



Nugget

Duality of the Pillars

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An exploration of the duality of the Pillars.

Summary

An exploration of the duality of the Pillars found at the Porchway of King Solomon's Temple.

Keywords

Second-Degree, Pillars, Solomon, Temple

The duality of the pillars

In Freemasonry there are a number of occasions where we have to deal with opposites. We enter on the mosaic flooring, which reminds us of good and evil, of joy and sadness and many other opposing emotions. We have to learn to balance them. As Freemasons we are expected to develop our characters, so that we can walk with serenity through life despite its extremes.

We see the point within a circle, bounded by two parallel lines representing Moses and Solomon; the laws of God and of Man. There may, on occasion, appear to be conflicting requirements between the two sets of laws, and we are taught to remain within the range of acceptable and laudable behaviours.

A similar duality is reflected in the pillars. The one represents temporal power: that of man and is named after a prince; the other represents the power of the Great Architect of the Universe and is named after a priest. We are also told that they represent the pillar of fire and cloud, which had two wonderful effects, assisting the Israelites to escape from the pursuing Egyptian army. In the darkness, the fire gave light; but in the day it gave protection from the pursuers. In our context, the one pillar enables you to move forward; the other protects you from being dragged back. Emblematically this represents leaving our past ways behind, and being able to see a way forward to a better future, despite the darkness that surrounds us.

Each pillar is surmounted by a Chapter, which is decorated by symbols of unity, peace and plenty and these in turn are surmounted by the two globes. One is terrestrial and is associated with the First-Degree; the other celestial and associated with the Second-Degree.

The Pillars were considered complete when the network or canopy was thrown over them. This is the act that 'conjoins' them and leads to the meaning of stability. It represents how we can find stability by balancing the conflicting forces of our earthly and spiritual lives.

##END##

Recommended use of Nuggets

Nuggets offer a short, simple and readily absorbed means of progressing Masonic knowledge and an easy way to introduce learning to Lodges and Chapters. It is hoped that they will become a regular feature of Lodge and Chapter meetings as well as a source for private-study.

Nuggets can be included as an item in the summons and read at most Lodge/Chapter meetings. They can be:

- Read by either a new or an experienced Mason with the minimum of preparation and practice; *though ideally, they need to be read a few times beforehand.*
- Themed with the meeting or activity.
- Used to initiate a discussion within a Lodge/Chapter, LOI/COI, or group.
- Read at home and shared as a topic for a future discussion.
- Used as a focus for an unplanned, informal discussion.

For further nuggets and other learning materials visit 'Solomon' at <http://solomon.ugle.org.uk>

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