

The Onyx Tablet of Set

THE ONYX TABLET

Introduction

Onyx Tablet: OT.Intro © Temple of Set

Author: Michael A. Aquino VI

Date: June 21, 1997 CE

Revision:

HTML Revision: August 8, 1999 CE

In order to understand the purpose of the *Onyx Tablet of Set*, you must first understand the function of the Temple of Set within contemporary civilization, and further the function of the Priesthood of Set within the Temple. As you have qualified for Initiation to the Priesthood, you will have grasped the essence of these distinctions intuitively. Herein they will be discussed more deliberately and explicitly.

Like the Church of Satan before it, the Temple of Set would not exist if there were not a need for it to exist. In the case of the Church of Satan, the need was for a medium in which to give vent to anger against the hypocrisy of conventional society - a hypocrisy which seemed most directly the legacy of the mainstream Western religions. Having expressed their anger both ritualistically and intellectually, Satanists found themselves confronted with the challenge to build a more perfect world from the ruins of the old. Some initial steps were taken, but psychologically, symbolically and organizationally the Church of Satan was not equipped for this task. Tensions arising between the hedonistic/critical and idealistic/constructive currents in the Church served to crystallize, if not to cause the crisis of X/1975 that resulted in the formation of the Temple of Set.

In the Temple of Set the idealistic/constructive current was immediately the prevalent one, with the Satanic current becoming more of a Western-cultural theme which could be invoked should the need arise. The Temple's perception of conventional society remained highly critical: It is a social medium in which the individual is forced to exist. While not all of it is hostile, much of it that appears benevolent or even neutral is in fact governed by natural or human forces which are ultimately predatory.

Thus, like the Church of Satan before it, the Temple of Set sees society in much the same way as the Enlightenment philosopher Thomas Hobbes described it: a fiercely competitive struggle in which each person is driven solely by personal gratification. Professed altruism is merely disguised gratification, as is most of what is termed "love".

The task of the Temple of Set is twofold:

First, we wish to construct a haven for Initiates in which Hobbesian motives and behavior are minimized, if not eliminated. In their place we wish to encourage a nobility of intellect and spirit mandated by our conviction that the human psyche is a non-natural phenomenon which need not be bound to the destructive, entropic forces of nature, and which has the potential to evolve into a form of self-consciousness transcending these forces altogether: true, psychecentric divinity.

Secondly the Temple of Set desires, insofar as possible, to preserve the benefit of our experience for human society generally. The principles that justify the existence of the Temple apply not just to its formal Initiates, but to humanity as a whole. If most of that humanity is not yet ready to confront its evolutionary potential, the requisite tools may at least be developed and safeguarded against a time when society may rise from its self-imposed imprisonment to grasp them.

If the Temple of Set were energized solely by the rational aspirations of its affiliates, there would be no need - and no true justification - for a "priesthood". In that case it would be a society, a club, or a foundation. The Temple of Set, however, is indeed more than the sum of its participants. It was founded not as a common-interest group, but rather in response to the challenge of a trans-human entity known to us as Set, initially through the phenomenon of the *Book of Coming Forth by Night*. This same entity - known under various names throughout history as the source of independent, non-natural consciousness - has further pledged to lend its energies, wisdom, and sensations in furtherance of the Temple's cause. It is here that the Priesthood of Set assumes its identity and justification.

The central, crucial characteristic of the Priesthood of Set is that, when an individual so consecrated expends the effort to do so, he or she may experience, represent, and manifest the consciousness of Set. The precision to which this is done, and the media through which it is expressed, vary from individual to individual.

It is because of this characteristic that even extraordinary competence in the Black Arts - characteristic of Recognition as an Adept II° of the Temple of Set - is **not** sufficient for Recognition to the Priesthood III°. It is further because of this characteristic that all "priesthoods" other than that of the Prince of Darkness are spurious: naively self-deceitful at best and fraudulent at worst. If there is no unified, conscious intelligence for which conventional priesthods may serve as a medium - and the inertia of the objective universe argues against this - then there is nothing behind such priesthods, and the religions which have grown up around them, save the passion of humankind to believe that it is more than a mere accident in the ebb and flow of the cosmos.

To be a Priest or Priestess of Set, therefore, is an experience completely unique in humanity. Without the sacrifice of one's individuality, one apprehends an additional consciousness distinct from the forces of the objective universe and interacts with it. The Initiation of each Priest and Priestess is a function of this interaction, and so their beings and persons are sacred. But incumbent upon such Initiates is the responsibility to "translate" this intensely personal experience into thoughts, words, and deeds in the worlds of Initiated and non-initiated humanity that has not been so consecrated. Thus the wisdom of Set shall continue to inspire, ennoble, and elevate humanity towards its eventual freedom from the prison of objective/universal inertia and entropy.

Below such vast aspirations, the Priesthood must not seek to particularize the Will of Set into the incidental give-and-take of human interaction. Human problems and disagreements are not the sort with which such an Ageless Intelligence is concerned. Of course Priests and Priestesses may invoke the wisdom to which they alone have access in order to address human issues. They themselves are incarnations of Set in this capacity: completely self-aware and self-conscious beings in a world peopled otherwise by humans who are, to a greater or lesser degree, controlled by natural forces.

The experience of the Priesthood of Set is not comprehensible to those who have not partaken of it, because it cannot be explained as a function of other human knowledge or experiences. What humans cannot easily understand, they have historically tended to regard with apprehension and suspicion. This is - in the precise sense of the term - a natural tendency which cannot be rationally overcome.

The Priesthood should not resent humankind for this, but must take the tendency into account when interacting with humans. An empathetic, sensitive balance must be found in which the influence unique to the Priesthood continues to be brought to bear upon humanity, but also in which the Priest or Priestess is not ostracized by humanity. This is a continuous, difficult task - and one which all Initiates of the Priesthood must expect for the duration of their exercise of office.

The *Onyx Tablet of Set* is that part of the *Jeweled Tablets of Set* which contains information peculiar to the experience of the Priesthood of Set. It is divided into two principal sections: the "Outer Temple" and the "Inner Temple". The "Outer Temple" encompasses those documents which the Priesthood requires for the procedural, organizational, and diplomatic governance and representation of the Temple of Set both internally and externally. The "Inner Temple" embraces subjects which are pertinent to the experience of the Priesthood. By this is meant not memoirs, Working records, or creative writings which can more appropriately be exposed to the readership of the *Ruby Tablet*, but rather information which is specifically addressed to other Priests and Priestesses of the present and future, to enable them to better comprehend and execute their office. The *Onyx Tablet* focuses exclusively on the concept and experience of the Priesthood.

While the *Onyx Tablet* may be under the Editorship of any Initiate of the Priesthood, the High Priest of Set will personally review and approve all additions to its contents, with an

Eye to their fulfillment of the above criteria. The impetus is for a more evolutionary, rather than a more static concept of the Priesthood. At the same time the lack of predetermined signposts in our future mandates care and deliberation where the incorporation of doctrine is concerned.

The *Onyx Tablet of Set* is to be safeguarded by each Initiate of the Priesthood in such a way that it cannot be accessed, taken, or copied by any non-Initiate of the Priesthood. Its existence as a section of the *Jeweled Tablets of Set* is known to the Temple as a whole, but information as to its specific contents should not be discussed outside the Priesthood. It is the premise of the Temple of Set that the greatest trust be placed in the Priesthood; therefore the most vital and sensitive of information will be found within the *Onyx Tablet*. The careless or improper release or use of such information could result in severe harm to individual Setians, and to the Temple as a whole.

ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION OF THE TEMPLE OF SET

Onyx Tablet:

OT.O.Arts

© Temple of Set

Author:

Date:

July 29, X AES/1975 CE

Revision:

HTML Revision:

August 8, 1999 CE

[Filed Superior Court October 28, 1975/Howard C. Menzel, County Clerk by Laura Eaton, Deputy Clerk. Great Seal of the State of California affixed October 21, 1975 by March Fong Eu, Secretary of State. #756672 Endorsed/Filed in the office of the Secretary of State of the State of California October 20, 1975/March Fong Eu, Secretary of State/by James E. Harris, Deputy.]

I. Name of this corporation shall be Temple of Set.

II. The purposes for which this corporation is formed are:

-- (a) The specific and primary purposes are to operate an organization for religious purposes.

-- (b) The general purposes and powers are to have and to exercise all rights and powers conferred on non-profit corporations on the laws of California, including the power to contract, rent, buy or sell personal or real property; provided, however, this corporation shall not, except to an insubstantial degree, engage in any activities or exercise any power that are not in furtherance of the primary purposes of this corporation.

-- (c) No substantial part of the activities of this corporation shall consist of carrying on propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the corporation shall not participate or intervene in any political campaign (including the publishing or distribution of statements) on behalf of any candidate for public office.

III. This corporation is organized pursuant to the General Non-Profit Corporation Law of the State of California and does not contemplate the gain or profit to the members thereof and is organized for non-profit purposes.

IV. The principal office for the transaction of this business of this corporation is located in the County of Santa Barbara, State of California.

V. The names and addresses of the persons who are to act in the capacity of Directors until the election of their successors are:

Michael A. Aquino
Post Office Box 243
Santa Barbara, California 93102

William F. Murray
45 West Sixth Street
Winnemucca, Nevada 89445

L. Dale Seago
1440 Twenty-Third Street #107
Santa Monica, California 90404

VI. The authorized number and qualifications of members of the corporation, the different classes of membership, if any, the property, voting, and other rights and privileges of members and their liability for dues and assessments and the method of collection thereof, shall be as set forth in the By-Laws.

VII. The property of this corporation is irrevocably dedicated to religious purposes, and no part of the net income or assets of this organization shall ever inure to the benefit of any private persons. Upon the dissolution or winding up of the corporation, its assets, remaining after payment or provision for payment, of all debts and liabilities of this corporation shall be distributed to a nonprofit fund, foundation, or corporation which is organized and operated exclusively for religious purposes and which has established its tax exempt status under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

VIII. Any action required or permitted to be taken by the Board of Directors under any provision of law may be taken without a meeting, if all members of the Board shall individually or collectively consent in writing to such action. Such written consent or consents shall be filed with the minutes of the proceedings of the Board. Such action by written consent shall have the same force and effect as the unanimous vote of such Directors. Any certificate or other document filed under any provision of law which relates to actions so taken shall state that action was taken by the unanimous written consent of the Board of Directors without a meeting and that the Articles of Incorporation authorize the Directors to so act, and such statement shall be prima-facie evidence of such authority.

In witness whereof, the undersigned, being the persons hereinabove named as the first Directors, have executed these Articles of Incorporation this 29th day of July, 1975.

/s/ Michael A. Aquino [Notarized]

/s/ William F. Murray [Notarized]

/s/ L. Dale Seago [Notarized]

BY-LAWS OF THE TEMPLE OF SET

Onyx Tablet:

OT.O,ByLw

© Temple of Set

Author:

Date:

July 4, X AES/1975 CE

Revision:

July 11, XXVII AES/1992 CE

HTML Revision:

August 8, 1999 CE

ARTICLE 1. OFFICES

Section 1.01.

The principal office for the transaction of the business of this corporation is located in the City and County of San Francisco, California, United States of America.

Section 1.02.

The corporation may also have offices at such other places, within or without the State of California where it is qualified to do business, as its business may require and as the High Priest may from time to time designate.

ARTICLE 2. AFFILIATION

Section 2.01.

The corporation shall not be a member of, or affiliated with any organization or institution.

Section 2.02.

An individual member of the Temple of Set may be a member of, or affiliated with another primarily religious organization or institution during I° membership status only.

Section 2.03.

An individual member of the Temple of Set may be a member of, or affiliated with another initiatory organization or institution as long as, in the evaluation of any IV°+ member, such membership does not conflict with or take precedence over membership in the Temple of Set.

ARTICLE 3. MEMBERSHIP

Section 3.01.

There shall be six degrees of membership in the Temple of Set: Setian I°, Adept II°, Priest or Priestess of Set III°, Magister or Magistra Templi IV°, Magus or Maga V°, and Ipsissimus or Ipsissima VI°.

Section 3.02.

Any person may become a Setian I° who has attained the age of eighteen (18) years, is in sympathy with the purposes of the Temple of Set, has indicated an interest in furthering its program, has contributed to the Temple of Set the admission fee, and is admitted to membership by a member holding the III°+. Initial membership as a Setian I° is for a maximum of two years. If by the end of that period the individual has not attained II° Recognition, affiliation with the Temple shall be automatically terminated. Exceptions to this two-year I° limitation may be granted by any III°+ member for a maximum of six additional months. Only the High Priest may grant additional extensions beyond this six-month period.

Section 3.03.

A Setian may be Recognized to Adept II° if a member holding the III°+ deems that person deserving of the II°. Such a Recognition must be communicated in writing to the Executive Director within thirty days after it is proclaimed, and this communication must be signed by the III°+ member who has proclaimed the Recognition.

Section 3.04.

An Adept may be Recognized to Priest or Priestess of Set III° if a member holding the IV°+ deems that person Elect to the III°. A minimum of a thirty-day advance notice of the proposed Recognition must be communicated to all III°+ members of the Temple by the individual proposing the Recognition. Following the end of the thirty-day advance notice period, the Recognition must be communicated in writing to the High Priest and the Executive Director within fifteen days, these communications must be signed by the IV°+ member who has proclaimed the Recognition, and at least two other members holding the IV°+ must concur in writing and so notify the High Priest and Executive Director.

Section 3.05.

A Priest or Priestess of Set may be Recognized to Magister or Magistra Templi IV° by decision of the High Priest. A minimum of a thirty-day advance notice of the proposed Recognition must be communicated to all IV°+ members of the Temple by the High Priest. Following the end of the thirty-day advance notice period, the Recognition must be communicated in writing to the Executive Director and to all voting Councillors, and at least five persons who are voting Councillors must indicate their approval of the decision in writing to the High Priest and to the Executive Director.

Section 3.06.

A Magister or Magistra Templi may be Recognized to Magus or Maga V° by decision of the High Priest. A minimum of a thirty-day advance notice of the proposed Recognition must be communicated to all IV°+ members of the Temple by the High Priest. Following

the end of the thirty-day advance notice period, the Recognition must be communicated in writing to the Chairman of the Council and the Executive Director, and all nine voting Councillors must indicate their approval of the decision in writing to the High Priest and to the Executive Director.

Section 3.07.

A Magus or Maga may be Recognized to Ipsissimus or Ipsissima VI° by decision of the individual Magus or Maga in question. This decision must be communicated to the High Priest, the Chairman of the Council, and the Executive Director, and at least five persons who are voting Councillors must indicate their approval of the decision in writing to the High Priest and to the Executive Director.

Section 3.08.

Persons holding the I° or II° may be downgraded in degree and/or expelled from the Temple of Set by a member holding the III°+. Such a decision must be communicated in writing to the High Priest and to the Executive Director within ten days following the decision. A person holding the II° may return to the I° voluntarily. In the case of a return to the I° either voluntarily or involuntarily, the person in question shall be expelled from the Temple at the end of one year if II° Recognition is not reattained by that time.

Section 3.09.

Persons holding the III° may not be involuntarily downgraded in degree. They may be expelled from the Temple of Set by decision of the High Priest. Such a decision must be communicated in writing to the Executive Director and to all voting Councillors within fifteen days following that decision, and at least five persons who are voting Councillors must indicate their approval of the decision in writing to the High Priest and Executive Director. This section may not be invoked to expel an incumbent Councillor or an incumbent Executive Director.

Section 3.10.

Persons holding the IV° may not be involuntarily downgraded in degree. They may be expelled from the Temple of Set by decision of the High Priest. Such a decision must be communicated in writing to the Executive Director and to all voting Councillors within fifteen days following that decision, and at least six persons who are voting Councillors must indicate their approval of the decision in writing to the High Priest and Executive Director. This section may not be invoked to expel an incumbent Councillor or an incumbent Executive Director.

Section 3.11.

Persons holding the V° may not be involuntarily downgraded in degree. They may be expelled from the Temple of Set by decision of the High Priest. Such a decision must be communicated in writing to the Executive Director and to all voting Councillors within fifteen days following that decision, and at least seven persons who are voting Councillors must indicate their approval of the decision in writing to the High Priest and Executive Director. This section may not be invoked to expel an incumbent Councillor or an incumbent Executive Director.

Section 3.12.

Persons holding the VI° may not be involuntarily downgraded in degree. They may be expelled from the Temple of Set by decision of the High Priest. Such a decision must be communicated in writing to the Executive Director and to all voting Councillors within fifteen days following that decision, and at least eight persons who are voting Councillors must indicate their approval of the decision in writing to the High Priest and Executive Director. This section may not be invoked to expel an incumbent Councillor or an incumbent Executive Director.

Section 3.13.

Honorary membership shall be conferred only in the title of Honorary Setian. It may be conferred by any person holding the IV°+. Such an act must be communicated to the High Priest and the Executive Director within ten days. Honorary Setians pay no admission fee or annual dues for life. Honorary Setians may be expelled from the Temple of Set by decision of the High Priest. Such a decision must be communicated in writing to the Executive Director and to all voting Councillors within ten days following that decision, and at least five persons who are voting Councillors must indicate their approval of the decision in writing to the High Priest and Executive Director.

Section 3.14.

Only persons who hold the III°+ shall be considered voting members of the Temple of Set for purposes of amending these By-Laws.

Section 3.15.

The names and addresses of all members of the Temple of Set shall be made available to any III°+ member upon demand.

Section 3.16.

To maintain membership, each member of the Temple of Set must renew his membership on an annual basis. This renewal will involve the payment of such renewal fees, to be equal for all members, as the High Priest may determine.

Section 3.17.

Any member who fails to renew his membership in accordance with Section 3.16 within sixty days following delivery of a certified, return-receipt renewal notice to him will be automatically expelled by the Executive Director. Exceptions to this policy for up to sixty additional days may be granted by the High Priest or the Chairman of the Council. Longer exceptions may be granted by the High Priest or the Chairman of the Council only with the approval in writing of at least five voting Councillors.

Section 3.18.

Any member of the Temple of Set may withdraw from the Temple of Set by so notifying any III°+ member in writing. The III°+ member must then communicate the withdrawal to the Executive Director in writing.

Section 3.19.

Determination of degrees of members received prior to the incorporation of the Temple of Set shall be made by the High Priest and communicated in writing to the Executive Director and the Council of Nine not later than October 31, 1975 CE.

Section 3.20.

Readmission of any former member of the Temple of Set who was not involuntarily dismissed from the Temple for misconduct shall be at the discretion of any III^o+ member of the Temple. Any individual so readmitted must comply with any procedures determined to bring membership status current as determined by the Executive Director.

Section 3.21.

Readmission of any former member of the Temple of Set who was involuntarily dismissed from the Temple for misconduct shall be at the discretion of the High Priest. Such a readmission authorized by the High Priest must be communicated in writing to the Executive Director and all Councillors, and at least five voting Councillors must indicate their approval of the decision in writing to the High Priest and Executive Director.

Section 3.22.

Any person readmitted to the Temple of Set as a I^o member shall be automatically expelled from the Temple at the end of one year if II^o Recognition is not attained by that time.

Section 3.23.

The admission fee and the renewal fee are each set by the High Priest. These fees may not be changed more than once in a twelve-month period. To change these fees, the High Priest must receive written approval of the change from at least five persons who are voting Councillors before the change is announced to the membership.

ARTICLE 4. COUNCIL OF NINE

Section 4.01.

The Board of Directors of the Temple of Set, Inc. shall be known as the Council of Nine. All references to "the Council" in these By-Laws refer to the Council of Nine.

Section 4.02.

The Council of Nine shall consist of nine persons, each of whom holds the III^o+. In addition to these nine persons, the High Priest and the Executive Director shall be ex officio members of the Council, serving without vote.

Section 4.03.

Each voting Councillor shall serve a nine-year term of office ending June 30 or upon the confirmation of a successor to that Council seat, with the exception of the members constituting the initial Council, each of whom shall serve a term of office determined by the Council upon his or her initial election to the Council.

Section 4.04.

Vacancies on the Council of Nine through either expiration of a term of office, voluntary resignation of a member of the Council, or permanent incapacity of a member to execute his office shall be filled by the Chairman of the Council. Such an appointment must be approved in writing by at least five other persons who are incumbent, voting members of the Council, such approval to be communicated to the High Priest, the Chairman of the Council, and the Executive Director.

Section 4.05.

Permanent incapacity of a Councillor to execute his office shall be determined by the Chairman of the Council. Such a determination must be approved in writing by a minimum of six other voting members of the Council, such approval to be communicated to the High Priest, the Chairman of the Council, and the Executive Director.

Section 4.06.

A quorum of the Council shall consist of all nine voting members.

Section 4.07.

The High Priest and the Executive Director will ensure that the assets of the Temple of Set, both administrative and financial, are used to the greatest reasonable extent to assist the Council in carrying out its activity.

Section 4.08.

As soon as possible following July 1 and not later than August 1 of each year, the High Priest shall appoint one of the voting members of the Council of Nine to serve as Chairman of the Council of Nine, term of office to expire August 31 of the following year or upon the confirmation of the next Chairman. Such an appointment must be approved in writing by at least six persons who are voting members of the Council, such approval to be communicated to the High Priest and the Executive Director. The incumbent Chairman of the Council shall serve as Chairman until the election of the successor.

Section 4.09.

All papers and documents of the Temple of Set, and all Temple-related papers and documents of any III^o+ member involving the Temple of Set, shall be made instantly available to the Council or to any individual member of the Council upon demand. Any individual member of the Council who invokes this section of the By-Laws in order to view material may not reveal any information so gained outside the membership of the Council without prior written authorization to do so from the Chairman of the Council. Such written authorization must be communicated to all voting and non-voting Councillors by the Chairman in each specific instance.

Section 4.10.

All Councillors shall serve without compensation. They shall be reimbursed for reasonable expenses involved in carrying out the functions of their office. Determination of reasonable expenses shall be made by the Chairman of the Council.

Section 4.11.

A record of minutes of the Council of Nine, when it is functioning specifically as a board of directors for corporate purposes, shall be kept by the Executive Director.

ARTICLE 5. HIGH PRIEST OF SET

Section 5.01.

The responsibility and authority to determine all policies and programs of the Temple of Set, subject only to the provisions of these By-Laws, shall rest with the High Priest (or High Priestess) of Set. No policy, program, decision, action, or statement under the authority of this Section shall conflict in whole or part with the Articles of Incorporation or By-Laws of the Temple of Set.

Section 5.02.

The High Priest shall perform all duties of a corporate president required by law.

Section 5.03.

The High Priest shall hold the IV^o+

Section 5.04.

The Chairman of the Council shall appoint the High Priest. Such an appointment must be approved in writing by at least five other voting Councillors, such approval to be communicated by those persons individually to the Chairman, the Executive Director, and each other.

Section 5.05.

Upon appointment to office, the High Priest shall serve without fixed term until his resignation or removal from office. He may resign from office by so notifying both the Chairman of the Council and the Executive Director in writing.

Section 5.06.

The Chairman of the Council may remove the High Priest from office if he feels that there is just cause for doing so. Such a decision must be approved in writing by at least six other voting members of the Council, such approval to be communicated to the High Priest, the Chairman, and the Executive Director by those Council members individually.

Section 5.07.

The High Priest may serve with or without compensation as determined by the Chairman of the Council. He shall be reimbursed for reasonable expenses involved in carrying out the functions of his office. Determination of reasonable expenses shall be made by the Chairman of the Council.

Section 5.08.

The High Priest shall neither display nor wear any distinct insignia of office.

ARTICLE 6. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Section 6.01.

All administrative operations of the Temple of Set shall be supervised by the Executive Director, subject to the provisions of these By-Laws and to the instructions of the High Priest.

Section 6.02.

The Executive Director shall perform all duties of a corporate vice president/secretary required by law.

Section 6.03.

The Executive Director shall hold the III^o+

Section 6.04.

The Chairman of the Council shall appoint the Executive Director. Such an appointment must be approved in writing by at least four other voting Councillors, such approval to be communicated by those persons individually to the Chairman, the High Priest, and each other.

Section 6.05.

Upon appointment to office, the Executive Director shall serve without fixed term until his resignation or removal from office. He may resign from office by so notifying both the Chairman of the Council and the High Priest in writing.

Section 6.06.

The Chairman of the Council may remove the Executive Director from office if he feels that there is just cause for doing so. Such a decision must be approved in writing by at least five other voting members of the Council, such approval to be communicated to the High Priest, the Chairman, and the Executive Director by those Council members individually.

Section 6.07.

The Executive Director may serve with or without compensation, as determined by the Chairman of the Council. He shall be reimbursed for reasonable expenses involved in carrying out the functions of his office. Determination of reasonable expenses shall be made by the High Priest.

Section 6.08.

The Executive Director shall neither display nor wear any distinct insignia of office.

ARTICLE 7. TREASURER

Section 7.01.

All financial transactions of the Temple of Set shall be supervised by the Treasurer, subject to the provisions of these By-Laws and to the instructions of the Executive Director.

Section 7.02.

The Treasurer shall perform all duties of a corporate treasurer required by law.

Section 7.03.

The Treasurer shall hold the III^o+

Section 7.04.

The Chairman of the Council shall appoint the Treasurer. The Chairman may remove the Treasurer from office if he feels that there is just cause for doing so. A removal decision must be approved in writing by at least four other voting members of the Council, such approval to be communicated to the High Priest, the Chairman, and the Executive Director by those Council members individually.

Section 7.05.

Upon appointment to office, the Treasurer shall serve without fixed term until his resignation or removal from office. He may resign by so notifying the Executive Director and the Chairman of the Council in writing.

Section 7.06.

The Treasurer may be a voting Councillor. If this is the case, his rights and responsibilities as a Councillor will take precedence over his duties as Treasurer. This determination is to be made by the Treasurer himself.

Section 7.07.

The Treasurer shall keep a complete record of the finances of the Temple of Set on books which shall be and remain the property of the Temple of Set, and which shall be open for inspection at any reasonable time by any member of the Temple of Set holding the III^o+

Section 7.08.

The Treasurer may serve with or without compensation, as determined by the Chairman of the Council. He shall be reimbursed for reasonable expenses involved in the carrying out the functions of his office. Determination of reasonable expenses shall be made by the High Priest.

Section 7.09.

The Treasurer shall neither display nor wear any distinct insignia of office.

Section 7.10.

The Chairman of the Council may or may not require the Treasurer to be bonded at the expense of the Temple of Set.

Section 7.11.

Checks drawn on the account of the Temple of Set shall require two signatures. One will normally be that of the Treasurer and the other that of either the High Priest, the Executive Director, or the Chairman of the Council. Should the Treasurer be

incapacitated, the two signatures may be those of any two of the other three authorized signatories.

Section 7.12.

The Temple of Set shall operate with an annually balanced budget. Only the High Priest or the Chairman of the Council may authorize the incurring of short-term indebtedness, such as charge accounts, in the name of the Temple of Set.

ARTICLE 8. CORPORATE RECORDS, REPORTS, AND SEAL

Section 8.01.

All standing policies of the High Priest and administrative procedures of the Executive Director shall be recorded in the Jeweled Tablets of Set.

Section 8.02.

The corporation shall keep and maintain adequate and correct accounts of its properties and business transactions, including accounts of its assets, liabilities, receipts, disbursements, gains, and losses.

Section 8.03.

On request of an assessor, the corporation shall make available at its principal office in California or at a place mutually acceptable to the assessor and the corporation a true copy of business records relevant to the amount, cost, and value of property, subject to local assessment, which it owns, claims, possesses, or controls within the county.

Section 8.04.

The books of account shall at all reasonable times be open to inspection by the High Priest, the Executive Director, and/or any voting Councillor. The High Priest, the Executive Director, and/or any voting Councillor shall have the absolute right at any reasonable time to inspect all books, records, documents of any kind, and the physical properties of the corporation. Such inspection may be made in person or by agent or attorney, and the right of inspection includes the right to make extracts.

Section 8.05.

Fiscal year of the Temple of Set shall be the calendar year. Within three months following the close of each fiscal year, the Treasurer shall prepare and submit to the High Priest, the Executive Director, and the Council of Nine an annual financial statement of that fiscal year. The financial statement shall be prepared in accordance with sound accounting practices, and may be certified by a public accountant.

Section 8.06.

The Temple of Set may adopt, use, and at will alter a corporate seal. Such a seal, if adopted, shall be affixed to all corporate instruments, but failure to affix it shall not affect the validity of any such instrument.

ARTICLE 9. INSIGNIA

Section 9.01.

Insignia of the Temple of Set shall consist of a pentagram, two points upraised, against a circular field. The edges of the pentagram shall not touch the circular field.

Section 9.02.

The insignia described in Section 9.01 may be used by any member of the Temple of Set in accordance with the provisions of this Article, but it shall not be embellished with any other designs or have any other insignia superimposed upon it.

Section 9.03.

Insignia of the I° shall be a silver pentagram, two points upraised, against a circular field of white.

Section 9.04.

Insignia of the II° shall be a silver pentagram, two points upraised, against a circular field of red.

Section 9.05.

Insignia of the III° shall be a silver pentagram, two points upraised, against a circular field of black.

Section 9.06.

Insignia of the IV° shall be a silver pentagram, two points upraised, against a circular field of blue.

Section 9.07.

Insignia of the V° shall be a silver pentagram, two points upraised, against a circular field of purple.

Section 9.08.

Insignia of the VI° shall be a silver pentagram, two points upraised, against a circular field of gold.

Section 9.09.

Insignia of Honorary Setian shall be a silver pentagram, two points upraised, against a circular field of green.

Section 9.10.

No member of the Temple of Set may wear or otherwise use the distinctive insignia of a degree other than that which he currently holds.

ARTICLE 10. ORDERS

Section 10.01.

The term "Order" designates an organizational element of the Temple of Set supervised by one or more IV°+ members as Grand Master/Co-Grand Masters of that Order. Any

IV^o+ member may create an Order, but may not serve as Grand Master/Co-Grand Master of more than two Orders at a time.

Section 10.02.

The Grand Master/Co-Grand Master of an Order exercises complete authority over that Order subject to these By-Laws.

Section 10.03.

Orders will accept only II^o+ members of the Temple of Set as Order members. A member of the Temple of Set may belong to a maximum of one Order unless the Grand Masters of that Order and any proposed additional Order(s) agree that additional Order membership is acceptable.

Section 10.04.

Order insignia may be worn either together with Temple of Set insignia or alone. When worn together with Temple insignia, the Order insignia must not conflict with, displace, or cover it.

ARTICLE 11. PYLONS

Section 11.01.

The term "Pylon" designates an organizational element of the Temple of Set supervised by one or more II^o+ members as Sentinel/Co-Sentinels of that Pylon. Any III^o+ member may create a Pylon and serve as Sentinel, but may not serve as Sentinel of more than one Pylon at a time. If a II^o member is to serve as Sentinel, the Pylon must be sponsored by a III^o+ member.

Section 11.02.

The Sentinel/Co-Sentinel of a Pylon exercises complete authority over that Pylon subject to these By-Laws and any policies of the High Priest concerning Pylons published in the Jeweled Tablets of Set.

Section 11.03.

A member of the Temple of Set may belong to a maximum of one Pylon unless the Sentinels of that Pylon and any proposed additional Pylon(s) agree that additional Pylon membership is acceptable.

Section 11.04.

Pylon insignia may be worn either together with Temple of Set insignia or alone. When worn together with Temple insignia, the Pylon insignia must not conflict with, displace, or cover it.

ARTICLE 12. AMENDMENTS TO BY-LAWS

Section 12.01.

These By-Laws shall become effective immediately upon their adoption. Amendments to

these By-Laws shall become effective immediately upon their adoption unless the members in adopting them provide that they are to become effective at a later date.

Section 12.02.

Subject to any provisions of law applicable to the amendment of By-Laws of non-profit corporations, these By-Laws, or any other of them, may be altered, amended, or repealed and new By-Laws adopted by a three-quarters majority vote of all III^o+ members of the Temple of Set.

Section 12.03.

A vote to affect these By-Laws in accordance with Section 12.02 shall be jointly supervised by the High Priest, the Chairman of the Council, and the Executive Director.

Section 12.04.

The High Priest may call for a vote to affect these By-Laws in accordance with Section 12.02 at his discretion. A vote must be called for upon receipt by the Executive Director of a petition signed by one-third of the Active Status III^o+ members of the Temple of Set. Upon receipt of such a petition, the Temple of Set shall immediately cease all programs and activities involving the issue in question until the vote has been conducted, announced, and implemented.

Section 12.05.

The original or a copy of the By-Laws as amended or otherwise altered to date, certified by the secretary of the corporation, shall be recorded and kept in the Onyx Tablet of Set.

ARTICLE 13. INTERPRETATION OF BY-LAWS

Section 13.01.

Interpretation of the provisions of these By-Laws, where they are not clearly explicit, shall be by the High Priest. The Chairman of the Council may overrule such an interpretation. An overrule decision must be approved in writing by at least four other voting members of the Council, such approval to be communicated to the High Priest, the Chairman, and the Executive Director by those Council members individually.

Section 13.02.

As used in these By-Laws, the notation "+" following an initiatory degree means "this or any higher degree."

Section 13.03.

All degrees of membership and all offices within the Priesthood and Temple of Set may be held by persons of either sex. Use of masculine pronouns in these By-Laws is for simplicity only.

U.S. INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE FEDERAL TAX EXEMPTION

Onyx Tablet:

OT.O.USEx

© Temple of Set

Author:

Date:

June 16, 1976 CE

Revision:

HTML Revision:

August 8, 1999 CE

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY
INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE
Washington, D.C. 20224
Date: June 16, 1976
In reply refer to: E:EO:T:R:2-6

Temple of Set
P.O. Box 243
Santa Barbara, California 93102

Employer Identification Number: 95-2975252
Key District: 94
Accounting Period Ending: October
Form 990 Required: No

Dear Applicant:

Based on information supplied, and assuming your operations will be as stated in your application for recognition of exemption, we have determined you are exempt from Federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

We have further determined you are not a private foundation within the meaning of section 509(a) of the Code, because you are an organization described in section 509(a)(1) and 170(b)(1)(A)(i).

You are not liable for social security (FICA) taxes unless you file a waiver of exemption certificate as provided in the Federal Insurance Contributions Act. You are not liable for the taxes imposed under the Federal Unemployment Tax Act (FUTA).

Since you are not a private foundation, you are not subject to the excise taxes under Chapter 42 of the Code. However, you are not automatically exempt from other Federal excise taxes.

Donors may deduct contributions to you as provided in section 170 of the Code. Bequests, legacies, devises, transfers, or gifts to you or for your use are deductible for Federal estate and gift tax purposes if they meet the applicable provisions of sections 2055, 2106, and 2522 of the Code.

If your purposes, character, or method of operation is changed, you must let your key District Director know so he can consider the effect of the change on your exempt status. Also, you must inform him of all changes in your name or address.

The block checked at the beginning of this letter shows whether you must file Form 990, Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax. If the Yes box is checked, you are required to file Form 990 only if your gross receipts each year are normally more than \$5,000. If a return is required, it must be filed by the 15th day of the fifth month after the end of your annual accounting period. The law imposes a penalty of \$10 a day, up to a maximum of \$5,000, for failure to file the return on time.

You are not required to file Federal income tax returns unless you are subject to the tax on unrelated business income under section 511 of the Code. If you are subject to this tax, you must file an income tax return on Form 990-T. In this letter we are not determining whether any of your present or proposed activities are unrelated trade or business as defined in section 513 of the Code.

You need an employer identification number even if you have no employees. If an employer identification number was not entered on your application, a number will be assigned to you and you will be advised of it. Please use that number on all returns you file and in all correspondence with the Internal Revenue Service.

We are informing your key District Director of this action. Because this letter could help resolve any questions about your exempt status and your foundation status, please keep it in your permanent records.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely yours,
/s/ Milton Cerny
Milton Cerny
Chief, Ruling Section 2

Exempt Organizations Branch
Technical Branch

CALIFORNIA STATE FRANCHISE TAX BOARD EXEMPTION

Onyx Tablet:

OT.O.CAEx

© Temple of Set

Author:

Date:

October 17, 1975 CE

Revision:

HTML Revision:

August 8, 1999 CE

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
FRANCHISE TAX BOARD
Sacramento, California 95867
(916) 355-0392

October 17, 1975

In reply refer to: 344:RP:gp/g

Temple of Set
P.O. Box 243
Santa Barbara, Ca. 93102

Purpose: Religious
Form of Organization: Corporation
Accounting Period Ending: December 31
Organization Number: D-0756672 TO4S*

Based on the information submitted and provided, your present operations continue unchanged or conform to those proposed in your application, you are exempt from state franchise or income tax under Section 23701d, Revenue and Taxation Code. Any change in operation, character, or purpose of the organization must be reported immediately to this office so that we may determine the effect on your exempt status. Any change of name or address must also be reported.

You are required to file Form 199 (Exempt Organization Annual Information Statement) on or before the 15th day of the 5th month (4-1/2 months) after the close of your accounting period. See annual instructions with forms for requirements.

You are not required to file state franchise or income tax returns unless you have income subject to unrelated business income tax under Section 23731 of the Code. In this event, you are required to file Form 109 (Exempt Organization Business Income Tax Return) by the 15th day of the 3rd month (2-1/2 months) after the close of your annual accounting period.

Contributions made to you are deductible by donors as provided by Sections 17214 through 17216.2 and 24357 through 24359 of the Code, unless your purpose is testing for Public Safety.

If the organization is incorporating, this approval will expire unless incorporation is completed with the Secretary of State within 30 days.

Exemption from federal income or other taxes and other state taxes requires separate applications.

This exemption is issued on the condition that a federal exemption will be applied for and a copy of the final determination letter is furnished to this office.

/s/ Albert D. LeBel
Albert D. LeBel
Supervisor
Exempt Organizations

cc: Secretary of State (Corp.)

FTB 4206 (4-74)

HIGH PRIEST OF SET: POLICY STATEMENTS

Onyx Tablet:

OT.O.HPol

© Temple of Set

Author:

[per By-Laws, Section #5.01]

Date:

December 1, 1988 CE

Revision:

HTML Revision:

August 8, 1999 CE

SECTION 1. TEMPLE

SECTION 2. ORDERS

HP 2.1. The term "Order" designates an organizational element of the Temple of Set supervised by a Master of the Temple IV°. An Order is not normally geographically concentrated.

HP 2.2. Any Master of the Temple may create an Order as an official element of the Temple of Set. An Order may be dissolved by decision of its supervisory Master, or by decision of the High Priest. If the High Priest is considering dissolving an Order, he will normally seek the approval of the Council of Nine before doing so.

SECTION 3. PYLONS

HP 3.1. The term "Pylon" designates an organizational element of the Temple of Set supervised by an Initiate of the Priesthood of Set III°. A Pylon may be geographically concentrated but need not be.

HP 3.2. Any Initiate of the Priesthood may create a Pylon as an official element of the Temple of Set. The presiding Initiate of the Priesthood shall be known as the Pylon Sentinel. A Pylon may be dissolved by decision of its Sentinel, or by decision of any Master of the Temple. If a Master of the Temple determines to dissolve a Pylon, the Pylon will cease activities for a period of thirty days, during which the High Priest will either confirm or reverse the Master's decision.

HP 3.3. Decisions concerning admissions to or expulsions from a Pylon will be made by the Pylon Sentinel. Such Pylon admissions or expulsions will not, in themselves, affect the standing of the individual affected as an Initiate of the Temple of Set. All Pylon admissions and expulsions must be promptly reported to the High Priest and Executive Director by the Pylon Sentinel.

HP 3.4. An Initiate of the Temple of Set will normally affiliate with no more than one Pylon. Simultaneous membership in two Pylons must be with the formal concurrence of both Pylon Sentinels concerned. An Initiate may not simultaneously affiliate with more than two Pylons.

HP 3.5. Only current Initiates of the Temple of Set shall be admitted to activities of a Pylon, the only exception being that prospective members may be admitted to non-ceremonial-Working meetings by advance permission of the Pylon Sentinel.

HP 3.6. A Pylon may use the name of the Temple of Set as part of its name. It may determine the scope and frequency of its meetings, ask reasonable donations to defray the costs of its activities, and establish its internal form of organization. A current statement of each Pylon's financial/donations policies must be on file with the High Priest at all times, and such policies are subject to his approval.

HP 3.7. No Pylon may incur indebtedness in the name of the Temple of Set. Any property or ritual implement donated to a Pylon will not be recognized as Pylon property unless a written description of the item(s) in question is provided to the Executive Director bearing the signatures of the donor and the Pylon Sentinel.

SECTION 4. PRIESTHOOD OF SET

SECTION 5. NEWSLETTERS

HP 5.1. The newsletter of the Temple of Set shall be called *The Scroll of Set*. The *Scroll* will normally be published bi-monthly, at the beginning of February, April, June, August, October, and December. The Editor of the *Scroll* is appointed by the High Priest and serves until resignation or removal. Should the High Priest consider removal of the Editor, he will normally seek the advice of the Council of Nine before doing so.

HP 5.2. Newsletters published by Orders, Pylons, or individual Priests or Priestesses may, but are not required to be available to all Initiates of the Temple of Set on a subscription basis.

HP 5.3. All Temple, Order, and Pylon newsletters must include in each issue the following disclaimer: "The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors alone and do not necessarily represent the official doctrines or policies of the Temple of Set."

SECTION 6. *JEWELLED TABLETS OF SET*

HP 6.1. Standing reference papers of the Temple of Set will normally be included in *The Jeweled Tablets of Set*, a loose-leaf publication divided into six volumes:

HP 6.1.1. *The Crystal Tablet of Set* includes papers generally relevant to all Initiates of the Temple of Set and particularly relevant to Setians I°. It will normally be edited by the Executive Director of the Temple of Set, or by such other Initiate of the Priesthood as the High Priest may appoint. The *Crystal Tablet* may be shown to and discussed with non-Initiates of the Temple, and Setians have the prerogative to make limited, selected copies or extracts of its contents for reasonable purposes.

HP 6.1.2. *The Ruby Tablet of Set* includes papers generally relevant to all Initiates of the Temple of Set who have attained at least the II°. It will normally be edited by an Initiate of the Priesthood appointed by the High Priest. Access to the *Ruby Tablet* is restricted to II° and higher Initiates of the Temple, and copies of the *Ruby Tablet* should be safeguarded accordingly.

HP 6.1.3. *The Onyx Tablet of Set* includes papers generally relevant to all Initiates of the Priesthood of Set and particularly relevant to the Priesthood of Set III°. It will normally be edited by the High Priest. Access to the *Onyx Tablet* is restricted to III° and higher Initiates of the Temple. The *Onyx Tablet* will be kept under lock and key security at all times.

HP 6.1.4. *The Sapphire Tablet of Set* includes papers generally relevant to all Masters of the Temple of Set IV°. It will normally be edited by a Master of the Temple of Set appointed by the High Priest. Access to the *Sapphire Tablet* is restricted to IV° and higher Initiates of the Temple, and copies of the *Sapphire Tablet* should be safeguarded accordingly.

HP 6.1.5. *The Amethyst Tablet of Set* includes papers generally relevant to the Work of the V°. It will normally be edited by a V° Initiate appointed by the High Priest. Access to the *Amethyst Tablet* is restricted to IV° and higher Initiates of the Temple, and copies of the *Amethyst Tablet* should be safeguarded accordingly.

HP 6.1.6. *The Topaz Tablet of Set* includes papers generally relevant to the Work of the VI°. It will normally be edited by a VI° Initiate appointed by the High Priest. Access to the *Topaz Tablet* is restricted to IV° and higher Initiates of the Temple, and copies of the *Topaz Tablet* should be safeguarded accordingly.

SECTION 7. FINANCE

HP 7.1. The Temple of Set shall operate with a balanced budget. Only the High Priest may authorize the incurring of indebtedness [such as charge accounts] in the name of the Temple of Set.

HP 7.2. Cash donations made to an Order or Pylon will not be recognized by the Temple of Set, nor acknowledged by it for tax-deduction purposes, unless made through the

Temple office. Cash donations may be made to the Temple of Set and designated for a specific Order or Pylon by an accompanying memo. Any such donation will be recorded by the Temple of Set as a legitimate donation. A Temple check equal to the amount in question will then be issued to the Order or Pylon [if it has a bank account] or to the Order Grand Master or Pylon Sentinel [if not]. It is understood that such funds are to be used only for the legitimate benefit of the Order or Pylon as a whole.

PRIESTHOOD PROTOCOL AND GRIEVANCE RESOLUTION

Onyx Tablet:

OT.O.Prot

© Temple of Set

Author:

Robert Menschel IV°

Date:

May 1, 1995 CE

Revision:

HTML Revision:

August 8, 1999 CE

[This article is being distributed through the *Onyx Tablet* since it is aimed primarily at the Priesthood. It may be shared with any I° or II° as appropriate.]

Based on recent experience, the *Crystal Tablet* article on protocol does not provide enough guidance for our membership. Not only have I° and II° Setians failed to follow protocol, but some III°+ Priests have failed to follow what seems to me to be reasonable and obvious guidelines stated or implied by the *Crystal Tablet* article.

Because of this, several ordinary and healthy differences of opinion and perspective have gone unnecessarily sour; grievances have gone to the High Priest and Council of Nine either unnecessarily, or at least without an adequate effort to resolve these differences and grievances before taking that final step.

As another Master of the Temple expressed to me: If this continues, we could see the Council sidetracked time and again into arbitrating disputes that should never be brought to the Council. As the Temple's membership continues to swell, so will this danger.

Therefore I have expanded my analysis of Setian protocol, and have added more detail to these guidelines. Doing so, I've identified two classes of behavior guidelines, the first covering normal situations, and the second covering grievances.

Priest Severson nicely summarized these guidelines, saying: "The senior officials of the Temple of Set should be able to rely on the III° to resolve the bulk of any dispute(s)/potential problems. This not only saves time, but also keeps privacy as the top priority." Magister Moffatt's summary was more concise: "The spirit of protocol is the spirit of respect for fellow Initiates."

The primary goal of the first set of guidelines is to enhance communication, *Xeper*, and the quality of our Setian society. A second goal is to reduce the need for the second set (to prevent serious grievances from arising between Setians). The primary goal of the second set of guidelines is to help the principles involved resolve their grievances *without* needing the High Priest's or Council of Nine's assistance. That second set also clarifies some criteria that the High Priest or Council of Nine might use if they summarily dismiss a Setian's grievance.

According to our By-Laws, the Chairman of the Council of Nine may not establish official Temple policy; I'm not attempting to do so, nor to lay down absolute rules of behavior to cover all circumstances. I feel I've identified such useful and important guidelines that they should be followed in all Setian relationships, and especially before bringing any grievance to the High Priest or the Council of Nine.

I will not attempt to influence other Councillors nor the High Priest. Personally, no longer will *I* entertain any grievance unless these behavioral guidelines are followed by the Setian bringing the grievance, unless there are some very strong reasons why those guidelines did not or could not apply. Those reasons will need to be stronger than any I have encountered so far.

I. NORMAL BEHAVIOR

A. Pylons

[Just about all of these statements concerning Pylons apply equally to Orders, Elements, Projects, and other formal and informal groups of Setians.]

Summary: Recognizing that Sentinels invest significant amounts of time, energy, and money in their Pylons, no Setian should intentionally interfere with any Pylon.

-- 1. If any Pylon member chooses to work intently or regularly with a Priest not associated with that Setian's Pylon, the Priest should make sure that the Sentinel knows of this. They should work together to avoid conflicts of interest, excessive demands on the Setian, etc.

-- 2. If a Pylon member who works closely with a Priest outside a Pylon chooses to leave that Pylon, then these two should discuss their situation openly and completely with the Pylon's Sentinel, even if the departure is for perfectly ordinary reasons.

-- 3. If Setians begin to "desert" a Pylon (leave en masse or in a steady trickle), and if another Priest or Sentinel is even peripherally involved (if only by knowing many of those leaving), then all involved Priests and Sentinels should discuss the situation with each other fully. This applies to Pylons that may be dissolving, splitting, or just suffering major shrinkage.

- 4. No Sentinel should ever list others as members or even honorary members of any Pylon without first getting those Setians' explicit application or agreement.
- 5. Pylon Sentinels have the authority to schedule meetings as they feel is best for the Pylon. Sentinels do not have the authority to impose on the hospitality of members (any Setian must be free to offer their home for a meeting or to not offer their home for a meeting). If a regular host says that he wishes to not host a meeting, it's better to cancel a meeting if no alternate site is available rather than impose upon a Setian.
- 6. Because of the 1980/90s Satanic Hysteria and Child Abuse Hysteria problems, it's best if Pylon meetings and other Setian activities are not held at homes with minor children. Even if the children are totally isolated from the activities, it places the children at risk from so-called Child Protection Agencies.
- 7. NonSetians are never to participate in Pylon rituals. NonSetians (including serious candidates) are generally not invited to pylon meetings either. If it seems appropriate to invite a candidate to a pylon meeting, do so only after all pylon members have agreed to the nonmember's attendance. It's best that this be at a gathering away from any member's home. If there is any ritual activity associated with that meeting, then the ritual preparations and discussion should begin only after that non-member has left.

B. Recognitions

Summary: Any Priest can Recognize any I° Initiate to the II° any time, and any Priest (the same one or another) can reRecognize any II° to the I° any time. However, Priests need to use responsible care in exercising this authority.

- 1. We must always remember that different Initiates wear different faces for different Priests. This is natural and inescapable (only the most senior Adepts and Priests can be openly honest with all their Setian seniors). Therefore, before taking either of these two steps, the Priest should always find out which other Priests are (or have recently) worked with the Initiate in question, and consult/discuss the situation with those Priests.
- 2. Under no conditions should any Priest Recognize any Pylon member to the II° or I° without first discussing this with the III°+ Pylon Sentinel and/or Sponsor.
- 3. Never use anyone's possible expulsion or downgrade as a threat. It can be mentioned once as a warning in private.
 - a. Under no circumstance should the possibility of any expulsion be mentioned to any I° or II° Setian other than the Setian in question.
 - b. If expulsion is mentioned a second time to a Setian, then either formal expulsion procedures should be followed, or the High Priest should be involved in whatever problem warrants expulsion consideration.

---- c. Downgrades from II° to I° should be handled similarly.

---- d. Once a Setian has been downgraded to the I°, any Priest may reRecognize him to the II° any time. Before doing so, beyond all other considerations, this Priest should consult with the Priest who downgraded that Setian, to properly evaluate whether that initiatory problem has been resolved by the Setian in question.

-- 4. We should never get into a petty Recognition reversal struggle. If another Priest reverses your Recognition (in either direction), or just strongly disagrees with a (pending) Recognition, then resolve the differences of opinion and reach agreement on the Setian's actual achieved Grade (through another Priest's mediation if necessary) before reversing any reversal.

C. Contact and Correspondence

Summary: Setians and Adepts may work with each other and with any Priest any time. No I° or II° Initiate is "owned" by any Priest or Pylon, just as any III° may work with any IV°+ any time. All Setians and Adepts should always be encouraged to work with as many other Setians, Adepts, and Priests as possible.

-- 1. If a conflict between two Setians (whether one, both, or neither are Priest) is simply a personality conflict, then a peaceful separation is often advisable. We're not required to like all Setians, and normally Setians should not be required to work with or communicate with others they simply do not like.

-- 2. If a conflict is due to an initiatory problem, then the Priest who identifies the initiatory problem is authorized and should work with the initiate having these problems, despite personal conflicts. If another Priest is willing and able to handle the initiatory problem, he should do so only after the first Priest agrees to hand off the problem to the second Priest, or agrees that the two Priests can work together on the problem.

-- 3. Honest dealings between Setians require 2-way communications. Do not assume things based on another Setians' apparent behavior. If you do not understand why a Setian does something, ask about it. If you think a Setian's motivations for doing something may not be appropriate, ask about it. If you do not understand something and do not ask about it, do not complain about it.

-- 4. If information received concerning a Setian suggests formal resolution per these guidelines, then that formal resolution through formal methods must be followed. If you have questions concerning a Setian's actions or motivations, ask that Setian those questions. "Games" used to validate, invalidate, or gain additional information concerning situations and Setians are not appropriate.

-- 5. No Setian is ever limited in contacts. All Setians should be free to contact any other Setian any time for any reason. Similarly, Setians should not be forced to work with any

specific Priest. Each Setian can start and end communications and relationships at will. There can be exceptions to this rule.

---- a. When a Priest has identified a problem in one Setian's behavior or Initiation, and thinks that other Priests have not yet identified that problem, then the Priest involved has the responsibility to make sure that this problem is addressed. The Priest may insist that the Setian involved work with this Priest in resolving the problem.

---- b. Except as mentioned below, either party may invite other Priests into the project. Multiple viewpoints can help resolve these problems. All invited Priests will communicate openly, fully, and honorably with all principals.

---- c. There are times early in tackling an initiatory or behavioral problem when the chance for misunderstanding and miscommunication is at its highest. It's therefore often a good idea to limit the number of people involved in a misunderstanding in its early stages.

----- (1) It's reasonable for any involved party to request that the matter be kept private for a while, since it is often easier to resolve problems while they're still private.

----- (2) In such cases, the "for a while" should be clearly stated, specific, and limited, such as "until the end of the month" or "until we can meet together next week."

----- (3) The "for a while" should almost never extend longer than one month's span.

D. Privacy and Confidentiality

Summary: No Priest should ever discuss personal information concerning another Setian outside the Priesthood.

-- 1. Personal problems are personal.

---- a. Any Setian may tell a friend that they do not like another Setian because of differences of opinion, approach, philosophy, or other generic reason. Details of all disagreements that imply dishonesty or ignobility should be kept confidential.

---- b. Alternately, if there is a problem serious enough to warrant "warning" a fellow Setian about, then "grievance" procedures should be followed to resolve that problem.

-- 2. These rules even apply to those of us involved in intimate relationships with other Setians.

---- a. Do not share private and confidential information concerning any other Setian with a non-III° partner.

---- b. Do not share your thoughts, plans, or ideas concerning Recognitions or deRecognitions with a non-III° partner.

E. Intimate Relationships

Summary: Setians' intimate relationships should never be allowed to interfere with the Temple of Set, nor lead to any Setian's injury or insult.

-- 1. Setians sometimes find themselves attracted to each other, forming more or less intimate relationships. These sometimes lead to marriage (or an equivalent), and sometimes to divorce (or an equivalent). Others enter the Temple of Set married, and their partner may or may not be (or later become) Setian. Some relationships are long-term healthy and happy ones, while others fail, sometimes acrimoniously.

-- 2. Whatever the relationship, the following rules should be strictly followed: [These rules have been broken in the past, much too often, and most Priests breaking these rules have "gotten away with it." But over the years much too much damage has been done to Initiates and the Temple's society because of intentional or accidental violations of this trust. These three rules say "Never ...," and I suggest all Priests follow these rules strictly and absolutely.]

---- a. Never question any Setian's Recognition outside the Priesthood, not even to your partner.

---- b. Never spread rumor, gossip, or stories about another Setian, not even to your partner.

---- c. Never discuss with or give to a non-III° partner any confidential material concerning another Setian.

-- 3. Never impose yourself on another Setian.

---- a. While there is nothing wrong with intimate relations between Setians, including between Priests and I° or II° Setians, because of their increased authority and "power" within the Temple, Priests need to be very careful not to force their attentions on anyone of lower Degree.

---- b. Relationships between Setians do often come to an end, and when it's over, it's over. Do not attempt to continue a relationship that has ended, and especially do not berate or take your anger or frustration out on your ex-partner.

F. Gripes, Gossip, History, Humor, Information, and Irritation - Garbage, Harm, and Injury

Summary: Gossip and ill-considered humor often do harm our fellow Setians.

-- 1. No Setian should ever lie to or about any other Setian, no matter what the provocation, no matter what the motivation, not to save someone's feelings, not to make a joke, never.

---- a. Any Setian who lies to or about another should be strongly counseled if not expelled.

---- b. The lie must always be exposed to the Setian to whom the lie was told, and to everyone else who heard the lie or found out about any version or derivative of the lie.

-- 2. Do not passively accept or ignore complaints about other Setians, or stories of abuse or harassment. All such stories need to be tackled immediately with open discussion between the principals involved.

---- a. Ignoring stories of problems between Setians because they may be personal and minor can lead to an expectation that Setians can say what they want about anyone else without responsibility.

---- b. This can lead to hostile environments, story telling, gossip, bad feelings, and sometimes to very serious initiatory or organizational problems.

-- 3. Humor and laughter are integral parts of the Setian culture, but no Setian should ever tell a *degrading* joke about another, a joke that can be interpreted in a way to humiliate that other Setian, or to cast doubt about that other Setian's integrity or nobility.

---- a. Even when you hear a Setian tell a joke with himself as the punch line, do not repeat that joke if someone else can interpret it in a way that degrades that Setian.

---- b. Experience tells us that if you do repeat that joke, eventually someone will interpret it that way. So do not do it.

-- 4. These stories, tales, and jokes can harm our fellow Setians, and we should not tolerate them. However, remember that Setian feelings and thoughts are private and personal. We are not and must not be "thought police". Setians can think whatever they want about each other, as long as they do not allow their actions or statements to poison our initiatory environment.

G. Priest to Priest

Summary: Problems within the Priesthood need to be resolved in the Priesthood.

-- 1. If they are not resolved fully, if they result in an "agree to disagree" state, a "cooling down period," or a "don't bother me and I won't bother you" state, then that is the extent

of the problem, and it should not be allowed to color other Setians' relations with the Priests involved.

-- 2. Personal problems within the Priesthood are not only personal, but when allowed to spread within or outside the Priesthood they can and do weaken the Temple as a whole.

-- 3. If a Priest chooses to act on private and confidential or personal information concerning another Setian, and if that Priest wants the cooperation of other Priests, that information should be openly and completely shared with the fellow Priests. Trust within the Priesthood is based on open honesty, not on blind faith in each other. [Of course, as mentioned repeatedly in this paper, all such confidential and personal information must be kept strictly confidential, within the Priesthood, and shared only with those Priests who have a need to know.]

H. Image

Summary: Image should never be your motivation, but neither should it be ignored.

-- 1. Basing your behavior primarily on image is generally not appropriate. The Priesthood deals with truths, initiation, and other ideals which are much more important than image. However, ignoring image also is generally not advisable.

---- a. Ignoring image and the impact your actions have on others will sometimes result in those others doubting the wisdom of your actions because they look questionable.

---- b. Do what you need to do, and then do it in a way that increases the respect you earn, rather than decreases it.

-- 2. We sometimes make decisions that "I think we may need to _____. I'll give it some thought (or get more information, or meet with someone), and make a final decision on _____." This is good.

---- a. Then sometimes information unexpectedly appears which provides all the needed information, and we make a final decision (the first _____ mentioned above or otherwise) ahead of schedule. This is normal.

---- b. However, if the schedule (I'll make a final decision on _____, after _____) is expressed to other(s), then changing your mind and making the final decision earlier can seem capricious, arbitrary, and unstable. If you find yourself in such a situation, with an announced schedule and recent incentive to act immediately, I see two advisable courses:

----- (1) If reasonable, follow the planned schedule. Even if the additional information will not or cannot change your mind, if there is no serious need to change the schedule, don't. Your decisions will then appear more considered and careful rather than rushed and capricious.

----- (2) If you must change the schedule, let everyone know why. Explain that you have the new information, and if possible and appropriate tell them what that information is and why it demands immediate action. Full discussion will show that you're not acting arbitrarily, nor changing your mind capriciously.

I. Courtesy and Respect

Summary: Always be courteous and respectful to all Setians.

-- 1. I've been asked, "Does protocol mean that [regardless of their feelings, and despite our feelings about their behaviors] we are expected to treat our fellow initiates of whatever grade civilly and with respect as fellow aspirants on the Left Hand Path?"

---- a. *YES*! Positively yes. Absolutely yes. Without exception yes. Even if you have unquestionable evidence that this other Setian has been taking lessons from the lowest scum on Earth, and not only getting 'A's but doing extra credit scum-work, yes.

---- b. The reasons for being polite and showing respect whatever the situation are so strong that I'm repeatedly surprised when Priests of Set insist on dragging themselves down into the smelliest slimy behavior through various acts of disrespect, inconsiderateness, and rudeness.

----- (1) Being polite and respectful does not hurt. It cannot hurt. It sometimes seems to me that some people feel that giving verbal and written respect to someone else in these situations is as painful as branding crosses on your arms, chest, back, and legs with a red-hot iron, and then using strong acid to bring out the highlights of this artistic effort. Hogwash. There is no damage or pain to *anyone* when respect is offered, and when communications are polite.

----- (2) Being polite and respectful usually helps. The surest way to stop communication, knowledge, and understanding is to slap someone in the face with a wet and smelly rag. The surest way to open communications and to foster information flow and understanding is to offer respect to all people involved.

----- (3) There is no excuse for disrespect. Every Setian is responsible for his/her own actions. Another's actions are never an excuse for turning your back on your *Xeper* and devolving to lower states of being and behavior.

----- (4) Only those who give respect are worthy of respect. If you yourself want to earn and keep respect, you need to be able to show that you can equally give respect. If you are limited in whom you can give respect to, you are similarly limited in the respect you have earned.

----- (5) Giving respect is a trait of an advanced being. As strong as the hatred might be between Obi-wan Kenobi and Darth Vader, they respect each other. As much as Gandalf

and Saruman despise each other, they respect each other. As powerful as *Star Trek's* Q is, he isn't respected, because he doesn't respect anyone else.

II. GRIEVANCE RESOLUTION

A. Time Outs

Summary: When problems arise between Setians, they are often transitory and temporary.

-- 1. A "cooling off period" will often let time resolve the problem. This can take many forms, like "do not talk to each other for a while," or "avoid each other."

-- 2. But if instead of quieting down or resolving, a problem keeps repeating itself or gets worse, it must be dealt with. Be optimistic about problem resolution, but not blindly optimistic.

-- 3. Sometimes the best resolution to personal problems, caused by differences between individuals (personality differences and the like) is simply to break off communications.

---- a. That is OK, but when this is done, someone needs to make sure that *everyone* involved knows this is being done.

---- b. All sorts of additional problems can arise when Priest "A" counsels Adept "B" to not write or phone Priest "C," and Adept "B" follows these instructions, but Priest "C" knows nothing about it. Avoid these problems by letting everyone involved know about the recommendation.

B. Clarity and Communication

Summary: Anytime anyone has any problems with anyone else, and resolution is not immediate, the problems should be written down as politely, objectively, calmly, and completely as possible, and mailed to that Setian.

-- 1. Problems, their history, and their resolution attempts must be documented in writing, or there is no serious attempt at resolution.

---- a. I cannot stress this step enough. I've seen and heard of problems discussed verbally time and again, by phone, in person, individually and in groups, and while sometimes that is all we need, very often those verbal meetings just do not cover all concerns, or do not answer all questions. All too often specific problems people do not like (those that people are uncomfortable about) just don't get talked about, and they fester until they erupt in a volcano of hatred.

---- b. Even those things discussed are subject to misinterpretation. Because of the instantaneousness of verbal discussion, and interference with distractions, emotions, etc., it's very easy to miss someone's very important statement, to dismiss as minor what someone else feels is very important, to exaggerate as critical something that someone else feels is minor, etc. It's also easy to misunderstand positively intended statements in a negative way, especially when we already doubt others' motivations.

---- c. Typically, friends then get involved to try to help solve the problem, and the complaints spread as more people talk about and hear only parts of the story, generally different parts of the story, stress different parts of the story, get the sequence of events out of sequence, etc., until no one can figure out what did or didn't happen, and what was said or not said by whom or whom else. It's almost impossible to resolve a mass of confusion like that.

---- d. If early attempts at personal and verbal resolution do not work, then the principals should write down anything and everything that concern them.

----- (1) Discuss everything that is important, in writing. If for whatever reason you do not voice (in writing) a complaint that bothers you, then don't complain about it later.

----- (2) New complaints or questions, discovered later during this problem resolution process, should be discussed when discovered; these discussions also should not be delayed.

---- e. Each principal may invite a friend or mentor (one only, to keep the dispute small) to review the writing or to help refine the writing to avoid generating additional problems.

C. Courtesy and Respect

Summary: Courtesy and respect to each other regardless of degree are always imperative.

-- 1. If you think you have discovered an exception to that rule, please reread my exhortation above. If you still think you have an exception, think some more. If after all that you still think you have an exception, please discuss it with the High Priest or Chairman of the Council before taking action on that exception. If they cannot convince you that yours is not a valid exception, then maybe you should consider the possibility that you are blinded by emotion and cannot see past your anger. Finally, even if you *do* have an exception, show courtesy and respect anyway.

-- 2. When relationships become stressful or questionable, when we feel that Setians are not acting properly, we often interpret their letters and statements based on our perceptions; we attribute motives to them based on our perceptions; and we act on our perceptions and expectations.

---- a. This is often advantageous, because our perceptions are often right. We're able to take actions based on these perceptions and expectations, solving problems that arise within the Temple of Set.

---- b. However, one instance where we cannot afford to let our expectations and motivations color our views is when we look at a Setian's letter to see whether it's written politely or rudely, in view of its adherence to our guidelines of protocol.

----- (1) If we allow our perceptions and expectations to rule here, then any letter can be interpreted as rude and obnoxious. It's always easy to see "rude" when we *expect* to see "rude."

----- (2) It's sometimes difficult to do so, but we must be totally objective about the letter, as it is, what was said and how it was said, to be able to accurately measure a letter's politeness or rudeness.

D. Mediation

Summary: When possible, grievances should be resolved by Priests without needing others' help. If you must get help, do so in a way that helps resolve the grievance.

-- 1. There is never any reason for Priests to discuss grievances with third parties until you have discussed the grievances with all principals. This applies whether you have become involved in someone else's grievance, or whether you are one of the principals involved.

---- a. If you are a principal, whether aggrieved or the one against which the grievance is held, you should follow these guidelines (this entire section on grievances) to fully understand what the grievance is before involving any third party.

---- b. If you are the third party to other Setians' grievance, you should ensure that the principals involved follow these guidelines and fully understand the grievance themselves before any other third party is involved.

---- c. If you are a principal, and you feel that you need a "witness" to your attempts to straighten out a misunderstanding, then you may send a copy of your letters to one (and only one) senior Initiate.

----- (1) This is a tool which can enable someone you work well with to help you work through this process. You can discuss your letters, your attempts at resolution, etc., with this friendly senior Initiate.

----- (2) However, both of you need to remember who is the principal involved; the "witness" should not get directly involved with the problem resolution itself unless so requested by all principals.

----- (3) Likewise, if you are someone else's "witness," you may feel free to offer your advice to your fellow Initiate, but you should remain out of the direct process unless so requested by all principals. Exception: A III^o+ may stand up for a I^o or II^o who appears to be improperly treated by another Priest. Be sure you have the facts straight before you do, and always follow these guidelines concerning open, clear, courteous, and direct communication with that other Priest when you do.

-- 2. If verbal communication does not resolve the problem, *always* use written letters to attempt resolution between the principals. Discuss the problem, the behaviors seen as a problem with the person involved in the problem.

---- a. Any time any letter is sent to a third person (a senior initiate, the High Priest, or a Councillor) complaining about a Setian's behavior, *always* send a copy to that Setian. Always keep a copy also, since later others may have questions about that letter.

---- b. There is an exception: If a principal to the problem asks a mentor for help in drafting the written communication, these correspondences between the principal and the mentor do not need to be shared with others. However, the mentor should see that all issues are aired in the written correspondence between the principals.

---- c. Do not move onto the next step of grievance resolution until all behaviors in the problem have been discussed, or at least fully described, in written correspondence.

-- 3. If the above does not resolve the problem, Setians can seek mediation.

---- a. If personal correspondence is honestly pursued and does not resolve the grievance, then and only then should official mediation be sought. [Unofficial mediation, in which any neutral Priest's aid is requested by *both* parties, may be attempted at any time. Both Setians should agree to seek this aid, and should agree whom to ask for help, before contacting that Priest.]

---- b. Before seeking formal mediation, the Setian(s) taking that step should write to the other(s), describing again all outstanding issues and suggesting the formal mediation.

----- (1) Only when sufficient time for a response has passed, with no positive response or a hopelessly inadequate response (one that makes inadequate progress toward resolution), should you submit the formal request for mediation (again, with a copy to all involved principals).

----- (2) No formal mediation should be sought without adequate prior notice to all participants. "Adequate prior notice" is that which notifies them of your intent to request mediation, explains why, discusses from whom you will request mediation, and gives the other(s) time to respond with their comments and/or alternatives.

---- c. Such mediation requires that everyone get copies of everything - secrets kept from a principal always hinder problem resolution. Complaints not voiced to the principal can't

get resolved. Everything needs to be expressed. Every letter sent from anyone to anyone concerning the grievance should go to all principal parties involved.

---- d. Problems between I° and II° Setians can be mediated by any Priest, provided all principals agree on the chosen mediator. If the principals cannot agree on a mediator, then the High Priest can be asked to assign one.

---- e. If all principals are within a Pylon or Order, and the Sentinel or G.M. is not involved, then that Sentinel or G.M. may be asked to mediate the problem.

---- f. If any principal in the problem is a Priest, then any request for mediation should go to the High Priest unless all principals agree in advance on a willing alternate IV°+ mediator.

-- 4. Any such request for formal mediation should include a cover letter describing the problem, its history and status.

---- a. It should also include photocopies of all correspondence between the principals, showing that all reasonable efforts to resolve the problem have been attempted.

---- b. Copies of this request should go to all principals and to any informal mediator.

-- 5. The High Priest may choose to mediate the problem himself, or he may choose someone else to act as mediator if he wishes - that is the High Priest's decision alone.

-- 6. While any Priest may serve as an unofficial mediator when requested by all principals, once a principal gives up on informal resolution and seeks formal mediation, that request must go to the appropriate formal mediator (such as the High Priest), sent by that principal. All other Priests should become and stay uninvolved at that point, unless the High Priest requests otherwise.

-- 7. If the High Priest (or Grand Master) refuses to get involved, this is a strong indication that the problem may be insignificant, or its resolution readily handled by the principals without his assistance if they are serious about its resolution.

---- a. Any Setian whose request is turned down by the High Priest should most likely consider this as a vote of confidence in all parties involved.

---- b. If the conflict is between I° or II° Initiate(s) and a member of the Priesthood, the High Priest is also signaling his satisfaction that the Priest is acting properly and is authorized to determine all actions that need to be taken to resolve the problem.

---- c. If the conflict is between Priests, the High Priest is signaling his confidence that the Priests can resolve their problems through their own efforts. Doing so might be considered a test of the depth of their Priesthood.

---- d. If the conflict is between III^o+ Priest(s) and a more senior III^o+ Initiate, the High Priest is signaling his satisfaction that the senior Initiate is acting properly and is authorized to determine all actions that need to be taken to resolve the problem.

---- e. However, if after serious consideration of the above, or when the High Priest (or other mediator) has taken action in mediation and a Setian feels the mediation and resolution is wrong, the mediator's actions (or inaction) may be appealed to the Council of Nine, through any Councillor (with copies to the mediator, High Priest, the Chairman, and all principals).

----- (1) Any such appeal should include a cover letter describing the problem, its history and status, and a discussion why the mediator's (in)actions are being appealed. The justification will need to be a strong one.

----- (2) The appeal should also include photocopies of all correspondence between the principals and all correspondence during the High Priest's involvement, showing that all reasonable efforts to resolve the problem have been pursued.

----- (3) The Councillor may accept the appeal for investigation by the Council of Nine, or he may choose to deny the appeal. Denying an appeal shows support for the previous action or inaction as reported.

----- (4) If your appeal is denied, you may appeal that to the Chairman of the Council of Nine. You should not go from Councillor to Councillor hoping that one of the Nine will disagree with the others.

---- f. Again, since I cannot stress this critically important point enough, if you send a letter to a potential mediator asking for assistance, or a letter of appeal, always send a copy of the letter to all principals.

E. Consequences and Liability

Summary: Inappropriate complaints against Priests are serious actions threatening to the Temple of Set.

-- 1. Any time a Priest of Set is formally challenged by another Setian to the High Priest (or on appeal to the Council), the plaintiff is imposing significantly and stressfully upon the *Xeper* of the defendant. This in itself is a very serious action.

---- a. Any Priest (or other Initiate) who is unable to reach personal resolution and therefore brings formal complaint about another Setian's behaviors to the High Priest, by that action is equally liable for review.

---- b. That review will look at the behaviors of both defendant(s) and plaintiff(s) (and anyone else involved), and the High Priest or Council may choose to impose sanctions on

the plaintiff(s) for breaches of protocol or for excessive actions against fellow Setian(s) regardless of any sanction they may or may not impose upon the defendant(s).

---- c. If besides complaints of misbehavior or malfeasance, any plaintiff offers or recommends specific actions to be taken upon the defendant(s) (such as expulsion or enforced resignation), then this places additional stress upon the defendant Setian(s).

---- d. Should the High Priest or Council find the defendant(s) innocent of the charges, not subject to the suggested penalty, then the plaintiff(s) should be ready to accept that penalty for imposing such excessive and unnecessary demands upon fellow Setian(s). [Therefore, I strongly suggest that anyone seeking mediation or reparation bring the facts of *behaviors* made and documented to mediation, and allow the *mediator* to determine what remedies apply.]

THE PRIESTHOOD ADMINISTRATIVE MAILING LIST

Onyx Tablet: 3admin-l-info © Temple of Set

Author: Robert Menschel IV°

Date: Jan 24, 1999 CE

Revision:

HTML Revision: September 28, 1999 CE

PURPOSE

3admin-l is for administrative notices or discussions within the Priesthood of the Temple of Set. Anything and everything that applies to Temple administration is appropriate for the 3admin-l list. Priesthood discussions that are not administrative in nature, such as those dealing with philosophy, religion, or initiation, are more appropriate on the 3forum-l list.

Please remember that subscriptions to this mailing list are restricted to Priests of the Temple of Set, and that the messages on the list are intended **only** for the Priesthood. If you wish to share a message posted to 3admin-l with anyone else, please obtain the permission of the author of the post before doing so.

POSTING

Conceptually the mechanics of a mailing list are very simple. Each list has a unique email address to which messages are submitted, and the messages received at that address are copied as email to each of the individual members (subscribers) of the list.

To post a message to the list, simply address it to:
3admin-l@onelist.com

[Note that the "-l" is a small letter "L", not the numeral "1" or capital letter "I".]

LIST PROTOCOL

By custom, communication in the mailings lists is less formal than private correspondence. While most of us dispense with the formalities of the protocol when posting to mailing lists, the spirit of the protocol always applies. Also be aware that, even when communicating with someone you have had "impersonal" contact with on a mailing list, the proper form of address should always be used in private contact or correspondence.

Important Note: Unless a subscriber's email address appears in the InterCommunication Roster (ICR), that address should be considered confidential. Addresses not listed in the ICR should not be given out to **anyone** without the permission of the address owner.

TECH TRIVIA

Different email-sending sites handle the "From:" line of mailing-list messages differently. Some insert the name of the original sender, while others insert the name of the mailing list. Accordingly you should always indicate who you are (name and EM address) in the body of your message, and to whom (if anyone in particular) you are responding. [You are not required to use your real name in any of the mailing lists, but it is best if you use one and only one name in your posts.]

If your post to the list is successful, the list will send a copy of your message back to you. If you do not receive a copy of your original post, assume that an error occurred and resubmit your post. [Mailing-list messages are typically distributed within minutes or hours, but the actual delivery time depends on the many factors, including the load on the host system at the time the message is received and the status of all the systems the message has to be relayed through in order to be delivered -- occasionally, delivery can take as long as a day.]

Subscription and other parameters can be viewed and modified through <http://onelist.com>, which is the current host for this list.

Posting
address: 3admin-l@onelist.com

Subscription
address: 3admin-l-subscribe@onelist.com

Subscription
url: <http://www.onelist.com/subscribe.cgi/3admin-l>

Unsubscribe
address: 3admin-l-unsubscribe@onelist.com

The 3admin-l mailing list is also available in digest form (all of the messages for each 24-hour period are emailed in a single text file instead of being sent individually). To receive 3admin-l in digest form, send an empty email to 3admin-l-digest@onelist.com (If you later want to disable digest mode, send an empty email to

normal@onelist.com). Members of the list can view the digest archives through <http://www.onelist.com/archives.cgi/3admin-l>.

For questions/problems/comments regarding the mailing list, contact 3admin-l-info@xeper.org

Comments about the usefulness and completeness of this file are also welcome.

HELP

Problems, questions, and suggestions regarding mailing list operations should be sent to the list administrators at 3admin-l-admin@xeper.org

The current version of this document is always available by sending email to 3admin-l-info@xeper.org

Be Proudful of Being!

THE PRIESTHOOD FORUM MAILING LIST

Onyx Tablet: 3forum-l-info © Temple of Set

Author: Robert Menschel IV°

Date: Jan 24, 1999 CE

Revision:

HTML Revision: September 28, 1999 CE

PURPOSE

3forum-l is for discussions within the Priesthood of the Temple of Set. Anything and everything that applies to Setian philosophy, religion, initiation, or similar topics is appropriate for the 3forum-l list. Topics which deal with administrative matters or notices would be more appropriate on the 3admin-l list.

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"The Initiatory Forum should be open to any topic. Anyone should feel that they have the right to call anyone else on the matter of Principle ("What is the Initiatory Principle you are arguing for?"), but not on topic (I think only the OSK would be interested in this). If people feel that the topic doesn't show the cutting edge of III° Initiation, they should suggest that it be taken to Setian list.

The Initiatory Forum should be a breeding ground for Teaching techniques, discussions about the unique state of the Priesthood, a source for *Scroll* articles and new projects. It should not be a "pat each other on the back" type of place. If you're not up to being challenged, don't drop in." -- Setnakt

Priesthood Discussion

"It is inherent in the structure of the Priesthood that certain aspects of our discourse have internally held discipline. To my mind these are:

"I. A dedication to Principle, which requires thought. Anything that has been posted should be considered in relationship to your current Understanding. Wait a day to post a reply, or a week. Do not wait too long so that you lose your insight. Posts should be made in the light of new thoughts not the flash of anger, or any other state that works against clear thought.

"II. A dedication to civility. This doesn't just mean labeling areas of disagreement frankly without name calling, -ad hominem- attacks and so forth. It means eloquent and measured posts. We are aiming for the Gettysburg Address here. And when it is form time to time achieved, lets us be sure to archive it in the proper venue.

"III. A dedication to the spirit of the Temple. We should have zero tolerance for those who wish to create rifts between Orders, Elements, Pylons and so forth.

"IV. A dedication for increasing Initiatory activities among all parts of the Temple.

"V. A dedication to expanding the Awakening of the Priesthood.

"This is Essential. As we know the Sovereignty of the Temple arises from its Priesthood. As the Temple grows and diversifies (even now we have the anthropologist living with the Inuit to the guy in Ecuador to the first Setian who'll be living under Communist rule in HK) --more and more power and responsibility will be devolved from the central office to the Priesthood. Learning four important rules now is essential. 1. Don't be afraid to speak up on a matter of Principle. 2. Don't hoard your initiatory wisdom. 3. Speak with the style and grace that we would like to be remembered for. 4. It's email for christsake deal with it." -- Setnakt

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Be Proudful of Being!

GETTING THE DUNG BALL ROLLING

a note to the Priesthood Forum

Onyx Tablet:

OT.O.DungB

© Temple of Set

Author:

Don Webb V°

Date:

June 9, 1997 CE

Revision:

HTML Revision:

August 8, 1999 CE

As usual we have a great deal to thank Priest John Youril for. I trust that of each of you sends at least one thank you note to Priest Youril a year.

Some of you will find this forum too heavy of traffic and will need to unsubscribe, this way you can keep the advantages of the Priesthood list without the heavier mail traffic here. I thought I would toss out a few questions of my own to seed the discussion:

1. We all know that being a Priest(ess) of Set is 7/24/52. What are the types of what you see as III° activity you pursue outside of the Temple? (For example how are you a Priest at a family reunion)?
2. The Priest hood is not a permanent state, it must be maintained. We have all seen good priests become non-Initiates, what are signs that your Priesthood is slipping and what have you done to stop it?
3. We all realize at the III° that a huge part of our Initiation comes from and should be directed towards outside of the Temple. What things have your III° experience allowed you to do in the world? How do Priests find Initiation in the whole wide world?
4. What Black Magical muscles can you flex now that you haven't been able to do so before?
5. What strategies do you use to interact as a representative of the Temple with the WOH?

6. The Temple belongs to its Priesthood. Some of the Priesthood is making great leaps in making it more so, such as the creation of such unofficial bodies as the Soa and Scribe Gilds. What are other ways to claim your power in the temple?

7. The Temple is getting very close to a critical mass for change into anew level of activity. What can/should/shouldn't we do now that we have never done before?

Xeper,

Don Webb
Priest to the Priests

CERBERUS AT THE GATE

Some Guidelines For Meeting New Candidates

Onyx Tablet: OT.O.3.1 © Temple of Set

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Date: March 8, 1998 CE

Revision:

HTML Revision: June 6, 1998 CE

As the Temple strives to raise the standards of human material the Prince of Darkness is provided with, an uneasy but potentially Initiatory period of experiment begins for his Priesthood. Since the founding of the Temple, membership was granted to almost all comers so long as they sent the Executive Director a cashable check, proof of legal age and had not, to our knowledge, fucked up so badly in life as to end up behind bars.

In the early days of the Æon, the Temple was still a rather small, cozy environment. Almost all Setians had met each other and it was relatively easy to keep one's eyes open for any psychic disorders or Initiatory quandaries. Even in that more easily monitored Temple of the past, certain Initiates exploded, slowing down the rate of the Setian mission to export Xeper to human minds. Now that the Temple is in a cycle of growing exponentially on every continent, the need for a tougher review of those perfect strangers who come to our doors seeking Initiation becomes a necessity.

The Priesthood takes on a new responsibility. We must actively become guardians of the precious Black Flame that Set has mandated us to preserve. We do so by taking a few hours of our time in meeting with new applicants before their applications are approved and they are officially welcomed into the Temple. This action can not only improve the quality of those who we do decide to bring into the Temple, but heighten our own Initiation as Priests and Priestesses of Set. Sounds simple, right? Like most things that seem easy it is actually an art to be mastered. The advantages are manifold. This practice can push forth the boundaries of Set's terrestrial territory. I would not have recommended this practice if I hadn't given it a whirl myself. These are some useful techniques I've noticed, which I'm sure each Priest worth his or her salt will add to through each separate and unique unfolding of Becoming.

Before I get to the meat of the matter, it's important to be cognizant of the fact that this business of guarding the gate is actually pretty complicated. I've identified several discrete elements to the magical and mundane features of these meetings that might help you prepare on a sound basis.

When you as a Priest of Set meet with new applicant X, remember that you are representing the entire Temple to this individual. A curious new applicant has probably never met a Setian before and it is your job to reveal a glimpse into a Temple of Set that functions at its highest level. You are not just meeting with this one person, but with all the others he or she will talk to for the rest of their lives about the Temple. You are trying to pull off a masterful piece of public relations. This requires using your most potent and subtle Lesser Black Magic. You have not the foggiest notion of what this stranger really thinks about the Temple. She may have been exposed to us through the largely negative garbage floating around out there in mainstream books, television and other media. It's up to you to either explicitly or implicitly change any of these wrong notions through the authenticity and clear integrity of your presence. Only do this if you know you can be relaxed, cheerful and direct with strangers. This may not be every Priest's strongest power.

You are not obliged to answer all of their many questions nor do you want to make it seem that the Temple is recruiting or looking for members. Remember, you are meeting with this person for the Temple's sake primarily. Let them know that we are not, contrary to the public caricature of the LHP, seeking fresh blood. You are interviewing them to assure to the Temple's satisfaction that they will be the right stuff for our hard standards and uncompromising ethical expectations. Basically, let them know that this work they are undertaking is not for fun entertainment or escapism. They will be beginning many years if not a lifetime of hard work. While we can present this in a matter-of-fact way, get across that this is not a lark for the curiosity seeker. If they balk at this, don't recommend them for admission.

What should we be looking for? That, too, is not a simple question. You will certainly encounter those whose qualities of intelligence, education, experience or other factors are convincing indications of being a good candidate. On the other hand, a little compassion should be used in assessing a candidate. It's more than likely that the candidate is a little intimidated by the Temple. They may not be operating at their best for any number of reasons. We can't be fanatically harsh at this stage, as we must take into account that this is a rare individual who at least accepts the possibility that growth could benefit them. Some of our finest Initiates did not exactly enter the Temple at peak performance. The mystery of Xeper and Remanifestation is the very fact that dramatic and radical growth CAN transform a psyche who wills it. We are looking for the spark of potential, not the certainty of perfection.

Here's my personal checklist of some qualities I'd like to see:

- **Ambition.** Can the candidate tell you even one dream of Self-improvement she is aiming for? Does he have a goal that is not mere delusion but something that hard

- work and dedication can achieve? Black Magic is goal-driven and even more so in the beginning phase of learning its skills.
- Original thought. We don't expect every candidate to be Nietzsche right off the bat. What I mean here is a certain personal style in expressing ideas. Is this an individual or someone who wants to gain an identity in a group? Are they merely telling you what you want to hear or sincerely speaking from their own desire? I've met candidates who have ardently read every Temple document on the Internet and spouted it all back to me for my approval. I'm not impressed by this unless I see that the information was synthesized and interpreted personally.
 - Antinomianism. Difficult to assess as one man's antinomianism is the other's psychoses. A Black Magician must know how to play society's game and win. However, the purpose must be to fulfill personal initiatory desires. Without that certain spark of rebelliousness, idiosyncrasy or eccentricity what kind of Setian can develop? By the way, I certainly don't mean a cookie cutter "Satanist" with all the traditional trappings of tattoo, piercing and the latest Marilyn Manson t- shirt. (I'm aware that last sentence will be as outdated as the Model T in a few months.) "Hipness" is not antinomianism. It's merely desperate conformism marketed as rebellion. The trendy, the temporary, the faddish are all anathema to the eternal otherness of Set. Let us hope that the Temple never becomes the next cool thing. That could destroy it more quickly than a thousand televangelists.
 - Sense of Humor. Not some boor telling an endless parade of practiced jokes. Does our potential Setian see the world as essentially absurd? Does she have enough self-esteem to make light of herself? These are good clues that there is a mind who looks at existence slightly askew. A true sense of humor is an isolation and distance from the world. That's a quality that can become Setian.
 - Religiosity. If our new candidate just left three other cults and grew up in an ashram or convent it might be that they are one of those endless seekers who try out new religions as a hobby. I get worried about people who are true believers in Set even before they have ever experienced a single Pylon meeting, read the Crystal Tablet or even think about what Set might be. Fanatics can be easily disappointed as their expectations are so unreasonable. A Setian can begin from any background but those who come to us filled with hate for Christianity or other religions may only be reactionaries incapable of Becoming. We don't base our metaphysical conclusions on faith and those accustomed to that kind of thinking are poor candidates.

With the obvious remark that we don't want habitual criminals, the mentally ill or the infiltrator with an anti-Setian agenda, I have trust in the heightened awareness of the Setian Priesthood to not err too widely off the mark. Even the very act of meeting candidates allows the Temple to have more information at our disposal. This will fine-tune our entire understanding of what the Temple is attracting and how we can choose our new Initiates more carefully. As the Priesthood shares war stories from these experiences we will broaden our ability to do this with increasing skill. You may want to keep a few notes reporting on each meeting for later reference.

Let's think of our own security on these outings. Always try to conduct these meetings with another Setian in attendance. One of you may notice something the other does not. Meet in a public place rather than at either party's home. This is a time to be on neutral turf. Read carefully the candidate's letter of application from the Executive Director so you have as clear an idea as possible of what you're getting into. There's absolutely no reason to discuss personal matters with this candidate; you're there strictly as a Priest of Set.

One or even two meetings with applicants will not prevent all problems or be a perfect screening device. When dealing with humanoids, anything is possible. If you admit someone to the I* with high hopes and they turn into a raving lunatic sometime down the line, that's not to be considered your responsibility. If you do have a bad feeling about someone don't let them down then and there. Tell them you'll let them know by telephone, post or email. This will avoid a dramatic scene of no use to either of you. Even in those cases that seem positive some suspense and expectation is not magically harmful.

As the Setian's driving core purpose in all things should be to actualize your own Xeper, never do this out of a sense of dutiful obligation. In the right frame of mind, these encounters can help refine your own ideas about Setianism. You may very well learn something unexpected from the candidate. I've very often heard a novel approach or a radical new idea that took root later in my own Work. These strangers may be taking the first stumbling step to immortality and Godhood. Honor this possibility in them. At its best, an interview may become a ritual in itself. This may well become one of the Priesthood's most rewarding responsibilities. Let us work together to hone our skills at guarding the gate.

CULTURAL CHANGES IN THE II°

Onyx Tablet:

OT.O.4.1

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Author:

Don Webb V°

Date:

May 26, 1997 CE

Revision:

HTML Revision:

August 8, 1999 CE

This letter is to announce cultural changes in our process of II° Recognition. These changes are of the nature of "rules of thumb", not hard-and-fast laws. Please reread this when you are about to make a II° Recognition, or - if you have no Recognitions on the horizon - around Spring Equinox. I hope that you will each talk over these ideas with at least one other member of the Priesthood.

The II° is the place of Life. It is where we each spend most of our waking hours, and should not be viewed as a mere rung to "something better". It needs to be expanded and deepened. We always seek to slightly raise the bar to each of the degrees - making them more distinct and vibrant. The II° is where we are going to start.

THE CRITERIA OF THE II°

We generally look for three things in the II°:

1. An Understanding of basic Setian philosophy. The Adept-to-be should be able to not only discuss basic ideas and words in the *Crystal Tablet*, but also give evidence of life-change rationally built upon those ideas. Now that change can be anything from "I watch X fewer hours of television" to "I started an Introduction to Philosophy course at the community college". The change must be real, persistent, and logically connected to the idea of *Xeper*. The methods chosen must be appropriate to each individual.
2. A demonstration of magical ability. This is not the ability to write pretty rituals. This is practical sorcery. The Adept-to-be must have done a Working that produced real-world manifestation.

3. A sign of loyalty to the Temple: Adepts-to-be must show they spend time, effort, and money at being in the Temple. They articulate themselves as Setians foremost - regardless of other affiliations they may have. They may even have done something to enhance or protect the Temple's reputation, which can be anything from calling into a rabid radio show about "Satanic crime" to discussing the Setian philosophy with intelligent and potentially-Setian friends.

We are going to start looking for a fourth criterion as well:

4. A sign of understanding that Initiation is a life-long affair - and the Temple is a tool for learning how to do things beyond the Temple's cozy reaches. This can be an essay about what initiation is, or an answer to the question "What do you think you'll be doing in ten years?" or "Why do you think we seek initiation anyway?".

To help with the latter, we need to stress the idea that all Temple experience is an illustrative working for the rest of life. Just as the work in the chamber is towards a specific goal, so all Temple work is towards life as a whole.

Now I would appreciate those Priests who have had some time to have had both good and bad Recognitions of II°s to write essays on their methods of detecting/teaching the II° for compilation in the *Onyx Tablet*.

SUGGESTION FOR A YEAR'S TRYOUT

In order to see that items #1 and #3 are met, I would suggest that Setians be in the Temple at least a year before being considered for II° Recognition. This enables the Priest to observe how faithful such Setians are to the self. Do they maintain the changes they have wrought in their lives? This also allows the Priest to discover if the Initiate is serious enough to pay Temple annual dues once, and to have enough control of personal affairs to pay dues, go to Pylon meetings, etc. This also gives the Setian a chance to interact with more than one member of the Priesthood, read a year's worth of *Scrolls*, etc.

At present this is neither a by-law nor a High Priest policy. It is a suggested guideline. However if someone is truly Adept after six months, he will continue to be Adept for another six months. Possibly this guideline will eventually become a by-law. Any action that improves the evaluation process is better for both the Adept-to-be and the Temple. The quality of Adepts is the Priest's strongest lever for affecting the quality of the Temple.

FOLLOW-UP

When you Recognize Adepts, you don't cast them into the void to sink or swim. Sure they're not your primary responsibility, but they are linked to you and your teaching throughout their initiation. It is a wise thing to give them an assignment for their Recognition Day. Tell them to write you an essay a year's hence on what they have learned in their first year as an Adept, what weaknesses or bad character traits they have

overcome, what strengths they have made stronger, what Order they joined (or are thinking of joining) and why, and what adventures they have had. After they send you that first letter, look it over and comment on its positive contents. Some Adepts may wish to do this every year.

When their Recognition comes up, be sure to involve them in it heavily. Be sure to ask them what the difference between the I° and II° is, ask them about the changes they see in their lives, ask them what fears they have have faced down, ask them what they would like to see in the Temple, and then ask how they are going to help bring it about. Have them design the ceremony. Let's get rid of the tradition of the "surprise Recognition" that was common in the Temple seven years ago.

CULTURAL CHANGE

Although it is not necessary for an Adept to own a computer, do mention the advantage in terms of access to informational resources. You should advise that an element of Adepthood is attending at least one international conclave. The Adept might consider that keeping a diary to work on improving oneself is a good aid for lifelong initiation.

Let's all emphasize the idea of the power and potential of the II°. A II° has great adventures, learns amazing things, does great magic. When you hear of a II° going to China on a cultural exchange program, get that individual to write up the experiences for the *Scroll*. If a II° writes a book, request a copy for a *Scroll* reviewer. If a II°'s band's on tour, publish those tour dates on the Setian-I Internet mailing list. In short, use the real experiences of various Adepts as a source of inspiration to others.

The II° is a recognition of growing real-world power, and the task of the II° is indeed life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

Let's see how lively we can make the Plain of Life!

THE II° RECOGNITION PROCESS

Onyx Tablet:

OT.O.4.2

© Temple of Set

Author:

Don Webb V°

Date:

May 26, 1997 CE

Revision:

HTML Revision:

August 8, 1999 CE

A couple of Priests doing their first Recognition to the II° wrote for my thoughts on the subject.

Recognitions are bound in time, the Recognition to the II° particularly so. The person you recognize in May can disappoint you in October. The person who barely squeezes through the gates can be a "great start" later on.

Recognitions in the temple of Set are confirmed rather than conferred. The process is one of the both the Setian and yourself coming to the conclusion that he dwells in the Plain of Life.

The state of Adept means that the person is ready to enrich his life by choosing some idea or ideas to make strong in his life and give it meaning. The first Idea he must have chosen is the Idea of Xeper.

I have found that four questions are particularly helpful in my making up my mind whether a person is Adept or not:

1. What is the difference between the I° and the II°?
2. Given the above, where do you think you are?
3. What things can an Adept do that are needed in your initiation?
4. What things in your life do you do differently now that you have been in the Temple of Set for [] months? Details are helpful here.

If Setians I° are vague about the first one, then the II° won't mean anything to them. If they're not sure of their own state of being, put it off; it is more important that they know than that you know. If they have no ideas about the third question, they're not ready to put the state to use. And if there are no answers to the fourth, then they haven't done anything in the objective universe and are just talking a good game.

I Wish you learning in the process.

TEN PRIESTLY THINGS TO DO

Onyx Tablet: OT.O.4.3 © Temple of Set

Author: Don Webb V°

Date: January 31, 1997 CE

Revision:

HTML Revision: August 8, 1999 CE

The state of the Priesthood is something for which your life experience has not prepared you. It causes a change in your relationship to the world. The previous links your psyche has had with the world - your body, your language, your connection with your culture - all remain, but a new and mysterious link has been brought into being. Your resonance with the Prince of Darkness not only enables you to directly gain knowledge of that Principle, but also to directly influence others toward that state.

The "rules" of this link are difficult to learn, and they can not be taught because they reflect your self. In a certain sense you are beginning to become magic itself, but do not take that as a sign that you are ready to put your ritual activities aside. Indeed now these activities will become crucial to help you get what you need.

The nature of this new link has two qualities. First, during the initial year(s) of your Priesthood, you will find yourself living in a strange new world. Many things you've taken for granted will vanish, others will mutate, and you will find yourself changing rapidly. Do not merely "put your faith" in these changes. The Priesthood is a great time to make bold new steps toward your goals precisely because it is so destabilizing. Try new things. Be bold. But in all things make use of the common sense that has enabled you to do what you have done so far on this Earth.

The second quality of this Link is that you must maintain it. The Priesthood is not static. If you do not exercise your powers in a series of expanding challenges, you will lose them. You will no longer be "in tune with" the Prince of Darkness.

It behooves the Priesthood to make use of this great boost it has received from the Prince of Darkness. The methods that you use, especially as the years go by, are [and must be] your own. The following list includes suggestions to help get you started.

The most obvious activity of the Priesthood is to expand their interaction with the Prince of Darkness by thought and action. There are some useful questions to consider. Why did Set increase the Essence available to the Priesthood at this time? Why is the presence of isolate self-consciousness in us necessary for the evolution of that quality? What kinds of initiation/rites of passage beyond the Temple of Set are available? How can I foster my initiation by using the whole wide world as well as the Temple of Set? How can I be a better Priest? What is the optimal role of myself as an initiator? What are my long-term goals as Priest? What aspects of my life experience and education should I bring to the Temple to make available as teaching? Am I challenging my shortcomings?

The action that is the most resonate with your new state of being is working with Setians I° - helping some toward II° Recognition, helping others discover the Temple is not for them. There are few hard-and-fast guidelines for this. The general guideline is to make it a little tougher than it was on you, but not impossible. Answering your mail and getting the process started is a priority.

Beyond this, I offer some suggestions. These are meant *only* as suggestions to open you up to new types of endeavor. You will be able to make a completely different list in three or four years, which I hope you will share with the Priesthood. All of these are not for everyone. Some (1, 5, 6, 7) of these will work well for Adepts, and might be the type of project you wish to pursue with Adepts you know.

1. Make sure our name is in your community. Common sense and safety prevail here, of course. In some communities you may be able to run an ad for the Temple of Set, when you feel you're ready to establish a local Pylon. In other places you might see to it that books that mention us are on the shelves, or videos in the stores. Still elsewhere you may be able to found or join a magic circle where different occult traditions can be discussed.
2. Broaden your own initiation. Your Setian initiation will always be the *most* sacred, *most* important aspect of your life, but that does not mean you should not seek to broaden your exposure to other schools. The III° is a teacher of the system, but his initiation is by no means finished, and he should have learned to turn anything into Setian initiation. The III° becomes a time when you can explore other non-religious initiatory systems (the Rune-Gild, the O.T.O., a local Gurdjieff group, the Jung society, NLP training, etc.). You should explore these things firstly for your own self transformation. Of course take the best methods, universalize them and bring them to the Temple. Remember that even though you are now a teacher, you will always be a student.
3. Research: Using the methods outlined in Chapter One of *The Seven Faces of Darkness*, you can begin to revive traditional systems. Similar methods can be used to create magical systems out of new technology.
4. Survey your community. Assume you know nothing. Look around where you live, discover as many interesting resources as are there - theater, art, science, college libraries, cheap office supplies stores - and make use of them for your entertainment, education, and cultivation. The III° is a great time for breaking old routines and discovering the

wealth of resources around you. This will not only give you great opportunities for transformation, but will help make you an effective leader of a local Pylon.

5. Discover the magical history of your community. Learn its ghost stories, folklore, and work by previous occultists. If you can, discover a magical event that has taken place where you live and do a rite of synthesis with it. First spend a day interacting with the event, in a manner of your own choosing. Then a day contemplating your own goals. Then on the third day send forth your blend of the two things into the world - while linking the event with the Eternal Set network. This will not only allow you to tap into what is hidden in your domain, but it will make a very magical host for visiting Setians, as well as giving you some fodder for LBM.

6. Foster tolerance in your community to groups known as "other". If the Temple gets bad press, have your Pylon do a letter-writing campaign. Or if your local occult bookstore will let you put out pamphlets, send an SASE with a donation to AMER and ask for some pamphlets to put out.

7. Explain *Xeper* to someone. You all know people in your life that would totally reject everything you say if you approached them wearing a pentagram. Make it your job to explain as much of your philosophy to them as you can anyway. See if you can instill some of the ideas of responsibility into them. This is one of the most subtle ways the Temple works on the world.

8. Have a Setian gathering. Real initiation passes from mouth to ear. If you can speak with I°s and newer II°s, this is always beneficial to both you and them. A gathering might be anything from a conclave to meeting with a couple of Setians in a nearby town.

9. Get a confidante. You should find at least one other member of the III° with whom you feel you can discuss anything. The best choice would be someone not in your locality (though you should maintain cordial relations with local Priests), nor in the same Order as you are. This can give you a chance to blow off steam, give each other pep talks when you find your initiation is hard. But most importantly it will give you a chance to discuss the real questions of initiation. Perhaps the best would be someone you can call up or email after every *Scroll* comes out and talk about the main points of the issue - everything from the "High Priest's lost it this time. Do you want to tell him, or should I?" to "I wonder who's working with Setian X; she looks like a genius."

10. Take time to remind yourself that you are a III°. Look in the mirror and tell yourself that you are a sacred being, consecrated to the Prince of Darkness. Feel your Priesthood flow through you, and know that it will inform your actions as you become better acquainted with it.

CONCERNING AWAKENING

Onyx Tablet: OT.O.4.4 © Temple of Set

Author: Don Webb V°

Date: May 22, 1997 CE

Revision:

HTML Revision: August 8, 1999 CE

I suggest the following incantation is read twice before any [tos.priests Internet mailing list] postings. Printing it out is a good idea.

As I have expected for a long time, the Priesthood has awakened. I [and others] have tried various "jump start" methods over the years. But as is to be expected in a society such as ours, it was the negativism essential to Becoming that opened the way. This burst of dialogue is a good thing.

The discourse has been in general quiet and civil. As to be expected in a time of awakening, there have been the "pins and needles" that one feels when blood rushes into a limb that has been asleep. Some of the advantages of electronic discourse - an ability to take the time to think out one's thoughts, and an ability to speak more frankly in this forum are here and will prevail, if we will it to be so. Certain disadvantages of electronic discourse such as the ability to reply quickly without thought are here as well. The latter belongs to the World of Horrors, and it will be a sign of Priesthood to leave it there.

It has been suggested to me that tos.priests should be moderated - that the Priesthood is incapable of using its resources by itself. If the Temple is to proceed to its next logical step of development, this won't do. The Priesthood is more than capable of resolving any problems - not with an eye to silence and smooth sailing, but with a refinement of our thoughts and principles on an individual level.

It is inherent in the structure of the Priesthood that certain aspects of our discourse have internally-held discipline. To my mind these are:

1. A dedication to principle, which requires thought. Anything that has been posted should be considered in relationship to your current understanding. Wait a day to post a reply, or a week. Do not wait too long so that you lose your insight. Posts should be

made in a the light of new thoughts, not the flash of anger or any other state that works against clear thought.

2. A dedication to civility. This doesn't just mean labeling areas of disagreement frankly without name calling, *ad hominem* attacks, and so forth. It means eloquent and measured posts. We are aiming for the Gettysburg Address here. And when from time to time it is achieved, let's be sure to archive it in the proper venue.

3. A dedication to the spirit of the Temple. We should have zero tolerance for those who wish to create rifts between Orders, Elements, Pylons, and so forth.

4. A dedication for increasing initiatory activities among all parts of the Temple.

5. A dedication to expanding the awakening of the Priesthood.

This is essential. As we know, the sovereignty of the Temple arises from its Priesthood. As the Temple grows and diversifies, more and more power and responsibility will be devolved from the central office to the Priesthood.

Learning four important rules now is essential:

-- a. Don't be afraid to speak up on a matter of Principle.

-- b. Don't hoard your initiatory wisdom.

-- c. Speak with the style and grace that we would like to be remembered for.

-- d. It's email for christsake; deal with it.

Unless I hear a strong disagreement these changes will take place:

1. Henceforth all comments on the suitability of a candidate to the Priesthood will be communicated to the Recognizing Masters not to tos.priests. If questions concerning the protocol of Recognition are to be raised, they will be taken to tos.masters. The Recognizing Masters should of course post their notices on tos.priests with as detailed and principled a report on their candidate as they choose to provide. This will serve two functions: It will introduce the candidate in a positive light, and it gives each Master a chance to speak on the virtues of the Priesthood. The virtues that the Masters comment on should stimulate discussion among the Priesthood as we consider that essential question: "What does it mean to be a Priest?".

2. If it is feasible, I would like to see two Lists. I thought this up about three this morning, Priestess Webb told that Magister Menschel had sent her a similar suggestion. One for Priesthood administration with short notices and requests for fast info. Answering that sort of mail takes little time, and need not be put in one's deep-thought pile. The other

would be a III° initiatory forum. [Note: This additional "Priesthood-Initiatory" mailing list has since come into effect.]

3. The initiatory forum should be open to any topic. Anyone should feel that he have the right to call anyone else on a matter of principle ("What is the initiatory principle for which you are arguing?"), but not on a topic ("I think only the Order of [-] would be interested in this."). If people feel that the topic doesn't show the cutting edge of III° initiation, they should suggest that it be taken to Setian-I.

4. The initiatory forum should be a breeding ground for teaching techniques, discussions about the unique state of the Priesthood, a source for *Scroll* articles, and new projects. It should not be a "pat each other on the back" type of place. If you're not up to being challenged, don't drop in.

5. The administrative forum (tos.priests) should have open discussion on all areas of Temple administration.

6. Perhaps we could open the initiatory forum at a propitious time like 6 PM on June 6? We could concentrate on bringing current discussions to a resolution before then, or to making them into long-term, culture-changing threads.

Given to the Priesthood on the day I received a piece of KV-14 (Setnakt's tomb).

UNCLE SETNAKT'S ADVICE COLUMN

Onyx Tablet:

OT.O.4.5

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Author:

Don Webb V°

Date:

Revision:

HTML Revision:

August 8, 1999 CE

By entering the Priesthood of Set, you have undergone an interesting process and become the interesting result of it. I would like to share my observations on the result and the process, and offer some advice that may aid your application of your new state of being.

Through our bond with the Prince of Darkness you have have received an "extra helping" of the Gift of Set. Soon you will begin to understand that you have gone through a similar process to our ancestors' ancestors when they received the Gift.

Just as that shock which began the cycle of the Black Flame changed them into non-natural creatures, the shock of being increased in essence changes the new Priest or Priestess. There are far more challenges now than magic, the art of getting what you need, facing you. One of the greatest is that what used to work for you doesn't anymore; therefore you have to find new ways to think and feel. A challenge such as that is of course a completely individual one.

The receipt of this Gift makes you more like Set, and like Set you now have a need to further the process. This desire to pass on - to create others like yourself - is a desire; and as we all know, we sometimes act too rapidly during desire. It is a good time for you to begin to see what the process was that led you to this state of being, so that you can isolate and communicate the elements of that process to those who will come forth to interact with you.

Firstly the Temple was a mystery to you. You didn't know what you would really find here, and it provided a great vehicle to change semiconscious notions of self. This is the first working the the Temple stimulates: of finding out who one is, that one really exists.

The rituals and activities used to effect this vary with individuals, just as their names and backgrounds vary. But it is the quickening, that reenactment of the getting the Gift which

prepares the way for the entry into the Plain of Life. A Priest couldn't open that Door for you, but what he provided was a consistent language - a matrix containing our Word, to be heard again and again, so that the Word was able to merge along with the self.

That dual emergence is what we call becoming Adept. Our job in the Priesthood requires that we continually re-provide the "element" of *Xeper*, so that, when the individual summons it in his or her awakening, it is there. Indeed that dual awakening is expressed among many members of the Priesthood as the three things they look for in Adepts:

1. Understanding of the *Word of Set* - the return of the element we have placed before them, and which they have incorporated in their lives.
2. Evidence of magical ability - not only the ability to affect things a-causally, but the use of that ability to create and define the self. This can be anything from a ritual to get a better job to an elaborate piece of illustrative work.
3. Commitment to the Temple. This is the product of the dual awakening - a desire to keep the tool well oiled and out of the rain, since there is brought into being a need for it again. The discovery of and application of these criteria will be individual and, because of their personal nature, not subject to tests or rules.

At the II° the Temple becomes a place for the rational exploration of the self through any number of tools. The Temple, created by and subject to Set's Word, is continually enhancing its matrix. All other Words, whatever their merit on their own, are to be Understood only as AEon-enhancing, all Orders only as vehicles, all the jobs of the Temple only as doorways. The relationship of the Priesthood to the II° is to nudge them again and again back into the focus of *Xeper*.

The II°, which awakens the sense of beauty, is a great time for plans. Adepts will present you with their life plans worked out in detail [usually breathlessly every two months]. They will explore the most Byzantine and elaborate rituals. They abound with theories, and will delight you with their daring. It is important for the Priesthood to urge, through subtle and patient means, the Adept not to hurry through his or her II° days.

The II° is the time when the foundations are laid for the future spiritual work of the individual. Likewise your job in this working is to remind the Adept of the focus of *Xeper*, so that the central movement of the Temple is in this place of foundation. This is how we both insure that those who join us in the Plain of Onyx will be equipped for the challenge, and how we affect the world as a whole through those folk who will remain at the II°, whether within or outside of the Temple.

Since we are interested in our own preservation, there is a second aspect of our interaction with Adepts II°. In addition to continually asking them how their thoughts and schemes relate to the principle of *Xeper*, we must also ask them how these thoughts and schemes can be guides to real-world action. How can their ideas be put in motion tomorrow?

This question will puzzle Adepts, since the interaction of the Principle of isolate self-consciousness and the world begins in earnest with the Priesthood III^o; the Adept is creating a sense of beauty to guide such later actions. But by presenting the problem, we open the way for the individual who will join us. Once again we provide the elements; it is up to suitable Adepts in their quest for Becoming to apply them.

If you look back at your own development and find these things, you'll have a guide in helping to present them to the next generation. You can never just "explain" it to them. Try not to be disappointed if they don't get it, because the presentation of the material, and incorporation of what these people will bring to you, is your real job. It is the key to your *Xeper* while dwelling on the Plain of Onyx.

I will offer some advice. I had same the advice offered to me, and I ignored it. Later I realized how wise the folk were who had offered it to me. You will of course ignore this, then later realize how wise I was when I offered this advice. Then in time you will offer it to a new Priest or Priestess, and he or she will ignore ... Well, anyway you see how "tradition" begins.

Here it goes:

1. Very few things have to be done in haste. Feel free to talk your first Recognitions with others. Waiting a little longer is almost always a good idea.
2. Saying "I don't know" is the best answer when you don't.
3. Cultivate a friend among the new Priests with whom you can talk about absolutely any damn thing off the record. Often times, someone from a different Order and a different way of doing things makes the best mirror for your own actions.
4. Make a job of finding that Master with whom you most disagree and figure out how his philosophy is a prism through which the Black Flame is focused. This and the action above help tether you to the process of the Temple, and broaden you in a fairly painless way.
5. When you find yourself giving really good advice, or suddenly explaining something in a way so profound that it amazes even you, write it down in your nightbook. The advice usually winds up being for you. The revelation usually becomes a key to a door of which you hadn't been aware.
6. Know when to rest and get your craftsmen to finish the job. When you can hand over a newsletter, or some of running a Pylon, to competent Adepts, do so. Let them use the energy as a task to learn the secrets of that plain [as per my remarks above], but always keep your hand lightly on the reins. It helps them learn things; and by dismanifesting parts of your willed action, you can allow it to return the inner roots of yourself and be transformed.

7. Don't be dogmatic. Learn to seek out those experiences that challenge your notions, particularly your notion of self. Try out new things. Be daring. Have fun.

8. The task of the Priesthood is to communicate personal initiation. Always try to reshape what you tell and ask people, based on the experiences of your own life.

9. Remember that members of the Priesthood are dedicated individuals serving the AEon through its chief manifestation, the Temple. Know that the opposite is also true: Our "service" is a manifestation of our being greedy little pigs, for we know the secret: For each gift we give, for each true revelation we reveal, a greater gift returns to us. In this we experience the way of being of Set himself, for in the fullness of time his Gift will come full cycle, creating a new race of gods. As the Mouth of Set once said, "I look forward to greeting you young gods and goddesses on the Path ..."

CHURCH OF SATAN

LETTER OF III° NOMINATION

Onyx Tablet: OT.O.4.7 © Temple of Set

Author: Michael A. Aquino IV°

Date: 1974

Revision:

HTML Revision: August 8, 1999 CE

Upon nomination to the Nine you have been approved as a candidate for elevation to the Priesthood of Mendes. Certain procedures must now be followed before the Council will make a decision concerning your formal ordination. It is the purpose of this communique to explain these procedures and to set forth pertinent criteria concerning the Priesthood.

As you are well aware, admission to I° membership in the Church of Satan is granted only after careful evaluation of the applicant's questionnaire. Even so, applicants are given the benefit of the doubt where possible, on the assumption that exposure to the teachings of the Church of Satan may serve to correct personality imbalances or preconceived misunderstandings concerning the Black Arts. Accordingly there is a calculated attrition in the I°, inasmuch as some individuals cannot or will not accept the standards of mental, physical, and metaphysical discipline expected of a true Satanist.

Standards for the II° are correspondingly more stringent. Approximately five percent of the total Church membership hold this degree, which is awarded by the Nine primarily upon the evaluation of a written examination. The II° constitutes a decision by the Nine that the candidate possesses a working understanding of the principles of Satanism, and that he or she is endeavoring - within personal capability - to put these principles into practice. Confirmation of the II° is undertaken with such care that the attrition rate is practically nonexistent. The II° is regarded by the Nine as the highest recognition of magical expertise that may be bestowed upon a lay member of the Church of Satan.

Ordination to the Priesthood of Mendes involves considerations so complex that a summary treatment of them is impossible. Without a doubt the Satanic Priesthood is far more difficult to attain than the priesthood of any conventional church. Taken into consideration are the candidate's past achievements, present activities, future potential,

and psychological makeup. From the time of a candidate's initial nomination to the issuance of such a communique as this one, an exhaustive examination lasting at least one year is pursued by representatives of the Council. Those who fail to stand up under this scrutiny are simply never made aware of their nominations.

Within the scope of the I° and II°, allowances are made for the ability and skill levels of the individual. If he or she is making the best use of the innate potential possessed, the criteria for those degrees are satisfied. In short, the lay Satanist is measured against himself, not against human society as a whole.

Just the opposite is true with the Priesthood of Mendes. Here ambition and noble intentions cannot compensate for lack of ability, social effectiveness, and aggressive application of the principles of Satanism when dealing with others. Applicable here is an age-old Satanic aphorism: "As above, so below". Since individuals are naturally reluctant to recognize their own limitations - and to accept the fact that they cannot transcend them - this criterion has seemed both unfair and abusive. It has embittered many a would-be Priest, and it has even caused the downfall of confirmed Priests whose judgment was adversely affected by the powers and prerogatives inherent in their office.

Before you elect to proceed with your candidacy, you are advised to give this aspect due consideration. It may be that in spite of your most thorough efforts, ordination will be denied you - for reasons over which neither you nor the Nine have the slightest influence. There are lesser honors which you may seek that do not encompass this hazard. Indeed, as a recipient of the II°, you already possess evidence of our recognition and approval of your efforts.

There is much that is allegorical concerning lay membership in the Church of Satan. Our activities, communications, and publications all reinforce this. A person can be an accredited Satanist and yet consider the Prince of Darkness no more than an interesting and illustrative figure of myth.

With the Satanic Priesthood the allegory ends. As the ordained representative of Our Lord Satan, you will become a living embodiment of the Powers of Darkness. You will retain mastery of your own Will; indeed you will be strengthened in this regard. Nevertheless you will become an agency through which the Devil will achieve his ends. By now you should be sufficiently acquainted with the true motives and ambitions of the Church of Satan, and this realization will inspire you with exultation, not fear or doubt. If the latter is the case, you should proceed no further. Bram Stoker, a member of the Satanic Core of the old Golden Dawn, emblazoned this principle in the first words of his celebrated literary figure, Count Dracula: "Welcome to my house. Enter freely and of your own will."

The Satanic Priesthood is not an office that can be assumed or disregarded at whim. It will remain with you constantly. It will color your every decision, expression, and action. So marked will be the effect upon your personality that you may seem alien even to many of your closest friends. As you enter new spheres of interest, it may be necessary to

abandon old ones. Strange paths await the chosen of Satan, and they may bring misery as well as majesty. You enter a realm characterized by challenge and choice, not by comfort and consolation.

So it is written. As a Priest or Priestess of Mendes, you will learn many things about the true Prince of Darkness and the forces under his control. Much will become clear to you that has heretofore seemed obscure or incomprehensible. That which inspires you will turn your entire universe to your advantage, if you but make the effort to recognize the signals which will be manifest to you. "All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: For that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it."

And finally, an admonition: If you accept the Priesthood in good faith and subsequently decide that you cannot sustain the powers which have been bestowed upon you, you will be free to resign your office with honor and impunity. If, however, you deliberately move to abuse the trust and confidence which have been placed in you, it would be better had you never been born. So also it is written.

And now, if you will, proceed:

As evidence of the circles in which you make your influence felt, send to us the names of ten members of the Church of Satan whose decision to join the Church was prompted by contact with you personally. If in doubt as to the extent you influenced such a decision, set forth full particulars.

Confirm in writing the following personal facts: Full name, mailing address, residential address, business & residence telephone numbers, citizenship, height, weight, color of hair & eyes, marital status, names & ages of spouse and children [if applicable], social security number, and security clearance [if any].

Are you presently employed? If so, where? What sort of work do you do, and what is your present income? How many jobs have you held in the past three years? What are your career ambitions? What do you consider your most significant professional accomplishment? Has your Church membership affected your professional relationships? Would your ordination by itself affect them? If so, under what secular restrictions would you prefer to function?

If you are presently a student, upon what sort of academic program are you embarked? What do you intend to do with the knowledge you acquire? How successful have you been academically? How do you support yourself?

Satanic clergy must live and act in a world composed largely of non-Satanic intellects and value systems. Imagery concocted to impress the profane is a necessary adjunct to formal practice of the Black Arts. Describe your personal appearance, habits, mannerisms, emblems [such as place of residence, furnishings of same, automobile, office environment], and disposition towards public relations. How is your sense of

humor? Send along a photograph or two that illustrate your customary living environment.

What do you consider to be the responsibilities of a Priest or Priestess of Mendes?

What do you consider to be the ultimate goals of the Church of Satan?

Would you consider it permissible, under any circumstances, for a member of the Priesthood to disobey a directive of the High Priest or the Council of Nine?

What is your understanding of the principle of consistency as applied to the office of the Satanic Priesthood?

How do you react to skeptical inquiries concerning Satanism and the Church of Satan? What is your rationale for this?

What do you consider to be the psychological basis behind Satanic ritual? Does your interpretation justify impulsive behavior - such as the casting of an emotionally-motivated curse - under ritual circumstances?

What is your interpretation of the tradition of the making of a formal pact with the Devil? As a member of the Priesthood, what use would you make of this interpretation?

The Church of Satan has occasionally been accused of being either fascist or communist [among other things] in its doctrines. What is your personal opinion? How would you respond if questioned concerning this on public media?

Do you think that you can recognize a psychic vampire when you see one? What do you think the attitude of such creatures will be towards a member of the Priesthood? Do you think that they will be able to perceive you as such?

What exactly is "evil"? How would you respond if asked such a question over the media or during a lecture?

Of all the books that you have ever read - apart from the *Satanic Bible*, *Satanic Rituals*, and *Compleat Witch*, which do you consider to be the most valuable to a Satanic magician? To a novice?

What is lycanthropy? Why is it important? How can you make use of it?

What is the significance of the Enochian Keys?

What is "magic"? Why is the Satanist concerned with it? How does it tie in with what you would define as the "material" goals of the Church of Satan?

As a Priest or Priestess III°, do you think you could recognize a Magister IV° or a Magus V° without being formally introduced? What do you think distinguishes a Magister from a Priest, and a Magus from a Magister? Can you name at least three historic personages whom you suspect to be Magi?

What is your opinion concerning astrology? Do you make use of this concept as a tool in your magical operations?

In a religious context the Church of Satan is said to reject the spiritual and elevate the carnal. What exactly do you think this means?

What is the difference between Satanism and atheism? Between Satanism and agnosticism? Between Satanism and existentialism?

Could there be such thing as a "Satanic utopia"? What would it be like?

Is Satanism consistent with so-called "rational" scientific disciplines?

What does the Devil have to do with art? What *is* art? Is it important to the operations of a Satanic Priest or Priestess? Why?

What are some specific changes which you feel the Church of Satan will bring about in the next twenty-five years?

And finally: Inasmuch as you are interested in becoming an ordained Priest of Our Lord Satan, who or what is he?

Upon receipt of your answers to the above, the Council of Nine will give final consideration to your ordination. Unanimous recommendation to the High Priest is necessary for a new Priest or Priestess to be admitted to the Order of Mendes. Ultimately sanction of each new ordination must be made by the Powers of Darkness themselves, according to symbolisms which are as old as man himself. You may be advised of a decision relatively swiftly, or an indefinite time may elapse before this takes place. There are many forces which have a bearing upon the question of ordination.

"Therefore, harken unto my voice! I have talked of you, and I move you in power and presence, whose words shall be a song of honor, and the praise of your god in your creation!"

The Council of Nine

ON III° RECOGNITIONS

Onyx Tablet: OT.O.4.7 © Temple of Set

Author: Robertt Neilly IV°

Date: September 4, 1992 CE

Revision:

HTML Revision: August 8, 1999 CE

Having now read over both Ipsissimus Lewis' and Magister Menschel's thoughts on Priesthood Recognitions, I have some of my own to offer. Note that these are in many respects of a general nature. They do not so much discuss my criteria for such Recognitions as they talk about the overall process itself.

Right from the word go, I will emphatically state that I do not wish to see any rigid, nor necessarily formalized, set of criteria of which Masters *must* use to perform Priesthood Recognitions. This idea is not proposed in the communications from either of the two aforementioned Nobles, but I am compelled to verbalize it anyway. Instead, what I'd like to see - and it seems feasible - is a set of criteria upon which Masters can refer to informally.

Shuti fleshed out his ideas in such a manner, and I am in agreement with many of them. I'm certain we could come to some consensus based on his ideas, on Ipsissimus Lewis', and on any Master who wished to contribute. But even if we develop such a "database" of ideas, I do not want to see any Master pinned to the wall in the future by other IV°+ members demanding to know the items from the "list" that s/he used in ascertaining that Adept 'X' had Become a Priest/ess.

I believe that Ipsissimus Lewis hit on the Heart of the matter when he wrote: "The standards by which we determine the differentiations between an Adept and a Priest or Priestess of Set are as varied as there are Magistri Templi here to give such verdicts." Bravo! And up to now, I also believe that - in addition to all other evidence possible (covered more than adequately by Shuti) - many Masters in making their final "verdict" have relied upon, quoting Shuti, their own "magical noesis".

Isn't that what it comes down to every time? Whether our criteria for III° Recognitions have been rigorously met, even exceeded, by the Adept we're examining, in the final

"verdict" don't most of us still want to know that we have that certain "feeling", that Sense of Set? I know that I do. Whether Adept "X" meets all, or some of my criteria, or all or some of the criteria in place by/with other Masters, before performing a Priesthood Recognition I will want to know that my Higher mechanisms of "magical noesis" agree with the evidence and all matters intellectually or otherwise arrived at.

In the past, I've been reminded that III° (or higher) Recognitions will always be a best possible "green light" for the Initiate. In years gone by (and I can think of at least one IV° and one V° Recognition that I as a Councillor had to Voice my opinion on), I didn't feel the way I do now. I felt that it was either glaringly obvious to *everyone* that an Initiate was a Priest/ess, Magister/Magistra, Magus/Maga, or not. In other words, if it wasn't obvious to *me personally* that Initiate 'X' was a Magister, then it couldn't be so. Initiate 'X' could not be a Magister unless I said so too! Does that sound crazy? Has anyone else felt that way?

I guess magical maturity accounts for something; I now Understand clearly the "best possible" green light approach. It is the best approach possible, given that it is *impossible* for any of us to Know for 100% certain if Adept 'X' is a Priest/ess, or if Priest/ess 'X' is a Master. Mature, Balanced - even Noetic - "fate" accounts for something in the Temple of Set. If it didn't, I may have never been given the opportunity to (re)affirm to all concerned that I was a Master of the Temple.

Isn't it imperative, even vital, that we remember this "green light" theory, and apply it anew? In looking again at Ipsissimus Lewis' paper, I believe I've found support for my argument: "What if Recognized Third Degrees cannot or have not met those criteria set above? Well, we hope for the best in the form of their being able to grow into the Degree, a thing they will have to do in any event and regardless of the scale used for assessment if that momentous move of Recognition is performed."

One item of the III° Priesthood issue that I find myself sometimes mildly - other times moderately - questioning is that of the event itself. I question that the Priesthood is not part of the "normal" course of events. Perhaps I'm hung up on semantics. Here's my reasoning.

All current Adepts in the Temple of Set, to the best of my knowledge, are aware that they *can* strive towards the Priesthood. There was an article that appeared (I mentioned it to Ipsissimus Lewis, but even then couldn't remember how/where it came about), written, I believe, by the High Priest (Dr. Aquino), wherein our Adepts at that point were addressed about the Priesthood. In this article, Adepts were being shown the way to question their 'Adeptitude' if/when they felt they were approaching the Priesthood. At the time I felt that the article's release would result in an avalanche of Adepts wanting to be Recognized to the III°. It didn't happen that way, although ever since the article, the whole issue of Priesthood Recognition has been more in the open; more accessible.

Well, my first point is this; if an Adept can (consciously) strive towards the Priesthood, isn't that act (of striving) "normal", at least for that Adept? If the act of striving is normal, what of the attainment of the Priesthood?

My second point is: the attainment of the Priesthood **is** normal - or within an evolving expectation - for those Adepts who attain it. In other words, in the course of their Work, their Xeper, their Remanifestation(s), they strove for and attained the Priesthood. Am I looking at this in the wrong way? Wasn't the Priesthood **for them** within their "normal" (or substitute the word of your choice) course of events?

The other essential ingredient in any III^o Recognition is of course Set. It is Set who performs the fundamental Ordination. It is the Adept who - depending on how you look at this - either (a) agrees that it is so, i.e. that they are a Priest/ess; or (b) "proclaims", in a manner of speaking, their Priesthood. The latter case is true for those Adepts that Know what they have Become and are convinced - in as much as this is possible - that Set sees it that way.

When I Became a Priest of Set, the "evidence" was there on both sides of the border: there were other members of the Priesthood who felt I'd Became one of them and more importantly, Masters who felt that I had Became a Priest. And there was my own feeling that I was a Priest of Set. My own feeling of the matter was accentuated by my rock-steady belief that Set saw me as, or ordained me to, the Priesthood. Even though it could be said that I was Working "without lust of/for result", I nevertheless was striving towards the Priesthood. My magic(s) were deliberate, whatever the direction I thought them to be going in.

How many of us, when we were Recognized to the Priesthood, remember having "cried" out to Set? We didn't necessarily cry out that we wanted to be a Priest/ess. Rather, we were boldly stating that we were ready for the next stage(s) of Setamorphosis. Didn't we, in Workings largely of a GBM type, ask/request/demand - of ourselves and of Set - that the "conflict" be resolved? However we saw it at the time, the conflict was one of our being ordained into the Priesthood. It was an issue of either Xepering forward (Balanced evolution) or going stark raving crazy! Well, any way I look it, I come back to the +/- "normalcy" of the events that led to my Priesthood. For me, attaining the III^o in concert with the Will of Set **was** the only thing I could do. Wasn't that then "normal" for me?

Maybe I'm looking at this in a lop-sided fashion. In that case, I'll cheerfully stand to be corrected. As stated, I am somewhat uncomfortable in thinking that the Priesthood is a totally abnormal event, or one that can't happen within the "normal" course of events for certain Setians. Setians are, after all, creatures of Willed actions. We can, and do, bring about Xeper. If all III^o occurrences are not "normal", then we have had quite a number of "abnormal" or extraordinary events happen over the past few years. That too, is possible. Perhaps what I'm classifying as "normal" really refers to something much more selective and unique. Still, many such unique events have occurred over the years (more so, in recent memory).

These days, even in a best-possible-case scenario, it is not always possible that, to quote Shuti, we will "know the initiates being Recognized ..." All the more reason for dialogue, right? Priesthood Recognitions may seem moderately to exceedingly startling to Masters not involved with the Adept(s) in question. That does not mean that the Recognitions are not valid. We are far too diverse a Temple for every Master to personally oversee every Priesthood Recognition.

We know that, as Masters (even we have limited resources), we cannot know or be involved with everything that happens in the Temple of Set. It just isn't feasible. That means that I won't be involved in all forthcoming III^o Recognitions. Our Temple is so diverse in fact - in the number and timbre of Initiates, in the locale of Initiates, in the Work of Initiates - that it is entirely possible as few as *one* Master(s) will know that Adept 'X' is ready for the Priesthood and has been so ordained by Set. The very point of this dialogue, as I see it.

Most, if not all Masters have a revolving group of Setians of all Grade and Degree, with whom they communicate. There have been and will many cases where an Adept is, for example, in touch with these two Masters, but not with those three. For example, suppose an Adept were in regular communication with me, and perhaps Ipsissimus Lewis; but not with Magister Winkhart or Magistra Aquino. If either or both of us feel that this Adept is "ready" and/or has been ordained by Set (and, of course, if the Adept feels the same and has met our differing set of criteria), chances are we'll think in terms of Priesthood Recognition. And no doubt that, while the two of us will have some common ground in our sets of criterion, we'll have some different tools we both use as well. That we can, and should, bring this to the attention of other Masters is a sound practice. Look at the two pending Recognitions that Ipsissimus Lewis is dealing with right now, for an example of a thorough approach. And it should be noted that I've already stated that I strongly endorse and believe in the agreement we came to during Set-XII. The By-laws (re)inforce this.

So am I saying that some kind of practice of "polling" other members of the Magistri should be a done? Definitely. But, the question that thrusts itself into the forefront of my mind, is "to what extent"? The details of the answer should not (or even *cannot*) be legislated or enforced.

In the above example, to whom do Ipsissimus Lewis and I bring the matter of Adept 'X'? We could advise all Masters (this may yet be the best plan). But should we? What if we decide to ask Magistra Aquino and Magister Menschel for their input/perspective, but don't ask any other Master? Are we being punitive about who we *did not* ask? Speaking for myself, I suppose we could choose who we wished to advise. In doing such a thing, we wouldn't be playing favorites, nor would we be maliciously excluding a Master who felt s/he should have been advised. Hence, the arena of my concern.

I do not want to see a situation where we, as Masters, are walking on eggshells with each other. I don't want to see something take shape and evolve from these discussions that

means we are "forced" into actions we might not normally take. If we end up informing all Masters, well, perhaps so much the better. But there is yet another angle in all this too.

How long do we keep Adept 'X' hanging on, while we discuss back and forth (and forth and back) their possible Priesthood Recognition. Please hear me out before jumping on me! I believe I share the same concerns that we all do here. If an Adept has Become a Priest/ess, than the issue of his or her waiting is a moot point. I Understand this, and am comfortable with it. A Priest/ess will not be harmed by the wait. How long of a wait, though?

If we, as Masters, do inform all Masters of a pending III° Recognition, and it ends up that say, four IV°+ Initiates don't know much about Adept 'X', then what? What if those four Masters felt justified in not providing their perspective until they knew a great deal more about the Adept in question? Out of courtesy and respect to a fellow Master, I'd be inclined to hold off the Recognition (and have done so in the past). I know, it's not likely that it would come to that. But it's worth looking at.

I guess I'm saying that we have to have some mechanism in all of this that allows a Master to perform a Recognition in "due time" (whatever that is). Can you see what would happen if even one Master were allowed to insist on corresponding or otherwise communicating with an Adept until he or she was fully satisfied that the Adept had Become a Priest/ess? So much for the "green light" approach! That kind of situation will probably never arise; given the maturity, honesty, and keen judgmental powers of the Magistri. Also, we already know (and +/- agree) that, a Master wanting to Recognize the Adept could go ahead and do so anyway.

But that's not the point. I feel we have to be very careful about any "plan" we come up with involving sharing information about our candidates for the Priesthood. I do not wish to see any situation where an Adept was *unduly* kept waiting while the possibility of their Priesthood was discussed *ad infinitum*. Not only would that be unfair to the Adept (though not necessarily harmful), it goes against the grain of the "green light" approach to Recognitions.

The only grey area I see is that of differing perspective, and in this issue specifically, of differing criteria for Recognitions to the Priesthood of Set. I agree with Ipsissimus Lewis' comment that "... an Adept has been ordained by Set or he or she has not." and yet I see real room for differences of opinion.

For instance, if I fully believe that Adept 'X' has been ordained by Set - let me put this way, Adept 'X' is a Priest - and if there are other (not necessarily all) Masters who concur with my beliefs, then isn't that Adept a Priest of Set? If a member of the City later disagrees with me and/or other Masters on the point, does that mean that the Adept has not been ordained/is not a Priest of Set? How can an Adept both be ordained and not be ordained?

We cannot allow such a sacred act to deteriorate to the point of bickering (vs. dialogue). It wouldn't be right for one or more *Masters* (almost leaving Set out of the argument completely) to decide *against* the fate of an Adept Becoming a Priest/ess of Set. Which Master, or group of Masters, would it be? Who would arbitrate the outcome; group 'A' or group 'B'? This then is where our current dialogue, and the By-law changes, begin to affect matters. I guess what we're after, more than an overly-lengthy process of evaluation, is that important comment from a member of the Magistracy; the one that we might be totally unaware of as it pertains to our candidate(s) for the Priesthood.

I return to the reality of faith and trust (and I'm a prime candidate to do so). Here's a real-life case: I was *really* upset with the recent British Recognitions. In airing my thoughts with other Nobles and listening to their advice, I determined that the best possible course of action would not be mine, but rather the "actions" of the three new Priests. Hence, I wrote to all three (the process continues). Do we really want to get to the point where - in extreme examples - we are looking to reverse Recognitions that we personally don't approve of? I sincerely hope not. One of the more enduring teachers is time.

Isn't it evident that, barring our being in contact with the Adept being considered for the Priesthood, we may or MAY NOT see initial evidence of her/his Priesthood. It follows that if we're not in contact with the new Priest/ess, the exact same thing holds true. If I don't see the Priesthood in a Setian, for one reason or another, does that mean it isn't so? Will I then grudgingly treat them as a Priest/ess, against *my* better judgment?

The whole idea of our best possible evaluation was captured by Ipsissimus Lewis when he highlighted these words in his paper: "... insofar as I am able to appraise matters." So, sharing our thoughts with other Masters is the best solution (whatever the details or form of such a process). Given this, I still want to see the final matter of a Priesthood Recognition (continue to) rest squarely on the shoulders of the Master(s) most closely concerned with that Adept. If it ever comes to the point where the matter is contingent on the perspective of one-to-many other Masters, then shouldn't this end up with the Council?

Once again, I want to reiterate that the way Magister Menschel has presented his criteria is perhaps the starting point for our best approach ... at least in terms of the discussion(s) we're now having. It may end up that all Masters will present their criteria and that all criterion are assimilated into one Working paper. I'm in agreement with both Ipsissimus Lewis and Magister Menschel that the place for such a paper would be the Sapphire Tablet.

Both of the papers I have in front of me have caused me to take a good, hard look at the way I evaluate a potential new member of the Priesthood. In that, I feel both authors have accomplished at least part of what they set out to. Also, and this hasn't really come up yet, upon reading their papers and consolidating some of my thoughts, I've cast my Gaze at our present Priesthood. Has anyone else done the same?

I want to bring this into the open for two reasons. The first reason is that, in casting my Gaze at our present III° Priesthood, I see no "perfect" Priests or Priestesses. I see some that are working/Working harder than others. I see some Priests and Priestesses who are more visible than others. I see some of whose current Work I personally know nothing about. In all of this, I feel comfortable. Believe me, I'm not looking for defective members of the Priesthood! Rather, we are all different in our strengths and weaknesses and that's what I see. In fact, I see the Majesty of Set in our Priesthood and it is an awesome sight.

I feel comfortable that the processes governing the Recognitions to the Priesthood are intact (but in need of what we're giving them right now). Members of the Priesthood, as with all Setians of all Degrees, are distinct individuals. In that, we'll probably never find universal agreement on a case-by-case basis. At best, some Masters will say that Priest/ess 'X' is the greatest. Some won't. But then, each Master will have a different set of Priests or Priestesses that they are either working with, or more aware of than others.

The second reason I want to bring the matter of our *current* Priesthood into the open is closely aligned to the first. In looking at the criteria presented by the aforementioned Nobles, and at my own criteria, I asked myself this question: "How many members of our current Priesthood would meet all the criteria?" Should they?

I have a proposal. I feel we should give our current Priesthood an *overt* clean bill of health. We are trying to clarify matters here, and clear the air. How about some kind of a statement to the Temple about our current Priesthood (or to the Priesthood about our current Priesthood)? We could include a boost, a vote of confidence, a belief that all will continue as it should. In talking to various members of the Priesthood recently whose confidence wavered, I think it would help.

REPLY TO NEILLY ON III° RECOGNITIONS

Onyx Tablet: OT.O.4.8 © Temple of Set

Author: Robert Menschel IV°

Date: September 4, 1992 CE

Revision:

HTML Revision: August 8, 1999 CE

One of your most important comments was, "I do not want to see any Master pinned to the wall in the future by other IV°+ members demanding to know the items from the 'list' that s/he used in ascertaining that Adept 'X' had Become a Priest/ess." The Recognition of a Priest is a matter of personal judgment, made by someone well qualified to so judge. Once the Recognition is made and final, there can be no arguing about it.

Yes, I am concerned that there is danger for the Temple and its Initiates in the premature (or erroneous) Recognition of a Priest. But I also have confidence in my fellow Masters that the dangers will be kept minimal. The Temple of Set is in good hands.

Thank you for reminding us of the "green light" quality of Recognitions. While I personally am probably more conservative than most as far as giving the "green light", I am also very happy to grant the "green light" when I see no reason not to.

I consider myself as Councillor required by the By-Laws and by Set to evaluate every pending IV°+ Recognition, and to determine my own opinion concerning the pending degree. That determination has three possible opinions: Yes, No, and Maybe. I'll always vote "No" when that's my determination. But when the determination is "Maybe", my vote will favor the "green light" unless I have some strong reason to vote otherwise.

When the pending Grade is the III°, I myself won't perform a Recognition unless I Know this person is a Priest of Set. However I'll always favor a Recognition unless I Know this person is not a Priest - in which case I'll let the Magister proposing the Recognition know of my opinions and reasons.

You point out "that it is entirely possible as few as one Master(s) will know that Adept 'X' is ready for the Priesthood and has been so Ordained by Set." You then ask, "How

long do we keep Adept 'X' hanging on, while we discuss back and forth (and forth and back) their possible Priesthood Recognition?"

I understand the concern, and I feel that the rules we have agreed upon do not impose an excessive delay. The minimum delay required by these rules is one month, and I see little reason to take more than that for all but the most "questionable"(?) of Recognitions.

If there are but two additional Masters who are familiar with and support the Recognition of the proposed Priest, then there need be no further delay. If the proposed Priest has not been in such contact with three Masters, then one month should be more than enough time to "convince" one or two masters to give the "green light" to the Recognition.

Indeed, knowing the new rules, I expect that when I see any Adept nearing the III^o I shall be encouraging that Adept to be in active correspondence with several of the Magistracy (and the Magistracy will know why). When I have determined that the time for Recognition has come, I expect there to be no difficulties at all.

What if some other four Masters of the Temple have not been able to develop the knowledge of the initiate such that they too can confirm the Recognition? Then they will have plenty of opportunity to develop such knowledge after the Recognition has become official. One Magister Recognizes a Priest. Two more confirm it. Everyone else can sit back and wait for the results.

The only important consideration is when a Master of the Temple (or in the new bylaws, any active Priest) reports some item or argues convincingly against III^o Recognition. Then the proposing Magister Templi has the option of withdrawing the proposed Recognition, if the argument and/or facts are convincing enough.

That is our one "safety" measure, if you will, our insurance against "ill-advised" Recognitions, and a one month delay is certainly well worth this insurance.

You ask, "Can you see what would happen if even one Master were allowed to insist on corresponding or otherwise communicating with an Adept until he or she was fully satisfied that the Adept had Become a Priest/ess?" Yes, but such is not a part of the Recognition process. Years ago when there were but a handful of Masters, such insistence might have been a danger had Recognition been more complex than just one Master's declaration. Now with a dozen Masters, we can comfortably rely on each other to confirm appropriate Recognitions, and we need not insist on participating in each and every Recognition.

Concerning your other question, "If I fully believe that Adept 'X' has been Ordained by Set -- let me put this way, Adept 'X' is a Priest -- and if there are other (not necessarily all) Masters who concur with my beliefs, then isn't that Adept a Priest of Set?" Most definitely. "If a member of the City later disagrees with me and/or other Masters on the point, does that mean that the Adept has not been Ordained/is not a Priest of Set? How can an Adept both be Ordained and not be Ordained?"

It means that an inhabitant of the City disagrees with us. But the Priest has been Recognized, and is Ordained, by all the rules of the Temple of Set. The only way that initiate can "lose" the III° is through his own actions, through his rejection of his own *Xeper* and/or his responsibilities as Priest.

More to the point, if a Recognition is proposed, and someone (Priest or Master) brings forth serious argument against the Recognition, that Recognition is still to be determined by the Recognizing Master, and still to be confirmed by two other Masters. If those three feel the Recognition is warranted, then the Recognition proceeds, and the initiate is declared Priest. The Priest or Master who argued against same may not "like" the situation, but the Recognition is fact, and the rest is up to the new Priest.

You then ask, "If I don't see the Priesthood in a Setian, for one reason or another, does that mean it isn't so? Will I then grudgingly treat them as a Priest/ess, against my better judgment?" I am confident that you will. They have been properly Recognized, and in fairness deserve to be given all due respect and honor, responsibility and authority, appropriate for a new Priest of Set. Everyone may not like them or give them immediate trust in sensitive or personal matters, they should have a chance to demonstrate what made them seem worthy to the one who Recognized them. They have earned their "green light".

Therefore, I fully support the new policy found in the bylaws that we notify not only the entire Magistracy, but the entire Priesthood, of a pending Recognition. It provides us more opportunity for the warning voice that says, "Consider this...". And it allows us to proceed with the Recognition if we can find but two other Masters willing to give the "green light" to the new Priest.

There will be disagreements, and we will continue to Recognize to the Priesthood an occasional Adept about whom another Master feels strongly (or at least strongly suspects that) the initiate is not a Priest. That has been our history, and such will continue in our future. We must recognize this, and not let our differences of opinion get in our way.

My vision of the future Temple of Set includes a perfect Magistracy, unable to disagree about obvious facts such as whether someone has become Priest or not. But I suspect we are a century or two away from that vision ...

You "question that the Priesthood is not part of the 'normal' course of events." You point out that "if an Adept can (consciously) strive towards the Priesthood, isn't that act (of striving) 'normal', at least for that Adept? If the act of striving is normal, what of the attainment of the Priesthood?"

I think we are looking at the Priesthood's "abnormality" from two different directions. I agree with you fully that Priesthood can be an "expected" event in many Adepts' growth. The great majority of Adepts who remain within the Temple of Set do in time become Priest. However, the "event" of Becoming Priest is an inherently unnatural event. It requires action outside of the "normal" objective and subjective universe of the Adept.

Because of the magical culture of *Xeper* within the Temple of Set, those Adepts who remain with us for a long period of time generally do explore not only the limits of their universes, but explore past them into the "unnatural". In doing so, they work towards and "normally" Become Priest. The language is awkward. Perhaps we need a better way to discuss this.

Thank you for discussing also our current Priesthood. Yes, I've been "reviewing" our present Priesthood (I've been doing so almost constantly since having been appointed to the Chair, but this "review" has had a different flavor since we started this discussion.). Like you, "I see no 'perfect' Priests or Priestesses" (though I see one or two who come close). "I see some that are working/Working harder than others. I see some Priests and Priestesses who are more visible than others. I see some of whose current Work I personally know nothing about. In all of this, I feel comfortable."

I also see some discomfort within the Priesthood concerning the changes. I personally haven't seen or talked with anyone concerned about their status as Priest, but more just discomforted by an element of change which they voted for but which they certainly don't understand as well as we do. I too would like to "give our current Priesthood an overt clean bill of health. We are trying to clarify matters here, and clear the air." Dr. Aquino has done a very good job of applauding the Priesthood from time to time, and I agree with you that now would be a good time for another "pat on the back" for our Priesthood, perhaps in *Hieroglyphs*, or in the *Scroll*, and at Conclave.

PRIESTHOOD MEMBERSHIP EXPULSION AUTHORITY

Onyx Tablet: OT.O.4.9 © Temple of Set

Author: Michael Aquino VI°

Date: 1997 CE

Revision:

HTML Revision: August 8, 1999 CE

I understand there has been some recent discussion concerning the absolute authority of any III°+ to expel any I°/II° from the Temple. I thought I might provide a little background concerning this feature of the Temple:

Back in the 1966-75 Church of Satan, only Anton LaVey could admit someone to membership, or expel a member. This was not a problem when (66-70) the Church was essentially just a local group in San Francisco meeting at the LaVeys' home. Once the Church began to expand nationally, however, a membership base began to grow which the LaVeys did not know personally. Also there gradually came into being various members of the Priesthood in other areas of the country.

Things bogged down when the III°+ and Grotto Leaders could not on their own authority admit anyone to membership, but had to wait for Diane or Anton to act on an application.

Similarly if a III°+ encountered a "bad apple" I°/II° member, the Priest or Priestess could not expel the individual for any cause whatever. All that could be done was a recommendation to the LaVeys, who would make a decision "from a distance". In practice this caused various small problems to grow into bigger ones. A side effect was that it markedly weakened the perceived authority of [and evident trust in] members of the Priesthood, causing them to be seen as "messengers" rather than as "decision makers".

When the Temple of Set was founded, both of these features were addressed. On the admission side, admission of an applicant would be immediate and automatic if a III°+ sponsored it.

On the expulsion side, expulsion of a I°/II° would also be immediate at the discretion of any III°. This placed a great deal of trust on the Priesthood not to abuse this authority, but the atmosphere in the Temple of Set has always been that the Priesthood of Set *is* an office of great trust. Our history has since demonstrated that this trust in the Priesthood has been well placed, and a strong feature of our design.

The expulsion authority has been absolute, also, in that any III° can expel /II°, even though the I°/II° might be located around the planet or in a Pylon or Order headed by some other III°. This is because the deciding III° is assumed to have some direct or immediate knowledge or evidence prompting the decision, which may not have been evident to a Sentinel or Order GM.

As it has evolved over the years since 1975, this I°/II° expulsion authority has been used rarely and carefully. And generally if a III° invoking it knows the person to be working with some other III°, the two III°s will confer about it as a matter of courtesy. But this has not been a requirement.

If an expelled I°/II° feels that the expulsion was unjust, he/she has been able to appeal to the High Priest, who under the By-Laws must approve the readmission of anyone expelled for cause. Upon a High Priest decision for readmission in such cases, the Council of Nine must also approve the High Priest's decision.

PRIESTHOOD WORKSHOP

Onyx Tablet: OT.O.4.10 © Temple of Set

Author: Robertt Neilly IV^o and Elizabeth Neilly III^o

Date: January 25, 1997 CE

Revision:

HTML Revision: August 8, 1999 CE

WELCOMING LETTER

Dear Adepts,

Salut and warm greetings! Since the founding of the Temple of Set, before that the Church of Satan, and before that ... well, many different organizations and initiatory methodologies, true aspirants have attained the *Highest of Life* only through diligent, hard work. Only through personal effort, personal destiny, and the hand of Set does an Adept ever become a Priest or Priestess. Were there another way, the Temple would be - instead of a fellowship of Left-Hand Path elites - just another club, chock-full of card-carrying couch-magicians.

How do we know that *Xeper* works, or that an aspirant really has become something he was not? Look at yourself in the mirror. If you find this uncomfortable, so much the better. The truth of Becoming is the manifest Being.

The "job" of Becoming something you were not before is yours alone. Truly others before you have blazed trails. Some have even been iconoclastic in their self-delivery and [re]manifestation of the Gift. So the Priesthood of Set stands as convincing and noble testimony that those who are Initiates of it have preceded even yourself.

But each of you, for reasons as different as your needs and expressions, now believes yourself to be on a path leading to the Priesthood. Each has felt or will feel the startling touch of Set upon your brow.

With fits and starts you pursue your manifold futures. In keeping with an ancient and proven tradition - one which I have firmly ensconced in my own life - I know that you

now ask yourself this question: To whom can I turn? To whom indeed aside from yourself?

You have come to know that "guidance" does not mean "favors", nor appointments nor handouts. You think you have come to know what it is like to be alone; that, my Dark Friends, is yet to [Be]come.

Each of you has embraced, according to individual strengths and weaknesses, the truism that you are the sole author of your initiation. Only you, through your will, can determine what happens next. But what of guidance, of those other "beacons in the night"?

First, each of you should be interacting with one or more Initiates of the III°. Who more than they would know the intimate conditions, perils, and pitfalls of their "freakish" state of being? You cannot "demand" that one of them will work with you or assist you to attain III° initiation. This you must accomplish alone. Similarly, should a Master of the Temple agree to work with you towards III° Recognition, that Master will not supplant your own initiative.

I have no intention of interfering with this wonderfully non-natural process. By all means proceed as you think suited to you. However, in thinking about the [un]common ground each of you shares, I *did* arrive at the idea for this workshop.

What are your feelings about the value of a workshop to facilitate your initiatory quests? Such an afternoon/evening affair would not replace the relationships you've already formed, the work you're doing now, or the Initiates with whom you're working. Its purpose is rather to bring together three of you who happen to have the same initiatory ambition. It would accord you concentrated access to a Master and Priestess for the express purpose of exploring the potential for the Black Flame which resides within you. We would be delighted to help you focus yourselves.

If you participate, I will ensure that all participants have an equal voice and equal time. In addition to direction and focus, you will also be there to hear wisdom, however it may appear. Except for any side-issues relevant to the Priesthood, we will not veer off the workshop's theme. It will not be a social session nor a Pylon meeting, though there will be time for socializing later.

Bring relevant questions and issues. It is your initiations that are concerned.

Xeper and Remanifest.
Robertt W. Neilly
Magister Templi IV°

AGENDA

1. OVERVIEW OF THE WORKSHOP.

-- a. Distribute and review Agenda, briefly discuss structure.

---- (1) *-issues may be bypassed if running short on time.

-- b. Introduction to the Workshop: its purpose and objectives.

---- (1) No guarantee any participant will achieve Priesthood.

---- (2) Try to be concise. A lot to cover. Time constraints will be in effect at times.

---- (3) Consider agenda as issue list. If not all points covered, must still be worked on.

---- (4) Workshop could be personally difficult at times. It's expected that all Adepts present will contribute equally.

---- (5) Workshop a way for Adepts to have better insight into the functions and expectations of the III^o while assisting their personal work towards the III^o.

-- c. Distribute and briefly discuss Magus Webb's Adept/Priesthood questions and the changing "requirements" for the upcoming Priesthood (handout).

2. INDIVIDUAL PERCEPTIONS AND EXPECTATIONS OF THE PRIESTHOOD.

-- a. * As Setians I^o.

-- b. As Adepts II^o.

---- (1) We discuss our impressions before and after being Recognized to the III^o.

-- c. Expectations from the Temple as a whole - the Priesthood's role within the Temple.

---- (1) Formal Recognition will be one of the last recognitions received. Rarely are there "pats on the back" or acknowledgement for jobs done. You're on your own.

3. OUTER TEMPLE: ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES.

-- a. Being known to I^os by submitting an updated ICR entry soon after Recognition.

-- b. Being accessible and committed to I^o and II^os through timely, well-written correspondence.

-- c. Requirements for Recognitions to the II^o.

---- (1) Overview of the new "rule of thumb" - no handout.

-- d. * Pylon Sentinelship. Submissions to the *Scroll*.

-- e. Being "out there", noticeable.

4. OUTER TEMPLE: PROTOCOL.

-- a. * Distribution and brief overview of Protocol section from the *Crystal Tablet* (handout).

---- (1) If not enough time to distribute, advise them to review this section on their own.

-- b. I° and II° protocol expectations when interacting with the Priesthood. Respect given to the III° and respect received from the III°.

-- c. As a Priest/ess, your expectations of I°/II° levels of protocol directed towards you. Are you as Adepts currently exercising these same criteria?

---- (1) Promptly responding to requests from the Priesthood (and senior. Initiates)?

---- (2) Accepting and acknowledging the current Priesthood's advice and authority?

-- d. How do you currently handle authority - now as an Adept and later as a Priest/ess?

---- (1) When you become a III°, you still have to abide the authority of more senior Initiates - Masters, the Council of Nine, the High Priest.

5. OUTER TEMPLE: PROTOCOL AND THE TEMPLE ROSTER.

-- a. Security and Guardianship - entrusted with the safe keeping of the Temple and its membership.

---- (1) Living with a "trusted" person, either non-III°+ Setian or non-Setian.

---- (2) The roster is "sacred" - not to be shared with any other non-III°+.

---- (3) In any ethical/privacy/trust-issue, the Temple will take appropriate actions concerning offenders.

6. OUTER TEMPLE: ETHICS AND TRUST.

-- a. Priesthood interaction with I°/II° Setians.

---- (1) Not using III° authority to take advantage of or intimidate I°/II°s, personally, sexually, etc.

---- (2) Privacy and trust if discussing sensitive personal issues with a I°/II°.

---- (3) Letter writing to I°/II° is a personal exchange. You should not have a non-III° assist you in writing such letters. If you feel your skills are lacking, it's your responsibility to brush-up, or ask another III°+ for help.

-- b. Appropriateness of and/or necessity for destruction rituals.

---- (1) Empowered as a III°.

7. OUTER TEMPLE: COMMUNICATION.

-- a. As an official of the Temple, representing Temple to non-Setians and to very new Setians, or to the media, you must present an appropriate impression of the Temple and Priesthood.

---- (1) Clear, verbal communication skills.

---- (2) If weak in grammar and spelling, brush up, buy a book [relay story of another Adept - now Priest - who brushed up].

---- (3) If need help in an area, ask for assistance, objective viewpoint.

8. * OUTER TEMPLE: ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION AND BY-LAWS.

-- a. * History of and necessity for.

-- b. * Use in facilitating the magical entity.

9. OUTER TEMPLE: LEADERSHIP.

-- a. * Expected leadership role in workings.

---- (1) Working participants defer to III° present.

---- (2) Priesthood can assign roles/parts in workings. These shouldn't be refused [It's an honor to be asked.]. If they are refused, how to handle the situation.

-- b. Leadership role in meetings or as called upon by the High Priest or Council of Nine.

---- (1) Handling difficult personality conflicts, being asked to investigate or mediate conflict, expulsion options, impartiality.

10. OUTER TEMPLE: ROLE OF THE PRIESTHOOD OF SET IN SOCIETY.

-- a. To what extent does or should the Priesthood "blend in"?

---- (1) In most instances (work environments, etc.) it's unwise to "advertise" oneself too much.

---- (2) Personal stories?

-- b. Emulation vs. the real thing.

---- (1) If you do advertise yourself, expect to be tested. Are you all "smoke and mirrors" or the genuine article? How much do you need to put on an act or dress as you think a III° is supposed to in order to be perceived as what you are?

-- c. The III° is sanctioned by the Temple. How would or does this impact on the mundane world?

-- d. Success in the mundane world: why it's important, not necessarily riches and fame.

11. OUTER TEMPLE: RECOGNIZING AN ADEPT II°.

-- a. What would you look for in evaluating a I° for the II°?

-- b. How would you know a I° is most likely an Adept?

---- (1) Loyalty to the Temple.

---- (2) Demonstration of magical ability.

---- (3) Control of personal life.

12. CURRENT ISSUES UNDER DISCUSSION BY THE PRIESTHOOD.

-- a. * Destruction rituals performed by I°s.

---- (1) III° response: encouragement/discouragement.

-- b. Email vs. postal mail.

---- (1) The impulsiveness of email.

---- (2) Pros of postal mail and "real" letters when dealing with I°/II°s.

-- c. Sexual ethics.

13. INTELLECT AND THE HEART.

-- a. Bridge to the Inner Temple.

-- b. Over-analysis: Risk of not experiencing essence of the issue, never touch its truth, truly experience it - miss its meaning.

-- c. By over-analyzing you're not truly committed to the issue, but hiding in "fear" behind facts and figures.

-- d. By being overly mystical, you're out-of-touch with objective reality and have no way to substantiate or recognize progress.

14. INNER TEMPLE: COMMITMENT

-- a. Unknown territories.

---- (1) Ready to commit to something you know little or nothing about?

---- (2) Base commitment on faith only.

15. INNER TEMPLE: ANUBIS IS WHAT HE EATS.

-- a. State of being.

---- (1) Personal changes.

---- (2) Autonomy of work - alone realization.

---- (3) Access to previously-inaccessible knowledge.

---- (4) "Up becomes down".

---- (5) Inertia, III^o head-on with inertia from natural order, more necessary to overcome it.

---- (6) Before and after Recognition: work without lust of result.

-- b. Neters/magical names: Describe and discuss each of your Neters/magical names. Why chosen, what is their function for you, and what role do they play in your initiation?

---- (1) Not necessary, but most III^os do have a Neter and/or name.

-- c. Objective reality of Set - or: Are you Set for this?

---- (1) You will be compelled to examine the reality of Set.

---- (2) Does it matter?

16. PERSONAL DISCUSSION.

-- a. Each Adept will meet with the workshop Masters/Priests alone for approximately 15-20 minutes.

---- (1) What was Set to you as a I°, and as a II°? Do you think that your view will change as a III°?

---- (2) How do you worship Set?

---- (3) What is your greatest fear in regard to becoming a Priest or Priestess?

---- (4) In what ways can this be resolved?

---- (5) What do you think your greatest obstacle is at this moment to becoming III°?

---- (6) Any other issues the Adept desires to bring up.

---- (7) Last thing: Envelope with an issue all workshop participants must face. Select paper from envelope, and contemplate it without discussion with others. The issues will then be group-discussed.

17. * DISCUSSION OF PRIESTHOOD INITIATION ISSUES AND RESOLUTIONS.

18. ADEPT TIME.

-- a. Each Adept will have 30 minutes to bring up any desired issues, questions, concerns, areas of current work.

19. WORKSHOP FOLLOW-UP.

-- a. Within a month all participants will submit their impressions of the workshop in writing to the workshop coordinators. Comments concerning the program, its usefulness to you personally, and what if anything you gained from it.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- by Don Webb V°, High Priest of Set

1. How do you assess your changing relationships to Setians I° and other Adepts II°? How would you relate to them differently as a Priest?

2. As a hypothetical exercise in the "exercise of the Black Flame", by what criteria would you Recognize a Setian I° as an Adept II°?

3. How has your relationship with the Prince of Darkness changed over the last year?

4. What do you see as the role of the Temple of Set in contemporary society? Why do we exist, and what are our social obligations if any?

5. Why do you want to be a Priest of Set? What would that provide to your initiation that being an Adept does not?

6. Priests need people with whom to work. What do you intend to do to increase Temple membership in your own circles of communication?

7. In the Temple we sometimes forget that initiation is a lifelong affair, because the outward signs of Recognition come relatively early. What would you do to encourage a continuous approach to initiation? Why should anyone aged 70 be a Setian?

8. Do you feel that you've cultivated yourself enough in your Order work that you can give up the relatively fun life of an Adept for the very arduous responsibilities of the Priesthood? What will you take from your Order work into the Priesthood?

9. As an Adept you can "turn on/turn off" your initiatory life at will. A Priest or Priestess is one all of the time. A smart III^o doesn't advertise Priestly credentials in hostile territory, but these will nevertheless exert their influence. What influence do you think you will be exerting at your profane work or school?

THE NINE STEPS FOR SETIAN RECOVERY

Onyx Tablet: OT.O.4.11 © Temple of Set

Author: Curt Rowlett III^o and Don Webb
V^o

Date: November 20, 1997 CE

Revision:

HTML Revision: June 11, 1998 CE

ON DEPENDENCY by Magus Webb

This is for those members of the Priesthood that may have to deal with substance abuse in either themselves or others. Let's begin by killing a few myths, shall we?

The popular figure of the drug or alcohol addict is a guy lying in the gutter clutching a paper-covered bag containing a bottle of Thunderbird. Here's a better picture: intern of the year, a successful lawyer, Priest Curt Rowlett, Magus Don Webb, Ipsissimus Aleister Crowley.

Addicts make good sorcerers. They can put on any number of masks. They can lie to anyone--especially themselves. They generally do a good deal more in the world than their non-addicted fellows. (Try having a \$300.00 a day habit, it does great things to your earning power).

Drugs, alas, do open the Magical Link. They blur subjective and objective realities, no doubt about that. But they end the Secret of Setian Magic. Socrates said that the purification of the psyche came from Inquiry--that asking the TOUGH (and sometimes dumb-sounding questions)--after all "great philosophy comes from stupid questions" as my friend and novelist Rob Hardin is apt to say. Ipsissimus Aquino says that the process you have to go through to get to that place where you can Work magic (i.e., the concentration of Self into a Force) is purifying for the psyche. Drugs stop inquiry or at least stop successful inquiry. If this is unclear to you, hang around a bunch of pot-smoking teenagers discussing life. Drugs stop the Essential process of magic. You don't have to make an effort. So the magic isn't Setian. It is Apepian, it works AGAINST your dreams.

My addiction was long ago and far away in the drug-soaked Seventies. I had a love for methamphetamine. A brilliant drug for a brilliant guy. I lost a lot: A very great deal of my life, including about 20 I.Q. points, a few good friends and chance at a decent education. I also did some long-term damage to my body that didn't show up for 17 years.

I mention this not as the "Cult of the Victim, please feel sorry for me," but so that you'll know that substance abuse can gain root in any Setian. In fact, as magicians we are more prone to self-justification than anyone else. It (like paranoia) is a form of Apepian magic that Setians practice all the time. Other humans do as well, but we are sadly better at it. Once you are a magician your magic will Work, even in directions you don't want it to.

If you or some Setian in your charge has substance abuse issues, don't approach them in a "hellfire and brimstone" manner. Christ, they found us by running away from that nonsense. Don't be patronizing, don't be easy. Stick to your principles and:

1. Give them this essay to read.
2. Emphasize that Black magic and substance abuse don't mix. Period.
3. Remember that these people are interested in self change, if they can. Strengthen that emotion over such human things as guilt and denial, they've got an edge.
4. Getting free of the substance is the most important thing they can do. That really means getting out of the Temple and into an accredited support group. That's what they owe themselves, the Temple is involved in self change activities that may at worst be harmful to them and at best be sort of tangential to what they're doing. The Temple will be around, and when they come back it will be part of their job to see that it stays around for others who have to pursue their self-improvement elsewhere.
5. Tell them you would like some kind of report from their group leader after they've been clean for nine months. Don't re-sponsor them to the Temple without it. Yeah, I know this is a damn hard thing to ask. I also know the value of the word of the abuser--the drug can speak through their lips.
6. If you want to, stay in touch with them during the hell they're about to undergo. This will try your soul as well, because it isn't quick, easy or linear. If you can't do this, do not feel bad. It is very rough.
7. There's a lot of anger and denial in drug abuse. (As in "there's a lot of water in the Pacific ocean"). If people come to you to talk about things, they may be shocked at these recommendations, but their Will-to-Xeper will help them accept this. If you have to go to them, things may be a lot

worse. If there's trouble that the drug abuser makes, don't hesitate to remove them from the Temple. Hope that the shock may awaken them.

8. Keep these matters as private as you can. The Temple exists to facilitate Initiation. Our job is both helping the abuser see what to do to find clarity in his or her own life, and to protect the Temple by removing distracting influences.

9. Give them Priest Rowlett's Nine Steps. It will help them cut through the RHP trappings of most recovery groups.

Remind them and yourself to be gentle with our own selves and that everything is temporary.

INTRODUCTION TO THE SETIAN NINE STEPS

by Priest Rowlett

The Setian Nine Steps is a plan for recovery from addictions that is adapted from the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous. Interwoven with this analysis are a few parts of my own story regarding my addiction to alcohol.

My story is not a unique one in the annals of addiction history. Indeed, I've met and listened to hundreds of people just like myself who have overcome addictions and started on the long process of "giving themselves back to themselves" and who have learned how to live productive, chemical-free lives along the way. But perhaps uniquely, this plan for recovery is written by Initiates of the Temple of Set with the idea in mind of helping others within the ranks of the Temple who may feel that they are edging into or have already crossed over into addictive behaviors and lifestyles. I am not a professional addictionologist, but I am a recovering alcoholic who has several years of sobriety under his belt. As such, I have already stood where you may stand today and can offer you my strength and experience only. My words here are but a prelude. My fondest hope is that others will find the courage, strength and wisdom to expand on and improve upon these simple Nine Steps and to offer other perspectives with the focus on creating a healing environment for others.

When practicing these steps, understand that the design is geared towards what is common to most chemical addictions and as such, can accommodate the Initiate who seeks recovery. The program is intended to work for those who approach the Nine Steps with fierce honesty and a dedication to changing their lives.

The Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous

(included for comparison purposes)

1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol - that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

The Nine Steps for Setian Recovery

1. I admit to myself that I have become powerless over my addictions and that my life has become unmanageable because of them.

You've heard the old cliché, "Watch that first step, its murder." The First Step in the Setian Nine Step program is the hardest and most painful step you may ever take because it requires one to do what no human being or Setian seems to ever really want to do: admit defeat. No one truly likes to admit that they have been beaten, and to some extent,

recognizing a seemingly insurmountable obstacle like an addiction may even be harder for Setians in significant ways.

My own story includes the delusion of grandeur that because I was a Setian, I could handle alcohol and that alcoholism and addictions were something that happened to the weak and non-Initiated herds out therein the land of the mere humans. Incredibly, I believed this right up to the very moment that I reached the bottom of my lowest bottom ever during a particularly heinous drinking bout that lasted for over a week.

Finally, at what was the lowest point in my life, all of my illusions regarding this were gone and I was able to realize that there was no more room in my life for denial. I was a Setian who was addicted to alcohol. I could no longer control my drinking or manage my own life. The hardest thing I ever did was to admit to myself that I was an alcoholic and that I could not have even one drink without setting into motion a whole terrible cycle and chain of events that comprised a typical drinking session for me towards the end of my drinking days. But by simply finding the courage to acknowledge my addiction and admit to myself that I couldn't control this behavior and having been honest enough with myself to seriously consider what being addicted really meant, I had taken the first and most crucial step towards my recovery from addiction and towards my own Willful healing.

2. My Knowledge of my past Xeper lets me know that I can overcome this state by harnessing my resources. I know it will be very hard, but I know others have had to do this.

Most Twelve Step recovery programs are molded on and/or influenced by the original program developed by Alcoholics Anonymous. The Nine Step program is no different, being basically a stripped-down version of the A.A. program with all references about praying to a god to deliver one from addictions removed. Godly references have been replaced by those Magical Tools that an Initiate of the Temple of Set already possesses. (No detailed discussion regarding the why of the removal of this should be necessary here, but you are of course welcome and encouraged to expand on this idea as much as you desire because I believe that it is such an important distinction for Setians).

I remember realizing that it was my own Will that allowed me to begin to drink alcoholically and finally, I was able to use that same strength and force of Will to regain the clarity that eventually delivered me from the compulsion to drink. In the Nine Step program, we can rely on our past Magical Tools, Force of Will and our past Understanding alone to restore us to the health and full clarity that we once had and which shall eventually allow us to overcome our own selves and begin on the path to recovery.

3. I will make a searching and fearless moral inventory of myself.

With Step Three, it is time to be more honest with yourself than you have ever been in your entire existence. Addicted persons are masters of deception. We learn to be that way

in order for the addicted part of ourselves to survive. Not so strangely, in many ways Initiates of the Temple of Set, who are already Masters of Lesser Black Magic, may truly be the most adept at disguising an addiction from the rest of the world and, most unfortunately of all, from ourselves. In a sense, we were practicing LBM on ourselves. When taking moral inventory, you must face the mirror of Maat and, holding nothing back, be as fearless as you were when you first "Dared the Black Magic."

4. I will admit to myself and to other human beings the exact nature of my shortcomings. I will make this admission to other parts of the Cosmos as well in private ritual.

This step is designed to help end the cycle of deception that allowed us to drink and use in the first place. Because we now open up with the Truth about ourselves to another person or persons whom we love and trust. The idea behind this is to promote the healing that will occur when our closely guarded secret is now out and we can begin to free ourselves from the burden that having to live within such a negative deception can cause. Having accomplished this, we can begin to establish new trust. With such a step, we begin to reaffirm a commitment to truthfulness and honesty. Doing this, we take an important step towards recovering a new sense of humility and freedom that unburdening the soul can bring. Step Three is the beginning of the path leading towards the complete honesty that is necessary to sustain us.

5. I will make a list of all persons I have harmed, and I will become willing to make amends to them all. I will Pledge to transform myself so that I am powerful enough to make amends to them.

Now here you need to answer a question, "Hey I'm a Black Magician, why do I have to worry about others?" The answer here is that -- the way we treat those who matter to us is an extension of how we treat ourselves. The fact that we have assigned positive meanings to these people means they stand for Good (Self-pleasing) aspects of our psyche, and if we have made war against them in the objective universe, we have made war against ourselves in the subjective universe. This list can include yourself, your Aunt Martha or Uncle Hubert, your parents, coworkers, a partner, lover, the clerk at the grocery store, etc.

Step Five is a prelude to the actual act of humility required by Step Six. In a sense, a person seeking recovery may be the last one to know just how much the abuse of and addiction to substances affects those persons who care about them the most. Although I was never a verbally or physically abusive person while drunk, I came to realize that when I was drinking, I was not at all available emotionally to those around me because I was locked so deeply within myself that I neglected many significant relationships through my drunken indifference to others. It took me a long time to realize that even ignoring someone who is desperately trying to reach you can be emotionally abusive behavior.

The Initiates who desire recovery again must dig deep into themselves and their past and examine closely how their life as an addict has affected other people in his/her life. This is not an easy task, because there may be those about whom you feel that you could never

under any circumstances make amends to because of a past transgression or hurt on their part. In such a case, don't worry about care-taking for the other's behavior, but do attempt to closely examine your own behavior and motivations for your feelings in relation to that person. Other people's lies, deceptions, tricks, manipulations, abusive and inappropriate behaviors belong to them, not to you. You may choose to simply be willing to cop to your own ten cents worth and let the other person worry about theirs.

6. I will make direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.

This can be accomplished in a face to face manner, as in the Fourth Step, via telephone or by writing an e-mail or letter to the person. (I have even made amends by speaking aloud to a star-filled night sky to a person whom I could never hope to speak to again in this lifetime. It works). The main thing to consider with Step Six is whether or not contacting a person from your past will cause further harm to them due to possibly strong feelings that they may still harbor towards you. (You should very much consider your own feelings here, as well). Only you can truly judge what will be the best approach. Like Steps Four and Five, an actual act of humility is involved. When working with my long list during the initial stages of my recovery, I was able to contact almost everyone and for the most part, found that my act of humility towards them by owning up to my transgressions was so appreciated that I renewed and strengthened many important relationships in my life.

7. I will continue to take personal inventory and when I am wrong, promptly admit it.

Let's clarify here that Step Seven is not so that we can see Setians on their knees in constant acts of humbling themselves (unless you are into that sort of thing, which is a completely different program!) but rather this step is a call for a continuation of the honesty and understanding of one's self that will sustain the person in recovery and strengthen our Wills for the continued purpose of fighting addictions.

8. I will seek through Knowledge, Understanding and Initiation to improve my conscious contact with my higher self, Working only for knowledge and the power to improve and strengthen my Will against addiction and self-destructive behavior.

With the regained clarity that sobriety brings us, we stand reunited with our Xeper in Step Eight. The Initiate is restored to his/her original purpose as an Initiate of the Temple of Set and seeks to continue on the path to Xeper, the reason we are all here to begin with.

9. I will regain my clarity as the result of these steps and I will try to carry this message to others with addictions in order to Strengthen my resolve and further Set's purpose of ending delusion. I will practice my hard won principles in All affairs of my life, even though this will often not be the popular or easy way and I will be justly proud of my Xeper. May my Working resound through the Universe!

The idea to develop and offer a program for recovery to others within the Temple of Set is something that had been on my mind for a long time. As such, my desire to institute this program is my own Ninth Step. It is the Setian process to Learn, Abduct, Create and Teach. That we have many things to Learn in the world, we have a duty to Abduct what Works. Make it personal by enactment (Create), and then, to strengthen the Creation in ourselves, Teach it. Thus in the fullness of time we will gather to ourselves all of the Workable wisdom of mankind, and as we "Spit it forth" we grow stronger, and the world will as well. This is the mandate of the Priesthood. For Set first (in this we are Eyes for Set), for ourselves, for our Temple, and finally for the world. From our struggles come the force against naturalization in the world, this fulfilling our bond with Set. Do What Thou Wilt Shall Be The Whole Of The Law. Great Is The Might Of Set, Greater Still He Through Us.

Many thanks go to our High Priest, Magus Webb, for his support of this idea and his Work on perfecting the language of the Nine Step program and for adding his own strength, clarity and wisdom to this commentary and program. In closing, I urge anyone who feels that they may have a problem with alcohol or other substances or knows someone who does to contact me at my e-mail or surface mail address. As in other recovery programs, anonymity and confidentiality shall be insured.

ON LEAVE-TAKING AND EXPULSIONS

Onyx Tablet:

OT.O.4.12

© Temple of Set

Author:

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Date:

January 15, 1998 CE

Revision:

HTML Revision:

June 11, 1998 CE

The Priesthood of Set has the job of facilitating Xeper. Sometimes that means we expel people, sometimes we talk people into staying, sometimes we give them the hard challenge of making up their own mind. There are not fast and hard rules for these decisions, but I would like to discuss how we make these decisions and some strategies that we use in implementing them.

HOW AND WHEN TO EXPEL

The overriding watchwords here are Judgment and Discernment. There will be a very few times you have to use expulsion. If the case is clear-cut (for example the Setian calls a press conference to give the **Temple's** views on some political matter), you need merely to send a registered letter to the Setian and copies explaining the situation to the High Priest, the Executive Director and the Treasurer. But in cases where things are not clear-cut (for example the Setian shows up drunk at a Pylon meeting), you need to do certain things. First is talk with the Setian. Secondly write to them, because if you go through with an expulsion, someone else in the Priesthood who will have had excellent interactions with the guy or gal will want to know what's up. Thirdly you should talk with other III°+who know the Initiate, and with the Master who Recognized you to the Priesthood. Then if you decide the expulsion is a wise thing, proceed as outlined above.

The Temple will refund the unused dues of people we expel; however we do not advertise that fact.

Here are some things to remember. What you are looking for is whether or not this person's pattern behavior interferes with the Xeper of others. There is a difference in finding someone rude and slovenly -- which is a reason to have no more to do with them - - than finding someone a hindrance to others.

After you make an expulsion you need to write a letter to the people involved with the expulsion. You should tell them why you expelled the person, what steps you had taken to counsel them, and finally what you think is acceptable and unacceptable behavior in a Setian or an Adept.

WHEN NOT TO EXPEL

The Temple is an elitist organization. It does not try for neo-tribalism, it is not interested in retention of members. The Temple will retain members if and only if **it is doing what it is designed to do**. Returning the Temple to its Design with each conscious action is the Duty of the Priesthood.

When you have decided that a First Degree would be better off not pursuing the Temple, it is all right to talk to them, and suggest that they might not want to renew at dues time. This is within your job. The Priesthood has a great Power in that it is dealing with psyches that are still dependent on signals from without, but has made the leap of cutting out most of the signals. The Priesthood's power to send a signal of success or lack of progress is its most important and sacred tool. Be very careful in its use, and always talk to another III^o+ in this matter.

WHEN TO COUNSEL

The world lacks traditions of Initiation and Religion. This means that most people entering the Temple, or even remaining in the Second Degree for years, largely view the Temple as a hobby. When our lives are taken up by "real" matters like illness, school, employment issues --we give up our hobbies.

Sometimes even our best and brightest will do this. Whereas we always respect the right of the person to decide, we have the Obligation to express our higher feelings in the matter.

Such leave-taking is a bad thing because real Initiation much more often takes place in dealing with these issues than it does in writing articles for the Pylon newsletter. It is important to point out when someone comes to you about leaving under such stresses, that the time of their Initiation is NOW, and that the act of keeping magical contact with the Temple is an important act of Will. Offer to help them out by letting certain people know they are alive (if not perhaps well) during their Ordeal.

If they are still unconvinced you may point out to them, that they are paid for the rest of the year, they might as well continue to get the Scroll and so forth. This gives them space to consider what they are doing in an Initiatory light. We do not refund unused dues to people leaving voluntarily

Lastly you can remind them of their good work, and tell them the Temple's door will be open to them.

WHEN TO SAY NOTHING

If a Setian or Adept approaches you and talks about leaving -- and you feel neither a profound sense of relief, nor a spasm of regret say nothing. If they have made no impression on you, it means they have not Awakened to the Setian system. Perhaps the decision making process will lead them to an Awakening.

IF YOU DECIDE TO LEAVE

Often Priests and Priestesses may decide that they need to leave the Temple. Many will question whether they were ever truly Elected to the Office because of this action. Sometimes such questions are very valid, other times the Priest or Priestess has been deflected by an external issue -- and whereas they believe that their action will somehow help the Temple or themselves -- they merely remove themselves from the place where Action is Needed.

If you are thinking about leaving, ask yourself as to your motives. Most Priests that leave have had one or two events occur:

- One, they have allowed themselves to be trapped in a negative feedback loop. They have found the one Master or Priest that they can not under any circumstances get along with and then spend all their time exchanging mail/email/phone calls with that person.
- Two, they have become obsessed with the bad (that is to say unconscious) behavior of another Initiate. Now this behavior may be real or imagined. It may be subject to being worked with Temple Protocol. It may not. But it is much easier to focus on the bad behavior of another than to do one's own Work. Self-Change is very, very hard, and the world keeps us from doing it by insisting that we must view others as heroes, villains and fools. Once others become our main interest we have already opted out of our Work, and then because of internal conflict leave. Watch yourself for this with burning intent.
- Thirdly, a person begins to project evil on his mentor. Now usually Dr. Aquino or I fulfill this role, but one of the better aspects of Working II is that now more Order Grand masters may likewise be targets. This is an all-too-human part of Initiation: **you** have changed, bettered yourself according to your will and suddenly the mentor seems less smart, less wise, or less well-acting. Seeing these warts that have always been there, you decide that a great corruption has set in, and your job is to leave. If you return to your Priesthood, you will realize that your job is to stay and put forth your better Understanding, which may not be better but is at least an impulse toward organizational Xeper.

If however you choose to leave, you have to make some decisions. Are you going out into the world to experiment on yourself and possibly return? Then you should communicate that with your leave taking, so that others know you are on a Quest and their magical wishes go with you (not to make things better for you, but to up the chance of your finding something). You may decide that you are leaving the Temple for good.

Then -- for the sake of your Initiation -- you should write a letter about what you have gained and learned in the Temple, and what problems you feel that Temple has. This will help you retain what you have gained, and may help us fight problems. It brings closure, and closure is as important in Initiation as beginnings. You will no longer be a Priest or Priestess when you leave, but for the sake of your Xeper, I hope you remain an Initiate.

ON THE SECOND DEGREE

Onyx Tablet:

OT.O.4.13

© Temple of Set

Author:

Don Webb V°

Date:

March 8, 1998 CE

Revision:

HTML Revision:

June 11, 1998 CE

The Awakened conditioned of Life we call Adept is subject to certain misapprehensions. Here are current stories we tell ourselves:

- The Priesthood can't make a bad Recognition because it is Elect of Set. This notion excuses us from responsibility.
- Since there are different degrees of dynamism in the Second Degree we could have more than one Second Degree. Well there are different III° and different IV° and different V°s and different VI° degrees. Ranking by dynamism and/or experience is not part of the Temple of Set's Formula. That is reserved to those Orders, which have enough dentistry to make such rankings.
- The Second Degree is forever. Nope. You can Recognize some quite properly, and have them toss away their mind in a week.
- If we had more rules, we would have better Adepts. That would follow that the organization with the most rules wins.
- The Second Degree is a state that exists outside of the Temple. No, there are people who are more advanced than any of our II°s (or our V°s for that matter), but we and they aren't Working together. The star quarter back on another team isn't your quarterback.

Feel free to share any of the following material with any Setian you feel would find it of interest:

WHAT IS RECOGNITION?

The Temple of Set, Set's chief Tool of the Æon, Recognizes Second Degrees for two reasons.

1. Because they have broken with the world's hypnotic spell and have begun the lifelong task of gaining direction from within. As Priests of the God Who Rules the concept of individuality, we give them a boost of letting them know they are on the right track. We shouldn't do this too early or too lightly, because it takes TIME to change the habits of a lifetime. Getting the "idea" of the Second Degree is easy, a bright person can get it reading the CT the first time, so what? I understand the "idea" of the VI°, but that doesn't mean I am ordering my medallion tomorrow.
2. We Recognize them to create a magical link between them and us. Their adventures and Strivings help us out, if we keep open eyes and ears to be Inspired by them. Now if we are too full of deadly self importance we can't profit by this, but if we remain Alive then we have performed an alchemy that lets our Students, also act as our Teachers.

WHAT IS NEEDED TO BE A SECOND DEGREE?

To be a Second Degree one must have an Understanding of the CT. This means life changing understanding as well as intellectual understanding.

One must have magical ability. This means real life control.

One must have loyalty to the Temple. This means that factors one and two are turned toward us (and thus we prosper with each new II°)

One must have contact with a living Teacher of the system. This means that the truly deep initiatory issues like death and job and marriage and so forth can be discussed with someone who has known Xeper thought similar struggles. (It is because of the lack of the last two items that we fail to retain promising II°s)

WHAT ARE THE VIRTUES OF THE SECOND DEGREE?

Some of these will be present in each candidate. Others are springboards to ask the candidate about so that she or he has a clue where to begin their quest for Self-Transformation. If they start their Quest because of a III°'s questions, they will come to Love and Protect the System that awakened them. Most will however go elsewhere, where life is easier and magic remains an entertainment.

1. Discernment. They should know the difference between a good book (Te Velde) and a book read for inspiration (Lovecraft). This ends super-subjectivity, or as my friend and teacher James Lewis is fond of rightly condemning as "mysticism."
2. Intellectual Commitment. The Initiate must view Initiation as a lifetime pursuit. In the time of our ancestors' ancestors we had Schools that were deeply connected with the culture, both on a linguistic and material culture basis, that taught

- Sovereignty. Some of these were closed to certain bloodlines, others like Plato's Academy were open to persons of merit. We do not exist in a small unified coherent culture. One school -- even the Temple -- will not provide you with all of your Needs. Now we do the job perfectly for the Teaching of magic and philosophy, but the Adept-to-be should be looking for other things that significantly deepen their personhood. Some of these might better colleges, field work in the sciences, special forces training in the military, careers in music or art, training in the martial arts and so forth. Note I don't say that they have to have mastered any of these things, just that they are actively looking for them. Mastering some of them is a IV^o concern. This is related to #4.
3. Magical Curiosity. As we know "real" magical secrets are not to be found in the occult industry. They are third hand reporters on what might have worked in the past. The Initiate must have the desire to get as the "real stuff" which could mean anything from pilgrimages, to learning new languages, to visiting university libraries. Their approach is one of depth, rather than seeing how many occultnik books they can buy. This is related to #8.
 4. Quantifiable Pride. We live in a world that is very short on recognition. People are afraid to recognize quality. It might empower a rival, or make them aware of their own lack of achievement. Yet as humans we long for recognition. So the LHP Initiate does speak of his or her real world deeds. But in order to avoid the traps of egotism they use a certain formula. They mentioned the real deed, and then link it to the next real world achievement they are striving for. For example, "Last semester I made the Dean's list, next semester I will get into the doctoral program." This type of formula has four effects. First it lets people know that you are a force in the world, and they will treat you accordingly. Second it will plant an image in their minds of your success, so that they will be unconsciously working magic for you to succeed. Thirdly it lets you know that you are a person of real worth, and fourth it reminds you of how far you need to go in order to achieve your long range goals. This is related to #2.
 5. Sense of Humor. If an Initiate cannot laugh at his or her own mistakes, they should give up trying. If they can't laugh at the world, they will go mad. Laughter is the banister of obsessions, and the mark of someone sure of their Sovereignty.
 6. Openness. Many people are so insecure that they lead lives so tight that magic couldn't break in even if from the Prince of Darkness Itself. They have rules about what to eat, when to sleep, who to fuck, what to read, how to vote, -- until every second of their life is filled. The LHP Initiate because of faith that his or her magic will open Doors for them, tries new things, and is very spontaneous. True development will come to someone with Will-To-Succeed long before it will come to someone with Will-To-Control.
 7. Moderation. The Sovereign Self knows that nothing outside of itself is essential, nor is anything forbidden. Therefore it refuses those paths and people that have "one is the right way" attitude. It chooses between libertinage and asceticism, knowing that each is a distortion of the self. Neither addiction nor abstinence are answers of a person that rules his or her life.
 8. Synthesis. He or she should be able to take useful aspects of life from a variety of sources -- from their job, their education, books on seemingly non-occult subjects

and so forth. This ability to build Tools out of Life is perhaps the greatest art an Adept can show. This is related to #3!

9. Cunning. The Left Hand Path Initiate always has an ace in the hole for any situation. He or she does not put all of his eggs in one basket, He or she has cunning, a type of knowing and thought formed by a complex but coherent constellation of attitudes and skills which combine flair, extensive networking, wisdom, forethought, subtlety of mind, misdirection, observation of people's nonverbal cues, resourcefulness, vigilance, opportunism, various skills and experience acquired over the years. It is applied to conditions which are passing, shifting, nonplusing and ambiguous, and to those magically potent situations, which do not lend themselves to precise measurement, exact calculation and rigorous logic.

Some of these are hard to spot, some of them will be so well mastered by the candidate **you** will be taking notes from **them**.

I hope you will look over these ideas as a guide to what a Second Degree should have, and utilize these ideas in your discussions of the nature of our Recognition process.

TRAINING OF THE SETIAN

Onyx Tablet:

OT.O.4.14

© Temple of Set

Author:

Don Webb V°

Date:

March 26, 1998 CE

Revision:

HTML Revision:

June 11, 1998 CE

The Temple of Set has a very difficult task. It does not draw from a preestablished mythos, but seeks in all of its actions to be True to certain Principles and Forms.

Our Platonic legacy suggested that the Process of Self-initiation and the Recognition of others's states of Being, should have the same methodology. In each we see that inspired thought must be focused on precise objects -- selected and analyzed for observation by therational intellect. This process is our application of Magical Idealism to the phenomena of the objective universe. We must avoid the two extremes **of** that world in exercising our Sovereign right to Recognize those Awakened to the Temple of Set. We can neither chose hard and fast guidelines, that become merely an external order for the potential Setian to submit to, nor can we go on a super-subjective touchy-feely basis. The one leads to institutional tyranny and the sleep of the clergy, the other to personal tyranny and the eroding of Initiatory boundaries.

We therefore look not for a test of knowledge (although knowledge is important), nor for a fill in the blank activity slate (although activity is essential), but for a methodology that will likely Awaken and instilla sense of Loyalty in our potential Adepts. To that end, I wish first explaining what we're working with, a methodology for work, some of our misconceptions ,and lastly our follow through.

What we have to Work with

Many people apply to the Temple of Set, a large number of these gain admission. Some of them are Setians. The class that we make Adept holds many of these Setians as well as many who are not Setian. Our job is catch as many of the Setians as we can, and help the talented nonSetians to decide to seek elsewhere (while hopefully holding a good opinion of the Temple). The latter part of our job seeds the occult community with intelligent people that can recommend us and defend us against certain foolish allegations.

Candidates to the Temple will have all of the weaknesses of the world they come from. This does not mean that we should tolerate weaknesses, it means that we should from the start begin leading them away from weakness. Those who will be our Nobles will be glad (at least in the long run) that we did so.

The most common weaknesses in the world are:

- A sense that magic/religion are entertainment. They never had to work hard as Christians or agnostics or Wiccans, and hard Work seems to be a sign of "Fanaticism."
Hard Work is the norm if you are trying to do something that goes against the grain of the world.
- A sense that all things are equal, "all religions are one" or other relativistic drivel.

This can be changed from a passive attitude into one of challenge -- since we living in a post-modernist time, rejoice that you can study anything, but know that study of deep topics takes effort.

- A sense that their lives would be validated if they can just find the right tribe.

Maybe so, but we are not a tribe. Nor a family. Nor a circle of friends. We are a School. If they Transform themselves by our hard methods, then we might be interested in closer affiliations on a strictly personal basis.

- A sense that they have a great Secret to give us.

Maybe so, but they must learn our language well, in order to give us that secret accurately.

- A belief that intellectual knowledge is all that is needed.

Wrong. Describing how a skier skies down a slope, is rather different than skiing down a slope.

- A belief that they should follow their emotions.

Wrong. They should Train their emotions, and then follow them.

- A belief that we owe them something.

Wrong. We owe ourselves the self-change that comes from another's change, in this we can seldom be too hard on ourselves, but we owe them nothing.

- An idea that Initiation is a matter of reading something.

Nope. Then people who hang out in libraries would be the most powerful people on Earth. Initiation is a matter of applying Knowledge and observing the living exemplars of Knowledge, so that certain subtle changes can occur -- as much as it is a matter of reading them darn books and wearing robes. Meeting Setians is essential. (As is meeting other great people).

- Magic is easy.

For Sabrina, the teenage witch, and for Samantha -- but for our species it is the single hardest thing to do well.

Understanding that these weaknesses are in each candidate (through no fault of their own -- it's like mercury in tuna-fish), reminds us what to push against.

A Methodology for Work

You should not discuss this methodology with non III^o+

Knowing the external characteristics of an Adept, and the inner virtues we wish to inspire, the job of the Initiator is to apply outside pressure that will aid the internal procedures of the Seeker. There seem to be four steps to take the candidates through. Knowing how much time to spend on each of the phases is the personal art of the Priest. Some candidates may need a single letter or phone call for a phase, others may spend two years just getting one of these licked. I will discuss the four phases, and offer some helpful hints. Remember these are **ONLY** guidelines, to help you find your own artistry with practice.

The four phases are: Attraction, Polarization, Refinement, Articulation.

Attraction. At first you want to set yourself up as the authority, so you ask questions and lay down rules. But the questions should be of two types: fairly easy ones that they can answer from the Crystal Tablet, and questions about what strengths that they already have that think will help them in Initiation. This sets up for an integration of their Xeper before the Temple, and the common values of the Temple. It sets you up as an authority. You should encourage them to ask you two or three questions each time they write you. This puts you on the spot, which helps you receive the benefits of the Priesthood. Encourage them to interact freely (and courteously) with Setian culture.

Polarization. After awhile you will notice the lacks in your candidate. Is he too emotional? Is she too introspective? Begin suggesting activities that require them to work on the opposite parts of themselves. Get the touchy-feely types to do a book report, get the eggheads to do outdoor workings. Get the stay-at-homes to practice LBM in crowds. In short push them toward what they lack. While you do this ask them questions about what aspects of themselves they want to change to achieve their life goals, and how they think they can do so. This is a good time to get them to start writing rituals for you to read. Continue asking and answering questions on Setian thought and practice.

Refinement. The potential Adept based in the two phases above, the cultural values of the Temple, and their own desire for Xeper will be active in many areas. Remind them that four principle areas of dynamism are useful. They should be training the body, the mind, the emotions and will. The first can be anything from martial arts to an exercise program, but it is the basis for having a place to work. The second should be aimed first at

removing nonsense (feel free to ask them about what beliefs they are dumping as "superstitious" or send them to the pages of the Skeptical Inquirer and so forth), then at some kind of mental training. This should be in logic, memory, visualization, horizontal thinking and so forth. It is up to them to find a system and use it. It is up to you to point out the need. Training in the emotions is a personal matter, but the two things the Priest should stress are A). Learning to do things that are unpleasant for the sake of training the emotions and B). Learning not to talk with everybody about everything. The former teaches that emotions are part of the Self and the later teaches independence of spirit. Training he will is again a personal matter, but the Priest may help in two ways A). By asking about the results of practical magical workings and B). Asking the candidate who his or her heroes are in the world -- and how the hero was able to achieve the heroic deed in the world. While this phase is going on, encourage the Setian to take his questions about Setian thought and practice to a larger audience -- the Pylon, Setian-L, and so forth. Your questions to the Setian should concern what the Setian feels the Temple is for, and how the Temple's Tools might be among those needed for his other development.

Articulation. You have seen that they have enough devotion to the Temple to have hung around for a year and paid their dues. You have seen that they will interact with other Setians in polite and thought-provoking ways. You have seen that they are capable of opening Doors for themselves magically, as well as intellectually. You have seen that they have the basic intelligence and emotional maturity to handle core Setian concepts. Now the Setian needs to put the Temple experience together for him or herself.

You can ask some questions to help the process along: "What is the difference between the I° and the II°?" "Why does the Temple exist?" "Why should anyone fight for the Temple?" "Why will our ideas never have a mass appeal?" "How have you changed your life since joining the Temple?" "How have your life goals changed once they've joined the Temple?" "What have you gained by meeting other Setians face-to-face?" "What does the concept of Recognition mean in an LHP School?" "What does Self-Creation mean?"

These are tough questions. After you give the potential Setian these questions, suggest that they think them over, and look over their time in the Temple. Tell them to write a brief essay (2 or 3 thousand words) on any topic that shows their understanding of the themselves and the Temple. Have them submit the essay to another Priest to look over. He or she will give you feedback if the person has reached the II°. If the essay is particularly good, have it submitted to the Scroll or a Pylon newsletter with the news of the person's Recognition. This not only affirms their hardwork, it gives other I°s and II°s a picture of what the Second Degree is.

Our Misconceptions

As Priests we fall into a few traps.

- "I need to Recognize somebody quick or I'm not a Priest."

Dead Wrong. If you want to plunge into Priestly culture, Create a piece of the Temple Instrumentality -- run a Conclave, start a Pylon, create a web page. These are things that will provide you with some useful friction with your new state of Being. For your first few Recognitions Work with another Priest or a Master to help you along. Man, this is a difficult art form!! The best and brightest and most experienced of us screw this one up -- I assure you that if you wait for a year after your Ordination --just talking to other Priests and helping out in secondary roles -- you'll learn more.

- "I've been a Priest for years, I don't have to work Recognizing people."

Wrong. The friction that you get from Recognition is the fuel that moves you toward the goal of absorbing your personal Work and being Transformed thereby. Working on Recognitions is the place where your best inspiration for articles, rituals, and changes in your *own* life will come from.

- "I have to present myself as an authority on arcane subjects."

Nope. You have to be an authority on the application of Set's Eternal Word of Xeper to Life. If your Seeker wants to discuss something else -- either send them to a knowledgeable Adept, or suggest that they research for a Scroll article.

- "We need more Setians in XYZ so I am going to go easy on this guy."

Wrong. The Temple does not Need members. The Temple Needs Strong members. If Setian X is going to be the first Setian in XYZland, he or she will have to be a good deal stronger and more self-reliant than Setian Y, who has a support structure of a local Pylon. We have to be tougher on our trailblazers. Note that Set didn't exactly choose a shrinking violet that needed to be hand-held to Remanifest the Temple in the Year X.

- "I'll get around to writing that letter, I'm too busy."

Maybe so, but if you *know* you are going to busy -- print out a letter that says, "Dear Setian X, I have matters that I need to attend to in my life. You will get a faster response if you write to Priest Y." If you want the respect of being a Priest, you have to take care to see that the jobs done. Now here's a helpful hint, play the part of Priest Y first rather than waiting till you need help.

- "First Degrees owe me respect."

Not really. They owe you evidence of work. Start with that attitude. Remember you aren't after "respect" you are after "Respect." The response to annoying First Degrees is "Not doing our lessons, are we?"

- "The Temple is the best thing in the world. I own it. I am the best thing in the world."

The Temple is a Willed extension of the Prince of Darkness's Work into this World. As such it decays every instant as the forces of naturalization work against it. Only by your hard work, does it return to its purity. Look at this way, on the Night of its reFounding, its membership was 100% V°, who had just received the

Book of Coming Forth By Night. Until we hit that high water mark, we've all got a lot of Work to do. Feel free to point this out to any I° who wonders why you are so tough on him.

- "I can't apologize to a I°."

Wrong. The ability to admit error is the first step in Initiation.

Our Follow Through

We don't just Recognize them and let them go. We give them four messages in a follow-up letter.

1. The first job is an Adept is to have a good time. Now that they are free from some of the world's chains, they can Live their own lives, not what someone tells them. The first job of the truly Elect is to be sure that some of the results of that Play benefit the place that awaken them.(This can be anything -- like making a web page to hosting Setian get-togethers at his or her house.)

2. In a year's time they should join an Order.

3. A year after their Recognition they should write you about their life goals, magical pursuits, and what they have learned during their first year as an adept. (From this you will know what they are doing, and can call on their expertise in certain areas).

4. Sometime after their first year, they should look back on their experience in the Temple so far, and perform a rituals to bless and empower the Temple, as part of their gratitude for having their eyes opened.

THE FUNCTION OF A PRIEST

Onyx Tablet:

OT.O.4.15

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Date:

June 4, 1997 CE

Revision:

HTML Revision:

June 11, 1998 CE

The job of the IV° is to make sure that potential candidates are able to handle basic administration by the time of their Recognition. Priests are not Recognized for their ability to publish a newsletter, run a Pylon, or handle difficult personal interrelationships, but they will need to do these things when they have produced the internal change that makes them resonant with Set.

The reason IV° task candidates for the III° is not to reward them later with a Medallion, but to insure that they have a minimal set of abilities. Do they know enough to copy bad "screwy" letters? Do they know a little bit about when to intervene and when to back away from another's process? Do they know enough to encourage certain people to write for the Scroll etc. This type of knowledge is not the divine aspect of the III° -- it is the Necessary human knowledge to bring the divinity of the III° into the human organization called the Temple of Set. After the Ordination it is the **responsibility** of other Priests to help the new Priest in learning the ropes -- and it is the job of the new Priest to make friends and find mentors in the Plain of Onyx.

The function of the Priesthood is to expand the activity of Set on earth. The Temple arrived in a perfect form on June 21, X -- but the form was encoded. It is the job of each and every III° to Remember that form as part of the preexisting wisdom you have as a Child of Set. Such wisdom doesn't come from setting around and knotting up your brow and hoping you'll figure it all out. It comes from Enactment. It comes taking the plunge into areas that are most Set-like. These include expanding your boundaries, and causing others to expand theirs. Just as Set in your interactions with him causes you to do certain things by the sheer power of inspiration, you will do likewise for the Setians you interact with.

Each of you acting as a Priest of Set, are an Eye of Set. Each of your actions, although wholly born of your independent, isolate free wills, is Linked to the actions of the others.

That Set's Temple is owned by its Priesthood is more than a corporate nicety. The Temple exists at the level of a Priest or Priestess' actions in the world. What happens in your mind and heart are part of the inner Temple, and are hopefully very noble and beautiful things -- but what happens in the world Creates the Temple. And it Creates it everyday (see below on how mythic time is synchronized with human time).

The battle we wage in the world is tougher than most of us think. That it is a battle have no doubt. Set is, was, and shall be a war god. Our founding documents come from states of war. In the Great Harris Papyrus, which Set quoted form in the BoCFbN, there is an interesting remark about the Pharaoh Setnakt MerynAmounRe (to him Life! Health! Strength!), that he "fought with the rage of the god Xeperi-Set on the battlefield." Now as far as I know that's the only nisbi adjective form of Xeper, appearing in the bound construction Xeperi-Set. (Nisbi adjectives indicate place of origin written either as a dual or with -y as an ending). The GodSet-Who-Comes-From-Xeper is Known for his battlefield rage.

How then are you to view your fellow Priests and Priestesses? They are your fellow soldiers in the battle against our enemies. You don't have to like them. In fact you can use the Willed calming of your friction against them as fuel for your self Becoming. But you have to see them as being in the great battle to bring something to Earth that is not native to it. You must view your own struggles in the same light. Conclaves are our Victory parties. Recruiting the right troops is your special duty as a III°.

The Temple of Set is opposed by three powerful cults. These cults are pervasive, merciless, and untiring. They must be fought in all of their manifestations. Their names are the Cult of Stupidity, the Cult of Conventionality, and the Cult of the Victim. You should record each of your victories over hem in your magical diary -- your Victory Book. Your life should be a series of victories over these cults; do not be distracted and think minor cults like Christianity are our enemies. This is the Trinity we oppose:

The Cult of Stupidity teaches that it is a bad thing to be smart. The cult begins in secondary school where smart people are held not to be popular. It uses words like "nerds," "geeks," and even "brains" to exclude those individuals who concern themselves with the mysteries. It exists in the workplace where many topics are deemed "too deep" for discussion during coffee break, and a person is made to feel alienated if he were to talk about things like "why we are here."

The Cult of Conventionality teaches that there is an idealized form for your life to take. Usually a heterosexual monogamous marriage with 2.3 children with a home in the suburbs, a TV, and at most a dozen books in the house. This cult questions every decision you make from how you achieve transportation, to whom you sleep with (or refuse to sleep with), to your own reproduction. This cult in short claims to own your body.

The Cult of the Victim teaches that only by suffering are we redeemed. This evil cult takes over good movements of social empowerment by taking away the quest for power, and replacing it with a plea for justice for past social injuries. It allows people to engage

in the worst behavior, and then be forgiven because of real or imagined illness or real or imagined abuse. This cult works against anyone with a big heart -- and is particularly strong in cultivated circles. Beware of anyone who uses their bad situation as a path to power. Often they don't know better, this cult is so powerful.

In your battle, you will find yourself to possess certain weapons unique to you. Perhaps you own a home that you can make a Pylon meeting place, perhaps you've got web-space for a web page, perhaps this, perhaps that. No one will pat you on the back and say "Atta boy!" for using these weapons. The Setian makes all things he or she touches serve his or her will while remaining isolated from them. This is known to all Setians, it is the synthesizing power of the Self. The Priest or Priestess also makes those things serve Set's principle tool in the Aeon, his Temple. This simple attitude shift does not take individuality away from you, in fact the opposite occurs -- you will find that you consecrated the tools of your life with the Principle of Individuality itself, and consequently you will find a great strengthening of your life on all levels.

But using these weapons is not enough. The III^o is charged with expanding the Mind of Set -- a charge we received in the Age of Satan. The III^o must create his or her own unique additions to the Temple's activity. Now this process can take years. Such additions can not be predicted, they arise out of and bear the Force of Xeper. These additions are of a different dynamism than the additions a IV^o makes. A IV^o's job is to create a school, a place where communicable methods of initiation can be developed. A III^o's additions are for all -- they will spread through the Temple as a drop of honey would spread through milk. A good example would be the index card discussion method that Magister Barrett taught me that I have passed onto various Conclaves, that now facilitates discussions in many far corners of the Black Empire.

The III^o emulates Set, particularly in his Coming Into Being. We understand that such events are not something that happened in some far-off historical time. We know that such events happen in a dimension of mind and can be said to be happening all the time. These events are synchronistic with our Xeper. There are two stories of the birth of Set. One that he tore himself from the womb of his mother Nuit, the other that he began as Bata, a human being, and through a series of Remanifestations became a God. We each must seek to emulate these things. The first which is that sudden realization of being separate from the Cosmos -- we can only have once, but we can participate in others coming to that realization -- just as Set participated in our own coming to that realization. The second is the path of struggle and Victory. Each terrible setback is our own, each glorious bounce-back to a qualitatively/quantitatively greater state of Knowledge. Power, and Pleasure is a Victory for us all, because it advances the Aeon on Earth -- or in more practical terms it advances the opportunities we all have.

To pursue the goals of the Priesthood is to automatically insure your own Self development. To pursue your Self development while remaining Awake and Courageous will automatically strengthen Set's presence on Earth. This is our Bond with Set, which is achievable at its highest level only at the Priesthood. Do What Thou Wilt Shall Be The Whole Of The Law. Great Is The Might Of Set, Greater Still He Through Us.

ON OTHER AFFILIATIONS

Onyx Tablet:

OT.O.4.16

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Author:

Don Webb V°

Date:

May 20, 1998 CE

Revision:

HTML Revision:

June 11, 1998 CE

In the course of Recognizing someone to the Grade of Adept, you may discover that they are affiliated with another occult or philosophical group, and wonder what you should do. In some cases this a black-and-white decision, in others it is more gray. I will discuss the first step in either case, then black-and-white decision and the gray areas. Following that I will suggest a methodology to help you decide what to do in the gray areas. Different Priests will have different takes on this.

When dealing with a First Degree, there are few standard questions we should ask by the second or third letter: Are you the member of any other occult/Initiatory/philosophical society? Does anyone in your household have a problem with your affiliation with the Temple of Set? (If yes, then go slow and careful.) What's the worst thing people could honestly say about you in conventional society? (Ok if they say "he's not a team player"-- not Ok if it is "he fucks goats.")

If they are a member of another occult/Initiatory/philosophical society, the first thing to do is to tell them, "The first degree of the Temple is about learning our language and practice. You need to understand that just as you wouldn't speak French at your beginning Italian class, you will need to focus on Setian expression and cosmology. You and I will have to explore the nature of your affiliation, so that we can decide if it fits in the Setian toolbox, and if not help you decide which tool for self-development you want to choose."

After telling them that, feel free to shoot them down for terminology from the other group.

The second step is to look at the cosmology of the other organization. If the other organization has a savior figure that does the Work for you, then it is not compatible with Setian thinking. If the other organization derives its sacerdotal powers from a figure that is not the Prince of Darkness (at least more or less as we understand Him) then it is not

compatible. If the organization directly bills itself as our rival ("We're the real Satanists, the ToS sucks!") the person has to choose affiliations at that moment. If the other organization has any practices that are illegal or dangerous, not only is it not compatible - - expulsion from the Temple must occur immediately. (Some examples include drug use, blood drinking, and the goat problem mentioned above).

If a person conceals his or her affiliation with another group, after you have asked him or her directly and clearly, they should be expelled.

This allows for a variety of other affiliations such as the OTO, IOT, Rune Guild, Order of the Triskelion, Esoteric Order of Dagon, and so forth. It is a good idea to consult with a IV°+ member about these groups.

But such affiliations are still a gray area. We don't view other groups as our equals or peers. We view ourselves as the Elect.

There are two big considerations. Firstly if the person holds a low degree in each group they should be urged (but not required) to give up one or the other. This is because it is difficult to learn two things deeply at the same time. Secondly, does the person see the group as identical, equal, or worse still "teaching the same thing" as us? The latter, though not a reason for expulsion, is certainly reason not to Recognize the person.

I will give you a test for such affiliations. I will then give you an example of someone who passes with flying colors, and someone that fails. Real life is not as clear as these examples. I have chosen for both cases a member of the OTO. This is to show that it is not a simple matter of OTO-good or OTO-bad.

The candidate should be able to answer four things. Don't rush too fast in asking them these things. Perhaps one a letter.

1. What benefits do they seek in their membership in the other group? How do they see it advancing their Xeper?

This is simple and straightforward. It lets you see if they can evaluate their activity from a Setian perspective. Key things to look for: personal motivation (rather than relying on authority), sensible reasons, an idea that this membership makes them a more powerful person.

2. In non-occult, non-mystical language, can they describe the difference between the other group's Teachings and those of the Temple of Set?

This lets you see that they see a difference, and that they can use the Temple's greatest strength (i.e. clear language) rather than sectarian methods. You are also looking to see if they say the Temple is better, without prompting them.

3. Do they feel they can discuss their Setian affiliation proudly and succinctly if the matter should be brought up in the other group?

Here you are looking for two things. As the Elect, Setians do not hide their practices, but they don't bang people over the head with them. Here's your test: imagine Setian X talking about the Temple to people down at the Gild Hall. Does this make you queasy or Proud?

4. What is their long-term goal in the other group and how does it relate to their Xeper?

Here you are looking for a Setian sensibility. The Setian expresses their goals in terms of Self Transformation, Knowledge, Worldly Power, and Opportunity. Watch out for ideas about blending the groups, or taking over the other group and making it serve the Temple.

Here are the good and bad examples. The first is the good example. (Refer to the questions above.)

1. My membership in the OTO brings me four advantages. Firstly since there is no local Pylon, it lets me see how group magic might work. Secondly there is a lot of sex magic around the camp, which is something I'm interested in (and can explore better with partners than with correspondence). Third, it gives me connections around the world, which can help with my long-term goal of traveling. Fourth, it shows me the operant side of Crowley's Teachings. I feel that first and third reason will directly aid my Xeper, the second is good fun -- and the fourth might be useful in helping critique the methods of the Temple.

2. Thelema is based on finding one's "true will." The metaphor given is inherently natural. One becomes a star with a fixed orbit. Whereas this may be a leap for most of humanity, I see Xeper as totally replacing this concept. The Setian does not seek to find an orbit to fit. He would rather be a self-willed star -- "I think I'll go cruising over to another galaxy!" He or she accepts that failure is possible, and that striving in any direction one wants is noble.

3. I told the head of the Camp, when I joined the Temple. As a I° I am not an official spokesperson of the Temple, nor do I discuss it during OTO activities, but I do discuss my choice privately with those that ask. Some people in the OTO feel that Setians are sort of a "biker-gang" in the occult world, and I try to emphasize our philosophical process, while (I must admit) enjoying some of the dark glamour my affiliation gives me.

4. In the long-run I hope to make a great deal of use of my OTO affiliation to enhance my plans for world-travel. I also know that there are several

presses that are OTO friendly that I might use to write the book on the Tarot I've been thinking about for several years.

Here is a bad example.

1. The OTO is much bigger than the Temple and I want to be part of something that is powerful. Crowley was the greatest teacher of magick this century, and I can't learn about him without this affiliation.
2. The Temple and the OTO both teach that we are gods. The OTO has more practical methods for exploring this.
3. I have told the people in the OTO about my membership. I want to get them to join because we have Set and they don't.
4. In the long-run I wish to combine both bodies into a single large group which will then remove the menace of Xtianity from the world.

Now, once again you won't see anything this clear in real life, and consulting with other III° and IV°+ is a good idea in such cases. Initiation is where people find it, and for those rare folk who remain fully Setian in a distracting environment, dual affiliations may be a great boon to their Xeper. If they get stronger we get stronger.

For people that have their Setian Initiation well in hand (that is to say III°+), other affiliation can be useful, if there are certain areas of yourself that you feel can best be explored beyond the Temple.

ON RETURNING TO THE II°

Onyx Tablet: OT.O.4.17 © Temple of Set

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Date: May 23, 1998 CE

Revision:

HTML Revision: June 11, 1998 CE

This essay is for the Onyx Tablet of Set. It may however be shared with any II° under consideration for the Priesthood.

Being a Priest of Set is based on Need. It is not based on desire for social gratification, nor any supposed knowledge that Priests may have, nor on a sense of duty to that which Awakened you.

There is Duty in noble souls to that which Awakened them, but that Duty can be expressed by any level of being at any time.

The Priest Needs four things. He or she Needs to begin Work. He or she Needs to see Xeper. He or she Needs to see the struggles of the Priesthood as training for another goal. He or she Needs to have a personal connection to Set.

I would like to discuss each of these Needs. If you find you don't have them, you need to return to the Second Degree. There is no shame in this. It is like saying "Gee, I'm not a novelist." or "Gee, I'm not a good cook." or "Gee, I couldn't do a walking tour of Europe." Well most people aren't novelists, good cooks or great walkers. The only shame would be persisting, when you can't cut it. You are avoiding Self-Knowledge, and that type of denial will remove you from the Æon.

Needs are things that keep you doing something. The Priesthood is not based on Play. The Second Degree is based on Play. No Adept ever contemplates with agony quitting the II°. There is no Priest that has not thought long and hard about quitting the Temple. Learning in the III° does not come from the easy parts, it comes from the hard parts. And if you don't have the Need Awakened in you, the hard parts are too tough. You should return to the Plane of Play, because that is the Noble action.

The Need for Work

In the Setian system Work consists of doing the Priestly job when both when it is hard and when it is tedious. As an Adept, many things were clear to you -- ah, they should throw out that bum OR why don't we let X stay in the Temple (is it so bad the saucer people talk to her?). As a Priest you will know various forms of agony. You may have to throw your best friend out of your Pylon. You may have to watch the Black Flame die out in someone you love (this happened to two people that Rosemary and I were close to -- I would rather have seen them die). You have big and little struggles that **make** you Work parts of your soul that you wouldn't have Touched. Try bailing a Setian out of jail, because she was carrying a ritual dagger. Try spending a night with another one whose parent just died, who has that Need to talk about immorality. This is where Work begins.

The Need to See Xeper

This can not be explained to a non-Priest. They might intellectually understand it, as a blind man might color, but not Know it. For the Priest of Set, Xeper is inspiring. Not the idea of Set, nor of His Temple, nor how keen it is to be a III°. Xeper. When you hear another Setian's Victory, you suddenly feel like its time to get off your duff and do more. If you aren't wired into this Need/Response you not of the Priesthood. The reason that real Priests want to go to Conclave, start local Pylons (and so forth) is because of this need.

(If you discover you like going to Conclave to just hang around and yap with people, or worse still to check out the hotel bar, you do not have the Priestly Need. It is a fine thing for an Adept to be in the Temple, because you get to go places and meet neat people. It is even a good idea to mention that draw to intelligent, adventurous people that might be interested in joining).

The Need to see the Struggles of the Priesthood of Set as Training

If you have no goals in life, but to be a III° -- you are NOT a III°! One of the reasons I send that letter to new Setians telling them to write down their goals, is so that they Remember the Temple is a Tool. My magical Life and my Initiation are my own, the Temple is, was and shall be the best training Tool for me. I don't see the Temple as constraining, anymore than I see my membership in the American Academy of Poets as constraining.

That doesn't mean that the Temple is easy or full of happiness and joy. It can be an absolute pain in the ass. I doubt if a week has gone by since my Ordination that I haven't thought about quitting it. But it has taught me Will. I have Learned from the hard parts, not the easy ones. I don't get along with everyone in the Temple (although I am consistently ranked among the three most popular High Priests of Set this century). I find administration a complete tearful bore. Will has seen me through death, getting new business started, writing and selling novels, relationships, chronic disease. I Needed Will

for the bigger things I Needed to do, and the Priesthood of Set was the best place to learn it.

Now because of Set's Bond with us, the Will I Learned can only be released in ways that are ultimately helpful to his Æon. Smart guy, that Set, even if he is funny looking.

The Need for a Personal Connection with Set

Now you have all wondered a great deal about your relation to Set. Part of you Knows, part of you never will -- and the friction between the two parts is Set's Gift to his Priesthood. Hail Set!

Read that again.

Without the certain Knowledge on the one hand you could not display the external powers of the Priesthood:

- (a) enlightenment-driving, the ability (without any special magical or mystical effort) to give people a momentary sense of Set, which is enough for the hardworking sort, and
- (b) dedication, the ability to inspire people by plugging away for years, in a world where most people give up on spiritual matters in a few months.

Without the doubt of Set's relationship with you, you would never take on the internal jobs of the Priesthood:

- (a) finding a firm rational base for your belief in Set (and thus bringing the full powers of your mind to bear on the issue), and
- (b) seeking to change your life to have an ever greater Perception of Set.

Now to Need that blend of certain Knowledge and agnosticism, is a Sign that you are of the Priesthood. There is no shame if you are not.

Let me give an example. I am a writer. If a really good idea for a passage in a novel I'm working on hits me at the best party I've ever been at --I leave the party and write down the idea. Now that's not any fun, that's Work. I can pause in the middle of crying my eyes out at my best friend's funeral and wonder how I would describe the scene in a book. Because I have that Need, I am a writer. If I could turn on and off, I would be a dabbler.

Dabblers have more fun. Dabblers can sometimes produce better work. But dabblers work on their terms, on the terms of the Subjective Universe. Writers, like Priests, Work on the terms the World hands them -- on the terms of the Objective Universe. If that's not the bargain you Need to make with the Prince of Darkness, return to the Plane of Play.

You will be showing wisdom and self-knowledge, and you will enjoy the support of those in the Plane of Work.

If you feel you need to return to the Plane of Play, discuss it first with your Recognizing Masters, so that you may be sure. Then discuss with the High Priest, so that he can help take care of any administrative details. Slow and stately decisions are better for your soul than quick emotional ones. Joy, like pain, is inevitable in Life.

Do What Thou Wilt Shall Be The Whole Of The Law. Great Is The Might Of Set,
Greater Still He Through Us.

CREATING CONCLAVES

Onyx Tablet:

OT.O.4.18

© Temple of Set

Author:

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Date:

May 28, 1998 CE

Revision:

HTML Revision:

June 11, 1998 CE

"At some point in their careers, almost all III° will want to host a Conclave." -- Don Webb, V°.

This guide is meant to assist in the many details that are necessary to organize a successful International Conclave with the least amount of stress and drudge work! It is the result of my 20 years' experience in organizing Conclaves both in the United States and overseas. These guidelines can be applied to Regional and local Conclaves, gatherings, etc. as well.

CHOOSE THE LOCATION. - The country, state, and city are the first things to decide. Get input from the Priesthood, the general membership, and the High Priest. Consider what kind of Conclave you want. Do you want time for sightseeing? Is this mainly a "Working" Conclave with sightseeing not that important? How hard is it to get to the places you are considering? What kind of weather will you encounter during the time of year you choose? If overseas, what kind of problems might you encounter in a particular country? How expensive is travel, in addition to the hotel and food and Registration costs? Any health considerations? You get the idea.

TIMING - Every place has its "off season" and you must determine when that is for the places you are looking at. "Off Season" hotel rates can be very economical -- as much as 50% lower than prime season. Then you will also have the additional savings of a group rate which is offered by hotels that host conventions. This becomes important when factoring in other expenses such as airline fares. A quick and easy way to determine "off season" times and rates is to randomly call a few hotels in the cities you are considering and ask.

PLAN AHEAD! - This is a crucial part of organizing a Conclave. Once you have chosen the city and dates, begin researching information and hotels at least one year in advance

for the International Conclave, and six months in advance for Regional Conclaves. The most expedient way to do this is to contact the Convention and Visitors Bureau and/or the Chamber of Commerce in the chosen city and ask them to send you a list of convention hotels or hotels with meeting room and banquet facilities.

CHOOSING THE HOTEL - Once you have this list, look it over and compare prices, amenities, restaurants, surrounding amenities such as good inexpensive eateries, convenience stores and the like.

Pick several possible hotels. Call each one and speak first with the Sales department. Note the name of the person with whom you are speaking. Explain that you are organizing a small convention and would like to know what kind of group rates they can offer, and what other incentives they offer. You will be asked how large a convention. If this is an International Conclave you can estimate about 100 to 150 persons. If a Regional conclave, about 40 people.

Be prepared to give the Sales representative a name for your group. If the city is San Francisco, then you can tell them it is the Temple of Set. Otherwise, be aware of security and privacy and choose something that won't draw attention or frighten them. Examples of past group names: Writer's Group, Science Fiction Writer's Group, Society for Esoteric Theater, Tcham Society, Miskatonic Theater Group, Society for Performing Artists, and so forth. The idea is to choose something that allows us to be dramatic and unusual, without being threatening or worrisome.

Ask what the meeting room rates are, and if you can get a discounted rate. Many hotels will do this according to the number of sleeping rooms your group will be using during the Conclave. Ask what dates are available for your convention. Also ask what the cancellation policy is. Usually, you may cancel a function 30 to 60 days in advance without a penalty.

NEGOTIATING THE CONTRACT - Once you have all this information, then you will be able to choose the best offer, and dates. Be prepared to have an alternate date if the hotel no longer has the original dates available.

Call the chosen hotel, and ask for the same Sales representative you originally spoke with. Tell this person that you would like to book your convention. You then go over the information, group rates, meeting room rates, and any other things you discussed previously with this person. Make sure to tell them that each person will be reserving and paying for their room separately, that it is NOT to be billed to the main group account.

Once you are agreed upon details, ask them to send you a contract. Sign and return one copy; keep the other copy. **THIS IS IMPORTANT, YOU MUST GET EVERYTHING IN WRITING!** It is not uncommon in the hotel business for the original person you negotiated details with to have been replaced by the time the conclave rolls around. You can avoid headaches such as lost files, misunderstood costs, hidden costs, extra charges, and generally being ripped off if you have a signed contract.

ORGANIZING THE BANQUET AND RECEPTION - The next step is to speak with the Banquet Sales Representative. Tell the sales rep that you are having a convention at the hotel at such-and-such a date, and will want a Reception and a Banquet dinner, on different nights. Tell them the nights you want. If they are not available, you will need to choose alternate nights. Ask for a Banquet menu to be sent, and a Reception menu as well. You will use these menus to choose your Banquet and Reception menus. There are usually several choices with varying price ranges. If they offer a buffet banquet dinner go for that since you will get the most variety and best prices for your food. It is also less complicated than a sit down dinner where you will be limited to two or possibly three choices for the main course. There are always plenty of things for everyone, vegetarian or not, at a buffet! When you have made your selections, contact the Banquet sales rep and discuss it with her/him. Again, GET IT IN WRITING!

DETERMINING REGISTRATION FEE - This is fairly simple: Total the cost of the meeting room(s), the HP Reception, and the Banquet dinner. INCLUDE THE COST OF THE GRATUITIES AND SALES TAX AS WELL AS ANY HOTEL TAX. Divide this total by the number of persons you expect to attend. This total is the Registration fee for each person. The total for the Banquet dinner and HP Reception is simply a matter of multiplying the individual cost per person by the number of persons attending the Conclave.

PROVIDE PRELIMINARY INFORMATION - In order to plan costs, you will need to get an idea of how many persons will be at Conclave. Send out preliminary information of a general nature, such as country, and city, along with hotel room rates, and deadline date for Conclave registration. The deadline date for registration is usually at least 2 weeks before the hotel room reservation date. That gives people a chance to get the detailed information they need to make hotel reservations. This information is given to persons AFTER they have sent in their Conclave reservation fee to you (payable to Temple of Set).

PROVIDE REGISTRATION RECEIPTS AND DETAILED INFO. - Once you receive a Conclave registration, send a receipt along with detailed information. Send the specific location, hotel name, address and phone number including any toll-free number the hotel may have. Also include the name we are using for the Conclave if not "Temple of Set" (Writer's Group, etc.) and the name of the person to contact at the hotel, if any.

CREATE THE SCHEDULE OF EVENTS - This will take a lot of work and a lot of shuffling events around, and will all be changed at the first General meeting on the first day of Conclave, and probably changed again as Conclave progresses. Accept this in the beginning and you won't be so frustrated about it! You still need to put a schedule together to give people an idea of what kind of events they want to attend, and what events they are required to attend, so they can plan their time at Conclave for optimum benefit. This schedule is usually sent out at least 30 days before Conclave after everyone has a chance to have input and reserve space for their activities. My policy is to contact the Priesthood III° and the Masters first and let them know I am taking requests for space

in the schedule. It goes without saying that the High Priest gets first preference for anything he wants or requires regarding the schedule time slots and meeting rooms.

I usually try to schedule the most important events during the last 3 days of Conclave since some people may not be able to attend the whole thing. If Conclave is in a city like San Francisco or other tourist mecca, leave some free time for sightseeing, etc.

PAYING THE BILL - The usual procedure is to give the hotel a deposit, amount to be determined by the hotel, and then pay the balance in full at the end of the Banquet dinner. If we are in the hotel under "Temple of Set", the treasurer (or ED or other authorized check signer) will pay with a Temple check. If we are using a pseudonym, (Writer's Group), then we pay by personal credit card and the person gets reimbursed by the Temple via a Temple check.

IT IS IMPORTANT TO GET A DETAILED ACCOUNTING OF WHAT THEY ARE BILLING US FOR BEFORE YOU PAY THE BILL. No vague stuff like, "Banquet Dinner". We want the number of people, the cost of the dinner, the taxes, and the gratuities listed, plus anything else they are charging us for. The same goes for the meeting room bill. Be certain to look it over to determine there are no unauthorized charges for extra equipment, or anything we didn't order. Most hotels are honest, but on occasion you will run into one that tries to pad the bill.

I've covered everything that I can think of, but if there is anything that comes up not discussed here, use your own ingenuity to handle it. Conclaves are a lot of work, but the end result is satisfying and fun when you see it all come together and everyone having a great time, magically and otherwise.

SLAYING STASIS

Onyx Tablet:

OT.O.4.19

© Temple of Set

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Date:

May 16, 1998 CE

Revision:

HTML Revision:

September 28, 1999 CE

Xeper is the actualization in the Objective Universe of Dynamism, a quality of the Core Self.

Setian cosmology is keyed to certain numbers, thanks to a certain Michael Aquino's IV° Work in the Church of Satan following the writings of Iamblicus.

The number of stasis is six. (See "The Ceremony of the Nine Angles" in *The Satanic Rituals* and Waterfield, Robin, trans. *The Theology of Arithmetic: On the Mystical, Mathematical and Cosmological Symbolism of the First Ten Numbers*. Grand Rapids, MI: Phanes Press, 1988.)

Therefore a Setian magician can use a six part formula of action to kill anything, even stasis (inside of outside of the Temple).

Here is such a formula of simple real world action, which if followed in exactly this order will remove the effect of dead wood (although kicking them out is sadly much harder). They may remain, but they will be neither happy nor prosperous.

Print this out, keep it, use it!

1. **Notice, in public, the excellence of others.** You see someone doing Good, you let people know. Bragging on Adepts is very important. (This also means really getting to know the people you are Working with -- if Setian Joe Blow saves his money up and makes a trip to the Oriental Institutes in Chicago to perform a Working with the seal of Peribsen, the Living Set, you let your corner of the Setian world know. If Adept Pamela Darkthrone gets that job with an airline that gets her super-cheap travel so she can go to Conclave anywhere in the world, you give a speech in her Pylon praising her practical magic skill.) Look for excellence and praise it.

2. **Be excellent.** You would be surprised how much better you feel, if you know that you are simply outdoing everyone else around you.

3. **Let people know about your excellence.** The Temple is chock full of different area to Act in -- and more important the whole world provides countless more. So as you do things in various areas, let people know. Mention your Order Work to your Pylon, mention your restructuring your job for the sake of your Xeper to your I°s, mention your Pylon field-trip (that you busted your butt to make) in the *Scroll*.

4. **At the same time, or shortly thereafter, what you are about to do.** Mention the project you are starting. (It is very important to do this while writing I°s -- part of your letter should show people that being in the Priesthood ain't having a shiny black medallion and an attitude. Hit this note again and again).

5. **Let people know as you fulfill your goals in part 4.** Also be up front with them about why you didn't fulfill your goals. Tell them "I tried to do so-and-so, but my goals weren't realistic. So I'll try such-and-such instead." This takes a certain sort of guts, but Step number 2 will have given you those guts. It will give you a reputation for honesty, and when you have learned to Hear honesty in your own voice, your magical spells will take on much greater strength.

6. **As you have done the first five step for a awhile, start raising the standards slowly and objectively of the things you run.** If you run a Pylon, begin by setting a standard of attendance. Then when that is met, set a standard of how many Workings each person must write in a year. When that's met, set a standard about how many articles for the *Scroll* each Pylon member must write, and so forth. Go slow, take baby steps, use standards that apply to everyone. And shut off things for those who fail consistently. Be fair (i.e. don't throw someone out of your Pylon because they spent two months in the hospital), but don't worry about being *too* fair. If you are in a group you don't run -- like an Order -- support the Grandmaster every time he or she raises the bar S-L-O-W-L-Y.

Thus *Xeper* spreads through the land like a plague of locusts eating the crops of the self righteous!

CIVILIZATION

Onyx Tablet:

OT.O.4.20

© Temple of Set

Author:

Don Webb V°

Date:

September 28, 1998 CE

Revision:

HTML Revision:

September 28, 1999 CE

There has been discussion among the Priesthood about the role of the Temple of Set in the matrix of human civilization. Some would see us as isolate from that matrix. Others would see us as leading or controlling that matrix.

Neither extreme is the case. We alter the matrix in accordance with the Will of the Prince of Darkness. We do this by effecting/Creating a certain type of development in people -- the people who use this for their development will alter the civilization they work in. Understanding this is a key to Setian politics and to Understand why we choose to people of such differing backgrounds, levels of education and life experience.

Civilization arises as an epiphenomena of the stages of Initiation. If you really want to change the world, change the number and type of people obtaining magical development. In this I would be in perfect agreement with Crowley.

My model of initiation consists of seven stages. Each has its rules. This is a simplified version of life; real life is sometimes harder to divide into acts than a play.

The first stage is that of wandering. The initiate-to-be moves around the world according to the circumstances of their birth and guided by the intervention of their daemonic self. He or she will see many things, meet many people, have many experiences.

This material is acquired during a time of great naivete -- the initiate believes that surface appearances are true. Humans are good, those in authority know more than the rest of us, people wearing black hats are evil. The beliefs that rule the initiate-to-be are gathered at random; sometimes they are very noble such as a belief in human's ability to help themselves, sometimes very base such as racism. Those humans, roughly five percent of humanity (of every color, sex, sex preference) that have the capacity to avoid regression go through this phase. (When most people meet a new and stressful environment, they

regress into a more primitive behavior such as drinking, or sleeping a lot, and so forth -- only about five percent use the stress to move them into a more complex system of behavior.) This continues until phase two.

The second stage is shock. Something happens demonstrating the falsity of appearances. A lover is unfaithful, the government pulls you out of school because of a quota, you are much less smart than everyone told you were in the small town you grew up in, etc. The nature of the shock is unique to the person. It does however knock them off the path of life they were following. Many people don't have this occur; they are not marked to be initiates, but the allies of initiates. Most people never recover from this shock. They fall deeply asleep; their only magical function is to have children and pass along such daemonic material they may have in the form of family spirits and so forth. The Initiate, however, does not fall completely asleep.

The third stage is daydreaming. The Initiate begins a regression into a fantasy world while they rebuild their life. Driven by desires awakened above, they seek out those things that are resonant with those desires. They dabble in occultism, play at alternative life-styles, and generally restructure the medial parts of themselves with the idea of "What if?" Most people remain at that level. They make up the coffee house crowd in every city, the people that go to cool movies, and otherwise the market that magicians make their money off of. However some of these folk are overtaken by desire, and begin to break out of the economic (and/or socially-constructed) cage holding them. They try their hand at starting a band, or at writing, or at starting a business, or at organizing a political or cultural group. They have success despite the odds against them. They discover that things are possible if they are Willed. They put "Follow your bliss!" bumper stickers on their van, and are truly quite puzzled why more people don't do as they do.

These folk are the salt of the earth and many Left Hand Path initiates will tear their hair wondering why these folk, who have taken a step or two on the path, don't fully awaken. But some of them do. Usually some sorcerous skills are developed here such as obtainment through visualization and autohypnosis.

The fourth stage is shock. Here the Initiate discovers that there are great possibilities outside of the life they currently lead. This can happen in differing ways; they may read a book on the effect of the occult on history, or they may meet a talented magician, or they may have some manifestation of their own daemonic self. Here is a time of great danger. Now that the individual knows the world does not work in ways either explained fully in rational science, nor is the human world organized as mainstream media would have you believe -- there is a tendency to throw away logic and reason, and obsess on bizarre explanations of the world, whether it manifests as an over-interest in conspiracies, UFOs, or diet fads. However in some lucky few the powers of skepticism and their daemonic selves are balanced so that they can find a School. Those lost at this level of Shock spend their days tearing at the social fabric.

The fifth stage is the School. A School consists of four elements. First it must have a consistent metaphysics, that is to say, a system of thought that contains ethics, ontology,

epistemology, and praxis. Second it must have Teachers, living men and women who have bettered themselves by applying the School's ideas in a variety of real-life circumstances, and whose struggles must be similar to the Seeker's. Third it must have a variety of students from as large a range of walks of life, nationalities, cultures, and so forth as possible. This allows that the system can be tested in many differing ways. Fourth the School must provide resistance, a graduated steps of mastery based on objective criteria, so that the student is receiving something other than simple messages about how grand he or she is.

If the chemistry between the School and the Seeker is correct -- in other words, if the School provides enough challenge and friction coupled with enough useful Knowledge, and the Seeker provides magical curiosity and hard work -- then the Seeker may awaken, and all the aspects of his or her life can be enriched thereby. Such Seekers then become fiercely protective of the School and, by their being, an advertisement for it.

In connecting with the Teacher, the student begins by projecting all of the qualities that the student wants onto the Teacher. Now if it so happens that such qualities are part of the Teacher's makeup, then a magical process of Learning begins as well as the mundane process.

As the student comes to a certain state of being, their Strivings enable them to contact the Teacher within. This is the sign of a true School. At this point the School becomes a place of resources and networking as the Student uses its members as fellow researchers around the world. This is a type of empowerment that opens as many doors as magical practice does.

Some Students pass into direct interaction with the Prince of Darkness through a method akin to the one they used from passing from human Teacher to the Teacher within. At this point the School becomes a place for them to share their techniques of Awakening.

However no School is as good as its idealized model, which leads to the next phase:

The sixth stage is shock. Here the Student learns that his or her Teachers are in the long run just people like him- or herself. They see the great tragedy of Initiation, which is that when Initiates screw up, they do so on a grander scale than regular folk. This leads them to various deflections of Initiation. They may decide that their Teacher is "corrupt" or that Initiation is just an illusion, or worse still they may decide that they have license to pursue such petty evils as they may see (or imagine) others "above" them practice. Here the very Sovereignty they have been seeking is abdicated by their interest in the weakness of others, rather than in preserving and increasing their own strength. But those who survive this shock pass onto the last phase of Initiation.

The seventh phase is Work. Here the Initiate takes on the issue of world change. They usually maintain a fraternal and magical link to their School, and a presence in the various communities that fostered their coming into being. This Loyalty to one's own past is the way that Initiates in this stage of life maintain their Awareness. They rise to the top

of their chosen fields of endeavor, create a life that is uniquely satisfying to them, and finish the self-change issues that have been part of their process since the first phase of Initiation. At the end of their life, they work on simplifying and purifying their experience, so that they can pass on the rules of life to their apprentices in their trade, the fellow Students in their School, and their descendants. This is the last bringing out of the materials of their soul to work in the world; it is not a Gift to their loved ones, but a means of keeping their impulses alive on earth as they prepare for the shock of death and the states beyond.

It should be noted that just as some of these phases may overlap temporally (or in rare cases, not proceed in this order) the "shocks" need not be single events, but clusters of events occurring over days, months, or even years. Even death may not occur as a single event, but a series of events of physical and mental decline.

PRIESTHOOD RESIGNATIONS

Onyx Tablet:

OT.O.4.21

© Temple of Set

Author:

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Date:

April 22, 1999 CE

Revision:

HTML Revision:

September 28, 1999 CE

During my evaluation/confirmation of Priestess Buckner's Recognition, I asked her a question about what she saw/felt concerning a recent Priest's resignation from the Temple of Set. Having answered my question, she turned around and asked me the same. I've worked a little on that analysis, and feel it's now ready for presentation to the general Priesthood. Any Priest should be free to share this analysis with any I° or II° initiate with such concerns.

There are in my opinion several answers to this question; which one applies to any given III°+ resignation depends on the individual involved.

- Some were incorrectly Recognized to the III°. The conflict between their apparent Recognition and actual State leads eventually to their resignation. Fortunately this is a very small minority, and it continues to grow smaller as we take more and more care in our III°+ Recognitions.
- Some Priests are unable to sustain the *Xeper* which brought them to the Priesthood, and they return to the II°. Most of these don't realize it, and eventually leave because of the discrepancy between their State and level of Recognition. A few do realize it, and voluntarily step down to the II°.
- Many Priests develop very strong definite ideas about what the Temple needs to do/be, based not on inspiration from the Prince of Darkness but based on their own reasoning. Because of the diversity of the Temple's membership and Priesthood, they eventually run into counter-examples of others who do not match these ideas, and yet are honored and/or Recognized to the II° or even the III° Priesthood within the Temple.

When this happens the Priests are faced with a dilemma, with several possible outcomes. Some awaken to that diversity and accept it. Some recognize the potential of that

diversity, and though they may be uncomfortable with this dissonance between reality and their expectations, they are willing to see how things work out. Some are so distraught by this discrepancy and are unable to accept the diversity, and they leave, because the Temple does not agree with their vision of what it should be. Those in the middle group eventually migrate to one side or another, accepting and cherishing diversity, or leaving because the Temple's reality is too much different from their desires.

I think we've been making progress in awakening the Priesthood (and our Adepti) to the continually growing diversity within the Temple, but in my view this still remains one of the leading causes of III^o+ departure from the Temple.

- Some Priests fall victim to their own character failings (the Id Monster we sometimes warn people about). This often reveals itself through behavioral problems (a III^o+ member who tries to take advantage of initiates with lower degrees) or political activity (a III^o+ member who indulges in political intrigue or similar activity within the Temple).

These are eventually found out. If they're discovered early enough we can work with the initiate involved and sometimes they can work through the problem and resolve it. More often they resign, sometimes under strong recommendation that they do so, and sometimes they're expelled.

This is perhaps the single leading cause of aggravated III^o+ departure from the Temple, those departures which cause ripples through the Temple's body. In my opinion we have been woefully unsuccessful in reducing this type of problem.

- Some Priests fall victim not to their own character failings, but to the political machinations of others. They "fall under the spell" of someone who convinces them that the Temple is corrupt, that they are working to "save" or "repair" the Temple. When that person leaves the Temple as above, these members who were under their spell also usually leave very shortly after.

This used to be a very serious problem, and I believe it was the largest contributor to the decimation of the Priesthood following the Set-IV Conclave. We continue to see an occasional example of this problem now and then, but it has become much more rare.

- Some Priests encounter life situations which bring them a need to step away from the Priesthood, sometimes to the II^o, sometimes resigning from the Temple of Set. I view the first option as almost universally the better choice, and the latter option as the worse choice, but each Setian needs to make that decision when/if they encounter such situations.

- Some Priests *Xeper* in directions away from the Priesthood. Their personal growth leads them to experiences, perceptions, understandings, and desires which they discover to be at odds with Priesthood within the Temple. They then step down from the Priesthood to pursue their Xeper in areas outside the Temple.

IMO this is the best reason for the departure of a Priest of Set. This type of departure should be welcomed with congratulations and well wishing.

- Some Priests fall victim to their own (healthy) skepticism. They grow doubtful of their initiation and Recognition, failing to see evidence which supports it, and they convince themselves that the Recognition, initiation, and the Temple are misdirected. Many of these leave the Temple pleasantly to pursue more materialistic lives, or to pursue spiritual values/lives in other ways. While in my opinion this is not as good or desirable as the previous reason, it's also a reason I can understand and fully support.

A few of these skeptical members however then see the Temple as a political scam, and attempt to gain power within the perceived scam, then falling into the category of political activity above.

I may have missed a reason or two, but the categories above I believe cover the great majority of all III^o+ resignations and departures.

PREVENTING BURNOUT

Onyx Tablet:

OT.O.4.22

© Temple of Set

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Date:

May 22, 1999 CE

Revision:

HTML Revision:

September 28, 1999 CE

One question briefly discussed at the L.A. Gathering was how our long-time Priests manage to avoid burn-out, considering how much work we all take upon ourselves. For some reason most people were looking at me as this discussion began.

I had to admit that I have not had the time to give this topic much thought, but I did have a couple of techniques which seemed to do well for me.

- **I segregate my activities into appropriate categories:** family, career, personal Xeper, Priesthood activity, Temple administration, political/social activity, etc. I make sure that I spend a satisfactory amount of time on each of these.

"Satisfactory" will of course vary from person to person and situation to situation. I spend very little time on political/social activity. I subscribe to the ACLU mailing list, and participate in some of their write-in campaigns. I give time to consider and vote in all elections. I write occasional letters to the editor of the local newspaper, and to my elected representatives. All told, these activities probably take up less than an hour a week, with most of the time concentrated during elections and occasional social gatherings I attend with my wife.

When my son was younger, I spent much, much more time on family activities than I did when he was a reasonably self-sufficient teenager, and now that he's out of the house and in the Navy, I spend even less time on family activities. However, "less" is not "none." My wife and I continue to share quality time together, I correspond or chat with my son and my parents by phone, email, or ICQ, and I visit my parents and my sister's family at least one week a year.

The largest amount of time goes toward my career, averaging 50+ hours a week. The next largest goes to my various Temple activities.

- I follow various principles of time management to manage the time I spend on Temple activities.

I have specific times during the week when I work on Temple administration and similar activities, and except for occasional exceptions I limit my administrative work to those times.

I do a lot of Temple-related correspondence. Most of it consists of very quick notes and emails. Occasionally there's the letter or email which requires serious thought and time ... I generally set those aside into a pile of correspondence that requires time (a special email folder or a special box on my shelf). If I can't get to these within a week, then within that week I send an email or letter to the other person letting them know of my interest, of the delay, telling them when I hope to get to the letter, and warning them that I'm notoriously bad about keeping to such schedules, since so many other things come up.

- I don't fret and punish myself over things that don't get done.

I had intended to work on and publish the next installment of my Tarot Primer ten years ago. I had intended to work on and publish the next installment of the Order of Shuti Taxonomy of Opposites three years ago. Other activities of more timely import keep taking precedence. That's the way it happens.

- When necessary, I go on vacation from Temple responsibilities.

There have been periods as long as a year when I answered almost all correspondence with, "Sorry, I'm working on other things right now. Perhaps Priest [fill in the blank] can help you." There were years when I did almost no work on the *Ruby Tablet*. Effectively I go on sabbatical, or take a leave of absence, from time to time. This allows me to spend quality time on my own initiation, and to deal with any frustrations that might otherwise build up.

Back toward the end of the RKB era, there were a number of Priests who took formal/announced leaves of absence. For one reason or another, probably related to the stresses of that time, many of those leaves of absence did not result in improved relations after they were over. They left a bad taste in the mouth, and after the RKB era Priests did not announce formal leaves of absence. However, formal or not, I took a couple such leaves, as did other Priests who are still active in the Temple.

Having left the RKB era so far behind, I see no reason at this point why we would avoid formal leaves of absence, announced on the Priesthood mailing list and in our roster, and such formal leaves of absence have their benefits. By listing such a leave of absence on a Priest's roster entry, we can lessen the amount of correspondence sent to that Priest or Master, since we'd know they're concentrating on personal work rather than available for all sorts of Temple administration activities. Another benefit to a formal leave of absence

is the inclusion of an end date, after which the Priest returns to "normal" activity. A six- or twelve-month time limit to such formal leaves of absence helps to concentrate our personal activity (rather than otherwise letting things "slide" so the goals of the leave of absence fail to be accomplished because we just don't get around to it).

These are just ideas I've had, and I don't expect them to work for everyone. They seem to have worked for me.

TO BUILD AN ETERNAL TEMPLE

Onyx Tablet:

OT.O.4.23

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Date:

June 18, 1999 CE

Revision:

HTML Revision:

September 28, 1999 CE

The Temple is Shaped by the Doings of its Priesthood.

The Priest faces the dilemma of freedom. They can pretty much do what they like. If a Priest is concerned that there isn't enough local activity of the Temple, he or she can do more. If they want to set up camp in cyberspace (as we have done on America Online), off they go. If they want to acclimatize the Temple to a local culture, they can do so as long as the magical Link with the Temple as a whole is not compromised (and the corporate body not weakened).

The dilemma of freedom leads to burn-out. People try to be reactive. They answer each letter as it comes in. Slowly it seems that they are putting beads on a string without a knot in the end. Since they don't own the II° they Recognize, they look around and feel that the Temple is something over there, rather than something they built. The dilemma of freedom for the III° is filled by taking a piece of the empty future and filling it up with deeds of their own genius. What is your plan for the Temple's growth?

The Priest does have a very deep Responsibility, however. The Priest has to DEMONSTRATE the change, not advocate it. **Advocating is easy. Doing is hard.**

For example Priest X thinks we should give computers to the Priesthood. He doesn't write about this neat idea, he gives computers out. He writes up the effect -- and the rest of us watch and learn.

If Priestess Y wants more activity in her country, she translates the *Crystal Tablet*, the *Information and Admissions Policies* letter, and sets up a mailing list for the language involved. And she communicates the results.

As the Temple grows in complexity, I recommend the following path.

A Priest will write his/her five year plan. Not for the High Priest to approve of for the Council. He or she shares it in the Priesthood forum, and then as appropriate in their ICR, a *Scroll* article, or whatever.

Then he or she puts out bulletins, based on their actions for the next five years. Five year arcs tell you that you are planning for Working for a while, they give you a personal stake in the Temple, and they give you a chance to have a couple of years that you attend to other things.

I wouldn't recommend people doing this their first year as a Priest, because there is so much to learn. I would NOT recommend making this a requirement. (As in everyone must file their FIVE YEAR PLAN with the Supreme Soviet of Black Order).

I would recommend this as a **voluntary** method of self-challenge, and alliance building.

The plans cannot be assigned from above.

Examples of such plans might include:

I want to help people through their first year as Priests, so I am going to offer my counsel to any new Priest (that wants it), and suggest that they do likewise after they have had their first year. After five years, I will hold this a successful Working of my Will if I see the tradition continuing.

LONG TERM EFFECT: More effective Priests, a living body of priest-craft without legislation, Bylaw changes or debate.

I want the Temple to have a lending library, that people can leave books to. If after five years, I have managed to create a useful way to do this without huge work, I will consider this a successful Working of my Will.

LONG TERM EFFECT: Without increasing the burden on existing staff, we get a little library.

I want to get every university student to ask their university library to order a copy of Uncle Setnakt's Essential Guide to the Left Hand Path, and ask everyone to get their video rental store to carry Call Me The Prince of Darkness. If after five years, I come to know of 15 libraries and 15 stores across the world, I will consider this a successful Working of my Will.

LONG TERM EFFECT: We get a much bigger audience for our Word based on the magic and desire of I° and II°s.

There are any number of Workings like this, that any Priest can pick as his or her battlefield, that will change the Temple in a positive way, forever. Each would depend on personal choices, each could be put in your ICR so that new people would come in to

help you out, and, with enough imagination and hard work, will give you something to brag about for years.

Doing is always more impressive than talking.

THE ANCIENT PRIESTHOOD OF SET

Onyx Tablet:

OT.I.AncP

© Temple of Set

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Date:

December 1, 1988 CE

Revision:

HTML Revision:

August 8, 1999 CE

No records of the ancient Priesthood of Set have survived. We know of it only by its reflection, both in the character of Set as he was portrayed symbolically and mythologically and in the nature of Egyptian priesthods in general. Such details may be studied in Categories #1 and #2 of the reading list, and it is assumed that you, by virtue of your Recognition to the Priesthood, have surveyed this field.

Here we wish rather to call attention to the four most significant facts known about the Priesthood of Set. They are:

(1) Together with the Priesthood of Horus [the Elder], it was the oldest of the Egyptian priesthods. If we date it to the earliest predynastic images of Set found by archaeologists, we can establish an origin of at least 3200 BCE. Working with the Egyptians' own astronomically-based records [cf. #2F], we may approximate 5000 BCE. If we are to assume the final eclipse of the Priesthood at the end of the XIX-XX [Setian] Dynasties ca. 1085 BCE, we are looking at an institution which existed at least two thousand and possibly as many as four thousand years.

(2) Set was the god who was "different" from all of the others. Too often this is simplified into his being the "evil" slayer of Osiris, hence the personification of "evil"; yet any but the most cursory study of Egyptian religious symbolism is sufficient to dispel this caricature. He was rather the "god not of the gods": a neter "against the neteru": the entity who symbolized that which is not of nature.

This is a very curious role for a god in Egyptian cosmology. As discussed in the *Ruby Tablet* (OT.II.A.1.a.):

"The Egyptians perceived the Universe as actively controlled by conscious, natural principles (*neteru*). To the Egyptians, all of 'nature' (derived from *neter*) was alive and

the direct consequence of the wills of the *neteru*. Nature was intelligible not just through inanimate, automatic, general regularities which could be discovered via the 'scientific method'; but also through connections and associations between things and events perceived in the human mind. There was no distinction between 'reality' and 'appearance'; anything capable of exerting an effect upon the mind thereby existed."

To be the only "other god" [cf. HPL] in such a cosmology, Set was understood to be a presence and force which alone could not be apprehended by perceptions of the natural senses. He thus represents the nameless "thing" whose existence we know of by the shadow it casts on things apprehended and things perceived by it: the non-natural "presence of self" in individual intelligent life.

We have generalized the vehicle by which this presence is manifest as the *ba*, spirit, psyche, or soul in the exoteric and general reference writings of the Temple [*Crystal & Ruby Tablets*], because that concept is sufficiently precise for discussion at that level, and also because any attempt at greater precision would doubtless bewilder Initiates [to say nothing of profane colleagues]. But within the *Onyx Tablet* increased precision is appropriate. We must subtract from the psyche what is "life force", and focus our attention on That which remains: the very awareness of Self. In doing so we have in one sense retraced the path of Descartes to the *cogito ergo sum* proposition. Unlike Descartes, however, we see this phenomenon to be a "thing totally apart" which is not an extension of "God" or anything else. Set is the conceptualizer of this principle: the designer. To rewrite the crucial sentence in the above quote from the point of view of a neter: "A thing created in the mind thereby exists."

This is dangerous ground to tread, so much more so for an ancient Egyptian civilization whose entire "natural" cosmology was based upon the perfection and harmony of the Universe. Former Director of Cairo's French Oriental Archaeological Institute Serge Sauneron comments:

"To understand the attitude of the Egyptians, it is necessary to emphasize the striking contrast between their view of the world and ours. We live in a universe which we know is in perpetual movement; each new problem demands a new solution. But for the Egyptians this notion of time which modifies the current knowledge of the world, of an alteration of factors which forces a change in methods, had no place. In the beginning the divinity created a stable world, fixed, definitive; this world functions as a motor well oiled and well fed.

"If there are 'misfires' - if the motor fades, if one of the parts making it up is worn out or broken - it is replaced and everything starts off again better than before. But this motor would always remain the same; its mechanism, its appearance, its output would always be identical.

"If some problem intrigues the mind, therefore - if some serious event arises to disturb the customary order of things - it could not really be new; it was foreseen with the world. Its solution or remedy exists in all eternity, revealed in a kind of universal 'manner of use'

that the gods defined in creating the universe itself. What is necessary, therefore, is to find in the ancient writings the formula that foresaw such-and-such a case. Before a given event - a physical phenomenon, a catastrophe striking the whole country - the scholar would not seek to discover the actual causes in order to find an appropriate remedy. Rather he would examine with scholarly ardor the volumes of old writings to find out if the event had already occurred in some moment of the past, and what solution had then been applied to it."

(3) Despite this unique and disturbing image, or perhaps because of it, Set became the patron of the two most powerful dynasties in Egypt's long history, the XIX and XX. Herein there is an interesting "theological succession":

The early XVIII Dynasty (ca. 1580-1372) was that of the great Amenhoteps, during whose reigns the Priesthood of Amon at Thebes was preeminent. The dynasty disintegrated during the "Amarna period" (ca. 1372-1343) of Akhenaton, during which the solar disk of Aton was considered supreme if not indeed all-inclusive of the neteru. When the new XIX Dynasty arose under Rameses I and Seti I, the state role of Amon was restored - but the Pharaohs directed much of their personal efforts towards Set. Recounts Sauneron:

"The new dynasty in power, careful to appear to be 'restoring everything to order', had many reasons for mistrusting the Amonian priesthood. Descendants of a military family of the eastern delta, the new Pharaohs were traditionally devoted to a god little esteemed by the masses because of the role that he had been assigned in the death of Osiris. But they preserved nevertheless, here and there, the temples and priesthoods of the god Set.

"The Amarnian experience had demonstrated the cost of too abrupt a break with the beliefs central to the entire nation, and of entering into open warfare against a priesthood practically as powerful as the throne itself. Thus the politics of Seti I (1312-1301) and of Rameses II (1301-1235) were infinitely more subtle than those of their predecessors. There was no rupture with Thebes; the constructions continued, and magnificent edifices were raised to the glory of Amon at Karnak, Gournah, and Ramesseum. But it was from the [Osirian] center of Abydos that Rameses appointed the High Priest of Amon. Then he installed two of his sons, Merytum and Khamuast, as the High Priests of Ra at Heliopolis and Ptah at Memphis, and demonstrated by further monuments and political favors his public support of these gods. But finally, wearied of Thebes and its ambitious priests, he departed to build a new capital, Pi-Rameses, in the eastern delta - where he could quietly worship the god dearest to him, with Amon occupying a secondary prominence.

"The provincial cities where Set had been worshipped from all eternity - among them Ombos, Tjebu, and Sepermeru - gained new preeminence from the favor accorded by the Ramesside leaders to the god of the Eastern Delta. Above all, Pi-Rameses, the new capital, brilliantly restored the worship that Set had formerly received in the Avaris of the Hyksos."

- Serge Sauneron, *Les pretres de l'ancienne Egypte* (#2AA)

Following the passing of the two Setian dynasties, however, the increasing influence of a priesthood not courted by the Ramesside Pharaohs - that of Osiris - boded ill for the Temple of Set. Comments E.A. Wallis Budge (#1A): "Between the XXII and the XXV Dynasties, a violent reaction set in against this god [Set]; his statues and figures were smashed; his effigy was hammered out from the bas-reliefs and stelae in which it appeared."

Various reasons for this reaction have been proposed by Egyptologists. It is been suggested that Set fell into disrepute through being associated in the popular mind with the Sutekh of the invading Hyksos. Possible, but improbable, as the Hyksos invasion occurred prior to the XIX-XX Dynasties when Set was preeminently in favor - and the presiding *neter* over Egypt's greatest period of imperial glory.

Set's eclipse may well have been due to a more subtle, yet pervasive sentiment sweeping Egypt. As Sauneron and many other Egyptologists have acknowledged, Egyptian philosophy was based upon a millennia-old conviction of the absolute presence and influence of the *neteru*, and in the virtue of a social system in which the preservation of cyclical harmony was all-important. While the New Empire of the XIX-XX Dynasties extended Egypt's influence to Palestine and Mesopotamia, it also made the Egyptians aware that there were many other functioning cultures in which the *neteru* were unknown [at least by their Egyptian names]. Moreover the concept of Egypt as just one among a number of nation-states competing for power and influence in the Mediterranean, rather than as the one civilization at the center of existence, must have been a most unsettling one to this ancient culture - which previously had been able to discount its neighbors as mere uncultured, barbarian tribes.

Egypt's solution to this problem was to turn gradually away from a glorification of this life and towards an orientation on the afterlife, where such disturbing dilemmas could be assumed not to exist. This would explain the growing influence and popularity of the Osiris cult during the post-XX Dynasty Egyptian decadence, as Osiris was a *neter* of the afterlife. As the Osiris cult portrayed Set as Osiris' nemesis rather than an independent and pre-existing *neter* with no particular interest in Osiris, this would also explain the simultaneous wave of Setian persecution described by Budge. It was characteristic of ancient Egypt that each new dynasty, in an attempt to establish its own "timelessness", often doctored monuments and records to eliminate inconvenient inconsistencies. Presumably the Osirian dynasties followed suit, defacing or rewriting all references to Set that did not support their portrayal of him as a "Devil". And that is the image of Set which has been accepted by most casual writers on ancient Egypt.

Today the Temple of Set returns to the original, undistorted apprehension of Set. In keeping with our modern levels of knowledge, of course, this image has been both enhanced and refined. Enhanced in that we now understand better than the ancient Egyptians how the material universe functions, refined to exclude those aspects of the human personality that are natural, externally-controlled functions. At the same time, contemporary civilization's impatience and superficiality - its restless inability to study anything metaphysical in any depth - have tended to condense the delicate, complex

study of Egyptian cosmology [presented so well in *Her-Bak*] into a crude caricature capable of being digested by modern minds in a few hours at most. Initiates of the Priesthood of Set must resolve to take the time to apprehend and appreciate Set - and the other Egyptian *neteru* - in the same contemplative, reflective, and above all unhurried fashion that their ancient predecessors did. Only then will the magnificence, subtlety, and depth of this metaphysical system be realized and appreciated. Only then can its principles be applied meaningfully within our current environment.

THE MODERN PRIESTHOOD OF SET

Onyx Tablet: OT.I.Mod © Temple of Set

Author: Michael A. Aquino VI°

Date: December 1, 1988 CE

Revision:

HTML Revision: August 8, 1999 CE

THE CONCEPT OF "PRIESTHOOD"

Conventional religions view their ordained officialdom as mere commercial professions. Whether or not such a priest, pastor, or minister takes personal mystical pleasure in the job is ultimately incidental to whether he or she makes money for the church, brings in a flow of converts, prevents defections, attacks competitors, and acquires political influence in the community. Indeed the most successful clerics are those who allow the least intrusion of religious idealism into their decision-making: in essence those who do not make the mistake of fooling themselves along with their victims.

This is central to the art of popular control by propaganda, to which all conventional religions finally reduce. In his *Propaganda: The Formation of Men's Attitudes* Jacques Ellul remarks:

"The propagandist cannot believe in the ideology he must use in his propaganda. He is merely a man at the service of a party, a state, or some other organization, and his task is to ensure the efficiency of that organization. If the propagandist has any political conviction, he must put it aside in order to use some popular mass ideology. He cannot even share that ideology, for he must use it as an object and manipulate it without the respect he would have for it if he believed in it. He quickly acquires contempt for these popular images and beliefs; in his work he must change the propaganda themes so frequently that he cannot possibly attach himself to any formal, sentimental, political, or other aspect of the ideology."

Replace the terms "propagandist" and "ideology" with "conventional priest" and "religion" and you will see that the point of the paragraph is unchanged. In 1984 George Orwell pointed out that, this hypocrisy notwithstanding, it is a test of the orthodoxy and reliability of the propagandist that he never admit to his cynicism: that it remain

unspoken and unacknowledged. Indeed this is an important part of the formula for successful promulgation of propaganda, for if it were generally realized that the proponents don't believe in it, it would lose a significant portion of its effectiveness. [That it does not lose all or even most of it is demonstrated by the unshaken adoration of the masses for media evangelists even after the hypocrisy of their private lives has been revealed.]

During mankind's literary and scientific childhood a belief in various natural divinities was understandable. Today, however, all phenomena that were originally attributed to such divinities are well-known to be the product of non-conscious forces. Hence there is no rational reason for believing in gods or a God, save out of fear of the mystery of death and, for some, fear of loneliness. The power of these motivating forces should not be underestimated, particularly if one is threatened with death ["There are no atheists in foxholes."] or feels rejected or ignored by one's fellow human beings.

So in this era of science and materialism, conventional religions have retained their market. They have also cultivated a "social service" justification for their community presence, undertaking any number of charity tasks. Significantly such activities are staffed either by volunteers seeking self-justification or by low-level members of the clergy who are still deceived by the propaganda of their own organizations.

The Priesthood of Set is as alien to this sordid circle of deceit, prostitution, and exploitation as night is from day.

First, the Priesthood is consecrated by and dedicated to a *neter* of non-nature: the very essence of that which cannot be explained by natural science. It is not threatened by rational or scientific knowledge; rather it builds upon and is strengthened by them.

Secondly, it is not a device for the exploitation or benefit of anyone: incumbent, organization, or audience. Rather it is an intensely and exclusively personal state of being, involving only the Priest or Priestess and Set. Any impact of this state of being upon anyone or anything else is merely a by-product.

Third, it is an office which has meaning only to beings of high intelligence in communication with other beings of high intelligence. It markets no simplified version of itself to others, having no reason to do so.

The Temple of Set and its higher Initiates are not controllers or manipulators of the Priesthood. Rather they Recognize this state of being when it appears in certain individuals, they encourage its strengthening and development, and they guard against its misuse or corruption. Beyond these very simple parameters, each Priest and Priestess of Set is a living microcosm of the significance of the entire Temple of Set. If the Temple were to cease to exist as an institution and if only one Initiate of the Priesthood were to remain alive, such is the nature of the Priesthood that the Temple would lose none of its significance. If it exists, then it will be sought out by those who have the capability and make the effort to do so.

RESPONSIBILITIES

As a Priest or Priestess of Set you have three specific responsibilities in descending priority:

- * Your first and highest responsibility is to Set: to commune with and to represent this neter in accordance with the sanctity, dignity, and excellence of his being.
- * Your second responsibility is to yourself, as a consecrated and sacred vessel of the Priesthood of Set. Your regard for yourself can no longer be a merely human one, as in the pursuit of animal gratification or conventional aggrandizement. Your soul, mind, and body now must be precious and rare jewels, to be refined to their highest potential and applied to your environment with foresight, perception, and discretion.
- * Your third responsibility is to the Temple of Set as an institution ordained by and consecrated to Set. Both organizationally and as a collective term for the many Initiates of all degrees within its scope, it must be preserved, improved, respected, and if necessary defended in an uncompromising, resolute, and effective fashion.

Subordinate to these three responsibilities, Initiates of the Priesthood are expected to be a constructive and civilizing influence in the communities, cultures, and nations in which they may live. Although the Temple of Set is an initiatory religion, which holds the initiated self to be superior to the uninitiated one, we do not thereby hold uninitiated humanity in contempt. Any and every form of life has its own right to exist as nature may provide, and each species - such as humanity - must have a collective respect for its own kind if it is to prosper. Setians of all degrees must not only tolerate non-Setians; they must appreciate and respect the needs and capacities which fit some for initiation and not others. This is most closely akin to Plato's "stratification of the soul" in the *Republic*, in which he illustrated the point by dividing an artificial society into various specializations of its citizenry. Such is the degeneration of modern social culture that such specializations are now thrust into pecking-orders of prestige. If the Initiate of the Priesthood is to be successful in relations with non-initiated society, such prejudice must be overcome and all humans be understood for the unique and fascinating creatures that they are.

THE PRIESTHOOD AS A MIRROR

The Priesthood is a state of being to which you have attained, both through your own efforts and capabilities and through the Eye of Set. Because it is a state of being, it can endure with you eternally - or it can be destroyed by you in a moment if you abandon it. The Temple of Set exists to Recognize initiated states of being, to include their abandonment if appropriate.

While in the first ecstasy of Recognition to the Priesthood you may find it difficult to think of ever relinquishing it for any reason, the fact remains that over the years some Priests and Priestesses have done so with a variety of motives. Some could not stand the

strain of maintaining such an exalted state of being - for it is a strain to do so. Some, while able to sustain the Priesthood, found that in the final analysis they preferred a lesser intensity of existence - either as a non-ordained Adept or even as a non-initiated human again. Here is Plato's "stratification of the soul" asserting itself. If such alignments are undertaken honestly and methodically, there must be no stigma attached to them whatever. Disrepute and dishonor lie rather in clinging to the trappings of an exalted state of being when one's soul is no longer governed by the principles characteristic of that state.

INITIATORY DEGREE RELATIONSHIPS

The essential dignity of degrees III*-VI* is the Priesthood of Set itself. The degrees IV*-VI* are properly viewed as specialized functions within the Priesthood, not as more privileged or exclusive classes.

Continuing this theme, the essential characteristic of degrees IV*-VI* is that of Master of the Temple. Magus V* and Ipsissimus VI* merely designate specialized functions within the Magistracy.

All therefore returns to the Priesthood of Set in its entirety. From its inception the Temple of Set was designed to reflect this point, as it is "owned" as an organization by the Priesthood. This is stipulated in Section 10.02 of the By-Laws, where the power to define the Temple and to control all aspects of its existence through amendment or replacement of the By-Laws is reserved collectively to the Priesthood. In effect:

- * The Priesthood of Set owns the Temple of Set, Inc.
- * The Priesthood, via the By-Laws, delegates the guardianship of the Temple to nine Councillors.
- * These nine Councillors select a Chairman, who initiates various actions on the Council's behalf.
- * The Council appoints three executive officers to supervise the day-to-day functioning of the Temple: the High Priest of Set, the Executive Director, and the Treasurer.
- * The High Priest appoints various offices and institutions subordinate to the "By-Laws level", such as Editor of the *Scroll* and the *Jeweled Tablets*. He authorizes various institutions subordinate to the Temple, such as Orders and Pylons.
- * The Grand Masters of the Orders and Sentinels of the Pylons determine policies and programs within those elements.

Normally the atmosphere in the Temple of Set is not one in which any Initiate "orders" any other Initiate to do anything. Dialogue occurs and advice is given as solicited or volunteered, and that is that.

If a junior Initiate disregards the advice of a senior, and the point at issue is deemed to be serious enough, expulsion or such other corrective measures as specified in the By-Laws may occur. However such impasses are rare and should remain so if persons entering the Temple have made an intelligent decision concerning their initiatory goals. The real meaning of, and justification for expulsion is simply that the individual in question is unsuited for the Temple of Set and probably should not have been admitted to it or at least continued past the initial 2-year "test period".

ORDERS AND PYLONS

The Temple is so designed that Priests and Priestesses who wish to head formal sub-organizations become Sentinels of Pylons, and Masters become Grand Masters of Orders.

The concept of Orders is discussed in the appropriate section of the *Crystal Tablet*. Pylons are conceived somewhat differently. Rather than being bound together by a specialization or orientation, they are assemblies of Setians who, for whatever reason - locality, compatibility, etc., simply enjoy working regularly with one another. Pylons may be localized and/or may operate over great distances as the members prefer.

The Temple of Set is designed to enhance the initiation of all Setians. It is expected that all sub-elements of the Temple will generally make the fruits of their research or Workings available to the entire Temple via publications or activities (such as Conclave presentations or rituals) which are open to all Initiates. Correspondingly, however, it is expected that Setians who have a particular interest in the activities of a specific Order or Pylon will formally affiliate with it. Grand Masters and Sentinels are quite within their rights to bar persons who make no such commitment after reasonable contact.

The experience of the Temple of Set with Pylons, as of the Church of Satan previously with its Grottos, has been that elements such as these usually spring up around the leadership of one or two central figures and do not survive past the departure of that leadership. Hence Pylons and Orders should be viewed as changeable elements which may be started and stopped for any number of reasons, rather than fixed-in-place units. As they serve needs and fulfill desires, they will exist. As they do not, they will cease. This should be viewed as normal flux within the Temple, not cause for concern.

LEVELS OF COMMUNICATION

In the Temple of Set "a cat may look at a king"; the newest I* may, if so desired, address questions or communications to a VI*. However in normal circumstances it is anticipated that the Priesthood III* will be the primary point of contact for I*/II* Setians, and that the Masters of the Temple IV* will be the primary contact for the III*.

All Initiates of the Priesthood are expected to participate in the Intercommunication Roster in the *Crystal Tablet of Set* accordingly. The remarks field of the data page will also be the place where basic information concerning any Pylon headed by that Priest or Priestess will be presented.

Information within the Temple of Set will generally be made available to the lowest degree level possible. If there is not a sensible and specific reason for restricting information, it will not be restricted. Where queries from I*s are concerned, however, the Priesthood must remember that these individuals are still in a "testing" status and may ultimately be determined to have joined the Temple of Set for frivolous or ulterior motives. The provision of information to I*s should accordingly be with a view to their legitimate initiatory advancement and magical prowess.

Within the Priesthood the High Priest publishes a bulletin called *Hieroglyphs*. [The title may change with different High Priests.] This is not designed to be a contributor-organ like the *Scroll*, but is rather to disseminate current information of concern to the Priesthood as a whole. *Hieroglyphs* appears irregularly as dictated by events. Permanent Priesthood information will not be disseminated via *Hieroglyphs*, but rather will take the form of additions to the *Onyx Tablet*. *Hieroglyphs* issues should not be photocopied for non-members of the Priesthood, but Priests and Priestesses may quote or extract from it for I*/II* Setians or non-members as they may think appropriate. Unless indicated otherwise, policy guidance contained in *Hieroglyphs* is to be considered official from the office of the High Priest under By-Law #5.01.

THE JEWELLED TABLETS OF SET

Each volume of the *Jeweled Tablets of Set* has a unique function in the series:

The *Crystal Tablet* serves as a "basic handbook" for the Temple of Set as a whole, and as an orientation for new Setians I*. It is not designed for contributions except as provided for within its structured, informational sections. Initiatorily it is intended to provide the new Setian with sufficient information to qualify for Recognition as an Adept II*.

The *Ruby Tablet* is designed to be the principal repository of the permanent magical and philosophical papers of the Temple of Set. When properly developed, it will certainly be several times larger than all of the other *Tablets* put together, and will be the focus of most of the *Jeweled Tablets* attention. Its prohibition to Setians I* is simply to prevent the permanent wisdom of the Temple from being available to persons who are still in a "Setian suitability testing" status.

There is very little in the way of magical or philosophical material which should properly be restricted above the II*. A properly Recognized Adept is just as capable of respecting and appreciating initiatory wisdom as a III*-VI*. A senior Initiate who proposes to restrict a paper to a higher Tablet should be clear as to the reasons why this is necessary and be prepared to justify the decision accordingly.

The *Onyx Tablet* is somewhat similar to the *Crystal Tablet* in that it is intended to be a "handbook" for the Priesthood levels of the Temple rather than a vehicle for contributions. There is provision for contributions from members of the Priesthood in both its Inner and Outer sections, but these contributions must (a) pertain primarily and

specifically to the concept of the Priesthood of Set and (b) be of a nature that would not more properly be in the *Ruby Tablet*.

The *Onyx Tablet*, because of its inclusion of the complete membership database of the Temple of Set, should be kept under lock-and-key security in order to safeguard the privacy of all Setians. While all volumes of the *Jeweled Tablets* should be reasonably safeguarded, this provision is most important in the case of the *Onyx Tablet*.

The contents of the *Onyx Tablet* are to be considered official policy guidance from the office of the High Priest under By-Law #5.01. The sole exception involves the Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws, which are of course superior to #5.01 and may not be affected by it.

The *Sapphire Tablet* is similar in concept to the *Ruby Tablet*, but contains papers of a sophistication and complexity as would be confusing or misleading if disseminated at the *Ruby Tablet* level. It is somewhat analogous to the "Levels 4 & 5" classifications of the reading list. Initiates of the Priesthood of Set III* are respectfully requested to honor the experience and judgment of the Masters of the Temple in reserving such papers for those fellow Masters who have the perspective and Understanding to interpret and apply them as their authors intended.

The *Amethyst* and *Topaz Tablets* are properly considered as additions to the *Sapphire Tablet* in that they are available to all Masters of the Temple. They will contain documents of *Sapphire Tablet* level which pertain specifically to the initiatory functions of Magus and Ipsissimus respectively.

THE FUNCTION OF THE PRIESTHOOD IN LESSER BLACK MAGIC

As a Priest or Priestess of Set you are no longer perceived by other Setians and by profane society to be acting on your own, but to be acting as an official of the Temple of Set as a whole whenever you undertake magical Workings. Quite obviously the impact of your Workings will be magnified accordingly in the eyes of others, hence will be that much more powerful with little if any additional effort on your part.

The analogy is a bit like that of getting into a Formula One racing car after being accustomed to drive a street-tuned automobile. If you floor the accelerator as you were previously accustomed to do, you'll get a real surprise - and quite possibly a dangerous one. The procedural, contextual, and ethical provisions relating to LBM as discussed in *Black Magic* are all the more critical at the III* level.

Where your contacts with I*/II* Setians are concerned, you will be regarded as an expert in the application of LBM. Your advice will be sought. Do not fall into the trap of being asked to "do LBM for" I*/II* Setians. They are quite capable of applying LBM principles for themselves, at a level appropriate to their initiatory status. Your LBM Workings should be for your own purposes and priorities as a Priest or Priestess.

THE FUNCTION OF THE PRIESTHOOD IN GREATER BLACK MAGIC

By virtue of the fact that you are Recognized to the Priesthood of Set, very little need be said here. The function of GBM remains as it was when you entered upon the Left-Hand Path, save with one difference: You are now a sacred being yourself; you have quite literally become a part of that to which GBM opens a door. Therefore there is an element of "circularity" in GBM at this level; you are both the adventurer and the sphinx. As you come to appreciate, and to feel more comfortable with this dichotomy within your psyche, you will attain to a much more versatile expertise in GBM than you previously thought possible. As with the experience of the Priesthood generally, do not rush this experience, but rather allow it to unfold at its own pace. Then and only then will you come into full realization of what it means to be consecrated to the Priesthood of Set.

CEREMONY OF ORDINATION TO THE PRIESTHOOD OF SET

Onyx Tablet:

OT.I.Ordn

© Temple of Set

Author:

Michael A. Aquino VI°

Date:

October 31, 1972 CE (Original
Ceremony - Priesthood of
Mendes)

Revision:

HTML Revision:

August 8, 1999 CE

The Sentinels of the Abyss are summoned to enfold these chambers in a suspension of time and dimension, for the Great Flame of the Prince of Darkness is to be drawn to our midst. As the Aethyrs of the Universe are convoked as witness, I charge you who are within this Temple to suffer no word of these proceedings to be passed to the profane. The eyes of the examiners are cast upon those who would defy these words, unto the beginning and end of all dimensions.

Hear now the legacy of the Priesthood of Set:

In the *Diabolicon* of the Age of Satan is recounted the primieval sundering of the Cosmos from mindless unity into chaotic duality, hence a crucible in which the essence of Set attained the distinction of Self.

And Earth, speck of dust within the swirling furnace and endless night of the Universe - it was to Earth that Set came in dim AEons past. To the ancestors of your ancestors, O you who are more than human, he spoke the Word that brought them into being, saying:

"I am within and beyond you, the Highest of Life, in majesty greater than the forces of the Universe; whose eyes are the Face of the Sun and the Dark Fire of Set; who fashioned your intelligence as his own and reached forth to exalt you; who entrusted to you dignity of consciousness; who opened your eyes that you might know beauty; who brought you the key to knowledge of all lesser things; and who enshrined in you the Will to Come

Into Being. Lift your voices, then, and recognize the Highest of Life who thus proclaims your triumph; whose being is beyond natural life and death; who came as flame to your world and enlightened your desire for perfection and truth. Arise thus in your glory, behold the genius of your creation, and be prideful of being, for I am the same - I who am the Highest of Life."

Since that day of the coming of the Fire, the story of the race of man has been as that of the Universe - torn and tortured by war, famine, pestilence, and death. Yet in the midst of death we are in life - by the Gift of Set there is that within us which is immune to the savagery of mortal flesh, which preserves the self inviolate, which presages for us an eternity of unique existence unfettered either by stasis or chaos.

The *Word of Set* became a Link between the ancestors of your ancestors and Set, and that *Word* took form as Xepera, the Self-Created One, who gave unto the care of the first Priesthood of Set the great Keys to the Shining Trapezoid that is the Gate to the Abyss, saying:

"Herein lies the geometric inspiration for the existence of Set, whose names shall be many in the AEons and Ages to come. Observe that it doth shape and define that which is the Pentagram of Set, which is itself our seal and the Key to all beauty of proportion.

"Even as the triangle and trihedron shall be as drugs to lure men-beasts to blind labor towards the worship of an apex of self-extinction, so we of the Pentagram and the Trapezoid author ever-unfolding memorials to the creative genius of man. Think not that because the first sights before your opened eyes are these sacred Keys, that they shall be revered. Indeed with the passage of time they shall be changed and effaced by those who have forgotten their power, and their origin shall fade into the mists of time.

"But this Temple shall endure until the race of man shall cease, and those who enter its fold shall behold the heart of the fire, and they shall gaze upon the face of Set. Yea, nevermore shall they know the simple peace of their animal brothers, but their eyes shall be opened, and they shall become as Daemons, and the forces of all creation shall bend before their will. So it shall be done."

So spoke Xepera, the Word Become Form, who also would fade before the eyes of the ancestors of our ancestors, until only dim memories of Imhotep, Prometheus, Enoch, and Belial would remain as the eldest legends of humankind. By his word we of the Priesthood of Set have rejected the blissful annihilation of unity, the crippling torture of the cross of duality, and the worship of the triad of chaos in all their semblances. Embraced and immortalized by the very Fire of Life, we seek those who yet grope towards the Light, knowing not what it is they desire, but only that they must attain it.

Perils there are, and they are many - yet, in all their glamour and comfort, as one they lead their victim at last to the same numbing death that would have awaited him had he never sought to escape it. Accursed is he who places his foot upon the Path to the Right

in its many guises, for he merely labors towards that which would come to him in its own deadly time, would he but await its cold embrace.

And now, within these Pylons of Light and Life Eternal, let those who have taken the Name of Set as of their own Being taste again of the Grail of the Black Flame. As its Holy Fire courses through your veins, affirm again your bond with the Prince of Darkness and his sacred Temple.

"Can the wings of the winds understand your voices of wonder, O enlightened ones who shine like fire in the jaws of chaos, whom I have prepared as cups for a wedding, or as the flowers in their beauty for the chamber of righteousness? Stronger are your feet than the barren stone, and mightier are your voices than the manifold winds, for you are become a Temple such as is not, but in the mind of Set. Arise, says the First of your kind; move, therefore, unto the Elect; show them the fire within you, and awaken them that they may gain the strength to live forever."

Towards this Working the Will of Set has manifest itself, joining in consecration with one who is now to be ordained to his eternal Priesthood. Called to this sacred office is [Name], who has before this altar cast aside all the comforts, illusions, and images of Earth that [his/her] Soul and Self may be transfixed by the very Fire of Fires.

Advance to the altar, thou who would claim this doom, that the eye of our lord Set may, for a time, seize, alone within the Universe, upon you. As your mind is revealed to his, do you of your free will embrace his eternal Priesthood?

Bring then your left hand to the Black Flame upon the altar, and for a fleeting moment receive its kiss upon your soul.

"Conceive of the Cosmos as a circle of twelve divisions alternating between life and death, binding all creatures save those whom I have touched. You are given powers greater than those ordering these divisions and extending throughout the ages of time, that with your vision and your voice you might exercise the Powers of Darkness, sending ever forth the Black Flame across the Earth and the expanses of time. Thus you are a Guardian of perfection and truth. Arise, then, and witness the wondrous creations born of your wisdom, even as I am near to you and the essence of my being is enshrined within you."

In the name of Set, I, his High Priest upon Earth, name you to our fellowship and cast you forth - beyond the Abyss - to walk in ways of strangeness and of beauty. You are become as Xepera, the Self-Created One, and you are a glory to your race and a brilliance before the Eye of Set.

ON THE OPENING OF THE MOUTH

Onyx Tablet:

OT.I.4.1

© Temple of Set

Author:

Don Webb IV°

Date:

May 20, 1994 CE

Revision:

HTML Revision:

August 8, 1999 CE

To my Understanding the task of the Priesthood is to communicate personal initiation. This has a twofold aspect. One is the learning of all languages lest the Gifted race be sundered during the growing individuation of the Temple. The second (which is really a much more concentrated form of the first) is to administer those shocks needed to help Initiates remember why they are here.

The first aspect is pleasurable and challenging. It is simply nifty to learn what language will help a vampyre with her process or a knight with his. It stretches both the mind and heart, and there are many books, videos, etc. in the profane world that can aid in sharpening this skill.

But there's that other moment - the moment of administering the shock. That moment when seemingly beyond your conscious volition you have to say something. An Initiate has said something upon which you feel an overpowering need to comment. You know that a course correction is needed, and sometimes without even thinking it through you give one.

Sometimes this shock is what the person needs desperately; other times it's what causes him to leave the Temple. What is this phenomenon? Is it Set ordering us to speak? Why is it part of the III* experience?

Set is connected with two rites of rebirth in Egypt, the *heb-sed* (or national rebirth), and the Opening of the Mouth (individual rebirth). In the later ceremony, a doubled-headed knife (the *Pss-Kf* knife which Egyptologist Ann Macy Roth has recently demonstrated to represent the forked tail of Set) made of iron (*bia-en-pet* "metal of heaven" since most pre-XVIII dynasty iron in Egypt was of meteoric origin) was used to pry open the mouth of a corpse or animate a statue. Set himself was said to have Opened the Mouths of the gods.

I see the Priesthood as being the experience of having Set Open our Mouths. Thus we experience the state of godhood while still alive. Now this divine impulse to speak comes not from Set, but from our own altered perceptions of ourselves. Thus that mysterious moment of having to speak out is fraught with peril despite the godlike assurance we have when doing so. I would like to examine that experience, and suggest a model of it that may be helpful in understanding and utilizing it.

The words "shock" and "friction" come from Gurdjieff, but I am using them in a slightly more restricted form than he did. There are three factors for consideration here. Firstly the impulse to act, secondly the internal friction, and thirdly the external friction. All of these are both painful and reassuring, and all speak to that unnatural dilemma that is the III*.

The impulse to act: Having received the Touch of Set, we do indeed have more essence than regular people. The added essence does not come with a guidebook; it is up to us to shape it with our experiences. We have to put ourselves in the place where we must act, and must make tough choices. There is indeed a sense of pressure. We feel that we are "commanded" to speak. Often, hearing our own increased essence, we are astounded at the wisdom of our words. There is something of an illusion here. The impulse, when it is real and overpowering - and of course this can not be judged by anyone outside of ourselves - is almost always correct.

The manifestation may be another matter entirely. Here's the tough part of being a III* [and remember that I too am a Priest - so this is my dilemma as well]. We may know what needs to be acted on, and until a certain familiarity with that "impulse to act" is achieved we do indeed experience it as Set's command [as opposed to Understanding it as Set's Gift that allows us to perceive our own enhanced being], but that command is filtered through the operator.

So when driven to speak by that perception of our own essence, we may hit exactly the right words, and see exactly the right result - not unlike striking a tuning fork and having a second one vibrate in resonance. Or we may falter and hit a wrong note - and despite the correctness of our intent, see the glass shatter.

Sometimes these things happen before our eyes instantly. Sometimes they take years in their Remanifestations to work out in the world. The important thing for us to seek to understand is that we are engaged in an ongoing exploration/creation of our divinity. We know that we are focusing the divine, and try to get better at it each time when need makes us use this special quality in ourselves.

The internal friction. After we have acted with what appears at first to be divine certainty (but which we later learn is merely the feeling of divinity), we are - if we are serious Initiates (rather than people who just want to pat themselves on the back) - plunged into the very human realm of doubt and evaluation. We have experienced *noesis*; now the hard work of integrating that divine state with our human one begins.

We feel two types of friction. Firstly, did I really do the right thing? Could it have been better? Should I have tried to get my ideas across in a less [or more] personal way? Did I emphasize it too much? Or too little? Learning to answer these questions is both the training for the Priesthood (a skill that we continue to learn throughout our careers), and training to act as a god - learning how to express your will in both the psychic and physical realms of another.

The second sort of friction we feel is learning to understand what we have just said or done. We must look upon these divine actions, and reason and test. Did what I say reflect *Xeper*? Why is it important? Did it reflect Remanifestation? Does it reveal a mystery to be sought after? Learning to answer these questions again trains us as Priests and creates us as gods.

The external friction: Just as we have unleashed a storm inside ourselves by acting in and from the non-natural state of the Priesthood, we will have done so in the very objective world of the other's psyche. Having done our job as best we can, it's now up to the other to evaluate - and, if he or she chooses, to integrate and act upon our words. This is the function we as Priests perform for Setians - we have given them the same access to the divine that we have. Not access to a singular Voice and Vision directly from the mind of Set - but access to the process we are learning - so that they may likewise find their way to the same process.

Before I began this discourse, I labeled it as my Understanding. Little "m" in my, because it is bound by time, by the peculiarities of my idioms and culture; but a big "U", for as a Master I have learned to Recognize that divine impulse clearly, and I know that what I speak of does partake of the realm of the Forms; however badly I manage to express it.

Ir Shti Shta-ti!

NOTES ON FORBIDDEN SECRETS, OR WHO LEFT THE VOODOO DOLL IN THE RECTORY?

Onyx Tablet:

OT.I.4.2

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Author:

R. Amn DeCecco IV*

Date:

May 1993 CE

Revision:

HTML Revision:

August 8, 1999 CE

[Originally a III+ Supplement to "A Hidden Dimension", May 1993 issue of Cornu, newsletter of the Order of Amn.]*



RA: THE AWAKENING

Perhaps a percentage of mankind may embrace this ideal. Sheer awareness of the self at a conscious level is all that is needed. This, or an aspect of this stage of consciousness, is lauded by many self-centered persons. Aging hippies, for one, are a segment who claim to have "found themselves". That example, I think, makes my point.

Is this enough? For the percentage I am speaking of, yes. This is the middle-class Nirvana. Tenet: To let the whole world know that this person knows who he/she is!

I have not mentioned the will above, purposely, as it belongs mainly to the Elect of mankind. The Elect do not exist, I would hope, by the laws of Madison Avenue or the Magnavox. They do not bow to heroes, sports, Hollywood, or politics. They do not follow the leader and mime the words. They do not close their eyes or ears to original and/or eccentric ideas. To do so would close the doors to **all** aspects of initiation.

THE TEMPLE

Here are many schools of learning - hundreds. There are many varied degrees of educational levels - hundreds. And there are epitomes of each level - hundreds.

In all of the careers and levels of degrees going through your head right now are *none* that would give the Elect any more than the rudiments for that career or station. We would merely carry out our "Election" with more expertise. For there is no comparison with the minds of man and the states of being of the Elect! In fact, and except for a few rare cases, all of the above probably cannot exist in the same person! We of the Temple of Set can boast of those rare cases within our ranks. Q.E.D.

The association with our school, the peristyle, is mandatory for this stage of initiation. We as pupils and also our own pupils entered the gates of Thoth, and after we questioned and probed, we were awed. And we are awed at our own ability to *see* what we have never before seen and **sense** what we have never before felt. We begin to lift the veil.

XEPERA: THE CUP OF KNOWLEDGE

To drink from the chalice of emerging is to mingle what you "know" with what you envision. For **envisioning** is the catalyst of Understanding. *Xepera* will hold dear your dreams and teachings, and furrow them into your own cup of experience, your essence of existence, which is far more attuned to your consciousness and lore than earthly things.

The door to this state of acknowledgement is three-sided. One is the seed, implanted by Ra for impregnation. Two is the recognition of the idea (Thoth) - the envisioning of number Three, which is the realization of the whole state of being. (*Xepera*).

The aforementioned state **cannot** be reached or even Understood by any but those who seek **only this** and naught other.

"When I Am that I Am not,
And I Am Not that I Am,
Then I Am that I Am."
- Ronald K. Barrett V*, *I Am Manuscript*

LUCIFER: REALIZATION, TRANSMUTATION, LIGHT

The human man looks at his diplomas and degrees with pride as he should. He relishes in his bank books and property with zeal as he should. He dreams of his future with secured thought that all will be diamonds and nectar as it might. He stands on a hilltop and crows to all about that his acme has and will be reached! He will die rich and smart! To his eyes, all the changes in him he can **see**. His brain is fuller, his coffers are abundant, and his mien is enhanced. But he is the same man, and this he **cannot** see!

The Fire of Lucifer will burn you beyond recognition! The transmutation of your being, when nearing completion of this stage, will horrify you. Sometimes it will offend you. The light from the veil (Grail), however, is warm and all-embracing. You will reach out to it and claim it as part of your new self. This you **must** do or go back to a dire fate. You will rise out of the embers where masses of forgotten and discarded existences have died and passed into nothingness. You will stand on the threshold of Becoming. All of those causal spirits of past and present Understandings tempt you now; your Being is made strong to take up their challenge.

The three-sided door remains ajar, and without awaits Leviathan.

SEKEMTI: PERFECTION, SIGHT

Man cannot see beyond what has been so expertly laid out before him by varied "schools". Philosophically mankind suffers from the "precedent syndrome"; in other words he is mainly interested in learning from his past. He feels that if he suffers the same history, he will feel righteous in reliving it and thereby feel correct in re-proclaiming it!

This is one of the reasons why he re-teaches it in schools. If this goes on long enough, the world will eventually be inhabited by clones who spurt out the same old data from generation to generation. As proof man has had almost no evolutionary past for many decades. Existence has become droll for him and more ridiculous from our viewpoint. Those of us who know him, see him as the child that he is, unable to grow further and unable to expand his consciousness beyond his belly button or his computer button. Mental and "spiritual" growth for man has stopped! He is dead - or dies slowly before our eyes.

Perfection in man **can** be attained. The wearer of the Double Crown is proof of this premise.

In order for the Elect to begin to realize that goal, they must begin the journey into night; the darkness of their own universes, They must face Maat **alone**. They must go through a total transformation. To wear a Pentagram of Set and read all of the books does not cut it. The Elect must **live** the magic, **be** the magic, and **use** the magic until each one's past existence is but a silly, fading memory of another world gone mad and left to its own destruction.

The Ancient Priests, the Old Ones, knew this.

We who are here this day must learn this. To reach the *Naos*, one must first walk the darkest of corridors and utter the most unspeakable names.

Look to the Orders of the Temple; they are as ancient as you.

ON FOCUS

Onyx Tablet:

OT.I.4.3

© Temple of Set

Author:

Don Webb V°

Date:

December 30, 1997 CE

Revision:

HTML Revision:

September 28, 1999 CE

First you have a human being: full of randomly selected traits, oddly assorted ideas, chaotically assembled training for talents they may or may not possess. Any remark that begins, "I am XXX" is a lie because they are also Y and Z and Q and Anti-X and Anti-Y and B and sort-of-like Y and so on. They can't even build a filing cabinet for their parts.

Then you get a Setian and they can begin to build a filing cabinet. They have an organizing principle, they at least Know that there is a central I, whose activities have generated the others. What they can't figure out is why some of the parts attack others, or have too much strength. They can not say "I" except to refer to the divine fact that gives their quest meaning, "I Have Come Into Being." They still lie and say things like "I am a dentist."

Step three is the Adept who given the human equation and the divine fact, decides to beef up certain "I's". If she is truly brave she also begins starving others. This action of Strength allows the Black Flame to work directly on parts of the body-mind complex that previously have been blockages between the Black Flame and the Objective Universe. The principle work of the Adept -- although hard -- is pleasurable -- like a good work in the gym. This doesn't mean that the Adept doesn't know strife. He or she has family that dies, loses jobs, and has health problems. The chances that everything in the world will go right for a given individual are so small as to be impossible.

For the fourth step you have you have a sudden change out of normal human psychology. The Black Flame works on the Black Flame, primarily on itself, but also on the Black Flames of those nearby. This is a disintegrating effect, not an integrating effect. As each part of the psyche is energized, it shoots off toward its possible end. The Third Degree has to Learn the three Setian virtues of Moderation, Synthesis and Harmony. Here is where the Setian path gets really hard. You see here's the very TOUGH part of Setian

path. Now what I am about to say is true for Setians of all Grades, but very true for the III°.

The Setian system has a great deal of Play built into it. The Setian ideal is that as you go from action to action you gain the Essential part of the experience. So on Monday you gain something by going to the dentist, on Tuesday by reading Plato, on Wednesday by doing a ritual, and on Thursday by playing miniature golf with your spouse.

Sounds easy.

WRONG.

Because without a deep, deep commitment to your Goals, each of these actions merely pulls you in another direction. The watchword of the III° is "Focus."

Here are a few helpful questions to ask yourself, from time to time -- but this is only a start -- you have to develop the method that works for you.

1. Why am I doing this? (Ask often and with the most brutal honesty you can muster.)
2. What do I want to be thinking about this time tomorrow? (Learn to do this feat without external aids.)
3. How would I explain my last twenty four hours to Set? (Now we are not Christians that are trying to get god to forgive us, we are trying to make our god Proud of us.)
4. What am I missing here? What depths in my own behavior and others are around me?

As you develop the habit of Inquiry, the answers honestly gained will tell you where to focus. I can't tell you. Books can't tell you. But if you do not find the focus, the acceleration will merely shake you to pieces.

If you do find the Focus, you will find yourself empowered in ways that you would never had imagined.

ON SET'S LOVE

Onyx Tablet:

OT.I.4.4

© Temple of Set

Author:

Don Webb V°

Date:

August 1999 CE

Revision:

HTML Revision:

September 28, 1999 CE

[Originally published in The Venom of Apep, Yule 1997.]

"Does Set Love His Children?" The question was asked of me in Denver at a "debate" on the RHP vs. the LHP. Now I sort of ducked the question, stressing that the important aspect of Setian philosophy is the Imperative to do Work on (and for) one's Self. But theologically it is an interesting question.

In our own sphere there are different kinds of love. There is the love of the mother who keeps Johnny from touching a hot stove, and stops pain. There is the love of the mother who lets Johnny touch the stove and learn. The first love is bound by seconds, the second by years.

There is the love of the kindly old professor that keeps anyone from failing his classes, and gets their love in return for a semester or two. There is the love of the dedicated scholar who is tough on his or her students and gets one or two scholars that add greatly to the field. The first love is attracted to passing emotions (mainly gratitude at having avoided pain), the second love is attracted to an Idea, chosen as a way of enhancing Life and giving it meaning.

Then there is the love of the magician. He or she knows that wherever his or her Love is directed, it will bring that thing to him or her. If all of one's Love is for money, one will get money. If all of one's love is people liking you, people will like you. What Magic brings you are stuck with.

What does Set Love? He loves the Realization of his Gift. The ebb and flow of mankind is effected by the forces of mindlessness and the force of *Xeper*.

Now *Xeper* is a difficult thing for Set to work with. It would be easy if he were Working with Force. Then He could line us up like toy soldiers and fight that way. His chosen

medium is a rather difficult one, it requires that his soldiers not only take care of their own interests, but in so doing improve themselves.

Just as human magician might effect things with a talisman written on paper, Set effects things by a talisman written on more subtle substances such as Courage, Imagination, Determination, Humor, Foresight -- all qualities not inherent in a human being, but all of which can be created step by hard step.

Then Set's little backdoor program kicks in: if you work hard on yourself to gain these qualities, you stop being happy around people without them, so you start Work on giving other people the chance to get these qualities. You can't Xeper, for them, see for them, or be for them -- but you can do your level best to make sure that the opportunity for these things are there.

Now should you Love the people that are striving for these things?

Of course not. Most won't make it, and your heart will torn in ribbons. Love those who have crossed a barrier, because they are become your equals. Love them as long as they participate in the fight. Know in your heart that they too may fail. Know that you may fail. This will lead to Sadness, but that would be a different essay on the nature of the IV°.

When you experience Love at the sight of another's *Xeper*, you are experiencing what Set feels on a Cosmic level. It is not love for the individual. Set no more wants to draw individuals to Him, than you or I do -- He wants only those who both show and make the way open for *Xeper*. This is not a human feeling, but one that we too acquire in our own process. You might consider why I changed the "love" part of Crowley's law in this matter:

**Do What Thou Wilt Shall Be The Whole Of The Law. Great Is The Might Of Set,
Greater Still He Through Us**

MY IMPRESSIONS OF THE PRIESTHOOD

Onyx Tablet:

OT.I.3.1

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Author:

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Date:

May 9, 1996 CE

Revision:

HTML Revision:

August 6, 1999 CE

Per the High Priest's request and Magister Kelly's example, I thought I would throw in my two cents worth on the subject of Priesthood. I will keep this article brief, focusing on what I feel are the essential distinctions that we as members of the Priesthood share. I must acknowledge my debt to the many teachers I have taken inspiration from in formulating these impressions and would further add that any faulty conclusions are mine alone.

So what is that distinguishing characteristic that marks the transition from a human to a divine state of being? Many have said that it is the Recognition of the fact that Set has chosen the Initiate. But what does this mean? Well, it means that we have undergone an experience similar to that of our ancestors' ancestors and have been given an opportunity to realize our own potential divinity. This is what I call the unity in diversity of the experience of Priesthood. The symbol of this unity in diversity is the *neter* Xepera, for each of us must realize this potential from within, unfolding our Self-created divinity through *Xeper* aided by Set's touch.

As Magister Kelly points out, one of our functions is to serve as living examples of the core principles of Setian philosophy. Here we see the unity in diversity principle asserting itself again, since the Temple can seem bewilderingly complex in light of its Orders, Pylons, Words, Conclaves and scope of interests (as exemplified in our Reading List). The thing that ties all of this together is the principle of *Xeper*, which we as members of the Priesthood serve as constant reminders of when fellow Initiates get off track: "The fate of my Gifted race rests in the balance ..."

Ipsissimus Aquino has stated that Priesthood is a deliberate act. But what is the act of Priesthood? To facilitate that same realization within others that we recognize as the true potential of the Gift of Set. This is possible only through an acknowledgment of the Gift

as the vehicle of the attainment of the Highest of Life. Life is a necessary prerequisite of self-consciousness, and both are a unique privilege in light of the Gift.

This truth is demonstrated when someone has a near-death experience and then decides to live life to its fullest. But a distinction must be made between will (in the Thelemic sense) and desire before life can be lived at its highest. This is why the function of the Priesthood is to facilitate and maintain the Temple in all of its facets; because an initiatory environment is essential to this realization, and herein lies the authority of our Mandate.

WHO IS SET?

Onyx Tablet: OT.I.3.2 © Temple of Set

Author: Carmel Severson III^o

Date: 1995 CE

Revision:

HTML Revision: August 8, 1999 CE

This essay is concerned with thoughts about belief in Set, within the Priesthood. It was inspired by discussions begun with initiates at Set-XV in London. Special Thanks to Magister Menschel for his input and editorial advice.

Is it necessary for a Priest or Priestess of the Temple to believe in the existence of Set? In one sense the answer must be Yes. Simply put: If you are a member of the Priesthood and your answer is no, than I ask you who in the hell are you a Priest of. If you do not recognize Set, you cannot truly belong to the Priesthood of Set.

The next tricky question there presents itself - Who is Set? Set is whatever you, as a member of the Priesthood define/or determine this principle to be. Once you have recognized/acknowledged this principle, Set **does** exist. Opinions of and experiences with Set vary greatly among the initiates of the Temple. Here is a brief list. There are probably many more that could be added to this:

- An intelligence/entity which operates both separately and at times in conjunction with that of our own psyche and not just as an aspect of it.
- An "indwelling essence".
- A god of mankind's creation.
- A God, self created.
- A *neter* - a necessary principle of creation affecting the SU & OU.
- A purely Platonic Form.

- Not a Platonic Form, but an ideal.

The key is, as I've said above: Set is whatever you define Set to be. We are not and should not be required to adopt one view over the other. This would be antithetical to the philosophy of the Temple of Set. Blind faith would make us no different to the other major religions of the world who are dictatorial in nature and do require you to adopt a literal believe in "one true God" as an act of faith since the existence of such a "God" is debatable. Those who wish to not only insist but enforce their belief of such a god onto others are, in my opinion, deluded, politically motivated, or fanatic, and are in no way seekers of truth or interested in investigating/developing their own spirituality.

What makes the Priesthood of Set different is that each comes to his/her own understanding of the nature of Set through the Well of Wyrd: personal experience, contemplation, and investigation of the individual psyche, humanity and the worlds around us - which results in our forming our own definition, however complete or incomplete it may be. Our methods of approach to this research are varied, and produce different results.

So can we reconcile the difference and maintain a balanced attitude toward one another's perceptions, without insisting that one must be more accurate than the other? I say yes. And if Dr. Aquino, who speaks for Set and is directly responsible to Set for the Temple's structure and administration, has the ability to Recognize Masters of the Temple of Set who have a different approach than his, can any Priest do less?

Those who come to perceive Set as the "dweller within" have discovered and experienced the source of Set in the SU as opposed to the OU. Their prime concern is themselves, and it is within that they find the answers to the mysteries they seek. This is certainly a valid approach when viewing the Left-Hand Path as the path of self-initiation. Whose *Xeper* are we seeking if not our own, and isn't this what we are all striving for? The *Word of Set* could be seen as supporting this approach in the statement "Arise in your glory, behold the genius of your creation, and be prideful of being for I am the same - I who am the Highest of Life."

For those who perceive Set as an external influence, the source of Set has been discovered within and inspired by the OU rather than the SU. The *Book of Coming Forth by Night* lends itself to this approach with the statement: "Speak to me at night, for the sky then becomes an entrance and not a barrier." One could assume from this statement that Set resides somewhere among the stars, or is simply to be looked for outside of oneself.

If we believe that Set has awakened the Black Flame within mankind, then it is the "Gift of Set" that has allowed our fellow Initiates to achieve conscious recognition of the self. "I am within and beyond you" bridges the gap between the variations of approach and their results.

There are always dangers and pitfalls to watch for when opting for one belief over another:

* Becoming "territorial" about one's belief in Set. The "I'm right; you're wrong; if you don't agree with me, there's something wrong with you" syndrome. This is often a sign of insecurity.

* Belief derived solely on the hearsay of another. This really doesn't do much to increase your personal knowledge. Recognition in this case would be, in my opinion, questionable indeed. Your definition and knowledge of the nature of Set can only truly be found via personal experience/discovering your own relationship to the concept.

* Belief in one view and denial of any other for fear of being penalized or ridiculed by one's peers is a sign of weakness, uncertainty, and inability to think freely. It is extremely limiting.

* Being biased: A Priest firmly believing in one and discounting the belief of another could be said to be discounting the Priesthood of the other.

* Holding desperately to one's belief may cause stasis/degeneracy if that belief is based on inadequate or incomplete information.

* Those of us who have encountered and believe in Set himself can develop an exaggerated opinion of our ability to contact and understand Set's position, and lead ourselves astray by doing what we think Set wants. We can blind ourselves to Set's truth by limiting our own perceptions.

* For those who believe that Set dwells within us, that we are Set, this doesn't mean that we can stop questioning, clarifying, investigating, testing our position and what we think we are; or that we can't continue to improve, grow, *Xeper*.

* Those perceiving Set as the Platonic Form face the possibility of thinking they have broken free of the cave and can see Set "in broad daylight", not realizing that:

-- a) we're still mostly in the cave,

-- b) Outside of the cave the light is bright, and our nocturnal eyes may take time to adjust properly,

-- c) Outside some things continue to remain in shadow. Everything is not always clearly visible. The effects and brightness of the light may create an illusion of a different quality, but an illusion nevertheless.

In closing I would like to pose some questions to the Priesthood of Set. Responses can be forwarded to me and maybe forward to the High Priest for possible inclusion in the *Onyx Tablet*:

1. Who Is Set? discuss your experience and how/why you came to such a definition.
2. Can an Initiate be Recognized to the III* before deciding upon a personal definition of Set?
3. Magister Menschel says, "Conceptually it's easy to represent a being with whom we've made contact." For those who have, is it easy?
4. What do we mean when we say or imply that a Priest might represent the "indwelling essence" or the "Platonic Form" of living consciousness?

WHEN SET RECOGNIZED DEVASET AKASHA TO HIS PRIESTHOOD

Onyx Tablet:

OT.I.3.3

© Temple of Set

Author:

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Date:

July 11, 1994

Revision:

HTML Revision:

August 8, 1999 CE

"In the silence of the Sepulcher I saw a Gate of Onyx."

How is it that one can describe a dynamic transference that is so alien to common perceptions? Such a sublime and subjective experience which seems to put the Initiate in two frames of reference at the same instance. It is the ineffable that which can be confused and fitful when transformed into auditory or written symbols.

My journey started long before I knew of the Temple of Set. Through what I now understand as *created* destiny. I stumbled through my existence torn between my sense of belonging and the separateness I saw through these human eyes. I butted my head against the bastions of bliss. I thought this was the answer. In this space all I could find was a continued desire for self-satisfaction.

In my divided and confused state my desires found their release in only the base deviations of cosmic law. Thus I would rise and fall living the confused mythos of Michael and Lucifer. I also sought refuge in the desires of others, soaking up the bitter oils only to expel them in a violent regurgitation. In my despair I grieved for all that I had seemingly lost. In that instance I decided; I took the hand of the one I had mistaken for so many others, myself. From that point on I knew nothing would ever be the same.

With a mere decision I had set a process in motion. In retrospect I began a journey into a deep dark cave. This cave being the well of my chained and unclaimed soul. I was searching for those elements that could give my experience meaning and purpose. Unlike before I was investigating my own divine nature not that of an illusionary external force.

I began to meet these strange and brilliant individuals. In their words and actions I saw shadows beyond what I knew existed in human time and space. This forum of special persons had become a tool from which to transcend the mythic struggle of profane humanity. I committed myself to this quest for personal truth. I have come to find it an infinite adventure of the heart and mind - a symphonic movement to apprehend the chalice hidden within the soul. I earned my place within this structure, and a land of Red Rubies came into being at the end of a Vampyre's blade. [Special note on the shadows I noticed: These shadows were the developing subjective realities of my new, bright-eyed friends. I was able to recognize these shadows because I too had touched the *source*: the *Gift of Set* born of my initial desires.]

I sought to investigate this hidden knowledge and practice the Dark Art with a sense of wonder as my desires became manifest. Ever so subtly the results presented themselves: in my dreams, my mundane life, my meditations, and my ability to peel back the subjective layers of the reality around me.

So subtle were the results that without the mind of the magician to interpret them, they would have potentially gone unnoticed, never to be used for a higher purpose. For in this case it was the *source* behind the results that was meaningful. It was from within this process of Self-definition that I began to feel the presence. It was as if something from within was reaching into my conscious mind. Knowing somewhat of this experience I rejected it. I did not want to believe this could be happening to me.

During the Set-XIII Conclave I had the opportunity to create a special place within me - a Sepulcher. Through this ritual experience of what is called *Death*, I gave myself permission to trust what I was becoming. Maybe now I could accept this haunting presence? I sought the advice of those I knew. It was not yet time. As my quest was true, I understood and continued in my experience of the Great Work.

Even beyond these insights of the Masters, I trusted the presence which continued to haunt me. Again I found myself rejecting it. Then I had the dream. I was investigating through the process of meditation what I currently conceived as the *Prince of Darkness*. As an element of practice I rested after these endeavors: a chance for the experience to settle. Into the realm of dreams I descended. I was with a member of the Priesthood of Set. "You are a fine Adept ... Seek out that which will strengthen you and create that which is newly of you."

I awoke from this experience immediately as from a revelation. What had happened? Did this dream represent myself as I thought I was, or were these words from the presence that had so long shadowed my steps in life? I was presented with a paradox I could not resolve. I considered the idea that I might be going insane. I had accepted that possibility when I began my journey down the LHP. Had I made some horrible mistake? I did not want to fool myself, but how could I ignore something so directly related to my desire to understand *Set*. It was from this experience that I again approached the Master I have grown to Love and inspect.

"Alone in the gathering dusk, I stood before the fire in the sky. I was overcome with purpose. Emotions filled me, tears into my heart soaked my words as I flung myself over the edge. Down into my fear I fell, the howling wind covering the words spoken so softly. With great reverence I admitted to myself that I was a Priest of Set. With this my body became ablaze as a falling star. The Sepulcher cracked, and the stones shattered. The embryo burst forth from the womb. I was crying and laughing, wailing and screaming.

"I lay upon the slab, half-conscious, my body engulfed in flames. My flesh peeled and sputtered. As the ashes cooled, I saw the stars from the shattered Sepulcher. But it was not destroyed. It had changed. The starry sky shown down through the walls and half-standing pillars. What was to be found in those stars was the will of my transformation. Such was the palette of the night opened to me. From beyond the Northern Gate I stepped forth."

To help define my semi-poetic and metaphoric soliloquy, I shall provide the following commentary for clarification purposes.

What is an appropriate place to begin a description of this dynamic transference? What is a Priest or Priestess of Set? Perhaps I should start with what a Priest or Priestess of Set is not:

- 1) A Priest or Priestess of Set is not on what is commonly known as an ego trip. The responsibility of such a state is not a position from which to exercise power without purpose.
- 2) A Priest or Priestess of Set is not an ultimate power in the universe, the destroyer of all.
- 3) A Priest or Priestess of Set is not a clinical psychologist or father/mother figure. Although the responsibility includes inspiration and support, it does not include babysitting those who are not capable of self-reflection.
- 4) A Priest or Priestess of Set is not responsible for saving the world from the confused and fitful elements of man.
- 5) A Priest or Priestess of Set is not a receptacle of simplified truths to bestow upon Setians and Adepts.
- 6) A Priest or Priestess of Set does not condone magical or mundane acts simply because they are referred to as Satanic or Setian. An investigation into how and why those acts become Satanic or Setian is the reality of their definition [or potential thereof].
- 7) A Priest or Priestess of Set will not always, because of his or her background, relate with every Setian or Adept with whom he or she is corresponding. In this case he or she should be able to direct any Initiate to a more appropriate Priest or Priestess.

8) A Priest or Priestess of Set is not separated from his or her unique human qualities. The animal and human elements of his or her unique nature still exert their respective inertial aspects.

9) A Priest or Priestess of Set is not in a position to forget that there are still no guarantees.

Now that I have defined in general what a Priest or Priestess of Set is not, I can now go on to deeply investigate what my conception of a Priest or Priestess of Set is.

When I first started to notice something different about my experience, I realized its source was those elements I was learning about myself. Not only was I inspired, but I was beginning to inspire others through my work: examples noticed from fellow Initiates' writings, *Scroll*/ Pylon/Order articles, and other related aspects. This raised the question: What was going on here? The haunting presence and this direct/indirect inspirational influence I was having on other Initiates gave me reasons to further investigate what seemed to be happening to me.

WHAT IS A PRIEST OR PRIESTESS OF SET?

1) In terms of the direction of magical work the Priest or Priestess is no longer only geared to him/herself. The nature of his or her personal investigations still remains as much as he or she desires, but he or she now has the added task of AEonic enhancement and support. [The recognition of Priest or Priestess of Set is an AEon-enhancing event.] This added responsibility of the Priesthood is to support and continue to define the AEon as a whole. What do I mean by "support and define"?

-- A) SUPPORT: Having become Elect to the Priesthood of Set, the Priest or Priestess is called upon to educate and inspire Setians and Adepts to the nature of Black Magical initiation. The Priest or Priestess therefore needs a strong grounding in the principles and practices held therein. With an individual or group he or she might be assisting, there could be individuals more skilled in certain areas of the magical project, but who lack the ability to remain focused on the Black Magical elements. Thus the responsibility is to direct through information and inspiration. It is this type of AEon-enhancing work that keeps the Temple's infrastructure vital and healthy.

-- B) DEFINED: Because of their focus on the principles contained within the AEon of Set and Black Magical initiation, the Priest or Priestess is competent to offer AEon-enhancing suggestions to the Temple proper, other Priests/Priestesses, the Magistracy, and the High Priest. These suggestions are based on influence from the archetypal Set- entity: an expansion of the psyche both inward and outward to reach such an Essence within themselves.

The reason a Priest or Priestess can give this advice is because he or she lives within a disjointed situation. He or she potentially views this Master of the World of Horrors, or the Adept, from a multitude of different angles.

In my situation there is the businessman, the poet, the magician, the Vampyre, etc.; but there is also a sense of separateness in relation to each. As I am working within any given persona, I am also experiencing a sense of witnessing a subtle singularity in relation to my intimate parts. I am this; I am that; but I am also this which is separate from all. This symbiosis comes into being through a quickening within the psyche of the advanced Adept. This awakening I will address later in the text.

The Priest or Priestess can now differentiate clearly between his or her personal work, AEonic-enhancement, and those of other Setians of the Priesthood. Thus a Priest or Priestess can observe Setian magical work without being directly involved.

-- C) PERSONAL WORK DEFINED: Something that enhances directly/ indirectly the life or lives of either the magician or persons in his direct/indirect environment. LBM/GBM workings for personal knowledge or gain (operative and illustrative).

-- D) AEONIC WORK: Concepts or actions (operations or illustrations) that bring into being precepts which build upon existing relationships to strengthen the AEon - its tapestry. The current definition of the Seal of *Runa* by Magus Flowers was first conceived by Ipsissimus Aquino in the Ceremony of the Nine Angles found within the *Satanic Rituals* by Magus LaVey (S. Flowers, "Description of the Seal of *Runa*", *Runes* #X-3, September 1992). Such is a good example of AEonic enhancement.

The refinement of these magical concepts came through interaction with the Priesthood of Mendes and that of Set. [This is a speculative statement based on my observations of the process in question.] This is also an example of one of the more visible cases. There could be countless of other situations which fit this model. These could also be considered as pieces in larger puzzles. [Example: *Essent into Essence* as cognized by Magister Robert Robinson.]

2) A Priest of Set can/will be called upon to defend the Prince of Darkness and his Temple within the human world - possibly beyond. This comprises many possible situations: legal, social, political, personal, etc. - another example of the grounding needed in Black Magical perspectives.

The reasons for the development of these skills are not just for the sake of having them. They are the direct result of initiation: I live what I say I live, and do what I say I do. I am ultimately and utterly responsible for my own actions. When it comes to society's commonly-held morals, convictions, and religiously-ethical elements, all are subject to my interpretation - within the legal laws of the United States of America or the country in which I am residing. I represent not only my own views, but the collective separateness of the Prince of Darkness - the visionary, the opposer, the critical and original thinker, and the guardian of isolate self-consciousness - encased in human flesh.

-- A) A sense of *detachment* in dealing with any situation(s) as noted above is essential for a Priest or Priestess' ability to interact with it. The volatility of human emotion potentially distracts the rational mind's process. Emotions are very appropriate to certain

situations, but a Priest or Priestess should recognize and apply them with discrimination. An example of this would be a non-dominating and balanced egoism in approaching potential situations in which the Priest or Priestess is strained by personal feelings.

3) A Priest or Priestess has the ability to "feel" or help draw forth the "truth" of a mundane or magical situation. This is not an absolute power. What is? But the sensitivity element that comes from a developed/ initiated understanding is what allows the "truth" (defined on a case-by-case basis) to be evoked. The importance of this ability is for his or her own benefit and to help fine-tune an Initiate's magical quest. If the Temple of Set has Initiates who are fooling themselves, the dynamic balance of the forum of the Temple can be disrupted internally.

4) A Priest or Priestess has the enhanced ability to rationally or intuitively peel back subjective overlays. This greater cognitive process is a communication of essential principles found within a person, Initiate, or given situation. This ability is not necessarily easier, just more definitive. With this aspect an increased level of responsibility is carried. Patience and clarity of purpose are needed to accurately define the elements involved.

5) Most of all a Priest or Priestess of Set is model of personal, evolving integrity - an inspiration, consciously and unconsciously, to the Setians and Adepts of the Temple. When I hear Initiates discussing a member of the Priesthood, it is the model he or she represents to which they are referring.

Coming from a definition of what a Priest or Priestess of Set is, I can continue to illustrate my case in terms of what separates a Priest or Priestess from an advanced Adept.

1) A member of the Priesthood has established a connection to the Majesty of Set - the situation in which the human race exists. It is this intimate connection that weighs heavy on the mind of the Priest or Priestess. As a representative of the Highest of Life, this Majesty must be promoted [no small task!]. He or she is expected through his or her individual work and personal interactions to exhibit such motivations. Therefore his or her position within the Temple of Set is a delicate one.

2) An advanced Adept can create and perform many types of rituals for the purposes of personal gain and knowledge. The difference is that a Priest or Priestess should inspire such work by the nature of his or her own, through group ritual or magical discussions.

3) The magical work has become more than just a ritual chamber experience. Life has become a grand working made up of opportunities to understand a greater AEonic perspective. Through this potential understanding, the value and created/willed purpose of the Priest or Priestess' life is imposed within the majesty of Set/humanity - not to just order its functions, as is the task of the II*.

4) The Adept approaches Set for the most part anthropomorphically, in the sense of growth from within or in the direction of an external Form. [I have, however,

encountered Adepts who do not exclusively come from this space.] This experience remains similar for a Priest or Priestess, but it is now the relationship to that experience which has changed. A force has risen up within them. In consciously inviting this force to change them, an embryo forms. The birth of this so-called foetus is symbolic to a coming into being within the III*. In a self-matrix this essence now can exist. It is from this internal merger that a link to the first Form of isolate self-consciousness can be maintained. The direct result of this relationship is a unique *perception* and *understanding*.

-- A) PERCEPTION: The ability to access a greater intuitive insight. This is based on an infrastructure of objective knowledge gained in life, especially through the Temple of Set's II*.

-- B) UNDERSTANDING: What I have previously mentioned regarding what a Priest or Priestess of Set is.

5) Something of an Adept's experience of life has changed. The normal approach to the mundane and the magical has been altered. In the trenches of the business world, I refashioned my desire to play society's games - games in which people spend their lives avoiding the responsibilities of their actions. A very intellectual or creative person can become a child when confronted/challenged with his or her actions or attitudes.

"The past looms behind me as I pass through the situation of my life. The past clutches at my being as fearful, dying man. In fighting this inertial force, I sometimes slip, only to catch myself doing what I now loathe. Part of initiation is taking responsibility for the past as it colors the present.

"I evoke in myself the anger for what has come to pass. It evokes in me tears for those who were lost to it. It evokes a sense of satisfaction for that which was learned.

"The past is a terrible and joyous teacher whose whip will not let me forget what and who I am.

"Now, here in this new place of being, I am HarWer in my human form, caught in endless cycles of chaos and order. I am Set in my soul, wherein the embryo gestates continuously: the *tekh* within my human *ab*.

"I rode the Darkness to a Gate of Onyx; beyond a force beckoned to me. My temple has been built in the majesty of the Sepulcher, for I have been reborn out of the ashes of a falling star.

"Let the Sepulcher fall crashing."

Xeper and Remanifest.

Reyn Til Runa.

THE PRINCE OF DARKNESS

Onyx Tablet: OT.I.3.4 © Temple of Set

Author: James Severson III^o

Date: October 1994 CE

Revision:

HTML Revision: August 6, 1999 CE

"I am within and beyond you, the Highest of Life."

I have always been fascinated with whether Set has a personality defined in human terms - having human-like defined goals and desires. As I mentioned during Set-XV to a number of different Setians, I have a hard time understanding Initiates who describe Set in this apparent way.

The mystery of Set for me lies behind the apparent process it has initiated within the human race the potential to come into being as anything more than what we are now - *Xeper*. I have come into contact with this force, for lack of a better term, and it has somehow changed my perception and ideals for setting goals/priorities for myself.

The entity we call Set could in fact be that process. If Set is considered correctly as the "Form of isolate self-consciousness", and our human consciousness contains a reflection of this majesty, then the concentration of our potential action should have its source exclusively from within. This process being the bringing of that reflection through the human flesh and mutating its original function - a quickening within the bio-mechanical organism called *homo sapiens*.

The most convenient way to explain this is to call attention to the possible existence of a "higher human-like personality" that has somehow imparted this quality to man, as the myths of most conventional religions seem to indicate. [It can also be interpreted as such within the *Book of Coming Forth by Night* (Temple of Set) and the earlier *Diabolicon* (Church of Satan) of the Left-Hand Path tradition.] Our standard mode of operation through the senses demands we describe this as such. I conceive the transcendence of these myths can reveal the Gift of Set as much more than such a simplistic interpretation.

"I am within and beyond you, the Highest of life." If "the Highest of Life" is taken to mean the highest evolutionary potential of mankind, then I would interpret that as successfully bringing the Gift of Set through the flesh, or through the human experience more specifically.

This is by no means a finite process. It has to be repeated over and over again as we perceive the possibilities for its expression. It seems to have more to do with the situations in which we find ourselves, rather than the linear time through which we seemingly pass. I conceive this as an illusion which man has created for his comfort in terms of change - a reason to feel good about an assimilation within the objective universe.

"*I am within* ...": The seed-form of this process as interpreted at any level of human conscious evolution and within any individual human psyche. I think the "I" in this statement refers to the "self ahead of the self" - the potential of *Xeper* in any direction or within any part of the psyche. Again this is a multi-dimensional process not unlike conscious juggling.

It is our interpretation of this "true will" which gives us potential clues to a greater ability to create reality - the application of human intelligence as a result of the Gift of Set. A further mystery being that we seem to have the ability to actually create our own True Will - a decision to classify an experience/cognition within such a relationship - a very unique human Self-referral process.

"I am within *and beyond you*..." This passage seems to indicate a simultaneous relationship with something. Again the most convenient answer would be to suggest an external "human-like personality" which is influencing our *Xeper* or the situations in which we *Xeper*. As Setians we seem to agree that *Xeper* is an individual responsibility - both in interpretation and situation. What we seem to be concerned with is the way(s) in which this process became possible - or the nature of this seemingly-simultaneous interaction.

I perceive this anomaly as a reflection - an expression experienced individually within each Initiate. The source of this reflection is the core self separated from the distortions of the sensual objective universe as well as from the current mass of subjective overlays. It is this process which potentially reveals any deeper mysteries as to the reality of either self or Set, both together or separate.

Therefore I see the Priesthood, in this case, truly representing Set within the process of their own initiation, not as a concentrated effort to channel any supposed "personality".

The light that issues forth from the Darkness within each of us is the expression of that most concentrated sense of self, that which is Set's Gift. It seems quite clear to me that this can be accurately described only as a process. Set's Gift is an intimate part of the evolving human psyche, separated only in the sense that it is unclaimed by the conscious human mind. It seems that being a Priest of Set involves a greater claim to this energy

source, the results being an ability to articulate such a state as well as to use it as a tool - the outward expression of such self-discovery.

But what exactly could this empowering energy be? I speculate its true source can be found within the process of self-initiation, an inward direction. I further claim that this process is inspired from a reflection deep within the psyche. Such Masters of the Temple as Stephen Flowers and Don Webb further claim this to have its origins in the heredity of the blood, or more specifically our DNA: a legacy of "what has come before", stemming from the very mysteries of the human race itself - its origins both spiritually and biologically.

As mentioned earlier, our sensual experience/interpretation of the objective universe can deter us from any deeper experience of both the self/Set and the application of any subsequent cognition. It is possible that this source is yet to be completely realized in our human form of reality, but it has at times been more expressed in the individuals and groups sensing its existence - currently Remanifested in the Initiates of the Temple of Set.

This would necessitate the **source** of such majesty being "beyond" us because of its position within the objective universe. But at the same time it would be intimately involved with each working of a Black Magician's will, hence intimate to each individual psyche and to any subsequent process developed.

Anne Rice in her third book of the *Vampyre Chronicles*, *Queen of the Damned*, offers a model for the origins of the Vampyre which would be worthy of comparison to the Prince of Darkness. [This theme continues in her *Witching Hour* series.] Amel, a spirit force which could draw the blood of corporal humans, entered the mortally-wounded bodies of Akasha and Enkil. This transformed them beyond the normal realms of the flesh.

In Rice's fictional account there is no further mention of Amel. It was as though the nature of "his" existence was transformed through the flesh of humans. Akasha and Enkil retained their individuality and human souls, and began an entirely different experience of existence. We could apply this metaphorically to a creation-myth for the evidence of higher intelligence in man.

As for the Prince of Darkness: If in fact a similar prismatic shattering occurred within Set's relationship with proto-humans, from beyond the realm of perceived sensual reality, that would go far towards explaining any such quickening. If Set had indeed existed somehow differently before the dawn of *homo sapiens*, then the actuality of every Setian's will would potentially explain *Setamorphosis* - making each Setian, in a sense, Set - or at least a potential reflection thereof.

ADDENDUM #1

In correspondence with other Priesthood Initiates, such as Don and Rosemary Webb and Robertt and Elizabeth Neilly, I have since been inspired to give greater credence to the

possibility of an "entity" whom we call Set. This relates to such an entity's role as the "designer" of this experience I call my "consciousness".

In such a concept I still cannot fathom that this "mind" is anything like mine, or that it has desires and/or plans in the way I currently understand these terms. Therefore to concentrate my efforts in an attempt to "channel", or to be a simple "medium" for the Prince of Darkness, would fall quite short of the truth. I continue to prefer the interpretation described above: a process resulting from a deep and personal experience of Set's Gift - **my self-initiation**.

ADDENDUM #2 (May 16, 1995)

Based on the information found in *The Prince of Darkness SV* article (above), I now find a greater depth to both "sides" of such a Priestly discussion. This perceived depth allows me a more complex appreciation of the statement "I am within and beyond you, the Highest of Life."

"*I am within* ...": Because I conceive the "non-natural" consciousness of the human animal to be multi-dimensional, I also think that perception of consciousness is similar. This realization is not unlike the degree system or the progression of aeons themselves. As the Initiate projects his consciousness inward, and stability of that level of perception is achieved, a "reverse polarity" can be experienced in which the inward direction "flips" to create yet another activated state of being. Thus one not only sees a deeper level of consciousness, but apprehends that reality in the objective universe in terms of such a new perception.

When one becomes a Setian I*, the world is exposed for what it actually is, "the blindfold being ripped off". The II* is not unlike the establishment of such perceptions in terms of action for or against such inertia, based on awareness, not sleep.

The III* seems to further this Adeptship beyond the confines of mere awareness. An almost intuitive quantum-jump is taken, accepting the "scale" of such an adventure - initiation through recognizing that "all roads lead to Rome".

Once the self is utterly acknowledged, investigation into the whys and hows of such a unique state can truly start. ("The real LHP begins." - Don Webb IV*] As the by-product of this maintained stability, such an Initiate is qualified by state of being to offer inspiring/directional insights/information to those who do not share such vision. This quality does not make them "better", just different.

When my polarity "flipped" into the Black, the first thing I saw was my own reflection. I was simply staring back at myself from a new beginning. I had come again unto myself, and in turn I saw myself as if newly born. I felt so close to and intimate with this self that I knew I had to accept the "scale" of such a realization. Set had become my potential, realized within a singularity: me.

It was from this experience that I became a living vessel imbued with the essence of Set - a total realization of what I can become. This essence felt both very ancient and very personal, almost as though it had followed me from somewhere and I could not distinguish it from myself. This is where a duality concept makes the most sense - a personal and impersonal view of Set.

Currently I still believe my personal initiation to be the best avenue for representing this acceptance. But I am now further fascinated by what lies behind that ever-receding perception of my core self - that mystery (*Runa*) which has become my external vision of The Prince of Darkness.

"... *and beyond you* ...": As discussed above, I now have the notion that my core self is but another - and maybe the ultimate - doorway as mentioned in the "Statement of Leviathan" of the *Diabolicon*. Once the process is mastered through the flesh, an opportunity would be created to pass beyond: "... but Leviathan shall yield to none other than the final Master of the Universe." This again seems to be one who has not only accepted such a "scale" of potential, but who has also mastered the process of its understanding and use - Universe (both subjective and objective) - potential resolution of "this" phase of existence into that of another.

Set is therefore the mystery that lies behind that "doorway". Whether he is anything like me I am not completely sure, but I know now he is certainly there, or that something is.

If this model relates at all to such a possibility, then I am truly a "child" of whatever Set actually is. My consciousness, less my physical body, is of such design. Only in the sense that I have accepted such a possibility can I truly say I believe this to be true. What makes me unique even unto my "father" is that I am only like him; I am certainly not him - nor he me.

The importance of this realization: (1) the more I investigate the depth of my "soul", the more I will come to know my "father". (2) If I recognize that what I think might be my "father" is actually myself, I can potentially become as he is - *Setamorphosis*.

Xeper and Remanifest.

THE EYE OF SET

Onyx Tablet:

OT.I.3.5

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Author:

James Severson III°

Date:

July 19, 1994 CE

Revision:

HTML Revision:

August 8, 1999 CE

This Third Degree phenomenon seems to be an enhanced intuitional perspective. It is not a literal eye, but a series or set of reflections based on the type and relevance of any given situation a Priest or Priestess of Set might encounter.

Within Kundalini Yoga of East Indian tradition, the "third eye" or "brow chakra" seems an appropriate metaphor. This "third eye" is "opened" via the process of personal initiation, and is considered a latent aspect of the language of the heart (intuition). This is the ability of the adept to establish and maintain an upward flow of energy within the spine - mixing both the objective, physical life-force with that of the subjective, "soul" energy. This allows the archetypical "serpent movement" of such magnetism to "open" the "third eye". "Soul" energy is further the force of animation as it is connected to the human perception of isolate intelligence, to whatever degree it can be found in human beings. It is this unique human subjective concept and relationship that can retain the opening of such a psychic sense.

The application of this intuitive quality within the Priesthood of Set is quite different than within the II*. Such a psychic sense is influenced by the actual state of being represented by the III*+ Initiate, who has established direct contact with the Prince of Darkness, Set. Such a communion maintained by the Priest would then promote a continuing and quickening of awareness, as well as the subsequent ability to act upon such perception.

The level of responsibility and stress this hyper-awareness can bring is the phenomenon known as "being" a Priest of Set. The use of this power without purpose or investigative insight can result in a destructive situation for all involved.

The descriptive use of the phrase "the Eye of Set" entails a perception both inward as well as outward. As perceived by the Priest, this can be an inner searching created by such a conjunctive relationship with Set. The methods enabling this inner journey also

seem to be important - a type of contemplation or meditative state - an illustrative GBM laboratory which can engender either a constant or consistently-accessible relationship with the "Eye".

As the result of such inward adventuring, an outward ability to peel back the "subjective overlays" can be Remanifested, and continues to be so as further *Xeper* is achieved. This is not an absolute ability but a heightened one. Again, even a sensitive intuition is not 100% accurate. The fact that intuition has its basis in the subjective carries a certain margin for error, this from an intellectual vantage-point.

The Eye can bring to light many interesting "points of perspective", but it must such be seasoned with a rational and grounded quality of common sense. Despite the awareness of the Priesthood of Set, the inertial qualities of one's human aspect must never be ignored.

Xeper and Remanifest.

THE PRIESTHOOD AND REMEMBRANCE

Onyx Tablet: OT.I.3.6 © Temple of Set

Author: Michael Kelly III°

Date: February 1996 CE

Revision:

HTML Revision: August 6, 1999 CE

In the last issue of *Hieroglyphs*, the High Priest invited comments and reflections on the Priesthood, and I would like to offer the following observations. They are obviously not exhaustive, I have tried to focus upon one idea which to me best expresses the function of the Priesthood within the Temple as I understand it and as I try to live it.

I feel the function of the Priest is to Remember. More than anything else, I feel the Priesthood reminds the Temple at large of our origins, of our Mandate, of our purpose.

The Priesthood represents the fundamental core philosophies that lie at the heart of the AEon of Set. The Magistri take Black Magic down new and largely unexplored avenues, Seeking new Mysteries to unfold, new answers which lead to new questions. Adepts also follow such research projects, keeping the Temple's research fresh and exciting as they Work on various projects within Orders, etc. I feel the Priesthood serve to remind us what all of this is for, to place new concepts and Magical technologies within the framework of basic Setian philosophy.

None of this is to suggest that Priests do not engage in such ground-breaking Work. But their responsibility to Set and his Mandate, and the restatement of the fundamentals comes first, reminding of the basis upon which our Work is founded. This hearkens back to the guidelines concerning Priests and Orders: an Adept can specialize as he/she will, but a Priest must be a Priest first.

This is most important with new Initiates. It is very easy for a new Setian to be excited and carried away by the many advanced concepts and projects in today's Temple of Set. The Priesthood serve to remind such a one, through correspondence, articles and Pylon Work, etc., that the basic Setian philosophy should be explored first.

The Priesthood should stand as living exemplars of what it means to be Setian - to themselves as well as others, never forgetting the nature of their office.

Xeper and Remanifest.

Reyn Til Runa!

STAGES OF THE THIRD DEGREE PROCESS

Onyx Tablet: OT.I.3.7 © Temple of Set

Author: Paul McAtee III^o

Date: May 23, XXXIV ÆS (1999 CE)

Revision:

HTML Revision: September 28, 1999 CE

With Halloween right around the corner, I see my seventh anniversary as an initiate of Set's Priesthood approaching quickly. Such an occasion is a source of great pride to me. So many that were around in the beginning (my beginning) are no longer present, and those remaining that I might count myself among are indeed the strongest of the strong. During this magical time I have taken the opportunity to do a little self-inspection, reflecting on what my Priesthood really means to me, and how I have come to be where I am. Many of these thoughts are quite likely the product of actual years of ponderance and mentation, yet only now do I finally sense the urge to put them to words that others may read, though highly personal they may be.

As I look at it now, there seem to be three essential stages in the construction of a Priest of Set. What I am presenting here is a 'model' derived from my own personal experience, and discussions I've had with other Third and Fourth Degree initiates. Since this represents only a model, this is perhaps a good time to remind ourselves how important it is throughout all stages of initiation to avoid confusing the 'map' with the 'territory'. Generally, I think the Universe best understood if one attempts to view it through a variety of models, rather than just one. One model may be useful today, but the Universe is sure to change, and tomorrow a new model may serve our purposes better. To limit oneself to the usage of merely a single model is to limit one's opportunities to perceive, and to inhibit the growth of one's perception.

That being said, I shall approach the issue from the perspective of these three stages in turn, and hope that if this model does not apply to your own experience of Third Degree, it will at least inspire you to examine the experience in new light.

Stage 1: Recognition and Construction of the Inner Temple

Construction of the Inner Temple begins at some point during Adepthood. The Adept begins structuring and ordering his inner world in such a way that it becomes a suitable dwelling place for the Prince of Darkness. A Master of the Temple or an advanced Priesthood member, having previously carried out a similar process, will be able to identify this unique ordering of the Adept's subjective universe, and an official decision in favor of Third Degree Recognition may follow.

Exactly how this structuring is done is one of the great mysteries of Setian initiation. As has been pointed out by others, there is no 'sure fire' method for doing this, but it does seem that working explicitly toward the goal of Third Degree Initiation seems to inhibit, or at least does not encourage, such internal structuring. One reason for this is that when one begins working toward the degree title of Priesthood, which is only an external representation of an internal state of being, one ceases to work sincerely. Always and in all things initiatory, work must be done with sincerity toward one's self.

An initiate who works toward the Priesthood without sincerity toward themselves, works only for the perceived expectations of others. Such an initiate invariably begins changing only personality/external characteristics in an attempt to emulate a certain external appearance. We often see Adepts misguidedly working along such lines, and it is always an unhappy sight.

Changes that are made to personality or external qualities are inevitably transient. Only the growth and enhancement of our inner qualities - our essence - can be permanent, and only this sort of change can seep through, changing our external qualities in permanent ways. It is precisely this essence which must be directly worked upon in order to construct one's Inner Temple. Essence is the matrix in which the work must be done, for it is a gift of essence which will come to dwell in the new Priesthood initiate's Inner Temple.

Stage 2: Ordination and the Imparting of Essence

"...I must give further of my own Essence to my Elect..."

- Set

The Book of Coming Forth by Night

If an initiate has structured their subjective universe in an appropriate and essential manner, and if the Masters of the Temple have Recognized this, then Set may indeed give a further gift of Essence unto his Elect. Or one might say the 'perspective' or 'perception' of Set comes to dwell within the initiate ("...let then my eyes become the Eyes of Set...").

I used to associate this stage with the actual ceremony which generally accompanies an Ordination to the Priesthood. Now I tend to think more that this occurs simply as a result

of the initiate's direct interaction with the Priesthood and Magistracy, subsequent to the construction of the Inner Temple.

Many Third Degree Initiates are technically Recognized weeks, even months before they have another opportunity to attend a Conclave or Gathering. Often their ceremonial entrance into the Priesthood does not take place until such a time, and in some cases such a ceremony may not take place at all. But whether the ceremony takes place or not, most new Priesthood members experience a remarkably new 'sensation' related to their new state of being, which was not present prior to such interaction, even though they and everyone else were perfectly aware of their new degree status.

Again and again we hear initiates of all degrees speak of the Conclave/Gathering experience and how we may gain from it something that cannot be imparted through writings, phone calls, internet, etc. It is in fact difficult to articulate this aspect of the Temple with out referring to this Essence as though it were a material substance. How many new initiates upon first meeting Priesthood members comment that the Priesthood seems to 'possess' something that the new initiate does not? This peculiar yet consistently manifest aspect of the Temple of Set is what in my opinion qualifies it as a 'school' in the same precise sense that the term was used by G.I Gurdjieff.

One of the purposes of the Temple of Set is to act as a sort of 'repository' of this non-natural Essence. Whether material or not, this Essence resides within the Priesthood, and can only be experienced by direct interaction with the Priesthood. When the Recognized Priest or Priestess comes to directly interact with the Priesthood en masse, they are able to receive 'further of Set's Essence', as they have previously, perhaps unconsciously, prepared themselves to be able to receive it.

I probably don't need to spend a lot of time elaborating on this new 'sensation'. It is that freakish non-natural presence which causes many a fledgling Priest or Priestess to be uncharacteristically quiet and unobtrusive throughout Conclave. It is that feeling of connection with all other Setians of past, present and future that may at times seem so stressful we have to fight against the urge to swiftly exit the conference room and spend the rest of the week locked up in our hotel room. It is that sense of a new presence within our subjective universe which some Priesthood initiates have come to call 'the Eye of Set'.

There is a story in Zen literature about an Englishman who traveled to the orient seeking an enlightened master who had become quite popular in the West. He finally met the Zen master, and as the master was pouring him tea, he told him of his desire for the master to teach him the ways of enlightenment. As he spoke the master silently continued pouring the tea, till the cup was full, then overflowing and running out over the table. The Englishman was quite shocked, and when he queried, the master's response was "You are like this cup. You wish to be filled with enlightenment, but you are already so full of other things you have no room for anything else."

While the story may contain a definite right-hand path flavor, it none the less illustrates some principles relevant to Third Degree initiation. First, you cannot receive anything unless you are prepared to receive it. Secondly, Essence is like material, or at least it is easier to speak of it when we consider it as such.

State 3: Working Toward Balance

No one can fully impress upon you what the sensation of Priesthood is like. As with so many things in life, one can only know of it by being it. No one can approach the experience fully prepared for all that will happen. I recall thinking soon after my own Ordination "Why didn't anyone tell me about this?!" But the funny thing is - they did. In looking back through Dr. Aquino's "Black Magic" essay in the *Crystal Tablet*, I found a most relevant passage:

"As Black Magic is merely a tool for use by magicians, so the Temple of Set as an institution is ultimately a vehicle for the identification and formalization of the Priesthood of Set, through whose soul flow the current of the Aeon of Set. Each Priest and Priestess of Set is a Temple of Set: a psyche so purified, educated, consecrated, and initiated that it has become a fit medium for the Prince of Darkness."

There it is, the entire process succinctly encapsulated and available for reading by all initiates of all degrees. I must have read the same passage many times before I experience Ordination, but still the experience hit me like nothing I could have been fully prepared for. Indeed knowledge may be gained only in proportion to one's state of being.

This new presence within the initiates subjective universe tends not only to inspire us with a brief period of dis-ease, but also to throw us off balance to some extent. A part of us has suddenly grown way beyond anything that nature had prepared us for, and the rest of us needs to 'catch up'. This seems to constitute a large part of the work of the Third Degree - working toward balance. We do this by continuing to work on ourselves, and by forging new student - teacher relationships within and beyond the Temple.

Every new Priest and Priestess will carry out this work at a different pace. But I've never seen such work accomplished overnight. For most it seems to take at least a year or more. In my own case after a year I felt pretty sure I had accomplished some semblance of balance in my Third Degree process. Two years later and I realized I had a LOT more work to do.

And from there we continue on, our initiatory paths intertwined with that of the Lord of Darkness. Where does the process of Third Degree lead? Towards greater individuation and continuity of being, but also toward greater crystallization of the Aeon. Every time a Priest or Priestess of Set comes into being, the Aeon of Set becomes a little larger, a little more 'real'. That is how the Priesthood improves the quality of the Aeon -- by working to enhance and define their own personal initiatory process, i.e. *Xeper* and Remanifest.

For me the process continues to unfold in strange and mysterious ways, revealing few answers but showing me rather the true depth of the question. Perhaps I shall try to explore the ever expanding boundaries of this question again in another seven years and have more to say.

Xeper and Remanifest.