

## **THE LANTERN VOL. 13 NO. 1 Spring-Summer 2024**

### **A Path to Peace**

As we embark on this Path of Return and “get to work” with our studies and our individual personality transformation we seem to become even more sensitive to the tumult around us. We develop a greater capacity for internalizing the imbalances of the world – and also the great peace within us all. Hopefully, during this process, we learn how to share that Inner Love and Peace that originates from the deep well of Divine Energy that we are, in fact, made of.

At this time, as in many times throughout earthly history, the world seems to be in great upheaval. Polarities in beliefs and actions are evident to us, and current technology allows us to clearly witness the great strife and inhumanities that occur daily. How can our studies help us to reconcile this with the joyful presence that we seek?

Our precious B.O.T.A. lessons help us to train ourselves in new patterns of thinking and being. Key 2, the High Priestess, represents both Peace and Strife, and reminds us to invoke the highest within us as we reset our subconscious reactions to all circumstances we encounter. So, what can we do when we are caught in situations of polarity or situations that require us to take a stand, be it theoretical, political, religious, or practical?

It comforts us in this Work to remember that we are not the ones driving the chariot.

We cannot always see the solution to complex conflicts. But the Driver of the chariot can. The Berlin Wall comes to mind. When it came down, reality shifted. From where we stand in our human form, the solution is not apparent. But if we remember to align ourselves with the Most High and seek to become the vehicle through which the Universal One can work, we can be of service to that solution.

This issue of The Lantern centers upon Peace. It is that great Peace that passeth understanding, the Peace that comes before and after thought that can envelope us and guide us if we let it.

When there is war many “reality patterns” collide and create new patterns that people attach to, depending on the direction of their moral compass. The most important one, and the one which is most clearly imminent and most urgent in all of this is the pattern of real-life suffering, which is lived by thousands of people on both sides of any such conflict. In B.O.T.A. we work to express the principle of peace through our own lives and actions. Nondenominational, ecumenical peace. - or, as our seven principles say: Universal peace.

We recommend a daily practice of setting aside 10 minutes each evening at 9 PM to focus on World Peace. Read a poem, pray a favorite peace prayer, listen to a song of peace, hold an image, and send that peaceful love to all of humanity, to world leaders, to nations, to each individual spark of Light on our precious planet earth.

Let us strive to become the expression of such peace. Let all sink into the radiant stillness of peace, and conflicts will find a path to dissolution.

Peace Be Unto You in L.V.X.  
The editors of The Lantern

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## **The Sevenfold Aim**

By a Frater from Croatia

Today, I'd like to speak about the aim of B.O.T.A. that is given to us in *Tarot Fundamentals*. This aim is stated as the welfare of humanity and is defined through seven points. Let's recall these points:

1. Universal Peace.
2. Universal Political Freedom.
3. Universal Religious Freedom.
4. Universal Education.
5. Universal Health.
6. Universal Prosperity.
7. Universal Spiritual Unfoldment.

A dear friend once told me that, for him, the important questions are: how can we attain true happiness; how can we help ourselves and our fellow humans; and how can we attain the sevenfold aim in practical reality? This resonates with me. The sevenfold aim is something every sane person wants, and yet we, as humanity, fail to put it into practice. And not for a lack of trying.

I speak from experience, and not just of these recent turbulent events that affect us all. When I was a child, I saw war break out in my country. Good people took up weapons against fellow humans in the name of peace and unity. If their intentions were good, but the outcome heartbreaking, we must conclude that they were fundamentally mistaken. Their state of consciousness contained a fundamental error.

Such a state of consciousness is shown by Key 15, the Devil. At its core, it is the bondage to the illusion of duality. If we take the little demi-human figures to stand for self-consciousness and subconsciousness, we see that ordinarily, subconsciousness is guided only by the limited self-consciousness. And if limited self-consciousness plants imperfect thought-seeds, subconsciousness produces error. This error is the Devil. *Universal* comes from Latin "*uni-versus*," meaning combined into one, unified, whole. The Devil stands for all that we believe isn't part of the One. The Devil is all we refuse to love, include, understand, and reconcile. So, ordinary means, such as politics or religion or technology, can't produce universal results until we change our state of consciousness to remove this error of separateness.



This process of change is shown here. With Key 15, we come face-to-face with the state of humanity. We see that the cause of bondage is not willful evil, but our state of being. We recognize the cause in us, too. Key 15 is part of every human.

I, too, have my own selfishness and prejudice. If I wish to benefit humanity, I need to be transmuted. This is why we set out on the spiritual path. We open ourselves to the Light, and the Light clears out our errors. Key 16 symbolizes this. Note that the tower isn't torn down. The tower is purified by fire. Our personality has its role, but it needs to be purified from error and selfishness. The king and queen falling headfirst recall Key 12, the Hanged Man, which represents reversal from the illusion of duality to the reality of the Divine Plan.

Before moving on to Key 17, let's see the process from a different angle. Key 9 tells us that we have help on this Path. Those who have gone up the Path before us don't impose solutions on us, but they send us their Light. The Hermit's lantern may be seen as the sun from which a ray emits to set our tower on fire. Key 13 is an image of transmutation. The dark night is ending.

From the blackness, which pervades Keys 15 and 16, but is here limited to the soil, new life springs up. Renewed self-consciousness and subconsciousness, shown as the king's and queen's heads, support the Reaper reaping fruits of transmutation. A white rose of purified desire blossoms and the sun of a new day rises in the East.



In both tableaus, the outcome is Key 17. This Key is attributed to meditation. Once purified, we don't have to ask others how to attain the sevenfold aim. We get these answers from within ourselves.

There are seven small stars in this Key, as there are seven points in the sevenfold aim. The seven small stars stand for our inner planets, or the chakras. Each inner planet is assigned a pair of opposites. The reconciliation of each pair of opposites appears to be related to a certain part of the sevenfold aim.

**Mercury** is assigned Life and Death, and true Health is balance between growth and dissolution.

**The Moon** stands for Peace and Strife, and true Peace is poise in the midst of shifting relations and conditions.

**Venus** is assigned Wisdom and Folly. Both wisdom and folly provide lessons for true Education.

To **Jupiter** belong Wealth and Poverty. Regardless of the money in the bank, Prosperity is the experience that the Limitless Substance of the One Will provides all things needful.

**Mars** is assigned Grace and Sin. Religious freedom is freedom from external dogma as we experience divine guidance in us.

**The Sun** is assigned Fertility and Sterility. Spiritual Unfoldment involves balance between purification and manifestation, so the results are ever more in tune with the Divine Plan.

Finally, we have **Saturn**, Dominion and Slavery. Political freedom means freedom from coercion, compulsion, and oppression. Who better to express it than the Cosmic Dancer of Key 21, oppressing no one and oppressed by no one, but only expressing joy of existence?

In *Esoteric Keys of Alchemy*, Paul Foster Case writes: *"The transmutation of the baser metals into gold is the process whereby the vibratory action of these interior stars is so modified that the lower rates of vibration are transmuted and sublimated, or lifted up."*

The sevenfold aim is something we express through our state of being, through the vibration of our inner stars. Occultism may sometimes seem abstract and out of touch with reality. But the transmutation of our inner stars is, we see, crucial work for the attainment of the sevenfold aim.

To Key 17 is also attributed Aquarius. We look at the beginning Age of Aquarius with hope that all humanity will be so transmuted. May our personal work of transmutation be our contribution to this. May our inner stars shine on everyone equally. And may this Key remind us that the sevenfold aim can be attained, and will be attained.

Shalom!

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## Shalom

By a Soror from the USA

Peace is often on my mind these days. There seems to be a great deal of unrest and conflict in the world, and I often wonder, as a Qabalist, how I need to engage that conflict with peace. On a personal level, I use the word *Shalom* to greet people and we know that implicit in that greeting is the wish for peace for our brothers and sisters.

On Shabbat there are always prayers for peace for the community, but these prayers don't always seem connected to current events to me. In our larger B.O.T.A. events, such as our online meditations, we meditate, visualize, and chant for peace and light for the entire world. So, I ask myself what is peace and how do we get from a simple greeting to something more meaningful?

Peace, or *Shalom*, is often conceptualized as the absence of war. As we read in Ecclesiastes, there is "a time for war and a time for peace." And in Deuteronomy 20:10, it is made clear that peace is preferred over war: "When you come near a city to fight against it, then proclaim *shalom* to it."

But the Hebrew root word for peace has no sense of war or struggle. The root word, *Shalaim*, means to be complete or sound. It is also used in the sense of making something whole or restoring that which was lost. Another permutation of the root word is *Shelemut*, which means "perfection."

Similar words, or cognates, are found in other Semitic languages - Arabic: *Salam*; Aramaic: *Shalaim*; and Etheopic: *Shulmu*. All of them have a similar meaning of complete, safe, secure, welfare, and peace. So, the meaning of *Shalom* is not just the opposite of war, but is really an ideal state of affairs, perfection, completeness, something unblemished by any sort of defect.

*Shalom* is also used as a personal name; the most famous of these is *Shlomoh*, which is translated to English as *Solomon*, referring to the great king and arbiter. To try to better understand the concept of *Shalom*, I turned to the Tarot Keys that spell it out. There is a lot going on in these three keys, but the first thing that struck me was that we have two of the three Mother Letters.



These two Mother Letters are of opposite elements: Shin ש represents Fire, and on the Cube of Space it connects two interior cardinal directions - North to South.

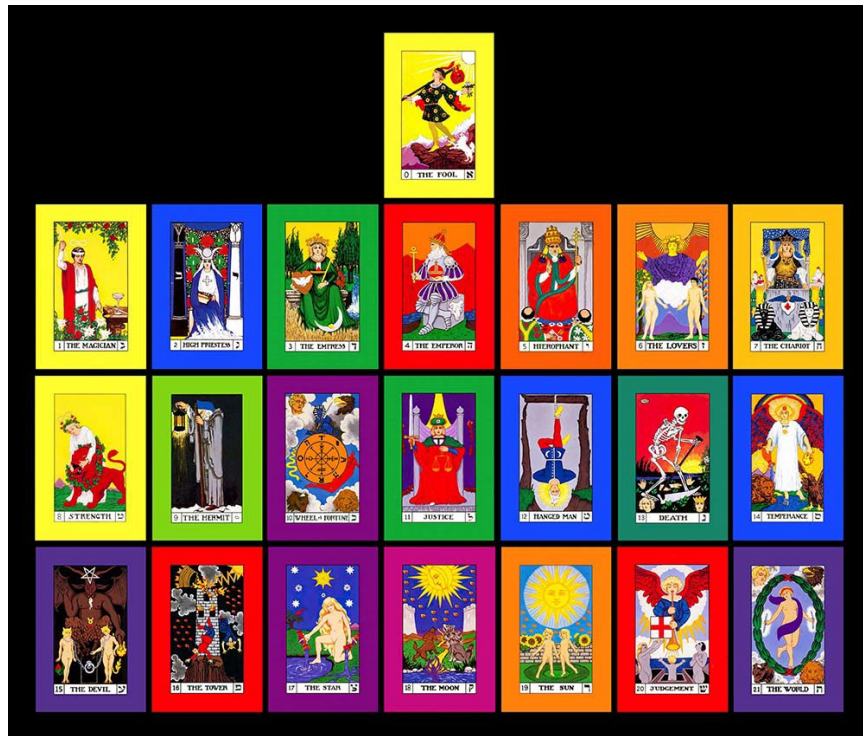
In Gematria, Shin is 300 = RVCh ALHIM (רוח אלוהים) (Ruach Elohim).

Mem מ represents Water, and on the Cube of Space it connects the other two interior Cardinal directions - East to West.

In *The Tarot – A Key to the Wisdom of the Ages*, Paul Foster Case says that this Key represents LVX = 65 = ADNI.

When talking about the Mother Letters, we usually see these two with the first Mother Letter, Aleph or Air, which is said to equilibrate Water and Fire. Here, with *Shalom*, instead of Aleph we have Lamed. Clearly Lamed, as Key 11, has something important to relay.

In relationship to the other Tarot Keys, we find Lamed is at the center of this Tableau. Lamed ל, as Justice, brings balance and equilibrium to the entire Tableau of Tarot Keys. We can see here that it is the pivot point, side-to-side and corner-to-corner. But it also has an important relationship to the Mother Letter at the top of the Tableau.



One of our B.O.T.A. meditations works with the balance between the Pillar of Severity and the Pillar of Mercy on the Tree of Life. Just as we imagine the colors of red and blue and chant the names of God that correspond to the tops of these pillars, we also see another connection and relationship to Lamed and *Shalom*.

### 1 + 1 = 2

The number of Justice, 11, reduces to 2, the number of the High Priestess. The High Priestess, connecting Kether to Tiphareth, forms the main part of the Middle Pillar on the Tree of Life and also embodies the pair of opposites Peace and Strife.

The other important point that Lamed brings to the central position of the word *Shalom* is its actual meaning. Lamed is the ox goad, as Aleph is the ox. Paul Foster Case says that Lamed urges and guides the cosmic power represented by Aleph. In the *Book of Formation*, Lamed signifies work and action. So, unlike Aleph, the first Mother Letter, that naturally equilibrates the other two Mother Letters, the presence of Lamed between the Mother Letters in *Shalom* tells us that this equilibration will involve work and will take action on our part. *Shalom* doesn't just happen because of an absence of war or strife; it is deliberately created through our work as Qabalists by bringing Justice to create a union of opposites.

*Shalom* can then be thought of as operating on a personal level, on a societal level, and on a world or spiritual level.

On a personal level, I greet my sisters and my brothers with the word *Shalom*. I have already pledged that this relationship will be one of fraternal harmony, and of course, I focus my

attention on that harmony. But I don't necessarily know what my sister or brother needs in order to achieve their own *Shalom*, their own completion or restoration.

And to be completely honest, I might have missed the mark at some point in that particular relationship, and so I might need to do some work to repair the relationship, because relationships are not static; they require constant attention and focus to maintain the sense of wholeness embodied by *Shalom*. When I say "*Shalom*" to my sister or brother, I commit to the work that will bring *Shalom* to our relationship.

On a societal or community level, I say prayers of peace each week and sometimes daily. But Lamed reminds me that there is real work to be done bringing Justice to our communities, protecting the vulnerable, supporting the infirm, and in creating systems that ensure fairness and equity for everyone. When I pray *Shalom*, I commit to that work that brings *Shalom* to my community.

Then there is the universal spiritual *Shalom*. The *Shalom* that overcomes strife, quarrel, and social tension. This is the *Shalom* that prevents enmity and war. The *Shalom* that brings peace, harmony, and perfection to the whole world. This is the *Shalom* that we create collectively, my sisters and brothers, when we chant together. When I chant *Shalom*, I commit to the work that brings *Shalom* to the world.

There is a wonderful passage from the Talmud that talks about how important *Shalom* is:

"Great is shalom, for of all the commandments it is written: 'if [emphasis added] thou see,' 'if thou meet' (Exodus 23:4, 5), 'if [there] chance' (Deuteronomy 22:6); that is, if the occasion for this commandment should arise, you must do it, and if not, you need not do it. In relation to peace, however, [it is written]: 'seek peace, and pursue it'--seek it in your own place, and pursue it even to another place as well." (Leviticus Rabah 9:9)

This is our legacy as Qabalists, to seek peace, to pursue peace, to do the hard work that reconciles opposites, to create a beautiful, perfect world.

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### **A Special Message**

By William A. Chesterman, a former Prolocutor General of B.O.T.A., September 2001

The present world events have the potential to escalate into major conflict of absolutely no useful purpose to the epic of human existence. The result of escalation would add naught but extreme sorrow and pain to a vast number, many of whom have known little else.

Everyone has a personal opinion of the situation, but the more spiritually minded are not caught up in mass-conscious reaction but only in the larger humanitarian issues, with full acknowledgment of State responsibility to act when necessary.



The hidden but ultimate true Government of this world has values of another quality all together, and from the most ancient past, as we have record of it, has been helping humanity to grow. Notwithstanding our incapacity to really understand the level of being spoken of as the Inner School, we do know that to awaken humanity has been a hard task, which, together with the true measurement of time, does not present an entirely certain future. However, hope, which is the substance and evidence of the future, always activates tireless work, which otherwise would fail.

Many who see deeply into the problems besetting humanity perceive the growth of a sheer, all-pervading materiality as stifling aspiration. It is a fact that in all spiritually-orientated organizations there is a fall of members, sometimes of serious proportion. It affects every aspect of life and Mother Earth also, which is expected to sustain it all indefinitely, the trend of which is unsustainable to scientific minds.

What is required of us? In one word, MUCH.

The appeal of this letter is that you commit yourself to the age-old practice of prayer and meditation so that the potential for disastrous escalation will be contained.

May we offer ourselves with full understanding that there are spirits of all kinds—they are like a whirlwind just now, but what are they and where do they come from?

There are two things that need to be known. They are created from within human consciousness, and they are manifest to the extent of the person projecting them. If we can grasp even a fragmentary image of the work of the Inner School, let us join them in the quality of our own projections of seeking moderation of wild spirits bent on escalation and destruction or even by fear, inviting it.

Just one prayer or meditation is not enough. If this message reaches the heart, it will work as something continuous and not distorted by private views of cause and effect but rather as a deep and compassionate petition to God for all humanity. Make it definite—some may like to set aside a regular time for prayer and meditation.

We know about the inner hearing of Key 5. God, too, has inner hearing. "If we ask anything according to His Will, He heareth us" wrote the beloved disciple, John. He is merciful, and He does hear, but holding darkness at bay still depends on emanations through enlightened souls. We do not understand everything, but, surely, we have a part, which can be expressed by joining the Inner School in their labors.

With much love and feeling for you all.

Reverend William A. Chesterman

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Let thy meditation bring thee to rest in that Will.  
Then in the midst of action shalt thou  
be at peace.

And in thy busiest hours shalt thou find  
the Eternal Worker  
Doing all things well in thee.

Lo, I guide thee all the way.  
Rest thou in me.

--the Meditation on Lamed,  
*The Book of Tokens*

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*Rise, oh my soul!  
Let me fly on the wings of Thy Love.  
Peace, oh my spirit! Encompass me  
Deep in the softness of Space.*

*Cradled...so safe in the Heart of Thy Grace.  
The night that is Light lifts and caresses...*

*The stars shout out Thy name,  
In the Infinite reaches of this, my soul,  
Now born on the wings of Thy love.*

----Rev. Ann Davies