

THE NEW GOLDEN DAWN
FLYING ROLL
IV

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CONCERNING
THE PATHS AND
THE SERPENT OF THE
TREE OF LIFE

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

In the esoteric system of the Qabalah there is what might be called a "western mandala." This Qabalistic mandala is called the Tree of Life, and is the supreme magical symbol of all the forces which constitute the operations of the Universe in its evolving scheme for absolute freedom of expression. This Tree is composed of ten Circular Spheres and twenty-two Paths connecting them. It therefore depicts the idea of thirty-two occult concepts in all. It is a perfect model of the universal plan and plays a great role in the esoteric initiation of a Golden Dawn Magician. It comprehends and synthesizes all forms and concepts of the Universe, and it embraces all essential keys to attain true union with the Divine.

The twenty-two Paths of the Qabalistic Tree of Life are forces of archetypal existence in the unconscious mind of man. They are microcosmic and subjective, whereas the ten Circular Spheres (Sphiroth) of the Tree of Life are macrocosmic and objective. All twenty-two Paths are living essential aspects of the individual psyche of man. By experiencing each of these inner forces, in their various modes of psychological expression, we can extend our conscious empires of experience and knowledge and thus obtain greater progress in our dynamic endeavor to participate in the grand scheme of divine evolution.

All twenty-two Paths are various modes of the essence of the Serpent Force which ascends the Tree of Life to the Supernal Crown of Qabalistic Light. This Serpent Force is, in the Eastern Science of Yoga, symbolized by the Kundalini which, for purposes

of initiation, must be controlled, sublimated and made to ascend through the various Chakras in the Astral Body to the Inner Crown of Illumination symbolically located above the head. In Magick this Serpent Force is known as the Astral Light, which is a subjective, electro-magnetic current within all. To control and direct the various modes of this Astral Light is the supreme method by which to cultivate and activate the Magical Will. But to do this requires an accurate knowledge about those various inner modes of astral activity.

The Ascending Serpent is also a 'phallic' symbol representing the inner force of creative reproduction, that is, sexual energy. Proper application of this 'phallic' energy is the true method and manner of affecting genuine magical conditions in Nature. This requires effective mental control and proper assertion of the Magical Will. Again the essential thing is to consciously develop knowledge of the various modes of this 'phallic' energy so as to consciously experience and thus transcend their inner nature. By doing this we can ascertain, enlarge, and exert the Magical Will with greater wisdom and skill.

True knowledge is experience, not mental theories or concepts derived from books. To understand something you will have to experience the life-essence of that thing. There is no possibility of knowledge without the essential application of this practical requirement. Thus you will need to experience all twenty-two modes of the Serpent Force to be able to control, direct and affect it, and thereby achieve magical sovereignty.

Each Path of the Tree is a unique mode of the Serpent Force which, consciously or unconsciously, affects every man and every woman in one form or another. If we are ignorant of the forces which affect us within, we are then under their control and no better off than mere mechanical robots which are controlled by something or someone other than themselves. But if we develop true knowledge about those various microcosmic energies, we then transcend and take control of them. Knowledge is transcendence, and this is the whole gist of achieving magical sovereignty. Knowledge is the key to the control of the various energies within us.

Each Path of the Tree is a door to achieving psychological and spiritual awareness. By experiencing the various modes of the Serpent Force within us we can realize ourselves in the light of true knowledge and attain authentic insight into the meaning

and goal of our existence. Now each Path is a microcosmic reflection and representation of a macrocosmic or universal power. This is expressed in the living truth of Hermetic Wisdom: "As above, so below." By experiencing each of the microcosmic Paths of the Serpent Force we extend ourselves in such a manner as to unite ourselves with those various macrocosmic forces. In other words, we develop cosmic consciousness and universal life which is the essential destiny of all things in this New Age of the Cosmic Order.

If we work with the Paths in a systematic and successive manner up the Tree of Life, we can then produce the necessary states of consciousness which are required for the development of Universal Consciousness. In this case we start with the Serpent's tail at the Path of Tav on the bottom of the Tree of Life and we end at the head of the Serpent in the Path of Aleph at the top of the Tree of Life. In other words, we commence our journey from Malkuth (Below) and end in Kether (Above). Malkuth is earth, our natural place of habitation. Kether is Spirit, our transcendent home of spiritual existence. If we ascend upward to Kether, it is the same as saying that we become one with God or the Universal Consciousness of all. This is certainly an endeavor of great significance and is the goal of all who seek to evolve spiritually and psychologically. The Paths of the Tree of Life are a good means to accomplishing this high goal, for they are doors to the Palace of the Infinite; and the Royal Serpent of Initiation which ascends the Tree of Life is the Sole Guide to that Ineffable Splendour of the Gods.

Love is the law, love under will.

Fra.'. Oriens Stella Hoorus
In the Victorious City
(An. IIIxx.)---