

Pillar and Globes

Bro. D. B. Wallace

PILLARS

Our very learned Brother, Dr. Albert Churchward, who, besides being high in our Masonic degrees, is an Egyptologist, having an understanding of the hieroglyphics, and has made a study of them in Egypt, tells us that the Egyptians held that their temples, equivalent to our lodges, were supported by three great pillars, known to them as Wisdom, Strength and Beauty, but in the course of time, and no doubt to impress the commoner people, they deified these attributes - Wisdom being represented by Horus, God of the North Pole Star; Strength being represented by Sut (or El Shaddai, of the Hebrews), God of the South Pole Star; and Beauty by Shu, God of the Equinox. It is self-evident that the change must have been made after the completion of King Solomon's Temple.

It is almost a certainty that speculative Freemasonry existed amongst the Israelites and neighbouring nations at about the time of the building of the Temple.

Hereon, I will quote at some length from "Symbols and Legends of Freemasonry" by Bro. J. Finlay Finlayson, a book which I would recommend to every brother who wishes information on these subjects without the laborious reading of the works of Bro. Dr. Gould and others.

"Moreover, we have most plausible proof in the pages of Scripture that societies of men known to each other by secret signs, bound together in a brotherhood, and called upon to assist one another in the day of trouble, actually did exist in the days of the Biblical narrative." (The Building of King Solomon's Temple). "Furthermore, that this "Brotherhood" was not confined to men of one creed or nation, but extended itself over a wide area and to dissimilar needs and circumstances."

This assertion is based on a passage in the First Book of Kings, chap. xx, 33, where we read:- "Now the men did diligently observe whether anything would come from him, 'and did hastily catch it', and they said, Thy brother Ben-Haddad." A resume of the history and circumstances that led up to this singular passage will bring before us its Masonic significance in a most startling manner.

"After the death of King Solomon and the splitting up of the Kingdom of Israel into two parts, the rival Kings of Israel and Judah were continually at war with each other. At a period of probably about twenty-five to thirty years after the death of King Solomon, Baasha, King of Israel, sought to prevent all communications between the ten tribes of Israel and the two tribes of Judah, and built the city or fortress of Ramah as a blockade to enforce his intentions. Thereupon, Asa, King of Judah, took all the treasure in the house of the Lord that Shishak, King of Egypt, had not already despoiled him of, and sent it to Ben-Hadad, the son of Tabrimon, King of Syria, who dwelt at Damascus, praying his assistance against Baasha, King of Israel. Beh-Hadad acceded to Asa's request and Baasha was overthrown."

"Sixty years had passed since the death of King Solomon. Asa had died, and his son, Jehoshaphat, succeeded him as King of Judah. Ben-Hadad, the son of Badaden-H already spoken of, the grandson of Tabrimon, reigned as king over Syria, and Ahab, the son of Omri, was king over Israel." . . . "Ben-Hadad, whose father had fought against Israel at the request of Asa now entered on a war against Ahab, King of Israel, in which, in two campaigns, he and his army were utterly overthrown and annihilated,

and Ben-Hadad himself fell into the hands of his enemies. We have now clearly before us the exact relationship of Ahab and Ben-Hadad. They were the sons of separate fathers, they were in no manner kindred, nor by any tie of affinity could they call each other brother. They were, above all, hereditary enemies."

We will now quote from the text of Scripture.

"And Ben-Hadad fled, and came into the city in an 'inner chamber.' And his servants said unto him, 'Behold now, we have heard that the kings of the house of Israel are merciful kings; let us, I pray thee, put sackcloth on our loins and ropes upon our heads and go out to the King of Israel; peradventure he will save thy life.' So they girded sackcloth on their loins and put ropes upon their heads, and came to the King of Israel, and said, 'Thy servant, Beh-Hadad saith, I pray thee, let me live.' And he said 'Is he yet alive? He is my brother' Now the men did diligently observe whether anything would come from him, and did hastily catch it; and they said 'Thy brother, Ben-Hadad.' They he said 'Go ye, bring him.' Then Ben-hadad came forth to him, and he caused him to come up into the chariot. And Ben-Hadad said unto him, 'The cities which my father took from thy father I will restore, and thou shalt make streets for thee in Damascus, as my father made in Samaria.' Then said Ahab, 'I will send thee away with this covenant.' So he made a covenant with him, and sent him away."

"Does not this vivid narrative carry its own comment? "Ben-Hadad has fallen into the hands of his enemies. His servants appeal to Ahab, the King, to save his life, and in Ahab's answer they "diligently observe whether anything should come from him, and they did hastily catch it." What more natural than that Beh-Hadad should cause his servants to deliver some secret token to Ahab which should cause him to return their salutation and to exclaim, "Is he yet alive? He is my brother." Then as an act of brotherly love, which has ever burnt warmly in the true inner life of Masonry, he relieved his brother from the fear of death, made a covenant with him, and sent him away."

"If we may accept this explanation of the text, and it is difficult to see what other meaning can possibly attach itself to it, we have a clear certainty that a fraternity, other than an operative guild, 'a brotherhood of man' actually existed in times still in touch with the days of King Solomon. Moreover, we have before us one of the noblest examples of the practice of a truly Masonic virtue that may be found in the history of the world."

Now, if, as I firmly believe from the foregoing narrative, the Israelites, either through Moses, or from their own sojourn in Egypt, had acquired a knowledge of the ancient mysteries of Egypt; they would, in the practice of their rites and ceremonies, make use, as we do, of the three great pillars - Wisdom, Strength and Beauty.

But in all times, all peoples have altered their symbols and legends to suit their circumstances and understanding, and what more probable than that the Israelites or the children of Judah should alter the names of these pillars to others which would appeal to their national pride.

As we know definitely that the names of the two pillars which stood at the porch way or entrance to King Solomon's Temple were altered at the time of this building, it is extremely probable that the names of the three great pillars were altered at the same time or shortly after.

GLOBES

These two great pillars are the pillars which stood at the porch or entrance to King Solomon's Temple, and have no connection with the three great pillars.

According to Bro. Dr. Churchward and to other good authorities, the Egyptians built their temples due east and west, and at the entrance in the east were placed two pillars, one on either side. These pillars were symbolically to divide the heavens and earth into north and south, and were named "Tatt" and "Tattu." According to the same writer these pillars had each a cube on top the one representing the heavens and the other the earth.

Bro. Churchward states that the four cross lines represent a cube, the Egyptians not being able to draw in perspective at that time.

Now, we know, that up to the time of Galileo, early in the 17th century, the earth was believed to be flat, so that this change must have been made since that time, and I think we may approve of the bringing these pillars into consonance with our present knowledge of the shape of the earth while retaining the original meaning given to them by our ancient brethren of Egypt.

But the present explanation of the Tracing Board in the Second Degree in F.C. Lodges is a stumbling block to newly passed brethren who are informed that the two pillars which stood at the entrance of King Solomon's Temple were surmounted by two spherical globes representing the celestial and terrestrial worlds. In our N.Z. workings these are happily omitted. In "Symbols and Legends," which, he writer states "are also the specimens of the style and architecture with which Moses must have been familiar."

Here we find two cubes one on top of each of the pillars. These may also present Heaven and Earth, but I must leave it to more competent critics to decide which is right, the one or the two cubes on top of the pillars. Or are both right, some having one cube, and some having two?

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