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THE POINT WITHIN THE CIRCLE

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(Refer to the sketch file when reading this paper.)

FIGURE I

Circle - Greek symbol of Perfection

Circumference - divided into six equal parts.

Radius - $1/6$ of circumference.

Equilateral triangle formed by joining the top point on the circle with the two lateral bottom joints.

A similar triangle is superimposed with its apex in reverse position and joining the two lateral top points on the circle. The figure thus formed by the two triangles forms a six-pointed star within the circle. It will be noted that at each point a smaller equilateral triangle is formed. In the centre of the figure, surrounded by the six smaller triangles is a six-sided figure whose opposite sides are parallel and equal and whose angles are also equal. (An explanation of the recurring sixes in the figure can be sought but is outside the scope and purpose of this paper.)

The diagram formed within the circle is historically known as "The star of David."

Consideration of the geometrical terms used in the diagram will assist in the search for its possible meaning.

A Point:(a) That which has neither length, breadth or thickness, therefore, Infinite.

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(b) A place marked in the heavens from which bearings and distances of the heavenly bodies are calculated.

(c) One of the 32 divisions of the mariner's compass.

Circle: A sphere or orb.

A plane figure bounded by a simple curve line - a circumference.

Straight Line: Shortest distance between two points.

Chord: A right-line uniting the extremities of the arc of a circle.

Radius: A right-line extending from the centre of a circle to its periphery - its length being $1/6$ of the circumference.

Cube: A regular solid body with six equal square sides.

FIGURE II

The starting point of Figure II is at the centre of the circle from which,

provided the radius is kept constant, the circumference cannot err. The point, as above defined, having neither length, breadth nor thickness is therefore infinite. God is infinite, the Centre of all good - the "Grand Prime Cause of all Existence".

With the point of the compasses securely placed on the centre, and having defined the radius, which must then be kept constant, we describe the circle. If the radius is altered the circle is distorted. Being conscious of our limitations, to make our circle complete we must work within the compass of our attainments. Neither to underdo nor in excess, but knowing our limits, we harmonize our actions and make the complete figure without distortions.

The cardinal points on the circle are defined by the points of the two triangles as shown in Figure 1. These points are basic principles to guide our conduct through life. The points of the upright triangle may be taken to represent Body, Soul, Spirit. This conception is basic to our understanding of human existence. At birth the Soul, that is YOU, the PERSON, enters flesh and becomes invested with the SPIRIT, that is the Spark Divine. At death the flesh (the temporary abode) perishes and returns to the earth. The spirit returns to God who gave it. The Soul (the person You) "which having being, must ever be" and "goes marching on".

The inverted triangle in Figure 1 contains the second trinity in human nature viz Wisdom, Strength, Beauty. These human attributes are essential to Man in his building of character, "that mansion not made by hands, eternal in the heavens". Wisdom to construct; Strength to support; Beauty to adorn. These three gifts, wisdom, strength and beauty emanate (as shown in Figure 1) from God who is the centre, the giver of every good and perfect gift. They radiate from that centre by the radius of our endeavours to the circumference to the best of our ability or "within the compass of our attainments." Therefore if our compasses are on the centre and our radius kept constant and we work within our limits the circle of our duties must be complete. The circle is marked by the two trinities of the triangles viz Wisdom, Strength, Beauty and Body, Soul and Spirit.

The six cardinal points or six human attributes or virtues are joined by chords, indicating that they work in harmony and are bound each to each into a perfect whole. For instance, note in Figure II, the following combinations and their product.

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Strength and Spirit	Fortitude
Spirit and Beauty	Patience
Beauty and Soul	Kindness
Soul and Wisdom	Justice
Wisdom and Body	Obedience
Strength and Body	Moderation

Finally by linking Wisdom, Strength and Beauty with the centre - God, We are drawn back to the Grand Source, the Centre, "from whom all goodness emanates." There then emerges from the drawings in Figure II the reward of our labour, the chief corner stone, the perfect ashlar, the first stone in the building, the cube, which in its symmetry represents -

"The mind of man in his declining years after a life well spent in acts of piety and virtue.

A mind thus disciplined and matured can no otherwise be tried and proved than by the

Square of God's word and the Compasses of his own self convincing conscience."

The geometrical figures integrated as illustrated show (1) The Circle -the symbol of Eternity (2) The two Equilateral Triangles, inverted and superimposed showing the six smaller triangles at the circumference of the circle hence its name Hexalpha which represents the collection of Holy Scriptures in six languages (3) the Point within the Circle, the point from which a mason cannot err The Point, representing the Centre, the source, therefore God, the Great Prime Cause of all existence: (4) the Cube or Hexahedron, perfect in all its parts and according to Pythagoras the most sacred of the perfect bodies. The cube is a regular solid body of six equal sides or faces. All of the above geometrical figures emanate from the Point within the circle. They are also the most perfect, therefore the most sacred. Thus we speculate on the figures by investing them with an appropriate selection of the moral virtues and human attributes so that by probing their symbolic meaning we might uncover their "useful and instructive lesson."

The subject of this paper was suggested to me on reading again Green's "Keys of Freemasonry". Here he treats by illustration, the significance of the perfect ashlar, rich in its symbolism and practical in its material function.

A RETROSPECT

Bro. C.E. Green published his "Keys" in Perth on 1 July, 1925. He was at the time editor of the old "West Australian Freemason", a P.M. of Thistle Lodge No. 889S.C. and a member of Mundaring Lodge No. 90 W.A.C. He came to W.A. from Scotland in 1910 and was by profession a school teacher. C.E. Green died in 1926 A second edition of his "Keys" was published in 1932.

I have always felt an affinity with the author of the "Keys to Freemasonry". We were Scots and came to W.A. about the same time (73 years ago). The book was published in 1926, the year I took the sublime degree. The second edition of the book was published in 1932, the year I was installed as W.M. of Lathom Lodge No. 29. Although separated by a decade we had both edited the old "WA Freemason".

The sketches accompanying this paper are

FIGURE 1.

"The Star of David"

FIGURE 2.

"The Perfect Circle"