

# The Emerald Tablet:

## And the Alchemy of Spiritual Transformation

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# Introduction

## The Emerald Tablet - Unveiling The Secret

The fast-cut montage that begins *the Secret* video features scenes from a mysterious green tablet - the Emerald Tablet. The Secret book begins with an eight-word excerpt attributed to the Emerald Tablet, circa 3000 BCE: "As above, so below. As within, so without." But after the brief acknowledgement, Byrne and her team of best selling authors and coaches never again mention this Emerald Tablet nor the Hermetic philosophy and teachings associated with it.

Hermetic philosophy centers on Hermes Trismegistus, whose legend traces back thousands of years to ancient Egypt. Like many historical and religious figures from antiquity, man and myth have been hopelessly entangled, leaving us with accounts that are subject to interpretation, exaggeration, errors in translation, and outright

repudiation. Hermes Trismegistus appears to be a syncretism of the Egyptian god Thoth and the Greek god Hermes. The title "Trismegistus" means "Thrice Great" and refers to the three ancient branches of the wisdom of the universe - alchemy, astrology, and theurgy - that Hermes Trismegistus possessed and transmitted.

The Emerald Tablet was said to have originally been a mysterious stone or crystal-like green tablet on which a coded spiritual formula was succinctly written in bas-relief. According to documentation from eleventh-century German theologian Albertus Magnus, Alexander the Great found the Emerald Tablet in Egypt in 331 BCE when he discovered what he believed was Hermes Trismegistus's tomb. Alexander immediately ordered that the Tablet be transcribed and translated. By 400 CE, however, the Tablet itself was reportedly buried along with other texts and artifacts - some say on the Giza Plateau - to protect it from destruction by religious zealots who were burning libraries and from patriarchs who condemned the Tablet's mysterious and universal formula for personal transformation and collective evolution. But the wisdom was nonetheless protected and became the cornerstone for Hermetic sciences and philosophy.



The tablet reads -

***The Emerald Tablet of Hermes***

In truth, without deceit, certain, and most veritable.

That which is Below corresponds to that which is Above, and that which is Above corresponds to that which is Below, to accomplish the miracles of the One Thing.

And just as all things have come from this One thing, through the meditation of One Mind, so do all created things originate from this One Thing, through Transformation.

Its father is the Sun; its mother the moon.

The Wind carries it in its belly; its nurse is the Earth.

It is the origin of All, the consecration of the Universe.

Its inherent Strength is perfected, if it is turned into Earth.

Separate the Earth from Fire, the Subtle from the Gross, gently and with great Ingenuity.

It rises from Earth to heaven and descends again to Earth, thereby combining within Itself the powers of both the Above and the Below.

Thus will you obtain the Glory of the Whole Universe. All Obscurity will be clear to you. This is the greatest Force of all powers, because it overcomes every Subtle thing and penetrates every Solid thing.

In this way was the Universe created. From this come many wondrous Applications, because this is the Pattern.

Therefore am I called Thrice Greatest Hermes, having all three parts of the wisdom of the Whole Universe. Herein have I completely explained the Operation of the Sun.

*In attempting to transmute lesser metals to gold, the alchemist is trying to achieve perfection, but not just in the material sense. At the same time he is striving to achieve perfection of the self. Just as compounds are broken down, dissolved and recombined in the alchemist's laboratory, death is not seen as the end of things but simply their breaking down into their components, a state from which they are combined with all things in existence.*

*It is the belief that the immortal 'spirit' can leave the mortal body behind and thus the self can become immortal.*

*"Leave the senses of the body idle, and the birth of divinity will begin." - Hermes*

## **The Seven Principles Of The Hermetic Philosophy - Short Version**

These Seven Principles will be discussed and explained later in the book. A short explanation of each, however, may as well be given at this point.

1. The principle of mentalism. ALL IS MIND, THE UNIVERSE IS MENTAL This principle explains the true nature of energy, power and matter.
2. The principle of correspondence. AS ABOVE, SO BELOW; AS BELOW SO ABOVE. This principle enables man to reason intelligently from the known to the unknown.
3. The principle of vibration. NOTHING RESTS; EVERYTHING MOVES; EVERYTHING VIBRATES. This principle explains that the difference between manifestations of matter, energy, mind and spirit result from varying rates of vibration.
4. The principle of polarity. ALL IS DUALITY. EVERYTHING HAS POLES; EVERYTHING HAS ITS PAIRS OF OPPOSITES; LIKE AND UNLIKE ARE THE SAME. Opposites are identical but different in degree. Opposites are only two extremes of the same thing, with many varying degrees between.
5. THE UNIVERSE IS RHYTHM. Everything flows out, and in.; everything has its tides; all things rise and fall. The pendulum swing manifests in everything, rhythm compensates. This principle of neutralization applies in affairs of the Universe, suns, worlds; in life, mind, energy, matter. There is always an action and a reaction, an advance and a retreat.
6. The principle of causation. EVERY CAUSE HAS ITS EFFECT; EVERY EFFECT HAS ITS CAUSE; EVERYTHING HAPPENS ACCORDING TO LAW. CHANCE IS BUT A NAME FOR LAW NOT RECOGNIZED. THERE ARE MANY PLANES OF CAUSATION, BUT NOTHING ESCAPES THE LAW.
7. The principle of Gender. Gender is in everything, everything has its masculine and feminine principles. Gender manifests on all planetary levels. Everything or person, contains the two principles within it, him or her.

*These seven principles are simple keys to the mysteries of matter-energy, spirit-mind, and consciousness. They can open the gateways through which a profound transformation of conscious life becomes possible. This book is an argument for undertaking such a journey, demonstrating that transformation on the mental and energetic planes will have immediate consequences in the material realm. Not one principle stands alone: all affect each other in a mode of reciprocation, thereby assuring the cohesion and unity of the multifaceted universe.*

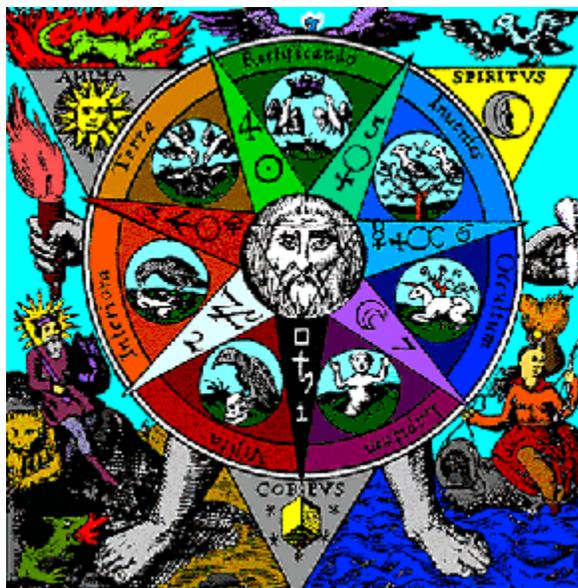
The *Kybalion* further states: "*Mind (as well as metals and the elements) may be transmuted from state to state, degree to degree, condition to condition, pole to pole, vibration to vibration. True Hermetic Transmutation is a Mental Art*"

Intention plays a vital role in mastering mental transmutation, and each of the seven principles is affected to varying degrees by the conscious *and* unconscious intentions of the practitioner.

Upon his extensive study of alchemy and its symbols, Carl Jung, the founder of analytical psychology, wrote an exhaustive work entitled *Psychology and Alchemy*. In his preface to the second edition, Jung writes, "I was led to postulate a 'collective unconscious,' a source of energy and insight in the depth of the human psyche which has operated in and through man from the earliest periods of which we have records." Wallace D. Wattles tapped into the concept of the universe as thought, when he wrote his classic, *The Science of Getting Rich*, in 1910: "Thought is the only power which can produce tangible riches from formless substance." Throughout the twentieth century and into the twenty-first, numerous works similar to *The Secret* convey their own version of the law of attraction - among them, Shakti Gawain's popular *Creative Visualization*, Deepak Chopra's *Creating Affluence*, and Wayne Dyer's *The Power of Intention*. The idea that our thoughts influence the manifestation of our reality is neither new nor radical.

## The Secret Eight Step

*The Octad keeps recurring in our reality because it is fundamental archetype on all levels of creation. Physically, psychologically, and spiritually, the number Eight drives hidden processes of transformation. The secret Eighth was a basic component of Hermetic doctrine since the beginning and has been openly incorporated into a number of esoteric disciplines. The Universal Laws of Transformation always result in a new level of Creation that is the Eighth. The Eighth step is a second beginning, sometimes even a Second Body, organized on a higher level (or Octave) that represents the fulfillment of what the previous Seven Steps had prepared.*



Could the One Thing of the Emerald Tablet be expressing itself in an emerging pattern as we approach a New Age? The apocryphal Gnostic texts of the Nag Hammadi speak of these coming changes: "Recognize what is in front of you, and what is hidden from you will be revealed to you, for there is nothing that will not be made manifest." In another Gnostic treatise, Discourse of the Eighth, Hermes Trismegistus offers to guide us from the Seventh Sphere, the last of the Seven steps in the physical realm, to the Eighth realm beyond words.

There is yet another step in our mandala, which is the eight step mentioned by Hermes and other mystics. It is depicted in the Azoth drawing as a return to the first ray, the ray of Salt and Saturn that points to the Cubic Stone. For at the end of the alchemical process, we arrive back where we started from, only now empowered and embodied in an eternal stone that represents an incorruptible higher consciousness.

There is one last message hidden in the Azoth drawing. All the Latin words contained in the outer ring that connects the rays of transformation spell out a summary of what has taken place: *Visita Interiora Terrae Rectificando Invenies Occultum Lapidem*. This means "Visit the innermost parts of the earth; by setting things right, you will find the hidden Stone." The first letter of these seven Latin words spells out the Hermetic word VITRIOL. Vitriol is the first of the arcana, which are secret chemicals in a laboratory experiment that summarizes the entire process of transformation. Acidic Vitriol is the fiery liquid energy that drives physical transmutation and becomes the brain ambrosia or hormone that brings on the materialization of spirit in man.

By recognizing and working with the forces of alchemy, anyone can not only tap into hidden sources of creative power but fundamentally transform themselves and their life

situations. The seven-stepped Emerald Formula, summarized in the phrase *Solve et Coagula* ("Dissolve and Coagulate"), is the driving force behind our physical, psychological, and spiritual lives, and by directly applying it - by beginning the Great Work within ourselves - we can change our reality on all levels. By mastering each step of the Emerald Formula we can transmute each of the hidden metals of our being into gold.

# Alchemy: The Great Work

The alchemists attempted to perfect the One Thing of Hermes, which they called the First Matter, by using specific physical, psychological, and spiritual techniques that they described in chemical terms and demonstrated in laboratory experiments.

However, while the alchemistic philosophers spoke in terms of chemicals, furnaces, flasks, and beakers, they were really talking about the changes taking place within their own bodies, minds and souls.

Thought in their public writings the alchemists always scrambled the order of the steps of transformation, the Emerald Tablet presents them in their original order. The tablet, which seemed to contain a recipe for the perfection of anything; was the cookbook that guided the alchemists through their experiments.

As the first chemists, the alchemists believed they could harness the forces described in the tablet and actually transmute lead into gold in their laboratories. But there was one big difference between the alchemists and modern chemists: The alchemists believed their own state of consciousness would somehow affect the final outcome of their experiments, that the purity of their own souls was a factor in perfecting the metals. For that reason, they worked as much on themselves as they did with their chemicals.

As the first psychologists, the alchemists identified a mixture of seven metals, or mental traits, that were responsible for an individual's "temperament". The transmutation of these base metals into gold was the perfection of their personalities, and, as mystics, they meditated frequently, exposing their very souls to the processes of alchemy.

Actually, the alchemists always had two laboratories in which they worked. One was the laboratory of beakers and smelly chemicals in which they sought physical perfection. The other was an inner laboratory, a quiet place the alchemist created within himself, a place of no confusion where the Work could proceed on his soul.

So alchemy was never just an intellectual exercise or an artificial discipline. Alchemists were intimately involved in their experiments and believed their thoughts and feelings were actual forces that could influence the results. It is a view of the power of consciousness, the crucial relationship between observer and experiment, which some quantum physicists have only recently accepted.

The Emerald Tablet is a Rosetta Stone for deciphering the alchemists' secret manuscripts. Their entire art was based on the principles it contained, and they followed the operations it described with religious zeal. In fact, in the so-called "Grail" layouts of the Emerald Tablet, in which the words were arranged in the shape of a chalice, the place where one grasps the Holy Chalice contains all seven steps. These seven operations are truly at the heart of both the tablet and the discipline of alchemy.

From the Nag Hammadi scrolls, discovered in 1945; it was learned that the followers of Hermes were practicing the Seven Steps of Transformation in their initiation ceremonies well before the third century. The probationary period began with the Lesser Mysteries, which were public lessons in the Hermetic texts and correct behavior in light of them. If the initiate progressed to the Greater Mysteries, he began an experiential journey through the seven planets.

By applying the operations of the alchemists, the initiate was able to overcome each of the planetary restrictions to return to the stars and be reborn as the true Self hidden in the soul, which is part of the Signature of God in each of us. Having conquered the planetary archetypes, the initiate became the adept, one who is skilled in the operations of alchemy. Next were oral teachings in a one-on-one setting in which the adept experience a profound alteration of consciousness and beheld the Hermetic truths directly. At this point, the adept became the Master.

# **The Emerald Tablet of Hermes Multiple Translations**