

Thoth and the Tarot

The Amazing Secrets

by

Douglass A. White, Ph.D.

* The Historical Origins and Development of the Tarot Cards.

Cards with all sorts of themes and dedicated to all sorts of serious purposes, games, or gambling have existed since the invention of paper. The concept behind cards certainly predates the medium of paper. It must go back to when man first began to make symbols and developed tokens for inscribing them. These could be used for business or pleasure, religion or art. Some of the earliest examples we have are the Sumerian clay Bullas. These held clay tokens used to represent various objects used in commerce. We also find that statues and images of gods, kings, and other important figures occur in almost all early societies. Recently in Africa archaeologists found decorative shells that go back tens of thousands of years.

In this book we are going to focus on a particular set of images that forms the pack of cards known as the Tarot. For hundreds of years this pack has been used for cartomancy as well as many amusing card games. It has shown remarkable consistency over the years. Scholars of the occult have claimed that the pack's Trump cards originated in ancient Egypt or came from the Jewish Qabbalah. Many modern scholars scoff at these claims. Yet no one has proposed a coherent theory to explain the origin of the powerful archetypal images that form the set of Trumps. Why were these particular images chosen?

The origins of the Tarot are not clear. We know that cards existed in Europe as early as the 14th century and Tarot decks definitely were in use by the 15th century since a few cards from that time survive. What is remarkable is that the basic themes depicted on the Major Arcana cards were already established and have remained consistent to the present day.

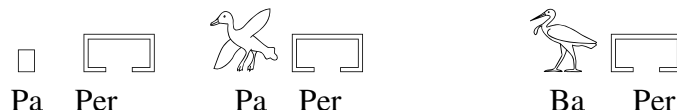
The Tarot cards are the product of contributions from several major civilizations over a period of many centuries and represent a wonderful combination of folk art and the highest teachings of esoteric scholars. Thus we can not attribute the Tarot to the creative genius of any historical individual. In fact the natural division of the deck into Major and Minor Arcana, with the subsequent evolution of modern playing cards from the Minor Arcana suggests that the Tarot may be a merging of several games or systems of knowledge into a single creation.

Although the Major and Minor Arcana may come from the same source, it is also possible that the Minor Arcana developed independently in several locations. The

simple reason for this is that the Minor Arcana are based on the number ten displayed with four suits. Ten is the most widely used base for the counting numbers because people have ten fingers. In many parts of the world the year clearly divides into four seasons due to earth's orbit around the sun. The directions also tend to form a natural set of four because of the revolution of the earth on its axis and the convenience of building quadrilateral architectural structures. Therefore we should not be surprised to find the emergence of games based on four and ten in ancient China, India, and the Middle East. Indeed we find evidence of the ancient Chinese playing games with coin-like disks and bamboo staffs written or printed on various media such as bamboo or wooden slips and later by block printing on paper. We also find the Indians celebrating the ten avatars of Vishnu and four-armed deities wielding sets of four symbolic implements (such as Vishnu's lotus, mace, conch, and discus). In the Middle East we find the ancient Qabbalistic tradition of the Tree of Life unfolds in ten major stages with four traditional levels of creation (Atziluth, Beriah, Yetzirah, and Assiyah). We also find in ancient Egypt that the four sons of Horus are commonly depicted on a table before Osiris, the god of the mature intuition. The symbolic Djed tree amulet represents the "Tree of Life" in which the body of Osiris was found entombed. Traditionally it has four parallel branches along the upper portion of its trunk.

* Paper Cards and the Technology of Paper Making

The practice of using paper cards of course depends on the invention and availability of paper. We know that the ancient Egyptians developed a form of paper made from the papyrus reed that grew along the banks of the Nile. The English word "paper" derives from the word "papyrus", a Greek word. Since the Egyptians invented papyrus, we would expect that this word would come from their language. Current theory about this is that it comes from **pa-per**, what belongs to the house -- that is, the Egyptian royal bureaucracy. The **pa** is written either with a little square glyph or a picture of a bird with its wings spread in flight. It is a demonstrative pronoun or means "belong to", "my" or "mine". The bird glyph also has the ideographic meaning of "to fly". The Egyptians also used a similar sounding word, **ba**, for the aspect of the soul that corresponds to our thinking mind and connects physiologically to the breath. The hieroglyph used is also a picture of a bird. This is an excellent way to represent invisible air, since birds fly through the air. So birds are traditional symbols of thoughts, and thinking is the primary function of the mind. The notion of ownership is a thought conceived by the ego-mind of a person. Thinking rides on the breath as you discover if you practice meditation and experience transcendence. When the mind transcends thinking, the breath automatically stops. Breathing and thinking also stop when we die. The word **ba** also means a book or papyrus roll or a document. A document is an object with our thoughts inscribed on it. **Per** is a house. So a **ba-per** can be a book-house, or library. **Per** also means 'to come out', and by extension has the sense of 'speech'. Books are a medium by which the mind can speak out.



* The Book of the Dead and the Tarot Trumps

The oldest known book in world is the "Book of the Dead". Papyrus scrolls with its text go back to the dawn of Egyptian history. Its real title is **Pert em Heru**, "The Coming Forth into the Daylight". Heru is a homophone for the name Heru (Horus), the Sun God. What is it that comes forth into the Light? What gets enlightened? The soul (conscious mind) does. Indeed the book speaks in detail about how the ba harnessing the bull-like creative **ka** energy emerges into enlightenment and freedom. The resurrected person becomes Osiris and praises the secret Ka energy: "Homage to thee, Bull of Amentet, behold Thoth, the King of Eternity, is with me! I am the Great God in the Boat." (Papyrus of Ani, Plate V.) The text begins unfolding ancient secrets by explaining its title.



ka



Amentet

"The beginnings of the praisings and glorifications (sekhu) of coming out and going into the glorious (khut) Nether-World of the gods (Neter-khert) in Beautiful Amentet, of coming out by day (Pert em Heru) in forms of existence (Kheperu) all (Neb) of which pleaseth him (meri-f), of playing at draughts (Senet), and sitting in the Hall, and coming forth as a Living Soul (Pert em Ba Ankhi)." (Plate VII; see page 276 for the glyph text.)



P-R-T



M



H-R-U

The hieroglyph for glorification and glorious is a pictograph of the ibis, the totem of Thoth, but with a head scarf. The Aa-khu are the Great Immortal Beings of Light who live and love forever. Khu is a secret name of Tehuti or Thoth, the creator of the Tarot. The light being forms of the ibis have crests, but they have the same curved beak as Thoth does. Amen means hidden, invisible. Amentet is the invisible world of the "dead". The Aakhu or sakhus exist forever as immortals in the paradise of Undefined Awareness. By the daylight of consciousness the gods and light beings come forth into various forms of existence as creations (Kheperu, the scarab that symbolized creation or becoming). The root MER means to love. Our word **amorous** comes from this ancient Egyptian word (as also "merry" and "Mary" and "marry". The gods come forth as living souls and sit around in the Hall and play. The game they play is Senet. Senet and Mancala are two of the oldest games in the world. People have played them for thousands of years in Africa.



khu



S - N - T



(glyph)

The hieroglyph for Senet actually looks like a playing card. It has the meaning of to pass, a model, a copy, a likeness, or an archetype. The two little slanted lines represent "two" or "double", the notion of a copy, or likeness. With the card glyph often is written another determinative -- the glyph for "going into". I believe that this glyph complex describes a card game. The glyph looks like the standard cartouche in which Egyptians wrote the names of gods. They used seals (usually shaped like scarabs) to impress the hieroglyphic names of gods onto papyrus cards. Then they played various

games with them. One of them would be a game like charades. You drew a card and whatever god's name was on it, you would create yourself to become (kheper) that archetype. This is the origin of the game of Tarot. Each card depicts the likeness of one of the gods. The god is [in] you and you can manifest his or her energy in your life.

* The Ancient Egyptian Game of Senet

The game of Senet probably goes back to before the first pharaohs. The earliest example we have is from 3050 B.C. Originally Senet was played on a board with 30 squares laid out in three rows of ten squares each. The squares had numbers on them. This immediately brings to mind the Minor Arcana of the Tarot. They had three suits of ten pips each. A cycle through the 30 squares came to represent one month. Each square was a day. As the game evolved, it became not just an amusement but a symbolic means of communicating with the dead or the gods -- a kind of Ouija board. Instead of two people playing, a single person could play with a god or demon or dead person's spirit. Later still the game became a spiritual initiation into the realms of the Aakhu. Each square on the board became an Egyptian deity. Thoth was Priest, Horus, the guide. The player's secret guide was Men, the Senet Board. The deity of fecundity and the technology of the ancient Cobra Breath technique had as the glyph for his name a simplified pictograph of the Senet Board -- how strange. Was this a coincidence, or did it go back thousands of years to the very beginning? The journey through the 30 stages of the Board became the Journey of the Fool, the pawn, through life, through the afterlife, or passing back and forth between the invisible and visible worlds. The glyph for a pawn actually looks very much like the crown of Southern Egypt. Men (or Min) was an autochthonous deity from Southern Egypt. The first Pharaoh of Egypt was called Men, and wrote his name with the same glyph as the God Men -- the Senet Board glyph. It may be that, as in chess, the pawn can become -- or even inherently is -- the Pharaoh.

Men 

In Chapter 147 of the Book of the Dead (Budge, p. 291-294) the deceased passes 7 Arits or Doorkeepers (Planets?) in the fifth division of the Tuat. The Tuat is usually called the Land of the Dead. Actually it is the "Neter" world, the world of the gods who choose to play in the body. In English slang this word lives as the twat of a woman. This is the underworld in which the gods play and souls live gestating in the ovary until they are ready to be born. (Externally it is the starry night sky.)

The Magic Circle, Tuat



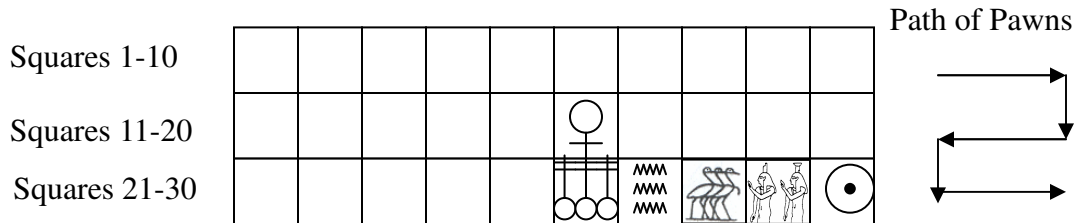
The Magician's Pentacle

Ar-t also means an Eye. Ar-t Heru is the Eye of Horus. The Tuat is a hidden Eye that sees the invisible world. In Chapter 146 (Budge, p. 295-298) he passes through 21 Pylons, each guarded by a deity. This looks like the 21 Trumps plus the deceased as the Fool. The 21 plus the 7 make 28, a lunar month. We are just two shy of 30, the solar month.

The Game Senet is about passing. When playing the game with a human opponent, your pawns can pass the opponent's pawns or even trade places with them. When

playing solo in a ritual context, the board acted as a bridge between worlds or states of consciousness.

In the Tuat Thoth was at the first pylon, and Anubis with some assistants was at the 21st pylon. Viewed from above the traditional Senet board looks like this.



Square 26 seems to be Un-Nefer, a title of Osiris, the Beautiful One, as he rules in Abtu. Square 27 is Mu the cosmic waters of Nun, and represents the state of Undefined Pure Awareness. To most people this is the Death Trump. Square 28 shows the Aakhu, or ba souls, when the potential energy of Nu becomes actualized as viewpoints emitting and absorbing light. Square 29 is Isis and Nebthys. They form the poles of the Kundalini Shakti energy. Square 30 looks like Horus/Ra, Creative Source, the OverSoul. Square 15 in the middle of the sequence is Ankh, the Breath of Life.

The classic scene of the Weighing of the Heart in the Judgment Hall of Osiris (e.g., Papyrus of Ani) shows along the top a row of gods witnessing the proceedings. They sit in ranks on 10 square thrones, closely resembling a row on the Senet Board. They are the Board of Directors, so to speak. Here is how they appear in the Papyrus of Ani.

"Senet" Witness Gods	Trump (proposed)
1. Heru-khuti, the Sun God;	Sun
2. Tmu, (Adam), Lord of On, First Man, fashioned Shu's penis, Tefnut's womb	Tower
3. Shu, god of air and sunlight	Emperor
4. Tefnut, lady of heaven as a lioness;	Strength (A Lion-lady)
5. Seb (or Geb), the Earth-god;	World
6. Nut, the sky-goddess;	Star
7, 8. Ast (Isis) and Nebt-Het (Nebthys);	Priestess, Temperance
9. Horus;	Chariot (Warrior)
10. Het-Hert (Hathor);	Empress
xx. Hu (taste) and Sa (feeling)	Queen of Cups, Queen of Coins

Judgment Hall Scene: Weighing of the Heart

11. Osiris with table and 4 sons of Horus	Magician (With 4 Kings, 2 Queens)
12. Ani before Osiris	Hanged Man (Then Horus/Chariot repeats)
13. Ammit Chimera	Devil Chimera (Transmutation of Ego)
14. Thoth oversees Ritual Procedure	Priest (Maat is his Consort)
15. Maat (Feather in Scales)	Justice (Goddess of Truth)
16. Anubis (Black Dog)	Death (Adjusts the Scale of Justice)

- | | |
|--|--|
| 17. Ape | Fool (Goofs around with the Scales) |
| 18. Shai and Sphinx | Fortune (Sphinx Higher Soul above him) |
| 19. Heart of Ani (isolated in the pan) | Hermit (Cultivation of Honesty) |
| 20. Rennt ("Name Soul" Nurse goddess) | Moon (Teaches baby his name.) |
| 21. Meshkenet (Midwife Birth goddess) | Judgment (Birth and Rebirth) |
| 22. Ani and Tutu (I and Thou/Thoth) | Lovers |

The 22 Trumps tell the Fortune of the Deceased. Hu is a secret name for Thoth. Hu and Sa together make H*USh, the Hebrew word for feeling. They are two of the four senses: taste, touch, sight, and hearing. Isis and Nebthet double as two queens, sight and hearing. The Board of Directors is a committee of senior gods. (Did the Roman Senate get its name from this game?) The thirty squares on a Senet Board make the basis for a calendar with 12 months of 30 days each. This gives a 360-day year. The last 5 squares on the board probably serve double duty as normal days and as intercalary days to complete the year of 365 days. The Ankh square in the middle can serve as Leap Day.

The name Senet means a likeness, copy, duplicate, or archetype. Senet and the Judgment scene were copied everywhere in Egypt. Another meaning of Sen is to smell, to breathe, or sniff. Our sn-words related to smell come from this root. For example, "sense", "sniff", "snort", and so on. In Hebrew the word carries over as Shin, tooth or ivory. The pawns on the Senet board could be made from ivory, and they looked like teeth as they stood on the board. SNIT means a second time, or secondly. This connects to the duplication idea in the root Sen. The notion of copying and images fits nicely with the archetypes of the gods in each square and with the use of papyrus. Senet "boards" could be drawn on the ground, carved in stone, or printed on paper. In his detailed study of the development of Senet, Professor Peter Piccione notes evidence in some papyri Senet drawings of folding. This suggests that the squares could be treated as "cards", although the sequence of the cards seems to have been very important to the Egyptians.

The invention of paper by the Egyptians provided a lightweight medium suitable for widespread literacy. This marvelous technology led to the assignment of a particular god as the tutelary deity of writing as well as the arts and sciences that it facilitated. The peculiar god assigned by the Egyptians as the totem for this basic tool of civilization was called Tehuti (Thoth), the same god who became Square 1 on many Senet boards. The Egyptians represented their tutelary god of the technology of writing in their iconography in the form of a human body topped with the head of an ibis (See cover of this book). The choice of the ibis as the animal totem for the technology of writing almost certainly derives from the common occurrence of this bird along the Nile banks, the environment in which the papyrus reeds grow.

Tehuti as the spirit of writing also became associated with the rites for the dead. He became the scribe who records the results of the weighing of the heart in the hall of judgment. He is thus associated with the "underworld" and thus the ritual use of the Senet Game of Passing. Interestingly the Hebrew word **TaH*aT** or **TeT** means "under".

The Tarot cards owe their widespread propagation and popularity to the convenience of

paper and printing techniques, the fundamental technology that has enabled the development of modern science. Therefore it is fitting that the god of the invention of paper and writing should also be known as the magician who founded technology and the author of the Tarot cards. The Egyptian invention of writing and paper literally underlies all the knowledge of modern technology that we have accumulated and passed on over the past six thousand years.

It is strange that the Egyptians used paper for thousands of years and then it disappeared. The earliest surviving example is from 2400 B.C., but they had it long before then. The Greeks and Romans methodically wiped out Egyptian civilization, and burned the great library of Alexandria. Julius Caesar burned part of it while besieging the city in 47 BC. More was destroyed during civil wars in the 200's. Then in 391 Archbishop Theophilus of Antioch had all the rest burned as dangerous heretical materials. By 400 A.D. nothing was left of the papyrus tradition and Europe went back to using animal skins. For a long time only a few monks knew how to read or write. In 104 A.D. a Chinese invented the method of making modern paper from wood pulp and rags. This technology gradually filtered westward. By 750 it reached Samarkand. By 793 it was in Baghdad. By 950 it got as far as Cairo. Paper had returned to Egypt. In the 11th century it reached Moorish Spain, and in 1151 it reached Christian Spain. Italy finally found out about paper in the 13th century, establishing its first papermill in 1276. The Chinese also rediscovered woodblock printing by 868 (the earliest surviving example), although we know they used it before then. It wasn't until 1399 that Gutenberg printed his Bible and Europe started to emerge from the Dark Ages.

We do not know for sure whether the Minor Arcana of the Tarot developed independently in ancient Egypt or the Middle East. Nevertheless it is almost certain that traders, travelers, and soldiers transported Chinese versions of early card games making use of paper westward during the period of the Mongol Empire in the 13th century. Subsequently such games became part of the culture of the Ottoman Turkish Empire that arose in Anatolia in the wake of the Mongol invasions and stretched across the Middle East and through North Africa. Before the Chinese developed paper players made "playing cards" by writing symbols with a brush on slips of bamboo. They also used wood or ivory or other materials. With the introduction of paper, they developed a variety of games adapted to sets of paper slips. Some were based on Che-ma-pao, or Chinese Chess. Some used the symbols of dominoes. The popular Chinese game of Mahjong carries on this ancient tradition using Coins and Bamboo sticks, the same basic symbols as the Tarot Disks and Wands, but inscribed these days on plastic tiles. Even the arrangements of the symbols on these Mahjong tiles look like Tarot cards. Non-Chinese players who "borrowed" these games could not read the Chinese characters written on many of the tiles, so they substituted other symbols such as swords and cups.

At this stage there were no court cards in the Asian Minor Arcana. The four season cards of Mahjong-type games when introduced to the Middle East continued to be printed with fancy floral decorations since Islam frowned on the representation of human figures. But the Islamic people omitted the Chinese characters since they did not understand them. It seems likely that the introduction of the court cards occurred after the decks entered

Europe. Probably this happened after the Minor Arcana had already been combined with the Major Arcana Trumps that came from the Egyptian/Phoenician/Hebrew milieu. This was a natural development because the trumps already carried depictions of human figures. In addition the four suits became associated with the four major classes of society: the decision-makers (swords), the spiritual leaders (cups), the traders (coins), and the workers (staffs). Our thesis at this point is that the Egyptian tradition had been lost or suppressed, so the cards revived when the Asian form of the game came into the Middle-East. The dormant tradition of the Senet Deck shaped by the influence of Hebrew and Arabic Qabbalistic traditions retained some memory of the system and adapted it to the old Phoenician/Hebrew alphabet. The return of a technology of cheap, convenient paper served to revive and re-popularize the ancient tradition. However, it no longer looked ancient Egyptian.

א	ב	ג	ד	ה	ו	ז	ח	ט
י	כ	ל	מ	נ	ס	ע	פ	צ
ק	ר	ש	ת	ך	ם	ן	ף	ץ

This is the Hebrew "Senet Board". This Qabbalistic arrangement of the Hebrew alphabet divides the letters into three groups according to their numerical values:

1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,	A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, T*
10,20,30,40,50,60,70,80,90,	I, K, L, M, N, \$, O, P, Tz
100,200,300,400,500,600,700,800,900,	Q, R, S, T, K*, M*, N*, P*, Tz*.

There are 27 letters in all. They form three rows with 9 letters in each row. However, the numbering system is based on 9 rather than 10. There is no 0. Also, the original Phoenician/Hebrew alphabet had only 22 letters. To fill out the Board 5 extra letters had to be created. These were variant forms of the letters K, M, N, P, and Tz. These would correspond to the final 5 squares on the Senet Board, and the Intercalary Days. Thirteen months of 27 days comes to 351. Thirteen plus one more day makes a year of 365 days. I do not know if Hebrews played parchisi-like games with such layouts, but the Qabbalists definitely played with the alphabet, making all sorts of elaborate codes with it.

* Naibi and Tarocchi

In the Middle East the Turks referred to the newly popular playing cards as Nabi or Naibbe. Early references to cards in Europe also used this term. This word comes from Arabic and traces back to the Hebrew word Nebi that refers to a prophet. The Hebrews call the writings of the prophets in the Old Testament "Nebiyim". Similarly the first five books, or Pentateuch, of the Old Testament are called Torah (the "Tour"), possibly referring to these books as a "tour" of ancient history from the beginnings to the time of the ancient Israelite judges, kings, and prophets. The remainder of the Old Testament is called Ketubim, or "(miscellaneous) writings", and includes historical

chronicles, poetry, proverbs, and stories. The term Naibbe suggests that people used the cards for prophecy as well as gaming.

Some believe that the mysterious name Tarot (pronounced "tah-roh") is related to the Torah of the Old Testament, but we must take into account another possibility. The earliest European Tarot cards seem to appear in Italy and southern France (e.g. Marseilles) during the 14th century. The cards in Italy to this day are called "Tarocchi". Other parts of Europe play related card games called Tarok. It seems to me quite reasonable that merchants trading in the Mediterranean region encountered Turks playing various card games and imported the cards under the generic name of "Turks" as shorthand for "Turkish Playing Cards". The spelling that became popular in England and later in America derives from a French spelling -- "Tarot". This may be a misspelling of "Tarok" that led to a subsequent dropping of the pronunciation of the final consonant on analogy with French words. In the light of this possibility it may turn out that the name Tarot simply derives from the historical accident that the Italians received the cards from the Turks and thus thought of them as a Turkish amusement. Many European countries play card games called "Tarok". In Russia there is a popular card game called Durak (the Fool). This may also come from the same tradition. It may just be a coincidence that the Russian word for Fool sounds like the word used for Tarok decks, a set of cards in which the Fool plays the central role.

The court cards seem to appear with the introduction of the Tarot to Europe. Perhaps they reflect the Medieval interest in hierarchical classes of society and the special privileges of the nobility. In any case each suit acquired picture cards representing a king, queen, knight (or prince) and page (or princess). The knight usually rides on a horse, and each member of the royal entourage carries the symbol of his suit.

*** Blood and Paper**

Merchants in Marseilles began printing cards at least by the middle of the 15th century. This started much earlier as the people in Southern France picked up on the Moorish introduction of paper in Spain in the mid-twelfth century. This was a major step in the introduction of paper and printing technology to Europe. The simple process of impressing single sheets of paper from wood-block carvings formed a major step in the development of broadside presses and eventually the evolution of printing, the evolution of books, and our modern press media. These developments under the influence of the heathen Turks and Moors were developed with the Cathars, a group of Christians already not very obedient to the Pope. This constituted a major threat to the Roman Church's monopoly over political power, education, and indoctrination and may be the real reason why Pope Innocent III (1198-1216) declared his "Albigensian Crusade" not against the "heathen" Turks, but against the Cathar Christians living in southern France. The pope enticed greedy knights from Northern France with the notion of grabbing lands and castles from the Cathars. This led to a massive "ethnic cleansing" that continued with varying intensity from 1209 to 1255. By 1307 the Pope's partisans eliminated the powerful and wealthy Templar order that was based in southern France and attempted to annihilate all followers of the Cathar "heresy". Many tens of thousands of Christians

were tortured, burned or simply slaughtered in the bizarre "Crusade" of Christians against Christians. Jacques De Molay, the last Templar Grand Master, was slow-roasted in 1314.

Numerous conspiracy theories surround the Albigensian Crusade, not the least of which is the "Holy Blood, Holy Grail" hypothesis. (See the popular book by this name.) The essence of the theory is that after the crucifixion of Jesus his immediate family felt that the political climate in the Middle East was very unhealthy for them. So they migrated to southern France, which was at that time a province of the Roman Empire. The disciples of Jesus had wanted Him to establish a new religion, but the family of Jesus had wanted Him to assume his mantle as the heir of King David and King Solomon, to throw off the yoke of Rome, and restore the glory of ancient Israel.

The Grail theory further postulates that Jesus' close friend and faithful follower, Mary Magdalene, was actually either his wife or his mistress. This explains her frequent appearance at his side at critical points in his life, including the curious story of how she discovered that his tomb was empty. According to the Bible Jesus was buried in a family cave vault owned by an uncle of Jesus, Joseph of Arimathea. Why was Magdalene there alone in the private family garden by the tomb? Where were the disciples? Magdalene must have had a very special relationship with Jesus to have such access to this private garden. The Grail theory postulates that she was actually part of the family. The "Holy Blood" theorists believe that at the time of the crucifixion Magdalene was either pregnant or already had a child by Jesus. Magdalene, Joseph, and Mother Mary secretly raised the child in the mountainous Languedoc regions of southern France. Family members and close friends formed a secret society of bodyguards with the aim to protect the child and his heirs from harm and to advance the cause of Zionist restoration. Proponents of the theory suspect involvement of the Merovingian kings, the Templars, and the Cathars in an elaborate secret conspiracy that spanned many centuries. Scholars believe that the word Cathar came from the Greek Kathar, which means to clean or purify. In English we say that something that cleanses is "cathartic". That word comes to the Greeks from the Hebrew T*eHeR, which also means to clean or purify. When the Greeks borrowed words from Hebrew, they often metathesized them the same way many foreign (or even native) English speakers say "ax" instead of "ask", "nucular" instead of "nuclear". The Cathars knew about Qabbalah and knew that KeTheR is the crown on the Tree of Life. The word Cathar very likely contains a secret pun on "Kether", the crown sephirah of the Qabbalistic Tree of Life a fitting title for the hopeful new spiritual and secular leadership of the heir of Jesus' throne. "Caesar" and "czar" or "tsar" are words derived from the Hebrew word for crown. K\$ is the Hebrew word for throne. As we shall see, this word goes back to ancient Egyptian. The hieroglyph AS means throne, the seat that supports the king. It also is the name of the Goddess Isis, the queen of Osiris. K- means "as" or "like", but also means an honest heart. KSR means fit, honest, to succeed. SR is a king. TR or TUR is the dove of peace, and the spirit of exploration. TURH is the Torah, the law. In some dialects of Hebrew the T's sound like Th's or S's, so these words sometimes get mixed by mistake or by wordplay.

In any case the theory maintains that the Cathars were a secret royalist (and probably also Qabbalistic) faction of Christians based in southern France with some branches even

extending into Italy. They did not like either the Pope or the Greek Orthodox Church very much. They kept to themselves, practiced vegetarianism, and -- rather like the later Protestants -- followed their own personal beliefs. To them Jesus was the "crown" sephirah on the Tree of Life. For a while the Merovingian knight-kings with the assistance of the Templar knights were quite successful in carrying on their secret plan for the restoration of the Holy Blood, Holy Grail. They managed to capture Jerusalem, secured and excavated the remains of the Temple, and held territory in Israel in the hands of French Kings of Jerusalem for almost 100 years (1099-1191). Fortress cities such as Acre maintained a safe corridor to Jerusalem for Christian pilgrims to the Holy Land. The Templars also became quite wealthy and powerful as protectors of pilgrims to the Holy Land and developed an elaborate banking system for lending funds to travelers in need. Eventually Acre fell to the Saracen Arabs and Turks in the great siege battle of 1189-1191 and the French were pushed back out of the Holy Land.

The name Magdalene means "of the Tower". This is an interesting hint at the Tarot trump called The Tower. The iconography of that card depicts a castle-like tower with a crown on it being blasted by lightning with people falling from its turret. This may be a veiled reference to the destruction of the Cathar (crownist) castles during the Albigensian Crusade. The High Priestess trump card depicts a mysterious woman sitting at the doorway to the Temple of Solomon. This may originally be a picture of Mary Magdalene as the "key" to the restoration of the Temple. Although the Roman Church portrayed her as a prostitute (hierodule?), the Cathars may have put her on the same footing as the Virgin Mother Mary. In the Languedoc region she is especially revered. Thus the High Priestess becomes the proper Trump card for the Sign of Virgo. One medieval deck shows a nun as the High Priestess. Some Christians wanted to elect her as the first female Pope, but the Church poisoned her and outlawed such notions.

The Death card shows the standard image of the Grim Reaper that emerged as a cultural icon from the horrors of the Black Death that ravaged Europe during the 13th and 14th centuries. The card usually also shows a decapitated head with a crown on it, suggesting that even kings were not exempt from the Reaper's scythe. However, we can also interpret it as a graphic portrayal of the extermination of the Christian Cathars by the Roman Church. Many tens of thousands were butchered or burned at the stake in this terrible ethnic cleansing. Some versions of this Trump show a bishop pleading in vain for clemency. The card suggests that no such clemency will be shown. With such dangerous political readings for the Trumps possible, we are not surprised that the Church felt threatened by the Tarot, and possession of the cards could get one arrested by the Inquisition and burned at the stake as a heretic or a witch.

Writers often mention the role played by wandering gypsies in the popularization of Tarot cards. Gypsies used the cards as a medium for fortune telling. Many Europeans mistakenly assumed the gypsies came from Egypt (whence their name), when actually they came from India. In any case we know that the cards entered Europe and spread through various levels of society since we have hand-painted versions that were commissioned by noble families in Italy such as the Visconti-Sforza cards. The evidence suggests that the gypsies simply used the cards for fortune telling because they

were already popular in Europe.

For many other interesting details concerning what is known about the history of the cards as well as reproductions of many historical cards the reader would do well to consult Stuart R. Kaplan's **Encyclopedia of Tarot** in 3 volumes. Kaplan, the owner of U.S. Games, has made a hobby of collecting Tarot cards and publishes many decks through his company. He compiled his encyclopedia to share the information he had gathered over the years. It is an excellent resource for information about the Tarot. For more recent editions of the cards the best approach is to browse the web and to look through available catalogs. The Tarot has now become a world phenomenon, an essential part of the "New World Order".

The modern popularity of Tarot cards came about due to the gradual spread of Tarot through Europe, particularly to Germany, Switzerland, and Spain. The French seem to have contributed both the development of the modern "poker" playing card set of Minor Arcana and the development of esoteric theories about the mystical origins of the Trumps in the occult traditions of ancient Egypt and the Hebrew Qabbalah.

*** Influence of the Occultists**

I shall briefly mention a few of the occultists who became key contributors to the development of Tarot theories and popularity. Court de Gebelin (1725-1784), whom I quoted at the beginning of the book, was one of the earliest to develop the theory that the Tarot cards originated in ancient Egypt. One of his followers, Alliette (fl. 1783), a wigmaker who went under the name of Etteilla (his own name spelled backwards) greatly popularized the theories of Gebelin in Paris. Etteilla also developed and promoted his own version of the Tarot that he called **The Book of Thoth**. In the mid 19th century a priest by the name of Alphonse Louis Constant (using a Hebrew version of his name as his nom de plume, Eliphas Levi Zahed) carried the esoteric theories much further. Levi believed that the Hebrew Qabbalists preserved and transmitted the Trumps from their original designer, Thoth-Hermes. Levi had a powerful influence on occultist thought of the 19th century. In 1853 he visited England and shared some of his ideas with a group of British occultists (including Kenneth Mackenzie, A.F.A. Woodford, Wynn Westcott, and S.L. Mathers) who founded an occult group called the Order of the Golden Dawn. The Golden Dawn members enthusiastically translated Levi's works into English. Arthur Edward Waite (1857-1942), another member of this group, subsequently spent considerable time studying the traditional cards and Levi's interpretations. With the help of artist Pamela Colman Smith, he designed his classic Tarot deck. The Rider-Waite deck (so-called because it was designed by Waite and published by Rider and Co.) has become a primary model for the 20th century evolution of the Tarot deck. The artwork of Ms. Smith has had a more profound influence on the development of the Tarot representations in the 20th century than any other source.

The modern poker card designs stabilized during the 17th century in France. From 1628 the English king Charles I granted a special charter to the "Company of the Mystery of Makers of Playing Cards of the City of London". From that time on the government

banned foreign-made playing cards in England and imposed a tax on the purchase of cards. But English cards eventually followed suit with the French, adopting the current court card designs, double-ended figures, and corner indices developed by the French. Today the English-style playing cards are used worldwide for games such as Poker, Blackjack, Bridge, Whist, Cribbage, Rummy, and so on. Many forms of continental playing cards continue to follow the more traditional designs that are closer to the original Tarot.

Levi's students, Papus (Gerard Encausse, 1865-1917) and the Swiss occultist, Oswald Wirth also strongly influenced Tarot deck development during the late 19th and early 20th century. Wirth designed an elegantly simple deck that incorporated key iconography of the trumps and retained the earlier tradition of representing the pip cards (1 through 10 numbered cards) with multiples of the suit symbols in the same way as modern poker cards. Waite took the liberty of interpreting each of the pip cards with a symbolic picture drawn by Ms. Smith. Waite's illustrations aided the beginner to get a feeling for the cards, but also put a strong Smith-Waite slant on the pip card interpretations. In this book we will draw the reader back to the original sequence of numbers from one to ten and present a study of their cardinal and ordinal values.

Another notable member of the Golden Dawn occult group was Aleister Crowley, (also known as Master Therion). Crowley also joined the German sex cult, the Order of Temple of Orient. While studying magic he became intensely interested in the Tarot. He accepted the Qabbalistic origins of the trumps but insisted that the correlation of data in the iconography and the order of the cards were incorrect. After a great deal of "Crowleian" research he created **The Book of Thoth** (Egyptian Tarot) with his theory of the cards and an accompanying deck illustrated with mystical swirling colors and designs painted by Lady Frieda Harris. The title he bestowed on the Tarot reflects the theories of the French occultists such as Etteilla, and, from what we have discussed above, turns out to be an excellent name for the deck. Crowley's book and his posthumously published deck subsequently had a significant influence on the development and popularization of modern Tarot -- almost as great as that of Waite, although the swirling artwork of Ms. Harris has remained rather inimitable compared to Ms. Smith's simple icons. Nevertheless this author accords Crowley due credit for recognizing that the Qabbalistic occultists were on the right track but did not have the assignments right. However, as we shall see, Crowley failed to crack the code properly for a number of simple reasons. In addition, like Etteilla, he arbitrarily altered the names and attributions of some of the traditional trump cards. For example, Strength became Lust, and Judgment became Aeon. His expansion of the World to the Universe is perhaps acceptable, and many subsequent decks have followed this latter idea.

The American occultist, Paul Foster Case, (b. 1884) founded Builders of the Adytum (BOTA), an organization based in Los Angeles, California. Case refined the artwork of the Waite-Smith deck and produced one of the best sets of Trump cards this author has ever seen. He printed an edition of his Trumps in an extra large size with no colors so that the owner of the deck could add his own colors and study the dynamics of color in the energy of the Trumps. He also designed an elaborate course in the study of the Tarot

and its occult background. You can order this course and the BOTA cards on the Internet at the BOTA website.

C. C. Zain, leader of the Church of Light, developed a notable Egyptian style pack based closely on an early 20th century pack designed in France by Comte de St. Germain. This set a precedent for "Egyptian" decks. Other occultists who influenced the development of the Tarot include J.A. Knapp and Manly P. Hall. James Wanless designed a very creative deck that he calls the **Voyager Tarot**. The Tantra master Shri Bhagwan Rajneesh (Osho) produced a very creative deck that he called the **Zen Tarot**.

In recent years Tarot has become very popular throughout Europe and the United States. From there it has spread around the world and hundreds of different decks in various styles and with varying levels of quality have appeared. This leads us to the puzzling question of how to pick the best deck. What are the real meanings of the Major and Minor Arcana?

In this book we will present a fully integrated theory of the Tarot Trumps with analysis of the accompanying court cards and pips. Whether or not our theory is historically correct is not important. We may never know for sure the intent of the original designers. Nevertheless, as Crowley pointed out in his **Book of Thoth** (p. 4) "The only theory of ultimate interest about the Tarot is that it is an admirable symbolic picture of the Universe, based on the data of the Holy Qabalah." In this book I will present a coherent interpretation of the Tarot along with a practical way of using it for personal development.

*** The Main Hypothesis of This Book**

The Main Hypothesis of this book is that the Tarot Deck is a loose-leaf textbook that was developed in ancient times to present the basic knowledge necessary to become an educated person. It is a complete educational textbook unbound so that the student can play with it as a deck of flash cards or a game. The Trumps of the Major Arcana teach the alphabet, and the Minor Arcana teach the numbers. Combined we have a resource for promoting literacy and simple accounting skills. The icons of the Trumps further form a profound anatomy of human psycho-physiology, while the minors introduce the dynamics of physical processes and the relationships and responsibilities of society.

*** The Vedas, Vedic Gods, and Vedic Rishis**

In ancient India seers (Rishis) cognized the hymns of the **Rig Veda**. The pundits passed this wisdom on orally from generation to generation until the time when cultural contact with the Middle East led to the introduction of the alphabet. The pundits then transcribed the Vedic texts onto palm leaves and these texts were also handed down in a written form together with the oral tradition. Over time the original meanings of the Vedas faded from the memories of the pundits. They venerated the texts as holy writings and eventually raised the preservation of this wisdom to the level of a religious ritual. Eventually all that remained was the texts and the rituals. The original content was lost. Only a few isolated sages recalled or rediscovered from time to time the true intent of the Vedas.

The Vedic texts present mythical stories and panegyrics devoted to what seem at first glance to be nature gods. In fact, these portrayals are mnemonic literary devices to aid in teaching people about how the body and mind functions. In particular the **Rig Veda** is an anatomy of the human brain with its attendant nervous system. It is a map describing which parts of the brain control which aspects of the physiology and psychology. The Vedas treat each component of the brain as a living being with certain physical attributes and personal characteristics. Each such being, or deva, interacts with all the other devas to form an integrated wholeness of mind and body. The following chart shows the Twelve Houses of the Zodiac as Vedic Gods and lists their names and the portion of the brain that they represent.

Sign	Devata	Organ of Brain	Function
Aries	Rudra (Shiva)	Medulla Oblongata	Primitive Brain, instincts
Taurus	Indra (Bull-like)	Cerebral Cortex	Cognitive function, intellect
Gemini	Ashwins (Twins)	Pons	Hemisphere crossover, twin lobes
Cancer	Indra's Chariot	Skull	Protects Brain and transports it
Leo	Savitri/Agni	Corona Radiata	Midbrain signals to cortex
Virgo	Shakti (Parvati)	Pituitary Gland	Controls glandular system
Libra	Pushan	Cerebellum	Controls sense of balance
Scorpio	Shiva's Eye	Pineal	Intuition, Wisdom Eye
Sagit.	Indra's Bow, Vajra	Trigeminal Nerve	Sends efferent motor impulses
Capric.	Vishnu	Spinal Cord and Nerves	Afferent perception conduit
Aquar.	Soma	Cerebrospinal fluid	Bathes brain in hormones
Pisces	Shiva's Trident	Olfactory lobes	Sense of smell (plus pineal)

Other devatas include Hiranyagarbha (the egg cell), Tvastri (the pattern of folding and differentiation of cells to form the foetus), Lotus-Born Brahma (the foetus attached to the placenta), pitris (genetic codes), Narayan (womb), Saraswati (ovaries), Sesha (mother's spine), and so on.

The pantheons of the Zend Avesta, Greeks, Romans, and Northern European tribes -- essentially all the Indo-European mythologies are just local variations of the same basic system.

The set of Tarot Trumps is similar to the Vedic pantheon, but derives from Egypt and the Middle East. This system portrays the various organs of the human body along with their respective physiological and psychological functions. Since these organs are all important, we can not assign an absolute order to them. However, since the organs and their icons also represent the letters of the alphabet we can take the traditional sequence of the letters as the appropriate sequence for learning them. We will see that this sequence provides profound insight into the interpretation of the Trump card icons. However, this sequence by no means vitiates the "traditional" sequence, for that order also has its value. (N.B.: There is no standard traditional sequence. We only have several variant lists.)

The Alphabet and the Trumps

When we relate the Trumps to the alphabet, we do not refer to the English alphabet with its 26 letters, nor do we mean the ordinary Hebrew alphabet as many have supposed. The clue to the proper approach is in the number 22. The current Hebrew alphabet contains 27 letters, of which five are actually variations of original letters written in an alternate orthography to be used as finals. Scholars apparently invented the finals for at least two reasons. First, they aided in the scansion of texts by marking word boundaries. The ancient Hebrew texts of the Bible consist simply of arrays of letters. As with ancient Chinese texts the reader must scan and then parse the grammar of the text. This sometimes leads to ambiguities in interpretation. Therefore the substitution of final letter orthographies may sometimes represent arbitrary editorial decisions made by scribes, but definitely helps in parsing texts. Second, the expansion of the alphabet to 27 letters ($3 \times 3 \times 3 = 27$) enriched the numerical interpretations possible with the Qabbalistic methods of Gematria.

The fact that there are only 22 Trumps tells us that we must refer to the ancient forms of the Hebrew letters that many believe originated with the Phoenicians. Currently all the decks that are coded with Hebrew letters make use of the "modern" Hebrew forms. These forms are highly stylized with serifs and often bear little resemblance to the early letters. The early letters were pictographic signs derived from Egyptian and Sumerian glyphs. Each letter represented a physical object important to the nomadic Semitic peoples who originally selected them to represent their speech. Each symbol also had a name that began with the sound that the pictograph was chosen to represent phonetically. The name of a letter corresponded to the original meaning of the pictograph with which it was written. Each pictographic letter symbolized a cluster of meanings that derived from associations with the original object symbolized. Some of the pictographs represented important body parts (such as the eye or hand), and their names are still used today in Hebrew to represent those body parts. This is a clue to the actual intended significance of the letter-map. Other letters represented important items of daily life, such as ox, camel, house, rope, hook, and so on. Below is a chart showing the 22 letters with their names, pronunciations, meanings, and numerical values (each letter is also a number). In the next section of the book I present a detailed description of each Tarot Trump card's iconography and its relation to the particular letter that corresponds to it.

Letter	Sound	Name	Meaning	Number
𐤀	silent	aleph	ox, bull	1, 1000
𐤁	b, v	beth	house	2
𐤂	g, gh	gimel	camel	3
𐤃	d, dh	daleth	door	4
𐤄	h	hey	flail	5
𐤅	v, w	vav	hook, nail, shepherd's crook	6
𐤆	z	zain	weapon, knife	7
𐤇	H (aspirated)	h*eth	rope, net	8
𐤈	t (retroflex)	t*eth	wheel, nave	9
𐤉	y	yod	hand	10
𐤊	k, kh	kaph	palm of hand, cave	20

⠇	l	lamed	teaching	30
⠍	m	mem	waters (mayim)	40
⠏	n	nun	dwarf	50
⠋	s (retroflex?)	\$amekh	aid, staff	60
⠔	o	oayn	eye	70
⠕	p, ph	peh	mouth	80
⠥	tz	tzadde	TzD = to hunt, shoot	90
⠒	q (guttural)	qoph	monkey	100
⠑	r, (?)	resh	head, beginning	200
⠔	s, sh	shin	tooth	300
⠥	t, th	tav	mark, twins	400

A peculiar feature of the Hebrew language (and other Semitic languages written with this alphabet) is that many words (and perhaps all the words) in the language encode in the sequence of letter-sounds the meanings that they convey. Since such a small set of letters is used, each letter has to carry a variety of associated meanings. The meaning of a word in Hebrew is then derived by a conventional interpretation of the cluster of pictographic and ideographic notions encoded in its spelling. Obviously this means that each word may have a variety of possible meanings of which the Hebrews conventionally chose to use only one or several. It also means that the Qabbalistic principle of permutation (temurah) holds. All words containing the same set of letters, regardless of the sequence, will have the same constellation of component ideas. The sequence may give a slant to the meaning, but there will be an ideographic connection akin to an etymological relation. For example, ⠔⠇ is a Hebrew word for God, and ⠇⠔ is the Hebrew for "not". A reversed spelling of the name 'god' signifies the act of denial. As you can see from the above alphabet chart, 'god' is an interesting word. We will have a deeper understanding of it once we explore the Trumps in detail.

The Sequence of the Trumps

The iconography of each Trump card is an elaboration of the pictograph of a Hebrew letter. There are 22 letters in all. The Trumps have no particular a priori sequence, but we can definitely take the traditional sequence of letters in the Hebrew alphabet as one natural sequence. Notice that in the list above the numerical values of the letters do **not** follow the sequence of the natural numbers. **Therefore all the Tarot editions that put sequential numbers on the Trump cards are incorrect.** Also, the Fool is usually assigned the number Zero. The Hebrews used the expression **Ain Soph** (No Limit) to represent Nothingness. So the Magician's Eye (O = OaIN = 70) doubles as Zero.

We have to be careful when criticizing the creators of Tarot decks, because for much of its history the Tarot was a dangerous and forbidden subversive tool subject to harsh political and religious suppression. Decks survived among the populace as a form of amusement. Only adepts and occultists had access to deeper understanding of the cards. The occultists formed secret societies to study and share their interpretations. They deliberately scrambled the information printed on the cards so as to keep the "True Meaning" secret. Therefore the presence of Hebrew letters and numbers on the cards tells us these symbols are relevant, but does not guarantee that they are assigned correctly

to the Trump images. This is also true of Zodiac signs and other esoteric symbols that sometimes appear on cards. Even the published interpretations of the cards may not always be trusted.

Once we understand the proper meaning of each Trump, we will discover a "natural" order behind the sequence of Trumps and the sequence of the Hebrew letters. (This sequence in some ways closely resembles the sequence of the Hexagrams in the text of the **Book of Changes**.) There are several other traditional arrangements for the Trumps. This is not surprising since the Trumps are a deck of flash cards for the alphabet, and the alphabet letters can be combined in various ways to spell words. All possible sequences are viable sequences. This is the principle we use when we shuffle the deck prior to doing a layout. So each sequence of the Trumps is like a layout. It provides a viewpoint for studying the cards.

One traditional layout of the Trumps has the Fool and the Magician at the top. Then the remaining cards form four rows of five cards each below them in "numerical" order. This layout is quite interesting and reveals deep relationships among the cards. James Wanless has another layout that essentially flips the traditional layout upside down. The Trumps form a human shape, with the last five as the head, the next-to-last five as the arms and torso, the third set of five as the lower body, and the final group of seven as the ground the Arcana man stands on

Manly P. Hall has suggested another interesting arrangement. He places the 21 natural number Trumps within the 0 of the Fool, forming a pyramid with the Magician at the top. The Magician is the deliberate master of all the elements and their transformations. By means of his layout Hall suggests that we are all Fools and that all the Trumps are embodied in the Fool. We will see that there is an even better version of this idea of one Trump embodying all the others. As we shall also see, each Trump contains all the other Trumps. The deck is rather like a hologram.

Zodiac and Planets

Scholars and occultists have noticed a definite correlation between the Trumps and the signs of the zodiac. The 22 Trumps comprise the 12 zodiac signs, plus the 7 planets, plus 3 others. The three others are sometimes thought to be the '3 Mothers' that go with the 7 doubles and 12 singles, as described in the **Sepher Yetzirah**. However the "3 Mothers, etc." system does not gibe with the zodiac/planets system. Therefore either the "3 Mothers . . ." system is wrong or it is just a separate classification. I suspect that it has been scrambled. Further evidence for this is the lack of any known "double" pronunciations for G and R. Crowley suspected strongly that the obvious correlation with the zodiac for some of the Trump cards was evidence of some scrambling of the true sequence by adepts in order to disguise the teaching from non-initiates. I believe his hunch was correct in this respect. But the final list that Crowley produced looks just about as bad as any others. Maybe he too was holding out on the non-initiates.

Here is my suggested "astrological" sequence. I adhere as closely as I can to the traditional order, but there are a few cases that simply must differ.

After allowing for seven planets and twelve zodiac signs, we have three cards left over. Occultists think of these as the three "Mothers" and associate them with the letters S, M, and A. Alchemists tended to associate the traditional "3 Mothers" with Mercury, Sulfur, and Salt. However, I came up with another identification: Earth, Man, and Heaven. According to my assignment of the letters these three "Mothers" turn out to be B, H*, and Q. **H*aQ** means "limit", "custom", or "law statute". Hence in Hebrew the three letter sequence spells **B-H*aQ**, which means "within the limit, custom, or statute". Each letter and each word creates a boundary that defines a mental or physical creation. All these creations are found somewhere in the mind of Man that is bounded between Earth and Heaven. Therefore these three letters are the Core Elements of the Universe.

This layout sequence confirms and expands the idea promoted by Manly Hall. We accept the idea of putting the Fool at the top. However, he can not be the first card. Comparing our list with the traditional list, the first discrepancy is that the first card in our list becomes the Hanged Man. We place the Hanged Man first, above the Fool, because he is transcendental. He is the rope from which the whole Universe hangs. His outer frame is the zodiac. Count the 12 knots on the wooden frame. The planets form buttons, or chakras, on his suit. He hangs upside down with the Sun of his head glowing down below as his Root Chakra. Earth becomes his foundation. His second chakra is the Moon. In ancient India the Sex Chakra always has the crescent Moon symbol. This is the "fertile crescent" pubic/hip bone that shields the bladder. The Fool has a cerebral rectal inversion. Just above the Moon there then follow six zodiac signs that relate to the lower two chakras. In the middle of the list we find the three outer planets -- Saturn, Jupiter, and Mars. Saturn (the Navel) and Jupiter (the Diaphragm and Solar Plexus) form the Power Chakra. Red Mars is the Heart Chakra. (The complementary color of Martian Blood-Red is Emerald Green, the esoteric color of the Heart Chakra.)

We then have the other six signs of the zodiac. As we near the top we find the two inner planets, Venus and Mercury. Venus/Juno is the Empress -- love-mate and assistant to the Emperor. She alternates with her mate, Jupiter (Zeus, the Emperor). Venus/Juno is the Throat chakra. Speaking from the diaphragm (Jupiter) we express love through our individuality. Mercury is the Eye Chakra, the messenger of the gods. The Heavenly (Divine) Fool is the Crown Chakra. Christ crucified on the cross personifies the Hanged Man. The rope above the Crown Chakra is Jacob's Ladder, the connection to the Higher Self and Higher States of Consciousness. The Hanged Man's glowing head on his inverted body tells us that the Sun is placed at the bottom of the list. The Highest Source is flipped over and goes into the Root Chakra. This is how we put ourselves into the physical body. We enter through the Root Chakra and are supposed to leave through the Crown Chakra. Unfortunately many denizens of this planet still insist that they are not Fools, so they remain tied down. So we begin our work here on Earth and awaken the Solar Life Force deep within us to cleanse and purify our whole being.

The second major deviation in our list is the Priestess. Many assign her to the Moon, which is ridiculous since there already is a Moon Trump. The female, watery nature of the Priestess definitely gives her a relationship to the Moon, as we shall see in our detailed analysis. But that does not make her replace the Moon Trump. She obviously

goes with Virgo. Many ancient temple priestesses had vows of celibacy and therefore were virgins. The Vestal Virgins of Rome are famous examples. The Priestess therefore comes at the end of the first sequence of zodiac signs.

Our third divergence is the choice of Judgment for Aries rather than the Emperor. Aries is the first sign in the zodiac sequence. The letter R that we will associate with Judgment means "head" or "beginning". This is appropriate for the first sign of the zodiac. Judgment suggests a Judge. When the Israelites began their national history after the Exodus, their leaders were not actually kings, but judges. The judge's job was to settle disputes between the clans or between individuals. The spiritual leadership came from the priests, a responsibility traditionally assigned to the tribe of Levi. In ancient Egypt (where the Israelites sojourned before forming their national identity) the pharaohs played the dual role of chief judge and chief priest. They symbolized this authority with the flail and crook. This also covered their responsibilities as head farmer and head shepherd. In my list the Emperor comes after the Hermit. The Emperor is actually like a Hermit. He isolates himself high above the people and must cultivate himself with spiritual exercises to be worthy of his high responsibilities.

The only other thing to note about the variance of our list with tradition is that the sequence of Temperance, Devil, and Tower must be reversed in order to agree with the order of the zodiac. We can not change the zodiac sequence because it is fixed there in the sky. Therefore it is the Trump sequence that we must change.

All in all we discover that our sequence begins in Heaven, and ends in the World. The whole thing hangs within the body of Man. The list of Trumps literally "Hangs" on the Hanged Man, dangling down from Heaven, just as he hangs suspended by a rope on a frame.

Secret Hebrew and Egyptian Messages in the Celestial Trump Sequence

Now that we have arranged our list in an order that "hangs" from the Hanged Man, we can examine the sequence of Hebrew letters for messages that it may convey. To our surprise we find quite a lot of strange material popping out at us.

As I mentioned above, the first two letters (Hanged Man and Fool) spell the word **חוק** (H*aQ), which means a rule, statute, or custom. This word suggests the statutes of the Jewish law in the Torah or the customs that people adopt as their conventional way of living. The verbal root of this word is **חקק**, "to carve". The opening sentence of the **SePheR YeTziRaH** says that God (YaH) "engraved **חקק**. . . and created His universe with 32 mystical paths of Wisdom, forming 3 books (Sepharim) with comprising text (Sepher), number (Sephar), and communication (Sippur)." The 32 paths refer to the 22 letters and 10 numbers of the Tree of Life -- and the Tarot of course. So the **Sepher Yetzirah's** expression **חקק יפ** is the same as **חוק OףP**.

The set of three letters after **חוק** spells **OףP** (O\$R). The Hebrew letters **ף** and **W** (Empress and Devil Trumps) sound almost the same and thus can alternate. The Devil is one's closest ally, the lesson of the projection of one's resisted Identity. The word

OWP means "ten" and also suggests wealth and abundance. Also SR (Shar) means King, Ruler, or Leader. The old Babylonian word for King was Osar. An important Qabbalistic principle that nobody ever bothers to point out is that the names of the major Egyptian deities appear as important words in the Hebrew language. These Hebrew words connect to the myths of the Egyptian gods. Thus we find a hidden imprint of ancient Egyptian culture in Hebrew. The word for "ten" (abundance and fullness) in Hebrew corresponds to the Egyptian god Osiris. Osiris embodies in his name and myth the ancient Egyptian Science of immortality. He represents the abundance that the Nile flood brought to the people of Egypt. The famous biblical "Ten Commandments" carved on tablets by Moses actually expound aspects of the esoteric teachings of immortality that Moses mastered in the Temple of Osiris during his sojourn in Egypt. The resonance between the Empress and the Emperor activates secret techniques of breathing that clear out imbalances in the physiology and prepare the body and mind for immortality. So the first two words refer to the Ten Commandments or the Law of Osar, the Lord of Abundance, or any other writing inscribed with letters and numbers. Such carvings last over time and form the basis for customs. It is ironic that the second commandment forbids "making" OWF graven images, when the Torah explicitly describes the ten commandments as images graven on stone. Hence, I suppose this means that God specifically forbids us to take his own commandments too seriously. He does not want us "bowing down unto them and serving them." The verb "to make" is a variant of OWP. Many Tarot artists draw the Emperor with icons suggesting Aries, thus substituting H for R at this point in the sequence. 'Making' is the fourth (and final) stage in the Qabbalistic process of creation. It is the crossover where a creation begins to become visible as an objective phenomenon, a denizen of the Kingdom of the World (Malkuth). The Empress is the Emperor's assistant and support, and her Trump Card represents fruition and abundance. The Egyptians write this with the pictograph of a throne and pronounce it Ash. When the female ending '-t' is added we get the name Ash-t (Isis), the Empress consort of Osiris. (Hathor is Ra's Empress.)

The next word we find in our message is YX (UT). This is shorthand for the Hebrew word "letter" (AUT, VYX). The "Bull's Head" first letter of the word (V) has been decapitated, but the word is still quite obvious even though the head "letter" is missing. Apparently the message of the Zodiac Trumps calls to our attention a particular letter of the alphabet. The next three letters tell us the esoteric meaning of that letter. These letters form the word, ʌƆ▽ (GYD), which means "penis". In the Egyptian mythology Osiris, Set, Isis, and Nephthys are all sibling offspring of Geb (Earth) and Nut (Starry Sky), who in turn are the offspring of the double-lion Ruty, the Solar couple of Shu and Tefnut. Shu (the Dawning Sun) is the Life Energy of Source, and Tefnut (the Setting Sun) is the Orderliness of Nature. These two solar deities are really variations of Ra, the Sun God, the Source of all Light-Energy. Ra high in the sky is Horus the Elder. His consort is Hathor, the "House of Horus", the Space in which Ra exists. She embraces him and is the Love that creates the space in which the Light can appear and evolve as Life. Another important primeval couple consists of Thoth (Science) and Maat (Truth). Clearly these two are transformations of the Ruty (Life/Truth and Order/Science). The giveaway is that Shu and Maat both wear a feather in their hair, indicating the lightness of Truth/Life. The evolutionary tendency is to move "upward" toward the Light/Life/Love

that is the essence of Source.

Osiris (The Eye on the Throne, Shiva) marries Isis (The Throne-Support, Shakti), and Set (The Revolver, Satan) marries Nephthys (Nebthet, "The House of All"). The Eye is the eye of Ra-Horus, the Eye of Intuition and Enlightenment, the laser eye of Shiva. This Eye of Wisdom thrives on the Cobra Life Energy, known to the Egyptians as the Uraeus. Set can play with all things (Nephthys), but he still is jealous that Osiris has Isis. He is also sterile and sires no offspring in spite of his powerful sexual libido. Coveting Isis, Set murders Osiris and dismembers his corpse. Sorrowful Isis and Nephthys cooperate to recover the scattered body parts and reunite them. Then Thoth uses his Magic Ankh, the Science of Immortality, to restore the corpse of Osiris back to life. However, one piece is missing from the revitalized mummy -- the penis. The idea behind this odd incident in the story is that in the evolution of consciousness the life energy that usually transmits sexually converts via a tantric awakening of the penis into a higher vibration of spiritual energy. The Aware Will transcends birth and death, and therefore no longer depends on the "penis" as a means of carrying on life from generation to generation once a person has realized his Osirian enlightened nature. The hidden message of the Zodiac seems to specifically point out this aspect of the story. The three Trumps that form the word for "penis" are the Chariot, Strength, and Priestess. These three then correlate to Justice, the Trump that represents the weighing of the penis in the Egyptian mythology. The sensitive head of the penis connects directly to the Heart Chakra. Thus we see in the iconography the heart placed in the phallic scale of Justice.

In between the Priestess and Justice we find the Hermit Mars, a barren red planet. The Hermit lives alone and therefore inevitably practices celibacy. His letter is K. This letter stands alone (Hermitlike) in the sequence as a word all by itself that means "is similar to". Syntactically it constructs a simile between the first half of the sequence and the second half of the sequence. So we can say that the first half of the message is "like" the second half. The two halves are mirror images of each other. The Hermit realizes that the whole world is a reflection of himself. Making love to someone is actually an elaborate form of masturbation. The letter K is a nice pictograph of a hand grasping a staff, just as the Hermit does.

The next two letters of the message are the planets Jupiter and Saturn. They require a secret transposition in order to read them correctly. Recall that the Emperor and Empress are a couple. Therefore we can transpose the Samekh of the Empress for the Hey of the Emperor. This gives us the word 𐤀𐤏. This word refers to someone who revolts against authority, a Revolver. This is the hidden appellation of Set, the brother and murderer of Osiris. Set is the prototype of the Biblical Satan, and is also Seth, the son of Adam from whom we are descended. (Cain killed Able, and there is no mention of children descending from Cain. But there may be confusion between Cain, the original Biblical fratricide and Set, the archetypal Egyptian fratricide.) The third chakra is the seat of the ego power that dominates the lives of most people on this planet.

Our next word in the message is the letter L. This letter represents the Trump Justice and the sign of Libra. It is all about fairness and balance. In Hebrew this letter means

"to" or "toward". The name "Lamed" or teaching is a euphemism for the sacred and secret science of the proper use of the penis both for sexual activity and for personal evolution. This is the letter to which the first half of the zodiac refers us. Naturally it forms the first letter of the second half of the zodiac sequence. The icon of Justice depicts the ancient Egyptian tradition of the "weighing of the heart" of the "deceased" in the Hall of Justice. When we examine the scrolls that portray this event, we find the ritual overseen by Anubis with Thoth acting as the scribe to record the results. Thoth's monkey form often sits on the fulcrum of the scales to fiddle with the accuracy. One pan of the scales holds the heart, and the other pan holds the feather of Maat -- Truth. If the heart drops down, Set's friend Ammit (the Ego of the third chakra) will devour it. If it goes up or at least balances, then Horus, the fifth chakra son of Osiris, introduces the initiate to Osiris, the Eye of Wisdom and Intuition in the sixth chakra. The Cobra Eye Energy then fully unfolds in the Crown chakra linking the initiate to the immortal Higher Self. So the scales represent the penis in the second chakra. The fourth chakra heart is balanced with Truth in the sex chakra to validate whether the sexual activity of the initiate is motivated by egotistical lust or by true love. The penis is a "waveguide" or channel for the flow of Love and Life. The letter L here stands for a direction and can be taken as a preposition. We can translate it as "for the purpose of".

The next word **ZP** is very curious. There is no such word in the dictionary. We must unlock its secret meaning. It must be important, because it carries the two powerful Trumps of Death and Tower. The Tower (Tz) is clearly a phallic symbol. Its letter name (Tzadde) means to "shoot" and depicts a penis ejaculating or "shooting cum". Ejaculation is often called the "Little Death" since life energy is shot out of the body and the post coital sensation is a polar flip from excitement to relaxation or even stupor. Z has the name Zain, which is a weapon. The penis is sometimes used as a weapon for rape and dishonoring of others. Violence and murder are usually expressions of sexual frustration. The most remarkable aspect of Set (and Satan, the "Devil") is his irresponsible willfulness. He is a rebel. Aries, the Ram represents the quality of Awareness that we call the Will. Aries is the first sign in the zodiac sequence. Aries comes first because of his willfulness. The Trump for Aries is Judgment. Aries is quick to judgment, and of course becomes his own judge. Horus the Younger, the son of Osiris and the namesake of Ra, the Elder Horus (The Light within Man's Consciousness), "avenges" his father's murder (or attempted murder) in a great battle with Set. Set wounds Horus in the eye, and Horus wounds Set in the testicles, a fitting payoff for the loss of Osiris' penis. The name for Osiris is written in Egyptian with the Eye glyph mounted on a throne. The Hebrew is also written with the Eye glyph. (The phonetics for the Egyptian actually are reversed, Os meaning "seat" and Ar meaning "eye", but the eye is usually placed above the seat in the hieroglyphs. (It hangs below in the earliest Pyramid Texts). So an eye is traded for a testicle, and then Horus banishes Set to the desert lands. Using our transposition of the Emperor (H) for the Empress (\$), we discover the son, Hor-us (HR) hiding within his father's name. O\$R). Horus succeeds his father as Emperor of Life, the Sun at noonday, whereas Osiris becomes the Lord of the netherworld, the midnight of the Life Energy persisting through Death.

The letter R has a pronunciation very close to Z, especially if we retroflex the Z into Zh.

If we substitute the letter R for the letter Z, we start to get some meaning out of the odd combination of letters. RTz is the bishop in chess and has the basic meaning of "running". The root verb R-Tz-H is to desire, wish for, or like something. RTz[U]N is the Will. The Will is the feature of Awareness (Osir) that creates definitions. This is why Osir and Set are brothers. Osir is Awareness, and Set is the Will. Together they make the Aware Will. Isis is the Throne of the Self-Identity that supports higher states of consciousness such as the Intuition of Osiris, and Nephthys (Nebt-Het = All House) is the collection [House] of All Creations that are "Not I". Hathor (Het-Her = House of Horus) is a similar principle, but represents a more exalted (prior or subtle) level of creation. Neb also has the sense of the Owner or Lord (Neb) of the House (Het), and so may also represent the Small Self that sees itself as possessing things. She is the fitting consort to Set, the Will. There may be a connection between the Egyptian Neb and the Hebrew Neb (prophet). The Egyptian word also carries the idea of 'gold' (i.e. wealth). She may represent the 'set' of Trumps, the Major Arcana that cover all things in the universe. Our English word "set" used mathematically refers to a collection of items that are bound into a unified identity by means of a mental process called definition.

The Will makes decisions from a field of possible choices. The imposing of a definition gives a direction (L) to undefined Awareness. The male penis is the primal organ that gives direction to the flow of Life, and Tzadde is its function of ejaculating sperm. Resh is a beginning that starts with taking a decision, a judgment. Nun shows us the small jugs of the testicles (and prostate) that contain the sperm and the essential oils of life. Embedded within the sequence R-Tz-N is the sequence SP. SPN is the rabbit, a nearly universal symbol for fecundity and an esoteric totem animal for the preparation of the elixir of immortality. We know that the S and \$ can alternate. We already read the Devil for the Empress. So now we read the Empress for the Devil. Making the transposition we get \$PN, the process of hiding or covering. Within this hiding lurks \$Ph (Soph), the sacred wisdom of the Limit. All creations have an End (\$Ph). That is, by definition any definition puts a boundary or limit on Undefined Awareness. The word "Undefined" in Hebrew is AYN \$[U]Ph, "No End". It also has the idea of infinity. So we could interpret the letter sequence \$P N as \$[U]Ph [AY]N along with our shorthand principles that alephs can be omitted because they are silent and vavs and yads can be omitted when they come between consonants because they just act like vowels. The Infinite is definitely "hidden" and "secret", since all tangible and visible creations are finite. The silent, hidden aleph further emphasizes this idea. Amen, the hidden, esoteric form of Ra, the Source, is the primordial creative principle behind the whole Egyptian mythology and continues to this day as the invocation with which we end prayers. The ancient Egyptians drew the icon of Amen (or Min) as an ithyphallic male deity with ostrich plumes on his head, one arm raised in the symbol of the ecstatic ka (the electric orgasmic soul) and holding the Emperor's flail. With his other hand Min grasps his erect penis. The flail and ostrich plumes symbolize that the aroused sexual energy is guided to rise upward by a deliberate use of the breath. Min is the Egyptian iconographic symbol of the ancient Cobra Breath. That is why we find both the gods and the pharaohs wearing the uraeus headband. The cobra energy shines forth from the Eye Chakra showing that the higher intuition is activated. The same symbolism transfers to the hermetic caduceus of the Greeks that survives today as the universal

symbol of the medical profession. Unfortunately most doctors would rather not confront the idea that if people awakened their own innate Life Energy in the manner suggested by their own logo, they would have much less need -- perhaps eventually no need -- for doctors.

So the Will plays with Definitions in the Undefined. Set is not SATisfied with seeing only Undefined Awareness. So he exercises Will in order to Define it. This seems to "kill" the Undefined Awareness and cuts it into pieces, but brings forth an abundance of possible creations all of which have an "end" to them. In this way Set (the Revolter against pure Undefined Awareness of the Father) seems to hide \$PN from his Father. The actuality, of course, is that he experiences self-imposed exile (via Horus the Younger) from his Father Ra-Horus the Elder, who is also known widely among Christians as Amen ("So Be It") Ra. In the desert Set experiences the light and heat of the Sun more than anywhere else. Ra in Hebrew means to "See". The mirror image of "seeing" is of course, A[U]R, or "Light". That is why the first words of Ra, the Seer, in the Hebrew Torah are "Let there be Light." (YHY AUR.)

Interestingly, if we fuse the S of the Devil with the Tz of the Tower to give it a long viper-like hissing sound, we get TzPN, or Typhon, an alternate identity of Set that also has the meaning of "hiding" along with another idea of "ambushing". TzPhUN is north, the dark and hidden direction. Typhon/Set is the Egyptian constellation around the North Pole Star. On the other hand TzPhR is a bird, and hence the bird calls of morning, and the morning breeze. From this we get the word "zephyr" associated with spring breezes, oddly associated with the west wind. TzeRUPhH is the Qabbalistic acrostic principle and is associated with TzR[U]Ph -- fusion, interchange, and purification. The acrostic principle of permutation allows for the mind to sort through all possibilities.

The next word in our message is the single letter M for the Moon and the Water that is the physical Source of our Life. This word means "from", because Water (plus reflecting Light such as the Moon represents) is where our Life in a physical body comes from.

The last word of the message is AB, the first two letters of the Hebrew alphabet. These two letters spell "Father" in Hebrew. In the Egyptian mythology the father of all the gods is the Ra, the Sun, the Source of Life. The Sun is the icon for the Trump Card of the letter A. B is the Trump for Earth, the physical World we live in. The final B wraps around and forms the first letter of the message as the preposition "among" or "within". We live in the world, in the universe.

At this point we can summarize our parsing, decoding, and translation of the message of the Planetary Zodiac System as follows:

ዘባ ዐቅፆ ሃጸ ለቻህ ሃ ቼፀ ተ ረዮ ሠጋሃ ሠ ላይ.

[illegible]

"Among the Tenfold Statutes of Osiris (10 Commandments and 10 Sephirot of the Tree of Life) the Letter for the Penis is like Set hiding the Limit to Will by hiding from his Sun-Source Father."

We can also make the transposition of the R for Tz rather than Z, which gives us ZR, 'crown', 'wreath', or 'rim'. (KTR K-ZR, the crown is like the crown.) So we get something like "Set, for the sake of a crown, hides [the infinite] from the Father." The crown is the Ouroboros rim that defines creation.

Here is another reading that lets the word UT double as "letter" (AUT) and "with" (AT):

"Engraving the tenth letter with the penis is like [Set] poking his firebrand which is the face of the father."

The tenth letter in this sequence is Daleth (∇). This letter is the pictogram of the female cunt, the doorway that the penis "engraves". The Trump shows the High Priestess, the symbol of the mysterious female who holds the secrets of sex, guarding the door to her sacred temple. She holds in her hand a book, the Torah, the engraved laws and customs of the Israelites. Anciently Abraham came from the Sumerian city of Ur (which for Hebrews means 'Light') where people traditionally wrote in cuneiform on clay tablets with a stylus. The image suggested is that the stylus poking into the clay to make cuneiform marks is like the penis poking into the cuneiform vulva. The ancient cuneiform character for 'woman' had the shape of Daleth with the urinary slit clearly marked.

HT*L is to throw (or lay eggs or put something into something else). ZTz could possibly transpose to ZQ, a firebrand. S = "which is". PNM is the face or surface.

Reading The Reversed Message

We recall that the whole message of the Planetary Zodiac System dangles from the Hanged Man and thus deals with the issue of Life, Death and Resurrection. The Judgment Trump that begins the Zodiac sub-sequence is the traditional icon of the archangel blowing his trumpet to resurrect the dead from their graves and summon them to the Final Judgment. The reversal principle embodied by the Hanged Man plus the Temurah/TzeRUPhaH principle of Qabbalah suggest that we may find another message by reading the list upward from the bottom. Let's try it.

The final triplet read backwards starts us off with "In the Mother" (B-AM). This sounds promising in the light of our forward reading of "from the Father". Reading on backwards we encounter next the word NPS (nephesh), "Soul or Spirit." Thus we find that "In the Mother is a Soul-Spirit." Perhaps that means the Mother is pregnant.

To read the next word, we recall we must make the substitution of the letter R (a pregnant womb, the start of Life) for the deadly weapon Z, which is the instrument of the Death Trump. This gives us TzR, a "rock". So within the Mother [Earth?] is a Spiritual Rock. If we put the pregnant R in place of Tz, we get RZ, a secret. So we might also say that in the Mother is a spiritual secret.

The next word L can mean "for the purpose of" just as it did in the other message.

Again we substitute the Empress to "assist" or stand in for the Emperor. Samekh means "assist" or "stand in for". This gives us 𐤎𐤕, "to fly". Within the Mother is a Spiritual Rock or Spiritual Secret for the purpose of flying. We know that both Set and Horus could fly and they did so in their aerial battle. Does this have to do with the mysterious flying Merkabah chariot of the gods that the Qabbalists speak of?

As in the downward oriented message we find K standing alone and setting up a simile or comparison, a mirror image between the two halves of the sequence.

DG is a fish, and DYG is a fisherman or "fishing". TUR is a dove, a bird that flies. We seem to have fowls and fish, possibly an evolutionary step up from the Spirit Rock. Perhaps we have a "fishing dove" a kind of seabird like a gull or albatross. This image reminds us of the Spirit of the Elohim hovering over the waters of the deep like a giant bird during the "creation" story (Gen. 1:2.) But, when we let the Emperor stand in for the Empress, we find the TURaH, the Torah Book of the Law, the Pentateuch of Moses, the core of the Bible that takes us from Genesis through Deuteronomy. The fish goes down into the waters of the deep, suggesting the lower anatomy, and specifically the phallus. The letters DYG are the mirror image of GYD, the phallus. The bird hovering above suggests the energy of the higher chakras, specifically the flying solar disc Aten that represents the Intuitive Eye of the visionary sixth chakra. The dove is the traditional symbol of peace and was the bird that flew over the waters to let Noah know that the flood was receding.

The fish is also the symbol of Pisces (Star) the last sign of the zodiac, and the Age of Jesus, the archetypal Hanged Man who starts off our whole sequence. The Fish-Torah may then refer to the Old and New Testaments combined or the Biblical span from the Taurian Age through the Piscean Age.

The final word of the inverted message is OQ, the Magical Fool. These two letters in Hebrew form the word "heel". The Hanged Man dangles by his heel exactly at this point in the list. A "heel" in modern slang is an uncaring, unprincipled, and dishonorable man. Why? The most famous character in the Bible associated with a heel was Jacob (IOQB), a notoriously uncaring man. Jacob's name refers to the odd event that he was born holding on to the heel of his twin brother Esau as he followed him out from the womb of Rebekah (Gen. 25:26). Jacob literally followed on his brother's heel. The heel is associated with footsteps that one follows, or creating a lineage of tradition. Unfortunately Jacob, like Cain and Set, succumbed to the old tradition of sibling rivalry and cheated Esau out of his inheritance. With an ironic sense of humor the Lord suggested that Jacob change his name to Israel (YSR = straight, El = God), a hint that maybe he should straighten out his behavior. This suggestion did not work out very well, and most of the sons of Israel turned out to be real stinkers. But the name stuck, and the Jewish tribes since then are known as Israelites even though they may not be straight with God all the time.

