



Ace of Orbs: Bread of Life

Card Description:

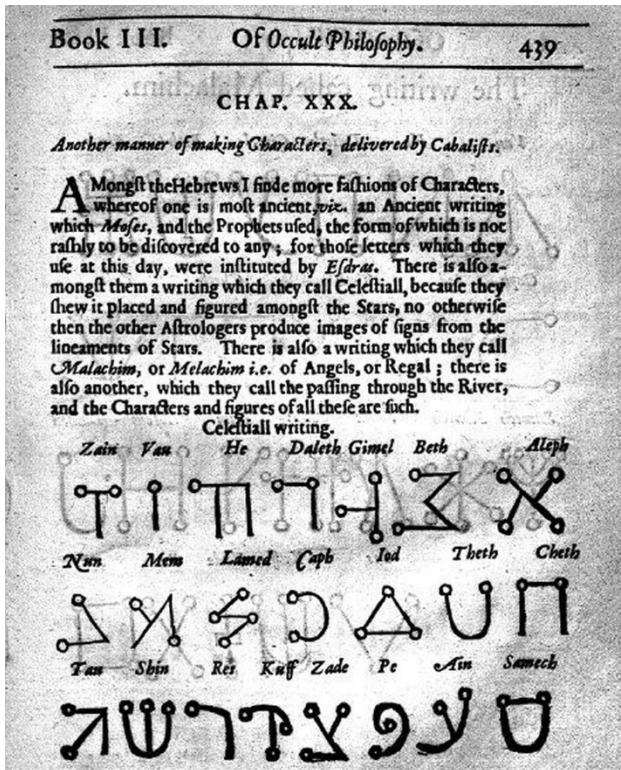
A Hand of Spirit, the color of verdant earth, presents an emerald orb to a praying Mariam, mother of Jesus, from Nazareth. Mariam was the wife of Joseph, a *tekton* (carpenter or craftsman) of Jewish descent.

Catholics immortalize Mariam, or the Virgin Mary, as a saint, Mother of God through an immaculate conception, and the one prophesied to defeat Satan. In Genesis 3:15, the protoevangelium, God says to the Serpent in the Garden of Eden that the woman and the seed of the woman would crush the serpent's head. In the Book of Revelation, the "woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars" who gives birth

to the Messiah is interpreted to be Mary, the one to defeat “the ancient serpent,” a reference back to Genesis.



Within the hexagram is the SATOR acrostic, often associated with a Pentacle of Saturn from the *Book of Solomon*. The letters are written in the Celestial Alphabet found in Agrippa’s *Of Occult Philosophy*, Book III.



Macgregor Mathers asserts that the words SATOR, AREPO, TENET, OPERA, ROTAS in that order means, “The Creator, slow-moving, maintains His creations as vortices, or wheels.” These vortices are what the orbs in the SKT deck signify, these *dharmachakras*, or energy wheels. 18th and 19th century texts describe the SATOR acrostic as a charmed tablet that wards against physical harms, everything from rabid dogs to toothaches. The earliest mention of this magical square was in a 12th century codex we identify as Manuscript Digby 53. Texts in the 15th century say it protects against black magic and even attracts love.

Archaeologists can prove that the tablet dates back earlier than that, to at latest 79 AD, as the SATOR acrostic was found all throughout the ruins of Pompeii, though the tablet was written as follows:

R	O	T	A	S
O	P	E	R	A
T	E	N	E	T
A	R	E	P	O
S	A	T	O	R

Known as the ROTAS square, the acrostic tablet was a popular architectural design feature across the Roman Empire, from Syria and Gaul to Great Britain, inscribed on the walls of houses or columns and entranceways. One theory for what it means in Latin is: “As you sow, so shall you reap.” Yet codebreakers have also found that the letters in the ROTAS square can be rearranged to form a cross, as follows:

	A		P	
	A		A	
	O		T	
			E	
			R	
P	A	T	E	R
			N	O
			S	T
			E	R

The letters of the ROTAS square can be rearranged into “PATER NOSTER” twice, forming a cross, plus the remaining letters “A,” “A,” and “O” for

“Alpha Ac Omega” or the Alpha and the Omega. “Pater Noster” is Latin for “Our Father,” the opening words to the Lord’s Prayer.

This arrangement also formed the Chi Rho symbol, pictured on the subsequent page, a Christogram formed from the letters Chi (X) and Rho (P). The Chi Rho was believed to hold mystical power.

When these four letters are put together—Alpha, Rho, Chi, and Omega—you get the word “ARCO,” which means to protect, to ward off that which is unwanted. The four letters can also form the word “ARCHO,” the Latin root for chief, sovereign, and ruler.



The wall of letters makes reference to some of the essential natures of Air and from the realm of Swords that beget Earth and the realm of Orbs: in the Opening of the Four Worlds in Creation, Air begets Earth: The Intellectual Plane to the Material Plane, the Formative World opens the Active World.

“And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father’s only son, full of grace and truth.” (John 1:14)

Inside the cave is the hexagram, symbolizing the Divine’s role as a sacred geometer, along with a pine cone. In Assyrian and Babylonian symbolism, the pine cone represented eternal life, fertility, and was associated with the Tree of Life. From a pine cone is birthed the Sacred Tree.

Card Meaning:

The Ace of Orbs endows the Keeper with access to the Sacred Mysteries and the Gift of Prophecy. The quality of this card is Fruition—the fruit born after the achievement.

In its simplest reading, this card portends that which has been in gestation is about to be birthed. It's the divinatory message that Spirit has chosen you to be the one to bring a divine mission into being.

This is the card of primordial Earth. It corresponds to the alchemical Darkening stage of achieving the Magnum Opus. Alchemically, the Ace of Orbs corresponds with Salt. It first descends down to manifest on the physical plane during the season of Cardinal Earth, or the winter solstice.

Invoked as the Bread of Life, the Ace of Orbs is an omen of nourishment. It's a greater, more powerful divine force who has descended into your world to ensure your prosperity and spiritual fulfillment.

The Ace of Orbs gives rise to the December solstice, and corresponds with the *medium coeli* (the midheaven) at the Tropic of Capricorn, or the southern tropic. The southern tropic is the southernmost latitude at which point the sun can be directly overhead. Your midheaven signifies a culmination point, a pinnacle of personal achievement. When the Ace of Orbs appears to you, you will be nourished and rewarded by your own hard work. This is sustenance and self-mastery.

Artist Notes:

Starting around the winter of 2017 and for all of 2018, the Ace of Coins/Pentacles/Disks followed me around, irrespective of which deck I was reading with. Any time I sat down and took the time to do an important personal reading, the Ace of Pentacles would come up. A few friends who did readings for me would also pull the Ace of Coins/Pentacles. And then in 2018, I conceived of the idea to create the *Spirit Keeper's Tarot*, so I have come to associate this particular card in the deck with the creation of the SKT.