

The Scroll of Set

Issue Number 29

Volume III-5

January 1978

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[1] *Xeper*: The Double-Edged Sword

- by Linda Thomas III°

At the dawn of the Æon of Set, we received the Word as the Word of each æon has been received. In the time of Horus the Word was *Thelema* (Will). Will discovered - Will accepted. Having been discovered, it began to take shape in the minds of men who could see. Then came the time of Indulgence, and we found we were free to indulge in the exercising of the seeds of our Will. Yet our Wills were only seeds, and we were not yet indulging in true exercise. Nevertheless the Age and its Word did show us we were free to Indulge that we might *Xeper*: Come into Being.

Come into Being as what? Masters of the universe? Let us presume so. Then we presume to master that which is utterly unknown to us. If mastery of this universe entails dealing with the unknown, then evidently the motive for doing so would have to be one much more grandiose than the seeking of power or glory. In the Statement of Leviathan it is said: "It is only by the obliteration of the universe that is may man seal his mastery of the Black Flame ..." So after obliteration of the universe that is, any designs for power or glory are rather inapplicable.

Yet we as Setians have exactly that potential - to master the Black Flame and to obliterate the universe that is. This means we also have the potential to either master or obliterate ourselves by our wielding of the Gift, or in my inference the Word.

Xeper is a very delicate concept. It is an absolute, not an on-off proposition. Aspiring towards *Xeper* means change, possibly in many ways we never would have conceived before. Change is not always pleasant and never easy. *Xeper* means creation. We can create actively, or we can create passively by not exercising our potential to create at all. One's very failure to act can bring about reaction. Then the creation that should have taken place inside of us takes place outside of us. Suddenly, we are at a point in our lives where: "Nothing is going right! Damn it! I'm a magician!" (Chuckle.) If we are to see the entire picture, we must step away from it see both sides of *Xeper*, as in a mirror: the image and the reflection.

We must aspire to the fullness of *Xeper* with careful consideration, and we must create concert,

not with the universe but with ourselves, lest we become unmade, for *Xeper* very definitely offers that potential as well.

Our fate rests in balance. We cannot un-create imbalance by leaning too far to the other side. The time has come for all of us to consider very carefully all aspects of that which we presume to undertake. We must *Xeper* with concern for ourselves as well as for the fulfillment of our goal.

May the Darkness bring you Joy.

[Editor's Note: Priestess Thomas has been appointed as Director of the Ap-uat Library Project of the Temple of Set. The *Scroll* staff wishes her every success in this endeavor, but realizes that success means both input as well as output. If you have suggestions, comments, criticisms, or ideas for ALP, please send them to her.]

[2] *To Xeper - Become*

- by Ricco A. Zappitelli II°

When I first came to this world, I gave to you my great pentagram, timeless measure of beauty through proportion. And it was shown inverse, that creation and change be exalted above rest and preservation. - *The Book of Coming Forth by Night*

To me the first clue and most important "direction" toward Becoming is in the words themselves spoken by Set. We first have to create and change - whereas to un-*Xeper* we merely have to rest and stagnate or place preservation above all.

The goal of the Setian - to evolve - is indeed involved. We know that it is essential to become a being as Set - an entity capable of acting independently from and in opposition to the natural order of things. But where does one start?

If one is to *Xeper*, then the first obstacle to overcome would be this order sometimes referred to as universal order or "God". This control on us can seem a vague influence or at times a painfully obvious one. To dispense with this hindrance would thus seem logical. But let's look at what Set says about this:

Were I my Self to displace the Cosmic Inertia, I should be forced to become a new measure of consistency. I would cease to be One, for I should become All.

But, as I have said, I cannot destroy the Cosmic Inertia without having to assume its place. And so HarWer must exist while Set exists. - *The Book of Coming Forth by Night*

So this approach would be futile, for harmony or natural order must balance chaos and abnormal

control; for things to continue both must remain inoperative. If one cannot destroy or change the balance of these polarities, there seems but one course left. Since we cannot effect change of those laws that act upon **us**, then the obvious course left would be to change or alter our inside force to act upon **them**. The more we are able to apply this force (our Will against the natural order), and the more we become capable of moving towards the operation of true independence, the more we will *Xeper* until we can act completely outside of it and with free will.

Even in mundane matters the Setian must take care to develop his/her consciousness and will so as not to become mechanical and controlled and in doing so contrast the imbalance.

But HarWer, my Opposite Self, is a strange and fitful presence. I, Set, am my Self distinct from the Order of the Cosmos, yet am ordered in and of my Self. HarWer I was when I was once part of the Cosmos and could achieve identity only by becoming what the Cosmic Order was not. By HarWer I cancelled the imbalance, leaving a void in which true Creation could take form as Set. - *The Book of Coming Forth by Night*

But just how do we follow Set's aforementioned example and apply it to our life? I think Ouspensky answers this far better than I could. I quote from *The Fourth Way*:

Without work on consciousness all the sides of us that can be conscious will become more and more mechanical." Ouspensky's example: "There may be very different talking; you can talk for the sake of talking, or you can make yourself talk with effort. Talking can be awakening, and it can be sleep.

In answer to a question on how to conquer this inertia, he answered thus: "By effort: effort to self-remember, to observe, not to identify. Consciousness is a force, and force can only be developed by overcoming obstacles. Two things can be developed in man - consciousness and will. Both are forces. If man overcomes unconsciousness, he will possess consciousness; if he overcomes mechanicalness, he will possess will. If he understands the nature of the powers he can attain, it will be clear to him that they cannot be given; these powers must be developed by effort."

I feel the second important step, then, would be the control of the consciousness and will by effort. Control developed by effort alone, however, is still not sufficient.

Think of it. A man in control of his environment but without knowledge of what to do with this control is still unable to act or create. Even of less value is a man possessing knowledge alone. Without the ability to put it into action, he can do nothing but sit on it. It remains unfulfilled. So I feel the third necessary step must follow, namely the assimilation of knowledge, concepts, and theories. This assimilation must be accomplished in order to get a complete picture which may be expounded later by the Setian.

To this point I have described only three steps that some magicians have already followed: (1) creation and change; (2) control of consciousness and will, and (3) assimilation of knowledge. As Setians, however, we have been given not only the Gift of Set in the form of the consciousness, but also the magic to bend order and its laws to our will. This makes us unique indeed. When we can bring all these factors together, apply them to our lives and live them, then we will indeed *Xeper*.

From the *IAM Manuscript* of Magister Ronald K. Barrett: "When I am that I was not, and I am that I am not, then I am that IAM."

From my own sonnet *Night Light* (Scroll #I-12):

Know you are my beloved,
And with your will and might
Feel me with your unfelt feelings,
See me with your unseen sights,
Sense me throughout all your senses,
Now and endless time - forever -
We shall meet here in the night.
Open your eyes and view me, for now only with
your sight;
From my cloaked and jeweled darkness shall
spring my gifted light.
To become man's involved evolution.
And enlightened minds Becoming,
Coming forth through will by night.

[3] **Ritual Building**

- by Bruce M. Bibee II°

The following is an outline that I would like more experienced and knowledgeable individuals to improve upon in the hopes that I will learn to create more effective rituals.

The first step in building a ritual is the selection of a definite goal or objective. Without a precise goal defined, the Setian will lack a definite target on which to focus the Will. Further it is from the goal being precisely defined which enables the Setian to determine effectiveness.

The second step is to identify the major elements of the situation to be influenced and their

interrelationships. Research may be necessary to clearly establish these elements and interactions in the Setian mind.

It is then necessary to select a key element to be influenced. It should be kept in mind that the element may be vulnerable to physical or psychological as well as magical influence. Further the key element should be able to react to the influence in a way which requires a minimal disturbance to “natural” probabilities of outcome, e.g. try to take advantage of situations in which an “either/or” outcome can be pushed in your favor, rather than trying to set up a 100-to-1 outcome.

Another factor is to minimize the power required to effect the outcome. The next step is to convert the elements into symbols so that they can be manipulated easily. The symbols must have meaning for the ritual builder whether they are newly-created or traditional. The symbolism must be unambiguous, and relate analogously to the mundane situation. As the symbolism is used to reconstruct the situation, a simulacrum is constructed which provides a clear overview of the situation and also a manipulative tool for alteration of the flow of events.

The Setian then forcefully executes the intended flow of events which results in the expected outcome. Sufficient “power” must be broadcast through the simulacra in order to shift the flow of events to their new path. This new path must have been selected with care so that an acceptable natural equilibrium is achieved and the event now will remain in its favorable state and not shift back when the ritual ends. It then only remains for the Setian to take advantage of the altered situation with confidence in the outcome. After the fact the results and analysis should be clearly recorded.

Similarity between Magic and Science

Something I noted down as being possibly worth further research on the similarity between magic and science by William J. Goode: Both have:

- (a) concrete specificity of goal.
- (b) manipulative attitude.
- (c) emphasis on professional-client relationship rather than prophet-follower.
- (d) emphasis on individual rather than social ends.
- (e) practiced mainly by individuals rather than communal worship.
- (f) reach change of technique in event of failure.
- (g) lesser degree of emotion.
- (h) emphasis on evading or bending the nature of the Universe as opposed to accepting and implementing it.
- (i) instrumental use for specific goals.

Other Projects of Interest

Other projects of possible interest which are “in progress”:

- (a) ritual staff made of stainless steel and lexan which will glow continuously or flash from either end.
- (b) ritual sword constructed to be useable.
- (c) researching for a book on self-healing.
- (d) rituals: Rite of Rising, Rite of Retiring, Rite to Charge with Power, Rite to Levitate Stone
- (e) conjurations: Dragons, Null Vortex (destroys dreams), Computer Bug (eats parity bit).
- (f) hexadecimal symbol sets for Temple of Set communication.
- (g) problem-solving procedures.

Most of these only have occasional work done on them, as the press of other events is heavy. Should you have a specific interest, I can describe my efforts more fully.

[4] Xeper Errors

- by James Lewis II°

I agree with Adept Kooiman in saying, “Set forbid I should *Xeper* erroneously.” Indeed Set forbid that any of us should *Xeper* erroneously. Having met Adept Kooiman, I doubt that she would work at Coming Into Being the “wrong” way. Too I have a private conviction that Set cares for his own, and that those Elect to whom he extends his essence of being will be sufficiently strengthened to follow the path of the Æon.

Do I mean we’re infallible? No. There are times when I would like to see things run smoothly and without error, but, like the High Priest, I become suspicious, terribly suspicious, when they do. Errors, while at times painful, are necessary to growth and learning.

We’ve seen the Æon of HarWer with its chaos and resulting destruction. My concept of the Æon of Set is far from that of HarWer - I see it as one of logical application of the tools available to us for our growth, both physical and magical. Thus I do not see “excommunication” from the Temple of Set as a bad thing. Unpleasant, yes, but consider this tool given us by the Prince of Darkness. Should we stand by and watch the possibility of it being destroyed from within without taking measures to remedy things that could destroy us all?

[5] Magical Timing

- by Margaret Wendall IV°

After my article “On the Day and Hour of the Sun” appeared in the February 1977 issue of the *Scroll* (#II-6), some of you questioned why I go to such great trouble in timing my magic. At the time I

could only give an irrational answer: it just feels right to me and seems to work.

I've just finished re-reading Lyall Watson's *Supernature* (New York: Bantam Books #Y8368, 1974). Part One on "Cosmos" contains a better answer than I could write in reply to your questions. The book is on our reading list, and I encourage you to read it for that reason. But if you're still wondering about my "magical timing", your questions will indeed be answered.

[6] **Ethel and Holt Resign**

- by Michael A. Aquino V°

Magister Robert Ethel and Priest Roland Holt have resigned from the Temple of Set with the intent of starting a magical order of their own. Ordinarily no special comment on this might be called for, but the two of them have charged gross misdirection of the Temple of Set and corruption on my part as the reason for their departure.

In my opinion and that of all members of the Council of Nine besides Ethel, both charges are unfounded. Complete documentation has been placed in the hands of all III°+, and you are welcome to contact any of them for comment should you feel the need to do so.

Regarding the actual basis for Ethel's resignation, I am of the opinion that he was uncomfortable with the open-disclosure and checks-and-balances aspects of the Temple of Set, preferring an environment which he can control exclusively. The Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws of the Temple prevent control of the Temple or administration of the degree-recognition system from being dominated by any one person.

As for Holt, he has been a close friend and admirer of Ethel's for many years, and I assume that this relationship overrode his dedication to the Temple of Set.

The Council of Nine is presently in the process of electing a new Councillor and a new Chairman per the procedures in the By-Laws; their names will be announced in the next issue of the *Scroll*. A new Editor has not yet been appointed for the *Ruby Tablet*. For the time being Magistra Wendall is supervising its distribution, with Adept Pat Turner handling the actual operation. *Ruby Tablet* correspondence should be sent to Magistra Wendall until further notice.

[7] **Tut Show**

Tut Show - Los Angeles

Tickets for the exhibition "Treasures of Tutankhamen", to be presented by the Los Angeles County Museum of Art February 15-June 15, will go on sale January 3 at 84 retail outlets in Los Angeles, Ventura, Kern, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and San Diego counties, it was announced by Museum Director Kenneth Donahue. The "Treasures of Tutankhamen" exhibition, comprising 55 of the most beautiful and representative treasures from the tomb of the young Pharaoh, will be presented in the Museum's Frances and Armand Hammer Wing. The exhibition is on a 2-1/2-year, 6-city tour.

Tut Show - Elsewhere

Seattle Art Museum: July 15-November 15.

Metropolitan Museum of New York: December 15 to April 15, 1979

De Young Museum of San Francisco: July 1, 1979 to September 30.

Tut Show - Temple of Set

So you're interested in the Tutankhamen show, but you live in Nebraska, right? Well, suppose the Temple of Set works a little magic and brings the show to your living room?

We have acquired a set of beautiful color slides of the entire exhibition, accompanied by a cassette tape narration of the various artifacts (spoken by Thomas Hoving, Director of the Metropolitan Museum of New York). We are going to make this set available to all members of the Temple absolutely free. Here's how:

If you'd like to view the set, send a letter saying so to the Temple. Enclose a check or money order for \$18, payable to "Temple of Set". The slides and tape will be sent to you. When you have finished with them (time limit two weeks, please!), send them back, and your deposit will be returned.

There are only two reasons why your deposit might not be returned to you: (1) If you don't return the slide-set within the time limit, or (2) if it comes back in a destroyed or damaged condition. Then your deposit would be used by the Temple to order another set of the slides and tape from the Metropolitan Museum. Fair enough?

The slides will be mailed out in order of requests received, so if you're not one of the first on the list, you may have a few weeks to a few months wait. If we really get bogged down with requests, we'll send out a little schedule sheet to all who request the slides, giving approximate dates when you can expect to find them in your mailbox.

[8] Close Encounters of the Second Degree

- by Michael A. Aquino V°

In the November 1977 supplement to the *Scroll*, I reviewed the concept of the I° - essentially a "screening process" to ensure that an individual and the Temple of Set can make an informed decision concerning their suitability for one another. When properly Recognized, the II° should indicate that the individual is satisfied with the magical and philosophical premises of the Temple; it should also indicate that the Temple is satisfied with the individual's potential for exploring, understanding, and applying those same premises.

The II° Recognition is regarded quite seriously by the Priesthood of Set. No corruption in the process is tolerated, and mistakes in Recognition - when they come to light - are corrected promptly. Per the Temple By-Laws any III°+ has the authority to downgrade and/or expel any I° or II° for cause. All such decisions are reviewed to ensure fairness, but the point is that magical "imbalances" at any level of the Temple are not permitted to continue merely for the sake of convenience. [It might be noted that the same principle applies at III°+ levels.]

There are two reasons that access to some of the major systems and research materials of the Temple is withheld until the II°. The first is that, when a I° is being evaluated for the II°, it is important that his/her intrinsic philosophical, academic, and magical aptitudes be measured. If someone were merely to parrot Temple doctrines without really comprehending them or forming opinions as to their validity, distortion would occur. The qualities that we are looking for in an Adept are already present before exposure to specialized Temple material. It must be remembered that the Temple does not "make silk purses out of sows' ears". It is rather a "machine" for concentrating an **already-present** ability of certain individuals (the Elect).

The second reason is that, were we to permit it, the Temple would be vampirized by the "occult subculture". Persons would join simply to gain access to the *Scroll*, the *Ruby Tablet*, etc., with no interest or intellectual commitment beyond that. Hence the II° Recognition as a precondition. This forces the would-be "armchair occultist" to either come out of his shell or be processed out of the Temple after the end of the 2-year I° time limit.

So when an individual is properly recognized as an Adept, what then? What do we mean by the title? What can and/or should the individual do as a consequence? What lies ahead, and where does the III° fit into the picture? Let me address each one of these questions in turn:

In the terminology of initiatory magic, an Adept is one who understands and can successfully employ the philosophy and techniques of the school or discipline in question. That the title may have been abused by charlatans from time to time is of no import, any more than the occasional abuse of the title "doctor" reflects adversely on properly-qualified Ph.D./M.D. recipients.

Is a Temple of Set Adept immediately qualified as such by this definition? Of course not. The II° is conferred as a **recognition of potential** for Coming Into Being as an Adept, not as an "end of the achievement award". There is no such thing as a "complete" II° within the scope of the Temple, since the concept of *Xeper* is one of expanding comprehension and magical evolution. To say much the same thing in Socratic terms, it is far easier to say what an Adept **is not** than what one **is**.

So you have just been recognized as an Adept. What do you do now? A II° stele and card will be sent to you automatically, but you must order the II° medallion and the *Ruby Tablet* from Magistra Wendall. At that point the direction in which you *Xeper* is completely up to you. As is the case with the *Scroll*, the *Ruby Tablet* is designed to be a two-way channel of communication. You can use it for information and reference, and you can submit ideas and research of your own for inclusion in it.

You will discover very quickly (if you haven't already) that the concept of magic in the Temple of Set is a very broad one. A person who seeks in ceremonial magic a small, cozy eccentricity in which to build a psychological nest is destined to be disappointed, because an axiom of magic is that the most accurate assessment of any phenomenon is the one which treats it in the widest possible context. The magician is one who can "see the big picture" and determine the appropriate controls for guiding it towards desired ends. Such control will seem "magical" to someone who sees the same situation from an incomplete perspective. This is well illustrated in John Fowles' *The Magus*.

Since the vistas before an Adept are so overwhelming, some new II°s experience a sort of "magical agoraphobia". This is predictable and understandable. The solution is simply to work out a comfortably-paced program of interests and priorities. Then one can *Xeper* at a rate which is both enjoyable and stimulating. Caution must be taken to avoid becoming "intoxicated" by the experience to the extent that one becomes a "magical addict". [If that is allowed to happen, the Adept's perspective on the mundane world will suffer distortion, magical operations will come to lose their objective effectiveness, and the Adept's sphere of magical influence will shrink to purely-subjective dimensions.]

I often advise magicians to balance their esoteric interests with some demanding activity in the mundane world, so that they may “step outside of their magical personalities” and see themselves in social context. Aleister Crowley was climbing mountains when he embarked upon his magical career; Anton LaVey was a lion-trainer in a circus; I was an officer in a paratrooper division. Today in the Temple some of our most successful magicians are those with surprisingly-exoteric outside interests.

Why is there so much talk about communications systems in the Temple? Because magic must be **communicated** to exist. You may argue that this is not true - that one can experience a purely-personal magical phenomenon. But I would say to you: Until you have rendered that experience into language, you yourself will neither be able to understand it nor be able to do anything with it. And the moment you succeed in translating it for yourself, you have made it understandable by other Adepts.

Such an accomplishment distinguishes a **magician** (who communicates his visions and draws meaningful conclusions from them) from a **mystic** (who floats in a dream-world which neither he nor anyone else can understand). Once again Crowley is a prime case in point, because he was able to communicate his magical philosophy so profoundly that he himself was immortalized by it.

So the oft-repeated advice for you to write ... letters, articles, essays, poems, stories, newsletters, books ... has a valid, magical motive behind it. No matter how helpful your writings may prove to others, **you** will be the prime beneficiary, because you are thereby forcing your thoughts to crystallize into language ... and then you will begin to **really** understand and evaluate them.

Have you ever paused to wonder why it takes such an effort of will to write a paper or letter? It is precisely because the process demands that you force vague, ethereal emotions, feelings, and sensations into inductive or deductive statements. [One encouraging note: The task becomes easier with practice.]

Occasionally I am asked whether a II° is expected to “progress towards” the III°. The very question is a misconception of the degree system. The III° is not a “continuation” of the II° into a higher echelon of expertise. In fact I think I would be correct in saying that there are a number of II°s who are more skilled in their areas of magical specialty than all of the III°+ - including myself.

Recognition to the III° may indicate no philosophical or magical refinement from the II° level at all, although it may seem that way because an Adept’s magical expertise will normally continue

to grow from the time of II° Recognition. Rather the III° is a recognition that the individual possesses a certain very singular quality identifying the Priesthood of Set.

It is difficult to say whether the III° is something that can be attained by effort or whether the characteristics that identify a Priest or Priestess are imparted from outside the self. Most likely it is a combination of the two.

A final point about Temple of Set degrees that I should like to clear up involves their permanence. These degrees are not awards or certificates of completion that are bestowed; they are a **recognition of an individual’s state of being**. And an individual can exercise the freedom of will to move in any direction or combination of directions.

Hence it is entirely within the realm of possibility that a III° may “move” to the II° without any punitive or degrading connotations whatever. The same holds true for “travel” from other degrees. If this principle is not realized, then the true nature of the degree-system is being corrupted into a one-way, ratchet-like process.

When you think about it, you will see why such a concept would be inconsistent with the presupposition of free will and the requirement that a Temple degree reflect an individual’s actual state of being. The Temple By-Laws do make it more difficult to withdraw a degree than to Recognize it, but this also has a basis in reason. The higher the degree, the more difficult it is to make a judgment concerning what the recipient must do to violate the scope of that degree. So there is a sort of “built-in benefit of the doubt” accorded with each degree. Only in essentially clear cases, then, are degree imbalances considered for correction.

I hope that this has helped to clear up some of the considerations involved in the II° - which in some ways is the “Alpha and Omega” of the Temple. If you have other questions on the topic, feel welcome to discuss them with any II°+. Unlike other esoteric societies, the Temple maintains no artificial games of secrecy about its degree system. We don’t have to. The “secrets”, such as they are, cannot be communicated to those who are not able to understand them. And those who can understand them should know about them.