

*To whose temple the Arch is starlit,  
In whose temple the Sun is the image of God,  
To whose temple the Moon goes every month  
And brings the message out every full Moon,  
And whose message the Moon sings as a word of sixteen letters,  
His religion I belong to, His temple I visit,  
His name I utter, His glory I live in.  
To Him I offer the lotus of my day,  
To Him I offer the lotus of my night.*

*These seed thoughts from the Spiritual Psychology meditations of Dr Ekkirala Krishnamacharya give the note for the Lunar Messenger of the Circle of Good Will. The Moon is the reflective principle and symbol of the mind. When pure and calm, it reflects impressions from higher circles. The time of the full Moon is especially conducive for higher alignment, if we are poised enough. The alignment of the sun, Moon and earth in the sky helps us to experience the magic of the light of the soul and its manifestation down to the physical.*

*The Lunar Messenger is published every month in time for the full Moon. It contains thoughts from the teachings of eternal wisdom. Its purpose is to inspire us to put the teachings into practical life.*

## VISTAS OF WISDOM 101: SYMBOLISM 1 - INTRODUCTION

### *Tools of Knowledge*

We can understand the world only through signs and symbols. For example, what we call the sun is just a name we use to refer to the central light of our solar system. It has nothing to do with the word 'sun', which is just a convention for understanding. In other languages, other words are used. We use the terms as a kind of symbolism. When we talk to a friend, we look at their face or at a camera. But we don't want to talk to the face or to the camera, we want to talk to the friend. We look at physical bodies and use them as symbols of a person. We cannot speak directly to the person. We speak to each other unaware that we are taking the symbol for the person. We also take the sound vibrations of a transmission device like a mobile phone as a symbols to connect with the person. Without symbolism, there is no communication.

A symbol is defined as a vehicle which conveys a truth in Nature or a concept of an individual mind. In itself a symbol has no value, but as a vehicle of our consciousness, each symbol is associated with great value. We recognize the existence of a human being only through the symbol of his physical body. We can neither see the existence of man nor feel it, and thus, the physical body is necessary as a symbol. Without the physical body, there is only the unit of a set of intelligences which we call *devas* or *angels*.

All the branches of modern and ancient scientific investigation form part of the subject of 'symbolism'. Symbols are tools for realizing the original meaning. Every science has its corresponding symbols - even the humanities. A language expert cannot understand books about nuclear physics, quantum theory, chemistry, biology, mathematics or computer science. If the normal mundane sciences have their symbols and abbreviations, this applies likewise to the occult sciences and scriptures. The wisdom teachings can only

be understood with their keys and not by simply reading what is written. We cannot read the teachings in the same way as we read mundane texts. We must know their symbols. Without these keys, we are searching in the dark. It is foolish to use intellectual language and man-made symbols when it comes to great teachings of eternal truths. At every point, intellectuals are stopped because there are concealments as protections. Sincere seekers can solve the mysteries and then move on.

### *Reading the Scriptures*

A truth seeker is recommended to read the scriptures along with the teachings coming from the Great Ones in order to find the Way. He is cautioned not to comment or criticize the scriptures or the lives of the initiates, for he has insufficient knowledge to do so. A blind man cannot comment on a sunrise. Until truth seekers have attained the truth, they cannot understand the teachers, the teachings or the scriptures. They would do well to wait and restrain from comment and criticism.

The scriptures in their original form are different from their translations. Sometimes translations can distort. Original scriptures contain much of the TRUTH within them. We should try to know the TRUTH and to follow the instructions given even if we have not completely comprehended them. We cannot remove from a scripture what we do not like. As we evolve, we will know why it is written that way. H.P. Blavatsky calls this "*a willing obedience to the behests of Truth.*"

If a scripture is not comprehensible to us, we might find a competent teacher who knows the scripture, and he knows the symbolism as well. Just like there is a right approach to the wisdom teachings, there is also a right approach to the

teacher. Only in this way can we learn. Pythagoras was asked why he taught in symbols, why not in normal, easy to understand language. He replied that it was not possible to communicate much in this way. We need to raise the level of our understanding so that with the utterance of just one word, a great deal can be communicated. All initiates speak through symbols and parables. The written scripture is but a symbol of the unwritten scripture. All is symbolic in the scriptures to guard them from the profane who use wisdom to gain power.

There are six keys to the scriptures. We need the keys of spiritual astrology, etymology, metrics and grammar, the time key, and also the key of utterance. When it is said in a scripture that the serpent came down from the tree, we must understand that it is the tree of life and the serpent coming down indicates the involution of time. When it is said of Adam and Eve that they put on cloaks of skin, it means that they developed bodies of flesh and blood. The apple that Eve eats indicates desire.

In more recent times, Madam Blavatsky and Master EK were among the best in revealing these symbols. The 'Secret Doctrine', for example, was decoded by HPB using three keys of wisdom - the keys of time cycles, astrology and etymology. With the right keys, the scriptures unfold wisdom in layers. As profound as we transform, so profound the scripture is revealed to us.

## Natural and Man-Made Symbols

The scriptures have their own language and symbols, which are different from the symbols created by man. Of course, man-made symbols are also necessary, like the symbols of chemistry and physics. Thus, there are two types of symbols, man-made symbols and natural symbols. Numbers and their functions are an example of the natural symbols, while numerals are man-made symbols that differ from language to language.

Natural symbols are those symbols that are presented by Nature to the mind of man. Sunrise and sunset are two symbols that are not man-made. Man-made symbols such as the writing of a language are confined to a group of people having a common convention. They are personal symbolism or conventions that differ from language to language, and they are never universal.

The universal symbols form the language of the *devas*, the gods. They are not personal gods existing on an objective or a personal layer; at the same time, they are not man-made symbols. They exist as eternal truths that work for the equilibrium of creation in every moment. They exist as truly as each of us exists, as our intelligence exists. But at the same time, they do not exist objectively as personal gods, just as our intelligence does not exist objectively

anywhere else. So, the *devas* should be understood as symbols that exist in Nature and are not man-made.

These archetypes of universal phenomena exist as hidden qualities in Nature and in man, and they are to be deciphered by us. Their symbolic language gives us instructions through the 'universal alphabet'. This alphabet includes number, shape, sound, colour, smell, taste, touch and our thinking. We are expected to use these different types of symbols for the gradual unfolding of our consciousness. We can work them out by thinking about their symbolism, using them for meditation, and elaborating them our own point of view and expression.

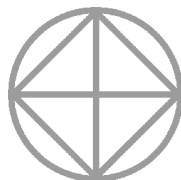
## Reading the 'One Book'

For this reason, some teachers believe that there is no need for much explanation and literature when we dealing with the meaning of these symbols. Because already when man began to observe Nature, Nature taught him in the form of his observations. The activity of Nature has its own symbolism, which is different from the symbolism created by man. When we observe a butterfly, we see that there are beautifully decorated designs on its wings and that both wings have the same decoration, only mirrored. Through observation and reflection, we then understand how the symbolism of Nature works.

Among the symbols of Nature there are the cycles of time such as the days and years. The rotation of the earth around itself represents the birth of the individual consciousness. Its rotation around the sun shows us how matter is impregnated by consciousness to produce the cycles of time which we call earth years. The form of the human body forms symbols to understand the mysteries of life. No doctor and no human father can give the miracle of life; no biologist can ultimately explain what life is. Life forms part of the symbols that are not created by human beings.

Therefore, if we know how to approach symbols, we will feel and realize their presence, communicate with them, and derive benefit out of them, just like we derive benefit from making an approach to our own intelligence. Through these symbols we read the 'one book'. We, the readers, are one half of the book and the whole outer creation forms the other part of the book. What we call 'subjectivity' is one half; what we call 'objectivity' forms the other half. This is how we begin to read and know ourselves.

Sources used: K.P. Kumar: *Hercules - The Man and the Symbol*. Div. seminar notes / E. Krishnamacharya: *The Science of Symbolism*. The World Teacher Trust - Dhanishta, Visakhapatnam, India ([www.worldteachertrust.org](http://www.worldteachertrust.org))



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*Circle of Good Will*