

XVIII THE MOON

Key Words: Pisces; final testing; wrong turns, illusion; burning off karma; interaction or struggle with the subconscious; threshold to new levels of consciousness.

The moon here is the waning moon. It is in the process of diving further and deeper into the darker realms of the soul. It is the time of final, and often most difficult, testing. The danger of forgetting your true goal in the darkness is very great. Temptations and illusory perceptions lurk along the way ready to lead you down the garden path! Be careful!

The upper part of the card shows a narrow passageway guarded by sinister sentries whose heads are those of wolves (Anubis, Egyptian god of Death). Behind them rise dark, threatening towers, symbols of the sentries' power. The guards hold the scepter of the Phoenix in one hand and the symbols for Mercury and Pluto as keys in the other. Jackals lurk at their feet ready to fall upon and devour the corpses of those who risk passing between the towers in uncertainty or out of mere curiosity.

The guarded entranceway is also a representation of the female sexual and birth organ, the vagina. The moon symbolizes here the unconscious aspect of the feminine; changeable, moist, shadowy, seductive, possessing an eerie attraction. Everything appears mysterious, doubtful and bewitching.

But only by passing through this gateway will new life arise. The path to awareness leads us through unawareness, the unknown the menacing. Anyone who wishes to be a person of wisdom must first deal directly and fully with these areas of ignorance. Only through direct experience will you get to know them; the veils of illusion yield finally to the light as you recognize them for what they are. As the veils part, you gain valuable insight into the true mysteries hidden behind them.

An analogy to this process is the rite of initiation performed in many tribes. The introduction into the status of adulthood requires the completion of a very difficult and dangerous task for which long and careful preparation is needed.

The person who dares to pass through the portals needs unconquerable courage and the willingness to make the necessary preparations. Happy the one who has the good fortune to find a guide who can be trusted on this stage of the path! Yet even or perhaps especially in this case, tremendous awareness is required. All too many guides offer themselves with tempting promises without knowing the way themselves. Only by keeping in constant touch with the voice of your heart will you be able to turn mistakes into opportunities for progress in the path. When you truly follow the teachings of the heart, you will see that even a false path may have been a necessary learning step on the way.

The threshold to Death is also the threshold to a new life. This is the entry way into a higher consciousness. This is symbolized on the card by the sacred Egyptian beetle holding in its pincers the symbol for the sun. The beetle carries the renewing light into the darkness. Wherever this light of consciousness appears, the darkness disappears. In fact, the darkness is revealed as having been an illusion, mere shadows which appeared to exist only because something was blocking the flow of light. Getting to know what things are blocking the light for you and sweeping them aside are the first steps in transformation.

Indications: You have heard the call of the unknown. You are on the threshold of new experience. Pay attention now to the voice of your heart, and scrutinize calmly and carefully the offers of assistance and guidance you may receive.

THE PRINCIPLE OF CHOICE, AUTHENTICITY vs. DUTIFULNESS

The Moon is the universal principle of choice-making and authenticity. Often this symbol is referred to as the karma card, karma meaning "work that needs to be done." The ultimate work to be done each day is to choose whether we will support our authentic self or support our false persona or dutiful self. Every day we are at the gates making choices about leaving old known worlds or going through the gates to explore new worlds. The gates also represent the process of choosing either between our authentic expression or our false or dutiful expression. Choice has three functions. It is through choice that we can 1) create new realities, 2) sustain and maintain current realities, or 3) release and let go of realities that no longer serve us.

The guardians of the gate are the Ra kings from ancient Egypt, the Sun gods, who protect our life force and energy as we change and reclaim our authentic selves. The jackals (symbol of the Egyptian deity, Anubis) are

reminders that we must let go of the old in order to go through the gates and experience anything new. In addition, the Egyptian beetle, or scarab, represents Khepri, the Egyptian God of Transformations. The scarab symbolizes "he who becomes." Before him, the scarab rolls the ball of the sun, pushing it into the Other World in the evening and over the horizon in the morning as the scarab beetle pushes before itself a ball of dung. For the Egyptians, the scarab-god represented the rising sun and symbolized the renewal of life and the idea of eternal existence.

The Moon is the astrological representative of the water sign, Pisces. The two fish traditionally representing Pisces are symbolized here by the Anubis, or jackal-gods, serving as guardians of the gate, or symbols of Piscean commitment to evolution and transformation.

The Moon is also the universal feminine principle. Its magnetic force upon the waters of the earth remind us that the inherent power of our receptive nature is to open, expand, yield, and totally express our full power and nature like the Moon. The Moon reflects back to us the mystery of who we are, and in its relentless consistency and changing phases, reminds us of those qualities which are inherent within our authentic natures. Whether we are male or female the reclamation of the authentic self requires that we open, receive and go inward; and like the Moon, it is essential to reveal ourselves without holding back or censoring ourselves in anyway.

The Moon is the symbol most associated with romance. The Moon reminds us that during romantic involvements we can see our potential dreams and visions, and yet, in romantic involvements we are challenged to truly be ourselves rather than to pretend to be other than who we are. The romantic state can be one of inspiration, or illusion and deception. The Moon reminds us that through our choices we can either reveal or conceal who we are and are not.

The Moon as Life-Time Symbol

For those individuals whose birthday adds up to the number 18 or 9, the Moon represents your life-time personality symbol. You have a great deal of magnetism as a personality, and like the Moon, often your personality has the capacity of bringing light into darkness. You are a romantic yet are willing to make choices that inspire rather than deceive you. Deception, whether it be your own tendency or of your being at the brunt of someone else's deception, is something that you will find difficult to handle at different points in your life. Your inherent nature is to reclaim the authentic aspects of your life so that your commitment to truth and self-disclosure can be expressed.

Even though many people will think that they know you and feel close to you because of your magnetism, it is only a few that you allow really close to you. Your emotional nature is like what the I-Ching refers to as the "great still lake." Since you feel very deeply, you establish trust and loyalty before allowing others to explore the depths of your nature. You will be drawn to Piscean people (anyone born February 21 - March 21) because they will function as mirrors of your own emotional depths and commitment to evolution and transformation.

You have a natural ability to make choices. Often life will present you with two or more choices to make at the same time. You will find yourself either combining two or more situations or choices together or you will carefully weigh one choice over the other. Since your inherent gift is to reveal and to make sound choices, you may find yourself assisting others to reveal more of who they are and to make choices in their life which will support their authentic expression.

The Moon Card as a Growth Symbol

The Moon is your growth symbol for the year when your birth month and day plus the current year adds up to the number 18. The Moon as a growth symbol requires that you begin the process of opening and reclaiming the authentic aspects of who you are. During this year, you will be faced with your own intolerance of old illusions, delusions, and self-deceptions. The Moon year becomes a year where you make choices that support your inherent nature rather than making choices that support your false persona or dutiful self. It is a year where you are no longer willing to abandon yourself in order to receive someone else's love or acceptance, or in order to keep peace, balance, and harmony in your life. You are willing only to be yourself regardless of what issues that might cause for others.

This is the best year to resolve issues with Pisces people (anyone born February 21 -March 21); or in the month of Pisces, you may resolve romantic issues or make choices that support your full creativity and expression in personal and professional arenas of your life.

The Moon year is a rite of passage, it is the year where you discover that you do have the right to make the kinds of passages in your life that support your becoming even more of who you are. The Moon reinforces the

commitment to be authentic rather than dutiful or false in any way. If you choose to no longer abandon yourself, the Moon can assist your commitment to authenticity. Through evoking this archetype in meditation or in creative visualization, the Moon enhances your capacity to be open and receptive.

The Moon Symbol as a Visual Affirmation and Meditative Tool

The Moon is the feminine principle within each man and woman which honors the ability to be like the bamboo reed - firm, yet yielding. This symbol allows you to realize that you are committed to leaving old known worlds so that you can go through the gates to experience even greater parts of who you are.

Sample Affirmations To Use While Looking at The Moon Archetype

I enjoy making important decisions.
I value honesty and integrity in relationships.
I like what is mysterious within me and within others.
Through choice I can change my experience.
I am willing to express who I am fully and openly like the Moon.

The Moon as an Outer Mirror

When you pull this symbol or find yourself continually drawn toward it, it represents your commitment to reflect yourself accurately in all aspects of your life. During the next eighteen weeks or eighteen months, you may find yourself confronted with making choices which will require that you drop old illusions, delusions, and self-deceptions in order to reclaim and express your own authenticity. This is the best time period to make changes that would support your basic nature. It is a time to reveal rather than conceal who you are.

You may find that Pisces people (anyone born February 21 - March 21) function as important teachers and mentors for you; or that during the Pisces month you want to make important changes in your life that will be more in alignment with who you are.

You become very clear about what you want romantically in your life and what you don't want. Women's issues or important women in your life mirror your need to go inward and trust the essential parts of who you are.

Other Symbols that Are Aspects of The Moon

The Moon is the external expression in the world of the Hermit archetype. The Moon (the number 18) is the expression of the authentic self in the world. Authenticity and the expression of our essential nature comes from going inward and reclaiming ourselves through contemplation, prayer, and meditation (The Hermit, the number 9).

We are only able to reveal our true natures (The Moon) when we have been willing to go inward and explore and reclaim the essence of who we are (The Hermit). During the reclamation process, we will face our own self-judgments (Nine of Swords). Once we are able to release our own self-delusions and self-criticalness, we will begin to experience the qualities of our essential nature: happiness (Nine of Cups); strength (Nine of Wands); and our own unlimited abundance (Nine of Disks). The Hermit is the authentic self within us that wants to be openly revealed and expressed in the world (The Moon). (See the Hermit constellation in Section VI for more additional information.)

The Gifts and Challenges for Persons whose Life-Time Personality Symbol Is The Moon

Gifts:

The Moon (Reflection of Self)
The Hermit (Introspection)
Nine of Cups (Happiness)
Nine of Wands (Strength)
Nine of Disks (Gain)

Challenges:

Nine of Swords (Self-cruelty)