

MORYA FEDERATION
ESOTERIC SCHOOLS OF MEDITATION



Welcome to the
Great Quest Student
webinar series on

The Labours of Hercules

An Astrological Interpretation

BASED ON ARTICLES BY ALICE A. BAILEY

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(*THE LABOURS OF HERCULES* BOOK WAS PUBLISHED IN 1974)

Why Study the Hercules Myth?

- The progress of a disciple is illustrated in the heavens
 - by the Labours of Hercules through the zodiacal signs.
 - It is as though God had pictured in space his Plan
 - for the working out of the evolution of the human spirit

- But the progress isn't limited to just disciples
 - We all can better understand the lessons of each sign
 - By reading about Hercules' journey through the signs
 - We all have each sign in our chart
 - Some signs are better represented than others, but all are there
 - We start off learning about the lower expressions of each sign
 - And eventually begin to face the lessons Hercules recapitulates for us in his symbolic journeys



The First 4 Signs Are Preparatory

- In Aries, the soul takes it's mental sheath
 - ✓ It adds the combinations of mental substance so it can best express itself, and man becomes a thinking soul.
- In Taurus the desire world & means of feeling develop
 - ✓ Man becomes a sentient soul.
- In Gemini, a vital energy body is constructed
 - ✓ Bringing together the energies of soul and matter, a living soul.
 - ✓ The two poles are en rapport, & the etheric body is created.
- In Cancer the work of incarnation proceeds
 - ✓ The fourfold nature is manifested.
 - ✓ Man becomes a living actor on the physical plane.



The Next 4 Signs are a Struggle for Achievement

- The tremendous battle through the medium of which the Self-conscious individual, emerging out of the mass in Cancer:
 - ✓ knows himself to be the individual in Leo,
 - ✓ The potential Christ in Virgo,
 - ✓ the aspirant endeavoring to balance the pairs of opposites in Libra,
 - ✓ and the one who overcomes illusion in Scorpio.
- These are the four signs of crisis and of stupendous endeavor, where all the illumination, intuition & soul power capabilities are needed
- These were also reflected on the involutionary arc when:
 - ✓ the soul achieved individuality in Leo,
 - ✓ became the nurturer of ideas and of potential capacities in Virgo
 - ✓ swung violently from one extreme to the other in Libra,
 - ✓ and was subjected to the disciplining effect of the world of illusion and form in Scorpio.



The First 5 Labors

- *“We might regard the first five labors (Aries, Taurus, Gemini, Cancer and Leo) as covering the entire period of the Path of Probation, and the killing of the Nemean Lion is the climax of that part of the struggle.*
- *Now he is ready to tread the Path of Discipleship, in which the indwelling Christ is gradually revealed, matter is steadily subordinated to the uses of the soul, and the form aspect comes to be regarded simply as the mother of the Christ Child.”*



The Final 4 Signs

- After the 4 preparatory signs & 4 signs of physical plane struggle
- The aspirant has worked out of the world of glamor and form, and in his consciousness is now free from their limitations
 - ✓ He can be the archer in Sagittarius, going straight for the goal
 - ✓ He can be the goat in Capricorn, scaling the mount of initiation
 - ✓ He can be the world worker in Aquarius
 - ✓ And the world savior in Pisces
- Thus he can sum up in himself all the gains of the preparatory period and of the fiercely fought battles in the four signs of strenuous activity;
- And in these four final signs demonstrate the gains achieved and the powers developed



The Link between the Myth & Sign

- By combining the astrological and symbolic story
 - ✓ the tests of everyday life of a disciple are shown
 - ✓ via the sign in which the myth takes place
- Each sign subjects the disciple to
 - ✓ influences of certain distinctive forces
 - ✓ and provides him with certain tendencies
- When understood, the meaning of the test emerges
 - ✓ And it's implications for all of us in our journey



A Little about the Fire Signs

- Exoterically, fire is animated, enthusiastic energy
 - ✓ But may be too forceful
- Esoterically, keys are burning by fire & reorientation
 - ✓ Aries clears the way for the Spirit & universality
 - ✓ Leo clears the way for the Soul & self-consciousness
 - ✓ Sagittarius clears the way for the body one-pointedness
- They are masculine, like the air signs
 - ✓ Yang energy; outgoing, expressive, and giving
 - ✓ They represent the day; related to the 1-3-5-7 ray line
- They are compatible with Air signs
 - ✓ Work out the issues of their axes relationships
 - ✓ Through Trine & Sextile, favorable aspects



The Myth



The First Great Gate Stood Open Wide.



A voice came through that portal:

“Hercules, my son, go forth. Pass through the Gate and enter on the *Way*. Perform thy labor and return to me, reporting on the deed.”



And thus the Labor started



And the first great act of service was begun



Labor I - The Capture of the Man-Eating Mares

♈ The mares of war were ravaging the land

- Hercules' task was to rescue the people from these wild mares
- He brought his beloved friend Abderis with him
- They carefully planned & executed the capture of the mares

♈ Cocky & arrogant, Hercules had Abderis drive them in

- Abderis lost control, was killed, & the mares were freed
- Humbled, grief stricken & discouraged, Hercules redid the task
- He was successful this time, and proclaimed a hero
- But Abderis was dead because of Hercules' arrogance
- The task was badly done
- But the gifts of failure guarantee success, if rightly understood



Labor I - Meaning of the Myth

- ♈ The 1st labor marks the 1st step upon the path
 - The life of inner unfoldment of the Soul & life of service begin
 - Brings about reorganization, reorientation, regeneration
- ♈ It is a sign of learning mental control
 - Right direction, right orientation, right thought
 - The horse stands for intellectual activity
 - ✓ White horses symbolize the illumined mind
 - ✓ Black horses represent the lower mind, false ideas, wrong concepts
- ♈ The task was to destroy wrong mental attitudes & ideas
 - Capture the female aspect of mind so no more mares are bred
 - Stifle selfishness, unkindness, gossip, criticism



Labor I - Journey

♈ Through the capture of the Man-Eating Mares

- We see Hercules make his start and react to thought impulse
 - ✓ But he's dealing with it from the angle of his personality (represented by Abderis in the Myth)
- Until he begins to learn something of mind control
 - ✓ How to corral evil thought forms
 - ✓ And use the mind positively under Soul influence

♈ As the intelligent disciple, he started his journey

- Beginning with an undefined spiritual urge to righteousness
- And eventually he'll end as the world savior



Aries:	the Ram
Element:	Fire sign
Quality:	Initiating. Beginnings. Will or Power expresses itself through the great creative processes. In the early stages, activities are directed toward the material side of life; later toward the spiritual.
Traits:	Negative traits: arrogance, stubbornness, impulsiveness, confrontational attitude, a tendency to leave projects mid-way. Positive traits: courageousness, liveliness, a positive outlook, mental acumen, adventurous spirit.
Esoteric Concepts:	Learning the right use of the mind and life force with unselfish intent, and gaining control over wrong thought, wrong speech, and wrong action.
Polar Opposite:	Libra, an Air sign (balance).
Rulers:	Exoteric, Mars; Esoteric, Mercury.
Keywords:	
form angle:	Let form again be sought.
soul angle:	I come forth and from the plane of mind, I rule.

Hercules faces the Presiding One for His Fifth Labor

The great Presiding One said to the Teacher who stood close to his hand within the Council Chamber of the Lord: *"The time for a dread labour now draws near. This man, who is a son of man and yet a son of God, must be prepared. Let him look well unto the weapons that he owns and let him burnish bright his shield, and dip his arrows in a lethal brew, for dire and dread is the labour just ahead. Let him prepare."*

But Hercules, resting from his labours, wot not the trial which lay just ahead. He felt his courage strong. He rested from his labours, and time and time again, past the fourth Gate he chased the sacred doe clear to the temple of the Lord. Thus time and time again, he placed the doe upon his heart and sought the temple of the Lord. Thus rested he.

Before the fifth great Gate stood Hercules, armed to the teeth with all the gifts of war and warriors, and as he stood the watching gods marked his firm step, his eager eye, his ready hand. But deep within his heart was questioning.

"What do I here?" he said. *"What is the test and wherefore do I seek to pass this Gate?"* and speaking thus he waited, listening for a voice. *"What do I here, O Teacher of my life, armed, as you see, with the full panoply of war? What do I here?"*

"A call has sounded forth, O Hercules, a call of deep distress. Your outer ears have not responded to that call, and yet the inner ear knows well the need, for it hath heard a voice, aye, many voices, telling you of need and urging you to venture forth. The people of Nemea seek your aid. They are in deep distress. Word of your prowess has gone forth. They seek that you should kill the lion that devastates their land, taking its toll of men."



Labor V - The Slaying of the Nemean Lion

Ω Now it was time for a “dread” labor

- Hercules felt strong & courageous, armed with gifts of weapons
- And went to Nemea to slay the lion terrorizing the area
- Realizing they were weighing him down, he dropped all weapons
- Keeping only a club made by his own hands, and a bow & arrows

Ω He sought the lion for days and days before finding it

- And shot arrow after arrow at it, but they failed to pierce the lion

Ω Following the lion to a cave, they faced each other

- He grabbed the lion and choked it to death with his own hands
- Then skinned the lion to show to the Nemeans they were now safe



Labor V - Meaning of the Myth

- Ω Hercules the aspirant symbolized the lion
 - This is why he traditionally wore a lion's skin
 - The lion stands for his coordinated, dominant personality run wild
 - ✓ With the lower vehicles blended & potent beyond average man
 - ✓ A personality can become a difficult, aggressive person
- Ω The personality is self-confident and powerful
 - He can become a devastating force in a family group or society
 - ✓ As he becomes self-aggrandized & asserts himself too strongly
 - Until such time as the aspirant slays the lion of his personality
 - ✓ And rids himself of the sense of I-ness
 - Selfishness has to give way to selflessness
 - The individual self becomes subordinate to the group



Labor V - The Journey

- Ω Equipped from his previous lessons, Hercules
 - Tracks the lion & faces it in a cave
- Ω He demonstrates in this test that
 - He has refocused and coordinated his personality
 - It's characterized by courage, a gift of this sign
 - The lower can be subordinated to the higher
- Ω He becomes identified with the real, spiritual identity
 - Is no longer occupied with his own form
 - Or mental/emotional reactions
 - The personality is overcome
- Ω Through service rendered and sanity of his methods
 - He gives a guarantee of the strength of his purpose



Leo:	the Lion
Element:	Fire sign
Quality:	Sensitivity leading to individual awareness. Self assertion.
Traits:	Negative traits: too headstrong, egoistical, dominating, impatience, arrogance. Positive traits: kindness, a big-heart, optimism, truthfulness, loyalty.
Esoteric Concepts:	The mind and heart united in the will-to-illumine; learning to express spiritual will, purpose and intent.
Polar Opposite:	Aquarius, an air sign (group awareness, world service).
Rulers:	Exoteric, Sun; Esoteric, Sun
Keywords:	
form angle:	Let other forms exist, I am because I am.
soul angle:	I am That and That am I.

Hercules faces his Teacher for His Ninth Labor

"O son of God who art also a son of man," the Teacher said, "the time has come to tread another way. At Gate the ninth you stand. Pass through and find the marsh of Stymphalus where dwell the birds that havoc wreak. Discover, then, the way to flush them from their long secure abode."

He paused a moment. "The flame that gleams beyond the mind reveals direction sure." he added. "The task awaits. Through Gate the ninth you now must go."

Forward, then, went Hercules, the son of man who was also the son of God.



Labor IX - Killing the Stymphalian Birds

- ✠ At Stymphalus the marsh was fetid and the birds cawing
 - They were huge, fierce, hideous, with iron beaks and sharp talons
 - Three birds swooped down on Hercules, but he warded them off
- ✠ He failed several times to remove the birds
 - Until he recalled the teacher's words
 - "The flame that gleams beyond the mind reveals direction sure."
 - And a method came to his mind
- ✠ At twilight he clashed cymbals to disturb the huge flock
 - The dissonance was awful, but it confused and scared the birds
 - They rose in a vast cloud and fled in frantic haste, never to return
 - Silence spread across the marsh
- ✠ The labor was successful



Labor IX - Meaning of the Myth

- ✚ Marshes are a symbol of the mind, amplified by emotion
- ✚ Hercules discovers that he still has an emotional nature
 - Even though he triumphed in Scorpio, he still must control emotions
 - The birds that did the most damage were cruel gossip, selfish talk
 - Even talking about occult troubles when listeners aren't ready
- ✚ The more spirituality you achieve, the more potent you are
 - Thus the more harm you can do
 - The cymbals in the myth represent the mind & power of the Soul
 - The “monkey-mind” thoughts die down when focus is on the Soul
- ✚ Sagittarius is dual, half human/animal or human/Divine
 - Gemini on the same axis is duality; Sagittarius becomes unity
 - Becoming one-pointed, unified, a soul-infused personality



Labor IX - The Journey

- ✚ One-pointedness is demonstrated
 - This is the consummation of the mental task begun in Aries
 - He demonstrates right use and control of thought and speech
- ✚ By slaying the man-eating birds of Stymphalos
 - He puts an end to all tendency to use thought destructively
 - No more gossip, criticism, or thoughts/words that harm
- ✚ Aspirants must weigh their thoughts carefully
 - Learn to speak kindly to minimize hurting others with words
 - Right use of thought, speech & harmlessness result in liberation
- ✚ We must also learn what not to say
 - Sagittarius is the spirit of Truth
 - Also the spirit of Right



Sagittarius:	the Archer
Element:	Fire sign
Quality:	Focused direction. One-pointed activity. In the early stages, satisfaction of desire; in later stages aspiration for the goal of initiation.
Traits:	Negative traits: carelessness, tactless, superficiality, inconsistency, overconfidence. Positive traits: optimism, intelligence, philosophical outlook, generosity, adventurous spirit.
Esoteric Concepts:	Illumination of the spirit of truths (truth of the whole, rather than just a small part); refocusing and reorienting the personality to a higher goal.
Polar Opposite:	Gemini, an air sign (eventual control of fluidity and pairs of opposites; fusion, synthesis, at-one-ment).
Rulers:	Exoteric, Jupiter; Esoteric, Earth.
Keywords:	
form angle:	Let food be sought.
soul angle:	I reach that goal and then I see another.

From the Faculty

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- Thank you for participating, we hope you enjoyed the webinar
- This is a marvelous opportunity to establish group cohesion and foster discussion among your fellow students
- We appreciate your patience and persistence, and welcome any feedback you might have
- The next Labors of Hercules webinar will be on 4 Sep