

Freemasonry - I

T071 The Inner Teachings 2nd March 1938 Pembroke Hall, London

Invocation:

We worship the Great Architect of the Universe. We bow our heads in simple humility before His* works. May we all be receptive to His love, to His wisdom, to His beauty. May we learn patience; may we understand true simplicity, and through these qualities construct within our being the great Temple of Light.

Amen.

*[*See the introduction for an explanation of gender issues in editing these teachings.]*

The subject chosen tonight is wide, so we have come to the conclusion that we must devote several talks to it. We cannot cover all the ground in one hour, since we are mindful of the fact that whilst many here are initiated brethren, there are also some not yet *consciously* initiated into the brotherhood on earth. But we stress the fact that all present tonight have at some time sought entrance to the Temple of Light, or they would not be here.

Let us divide our subject into two halves and first consider the freemasonry known on the outer plane today which is a secret and an exclusive order, and later turn to the freemasonry which is universal, to which many souls are attached who have never entered any lodge or undergone earthly initiation. This brotherhood is not confined to the few, nor was it inaugurated in Europe only a few centuries ago. As we understand this vast truth, such a masonry was originated by the revelation given at the very beginning of this humanity and brought to the earth plane by the God-men, the messengers from the higher planes of life, and those who came from the Sun and other planets to point the way. To the young souls then incarnating on earth this revelation showed the path by which they must travel in order to grow in God consciousness, to become clothed with the 'wedding garment' before they could return to the mystical wedding of the soul.

By this we mean that freemasonry, as revealed at the beginning, was the path indicated for the soul, that it might grow, or build for itself that temple, the celestial body or the body of light, without which no man can enter into the glories of heaven. Because, in order to respond to the beauties of God's world (by which we mean, God's universe), man* must create by effort, by work, the delicate and beautiful instrument which will respond to such higher vibrations. When this delicate instrument—the soul—stays deaf and blind and dumb, it is in a 'state of darkness', simply because through its own folly or ignorance, it has shut away the perfected state of conscious life. There may be those present who in this 'day' of life have not been initiated into a masonic lodge, but they must not feel that they are unqualified to pursue the path of brotherhood. There are many groups on earth today apparently outside the ancient brotherhood of freemasonry who nevertheless have found the Ancient Wisdom. Thus the journey which they follow lies parallel with that of the freemason. The brotherhood of man is universal.

*[*For editorial policy around gender, see the introduction.]*

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Originally the revelation came to the people on continents now extinct. You have heard of Atlantis and Lemuria*, with which many present were familiar, but do not think that the original revelation came from either. There were other lands before these, but more of this in the future. For our present purpose, suffice it to say that the revelation came from the wise ones in the mountains—or on the mountain tops—of various parts of the world. Some think that the truth came from Atlantis. Well, it *may* have done so, because the wise ones once were there. It may also have come from the polar regions, because the wise ones were there also. It may also have come from the East, for the wise ones rested there, wherefore symbolically it is said that the light comes from the East. The light comes from the East because the sun rises in the east and the brotherhood is founded upon the ancient Sun wisdom.

*[*See teaching T 047.]*

You can read about modern freemasonry in several books and discover that it concentrates upon the building of the temple of King Solomon. What does this mean? Let us get into the soul—the inner meaning. True enough, there may have lived a great and wise king called Solomon and he may have built a temple, but look beneath physical manifestation at all times for the truth. So many in the earth life are carried away by material facts and build so much upon records of actual happenings, but do you remember how the Master Jesus always spake in parables? We would interpolate here that when such parables are understood ‘in the light of the sun’ (here again a parable!) they will each reveal some truth concerning the evolution of the soul.

The temple of King Solomon is the Temple of the Sun. The physical sun itself is the vehicle through which the spiritual life force manifests: the Sun, and the attendant twelve signs of the zodiac. The ‘arch’ masons present will recognise in the twelve ‘tribes’ and the twelve ‘sons’ of the Hebrew teaching the twelve signs of the zodiac, or the twelve archetypal men, the twelve grouped round the King, the twelve perfect types of humanity. For all humanity stands grouped under one or other of these twelve aspects, and with its perfecting, each ego will contain the twelve and will be then perfect by the full illumination—or shall we say by the blending and absorption into the centre of life? Do not be frightened! This does not mean that you will lose yourself. So many dread the thought of absorption into the Universal: we all like to cling to ‘I’, forgetting that the real and the true ‘I’ is always a part, a unit in the Universal—or, if you like the word better, the Christ light. It is separation from this Christ light (or Sun) which causes human suffering. As we tried to explain when we spoke of joy and sorrow being one, only when the soul is separated from its true self do joy and sorrow become separate too, and operate in the life as teachers and guides, thus leading the soul back again to God.

Truth can be repeated again and again, and even then we do not absorb it, so these things will bear repeating. The Ancient Wisdom and the ancient brotherhood of freemasons can be found throughout history and in almost every country. Those who are of the craft know that the fundamental truths of freemasonry are concerned with the liberal arts and sciences. For those who do not know, I must try to enumerate these. Let me see: there will be grammar, rhetoric, logic, geometry, music and astronomy. Upon this knowledge is built the perfect expression of

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God through the soul of man. We said before that knowledge of music, mathematics and astronomy was essential in the Greek mystery schools. Some know that Pythagoras expected his pupils to have knowledge of these subjects. The building of a soul operates on the same principle as the building of a temple of wood and stone, in so far as it is based upon law and perfect measurement. The physical body should demonstrate that measurement of the waist is so many times that of the neck, and so on, indicating that even the body of man is governed by proportion or measurement.

Many thousands of years ago, the great temples of the past, of which you have ruins in India, in Easter Island, in America, in the East and in Greece, were temples built upon these principles, with a symbolic meaning in the structure of every one. More recently buildings have been erected in ignorance of these ancient principles of true masonry. On another night, following upon this subject, we will consider the architecture of the past and the present. We shall find it interesting. We feel from the spirit world that architecture is a lost art, or an art which lies hidden, and until man again opens to the Ancient Wisdom, the perfect structures of old cannot be built—but they will come again.

I hope I have not confused you between the actual building of temples and the building of the soul. We have, on the one hand, that masonry known as 'operative' masonry, and on the other, the masonry of the soul, known as 'speculative' masonry. We do not ask you masons to accept what we say, but we think that masonry of the soul must be operative also; if it be only speculative, it is a passive thing, but if operative, it has found a channel of expression in action, in service. That is why we feel the true brother, the true mason, must today be operative. This is the future work of freemasons and all true brothers: to become operative masons in the work for humanity, not in so far as they must build with stone, but in the degree they construct their own lives and raise the lives of their brethren on earth.

We had better explain that there are certain steps which a brother is expected to take in the craft, for those who do not know. There comes a point in each man's life when he wants more knowledge. We are told by Jesus to 'knock, and it shall be opened unto you'*, so he who is seeking knocks upon the door of the temple, and after the teachers are satisfied that he is genuinely seeking they reveal certain knowledge. It may be that the knowledge will come in various ways, through contact with the invisible worlds or through much-maligned spiritualism, but light then comes and floods the mind, and whereas before the soul was living 'in a state of darkness', living in 'earth', there comes then that wonderful experience whereby the soul knows, not through the mind but through spiritual illumination, that it has found an eternal truth, something beyond all price. This, then, is the first step. Shall we call it the first degree?

*[*Luke 11 : 9]*

Then comes a period of waiting. This is where so many feel disappointed, and sometimes use the word 'delusion'. After the first step has been taken many tests come to the soul, tests of the soul's integrity and sincerity; many little snags are thrown across the path. The tempter comes in, [the tempter] of the earthly mind, arguing with the higher self: 'It is all nonsense;

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don't believe it; nothing exists but what you can smell and touch, the things which you contact through your senses. This sixth sense is all nonsense, all imagination.' This is what the power aspect will attempt. You remember our talk on good and evil, and how the mind (which has its part to play in evolution)—the mind power drives man forward to seek self-expression? But if it is allowed to get out of control, mind power can destroy; the intellect is a valuable asset, a good friend, but a bad enemy. Through intellect, then, comes that force which will turn the soul off its path, but when seen from the higher aspect it is seen that this mind, which condemns and would destroy, is the 'tester', trying out the quality of the soul. If the soul stays secure in the wisdom which has been revealed to it through the light, then the next step is permitted.

The next step is somewhat harder, where many tumble and crumble; this is where the soul must put into action what it has learnt in the first degree. It is so easy to *talk* about the brotherhood of man. We are spirit; every man is our brother and God our Father, the Great Architect of the Universe, and we, like the rest of humanity, are His workmen, His craftsmen. We are set not only to build the temple of the soul but to help in the evolution of all men, for the construction of that mighty, grand temple in the heavens. Thus in operative masonry the master mason tests the work to see that it is exact and perfect; it is no use pushing in an uneven stone at the base of the building, so the master mason must use chisel and gavel and measuring tools; he must labour until he has knocked off all excrescences, all the knobs. You and I have still so many pieces that stick out, so many excrescences! The arrogant mind is so sure of itself! The true craftsman, working under the Great Architect of the Universe, has to work upon all these excrescences which exhibit themselves as weakness, lack of truth, simple frailties such as giving way to flattery, vanity, irritability—all these; depression too is a big knob that sticks out!

These things are not eradicated in a day or a week, and when you least expect it, up they come again. Selfishness takes many forms; when you think you are rid of it in one form, it will come upon you again in another.

We are craftsmen and are learning through our labours that there is a harmony in the universe which comes through to the earth in the form of music; hence music is important to the soul of the musician working in his particular workshop. Moreover, music expresses again the same principles which govern the building of a temple—or for that matter, of a universe. So we get down to hard work for the second degree and perfect ourselves through life experiences, and then, when we are ready, having satisfied our elder brethren that we can stand illumination which will come, we are allowed to take this next step.

The next step is still more difficult. The lower self must die completely and the candidate must gain complete mastery over the lower self, over the physical and the astral, or desire body; the soul must be able to detach itself from these lower vehicles, or aspects, of its being.

That is sufficient for tonight. We have given you an outline of the path indicated to the early brethren of the world, the path by which they must become fit and worthy brethren of the great White Lodge, or Temple of Light.

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Q.Can you tell us what effect modern music has on us?

A.Do you refer to modern music of a classical nature? (No, I am thinking more of jazz.)
Well, if you like jazz, I think it is helpful to you. We think that modern music has a certain effect upon humanity; it at least stimulates. All is moving in the right direction. We have so much respect for the law of progress. We do not like to use destructive criticism because we see such things have their place. We could say that some vibrations are inspired by elementals and that other music is inspired by angels. Even then, some will not know which is which, but let us recognise that both these aspects of music have their place in evolution.

Benediction:

Great Architect of the Universe, we pray to become true and straight pillars in Thy temple. May the light of the Sun, Christ, strike each pillar and radiate colours beautiful into the centre of the temple of life.

Amen.

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