

On the occasion of the 50th Jubilee of B.O.T.A. in New Zealand October, 2013

Address by Rev. Adrian of Auckland, New Zealand

Seated on Stone: The Empress and Emperor

Yesterday we heard about the history of B.O.T.A in New Zealand, and the amazing contributions of those who set up the foundation of the Work here. Today I want to change the direction of our focus. A few months ago, when I first started thinking about this talk, I was very much drawn to Keys 3 and 4. They are highly complementary Keys, and as I think we will see, they provide a wonderful foundation for creating the future.

We can look to the future in different ways.

- We can look ahead anxiously, seeing the difficulties and constraints before us.
- Or, we can look forward creatively, choosing the things and the conditions we want, and by when we will have them.

Commonsense and a little Qabalistic training quickly inform us which of these is more likely to lead to a future of growth and success. And yet, I suspect we all feel anxious at times when we look ahead. So, let's take this opportunity to look at Keys 3 and 4 and see how we can do better.

Let's start with **The Empress, Key 3.**

On the Tree of Life, the Path assigned to Key 3 is the link between Wisdom and Understanding – that is, between the grey Sephirah, Chokmah, the Father, and the black Sephirah, Binah the Mother. This is said to be a pathway of luminosity, or light. There at least two reasons why this is so:

- Firstly, the Intelligence assigned to Key 3 is called the Luminous Intelligence.
- Secondly, in the Cube of Space, Key 3 is assigned to the East, the direction of the rising light of Dawn.

At Dawn the first rays of the sun penetrate the darkness.

- In our work, this is a symbol of the entry of Unknowable, Absolute Divinity, one of whose Qabalistic names is the Limitless Light of L.V.X, into the process of manifestation.
- The Dawn is also a symbol of the irresistible cosmic drive for *perfect expression and perfect freedom*.
 - Another Tarot symbol for this Divine Desire, besides the Dawn, is the white rose, which appears both in Key 0 and Key 13.
 - This Divine Desire is an inseparable part of all forms, mental as well as physical. For example, the calling we feel, of being drawn to the work of B.O.T.A. is but one manifestation of the Divine Desire expressing through us.

Venus is the Astrological sign assigned to Key 3. Venus is our desire nature, which, when expressed positively, displays itself, as creativity and love. The chief value of the Venus vibration is its power to stimulate creative imagination. In the lessons we are told that Imagination is the power which is more potent than any other in human progress. We use our imagination every day – when we decide what we will wear, and what we will eat, for instance. But the potential available to us from actively directing our imagination goes way beyond this. I recommend that we ask ourselves, every day: 'How am I using my creative potential?'

A clue to where we should look to answer this question is provided by the fact that the Empress of Key 3 represents aspects of subconsciousness. Subconsciousness responds to suggestions, and one way we give our suggestions is in the form of expectations.

- “B.O.T.A studies are too hard: I can’t remember it all.” Are we sending subconsciousness this type of limiting suggestion?
- Or, do we have a really positive expectation and an intense desire, that says: “I commit to doing everything it takes to complete the Great Work in this lifetime”?

Our degree of intentionality sends a corresponding expectation and suggestion to the sub-conscious mind. Each seed idea that we plant with great intention in subconsciousness will yield a result of corresponding magnitude.

When I check my intentions and expectations, they show me how I am directing my creative potential.

I also need to be aware of what my attention is focussed on. When I focus on judging and assessing myself, politicians and those around me, I am directing my creative ability in the opposite direction to the Venusian qualities of love, generosity and compassion.

What do I want? It is so easy to have a vague idea of what we want in the various parts of our life. We know that *other* people shut down their attention on things like physical fitness, finances, or relationships, for instance, perhaps because managing them seems too hard. The thing is, we don’t need to get hung up on ‘how’ we will achieve great results in life. *Knowing and focussing on what you want* is what influences our creative potential. Providing we know what we want, and keep taking actions in that direction, success will come. This is borne out by Ann Davies, who wrote: “Desire is what causes our images to multiply Multiplication is the result of repetition. That is why we must repeat the mental images we want to become manifest over and over again until they seemingly have a life of their own.” EA 18: 2. The first step, of course, is to create the image – to know what you want.

Elsewhere, the lessons make the same point in a slightly different way. Daleth, meaning ‘door,’ or ‘portal’ is the Hebrew letter assigned to Key 3. It is crucial to look at how and where you are directing your consciousness, because, “the ... generation of mental images constitutes the portal through which you pass from your present states of personal existence into those you are to realize in the future. ... What you image today will become a pattern for the manifestations of days to come.” TI 16: 1

A moment ago I gave two opposite, B.O.T.A-related examples of possible thoughts on which people might focus. The first expressed the limiting belief that the lesson material is too hard to remember; and the second expressed the heartfelt aspiration to attain the Christ Consciousness. How could we use creative imagination to combine these two into a powerful new possibility? What could we invent that would make the learning easier, more fun and involve us with others?

When I contemplated this question briefly, one idea I came up with, was – crosswords.

- We could invite Members to write knowledge questions from material in the lesson they are studying, and provide single-word answers. When sending in questions and answers, Members include as a reference, the name of the lesson series, the lesson number and the page number.

- There are bound to be Members who could take these questions and answers and create crosswords. Failing this, we could certainly find people online who could do this for us.

The advantage of having crosswords to supplement the lessons is that we could print off a fresh copy and complete it a week, a month and anytime later. I think people would be motivated by not knowing answers to re-read the lesson or at least the appropriate page. We might need to explain that the aim would be to stimulate learning, not just locating the right crossword answer.

Increasing the use of creative imagination – a Key 3 activity - is an important practice in the work of this Order. If we use our creative imagination to support this Order, directly or indirectly, each of us can contribute to the future of B.O.T.A., for we all have access to the limitless abundance that flows from the Lord of the Universe.

The Emperor

Already you may have seen the influence of the Emperor in what I have been saying, for the loving productivity of the Empress which modifies the sub-conscious mind – symbolized in Key 3 by the Moon she controls with her foot – requires the strength and activity of the self-conscious mind, shown by the Emperor.

The North

The Emperor faces North – the place of maximum darkness – symbolic of the future and the unknown. The North represents the source of our fears *and* the source of our opportunities. We decide which of these takes precedence in our mind.

His attire and posture

The Emperor's military attire refers to courage and determination. He is very much a ruler of all that he surveys. He sits in such a way that the symbol of alchemical Sulphur is created by the triangular shape of the upper part of his body, surmounting a cross formed by his legs. Sulphur is the alchemical symbol for the self-conscious mind. The very practical message from his attire and his posture is that we must fight to bring to full awareness, the truth that we are a centre of expression for the One Will: Super-conscious Divinity is living, thinking, feeling, and acting through our vehicles.

Resisting

The rocky cliffs behind the Emperor are coloured red, symbolizing the Mars force at work, breaking down the rocky heights into fertile, alluvial soil. What are the hard, rocky areas in our personality? I would say they are the things we resist:

- Perhaps bodily ailments or imperfections – or their treatment
- People who annoy us
- Situations that anger or frustrate us.

These are some of the things that can *magnetically* attract our thoughts and feelings into negative territory. The thing is, when we resist, our visualizing powers become focused on what we don't want. Subconsciousness multiplies *these* images, and we wind up manifesting *more* of what we *don't* want.

Fortunately, there are practices we can implement, instead of automatically getting 'hooked' like this. Always, when life seems to go the wrong way we have choices:

- Stop and do it later.
- Don't do it at all.
- Give it all our attention or none of our attention.
- Or, perhaps most powerful of all, let go and surrender. Bless the divine order of things - and allow.
 - Allow things to take the time it takes. Allow the happening of what seems difficult and inconvenient.

- Instead of saying to ourselves, “It shouldn’t be like this!” say instead, “This is *exactly* where my Higher Self wants me to be right now.” This is such a powerful statement. I’ll say it again: “This is *exactly* where my Higher Self wants me to be right now.”
- When we do this, and let go of resisting, we allow the unseen bigger picture directed by our Higher Self to proceed.

In this way we are using the Mars energy constructively and harmoniously. We are breaking down the aspects of personality that have been keeping us stuck. This contributes enormously to us, because we stop feeling stressed. It is also a gift to all other forms of consciousness, because we are now putting peace and harmony instead of anger and other negativity, into the mass mind.

The river

The practices I have just mentioned are relevant to the river in Key 4. The river behind and below the Emperor is the stream of subconsciousness in which we live, and of which we are a part. Our task is to raise our awareness, so we become conscious of all that flows into and out of our personal consciousness. Our aim is to allow the purity of the High Priestess and the Empress to flow freely through its waters.

Vision and organization

The Hebrew letter Heh is assigned to the Emperor, and so too is the function of vision. Vision refers not just what we see in the world around us, but how we interpret the inner and outer worlds. This is how we create our own particular vision of reality. Vision - what we see, and what we don’t see - is a creative act.

Developing our mind so that we see the opportunities before us, and see what is entering and leaving our consciousness, requires a high degree of organization. It requires us to be orderly in our thinking, and in our life. Orderliness and reason are qualities of the Emperor.

Let’s take mess as an example. If mess or clutter are familiar friends, we need to send them on their way. Now, as you know, achieving a mess-free life needs more than doing an occasional tidy-up. Creating a mess-free life requires that we design and implement a new habit – a new way of doing things, based on a vision of the new reality that we want, and to which we are committed. This is using the powers of the Emperor.

We also activate the powers of the Emperor when we face our problems, and look for solutions that are based on the vision of the future we want to create. *Knowing what we most want – identifying what we desire* is always the first step.

I believe that it is tremendously important that we have a vision - the same, unified vision - for the future of Builders of The Adytum. Perhaps this Jubilee could be an opportunity to document exactly that.

I use the word ‘document,’ because bringing a vision of the future into manifestation must include managing the fact that consciousness is fluidic. Therefore we must use methods that arrest its flow, in order that we can focus repeatedly on what’s important to us.

- Writing down what we want, our plans to achieve our goals and the next tasks is the way to do this. Great ideas melt away if we don’t secure them. The humble shopping list is an easy example of the value of using lists to make life work.

How could we apply this to a global vision for B.O.T.A.? Well, we might create a Members’ Global page that is posted on each country’s website, or have a Global section in the email newsletter we can subscribe to, that comes from the U.S.

- It could include a Vision statement.
- It could show specific projects that are underway.
- A Project Help section could be worthwhile, where B.O.T.A projects needing help are listed – such as wanting people to create our crosswords, and funding needed to save the Higher Thought Temple for instance. One member anywhere in the world asking one friend might solve what appears to be an insoluble problem.

Widening our global communication in this way might be an effective way for us all to focus on, and be a part of, the global future of B.O.T.A. I offer this as an example of how we might use creative imagination to explore new ways of serving the Order in the future, in a way that combines the powers of the Empress and the Emperor.

Seated on Stone

The title of this talk is “The Empress and the Emperor: Seated on Stone.” I want to conclude this talk, and summarize a few main points, as we look at the significance of these two being seated on stone.

Tiphareth

The first involves the fact that the Empress and the Emperor both have links with Tiphareth.

- The 6 pointed stars comprising the Empress’ crown is a reference to the 6th Sephirah. In addition, she holds a copper shield. The Hebrew word for copper is Nachash. This same word is also the name for ‘serpent’ and its letter value, 358, is also the number of MSHIH, Messiah, the Redeemer. This is a clear reference to Jesus, and the Christ consciousness in Tiphareth.
- The Emperor is seated on a stone cube adorned with the head of a ram. The ram is a symbol of Aries, and of the powers of the focused, orderly mind. The six sides of the cube refer to the 6th Sephirah, Tiphareth.

The symbolism of stone

The second point concerns the Hebrew word for stone – *Ehben*. *Ehben*, spelled ABN, symbolizes the perfect union of *Ab*, the Father, or Chokmah, with *Ben*, the Son, or Tiphareth. *Ehben* is a verbal symbol of conscious identification of the personal ego with the cosmic, or universal Self.

The activities and powers of Empress and the Emperor are thus seated in, and have their highest expression, in the union of personal and cosmic consciousness. This is the attainment of the Christ Consciousness, in Tiphareth. It is the completion of the Great Work. The purpose of this Order is to guide men and women towards the achievement of this Goal, through knowledge and practices that result in the transmutation of consciousness, and transmutation of the physical body. GW 16: 6

The path to that union has many facets, but it includes perfecting the sort of practices we have considered today in relation to Key 3 and Key 4:

- Creating a vision of what we most want; and being committed to that vision.
- Returning frequently to our vision, thus making it a seed upon which the subconscious, creative, reproductive powers can work.
- Keeping our heart and mind open to new luminosity or light upon our vision, so that when the Higher Self brings greater opportunities, we are ready to adopt them.
- Frequently taking action towards achieving what we want, for it is only by being in action that any vision of the future will enter the plane of physical manifestation.
- And last but not least, combining the Venus principle of love and the Mars principle of action, by keeping foremost, the aim of devoted service to the Highest Good.

In L.V.X.

Frater Adrian