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The Ritual of the Flaming Star . . .

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THE FIGURE and symbology of the five-fold star or pentagram is familiar to most students of magick and occultism. Drawn properly its sides are equal and the five points equidistant from the center so that a perfect circle may be circumscribed about the figure through these five points, which will divide the circumference of that circle into five equal arcs. This provides a geometrical problem, which may not be easy to solve, but it is not likely that one who could not solve it would possess enough intelligence to get very far in the development of clairvoyant or magical powers. In actual practice the making of the star is a work of art and exercises the artistic faculty of the operator. Invoking often is the key to success.

Each point of the star has an elementary attribution. The star may be placed in an upright position or upside down in what is called the averse position. In the upright star the topmost point belongs to Light or Akasa, commonly referred to as Spirit. Then the upper right hand point is attributed to Water; the left upper point to Air; the right lower point to Fire and the left lower point to Earth. To determine the points of the Averse Star simply write the above attributions

against the points in the Upright, then turn it upside down keeping it always on the same plane, a two-dimensional plane, for the Astral (Starry) Plane has only two dimensions. It would therefore be a mistake to use a third dimension while inverting the figure of the pentagram.

The pentagram is drawn in front of you in the air as though on a wall before you, or on a plane perpendicular to the floor and ceiling of the room and parallel to the vertical plane in which you are standing. You do not touch any part of your body while drawing it. If you were drawing it on the wall itself your wand would at no time leave the surface of the wall. Thus you make five straight lines unicursally from point to point until you return to the starting point.

There are two directions which may be used in making the star. One is to draw it Deosil —or dextro-rotary, as the hands of a clock move, around to the right, sun-wise; the other is to draw it Widdershins —in the contrary direction, to the left. If you want to summons a force begin at the point which is attributed to the force and draw the star Deosil. Thus to summons the Elementary Force of Fire, called in occult science, a Salamander, if you use the Upright Star, begin at the lower right hand point and make five straight lines continuously from point to point in the following order: Fire, Air, Water, Earth, Spirit and return to Fire. To banish the Salamander reverse the procedure thus —Fire, Spirit, Earth, Water, Air and return to Fire.

Man being a microcosm his whole being has the same constitution as that of the universe. The elements present in external nature are the same as those within the magical being of man. The process of dealing with external powers is called invocation and that of dealing with internal powers is called evocation. For the rites of invocation we use the Upright Pentagram, for those of evocation we use the Averse Pentagram. In the former case we deal with the Upper or Supernal Gods and Powers; in the latter we deal with the Lower or Infernal Forces. The operator must be careful, however, not to attach any moral significance to these terms, for it is a matter of direction only. Both good and evil lie in both directions, no more so in one than in the other. Evil appears and frightens us only because we meet something which we are as yet unprepared to face. When we have perfected ourselves and prepared ourselves for any given ordeal what we meet is always to us good, true and beautiful. Fear arises from knowledge of our own weakness and unpreparedness to cope with the circumstance. What you are in your soul is exactly what you have made yourself either in this or other lives. As long as you remain in the temple of the body which has been built for you to dwell in by cosmic forces you are protected. When you leave that body or temple there remains nothing to curb the inclinations, passions and tendencies which you have acquired and unless they

are already balanced and function in harmony with the universal trend you will find yourself in trouble. You will then find yourself in a very painful predicament which is simply the effect of the practical criticism of your self-made structure by the powers that be. They automatically work to rub off your rough corners and reform you. Unless you have the courage to learn the lessons they teach and the will to reform yourself and correct your mistakes, it is better not to pass the Threshold.

Your soul is separated from your body at death and also in sleep. The Threshold between sleeping and waking is the same as that between life and death and that between the material and the spiritual worlds. The Initiate crosses this Threshold before the death of his physical body and his sleep becomes illuminated and he is conscious of what goes on there just as the ordinary person knows what his senses reveal while he is awake. The Pentagram symbolises the actuality which while we are awake culminates in the Light we have from the Sun; in sleep the Averse Pentagram is at work and the Flaming Star which burns at the core of our being illuminates the Pathway of the Initiate. But whatever is exists whether we are conscious of the fact or not. The clairvoyance which perceives occult forces does not create them. The methods of willing, feeling and thinking which cause spiritual progress and equip us to endure the ordeals are generally known to all and consist simply in obedience to moral law and the voice of conscience. The methods which result in clairvoyance are particularly known only to those who enter a School of Initiation. Clairvoyance is not necessary to spiritual progress, but those who wish to become Masters or Adepts can do so and those who find this desire in them should begin at once to fulfill it.

As long as we continue to go about in our daily lives in the ordinary ways to which external circumstances have accustomed us we can never become clairvoyant. But the moment we begin to aspire and do begin to do something extraordinary that is different from custom, we plant the seed which will in time flourish and bear fruit.

Our sleep will remain dark and obscure as long as we allow external circumstances to govern us. To begin making it bright in spots and intelligible we must determine to take our destiny into our own hands. The method is simply and easy. Set apart a few minutes each day and during that time act, think and feel in a manner quite distinct from the ordinary. Take a short holiday period each day and banish from your mind all the thoughts and emotions, worries and problems which usually occupy your attention and concentrate exclusively on something quite disconnected from your routine life. It does not especially matter what it is that you choose to occupy yourself with during this holy period. In schools of Initiation the Candidate is given something quite definite, but those

who have not yet enrolled themselves in such a school can select something for themselves. One person might occupy himself with exercising the muscles of his fingers; another might strive to control his breathing and bring it completely under the sway of his volition; another might enflame himself in prayer to obtain the Knowledge and Conversation of his own HOLY GUARDIAN ANGEL. But whatever you choose to do let it be done right —do not for one second permit yourself to slide back into habitual ways of acting, thinking and feeling. During this sacramental period do exactly what you will, surpass your ordinary self and put forth the best that you have within you. Actually be master of yourself. Set apart each day a short period of time and make it a perfect talisman. It will become like an oasis in the desert from which you can constantly draw forth spiritual nourishment and stimulation. It will act like yeast to leaven the whole of your life. And the rythm of this procedure will rest and recreate you. A short ceremony is one of the best ways of concentrating the attention on something quite different from daily affairs. Use of that given below will serve the purpose even if you do it only in your imagination or mentally.

(1) Stand erect in the center of the room and touch the forehead with the right thumb placed between the index and medius and say— ATEH (which means "Unto Thee").

(2) Then touch the breast and say— MALKUTH (the Kingdom).

(3) Touching the right shoulder, say— VE GEBURAH (and the Power).

(4) Touching the left shoulder, say— VE GEDULAH (and the Glory).

(5) Grasp the hands upon the breast, say— LE OLAHM, AMEN (to the Ages, Amen).

(6) Now turn to the North, using the right thumb placed as described above, make the Averse Pentagram of EARTH. Then vibrate the following words, prolonging or chanting it— ARO ELOHIM (which means Powers of EARTH).

(7) Now turn to the West, make the Averse Pentagram of WATER. Vibrate— MIM ELOHIM (Powers of WATER).

(8) Turn to the East, make the Averse Pentagram of AIR. Vibrate— RUACH ELOHIM (Powers of AIR).

(9) Turn to the South, Make the Averse Pentagram of FIRE. Vibrate— ASH ELOHIM (Powers of FIRE).

(10) Turn again to the West, extend the arms straight out from the shoulders so that you stand in the form of a cross and say, chanting— On my right hand the Bull, Before me the Dragon, Behind me the Man, On my left hand the Lion. For about me flames the Pentagram and in the column stands the six-rayed Star.

(11) Repeat (1) to (5) inclusive, which is called the Qabalistic Cross.