

## Tarot and Torah

As Moses came down the mountain and the people said what is God's name, Moses said, "I will be what I will be." The people (we learn this from the Jewish oral tradition) said "you can't say that!" Moses said, "Well that's what His name is." And the people said, "Well O.K. fine, but you can't say, 'I will be what I will be.' All you can say is 'He will be what He will be'." He will be is YHWH, and when the Christian Bible translates Exodus, chapter 3 as "I am that I am," they completely miss both statements. They do not translate His name as it should be, "I will be what I will be." They do not even translate it as, "He will be what He will be," but rather "I am that I am." There is so much ignorance and darkness in this matter.

This is the single most important religious matter that a human being can know, and it truly is desperately sad to see the human condition having fallen into a state of such total ignorance about this holy and sacred matter.

In the Bible, Moses asks to see God. God shows Him His backside because God says no one can see my front side and live. This is God without attributes. This is God before He has spoken to say, "Let there be light." He has the potential for all within Him, and He is clothed in that robe of infinite manifestation. He stands on the precipice; the precipice of creation. Every creation is, in fact, somewhat of a fall. If I sit at an easel with my oil paints, as long as I do not paint, the blank easel has infinite potential. But, as soon as the first drop of paint touches that canvass, the painting begins to fall from its infinite potential into a state of manifest reality. As I sit at a piano without playing, I have the potential of infinite expression, but the first note that I play drops from these lofty heights and begins to enter manifest reality.

Notice His expression as one of being carefree. This also contains a great revelation, because ultimately God's reality as pure infinite being remains unaffected by his "fall" into creation. What is there to harm Him? If the sum total of the universe were to disappear and to evaporate, the eternal transcendent reality of God would remain. This is one of the difficult lessons we must learn.

God said, "Let there be light," so too has He placed within us the ability to speak. Our words do contain power. As the Bible says, "The tongue is a mighty flame and an incredible power." Through your very words, you have the ability to create, and you have the ability to destroy. This is so essential. There is no way to over emphasize it.

God the creator is transmitting those positive aspects of his being into the creation. This is a key point. As God creates everything he says this is good, this is good, this is good, this is very good, everything in the universe which has been made by God is perfectly and absolutely good.

Every single thing in the universe exists in a dual form. Absolutely, positively every inanimate object, every relationship, every animate object, has a dual nature. And, that dual nature consists of a spirit and a body--a impulse and a form; a seed and a soil. There are an infinite number of illustrations. You have thoughts, feelings and desires which become your spiritual impulse. That impulse expresses itself and gains form through your body. Words themselves have a spiritual underlying meaning which get clothed in the words. If I say the word "power" the individual letters are a sign to point to the non-physical reality behind them.

Love is an emotion. Love is a relationship. Love is a reality which gets expressed in actions--a kiss, a gift, a touch. The Magician is then the spark, the impulse, the seed, the soul. The High Priestess is the form giver, the body, the soil. The Magician is the positive pole on the battery sending the energy out. The High Priestess is the negative pole on the battery taking the energy in. For every giver, there must be a recipient or there can be no gift. For every speaker, there must be a listener or there can be no speech. This is a deep and profound mystery understood by far too few people on this earth. This is the essence of the Christian revelation of the Holy Trinity, Father, Son and Spirit--subject, object relationship. The Father is the subject; the object of his love is the Son; and, they have a relationship between them which is the Spirit.

But I want us to focus a little longer on this idea of God's energy becoming evermore dense. The first moment of creation, God said, "Let there be light." The saying was the impulse. That impulse played itself out within the universe of God's mind and energy and light came about. God's spiritual impulse was given form through God the Mother and became light. As a result, God the Mother is also represented with light. The crescent moon at the feet of the High Priestess has many symbols, but one of them is to indicate the power and the presence of light. All that we have ever encountered in the universe is light. One of the things that Einstein has taught us is that if you take light in its purest form and simply slow it down, light begins to thicken. As it thickens, it becomes what we call matter. It takes on different shapes and forms.

Energy and matter are simply different parts of the same reality--the pure limitless energy of light. As God slows it down, and it condenses into matter, we can, through the power of atomic energy, take that matter and reconvert it into pure energy.

Everything then in the physical universe, we now know, is actually nothing more than light--light condensed and slowed down. Every living thing lives by one, and one power only--the power of light. The magical miracle of photosynthesis transforms light into what we can take as food. Our bodies are nothing more than transformed light. The light from the Sun hits the plants, the plants from the miracle

of photosynthesis transform that into plant material, which eventually either directly or indirectly, through the food chain, becomes our bodies. This is astounding. At the first moment of God's creation when He said, "Let there be light," God created light. That light, as Mother God the physical form of the spiritual impulse, has given shape and form to all other things.

The last comment about light is that light is the only thing that you can ever see. You have never seen a plant. You have never seen a dog. You have never seen a rock. The only thing you have ever seen is the light as it bounces off of the plant, the dog, and the rock. As the light hits the plant, the dog, or the rock, the light immediately adapts itself to the shape of that item. That light is then reflected into your eye. It is impossible for you to see a dog. All you can see is the light as it comes off of the dog. So from the first moment of creation, that spiritual impulse of the Arik Anpin to manifest Him/Herself into reality, created God the Father, who is the spirit to say I will be what I will be and I will that there be light--immediately creating the light as God the Mother who will give form to God the Father's impulses. That light is the source of all physical matter for all matter is simply light slowed down. That light is the essence of our lives, because without it no living organism could exist. That light, from the day you are born until the day you die, is the one and only thing that could ever, have ever or will ever see. That is God the Mother. That is the shaper of all existence.

The moon is related to another item which is also very closely associated with the High Priestess and with that of the mother--water. Just as light immediately adapts itself to whatever it strikes, so too water immediately adapts itself to whatever shape of container it is poured into. It does not matter if it is a huge ocean or a tiny thimble. Water will immediately adopt that shape. This is part of the fluid nature of water. Our bodies, just as they are animated light, so too they are animated water. They are animated, air because in exactly the same way that light and water will immediately adapt to whatever container they are in, so also will air adopt itself to whatever container it is in, though we do not see it as clearly. Our bodies consist of a tiny bit of earth combined with a lot of animated water. We are about 85% water sustained by the power of air and light. Those are the four primal elements: the earth, the water, the air and the fire.

The Magician holds the four elements on the table. He is the impulse for these, and God the Mother actually gives form to them. The phases of the moon are also related to womanhood and motherhood. The idea of cycling is in the female of almost all species, and especially in the human race. The woman's menstrual cycle very, very, closely matches the cycle of the moon. Approximately every 28 or 29 days, most women complete their menstrual cycle. The office of mother in an earthly sense is as sacred and holy an office as there is, but it is no more nor less holy than the office of father. They all work in conjunction with each other. So we

see the images of light, of water, of fluidity, of the moon, of cycles, of change, of motherhood--all of these are embodied in the High Priestess.

All creation, all manifestation is a cycle. This cannot be overemphasized enough.

The fact that the High Priestess is holding that scroll tells us that only through properly understanding God the Mother can we come to a true comprehension of the Torah. It also shows that, as it has been said throughout the ages, the Torah is the Bride of Yahweh.

The God of the Universe married to himself the Hebrew letters, married to himself his holy word and through the power of that word has created the universe and established all relationships with human beings. The Torah is a divine revelation which gives shape to God and enables us to see, touch and feel his non-physical reality. Once again, we see the idea of the spirit of God the Father being given form, shape, substance, and a body through the Torah--God the Father and God the Mother this time seen through the Torah.

However, there is more to it than that. Remember, the document you are reading is entitled Tarot for Christians. Have you ever wondered where the word "Tarot" came from? Take the letters TORA and arrange them in a circle like this:

T  
A   O  
R

If you read clockwise, it reads TORA. If you read counter clockwise it reads TAROT. Tarot is in fact a revelation of the Torah. As I said to you in the introduction, you will be shocked at some of these images. This is not a card of evil or Satan. This is not a card of darkness. This is a card indicating the strange mystical images of the very essence of God Herself, and the card is in part about the Torah. The Torah will help us to understand the Tarot, and the Tarot will help us to understand the Torah. As we cycle the wheel one way, we have Tarot. As we cycle the wheel the other way, we have Torah.

Those four letters can also start with the "R." If we do so, we have the word "Rota", Latin for wheel. In fact, Tarot card #10 is the wheel of fortune upon which we will see the words Tarot, Tora and Rota.

The sentence "Tarot Rota Tora" means that the Tarot reveals the wheel of truth which is the Torah. Once again we see remarkably the Torah as the "father", the

Tarot as the "mother" or "son", and the Rota as the wheel turning left and right, forward and back. Retaining the same essence is the relationship between them, again the Trinity, the tri-unity.

The High Priestess sits elevated above the crescent moon with the cross on her chest holding

The High Priestess sits between the two temples, between the two pillars. This indicates that this is the straight and narrow way. We must have balance. Just as all realms of existence cycle between two poles, and just as we dwell in the universe of the pairs of opposites, we must find the balancing point between the two in order to live. Too much air and you pass out; too little air and you pass out. Too much water and you pass out; too little water and you pass out. Too much warmth and you die; too little warmth and you die. The results are the same. Too much blessing and you die; too much judgment and you die. The way is broad that leads to death, but the way to eternal, limitless, infinite life is very narrow. There are very few that find it. When you find it, what do you find?

The High Priestess sits between the two pillars of the temple and she sits in front of the veil. Behind that veil is the holy of holies.

Again if you are not familiar with the Bible, then you do not know what is meant by the "holy of holies." You should read in the book of Exodus in the Bible as God tells Moses how to create his holy sanctuary. Inside the holy of holies, God's high priest, and we see here the High Priestess, would represent the people of before God. It was only in the holy of holies that man truly met God and God truly met man. The veil of the temple was meant to be a separation between God and the rest of the human race. This veil of the temple is covered with palms and pomegranates. The pomegranates are symbols of fertility, motherhood, great plenty. They were used throughout the Hebrew Bible in the various decorations throughout the temples. The palms were used to pave the way for Jesus as he entered Jerusalem, the home of the temple, the home of the holy of holies. Through Jesus' death, the temple was torn, symbolically indicating that now through the death and resurrection of Christ there is available to all people access to the inner holy of holies.

It is not merely enough for Jesus to have died. If you truly seek access to the inner holy of holies, to the inner temple, you must balance properly between blessing and judgment. You must die as Jesus died, so that you might be resurrected as Jesus was resurrected and enter into the inner most holiness. On the other side of that temple veil, what does the High Priestess hide? The Magician. As you encounter the Magician, you reach out to touch his hand, and he is pointing upward back to the Fool.

We are admonished in 1 Chronicles 16, to seek Yod Heh Vav Heh and his strength. Seek his face forever. We are told in Nehemiah 8, that the joy of Yod Heh Vav Heh is our strength. We are told in Psalm 18, "I love thee oh! YHWH my strength." Psalm 20:6, "I know that YHWH saves his anointed, he will answer him from his holy Heaven with the saving strength of his right hand."

It is all summarized, I think most beautifully, in two verses, Ecclesiastes 7:19, "Wisdom is a strength to the wise more than ten rulers that are in a cNotice that he is looking down. He is, however, not looking down so that he might find his own way. He is looking down to watch and seek and attune himself to others. This is the glory of religion. Religion is what we do completely alone in the inner most beings of our own soul, as well as what we do in partnership with every other soul around us.

The Hermit's attainment does not remove him from compassion. It begins compassion. The isolation and fracture begun by the Lovers, experienced through the poison of ego, as Adam seeks to even blame his holy wife for his problems-- that fracture begins to become healed on the pathway of the Hermit. For as you attain, and as you receive, you shall be free to share. We have discussed this before. As you give, so shall you receive; and, as you have received, you will give.

What is the greatest law? To love God with your total being and to love your fellow human beings as yourself. Note that this is a law. The law of gravity needs no one to give consent to it for it to be true. The law of electromagnetism was the governing factor of the universe before anyone ever conceived of it. In exactly the same way, the great law of God does not need you to consent to it or obey it for it to be true.

The fact is that you do love God with your whole being, and you do love your fellow person as yourself. These are not so much statements of command, as they are statements of reality--an explanation of the law of the universe. You absolutely must take time to meditate on this and make sure that you are completely clear on it.

How you love yourself is exactly how you will love others, and your entire personality is your expression of your love for God. The ways in which you think, the things that you feel, and those deeds that you perform are the way you love God. What you think about yourself and how you conceive of yourself when you close your eyes are how you love your fellow human beings.

You already do love God with the wholeness of your being. You already do love your fellow man as yourself, and it could never, ever be any other way.

Therefore, in the pathway of the Hermit, as we begin to see the glories of the canopy, as we begin to delight in the ecstasy of riding the Chariot, as we begin to

become healthy and have greater control over ourselves through the Lady of Strength, we are able to reach out and to share this with other people. As we become different people, we love differently. As we receive, so shall we give, and the giving that we do establishes what we will receive. Remember, this is a fractal universe. Our output becomes our input, and our input becomes our output. Therefore, when we attain the state of the Hermit, we seek to reach out, to share, and to touch other people. The best way to learn is to teach.

If you really want to learn something, try to explain it to another person. Reach out your hand. Let your light shine. You do not place a light upon a mountain in order to hide it. You place a light upon the mountain in order to let it shine. The whole purpose of the Bible is to discuss evangelism or discipleship. It is to discuss outreach, that we might let our light shine before others in such a way that they may see our good works and glorify our Father, who is in Heaven.

We become an actual channel. We become a vessel through whom the light of God can and will flow. Just as the Chariot is able to convey the higher powers of God to our eternal spirit, in exactly the same way as that spirit becomes awakened and alive and born inside of us, we too then can be a transmitter of that light. Whatever you bind on earth, shall already have been bound in Heaven. Whatever you loose on earth, shall already have been loosed in Heaven. Go ye and therefore and make disciples of all nations. During that process, momentum is gained.

ity." Wisdom--we have seen wisdom before. That wisdom, that living life according to the powers of God, is our strength. And finally, Mark 12:30, "You shall love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy mind, and with all thy strength." That is the pathway. That is our vision. That is our quest--to take us from the darkness of the ego state and enable us to ride the infinite chariot to the kingdom of celestial Godhood.

It does not matter if the wheels spin left or right or up or down. It does not matter if you are dwelling in a deterministic or a random or a chaotic world. It does not matter, the individual moments. It does not matter how confused or how puzzling or how bizarre life may seem. There is always a law. There is always a connection. There is always a purpose. There is always a direction. There is always a focus. That focus is the Wheel, the Wheel of Life. And that Wheel of Life is the holy word of God. That Wheel of Life is the Torah, and the Torah is revealed through the Tarot. The Tarot, the Torah, and Wheel of Life are all Yod Heh Vav Heh. That is a very powerful statement.

The Wheel of Fortune also pertains to the idea of success and prosperity. We as human beings become obsessed with material possessions. When I graduated from college, in order to have my own self respect, I spent several years cleaning

houses. This was a decent solid honest job. I was the black sheep of the family, because at that time on both my father's side and mother's side, I was the only one of any of the grandchildren to have ever graduated from a four year college. And, yet the college graduate was scrubbing toilets. I was an object of shame at family gatherings. The Wheel of Fortune started to turn differently, and I entered a new profession and started to make a lot of money. All of a sudden, I was someone who mattered to the family. I actually had people call me to say that they had never understood what I was doing, but they were really proud of me now. This is a horrid burden to put on anyone.

The proclamation of Jesus is that riches do not matter. Wealth and fortune, as they pertain to the material plane of money and commerce, are the lowest shells in the cosmic dance. Your divine limitless spirit does not care if you have a lot of money or hardly any money at all. The Wheel of Fortune will make some poor and some rich. Some will begin poor and become rich; some will begin rich and become poor. As we attach ourselves to the hub of the wheel then, we spin up and down. As we attach our consciousness to the rim of the Wheel of Fortune, when we make more money we are happier, and when we lose money we are sadder.

Every day that you wake up to brush your teeth, the full revelation of God is there screaming at you. Every time a bird flies through the sky and lands upon a tree branch, God is singing to you sermons so loud that the only reason you do not hear them is because you have had to cut them out. Or else, because of their glorious refrain, you would not be able to function in the day to day world. The glorious celestial choir, which is singing through every moment of this random, chaotic and deterministic world, so overwhelms our human soul, that we block out the light in order to be able to function and worry about our egos and our money and our conquest of other human beings.

The Wheel of Fortune says it need not be so. Through the Wheel of Fortune, we recognize that we can quite literally have our cake and eat it too. We can live in the normal world and suffer the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune. We can become richer and poorer. We can live as normal mortal human beings. But, we can recognize that every moment is the Torah, the Tarot, and Yod Heh Vav Heh.

Justice is not a separate self-existent entity. To say that God always operates with justice means that he always operates in perfect accord with his law of love. God's laws of love embody many things which we have seen throughout the cards. One of the prevailing factors is that of freedom of the individual. God will not coerce you into doing anything. As we've said before, God does not want to rape the bride, and he does not want the bride to rape Him. The celestial dance is a mating song of ecstasy. It is not a brutal violent rape. So God holds the sovereignty of the individual to be of utmost critical concern. This is his justice.



Inasmuch as God will not violate your personal freedom, and as much as God grants to you the ability to be a co-creator with him, this divine relationship, as it is expressed with every one of God's children on this earth, creates the dimension of human justice. In short, as God treats us, we must treat others.

We live in a "uni-verse", as we have said so often. And the command to love God with our entire being is exactly like the command to love our fellow people as ourselves. It is quite clear that no one who hates their brother or sister can actually love God. The two are intertwined. Therefore, the divine justice, which God has handed out to each of us by recognizing the autonomy of our individual selfhood,, we must in turn extend to all other people.

Taxation is theft. It is coercion. Theft, adultery, lying, murder--all of the evils of the world--ultimately result from a failed recognition of the commonality we all share as brothers and sisters of God. They result from our usurping another person's rightful authority on this earth.

When we all attain to the state of the fullness of Christ, there will be no reason for any laws. People will need no coercion, no rules of society, no taxation, none of the other social evils, for they will be ruled by the goodness of God within their hearts. Neither will we have any reason to teach one or another, because we will all be fulfilled. Until that point however, what do we do? This is the higher question regarding justice. Justice has two sides: a recognition of how we should operate and what to do when others do not operate in accordance with justice.

Justice holds the scales in one hand to say that all are free, all are equal, everything is perfectly balanced. The law of God and the law of man are one, and every human being stands equal in the eyes of God. And, every human being is completely free. As it says in the book of Leviticus 19:15, "Do not pervert justice, do not show partiality to the poor or favoritism to the great. But judge your neighbor fairly. All are equal."

In the other hand, Justice holds the sword--the sword of righteousness, the sword of judgment--to meet out properly, one to the other. As we give, so shall we receive. That is the law. And, the proper social order would be exactly what was laid out in the time of Moses--an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth. The thieves have what they stole taken from them. The murderers shall be killed.

Punishment is very different from retribution. Retribution is where I pass along to you or to another the wrong which you did to me, and there is place and a need within the world for retribution to be meted out. Retribution, ultimately then, is a tool for preventing greater harm. If we have a murderer in our midst, the removal of that one murderer potentially saves hundreds of lives. Therefore, the proper use

of retribution is to prevent a further, greater harm. In exactly the same way, punishment is the inflicting of a lesser comprehensible pain in order to prevent a greater incomprehensible pain. The clearest example is a child reaching for a hot burner on a stove. The parent slaps the child and scolds the child, punishing him for what he is attempting to do. This punishment--a slap on the hand--is a punishment that the child can understand, because it hurts. But ultimately, that slap on the hand is harmless. That slap on the hand is a much lesser threat than the incomprehensible threat of the hand which would be so badly burned. This is exactly what God did in the Garden of Eden, as we've seen before. God did not seek to get even with them so much as he did give them a smaller hurt that they could understand in order to help prevent the much larger hurt which would have been the immortalization of their egos.

Punishment is the infliction of a lesser pain in order to prevent a greater pain to the individual. The principle is the same, and the principle is always justice--to increase freedom, to help educate in the ways of goodness and health, to expand the power and presence of God in this world. That is the pathway of justice. This figure of justice does not sit with his eyes blindfolded, for justice need not be blind. There is no blindness in God. That is a human figure. That is a social symbol to indicate that justice is not supposed to distinguish between rich and poor, black and white, male and female.

Why upside down? This card visually indicates the reversal of everything we know, everything we think, everything we feel, and everything that we are. Many Tarot scholars have called this the most shockingly different card in the entire deck, representing powers, experiences and potencies completely beyond anything we encounter in any of the other cards.

The problem that entered the world in card #6 through the Lovers is addressed here. What is that problem? If you recall, we stated that the problem with Adam and Eve, their original sin, was not disobedience, but was rather a change of their mind which led to the existence of a separate ego. The original sin is not disobedience, but is actually ego.

That being the problem, the Hanged Man is the antidote--the solution. What exactly is that? Hopefully, it is obvious. To take up one's cross, means to engage upon those actions and experience those realities which will lead to the death of the ego. Your cross is that instrument upon which your ego will be slain. This is the crux of the biscuit, as they say. This is the cat's meow. This is the law and the gospel and the sum total of all human religious experience--the death of the ego.

Nature gives us an illustration, the great cosmic body of water. The spirit of God moves over the surface of the waters, and as the powerful light of the Sun hits the water, the water begins to evaporate. As it does, it rises into the air, forms into

clouds, and those clouds eventually become so heavy that they shed their moisture. The raindrops begin to fall to the earth, hit the ocean, and are reabsorbed into the cosmic oneness of God.

The ocean is God, symbolically. Through the light, the individual droplets form. This is the ego state where you can look at each individual raindrop, having its own characteristics. It has size, weight, a specific density, and a surface tension. It is a self-actualized slice of the ocean. Eventually, however, that slice of ocean becomes too thick and too heavy, thus it winds up falling back into the ocean. Our egos eventually must die; they must fall, just as the parable talks about the seed falling into the ground and dying. As that water drop falls into the ocean, the water drop still exists. Every single electron in that raindrop, all hundreds of uncountable trillions of them, still exists. However, that raindrop is no longer distinguishable or identifiable as one raindrop from another. They are all part of the glorious harmonious oneness which is the ocean. Unless a seed dies and falls into the earth, it can never be reborn. As long as we hold onto our tiny little egos, we will never be anything more than a pathetic minuscule raindrop. Once we abandon our egos and we return to our source, then we inherit and become one with all that the ocean is. That is the breath of God.

God dies so that we can live, so that we can die, so that God can live. God dies, the ocean denies itself and allows itself to be broken up and fractured. As God dies, each individual soul bubbles up from the vast countenance of God. God dies so that we might live. That is the message of the cards,. That is the message of the Bible. God exhales, takes a part of his energy, and breathes it into the nostrils of Adam that we might live. So that what? So that we can walk around the rest of our lives thinking that we are self-actualized and not needing anybody else. Right? Wrong!

Now at this point there is a rather unpleasant matter that I must discuss with the Christian church. Christianity has developed the idea that none of this is true, and that none of this necessary. Christianity has developed the idea that it is necessary only to believe that Jesus did this for us.

You can spend as much energy as you want worshipping Jesus as being absolutely perfect, but the Biblical record is quite clear that he wanted something against God's will. Not my will, but thy will. What Jesus wanted was not what God wanted. He wanted something which was against the will of God and, in essence, at that moment, at least, was a sinner. He had the power of ego within him, to seek his own life, his own comfort, to not have these problems, to not have to go to the cross. But, he recognized that as being against the will of God, and in so doing, voluntarily died to himself. He sublimated his will, his ego, his desires and sought only to serve the higher power of God's will. He died to himself. He took up his cross and entered eternal life.

That is the active participatory deed which Christ accomplished. He died to himself and followed not his ego, but the will of God. He did not hold onto the specific density of his tiny little raindrop, but recognized that that raindrop had to die, had to live for something beyond its own self-preservation, and its own tiny ego bound will. He sought to merge with the will of the Divine. In this way, he opened himself up so that the power of the ocean could flow through Him. The power of Strength, the power of Justice, the power of the Magician and High Priestess--the power of God could move and flow through Him. That is religion. That is the Christian pathway. That is the story of the Tarot cards.

The book of Romans makes it painfully, repetitively clear. If we belong to Christ and if we have been merged with Him in the likeness of His baptism, then so too we will merge with Him in His death and in His resurrection. Failure to do that leaves us caught forever, cast out of the Garden of Eden, forever trapped in our own sin.

That this is possible in God's will is clearly evident throughout the Bible. As Paul followed Christ and as he served Christ and he let his own ego die, we have these magnificent passages where he talks about all of his human accomplishments and all of his ego triumphs. And, he says that he counts it all as rubbish, for the higher calling of God in Christ. Toward the end of his life in the book of Galatians, he was able to say, "It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life which I live, I live by the power of God." Paul is stating there that he is the Hanged Man; that his ego has died; that he is now living as one with God.

This is your destiny, ladies and gentlemen. This is the pathway which God has laid out in the universe. This is the pattern He has laid out in the Bible. This is the pattern He has laid out in nature and in the Tarot cards. God dies so that we can live, so that we can die, so that God can live.

In exactly the same way, we profane the message of Easter. Because on the following Sunday after Jesus was buried, the women and disciples wound their way to the tomb at one time or another, and found that the tomb was empty. There were no trumpets blaring. There were no angelic children running around hunting for Easter eggs. There was no great dance and celebration and Easter breakfast. There were scared, frightened people hiding for their lives. Their leader had just been crucified, and their greatest fear was that they would be next. In their fear and in their anguish and in their aloneness, they went and found a tomb that was empty. This compounded their fear; this compounded their anxiety. They heard a message from an angel saying that He is not here, He is not dead, He has risen. Not a one of them believed this initially. It took them days, months, and years to fully comprehend all that this meant.

If you have a spouse, child, friend, or acquaintance, there is only a finite number of destinies for that person's relationship with you.

Destiny Number 1: You will lose contact with one another and not go through death. This can happen through divorce, through people moving away, people having new lives, or simply losing contact with one another. The relationship becomes broken and is no longer a factor. However, if you remain in a relationship with your parents, children, spouse or friends, then there are only three other destinies.

Destiny Number 2: Your parent, child, spouse or friend will die and leave you to mourn.

Destiny Number 3: You die and leave your parent, child, spouse or friend to mourn.

Destiny Number 4: You will both die together in some sort of catastrophe leaving everyone else around you to mourn.

There are no other choices.

Once we can embrace this and face it openly, we can begin to live. Here is the greatest secret I have ever discovered regarding death: Embrace death fully. Recognize that death is the natural state. Do your mourning now. Recognize that your cat is already dead; your baby is already dead; your parents are already dead; you are already dead. Face this. Embrace this death which sits upon the horse. Embrace this card and make it your reality. Live in it, absorb it, eat it, breathe it, drink it. Recognize that this is the destiny of one and all, and that it is completely, utterly inescapable.

Do not let this death stop with your friends. Embrace death in all aspects of existence. The clock, which you cherish, is smashed, destroyed, broken and dead. The business you have worked for so long is bankrupt, dead, destroyed. The house which you have spent so many years working for is a rubble, completely useless, gone.

The sum total of the universe has been swallowed into the mysterious unknown, and death is the only reality. Once you can do, you will begin to live in resurrection. The cat is already dead. We have buried the cat. What would you do? What would you give if you could spend just one more day with your dead cat?

Your wife is already dead. You have just returned from burying her. What would you give for one more day to be able to tell her all of the things that you wanted

to tell her, but never did? Your parents are already dead. You have just come back from the funeral parlor. What would it be like if you had one last opportunity to spend some time with them, to live with them?

That is the reality you can tap into, once you embrace death. Once you recognize that everything is already dead, then every single day is a gift of infinite grace. Every single day is a resurrection. Every single day is that one last chance to do and be all the things you want to be--to spend the time and the relationships and the warmth with all of your dead relatives. One last chance to enjoy working in your dead, bankrupt business. One more chance, by some divine miracle, to live one last day in that house which is a burning, rotting, rubble of dust. Then there is no mourning. There is no death. There is only resurrection. When the cat finally dies, you have already mourned the cat. When the children finally die, you have already mourned their passing. And you have lived a life of fulfillment, taking advantage of every opportunity of every moment of every day. When the miracle of resurrection has passed on, then you are at peace to recognize that things have simply returned to their natural state. You wake up one morning, and the resurrected cat is no longer there. There is no reason to grieve, because you have already buried the cat.

That is why this card is in the Tarot deck. It is meant to be embraced. It is meant to be a gateway to a new birth. If we can embrace death, then our lives are transformed. That is the physical realm. This is also a card of immense spiritual power. The crucifixion of ego, that we saw in the Hanged Man, can and will become reality. As that ego dies, we then live in a glorious resurrection. As we continue to look at the card, we see several important elements.

Death is a secret, death is a darkness which we do not wish to look at nor embrace. So if we are not going to supplicate death and we're not going to ignore death, what response do we have? The response of the little child. Unless we have faith like a little child, we will never enter the Kingdom of Heaven and recognize all truth. The little child does not seek to turn death into a friend. The little child does not seek to ask death to go away. The little child does not turn her eyes and pretend that death is not there. The little child opens her eyes, sees death in the face, recognizes death as what it is, and has a simple straight forward natural acceptance of this reality.

As the final element, I wish to direct your attention to the right hand side of the card, just above the head of the Pope. Notice, that we have two towers, and we have the Sun beginning to rise. Death is a stripping away of the veils--physical, emotional, mental and spiritual veils. And as we strip away veils, we can see more clearly into the heart of truth. That heart of truth is the light. God is the light. That is the Sun, and that sun will become our destiny in the next cards.

That halo of light which surrounds the head of the Hanged Man is nothing less than the presence of infinite God himself, and we must now, as we follow with these cards, take a journey, a long journey up and over the hills, until finally we will come to these two towers again. We will come to the Sun again. Death is the beginning of the pathway to resurrection, not instantaneous, not immediate, not overnight. Death is rather just the beginning.

The disciples were engaged upon the start of the spiritual pathway when they began to understand the resurrection of Jesus. You must start there to understand the death and resurrection of Jesus. But as we have said before, Jesus' death and resurrection are only the beginning, because they are an instruction booklet for you and your personal death and resurrection. That is the power that enables you to embrace death, look it squarely in the face with the faith of a little child, and rise beyond the human limitations to a glorious and infinite resurrection.

Temperance is balance and the sharing, within one person, of multiple and often contradictory energies. We are all subject to many, many thoughts, feelings, tendencies and energies. The various vehicles which we operate all have their needs, wants and desires. The mechanical vehicle, the physical vehicle, the emotional desire vehicle, the mental vehicle, the spiritual vehicle all lay claims to the energies of the divine controlling will, and all ask for their own attention.

The mechanical body needs to have its tires changed. The physical body experiences heart palpitations, gets hungry, wants to sleep. The desire body gets tossed about with overwhelming feelings of love and ecstasy, anger, tension, seeking one moment for peace of mind, seeking the next moment for thrill and excitement. The emotional body gets tossed in its reactions to all that happens, one moment full of peace and contentment, the next moment raging. The mental body has a plethora of experiences to tease, pull and tantalize it, all of which exist as playgrounds for the divine will. Where are we to focus ourselves? Not only do each of the different vehicles have conflicting desires, conflicting energies, but they all compete against one another. You cannot fix your car while you are meditating. You cannot serve humanity while you are feeding your face.

So Temperance is here as a divine guiding principle to bring balance, harmony and focus to all of our energies. This is most significant, coming as it does, on the heels of the previous two cards. The Hanged Man is the call to transcend ego. Death is the potential pitfall. For some people, the pathway of the Hanged Man is one of annihilation of the self--to beat the body until feeling is no longer possible, to dull the senses until experience is no longer possible, to numb the emotions until feeling is impossible, and to so confuse the mind, that thought is not possible. That form of ego transcendence leads not to the positive death merely of the ego, but the total annihilation of the being.

This pathway has been followed by many people. The term "nirvana" can be translated, to snuff out. No breath. Once the self is eliminated, then the self is free. Therefore, we have these pathways of absolute radical aestheticism. Do not feed the body, torture and kill the body. Do not feed the emotions, do not experience desire. Do not stir up the waters with all of your frivolous thought. Brother, seek to expire. Seek to be blown out. Some see the human consciousness as a knot, as a gnarl of tangles, and the purpose is to comb out the cosmic hair, removing all of the knots, wherein you'll be seeing that the individual does not exist.

When we were discussing the Hanged Man, we discussed the droplet of water which re-enters the ocean. Each and every individual atom and electron and molecule inside of the raindrop still exists. It has not been passed through some vaporizer that will not only turn the water into steam, but will also disseminate every single atom in some form of cosmic explosion wherein the atoms no longer exist. That is what is known as the left hand pathway, the negative pathway, the Nihilistic pathway.

We are not talking about the ego becoming the destruction of the person, but rather to break down the barriers between the individual and the group, between the particular and the whole. God is the whole, we are the individual and all fellow human beings are the group.

When the secret tradition calls us to the egotist's state, it is not calling for the abrogation of existence. It is not calling for the negative. It is not calling for the wholesome positive parts of the individual to be destroyed. In this respect, the call to death is not a death of the entire being, but only a death of those individual attributes which separate the individual from the totality in the group.

That's why the greatest law is the law of love. The law of love states that we love God with our whole being, and we love our fellow man as ourselves. That means that the individual merges with the totality of God and the individual merges with the group of all fellow persons. In this respect, Temperance balances the transcendence of ego and seeks to preserve it from an annihilation of the self so that the positive, or right hand pathway of ego transcendence, leading us through death, is a death not of all of ourselves, but only those parts which need to die. This is the key to Temperance. Temperance is a balance--finding the right amount and proportion in all aspects.

The opposite of Temperance is excess. If we are to kill the entire being, then we are proverbially tossing out the baby with the bath water. We are not separating the wheat from the chaff, but we are rather killing them all and letting God sort them out. This is excess. This lacks discernment, which is another important aspect of the angel of Temperance.



The pathway of Nihilism leaves us with absolutely nothing. The pathway of positive transcendence leaves us with only the good. And the faculty which we use to determine the difference is the faculty of discernment, which is cosmic conscious awareness of the yea and nay of life, leading us to balance--leading us to Temperance.

I began this chapter stating that balance was the unsung hero of the human race. If I breath too much, I will hyper-oxygenate and pass out. If I breath too little, I will become asphyxiated and pass out. The result is the same. Too much air and too little air lead to the same exact outcome. If I eat too much, I will become sick and die, yet if I eat too little, I will become sick and die. If I sleep too much, I will become groggy and tired, yet if I sleep too little, I will become groggy and tired. I must have a balancing point in all aspects of my life. Temperance is here to help give us discernment and keep/or restore the lost balance.

O.K. God, I'm ready! Now what do I do? You cannot do anything. Whatever you might do, is going to be a action of your ego and lead you back to the paradox of the Bodhisattva. What you must do is nothing. There is only an awareness that one is, in fact, one with the universe. You can simply open your eyes, and through the process of repentance, metanoia, and the transformation of your mind, recognize that your ego never existed at all.

In exactly the same way, the law to love God begins as a commandment only because we start entrapped in our ego. So we fight against God and work against His law, perceiving it simply as a command or a duty to be performed.

The Angel of Temperance is here to balance these elements and enable them to stay in harmony with one another. The angel is standing partially on earth and partially on water, to show that these different forces need not work against each other. They are in harmony. Your body and your desire state need not be at war. You can control all aspects of your being through the power of strength and through the divine will. As the book of Ecclesiastes says, there is a time for everything: a time to live, a time to die, a time to celebrate, a time to grieve. There is a time to eat and a time to refrain from eating. That is the power that the Angel of Temperance grants to us.

In terms of the Devil, the Devil is the controlling force of matter. The Devil is the opposite of God, to worship the creation instead of the creator, to amass the powers of all manifest existence and harness it as a separate entity apart from the prevailing will of God.

The temptation of Jesus by the Devil is astoundingly illustrative. Regrettably so few seem to recognize what these temptations are. Temptations are not simply Jesus being able to prove that he is really the Son of God. There are three temptations,

and each one represents a very specific danger on the pathway of spiritual existence. As we learn, as we grow, as we are able to harness strength and manifest the divine will, and as we begin to overcome the temptations of ego, there are three definite temptations which the Devil gives to us.

Temptation #1: If you are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread. The temptation here is to use the spiritual powers which the adept acquires for the purpose of satisfying his own flesh and his own needs and wants.

Temptation #2: If you are the Son of God, stand upon this high pinnacle of the temple and throw yourself down. The temptation here is, as one overcomes the limits of normal humanity and begins to glow with the celestial light of God, to make a spectacle of one's self and point to one's self as an object of worship and adoration.

Temptation #3: The devil took Jesus to a very high mountain and showed him all of the kingdoms of the world and all of their glory. He said to Jesus, "All these things I will give you if you fall down and worship me." This temptation is the final and most difficult. This is, in some respects, the last dying gasp of the ego. As the ego becomes cleansed and spiritual abilities are granted, and as the soul begins to recognize that it is a manifestation of God, the temptation is to harness those energies to control the entire world.

Temptation #1, we use our spiritual powers for our own personal pleasure.

Temptation #2, we use our spiritual powers to draw attention to ourselves as an object of worship.

And temptation #3, we use our spiritual powers to control the world.

To overcome temptation #1, we must always seek to serve others and recognize that we are all one.

For temptation #2, we must recognize that we are, in fact, nothing more than a conduit of the divine light and a channel of God's presence in this world.

And for temptation #3, we must recognize that the totality of manifest creation, as glorious as it is, is simply the dancing of shadows upon the face of God. We are to live not by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God. We shall not tempt the Lord our God, and we shall worship the Lord our God and serve Him only.

The Devil must be overcome, and these temptations must be overcome as we return on the pathway.

Jesus, through his passion and his death on the cross, states quite clearly, "It is finished." The struggle between good and evil, God and man, the spirit and the flesh, is over. The bonds of sin and death have been broken. The chains which ensnare the human race have been cast aside. We are now free to worship God and no longer be cast about and plagued by the Devil, yet the Devil is still alive and still well.

This is the symbolism of card #15. What else do we see? The most striking element perhaps is that this card has a completely black background. This card and the next card are the only two cards in the Tarot deck like that. The other backgrounds are either blue, the color of air; yellow, the color of the fiery sky; or, gray, which is non-committal. The Devil's black background indicates the absence of light. This leads us to another key point--the difference between light and dark. Many people ignorantly feel that light and dark are part of the pairs of opposites, just like male and female, heads and tails, North and South, but this is absolutely and categorically wrong.

We see at the foot of the Devil, Adam and Eve, the Lovers, chained to the Devil's footstool. As we talked about Jesus saying that he had overcome the powers of sin and death, he had overcome the Devil. As he said, it is finished. We see, though, that people are still being plagued by the Devil. Why?

This card gives us the clearest indication it possibly could. These poor fools, Adam and Eve, are wearing the Devil's horns. They're dressing like him. Adam's got his Devil's tail, and so does Eve. They are acting as though they are enslaved to their sin, enslaved to their conscience. The Devil made me do it. I am weak. I have no control. I am being held prisoner here. My parents didn't love me as a child, and that's why I can't love you. I had a rotten day, so that's why I'm going to tell you a lie. Oh, I was misunderstood in my youth, and people made fun of me on the playground, so that's why I'm going to murder you and eat you for dinner.

The card is telling us very clearly that this is all a lie. If you look, you can plainly see that Adam and Eve, with their fettering chains around their necks, could very easily remove those chains. The loops are so large that they could quite simply slip over their heads. All they have to do is want to be released through the divine will. Through an exercising of their conscience, they will be free. It is truly over. The only forces and power that the Devil and darkness have over us are the forces which we voluntarily grant to them. This is the key.

The only power which darkness has is that which we grant to it by volunteering to become its agent. The only truth is God. The only truth is the light. That freedom and that oneness is your divine call. Why do we have this at this stage of the aspirant's life?

We have come through the Wheel of Fortune, Justice, the Hanged Man, Death, and we have the divine guidance of Temperance. Why now do we face the Devil?

He was born of Virgo, the virgin. He is Aquarius, the water bearer to feed us with streams of living water. He is Aires, the ram or lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world. He is Gemini, part God, part man with the dual nature. He is Libra, the great judge who will come to discern truth from falsehood and through whom God will judge the world. He is the conqueror of Scorpio, the serpent who will sting him on the heels. He is Pieces, the fish. The word "fish" is an acronym for Jesus Christ God's Son Savior. That's why we see these little fish symbols on the back of cars today. He is Pisces, the Son of God.

Principle #1: The only reality is God.

Principle #2: The commandments of God begin as rules, and are fulfilled when they are recognized as being law.

Principle #3: We are one with God and with our fellow human beings.

Principle #4: All is good. All is good and the only thing that is bad is our way of thinking.

Principle #5: Repentance and salvation consist of an enhancing of our mind, that we might see the glorious truths.

Principle #6: The divine Lord plays himself out in this universe through an interlocking series of will, mind, desire and matter.

Principle #7: There is no difference or separation between the highest vehicle of God and the lowest. Having a body is not evil, and it does not separate you from God. All vehicles are a part of the divine dance.

Principle #8: The only reality, the only power of our physical lives and our religious life, is the power of grace. Since everything comes from God, and goes to God, and lives and breaths and moves in God, everything that occurs, is an outpouring of his grace.

Principle #9: The final enemy to be overcome is the appearance of our ego, which is the separator keeping us from oneness with God; keeping us from oneness with each other.

Principle #10: The breath of God is eternal. God breathes out and his expiration is our inspiration. We breathe out and re-inspire God. God dies so that we can live, so that we can die, so that God can live.

Here is to your eternity. Here is to our universe. Here is to our God. Here is to love.