

## Foreword

The ancient mysteries were and are those spiritual teachings that embody truth in symbolic ritual and allegorical tales. It has been said that the ageless wisdom embodied in these mysteries has always been available to humanity, in every time and place. For much of our long history the temples of the mysteries were the center of community life, and initiation into their rites and practices was openly available.

However, during the last age religious intolerance in western culture drove the mysteries underground. The path of spiritual initiation became furtive and secret, hidden from everyone but the elect. When the wisdom finally re-emerged, it was in a form that was acceptable to the times. In the West, that form was Freemasonry, whose lodges and rituals became the caretaker of the ancient mysteries. The spiritual teachings were there, but veiled in symbol and revealed through allegory.

Thus veiled, the ageless wisdom moved out into the world in a program of transformation. Lodges were established throughout the West, and the members were taken through rites of initiation that symbolized the ancient tale of spiritual growth and development.

Unfortunately, the intolerance of the times restricted the teaching and practice of the wisdom, even in the freemasonic Lodges or meeting halls. This led to a program to establish a “New Atlantis” in North America, a nation established by and based on the ancient mysteries. After centuries of secret effort, this new nation, founded on the principles of brotherhood, was founded by a group of Freemason’s

near the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Thus the United States of America was born.

With this success, the emphasis of the lodges slowly changed, and the meaning of the rituals was gradually forgotten. Many of the brethren remained ignorant of the subtle effects of the rituals, and the meaning behind the symbols, while learning the basic principles of brotherhood: liberty, equality, and charity. Nevertheless, the rites maintained their benevolent effect on both the brethren who practiced them and on the surrounding community.

Today there is a temple to the ancient mysteries in almost every town and city in North America, and every nation on earth, quietly hidden in plain sight. The vast majority of the members of those lodges do not understand their rituals, and consider Freemasonry a mere fraternal order, dedicated to charity and good works.

Unfortunately, in most of today's lodges, the ancient wisdom is not only forgotten, but maligned. Any suggestion of higher meaning is often treated as irrelevant and sometimes actively resisted.

With the passing of the old age, and the birth of the new, the time has come to restore the ageless wisdom to its proper place at the heart of community life. This enormous task would be nearly impossible without the network of existing Masonic Temples.

Even with that nucleus, it will still be incredibly difficult. The veils that formerly protected Freemasonry from ignorance and prejudice make it appear irrelevant to modern seekers, and the majority of the brethren are not receptive to change. Thus, the membership of Masonic lodges is dwindling, for few come to re-

place the old men who stand as perhaps the last remnant of the ancient brotherhood.

The mysteries must be restored, the veils raised aside, revealing the wisdom embodied within. Wholly seen and properly practiced, by men and women who understand the true work of the lodge, these mystery temples will take their place as a modern path, dedicated to the spiritual growth and development of its members, and service to humanity.

“In the beginning was The Word”

The ritual chamber of every Freemasonic Lodge represents Solomon’s Temple, and their rituals portray its construction. As we shall see, the symbol of the Temple veils a higher reality, the process of spiritual growth and development.

The “Word” of the title is the creative sound uttered by the One God in the beginning. This creative Word expresses Divine Intent, sets Substance in motion, and is the rightful inheritance of every human being. As children of the One Divine Parent, we share in that Divine Nature, and are co-creators within the One Life.

However, the Word of creativity is lost to us when we move into that creation, identify with it, and take on the limitations of a mind, emotions, and physical body. Knowledge of the Word is regained only as we recover our awareness of and identity as our true selves, the consciousness or Spiritual Soul.

This “Lost Word” is the great mystery of Freemasonry. The senior brethren of the order are sworn to seek it, but few truly know what they seek.

The few who understand the symbols know the nature of the Word, if not its

exact phonemes. Its identity lies hidden within the central legend of Freemasonry, the construction of the Temple of Solomon. This legend is an allegory, a symbolical tale that reveals truth through the language of symbol. If one knows what the Temple and the characters represent, then the veil is lifted and the Truth revealed.

However, Truth cannot be comprehended by the intellect alone, it must be experienced by the heart, recognized by the Soul, and given shape and form in the world of affairs. Only then, when it has been comprehended by every aspect of one's being, is it truly understood.

The following pages explain the meaning of the Legend of the Temple, and provide the means of experiencing that Truth for yourself through the inner creative ritual of the consciousness.

We will, of course, begin with The Legend.

## Finding Your Place and Ascending

The following exercise is the first step in a spiritual journey, and will help you discover where you are on the path. Please read and follow the indented instructions below:

- Close your eyes and try to sense where you live inside of your body, where you, the conscious thinking “I” reside within your physical form.
- Point to that place.

This is where you live *\*now\**. You have not always resided there, nor will you always continue to do so. As you progress on the spiritual path, your home in your body will change in reflection of that growth. Eventually you will be able to move your place of residence at will, changing your state of awareness as you do so.

- ◆ Having recognized *\*where\** you live, you can now move on, preparing to take the next step in your spiritual growth and development:
  - Imagine yourself standing alone and shivering in the cold shadow of a large white-marble wall, similar to the wall around a large castle. The sun is rising on the other side, and dawn’s light gleams white from the top of the wall and golden from the bronze-clad gates before you.
  - Step forward into the pale mist of your breath and knock on the gate. The sound disappears into the morning silence, the gates shudder, and you step back.
  - Golden light streams forth, bathing you in warmth as the portal opens. Stand

there a few moments, blind and blinking in the light from the East, and then take three steps past the gates, into the courtyard of the Temple of Solomon.

- Take a deep breath, drop the image, and open your eyes.

You have begun the journey to the Place of Light. This quest continues in the following pages, beginning with Chapter One, The Legend of the Temple.

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