

 

A Nightside Grimoire & the Ordeals of the ATAT

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Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

The ‘nightside’ of the Tree-of-Life


The Qliphoth (קליפות with a value of 606—equivalent to the Hebrew word for nexus or ligature [a binding] and meaning "peels", "shells" or matter, which in the singular form of the word [קליפה] having a value of 600—equivalent to the Hebrew word for knot or ligature) of the ‘nightside’[[1]](#footnote-1) of the Tree-of-Life create a valuable grimoire for those attempting to understand the Ordeals of the Grades of the ATAT These manifest in our traversal of the spiritual path as bindings that can hold us back from further advancement and with by successfully overcoming them, can bind us that much more firmly to the path.

These ordeals well up from the subconscious part of the psyche and serve to rid us of energy blocks that are the neuroses we each must confront in order to unify the psyche into a more functional whole; making us more fully human. Israel Regardie referred to these shadows as the “evil twins,” which can also easily be described as the Tree-of-Knowledge (of good and evil).

**The Sefirot**

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| Grade | Qliphotic Angels | Description of Qliphotic Angels | Ordeal |
| Neophyte(Malkuth attained) | Nehemoth(Lilith) | Nehemoth: Whisperers (or Night Spector) "These are responsible for frightening sounds in strange places. They excite the mind and cause strange desires." This corresponds with Malkuth as well. Nehema: Groaning To Nehemoth, Nehema is attributed, "and is traditionally a demon and the sister of Lilith, possibly a remembrance of the Egyptian Nephthys and Isis. It is conceivable that Nehema is the same as Naamah, the sister of Tubal Cain."  | The Ordeal of the Nephesh &the ‘Sorrow of the Great Mother;’ it is said that the vampire (from the Probationer Ordeal) appears here in the form of a woman. |
| Zelator(Yesod attained) | Gamaliel   | Gamaliel: Polluted of God "Yesod is the place of the final forms that become matter in Malkuth. The Gamaliel are the Misshapen and polluted images that produce vile results. The outer form is the order of Ogiel, 'those Who Flee from God'." Lilith: Night Spector To Gamaliel, Lilith is attributed and "is the grand lady of all demons. The demons are sometimes considered to be the children of Lilith and is said to be the woman who comes to men in their dreams."  |   The Ordeal of ChoronzonYesod connects via the nightside of the Tree-of-Life with Da’ath. |
| PracticusHod attained | Samael   | Samael: The Desolation of God, or The Left Hand "Hod is the complex working of the will of the Absolute. Samael represents the barren desolation of a fallen and failed creation. The outer form is the Theuniel, 'The filthy Wailing Ones of God'." Adrammelech: Powerful King To Samael, Adrammelech is attributed. "This name is found in Fourth Kings: XVII, 29-31: ' And the men of Babylon made Succoth-benoth, and the men of Cuth made Nergal, and the men of Hamath made Ashima, and the Avvites made Nibhaz and Tartak, and the Sepharvites burnt their children in the fire to Adrammelech and Anammelech, the gods of Sepharvaim."  |    |
| PhilosophusNetzach attained |  Harab Serapel | Harab Serapel: Ravens of the Burning of God "Netzach is the openness of natural love. The Harab Serapel are the Ravens of Death who reject even their own. The outer form is Theumiel, 'The Fouled Substance of God'." Baal: Lord and Tubal Cain: Maker of Sharp Weapons To Harab Serapel, "Baal is attributed, and is "a word which means Lord, much as Adonai means Lord. The word Baal or 'Bel' has become restricted in its usage to signify a 'Lord of Darkness'." Also attributed is Tubal Cain.  |    |
| Dominis Liminis[Intersection of Sameck & Peh] |   |    |   The Lesser Dark Night of the Soul |

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| Adeptus MinorTiphareth attained |  Togaririm  | Togaririm(n): Those Who Bellow Grief and Tears "Tiphereth is the place of great beauty and rejoicing. The Togaririm build ugliness and groan about it. The cortex of the Togaririm is called the Zomiel, 'The Revolt of God'." Belphegor: Lord of the Dead To Togaririm, "the replacement of Tiphereth, the sphere of the vitalizing Sun, with a place holding Belphegor, the lord of dead bodies, is most striking."  |   “The gross must pass through fire” AL:I.50—akin to silver; per AL:III.64 (the successful completion of the ordeal called the Lesser Dark Night of the Soul) |
| Adeptus MajorGeburah attained | Golab  |  Golab: Burning Bodies "Geburah is a going forth in power to rule in strength. The order of Golab is composed of those who burn to do destruction --- even on themselves. The outer form is the Usiel, 'The Ruins of God'." Asmodeus: The Destroying God To Golab, Asmodeus is attributed. "This name is half Hebrew and half Latin. Asmodeus is often mentioned in the literature of demonology. The name can also be translated as 'The one adorned with fire'."  |    |
| Adeptus ExemptusChesed attained | Gamchicoth | Gamchicoth: Devourers "Chesed is the source of bounty both in idea and in substance to the lower forms. Gamchicoth is the order of 'Devourers' who seek to waste the substance and thought of creation. The outer form is the order of Azariel, 'The Binding Ones of God'." Astaroth: One of the Flock To Gamchicoth, "Astaroth is attributed. This is the name of the goddess Astarte, the Ishtar of the Babylonians and perhaps also the Isis of the Egyptians."  |   “Let the fine be tried in intellect” AL:I.50—akin to gold; per AL:III.65The next ordeal corresponds to the Abyssal Crisis is designated as symbolically equivalent to “gold” (c.f. *L*, 3:65).  This word, in Latin, is *aurum*, a word from which we get *Aurora*, the goddess of dawn.  The word is also linked with the idea, “to shine”.  The word *gold* equates with 38, the value of the word *death*;  for it is the formula of the Exempt Adept to disintegrate the base components of his or her ego and to reintegrate them to best serve his or her Holy Supernal Will. |

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| Babe of the Abyss |    |    |   The Greater Dark Night of the Soul “the lofty chosen ones in the highest” AL—akin to stones of precious water; per AL:III.66Consider the river Styx to be crossed unto the City of the Pyramids |
| Magister TempliBinah attained | Sathariel |  Sathariel: Concealment of God "Even as Binah is the great revealing one who bestows the structure of the Absolute onto the created, its opposite, the Sathariel, conceal the nature of The Perfect. The cortex or outer form of the Sathariel is called the order of Sheireil, 'The Hairy Ones of God'." Lucifuge: One Who Flees Light To Sathariel, Lucifuge "is attributed and is probably a name made up to replace the name Lucifer, 'Light Bearer'."  |   Per Liber B:“Now the grade of a Magister teacheth the Mystery of Sorrow…” |
| MagusChokmah attained | Chaigidel | Chaigidel: Confusion of the Power of God "These are the confusion of that great power which, as Chokmah, goes forth at the beginning to give the vital energy of creation to the processes of Binah. The cortex of the Chaigidel is called Ghogiel, 'Those Who Go Forth into the Place Empty of God'." Beelzebub: Lord of the Flies and Adam Belial: Wicked Man To Chaigidel, "both Satan and Beelzebub are attributed as well as Adam Belial. The name Belial is often used separately as a demonic name."  |   Per Liber B:“…the grade of a Magus the Mystery of Change…” |

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| IpsissimusKether attained |  Thamiel | Thamiel: Duality in God "Thamiel represents duality whereas Kether represents unity. Thus Thamiel is the division of that which is perfect only in unity. As a demonic order name, the Thamiel were before their 'revolt'. This signifies 'Perfection of God'. These angels sought to become more powerful by adding an Aleph to their name. They then became the 'Duality of God,' an order of the lesser demons. In the lowest state of their 'fall', they become the 'the Polluted of God.' The cortex or outer form of the Thamiel is called Cathariel, 'the Broken' or 'Fearful Light of God'." Satan : Adversary and King To Thamiel, "there are two demons that are attributed to stress the view that the demonic opposite of Kether is duality instead of unity and are Satan and Moloch or Malech."  |   Per Liber B:“…and the grade of Ipsissimus the Mystery of Selflessness, which is called also the Mystery of Pan.” |

**The 22 Paths**

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| Kala | Disease | Force | Ordeal | Siddhi | Atavism |
| 32 UniverseThantifaxath | Arteriosclerosis; the adjunct of Senility | Restriction &Incarceration |  | Works of Malediction and Death | Crocodile |
| 31 AeonShalicu | Fever; culminating in insanity or death | Darkness |  | Transformation, Invisibility or Disappearance | Appearance of First Matter (Being) in its corrupt or unregenerate state (Ego) |
| 30 SunRaflifu | Depletion |  |  | Power of acquiring wealth (gold), and of preparing the Red Tincture | Leopard |
| 29 MoonQulielfi |  | Evil as the power of non-being | Malignant Woman haunt this Tunnel; cf. Crowley's instructions on the Ordeal of the Nephesch for the Neophyte | Casting of Illusions & Bewitchments | Frog |
| 28 EmperorTzuflifu | Apoplexy | Violent, spiraling heat and energy | Evil or Chaos emerges in its raw state |  |  |
| 27 TowerParfaxitas | Fevers & Wounds; also inflamation-the redness of which is symbolic of the wound of puberty |  | Wrath and Vengeance | Assumption of Animal Forms through employment of 8th Degree formula: masturbation | Owl & Wolf |
| 26 DevilA’ano’nin | Priapism |  |  | Witches Sabbat | Goat and Ass |
| 25 ArtSaksalim |  | Concepts of Reversal, Transformation and Annihilation | Being bound with Fear & Horror | Transmutation & Vision of Universal Peacock as a symbol of Shaitan | Serpent |
| 24 DeathNiantiel | Cancer |  |  | Necromancy; Alchemical formula of Purification via Putrefaction | Beetle |
| 23 Hanged ManMalkunofat |  |  |  | The Power of Skrying | Leviathon |
| 22 AdjustmentLafoursiax | Imbalance |  | Ravenous birds w/faces or women who snatch away souls of living from mortal clay. | Ability to balance on bridge over fulf othe Abyss; between living and non-living. | Spider & the precision and synastry of Truth and Justice |

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| 21 FortuneKurgasiax |  |  |  | Ascendency (political or otherwise) |  |
| 20 HermitYamatu | Paralysis | Virile force; reserved Karezza | Death in Life | Parthenogenesis |  |
| 19 LustTemphioth | Stroke | Sexual heat |  | Training wild beasts with reference to the mechanism of IX degree OTO; woman bridling & directing insensate passions | Serpent's tongue |
| 18 ChariotCharacith |  |  |  | Bewitchments & the power of casting Enchantments | Camel |
| 17 LoversZamradiel |  | Shugal-Choronzon as a virulent magickal storm | Ominous appearances and Banshees | Bilocation | Hyena |
| 16 HierophantUriens |  |  |  | Physical strength | Hippopotamus |
| 15 StarHemethterith |  | Energy flashes |  | Astrology | Peacock & Eagle |
| 14 EmpressDagdagiel | Syphillis, gonorrhea & nymphomania |  |  | Ability to distill love philters | Dove |
| 13 PriestessGargophias | Menstrual Disorders | Creativity & Reproduction |  | Clairvoyance & Divination during a lunar eclipse | Frog |
| 12 MagusBaratchial | Ataxaphasia; disorders of speech |  |  | Gift of tongues, gift of healing & knowledge of sciences |  |
| 11 FoolAmprodias | Flux; unbalanced or untimely discharges of lunar energy |  |  | Divination | Eagle & Man |

**The Ordeals & the Dark Night of the Soul**

The ordeals are intimately connected with a phase in spiritual development; referred to as the ‘dark night of the soul.’ The phrase was originally coined by St. John of the Cross, who says that it:

…puts the sensory spiritual appetites to sleep, deadens them, and deprives them of the ability to find pleasure in anything. It binds the imagination, and impedes it from doing any good discursive work. It makes the memory cease, the intellect become dark and unable to understand anything, and hence it causes the will to become arid and constrained, and all the faculties empty and useless. And over this hangs a dense and burdensome cloud, which afflicts the soul, and keeps it withdrawn from the good.

The first of these several occurrences in one’s Magickal career is called the ‘Valley of the Shadow of Death’ and is a feature of the Path of Tav that the Neophyte of Our Order begins to travel. It is this that is called a reflection of the ‘Sorrow of the Great Mother.’ The ‘Valley of the Shadow of Death’ is essentially, the Abyss; connected to Yesod (that the Neophyte is working to fully attain) via the ‘nightside’ (shadow) of the Tree-of-Life.



The averse pentagram with its apex at Yesod shows the Ruach involuted into the Moon, which is itself, the culmination of the path of Tav—the Universe Atu. Tav is ruled by Saturn, which in the original Hebrew rendering of the Tree-of-Life was also placed upon the Abyss (moving Binah—attributed to Saturn) from which the ‘Babe of the Abyss’ emerges into Binah. The averse pentagram shows the involuted soul (Ruach) of humanity.



A line is drawn from Da’ath (where Binah is superimposed) to Netzach; then up to Geburah and across to Chesed; then down to Hod and back up to Da’ath. Da’ath is termed the non-Sefira; giving credulity to the superimposition. This gives us the upright pentagram; its apex culminating in the Abyss or the City of the Pyramids (Binah), which themselves are tombs. This can be said to represent the idea of transcendence in the living man; reflective of Crowley’s motto as Master of the Temple: V.V.V.V.V. (“By the force of truth, I have conquered the Universe while living”). And it is said that this attainment is the complete annihilation of the personality; that is existence above the Abyss. But after such attainment, the personality is reflected back into the Ruach and only a limited memory of the experience remains.

The feeling of this ordeal is a morbid heaviness that besets the Neophyte; continuing on to the two subsequent grades in the Astral Triad (Yesod, Hod and Netzach). The second phase in this ordeal occurs for the Zelator and is called the ‘Ordeal of Choronzon;’ the Zelator now moving towards the Black Pillar on the Tree-of-Life. Here the argumentative nature of Choronzon is discovered and sophistic rationalizations are engaged. If the Aspiration unto Tiphareth is strong, these arguments are used to develop the intellectual (and subsequently, the emotional capacities for the Philosophus) understanding of the Practicus. But if the Aspiration is weak, a temporary or permanent failure will occur; leaving the Aspirant in a nihilist state—lamenting the futility of living (finding no meaning in existence).

The second of the existential crises is called the ‘Lesser Dark Night of the Soul’ that occurs at the intersection of Samekh and Peh; before the Veil of Paroketh. It is the ‘blasted tower’ that shows the Dominus Liminis, but a glimpse of the illuminated singular or unified consciousness that is called the Holy Guardian Angel. The fight is to yoke all the petty egos of the psyche into what is called *asar un nefer* (myself made perfect)—a singularity that Ray Kurzweil predicts is an upcoming destiny for the human race. Some, most or all of these psychic components will rebel; preferring to toy with old sweetnesses, as described for the Scarlet Woman in Liber AL.

AL:III.43 "**Let the Scarlet Woman beware! If pity and compassion and tenderness visit her heart; if she leave my work to toy with old sweetnesses; then shall my vengeance be known. I will slay me her child: I will alienate her heart: I will cast her out from men: as a shrinking and despised harlot shall she crawl through dusk wet streets, and die cold and an-hungered.**"

Motta’s commentary to this verse is insightful:

*Although this verse is specifically directed to the Scarlet Woman, there is a sense in which it is useful to all Aspirants, and it must be taken in a very literal sense.*

*We have already remarked that there are no contradictions in the Book. You have been told not to pity; you have been told that compassion is the vice of kings; you must act as if you believe these assertions to be facts, if you want to become a Thelemite. See LXV, v, 52-56.*

*Many of your ordeals shall be of pity and compassion. You must remember that pity is vanity and compassion is confusion, or you will run the risk of wasting your dedication on the most worthless people.*

*“Old sweetnesses”: see AL I, 49; AL II, 5, 52. These verses must be understood in the most literal sense, and complied with punctiliously. Let the dead bury their dead, and follow 666!*

*“I will alienate her heart”: I will confuse her intelligence.*

*“I will cast her out from men”: Even those for whom she showed pity or compassion will scorn her. In fact, they will be first to do so.*

*“I will slay me her child”: Remember the Sign I.R.! This is a hint for Members of a certain Grade.*

*Nor do you forget AL III, 16.*

It is important to remember that Crowley teaches that the Aspirants to the A.’.A.’. are brothers and those who have attained to the A.’.A.’. are sisters. This has everything to do with the fact that Malkah, the Daughter attains to the throne of the Mother (Babalon and the great N.O.X.). Thelema is indeed a truly Gnostic philosophical system that is goddess-oriented in the same way as the ancient Gnostic philosophical system.

The counterpart to the Lesser Dark Night of the Soul is the Greater Dark Night of the Soul that involves the transformation of the unified consciousness into divine consciousness. This is indicated by the fact that the apex of the upward pentagram is actually not on Binah at all (as described above) but is fixed on Uranus; hence a breakup of the unified ego structure into particles of dust; suitable to convince the ferryman that the soul is indeed dead and to conduct the Exempt Adept across the river Styx and unto the City of the Pyramids.

That this occurs on the path of Gimel (Priestess Atu) shows us the nature of this desolation. The camel is the vehicle of the desolate desert; desolation being the indescribable nature of the Ordeal of the Babe of the Abyss.

Love is the law, love under will.

1. The nightside would be essentially equivalent to the Jungian shadow that is also referred to as the unconscious. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)