

The Tree of Life

The Tree of Life is based on the Hebrew Qabalah and is closely related to the tarot. The Tree is a map of consciousness describing thirty-two paths of wisdom. The first ten paths are represented by the ten spheres. The next twenty-two paths are described by the twenty-two interconnections between the spheres. These twenty-two paths correspond both to the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet and to the twenty-two major arcana of the tarot. Together, the thirty-two paths represent a map of creation and manifestation and the relationship of the human being to God.

In one sense the Tree of Life is the connection between the Qabalah and the tarot. In another sense, the Qabalah is more fundamental and gives birth to both the Tree of Life and the tarot. What matters is that the underlying teachings and principles, represented by the Tree of Life, and applied through various Qabalistic (magical) practices, provide considerable knowledge of God, creation, and relationships between man and the divine. What matters even more is that studying the Tree of Life, understanding what it represents, and applying its principles, leads to growth in consciousness.

There are many and varied Tree of Life diagrams or representations, each reflecting the understanding of the author or artist. Some diagrams are more complete than others. Some show correlations to the tarot. Some show relationships to astrology. Some show correlations to the seven rays. It is important to work with a representation that is consistent with the intended approach and depth.

In a proper study of the Tree of Life, it is the Tree of Life which speaks to the student, through correlations and relationships. The occult knowledge or understanding that the student brings to bear provides a framework either for interpretation or realization (which is different from interpretation). The key in any such endeavor is to be open to the underlying truth. Thus what we know can be a formidable barrier to the insights available.

Here are two representations of the Tree of Life.



