**A Lecture: Gnosis & the Qabalah**

We will introduce the practice of the Qabalah, as a path to Gnosis. "Know thyself;" Pythagorus proclaimed. So that Gnosis is a journey into one's own being. And the Qabalah is a symbolic mapping of the soul that provides the tools for developing one's path in life.

The key point is in the developmental progression of the Oaths and the sincere resolve that one brings to force in carrying out these Oaths. The Tasks are the support structures that assist the Aspirant in fulfilling the obligation of having taken the Oaths. And most importantly, note that the Oaths taken by the Aspirant are to the Aspirant first and foremost, though in a few places, there is also the obligation to the Order…that invisible and Great White Brotherhood that remains in eternal service to the Initiation of all humanity.

***Keys to the Sefirot***

**Malkuth: To obtain a scientific knowledge of the nature and powers of one’s own being.**

**Ordeal of the Vampire**

The Probationer Oath has us obtaining a scientific knowledge of the nature and powers of our being. This is a real discovery period that forces us to ask ‘What is being?’ From this, perhaps the question of what it’s nature might be is simultaneously answered, providing also a simple deduction as to what its powers might be. But we have to answer this question first and foremost. Is ‘being’ consciousness? Or is it also the body that houses that consciousness? And what is the nature of consciousness (whether connected to the mind or independent of it) and what is the nature of the body (whether or not it is also connected to consciousness)?

Experientially, we involve ourselves with the Task of memorizing a chapter of Liber LXV and the mastery of the Star Ruby (along with a certain initiatory instruction that accompanies this). We should discover an elemental reality where our etheric (as contrasted with astral) body is incorporated in a material universe that is truer than the qliphotic universe of that consensus reality, which belongs to the bulk of humanity. The electro-magnetic current in its vertical and horizontal dimensions should be observed, particularly as there is one coordinate where they intersect and where the self, the particular being that is the Probationer, is incarnated (one's Logos).

**Yesod: To obtain control of the nature and powers of one’s own being.**

**Ordeal of the Nephesch**

The Neophyte Oath has us gaining control of the nature and powers of this being. But what does that mean? Does that mean that we must become suddenly, masters of ourselves? No, it seems that would be rather absurd. We would not then be Neophytes, or even a Zelator on the successful attainment of such. But we would become Adepts, which tells us that this must mean something else entirely.

As in our Probationary period, we discovered experientially, an electro-magnetic, elemental dimension that incorporates a materialistic coagulation (or involution) of an etheric body, so now do we take one step further and begin to formulate the astral ‘body of light’. We then learn how to maneuver and

manipulate the form of this body within that matrix that is called the ‘astral plane’. This certainly involves the four ‘Powers of the Sphinx’ and the alignment of one’s being with the energies now infusing the lower astral of our planet.

From the Rosicrucian Mass of the Gnostic Church of L.V.X.:

*Therefore must we be prompt and active as the Slyphs, avoiding frivolity and caprice; we must be energetic and strong like the Salamanders, avoiding irritability and ferocity; also, we must be flexible and attentive to images like the Undines, avoiding idleness and changeability; and finally, we should be laborious and patient like the Gnomes, avoiding grossness and avarice.*

**Hod: To obtain control of the foundations of one’s own being.**

**Ordeal of Choronzon**

The Zelator Task is far more complicated in that one has to get to the foundations of one's being. But what is that? It speaks to the very heart of the Aspiration as for the first time, from the position of Yesod, the Aspirant can clearly see Tiphareth and the goal of the Outer College of Our Order. Yet the distractions of Choronzon, which may light up with the ego imitating the role of the guru or holy man can easily dissuade us here, especially as it is the charge of the Zelator to be of service to the Order. And in the Astral Triad of which the Aspirant is now fully involved, the vacillations of being that is the work of the Practicus and the ‘attractions & repulsions’ of being that is the work of the Philosophus also come into one’s awareness. So one has the struggle to maintain the Aspiration and forge ahead despite the increased difficulty of the obstacles that one has run into.

This is a churning force that really adds meaning to the saying, ‘The greater the trials, the greater thy victory’. It is as if the Zelator simultaneously takes on the work of both the Practicus and Philosophus programs. Indeed, it seems almost impossible to separate them. So, it makes sense that there is no minimum time limitation placed on these Grades as by the time the Aspirant can claim Practicus, he or she has already done much of the work of both this Grade and its succeeding Grade.

But ultimately, the foundation of one's being is the body itself, which is rooted in the here and now. To get the body to cooperate with the spiritual aspiration is to learn to control its breath (air; intellect) and its movement; pranayama and asana, respectively. Mind and body need to learn to cooperate with each other and find a place of stillness.

**Netzach: To obtain control of the vacillations of one’s own being.**

The Practicus' Task is intellectual; the vacillations being the changeableness of learning in its stages. It is said that a little knowledge is a dangerous thing. And as we make a study into various subjects and disciplines, our ideas and opinions can move into a state of flux. Sometimes, this is eye-opening and we enjoy the greater depth and breadth of mind that knowledge can bring to us. In other situations, intellectual realization can really challenge our emotional predispositions and become difficult to accept. To gain an alignment between the intellectual and emotional centers of the psyche, as the two vacillate is the goal of this Oath.

The study of spiritual literature and particularly the Qabalah can open all sorts of doors of misperception and half-truths that will come about because of one's prejudices and inclinations; a solid, philosophical approach to the mystery of the self not having yet become consciously formed. But as this philosophy is formed, the vacillations steady themselves and the emerging adept begins to become a master of his or her own experience of being.

**Portal to Tiphareth: To obtain control of the attractions and repulsions of one’s own being.**

This Oath shoots to the heart of the matter of beingness. The sleeping man or woman who has no concern for spirituality lives in an unconscious state; constantly running from pain and towards pleasure; eschewing that which is considered ugly and seeking out only beauty. But in order to align with the divine light, one must come to see that the Sun shines on all things with indifference. This evokes the principle of detachment. It is said that one man's garbage is another man's treasure. So too does the Sun extend its comfort and warmth to evil and good people. And for that matter, who really is evil or good? It entirely depends on perspective. Getting to such a space in one's mind is its own arduous Ordeal; involving the acceptance of pain and pleasure on equal terms with the understanding that they are two sides of the same coin.

**Tiphareth (without): To attain the knowledge and conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel.**

**Tiphareth (within): To obtain control of the aspirations of one’s own being.**

Having delivered oneself through the intense ardor of this Ordeal, one should have attained the Magickal power to directly fructify the Aspiration to a fevered pitch of intensity that is might cement the focus of one’s whole being to that Aspiration. This of course, is that, which is of the Oath of the Dominus Liminis. Then, but one task remains...finally, one takes the Oath of the Adeptus Minor and excluding all else, seeks directly to attain the Knowledge & Conversation of Thine Holy Guardian Angel. Only then can that task be performed that shows the beauty of the order to the world; that which is within goes without along the lines of the formula of the Rosy Cross.