



Nugget

Between the Pillars

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The association between the two Pillars from Solomon's Temple and the two Wardens.

Summary

A retrospect of 18th century Freemasonry and an exploration of the ritual associated with the two Pillars from Solomon's Temple, and its connection with the two Wardens.

Keywords

Second-Degree, Pillars, Wardens, Columns

Entry between the pillars

We are told, in the explanation of the Second-Degree Tracing Board, that the Pillars were formed hollow, *'the better to serve as Archives to Masonry, for therein were deposited the constitutional rolls'*. The Biblical accounts do not suggest that they were used for any practical purpose. To account for that, we probably need to accept that two stories were brought together. The sons of Lamech anticipated that the wrath of God would inflict fire or flood on the world. To protect the knowledge known to mankind, they constructed two pillars, one able to resist fire, the other to resist flood, in which the knowledge was inscribed. However, whilst acknowledging a possible origin for the story, we need to accept how it has come to us, as every element of the ritual has significance.

In the story of the Second-Degree. The pillars were placed at the entrance of King Solomon's Temple and anyone entering the building would have to pass between them. In a Freemason's Lodge in the early 18th century, you would have found the columns by the entrance to the Lodge. This format persisted in the Antients until the time of the Union in 1813.

They were represented by the two Wardens. The Junior Warden was associated with Boaz, and the Senior with Jachin. Emblematically, they carried models of these columns with them. Indeed, they still have their 'Columns of Office', presented to them on their appointment by the Master of the Lodge. The Wardens were within the room, at one time seated at the table around which the brethren sat and where the both labour and refreshment took place. At the festive board the Wardens are still both placed in the West, but in Lodge the Junior and Senior Wardens are, of course, placed respectively in the South and West.

When a candidate for initiation was brought into the Lodge, with the brethren seated at table, he would be taken around the outside. When he was taken around the outside of the Lodge, he arrived behind the Wardens, and had to knock on their shoulders to obtain their full attention and, in due course, be presented to the Right Worshipful Master. At this point he entered between the Pillars. As you know, the Pillars were formed hollow the better to serve as archives to Masonry, so he figuratively stood between the two places where masonic knowledge was stored.

We might reasonably assume that the first pillar is associated with the laws of men, concerning behaviour, and the second is concerned with the laws of the Great Architect of the Universe. It was firmly held that these could best be understood through knowledge of the natural world, which he had created.

With this knowledge the fellowcraft is enabled to climb the winding staircase and enter the middle-chamber to receive his well-earned reward.

##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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