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1st Quarter 2019

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The Sacred Hebrew Alphabet: Taw - And the Last Shall be First

Scenza

It is fitting and proper that, through no deliberate effort, the composition of this last of 24 independent articles on the Hebrew Alef-bayt (AB) falls on Easter Sunday of the year 2,019 C.E. On a day that has symbolized since time immemorial renewal and rebirth, both as adopted by Christians, and also pre-dating Christian

theology as the celebration of Ishtar, this series of articles finds its conclusion. Still, as the twenty-second and final letter of the AB will amply demonstrate, in the minds of the Ancients, every ending was in fact a new beginning. As the death and decomposition of one organism into soil makes way for the nourishment and suste-

nance needed for the birth and survival of the next generation, so also does the final letter of the AB symbolize completion, as well as a new cycle of manifestation and development.

The Kabbalists classified the letter Taw as a *lingual* conso-

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The Grand Cross

Margaret Dissinger

The Order of the Sphinx is engaged in a study group, rereading and discussing* the 21 books written by C.C. Zain. Just now we are reading *Spiritual Alchemy*, which is clearly one of my favorites. This morning I read: "...if the soul so desires, and will put forth the effort, it can move forward continuously to become a more effective workman in the realization of God's Great Plan" (Zain II-44). Having spent the last month researching, considering, and imagining the implications of the subject of this article, The Grand Square (aka The Grand Cross), the words above have taken on special meaning.

It is rare to find a Grand Cross aspect in a horoscope. I have known a couple people

with a Grand Square, have heard stories about others, and have read recently about three in particular: Steve Jobs, Miles Davis, and Jennifer Lawrence (Google, Grand Square). This article is a combination of conversations with others, general reading, hours of meditation on this topic. The result is some very interesting observations and realizations about the spiritual impact of this aspect.

The basic Grand Square is composed of at least four planets (MC & ASC being included as planets) of which two are in opposition

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Editorial

Christopher Gibson

"Permanence, perseverance, and persistence in spite of all obstacles, discouragement, and impossibilities: It is this, that in all things distinguishes the strong soul from the weak." - Thomas Carlyle

Most all of us will at some time in our life be faced with obstacles and adversity. An obstacle can be defined as anything that obstructs or hinders our progress. Adversity is described as difficulties or misfortune. We can all probably agree that at one time or another we've experienced some of each.

During the early to mid-80's, I had the opportunity to work with an art therapist who had studied the Jungian method in Switzerland. She introduced me to the written works of the great mythographer, Joseph Campbell, beginning with "The Hero with a Thousand Faces". In this illuminating tome, Campbell explores the common themes of folklore, fairytales and world myth. He describes a journey of the archetypal hero who ventures forth to win a decisive victory over obstacles and adversity. The pattern of the Hero myth is that the protagonist often gains a special power or "boon" that s/he brings back for the benefit of the community.

These epic stories have continued to engage the human imagination for millennia because they speak to the minor acts of heroism that each of us performs daily when we successfully meet and overcome our own obstacles. Mythological obstacles might include cyclops, fire-breathing dragons or Herculean tasks, all which make our daily trials and tribulations appear insignificant.

Most of us who have been drawn to the study of astrology were originally attracted to the discipline as a means of gaining greater self-awareness. Part of that greater self-awareness is looking for the patterns of conflict in our lives and searching for solutions to mitigate them. Generally, these are the areas of our life where we experience our greatest obstacles and adversities.

Sometimes these obstacles are external events that are beyond our control. Perhaps we live in an environment beset with natural disasters such as fires, floods, earthquakes, droughts or pestilence. For other persons, our adversities might be societal, such as institutionalized racism or misogyny, economic recessions or pandemics.

Some obstacles are internal and might include wanting to experience improvements and advances in our income, health or relationships. Internal obstacles might also include habitual trends of thought, feeling or behavior usually stemming from fear (Saturn) or anger (Mars) and which repeatedly create conflicts in our lives.

Regardless of whether our obstacles are external or internal, they can only be surmounted when we are willing to take heroic measures and change our habit-

(Continued on page 6)

(Astrology — Grand Square Continued from page 1)

and making a square to two others which are in opposition. Obviously, other planets within orb of conjunctions with these planets become involved in the Grand Square. Let me offer you a visual that came as a result of meditating on this. When we see this aspect on paper, it is often marked on the chart with a separate color but only as a flat, two-dimensional image. Consider what it would look like by adding the declinations and putting it into motion as it would have been in the sky at the time of birth. What I see is the potential of a giant cube surrounding the native soul, with all the potential of the energies to be used in the realization of spiritual consciousness and connection with the Divine Source.

There is no doubt that this is the most difficult aspect. Each of the points in the Grand Square always represent the separate agenda of each point demanding attention. They present a never-ending series of choices, challenges, conflicts, and stubborn inflexibility. Planets represented will almost always be in signs of the same quality: movable, mutable, fixed; but will mostly be in separate elements: fire, earth, air, and water. The Grand Square planets will also likely all be placed in either angular, succedent, or cadent houses. The plot thickens. So many choices make for some very interesting outcomes.

Every single source I read says the same thing: these divergent energies create people who ultimately either focus on single goals, ideas, and strategies to accomplish things in life; or they stay distracted, disjointed and isolated. Imagine the spiritual impact of that idea! Astrologer Carl Wolbcke has written about the impact of the Grand Square in each quality. In the Grand Square, planets in movable signs may have problems accomplishing goals because the speed of action prohibits completion being too scattered, so the antidote is for the native to change or stop the way they go after things; the solution is to be more deliberate. Planets in mutable signs will have trouble maintaining focus in communication, often changing their minds and depending too much on the actions and reactions of others; their resolution lies in their ability to see all sides of things. Fixed planets are

often too emotional so even though organized, the energy lacks direction and gets bogged down. Learning to humble the will when acting will allow for greater success.

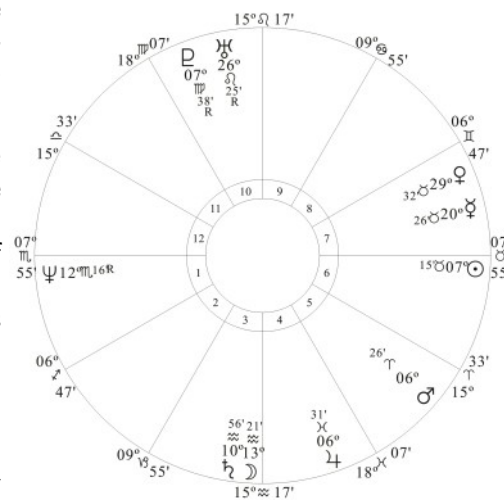
To further our knowledge of the Grand Square, let us apply the same process we have learned in our prior adventures with aspects. As mentioned, this aspect is rare in our natal charts, but we may have had one in the past or one coming up by major, minor, or transiting progression. A Grand Square by even transiting progression is an amazing source of energy to be used for our spiritual work. Being aware of this potential is very important and will be an interesting topic of discussion this summer at the June Convention, I hope.

Let us begin this process with the Grand Square in the natal horoscope and then in the progressed chart. For this aspect write in the following information: Planet/sign/house/element/etc., for each point of the Grand Square, then also note which planet in the aspect is the stronger, as this will be the point where the aspect will draw the most energy and attention.

Engage in a specific activity, as in writing, sculpture, collage, drama, to help see how they all manifest in your life. As with other aspects,

a great activity will be to create an actual dialogue between the planets in the signs and houses in which they describe themselves and how they feel being in relationship with their partners in this aspect. Write this dialogue down or at least record it in your spiritual journal. Meditate carefully on the Grand Square for more inspiration as to how its usefulness in your spiritual growth. Look in *The Sacred Tarot, Cs. VI*, for inspiration on the crosses represented in Arcana IV and XII.

Repeat this process for each Grand Square applying in the natal and progressed horoscopes. To ensure greater success with the Grand Square, work particularly with the terminal of the aspect that has the most harmony by astrodynes. This planet then becomes the place of balance for the Grand Square.



Sample of a horoscope with a Grand Square in Fixed Signs

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(Hebrew Alphabet—Continued from page 1)

nant, hinting at its deeper linguistic value. Linguals are one of the five classes of consonants in the AB. In order from most covert to overt, they are: *gutturals, palatals, linguals, dentals, and labials*. As has been explicated many times over during this series of articles, the author sees in these classifications potential phonosemantic links, such that the articulatory placements of the letters correspond to their linguistic symbolisms and values. Consonants produced deep in the vocal tract, invisible and unseen, correspond to the unseen elements of the universe, namely the *spiritual* aspects of creation. Conversely, those speech sounds produced most superficially at the lips (i.e., labials) correspond to the most manifest aspects of nature, namely *material* objects and phenomena. Existing at an interface between them, we find in the lingual consonants an apt analogy for the *mental* aspects of creation, as the intermediary between the spiritual and material elements of the universe.

Fittingly, we find in the name of the final letter of the AB, *Taw*, an exact representation of this triune nature of the universe. The first letter, /t/, is a *lingual*, pronounced in the center of the vocal tract, and therefore corresponds to the *mental* plane. The vowel, /a/, is the very first letter of the AB. It is a *guttural* consonant, produced deep in the throat, and therefore represents the primacy of the *spiritual* aspects of creation. Finally, /w/ is a *labial*, pronounced at the lips, and completes the symbolism of *Taw* by representing the *material* aspects of creation. Hence, in the seemingly unremarkable word *Taw*, we find a deliberately constructed symbol of the triune nature of the universe, with a concomitant representation of the spiritual, mental, and material aspects of existence.

According to Kaplan (1997), the word *Taw* means “cross”, and this symbolism is also apropos, as the cross has been used since time immemorial to represent a state of balance and order as regards the three main

elements of creation. The astronomical symbol of the

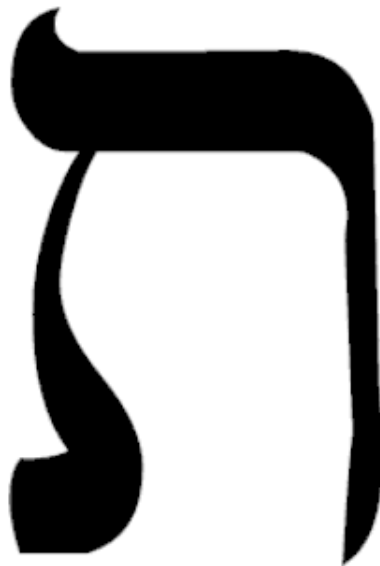
earth, , which is a cross inside a circle, demonstrates the three aspects of creation in perfect symmetry and balance. The circle represents the infinite, unchanging, immutable quality of *spirit*. The horizontal line represents the mundane element of *matter*, while the vertical line represents the inward, aspiring aspects of character and *mentality*. In the physical relationship represented by the cross, these three composite elements

of the universe are arranged in perfect balance and harmony. One might see in such a symbolism the concept that *at its heart, the purpose of the universe is to help God's children discover a similar state of physical, mental, and spiritual harmony*. Of course, this is much easier said than done, and so represents a very worthy target regardless of one's present point of development along the path to enlightenment and knowledge. Indeed, the person who proclaims that they are “enlightened” is by that very same statement impugned, in that enlighten-

ment is a *journey* as opposed to a *destination*. If we are to take any cues from nature, it is that she is in constant pursuit of greater development and growth, and we, being part of nature, must fall quite in line with this same precept.

In a manner similar to our analysis of the letters that constitute the word *Taw*, there is another Ancient Hebrew (AH) word equally worthy of consideration. In *The Wisdom in the Hebrew Alphabet*, Rabbi Munk dedicates nearly his whole chapter on the letter *Taw* to the concept of *Emet*, or Truth (In AH, *Emet* is spelled Aleph-Mem-Taw). Having analyzed all the letters of the AB through a phonosemantic lens, we are now in a position to more deeply understand what appears to be the deliberate construction of the AH word *Emet*. The first letter, *Aleph*, is the first letter of the AB, a guttural produced deep in the throat, and as such represents spirit.

(Continued on page 7)



(Editorial, Continued from page 3)

ual behaviors in thought, feelings, speech and actions. To do so we must first be able to identify the source of our difficulties. In an astrological chart these patterns in consciousness are mapped out by the relationships (aspects) between planets as they are colored by the sign and house positions they occupy. The birth chart offers us the map of our character, consciousness, habitual behaviors and the events and experiences we attract. The techniques for altering our deepest-held habits are Alchemical conversion and transmutation, which can be studied in Courses III, IX, XIV and XXI of The Brotherhood of Light Lessons.

The simplified version of the “Hero’s Journey” describes the process in three stages: Departure, Initiation and Return. These stages also apply succinctly to those of us who step out on a journey of spiritual self-discovery. The *departure* is when we become aware of the mundane thrall of our lives and choose to pursue a higher calling. Initiation is the trials and tribulations we encounter on our spiritual pilgrimage (which include our internal or external conflicts) and the teacher or the teaching that may illumine us and transforms our course in life. Part of that *initiation* is receiving a “boon” a blessing or beneficial insight, discovery or “ah-ha” moment. The *return* is when we arrive back to the place of origin, the family or community bearing our boon or gift of transformation that changes us and those around us.

The philosophical conundrum, especially when we are deeply suffering, is usually “why me, God?” Eastern philosophies teach that it is that our suffering is due to misdeeds performed in previous lives. And for those who subscribe to Western Orthodoxies, the suffering is seen as a purgation (which along with the belief in Jesus as one’s personal savior) will be what determines one’s placement in an afterlife. Hermetic philosophy looks at obstacle, adversities, struggles and challenges through an educational model. That we are here on earth in human form (Life) to grow in compassion (Love) and wisdom (Light). As we learn to successfully meet our conflicts and overcome our obstacles, we develop greater abilities which allow us to fulfill our destiny in God’s Great Plan. It is through having experiences that challenge us that we develop our abilities. This gives us a whole new perspective of looking at astrological charts where we will no longer shrink in horror from Squares and Oppositions. In a conversation several years ago with a psychiatrist client, I was

describing these energies in her chart. To which she responded, “oh, you mean another AFGO!” “AFGO,” I replied in surprise, “what’s that?” “Another – Freaking – Growth – Opportunity” was her response. Since that day I have looked at Squares and Oppositions in a chart through the window of the acronym “AFGO.” It has altered my perspective.

Among the many great reads in in The Brotherhood of Light series, I find “Occultism Applied” to be one of my favorite books. It offers techniques for successfully meeting and overcoming the obstacles and adversities of our lives – our conflicts both internal and external.

My fixation in this editorial on obstacles is inspired by the fact that this issue of the Quarterly is dedicated to the “Grand Cross” in astrology. This aspect is known to be the most challenging of astrological configurations and is comprised of four or more planets that are forming four Squares (90 degrees) and two oppositions (180 degrees). They are seen in a horoscope as an equilateral cross.

The Grand Cross represents a multitude of desires in conflict with one another and competing with one another for expression. The intensity of the conflict symbolized by the Grand Cross can be further defined by the state of activity the planets are in, be they Moveable, Fixed or Mutable signs. When in the Moveable (Cardinal) Signs of Aries, Cancer, Libra and Capricorn, each Element (Fire, Water, Air and Earth) is in its most active or gaseous state. The dynamic tensions expressed come through being rash, impulsive, daring and lacking the patience to bring things to completion. When in the Mutable Signs of Gemini, Virgo, Sagittarius and Pisces, where each element is in its liquid form, the issues can come from being too yielding or accommodating and seeking a path of least resistance. And when in the Fixed Signs of Taurus, Leo, Scorpio and Aquarius the elements express through their most solid form, the conflicts stem from being too rigid, unyielding, brittle or inflexible.

In my life I have attracted several friends over the years who have Grand Crosses in their charts, who I perceive as being both fascinating and frustrating. These friends certainly make my life more interesting, and simultaneously they can make life more tense or dramatic than I prefer it to be. The conscious person, who is devoted to techniques for personal growth can

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(Taw Continued from page 5)

The second letter, Mem, is a labial consonant, articulated at the lips, and so represents matter. Finally, the letter Taw, as amply discussed here, is the final letter of the AB and a lingual consonant produced in the middle of the articulatory tract, and thus represents the mental plane. Taken together, the letters yet again represent a state of symmetry, order, and balance between the three fundamental elements of creation. Hence, the construction of the AH word for Truth, Emet, stands in as a symbol itself of truth, in that it represents a unified, southerly symmetric relationship between the three prime elements of the universe: spirit, matter, and mind. Further supporting this analysis is the fact that the three letters that comprise the AH word *Emet* are the first, middle, and last letters of the AB. Hence, we see not only a symmetry and order regarding the basic elements of the universe, but also a positional symmetry which accounts for *all* of the letters of the AB, as well as the

archetypes they represent, within a neat and tidy package of three letters. That, my friends, is a word worthy of representing *Truth*.

In the minds of the Ancient Kabbalists, every ending brought with it a state and sense of completion, but also planted the seed of a new beginning. A mature plant has not fulfilled its mission until it has gone to seed, laying out the conditions for the next generation to rise where it will ultimately fall. Similarly, the letter Taw is the capstone that completes and unites the Alefbayt. And yet, it can also be seen as the cornerstone of a new and grand edifice built upon the strength and structure of the old.

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**(The Grand Cross Continued from page 4)**

A square provides a solid base. Those objects around us that are immovable are firmly anchored on four sides. For

our spiritual growth we face every aspect, every event in our life with determination and love, accepting that which has been given to us as a part of the Divine Plan. Going back to Spiritual Alchemy, Zain speaks clearly about all that we have available to us for fulfilling our part in the Cosmic Body and in the Divine Plan. For this to occur, we must use all the tools and energy available at any given time. The lesson of the Grand Square is that great adversity creates greatness. To succeed in this life and the next demands a reliance on that which we have no knowledge: faith in the Hermetic principles and the knowledge that we have been blessed with a guide for our own potential in this work: our natal and progressed horoscopes. As bizarre as it seems, the aspect that looks like it may be the worst, may be the best

as far as teaching us the importance of focus, faith, humility, and willingness.

*This is a Plutonian way for me to encourage all of you to finish your coursework and join The Order.

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Editorial (Continued from page 6)

convert or transmute the conflicts represented by the Grand Cross into quality of character.

The Grand Cross provides the perfect training ground to learn persistence and perseverance, It is this ability to persist against obstacles and to persevere in the face of discouragement that our souls become fortified.



Tarot Correspondence — The Eights



Divination

The Eights

The divinatory significance of the Eight of Scepters is a political appointment; its inner interpretation is **EXPLORATION**.

The divinatory significance of the Eight of Cups is extravagance; its inner interpretation is **SELF-SACRIFICE**.

The divinatory significance of the Eight of Coins is a costly law suit; its inner interpretation is **FIDELITY**.

The divinatory significance of the Eight of Swords is loss of honor, or business failure; its inner interpretation is **EXPERIENCE**.

From The Sacred Tarot by C. C. Zain

Sample Tarot Spread—The “Lucky Seven” Spread

Tarot Spread Interpretation

The Querent asked, “What surrounds my future life in my new home?”

Card Spread

The Past— Trey of Coins “a marriage for money; its inner interpretation is EXPIATION.”

The Present— Arcanum XXII - The Materialist/Spiritualist “means Failure, Folly, and Mistake; (or Spirituality).”

The Future — Five of Coins “abundant wealth; its inner interpretation is INSPIRATION.”

The Ability to Control— Four of Swords “remorse for past action; its inner interpretation is DETERMINATION.”

The Environment — Deuce of Swords “sickness through over-work; its inner interpretation is MARTYRDOM.”

The Opposition— Arcanum VI - The Two Paths (Reversed) “Temptation.”

The Outcome— Arcanum XXI—The Sun “Happiness and Joy.”



Interpretation

A little more than a year after the death of his life-partner, the Querent is moving from their joint home into a new home.

The Past— Trey of Coins shows that the Querent is moving from a home that was jointly-owned with his partner.

The Present— Arcanum XXII - The Materialist/Spiritualist reveals that the Querent, trusting that all will be well is packing up his worldly possessions and moving into an unknown phase of his life.

The Future — Five of Coins promises a future of prosperity and inspiration in the new home.

The Ability to Control— Four of Swords speaks of the Querent's determination to break from the past and reinvent himself, a process both painful and forceful.

The Environment — Deuce of Swords might indicate that the new neighborhood is not as nice as his current environment or that due to the age of the home it might require repair.

The Opposition— Arcanum VI - The Two Paths shows the painstaking choices involved with deciding what he will bring into his new home and what he must release.

The Outcome— Arcanum XXI—The Sun foretells a home filled with love, entertainment, joy and happiness.

Summary

The querent wished to commence a new life in a new home. Three of the seven cards in this spread are Major Arcanum indicating that this is a significant life decision. The deuce and four of swords show that the move will not be without some challenges; however, the Trey and five of coins show that this is a good financial decision and that his actions will lead to his greater prosperity.

Membership Room



The Beacon

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Welcome New Hermeticians

- Rick Groeneveld
- Joeless Pierre
- James Caldera
- Regina Thykattu
- Aaron Doyle



In Memoriam



Emily Ridding

October 26, 1922 - April 19, 2019

Emily was a longtime member of the Church of Light of Canada and a tireless worker on behalf of Hermetic Philosophy



As a religious non-profit, our continued existence is reliant upon financial gifts. Please support future generations of Stellarians by considering us as a beneficiary when preparing your will or trust.

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Join us at Church of Light Headquarters
in Albuquerque, New Mexico

First Sunday Roundtable Discussions: Astrology
Second Sunday Roundtable Discussions: Energy Healing

11 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Join Yvette Fortin and Veiga O'Sickey as they facilitate monthly roundtable discussions on Astrology and Energy Healing



Patrick Ramsey



Yvette Fortin

Third Sunday Religious Services

Join our ministerial team consisting of Paul Brewer, Vicki Brewer, Meg Dissinger, Yvette Fortin, Christopher Gibson, Veiga O'Sickey, Patrick Ramsey and Radine Ramsey on the Third Sunday of the month at 11 AM Mountain Time for our monthly religious service followed by a potluck brunch.



Radine Ramsey



Veiga O'Sickey

Calendar of Third Sunday Services: July - December 2019

Date	Event	Presented by
July 21	Leo Service	Veiga O'Sickey
August 18	Virgo Service	Christopher Gibson
September 15	Autumnal Equinox/Libra Service	Patrick Ramsey
October 20	Scorpio Service	Yvette Fortin
November 17	Sagittarius Service	Veiga O'Sickey
December 15	Winter Solstice/Capricorn Service	Christopher Gibson

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OUR MISSION:

To promote Universal Welfare and the exaltation of human-kind through the teaching and practices of the Religion of the Stars as outlined in the writings of C.C. Zain.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

A loving Cosmic Intelligence, of which we are all a part, whose infinite goodness guides us through undeviating natural law.

A Divine Plan manifests through progressive evolution in which each soul has a unique and important role.

A soul is completely moral when to the maximum extent of its abilities it adheres to the universal moral code: Contribute Your Utmost to Universal Welfare.

The realization of the soul's Mission and the attainment of Self-Conscious Immortality is the goal toward which each soul moves.

Love is the way to life. Unselfish Love alone makes immortality possible.

Through the proper exercise of one's mentality using Directed Thinking and Induced Emotion, it is possible to control one's own life and destiny, both here and hereafter.

Astrology is the Golden Key that unlocks the door to understanding the Soul's true character and potential.

The safe development of extrasensory perception (Extension of Consciousness) is the best tool for realizing each individual's mission in the Divine Plan and for verifying the survival of the soul after death of the physical body.

Religion is the sister of Science, and it evolves by incorporating new information as it is discovered and verified.

OUR VISION FOR THE 21ST CENTURY:

We are a powerful force for good and for spiritual enlightenment and expand the reach and experience of our members because:

We provide reliable and verifiable information regarding the nature of the soul and its relationship to Deity and other life forms;

We seek out reliable and verifiable information regarding life on higher planes of existence, especially in regard to the transition we call death and the nature of the next life;

We develop increasingly advanced tools and training in astrology, extrasensory perception, directed thinking and induced emotion toward the end of maximizing each person's happiness, usefulness and spirituality;

We promote the importance of the four essential freedoms: Freedom from Want, Freedom from Fear, Freedom of Expression and Freedom of Religion;

We build a sense of community and spiritual purpose which uplifts and inspires our members to Contribute Their Utmost To Universal Welfare.