

Who calls us Thelemites will do no wrong, if he look but close into the word. For there are therein Three Grades, the Hermit, and the Lover, and the man of Earth.

Liber CCXX. I., 40

Prelude to Grade Structures

The Probationer must acquire an adequate¹ understanding of the grades and their placement and movement on the Tree of Life. Without this understanding it will be impossible to make an informed decision as to whether or not to step onto the tree upon entering the grade of Neophyte. It also offers a more detailed picture of the path being considered.

A full *introduction* to the Tree of Life is covered in Section One, Part 10, however, the very brief overview below should be sufficient to the current task of understanding the grades and their placement on the Tree of Life.

Tree of Life [Map of the Universe] – is a system of categorization for everything, including, but not limited to, the physical universe, conceptual universe, human consciousness, and the levels of initiation. More importantly, it is a system that shows the relationship between all things. The tree is constructed using ten Sephiroth and twenty-two Paths.

Sephiroth (singular: Sephirah) [Emanations – Houses – Holy Spheres] – ten spheres representing states of consciousness, including that of universal comprehension, as well as human perceptions. To the Initiate, each Sephirah is a unique palace of wonder and also represents a grade. More accurately, each Sephirah embodies the grade and its luminous applications. The key to properly attributing anything to the Sephiroth is identifying only those things that are conceptual (theoretical) in nature.

The Paths [Pathways] – twenty-two paths that connect the Sephiroth and represent the rational universe. The paths are the equilibrium of the two Sephiroth being connected. Put another way, each Sephirah is distinct, if they were to be combined, the path would be the result. To the Initiate,

¹ Only the very basics are needed to place the grades on the Tree of Life and begin to understand the idea of there being interconnected systems.

the pathways represent tasks to be accomplished. Each grade requires the advancement of a task from each Path connecting to the Sephirah of their grade. The key to properly attributing anything to a Path is identifying only those things that are of the manifest universe (practical).

Ten Grades – each of the ten Sephiroth contains one of the ten grades. Progression through the grades is by means of the twenty-two paths. The Initiate gains passage by balancing the unique character of the path through understanding of its connection to the Sephiroth. Put simply, passage is accomplished by completing the tasks of the grade¹.

Three Grades Not on the Tree – the three grades that are not on the Tree of Life, as their passage is not gained through any of the twenty-two paths, are:

- a) *Probationer* – passage accomplished by consciously stepping upon the Tree of Life. Located below the first Sephiroth.
- b) *Dominus Liminis* – discovering the key of the mysteries and thereby lighting the lamp. Located below the fifth Sephiroth.
- c) *Babe of the Abyss* – the crossing of the abyss. Located below the eight, ninth, and tenth Sephiroth on the middle pillar.

Of the three grades not on the Tree of Life, only the Probationer has a numerical designation. Dominus Liminis and the Babe of the Abyss are not grades. That is to say, they are of the tree, but do not have a designated Sephiroth. Nevertheless, this does not take away from their importance. Indeed, they are the necessary steps for passage from one Order to another.

Placement of the Grades

The following drawing of the Tree of Life (diagram 1.) should be drawn into the Probationer's Magick Record, with great care taken to ensure accuracy. The numbers on the diagram correspond to the chart included immediately after and should not be included in the

¹ It is important to understand that the term 'task', in context to the grade work and the twenty-two paths, can represent accomplishment of a lesson learned, an acquired skill, an insight, a formula or a properly executed ritual.

Probationer's drawing¹. Dividing lines should be drawn onto the Tree of Life and labeled with the three orders². Additionally, the three grades not on the Tree of Life should be written into the space allocated (the three shapes drawn with dotted lines). The Probationer now has a permanent visual tool to assist in the understanding of the grades and their placement.

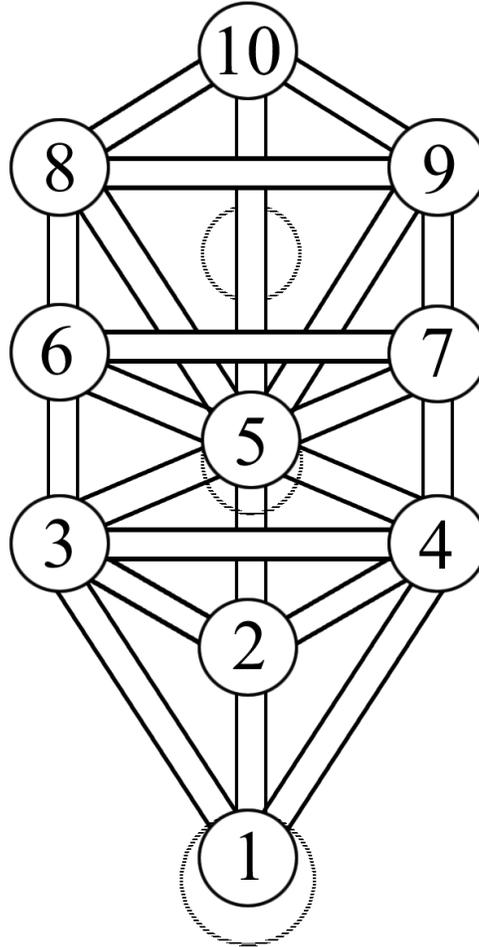


Diagram 1.

¹ The numbers on the diagram are better represented by the numerical designations of the grades. They also take up valuable space within the sephiroth that should be used in filling in the rest of the information from the chart.

² The Probationer should be capable of using logic and the chart provided to work out the proper placement of the dividing lines and the three Orders.

Now the following correspondences in the chart below; being the Sefirah number, Hebrew name, translation of the name, grade, and numerical designation, should be written onto the Tree of Life:

Order of the S.:S.:

10	KETHER	Crown	Ipsissimus	$10^\circ = 1^\circ$
9	CHOKMAH	Wisdom	Magus	$9^\circ = 2^\circ$
8	BINAH	Understanding	Magister Templi	$8^\circ = 3^\circ$

Order of the R.:C.:

7	CHESED	Mercy	Adeptus Exemptus	$7^\circ = 4^\circ$
6	GEBURAH	Strength	Adeptus Major	$6^\circ = 5^\circ$
5	TIPHERETH	Beauty	Adeptus Minor	$5^\circ = 6^\circ$

Order of the G.:D.:

4	NETZACH	Victory	Philosophus	$4^\circ = 7^\circ$
3	HOD	Splendor	Practicus	$3^\circ = 8^\circ$
2	YESOD	Foundation	Zelator	$2^\circ = 9^\circ$
1	MALKUTH	Kingdom	Neophyte	$1^\circ = 10^\circ$

► Probationer $0^\circ = 0^\circ$ ◀

Numerical Designations - two numbers separated by an equal sign are designated for each of the grades. The numbers always add up to 11, which is a significant number that will be fully explored in later Qabalah chapters. The numbers are arrived at using two methods, which yield the same result:

- 1) The first number represents the grade number and the second number represents the Sefirah number.

- 2) The first number is how many Sephiroth counting up from the bottom and the second, how many Sephiroth counting down from the top¹.

The ° symbol following the first number represents eternity or that which does not begin or end. The □ symbol represents the mundane, best understood utilizing the formula of the magical square, covered later in other student grades.

Brief Description of the Grades of the G.:D.:²

Student Grade - sometimes employed within the A.: A.: requiring candidates to spend three months reading general Magical and Mystical books, becoming familiar with different systems of attainment, to ensure some degree of knowledge before undertaking the Probationer's grade work. It also has the benefit of screening out less serious candidates. The Student Grade is still employed when needed.

Probationer - To begin studying the general history and the different systems of Magick and Mysticism, for the purpose of establishing, within themselves, their suitability for initiation into the next grade. Must accomplish the tasks of their grade, maintaining a detailed record, in preparation for the grade test.

Neophyte - Acquires control of the Astral Plane to facilitate control over the nature and powers of the self. Synthesises the magical alphabet to achieve a foundation of understanding upon the Earth. Creates elemental weapon for the grade.

Zelator - Learns expansion of consciousness through the inner passions of self. Studies the formula of the Rosy Cross. Begins study and practice of Hatha Yoga, achieving success in Asana and Pranayama. Creates elemental weapon for the grade.

Practicus - Must complete the intellectual training for the purpose of understanding the mechanization of the universe. Continues study of the

¹ The Tree of Life can be numbered starting at the top or bottom; therefore this method has the virtue of designating the sephirah containing the grade without actually numbering it.

² The descriptions of the grades are accurately modeled after the descriptions given in *One Star in Sight*, but some of the language has been changed and additional detail added.

Qabalah. Begins study and practice of Gnana Yoga. Creates elemental weapon for the grade.

Philosophus - Completes moral training by obtaining control of the attractions and repulsions of the self. Tested in devotion to the Order¹. Begins study and practice of Bhakti Yoga. Creates elemental weapon for the grade.

Further study of this chapter from the Required Reading:

One Star in Sight, Aleister Crowley

Liber XIII, Liber Graduum Montis Abiegni

Liber CCVII, A Syllabus of the Official Instructions of the A.∴ A.∴

¹ Clarification: Principles of the Order.