

Introduction

THE original objects of the rites and symbols of Freemasonry have been the subject of discussion for many decades, and the present-day members of the Fraternity are still trying to solve the mystery. The Masonic Order has the exterior expression in the form of rites and symbols, but there are many of the Craft who have yet to learn the spiritual significance of these rites and variegated symbols.

Masonry is founded on the Bible. Noah, Abraham, Jacob, Joshua, David, Solomon, John the Evangelist, and John the Baptist did not belong to the Masonic Order, although it is generally accepted by Masons today that they understood the mysteries which the present-day Mason knows nothing about. The Order of Masonry did not come into existence for many centuries after the Patriarchs lived on earth, which goes to prove that the true understanding of Masonry did not originate with the Order.

The ancient prophets gained their knowledge through spiritual vision. They were not humanly instructed. All truth is perceived through vision. Vision is a subjective state of consciousness in which the physical senses are hushed and the spiritual senses predominate. Truth cannot be heard in consciousness until the animal passions have been subdued.

The actual purpose of Masonry is to explain the relationship of man to God. It teaches principles of morality, and insists that man must subdue his passions in order to bring his consciousness into conformity with God's laws.

The ancient prophets were truly Free and Accepted Masons, because they, of their own free will, brought their consciousness into conformity with God's laws, which made it possible for them to make scientific discoveries of truth. It will be found, when the true meaning of Freemasonry is explained, that it differs in no way from the teachings of the prophets or from the teachings of Christ Jesus, the great Master.

The spiritual understanding of Masonry cannot come to one who has not, in some degree, mastered his physical desires. Truth can only come to the consciousness that has prepared itself to receive Truth. Let us not confuse the present conception of Masonry with that of the prophets, who obtained their knowledge through self-mastery and vision.

The purpose of this treatise is to interpret Masonry, and to trace the teaching to that of the inspired men of the Bible, who had the true understanding of that which today is called *Freemasonry*. The author does not wish to convey the idea that the true understanding of Masonry originated with the prophets whose lives are recorded in the Bible. Some of the symbols which are used in Masonry today can be traced back to the ancient Egyptians, which indicates that they, too, knew the mysteries. The author confines his references to the Bible only because Masonry is founded on the Bible.

We shall endeavor to explain the spiritual meaning of the rites and symbols of Masonry by following the initiate from his first step as an apprentice to the time that he arrives at the Royal Arch degree, and to show the intimate connection between the degree work and the history of one man, whose life is recorded in the Bible and defined by seven steps or degrees.

Many who have written against Masonry, under false impressions of its general tendency, have doubtless been actuated by the purest motives, whilst others have been instigated by the most malignant prejudices. The initiate, as well as those without the pale of the Order, are oftentimes ignorant of its derivation and import. It is the author's belief that when the spiritual meaning of Freemasonry is generally understood, and accepted in principle, it will bring about the brotherhood of man.

Carl Gluck.

[Publisher's Note: All Biblical quotations in this book refer to the Authorized King James Version of the Bible.]