



The emanation from Adam Kadmon then passes through eight other Sephiroth before arriving at Malkuth, or Earth – the physical world as we know it. In passing through these Sephiroth, the emanation traces what is known as the Qabalistic Lightning Bolt (see fig. 1). The lightning bolt moves from Kether to the second Sephirah, Chokmah, which is at the top of the right-hand pillar. This pillar is defined by masculinity, mercy and Force. Force is the creative drive or instinct. In biological terms, it can be likened to sperm. This is contrasted with the left-hand pillar, which denotes femininity, severity, and Form. Like the womb, this pillar gives form to the creative impulse generated on the masculine side. In terms of architecture, we may liken Chokmah to the architect's creative impulse, and Binah (at the top of the left-hand pillar) to the first sketches of the intended structure.

The lightning bolt then passes through several other Sephiroth on the left and right-hand pillars before the final manifestation in the earth which, if we maintain the architectural metaphor, would be the completed building. In addition to the left and right-hand pillars, there is also a Middle Pillar. This pillar contains both Kether and Malkuth, the beginning and end of the process, as well as Tiphareth and Yesod, which may be seen as spiritual attainments or gateways. One may observe that there is also a grayed out Sephirah on the Middle Pillar called Daath. This is known as the “invisible Sephirah.” The typical glyph of the Tree of Life shows four Sephiroth on the Middle Pillar, and these represent the Earth, or man, or the uninitiated candidate (Malkuth); the Moon, the creative cycle of the womb leading to birth, and femininity / motherhood (Yesod); the Sun, or the Son – the Son of Light, perhaps – the highest spiritual attainment man can achieve in his earthly form (Tiphareth); and the Divine (Kether).

The initiated Freemason knows that there are not two but three Degrees that a man must achieve in order to, arguably, briefly attain a glimpse of the divine level. To the initiate, there is another Sephirah located between the Golden Sun and the Divine, and this is the Black Sun of Daath, which represents Knowledge. In the Third Degree, there are several suggestions that we convey the candidate to Daath. The light of an MM is but darkness visible, and it is this glimmering ray which is perhaps all too appropriately represented by the Black Sun. Daath is also considered to be the gateway to Sitra Ahra, which translates from the Hebrew as the “Other Side” – the other side of the Tree of Life being the Tree of Death or the Tree of Knowledge. The meaning of these two distinct appellations is revealed to us in the Third Degree, as the candidate is laid down to a figurative death, transcending the perishable frame of the Second Degree; and through this experience, he is raised to Knowledge – the knowledge of the Self. In this sense, the Third Degree truly conveys the candidate to the gateway of Daath, knowledge through death – and we may say that the light of an MM is indeed Daath-ness visible.

Our focus, however, is the Tree of Life. This Tree has a strong relationship with the standard Tarot pack of seventy-eight cards. The standard Tarot deck contains three sets of cards: The twenty-two major arcana, forty minor arcana, and sixteen court cards. In traditional systems, the twenty-two major arcana are attributed to the twenty-two paths on the Tree; they also correspond to the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet. The forty minor arcana are split into four suits of ten cards each: Wands, Cups, Swords and Pentacles (sometimes represented as Disks or Coins). The ten cards of each suit are attributed to the ten Sephiroth. Finally, the four ranks of court cards<sup>54</sup> are ascribed to the four Qabalistic worlds. It is not necessary for this paper to examine these four worlds, but they are known as Atziluth, Briah, Yetzirah and Assiah. The system that I am proposing, however, differs substantially from the traditional attributions. It is also simpler. I will be ascribing several of the major arcana of the Tarot to the Sephiroth of the Tree. These attributions will illustrate the hierarchy of the Lodge room, as well as provide some interesting illuminations regarding the roles of the officers of the Lodge.

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<sup>54</sup> Traditionally King, Queen, Knight, Page, but there are several variations.

We will begin at Malkuth, the Sephirah that represents Earth. This is the grossest, material level of the Tree. It is the physical world. To this Sephirah, we can ascribe the Tarot card numbered 0, the Fool. The Fool is an ordinary man; he has not yet been initiated into the mysteries or gained wisdom. In Masonic terms, this is the candidate before his first entrance into the Lodge.

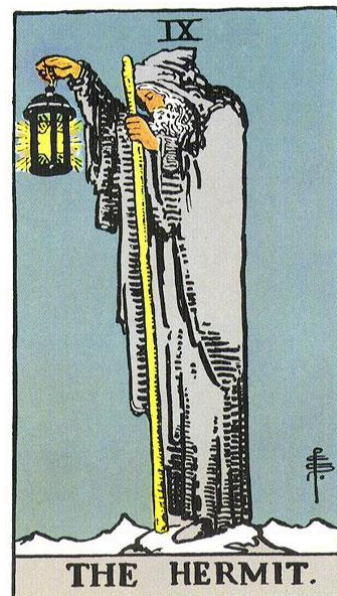


The Fool is pictured (*see plate left*) as dancing at the edge of a cliff, apparently unaware of the danger he is in. Likewise, the candidate is unaware of the two great dangers he faces at the door of the Lodge, until later in the First Degree Ceremony.

The next Sephirah that is encountered on the journey from Malkuth to Kether is Yesod. Likewise, the first officer that the candidate encounters during the Ceremony of Initiation is the Tyler, and this is his Sephirah. The Tyler may be represented by the Tarot card known as the Hermit.

This card suggests solitude and isolation, but it should be noted that the reason for this isolation is that the Hermit (*plate right*) has already obtained the mysteries; now he silently reflects upon them. The Tyler, usually

a Past Master, stands outside, at the door of the Lodge. His duty is to use the wisdom he has gained in his Masonic duty to prepare the Candidate for initiation. Otherwise, his role is largely silent. Indeed, outside of degree ceremonies, the Tyler does not speak; he only knocks. It is the Junior Warden who speaks for the Tyler at the opening of the Lodge.



The Sephirah of Yesod also refers to the state of dreaming. I would suggest that at the beginning of the Ceremony of Initiation, the candidate moves in a dream-like state until his awakening after the Obligation. It is at this point that he has been initiated and is qualified to ascend the Tree.

The next Sephirah is Hod, labelled 8 in fig. 1.



This is the lowest Sephirah of the feminine pillar. This pillar, it should be noted, is often labelled “B,” as distinct from the opposing masculine pillar which is labelled “J” (*see plate left*). Hod is concerned with the intellectual faculties, including prudence. This gives us our link to the office of Inner Guard, whose jewel – the crossed swords – refers to two of the four Cardinal Virtues, namely Prudence and Fortitude.

Prudence refers to the Inner Guard’s discretion in admitting the candidate, while Fortitude refers to his role in guarding the Lodge. There is a strong sense of balance here, and this is why it is appropriate to assign the major arcana of Temperance to this office. Temperance is a feminine card (*see plate left below*), and therefore appropriate to the feminine pillar.



The Junior and Senior Deacon may be ascribed the Sephiroth numbered 7 and 5 – Netzach and Geburah – respectively. The Deacons are both represented by the dove bearing an olive branch, which denotes peace and celerity. In this instance, I have ascribed celerity to the Junior Deacon, and peace to the Senior. The Junior Deacon is located at Netzach, the Sephirah associated with the swiftness of passion and inspiration. It is, therefore, appropriate to assign to this Sephirah and



office the major arcana of the Chariot, which is likewise swift and filled with fiery passion. One might also consider the swiftness of the messenger gods Mercury and Hermes. This is an intensely masculine card. The Senior Deacon is ascribed to Geburah, which may at first seem counterintuitive as Geburah is the Sephirah of war and judgement. However, it is the Senior Deacon who, through his role in preserving peace, order, and harmony in the Lodge, brings war and



judgement into due bounds. Without the influence of the Senior Deacon in this Sephirah, there would be chaos. Therefore, I have ascribed the major arcana of the Empress (*above right*) to the Senior Deacon, as she is concerned with sustaining and nurturing. She is also symbolic of an intensely earthly power, which is relevant to the Deacons whose duties largely see them perambulating about the floor or “earth” of the Lodge, while the “celestial bodies” of the Lesser Lights of Freemasonry are above them.

It will be noted that in assigning the Deacons to Netzach and Geburah, I have skipped Tiphareth, a Sephirah that appears on the Middle Pillar of equilibrium and is numbered 6. Qabalistically, Tiphareth is said to be the highest spiritual point to which a living man can attain. The Sephiroth beyond Tiphareth can only be achieved after earthly death. Therefore, I would see Tiphareth as not representing an office, but representing the completion of the Masonic journey – which the candidate achieves while escorted by the Deacons, who stand on either side (see fig. 1 – Tiphareth is located between Netzach and Geburah). For this reason, I have assigned to Tiphareth the Major Arcana of the World, which comprehends the entire system.



In a brief side-step from the hierarchy of Sephiroth and offices, I would at this point like to point out the correspondences that may be made between the Director of Ceremonies and the major arcana of the Magician (*plate left*). One of the defining characteristics of the Magician is that he has mastered the four magical tools: the wand, the cup, the sword and the pentacle. Likewise, it is the DC who is in control of the Working Tools of the Lodge, in that he opens and closes their receptacle as the Lodge moves through the degrees. The DC also has comprehensive knowledge of Masonic ritual, while the Magician has comprehensive knowledge of magical rituals.

We now move on to the Junior Warden, who marks the sun at its meridian. Accordingly, the major arcana of the Sun is ascribed to him. The Sun is an incredibly positive card signifying joy, expansion, optimism, and goodwill. This seems to coincide well with the Junior Warden's role of calling the brethren from labour to refreshment, and refreshment to labour, that profit and pleasure may be the result. Expansion and opulence are the purviews of the Junior Warden, and this is also borne out by the Sephirah to which he is assigned, Chesed; for this is the Sephirah of the benevolent rule and loving kindness. In many traditional systems, including that of the Tarot, the Sun is masculine.

The Senior Warden, marking the setting sun, is accordingly assigned the major arcana of the Moon. The Moon is a relatively negative card, but this is appropriate to some of the darker moments of our mysteries. The Senior Warden indicates that the Work of the Third Degree is to seek for that which was lost. It is the anxiety and confusion of that loss that is referred to here, as the sun of our first Grand Master, HA, has truly set. The Moon is also suggestive of mysteries yet to be revealed, again referring to that which has been lost. It also perhaps refers to the further secrets that are revealed to the Worshipful Master, which the Senior Warden has not yet obtained. However, the Moon is also suggestive of peace in the face of this adversity. The Senior Warden's jewel is the level, and in this context, it may refer to keeping a level head, as well as his level conduct.

The Sephirah assigned to the Senior Warden is the highest of the feminine Sephiroth, Binah. This Sephirah is linked with sorrow, but also with understanding. This reflects the mourning for this loss of our Grand Master – another of the attributions of Binah is time – but also the understanding of the lessons to be learnt from that loss.

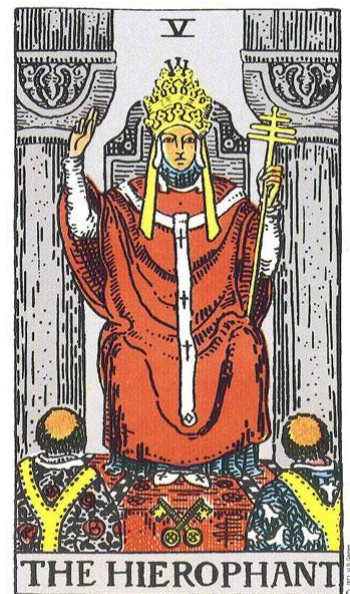
We then arrive at the chair of the Worshipful Master, who is the Hierophant of the mysteries; he is, accordingly, assigned the major arcana of the Hierophant. The Hierophant has the keys to the secrets or mysteries and reserves them for those initiates who have deservedly obtained them. He is the discrete dispenser of knowledge, just as the Master confers degrees upon candidates according to merit. He is assigned the highest of the masculine Sephiroth, Chokmah, whose chief quality is wisdom. This is of course reflected by the Master's Ionic Pillar of Wisdom in the East.

Though this concludes the principal and assistant officers of the Lodge, there are yet two other officers who sit in the East to whom major arcana may be assigned. Sitting at the Master's right (feminine) side is the Chaplain, to whom we may assign the Major Arcana of the High Priestess. Just as the Chaplain's jewel



of office is the VSL, so is the High Priestess often depicted holding or reading from the Torah. She is also pictured in between the two pillars of King Solomon's Temple. The Chaplain and High Priestess also share the role of invoking the blessing of their Supreme Beings.

At the Master's left hand (masculine) sits the Immediate Past Master. As the Master's position in the East may refer to progress or the present moving into the future, the left-hand path refers to that which is the past, looking back to previous states of being. This symbolism of the past and the left hand suggests the major arcana of the Devil (*plate left*). While it would be inappropriate to suggest that the Immediate Past Master is in some way "fallen," it





is worth considering that he has “descended” from the chair of King Solomon to resume a previous way of being. It may also be noted that the Devil somewhat resembles the Hierophant. With all of these attributions in mind, we can then apply some very interesting Qabalistic numerology. Each of the major arcana is assigned a number, from 0 to 21. The arcana that concern us in this instance are the High Priestess (Chaplain), the Hierophant (Worshipful Master) and the Devil (Immediate Past Master), which are numbered 2, 5 and 15 respectively. If we add these numbers together, we get 22 – the total number of major arcana in the Tarot pack, letters in the Hebrew alphabet, and paths on the Tree of Life. This is indicative of a complete system. Furthermore, we may apply the Qabalistic reduction to the number 22. This consists in adding the two numerals together (2 + 2) until we get a single figure. In this case, 2 + 2 = 4. Qabalistically, this is the number of the Tetragrammaton, or the fourfold name of God often written as YHVH (Yahweh, Jehovah). This may be represented by the letter “G” in the centre of the Lodge room, and also gives us our link to Kether, the crown of the Tree of Life and the source of the emanations of the Supreme Being. With all of this in mind, we may re-draw the diagram of the Tree of Life incorporating our attributions like so:

Thus, we see that the Tree of Life, the officers of the Lodge and the Tarot may be combined into a single system of knowledge, where each aspect reveals hidden elements of the others.

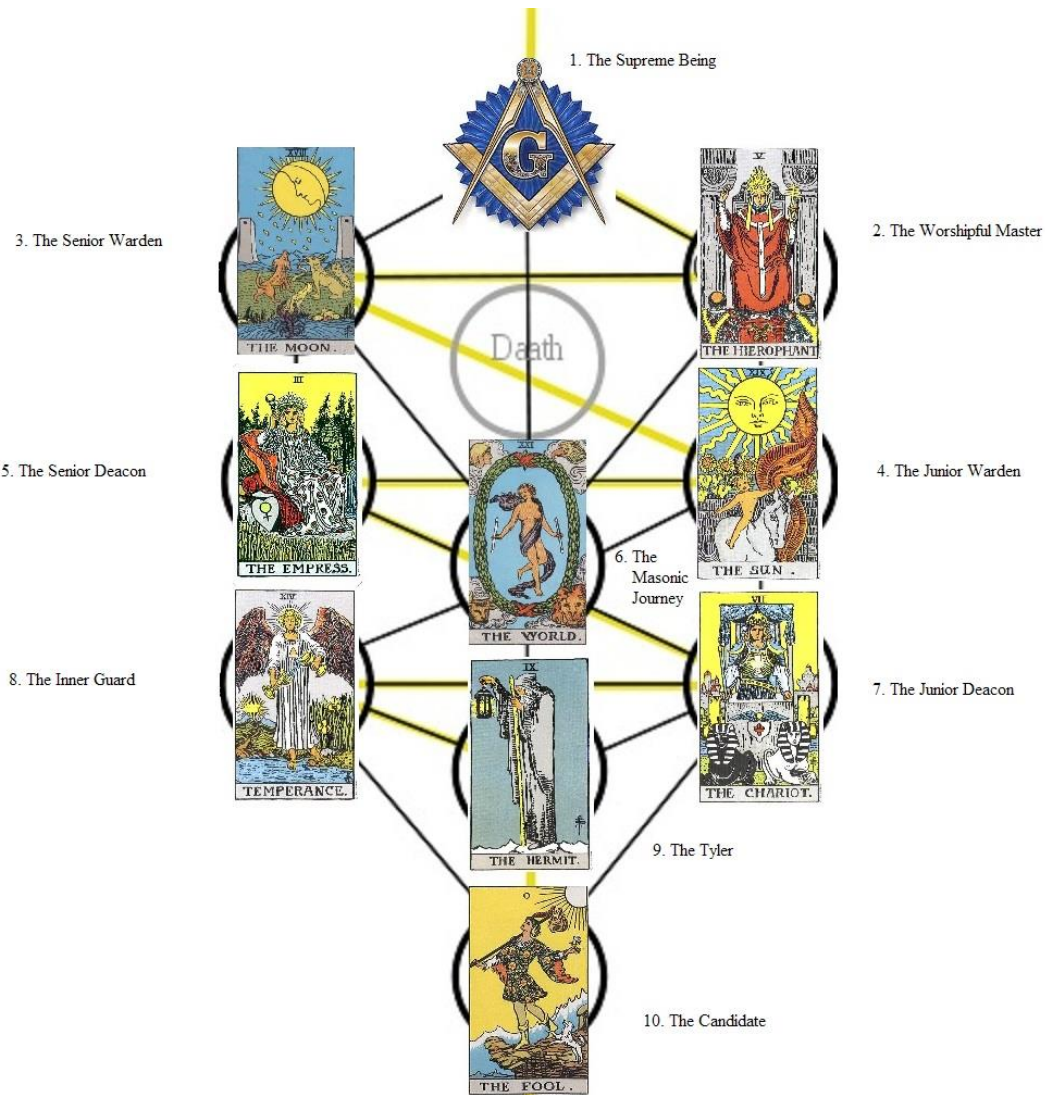




Plate 5: The World



Plate 4: The Chariot

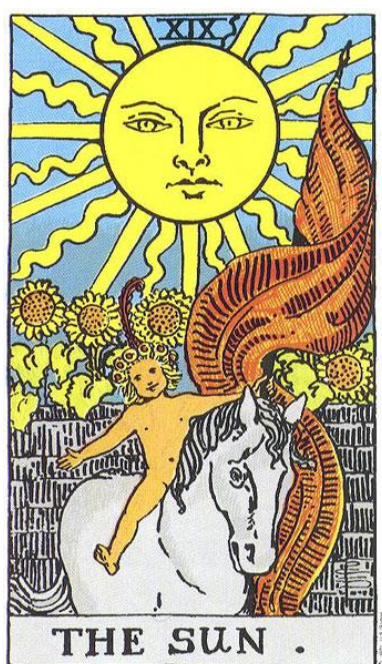


Plate 7: The Sun.



Plate 8: The Moon.