

He

## Trump V

### Allegorical themes

Pontiff — HGMVN

### Symbols

Temple — HYKL

Inner sanctuary — HKL

Crown — HDR

*Divided into thirds* — HShThLSH

Consecration — HQDSh, HThQDShVTh

Bishop (chess piece) — HGMVN

Stretch out one's hand — HDH

To be marked — HSThMM

To have one's hair cut — HSThPR

Baldness — HQRChH

### Interpretive words

Counselor, Minister — HDGR

Experience — HRPhTQH

Tradition — HLKH, HRGL

Religious Law — HBORH

Instruction, To teach — HVRH, HBYN

Consultation — HMLKH

Faith — HAMNH, HBMChH, HYMNV

Preaching — HShPH

Prophesying — HNBAVTh, HThNBAVTh

Breath — HBL

Infusion — HShAH, HShRH

Inspiration — HShRAH, HATzLH

Meditation — HGY, HGVTh, HThBVNNVTh

To be broken — HRS

Amethyst — HYMYSYVN

Salt — HMLYCh

The fifth letter *he* (HA) is ideally suited to the themes of ritual and religion, introducing as it does such words as *faith* (HAMNH), *worship* (HALYH), *preaching* (HTPhH), *meditation* (HGY), *purification* (HZKVTh), *self-purification*

## He

(HThBRR), *grace* (HART PNYM), *confession* (HDYA), *baptism* (HTBLH), *pardoning* (HSLChVTh), *repentance* (HThChRTBTh), *divine promise* (HBTChH), *charity* (HKShRVTh), *spiritual practice* (HLKH), *proper conduct* (HVN), and *consecration* (HQDSh). If the card designers were wishing to match the social triumph of spiritual authority to a letter of the alphabet, they would have been hard pressed to find a better fit.

The Empress and Emperor each hold scepters of earthly rule, symbolized by the sphere and foursquare cross. In contrast, The Pope holds a staff of spiritual authority, topped by the papal symbol of a cross *divided into thirds* (HShThLSh).

This division is repeated in his triple-crowned tiara or *triregnum*, meaning 'triple reign'. Originally, this crown may have represented spiritual sovereignty over the ecclesiastical body (church), the Vatican (city), and the Empire (state). Modern interpretations of the triple crown and staff might include rulership in the worlds of God, Man, and Nature; harmony in the subconscious, conscious and superconscious minds; experience within the realms of the Elysian Fields, Earth, and Hades. The vertical bar running through the staff's horizontal crossbars may be taken to represent the soul who can traverse these domains; such ability would be the hallmark of one who gives *counsel* (HDGR) to others. The word *hebayin* (HBYN) means 'understanding' as well as 'to teach' or 'to explain', implying the responsibility to pass on what one has learned.

The name of the fifth letter *he* (HA) literally translates to 'Behold!', 'here is', and 'this', all of which signify 'the indication of *that which is*'.

The shape of the 'he' is composed of three parts: the vertical right side, the horizontal crossbar above, and the 'yud' at the bottom left. The kabbalah interprets these to be the 'three servants' of thought, speech and action, suggesting that the Papesse (*analysis* - BChYNH), Emperor (*speech* - DBR), and Empress (*action* - GMYLH) are all reflected in the experiences represented by the *Pontiff* (HGMVN). The kabbalah also describes the three parts of this letter as "breadth, height, and depth", the dimensions of practical *experience* (HRPhTQH).

As the Papesse corresponds to the 'high place' of the *bimah* (BMH), the Pontiff corresponds similarly to the heights of a *mountain* (HR). This word connotes the *mountain* (HR) of spiritual experience, since there are five syn-

onyms for *light* which use this root as a suffix: *bahir* (BHR) or 'brilliance'; *taher* (THR) or 'brightness'; *nahar* (NHR) or 'light'; *zohar* (ZHR) or 'shining'; *tzohar* (TzHR) or 'noon, midday'.

The numeral 5 corresponds to the *Quintessence* which breaths life into the four alchemical elements, much as the head bestows *instruction* (HBYN) to the four limbs of the body. The five-pointed Star of Solomon shows this fifth element as *infused* (HShRH) onto the elements of fire, air, water and earth. The Kabbalah describes the soul as also having five aspects, all of which are associated with the fifth letter 'he' (The Bahir, v.53): *nephesh*, related to instinctual behavior; *ruach*, corresponding to the emotions; *neshamah*, the inner soul or mind; *chayah*, the life-force; *yechidah*, the subtlest portion of the soul.

The interpretation given to this trump by early occult authors is *inspiration* (HShRAH), which means not only the influence of the divine upon the human but the animating of elements by a spiritual *breath* or *vapor* (HBL). The *Pontiff* (HG MVN) is shown in an act of *benediction* or *consecration* (HQDSh), which could be interpreted as the *summoning* (HZMNH) of the Divine Breath into form.

The equation  $5=1+4$  suggests the idea that *inspiration* (HShRAH) is new energy (ADSh, *being*) poured into a readied vessel (DMVTh, *form*). The breath of inspiration can also *disturb* (HPhROH), *overwhelm* (HKNYO), or even cause the *breaking* (HRS) of the vessel.

Another link between this letter and Trump V is found in the word *hekal* (HYKL), meaning 'temple' or 'sanctuary' (1 Sam 1:9; 2 Sam 22:7). In some passages, *hekal* refers specifically to the *innermost sanctuary* (HKL) of the temple, where only the high priest was allowed to enter, and wherein was kept the ark of the covenant (1 Sam 3:3).

Since the Hebrew and Greek alphabets are both derived from the earlier Phoenician alphabet, many parallels can be found between their traditions of letter symbolism. One example of this is seen in Plutarch's *Essay on the Letter E at Delphi* (the fifth Greek letter 'epsilon' etymologically corresponds to the fifth Hebrew letter 'he'). This letter, says Plutarch, was found inscribed onto various gold and bronze objects at the Oracle at Delphi, again showing its connotations of spiritual *inbreath* (Gr. empneo) and *renewal* (Gr. egkanizo).

The two attendants on this card depict the *Bishops* (HG MVN) in the

*He*

game of chess; their movement abilities are indicated by their hands, which are extended diagonally in opposing directions.

The Hebrew word for *Pontiff* (HGMVN) can also be variously translated as *Archbishop*, *Bishop*, *Cardinal* and *religious official*, all of which support this card's depiction of 'religious authority'. Early authors also assigned it the meanings of ritual, *tradition* (HLKH), and *inspiration* (HShRAH).

## The unnumbered card

**Allegorical themes**

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Fool — ThRDA  
 Vagabond — ThVOH  
 Trickster — ThChBLN  
 Joker, Jester — ThLL  
 Excuse — ThRVTh

**Symbols**

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Masquerade costume, Mask, Disguise — ThChPSHTh  
 Crownlets — ThYN  
 Knapsack — ThRMYL  
 To carry a knapsack — ThRML  
 Pole — ThRN  
 Ladle — ThRVD  
 Bag — ThRMYL  
 To affix, suspend — ThLH  
 Staff, Crutch — ThGDA, ThGRA  
 Support, hold up — ThMK  
 Tambourine, Timbrel — ThE, ThVP  
 Fox — ThOL  
 Tearing off — ThLSH, ThLYSH  
 Pantaloon — ThChThVNYM  
 Underpants — ThChThVNYM  
 Furrows, Hillocks — ThLM

**Interpretive words**

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Innocence — ThM  
 Simplicity — ThVM  
 Error — ThOY  
 Folly — ThHLH, ThPLH  
 Wisdom — ThVShYH  
 Guide, Scout — ThYYR  
 Sojourner — ThVShV  
 Disciple — ThLMYD  
 Consciousness — ThVDOH  
 Essence — ThMTzYTh, ThOOVM  
 Costume — ThLBVShTh

Ditch — ThGRA  
 Obstacle, Stumbling block — ThQLH  
 Crocodile — ThMSCh  
 Jackal — ThN  
 To warn — ThRH  
 To wound — ThVH  
 Secret, Hidden — ThOLVMH

The Fool's position in the deck is elusive, and his identity an enigma. It seems no accident then that The Fool—the only card in the deck which traditionally has no number or "face value"—is completely *disguised* (ThChPShTh) in a *masquerade costume* (ThChPShTh). The wily *fox* (ThOL) behind him, though, attempts to expose his identity.

He also does not play by the same rules as the other cards. Linguistically, he is the *trickster* (ThChBLN) of the deck, the *knapsack* (ThRMYL) which he carries is most assuredly his *bag of tricks* (ThChBVLH).

The symbolic implications of a card with no value might be found in such words as *enigma*, *secret* (ThOLVMH); *abyss*, *primeval chaos* (ThHM); *infinite depth* (ThHVMYVTh); *madness*, *confusion* (ThMHVN); *emptiness*, *formlessness* (ThHV).

The word *tohu* (ThHV) is used in Genesis to describe the quintessential 'emptiness' before creation: "In the beginning, Elohim created the heavens and the earth; and the earth was *formless* (ThHV) and *void* (BHV), and darkness was over the surface of the *deep* (ThHM)" (Gen 1:2). *Tohu* can be variously translated as *chaos* (Isa 24:10), *confusion* (I Sam 12:21), *meaningless arguments* (Isa 29:21), and *nothingness* (Isa 40:17, 23). The term *tehom* (ThHM), also found in the Genesis passage above, signifies 'ocean depths'. As Trump XXI represents the *summit* (ShN) of the entire deck, The Fool suggests the *lowest* (ThChThY) or *nethermost* (ThThAH) social estate, represented by the image of a *vagabond* (ThVOH).

The Fool's role in the game sets him apart from the pack. He cannot, for example, be captured by any trump. While he also cannot capture tricks himself, he may be played at any time earning guaranteed points for his owner. Because he is especially useful when no other possibilities are open, The Fool acquired the Italian epithet of *Excusé* (ThRVTh), meaning *excuse* or

the answer to a difficult question (ThRVTh). This “wild card” status, as well as its visual and linguistic connections, show this unnumbered card as corresponding to the *Jester* or *Joker* (ThLL) in modern decks (although some card historians dispute that there is any direct connection between them).

The hoop of bells around the fool’s waist is a *tambourine* or *timbrel* (ThP). The *pole* (ThRN) from which his *bag* (ThRMYL) is *suspended* (ThLH) depicts the detail of a *ladle* (ThRVD) at its end.

The *fox* (ThOL) attempts to *tear off* (ThLSH) the *pantaloons* (ThChThVNYM) of the *traveller’s* (ThNARA) disguise. The allegory of a *masked* (ThChPShTh) persona suggests the themes of *mockery* (ThOThOYM), *concealment* (ThOLMH), *illusion* (ThOThVO), *deception* (ThOO), and *folly* (ThPL). When Jacob wanted to steal his older brother Esau’s blessing, he appeared before his father disguised in Esau’s clothes, saying “I shall be a *deceiver* (ThOO) in his sight” (Gen 27:12).

The Dellarocca card adds the specific details of a *feather in a cap* (ThHLH), the *lace* (ThChRYM) on his shoulders, the leaves of a *fig tree* (ThANH), the *seams* (ThPR, ThKYPH) on his pant leg and sleeve, the staves of *bone formation* (ThOOMTh), and an emphasis on the *heel* (ThPVCh OQB) of his bare *foot* (ThChThYTh). Close inspection identifies the beast behind him to be a *goat* (ThYSh) rather than the traditional fox or dog.

Perhaps most intriguing is the fact that, out of all the cards in Dellarocca’s deck, this is the only trump to bear a letter in its design. It is naturally assumed that the “M” shown on the fool’s tunic refers to the card’s Italian title of “Il Matto”, meaning *fool* or *madman*. One might ask, though, why exactly did Dellarocca add any letter at all, since the card’s identity was obvious and its title already printed at the bottom. It is reasonable to assume that the “M” has intended significance, since no other design bears a letter; it is also obvious that the designer knew it to be the initial letter for the card’s title. This suggests that Dellarocca either felt a need to make a rather simplistic allusion to *Il Matto*, or else that he was disguising an altogether different alphabetic allusion.

We find, in fact, that the Italian word *marca*, which means ‘mark’ or ‘sign’, is the exact Italian equivalent of the word *tav* (ThV), which literally means ‘mark’ or ‘sign’. In light of the alphabetic basis of Dellarocca’s deck, the “M” on *Il Matto* is almost certainly a clever allusion to his assignment of

## Tav

Hebrew letters.

Early authors associated this card with spiritual *folly* (ThHLH), as well as spiritual *innocence* (ThM) which often appears as folly to others.

The unusual headdress worn by the Marseilles fool seems to represent the *tagin* (ThYGN, ThN, ThNYM) or 'crownlet'. More specifically, the crownlet is the small ornamentation drawn above the Hebrew letters in the Talmudic *Ashurite script*. The shape of the fool's headdress is indeed similar to these ornamentations, which were drawn above a letter with a single dot of ink and a thin curved line extended downwards to the letter. Seven letters in particular received special crownlets: shin, ayin, tet, nun, zayin, gimel, and tzaddi. Many Marseilles designs, such as the Conver, actually show seven rungs in the Fool's headdress which appear to be these seven *crownlets* (ThYGN) aligned in a row.

Crownlets are also sometimes referred to as the *finishing touch* (ThGMYR), an appropriate word with which to close this analysis of the 22 Tarot allegories.



## Trump VI

**Allegorical themes**

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Love — VDO  
 Marriage — VGVHY  
 Rendezvous — VOD  
 Confession of love — VDVY AHBH

**Symbols**

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Couple — VGVHY  
 Senior — VThYQ  
 To point — VDY  
 Wooden poker — VDY  
 To sting — VQThA

**Interpretive words**

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Choice, Declaration — VDO  
 Surrender, Relinquish — VThR  
 Indulgence — VThRNVTh  
 Veil — VYLVN  
 To prove — VKCh  
 Regulation — VSTh  
 Conduct — VSTh  
 Valentine — VLNTYNUS  
 Venus — VNVS  
 Rose — VRD

The sixth letter vav is frequently used in Hebrew as a conjunction, as in the phrase “Judah *and* (V) Jerusalem” (Isaiah 1:1). The Hebrew language, however, does not place the letter *alone* between the two words it connects, as we do in English; instead, it is *attached* as an inseparable prefix to the second word. The above phrase appears then in Hebrew as “YHVdH (Judah) VYRVShLM (and Jerusalem)”. This use of the letter seems reflected in the Marseilles design itself, which shows the young man coupled with the woman on the right.

The linguistic function of the vav (VV) is reflected in the fact that its name literally means *hook* (VV); the shape of the letter also resembles a hook.

In kabbalism, the vav is associated with anything which connects, such as the gold “pillar hooks (VV)” used to attach the veil onto the innermost pillars of the temple (Exodus 26:32).

The earliest versions of Trump VI mimic the “betrothal portraits” popular in Renaissance Europe, which showed young couples “linking hands” under the figure of Cupid above. The connection with Cupid, son of the Roman goddess *Venus* (VNVS), is natural for the card of *Love* (VDO); in some Renaissance works, the angel himself is referred to as Love. His arrow implies both the *sting* (VQThA) of love and the ‘hook’ of the vav. More strikingly, the arrow of Cupid alludes to a Hebrew word for *wooden poker* (VDY) or *firebrand*.

This Hebrew word for *love* (VDO) also means ‘to select, to point out, to declare’, words reminiscent of early interpretations which described this card as *choice*. Closely related is the word *wa’ad* (VOD), which can be variously translated as ‘rendezvous’, ‘meeting’, ‘forever’ and even ‘to designate a wife’.

The Marseilles version of this card is often interpreted as symbolizing the individual standing between virtue and vice. However, the *senior* (VThYQ) at the left of the design more likely represents the traditional Italian chaperon or ‘duenna’, the matron in charge of unmarried girls. She may also represent the mother *relinquishing* (VThR) her child to marriage. The arrow of Cupid is traditionally shown pointed toward the younger *couple* (VGVHY), and suggests that they are making a public *declaration of love* (VDVY AHBH) to the parent or priest on the left.

In some designs, this third figure appears to be male rather than female. This recalls the legend of *Valentine* (VLNTYNUS), an Italian priest of the third century. The Emperor at that time was Claudius II, who outlawed his soldiers from marrying since he believed that men without wives and families made better fighters. Valentine defied this ban and married those couples who came to him in secrecy. He was discovered by Claudius, however, and put to death. An allusion to Valentine would have been appropriately placed between the cards of the priest (Trump V) and the soldier (Trump VII).

The interpretation of the Marseilles image as “the Two Paths”, though perhaps not intended by earlier designs, may nonetheless have an alphabetic basis. The sixth letter of the ancient Phoenician alphabet was written as “Y”, from which was derived both the sixth Hebrew letter *vav* and the sixth early Greek letter *digamma* (also shaped like the “Y”). Because it is shaped like a

fork in the road, the digamma was used by the Pythagoreans to represent the choice offered to the initiate entering their academy: on one hand, a life of rigor and intellectual discipline; on the other hand, a life of pleasure and material comfort. The "Pythagorean Y" thus symbolized a choice between intellectual versus worldly pleasures.

This trump represents the numeric value of 6 which symbolizes balance, harmony, and *regulation* (VSTh), all expressed by the geometric symbol of the Star of David. The equation  $1+5=6$  may be taken to symbolize the *uniting* (AChD) of *that which is broken* (HRS), or may symbolize that *love* (VDO) demands *will* (AVH) be married to *experience* (HRPhTQH). The equation  $6=4+2$  could be seen as *regulation* (VSTh) which requires *sustained* (DRA) *analysis* (BChYNH).

This card also alludes to Adam and Eve (ChVH) having been created on the sixth day.

## Trump VII

### Allegorical themes

Triumph, Victory — ZKH, ZKY  
Military Guard, Sentry — ZQYP

### Symbols

War Horses — ZRZYR MThNYM  
One with unequal pair of eyes or eyebrows — ZGDVM, ZGDN  
To pair up — ZVG  
To cut off the tail-end — ZNB  
Bit — ZMM  
Rod of an officer — ZMVRH  
Armor — ZYN  
Crown — ZR  
Cuirass — ZVNY  
Moon — ZHRA  
Wreath, Frame border — ZR  
Spoke of wheel — ZRVO  
Window sill, Molding — ZYZ  
Scaffolding — ZQYPA  
Silks used for brides' canopies — ZHVRYVTh  
Seed, Seedpod — ZYR, ZRO, ZROVN  
Sprout, Shoot — ZMVRH, ZRD

### Interpretive words

Merit — ZKVTh, ZKYH  
Worthiness — ZKA  
Pride — ZHVHA  
Passion — ZYDNA, ZDVN  
Vigor, Strength — ZRZ  
Movement — ZYZH  
Span of time — ZMN  
Splendor — ZYV  
Raging heat — ZLOPH  
Scorched — ZRB  
Prudence — ZHYRVTh  
Crimson ornament between a horse's eyes — ZHVRYTh  
To be on guard, To warn — ZHR

## Zayin

Gladiator — ZRZR  
Going to war — ZYVN  
Property, Estate — ZYHRA  
Possessions, Treasures — ZYHVRA  
Gold — ZHB

Since ancient times, the chariot has been seen as a symbol of triumph. Many different virtues have been depicted riding upon it, including Love, Chastity, Fame and Eternity. This card implies moral rather than physical conquest, since the charioteer is traditionally shown without sword.

This trump suggests the *allegory of the soul* as told by Socrates in Plato's *Phaedrus*. Socrates likens the soul to a chariot drawn by two winged horses: *reason*, obedient and agreeable, and *passion*, an ungovernable steed. The "beast of passion" seems to be symbolized by the horse which *moves* (ZYZH) in conflicted directions. The driver, being the intellect of the spirit, is depicted as master over the beasts of mind and emotion.

The horses also allude to the *war horses* (ZRZYR MThNYM) or Knights in the game of chess. Recalling the 'leap' of the King, the horses' upraised *forelegs* (ZRVO) denote their ability to *leap* (ZNQ) over other pieces. The horse which turns his head further denotes the unique ability of this piece to *zigzag* (ZGZG) across the gameboard. The implication of game pieces is also visually suggested by the *miniature* (ZOYR) size of the horses and by their *cut-off tail ends* (ZNB).

There are additional details in the design which, when taken together, appear to certify its link to the seventh letter zayin. The horse on the right, for example, is almost always depicted in the Marseilles pattern as *one with an unequal pair of eyes or eyebrows* (ZGDVM, ZGDN). The two beasts are shown with a *bit* (ZMVM), again symbolizing the harnessing of mind and passion. Beneath their feet can be seen *seeds* (ZYR), which might further imply the *manuring of a field* (ZBL). The chariot itself shows the unusual details of a *window sill or moulding* (ZYZ) and *poles or scaffolding* (ZQYPA) which support *gold embroidered silks used for brides' canopies* (ZHVRYTh). The object hanging from the top of the canopy is difficult to identify in some decks but appears to be a *bell* (ZVG). The *wreath* (ZR) or shield attached to the front of the chariot is where the card engraver traditionally placed his *identification*

## Zayin

(ZHVY) or mnemonic symbol (ZKR). The *wheel spokes* (ZRVO) and *rims* (ZYRA) can be seen behind the chariot; their unusual position may allude to the wheels used for the *spinning of cloth* (ZVL). The *military guard* (ZQYP) wears the specific items of *crown* (ZR), *cuirass* (ZVNY), and *moon* (ZHRA) epaulets.

The letter *zayin* (ZYN) literally means 'weapon', 'armor', and 'ornament', as well as 'to equip with arms'. Kabbalists describe the form of the *zayin* as a *golden scepter* (ZMVRH ZHB), and as a crown which has been placed upon the head of a king. This *crown* at the top of the letter extends horizontally in both directions and suggests the extension of dominion over one's kingdom.

As the seventh letter, the *zayin* corresponds to a time of rest after completion; the number 7 is often used in the Old Testament to represent a general *span of time* (ZMN). It also implies the attainment of a goal, such as in Ezekiel's vision of the seven steps leading to the temple (Ezk 40:22, 26) and the seven pillars supporting Wisdom's house (Proverbs 9:1).

The number 7, being the sum of the 'spiritual' 3 and the 'material' 4, represents the synthesis of 'soul and body'; as a prime number, its structure cannot easily be broken down or divided. These ideas, summarized geometrically by a triangle atop a square, led several occult authors to describe The Chariot as "the domination of spirit over matter" or "mind over form". It also reflects the Renaissance tendency to classify the world into threefold, fourfold, and sevenfold structures, such as the seven liberal arts divided into the language disciplines of Grammar, Rhetoric, and Dialectic and the physical disciplines of Arithmetic, Music, Geometry, and Astronomy. This wholism of the seven was expressed also by the grouping of the seven planets, the seven seas, and the seven wonders of the ancient world. There was even a sevenfold categorization for the training of knights: riding, tilting, fencing, wrestling, running, leaping, and spear-throwing.

The Greek myth of Phaeton might be seen in the image of the charioteer. The son of Apollo by a human mother, Phaeton sought to drive the Sun Chariot of his father, though he was *warned* (ZHR) that none besides the god could steer the *shining* (ZRYChH) chariot. Phaeton took the reins anyway, but the horses recognized that weaker and inexperienced hands were commanding them. In their *fright* (ZVO), the Sun Chariot *strayed* (ZNH) from its path and *scorched* (ZRB) the earth. Zeus, seeing the destruction and hearing the *cries* (ZOQ) of Phaeton, threw a lightning bolt to stop the chariot; his son

## Zayin

fell to his death and the chariot was destroyed.

A similar myth is that of Icarus who, along with his father, fashioned wings of feathers and wax in order to escape their island prison. Here too, the father warned the son to be cautious. Icarus was mindless of the danger and *flew* (ZBVB) too close to the sun's *brightness* (ZHR); the *heat* (ZLOPH) melted his wings of wax, and he fell to his death.

Both myths caution against *pride* (ZDVN, ZChH) and *presumption* (ZDVNY). Similarly, the Hebrew word *zohar* (ZHR) can be translated both as 'brightness' and as 'caution'.

Trump VII represents *merit* (ZKVTh), *conquest* (ZKH), and *triumph* (ZKH). It corresponds to a stage of completion, though also to alchemical *gold* (ZHB) which has yet to be purified. This card also suggests vigilance, *guardedness* (ZHR), and *that which is worth guarding* (ZYHVRA).

## Trump VIII

### **Allegorical themes**

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Judge — ChKTh  
Lawgiver — ChQQ  
Court Official — ChTzRN

### **Symbols**

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Sword — ChRB  
Scales — ChRSPYThYN  
To weigh — ChShB  
Sun — ChMH  
Solar columns — ChMNYM  
Screen partition — ChYTz  
Rope around the neck — ChNQA  
Crescent ornament — ChYDVSh

### **Interpretive words**

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Adjudication, To pass judgment — ChLT  
Equality, Liberty — ChRVTh  
Wisdom — ChKMH  
Mercy — ChNYNH  
To decide — ChZA  
To declare guilty — ChYB  
To declare pardoned — ChNN  
Imprisonment — ChBVShA  
Emancipation — ChRR, ChPSh  
Law — ChVQH  
Contract — ChVNH  
Money Changer — ChLPN  
Mathematician, Calculation — ChShBN  
Abacus — ChShBVNYH  
Addition — ChBVR  
Subtraction — ChSVR  
Division — ChLQ, ChThBTh  
Distribution — ChLQ  
To dissect, Cut — ChThN  
To limit, Engrave — ChQQ



## Chet

Trump VIII is a classical depiction of the virtue Justice. Its correspondence to the eighth letter chet also suggests it to represent a *judge* (ChKTh), *court official* (ChTzRN), or anyone whose function is to *investigate* (ChVQR), *clarify* (ChVR) and *adjudicate* (ChLT).

The letter *chet* (ChYTh) is actually the Hebrew root for *verdict* and *sentence* (ChYThVK). This letter begins numerous words related to legal *judgement* (ChLT) and to the *enacting* (ChVQQ) of such judgements into *statute* and *law* (ChVQH). The letter chet can decree *condemnation* (ChYB) and *imprisonment* (ChBVShA); it can also bestow *pardon* (ChNN) and *liberty* (ChPSh). And while it does allude to the *restrictiveness* (ChMRH) of legality, it also introduces *forgiveness* (ChNN), *clemency* (ChSVK), *grants of pardon* (ChPVShYTh), and the principles of *mercy* (ChNYNH).

These words show the chet as standing between extremes, at the *midpoint* (ChTzY) between *severity* (ChVMRH) and *mercy* (ChNYNH), between *black* (ChRVThA) and *white* (ChYVR), between *sin* (ChTA) and *piety* (ChSYD). This is the position from which the practical consequences of action can be *weighed* (ChShB).

Such *judgements* (ChLT) are not those of nature but of man, who attempts to reflect the balance of nature by defining social limitations. The Hebrew word *chaqaq* (ChQQ) means 'to draw a circle' and 'to limit'; the same word means *to cut* or *to engrave* (ChQQ) and is used to denote the *enactment* of law, owing to the ancient practice of engraving laws onto stone or metal slabs. "By wisdom kings reign, and rulers *decree* (ChQQ) justice" (Proverbs 8:15). This same word appears as 'lawgiver': "The Lord is our judge, the Lord is our *lawgiver* (ChQQ)" (Isa 33:22).

The ancient term *cheret* (ChRT) refers to the graving tool or to the inscribed letters themselves, from which also comes the word *chartom* (ChRTM) meaning 'engraver' or 'scribe'.

*Chet* (ChYTh) also refers to the *mathematician* (ChShBN) and *accountant* (ChShB), and to formulas of calculation. These skills reflect those of the judge and legislator, all of whom are required to calculate outcomes and to decide apportionments. The word *chadad* (ChDD) means 'to be sharp, keen', like the *edge* (ChR) of a *sword* (ChRB). Similarly, the word *chakam* (ChKM) means to be 'cunning' and 'prudent'.

The eighth letter chet is the most symmetrical form in the alphabet, and

## Chet

its shape is reflected in the hanging scales of Justice. Its shape has also been compared to a gateway offering an entrance and return to new experiences; the pillar on its left side is formed by the letter zayin, representing the way of entrance, and the pillar on its right side is formed by the letter vav, representing the way of return. These also represent the *pillar of severity* and the *pillar of mercy* on the kabbalistic Tree of Life, with the space between them representing equilibrium.

The word *cheleq* (ChLQ) means 'to distribute' and 'to make level'. It is also used to denote the *portion* (ChLQ) divided among victors (Gen 14:24), the offering *shares* (ChLQ) divided among priests (Lev 6:10), the *territories* (ChLQ) given by Joshua to Israel (Joshua 11:23; 12:7), and the military *divisions* (ChLQ) assigned by David (1 Chr 23:6). This letter also begins words for *field* (ChQL) and *boundary mark* (ChZYTh).

There are several small details on this card which appear to be clarified by alphabetic connections. For example, the double circle on Justice's head-dress is the astrological symbol for the *sun* (ChMH), and the posts behind her show a *knob at the end of a pillar* (ChZYGH). The horizontal shaft of her *scales* (ChRSPYThYN) passes through the *eye of a needle* (CHRYR) which in some versions is hanging by a *thread* (ChVT), while the two dishes are suspended by *triangular arrangements* (ChTzVBH)—all of which suggest the precarious nature of stability and balance. The shape of the *crescent moon* (ChYDVSh) on her head mimics exactly the three *crescent moon* (ShHRN) halos shown on Trump XXI; the fact that there are two such synonyms beginning with the letters chet and shin parallels the fact that these are the only two cards in the deck with such head ornaments. This card also depicts a *rope hung around the neck* (ChNQA), a word based upon the root meaning *execution by strangulation* (ChNQ).

The *sword* (ChRB) and *scales* (ChRSPYThYN) may also represent a *sacred object held while taking an oath* (ChPTzA).

Dellarocca included several details which seem to have been influenced by the alphabet: the *embroidered design* (ChVTBA) on the *garment border* (ChBTh); *byssus* or *fine white linen* (ChVR); *girding around the waist* (ChGVR); the eye on her collar as a symbol for *vision* (ChZVN).

The numeric value of the letter chet can be represented by several equations:  $8=1+7$  may symbolize the *weighing* (ChShB) of both *intention* (AVH)

*Chet*

and *merit* (ZKVTh), and that *judgement* (ChLI) requires *victory* (ZChH) to be joined with *truth* (AMT); 8=2+6 may symbolize that *judgement* (ChLI) is the *regulating* (VSTh) of *opposing sides* (BDL); 8=5+3 may symbolize that true *mercy* (ChNYNH) is accomplished by *faith* (HAMNH) wedded with *action* (GMYLH).

Early occultists defined this card as representing equilibrium, divine Justice, and *law* (ChVQH). Levi also emphasized its meaning as *distribution* (ChLQ), and Papus as 'balanced power'.