

# THE RIDDLE OF THE SPHINX

by

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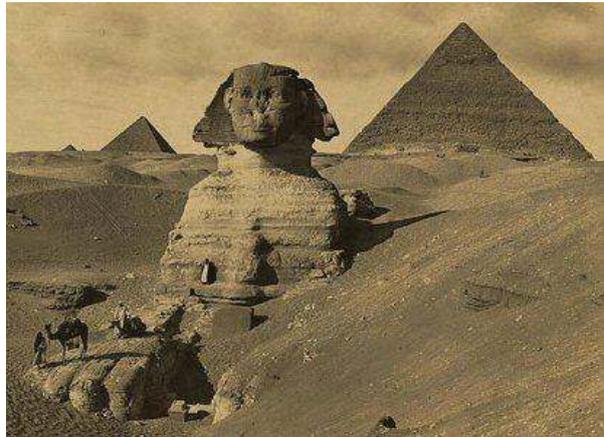
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## Introduction

An ancient legend tells of an intimidating Sphinx that sat high on the wall of the ancient Greek City of Thebes, and to all who passed by, the Sphinx posed a riddle. However, if the traveller could answer the riddle correctly, he was allowed to continue his journey. On the other hand, if he was unable to answer correctly, the traveller was destroyed by the Sphinx.

The esoteric Sphinx was a mystical creature that was comprised of four parts:

- 1) The feet and tail were those of a bull, and personified the element of earth.
- 2) The body was that of a lion, and personified the element of water.
- 3) The wings were those of an eagle, and personified the element of fire.
- 4) The head was that of a man, and personified the element of air.



## The Riddle of the Sphinx

Oedipus, a man who was travelling upon the road of life, approached the city of Thebes, and was confronted by the Sphinx and its riddle.

The Sphinx asked: 'What is the ultimate expression of the universe, and goes on four feet in the morning, goes on two feet at midday, and goes on three feet in the afternoon?'

Oedipus considered the question, and then responded, 'It is me! The answer is "man". As an infant, in the morning of life, man crawls upon all fours. As an adult, in the noon of life, he walks upon two feet. And finally, as an old man in the afternoon of life, he walks with a stick and his two feet, and thus he walks upon three feet.'

(Picture right - Oedipus and the Sphinx)



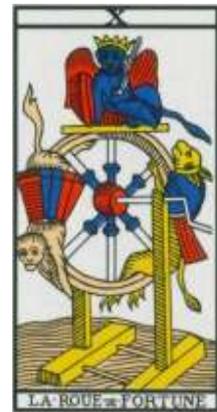
The Sphinx said, 'That is correct.' Being confronted with the correct answer, it turned and destroyed itself by throwing itself off the city wall, and died in the road before Thebes. Oedipus was then able to continue on his way without further restriction.

Esoterically speaking, the Sphinx represents a point of judgement on our journey of life. As cycles of experience are completed, we are confronted by the Sphinx, and are asked the riddle of life. Those who cannot declare the 'secret' and the 'purpose of life' will have to undergo further cycles of experience to further grow and find the answer by personal experience. Many will look to the Sphinx as God, or guide, or master, and will wait for it to impart direction. However, the Sphinx remains impassive and silent, and again the individual will have to undergo further cycles of experience to find the answer for himself.

### **The Hidden Portal - The door between 'that which is' and 'that which can be'**

Only the individual who correctly answers the riddle of the Sphinx by declaring himself as the 'secret and purpose' can enter the hidden portal, and move from the uncontrolled universal cycles of existence into the cycles of self-determination. In other words, the unification of lower and higher self enables the individual to understand his potential, and by choosing the direction of personal experience, he is able to take personal responsibility for the expansion of his consciousness.

When the individual realises that he is the focal point of existence, and discovers the experienceable universe is nothing more than the personified energy of his own potential, the riddle of life is solved. Universally-determined cycles are understood and mastered. The sphinx, the barrier to the self-determined cycles of expansion, is overcome, and the individual progresses in his evolution (the expansion of existence by experience). This process and portal is described in the symbolism of the Key of Atlantis over which the Sphinx presides. This concept is confirmed in the symbolism of the 10th Tarot Card ('La Roué de Fortune' - The Wheel of Fortune) where the sphinx takes its true position as the authority that presides over the key of Atlantis and the Hidden Portal.



(Picture Right - The Sphinx and the Hidden Portal)

In other words, the combined sphinx and the Key of Atlantis represents the hidden portal between the universally-determined cycles and the self-determined cycles that lead to unification and self-actualisation.

You, the individual, are truly the ultimate expression of the unfolding universe, and the revealed symbols of the o.e.v are the keys to the discovery of this reality.

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