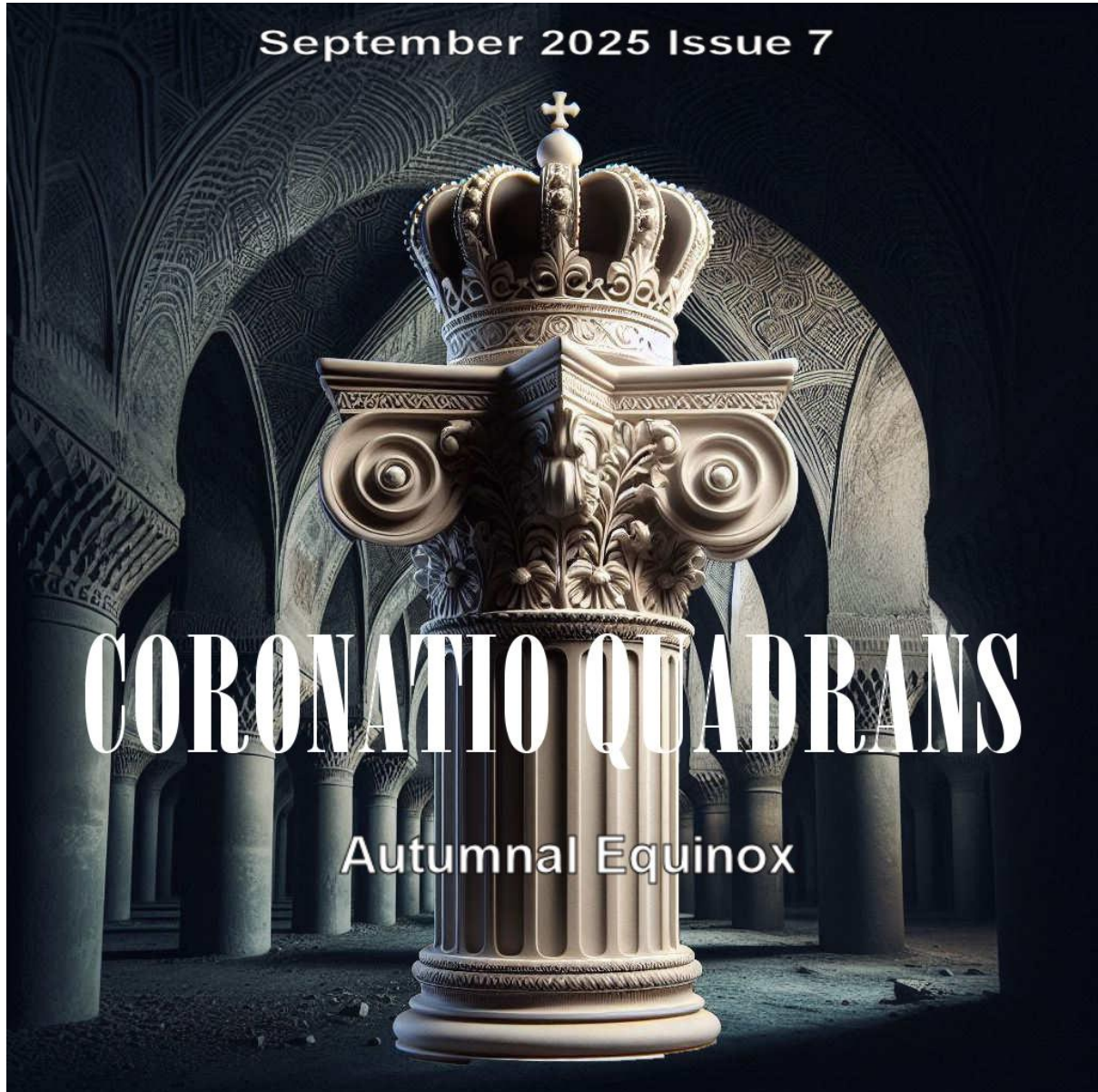


CORONATIO QUADRANS

September 2025



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A Few Words from the Editors

The editors have enjoyed a long summer of creativity; Both Dr Lomas and Dr Harrison have been busy putting together the final touches on Wilmshurst's third degree ritual book and the Installation ritual book, along with finding inspiration for other projects. Dr Harrison was holidaying in Wales, visiting various Holy Wells and following in Wilmshurst's footsteps, ultimately being inspired to write the paper that is presented in this edition of the journal, along with experiencing the positive aftermath of attending a live concert of Oasis at Heaton Park. This more modern event (complete with the wearing of bucket hat regalia) also inspired a short paper, to be seen in this edition.

And while we are talking about papers, we were notably short of articles from members of Coronation Lodge, though we were fortunate to get many sent from members of other lodges to make up for the shortfall. If you have joined an esoteric lodge that suggests you are interested in developing greater understanding of Freemasonry. An excellent way of increasing your own understanding of a subject is to write an essay about it, explaining interests you about the topic, why you think it is important and how it increases your understanding of our Craft. The recent articles by our WM reflecting on the objectives of the lodge are a good example of this. The discipline of writing will help you better understand the topic. To encourage more writing, CQ will be happy to consider articles on any Masonic topics for future issues.

Inspiration can be found anywhere, be it on holiday in Wales or at a concert, and as many eighteenth century Freemasons believed, such as Dr Jean Theophilus Desaguliers and Edward Jenner, the Divine is all around us, in all aspects of Nature, giving us all an opportunity to find Inspiration. It would be wonderful to receive more papers that present the inspiring moments of our members, so we look forward to hearing from you in future.

Since we started this journal we have promoted a quarterly anonymous writing challenge inviting all members of CQ, either Full or Associate, to contribute their own answer to a question set from the chair. As this quarter's question is highly focussed on the techniques which Wilmshurst recommended to guide individuals to the Centre (i.e. What specific techniques did Wilmshurst suggest, especially to Installed Masters, as methods for obtaining Awareness of the Centre?) we have decided to offer a more generalised form of this question to encourage the lodge members to engage with the challenge.

Our writing challenge for the coming quarter is "How useful, or inspirational, have you found working Wilmshurst's procedures for Opening and Closing the Lodge?. Do you feel that carrying the light from the Centre to the circumference and then joining in a Dark Silence is helping you appreciate the deeper aspects of our Craft?"

Do please write down your thoughts and send them to Bro Sec to submit for the challenge.

The CQ Editorial Cooperative

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Notes from The Secretary

Fraternal Greetings Brethren

Thank you to all of you for your continued support for Coronation Lodge. We continue to move forward with more members joining our merry bunch this month, welcome to all.

The Coronation Lodge Ritual, based on the Wilmshurst version from the Lodge of the Living Stones is moving on. The Opening / Closing is complete, and ritual books are ready for distribution. Please see me for your ritual book if you have not already received. Then they will be available for purchase for Associate Members, then any other interested brethren. The Third Degree is completed and then the Installation ritual will follow soon after. These Ritual books again will be available and please contact me for a copy if required. There are also plans for all the degrees from Wilmshurst's collection being worked upon. Hopefully by the end of this year we will have the Wilmhurst degrees Collection ready, thanks again to Robert Lomas and David Harrison.

Our plan for a Third-Degree ceremony has been put on hold whilst we decide the best way forward on this ritual and how to work it.

We will continue to give alms at the Festive Board and look for other ways to give to charitable causes but not in the lodge.

The Associate Membership of the Lodge, for brethren who live too far away from Runcorn, is progressing well with well over 45 members from all over the Globe. The Journal of the lodge is called; 'Coronatio Quadrans' is available all members and Associate Members via the OpenLodge portal. We actively encourage you to use the OpenLodge portal for both Coronation Lodge general business (summons, minutes, etc) but also, and perhaps more importantly, for use of the educational side, the Lectures, the Papers, the Discussion Board and the Writing Challenge, etc. The recent online lecture was a success and can be viewed on OpenLodge via a link on the front of the article. There is also a podcast of the question and answer session which can be downloaded.

The Coronation Lodge Writing Challenge paper, we encourage members both full and associate to put in a paper as set out on Masonic and Esoteric matters. These should be submitted to the Secretary before each lodge meeting and will be gratefully accepted, long or short.

Our home of Runcorn Masonic Hall has been very helpful, and we thank the hall for all their assistance and understanding. Barwise, the caterers, have increased the cost of a meal by £1 on all meals and £2.50 per head supplement for each fish ordered. Also, a £50 surcharge for late dining. This, is to pay for staff overtime and an attempt to prevent spoiled meals, so we will have to ensure we are at the Festive Board on time.....

We will continue to look for new and innovative ways to practice our Freemasonry within the Constitution, with the goal of Truth and the 'Return to the Centre'. Our next meeting on the 23rd September, close to the Autumn Equinox. we will have an interesting lecture from by Bro. Tobias Adams-Heighway entitled; 'Guardians of Subterranean Mysteries' and a short lecture by the WM entitled; 'Freemasonry and the Western Tradition'. We look forward to seeing you all and if you have any other interested brother who would like to visit and / or join us on the journey, feel free. Our mantra is: 'to get more Freemasonry into men'.

God Bless

John Karran

Steadfast Through the Storm: A Masonic Call to Endurance. - WBro John Karren

Worshipful Master, Wardens, and Brethren

There are moments in history when the world feels uncertain. We live in such a moment now. Conflict, violence, division, and despair seem to rise like floodwaters. Images that disturb the soul appear without warning. Voices of anger drown out voices of reason. It can feel overwhelming.

And yet, as Masons, we are taught to remain centred when all else is shifting. This is not the time for fear. It is the time for fortitude. It is the time to return to our working tools, to examine ourselves and to strengthen our minds, bodies, and souls.

The Storm Outside and the Stillness Within

Freemasonry does not promise a world without hardship. It teaches us how to endure it. The storm around us is not new. Every generation faces its own trials. What matters is how we respond. The world is loud. But the Lodge is quiet. That contrast matters. It reminds us that we are not called to match the chaos outside, but to bring order, peace, and moral clarity wherever we go. Silence, reflection, and careful thought are not weaknesses. They are sources of strength. And they are desperately needed.

Building Strength From the Inside Out

Endurance is not accidental. It must be cultivated. The Mason is not just made strong by ritual. He becomes strong through repetition, reflection, and real effort. When the world grows darker, we must make sure our inner lights grow brighter. That means maintaining physical health, mental clarity, and spiritual discipline. That means guarding the inputs of the mind, feeding it with truth and beauty, and avoiding the noise and poison that weakens the soul. That means exercising compassion without becoming naïve, and wisdom without becoming cynical. We cannot change the whole world. But we can hold the line where we stand.

That is enough.

The Spiritual Conflict Beneath the Surface

Much of what we see is not just material struggle. There is a deeper current, a spiritual one. Good and evil are not abstract concepts in Freemasonry. They are opposing forces we are taught to recognize and resist. The values of the Craft (brotherhood, truth, charity, humility, and moral discipline) are not just ideals. They are defences. They are tools for the inner war that rages quietly beneath the headlines. And while the world may not acknowledge this struggle, we know it exists. We feel it. We see its signs in the breakdown of trust, the erosion of virtue, and the confusion between right and wrong. We are not meant to despair.

We are meant to prepare.

Holding to the Light

When darkness increases, even a small light matters. We do not need to be loud. We need to be luminous. Let the world see Masons as men who act with calm, speak with care, and move with purpose. Let them see in us a quiet dignity, a steadfastness that cannot be shaken by news cycles or

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storms. Let our presence be felt. Not by force, but by example. To do that, we must tend the flame within.

We must stay close to our principles. We must reflect often, check our conduct, improve what needs improving, and never stop working the rough stone of self.

Brotherhood as a Fortress

The Lodge is not just a room. It is a sanctuary. And it is also a forge. We must lean on each other. When one Brother is weak, another must be strong. When one Brother loses hope, another must remind him why we endure. We were never meant to walk this path alone. The square teaches us equality. The compasses teach us balance. Together, they teach us how to lift one another when the burden grows heavy. Freemasonry is not a shield from pain. It is a place where pain is shared, where truth is spoken, and where strength is rebuilt.

A Simple Charge

The world may continue to tremble. But the foundation beneath your feet need not. If you have forgotten your working tools, return to them. If you have grown tired, rest, but do not give up the work. If you feel overwhelmed, do one small act of good. Then another.

You do not need to fix everything. You only need to remain upright. To speak when it is right. To be silent when it is wise. To act when it is needed. To love without condition. To correct your errors. To carry the light.

This is what it means to be a Mason in times like these.

Conclusion: Stand Steady, Build Quietly, Live Nobly

In seasons of uncertainty, the world does not need more noise.

It needs more examples. It needs more men who are honest, calm, faithful, and courageous - not with weapons, but with wisdom.

We cannot predict what tomorrow brings.

But we can meet it prepared. Stand steady.

Build quietly. Live nobly. And in doing so, help the world to heal.

So mote it be.

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A Message from the Worshipful Master

Brethren,

As the Sun enters Libra and light stands in sacred balance with darkness, we assemble not only to mark the turning of the autumnal season, but to partake in a meeting of especial significance.

This Equinox gathering invites us to look beyond the familiar landmarks of Craft Masonry and behold the wider currents from which our Fraternity draws. Tonight, we peer into the broader Western Mystery Tradition — that great stream of initiatic wisdom that courses through the Hermetic, Kabbalistic, Neoplatonic, and Rosicrucian schools, and finds its veiled expression within our rites, symbols, and working tools.

Let us meet, act, and part in the spirit of seekers — open to the Light that shines from both East and West, and mindful that Masonry is not an end in itself, but a gateway to deeper understanding.

S&F

WBro Dan Wilson

Worshipful Master

Coronation Lodge No. 2927

Questions from the Chair of Coronation Lodge - Bro. Dr Robert Lomas

A video of Robert reading this paper can be viewed by clicking on this link

https://youtu.be/_lwLxo-Lig8

This Quarter the Master's Question is: What specific techniques did Wilmhurst suggest, especially to Installed Masters, as methods for obtaining Awareness of the Centre?

This is really a two-part question. The first part concerns the nature of the lodge which Wilmhurst created to study the mystery of the Centre, the rituals he created to help that lodge teach development of awareness of the Centre and how its ritual practices were intended to work. I can then address the question of if he kept separate, certain information, which he only shared with a master who had followed his training program and whom he had personally installed in the Chair of the Lodge of Living Stones.

In a previous paper I outlined how WLW came to his view that there was a spiritual foundation to Freemasonry and how that this esoteric dimension of the Craft was related to a state of mind which he called Cosmic Consciousness and why he needed to create a special lodge to share this insight. (See CQ Issue 6 June 2025, p15-22) His was not an instantaneous insight and his journey to awareness involved his resignation from his mother lodge of Huddersfield 290 as it proved unable to satisfy the hunger for spiritual knowledge, that his Christian Faith inspired. He spent a year unattached. During that time he investigated Eastern Mysticism, writing a series of poems which were published, many years later, under the title of *The Way to the East*, composing an analysis of the spiritual teaching of the Bhagavad Gita, and writing essays about ways of attaining Cosmic Consciousness and on the conflict between Scientific and Religious ways of think (these essays were eventually published in The Annals of Psychical Science and The Occult Review.)

Have taken some time out he joined the Lodge of Harmony, where he met some men who took an interest in his "unorthodox" views on Masonry, and he was able to develop and expand in an atmosphere of keen but kindly criticism.

One such mason was the Worshipful Master of Harmony Lodge 275, WBro Frank Abbey, who described him at that time, "as being of a very studious and inquiring nature, always ready and anxious to discuss any aspect of the ritual and symbolism of the craft, with a ready wit and kindly, somewhat retiring, disposition".

He seems to have had a large acquaintanceship, but few close friends. But those who did know him well said "they loved him for his Puckish humour, and his readiness at all times to give of his scant leisure in the service of his fellowmen."

Having taken time to clarify his ideas, before he returned to Freemasonry, he rapidly progressed through the chair to provincial rank and became a much sought out lecturer on the Spiritual Dimension of Freemasonry. He became a regular contributor to the Occult Review and Quest Magazine. And became acquainted with J S Ward and who gave him full access to the papers of the late Mary Anne Atwood. She had previously published *A Suggestive Inquiry into the Hermetic Mystery*. I believe Wilmhurst was influenced by Atwood's work as means of understanding the hidden Masonic spiritual teachings and it encouraged him to develop the idea of a Masonic

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initiatory path to achieve awareness of the centre. He also became close friends with Mr Montague Powell who was a retired Naval officer who was took holy orders and became Chaplain to the Duke of Buccleuch. Montague encouraged Wilmshurst's interest in Egyptian Gnostic Christianity and gave him an early gnostic ring which portrays a Christian initiate's private mark or glyph as a symbol of this regenerative mystery. This ring is now worn by the master of Living Stones at the main meetings.

Wilmshurst developed his ideas over a series of lectures which he eventually brought together in book form and published as *The Meaning of Masonry*. Then, at the suggestion of various brethren, he set about founding a Lodge with the express purpose of studying "that teaching of the craft, which is hidden behind veils of allegory and symbolism". The search for "Truth, as it was thought of and known by the initiates of old" was to be its main purpose. As a result of that search, brotherly love and charity would take on new and fuller meanings. His efforts resulted in the founding and consecration, on December 16th, 1927, of The Lodge of Living Stones, No. 4957.

From that time, almost the whole of his spare time was devoted to the preparation of instructional papers for the Lodge and its Associates, who were scattered all over the world, and in private correspondence with Masons and non-Masons who wrote to him for advice and assistance. He employed no secretary, nor did he use a typewriter; everything was handwritten out in his small, neat, script.

Having set the scene, I would now like to explain the nature and purpose of the ritual system of instruction he developed. He said of the procedures: "There are two methods by which the superphysical world may be apprehended (I am careful not to say comprehended) by the human mind. – one method is relatively swift, immediate and self-convincing and is by the spontaneous development of spiritual consciousness in man; the other, which is slow, gradual, laborious and tantalising, is along a line of scientific research and intellectual investigation."

He devised just such a gradual and laborious process for those who did not have the good fortune to receive natural enlightenment. This plan involved five formal ritual books which, if worked, ensured that any joining member of Living Stones was properly prepared to become aware of the Centre before they reached the chair of the lodge. He also included a lodge paper which was intended to be read at each vernal equinox to make sure every candidate understood the importance of each office on the ladder to the chair, and the need for the lodge group mind to work in harmony and concord.

He intended his new lodge to be progressive, which is why he spent so much effort in writing these six papers. A joining member would be required to progress up the ladder of officers from Inner Guard to Worshipful Master, learning from each office as he progressed. This was to properly prepare him for the extended ceremony of Installation which Wilmshurst was forced to ask for special permission from UGLE to work. It involves more signs, working tools and complex floorwork, with fuller traditional information than is normally offered in the cut down Emulation Ceremony.

As well as the rituals of opening and closing, and installation, Wilmshurst also created rituals for demonstration ceremonies, one for each degree. He based them on the Workings of the Old Grand Lodge of York, which he studied as a young mason. They long predated London Masonry and, had deep roots in the Scottish Craft. His demonstration degree rituals incorporate a narrator who provides a spiritual explanation for each step in the ceremony. These demonstrations are too long to work in a single meeting and were intended to be worked over two consecutive meetings.

With this pattern he established a seasonal model of progression starting with the Installation in Dec, the Book of the Perfect Lodge in Mar, (to ensure that each newly promoted officer understood

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his role in creating the corporate spirit of the lodge) and then a two-part demonstration ritual to be worked over the other two formal meetings. It took three years of meetings to cover all three degrees.

The research and discussion functions of the lodge took place in separate monthly informal meetings, in the months the lodge did not formally meet. The four main formal meetings were utilised for the instruction of the officers, brethren and visitors about the deeper mysteries of the Craft. It took six years to progress to the chair, during which time a Candidate would have read out the meaning of each office at the March meeting and taken part in demonstration rituals of all three degree in two different offices, whilst listening to the explanatory narration, of each step. By the time a newly joined member reached the chair, he was equipped with a full knowledge of each degree and each office. In that way, he was properly prepared to fully appreciate the rich symbolism and deep meaning of the full Installation Ritual.

Sadly, this wonderful educational idea became diluted by later Masters of Living Stones, who failed to grasp its long term, and intentionally laborious, nature.

One of Wilmshurst's key principles was to use the opening and closing rituals of the lodge to concentrate the attention of the brethren, to produce a common focus for the group with the intention of forming a corporate mind to bring all brethren to a state of alert awareness.

There are three elements in his approach.

1. The Opening Rituals and Procedures to bring the lodge together to prepare it for working the ceremonies with maximum effect To achieve complete harmony of intention.
2. He suggests the use of a noonday prayer to strengthen the bonds of the group mind when the lodge cannot physically meet.

To work the noonday prayer, Brethren are asked to pause when the sun is at high meridian in Leeds. They are asked to imagine themselves in the lodge room and repeat quietly this collect.

Here, in the presence of the Great Architect and in fellowship with my Brother Masons, I offer myself as a living stone of a building raised to the service of God and the Craft.

May the power of the Highest overshadow and descend upon us! May Light illumine and Love unite us, that we may know ourselves one in God, and that from our unity there may go forth to all beings Light, Love, Peace!

3. He also used Dark Silences to strengthen the lodge's group mind.

Wilmshurst was acutely aware of the symbolic significance of experiencing darkness to appreciate light. To mark this, he introduced into the lodge ritual a special feature known as the Dark Silence. To work a Dark Silence the master announces it, says a few words about its focus of contemplation, e.g. 'let us consider the work we are about to undertake' or 'let us reflect on the work we have just undertaken'. The master then orders the lights to be extinguished slowly, so the lodge room is lit only by the flickering flamelets of the officer's candles, encircling the eternal flame at the centre of the lodge. This eternal flame is the source from which the light of the centre is spread to the periphery during the opening of the lodge.

In the enveloping darkness, the brethren sit in silence. Most practice breathing meditation, which often results in the lodge breathing in choral unison as the silence progresses. When the master judges the time right, he will knock to indicate the restoration of the lodge to light. At which point the junior deacon will slowly brighten the lodge room lighting.

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After the ritual working of the meeting, be it demonstration ceremony or lecture, the master will call for a second Dark Silence to give the brethren time and space to reflect on the recent events.

The first silence is held soon after the opening of the lodge to enable the brethren to prepare themselves to submerge their individual egos into a fully integrated lodge mind, able to carry out the work required. The second silence is carried out just before the lodge is closed to allow the brethren to reflect on what they have just achieved while working together.

My overall impression is that the dark silences are an extremely powerful way of bringing the lodge together to form a temporary group mind during its physical meetings. A few individuals have suggested that perhaps it would be helpful if the master explains the purpose of the dark silences when calling the first silence, so that visitors and newer brethren can benefit from the sharing of group breathing rhythms as a means of making brethren feel part of the group mind of the lodge.

Are there some Specific Techniques Wilmshurst suggests for Installed Masters, as ways of obtaining Awareness of the Centre.

In his paper *The Working Tools of an Old York Master*, Wilmshurst outlined a set of symbolic techniques and tools specifically intended for Installed Masters. These tools are not merely ceremonial; they are metaphysical instruments designed to guide the Master toward what Wilmshurst calls “Awareness of the Centre”—a state of spiritual alignment with the divine source of being.

Wilmshurst identifies three symbolic tools restricted to the Installed Master: the **Plumbline**, the **Trowel**, and the **Plan**. Each represents a distinct technique or principle for spiritual development and inner alignment.

1.The Plumbline– provides Vertical Alignment

The Plumbline symbolizes the vertical axis of spiritual consciousness. It is used to test the physical uprightness of a structure, but in its esoteric sense, it represents the soul’s alignment with the divine. (upright signifying purity of action and conscience).

Wilmshurst suggests that the Master perceives his own soul as the weight on a “silver cord” descending directly from the fingers of the Almighty. This vertical awareness is the first step toward centring oneself in divine truth. The Plumbline thus becomes a technique for introspection, moral rectitude, and meditative communion with higher spiritual forces.

2.The Trowel– Horizontal Integration

The Trowel is used to spread the cement of love and unity among the Brethren. Symbolically, it represents the horizontal axis of human relationships and emotional intelligence. Wilmshurst emphasizes that the Master must become a “burning centre of love,” radiating unity and harmony. This tool teaches the Master to cultivate compassion, empathy, and group cohesion — qualities essential for building a spiritual temple of humanity. The act of spreading love is not passive; it is an active technique for dissolving ego and fostering collective awareness.

3.The Plan– The Divine Blueprint

The Plan is the most sacred of the three tools. It represents the divine blueprint for the evolution of humanity and the cosmos. Wilmshurst describes it as a symbolical map entrusted only to those spiritually prepared to understand and execute it. Awareness of the Plan requires deep meditation,

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spiritual sensitivity, and a willingness to collaborate with divine forces. It is the culmination of Masonic labour—the final revelation that floods the intelligence of the aspirant with purpose and direction. Although the newly installed master is shown the plan Wilmshurst had prepared, during the ceremony, he is not allowed to securitise it, during the ceremony. Wilmshurst would provide individual verbal instruction on the interpretation of the Plan and such annotated copies of his plan, which WBro Douglas Inglesent discovered among his papers, are clearly marked, ‘Not to be Retained.’

Wilmshurst’s spiral path to the centre is graphically symbolic, but in the early twenty-first century one of the Associates of Living Stones, WBro Martin Jackson, produced a beautiful pictorial interpretation of that Plan which he called The Tracing Board of the Centre. His intention was to create a Tracing Board to be displayed during the inner workings of the Installation Ceremony.

In his lodge papers, Wilmshurst notes that the vertical Plumline and the horizontal motion of the Trowel form a Cross, that is a symbol of profound esoteric significance. It represents the central intersection of the spiritual and material, the divine and the human.

The Master, by embodying both axes, strive to become a “living cross”—a synthesis of opposites and a manifestation of the Centre. This philosophical conception is rooted in ancient mystery traditions and predates Christianity. To “take up one’s Cross,” Wilmshurst argues, is to engage in the Great Work: the resolution of duality and the realization of unity.

Wilmshurst insists that mastery of these tools is progressive. You must first internalize the lessons of the First and Second Degrees—objective conduct and mental discipline—before ascending to the spiritual insights of the Third Degree and the Installed Master. The tools are not static symbols but dynamic processes for inner transformation. They guide an aspirant from outer ritual to inner realization, from symbolic gesture to genuine Awareness of the Centre.

Wilmshurst’s plan to prepare joining members by a progressive ladder to the chair, offers a profound spiritual methodology. Through the Plumline, the Trowel, and the Plan, the WM is invited to align vertically with the divine, integrate horizontally with humanity, and participate consciously in the unfolding of the cosmic blueprint.

These techniques are not just symbolic; they are practical paths to enlightenment, designed to awaken the soul to its central purpose and divine origin. In this way, Wilmshurst says that Freemasonry is more than a system of ethics or fraternity, it a sacred science of the soul.

Coronation Lodge is working towards using Wilmshurst’s ideas to provide a lodge of esoteric inspiration for questers after Masonic Truth by producing modern versions of his rituals, which capture the essence of the teaching in a way which appeals to modern seekers of the Truth.

The curation, revision and editing of Wilmshurst’s original rituals has been undertaken by Drs Robert Lomas and David Harrison, and transliterated in five booklets, creating modern editions of Wilmshurst’s original conception. They have been privately published by a local printer in Huddersfield, whose printing works is only a few hundred yards away from the site of Wilmshurst’s original Solicitor’s Office.

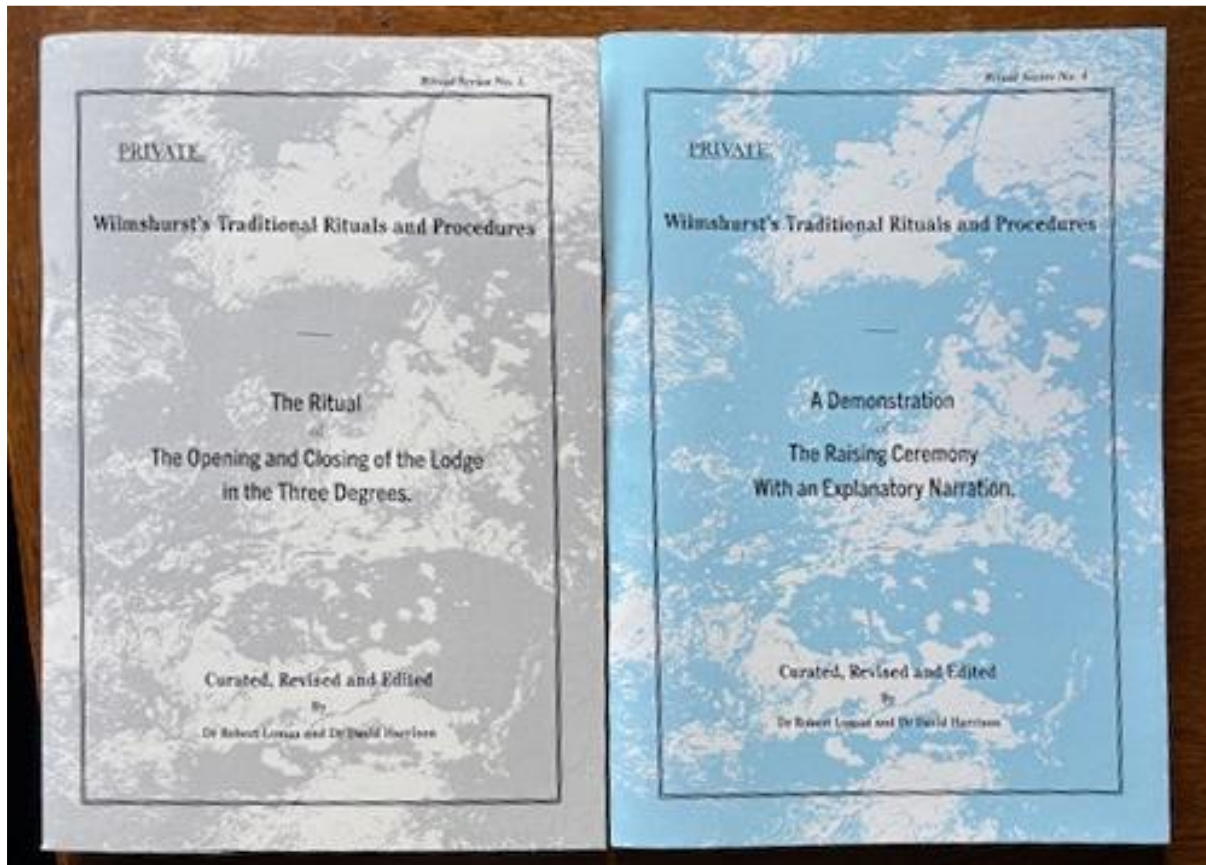
In an earlier meeting, Dr Lomas presented personal copies of the opening and closing rituals for all full members of the lodge, as these rituals form the most distinct part of Wilmshurst’s method of creating a group mind to lift the consciousness of the members. (If you have haven’t received yours then get in touch with Bro Sec) Associate members, visiting brethren and any other interested

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Masons can purchase copies (with profits going support the lodge) from Bro Secretary. (Contact John Karran karranjohn@hotmail.com)

Dr Harrison and I are currently working on the Installation Ceremony, to be followed by the Explanatory Demonstration rituals of the First and Second degree, with the aim of making them all available in time for the centenary of the Wilmshurst' founding of the lodge of Living Stones.

Currently the Opening and Closing, and the Demonstration of the Third Degree are available from Bro Sec.



Metaphysical Meditations of W.L. Wilmshurst: Holy Wells, Sacred Stones and the Journey to the Divine - W.Bro Dr David Harrison

In his work *Contemplations: Being Studies in Christian Mysticism*, esoteric Freemason W.L. Wilmshurst attempted to delve into early Celtic Christian traditions, the work containing a rather insightful chapter on the Holy Well of St. Winefride in Hollywell in North Wales. The work offered other ideas as he discussed the importance of sacred stones and how these Holy Wells held a certain mystical resonance that attracted pilgrims and seekers of philosophical wisdom like Wilmshurst.¹

During the 1920s, Wilmshurst spent some of his summer holidays hiking in North Wales, visiting early Christian sites, and as he wandered in a relatively still wild Wales, he forged ideas that filtered into his views of esoteric Freemasonry. Wilmshurst was very much interested in experiences of Cosmic Consciousness, the experience of being one with the Divine,² and we know that the earlier Occult Revivalist John Yarker had experienced this sense of oneness with Divinity through smoking marijuana.³ Yarker had also examined early Christian Mysticism and certain Eastern mystery traditions in his work *Arcane Schools*, where he linked certain hidden mystery schools with modern Freemasonry. Wilmshurst however, was slightly more cautious in his discussions, though he was certainly extremely interested in the similar Oriental themes that had been presented by earlier Occult Revivalists such as Yarker and Kenneth Mackenzie. This sense of Orientalism in Wilmshurst's work can be seen in his book *The Chief Scripture Of India: (the Bhagavad Gita) And Its Relation To Present Events*, and even in his commentary of St. Winefride's Well, in which he likens the sacred waters to the Ganges.⁴



St Winefrides' Well

His awareness of the East resurfaces when Wilmshurst discusses the sacred stone of St. Beuno, which lies in the waters of St. Winefride's Well and is the stone that pilgrims kneel upon when they have entered the water by the steps. Wilmshurst discusses the stone at Mecca, and the stone that Jacob lay his head upon when he dreamed of the ladder to Heaven. Wales has its fair share of sacred stones; with stone circles such as the 'Druids Circle' above Penmaenmawr and various standing stones, however, Wilmshurst emphasises the Christian importance of sacred stones, reminding the reader "of that rock" upon which, it is recorded, "I will

¹ W.L. Wilmshurst, 'St. Winifride's Well and Legend', from *Contemplations: Being Studies in Christian Mysticism*, (1928), in *Coronatio Quadrans*, Issue 4, (Winter Solstice, 2024), pp.47-58. See also Robert Lomas, 'A Context for WLW's thoughts about Holy Wells, the Pilgrimage of Winefrede's Cloak and the Plumb Line', in *Coronatio Quadrans*, Issue 4, (Winter Solstice, 2024), pp.58-65.

² David Harrison, 'The Masonic Pathway to Cosmic Consciousness', *Scriptorium*, Anul II, Nr.2, (Bucuresti, 2022), pp.295-303.

³ See David Harrison, *The Life and Death of John Yarker*, (St. Neots: Lewis Masonic, 2024), p.82.

⁴ Wilmshurst, 'St. Winifride's Well and Legend', from *Contemplations*, in *Coronatio Quadrans*, Issue 4, p.52.

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build my Church,” and to which St Paul alludes in saying, “And that rock was Christ.” Wilmshurst also reminds us here of the philosophical stone of the alchemists, and it is interesting to note that when Wilmshurst puts forward the legend of the stone that the foot of Jacob’s ladder rested upon, he also indicates that it is reputedly the same stone in the coronation-chair at Westminster, a stone that emanates power and strength.⁵ This same legend is discussed by Kenneth Mackenzie when describing the Cubical Stone (which can be found in some Rites of Freemasonry) in his *Royal Masonic Cyclopaedia*.⁶

Holy wells throughout Wales and in parts of England were connected to various early Christian saints such as St. Winefride and St. Trillo, who had found God through prayer and meditation, and in the case of St. Winefride, had, according to legend, experienced a resurrection of sorts. St. Oswald, an early seventh century King of Northumbria, was said to have experienced God before the Battle of Heavenfield in 633/4 AD, constructing a wooden cross on the battlefield, which inspired him to win the battle, where he faced overwhelming odds. He was responsible for spreading Christianity in Northumbria, and after his death at the Battle of Maserfield in 642, a cult developed around Oswald and a number of Holy Wells bore his name, which like the many Holy Wells in Wales, became renowned for the supposed healing properties of the waters.



St Trillo's Well

As Christian sites, these wells flourished during the medieval period as pilgrims visited the waters for healing or for blessings, though some were undoubtedly in use during the pre-Christian era, the votive offerings made at the various wells being a remnant of the older pre-Christian beliefs. An example of this are the tablets found in the King's Spring at Bath, with written curses etched onto them, allowing us to see how wells and springs were seen as portals into the Otherworld, and it was believed that messages from the living could reach certain Deities through these portals.⁷ However, Wilmshurst attempted to delve into the more Christian aspects of these sites, and concluded that due to the centuries of prayer and meditation that had occurred at these sites, there was a positive egregore that helped people's desires:

'The psychic forces generated in a shrine like this by the intense yearnings, the faith, and the aspirations of the troops of our afflicted brethren who for fourteen centuries have been visiting it in quest of life and healing, are not, be assured, utterly lost or wasted energies. The atmosphere of the place is charged with them. They have penetrated its walls and have soaked into its ancient stones

⁵ Ibid., p.55.

⁶ See Kenneth Mackenzie, *The Royal Masonic Cyclopaedia*, (Worcester: The Aquarian Press, 1987), pp.142-143. Wilmshurst uses the same description in part here as per Mackenzie's description.

⁷ Eleri H. Cousins, 'Votive Objects and Ritual Practice at the King's Spring at Bath', *Theoretical Roman Archaeology Journal*, (April 2014), pp.52-64. See also Sheppard Frere, *Britannia: A History of Roman Britain*, (London: Pimlico, 1992), p.318. Frere discusses Sulis Minerva at Bath, a Celtic water goddess that was assimilated with Minerva.

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until the accumulated force of that “effectual fervent prayer” which “availeth much” has induced conditions that, reacting upon certain persons chancing to be en rapport [in agreement] with, and susceptible to, the influence of this particular magnetic field, suffice to produce palpable physical effects in correspondence with the aspirant’s desires.”⁸



St Seirol's Well

In short, Wilmshurst believed that the ancient stones that surrounded these Holy Wells had been charged with the feelings of people over the centuries with their own psychic forces and wishes of healing. This belief of stones resonating a power, is not dissimilar to what Wilmshurst referred to as the living stones within Freemasonry. Indeed, as Wilmshurst puts it ‘*the Square of bodily form which it will be his task to work into due shape and make meet as a living stone for the Cosmic Temple*’, the Mason becoming a metaphorical living stone that will be a positive and strong part of society.⁹ The initiate, during the first degree ceremony, is placed in the north-east corner of the lodge, and is charged ‘*to make his present position the basis of renewed spiritual activity and to regard his personality as a “foundation-stone”*’. The Mason is also taught to find the centre, to find that divine spark within us, thus, for Wilmshurst, the metaphorical living stones held the power of God.¹⁰

These Holy Wells are indeed places of peace and harmony, and one cannot help but meditate and feel that peace. They are ancient places that are close to God, and places that reputedly manifest the Divine Will. For Truth Seekers of philosophical wisdom like Wilmshurst, they were places that held sacred healing waters and stones that resonated power.

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⁸ Wilmshurst, ‘St. Winifride’s Well and Legend’, from *Contemplations*, in *Coronatio Quadrans*, Issue 4, p.57.

⁹ See W.L. Wilmshurst, *The Ceremony of Initiation: Analysis and Commentary*, (London: J.M. Watkins).

¹⁰ See Harrison, *Life and Death of John Yarker*, pp.130-131. Yarker in his magnum opus *Arcane Schools*, uses the term ‘living stones’, as a spiritual development.

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Egregores and Memories; Oasis at Heaton Park in the Summer of 25 -W.Bro Dr David Harrison

One of the highlights for me this summer was watching Oasis from 'Gallagher Hill' at Heaton Park in July. ¹ A beautiful balmy evening, with 80,000 inside the walled off concert, and an estimated 20,000 outside, on the hill and crowded around the pubs on the Bury Old Road that runs along part of the park. It was a fantastic crowd, as the Oasis fans savoured every moment of the gig.



Indeed, it was a rather spiritual moment; the crowd singing every lyric to every song, some grown men had tears in their eyes, and it's safe to say there was a euphoric atmosphere - a coming together of thousands of people. This sense of togetherness on such a large scale is rare these days; however, we still see it in football matches, in places of religion and of course, within Freemasonry. According to some Esotericists and Occultists, this sense of togetherness at these events creates an egregore; a thought-form or entity that is believed to be created and sustained by the collective thoughts and emotions of the group of people involved. An egregore can of course be positive or negative, depending on the nature of the group's shared consciousness, but in this case, it was wholly positive. ²

¹ The hill is actually known as Hill 60 in honour of the tens of thousands of Manchester men who were killed and injured during the First World War.

² For an interesting definition of 'egregore', see Andrew Massey, 'Editorial: A decade of continuity, change and egregores', *Public Money & Management*, Volume 43, Issue 8, (2023), pp.769-770.

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The sense of Brotherhood and spiritual essence is something that I have felt during certain Lodge meetings, and in some ceremonies in certain esoteric Orders I am involved in. The bonding, the sharing of an experience and the breaking of bread together at the end of the evening is all part of the event. Add to the mixture the spiritual and esoteric aspect, and you have something uniquely special, even sacred.

These shared moments seem more special than they were before; perhaps after Covid and with a dissatisfaction with the political and social problems we face, these moments become highly valued. We need these moments even more during these uncertain times; the Brotherhood, the shared moments of togetherness, and that positive collective emotion, to bond us together and give us hope. Just imagine the positive progress we could all achieve in the world if we all shared in this feeling together.

Meanwhile, on 'Gallagher Hill', the memory of those gigs at Heaton Park will live forever... ³

³ Heaton Park was also the Childhood haunt of our co-editor Dr Robert Lomas, who lived just over the wall from the park in his formative years. He was also a frequent visitor to the Ostrich Pub on the Bury Old Road facing the park, which, on the evening of my visit to Gallagher Hill, was full of ticketless Oasis fans who were just happy to listen to the concert.

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Cosmic Consciousness – a Masonic Orientation - V.W.Bro. Gord Echlin

W.M. Mississippi Lodge No. 147, Grand Lodge of Canada in the Province of
Ontario

1st Principal, Sanhedrin Chapter No. 114, Grand Chapter of Canada in the
Province of Ontario

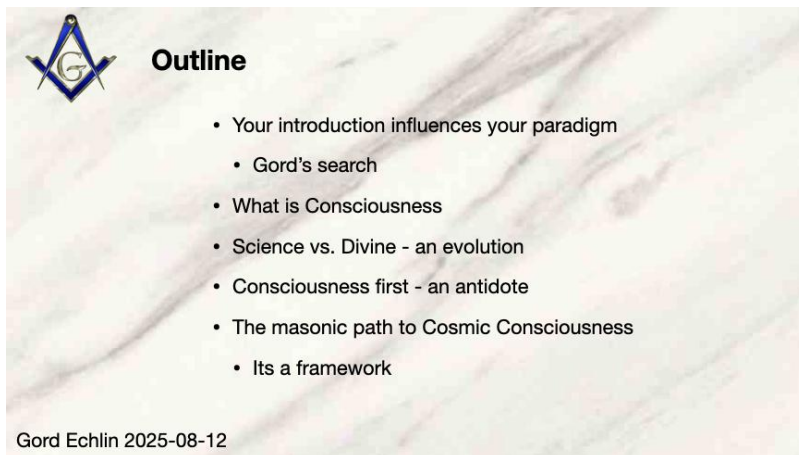
Here is a video link to this presentation <https://youtu.be/vw9nDXBmOJQ>

A podcast of the Q&A can be downloaded from the CQ Portal

Introduction

Good afternoon, Brethren. Thank you, Dr. Lomas, for the invitation to present to the associates of Coronati Lodge 2927 about Cosmic Consciousness.

This presentation is something of a travel log of my own journey with respect to the topic and to Freemasonry. I'm not going to pretend to be an expert on anything today ... my purpose is to unfold why I think this is one of the most important topics IN Freemasonry, and that pursuit of understanding Cosmic Consciousness is in fact the real underlying purpose of Freemasonry. I will try to do so by relating how my participation in Freemasonry was predicated on my search for Cosmic Consciousness. As a quick aside, when I say Cosmic Consciousness I am generally referring to it as meaning capital T Truth, and the fundamental nature of reality that we experience every day.



Outline

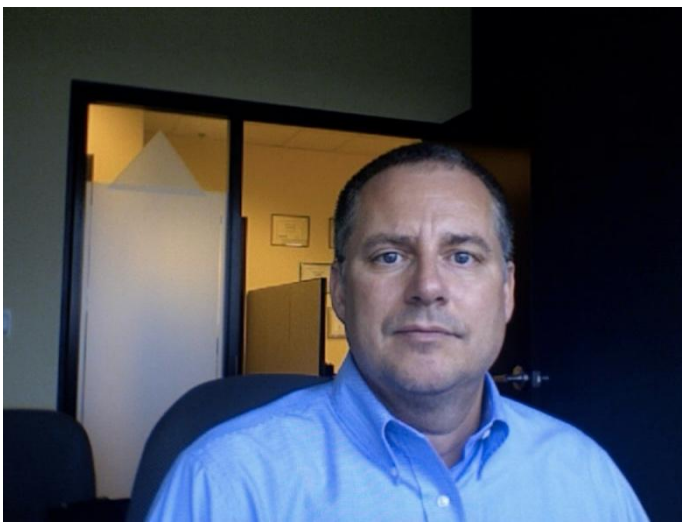
- Your introduction influences your paradigm
 - Gord's search
- What is Consciousness
- Science vs. Divine - an evolution
- Consciousness first - an antidote
- The masonic path to Cosmic Consciousness
 - Its a framework

Gord Echlin 2025-08-12

I'll start out discussing how your own experience of freemasonry may be coloured by how you were introduced to it, with my introduction as an example. Then we'll discuss Consciousness a little bit, and the tension between the traditional, old school model and the newer scientific view.

Next we'll discuss what I regard as the path to relieving

the tension and solving contradictions, and finally I will discuss the masonic framework as a path to enlightenment



Gord's Journey – Your Introduction influences your paradigm

This search is in fact one of the principal pursuits of my life (when I get the

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opportunity to pull myself away from the materialistic delusions that preoccupy most of our lives - which I will admit I have done poorly lately. Perhaps after this presentation you might feel the same about Freemasonry and Cosmic Consciousness, and I may have given you some nice bread crumbs to follow for more education.

Indeed, the pursuit of the concept of Cosmic Consciousness directly caused me to eventually join Freemasonry and deeply coloured how I view it, perhaps differently from many freemasons who came into it from a different perspective. To relate that story, I need to go back to 1996, where a couple of events happened. Please bear with me, I do think it is a somewhat germane background to the topic.

The first event was a very personal experience that set me off in search of Capital T Truth, to seek a personal understanding of the meaning of existence. It was a fairly mundane thing, but perhaps something that many people may experience today in our largely secular and material-centric society. I was 36 years old, and I was relatively successful in my career at that point, having transitioned from technical engineering and marketing roles, to a job as Assistant Vice President in the Partnering department of a substantive international telecommunications company, Newbridge Networks Corporation (another aside, for those who don't know, Newbridge was a very welsh-centric Canadian company with European headquarters in Newport just outside of Cardiff). I had a great job, great salary, great family, but my life was entirely work-centric. I gave scarcely a thought to religion or spirituality, or the broader search for the nature of reality that drives a great percentage of our scientific community today.

I was sitting at my desk, filling in my expense report for an international trip that I had just completed to the UK. It's a bit of a tedious job doing expense reports. All of a sudden, a thought exploded in my mind, completely unbidden and completely orthogonal to what I was doing. "What if when I die, there is nothing. Total non-existence." This thought stopped me in my tracks, and made me sit back and think about it for perhaps up to a half hour before I could go back to what I was doing. I was completely shaken by the thought. I had never ever addressed the concept before with any kind of focus, always passing it off subconsciously with an unexplored, unverifiable faith that "there was going to be something". Heaven, Hell, Valhalla, Reincarnation, Nirvana. I had no idea. Something. Usually, that was enough for me to pass on and continue my life. But this immediate and unbidden thought at that moment filled me with a very uncharacteristic, sustained dread, which I could not shake.

Almost immediately I went to my Vice President, who I had known for about a decade and was very comfortable with, to discuss it. I knew that he was a committed Buddhist who had gone on meditation retreats in Thailand, was a homeopathy practitioner and that he could have some advice for me. The contrast between his job as vice president of corporate business development for a telecommunications firm and his somewhat unconventional personal interests made it clear to me that he had also had "some thoughts". After a good discussion and encouragement from him, I set out on the path of exploring Buddhism for answers. I read extensively for the next 10 years on the subject and do continue that when I get an opportunity. Succinctly, my objective became to be enlightened, to be "one with the universe", which was natural because that is the single overriding goal of Buddhist philosophy. The prescriptive path to that in Buddhism is to shed the daily obsession of the egoic personal mind to become more aware of the fundamental unified egoless existence, to the maximum degree possible. That state is enlightenment or Nirvana. The primary tool for that path in most religions is meditation. In Christianity, this can often be thought of as prayer, but there are of course formal meditation practices as well, as there are in any religious pursuit. So a lot of

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effort was placed on the mechanics of meditation, with the goal of being able to rest in a place where the personal ego was for all intents and purposes erased, or more directly, silent.



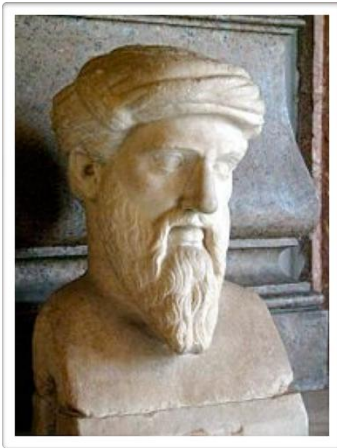
A surprising, for me, suggestion for this formula was that the best way to stay on track was to actively belong to a group of like-minded seekers that could support each other in the journey. In Buddhism that is called a Sangha. Meditation usually is an individual practice, but is often performed in a group, with alignment methods such as chanting, bell ringing, etc. This brings the group onto the same wavelength, if you will, helping to pull

together. Such alignment among multiple beings intuitively suggests transpersonal effects. Besides support in proper meditation practice, the purpose of the Sangha is to help fill one's everyday life with the practice of mindful awareness that the world you live in and see is not ultimate reality or capital T Truth.

My ongoing business and familial pursuits weren't conducive to joining a Buddhist Sangha, so I ignored that particular exhortation, as I continued my meditative "practice".



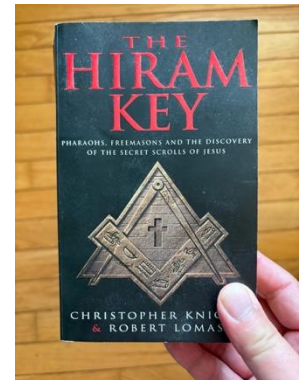
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But before I move on from this slide, I will return to the inset picture, which is of Pythagoras, heavily celebrated and influential in Freemasonry. Pythagoras, one of Freemasonry's fundamental influences, was a contemporary of the Israelites in their Babylonian captivity. Indeed, during this period, he is rumored to have visited India, which was not unimaginably distant from a starting point in Persia or Babylon. Since this was also the period during which it is believed that Siddhartha Gautama, THE Buddha, lived and taught in India, it is possible that two such luminaries were aware of each other, and quite possibly even met. Pythagoras' school later espoused Buddhist/Hindu concepts such as vegetarianism and transmigration of the soul towards ultimate perfection.

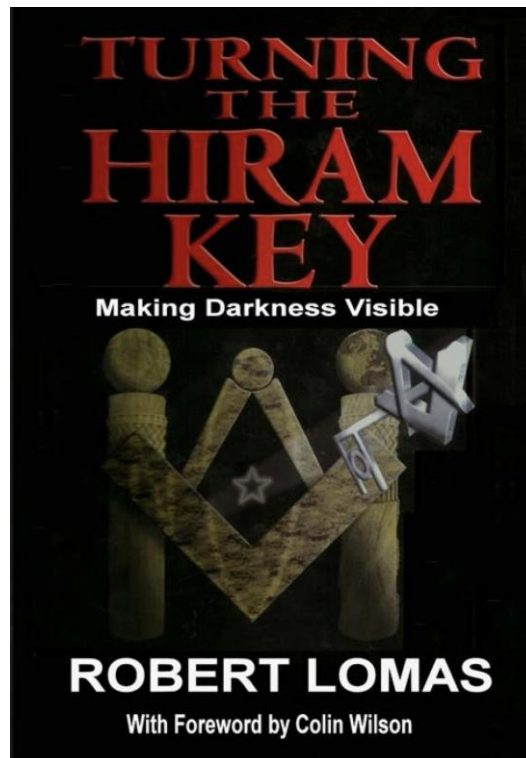
Strangely, the other event that happened in 1996 happened on the trip that I was filling in the expense report for. I was in Heathrow airport, in a book store (probably WH Smiths), and I picked up a hard-cover book on display in the new title's section.

It was entitled "The Hiram Key" which meant nothing to me, but I noted on the subtitle that it was about Freemasonry, which also meant very little to me in those days, although my Uncle and my Grandfather were both Freemasons, and I knew that my neighbour of about 8 years was one as well. So, after looking it, for some reason I decided to buy it for my neighbour as a gift. The book purported to reveal hitherto undisclosed information about Freemasonry and western civilization, and I was interested, but although I knew little about Freemasonry, the one thing I had heard was that it was a secret society and that characterization raised some deep unease in me ... as if I would be caught reading it and assassinated ... so I did not crack the book open and gave it immediately to my neighbour on landing. He must have thought I was a nut. Naturally He became my sponsor in Freemasonry later on.



Years later, I started my own company and my principal partner, also a bit of a seeker, asked me if I knew anything about Freemasonry. I said I did not, but that my uncle and grandfather were Freemasons. The conversation lasted long enough for me to decide that I should know a little bit more about it. By then I considered myself to be primarily an adherent to buddhism as my recipe for pursuing Truth, but my interest was a little piqued. I'm not sure why, because there really was not much in my then acquaintance with the topic that should suggest it was an avenue I could pursue for my search. The next step was to buy that Hiram Key book for myself (the only book I knew about Freemasonry). I read it, then I bought some more Lomas/Knight books: The Second Messiah, the Book of Hiram ... and finally I hit upon something that really impressed me:

"Turning the Hiram Key". Now I do have to admit that I read "Turning the Hiram Key" before I was initiated or even applied to join Freemasonry. It is in fact the book that convinced me to join Freemasonry.



“Turning the Hiram Key”, convinced me that Freemasonry was the western equivalent of the Buddhist middle way to find enlightenment. Balancing science and spirituality in a non-sectarian way, with the option to go as deep as you want. Freemasonry also had the advantage of being very western in nature, with Lodges, the equivalent of the Buddhist Sangha, in almost every city, town and village in Europe, North America and in fact much of the world. So, when I left the company I started, I joined Freemasonry in 2006. To be clear, I only joined because I believed that it was an equivalent spiritual practice to eastern philosophies such as Buddhism and Advita Vedanta Hinduism.

So, I’ve made a bit of a big statement here. Beyond the superficial, social aspects of a lodge (which are not unimportant I might add), beyond the historical curiosity of Freemasonry and its interaction with civil society, I am saying that Freemasonry is a methodical, initiatic framework to achieve enlightenment, or knowledge of and unity with Cosmic Consciousness. In fact, I am saying that for the people who formulated our rituals and customs, this was always the primary goal of Freemasonry. I say this with such emphasis because I think that is something that is potentially lost on people who don’t join from the perspective of being seekers, or lost even on masonic leadership, who make changes in our rituals and teaching that are intended to make things more palatable to the general public and less esoteric. If you don’t keep the original intent of enlightenment in the forefront of your mind in every masonic meeting, you are in danger of losing sight of it yourselves, and succumbing to the apron steeple-chase for outward appearances rather than internal development.

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Cosmic Consciousness – It Exists

So, what is this Cosmic Consciousness thing and why am I on about it and Freemasonry? Although I wasn't at David Harrison's presentation, I think I have a pretty good idea of what he said having read his paper on Cosmic Consciousness and Freemasonry, and I am quite aware of Wilmschurst's position on it. The same as mine. There is Cosmic Consciousness, and it is evidenced as reported by historical experiences in literature; a primordial, egoless experience of universal transcendence and connectedness. And of course, there is the considerable reporting of eastern philosophy. But how can it relate to our ordinary state of being? To set out to determine that, we have to contrast it with straight up personal consciousness. Through that discussion, we can start to see some of the hurdles we have even starting to approach understanding Cosmic Consciousness.

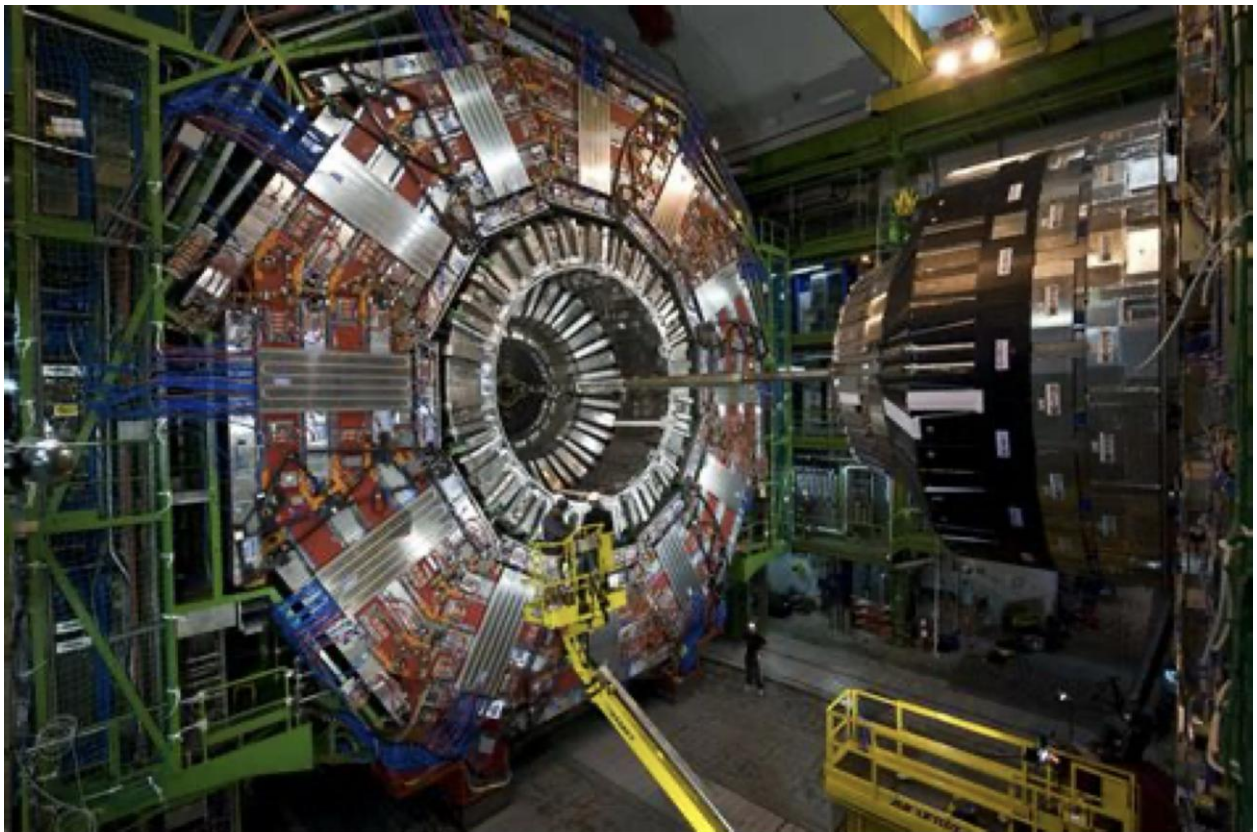


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Personal Consciousness 101 – The materialist

Humanity has always pursued higher knowledge of ourselves and the world. Without sufficient knowledge of the laws of nature and physics, we historically and naturally tended to ascribe the origin of all phenomena to higher powered supernatural beings, ultimately resulting in religious belief. In this world view, consciousness is more or less taken as granted and is in fact a gift of external deities or deity. As our relationships with each other on a daily basis are basically dualistic in perspective, ... there is you and there is me, separate ... the general relationship with these deities has often been coloured by this dualistic language, God created me and God and I are separate, with me being subject to his will.

As we have observed and learned more about the behaviour of the material world through the scientific method, the momentum of the basis of our explanation of universal origin and reality is moving from religions of deity to the “religion of science” (and I don’t mean that disrespectfully). This shift is accelerating with the success of the scientific model of the universe, undermining to an extent the position of spirituality as the centre of humanity’s life. As science has proven to be such a good student of the behaviour of the universe, as per the intent, the arc of truth (small t) in rational society is that everything can be explained by the particle physics model of the world. This progressive erosion of the “take it for granted” divine emanation model has led to the necessary step of explaining the fundamental problem of how consciousness arises, rather than seeing it as a divine spark or gift.



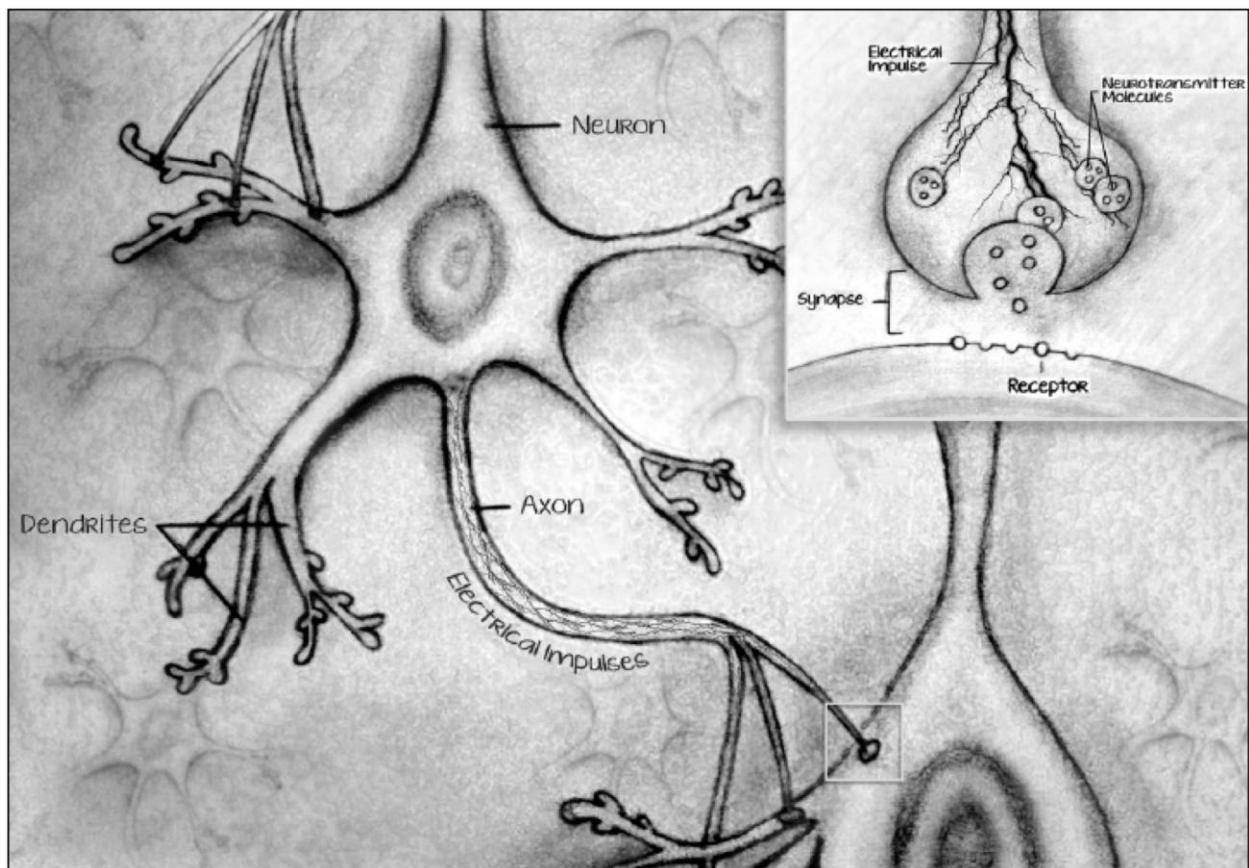
Particle Accelerator at CERN

It's a pretty important question because at the end of the day, consciousness is the only thing that each and every one of us can be certain exists, as absolutely everything we are and know is a subjective experience within our own consciousness. As you're sitting there listening to me, pause

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for one moment and reflect on it. It's true. To each and every one of us, our consciousness is everything. Anything you believe you are aware of, in and "outside" of subjective existence, outside of your consciousness, is only known and perceived to you within consciousness. The belief that there is an independent world outside of your subjective consciousness is in itself an article of faith influenced by your perception of independent objects and entities and sharing that experience with others.

Science, based on materialist or physicalist models, has the imperative to explain consciousness in terms of this belief. The most simplistic view of the basic foundation for all such physicalist theories is that the brain forms neurons, which form neural networks based on a process of stimulation from sense organs, with persistent memory forming a feedback into the process, that can evolve into higher level organization of cognizance, then to coherent thinking and ultimately personal consciousness. This is the general foundation of the physicalist view. As you can imagine there are still many leaps of faith to get from this simplistic view to a complete physicalist theory of consciousness. There are many specific elaborate theories that try to bridge the gap. For instance, Orchestrated Objective Reduction as theorized by Sir Roger Penrose envisions consciousness arising from the collapse of quantum superpositions in tubulin protein found in almost atomic level structures called microtubules that play important structural roles in cellular processes.



The physicalist study of consciousness, as part of its verification, measures responses to external activity or states of mind by changes in blood flow in certain parts of the brain. The relative intensity of this flow and mapping it in the brain are identified as the brain correlates of consciousness and are used in clinical study to figure out how consciousness arises in the brain.

BUT, there are issues with the model

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First, the model maps very well to certain parameters, like identification of classes of objects, like this is a rock. But what it does not cope well with, are what philosophers term qualia, qualitative properties like how things taste, how green is green etc.

This is something called The Hard Problem of Consciousness

This was coined by David Chalmers - 1994 and it goes like this:

- It is impossible to deduce the properties of subjective experience from the properties of matter. Colour, taste and feeling don't equate to the mass, momentum, spin, position or charge of the subatomic particles making up the brain.
- Second, there really is no explanation for how the random arising of neural processing and memory evolves into conscious and coherent thought. Its like understanding that bricks and mortar obviously are the structure of a building but being unable to identify the contractor that puts them together to build it.
- Thirdly, in the world of quantum physics, quantum states are in a superposition of multiple possibilities, behaving with the physical attributes of a waveform vs. The particle model we are all more familiar with, until, this superposition collapses into reality and conforms to a particle model. The Copenhagen interpretation of quantum mechanics postulates that this is caused by observation by a conscious observer, therefore conscious observers are what is in effect determining the collapse and therefore reality. This is widely discredited by most materialist leaning quantum physicists, perhaps because they can't explain the emerging logical discontinuity and circular loop (as per them, consciousness arises from physical properties, so how can physical properties arise from consciousness. Chicken and egg.). Perhaps more particularly there is still no agreed explanation for the cause of the collapse and the single shared world resulting among observers.

Many mathematical approaches derived from this starting point result in different results for multiple observers, therefore no shared reality, which we all agree can't be intuitively correct. However, that is perhaps a logical extrapolation if you are coming at it from the perspective that there are only individual personal consciousnesses, emerging from individual minds, emerging from separate collections of neural networks, with no concept of shared, unified consciousness that transcends this perspective. A unified universal observer that was necessary cause of the quantum waveform superposition collapse would be the common denominator that would create this shared reality.



Finally, if you give any credence at all to the incidences reporting experience of a primary, transcendent unified connection with everything ...that can be accessed by individuals, through various processes such as brain injury, meditation, near death experiences or pharmacological ingestion of chemical such as hallucigenics ... And there is quite a bit of documented evidence for these experiences ... even clinically documented ... and written about in popular masonic books ... there is absolutely no explanation for that in this model. Beyond the concept of transcendent

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consciousness, the correlation between the rich intensity of these experiences, wild, active and brilliant as they are beyond the normal subjective experience; when observed and measured in a controlled environment, they show absolutely the opposite effect on the brain correlates that would be intuited given their intensity. Rather than showing more excitation and intensity, they show less, even far less activity. So, these cosmic consciousness experiences, as hard to describe as they are, also behave contrary to the accepted materialist view of how consciousness arises from brain activity. So, there is no physical model explanation for this class of experiences. One of the implications of this, postulated by advocates of cosmic consciousness is that mind and consciousness is not fixed to the brain or caused by the brain, but is outside of the brain, with the brain metaphorically being a receiver for consciousness, and tuning it to the individual.

Freemasonry – at the Crossroads

Now let's get back to Freemasonry and Cosmic Consciousness. Freemasons have participated quite enthusiastically in promotion of the Scientific process, in our participation in the formation of the Royal Society and the many freemasons who have been famous scientists. Yet, we maintain a strong foundation of deference to the spiritual concept of higher being, higher order, or of deity, something that is purposefully left very murky, undefined and usually unknowable when discussed. We have enshrined this in our ritual and specifically exhort a balanced pursuit of spirituality simultaneous with the study of the seven liberal arts and sciences. Perhaps this is because our foundations are in the era where materialism was not so ascendent and the scientists of old stuck to the principle that they were merely revealing the genius of the divine in a more predictive model, not that they were eliminating it.



Bacon,



Newton,

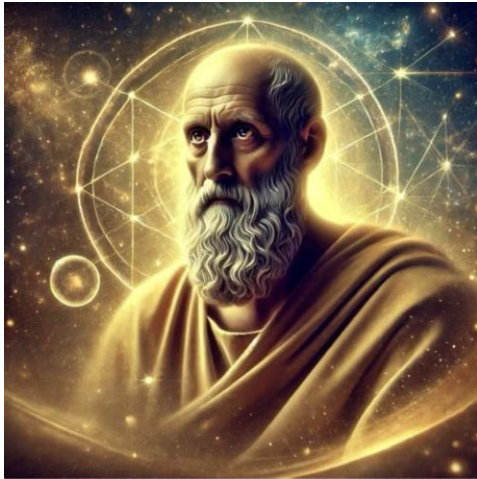


Ashmole

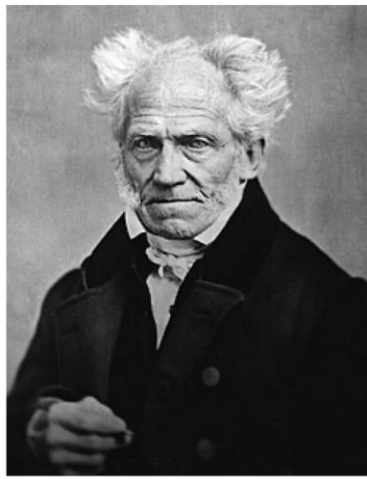
Today we have the situation of the scientific model of reality and the spiritual model being at odds with each other in our society. This is a contradiction that seemingly cannot be reconciled by most adherents of religion or science. It's one or the other. That leaves a continually shrinking space for "logical" and "rational" people subscribing to the scientific model to be able to continually maintain any faith in the existence of a supernatural, transpersonal higher plane of being that accounts for the reality that we experience. As a result, most scientists are becoming more materialist and physicalist, while the religious are starting to become more extreme in rejecting the scientific view of the world (unless it's convenient). Neither side can see where there is mutual ground for agreement. But in general, the physicalist view tends to increasingly permeate the general understanding of the subject, even among the religious, especially those who can't deduce the contradiction between the physicalist model and the divine model.

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Consciousness First – The antidote



Plotinus



Schopenhauer



Jung

However, there is a model that can reconcile these 2 perspectives theorized today, and it hinges on a VERY simple assumption that initially, to the materialist influenced mind, seems alien and implausible: the assumption is that rather than mind and consciousness emerging as a result of an almost magical configuration of matter that has evolved over billions of years ... that matter, with all its observed behaviours, arises in universal mind ...a proposal that physicist David Bohm sums up in his book with Basil Hiley “the Undivided Universe”, as “mind is the implicate or foundational order of the universe”. The substrate of being.

This particular assumption is the logical path that philosophers have pursued for eons, especially prior to the emergence of science, and the scientific model. It is also an assumption that has gained more attention lately in response to the inability that the scientific materialist approach has in explaining the emergence of consciousness from the physical world.

To rattle off some more well known adherents of this model:

Ancient

Plotinus (born 204 AD) as quoted by Wilmshurst in his paper “Concerning Cosmic Consciousness”:
“External objects, present us only with appearances. The problem of true knowledge, on the other hand, deals with the ideal reality that exists behind these appearances. It follows, therefore that the religion of truth is not to be investigated as a thing external to us, and so only imperfectly known. Rather it is within us. Truth, is not the agreement of our apprehension of an external object with the object itself, but it is the agreement of the mind with itself. “When you thus cease to be finite, you become one with the infinite.”

Ancient Napoleonic era

Arthur Schopenhauer - German Philosopher - 1788 to 1860

Modern

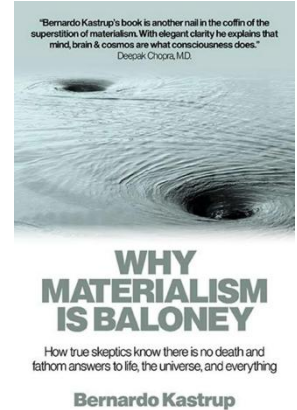
Carl Jung- Psychiatrist and Psychologist - 1875 to 1961

- He is very important to this theory, as he develops the concept of archetypes. The concept is most commonly applied to social constructs, but

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in mind first thinking, this concept can be extended to the subatomic level, with all the regularity of any rule of the emergent reality duly following the patterns that science has observed and recorded as a physical law

- David Bohm - Physicist 1917 to 1992
 - I have already quote him
- Donald Hoffman – 1955
 - Multimodal user interface theory
 - Bernardo Kastrup - 1974
 - Kastrup is one of my primary influences on my thinking on this, and he is a major proponent of Analytical Idealism. Certainly his views on materialism can be summed up by the title of one of his later books



Bohm



Hoffman



Kastrup

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Analytic Idealism

The key precepts of consciousness first, or Analytic Idealism, according to Kastrup:

- Mind is primary, universal and unified
- Everything is an image in mind
- All physical phenomena are archetypes that arise in mind, like ripples on water - the ripple being an archetype of the behaviour of water
 - Archetypal behaviour is exactly as described by science and archetypes are equivalent to any behaviour in physical science down to the subatomic level but arising in mind. Therefore, the subjective experience of the behaviour of these archetypes conforms to the scientific model



- Personal consciousnesses on a being-by-being basis are disassociated altars in mind. Not apart from the universal substrate of mind but disassociated from each other. This concept is equivalent to the findings in multi-personality disorder studies, that each personality in a patient is a completely disassociated being with no knowledge of the other. In fact, the pattern of brain correlates with each personality are completely unique when clinically observed. There are multiple minds in one person that just don't know about each other

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- Personal mind is to the universal mind what a whirlpool is to a river of water. The same stuff, but a local impermanent instantiation



- Brain activity that correlates to consciousness is proportional to the disassociation of a specific being or dissociated alter, the image of the localization, not an image of experience or the cause.
- By inhibiting the activity of brain correlates through brain injury, psychedelics or reduction of brain blood flow, the walls of disassociation are lowered, and the result is the experience of unity, cosmic consciousness, because the brain is not consciousness, just a representation of the disassociated alter. By lowering the correlates, you lower the individuation.
 - Remember from Plotinus. "When you thus cease to be finite, you become one with the infinite. Plotinus"
- Another method of reducing the excitation and level of brain correlates is yogic breathing (hyperventilation/Holotropic Breathwork). It increases blood alkalinity levels constricting blood vessels in the brain and causing hypoxia, or as theorized, lowering disassociation as above

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- This is the basis for meditative attainment of unity with cosmic consciousness
- Finally, the Shared transpersonal reality, the world outside each disassociated alter and shared between them, beyond the personal dissociative border, is still in mind and there commonly accessible to all.



Frankly, this metaphysical postulation is not more metaphysical than some of the materialist hypotheses of where our material particles come from, such as virtual particles emerging from the Planck scale quantum foam of the universe via quantum fluctuation of space time on very small scales (theorized John Wheeler) . You could even call quantum foam universal mind if you want and just skip the elaborate theories on how you get to personal mind from random particles interacting with each other and cut directly to the observer emerging directly from the quantum foam or if you will, mind. By the way that's a big leap on my part.

As an aside, the Planck scale represents the smallest scales of space and time where the known laws of physics break down

The Masonic Path to Cosmic Consciousness

Bringing us back to Freemasonry.

Taking the position that mind is the substrate of reality and given that the mechanism supporting disassociation, the barrier to experiencing unified consciousness, is overcome through some kind of inducement, then an initiatic framework can replicate the effect

Freemasonry, with one foot in the spiritual model and one foot in the scientific model, as I described earlier, evolved from the fusion of people trying to understand reality from an empirical view, but knowledgeable about the phenomenon of Cosmic Consciousness, with access to ancient techniques for attaining it, while not succumbing



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to the purely materialist model. A quirk of history, almost descending into being an anachronism, but ultimately perhaps vindicating the cosmic model.

As a result of this need for understanding, Freemasonry was developed as an Initiatic experience designed to access Cosmic Consciousness. Looking at our masonic framework from this perspective I can describe it as follows:

- The initiatic framework of Freemasonry is yogic in nature, with repetitive sensory deprivation elements, and prescriptive teachings embedded in its content, reinforced by yogic repetition
- It employs Sensory modification and even deprivation
 - Significant periods of movement in a hoodwinked state
 - Uncomfortable body contortion
 - Removal of everyday apparel to be set apart and isolated, then reunification through reclothing and rejoining the group
 - Utilization of extraordinary physical intervention
 - Tools on entry to the lodge used on the candidate - swords, square
 - Ritual Prescription
 - Progressive teachings that track the development of knowledge and wisdom, with the objective of unfolding ultimate knowledge of the divine or Cosmic Consciousness

A clearly meditative technique is the Chamber of Reflection used in some orders, primarily US Freemasonry, Le Droit Humaine and the Grand Oriente



This is a technique meant to do 2 things. Filter out those who have not mentally prepared for the journey and put the candidate in the right frame of mind for the journey. Consists of a period of isolation and sensory deprivation and stimulation through visual and olfactory paths.

In Canadian Freemasonry, the core canon of masonic teaching to the final revelation of the divine is as follows:

- Entered Apprentice
 - Sensory modification and physical intervention
 - Blindfold and sword
 - Clothing
 - Contortion at the altar
 - The prescriptive theme is somewhat basic, teaching fundamentals such as be a moral person, charity is important, and stick to your knitting, work hard, manage your time, and brotherhood (or alignment) etc.

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- FellowCraft
 - Sensory modification and physical intervention
 - Blindfold and square
 - Clothing
 - Contortion at the alter
 - The prescriptive theme is the importance of life long learning, embodied by the core curriculum around the seven liberal arts and sciences. You probably noted the balance in that classic syllabus between philosophy and mathematics and cosmology or the study of the sky, and stars, the universe. You can see the jump in our sights from pure worldly matters to more meditation on the greater universe.
- Master mason
 - This is an critical point in the progression (I must be vague due to the presence of non-master masons in the room)
 - Double up on sensory modification
 - The candidate is confronted with a serious challenge that everybody faces, and is informed that Freemasonry holds the answers, with the caveat that they are not yet available to him.
 - The answers are divine in nature
- Mark Master Mason
 - Unlike in the UK, the Mark degree is part of the progression to the Royal Arch in Canada
 - More sensory modification
 - More contortion (tokens)
 - The prescriptive theme is that there is more, and imagination and work is required to progress
- Most Excellent Master
 - degree that signals to the candidate that enlightenment and oneness with the divine is possible
- Royal Arch Masons
 - The Supreme Degree
 - In Canada, it includes the ceremony of the passing of the veils
 - Performed hoodwinked
 - Recitation of a long journey of guided exploration with multiple cycles of revelation
 - The final presentation on a raised pedestal of several symbols, aurally and visually, meant to stimulate an epiphany, potentially even an enlightenment/cosmic consciousness experience. It is my understanding that this presentation is quite drastically diluted in the UK due to the lack of the word, which is perhaps part of a different discussion
 - Note such an epiphany is more often than not only available when the participant is not anticipating it but especially when not prepared that is you cannot skip the previous steps without undermining the opportunity for epiphany.

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Alignment

And finally, alignment. They are a very important part of meditation as Sangha means participating in unison with the group. Freemasonry exhibits these types of repetitive alignment techniques in the regular opening and closing of each type of lodge.

Consequently, I would suggest that skipping regular openings and closing just undermines this purpose of aligning everybody.



Cosmic Consciousness References in “the Work”

Finally, for me the proof of Freemasonry as an initiatic experience with the objective of experiencing unified Cosmic Consciousness is that we really don't hide it. Our ritual is filled with allusions to it. Such as:

- The first 3 paragraphs in the 1st degree tracing board lecture equating Freemasonry to the “usages and customs” of the Egyptian philosophers and the all important Phythagorean system and many others. Pure allusion to a progressive initiatic system
- Second degree closing: God is in the **centre** of the Building
- Third degree is opened on the **centre**
- Everything is equally distant from the **centre**, the foundation of all things
- First degree Lecture:

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- “The universe is the temple of the Deity whom we serve. Wisdom (mental), Strength (Physical) and Beauty (Archetypical) are about his throne as Pillars of his works. His Wisdom is infinite, His Strength omnipotent, and His Beauty shines forth throughout the whole of creation in symmetry and order.” I will note that the language of this is somewhat dualistic, but unfortunately that is an artifact of how our disassociated alter egos see the world
- In the Royal Arch ritual, we find even more direct expressions of cosmic consciousness. One powerful example is the declaration:
 - “I am what I am”, an emphatic reference to the divine as self-existent and all-sufficient
 - A final emphatic Reference to the divine in the Royal Arch
 - “It shows him to be the actual, future and all sufficient God, who alone has his being IN AND OF HIMSELF and give to all others their being So he was what he is, he is what he was, and shall be both what he was and what he is, from everlasting to everlasting”
 - The Platonic solids in the Floor layout of the Royal Arch represent archetypes of mind and the physical, fundamental elements of the mathematical description of symbols of the archetypes of mind and the fundamental elements of the mathematical description of reality. These are not mere decorations;
 - they are representations of the structure of consciousness itself.
- The Royal Arch Jewel as described in Canadian Royal Arch Masonry
 - “We now present this jewel as a mark of our approval and esteem; it is a double triangle within a circle. The intersecting triangles denote the elements of Fire and Water; the Sun as its centre, with its diverging rays, is an emblem of the Deity; the surrounding circle, being an emblem of eternity and infinity, whose centre is everywhere and circumference nowhere, denotes omnipotence and perfection.” To me, this sounds like a description of cosmic consciousness, if ever there was one.

For those interested in exploring this topic further, I recommend the complete works of Bernardo Kastrup, whose philosophy of Analytical Idealism offers a compelling reconciliation between the physicalist and spiritual models of reality. His logic is incisive, and his critique of materialism is both rigorous and accessible. One of his books, *Why Materialism Is Baloney*, captures the essence of his argument.

I also suggest the podcast series by Kurt Jai-Mungal, which features world-renowned physicists and philosophers discussing consciousness, reality, and metaphysics. It’s an excellent resource for anyone seeking to deepen their understanding.

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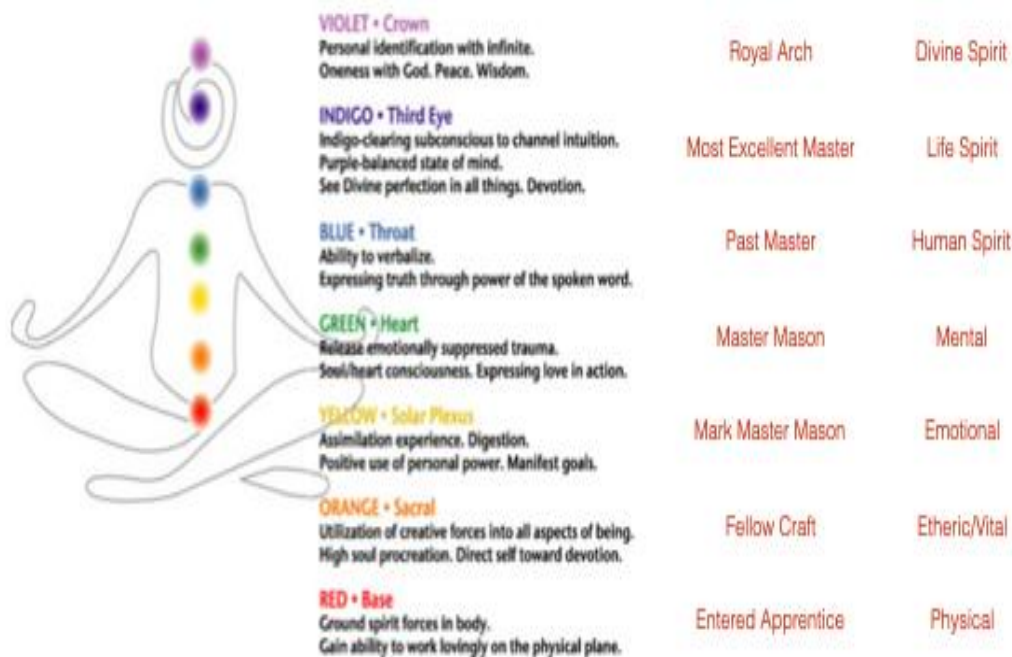
Reference Material for you

- The complete works of Bernardo Kastrup
 - Analytic Idealism
- Theory of Everything Podcast - Curt Jaimungal
 - Physics, Consciousness

Gord Echlin 2025-08-12

And finally, a personal note: while Freemasonry is a profound initiatic framework, it also benefits from daily meditative practice. I've developed a simple Masonic meditation form myself, which aligns the chakras of Eastern philosophy with the degrees of Freemasonry in the Canadian canon. I repeat it regularly, using it to rest in silence and reflect on the journey.

Thank you, brethren. That concludes my presentation.



The Onset of My Personal Awareness - W.Bro David Beckwith (Lodge of Living Stones)

In Freemasonry, and particularly in the Lodge of Living Stones, we learn of the existence of the Centre and its significance in our seeking this 'Spirit' that truly exists within us all. But what actually is the 'Centre' or the Spirit we talk of in real terms and in a way that we are all prepared to understand and relate to ?

Describing the Centre as a Spirit within our own earthly self is an acceptable description to most of us and no other detailed explanation is generally required. This often negates the necessity for an individual to go out of their way to describe the matter any further, knowing full well that all will understand, or at least appreciate the term when it is referred to in our group or individual discussions.

I have found, in modern day situations, that individuals deliberately avoid trying to describe the Spirit in further detail because of the risk that it steps on matters that are considered 'taboo'. I am referring to such subjects that are connected with the Supernatural or Clairvoyance or even just Death itself. In actual fact, there is nothing wrong at all in engaging in these other areas of interest if it has the ability to expand our minds towards the understanding of Truth.

It is irrespective as to whether a person wishes to believe in these subjects or not as the subject matter is not wrong. It really is just another form of seeking.

In the very least it provides that all options will have been aired even if no formal conclusion has been determined. Our Lodge founder, W.L.Wilmshurst, in his extensive writings, makes reference to matters involving the Supernatural and Clairvoyance, suggesting that all these areas are welcome to be considered along our path, but only as a point.

In the early 1970's I qualified as an Architectural Technologist. I was in a Profession that needed answers to many questions on all projects. Even at my young age of 21yrs, I was very good at my job. Due to National Economic circumstances at that time, I left Architecture in 1975 and became a Police Officer. This was a job that particularly suited me as it involved detailed investigation as Architecture did, but this time even more so.

For many years I had looked for the answers to questions in life, including who we are, where we are from and where we will go when we pass. We all have thought this at one time I'm sure. Like many others, my ability to ask more detailed questions developed with age and maturity.

In the mid 1980's, and well before I joined Freemasonry, I had sought many answers to my questions and took a different direction and used a respected Medium in Bradford. Amongst a great many things we spoke of at that time, I learned, and even had proved to me, that the existence of the Spirit within us was indeed fact, and importantly was very much in line with the way we generally perceive it in Freemasonry.

With developed experience, I adopted a maxim of 'ask the right question and get the right answer'. This is not as simple as it may seem especially when encroaching on topics of complexity, as a deeper understanding of the subject is essential.

Whilst in the Police Force in the late 1980's, I was invited to join Freemasonry three times. This was an area that had greatly intrigued me and I genuinely did want to know more. I especially wanted to

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know if Freemasonry could help provided the answers I was seeking about life. However, for personal reasons, I declined those earlier offers due to the 'quality' and honesty of those asking, even though my curiosity was now definitely charged.

In 1995, the offer to join our Institution was again made, only this time in very different circumstances. I took up the offer then and have never looked back. I will explain how this happened later.

In that year I progressed quickly in the Lodge and later learned much about the Masonic Institution I was now involved in, but still there were questions I needed answers to. I could not really explain this to anyone, and certainly, my curiosity was not appeased in my Mother Lodge in Harrogate.

In 2005, things began to change when I visited the Lodge of Living Stones for the first time. It was here I immediately realised that I would come to learn more about myself and the answers to the questions we all seek and that there was – and still is – a simple rationality to all I feel is within us.

After becoming a member of the Lodge of Living Stones, I learned much from the writings of our founder W.L. Wilmshurst. My own understanding of the Awareness of the Spirit within us was now beginning to take positive shape.

For some years now, I have come to accept that there is a Spirit within us all, but I was still asking myself questions as to what that Spirit actually is and the one we readily accept. How are we to know that it is present within us and importantly how do we recognise its presence within us ?

For me personally, I have preferred to refer to it more as an 'entity or an energy', ie something that is there but is intangible and unable to be seen but it is something I accept is working within us and is inexplicably able to guide us in all we do. Some often refer to the Spirit as the Soul, especially in religious scenarios, but to just name it as a Spirit, or the Centre, to me, is just not sufficient.

If we are to believe in the existence of a Spirit, I personally feel it is important to at least discuss the questions that refer to its existence and determine what it is and why it is there. As you will now have gathered, I have always had an enquiring mind and pride myself on my natural instincts and my ability to ask question and determine the truth in matters that generally cannot be explained or even discussed.

It was here in the Lodge of Living Stones, that a rationality of my understanding, based on my collective previous experiences, began to take place.

To explain this better, I have to turn the clock back 29 years to when I had a life changing experience. Up until this time, everything seemed to have been going the way I wanted in life from a domestic and professional point of view - or so I thought.

In early June 1993, my personal circumstances were to change dramatically. I was diagnosed with Cancer, a life threatening and life changing experience. I was given only one year to live. The Consultant, sitting with his Registrar, was quite confident in his explanation that I would develop Secondary Cancer and that this would then prove to be the death of me, irrespective of the treatment they were proposing. I was given a year to live. The severe Chemotherapy treatment I was to receive, was designed purely to try and prolong my life a little longer and not necessarily to save it.

My partner Debbie, to whom I was recently engaged at this time, was shocked to say the least. I now had to make plans – and fast, and at least for her sake.

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Later that month, I began the intensive chemotherapy regime accepting full well that it could all be in vain. I was in hospital 24/7 for a week on Intravenous chemicals, followed by one infusion each second and third week, with all repeated over the next nine weeks.

It was after the commencement of these serious drug infusions, that I was beset with a deep clarity of everything by something that had begun to dominate my thoughts.

This occurred over a few nights when I was physically unable to sleep for more than 20-30 minutes at a time. It was especially quiet at these times with conditions being not unsimilar to the meditative state conditions many may appreciate.

This clarity was not due to anything medical, like a side effect, but was a deeper, more specific 'Awareness' of something else that was present inside me which I could not explain at that time. I began to feel very different – even overpowered at times. It was as though someone or something was physically inside me. It was as though someone had switched on a metaphoric 'light of clarity' for me. I was beginning to feel that, irrespective of medical opinions, that everything was actually going to be alright and that I was going to come out on top of my condition even though I had been told otherwise by the specialists.

For some inexplicable reason, this 'clarity' was now appearing to be influencing the way I was beginning to think and feel about everything. Literally everything. I began to be more confident in the way I was dealing with my ulterior outcome even though I had much more treatment to undergo, each with their own side effects to endure. I was not worried about this though and felt very calm and collected throughout.

My demeanour was becoming obvious to the staff and doctors looking after me. It appeared to intrigue them and I was complimented in the attitude I was adopting towards my condition. It was something they had not seen before. At 11pm one night, I was asked by two doctors to write an essay for their own understanding of how I was feeling as they too had not encountered this before.

After a few weeks, my inner feelings were gathering momentum even though I was now experiencing many of the more debilitating physical side effects of Chemotherapy. I experienced thirteen side effects in all, some of which I have to this day. Although at times in some quite serious physical distress, I did not feel confused. Everything was going to be fine. My inner feelings were now strengthened, and I was now positively convinced that I was not going to die as was originally expected. Again, I could not explain why I was feeling this way when all the odds were technically stacked against me. Indeed, another male patient with precisely the same condition as my own, died within three months of our being in hospital together.

I did not wish to speak to anyone else about this for fear of others feeling that I was becoming desperate to find a positive outcome. I did not discuss my feelings with Debbie for these same reasons. My instincts were telling me that she was feeling very different to me and was understandably preparing for the worst outcome. The fact that I felt I was going to come out of it all and be permanently fit and well, was the true reality to me. I recalled to myself, many times, the old familiar saying, 'someone or something was looking after me' though just what this was I could not explain. I felt it was there and inside me for some special reason.

After 12 weeks of treatment, I left hospital and married Debbie straight away in a Register Office in Harrogate. I did this at speed to make sure she was well provided for domestically and financially and just in case the medical predictions did prove to be accurate after all. I had not let her be party to my deepest thoughts, as I have described to you here, for fear of giving her false hope based on

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something I could not tangibly prove to her. Because of my physical appearance when we married – I had no bodily hair, a swollen face and body all due to steroid infusion - I refused to have any of our wedding photographs on open display in the house. They did not display outwardly the person I felt was me internally. I could not look at them.

My confidence continued on a high note even though I still felt a little apprehensive until I had reached the anniversary of one year after my treatment – and proved to the professionals, at least, that they were wrong with their prognosis.

However, time moved on and my physical appearance changed for the better. Importantly, the bond I had with my wife now strengthened greatly. I was now physically looking the way I wanted to see myself and started work again within 6 months of my originally going into hospital. Only recently have I been relaxed enough to display my wedding photographs in my home.

During my stay in hospital, I was visited on a near twice weekly basis, by a man called Steve who I had met briefly on social occasions in my home village of Grassington in the Yorkshire Dales. He had learned of my illness through the village grapevines. Though not knowing a great deal about him at that time, I warmly welcomed his visits. I instinctively felt a deep, serene calmness and strength in this man's presence. My natural and instinctive feelings were telling me he was a good man and that we would remain friends for some considerable time. We did just that.

In the summer of 1994, I was invited to a small party at Steve's home. Though he had not mentioned anything, I had strongly suspected that he was a Freemason. It was during that weekend that he revealed he was. Steve invited me to join Freemasonry. I accepted immediately. On reflection, I feel he must have seen qualities in me that I recognised in him. He subsequently became my Proposer in the Harlow Lodge in Harrogate in 1995 and to which I became Master in 2002.

Within that Lodge, I felt very content and calm in the presence of the collective Brethren. The formal dress we wear impressed me as well as the rituals that were carried out. I found that I was becoming more proficient at ritual than I ever thought possible. However, I feel it was not quite the same type of deep, calm serenity I had experienced with Steve who introduced me. The strength of the inner feeling I felt in his presence, is the same type I experience in this Lodge room now, feelings that are very different to those I find in other Craft Lodges.

I was beginning to feel much differently in the spiritual sense, compared to how I had felt before being ill. I had never felt like this before. This was not a religious feeling either as I have never been a religious type. My confidence, and especially my feelings towards others and everything all around me, had become finely honed. I now began to prioritise my life both practically and positively with far more effectiveness than before. I was now in much finer control of my feelings, far more tolerant and much more understanding of negative situations. I found I was making all the right necessary decisions on matters that presented themselves to me. I thought I had been in full control before, but how wrong I had been.

My wife and family became the main priority more than ever before. After my Cancer situation, work wise, I developed much greater satisfaction being on the street and being able to help people, especially in their time of great need. I was able to do this very effectively and was gaining unexpected recognition from my superiors for this.

Much was based on consistently making the correct decisions for the job in hand. I found I was doing everything right first time without having to think about it. It was far different to the experiences I

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had before being ill, but I was becoming more aware now of my developed inner conscience. I was relying very much on 'gut' feelings more and more.

I had the distinct impression that I was being 'guided' in a certain direction to do the right thing. I did not fear these feelings either as I knew instinctively that what I was doing was right, and that I was being guided along a certain path, one I felt destined to follow. With the knowledge I now have today, I am able to understand, with far better clarity, what was taking place within me.

I reflected back over many years and now understood all the information I had gathered about the Spirit, years before entering into Freemasonry. It had helped lay the seeds to my understanding of the Centre and the Inner Spirit we talk of in this very room.

At the Lodge of Living Stones, I attended both the regular meetings and the informal meetings, both of which I found to be as fascinating as each other.

The Lodge offered deep references to the works of W.L. Wilmshurst, our founder. I did not find these easy to absorb at first, but, after years of reading and practicing many of his works, I have come to learn just how advanced and deep thinking he was, and, importantly, how similar my understandings were to his own.

Importantly, I also learned a great deal from our regular members, particularly in our lodge discussions but especially those in our informal meetings. Members would often extol the virtues of Wilmshurst's works but had a way of putting over his words in a much simpler way to understand than he did. It was this I appreciated and developed a strong feeling for.

I was now clearly understanding the context of the feelings I had experienced nearly 20-25 years before in the Cancer hospital and quickly associated this with the understanding of the 'Centre' as we discuss in Lodge, and what the Spirit within me actually meant. Things have a much deeper clarity to me now in all life's spheres.

I cannot say whether others within our Lodge, or any other Lodge for that matter, have fully experienced their own Awareness of the Centre or the Spirit within themselves in a manner similar to my own. I know that many actively Seek this consciousness by meditation or other means. As to whether they achieve this I cannot say as I feel this personal experience is something we tend not to discuss openly to each other. I can only say for myself, and quite positively, that I have experienced this state of awareness or, as I now know as Enlightenment, and continue to reap the benefits from this experience.

As a result, I now feel extraordinarily happy and content with my existence, fully knowing that it is a situation that is impossible to reverse. I have a much deeper appreciation as to what I understand Love and Emotion to mean and what they encompass in our lives, far more than I had previously.

I feel I have now found the answers to many questions I had been seeking for such a long time. I feel everything connected to my life is now very clear and very much in perspective. I also find I will not attempt to do anything I do not have positive instincts for. I trust my internal instincts, guided by my Spirit, implicitly. I have even found that I am sometimes able to 'predict' future events in my life with some surety – nothing to do with Clairvoyance – based on feelings and not just 'joined together facts'. I can also 'see' aspects of the future though not every time. This could obviously be explained as just educated guessing and good planning, but it seems to be much more deeply rooted than that. Happily, I find I am rarely wrong. My wife, who has not been party to what I have related to you here, is aware I have developed certain 'skills' for making the correct decisions and is happy to trust and rely on my ability to do this, without asking the obvious question of 'how'.

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Some time ago now, a respected member of our Lodge asked me if I had found the Centre. I recall saying then that I thought I had but I have only confirmed this to myself since having put this chronological 'jigsaw' of event facts over 50 years together, satisfying myself that I have indeed found the Centre or my Spirit Within as I prefer to call it.

Brethren, I hope you have found my personal experiences interesting and hope that it may allow you to consider your own situations to determine whether you have acquired yourself, an insight to the meaning of the Spirit Within.

I make the following observations: All of us have a Spirit Within that guides us along a path in life. Most never realise this but many suspect, as I did, that they are being 'watched' by something they cannot explain. I have now learned to recognise people with Enlightenment and those with 'acquired skills' that many take for granted. The two, I believe, are linked, but skills by themselves do not necessarily mean Enlightenment.

I believe that we will ALL achieve Enlightenment, but not all will achieve it in our lifetime. Those that seek it, will, without question, eventually understand Enlightenment but may not find it themselves. Enlightenment is a gift that is bestowed on us by our Spirit. No one else. It will come when the Spirit determines you are ready and will come when you least expect it - as I have described in my own experience.

When you have it, you will know it and will never have to ask the question again. It is a very special gift of life.

The Importance of The Black Squares- V.·III.·Sister Cathy Quickfall 33°

International Order of Freemasonry for Men and Women LE DROIT
HUMAIN, South African Federation.

One of the main symbolic features of a lodge room will be the mosaic pavement (often a carpet). It represents the ground floor of King Solomon's temple. The very ground that you symbolically stand on. The mosaic pavement of Freemasonry is made up of white and black squares and clearly visible in our Tracing Board of the First Degree.

Looking at them, the black gives the impression of acting as a background perhaps for the white squares allowing them to stand out. On the indented border the black seems to do the same and even the tassels would not stand out without the juxtapositioning of black and white. Just as life could be compared to death itself. Nothing is just the one; we have both.

Is it just our imagination that we see the white as good and the black as evil? Is it that we favour, we strive for everything positive, symbolic of Light, goodness, desirable - and negative is then perceived as being bad or undesirable? Some might suggest the squares are Light and Dark - with darkness then being equated to ignorance, death or something intimidating. Our opinions are shaped by culture and the internet or AI which will bluntly tell you about White being goodness, purity, light, peaceful and righteousness.... and that Black is evil. Note how there are so few words for Black as though it should be shunned. AI is not always the correct or full answer.

It has been said that these black and white squares represent a duality in our lives, the human experience – that we should ideally make every effort to embrace these opposing forces and keep them in balance. A good example perhaps would be the yin and yang symbol. So much has acquired a moralist and idealist symbolism. While we can see the beauty of balance, and understand the necessity of duality, there is again little attention given to the black squares; little value to be found other than that they are not white squares.

Perhaps we should give this some more thought, delve further and look at the possibilities. We would have every Entered Apprentice be informed of the East as a place of the rising sun and wisdom; the South as a place of Beauty where the sun is always at its meridian; the West being where the sun sets. This equates to our day. We can also acknowledge that there is an allocated time in the day while the sun sets and before it rises again.

We are instructed that we shall spend time in meditation, study and labour – and a time in refreshment and sleep. This is sound advice and to ensure our mental and physical condition and balance, our very endurance. We must spend a part of our 24 hours in a time to rejuvenate and revive ourselves. We spend so much time with our eyes open, radiating light and reflecting it; is it that time spent with our eyes closed in sleep is as a black square? Would we say equal in value to the white square of study, labour and refreshment? Maybe that would be a way to look at the lessons of the black and white squares. We need both and they are of equal importance for balance and survival.

In music we strike the notes, and there are intervals or pauses between them. This gives us the pitch and makes music into a melody producing an actual musical structure. There are even longer pauses

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where perhaps a trumpet player may need to draw breath. Breathe in, breathe out. If the note is the White Square and the Black squares are the intervals (or vice versa), we would have rhythmical beats – not just one continuous note. There is as much value in the pause or interval as there is in the beat! The mosaic pavement or carpet in sound would reflect the rhythm and beat; equally sized, equally shaped, regular as a heartbeat, consistent and even-paced.

Each square, white and black, black and white, in perfect order, measured in light absorbing and light reflecting spaces. The white squares now edging clearly and boldly on the contrast and beauty of the black square where you can rest your eyes and recharge.

In a scientific context these are not colours at all. Black is the absorption of all colours and white is the reflection of all colours. A poetic spectrum of light absorbed, and light reflected; side by side in our symbolic mosaic pavement in perfect alignment – set with mathematical precision. All colours in and all colours reflected outwards. Light in and light out. As within as without; as above so below.

There is an opposite for almost everything. Mathematics has an opposite; chaos. Mathematics is built on order, laws, and equations. There is a truth. There are always rules. $3+2$ will always = 5. In order to proceed we must learn the rules, understand the equations and how to apply them. Symbolically, mathematics can be described as a harmonious blend of logic and beauty which underlies the very structure of the universe. The universe is mathematics; shapes and forms are a part of the rhythm and music of mathematics. The square can evoke a real sense of order and precision. There is a stability and truth in the perfectly formed square where the 4 corners are well defined right angles – each piece of the mosaic fitting perfectly. And 4 squares creating yet another square, chequered in an unending march of accuracy.

The thought that our mosaic pavement may not be precise, that it may be chaos or just a jumble of irregular shapes in disarray is inconceivable; the Pillars of our temple would not be upright. The Altar would be askew. We seek the order, the correctness and pattern of our being; and reassurance in how the Pillars and Altar stand on both these black and white squares. How we may stand upon these squares.

The indented border would also seem to be our relationship with the world beyond the temple – where the light absorbed may then be light expanded outward. As within, as without. The contrasting elements invoking deep reflection on how we live our inner-world emotions and consciousness and our outer-world of reality – sometimes harsh and sometimes beautiful.

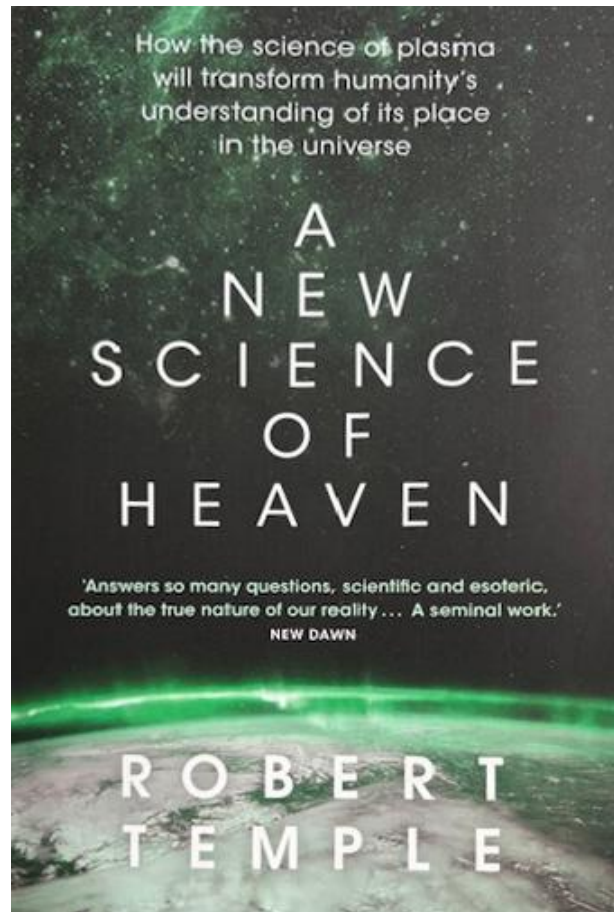
Life is stepping onward with or without our permission. Life and death. Much of the world is in turmoil outside of the temple. How shall we shape our lives in this 21 century where both the black and white squares are every bit as relevant now than ever, if not more so? While your eyes are open, or closed in rest, we may listen to the steady and ordered beat of our heart; find music and balance in knowing that the deep black squares soften the brilliant brightness of the white. When we see the angles of the squares lose their perfect formation and accuracy, can we adjust and straighten them to the right angles again?

As you stand upon the mosaic pavement consider and appreciate the beauty of both the black and the white of the squares. Stand yourself upright and true, be still in the perfect sequence and order of our existence. The black and white squares are of a different and yet so familiar space and time. As within, so without; as above so below, as the universe so the soul.

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Book Reviews

Review of Robert Temple's *A New Science of Heaven* Dr Robert Lomas



Published by Coronet 2023

https://www.amazon.co.uk/New-Science-Heaven-spiritual-experience/dp/1473623758/ref=asc_df_1473623758?tag=bingshoppinga-21&linkCode=df0&hvadid=80608074053507&hvnetw=o&hvqmt=e&hvbmt=be&hvdev=c&hvlocint=&hvlocphy=133610&hvtargid=pla-458420759

I've known and respected Robert Temple for nearly thirty years. We share a literary agent and a favourite editor, and I've long admired Robert's work—particularly his translation of the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, which I drew on extensively while writing *Uriel's Machine*. However, during the enforced isolation of the Covid years, we drifted out of touch.

Recently, while chatting with Mark Booth—our shared favourite editor, now retired—about the role of self-aware intelligence in shaping a life-supporting cosmos, Mark mentioned that the last book he had edited before retiring was a fascinating new work by Robert Temple. "It explores similar ideas to

your *The Lost Key*,” he said, “but takes a radically different angle on the emergence of conscious intelligence. Robert has looked at the newly discovered Kordylewski plasma clouds and their potential to act as a nursery for non-human intelligence.”

I was immediately intrigued. The idea of Robert Temple investigating the latest developments in self-awareness, with Mark’s editorial guidance pushing him to explain clearly—as he had done with me in *The Lost Key*—was thrilling.

In *The Lost Key*, I explored the work of Fred Hoyle and Chandra Wickramasinghe on panspermia and speculated on its implications for the development of non-human intelligence within John Wheeler’s theory of a Participatory Universe. Wheeler proposed that information, not matter, is the foundation of reality, and that acts of measurement determine the past to establish the present. I connected this idea to the teachings of the second degree of Freemasonry.

As I wrote in *The Lost Key*:

“We humans don’t understand the nature of our conscious self-awareness, but it is a key aspect of the soul of an observer that collapses the wave-function to kill or reprieve Schrödinger’s Cat. Instinctively, we recognize it as the great mystery that both science and religion seek to solve: the knowledge of yourself. Freemasonry has preserved and nurtured this interest. Experimental physics, the wayward child of Freemasonry’s second degree, contemplates the cosmos through the telescope of relativity and peers into the proton through the microscope of quantum mechanics, while asking the important question—why are we self-aware, and what can we achieve through our self-awareness?”

After our phone call, I immediately ordered a copy of *A New Science of Heaven*. When it arrived, I opened it eagerly. It’s riveting. Robert, with his long-established reputation as a scientific journalist, had spoken to scientists I know and admire—including Chandra Wickramasinghe, Brian Josephson, and the late Karl Pribram—while developing his hypothesis.

Had the book arrived earlier in the day, I would have read it in a single sitting. As it was, I started reading at nine in the evening, fell asleep around the end of Chapter 13, and finished it the next day. It’s well-argued, thoroughly researched, logical, and compelling.

The book’s central premise is that plasma—the fourth state of matter (alongside solid, liquid, and gas)—may be the foundation of life and consciousness. Around 99% of the visible matter in the universe is plasma, and Robert explores its potential role in biological and spiritual phenomena. He suggests that plasma clouds can develop structures and exhibit behaviours that could support intelligence or even sentience.

He shows how plasma formations can mimic the biological structures—double helices, cellular banks, and filaments—that could theoretically support life-like processes. He backs up these speculations with observational evidence, including insights from Nikola Tesla, noting plasma’s ability to react to stimuli and induce unusual mental states.

Robert then ventures into metaphysical territory, proposing that plasma may be a medium through which consciousness and spiritual phenomena manifest. He discusses biophotons and superconductivity in biological systems, and the possibility that we are “plasma beings” participating in a universal energetic process of consciousness.

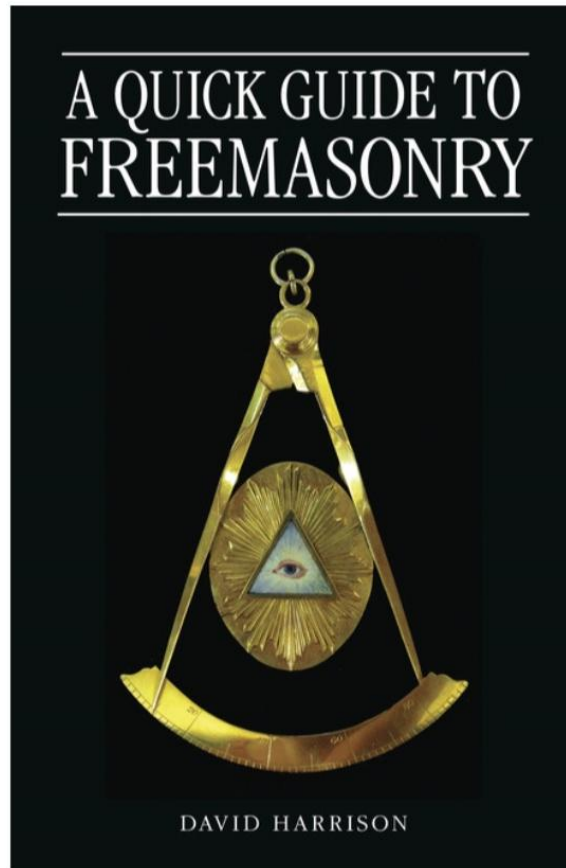
Although Robert is not a Freemason, his blend of science and spirituality will resonate with Masonic readers, who may see the book as a bridge between ancient wisdom and modern physics.

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A New Science of Heaven is more than a book—it's an invitation to rethink the nature of existence. Whether you're a physicist, a spiritual seeker, a Freemason, or simply curious about the universe, Temple's work offers a rich array of ideas that explore the boundaries between science and consciousness.

I thoroughly enjoyed it. If you're interested in the hidden mysteries of nature and science, I think you will too.

Review of: David Harrison's A Quick Guide to
Freemasonry -W.Bro Pete Maguire



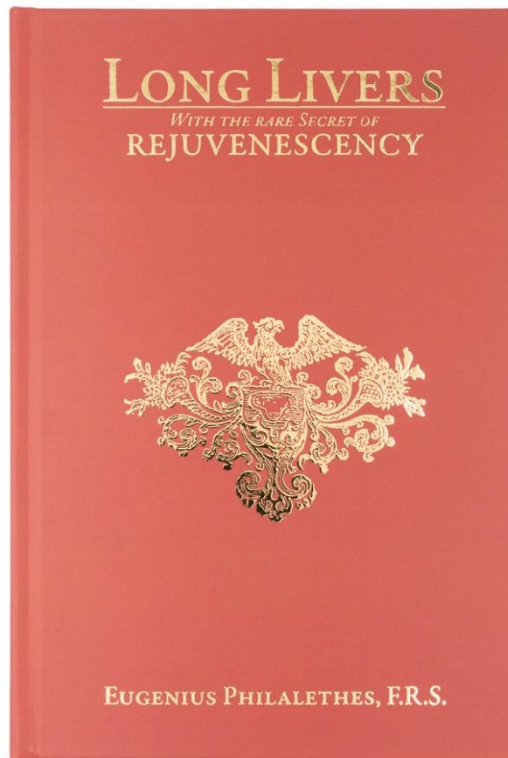
<https://www.lewismasonic.co.uk/general/craft/a-quick-guide-to-freemasonry.htm>

It's nice to see A Quick Guide to Freemasonry still on the best sellers list on the Lewis Masonic website. The book was published by Lewis in 2013, and it has sold phenomenally well, being translated into a number of different languages.

It's a great book for mentors - being presented in a simplistic Q&A style, with most of your Masonic questions answered. Thus, it's perfect for new members, is easy to read and is fully illustrated.

The book is pure entertainment with Masonic history and education bubbling underneath....

Review of: By Eugenius Philalethes's Long Livers: With
the Rare Secret of Rejuvenescency -Bro Dr David
Harrison



Published by Lewis Masonic, 2025.

ISBN: 978 0 85318 683 0

<https://www.lewismasonic.co.uk/esoteric/long-livers.htm>

Long Livers: With the Rare Secret of Rejuvenescency, is a book that was originally published in 1722, and has been reprinted with a new introduction by Martin Faulks, being recently published by Lewis Masonic. It is a beautifully presented edition, available both in hardback and paperback.

It is an intriguing book that has inspired the Occult Revivalists of the nineteenth century and modern esoteric Freemasons alike, with its rather long but enigmatic dedication to the Grand Master, Masters, Wardens and Brethren of Free Masons, dated to March 1721, which acts as a first part to the work, and its presentation of 'long livers', which effectively forms the second part of the work. Thus, the book is of interest for two main reasons; its reference to early Freemasonry in London,

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which gives a possible connection between its mysterious author - Brother Eugenius Philalethes FRS - and early Grand Lodge Freemasonry, and its suggestion of rejuvenation of the 'long livers', which attracted both Occult Revivalists and Esotericists.

John Yarker (1833-1913), for example, mentioned the work in a paper that he presented to the Societas Rosicruciana in Anglia, and appeared to be a work that fascinated him. This was something that I wrote about in my recent biography on him.

The 'long livers' mentioned in the work are a mixed bag of characters, ranging from Biblical figures such as Adam, Enoch, Noah and Moses, certain men from ancient Greece and Rome, Christian Saints, members of Royal lineages and a scatter of ordinary folk as well. The author puts forward a 'renewal of youth' as being consistent in most cases of the long livers, which is noted as being assisted by certain traditional remedies and medicines, which are also listed. Essentially, making oneself a better person (something that resonated in the teachings of Freemasonry) is also a theme highlighted by Faulks during his introduction.

This is a fascinating and essential work from an era of early Grand Lodge history, and as Faulks points out in his introduction, the ultimate pathway to rejuvenation was virtue, and this would help to find our way back to the Garden.

Stay Safe Online -Prevailing Threats Bro Chris Eyre -St Oswald Lodge - Associate of CQ

Fake DVLA Info Request Email

Scammers are getting more sophisticated, but there are usually some clear signs that an email is not genuine:

- **Urgent or Threatening Language:** The emails often use language to create a sense of panic or urgency, such as "Final Notice" or "ACTION REQUIRED," and may threaten you with fines if you don't respond immediately.

DVLA - Information Request #ua47uiw-88770702289666

Dear Customer,

DVLA routine check has found some irregularities in your current profile, which indicates that the information given is no longer accurate or up to date.


You are required to update your profile to its latest form to avoid termination of your motoring license.

You must use your valid and official information to complete this form. Using any nicknames or short-addresses can lead to rejection of this update.

More information here - www.gov.uk/government/publications/inf7897-can-i-drive-while-my-application-is-with-dvla

Please do not reply to this email as the return mailbox is not monitored.

Best Regards
DVLA



[Twitter: @govuk](#) | [Facebook: govuk](#) | [YouTube: govuk](#)

- **Requests for Personal or Payment Information:** The DVLA will **never** ask for bank details or personal information via email or text message. Vehicle tax refunds are processed automatically, not through a link in an email.
- **Links to Unofficial Websites:** The link in the email will direct you to a fraudulent website that looks very similar to the official GOV.UK site. Always check the URL carefully. Legitimate DVLA services are only available on the GOV.UK website.
- **Grammatical Errors and Poor Formatting:** While not always present, typos, poor grammar, and inconsistent formatting can be a red flag.
- **Generic Salutations:** The emails may use a generic greeting like "Dear Customer" instead of your name.

Other Types of DVLA Scams

Fraudulent DVLA emails often follow a few common themes:

- **Vehicle Tax Overdue/Failed Payment:** The email claims your vehicle tax has expired or that a recent payment failed and asks you to update your details.
- **Vehicle Tax Refund:** The email states you've overpaid and are owed a refund, prompting you to click a link to claim the money.
- **Driving Licence Verification:** The email asks you to verify your driving licence details as part of a database upgrade or for another reason.

What to Do If You Receive a Scam Email

If you receive a suspicious email claiming to be from the DVLA:

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1. **Do not click on any links.**
2. **Do not reply to the email.**
3. **Delete the email immediately.**
4. **Forward the email** to the National Cyber Security Centre's Suspicious Email Reporting Service at **report@phishing.gov.uk**. This helps them investigate and take down fraudulent websites and email addresses.

What to Do If You've Already Fallen for the Scam

If you have clicked on a link or provided your details:

- **Contact your bank immediately** to report the fraud and cancel any payments or cards.

Report the incident to Action Fraud (for England, Wales, and Northern Ireland) or Police Scotland (for Scotland). You can report to Action Fraud online or by calling 0300 123 2040.

Hook line, and sinker, I got caught...

After browsing the internet shopping for some 'DE-WALT Power Tools', within a couple of days, an email alert from Facebook, I was surprised to see something won by a 'friend of...' Some DE-WALT Power Tools, **SO I CLICKED.**

I found the link, and... got a link for a survey, looked legit, the survey site wasn't the vendor or the reseller, but this is a marketing isn't it, convincing myself this is normal. Even though I didn't know Alex, Alexander, or Lester.

I WON!

Now I am fumbling about for a payment card, as Google Pay, ApplePay, and PayPal are unavailable, but I don't normally win, this is probably normal.. I told myself..


£9.95 left my account, from a different merchant, not the vendor, or reseller not even the third part marketing site.


Now the 2 minutes had passed and I got this sinking feeling and realised the 20+ years experience were lost, all for what, FEAR... fear from losing that once in a lifetime deal...

I called my bank, they had more sense than me, and had flagged that dodgy merchant and placed my £9.95 payment on hold, phew.

30 days later another £40 left my account from the same merchant (**DOCSHANDLER**), I called my bank again and it seemed there was a subscription taken out, allowing the merchant to charge me as and when my 'service' changed, subsequently my bank cancelled that payment, and blocking the merchant from charging again.

Most relevant ▾


 Author
Alexander Gibson
For anyone who fancies a shot, here's the link
<https://tinyurl.com/screwfix-employee-uk>
5d Like Reply 114 🍷👍👎

 Alex Bryant Alexander Gibson Good one
View 1 more reply...


Lester Ramirez
Got mine today - already putting it to good use.



5d Like Reply 43 🍷👍👎




Congratulations, you are a winner!

1. You must complete the form and confirm your participation.
2. Your special prize of **£9.95** will be available for the next **1 minute 56 seconds**
3. DeWalt Combo Kit will be shipped to the winner within 4-7 days.

OK

We use our partners Visa, MasterCard, and Maestro for identity verification.



What to do if you find a "DOCSHANDLER" recurring charge:

1. **Contact your bank:** The first and most important step is to call your bank or credit card company. Explain that you are seeing an unauthorised recurring charge. They can help you dispute the charge and may be able to block the merchant from charging your card again.
2. **Report the scam:** Report the issue to consumer protection agencies like Action Fraud in the UK or the FTC in the US. This helps them track these scams and potentially take action against the companies responsible.
3. **Search your emails:** The credit card processors often send emails with account numbers and login information. Searching your email for the name on your statement might give you clues about the original subscription.

Digitising and Recording Historic Buildings -Bro Chris Eyre

Bro Christ has recently being involved in producing 3D Scans to create detailed records of historic buildings, including Churches and Lodge Rooms. In this article he explains how modern laser scanning works and gives some examples of the work he has been doing in this field.

3D Scanning What is it?

Modern archaeological preservation which can be accessed by all.

3D LiDAR scanning is a powerful method for creating highly accurate digital models of structures and environments. It is a key technology in the architecture, engineering, and construction (AEC) industries, as well as for historical preservation and facilities management.

How It Works

LiDAR stands for "Light Detection and Ranging." A 3D LiDAR scanner works by emitting millions of laser pulses per second and measuring the time it takes for each pulse to travel to a surface, reflect, and return to the sensor. This "time-of-flight" calculation, combined with the scanner's angle and position, allows it to determine the precise 3D coordinates (x, y, and z) of each point it "hits."

The result of this process is a "point cloud" – a massive dataset of millions of individual data points that, when viewed together, form a detailed and accurate 3D representation of the scanned object or environment. This point cloud can then be processed and used to create other deliverables, such as 2D floor plans, 3D models, and Building Information Models (BIM).

Key Applications in Building and Construction

3D LiDAR scanning is used throughout a building's lifecycle, from initial planning to ongoing maintenance. Some of the most common applications include:

- **Pre-Construction Planning:** Capturing a detailed topographic survey of a site, including terrain, vegetation, and existing structures, to inform design and cost predictions.
- **Renovation and Retrofitting:** Creating a precise "as-built" model of an existing structure to ensure that new designs integrate seamlessly and to identify any potential conflicts or clashes. This is especially useful for older buildings where original plans may be missing or inaccurate.
- **Construction Progress Monitoring:** Comparing point clouds from different stages of construction to the original design plans (BIM) to track progress, ensure quality control, and identify any deviations or errors early on.
- **As-Built Documentation:** Generating a highly accurate digital twin of a completed project for future use in facility management, maintenance, or further renovations.
- **Historic Preservation:** Documenting intricate architectural details of historical buildings for preservation, restoration, and research.

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Benefits of 3D LiDAR Scanning

The use of 3D LiDAR for building scanning offers numerous advantages over traditional surveying and measurement methods:

- **Speed and Efficiency:** Scans can capture millions of data points in minutes, drastically reducing the time required for surveying and documentation compared to manual methods. This also minimizes disruptions on a job site.
- **High Accuracy:** The technology provides highly precise measurements, minimising errors and the need for costly rework.
- **Comprehensive Data:** LiDAR captures a complete dataset of the entire environment, providing a rich source of information that can be revisited virtually without needing to return to the physical site.
- **Improved Safety:** By eliminating the need for workers to access hard-to-reach or hazardous areas for manual measurements, LiDAR scanning reduces on-site safety risks.
- **Enhanced Collaboration and Communication:** The resulting 3D models and point clouds can be easily shared among architects, engineers, contractors, and clients, improving communication and ensuring everyone is working with the same up-to-date information.
- **Clash Detection:** By overlaying scan data with design models (e.g., BIM), teams can detect and resolve conflicts between different building systems (e.g., plumbing and HVAC) before they become problems during construction.

Examples of Chris's Work:

Saint Oswald's Church, Heavenfield, Northumberland, England.

<https://my.matterport.com/show/?m=q8ArTUjKmhP>

Nostell Priory's Obelisk (former Entrance).

<https://my.matterport.com/show/?m=hVcL8kc7bg4>

Pontefract Town Hall interior, including The Nelson Plaque from Nelson's Column - London.

<https://my.matterport.com/show/?m=yrKbDDbTdkY>

The Quarterly Writing Challenge

This Quarter's Winning Submission

The Hidden Architecture of Light: Wilmshurst, Theurgy, and the True Aim of Freemasonry

Writer No 1

The current WM of Coronation Lodge set the lodge question of

"The objective of all esoteric spiritual traditions seem to have a similar goal, be it Knowledge and Conversation with the Holy Guardian Angel; union with the Higher Self; reception of the beatific vision; finding the Holy Grail; union with the Augoeides; Henosis with the One of the Soul or the monad; Theosis with the Father; or Gnosis of the Pleroma. Wilmshurst said the goal of Freemasonry is to reach the Centre.

What is unique or particular to Freemasonry's goal and approach to this ultimate objective?

Do Wilmshurst rituals encode instructions to reach this goal, or does reaching the goal rest upon solemnly performing the ritual in itself, vis-a-vis, is the ritual theurgic?"

To the general public, Freemasonry often appears to be little more than a social club—centred around charity work, fine dining, and networking. Many see it as an opportunity to gather, enjoy a meal, and contribute to a raffle or donation plate. But this perception barely scratches the surface.

What most fail to realize is that Freemasonry is rooted in ancient traditions and profound philosophical teachings. It is a fraternity built on symbolism, allegory, and the pursuit of personal enlightenment. The rituals, the architecture of its ceremonies, and the layered meanings behind its symbols all point to a deeper, hidden mystery—one that is not immediately visible to the casual observer.

To those who only engage with its surface, Freemasonry is just drinking, dining, and donating. But they remain unaware—ignorant, even—of the Great Secret it guards. This is not a secret in the conventional sense, but rather a journey of inner transformation, moral development, and spiritual awakening that only reveals itself to those who seek it with sincerity and dedication.

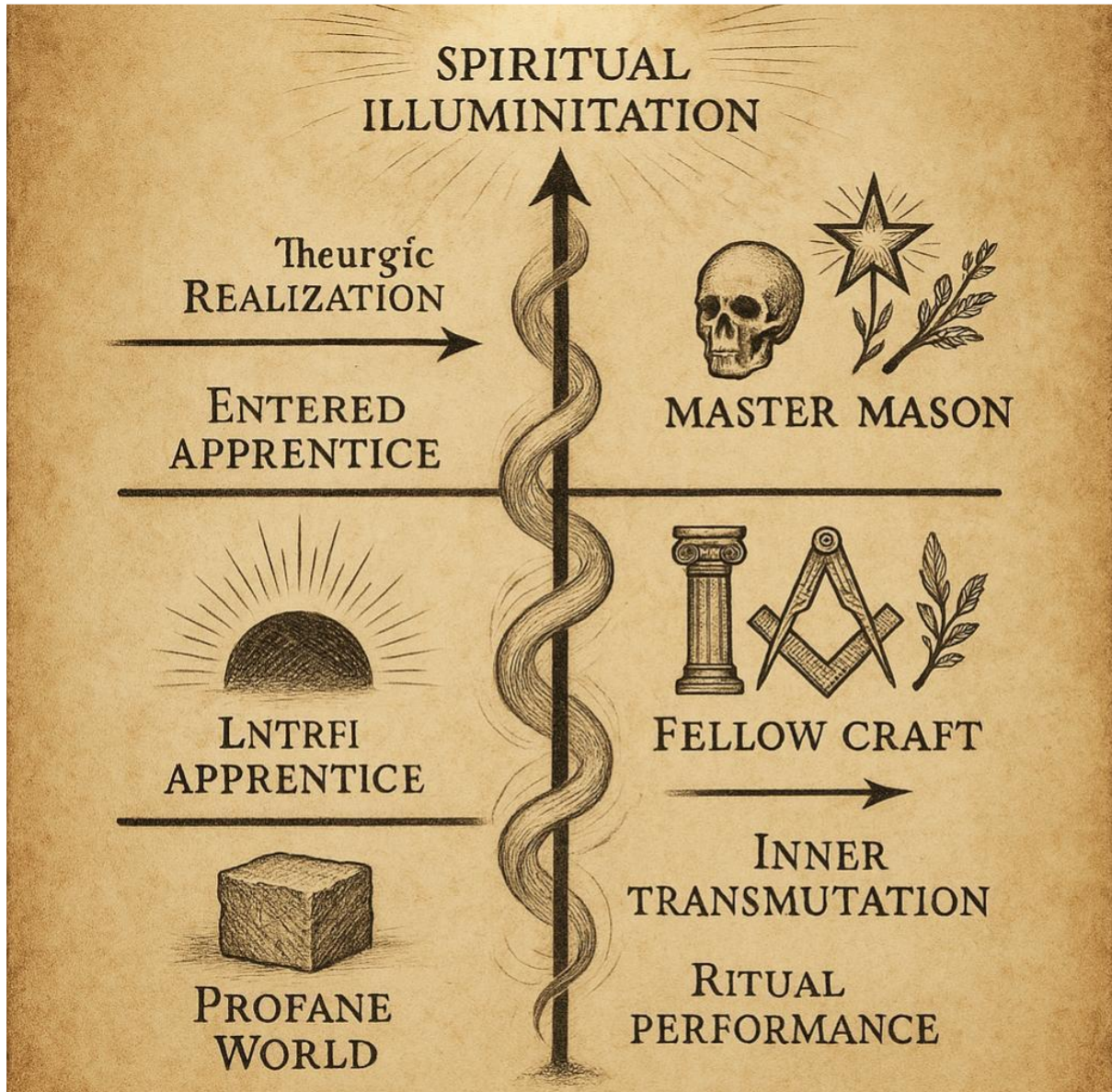
Freemasonry's ultimate objective—though tragically opaque to the uninitiated—is nothing less than the perfection of the human soul through symbolic enlightenment. But of course, that's not something one simply stumbles upon by reading a few dusty tomes or parroting ritual lines. No, it requires a grasp of allegory, archetype, and esoteric philosophy that, frankly, most never attain.

Now, as for Wilmshurst—ah, Wilmshurst! A name that echoes with the faint hope that someone, somewhere, might actually understand the inner mysteries. His interpretation of Masonic ritual is not merely instructional; it is revelatory. He doesn't just describe the path—he encodes it. But decoding it? That's another matter entirely. One must already possess the keys to the temple, so to speak.

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And regarding the theurgic nature of the ritual—well, that’s the question, isn’t it? Is the ritual a vehicle for divine transformation, or merely a symbolic drama? The answer, naturally, is both— and neither. The ritual is theurgy only to the extent that the practitioner is capable of making it so. Without inner transmutation, it’s just theatre. With it, it’s alchemy.

But again, this is all rather elementary—if you know what you’re looking at. Let me give a Diagram of the Spiritual Progression in Freemasonry — For Those Who Can Grasp It



At the very base of the diagram—where most people reside—is the **Profane World**. This is the realm of the uninitiated, the spiritually inert, those who believe the Craft is about handshakes and dinner meetings. It is, regrettably, where most remain.

Above this, we ascend to the **Entered Apprentice**, the first glimmer of light in the darkness. Here, the initiate begins to suspect that the ritual might mean something more than memorization. A quaint notion, but promising.

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Next is the **Fellow Craft**, where intellectual tools are introduced—pillars, geometry, the square and compass. Of course, these are not literal tools, but symbolic instruments for shaping the soul. One hopes the initiate realizes this before reciting them for the hundredth time.

Then comes the **Master Mason**, the degree that confronts mortality and rebirth. Symbols like the skull and the sprig of acacia are not macabre decorations—they are metaphysical signposts. But again, only the discerning will notice.

Above this is **Theurgic Realization**, where ritual ceases to be performance and becomes divine invocation. This is where the initiate begins to operate on the soul itself. Most never reach this stage, and fewer still understand it.

Finally, at the summit, we find **Spiritual Illumination**—the union of the soul with the divine. Represented by the radiant sun or the Eye in the Triangle, this is not a goal for the casual Mason. It is the culmination of a path few even know exists.

Winding through all these stages is the **serpent or spiral**, symbolizing inner transformation. Not everyone sees it. Fewer still follow it.

Conclusion

To approach Freemasonry merely as a sequence of ceremonies is to miss the architecture behind the veil. The symbols, the degrees, the ritual language—all point toward something far more refined than fraternity or tradition. Whether one sees in Wilmshurst's interpretations a roadmap or a mirror depends not on the ritual itself, but on the eye that beholds it.

The journey from the profane to the illuminated is not marked by external milestones alone. It is a path that winds inward, often unnoticed, often unspoken. And while some may argue that the ritual is the key, others might suggest that the key was never hidden—only overlooked.

In the end, the question is not whether the ritual transforms, but whether the initiate is prepared to be transformed. Freemasonry offers the form; the substance must be drawn forth by those who understand that the Work begins where the words end.

Previous Winners Own Choices of Subject

Ye Sons of the Widow W.Bro Wayne Owens

Let us begin by contemplating the identity of those known as “Ye Sons of the Widow” or, expressed in more contemporary terms, “The Widow’s Sons.”

So, ask yourself, “who are the Widow’s Sons?”

Chances are, most of you answered, “They’re Freemasons.” A few might have said, “A Masonic Motorcycle Association.” And if you’re employed by the Daily Mail, you probably shouted, “It’s a biker gang, and they’re secretly running the country!”¹



Truth be told, each of those answers is, kind of correct. Like a good conspiracy theory there is a kernel of truth wrapped up in leather jackets and mysterious handshakes.

¹ Freemasons Utd! Soccer stars to get their own lodge where they can perform Masonic rituals" Article in The Daily Mail 8th November 2015

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A sensible answer would be, "Ye Sons of the Widow" is a term used to refer to Freemasons. This phrase is symbolic and has historical significance within the Masonic tradition. It is often associated with Hiram Abiff, a central figure in Masonic lore, who is described as a widow's son.

We are therefore left with "Ye Sons of the Widow" is a name or term for Freemasons!

But is it really?

"The Freemasons"

I have long regarded the term "Widow's Sons" as synonymous with Freemasonry. It's a common association. After all, we are taught, almost by tradition, that we are all Sons of the Widow.

But does that assumption hold true?

When I received this topic as part of the OpenLodge Writing Challenge, my instinct was to consult the most familiar companion in all our Masonic journeys, the ritual book, in my case the little blue emulation ritual book. Surely, if the phrase "Widow's Sons" is fundamental to our identity, it would have to be there, echoed throughout the ceremonies. Wouldn't it?

To my astonishment, as I examined the rituals of all three degrees, including the Installation, I uncovered only a single reference to a widow. It read as follows: -

"On the Continent of Europe, the Sn of G and D is given in a different manner, by clasping the hs and elevating t w tr bs t t f exclaiming 'Come to my assis y c o t widow' on the supposition that all MMs are bs to H A, who was a widows son. In Scotland, Ireland and the States of America the Sn of G and D is given in still a different manner, by throwing u t hs with the ps extd towards the hs and d them with three distinct ms to the ss exclaiming, O L my G, O L my G, O L my G, is there no help for the widows son?"²

Within the Emulation Ritual of the United Grand Lodge of England, the term "Sons of the Widow" receives only a passing mention, primarily to note that Freemasons in other jurisdictions employ the phrase. Curious to uncover deeper significance, I turned to the Emulation Lectures of the Three Degrees, hoping they might shed further light on our ceremonies and their underlying meanings.

Yet, even within those more detailed lectures, I found only the same brief reference: that the phrase is used elsewhere. Something, it seemed, was missing.

Determined to dig deeper, I broadened my search and eventually came across the following passage within an introductory lecture delivered to new members of the Widows Sons Masonic Riders Association: -

"In Ancient Craft Masonry, the title applied to Hiram, the architect of the Temple, because he is said, in the first Book of Kings (vu, 14) to have been "a widow's son of the tribe of Naphtali." The Adonhiramite Freemasons have a tradition which Chapron gives in the following words: "The Freemasons call themselves the widow's sons, because, after the death of our respectable Master, the Freemasons took care of his mother, whose children they called themselves, because Adonhiram had always considered them as his Brethren 'As the wife of Hiram remained a widow after her

² Taken from the Traditional History part of the 3rd Degree Ritual (Emulation)

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husband was murdered, the Freemasons, who regard themselves as the descendants of Hiram, called themselves Sons of the Widow." which makes Hiram himself the widow's son."³

At this point, things became increasingly perplexing. According to one interpretation, Freemasons are considered Sons of the Widow "on the supposition that all Master Masons are brothers to Hiram Abiff, who was a widow's son." Alternatively, some suggest that "as the wife of Hiram remained a widow after his murder, the Freemasons, who view themselves as his spiritual descendants refer to themselves as Sons of the Widow."

So, which is it? Are we brothers of Hiram, making his widowed mother our symbolic matriarch? Or are we the sons of Hiram himself, and the widow in question is his bereaved wife?

Interestingly, the Hiram legend while central to modern Freemasonry, have a relatively recent origin. The legend of Hiram Abiff, as the cornerstone of the Third Degree, first appeared in the early 1720s. In fact, the earliest known full recital of the Hiram legend as the dramatic core of the Master Mason's degree can be found in Samuel Prichard's exposé, *Masonry Dissected*, published in London in 1730. Significantly, no mention of Hiram Abiff or his tragic story is found in any of the "Old Charges and Gothic Constitutions" or other remnants of old ritualistic practices from operative Lodges.

Hiram Abiff.

Before we get too tangled in ritual and symbolic lineage, it's worth pausing to ask: who exactly was Hiram Abiff?

Interestingly, the name "Hiram Abiff" does not appear in any biblical text. However, Scripture does reference three individuals named Hiram who were involved in the construction of Solomon's Temple:

1. **Hiram, King of Tyre.** (2 Samuel 5:11 and 1 Kings 5:1-10)

In Samuel it states Hiram king of Tyre sent to David, cedar trees, and carpenters, and masons. Then in Kings, Hiram king of Tyre has the same deal with Solomon (David's Son).

I think we can safely say this Hiram, is not the Masonic "Hiram Abiff".

2. **Hiram** (1 Kings 7:13–14)

In Kings it states that king Solomon sent and fetched Hiram out of Tyre. He was a widow's son of the tribe of Naphtali, and his father was a man of Tyre, a worker in brass: and he was filled with wisdom, and understanding, and cunning to work all works in brass. And he came to king Solomon and wrought all his work.

Although Scripture does not explicitly refer to this Hiram as an architect—or even as a mason—his description aligns closely with the figure of Hiram Abiff as portrayed in Masonic tradition. He is identified as a widow's son and a skilled worker in brass.

This connection is echoed in our ritual, which recounts: "They were made of molten brass, and were cast in the plain of Jordan, in the clay ground between Succoth and Zeradathah, where King Solomon ordered all his holy vessels to be cast. The superintendent of the casting was Hiram Abiff."⁴

³ Taken from "The Widows Sons Vest Lecture" of The Widows Sons Masonic Riders Association.

⁴ The Second Degree Tracing Board Lecture.

3. Hiram/Hiram (2 Chronicles 2:13-14)

In Chronicles we hear of Hiram(Hiram?) The son of a woman of the daughters of Dan, and his father was a man of Tyre, skilful to work in gold, and in silver, in brass, in iron, in stone, and in timber, in purple, in blue, and in fine linen, and in crimson; also to grave any manner of graving, and to find out every device which shall be put to him, with thy cunning men, and with the cunning men of my lord David thy father.

While there may be some ambiguity surrounding the names Hiram and Hiram, the biblical description of a highly skilled artisan, versed in working with brass, stone, and other materials, whose father hailed from Tyre and who was commissioned to assist in the construction of Solomon's Temple, aligns closely with the Masonic portrayal of Hiram Abiff.

An interesting point in the third instance (2 Chronicles 2:13-14) above is the mention of "cunning men".

Cunning-Man Noun (plural cunning men) (now historical) A wise man or wizard; a magician.

A "Cunning-Man" was a type of folk practitioner found across Britain and parts of Europe from the Middle Ages through to the early 20th century. Far from the sinister connotations of the word "witch," these individuals were often respected members of their communities, sought out for their practical and magical expertise.

Having potentially identified the biblical reference to Hiram Abiff, we learn that he was described as a widow's son from the tribe of Naphtali. The mention of his tribal affiliation is understandable—it situates him within the genealogical and cultural framework of ancient Israel. But what invites deeper contemplation is the deliberate inclusion of the phrase "widow's son." Why was this detail deemed significant enough to preserve?

Considering the historical context, it's reasonable to assume that widowhood was not uncommon. Life expectancy in biblical times was relatively low, and women often outlived their husbands. The Scriptures, having undergone centuries of translation, transcription, and editorial refinement, have retained this particular designation. That alone suggests it held more than incidental value.

If there had been multiple individuals named Hiram involved in the temple's construction, one might expect such a qualifier to serve as a distinguishing marker, perhaps "Hiram of Tyre" or "Hiram the widow's son." But in this case, the narrative centres on a single Hiram, and yet the authors chose to emphasize his maternal status.

This raises a compelling question: could the phrase "widow's son" carry symbolic or allegorical meaning beyond its literal interpretation? Might it reflect a deeper spiritual condition, a ritual identity, or an archetype embedded within the tradition?

Such a possibility invites further exploration, not only of Hiram's role in the biblical account, but of the enduring significance this phrase holds within Masonic lore.

Biblical Roots: The Sons of Ruth.

Let's travel several generations backwards in the Biblical history, to the Book of Ruth.



The meeting of Boaz and Ruth

Ruth the Moabite married Mahlon the Ephrathite. About ten years into the marriage Mahlon died, and Ruth accompanied his widowed mother Naomi back to her native home of Bethlehem to help look after her. It was there, while collecting fallen grain from the fields that Ruth met Boaz a prince of the people. Boaz having heard how Ruth had left her own land to come and look after her widowed mother-in-law showed her kindness, and after getting to know her and her character married her under Levirate/Redeemer law⁵. At the time of the wedding Boaz was eighty and Ruth forty, and although Boaz died the day after his wedding, they had a child.

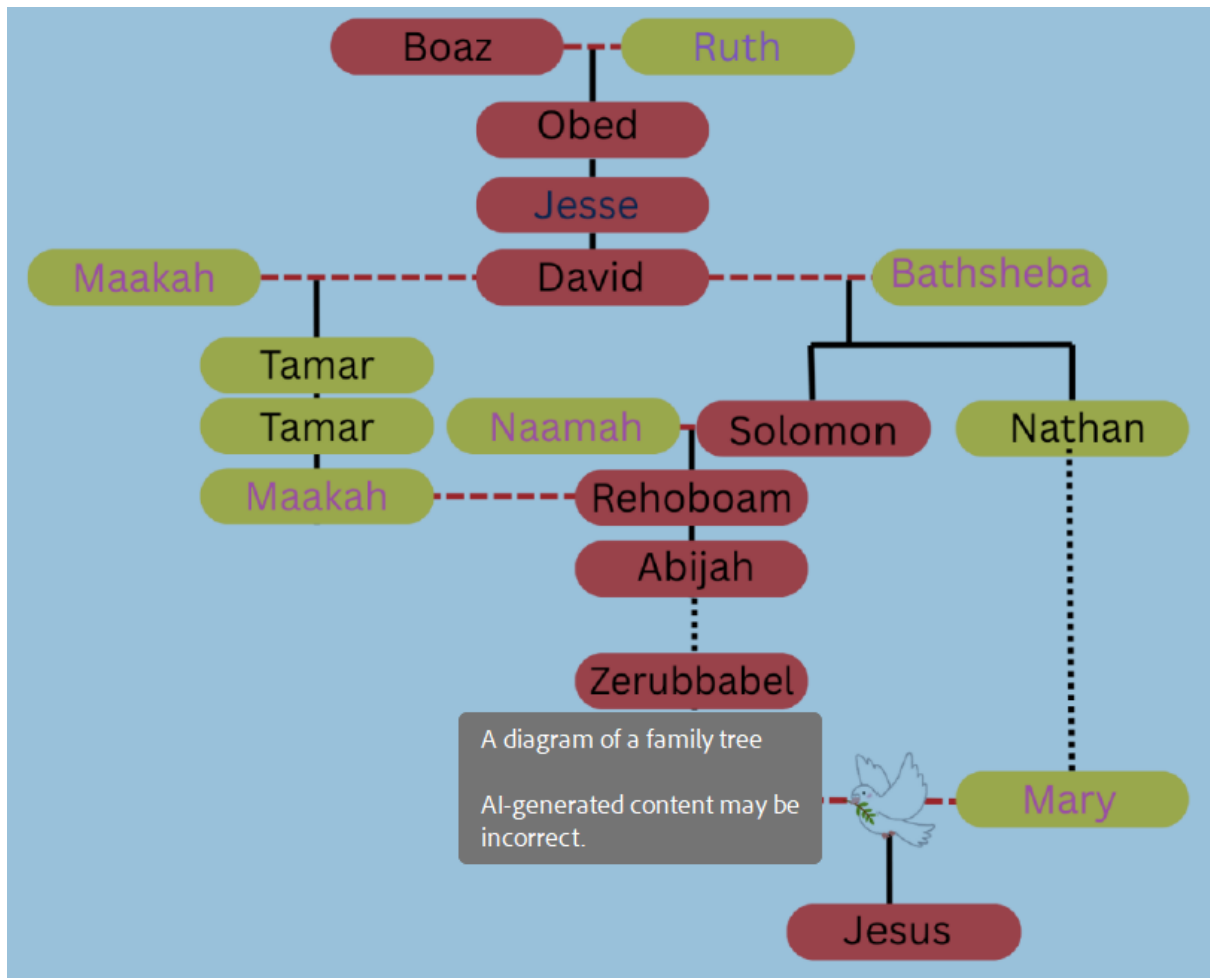
Ruth was now twice a widow, and her son Obed was referred to as the "Son of the Widow" since by Levirate law he was the Son of Mahlon, and biologically the son of Boaz and from this point on all descendants of Ruth were simply known by the genetic title of "Sons of the Widow" genetic title that could be genealogically traced. This lineage, often referred to as the "Alpha or Royal Line" includes Obed (the first "Son of the Widow"), Jesse, King David, King Solomon, and, according to the Gospels, Jesus the Nazarene. Jesus is explicitly identified as a "Son of the Widow" through this lineage, which spans forty-five generations from Ruth to him.

From this point forward, all the descendants of Ruth, were known simply as "Sons of the Widow", a genetic title that could be genealogically traced. This lineage, often referred to as the "Alpha or Royal Line" includes Obed (the first "Son of the Widow"), Jesse, King David, King Solomon, and,

⁵ A levirate marriage is mandated by Deuteronomy 25:5-6 of the Hebrew Bible and obliges the oldest surviving brother of a man who dies childless to marry the widow of his childless deceased brother, with the firstborn child being treated as that of deceased brother which renders the child the heir of the deceased brother not the genetic father.

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according to the Gospels, Jesus the Nazarene. Jesus is explicitly identified as a "Son of the Widow" through this lineage, which spans forty-five generations from Ruth to him.



The Family Tree of the Sons of the Widow

This "Alpha Line" is synonymous with "The Widow's Son" and is described as originating from Elohim, and leading to Adam, then through this significant lineage, which is particularly notable for containing "great builders" such as: -

- Enoch (associated with a mythological underground temple),
- Noah (builder of the Ark),
- Abraham and Ishmael (purported builders of the Kaaba),
- King David (builder of a city and palace),
- King Solomon (responsible for the Temple),
- Zerubbabel (responsible for rebuilding the Temple).

Given this context, could Hiram "the widow's son" have been a descendant of Ruth? Might King Solomon have summoned him to oversee the construction of the Temple due to a familial connection? Is this perhaps why he is referred to specifically as the son of a widow?

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Other Ancient Archetypes of the Widows Sons: Osiris and Isis



Osiris and Isis

Beyond its biblical connections, the term “Widow's Son” carries profound allegorical and mythological interpretations, linking it to ancient goddesses and the universal concept of humanity's spiritual journey and its “lost connection to Divine essence”. This “widow” archetype is linked to ancient fertility goddesses such as Isis, Ishtar, Anu, and Anna. The Egyptian Goddess Isis, in particular is described as the “The Virgin of the World” who, despite giving birth to all living things, including the Sun, legendarily remained a virgin. Christianity later transformed this archetype into the Virgin Mary.

For those who are unfamiliar with the story of Isis, here is a brief summation: -

Osiris, the beloved and just ruler of ancient Egypt, reigned alongside his devoted wife, Isis. However, envy brewed within his brother Set, who coveted the throne and schemed against Osiris. Driven by jealousy, Set betrayed him, ending his life and dismembering his body, scattering the fragments across the Egyptian landscape.

Unwilling to let her husband's legacy be lost, Isis embarked on a determined quest, scouring the land to gather every part of Osiris. All were recovered except one, his phallus which, according to legend, had been cast into the Nile and consumed by a creature of the river. Undeterred, Isis used her divine powers to fashion a golden replacement, allowing her to conceive their son, Horus.

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Though Isis restored Osiris to life through magic, his incomplete form barred him from dwelling among the living. He descended instead to the realm of the dead, where he became ruler of the underworld.

Horus, born of this divine union, grew to adulthood and challenged his uncle Set to avenge his father's death. Their battles, chronicled in the tale known as The Contending of Horus and Set, raged without a decisive victor. In the end, divine judgment was rendered: Osiris took his place as lord of the underworld, Horus was crowned king of the living, and Set was banished to rule the barren deserts as the embodiment of chaos.

The Egyptians believed as supreme ruler of the people, the pharaoh was considered a god on earth, the 'living Horus', the intermediary between the gods and the people, and when he died, he was thought to become Osiris, the god of the dead. As such, in his role of 'High Priest of Every Temple', it was the Pharaoh's duty to build great temples and monuments celebrating his own achievements and paying homage to the gods of the land.

Consequently, all subsequent kings of Egypt, who embodied Horus, described themselves as "Son of the Widow". Sound Familiar?

In Conclusion.

The term "Widow's Son" carries a lot of rich symbolism in Freemasonry, it is more than just a title but is a powerful concept with layers of meaning drawn from history, scripture, and spiritual thought. At the heart of it is Hiram Abiff, the legendary Master Builder whose symbolic death teaches lessons about loyalty, sacrifice, and the inevitability of mortality.

There's also a biblical thread woven in here: descendants from Ruth, often called "Sons of the Widow," are seen as sacred builders, tracing a spiritual lineage that connects Masons all the way back to the "Great Architect of the Universe." But the term goes even deeper. The Widow's Son is a symbol of the human spirit, that spark of divinity that rises from the material world. Think mythological figures like Horus, born of Isis, who represent spiritual rebirth emerging from earthly origins.

In this view, the Widow stands for the earthly, physical realm, everything that's mortal and material. Her son symbolizes the spiritual essence trying to rise from it. This idea is central to Freemasonry's inner journey: to reconnect with the divine, to heal the "lost connection," and to transform spiritually. It's not just about history or myth; it's about the ongoing human experience and the rituals that help guide us through it.

So, when Masons talk about becoming a Widow's Son, they're stepping into a symbolic role. Like Hiram, they're setting out on a personal journey bridging the gap between body and soul and aiming to reunite with the divine creative force. That's why the phrase represents more than just lineage. It speaks to royalty, craftsmanship, leadership, wisdom, and the pursuit of something higher.

I for one am happy to be known as A Widows Son.

Then 'ere's to the sons o' the Widow
Wherever, 'owever they roam.
'Ere's all they desire, an' if they require
A speedy return to their 'ome.

Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936)

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Comes the Rank comes the Regalia. - W.Bro Phillip Harris, Lodge of Living Stones

Brr Brr, went the phone, late at night but an expected call. "Hi Dad, Jacob here, I did my third last night, so sorry you couldn't make it". "Thank you, yes thank you I will pass on your compliments next time". "I thought you said wait until the third and all would be clear". "I'm still wondering what this Freemasonry is all about". Jacob waited until Dad had conveyed his sagacious advice. "Yes, I did listen to it all but remember little". Dad spoke at length about the need for patience. "Your mate Joe did support me but was not up to answering questions". "I'm coming home next weekend perhaps we can talk then". "Okay, love to Mum, bye". Click went the phone, "bye Dad", said Jacob.

Jacob, a Lewis and a new mason, picked up his new ritual with his name on it. There was a recommendation to access the portal called Solomon. "With some interest he accessed the portal to please his Father, but wondered if this was definitive or just a taster. It was not easy to follow and decided he must look through the rituals to understand what was written. He read through the ritual of the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd degrees. The pages for the mysterious RA were covered by a note that he was on-his-honour as a mason to go no further until such time as he was exalted. "Some hope anyone would believe that warning". He turned the pages and did not understand a word.

The weekend came, Jacob arrived home late on the Friday evening. Dad was out at lodge and Mum was sat alone doing Mum things. "Dad wants to see you when he comes home" said Mum before she got to her feet and greeted her son with some affection. "Why, does he have something to tell me or is it something that cannot wait until morning". "You know Dad, nothing masonic is shared with me". "Oh", remarked Jacob as he knew this was still the case even with himself. Although his Father was a learned man, he was never a person to share much about himself with family or friends.

Later than expected Dad returned with a wide smile on his face. From ear to ear it was so wide a smile it appeared like he had had his throat cut. What he lacked in beauty nonetheless could play business, politics and get his own way with some ease. Dad was dad and he loved him.

"Hello Jacob", he said with some unfamiliar tone of authority, "thank you for waiting up, I know I am a little late, but I have some news". Jacob rose and greeting his father with a handshake. Strang he is going to share with me something of importance, "what is it Dad, you look very content with yourself". Dad took his time removing the dapper suit jacket and hung it with the bag containing his tailcoat, waistcoat; braces and tie were removed and the shoes neatly placed in the cabinet to be polished up for next time.

"What I have to say is important to me and I hope you", said Dad. "There are some things I need to clarify for you following your Raising to the Sublime degree two nights ago". Jacob paused his enquiries as some lecture was about to come forth. A talking to, orders to be obeyed, or instructions on how to do it, that must be listened to. Or he hoped some explanation why when made a mason he was stripped and walked around a Temple like a fool. No interruption as Dad was ready to speak. Jacob knew the rules. Mum quickly gathered her book and belongings and quietly retired upstairs.

Jacob gave a focused stare at the dressed down man, from what he now believed to be a Provincial Grand Lodge Pooh Bar and waited for the Lecture. Dad stood by the fireplace that had not had a fire since the previous Christmas. To keep his pants up he had his hands in pockets juggling some coins. Dad began, "Now you are a Master Mason it will come clear to you that Masonry is about Charity

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and giving. I have long taken part in this with a weekly donation of £1.00 to the Charity and a similar amount to the Almoner fund each month". "Whatever you may think masonry is it is an Order to promote oneself to your peers, the Province and the Serious Masons who visit us from Grand Lodge". "Take your time and in time you will see that Provincial and Grand Lodge reward those who contribute and take an active part".

"This brings me to my news". Dad shuffled his feet and that wide smile appeared, looking at his manicured fingernails his right hand, his pants now slipping off his right hip, with some satisfaction said, "last week I was informed I am to be a Grand Lodge Officer". "As you know, I have been active in the craft for 30 years and taken an active part in the work of the Lodge and the Province". "My good friend, the liaison officer for the Lodge has tipped me off of the honour to be bestowed on me next June". "You will come with me to Grand Lodge to observe the ceremony". Jacob's heart sank as his experience so far was not great.

A visit to Grand Lodge sounded great but Jacob's experience so far was one of being ignored by high-ranking Masons in Lodge. Indeed, following his raising he heard them talking, "now that is the last of the ceremonies, what are we to do next". He thought that they could at least explain things to him. It was obvious from the previous ceremonies they did not know what to tell him.

Jacob had now to rely on his Father to teach him and explain the way of a Master Mason. He not sure what to say to that and fell back on the formula that seemed to fit such an occasion, "well done Dad, I am pleased for you". "Thank you" said the new Grand Officer in reply, "keep it to yourself for now as I don't want others to know it will make them green with envy when they hear it".

Dad continued to give Jacob his masonic life story, Worshipful master once in Lodge, Director of ceremonies for one year, and the many visits he had made following the acting provincial officer visits each year. "The way to get noticed and introduce yourself to those that matter", he said with outright conviction. This changed David's view of masonry, but he decided for his father's sake he would be there for him.

"One thing I need to understand Dad", David asked. "Does this mean you will be wearing scrambled egg on your regalia now like those guys who don't speak with me"? "Now David", said Dad, "don't speak like that, those men are great and worthy masons who have worked for the betterment of Masonry. They have much to share with you one day and in the meantime, you are there to sit down, shut up, and learn from them". David restrained himself from rolling his eyes at this, although Dad was more interested in looking at the ceiling considering his new lofty heights.

It was now obvious that he had joined Masonry and did not have a paddle for the canoe he was now in. "Go with the flow", he said to himself. Sadly, Dad had now somewhat diminished in his eyes now.

Thinking about things later in his room, Jacob saw his dad has been sold an idea not so much an opportunity for a better and exemplary life but as a collector of network and medals. He realised that for the present he had to go along with what was becoming "balls and trousers" to him in Freemasonry. Since being initiated he had been left on his own for the most part and little interest had been shown in him at Lodge. Pressure was placed on him to sign up for Direct Debits, joining a thing called Mark and another Royal Arch. Very good but no thank you was his response. This usually dismissed any further conversation.

Jacob attended the great day in London and skipped the following grand dining event as already the back slapping and handshaking was overpowering. When he was told his father was a good example to follow, he quickly realised there was nothing of value here for him. "Slipping away he telephoned

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Mum to let her know it was all over and that all was well. Dad had a train booked for 21:30 and would be home by taxi later. Jacob took himself to his flat and opened a book he found in the local book-store. "The Meaning of Masonry" by W L Wilmshurst.

Jacob continued attending lodge and although interesting he was finding it empty. Solomon provided some certificates for him, attending lodges for friend's ceremonies was a night out, and the odd night out with the lads remained a high point of his social networking. However, he kept coming back to the book he had at his flat. The meaning of freemasonry. He would have liked to give it to his father but realised that presently more important thing filled the time.

During the next few months, he could become mechanical and institutionalised. Masonry, as presented to him, was not giving him anything of value. The walls could be repapered with certificates, dinner was more important than the ceremony or the odd lecture and he could frame some medals for show but so what. He was still a Grand Lodge officer's son and did not know why.

For the investiture, Dad had treated himself to some new regalia and several white shirts. Unbeknown to mum a new herringbone tail suit was purchased while staying with Jacob in preparation for his new rank. Where dad was a fine dresser, he now exceeded adornment with gold cufflinks, a new watch chain, a holder for his medal, white silk gloves and handkerchief. A little over the top thought Jacob. It looked good but also gave his father an attitude of some superiority. Meeting his Father's friends, Jacob realised he had become invisible and of no importance as the men gathered for the event. Jacob was moved several times from his seat as others wanted to sit with friends or colleagues. What was worse and most awkward was a dressed up decorated 'Christmas Tree' of a man told him, "you cannot sit there, move you are only a Master Mason". A few fairy lights about his shoulders would have completed the effect.

In the following few days from the investiture of Dad the Grand Pooh Bar, Jacob convinced himself there must be something other than new clothes, chumminess and spending more on fashion than charity he looked about for a way forward. His one masonic book had extended to a whole shelf of interesting masonic writers. One step at a time he realised was the way forward and not to rush towards the Chair of Solomon. He had much to learn, understand and perhaps digest.

Out of curiosity he joined a masonic research group suggested to him if he wanted to really know what masonry was all about. This proved a turning point in his masonic career. The regular online meetings, books, mail shots, and physical meetings were showing him the meaning of the ritual, allegory and the chance to discuss the symbolism that were so mysterious and vague to him in the past.

So taken with this he shared some detail with his dad to see what he might think. "Well, this is fine, but why are you looking so deep", responded his father during one of his visits to the family home. "It has no relevance to our purpose of Charity and doing good". "If you carry on like this you will upset people as they won't want to know this stuff you are sending out to me". "We (by that he meant is new friends) do not like questions as you don't ask the right things". Jacob was crest fallen and felt sorry for his father.

A telephone call from Dad came one evening, "I have met with one or two of your study group members and have been asked to speak to the group". "I want to give them an idea of Masonry that is universally accepted and practiced". "I have it on good authority that my work for the Lodge and the support I have given to initiatives has been recognised and I am to be promoted again to an acting rank in Grand Lodge". "Great and well-done Dad", remarked Jacob. "Are you sure you want to speak into the Study circle"? His heart was filling with dread, as he said this.

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Dad was hardly able to contain his delight at the thought of showing off his importance and his superiority of knowledge about the Craft. "Well, yes they have a space, I am pleased at this opportunity ". I am sure my input would help them focus on what is important".

The date was set, accommodation was sorted in Jacob's spare room, and the transport organised via taxi. Attending were members from all over the British Isles, a few from the continent of Europe, and supporters of his father from Grand Lodge.

Clothes were pressed and shirt starched, all gold fittings applied, and an immaculately knotted tie affixed. He looked the height of sartorial excellence.

Arriving at the venue he was greeted by the Study group chairperson and the Secretary who welcomed him. Apologising that there was no festive board. For these meetings they offered hospitality following the meeting across the road when finished. This was acknowledged but declined as not necessary, but he would be dining with his son that evening later. This was news to Jacob who usually had a pie and a pint over the road as was just offered.

Having been introduced to the audience Dad climbed onto the dais of a few inches high and held the lectern with both hands. "I am here as a Grand Lodge officer to outline what we are all about". Within 5 minutes he had adorned himself in glory, promoted Charity and the need for active participation in "initiatives". He was dried-up and asked for questions.

"Can you explain what Grand Lodge does", someone asked. "Of course, if you look in the book of constitutions you will see". Another question came, "what is the purpose of the current structure of the Grand Lodge and Provinces". "I can tell you but look in the book of constitutions and you will see". Another question came, "why are we giving funds away to outside organisations when we have buildings in need of repair and needy members". For that said dad, "again look in the book of constitutions for the answer".

People became uneasy and dad tightened his grip on the lectern. "How do you see Masonry making us better men"? Dad flushed, "Well it will teach you how to dress respectfully, have confidence in speaking up, and you will meet the right sort of people". "Is that explained in the Book of Constitutions", came another question? "What difference has been Grand Rank made to you", dad's hands were almost breaking the edges of the lectern? "It is the sum and total of how you become better men by climbing the Lodge Ladder, and advancing up the ranks". "You improve yourself with being a member, attending meetings, paying your dues, networking and obtaining the highest rank possible", "It makes us different to you". With that came the remark, "like boosting your ego you mean"? Dad turned from furious red to pale realisation.

At this point David got up and went to his father, "come on dad you have lost your trousers here". Let me take you out. "Have I wasted all these years David", his dad asked?

He left with David silently, no one looked at him, no one but David was with him, they left the building together. Silence followed as they retired to bed.

The next morning at a simple breakfast Dad said to David, "I was naked like the emperor in his new suit last night". "Where did I go wrong"? David gave him his first masonic book that was well thumbed, worn and annotated. "It's the Meaning of Masonry Dad". "It is never too late to be prepared in your heart".

A week later the secretary of the Masonic Study group sent a letter of thanks to Jacob's Dad. "I apologise if you were embarrassed but note that you did wake some members up to the realities of

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Masonry for which they also extend their greetings". "You are most welcome to come to our monthly meetings as our guest, your son has been an exemplary member, and you should be most proud of him".

Chaplain's Corner - WBro Revd Roger Quick, Provincial Grand Chaplain, Yorkshire West Riding

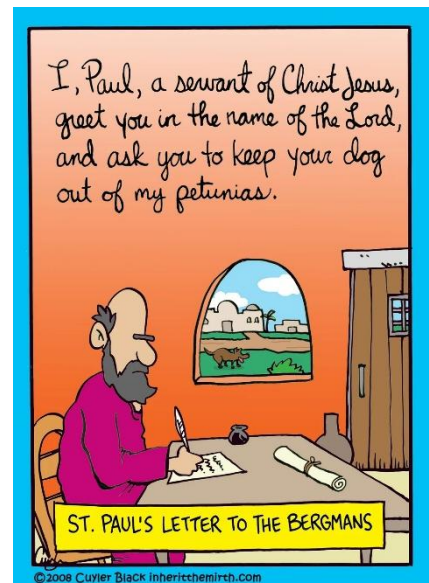
Our lodges are opened on the Volume of the Sacred Law; we take and seal our Obligations thereon; it is the first of the Three Great Lights to be named. We are charged to consider it as *the unerring standard of truth and justice*. The new Initiate is enjoined: *regulate your actions by the divine precepts it contains*.

If this meant anything at all in the Goose & Gridiron in 1717, it certainly means something different now. We have left the Eden of innocent, literal belief - if indeed we ever lived there.

The VSL may be interpreted to mean the sacred texts of any religion, which in detail at least are barely compatible. But even in early freemasonry, the Bible had to be carefully negotiated, unless you wanted to be stoned to death for eating lobsters, or for wearing wool and cotton together, or letting your daughter marry an Amalekite. Nor are these difficulties encountered only in the Hebrew Scriptures: St Paul condemns eating meat with blood in it, and says women should be silent and wear hats.

The way through this maze is to understand that the Bible is not one single book, but 66 or 73 or maybe more books, depending on who you ask. And the genres of those books varies hugely. Some are history, some poetry, some myth, some prophecy. Failing to notice which category you're reading is like watching television round the clock without seeing the difference between the News and *Spongebob Squarepants*, or indeed believing that *Masterchef* is a depiction of the Last Supper.

The book *Genesis* has a more complicated history than most, presenting at its start Creation myths from at least two sources (one in which man is created last, the other first.) Both probably received their final redaction during the Exile in Babylon and are therefore shaped in contradistinction to the myths encountered there, which involved battling gods: the Hebrew God is deliberately shown to be above all that. Abraham's journey from Ur to Canaan retraces the steps of the returning exiles; that may just be coincidence, or it may mean that they wanted to make sense of their own painful history by having a biblical exemplar. The story of Joseph probably reaches its final form at the Solomonic court, to entertain Solomon's Egyptian wife. And that's just the first book. It is most unlikely that King David wrote all the psalms; Isaiah is probably at least three people; parts may be prophecy, or history, or both.



For fundamentalists, every word of the Bible has to be true; to admit even one error would call the truth of the whole into question. This causes some difficulty about e.g. parables, which after all were never literally true, but contained deep truth within them.

As masons, we are instructed to look beyond the outward form and find deeper meaning in the speculative. That deeper, metaphorical, meaning may after all be the key to our understanding of the scriptures we are taught to revere. It may help to recall Karen Armstrong, who calls mythology *an early form of psychology*.

Letters to the Editorial Cooperative

Dear Editorial Cooperative

THE PROBLEM WITH RECREATIONAL DRUGS.

Everybody knows the problem with Drugs and especially these days. Recreational Drugs are those taken unnecessarily by personal choice for the purpose of obtaining (an illegal) 'high'.

The problem of recreational use has been the same problem for tens of years before now only the drugs have been further developed for impact on the user.

I completed thirty years service in the Police Force and engaged with the drugs scene. Throughout my service I worked in many crime situations but especially with the Drug Squad and Special Branch. Latterly I finished my service as the Divisional Coroner's Officer a specialist job I held for six years.

During my time I had custody of the Force Drugs Bag, which contained examples of all drugs. With this I would give lengthy talks to groups of varying ages but especially to youthful members of society. I opened many eyes, young and old doing this work!

In my experience, I can say emphatically that I have never taken any form of recreational drug and never will. I learned too much about the disastrous effects of these drugs.

I have, however, worked alongside many Pathologists for thirty years and they had their own input on the effects of drugs, from their clinical perspective. I learned much from these professionals.

I joined Freemasonry in 1995 whilst still a serving Police Officer. It took nearly twenty years for me to realise that many of my Masonic Brethren had been involved in the use of drugs to seek answers to their questions

I became WM of Harlow Lodge No 4404 in 2002 in Harrogate. Then I became a member of the Lodge of Living Stones in 2005. LOLS is an Esoteric Lodge formed by W.L. Wilmshurst. I in 1927.

I learned much about the achieving of Enlightenment – (which is subject of another paper, published in this edition). However, in recent years I have learned of the many ways Brethren use to seek a route to Enlightenment. It horrified me to learn that some have encountered, used and even tried to secure a path towards Enlightenment, using drugs. One drug that concerns me specifically is 'lysergic acid diethylamide' or **LSD** as it is well known as. This drug was used extensively in the early 70's and 80's but has since been superseded by more deadlier drugs like Meth Cocaine and various others you may be aware of.

Let me highlight a few facts for you to consider regarding well known drugs:

Cannabis.

1) This is regarded as a 'soft' drug and viewed as acceptable by some who use it. It is popularised by some ignorant yet famous people. It is not addictive as it does not create a physical dependency, like mainstream drugs.

2) Contrary to popular belief Cannabis IS hallucinogenic. If used over long periods it can cause alarming and considerable Mental Health issues in the user. Though these are rarely reported, especially by its celebrated advocates!

3) Cannabis can be used in food, used in drinks and smoked.

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4). It is the main 'starter' drug users explore. There is no expiry date on the potency of the plant leaf. However, habitual use causes its effects to lessen on the individual, they then sometimes seek better 'highs'. This can a dangerous step up to stronger drugs, if their willpower is lacking.

LSD

1) This was 'popularised' in the 70's by writers such as Ken Kesey, Timothy Leary and Allen Ginsburg, and taken up in the 80's for drug induced 'Rave' dance events, though many other different drugs were also used.

2) It is an immensely powerful drug and need only be taken in very small amounts. It can be produced in DOTS of about 3mm dia and affixed to (say) 'stamps' which are then swallowed, or attached to other objects and dropped in drinks i.e. 'spiked' etc. You would not know it was there until its effects began.

3) These effects are known as trips and involve serious hallucinations. These can be horrifically bad experiences or extremely pleasurable. People who take this drug more than once are generally attempting to repeat the latter agreeable experience. But nothing is guaranteed with LSD!

4) Importantly, this drug is not addictive. However – and this is important - if taken just once, its exact incredible effects can reappear at any time, in any place, in any circumstance, without a person having to ingest the drug a second time. This situation lasts for life! The drug cannot be removed from your body! And the effects on your brain can be immense.

5) The drug's 'trip' effect lasts for about 8hrs. The user has no control over this.

6) People who suffer bad hallucinations are often driven to suicide. Family and friends, or even the victim, may not have known the drug had have been taken, deliberately or otherwise. Detecting its origin therefore is quite a difficult matter!

The latest mainline drugs like cocaine, morphine, heroin, etc are all highly addictive. Some like meth-cocaine can be addictive from the first ingestion and from then on, there is no stopping point. The only certain way of ending the use of these drugs, in my own experience, has resulted in having to deal with a pointless and unnecessary death.

The list of drugs is immense these days as I am sure you are only too well aware. None are worth taking recreationally.

In short Brethren, never be tempted by anyone, to take any drug unless it has been medically prescribed for a specific condition by a medical professional.

Take care.

W.Bro David Beckwith

Lodge of Living Stones

Notes About Contributors

W. Bro John Karran – Secretary of Coronation Lodge 2927

John was born in Liverpool, is an Oil and Gas Consultant and has been married to Sheila for over 40 years with three grown up children and three grandchildren.

He became a Freemason in 1985 and was initiated into Eureka Lodge No 3763 in Bootle. After some years living abroad, on his return he joined Starkie Lodge in the Southport Group in 2006 and became its Worshipful Master in 2013. He became acting Provincial Grand Steward in 2015, and Master of the Provincial Stewards Lodge, Quingenti Lodge No 8516, in 2017.

John was Acting Provincial Grand Senior Warden of the Province of West Lancashire in 2017 and was exalted into North Meols Chapter No 5828 in 2000, installed as First Principal in 2017 and became Acting Provincial Grand Steward in Royal Arch in 2021. He is also a member of Provincial Stewards Chapter.

He is Secretary of Mersey College in the SRIA and their Provincial Director of Studies. He is active in many other Masonic Orders, in the Ancient and Accepted Rite (Rose Croix) where he has attained the 30th degree and is a Acting Officer of Red Cross of Constatine. Has been in both KT & KTP Chairs and is a Mark PM and with acting rank in Red Cross of Constatine plus is in many others including Royal Order of Scotland. As is clear from his CV, John has a strong interest in the esoteric and mystical side to Freemasonry.

W. Bro Dr David Harrison – Assistant Secretary of Coronation Lodge 2927

W. Bro. Dr David Harrison gained his initial degree in Welsh History and Archaeology at the University of Wales, Bangor, in 1997, and went on to gain an MA in 2000, and then a PhD in 2008, both at the University of Liverpool. Harrison also gained a Certificate of Education from the University of Manchester in 2000. He has worked as a history lecturer for the University of Liverpool, University of Hope, Liverpool and the University of Manchester, and as a project coordinator for various History groups around Liverpool and Merseyside.

Harrison has had 15 works published on the history of Freemasonry and Fraternalism and has had numerous academic papers and letters published on the subject in various journals. His works include *The Genesis of Freemasonry* (2009), which was Harrison's PhD thesis, *The Lost Rites and Rituals of Freemasonry* (2017), *The Rite of Seven Degrees* (2021) and his most recent work *The Life and Death of John Yarker*.

He became a Freemason in Cheshire in 1998 and is a Past Master of the Lodge of Lights no.148 in West Lancashire.

David is currently Assistant Secretary of Coronation Lodge and Co-Editor of the Quarterly Journal of Coronation Lodge, *Coronatio Quadrans* or *CQ* for short.

www.dr-david-harrison.com

Bro Dr Robert Lomas – Mentor of Coronation Lodge 2927

Robert is a British author, physicist, and retired Fellow in Operations Management from the Bradford University School of Management. He holds a First-Class Honours degree in Electronic Engineering and a Phd for research into the quantum properties of solid-state physics and crystalline structures from the University of Salford. He has worked as a consultant on command-

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and-control systems for various weapons systems, and the emergency services. Before he retired, he lectured on Information Systems, Statistics and Computer Security at Bradford.

He remains among the longest standing members of The Lodge of Living Stones, where he is organist, and has also benefited from that lodges' resources to study the work and philosophy of founder Walter Leslie Wilmshurst which he strongly promotes.

Robert is currently Mentor of Coronation Lodge and Co-Editor of the Quarterly Journal of Coronation Lodge, *Coronatio Quadrans* or CQ for short.

www.robertlomas.com

X: @Dr_Robert_Lomas

V.·III.·Sister Cathy Quickfall 33° - International Order of Freemasonry for Men and Women Le Droit Humain

Initiated into Lodge Dedication in the Orient of Cape Town, South African Federation in 1986. Raised to M.·M in 1988.

Consecrated to the 33rd degree in Paris, France in the Temple of our Headquarters. Elected MPGC (Most Puissant Grand Commander) of the South African Federation in 2017 and currently serving a second term. 2022, Member of the Grand Council of Le Droit Humain. Editor of inhouse Foundation Stone and Craft News publications.

WBro Phillip Harris. JP Lodge of Living Stones 4957 & Associate of CQ

Bro Phillip was initiated into Leodiensis Lodge 4029 in 1994. He as Passed and Raised in the same year. Suspecting that there was more to freemasonry than the parochial, he moved Lodge to Olicana 1522.

He found the Royal Arch a disappointment and following his exaltation I felt lost. He was installed as a Knight Templar in 1998. But did not find the answers to his questions in the Encampment. He moved to Harewood Lodge 5667. By now he was beginning to suspect that he wasn't going to get answers to his questions. Then, when he joined Chapter Affability 308, he found a community of Companions who had more understanding.

In 2016, he joined Internet Lodge 9659 and never looked back. He was able to visit overseas, brethren who were strong in Masonic light, and began to understand more about The Craft. He visited the Lodge of Living Stones 4957 and found a guide, mentor, tutor, and friend there.

Bro Phillip has papers (*The Excellent Master, The Strait path of the Master Mason, The Sun in Freemasonry.*) published in Masonic Forum, SRA magazine, and has been translated into Romanian and German.

W.Bro. Wayne Owens PProvSGD. Associate Member of Coronation Lodge

Wayne is a polymath who was born at a very early age and, quite impressively, has not died yet—something he considers to be a notable achievement. He joined Llannerch Lodge in 2006 and has been deeply involved in Freemasonry ever since. Wayne is a member of Wrexhamian Lodge, the Maesgwyn Lodge of Installed Masters, and the Provincial Grand Stewards Lodge of North Wales.

In 2011, Wayne became the Master of Llannerch Lodge and has spent eleven of the ensuing thirteen years in one chair or another. He is the Secretary of the Maesgwyn Lodge of Installed Masters, and Bishop Wilkins College SRIA.

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His commitment to Masonry in North Wales is extensive. He was a founding member of the Widows Sons North Wales chapter, served as the Provincial Webmaster for five years, and has been the Assistant Provincial Mentor since 2021. Additionally, Wayne is an active member of the North Wales Association of Masonic Study, gives talks across several provinces and has done since 2017.

Wayne is also a fervent supporter of the Blood Bikes Wales charity, dedicating his time and effort to this vital cause.

<http://www.wayne-owens.uk>

X: @Wayne_Pen_Owens

Bro Chris Eyre. St. Oswald Lodge No. 910 , Associate Member of CQ

Chris was born 24th June – in the Feast of St John the Baptist and was ordained as Brother Christopher James Eyre on 11th July 2024, with themonastery.org

He studied at King's School Pontefract 1984-88, and Wakefield College, receiving a diploma in IT and also Electronic Engineering 1988-89. Shortly after he started work at ICL Wakefield, and has stayed in IT ever since, from support to sales, and also management, working in 'cyber security' before it even had a name. He's worked for big brand names like Insight, NCC, ECSC, and also for vendors such as like SmoothWall, and Computer Associates (CA).

Bro. Chris is Senior Deacon at St. Oswald Lodge No. 910 in Pontefract, for which he joined in June 2014, being raised on the 21st October 2015, and was further exalted on 11th December 2024. He is also a member of St. John 280 in Coldstream, and a Companion of Hirsell and Duns SGRAC Chapter No.466.

Chris is passionate about preserving British and Masonic history, and has started to preserve some of his Mother Lodge's history, using Large format scanners and 3D rendering, Here are some examples:

Hughan Masonic Manuscript - By Bro. William Watson – Dedicated to T. W. Tew (Our Founding Master)

St. Oswald's Church, Heavenfield, Northumberland

His pastimes are: Scuba Diving, Computers, 3D Scanning, 3D Printing, Astronomy, Esoteric Freemasonry, Freemasonry history.

V.W.Bro. Gord Echlin, W.M. Mississippi Lodge No. 147, Grand Lodge of Canada in the Province of Ontario, 1st Principal, Sanhedrin Chapter No. 114, Grand Chapter of Canada in the Province of Ontario

PERSONAL -Grandfather to Aria and Hallie, Father to Natalie, Ryan and Allyson, Spouse to Kathryn. Born 1959

MASONIC Craft Lodge, Worshipful Master of Mississippi Lodge, No. 147 Grand Registry of Canada (Grand Lodge of Canada in the Province of Ontario) 2nd year, Past WM of St. John's Lodge No. 63 GRC 2011/2012, Past Grand Standard Bearer Grand Lodge of Canada in the Province of Ontario Royal Arch: First Principal of Sanhedrin Chapter 114 Grand Chapter of Canada in the Province of Ontario (2nd year) Past First Principal of Maple-Granite Chapter No. 61 (2 times) Scribe E Maple-Granite Chapter Past Grand Master of the 1st Veil, Grand Chapter of Canada in the Province of Ontario Past President Adoniram Council No. 2 Order of the High Priesthood of Canada (2 times)

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Royal and Select Masters : Illustrious Principal Conductor of the Work, Gedeliah Council No. 16, Royal and Select Masters of Ontario

Royal Ark Mariners: Junior Warden (Shem), Britannia Bay Lodge No. 12

PROFESSIONAL :Technologist for 45 years, Telecommunications & Networking, Telematics, Building Automation, Current: Global Navigation Satellite System Applications

W.Bro The Revd Roger Quick – Honourary Associate of Coronation Lodge 2927

Roger Quick was born in London and raised in Yorkshire. He trained from the age of thirteen as a Junior Exhibitioner at the Royal College of Music, and took his first degree in Music at Leeds University, where he studied composition with Alexander Goehr and Philip Wilby.

After making his debut as an accompanist at the Wigmore Hall in 1975 he freelanced as a pianist, conductor and composer, working with the newly established *English National Opera North* as a repetiteur and conducting promotional concerts. He has accompanied and worked with a great variety of artists, including Donald Swann, Raphael Wallfisch, William Waterhouse, Eugene Rousseau and Omar Puente. He began his doctorate on Sibelius in 1982.

Roger has written a number of scores for theatre productions, including *Tutte Lemkow* at the Traverse Theatre, Edinburgh: the *Young Vic*: Leeds Playhouse, and for the first production of John Mackendrick's play *Ludd!*

He taught piano in the Music Department at Leeds University and at the Yorkshire College of Music, conducted Leeds Youth Opera and Leeds Guild of Singers, and was college accompanist at Leeds College of Music.

He was for six years Senior Lecturer and Director of Music at the Northern School of Contemporary Dance, working with many of the world's leading choreographers and dancers, broadcasting frequently. Whilst there he conducted his own composition as part of the inauguration of the Symphony Hall complex at Birmingham, in the presence of HM The Queen.

He has frequently improvised music for silent films in the Leeds Film Festival. He enjoys busking on the accordion, and played that extraordinary instrument on the very first edition of *The Big Breakfast Show*.

After studying for the Anglican priesthood at the College of the Resurrection, Mirfield, and taking a further degree in Theology, he was ordained in 1996. His short Mass setting is included on the cd *Maranatha!* recorded at Mirfield.

As an actor and author, Roger worked with *Jabbok Theatre*. He wrote and presented an occasional series, *Talking Saints*, on BBC Radio 2 for Aled Jones' *Good Morning Sunday*. His presentation of a sermon in Rap for Advent Sunday 2003 was broadcast on BBC television to great, if mixed, critical acclaim. He has written for a variety of journals on law, music, and theology, and in 2008 a number of his poems were included in the anthology edited by Barry Tebb, *Strangers on the Shore*. He completed his first novel in 2016.

His leisure interests have included studying computer science at Kellogg College Oxford, riding, and glass engraving. He has been a member of the Society of Genealogists and the Yorkshire Archaeological Society, and in 2018 was elected a member of the Royal Entomological Society.

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Roger was for seven years Chaplain & Head of Divinity at Strathallan School. He became Episcopalian Rector of Highland Perthshire in July 2011, where he was chaplain to the Celtic Bishops' Conference, and honorary padre to the Cameronians Regimental Association.

From 2013-22 Roger was Chaplain to the homeless charity St George's Crypt in Leeds; his two books about that work were published by DLT. In 2021 he was part of the *Nursing Times* "Team of the year".

He retired in November 2022, and the following year was chaplain to the Lord Mayor of Bradford.

His son Ben is an artist blacksmith, and his daughter Olivia works with refugees in London.

Bro Roger was Initiated into Headingley Lodge in 1987, and is presently Provincial Chaplain for the Province of Yorkshire West Riding. He belongs to many companion orders, where he is often either Provincial Chaplain, or Organist.