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### The Beliefs of the Oldest Fraternity

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# SENIOR THESIS APPROVAL

This Honors thesis entitled  
**“The Beliefs of the Oldest Fraternity ”**

written by

**Bella Blankenship**

and submitted in partial fulfillment of  
the requirements for completion of  
the Carl Goodson Honors Program  
meets the criteria for acceptance  
and has been approved by the undersigned readers.

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May 7, 2023

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## Introduction

The world's oldest fraternity known as the Freemasons is one that is shrouded in a cloud of secrecy. Since most of what is involved in the Freemasons is a secret, it can be difficult to understand what members truly believe. To get a grasp on this belief system that is far too expansive to dive into fully, the first thing that has to be understood is what even is Freemasonry?

Freemasonry can be defined in numerous ways depending on where the lodges are located and who is asked. According to Dr. John K. Young and Barb Karg, freemasons are “a benevolent, social, charitable organization whose members seek to learn more about themselves in order to benefit their families and communities.”<sup>1</sup> There are others that would explain freemasonry as a “beautiful system of morality, veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols.”<sup>2</sup> Even then there are those that would define it as “a society of gentlemen concerned with moral and spiritual values” and that it is “a philosophy and a system of morality and ethics.”<sup>3</sup> There are even some that simplify it to “a universal society of friends who seek to become better people through their association with one another.”<sup>4</sup> To truly grasp what Freemasonry should be defined as is a combination of all of those definitions. The best definition would be that Freemasonry is a social organization of men that focuses on

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<sup>1</sup> John K. Young and Barb Karg, *The Everything Freemasons Book: Unlock the Secrets of This Ancient and Mysterious Society!* (Avon, MA: F+W Publication Company, 2006), 2.

<sup>2</sup> Editors, “Not Just a Man. A Mason.,” *Parabola: A Search for Meaning* 45, no. 4 (2020): 36-37, 37.

<sup>3</sup> Christopher Hodapp, *Freemasons for Dummies*, 3rd ed. (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2022), 11.

<sup>4</sup> Jeremy Harwood, *The Freemasons: Unlocking the 1000-Year-Old Mysteries of the Brotherhood* (Wigston: Lorenz Books, 2021), 6.

philosophy, morality, ethics, and spiritual values through the use of symbols that are veiled in allegory.

One of the main concepts in Freemasonry is the use of symbols and allegories to explain what it is that members believe. There are certain symbols that are “explained to you as you progressed; others are explained later; some will never be taught.”<sup>5</sup> There are different symbols for each of the three degrees that are important, but the same symbol can also mean different things depending on what degree the Mason currently holds. Even the different rituals and ceremonies have specified significance based on what symbols are present and what the Mason is doing to show what it is he believes. The most known symbol of the Freemasons is the “interlaced Square and Compasses” known as the “symbol of Freemasonry.”<sup>6</sup> In order to understand the teachings and philosophy of the Masons, we must understand the meaning of the symbols.<sup>7</sup>

The Freemasons have a belief system that follows believing in a god of some sort; there is a sacred text to be used and rules and rituals by which the men must abide. They use a variety of symbols to explain their essential beliefs. The Freemason belief system is full of inconsistent ideas about god, how to relate with others, and symbols that dictate how to live moral lives.

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<sup>5</sup> Allen E. Roberts, in *The Craft and Its Symbols: Opening the Door to Masonic Symbolism* (Richmond, Virginia: Macoy Pub. and Masonic Supply Co., 1974), 4.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, 12.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, 6.

## Freemason Beliefs about god

The beliefs that the Freemasons hold about god are a piecing together of beliefs from various traditions around the world. There is a use of symbols to help them understand major points of belief about how they view the deity that they learn about. The melting pot of religious views of god comes to be known as what is truly believed about god in the brotherhood and shows why it has been a popular choice for men to join.

### Symbols of god

There is a symbol that the Freemasons use to help signify god throughout the world so that there is no question about what they are discussing. Most Masons would say that the letter G is to represent “either geometry, the Grand or Great Architect, or simply God.”<sup>8</sup> In English and American lodges, the letter G is used as the initial of the word god, but it is based off of the use of the letter Yōd in Hebrew that is to symbolize unity and that it is the creative energy of the deity.<sup>9</sup> The Masons use the letter G as a symbol of the unmanifested Deity who is the Absolute that does not have a name.<sup>10</sup> The letter G is used in conjunction with the symbols of the square and compass which makes it symbolize geometry, god and what the Masons call the Grand or Great Architect of the Universe.<sup>11</sup> The use of the letter G is so that in all of the images and teachings they do not have to write out the full name of the deity, but instead, the

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<sup>8</sup> Interfaith Witness Department, *A Study of Freemasonry* (Atlanta, GA: Home Mission Board, SBC, 1993), 38.

<sup>9</sup> Albert Pike, *Morals and Dogma of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry: First Three Degrees* (Mansfield Centre, CT: Martino Pub., 2011), 15.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Young and Karg, 145.

Freemasons designate a symbol that is united between all the different lodges around the world.



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<sup>12</sup> Photo by Me. All photos without footnotes were taken by me at the Grand Lodge in Waco, Texas.

The name that the Freemasons use to refer to the deity is The Great or Grand Architect of the Universe so that they do not have to clarify between all of the different gods of the many religions that are a part of the Masons. The use of the name Grand Architect of the Universe gives the Masons a way to discuss the Deity in a nonsectarian format so that each brother can focus solely on their own supreme being while still discussing matters that relate to god.<sup>13</sup> The Great Architect of the Universe is thought to be the “one God in Freemasonry and besides him there is no other in that institution,” and that a Mason “knows no deity save the Great Architect of the Universe.”<sup>14</sup> The Masons refer to their deity as a specific name thus they do not offend other brothers so that they can talk about god and not offend the religions of the other brothers.

There is another symbol that relates to the Masons beliefs in god and that is what is referred to as the All-seeing Eye. The All-seeing Eye has its origins traced all the way back to the ancient Egyptian mythology and the Eye of Horus which was the symbol of the falcon-headed god Horus and Re the Sun god and was used as a symbol of power and protection.<sup>15</sup> The All-seeing Eye to the Egyptians was the symbol of Osiris the creator however with the Yōd in the middle from the Kabbalah it symbolizes the divine energy manifested as light that created the universe.<sup>16</sup> In Masonry, the All-seeing Eye is a symbol to remind Masons that the Great Architect of the Universe is always watching their deeds.<sup>17</sup> This symbol is one that has

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<sup>13</sup> Young and Karg, 145.

<sup>14</sup> John Ankerberg and John Weldon, *The Secret Teachings of the Masonic Lodge: A Christian Perspective* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1990), 110.

<sup>15</sup> Harwood, 58-59.

<sup>16</sup> Pike, 16.

<sup>17</sup> Harwood, 58.



many origin stories and is probably one of the most well known of the Mason symbols but is important to the way that they see god or the Great Architect of the Universe.



There are many things that differ from Mason to Mason but the most important has to do with the Holy Text that is used by the brothers, which shows their views of god. In different lodges there will be a variety of texts used such as the King James Bible, the Hebrew Tanach, the Muslim Quran, the Hindu Veda, the Zoroastrian Zend-Astra, or the Analects of Confucius. There is no specific Freemason or Masonic Bible, but some version of a Sacred Law must be present at every gathering and during the initiation the candidate will choose which text he holds to be sacred.<sup>18</sup> If multiple faiths are present in the same lodge there will be several sacred texts used.<sup>19</sup> The different texts used leads to the vastly different views of how Masons around the world view god.

### Background of god

There is a lot of debate around where the Masons got their views on god, but it has some roots deep into history. It is long held belief that Freemasonry is associated with ancient cults and ancient mysteries including Hermeticism, Paganism, Cabbalism, Gnosticism, and the one most linked is Mithraism.<sup>20</sup> The Masons' teachings, symbolism, and rituals can be traced back to ancient paganism mainly from Egypt, Rome, and Greece but some other cultures as well.<sup>21</sup> It is a requirement that all Masons have some sort of belief in a god, and they do not accept atheists into the brotherhood.<sup>22</sup> A belief in a god is necessary for admittance into the

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<sup>18</sup> Young and Karg, 144.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid, 145.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid, 153.

<sup>21</sup> Ankerberg and Weldon, 35.

<sup>22</sup> Young and Karg, 146.

brotherhood, but with the long history and connections to ancient groups it brings some confusion to the view the Masons hold of the Great Architect of the Universe.

There are many views held of the deity that have to do with light or the sun and how that places the Great Architect of the Universe above people. “To the ancients light was the cause of life and God was the source from which all light flowed.”<sup>23</sup> The Masons hold that all truth is light, and the deity is where the true light comes from so all truth comes from god. “Masonic reference to God as ‘the most high’ is therefore a description of Re, the sun god of the ancient Egyptians, in his ultimate position, the zenith of the heavens at noon.”<sup>24</sup> There are Egyptian influences that the deity is symbolically at the highest position like the sun, which came from their highest god of Re. “God seemed to worship the Sun in whom they saw the manifestation of the Deity.”<sup>25</sup> They also have some beliefs that god actually worshiped the sun and that through the sun that is how they actually see the deity in real life. “The ‘Master of Life’ was the Supreme Deity above both and manifested through both Zeus, the Son of Saturn, become King of the gods, Horus, son of Osiris and Isis become the Master of Life, Dionusos or Bacchus, like Mithras become the author of Light and Life and Truth.”<sup>26</sup> The Masons hold to many different ancient groups beliefs and combine them together to illustrate the true nature of god and its place of the creator of life and through him there is light and truth.

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<sup>23</sup> Pike, 13.

<sup>24</sup> Harwood, 60.

<sup>25</sup> Pike, 13.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

There are many other major beliefs that the Masons hold true about god and how god relates to man. One assumption that the Masons believe about god is that he is the creator of all people and that “people are automatically His spiritual sons, in right standing with Him.”<sup>27</sup> It is interesting to see that the Masons believe that god created all people but are already in right relationship with god but that they believe they have to learn the truth of god through means of study. Another important belief is that “God is the absolute of Faith; but the absolute of Reason is Being.”<sup>28</sup> The Masons believe that man is reason, but that god is faith, and this belief goes against most of what other convictions they state including that they have to search for reason and truth. However, that means that man would not be the absolute of reason. Freemasons also hold to the belief that god is the Father of every person no matter what religious belief they hold.<sup>29</sup> This belief that no matter what religion a person follows that god is their father is very utilitarian in their thinking which goes against some of the religious beliefs held by most of their members.

There are many beliefs that the Freemasons hold about god that combine major convictions from multiple different religious backgrounds. Masons hold to the belief that men call god different names and will define him differently because they simply do not know any better and that they are in the darkness and the true nature of god has not been revealed to them yet.<sup>30</sup> This view is very similar to the Hindu view of other religions; god is the same, but they have not gotten over the ignorance of not understanding god but that all gods are the

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<sup>27</sup> Ankerberg and Weldon, 100.

<sup>28</sup> Pike, 97.

<sup>29</sup> Ankerberg and Weldon, 101.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid, 110.

same but people use names because they simply do not understand. Masons will describe god as the Creator, Preserver, and Destroyer which is in turn reminiscent of the Hindu constructions of god.<sup>31</sup> In Hinduism, Brahma is Creator god, Vishnu is the Preserver god, and Shiva is the Destroyer god. Masons stress the idea that god has “absolute unitarian nature and transcendence, over against His immanence, is similar to the Muslim concept of God, and its deism and pantheism are common to many other religions.”<sup>32</sup>

Within Freemasonry, there are multiple concepts in the view of god and its role over humanity and creation that come together from many different religious backgrounds. The first Indian Mason was initiated in 1812, the first Hindu Mason was initiated in 1857, and the first Sikh Mason was initiated in 1861.<sup>33</sup> There are now Masons in almost every religious tradition and the numbers are increasing every day. Members of different faiths are bringing their individual beliefs into what the Freemasons believe. It is known that every brother in the Craft has their own beliefs about god, but they are to use those beliefs to help better understand the Masonic teachings and lectures but not speak to others about it.<sup>34</sup> The Masons use their beliefs about god to understand the teachings but are not to impose their beliefs on any others in the brotherhood. There are countless more beliefs that could be talked about when it comes to the Freemasons ideas about god, but it would take actually having access to the resources used in lodge meetings that are not available to the public.

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<sup>31</sup> Ankerberg and Weldon, 112.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Young and Karg, 146.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid, 153.

## Working Tools

The Working Tools of an Entered Apprentice include the Twenty-four Inch Gauge and the Common Gavel. The Twenty-four Inch Gauge is used as a symbol of purpose or of time.<sup>35</sup> The Gauge is subdivided into one-inch dimensions and “the divisions represent the hours of the day and their purpose to teach Entered Apprentices the necessity of devoting their time to good purpose.”<sup>36</sup> The Twenty-four Inch Gauge can also be called the Twenty-four Inch Rule. This is also seen as symbol of being “regulated and guided by and acting within the limits of Law and Order.”<sup>37</sup> The Common Gavel is seen as a symbol of power, but more specifically, the power that is received from god.<sup>38</sup> In Freemasonry, the Gavel is a “reminder of the necessity of divesting heart and conscience of what are termed the vices and superfluities of life.”<sup>39</sup> The gavel is also sometimes seen as the force that the people have, the popular will that is in action and exerted.<sup>40</sup> The Chalk, Charcoal, and Clay are seen as symbolic of freedom, fervency, and zeal, which are essential to anyone in the Entered Apprentice degree.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Roberts, 37.

<sup>36</sup> Harwood, 50.

<sup>37</sup> Pike, 5.

<sup>38</sup> Roberts, 38.

<sup>39</sup> Harwood, 51.

<sup>40</sup> Pike, 4.

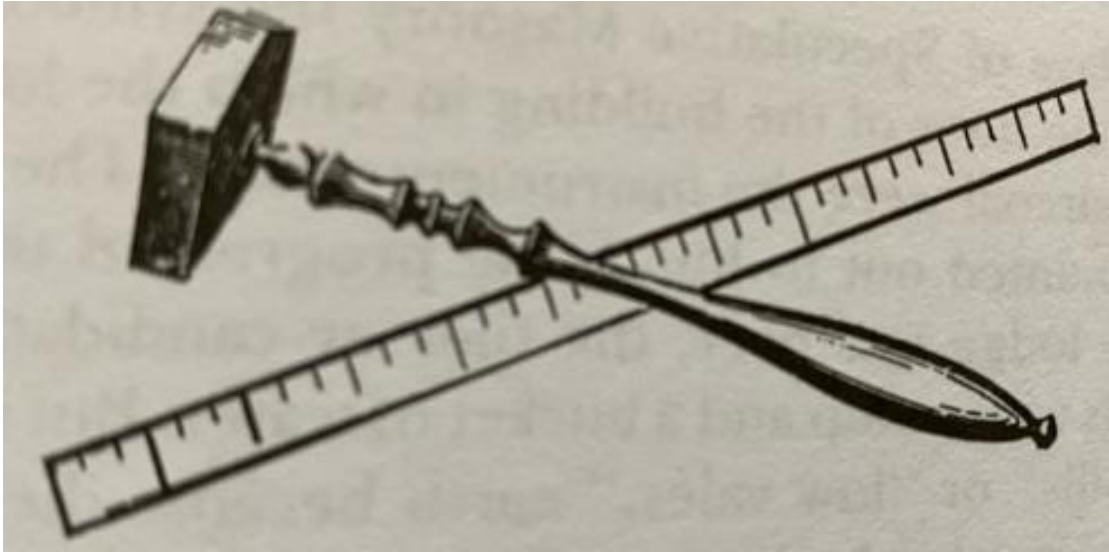
<sup>41</sup> Roberts, 38.



The photo above is of gavels from past Grand Masters of Texas.



The photo above is of working tools. Number 1 is a twenty-four-inch gauge and number 8 is a gavel.



The photo above is the working tools of the Entered Apprentice together.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Roberts, 37.



The Working Tools of the Fellowcraft include the three immovable jewels of a lodge the square, level, and plumb line. The square is symbolic of a perfect right angle, which is needed to build a stable and strong wall, so the Mason is to strive for his behavior and conduct to stand upright without straying away from perfect conduct.<sup>43</sup> The square is used in multiple of the degrees but every time that it is used it tends to have a different meaning associated with it.

The level is a symbol that teaches Masons that no matter the circumstances that they were born in every man is equal in god's eyes so they must work to improve themselves physically, materially, spiritually, and internally.<sup>44</sup> The idea that they have is to make themselves better in every aspect of their lives because they are seen as equal to god even though they are all born different is one that is not seen in most places or religions.

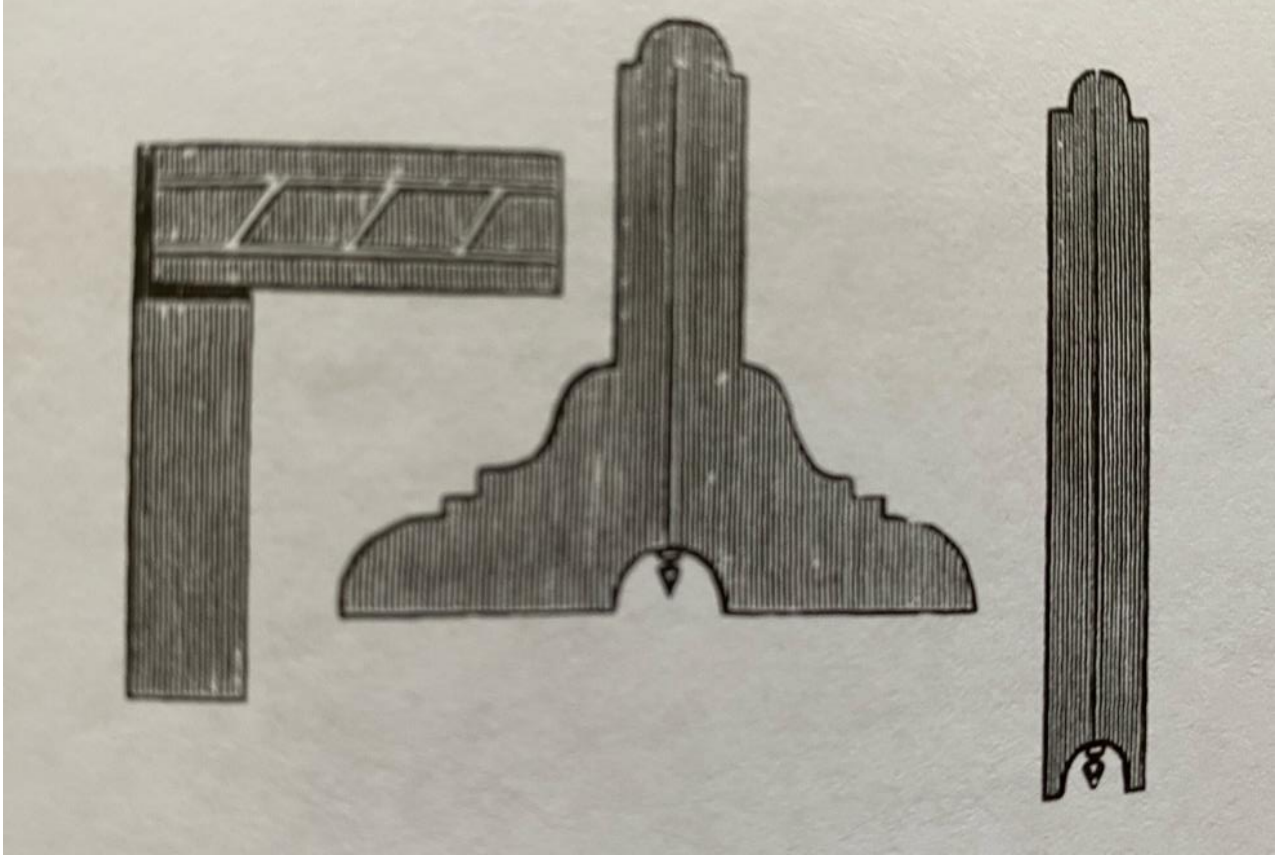
The third working tool of the Fellowcraft is the plumb line, which shows the emphasis of treating other equally and fair play but also acts as a symbol of justice for all without a bias.<sup>45</sup> These three working tools come together to teach the Fellowcraft Mason that they are all seen as equal under god and how they are to relate to others.

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<sup>43</sup> Giles Morgan, *Freemasonry* (Harpenden, England: Pocket Essentials, 2012), 30.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.



These are the three working tools of the Fellowcraft degree.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Roberts, 33.

The Working Tools of the Master Mason include the skirret, pencil, trowel, and compass. The skirret is a tool used to draw a true line, which in Masonry is symbolic of a Master Mason using his religious teachings of his faith in conjunction with the standards of Freemasonry to develop their behavior.<sup>47</sup> The pencil is used symbolically to record all the actions that an individual does.<sup>48</sup> It is interesting to think that a pencil is used to write down every action that a person does but it is not explained as to why all of the actions a person does is needed to be written down. The Trowel symbolizes “the noble and glorious purpose of spreading the cement of brotherly love and affection.”<sup>49</sup> The Master Mason is to make sure that his relationships with his fellow brothers is of the highest regard and that it reflects well on them. The last of the working tools of the Master Mason is the compass, which is used as a symbol of the Supreme Being having the role of the ultimate judge of all of mankind.<sup>50</sup> The use of these symbols gives the impression that the Master Mason must start looking towards the end of his life and make sure that everything in his life is in line for when the Supreme Being judges him at his death.

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<sup>47</sup> Morgan, 38.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Harwood, 51.

<sup>50</sup> Morgan, 38.



This is a photo of a skirret used in the third degree.<sup>51</sup>



This is a photo of a trowel used in the third degree.

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<sup>51</sup> “The Masonic Skirret,” *The Masonic Skirret - a Working Tool of the Third Degree*, last modified 2019, accessed February 13, 2023, <http://www.phoenixmasonry.org/skirret.htm>.



This is a photo of a compass used in the Master Mason degree.

## Main Beliefs

One of the main beliefs of the Freemasons is the truth and knowledge that all must strive to seek and to get out of the ignorance of not knowing. The Masonic Light is used interchangeably with truth so when a Mason talks about seeking the Masonic Light they are referring to the quest for seeking truth.<sup>52</sup> Light is also a symbol of truth, and in the First Degree, Masonic Light can also symbolize “charity, lawfulness, patriotism, reverence, and unselfishness, among other things.”<sup>53</sup> Darkness in every form of initiation is a symbol of ignorance.<sup>54</sup> It is required that all initiates for the three degrees enter the lodge in total darkness as a necessity to receive the Light that they are looking for.<sup>55</sup> The Hoodwink is a symbol of ignorance because with knowledge comes the light.<sup>56</sup> The hoodwink is also simply just being blindfolded or the symbol of a blindfold depending on use in ritual or teachings.



This is a symbol of the hoodwink or blindfold used in Masonry.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Roberts, 21.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

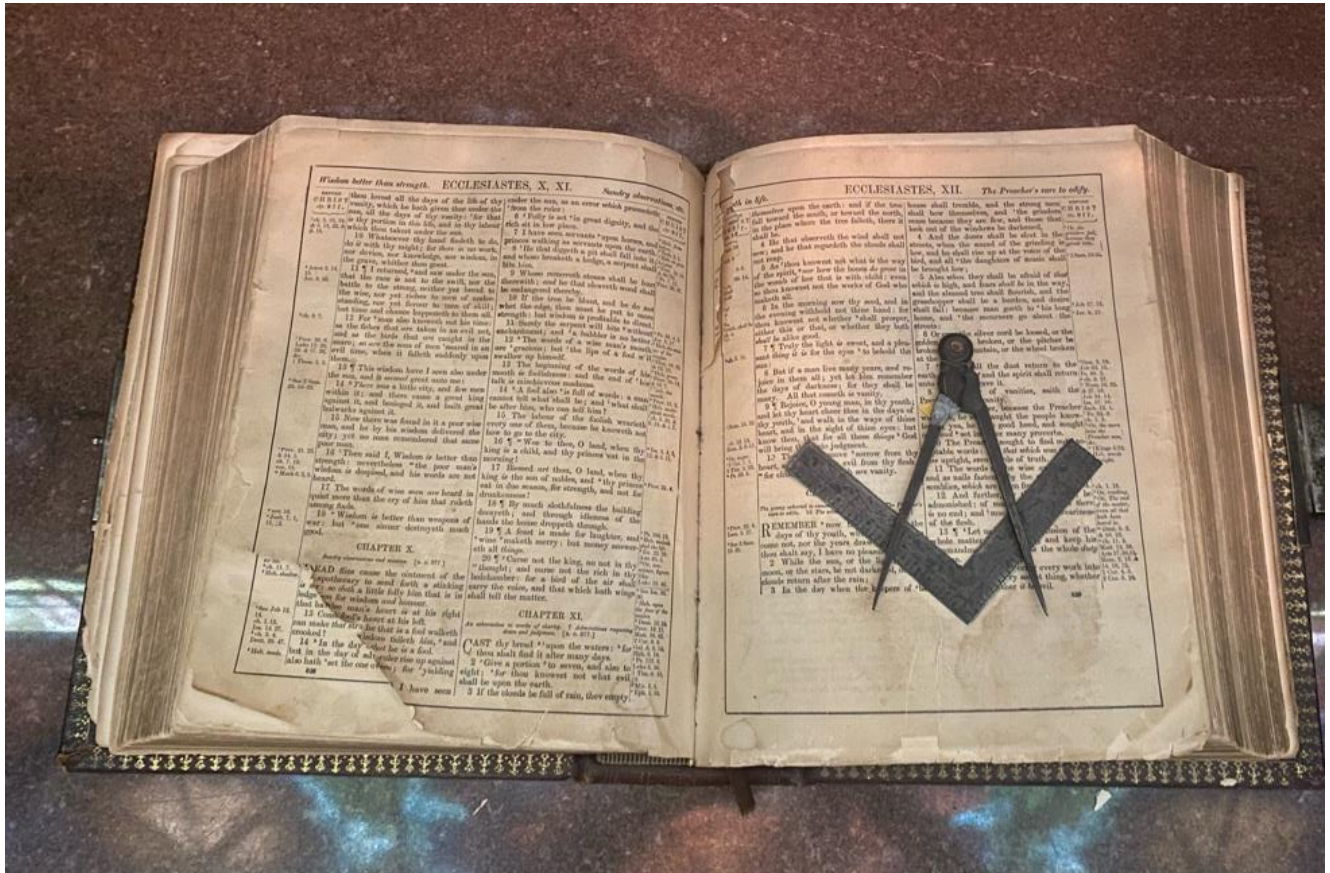
<sup>54</sup> Ibid, 42.

<sup>55</sup> Harwood, 92.

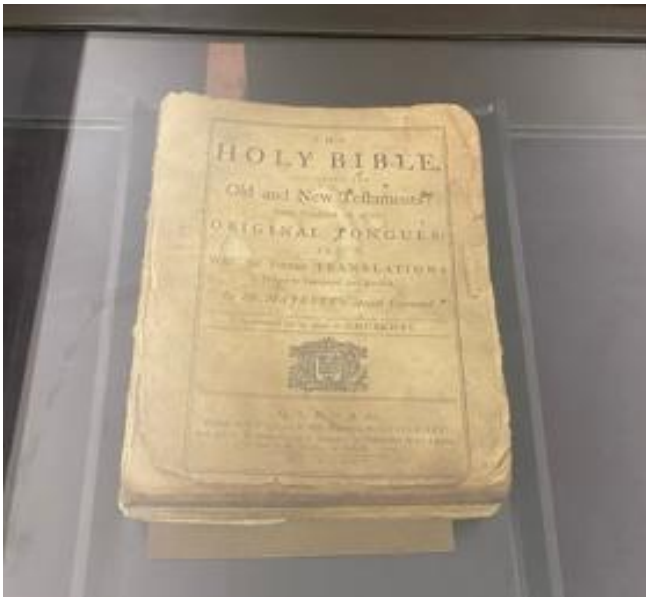
<sup>56</sup> Roberts, 43.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid, 23.

The next main beliefs come from the Three Great Lights of Freemasonry. The Three Great Lights of Freemasonry include the Holy Bible, Square, and Compasses. These are all present at every lodge and are considered to be the most important objects in all of Masonry because they have such importance on everything a Mason must learn.



The Holy Bible is not what most people would normally be called the Holy Bible but instead can represent any text held holy. The Holy Bible is a gift to man from god and is sometimes referred to as the Volume of the Sacred Law.<sup>58</sup> “Most of the forms and ceremonies of initiation are based on the truths found in the Holy Bible.”<sup>59</sup> Each religion has its own text and unless the Masons take his obligation with their Volume of the Sacred Law then it cannot be seen as binding upon him.<sup>60</sup> Texts that can be used during the ceremonies the Holy texts that can be used include the Holy Bible, the Torah, the Vedas, the Koran, or any other texts held to be holy for their Deity. The Holy Text of their choice also symbolizes Truth, Faith, and Hope.<sup>61</sup>



This is a photo of the Holy Bible used in the Lodge of Sam Houston.

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<sup>58</sup> Roberts, 22.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid, 15.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid, 22.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid, 23.



The second of the Three Great Lights is the Square, which is one part of the main symbol of Freemasonry as a whole. The Square is used as an “emblem of what concerns the earth.”<sup>62</sup> The Square is seen as a symbol of morality, but it also symbolizes righteousness which keeps them in touch with god.<sup>63</sup> In the Fellowcraft degree the Square also symbolizes virtue, and that virtue should be the guiding force in everything that a Fellowcraft does, but it also adds the virtue of morality.<sup>64</sup> The Square is one of the working tools in the second degree and in the third degree it is the emblem of the Master of the Lodge but it symbolizes morality, honesty, and fair dealings.<sup>65</sup>



This is a square of a former Grand Master of Texas’s neckpiece he had to wear during ceremonies.

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<sup>62</sup> Pike, 11.

<sup>63</sup> Roberts, 23.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid, 43.

<sup>65</sup> Harwood, 50.

The last of the Three Great Lights is the Compass, which is the second half of the symbol of Freemasonry as a whole. The Compass is an emblem of “what concerns the heavens and the soul.”<sup>66</sup> The Compasses in Freemasonry symbolizes spirituality and is seen as the most spiritual of the working tools.<sup>67</sup> Being the most prominent symbol of Freemasonry it is a symbol of truth and loyalty but there are also some Masons that believe the Compasses are a “symbol of the sun, the circular pivot representing the sun’s body and the diverging legs its rays.”<sup>68</sup>



This is a photo of the compass and square from a Lodge in Cincinnati, Texas from March 16, 1861.

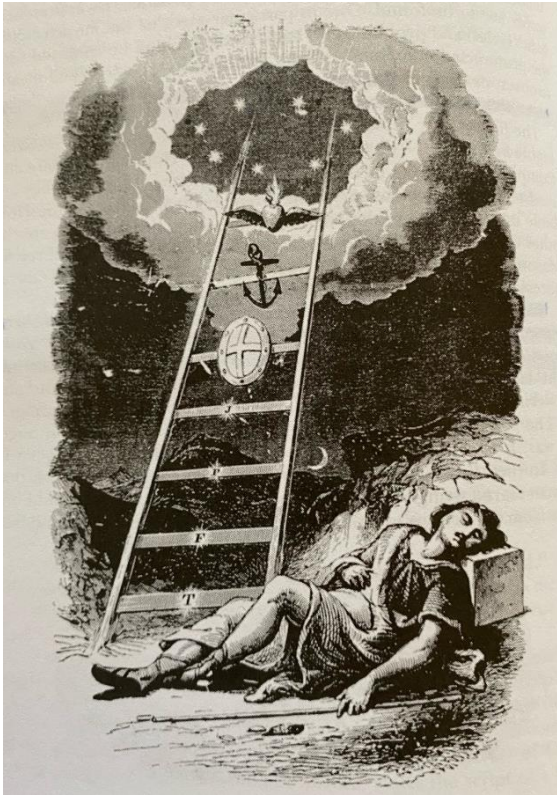
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<sup>66</sup> Pike, 11.

<sup>67</sup> Roberts, 23.

<sup>68</sup> Harwood, 50.

The next belief that is essential in Freemasonry is that of heaven and how members are to get to heaven. The covering of a lodge is seen symbolically as the “Clouded Canopy or Starry Decked Heaven” where all good men hope to be able to reach and is the ultimate reward for reaching for perfection.<sup>69</sup> This is what they would see as the ultimate destination to reach for but only if they have truly achieved perfection. The only way to reach the Clouded Canopy or the Starry Decked Heaven is with the use of the Ladder of Jacob, which is needed to climb towards the ultimate reward.



This is a photo of the Starry Decked Heaven that can be reached only by the use of Jacob's Ladder.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Roberts, 29.

<sup>70</sup> Roberts, 28.

The Ladder of Jacob is used to reach the ultimate reward for man but is made up of all the principal aspects of a man that Freemasons must practice. The Ladder is made up of three principle rounds including Faith, Hope, and Charity but also includes the three tenets of Freemasonry but also adds the four Cardinal Virtues and when they are taken all together, they symbolize perfection.<sup>71</sup> Charity is actually to be interpreted as Love.<sup>72</sup> The steps of Jacob's Ladder each have their own symbolic meaning including "the first symbolizes Justice, the second Equality, the third Kindness, the fourth Good Faith, the fifth Labour, the sixth Patience, and the seventh Intelligence," but taken together as one it points to a connection between faith and heaven.<sup>73</sup>

The cardinal virtues each have their own symbol that help complete the Ladder of Jacob and help with the understanding of the practices that must be followed for all Masons. The Cardinal Virtues include Temperance, Fortitude, Prudence, and Justice. The virtue of Temperance is a symbol of restraint in all things.<sup>74</sup> The virtue of Fortitude is to symbolize courage but specifically moral courage and the strength and ability to make decisions and stick with it no matter the outcome.<sup>75</sup> The virtue of Prudence symbolizes wisdom because wisdom is what brings man closer to their creator.<sup>76</sup> Justice for the Masons is a symbol of

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<sup>71</sup> Roberts, 29.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

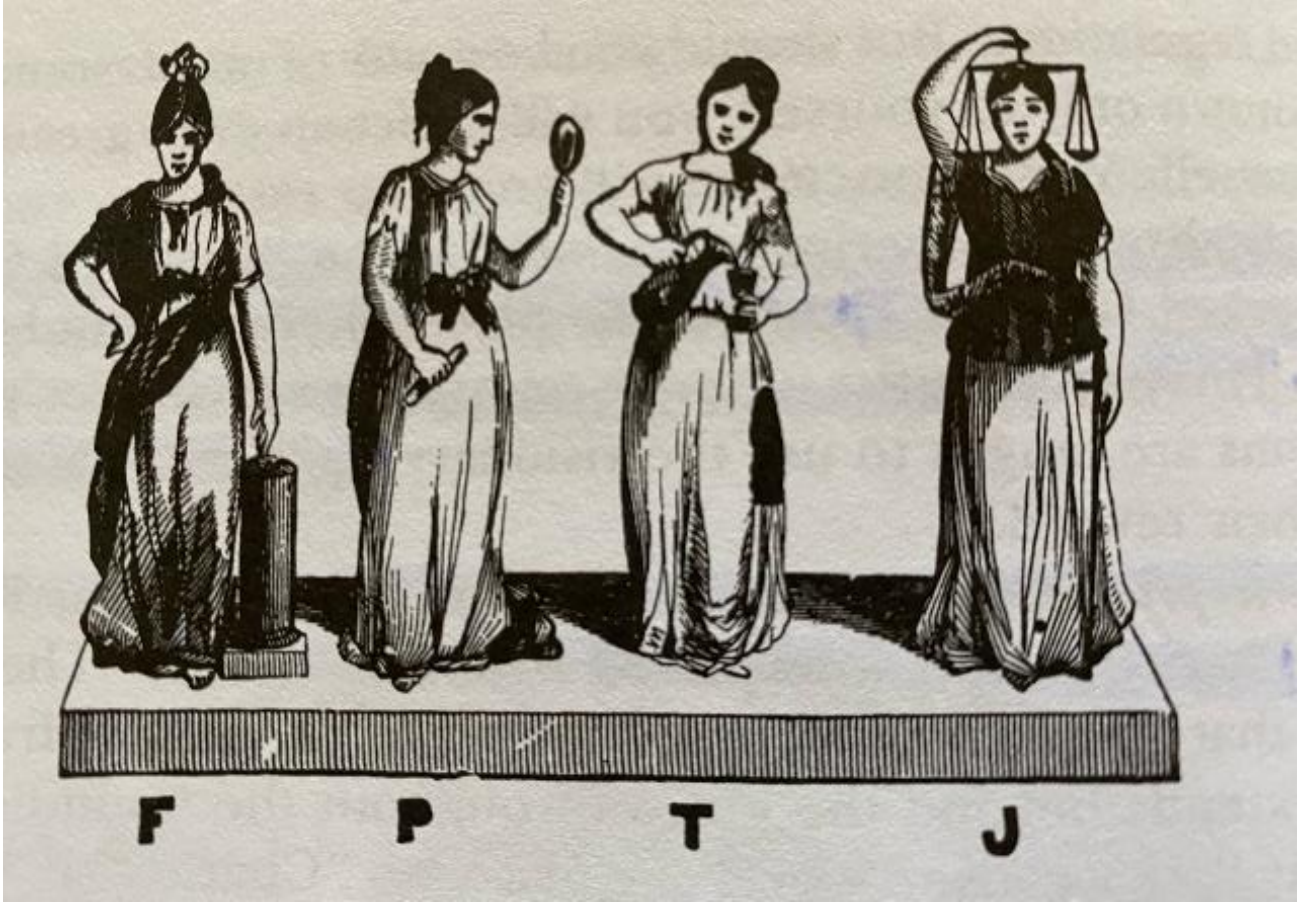
<sup>73</sup> Harwood, 68.

<sup>74</sup> Roberts, 30.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid, 29.

<sup>76</sup> Roberts, 30.

equality and is symbolized by a picture of a “blindfolded woman holding scales and a sword.”<sup>77</sup>



These are the pictorial versions of the four cardinal virtues.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> Roberts, 30.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

## Belief of Man

There are certain beliefs that pertain to how a Mason should act but also what it means for them when they are going through the different degrees. When a man wants to enter into Freemasonry and first enters into a lodge for initiation it symbolically is seen as a rebirth.<sup>79</sup> The heart is “a symbol of what a man is or becomes.”<sup>80</sup> These are both important to the way that a Mason looks at themselves before they are ever initiated into the Fraternity.

The Masons have a three-fold belief of what a man is and how they are to live that out throughout the course of their lives as Masons. The use of three tenets in Freemasonry when practiced by a Mason is to bring out the best that man has to offer this world. The first tenet known as Brotherly Love “symbolizes the universality of man.”<sup>81</sup> The next tenet that is used by Freemasons is known as Relief, which is a symbol of man’s duty or responsibility.<sup>82</sup> The last tenet is known as Truth, which is the symbol of divinity because that is what man is consistently seeking after.<sup>83</sup> The three of these tenets are used together for Masons to understand what they are responsible for as men but also what they are searching for in terms of themselves and their Deity. The Freemason also believe that they as men are “supreme over institutions and not they over him” and that “man has natural empire over all institutions.”<sup>84</sup> There is also another important belief that is taught to Fellowcraft masons

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<sup>79</sup> Roberts, 13.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid, 4.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid, 21.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid, 21.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid, 21.

<sup>84</sup> Pike, 23.

which is that man is not to become to wise in his own conceit and that pride is worse than ignorance and that a true Mason practices humility.<sup>85</sup> The Masons must hold to these beliefs to be considered a true and full Mason within the fraternity.

One belief is quite different when it comes to their beliefs about themselves, and it has to do with where they come from. The Lodge of the Holy Saints John of Jerusalem is the lodge where symbolically every Freemason comes from.<sup>86</sup> This lodge never actually existed but it is seen as the beginning lodge of all lodges. It is widely held that The Lodge is symbolic of King Solomon's Temple, so the Freemasons believe that they have all come from this Lodge located where the Temple once stood so that they have all come together from the same place from the beginning.

Another belief that is held of Masons about themselves as men comes from the cornerstone laid in the Northeast Corner. The Northeast Corner is where the first stone is laid of a public building but is seen as a spiritual cornerstone of a Mason's life as they are the cornerstone it is symbolic that they are seen as eternal.<sup>87</sup> The cornerstone must be square and a solid cube in physical form, but it symbolizes truth and morality and its position in the northeast corner symbolizes "progress from ignorance to knowledge."<sup>88</sup> The placement of the stone and the stone itself both hold a belief that the Mason sees themselves as eternal and that

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<sup>85</sup> Pike, 38.

<sup>86</sup> Roberts, 36.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid, 37.

<sup>88</sup> Harwood, 92.

they have been placed in a position to go from ignorance to knowledge and learn the truth and morality of the Fraternity.

Another belief that the Mason believes about man in general is to put an emphasis on being perceived certain ways and that they can be spotted for being different and they do this by the use of the Apron. The apron is the first gift that a Mason receives and is a badge of them being a Mason usually being made of white lambskin or white leather.<sup>89</sup> The apron is a symbol of antiquity and “puts emphasis on the value of the past, and its contribution to the present and future happiness of man.”<sup>90</sup> It is seen as the membership of the Fraternity and must be worn at all times in the lodge but it is also seen as “the bond of friendship,” a symbol of brotherly virtues, the “badge of innocence,” and testifies to the “honourable age of the Craft.”<sup>91</sup> It is also seen as a symbol of Innocence, Purity, and Honor because it sets the Mason apart from the other members of society.<sup>92</sup> In the Third degree of Master Mason it is a badge of authority that gives them the right to instruct the Masons under him.<sup>93</sup> The apron is the symbol to other Masons that one has been brought into the brotherhood and that they are of a certain level in the Fraternity based on whether you have a plain white apron as the Entered Apprentice or have a slightly ornate aprons with images for the Fellowcraft or have very decorative aprons full of symbols to symbolize that they are a Master Mason.

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<sup>89</sup> Harwood, 92.

<sup>90</sup> Roberts, 31.

<sup>91</sup> Harwood, 89.

<sup>92</sup> Roberts, 31.

<sup>93</sup> Harwood, 89.



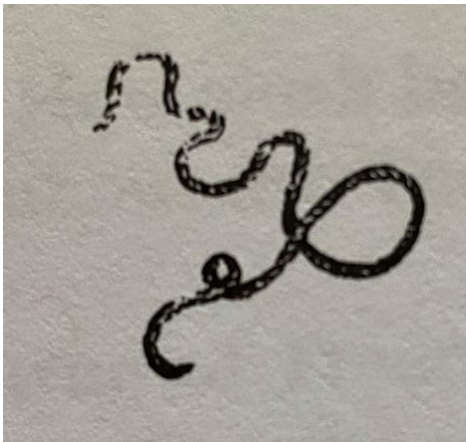




These are examples of different aprons for different degrees and include different symbols.

## Belief of Relation to Others

One of the beliefs that is held by Masons about how they relate to others is that they are tied together as brothers through the Fraternity. This is usually symbolized by the use of a cabletow. The cabletow is simply a rope used for leading or drawing and is used in all of the rituals of the three degrees but symbolizes something different in each one.<sup>94</sup> The cabletow is much like an umbilical cord it is what ties a Mason to their new world they are entering.<sup>95</sup> It was also seen as an outward expression or a “visible pledge of submission or fidelity.”<sup>96</sup> Once they enter into the second degree of Fellowcraft, the cabletow is no longer a restraining force but instead a strengthening force that signals the need to go work for Freemasonry and humanity as a whole.<sup>97</sup>



This is a picture that depicts the symbol of the cabletow.<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>94</sup> Harwood, 92.

<sup>95</sup> Roberts, 13.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid, 14.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid, 42.

<sup>98</sup> Roberts, 14.

An additional belief that the Freemasons hold about how they relate to others in the Fraternity comes from the passage of scripture from the Holy Bible of Psalm 133. Psalm 133 is recited during the Initiatory Degree and symbolizes unity or Brotherly Love.<sup>99</sup> The Psalm reads, “Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity! It is like the precious oil on the head, running down on the beard, on the beard of Aaron, running down on the collar of his robes! It is like the dew of Hermon, which falls on the mountains of Zion! For there the LORD has commanded the blessing, life forevermore.”<sup>100</sup> This passage of scripture is said aloud by the initiate during the ritual of the first degree.

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<sup>99</sup> Roberts, 20.

<sup>100</sup> The Holy Bible: English Standard Version (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Ps 133:1–3.

## In the Lodge

In Freemasonry there are certain things needed to be able to hold their meetings in their lodges. In the lodges there are a variety of things needed and they all have a significant impact on the way that the Masons are as people. Lodges are the meeting place for the Masons and are essential for the training of a Mason and where all their rituals are done.

There are three things needed for there to be a Masonic Lodge known as the Three Lesser Lights. There are what is known as the three “burning tapers” in every lodge that represent the Sun, Moon, and Worshipful Master that are placed around the alter in the middle of the lodge.<sup>101</sup> The first of the Three Lesser Lights is the Sun which is seen as the governing of the lodge during the day.<sup>102</sup> In ancient days the Sun was seen as a symbol of the life giving and generative power of the Deity and the Masons took this as a symbol of life giving because they are searching for the light or ultimate truth given from the Deity.<sup>103</sup> The Sun as a source of light is a symbol to Masons to strive for intellectual enlightenment which is part of the reason that ceremonies are preformed facing east because the Masonic rituals proclaim, “the sun rises in the east to open and govern the day.”<sup>104</sup> The second of the Three Lesser Lights is the Moon which is seen as the lodge being governed by the night.<sup>105</sup> The Moon was seen as the symbol of the “passive capacity of nature to produce, the female, of which the life-giving

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<sup>101</sup> Roberts, 32.

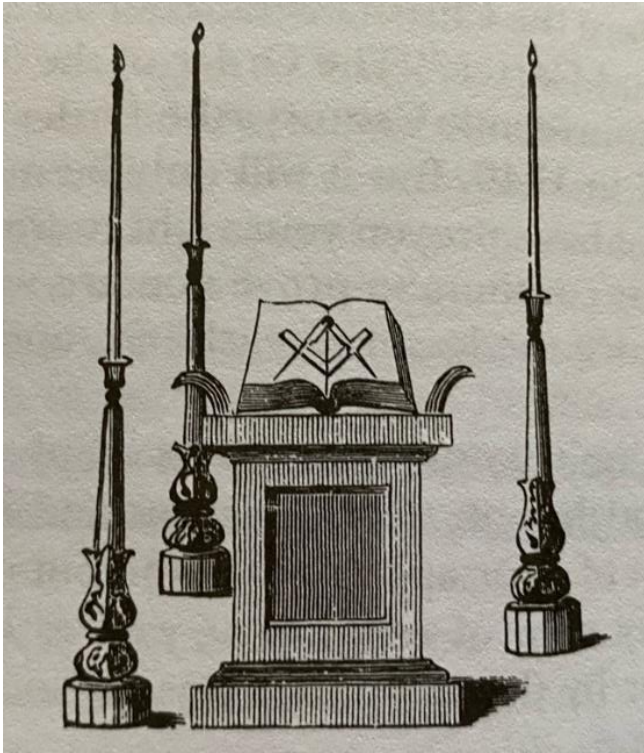
<sup>102</sup> Ibid, 27.

<sup>103</sup> Pike, 13.

<sup>104</sup> Harwood, 61.

<sup>105</sup> Roberts, 27.

power and energy was the male.”<sup>106</sup> The Moon in the initiation of the first degree is “identified as the biblical ruler of the night,” but in a ceremonial symbol the lodge’s Senior Warden is placed to the west of the lodge Master during rituals.<sup>107</sup> The Senior Warden is the highest ranking Mason in the lodge while the Worshipful Master is also a high ranking Mason but not as high as the Senior Warden. The last of the Three Lesser Lights is the Worshipful Master who is charged to emulate the first two and govern the lodge as the Sun and Moon do.<sup>108</sup>



This is a photo that shows the three “burning tapers” that represent the Three Lesser Lights.<sup>109</sup>

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<sup>106</sup> Pike, 13.

<sup>107</sup> Harwood, 62.

<sup>108</sup> Roberts, 27.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid, 32.

In addition to the Three Lesser Lights in the Lodge there are more physical aspects that are needed for every Masonic Lodge. Inside of the physical lodge there are physical symbols known as the Ornaments of a Lodge which include the Mosaic Pavement, Indented Tessel, and Blazing Star. These are essential in understanding what the inside of every Lodge is going to look like.

The first of the Ornaments of a Lodge is what is known as the Mosaic Pavement. The Mosaic Pavement is thought to be a representation of the ground floor that would have been found in King Solomon's Temple. The Mosaic Pavement is black and white tiles in an alternating pattern that symbolize good and evil or any contrast of opposites.<sup>110</sup> The Pavement is said to represent the "earthly aspects of mankind's existence and the trials and tribulations of everyday life," and is termed beautiful because of the color and design as a reminder of the "eternal sequence of day and night as well as the varied nature of the objects that decorate and adorn Creation as a whole."<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>110</sup> Roberts, 31.

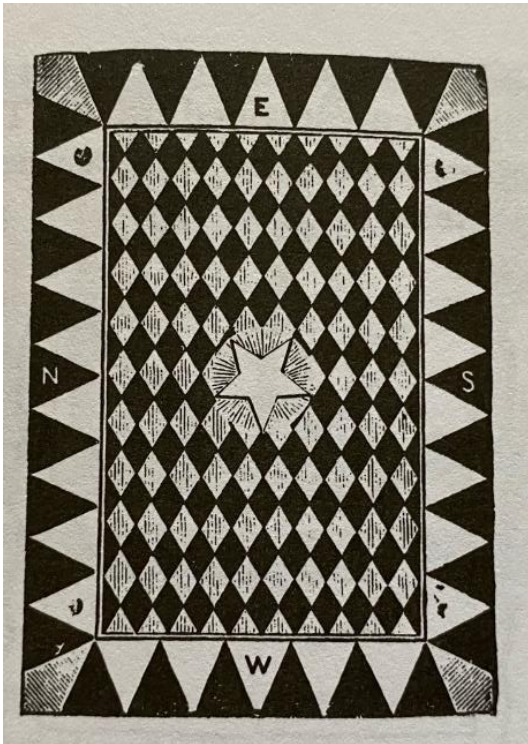
<sup>111</sup> Harwood, 66-67.







The second of the Ornaments of the Lodge is what they call the Indented Tessel which is the border of the floor in the physical lodge. It is not fully known the significance of the Indented Tessel, but it is believed to be symbolic of fellowship or man being bonded together with god.<sup>112</sup> The Indented Tessel or tessellated boarder is believed to symbolize “those blessings and comforts that surround us and that we hope to obtain by a faithful reliance on Divine Providence, which is hieroglyphically represented by the Blazing Star in the centre.”<sup>113</sup>



The border around that has the black and white triangles is what is known as the Indented Tessel.<sup>114</sup>

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<sup>112</sup> Roberts, 32.

<sup>113</sup> Harwood, 67.

<sup>114</sup> Roberts, 32.

The final element of the Ornaments of the Lodge is what is known as the Blazing Star. The significance of the Blazing Star has also been lost to history, but it is believed to be a symbol of Deity.<sup>115</sup> The Blazing Star has a double symbolism in that the star symbolizes the sun. The main purpose of the star is to “symbolize the Supreme Being, reminding us of ‘the omnipresence of the Almighty’ and the fact that ‘wherever we may be assembled together, God is in the midst of us seeing our actions and observing the secret intents and desires of our hearts.’”<sup>116</sup> The Blazing Star is also said to be an “emblem of Divine Providence, and commemorative of the star which appeared to guide the wise men of the East to the place of our Saviour’s nativity.”<sup>117</sup>



This is a photo of the Blazing Star at the top of the pendant with other masonic symbols.<sup>118</sup>

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<sup>115</sup> Roberts, 32.

<sup>116</sup> Harwood, 61.

<sup>117</sup> Pike, 14.

<sup>118</sup> Harwood, 61.

In addition to the Three Lesser Lights and the Ornaments of the Lodge, there are Six Jewels needed in every Lodge. The Six Jewels that are needed as furnishings in every regular and well governed lodge that include three immovable and three movable jewels. They are called jewels because of their value but also because they are symbols of morality for Freemasons.<sup>119</sup>

The Three Immovable Jewels are the Square, Level, and Plumb. The Square is a symbol of morality and is worn by the Master.<sup>120</sup> The Level is worn by the Senior Warden and is used as a symbol of equality.<sup>121</sup> The level is also a symbol of where Masons meet and they have the same “duties, responsibilities, and rights,” and that they are brothers.<sup>122</sup> The Plumb is worn by the Junior Warden and is a symbol of an upright life.<sup>123</sup> In the Fellowcraft degree, the Plumb is a symbol of righteousness, and that Masons should live an upright life before man and god.<sup>124</sup> These are considered immovable because for a lodge to be considered open there must be a Master and two Wardens present so they are immovable for a lodge to be open.

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<sup>119</sup> Roberts, 32.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid, 33.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid, 44.

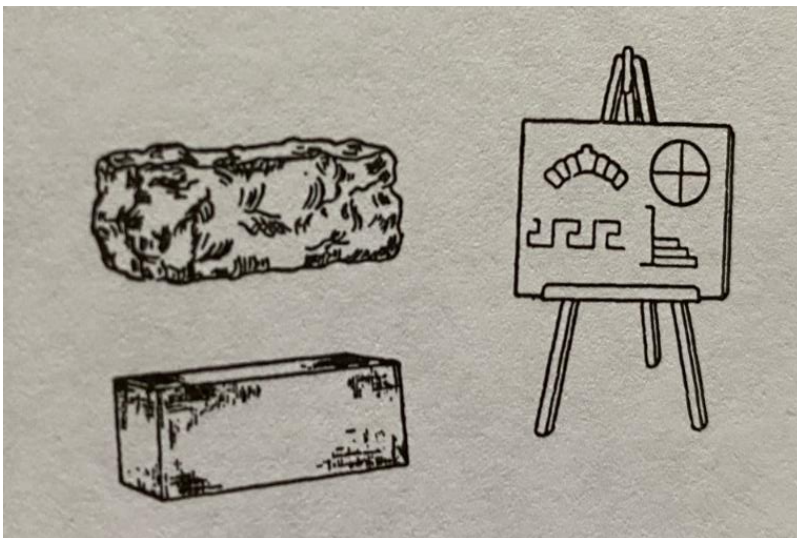
<sup>123</sup> Ibid, 33.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid, 44.



The square, level, and plumb carved into a piece of wood found at a Lodge in Texas.

The Three Movable Jewels are the Rough Ashlar, the Perfect Ashlar, and the Trestle or Tracing Board, and do not have to be present for the lodge to be open. The Rough Ashlar is “a crude stone, just as it’s taken from the quarry,” and is a symbol of the uneducated man who is unaware of his potential as a Mason in the fraternity.<sup>125</sup> The Perfect Ashlar is symbolic of the educated man who has been taught by men more knowledgeable than him in Freemasonry principles.<sup>126</sup> The Trestle or Tracing Board is used by the “master workman to draw his designs upon,” and is a symbol of perfection, but it is also “symbolically a spiritual board on which a man should lay out his plans to build his ‘living stone’ into a Temple to the Great Architect of the Universe.”<sup>127</sup> Each degree has a distinct Tracing Board that is painted with the symbols needed for that degree to understand and elaborates pictorial diagrams.



Pictured is the rough ashlar, perfect ashlar, and an example of a Trestle or Tracing Board.<sup>128</sup>

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<sup>125</sup> Roberts, 33.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid, 35.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid, 33.

The Entered Apprentice has a border of black and white triangles with the lodge depicted in the center with the Mosaic Pavement, the lodge opening to the heavens with no roof or walls, the three pillars of Beauty, Wisdom, and Strength, it also has a pedestal with an open book, compasses, and square, and there is a Ladder reaching towards the Blazing Star in the heavens where the sun, moon, and stars are seen.<sup>129</sup>

The Fellowcraft shows the interior of King Solomon's Temple with the pillars of Boaz and Jachin, the winding staircase to the Holy of Holies, looking towards the inner sanctum, and the "River Jordan can be seen in the background with a small waterfall and an ear of growing corn."<sup>130</sup>

The Master Mason has a solid black boarder representing mourning and an open grave, there is also a coffin with an acacia bush, King Solomon's Temple is also depicted again but, on the coffin, the working tools of the Master Mason are also seen, and at the head of the coffin there is an inscribed plaque that has secret codes that need to be decoded using cyphers.<sup>131</sup>

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<sup>129</sup> Harwood, 90-91.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid, 91.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid.



This is a photo of the Entered Apprentice Trestle Board.<sup>132</sup>

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<sup>132</sup> Harwood, 91.





This is a picture of the Fellowcraft Trestle Board.<sup>133</sup>

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<sup>133</sup> Harwood, 91.



This is a picture of the Master Mason Trestle Board.<sup>134</sup>

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<sup>134</sup> Harwood, 91.

The next thing that is in a physical Lodge comes from the Temple of King Solomon and that is the two Pillars that stood at the entrance. There are two great pillars that are encountered named Boaz and Jachin. Walking through the two pillars it is signified that they are no longer youth but instead are a man and have what is needed for success, happiness, and achievement.<sup>135</sup> When the two pillars are united they are seen as providing stability.<sup>136</sup> The left-hand pillar is named Boaz and is a symbol of strength and power.<sup>137</sup> In looking at the words used to describe the pillars the Masons hold the pillar named Boaz to mean stability and permanence but in the passive sense.<sup>138</sup> The pillar on the right is called Jachin and is a symbol of establishment and choice or control.<sup>139</sup> The pillar meaning when looking at the way it was described would mean to the Masons is an active and “vilifying energy and force.”<sup>140</sup> There are two columns or pillars of the Porch of Solomon’s Temple and out of them Boaz is the senior and is symbolic of strength while the junior is Jachin or known as wisdom.<sup>141</sup>

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<sup>135</sup> Roberts, 45.

<sup>136</sup> Morgan, 47.

<sup>137</sup> Roberts, 45.

<sup>138</sup> Pike, 9.

<sup>139</sup> Roberts, 45.

<sup>140</sup> Pike, 9.

<sup>141</sup> Harwood, 57.



The far-left photo is an artistic representation of the two pillars in King Solomon's Temple. The second photo is a drawing of what the pillars could have looked like and is the symbol associated with the pillars in Masonry.<sup>142</sup>

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<sup>142</sup> Harwood, 56-57.

## Rites or Special Rituals

In the progression of the three degrees there are certain rituals or rites that must be performed by the initiates. There are many that cannot be fully discussed because they are oral traditions that are passed down through the generations of the Masons. There are different rituals and rites performed for each of the degrees but each one has a significant impact on Mason in their search for truth.

The Rite of Discalceation is one of the first rituals performed by initiates into the first degree of Entered Apprentice. The removing of one's shoes is very significant and symbolizes humility and "that meekness we all should display before a greater or supreme power."<sup>143</sup> It is important when in the presence of something higher than themselves that they remove their shoes but also during all the initiation rituals and ceremonies. The Rite of Discalceation comes from many different sources including the Bible, Ethiopia, Peru, and the Druids.<sup>144</sup> There are actually two distinct actions that take place during this Rite which include taking off both shoes to show humility before god and removing one shoe to symbolize the sincerity of a vow that is made and showing an obligation to go through with it on behalf of man and god.<sup>145</sup>

The Rite of Circumambulation is a ritual that Entered Apprentice initiates must partake in during initiation. The Rite of Circumambulation is simply walking around during the ritual of initiation but symbolizes the "homage that all of us owe to our God" but also our

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<sup>143</sup> Roberts, 16.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid.

<sup>145</sup> Ibid.

dependence of man on man.<sup>146</sup> The initiates have to take a vow of secrecy and is led around by the cabletow, and they are led around in certain ways that mix the practical and metaphysical concerns but to show the members that the initiate is ready to go into the next phase of Freemasonry.<sup>147</sup>

The Rite of Investiture or Purification happens for Entered Apprentices at the end of their initiation ceremony. The initiates have to swear an “oath of allegiance at the altar that lays out what their fellow Masons expect from them and what responsibilities and status within the lodge are.”<sup>148</sup> The Rite of Investiture or Purification is when an initiate is presented with a lambskin or white leather apron which sets them apart as now a part of the Freemasons.<sup>149</sup> The apron symbolizes the innocence that an Entered Apprentice and shows that they are expected to fulfill his responsibilities to the brotherhood, society and morally.<sup>150</sup>

The Rite of Destitution is taught after an Entered apprentice has been accepted into the brotherhood of the Fraternity. In this rite the initiates have to wear simple clothes that are provided to them, they are blindfolded or hoodwinked, all metal objects are removed, all money is removed, they have one slipper placed on their foot, they have their left leg bared and left breast exposed, a rope is tied loosely around their neck, and a dagger is held to his exposed breast.<sup>151</sup> All of this is required for an initiate to be allowed to even enter into the

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<sup>146</sup> Roberts, 20.

<sup>147</sup> Morgan, 21.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid, 23.

<sup>149</sup> Roberts, 31.

<sup>150</sup> Morgan, 23.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid, 21.

lodge for the initiation to begin. In Freemasonry being destitute is what initiates are taught to do when helping others, but it is also a symbol of compassion for others.<sup>152</sup> The Rite of Destitution is when initiates are symbolically “take their first step into the world of Freemasonry.”<sup>153</sup>

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<sup>152</sup> Roberts, 37.

<sup>153</sup> Morgan, 21.

## Other Beliefs

One belief of the Masons is how they are admitted and given the ability to enter into the Fraternity. Knocks are seen as what gives Masons admittance and are symbolic of man having freedom that is taught in Freemasonry.<sup>154</sup> Knocks come from Matthew 7:7 where it says “Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.” All a Mason had to do was ask to be let in for them to open that opportunity after they knocked. The act of knocking in Freemasonry symbolizes a prayerful act because according to their beliefs “no ‘great and important undertaking’ should ever be taken ‘without first invoking the blessing of Deity’”.<sup>155</sup>

Some other beliefs that the Masons have relate to the physical places that they meet. Freemasons see their lodges as Egyptian temples or pyramids, so they are decorated with Egyptian symbols including hieroglyphs and because of the fact that the world’s first known architect, an Egyptian named Imhotep, was the first to build a pyramid.<sup>156</sup> All Masonic lodges and temples are symbolic of King Solomon’s Temple built in 967 BC.<sup>157</sup> Masons also believe that the Lodge represents King Solomon’s Temple, so it contradicts the Lodge being seen as a pyramid or Egyptian temple. The Lodge is seen as a symbol of the new world that the initiate

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<sup>154</sup> Roberts, 15.

<sup>155</sup> Ibid, 15.

<sup>156</sup> Harwood, 55.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid, 53.



has been reborn in.<sup>158</sup> A lodge is also seen as the world, but the oblong square is the image that is used to signify a lodge.<sup>159</sup>

Other Masonic beliefs include things that can get in their way and certain promises that they make. Obstructions and Guards that come into their path of life hold very specific meanings. “The obstructions we meet, and guards we encounter, are symbolic of a pure mind, deeds, and action.”<sup>160</sup> There are also very symbolic beliefs about the obstacles that every Mason will in encounter through his path to truth. In Freemasonry, obstacles are a symbol of courage, more specifically in the courage to continue striving for their goals in life.<sup>161</sup> There are also very distinct beliefs that are held relating to obligations and oaths that are taken. Obligations are symbolic of promises and agreements that are made where an oath is symbolic of the love or fear of god.<sup>162</sup>

Freemasons also consider certain sayings or phrases to be very sacred and they contain great insight into what they believe. The Latin phrase *So Mote It Be* is said to be a symbol of fellowship and also symbolizes reverence because it links all Speculative Masons together.<sup>163</sup> Speculative Masons are what Freemasons are called because they are not a practicing Mason in the guild or operative setting. This phrase is also seen as the Masonic phrase equivalent to

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<sup>158</sup> Roberts, 14.

<sup>159</sup> Ibid, 26.

<sup>160</sup> Ibid, 20.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid, 26.

<sup>162</sup> Ibid.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid, 25.

Amen.<sup>164</sup> The term Hele comes from the Anglo-Saxon word *helan* which simply put means to cover or conceal but in Freemasonry it is used when they make a promise to conceal something.<sup>165</sup> Hele can also be symbolic of a meaning to cover a house with tiles which in turn is also symbolic of concealing what is inside.<sup>166</sup> A *Due Guard* is a form of salutation to use in regard to the Master and Wardens of the lodge because it is a symbol of respect.<sup>167</sup> All of these sayings and phrases show that they have the belief that there is a respect to those that are in authority over them but mostly that they have a relationship with the other brothers and have a responsibility to treat those relationships with the utmost of respect.

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<sup>164</sup> Harwood, 93.

<sup>165</sup> Roberts, 27.

<sup>166</sup> Pike, 63.

<sup>167</sup> Roberts, 30.

## Numbers and Shapes

Numbers play a huge role in Freemasonry. They are not just symbols but also hold to the way that they hold their meetings and how they walk through life. Numbers also then play into the idea that shapes are important based on the logic of the number of sides the shapes have. It is important to understand the importance that numbers and shapes have on Freemasonry.

Number Two is also known as the Duad in Masonry. Two is seen as a symbol regarding “Antagonism; of Good and Evil, Light and Darkness” and is seen through the use of “Cain and Able, Eve and Lilith, Jachin and Boaz, Ormuzd and Ahriman, Osiris and Typhon.”<sup>168</sup> This number is one that is used to show a difference between things that are usually complete opposites from one another.

The number Three otherwise known as the Triad is usually “expressed by the equilateral and the right-angle triangles.”<sup>169</sup> Three is used by the Masons to represent the three primary colors, the Trinity of the Deity, Man being body, mind, and soul, the Deity’s mode of create, preserve, and destroy, the Deity’s generative power, productive capacity, and the result.<sup>170</sup> There also used to be great importance on the three great symbols of the alchemists which include salt, sulphur, and mercury.<sup>171</sup> “Three is symbolic of Deity.”<sup>172</sup> The number

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<sup>168</sup> Pike, 57.

<sup>169</sup> Ibid.

<sup>170</sup> Ibid.

<sup>171</sup> Ibid.

<sup>172</sup> Roberts, 51.

three is one that is seen as a perfect number and is one that is mainly used to talk about the Deity and the things that have relation with the Deity.

The number Four is expressed by the square or a four-sided right-angled figure. The Masons have many reasons why the number four is seen as so significant. One being that the river that flowed out of the Garden of Eden split into four streams the Piston, Gihon, Hiddekel, and the Euphrates.<sup>173</sup> Other reasons come from scripture including that Zechariah saw four chariots, Ezekiel saw four living creatures with four faces and four wings, Saint John beheld the four beasts, and Daniel saw four great beasts.<sup>174</sup> The number four has more to do with references to scripture but is seen as a symbol of the square which is one thing the hold most dear.

The number Five is the Duad added to the Triad and is expressed by the blazing star or the five-pointed star.<sup>175</sup> The number five is mainly used in connection with the number seven but is significant of the five loaves of bread that Christ used to feed the multitude and the five small planets known including Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn.<sup>176</sup> There are five steps that are symbol as the Fellowcraft degree as a whole and it takes five people to hold a Fellowcraft's lodge.<sup>177</sup> There are five human senses, five orders of architecture (Tuscan, Doric, Ionic, Corinthian, and Composite), and geometry is known as the fifth science.<sup>178</sup> The

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<sup>173</sup> Pike, 58.

<sup>174</sup> Ibid.

<sup>175</sup> Ibid.

<sup>176</sup> Ibid.

<sup>177</sup> Roberts, 51.

<sup>178</sup> Ibid, 51-52.

number five is important for so many reasons but it all goes back to it being the number 3 and number 2 added together to signify something even greater.

The number Seven is seen as the most sacred number. Seven is seen as the number of planets, archangels, colors of the rainbow, seven lampstands, seven epistles to the seven churches in Revelation, seven seals, seven trumpets, seven bowls, seven days of creation, and seven days of the week.<sup>179</sup> The number Seven was also important because of the “Phoenician Deity was called the Heptakis or God of seven rays.”<sup>180</sup> Seven is the number with the most examples of why it is important to the Masons. Some other examples include the number of years Jacob worked for Leah and Rachel, Job had seven sons, Jericho fell when seven priests with seven trumpets walked around the city seven times, the seven eyes of the Lord, the seven angels in the Apocalypse, the seven plagues of end times, and many more that is way more than can be explained.<sup>181</sup> There are seven liberal arts and sciences that include grammar, logic, rhetoric, music, arithmetic, geometry, and astronomy.<sup>182</sup> Seven is the most sacred number and there are numerous reasons as to why this is the case for Masons.

Eight is a number that is really important to Masons when it comes to shapes. The number Eight is the “first cube, that of two.”<sup>183</sup> The cube is seen as the symbol of perfection

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<sup>179</sup> Pike, 58-59.

<sup>180</sup> Ibid, 58.

<sup>181</sup> Ibid, 60.

<sup>182</sup> Roberts, 53.

<sup>183</sup> Pike, 60.

and when it is taken on a plane surface it includes all the sacred numbers including 3,5,7,12, and 9.<sup>184</sup> This number eight and shape of the cube are the most important for Freemasonry.

Similarly, the number nine is seen just like the number eight. The number Nine is “the square of three and represented by the triple triangle.”<sup>185</sup> This number is one that does not have much explained about it but is important because of the number three.

The number Ten in Freemasonry is known to include all of the numbers and is called the number of perfection. Ten is important because it signifies the number of Patriarchs from Adam to Noah and is the number of the Commandments given to Moses.<sup>186</sup> Ten is understood as the perfect number and includes most of the other important numbers such as two and five.

The number Twelve is the number that includes other important numbers such as two, three, nine, seven, eight, and ten. The number Twelve is seen as the “number of the lines or equal length that form a cube,” and is seen as important because of the number of tribes, months, apostles, stones on the high priest’s breastplate, and the number of oxen under the Brazen Sea.<sup>187</sup> This number is important based off of shape and use in scripture and history of religions.

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<sup>184</sup> Pike, 5.

<sup>185</sup> Ibid, 60.

<sup>186</sup> Ibid, 61.

<sup>187</sup> Ibid, 61.

## Conclusion

The Freemasons are a confusing group of people when it comes to their beliefs. They have a variety of views on how they see the world and god. They take various aspects of other religions and turn them into one thing for people to follow while telling them that it is not a religion. Every group of people is going to have their own views on life, but the Masons combine them together to try and unite all men, but they are not allowed to talk about their individual beliefs with each other. Freemasonry is a group of men that try to bring different ideas together to try and improve the world that is around them by first improving themselves.

The Masons hold to a very strict teaching style and rituals to better right themselves with their “god.” These teachings help them learn to be better men in the sight of their deity and how to be better brothers to those in the brotherhood. They then take the lessons learned and do charity work around the world to help improve systems and people in need.

Everything that the Masons do is to place themselves in better standing with their god.

Freemasonry is a fraternity that values continuing education and improving their knowledge. The use of symbols and phrases help teach the Masons the different lessons depending on what degree they are in. The symbols used come from many backgrounds but are used to give representations of different doctrines that they hold to be true. These symbols make up the entirety of the teachings that the fraternity deems to be part of their morals and dogma.

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## Appendix I

These are a few ideas that could be researched later on in the future to get a better understanding of the Freemasons. These further research ideas reach into a vast categories relating to research that was found drafting this paper but did not make the content for this paper on beliefs of the Freemasons.

- Freemasons in History
- Creation of the Freemasons
- Masonry in the church
- Differences in Masonry in different Religions
- Mormons and Masonry
- Difference between Scottish and York rites
- Degree system of Freemasonry
- Grand Architect of the Universe deep dive
- Significance of the King Solomon's Temple in Masonry
- How did operative Masonry become speculative Freemasonry?
- Zoroastrianism in Masonry
- Freemason burials
- Why are the aprons different for different degrees?
- Why was Masonry so secretive in the beginning?
- Different theories of where the Masons came from originally
- What does a Masonic lodge look like from inside?

- Why are there other groups based off of Masons, but they do not have any connections?
- Order of the Eastern Star
- Rainbow Girls
- Job's Daughters
- Order of the Amaranth
- Daughters of the Nile
- Council of the Nine Muses
- Knight Masons
- Holy Royal Arch Knight Templar Priests
- Order of the White Shrine of Jerusalem
- The Mystic Order of Veiled Prophets of the Enchanted Realm
- The Royal Order of Scotland
- Supreme Assembly Social Order of the Beauceant
- Day in the life of a Mason
- Freemasons and the connection and use of the Holy Bible
- Egyptian symbols and how they became Masonic symbols
- How is a lodge formed?
- Why is Masonry banned in most Islamic countries?

## Appendix II

These are some additional sources that were found for research that might be beneficial to the additional research ideas mentioned in Appendix I.

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