

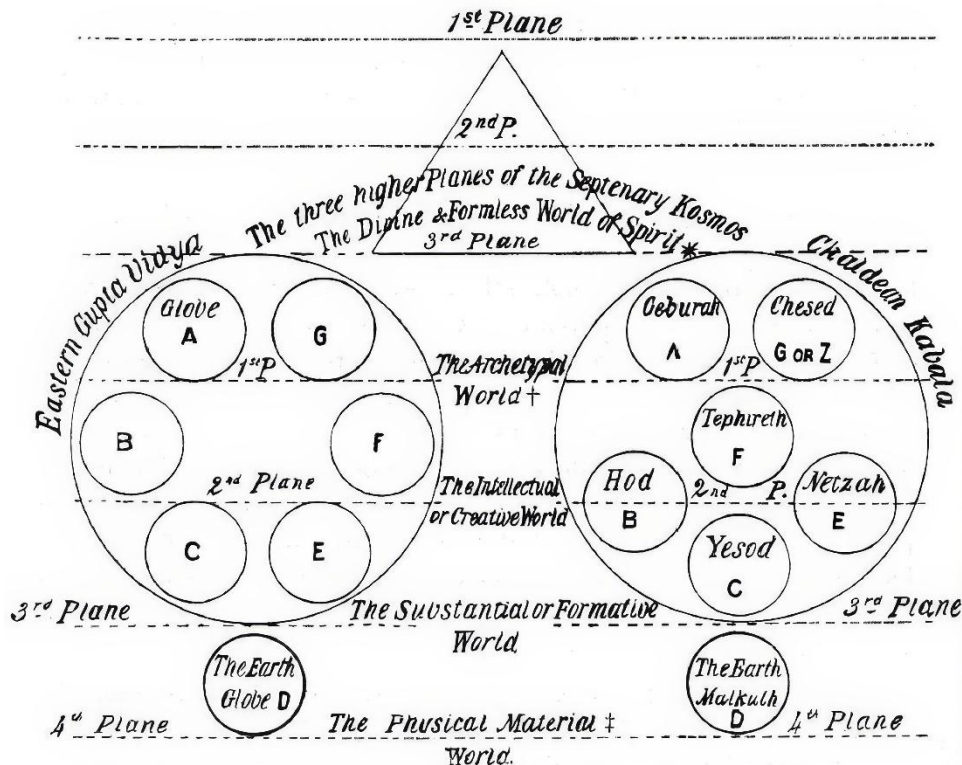
(From the publication: *Collected Writings*, The Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, 1978)

[H.P. Blavatsky, *Secret Doctrine*, vol. I, orig. 1888 ed., pp. 199-200]

Here, having finished for the time being with our side-issues—which, however they may break the flow of the narrative, are necessary for the elucidation of the whole scheme—the reader must return once more to Cosmogony. The phrase "Older wheels" refers to the worlds or Globes of our chain as they were during the "previous Rounds." The present Stanza, when explained esoterically, is found embodied entirely in the Kabalistic works. Therein will be found the very history of the evolution of those countless Globes which evolve after a periodical Pralaya, rebuilt from old material into new forms. The previous Globes disintegrate and reappear transformed and perfected for a new phase of life. In the Kabala, worlds are compared to sparks which fly from under the hammer of the great Architect—LAW, the law which rules all the smaller Creators.

The following comparative diagram shows the identity between the two systems, the Kabalistic and the Eastern. The three upper are the three higher planes of consciousness, revealed and explained in both schools only to the Initiates, the lower ones represent the four lower planes—the lowest being our plane, or the visible Universe.

These seven *planes* correspond to the seven *states* of consciousness in man. It remains with him to attune the three higher states in himself to the three higher planes in Kosmos. But before he can attempt to attune, he must awaken the three "seats" to life and activity. And how many are capable of bringing themselves to even a superficial comprehension of *Atma-Vidya* (Spirit-Knowledge), or what is called by the Sufis, *Rohanee!* In Section the VIIth of this Book, in Sub-section 3, the reader will find a still clearer explanation of the above in the Commentary upon *Saptaparna*—the man-plant. See also the Section of that name in Part II.



* The *Arupa* or "formless," there where form ceases to exist, on the objective plane.

† The word "Archetypal" must not be taken here in the sense that the Platonists gave to it, *i.e.*, the world as it existed *in the Mind* of the Deity; but in that of a world made as a first model, to be followed and improved upon by the worlds which succeed it physically—though deteriorating in purity.

‡ These are the four lower planes of Cosmic Consciousness, the three higher planes being inaccessible to human intellect as developed at present. The seven states of human consciousness pertain to quite another question.

[H.P. Blavatsky, *Secret Doctrine*, vol. I, orig. 1888 ed., pp. 267-268]

Thus proceed the cycles of the septenary evolution, in Septennial nature; the Spiritual or divine; the psychic or semi-divine; the intellectual, the passional, the instinctual, or *cognitional*; the semi-corporeal and the purely material or physical natures. All these evolve and progress cyclically, passing from one into another, in a double, centrifugal and centripetal way, *one* in their ultimate essence, *seven* in their aspects. The lowest, of course, is the one depending upon and subservient to our five physical senses.* Thus far, for individual, human, sentient, animal and vegetable life, each the microcosm of its higher macrocosm. The same for the Universe, which manifests periodically, for purposes of the collective progress of the countless *lives*, the outbreathings of the *One Life*; in order that through the *Ever-Becoming*, every cosmic atom in this infinite Universe, passing from the formless and the intangible, through the mixed natures of the semi-terrestrial, down to matter in full generation, and then back again, reascending at each new period higher and nearer the final goal; that each atom, we say, *may reach through individual merits and efforts* that plane where it re-becomes the one unconditioned ALL. But between the Alpha and the Omega there is the weary "Road" hedged in by thorns, that "goes down first, then—

Winds up hill all the way
Yes, to the very end"

Starting upon the long journey immaculate; descending more and more into sinful matter, and having connected himself with every atom in manifested *Space*—the *Pilgrim*, having struggled through and suffered in every form of life and being, is only at the bottom of the valley of matter, and half through his cycle, when he has identified himself with collective Humanity. This, *he has made in his own image*. In order to progress upwards and homewards, the "God" has now to ascend the weary uphill path of the Golgotha of Life. It is the martyrdom of self-conscious existence. Like Visvakarman he has to sacrifice *himself to himself* in order to redeem all creatures, to resurrect from the many into the *One Life*. Then he ascends into heaven indeed; where, plunged into the incomprehensible absolute Being and Bliss of Paranirvana, he reigns unconditionally, and whence he will re-descend again at the next "coming," which one portion of humanity expects in its dead-letter sense as the *second advent*, and the other as the last "Kalki Avatar."

Footnote(s) —————

¹ Which are in truth *seven* as shown later, on the authority of the oldest *Upanishads*.

[H.P. Blavatsky, *Secret Doctrine*, vol. II, orig. 1888 ed., p.261]

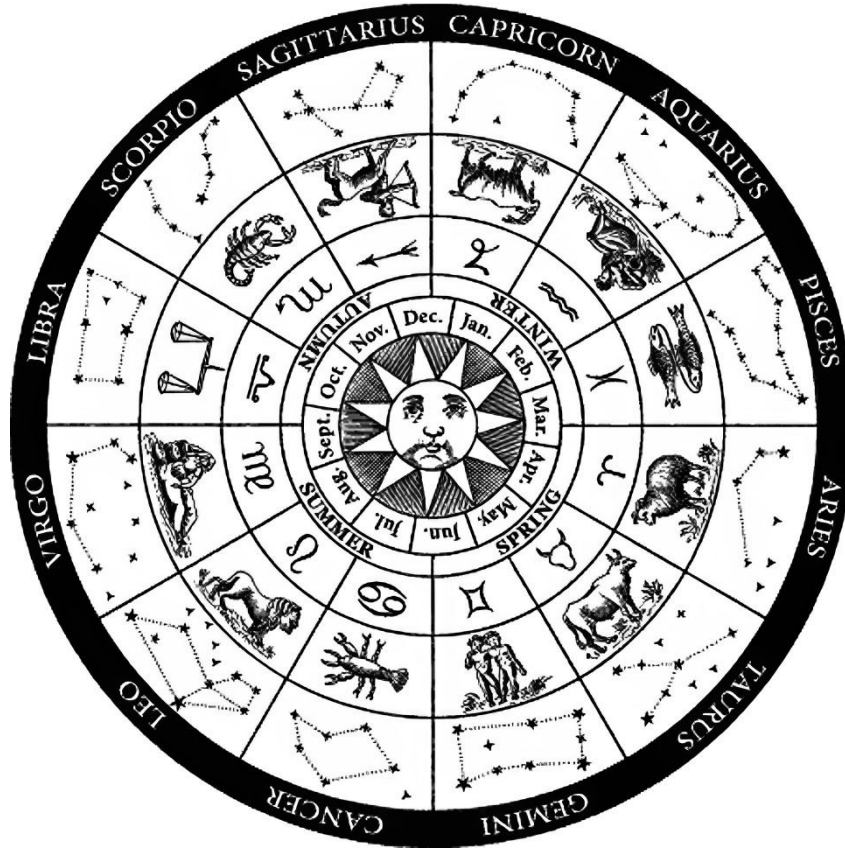
The occult doctrine, is, we think, more logical. It teaches a cyclic, never varying law in nature, the latter having no personal, "special design," but acting on a uniform plan that prevails through the whole manvantaric period and deals with the land worm as it deals with man. Neither the one nor the other have sought to come into being, hence both are under the same evolutionary law, and both have to progress according to Karmic law. Both have started from the same neutral centre of Life and both have to re-merge into it at the consummation of the cycle.

It is not denied that in the preceding Round man *was* a gigantic apelike creature; and when we say "man" we ought perhaps to say, the rough mould that was developing for the use of man in this Round only — the middle, or the transition point of which we have hardly reached. Nor was man what he is now during the first two and a half Root-races. That point he reached, as said before, only 18,000,000 years ago, during the secondary period, as we claim.

Till then he was, according to tradition and Occult teaching, "a god on earth who had fallen into matter," or generation. This may or may not be accepted, since the Secret Doctrine does not impose itself as an infallible dogma; and since, whether its prehistoric records are accepted or rejected, it has nothing to do with the question of the *actual* man and his inner nature, the Fall mentioned above having left no original sin on Humanity. But all this has been sufficiently dealt with.

Furthermore, we are taught that the transformations through which man passed on the descending arc — which is centrifugal for spirit and centripetal for matter — and those he prepares to go through, henceforward, on his ascending path, which will reverse the direction of the two forces — viz., matter will become centrifugal and spirit centripetal — that all such transformations *are next in store for the anthropoid ape also*, all those, at any rate, who have reached the remove next to man in this Round — and these will all be men in the Fifth Round, as present men inhabited ape-like forms in the Third, the preceding Round.

[H.Valborg, W.Q. Judge, H.P. Blavatsky, R.N. Iyer, *The Zodiac, Theosophical Astrology*, pp. 5-8, January 25, 2018]



It has been suggested that the signs of the zodiac symbolize and analyze phases of the cycles and evolutionary stages which they embrace. This may be seen in many correlative observations made by various cultures such as the concurrence of a full moon in Virgo with new crops. The signs have characteristics which can be symbolically related to the nature of cycles or stages. It is thought-provoking to consider that "the orbit of the sun through the twelve divisions corresponds to twelve degrees or stages in the action of the active principle upon the passive." In the Hindu tradition there has long been an exact correspondence between the signs of the zodiac and the cosmic cycles of *Avatars*, while in the tradition of the Jews the characteristics of the signs can be recognized in the words of the dying Jacob to his sons when he indicated to them the future of each of the twelve tribes.

The zodiacal signs are ideographs and hieroglyphs with number, colour and tone. Their number is significant by its ordinal place in the series as well as its factorial position, the latter indicating whether it is cardinal, fixed or mutable, properties which can in turn be related to other trinities such as Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva, the three gunas, and concepts such as knowledge, devotion and sacrifice. These can be seen as aspects of consciousness expressing themselves through certain signs or as symbols of stages of human life. The tropical Aries corresponds with the newborn baby who sees the world subjectively in terms of his own being. Taurus suggests a growing awareness of the world in relation to oneself while Gemini relates to play and the development of the capacity

to articulate one's newly discovered knowledge. Cancer, connected with the moon, symbolizes adolescence and emotional turbulence, followed by Leo, where the individual attempts to stand on his own two feet and assert his own sense of identity. This sign characterizes a certain exuberance which is liable to incur difficulties, but Virgo, with its willingness to learn and serve, marks a maturing corrective stage. Libra, symbolizing balance, corresponds to a finding of one's place in the scheme of things, while Scorpio suggests a creative direction to one's energies and a fruitful consummation, Sagittarius a steady will to improve, and Capricorn, practical attainment on the basis of recognized ideals. These are followed by Aquarius, where an impartial understanding of things is possible which may lead the individual to a Piscean expression of ultimate meaning or, if the Aquarian potential was poorly grasped, an obverse expression of emotional reinvolvement and its attendant suggestion of futility.

In the *Abhidhammatha Sangha* the twelve *Nidanas*, the causes of sentient existence expounded in Buddhist teachings, are linked with the twelve signs of the zodiac. Their division into two sixes is reminiscent of the way Patanjali distinguishes the individuality from the personality. Here, Aries is related to *avidya* or the ignorance and non-cognition responsible for birth. Taurus relates to *samskara*, the karmic conditions from previous lives, while Gemini corresponds to *vijñāna*, or egoic self-consciousness. This is followed by Cancer, related to *namarupa*, or name and form, Leo to *sadayatanam* or the six senses, and Virgo to *sparsa*, the contact with the outer world. These first six, relating to the personality, are followed by the second six related to individuality. Libra corresponds with *vedana* or perception and sensation, while Scorpio relates to *trishna*, thirst or desire, and Sagittarius is connected with *upadana*, clinging. Capricorn relates to *bhava*, becoming, Aquarius to *jati*, birth, and Pisces to *jara marana*, decay and death. The last two are especially significant in relation to the potentiality of the soul's liberation from the wheel of life and death and have direct implications for the future. The first two are related to the past, while those in between mark the conditions and possibilities of the present. These temporal correlations remind one of Plato's account of the Moirae, the goddesses of past, present and future who enforce destiny through the 'Spindle of Necessity,' eternally ensuring the reincarnation of all life that is not yet fully enlightened. In this powerful metaphor Plato depicts the soul as it first chooses to descend into a personality and then becomes forgetfully enveloped while the forces of the three goddesses bear it towards its destiny.

BEHOLD THE BEGINNING OF SENTIENT FORMLESS LIFE

The stillness of the deep gives rise to One followed by Seven which is Three and Four, the multiples of which are Twelve. The hierarchy of Creative Powers is divided into seven esoteric aspects within the twelve great Orders that are recorded in the twelve signs of the zodiac. In the ancient Etruscan tradition this was spoken of as the apportionment of Twelve Millennia for the acts of creation which were then assigned to the twelve signs of the zodiac. *The Secret Doctrine* describes the highest hierarchical group as composed of the Divine Flames or 'Fiery Lions' hidden in the sign of Leo. This is the nucleole of the superior divine world. From this flame come the three descending groups. In Hindu tradition the Twelve Great Transformations of spirit into matter are said to take place during the four great ages of the first *Mahayuga*. This is the hidden meaning of the Kabbalistic axiom: the Dodecahedron lies concealed in the perfect cube.

These magnificent conceptions are synthesized in the symbol of the zodiac which covers, with its pictorial garments, the most arcane mysteries of manifested life. Hidden within the signs are the clues to the gradual understanding of how the universe is evolved from pre-existing matter, how it is one of an endless series, and how "Eternity is pointed off into grand cycles." The first six

signs involve a steady materialization, the second six a gradual refinement, followed by a great indrawing of all life. The zodiac thus symbolizes an entire cosmic cycle of evolution and dissolution.