

PENTAGRAMS, HEXAGRAMS AND SACRED GEOMETRY

Excerpted from "The Book of Magick Power"
by Jason Augustus Newcomb

The "Greater Rituals" of the Pentagram and Hexagram are part of our magical inheritance from the 19th century occult group The Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn. They have been reprinted in so many books that I was almost going to skip them as a topic in this already crowded manual. However, they have a useful function within your magical work, so I thought I had better give them a little space. Besides, I have a few unique viewpoints that you will hopefully find helpful in understanding and using these techniques.

In the Order instructions given out by the Golden Dawn, pentagrams are supposed to be drawn in a specific way to invoke and banish elemental energies, and hexagrams to invoke and banish the energies of the planets. It is said that when you trace the symbols carefully in the air, "From each re-entering angle... issueth a ray, representing a radiation from the Divine." [22] This is the only explanation offered by the Order for exactly what these symbols are for, and why you should use them. This has always seemed a strange statement, and one that explains very little.

The pentagram is generally considered a symbol representing the microcosm, or humankind, and that the upright pentagram shows the triumph in humans of spirit over the elements. Humans can control the elements through spirit, and this symbol is a representation of that. If you look at Diagram 18 you will see the attribution of an element to each of the points of the pentagram, with the element of spirit at the topmost point. However it is still unclear exactly what is meant by the ray that "issueth forth," from each re-entering angle.

However, recently, I've been exploring sacred geometry, and discovered within the geometry of the pentagram is an interesting ratio known as "phi" or "the golden mean."



Diagram 15 - Pentagram with "Phi Ratio" or the "Golden Mean"

A rectangle created with this ratio, called a "golden rectangle" can infinitely reproduce itself, larger or smaller, making the geometry for a "golden spiral." This spiral

measurement can be found all through nature, creating seashells, weather patterns, air resistance and the spiral form of galaxies. This geometry also plays out in the growth of plants and the expansive reproduction in all life forms. [23]

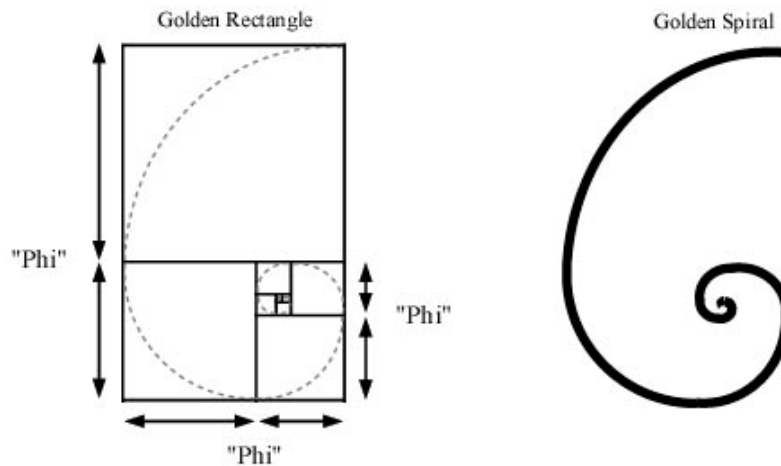


Diagram 16 - The Golden Rectangle and the Golden Spiral

So, the pentagram is representative on a symbolic level with the dynamic forces that create the universe. This is very congruent with its nature as ruler of the elemental forces. But looking at geometry, we can also understand the power of the pentagram in a whole new way. I'm not sure if this was on the minds of the magicians who began to use it, but it immensely helps me to empower the pentagram with a whole new level of influence. When we trace a pentagram in the air, with the intention of making use of a force, we are creating a massive geometric progression of power and manifestation that can dramatically influence the universe through our spirit. This power expands outward or inward with the force of all of nature's expansive and contractive processes. Perhaps this is after all what the Golden Dawn document is referring to by this "ray" from the divine.

The hexagram on the other hand, consists of two separate equilateral triangles, facing opposite directions. This is said to represent the macrocosm, or greater universe, as opposed to the microcosm of mankind. It also shows our relationship to the universe, the one triangle representing our aspiration to understanding, and the other triangle representing the downward flow of understanding from the divine.

Geometrically, the hexagram represents perfection in form and structure. It is stable and economically uses space to perfection. The structure of honeycombs uses this geometry to maximize the amount of available spots for honey storage without wasting any space. If you place equally sized spheres next to one another they will naturally take on hexagram patterns.

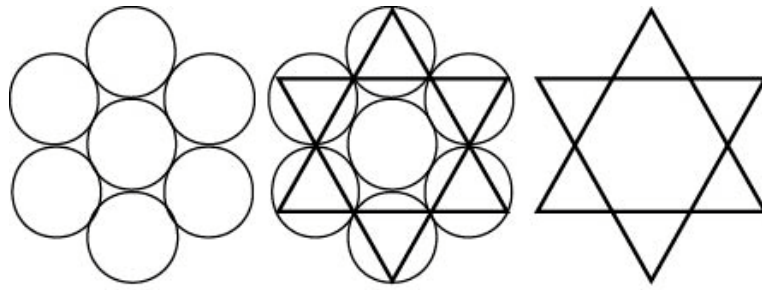


Diagram 17 - Spheres in a Hexagram

So, in using this shape in our rituals to invoke planetary energies, we are emphasizing perfect harmony, balance and structure, the very laws through which the universe maintains equilibrium. [24]

Each of the points on the pentagram and the hexagram are assigned correspondences from Hermetic and Qabalistic tradition, and it is through the relations of these correspondences when we trace the shapes that the specific energies are invoked. Further symbols of the elements and planets, as well as corresponding holy names have been assigned for invoking each of the forces as well. We will get more into this as we discuss each ritual in turn.

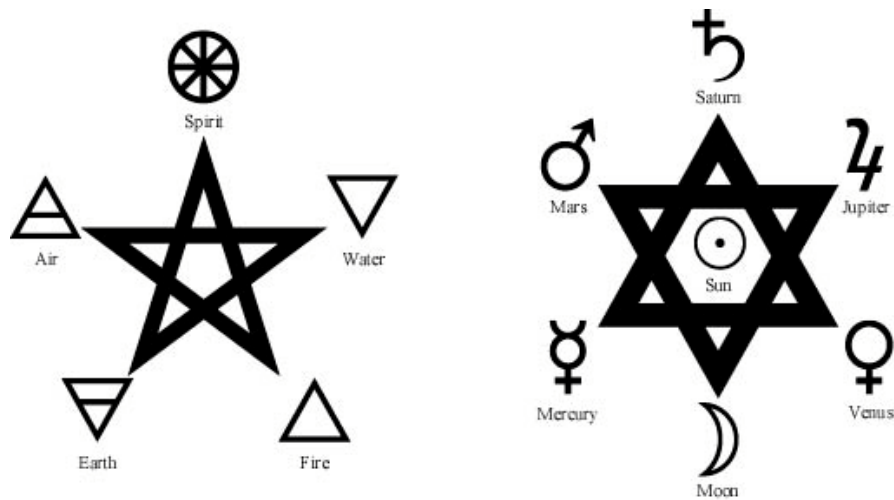


Diagram 18 - Elemental Pentagram and Planetary Hexagram

These rituals are of course not strictly necessary for basic magical work, the simple exercise for accumulating magical atmospheres will work just fine in most cases. However, these special, ritualized shapes form an excellent method of testing the validity of contacts with spiritual entities that you will learn about in a later chapter. This testing method works best when you are familiar with these techniques, and have already used them a few times. It is for this reason that I am providing these techniques to you now, and suggest that you use them regularly in your magical work.