

## Chapter 4

### The Two Pillars

The two pillars on the porch or entrance of King Solomon's Temple are essential features of that edifice. Since the Tabernacle is a reflection of the Temple, it follows that the Tent of Appointment must include reflections of these columns. However, while the detailed description of the Tabernacle mentions five pillars supporting the front screen or wall of the Tent, it does not appear to mention twin columns framing its entrance.<sup>1</sup>

This apparent difficulty disappears when one knows what the columns represent, and recall how YHWH guided the wandering Hebrews. The explanation begins with the pillars of Solomon's Temple, which are described in the Bible as follows:

“He cast two Pillars of brass, of eighteen cubits high apiece. ...And he made two chapiters of molten brass, to set upon the tops of the Pillars: the height of the one chapiter was five cubits, and the height of the other chapiter was five cubits. And nets of checker work and wreaths of chain work, for the chapiters. ... And two rows ... to cover the chapiters ... with pomegranates. ... And the chapiters ... were of lily work. ... And he set up the Pillars in the Porch of the Temple: and he set up the right Pillar, and called the name thereof Jachin: and he set up the left Pillar, and called the name thereof Boaz.”<sup>2</sup>

Masonic tradition expands on this somewhat, and indicates that the pillars are hollow, contain the secrets or laws of the craft, and caps them with bowls (one of which contained water and the other fire) or spheres (one representing the earth and the other representing the sphere of heaven. In addition, Jachin is described as the pillar of light, while Boaz is described as the pillar of darkness.

According to a Hebrew dictionary, the names of the pillars are traditional Hebrew names. “Jachin” means “he that strengthens and makes steadfast,” while “Boaz” means “in strength.”

In the Book of Exodus, the wandering Hebrews were guided by a Column of Cloud by day, and a Column of Fire by night.<sup>3</sup> When these columns moved, the Hebrews packed up and followed them. When the columns stopped, the Hebrews stopped, and set up the Tent of Appointment in the location where the columns came to rest. Thus, these columns of Fire and Cloud are the reflection, in the Tabernacle, of the twin pillars of the Temple.

One of the great questions of Masonic symbolism has been the identity and meaning of these pillars. As with our other symbols, the meaning is largely dependent on the context. When the two pillars stand on either side of the porch or entrance of the Tabernacle (the chamber of the physical-etheric or energy body), they represent twin structures in that physical-etheric body. The combination of their location and description provides all the clues we need to determine their symbolic

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<sup>1</sup> Exodus 26.36-37

<sup>2</sup> Holy Bible, I Kings 7:13-22

<sup>3</sup> Exodus 13.21-22; 14.19-20; 14.24; 33.9-10; Numbers 12.5; 14.14; Deuteronomy 31.15

meaning.

As structures within the physical-etheric body, they are part of the subtle anatomy of the human instrument. Much of what we know of subtle or esoteric anatomy comes from the Hindu tradition. In that system, three hollow tubes of light, or *nadis*, are associated with the human spine. They are Pingala, the nadi<sup>4</sup> of the sun, Ida, the nadi of the moon, and Susumna, the nadi of fire. The first two, Pingala and Ida, twist around Susumna in concentric spirals. These three nadis were depicted in the Greek mystery tradition by the Caduceus, the rod or staff of Mercury.

[Caduceus illus.]

The winding Pingala and Ida intersect each other, and Susumna, at five points along the spine. At each of those points, a spark of consciousness constantly sounds a creative note. That creative note radiates light, creating a tiny geometric jewel or “center” of light.

[Primal Anu illus.]

The center vibrates in harmony with the note, setting the surrounding etheric substance into spirilic motion. That spiral is called a *chakra*.<sup>5</sup> When seen from the side, the chakra looks like a swirling vortex of energy. When one peers down into it, it looks like a spinning wheel or flower.

There are two such centers above the spine, making seven major centers. One is in front of the forehead, and the other on top of the head.

Each of these centers contains:

- A spark of consciousness. This spark is a tiny mote of the Light of The Soul, extended into the three lower worlds. Each spark has a particular quality of awareness that is peculiar to and typical of that center.
- A note or sound. This note is part of the seven-fold word that created the persona and holds its substance together (This creative word will be discussed in detail in a later chapter).
- Vibrating substance. The notes set substance vibrating throughout the three lower worlds. Thus, the seven major chakras are present in the mental, astral, and physical-etheric bodies. The centers process energy on each of the three planes. However, each center specializes in a particular frequency range, and they are seldom all functional in any one persona instrument.

The entire persona instrument, including the three subtle bodies, three nadis, and seven major centers, is reflected in the physical-dense body. The seven major centers, for instance, are reflected in the ductless glands, and each of them “governs” some portion of the physical instrument. Each of the centers is also symbolically associated with a location in the Tabernacle.

### Seven States of Consciousness

The three chambers of the Tabernacle contain a number of significant spots or locations. Each of these locations represents a state of consciousness with a particular purpose and a state of energy. Thus, we have a:

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<sup>4</sup> “Nadi” is Sanskrit for a hollow tube through which etheric energy flows.

<sup>5</sup> “Chakra” is Sanskrit for “wheel”.

- Spark or State of Consciousness, with a
  - Purpose, place and function within the Tabernacle, and a
  - Quality of Energy, Force, and Substance

Many other spiritual systems also recognize these points, and represent them in a variety of ways. They are often depicted as flowers (particularly the water lily or lotus (in the East) or rose (in the West), as vortexes of energy, twining serpents, musical notes, individual animals, and planets.

Beginning at the porch or entrance of the Tabernacle, these locations are:

**The First Center:** In the Temple allegory, this center is located on the porch at the top of the twelfth step, between and slightly in front of the two pillars. It is the center of focus for:

- Consciousness: Awareness as form
- Purpose: Intelligent activity of substance
- Substance: The fire of matter

This is the first center formed during the cyclic incarnation process. The glands of this center are the adrenals and the coccygeal or Luschkas gland. The areas governed in the human body include the spinal column and kidneys. The symbols of the first center include the elephant, bull, and ox.

**The Second Center:** Located in the middle of the porch, it is the center of focus for:

- Consciousness: Animal Instinct – identification with the form
- Purpose: Procreation
- Substance: bio-electric energy

The organ of instinctual procreation and physical appetites, this center naturally functions on annual, lunar, and daily cycles, but has long been dominated by the insatiable desires of the overactive Third Center.

The symbols of the third center include fish and all creatures of the sea.

**The third center:** Located on the porch or entrance, directly in front of the door to the Tabernacle/Temple, it is a focus for:

- Consciousness: Awareness of differences
- Purpose: Direction of emotional force
- Substance: astral/emotional force

The force of the third center is experienced as form-oriented emotions, such as desire. The center is insatiable, and thus, while these emotions can be temporarily satisfied, they can never be quenched. It is presently the dominant center in most human beings, in whom it rules second, fourth, and fifth centers. As long as this center dominates the Tabernacle, the incarnate consciousness is its victim.

The proper function of the third center is to quietly await impression from the sixth, and then gather and channel the tremendous force of the astral-emotional body. It is an essential part of the process of moving a thought-form downward into appearance in the world of affairs. Thus, those who suppress this center, in a misplaced-attempt to control their emotions, are preventing themselves from being effective in the world.

Ultimately, this center functions in daily, lunar, and annual cycles, in coordina-

tion with the other centers. Its gland is the pancreas, and it governs the stomach, liver, gall bladder and nervous system. The symbols of the fourth center include the ram.

So long as this center controls the emotions, the door to the Tabernacle/Temple remains shut.

**The Fourth Center:** Located in the heart of the middle chamber, and represented by the altar, it is a focus for:

- Consciousness: Mystical at-one-ment
- Purpose: Union of the Divine Poles
- Substance: Selfless astral/emotional force

The organ of mystical union or at-one-ment, the fourth center processes the higher energies of the astral plane. This center is very good at perceiving relationships, but very poor at details. Its gland is the Thymus, and it governs the heart, blood, vagus nerve, and circulatory system. The symbols of the heart center include the lion and the dove.

**The fifth center:** The tracing board, immediately before the veil to the inner chamber. It is the focus for:

- Consciousness: Rational mind
- Purpose: Sequential organization of thought-forms
- Substance: Mental energy or manas

The center of the concrete rational mind, intellect, or conscious creativity, the fifth center specializes in manipulating the substance of the three lower sub-planes of the mental plane. In particular, it organizes thought-forms into a sequential plan of activity (symbolized, in the Legend, by drawing the day's work drawn on the tracing board).

The fifth center is very good at perceiving details, but very poor at relationships. As a result, the intellect cannot know God. Its proper function is to organize abstract thought-forms into a sequence of activities or a plan of action.

The glands of the fifth center are the thyroid and parathyroids, and it governs the bronchial and vocal apparatus, lungs, and alimentary canal.

If we compare the sixth center to an Architect who creates the blueprint of a building, then the fifth center is the Building Contractor who organizes the construction process. The symbols of the fifth center include the cock.

**The sixth center:** Located immediately within the Holy of Holies, between the two large cherubim, it is the focus of:

- Consciousness: At-one-ment of emotions and mind
- Purpose: Coordination of the Tabernacle and Temple
- Substance: Mental energy, emotional force, and physical substance

This center is the highest center in the persona instrument. It specializes in manipulating the higher frequencies of the mental plane, and is responsible for building and manipulating thought-forms. It also functions as a switchboard for the lower states of consciousness and energy/force centers, integrating them into a single, functioning whole.

The sixth center is located between the brows, approximately three inches in

front of the forehead. Its gland is the pituitary or hypophysis, and hypothalamus. The pituitary sits on the wing-shaped sphenoid bone, inside the skull. The motion of the sphenoid circulates the brain and spinal fluid. The symbols of the center include Pegasus, the winged horse.

Before this center is developed, the consciousness of most people functions rather like the human eye does when gazing at a scene at the beach. One can either look out at the grand vista of the entire scene, or gaze closely at details such as individual grains of sand. One cannot do both simultaneously. The sixth center can. It integrates the mystical (the grand vista) and the intellectual (the minute details) into a single state of awareness. When the incarnate consciousness moves up into the sixth center, the Tree of Knowledge becomes the Tree of Wisdom.

**The Seventh Center:** Located within the heart of the Holy of Holies, this center is represented by the Ark of the Covenant and is the focus of:

- Consciousness: At-one-ment
- Purpose: Transcendent union of the Divine Poles
- Substance: Union of energy, force, and substance with Divine Intent

Located approximately three inches above the head. This center is not, properly speaking, a part of the persona instrument. It is actually the lowest center in the center system of the overshadowing Spiritual Soul.

The seventh center is the place of transcendent awareness, or at-one-ment with the Spiritual Soul. It's physical-dense correspondent is the pineal gland or epithalamus. The center governs the upper brain and right eye. It is sometimes symbolized by the unicorn or risen serpent, while the gland is symbolized by the pinecone and the pomegranate (both of which are said to resemble the gland in appearance).

**The Eight Center:** Also located within the Heart of the Holy of Holies and represented by the Ark of the Covenant. However, it incorporates the consciousness and purpose of both the sixth and seventh centers, in a new state of awareness. Thus, it is the focus of:

- Consciousness: Divine Marriage of the Son and the Mother, or union of Soul and Substance
- Purpose: Embodied union of the Divine Poles
- Substance: Relates energy, force, and substance to Divine Intent, and Divine Will to energy, force, and substance.

This unusual center is the place of union or at-one-ment of the overshadowing Spiritual Soul and the incarnate human soul. When this at-one-ment is achieved, the initiate becomes a Conscious Soul Incarnate, one who lives in the world but is not of the world, a magician according to Divine Law.

The 8<sup>th</sup> center or Cave is not part of either the persona (Tabernacle) or the Soul (Temple) center system, but relates and merges the two. It has to be built consciously, following the activation of the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> centers. As an activity of Consciousness, rather than of Substance, the 8<sup>th</sup> center does not go into and out of incarnation with the form, but remains behind when a person discarnates. When they incarnate again, the Spiritual Soul Incarnate has to rebuild the 1<sup>st</sup> through 7<sup>th</sup> centers, but merely moves back into the 8<sup>th</sup>.

Its gland is the pineal (taking over the control of that gland from the 7<sup>th</sup> center), and its symbols include the crystal cave, the pinecone and the pomegranate.

#### The Place of Residence

Back in the Foreword we asked you to point to the place where you, the conscious, thinking “I” dwell in your body. When asked this question for the first time, most people point to their abdomen, chest, throat, or head. As the above suggests, each of these locations suggests something about the state of awareness of the incarnate consciousness or (in Freemasonic terms) their dwelling place in the Tabernacle.

- Those who point to their abdomen are indicating that they dwell in the outer chamber of the Tabernacle.
- Those who point to their solar plexus or chest are indicating that they dwell in the middle chamber of the Tabernacle.
- Those who point to their throat are indicating that they dwell in the fifth center of the Tabernacle.
- Those who point to their forehead are indicating that they dwell in the sixth center of the Tabernacle.
- Those who point to the top of their head are indicating that they dwell in King Solomon’s Temple.
- Those who point to the center of their head are indicating that they dwell in the eighth center, or the Ark of the Covenant.

As the heart of the Holy of Holies, the symbolism of the Ark is too important for a brief outline. Thus, we will examine it in more detail in the next chapter.

We are further encouraged in the association of the pillars with the spine by the Egyptian Djed Pillars. These pillars, representing the spine of Osiris, were planted or “raised” at solstice ceremonies. They are sometimes associated with the tree-pillar in which Osiris was temporarily entombed, as well as with the Tree of Life.

#### The Sacred Trees

As already mentioned, the etheric body, with its centers and nadis, is reflected in the mental, astral, and physical-etheric bodies and organs. These in turn are reflected in the organs and systems of the dense-physical body. These dense-physical counterparts include the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems, the glandular system, the cardiovascular system, and the spinal column. The world’s religions and mystery traditions frequently symbolize these organic systems as trees, vines, fruit, and pillars. This includes:

ASK TREE .....	Norse ... “from which issued the men of the generation of bronze.”
BRAMANANDA .	Hindu ... the rod or stick of Brahma with the 7 knots of the 7 spinal nadi.
GOGARD .....	Hellenic (Greek) tree of life ... “amidst its magnificent foliage dwelt a serpent ...”
HOMA .....	Middle East ... planted by Ahura-Mazda (the god of light) ... “He who drinks of its juice never dies.?”

TAT .....	Egyptian pillar ... backbone of the god Ptah, later Osiris
TREE OF LIFE ..	Hebrew ... Genesis
TZITE TREE .....	“out of which the Mexican third race of men was created ...”. From the Mexican Popul Vuh or “Bible.”
WORLD TREE ...	Hindu (Bhagavad Gita) ... the sacred Ashvatta ... “They say the imperishable Ashvatta is with roots above and branches below ...”
YGGDRASIL .....	Scandinavian world tree, source of Odin's wisdom.
ZAMPUN .....	Tibetan great World Tree

Compiled from: Man, Grand Symbol of the Mysteries, by Manly P. Hall, pp. 175 -185

“These are quite evidently the symbolic trees referred to in Genesis, for the arterial system with its numerous branches is certainly a ‘tree of life.’ and the nervous system with its infinite ramifications, with its roots in the brain, is with equal certainty the ‘tree of the knowledge of good and evil.’ From an examination of the human spine it is not difficult to recognize therein the simile to the World Tree ...”  
*ibid.*, p. 177

It should not be surprising to find trees featured in many early spiritual systems, given the importance of trees to humanity. However, the trees of these traditions share some interesting features. They may describe:

- One tree with three roots (such as Yggdrasil)
- Two separate trees (such as the Tree of Knowledge and Tree of Life)
- A rod, staff, or pillar (such as Bramananda, Djed, Asherah, Tat and Tattu, Boaz and Jachin).

Most descriptions of the tree/pillars include significant features such as fruit, knots, jewels, shining leaves, etc. They also often place a serpent in the tree (as in Bramananda, Gogard, Yggdrasil, the Tree of Knowledge, etc.).

These are descriptions of the same tree or trees, Jachin/Pingala and Boaz/Ida. The descriptions are different because the observer, method of observing, and that which is observed differ from one time and place to another. The descriptions of these trees are similar because they are describing the same things, the Tree of Life and the Tree of Knowledge

### The Tree of Life

Osiris is the Father or Life Aspect of the Egyptian trinity of Osiris—Horus—Isis. In their myth, Osiris was entombed alive in a casket. A tree grew around the casket, and a pillar was made from the tree. Thus, we see the Tree of Life as a symbol of the Father or Life Aspect, entombed in form.

The pillar, tree, and casket are three containers of the Life Aspect. The casket is the physical body. During incarnation, the Spiritual Soul (Horus) enters into and identifies with the body, and “dies” to its self. The incarnate Soul forgets who and what it is, and acts in the world as a body.

The tree surrounds, enfolds, and is reflected in the casket. Energetically, the tree represents the etheric or subtle-energy body that underlies the persona. This body is composed of hundreds of tiny tubes of light, or nadis, which form the framework of the mental, astral, and physical-etheric bodies.

When the Soul sounds the creative word through the etheric framework, on the frequency of the mental plane, the word attracts mental substance to this framework, forming the mental body.

When the creative word is sounded on the astral plane, it attracts emotional substance, forming the astral-emotional body.

When the creative word is sounded on the physical-etheric, it attracts physical etheric substance, forming the physical-etheric body.

Although this entire energy system is reflected in the physical-dense body, the “Tree of Life” is reflected, in particular, in the spine and the cardiovascular system.

The ancient Egyptians considered the physical heart to be the “seat of life.” During mummification, they originally left it in place, but later developed the custom of replacing it with a special stone.<sup>6</sup> The Life Thread, one of the three threads of the antahkarana (the rainbow bridge or silver cord from the overshadowing Spiritual Soul to the persona instrument) is anchored in the sino atrial node or pulse point of the heart. This thread brings the Life Aspect into the physical-dense body. The heart begins to beat when this thread connects to the heart, and it ceases to beat when this thread disconnects.

The Life Aspect flows out from the heart throughout the entire body, along the network of veins and arteries laid out (on subtle levels) by the etheric body.

Thus, the etheric body, as the Tree of Life, moves the First or Life Aspect down and out, exciting substance into organized, intelligent activity.

### The Tree of Knowledge

The tree of Knowledge or Wisdom is also a symbol of the etheric body, but as an instrument of the Third Aspect or Divine Intelligence. In this function, its physical-dense correspondents include the nervous system and the ductless glands. The ductless glands are the physical-dense correspondents of the chakras.

#### The Fruit of the Tree

The seven major chakras or centers are the “fruit” of the tree. Whether it is a “Tree of Knowledge” or a “Tree of Wisdom” depends on which center is the place of residence of the incarnate consciousness. If the consciousness identifies with its thoughts (i.e., “I am what I think”), then it dwells in one of the centers that specialize in processing mental energies. If the incarnate consciousness identifies with its emotional feelings (i.e., “I am what I feel”), then it dwells in one of the centers that specialize in processing emotional energies.

#### Knowledge of Good and Evil

Each center expresses a particular state of consciousness. Awareness of good and evil, for instance, is born in the third center, and it is at this stage of development that the dark pillar becomes the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. As we shall see in the following chapter, the function of the Tree changes as the consciousness grows and develops, and moves upward from one center or chakra to another.

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<sup>6</sup> The higher correspondents of the Tree of Life include the antahkarana (a.k.a. Silver Cord, or Rainbow Bridge, discussed in the chapter on the Temple of Solomon), and the sutratma (discussed in the chapter on the Temple of Ezekiel).

## The Choice

In our previous exercise we began the process of transforming the personality into an instrument of liberation of the Soul and at-one-ment with the divine. In this exercise we continue this process, and face a crisis of choice between the paths you will tread.

- ◆ Opening alignment:
  - Sit in a comfortable chair. Place *The Temple and The Word* in your lap or (if its weight is distracting) within easy reach.
  - Close your eyes and relax your physical body. Complete the relaxation with your consciousness focused in your head and endeavor to remain there throughout the projection.
- ◆ Review your progress thus far: Imagine yourself in the shadow of the wall, before the gate.
  - Knock, step into the courtyard, walk up to the Laver, and gaze inside. Calm your emotions by picturing them as the perfectly calm clear pool of water.
  - Remove your raiment and rub your body with salt.
  - Pour water over your head and shoulders.
  - Pick up your raiment and lurch over to the Altar.
  - Light the altar, burn your raiment, and clarify and focus your mind by concentrating on the flames.
  - Burn your raiment, walk to the Temple, and climb to the eleventh step.
  - Don your new raiment, including the robe, sandal, and knotted cord.
- ◆ Imagine yourself back on the eleventh step of the Temple, clothed in a robe, sandal, and knotted cord, and shadowed by the arch of the porch.
  - Lift your left foot, and step over the twelfth step and onto the porch. You are standing between the two columns, and you now see that there are three doors into the Temple.

The door on the left (formerly hidden behind the dark pillar) is shut, but the wear on and around the handle suggests regular use. In the center of the door, as part of its brass binding, is the relief of an ear of wheat.

The door on the right (formerly hidden behind the light pillar) is also shut, and shows extensive wear on and around the handle, suggesting heavy use. In the center of the door, as part of the brass binding, is the relief of a flail.<sup>7</sup>

The central door is shut and looks new built, as though it had never been opened. Set into the center of the door is a stylized, brass relief of a human eye.

Recognize that your next step is to choose between the doors, but that you do not know which to choose.

- Turn your inner gaze upward and aspire to your higher self or Soul.
- ◆ When that aspiration has reached its height, audibly state the seed-thought:
 

*“I invoke the Light of the Ancient Wisdom into my consciousness, and truth*

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<sup>7</sup> A “flail” is a traditional implement for threshing grain (beating the harvested grain to break the seeds from the chaff or coarse protective covering).

*is revealed to me.”*

Hold that thought for at least three minutes, then:

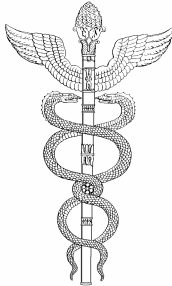
Imagine the Light of Wisdom shining into and through your physical-etheric body.

- Standing again on the porch, turn to the right and gaze at the light pillar, with the serpent crawling down. This is the column of descent, and its path leads to matter, not to liberation.
- Turn to the left and gaze at the dark pillar, with the serpent crawling up. This is the column of ascent, and its path promises escape from the form, but it does not lead to at-one-ment.
- Turn back to the central door, and gaze at the paving stones beneath it. Follow a line of stones, like a flat pillar, from under the center of the door to beneath your feet. This is the central column, which leads to both liberation and union.
- Beginning with your left foot, stride up to the central door.
- Take a deep breath, drop the image, and open your eyes.

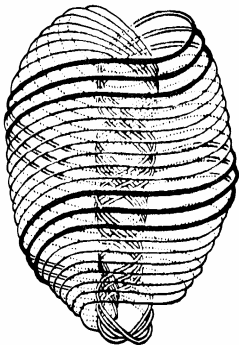
Continue to the next chapter.

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Caduceus



Primal Anu



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