

MORYA FEDERATION
ESOTERIC SCHOOLS OF MEDITATION



Welcome to the Great Quest Student Webinar Series

Webinar 8 - Esoteric Astrology

The Labours of Hercules (Aries to Cancer)

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 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



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.



The Myth



Hercules faces the Presiding One for His Second Labor

The presiding One spoke to the Teacher of the man whose light shone forth among the sons of men, who are the sons of God.

“Where is the man who stood with power before the Gods, received their gifts and entered through the first wide open Gate to labor at his task?”

“He rests, Oh, great presiding One, and ponders on his failure, and mourns for Abderis, and seeks for help within himself.”

“It is well. The gifts of failure guarantee success, when rightly understood. Let him proceed to labor once again, enter the second Gate, returning with dispatch.”

The second Gate stood open wide and, from the light which veiled the distant scene, a voice emerged and said: “Pass through the Gate. Proceed upon thy way. Perform thy labor and return to me, reporting on the deed.”



Labor II - The Capture of the Cretan Bull

♉ Still sad, Hercules embarked on his 2nd labor

- To find and lead the sacred bull to the Holy Place
- To navigate the maze & save the bull from sacrificial death
- He was guided by the gleaming star on the bull's forehead

♉ This task he did alone

- At times he rode the bull, at times he carried it on his back
- Taking it to the three Cyclops in the Holy Place
- Walking in the light
 - ✓ The star on the bull's forehead represented Aldebaran
 - ✓ The eye of the bull, illumination



Labor II - Meaning of the Myth

♈ In working out the Plan, desire follows thought impulse

- Mental consciousness is succeeded by sensitivity
- The potency of desire is tested here, a lesson of proportion & restraint
 - ✓ For a long time the disciple fails and is ridden by the bull of desire
 - ✓ Before rising above desire into the guiding light of the Soul

♈ The key is right understanding of the Law of Attraction

- The law of magnetic force & coherence of forms
- It produces stability & the persistence of forms
 - ✓ Between positive & negative, Spirit & matter, the Self & not-self
- Concerns the interrelation between the builder & the form
 - ✓ The bull represents the creative force



Labor II - The Journey

- ♈ **The strong urge and potency of attraction**
 - Produces the great illusion
 - But can eventually become the cause of illumination

- ♈ **Hercules has to learn the nature of desire**
 - To transmute it into aspiration
 - To dominate sex
 - ✓ The lowest expression of the Law of Attraction
 - And use it rightly (capture the bull)



Taurus:	the Bull
Element:	Earth sign
Quality:	Desire, for the mass of men; will or directed purpose, for the disciple.
Traits:	Negative traits: stubbornness, self-indulgent behavior, laziness, materialistic, possessiveness. Positive traits: dependability, practicality, patience, independence, persistence.
Esoteric Concepts:	Illumination; applying knowledge & experience toward spiritual aspirations; the wish to overcome the baser desires by transmuting them into love for humanity.
Polar Opposite:	Scorpio, a water sign (conflict of duality, desire overcome; triumphant discipleship).
Rulers:	Exoteric, Venus; Esoteric Vulcan.
Keywords:	
form angle:	Let struggle be undismayed.
soul angle:	I see and when the Eye is opened, all is illumined.



The Myth



Hercules faces the Presiding One for His Third Labor

The great Presiding One, within the Council Chamber of the Lord, had watched the labours of the son of man who is a son of God. He and the Teacher saw the third great Gate, opening before the son of man, revealing a new chance to tread the *Way*.

"Send out the word to guard the sacred tree. Let Hercules unfold the power to search without discouragement, deception or too great a speed. Let perseverance now be called upon. He has done well so far."

And thus the word went forth.



Hercules turns to his Teacher

"Tell me the way, O Teacher of my soul. I seek the apples and I need them quickly for my use. Show me the quickest way and I will go!"

"Not so, my son", replied the Teacher, "the way is long. Two things alone I will confide to you, and then it is for you to prove the truth of what I say. Remember that the sacred tree is guarded well. Three maidens fair cherish the tree, protecting well its fruit. A dragon with one hundred heads protects the maidens and the tree. Guard thyself well from strength too great for thee, from wiles too subtle for thy comprehension. Watch well. The second thing that I would say to thee is that thy search will carry thee where five great tests will meet thee on the Way. Each will afford thee scope for wisdom, understanding, skill and opportunity. Watch well. I fear, my son, that you will fail to recognize these points upon the Way. But time alone will show; God speed thee in thy search."



Labor III - The Golden Apples of the Hesperides

II Hercules was eager and confident as he started

- But he got nowhere for a long time as he searched
- A guide was sent to aid him, but he never realized it
- Then he had a small measure of success killing the serpent
 - ✓ These were smaller tests within the labor, one failed, one passed

II He continues on, and faces more of the smaller tests

- He encounters and is delayed by following a false teacher
- He is delayed yet again as he stops to help Prometheus
 - ✓ But this is a valuable lesson he learned that service is never a delay
- He continues on and finds Atlas in distress, and aids him
 - ✓ And the Golden Apples are then offered to him, he passed the labor
 - ✓ “The Way to us is always marked by service,” he was told by the 3 sisters



Labor III - Meaning of the Myth

II The mystic must add occult knowledge and achievement

- He gains knowledge through his 5 senses
- Opens him up to new fields of awareness
- He becomes a man of action
- But he must also listen for than inner guide, the Soul
 - ✓ His guide Nereus

II The knowledge must be transmuted to wisdom

- Knowledge is the quest of the senses
- Wisdom is understanding & applying it to problems of life
- Hercules had to integrate his lower self into his higher self
 - ✓ He had to conquer glamor and illusion
 - ✓ Presented as Busiris

II Despite failures & long delays, Hercules obtains Wisdom

- But only after giving up his search in selfless service



Labor III - The Journey

II Hercules's progress

- At first subjective, characterized by thought & desire
- Worked out as expression on the physical plane
- Until he arrives at knowledge about himself as a personality

II Then he begins gathering the apples of knowledge

- Realizes the duality of man, personality vs Soul
- He must subordinate the personality to the Soul
- By controlling his 3 lower vehicles
 - ✓ Body, desire nature, mind
- And developing his Soul nature
 - ✓ Clarity of perception unaffected by delusion
 - ✓ Love and wisdom
 - ✓ Service to humanity



Gemini:	the Twins
Element:	Air sign
Quality:	Duality. Love-Wisdom. Fluidity. Control of every pair of opposites. The underlying love of Deity reaches our solar system through Gemini.
Traits:	Negative traits: inconsistency, superficiality, indecisiveness, lack of focus, nervousness. Positive traits: versatility, enthusiasm, eloquence, wit, intellect.
Esoteric Concepts:	The intermediary between the soul and body (depicted as the mortal & immortal twin); Dual aspect of the mind as it mediates between the higher and the lower expressions.
Polar Opposite:	Sagittarius, a fire sign (one-pointedness; preparation for initiation).
Rulers:	Exoteric, Mercury; Esoteric, Venus
Keywords:	
form angle:	Let instability do its work.
soul angle:	I recognize my other self, and in the waning of that self I grow and glow.

The Myth



Hercules faces the Presiding One for His Fourth Labor

The great Presiding One, who sits within the Council Chamber of the Lord, spoke to the Teacher, standing by his side: *"Where is the son of man who is the son of God? How fares he? How is he tested and with what service is he now engaged?"*

The Teacher said, casting his eye upon the son of man who is a son of God: *"Naught at this time, O great Presiding One. The third great test provided much of teaching sustenance to a learner such as he. He ponders and reflects."*

"Provide a test which will evoke his wisest choice. Send him to labor in a field wherein he must decide which voice, of all the many voices, will arouse the obedience of his heart. Provide likewise a test of great simplicity upon the outer plane, and yet a test which will awaken, on the inner side of life, the fullness of his wisdom and the rightness of his power to choose. Let him proceed with the fourth test."



Labor IV - The Capture of the Doe or Hind

- ☉ Hercules starts his journey in deep silence
 - He watched and listened
 - Heard quarreling voices of Artemis & Diana, both claiming the doe
 - He also heard a 3rd voice, asking him to rescue & save the doe
- ☉ He chased the doe, hindered by both Artemis & Diana
 - For a year this went on, until he glimpsed the doe sleeping
 - He captured the doe, claiming the sacred doe as his
 - But the Presiding One told him the doe belonged in the shrine
 - ✓ It belonged to no man, even a son of God
 - ✓ It should be shared with all who dwell within the shrine
- ☉ Done, he looked & saw a fawn where the doe once stood
 - Again & again, he was told, the fawn must be brought to the holy place



Labor IV - Meaning of the Myth

♋ Cancer is the last of the 4 preparatory signs

- Here he enters, through birth in Cancer, the Human Kingdom
- A mass sign, he gets a more universal sense of mass consciousness
- This readies him for the work of the next 4 signs

♋ Objective is the evolution of the consciousness aspect

- Cancer is primarily one of instinct that is lifted up by intellect

♋ He must now become familiar with intuition

- That instantaneous recognition of truth and reality



Labor IV - The Journey

☿ The higher faculty of intuition is brought into play

- Symbolized by the capture of an elusive doe
- Sensitive and hard to find

☿ In his previous cycles of life experience

- Hercules transmuted intellect into intuition
- He has to become aware of the world of human ideas
- And develop its use
 - ✓ as all lower powers have to be developed and used

☿ The battle for possession of the doe continues

- Apollo knows the doe is intuition
- Diana knows the doe is intellect
- Artemis thinks the doe is just instinct



Cancer:	the Crab
Element:	Water sign
Quality:	Mass sensitivity; for the average man, mass identification with form. For the disciple, service for the masses.
Traits:	Negative traits: moodiness, being too clingy, over emotionalism, suspicion, tendency to nag. Positive traits: imagination, intuition, loving compassion, protectiveness.
Esoteric Concepts:	Developing intuition and a sensitive response to the environing conditions and circumstances; psychic development of both the lower and higher senses; transmuting instinct to intuition and emotional reactions to inclusive love.
Polar Opposite:	Capricorn, an earth sign (spiritual awareness after struggle; birthplace of the Christ).
Rulers:	Exoteric, the Moon; Esoteric, Neptune.
Keywords:	
form angle:	Let isolation be the rule, and yet the crowd exists.
soul angle:	I build a lighted house and therein dwell.



Recap of Progress through the Signs

- The 4 preparatory signs:
 - he is equipped with the faculty of mind in **Aries**
 - with desire in **Taurus**
 - arrives at his essential duality in **Gemini**
 - enters the Human Kingdom in **Cancer**
- The 4 signs of physical plane struggle:
 - self-consciousness & individualism emerge in **Leo**
 - nurturing of the Christ within in **Virgo**
 - trying to balance the pairs of opposites in **Libra**
 - overcoming illusion in **Scorpio**
- The 4 signs of achievement:
 - going straight for the goal in **Sagittarius**
 - scaling the mount of initiation in **Capricorn**
 - becoming the world server in **Aquarius**
 - and the world savior in **Pisces**

