

Arcanum: 4

Zodiac Affinity: Aries

Element: Fire

As a "Yes" or "No" Card: Yes

Overview

The Emperor is, in contrast to the High Priestess and the Empress, a masculine card. Presented as a bearded King upon a throne. The Emperor shows his stability and need to rule. He holds an Ankh and an Orb; core symbols of Egyptian theology. First impressions of the Emperor remind us of mythological kings, sat upon their throne, bearded and crowned.

Keywords

Power - Authority - Patriarchy - Leadership - Power of Reason - Establishment - Structure - Ambition

"Building structures and processes to encourage efficiency, prosperity, and stability. Decisions are made for the greater good, intending to benefit as many as possible." -Tarot of Pagan Cats, Lo Scarabeo.

Key Phrases

- I. Insensitivity to others, their feelings & passions
 - II. Assertive dogmatic thinking
 - III. Orderly chaos
- IV. Establishing laws or family values
- V. Taking control of a situation
 - VI. Structured thoughts
 - VII. Sticking to the rules

General

A distinctly masculine card, The Emperor is represented as an ancient King, always bearded; sitting on his throne, the rams shout 'Aries.' His stone throne shows his time honored, unwavering conservative values. The Empress is linked, and their names show, they balance each other on the Male/Female divide. In his hand, he holds a stylized Ankh, and

Egyptian symbol that has many meanings; mainly, "life," but also typing the card in more deeply with the Egyptian undertones that are present in the Tarot.

He wears a red robe, indicative of his power, passion and energy for life. Underneath it, he wears a suit of armor, suggesting that he is protected from any threat (and any emotional response or vulnerability). His long white beard is symbolic of his age-old wisdom and experience, and along with his gold crown, he is an authority figure who demands to be heard.

Behind his throne looms a tall, impenetrable mountain range, signifying that he is backed by a solid foundation but resistant to making any changes unless he deems it necessary. Beneath the peaks flows a small river, giving some hope that despite his tough exterior, he is still an emotional being – it will just take a lot of digging and trust to open him up to his softer side.

Relationships

The emperor represents a stable career. No surprises there, but no pitfalls. Promotions, if expected in your role, will come; but also a stable progression if you decide to start a new job. If you're looking for a job, a junior position will work well.

In romantic relationships he shows stability again, and a period of 'sameness.' If you're in a relationship, you'll get to know each other on a deeper level. If you're single and looking, now isn't the best time to look for a completely new person. Maybe somebody you know has an interest in you? If you aren't looking, time alone is all that's needed. The Emperor sits alone on his throne considering bigger things.

Now might be a time to work on that project instead of going out with your friends. Don't procrastinate with excuses. If you're working with friends on a project, now might be a time to start a new aspect of it.

The Emperor & Finance are a good combination. The stability means that investments will be okay, and generally, you should be doing well with money. Money is just a tool, a concept, and it comes and goes. You have to recognize the transient nature of money.

The emperor promises no surprises in regards to health. His conservative nature means little is going to change severely. Don't worry about it. If you're already ill though, you may be for a little while longer. As a ruler, The Emperor is looking to improve situation by traditional techniques. Don't try anything holistic, stick to what is proven to help you. If in doubt, consult a doctor.

He has the wisdom of an experienced and wise Father. Sticking to your current spiritual path is the best deal for you. You may have already realized that all spiritual paths lead to the same God.

Past

The Emperor in the past position represents a strong past paternal presence. A good teacher or father who guided, who taught you lessons that still come in handy today. The Emperor is conservative with traditional values. Maybe you were brought up in such a household, or taught by somebody who paid attention to the rules.

Present

The Emperor here represents a current paradigm of rules and regulations or a strong and well-known person. Look to somebody who can guide you down a new way of organization and thinking. It is also possible you may meet somebody famous, or somebody you used to idolize as a role model.

Future

He suggests here that a level of stability or a change of mindset to perceived stability. Your political views may change, or you may consider working 'by the book' instead of trying new techniques. You may also be working in the same field for a long time, but this isn't a bad thing; you'll learn a lot and become an expert at the techniques you use.

In Reverse

Domination - Excessive Control - Lack of Discipline - Inflexibility

In reverse, The Emperor takes authority to a new level. Expect misuse of power, or themes relating to somebody taking their control too far. He has absolute power. As well as signifying somebody else, it may also point to you. Are you acting within your bounds? Is it possible that you are infringing the rights and comfort of others?

He can also be a sign that others look to you as their leader or as an expert in the field but you are shying away from the role. You may fear being seen as the leader, instead preferring to hide in the shadows or stay out of the spotlight. There are other ways you can make an impact and influence on the world, such as authoring a book or training others to reach a bigger audience.

In a relationship reading, the reversed Emperor suggests that you may be in an unequal partnership and it's making you unhappy in the long term. Your significant other has become overbearing, possessive, dominating and authoritative. While you may have been looking for a partner to take care of you and offer a stable foundation for the future, those qualities have gone too far, and it seems as though much of your independence and freedom have been taken away. This dynamic is putting a strain on the relationship and preventing a flow of energies between you two.