

The following is an excerpt from *The Book of Maps*, the companion guidebook to the *Spirit Keeper's Tarot*, a hand-illustrated black and white tarot deck crafted with practitioners of the mystic arts in mind. The pen and ink drawings were inspired by woodcut prints from the late Renaissance. Symbology called upon is based predominantly on medieval European alchemy, astrology (the Sacred Seven), Hermeticism, Zoroastrianism, Abrahamic angelology, Kabbalah, Catholicism/Christianity, Sufism, and Egyptian mythology.

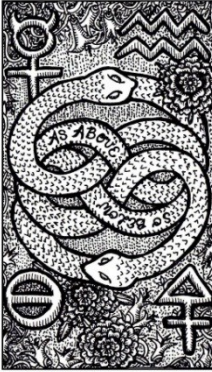


For more information about the deck, go to:

<https://benebellwen.com/spirit-keepers-tarot>

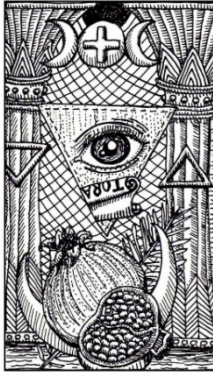
# First Septenary: Integrate the Self

♁ 1. THE MAGUS ♁



Divinity in Man: Powers of the Spirit

☽ 2. THE PRIESTESS ♀



Sanctuary of Isis

♁ 3. THE EMPRESS ♀



Gloria Mundi: Ourania's Gate

♁ 4. THE EMPEROR ♁



Commander of Intellections

♁ 5. THE HOLY SEE ♁



Master of the Arcanes

II 6. THE LOVERS I



Mystery of the Covenant

♁ 7. THE CHARIOT ♁



Chariot of Osiris

The First Septenary is the exposition of the narrative arc where the precise setting of a life path is revealed. Key 7: The Chariot marks the rising action.

Note how Key 0: The Initiate transitions into Key 1: The Magus when the serpent coiled around the cosmic egg in Key 0 arranges itself into an intelligent design of the double ouroboros in Key 1. This is the initiated power of the self, of Spirit evident in Man.

The first four keys bear many cross-relations. There is the intuitive pairing of Key 1 and Key 2 as the divine masculine and divine feminine, then Key 3 and Key 4 as the temporal feminine and temporal masculine. Yet Key 1: The Magus and Key 3: The Empress are also related by their common trait of manifestation and productivity. Meanwhile Key 2: The Priestess and Key 4: The Emperor are related to each other by their common trait of intelligence, aptitude, and reasoning. The Priestess is psychic intelligence while The Emperor is social intelligence.

The First Septenary of Keys represent the primordial family, both in terms of a divine pantheon that governs us and as the relatives that make us who we are. The First Septenary is about making sense of who we are, based on where we've come from, what influences us, and how we commence the journey of self-actualization. Reading Papus, these Keys convey Divine Providence and how to make sense of that Providence as it pertains to our inner selves. Initiation through the first seven Keys alongside a set intention for ancestor work can raise profound insights about the initiate's ancestors, ancestral memory, and psychic or spiritual heritage, such as the mystery traditions the Initiate may have been linked to in past lives.

When pathworking through the Keys of the First Septenary, the landscape pictured within the frame of the card is your starting point. As you navigate that realm, the Initiate will be receiving a gift or be given instructions or directions by the spirit of that Key to acquire something. It will differ for each Initiate, though the essential nature of the gift is in line with the essential energies of the card. For example, a sacred tool or altar tool is acquired after pathworking The Magus. A scholarly book or grimoire that helps the Initiate advance in Craft is come upon after pathworking The Priestess; successful production from Craft is achieved after pathworking The Empress; a pantheon or particular esoteric tradition presents itself to the Initiate that resonates deeply, after pathworking The Holy See, etc.

## Key 1: The Magus

*Attribute Manifested:* Focus, Mastery

*Theosophical Septenary:* Self

*Saint-Germain Key:* The Magus

*Path on Spirit's Journey:* Divinity in Man

*Sepher Yetzirah:* Life vs. Death

This is the primordial Mark of Creation. A double-headed ouroboros forms a double lemniscate knot. Inscribed upon its scales: As above, so below. At the four corners within reach of the magus are the four alchemical symbols. Top left: mercury for Air, the quality of enforcement; to know. Top right: water for Water, the quality of fluidity; to keep silent. Bottom left: salt for Earth, the quality of fruition; to do. Bottom right: sulfur for Fire, the quality of synergy; to dare. Of the four symbols, only mercury touches the serpent.

Surrounding the ouroboros are vines upon which fifteen white lilies and three mystic roses bloom. Fifteen is the sum of numbers in the Lo Shu magic square, a basic periodic table for the magician and the alchemist. Three calls to mind the Holy Trinity. Note that the magic squares for invoking the Four Archangels from the Empyrean Courts all add up to the sum fifteen. The three mystic roses are the Tria Prima. The coiled serpent here is reminiscent of the serpent coiled around the cosmic egg in Key 0: The Initiate. Here, that serpent has begun to form itself into an intelligent design.

The Magus is the touchdown point of Divinity in Man, when the Divine Unconscious Will becomes the Conscious Personal Will. The card is emblematic of the Powers of the Spirit. As above, so below: worldly knowledge is psychic knowledge. What you master inside of you, you will also master beyond you.

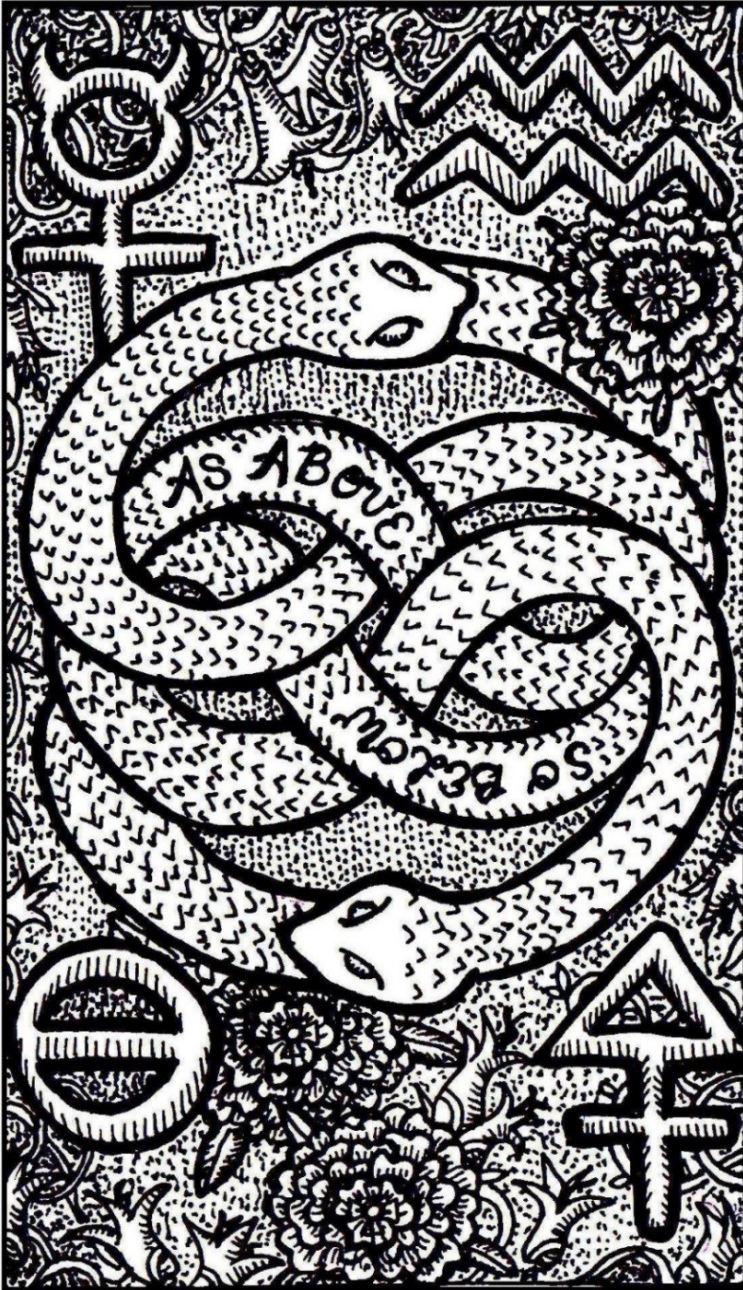
Successfully working through the lessons and the trials of Key 1 will endow you with a gift from The Magus, one of technical mastery over the four fundamental elements of the universe—actual and measurable development of a key ability in you: here, the Initiate pledges reverence to Wisdom, Will, the Word, and the Logos. Key 1's message: in the beginning, the Magus must speak the Truth (*Crowley's Liber B vel Magi*).

I took pains deliberating between the title The Magus and The Alchemist, which I believe is now reflected in the imagery on the card. Instead of the more iconic imagery of the wand, chalice, sword, and pentacle on a working table, I've decided to represent the same meaning with the four alchemical symbols for the four elements.

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I. THE MAGUS

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Divinity in Man: Powers of the Spirit

## Key 2: The Priestess

<i>Attribute Manifested:</i>	Esoteric Knowledge
<i>Theosophical Septenary:</i>	Soul
<i>Saint-Germain Key:</i>	Gate of the Sanctuary
<i>Path on Spirit's Journey:</i>	Creative Power
<i>Sepher Yetzirah:</i>	Peace vs. War

The Left Eye of Providence opens within the alchemical symbol for Water. The crown of the Triple Goddess appears above it, inscribed with the solar cross. In front of the Eye, a scroll inscribed with *Tora*—the Greater Law, the Secret Law, and the Word.

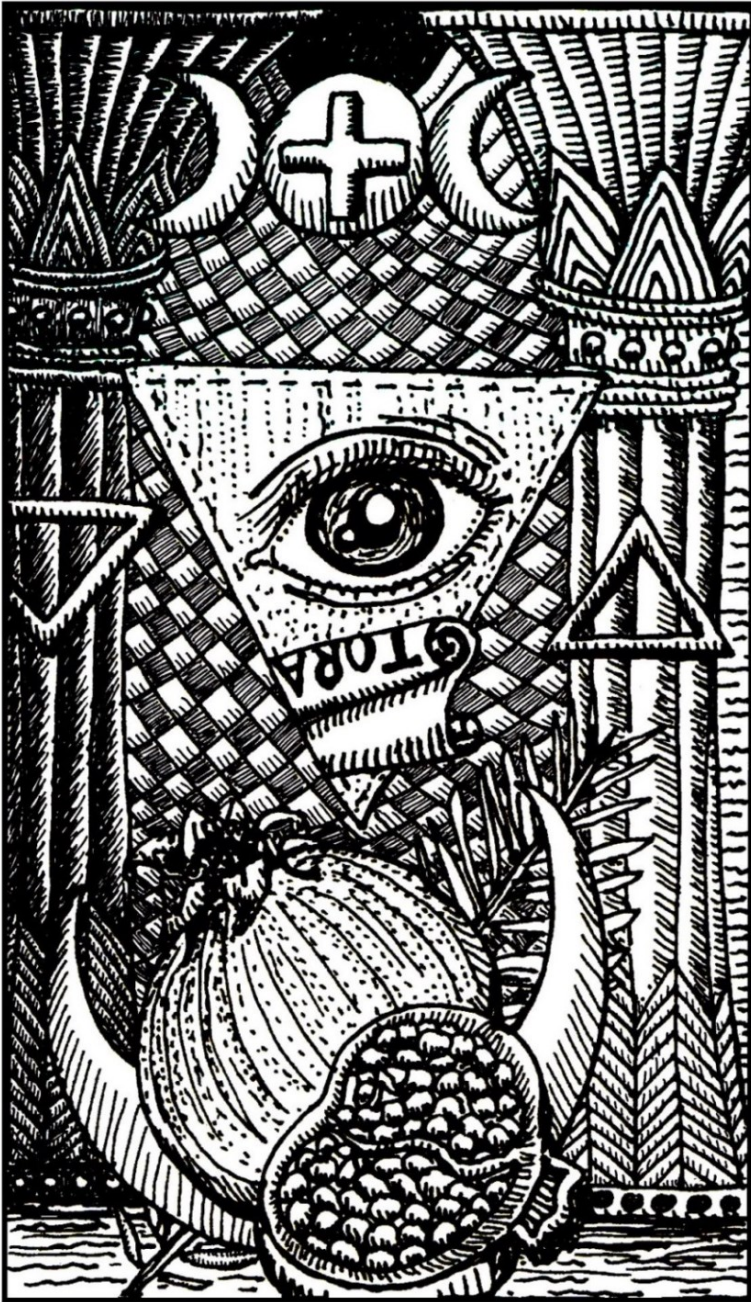
Behind the Eye, a veil woven of dark and light shrouds the Mystic Sea. Guarding the Eye stands the dark and light pillars of Jachin and Boaz from Solomon's Temple, featuring the sculptural relief of lily petals and pomegranate seeds. White lilies represent the Milk of Hera and that which gives sustenance to the gods. In the foreground, a rippling pool, upon which floats a crescent moon, palm leaf for eternal life, and pomegranates.

The Priestess is the Queen of the Angels. This Key marks the threshold into the Sanctuary of Isis. The codification of this Key is also a portal by which Artemis can come through. In Key 2, the Initiate communes with the Daughter of the Stars.

Woven into the Major Arcana is coded revelation of the Eleusinian Mysteries, an occult religious rite honoring Demeter and Persephone. In Key 2, the dark pillar is symbolic of Persephone's hair and eyes darkening when she descends to the underworld in winter; the light pillar is spring, when her hair and eyes lighten.

The prominent symbolism of the pomegranate in Key 2 associates the Key with the Temple of Solomon. It is symbolic of knowledge, wisdom, and divine teachings. According to the Torah, images of pomegranates are woven into a High Priest's robes. The pomegranate symbolizes spiritual and psychic abundance. The Priestess is also Sophia, the personification of wisdom and intelligence. This is the spirit of Holy Wisdom.

With the Key's association to the moon and moon cycles, marked by the crown of the Triple Goddess, Key 2 also designates the power and potency produced from the menstrual cycle. It is blood magic empowered by the Divine Feminine.



Sanctuary of Isis

(continued from Key 2: The Priestess)

Key 2 is a protected sanctuary in the underworld, whereas Key 18: The Necromancer gives access to the vast terrain of the dark realms. Consistently across Western occult texts on the tarot, Key 2 is noted as one of the most important cards in the deck, if one identifies as an occultist. Thus, if the Initiate fancies the study of the occult, then consider taking greater pains through ritual working of Key 2.

### **Key 3: The Empress**

*Attribute Manifested:* Creativity, Mettā  
*Theosophical Septenary:* Will  
*Saint-Germain Key:* Isis-Urania  
*Path on Spirit's Journey:* Desire, Restlessness  
*Sepher Yetzirah:* Riches vs. Poverty

The Mother of Thousands wears a crown inscribed with the twelve signs of the zodiac, a tribute to Ourania (Urania), and the seal of a lotus blossom with three orbs symbolizing the Holy Trinity and also the Three Pure Ones. Ourania is the daughter of Zeus, granddaughter to Uranus, and the divine feminine personification of the Holy Spirit. This is also the card of prophesy and sooth-saying through the study of stars, celestial configurations, and the Key of astrology. Note: Compare it to the prophesy from The Priestess.

Her crown also symbolizes Musica Universalis—the Harmony of the Spheres. The constellations are a form of music, a harmonic of mathematics and the Holy Spirit. The dress of The Empress features a mandarin collar and is embroidered with stars; the single knotted button on her collar is reminiscent of a raspberry. Irises hang from her ears. A dragonfly masks her true identity. She is an encoded revelation of the Holy Grail.

In the foreground, a swan guards the Empress Mother's scepter, the swan being an emblem of Venus, symbolic of poetry, the arts, and creativity. The orb atop the scepter is reminiscent of the alchemical symbol for salt. Placed before the swan are raspberries, symbolic of fertility.

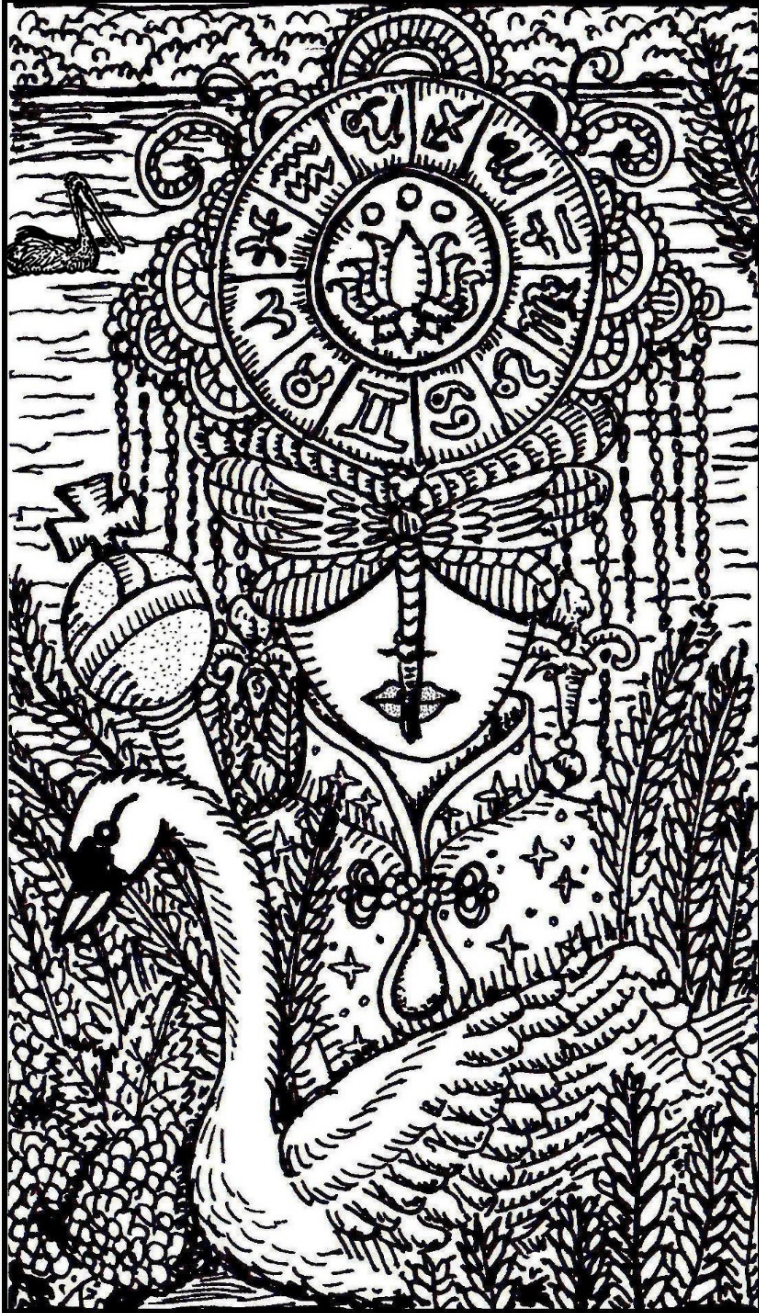
The swan and scepter are fenced in by an abundance of golden grain. She is the Giver of Plenitude, emanating of Ceres or Demeter; she can manifest as the Empress Mother of the West. Deep green waters in the distance are symbolic of how humankind evolved from algae blooming in the seas. In the background, behind her right shoulder is the resting alchemical Pelican: only by blood, sacrifice, and resurrection comes to fruition the Great Work.



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3. THE EMPRESS

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Gloria Mundi: Ourania's Gate

*(continued from Key 3: The Empress)*

The Empress is connected to Venus, and so she is the Bringer of Light. Note that Key 19, The Warrior, is the Bringer of Dawn. The spirit of Key 3 is Gloria Mundi—the glory of the world. The pelican behind her conveys a Mother’s Love. *Cf.* The spirit of Key 21 is Anima Mundi—the soul of the world. Their numerical relative Key 12 is the bridge between glory and soul.

## **Key 4: The Emperor**

*Attribute Manifested:* Temporal Power

*Theosophical Septenary:* Desire

*Saint-Germain Key:* The Cubic Stone

*Path on Spirit’s Journey:* Power to Control

The crowned Father of Thousands holds the Sovereign’s Orb and Scepter. Here, the Father manifests as an eagle, his wings outstretched, with the horns of a ram. Or is that the face of a hawk? As noted in the Chaldean Oracles of Zoroaster: “God is He having the head of a hawk... He is the Father of Equity and Justice, self-taught, physical, perfect, and wise—He who inspires the Sacred Philosophy.”

Feathers upon the Emperor’s head form a subtle ecclesiastical sign of the Divine Secrets, in rivalry against Key 5: The Holy See. Both his beak and his crown form the astrological glyph for Aries.

The Biblical reference to the eagle reveals the Emperor’s power, endurance, and formidable character: the eagle is one of four dimensions of creation. He is a protector. The golden eagle is also iconic of Zeus. Call upon The Emperor to restore order in your life path, to enhance personal discipline, and to sharpen your discernment. Key 4 is the fiery masculine power that the Initiate must master.

The Orb features a pictorial map of the formulas for creation and destruction. The Scepter, an ankh, is the Key of Life that the Emperor wields. The ankh is also the Knot of Isis, implying the subtext that the Emperor cannot rule without the blessing of the Divine Mother (and perhaps also The Priestess). Embroidered upon the chest plates of his armor: cubic stones featuring the glyphs for Mars, and Phoenician letters standing for Keys 11 and 18, Key 4’s relative cards, and wheels of the ogdoad. The Emperor is the Commander of Intellections, holding dominion over the Cubic Stone. Upon the sleeve of his right shoulder, a dragonfly facing the direction of Key 3: The Empress.

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4. THE EMPEROR

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Commander of Intellections



Of the Mystical Orphic Hymns (100-300 AD)

IV  
TO HEAVEN

*Recited while burning frankincense.*

Great Heaven, whose mighty frame no respite knows,  
Father of all, from whom the world arose;  
Hear, bounteous parent, source and end of all,  
For ever whirling around this earthly ball;  
Abode of Gods, whose guardian power surrounds  
The eternal world with ever during bounds;  
Whose ample bosom, and encircling folds  
The dire necessity of nature holds.  
Ethereal, earthly, whose all-various frame,  
Azure and full of forms, no power can tame.  
All-seeing, source of Saturn and Time,  
Forever blessed, deity sublime,  
Propitious on a novel mystic shine,  
And crown his wishes with a life divine.

V  
TO AETHER

*Recited while burning saffron incense.*

Oh ever untamed aether, raised on high  
In Jupiter's dominions, ruler of the sky;  
Great portion of the Stars and lunar light,  
And of the Sun, with dazzling luster bright;  
All-taming power, ethereal shining fire,  
Whose vivid blasts the heat of life inspire;  
The world's best element, light-bearing power,  
With starry radiance shining, splendid flower;  
Oh hear my suppliant prayer, and may thy frame  
Be ever innocent, serene, and tame.

X  
TO NATURE  
LAST OF THE DEMIURGIC CAUSES

*An excerpt. Recited while burning aromatic incense.*

Nature, all-parent, ancient and divine,  
Oh much mechanic mother, art is thine;  
Heavenly, abundant, venerable queen,  
In every part of thy dominion seen.  
Untamed, all taming, ever splendid light,  
All ruling, honored, ever still the same,  
Nocturnal, starry, shining, powerful dame.  
Thy feet's still traces in a circling course,  
By thee are turned, with unremitting force.  
Mingling, all-flourishing, supremely wise,  
And bond connective of the earth and skies.  
Leader, life-bearing queen, all various named,  
And for commanding grace and beauty famed.

## Key 5: The Holy See

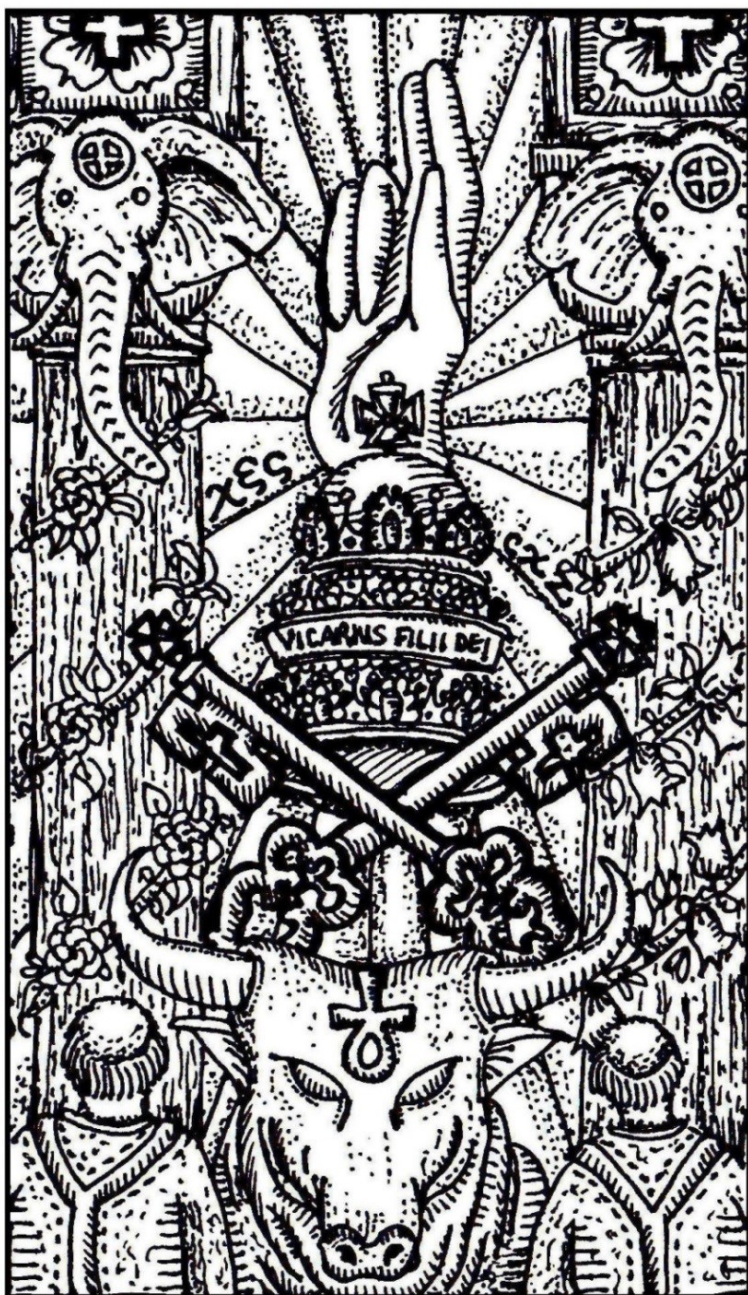
*Attribute Manifested:* Spiritual Power  
*Theosophical Septenary:* Force  
*Saint-Germain Key:* Master of the Arcanes  
*Path on Spirit's Journey:* Highest Intellect

Between twin pillars is the Right Hand giving the ecclesiastical sign of Divine Secrets. In front of it, the crossed Keys and triple crown of the supreme hierophant, watched over by two ministers. Upon their cloaks is the letter "Vav" (Y) in the Proto-Canaanite alphabet. One pillar marks the Master's authority to bind; the other pillar marks the Master's authority to permit: such are the authorities of the enchanter designated by the Holy One. At the top of each pillar: the mystic rose and below it, the stone relief of an elephant with a solar cross upon its head. This calls upon a reference to Hindu cosmology of the world elephants, and also of the elephant's elemental correspondence to Earth (the elemental correspondence of Key 5). Here, the elephants also call in the presence of Ganesha.

Coiled around the pillar to the Hand's right, a vine of red roses; around the pillar to its left, a vine of white lilies. Inscribed upon the triple crown: "Vicarius Filii Dei" (Vicar of the Son of God, in reference to Saint Peter, though by another view, also denotes the Antichrist, where the Latin phrase, reduced to its Roman numerals, sums up to 666). Inscribed in the red and orange halo surrounding the hand: χξζ (Greek, "cxz"), Man's Number associated with the Beast. Standing in the foreground is the white bull, with one black horn and one gold, and sapphire eyes. Behold the powers of the divine, manifested as exoteric, orthodox doctrine. An inverted ankh adorns the bull's head, representing the absence of the blessing from the Divine Mother. In a different light, this is also the Holy Bull, the beneficent bull of the Avestan scriptures.

The Holy See is a spirit who is known as the Master of the Arcanes and a Channel of Grace. These are the gates of established thought, sovereignty concomitant with The Emperor's temporal power. The Holy See acts and speaks for Thousands. In *Spirit Keeper*, The Holy See is the card of challenge: challenge authority, defeat the papal bull, and walk through, beyond, and to the other side of the twin pillars toward Key 12: The Outlaw, the counterpart to Key 5: The Holy See. These two cards reveal the building and establishing of your inner temple so that you might commune directly and personally with the Divine, no longer relying on intermediaries. At the point of Key 5, the Initiate must begin to open the inner ear to hear the voice of the Holy Guardian Angel. Begin developing clairaudience.

8 5. THE HOLY SEE Y



Master of the Arcanes

## Key 6: The Lovers

*Attribute Manifested:* Passion

*Theosophical Septenary:* Astral

*Saint-Germain Key:* The Two Ways

*Path on Spirit's Journey:* Love

In the foreground, a dragon and phoenix face off. The dragon guards the Tree of Life, rendered per the Ari Paths, though the tenth sefirah Malkuth is concealed from view. The phoenix guards the Tree of the Knowledge, upon which the Kundalini serpent is coiled, guarding a single born fruit, a fruit implying the hidden sefirah Malkuth. A bow and arrow forms the Arch of Swords over the dragon and phoenix, cast by their Holy Guardian Angel—the feathers of the arrow are from the Angel's own wings. The arrow is also a symbol for Mercury, the planetary ruler for Gemini.

Inscribed on one side of the bow: *Solve et Coagula* (“dissolve and concentrate,” an alchemical maxim balancing a time to rest and a time to act, which leads to successful completion of the Great Work). Inscribed onto the other side: *Mutatis Mutandis* (“the necessary changes having been made”). Upon the arrow itself: *Law of Providence*. The arrow is aimed into an empty chalice placed between the dragon and phoenix. This is the Secret Law of Divine Providence. The bow and arrow reveal God's love for humanity. This is the sacred marriage of the higher self and the ego.

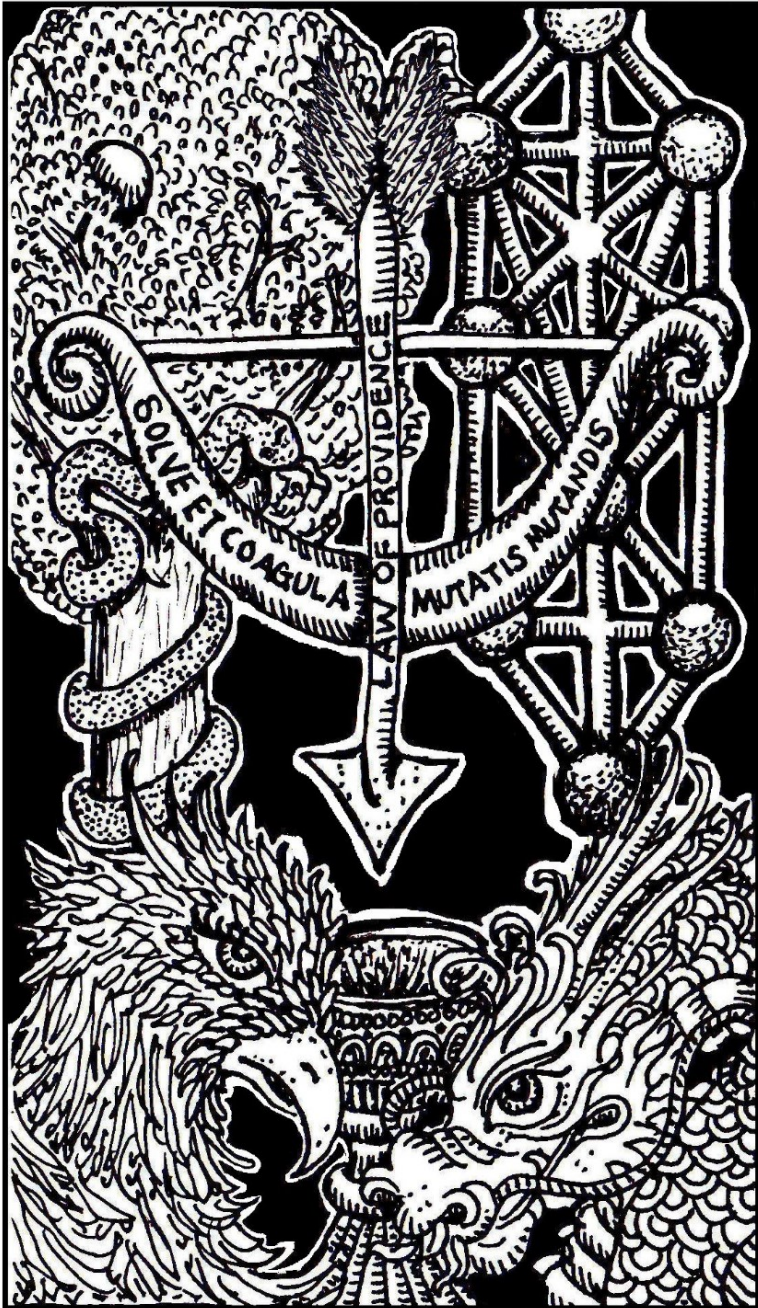
In Chinese symbology, the phoenix and dragon together represent the perfected marriage of yin and yang, matrimonial bliss, and are a power couple, as two of the most powerful celestial animals of heaven's kingdom.

Key 6 marks The Two Ways. First is the choice that must be made between the Two Ways. Key 6 is also the choice between instant gratification in your Path and delayed gratification. Second in the Mystery of the Covenant comes the marriage of both ways so they become one and the same. It is the anima and the animus in conflict, in struggle, and then in perfected harmonious union. In alchemy, the Two Ways are Analysis then Synthesis.

Successfully working through the lessons and the trials of Key 6 will endow you with a gift from the spirit of The Lovers, one of attracting into your personal sphere compatible and harmonious relationships. The realm that Key 6 leads to is the first realm to achieve dominion over toward Perfection of the Soul. This is the card of interpersonal relationships to integrate.



II 6. THE LOVERS I



Mystery of the Covenant

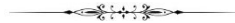
(continued from Key 6: *The Lovers*)

Although I'm not fond of interpreting Key 6 to mean love, romance, or marriage, I've embedded those implications into the card's imagery nonetheless, or at least I hope I have. Also, is it just me, or is the sexual subtext in the imagery on this card (e.g., the single fruit jutting out on the Tree of Knowledge, the slithering serpent heading toward it, or the arrow and chalice) palpable?

## **Key 7: The Chariot**

*Attribute Manifested:* Creating Change  
*Theosophical Septenary:* Material  
*Saint-Germain Key:* Chariot of Osiris  
*Path on Spirit's Journey:* Freedom by Knowledge

This is the primordial spirit and personification of Free Will. Successfully working through the lessons and the trials of Key 7 will endow you with a gift from the spirit of The Chariot, one of achieving an ambitious undertaking and mastery over exoteric knowledge. The realm that Key 7 leads to is the first realm to achieve dominion over the self, and toward attaining wisdom and knowledge of the Divine Law.



An armored knight, adorned with an eight-pointed star on the helmet—the Seal of Prophets, steers a canopied chariot pulled by two sphinxes, dark and light, representing the Urim and Thummim. One sphinx has eyes for seeing the light; the other has only an open mouth, for speaking the truth. The hind leg of the sphinx who speaks is crushing its own tail, symbolizing the self-inflicted pain of speaking the truth. Crescents on their headdresses are reminiscent of divination moon blocks.

Visualize the canopy as blue as a summer night sky. It is held up by the four pillars symbolic of the Tetragrammaton, YHVH, in the Proto-Canaanite alphabet. A shield bearing the cardinal zodiac signs: Aries, Cancer, Libra, and Capricorn, indicated by the ram, crab, balancing scales, and goat respectively, conceals the knight's acquired treasures: the Sacred Relics. Inscribed upon the chariot: *Lux et Veritas* (light and truth), a translation of the Urim and Thummim. In the journey toward the godhead, Free Will must be steered by Light and Truth.



7. THE CHARIOT

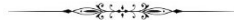


Chariot of Osiris

*(continued from Key 7: The Chariot)*

This card is a recognized achievement of the first series of challenges presented to the Initiate. A tangible glory will have manifested for the Initiate at this point. The Initiate will have become The Chariot, holding within the inner self acquired insight. The Initiate is now a carrier of attained knowledge. Yet how the Initiate can use the knowledge, what is to come of this knowledge, the Initiate still does not know. At this point, the attained knowledge is materialized, but useless, without discernible practical application.

Manifestation of this card is an omen to the Seeker that the Grail has been attained; however, the Seeker appears to lack knowledge of how exactly to utilize the attained knowledge.



When the sun is in a cardinal sign (Aries, Cancer, Libra, or Capricorn, though when the sun is in Cancer would be optimal, given the astrological correspondences for the Key), pathwork through The Chariot. An evening hour after sunset is also optimal.

Begin by ringing ceremonial bells or beating a ritual drum to clear the space. Light incense that is personally amplifying. Sit or lie down comfortably. Gaze at the imagery of the card. Recite the words “Lux et Veritas” repeatedly—Light and Truth. Chant it to yourself in a manner that the chant will alter your state of consciousness. Study the imagery on the card and inscribe it into your memory. Set the card aside when you’re ready and close your eyes. Before continuing further, call in your Holy Guardian Angel by title, so if no name is yet known to you, simply call out, “Angel who has been here from the beginning to this day, who has been with me and will be with me from my cradle to my grave, Angel who safeguards and protects me, please see that no harm comes while I’m away.” (or any variation on that recitation). Then lift your astral self out of your physical body and propelled by the engine in your mind, push your astral self forward and into the imagery of The Chariot card. Say your respectful greetings to the charioteer, then step into the chariot. As you turn to face the same direction shoulder to shoulder with the charioteer, the landscape you see will be unique to you. You will see what is ahead of you. The chariot will move forward. Continue the astral journey and when you return to your physical body, you will bring with you knowledge or insight you did not have before.



The seventh Key in each of the Three Septenaries marks a critical milestone in our journeys. There is a cardinal quality to the first seventh, which is Key 7: The Chariot, prognosticating achievement and the exercise of audacity.

Consistent with the threes and fours in sacred geometric union, leading up to the Four Pillars represented by the four fixed signs that form the Magi's Pyramid revealing four trinities, here we see the four cardinal signs among the Three Septenaries, but as one of the four is the first seventh, a trinity (Keys 4, 11, and 15) is formed out of the cardinal four.

Also, the three cardinal cards excepting The Chariot come from each one of the Three Septenaries. In esoteric astrology, the motto of Aries in the spirit of Key 4 is "to be." Libra in Key 11 is "to balance" and Capricorn in Key 15 is "to use."

Key 7 is manifestation of self-discovery, leading you to decide with conviction what your Path shall be. Key 8 begins the journey of walking that chosen Path. This is the attainment of worldly knowledge.