



Sussex Freemasons - West Group

'The West Wing'
(Bognor, Chichester, Clapham, Littlehampton,
Midhurst, Pulborough, Steyning and Worthing)

The West Wing Learning and Development Team

Sacred Geometry and the Royal Arch Jewel

This paper takes us on a journey from the ancient symbols which go back thousands of years and many cultures to the forming of the jewel of the Holy Royal Arch. A journey of finding that, which may be lost, but is central to the very essence of Freemasonry.

When I was a young Freemason, that was a long time ago, I looked around my 'Craft' Lodge and saw many brethren wearing a number of jewels on their breast but the one that struck me most I later learned was a jewel associated with the Holy Royal Arch. But what confused me was that some had white ribbons, some crimson ribbons and others, on more senior brethren, had tri-coloured ribbons. I came to wonder what it all meant. This was the start of my deeper understanding and learning.

I learned that in my 'Craft' Lodge I was on a journey of personal discovery. I was to learn about being a moral, educated and reflective man. Those three steps of my development to becoming a good citizen. What intrigued me was the discovery that those wearing the white ribbon had taken a fourth step in their personal development. A step or journey to find their spiritual centre. A journey to explore their faith. The crimson ribbon identified those who had succeeded in that journey and were now teachers and mentors helping those wearing the white ribbons on their journey of spiritual discovery. Those Freemasons wearing the tri-coloured ribbons were the elders of what I learned to be a Holy Royal Arch chapter.

I knew that a church 'chapter' was a group of clerics that formed a moral body to promote divine worship. They enjoyed each other's company spending communal time together. I later also learned that those on that spiritual journey called each other 'companions' which interested me because a 'companion' is someone who spends time with or travels with others. A perfect description of these Freemasons who had taken that fourth step.

Exploring more thoroughly into this jewel I discovered triangles, circles and a thing called a 'triple tau'. The way the triangles were interlaced to form a six pointed star I thought must mean something. This led me into the amazing world of 'Sacred Geometry'.

Sacred Geometry ascribes symbolic meaning to geometric shapes. This is a fundamental part of Freemasonry. The belief that a 'divine creator', the 'Great Architect of the Universe', is working in a mysterious but constructive way in creating all things.



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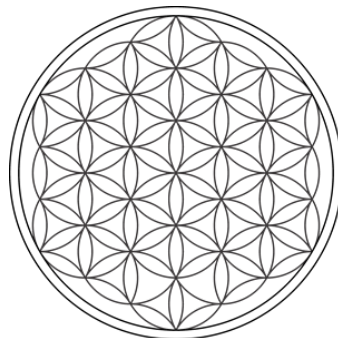
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Stephen Skinner, an Australian author, states that 'Sacred Geometry' has its roots in the study of nature and has mathematical principles. For example honey bees construct hexagonal cells to store their honey and certain shells grow in spirals.

As we dig deeper into 'Sacred Geometry' we can see that Plato and Pythagoras were not the only people who aspired to investigate how all things were created. In the Temple of Osiris was found a representation of the 'Flower of Life', dating back some 6000 years. It is an intricate design made up of nineteen overlapping circles which intersect with each other to form a flower. Within the flower can be seen the 3 basic shapes, Triangle, Square and Circle, in two dimension and the Pyramid, Cube and Square, in three dimension.

Each overlapping circle, it is said, holds a secret which underpins the Cosmos, holding the answers to the mysteries of life and the keys that unlock powerful hidden knowledge. It demonstrates that all things are interlinked as part of the intricate web of creation. The 'Flower of Life' is something that transcends culture and can be found in Egyptian and Buddhist traditions



The Flower of Life.

Taken from the 'Flower of Life' we find Metatron's Cube consisting of thirteen circles of the same size with lines extended from the centre of every circle to the centre of all the other twelve circles. According to Jewish and Islamic writings Archangel Metatron is in charge of all God's creation as well as being a judge and intermediary between God and man, God's scribe. Metatron is the name given to Enoch when God took him from earth to walk by his side as an angel.

Enoch, according to the bible, was Adam's great, great, great, great, grandson, and Noah's great grandfather. He apparently lived for 365 years. He was commended for his immense faith and as a reward he transcended death and was "taken " to heaven by God.



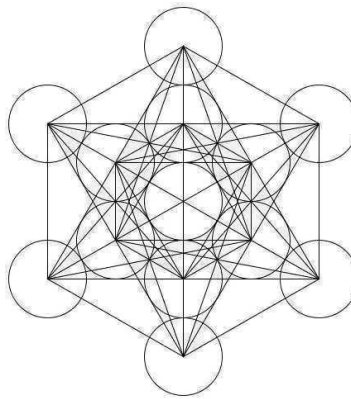
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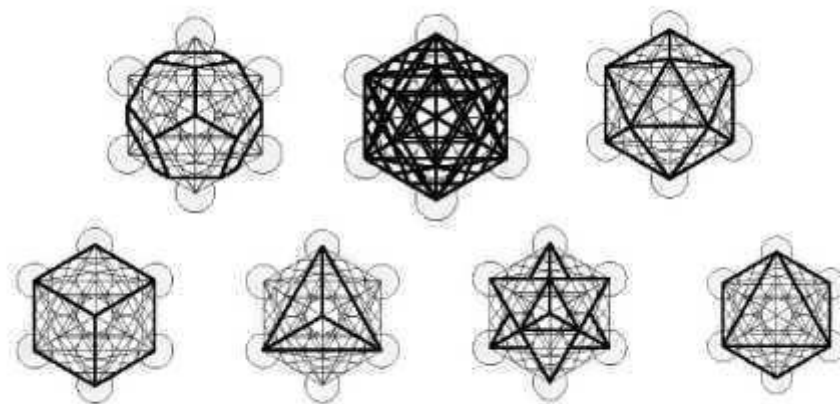
In the third Degree Working Tools we are told that “the Pencil teaches us that our words and actions are observed and recorded by the Almighty Architect, to Whom we must give an account of our conduct through life.” I would suggest that the angel making those observations and recordings would be Archangel Metatron (Enoch)

Here we have the link between, Enoch, Metatron and Freemasonry and perhaps the start of the journey to the Holy Royal Arch jewel.



Metatron's Cube

From Metatron's Cube we can see in the diagrams below the five 'Platonic Bodies' within the cube along with other geometrical figures.



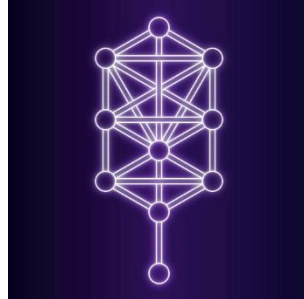
Metatron's Cube and the Five Platonic Bodies.



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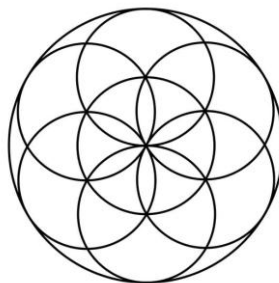
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The 'Tree of Life'

The 'Tree of Life' or 'Sephiroth' consist of ten interconnected circles which has twenty two paths that connect them. The 'Sephiroth' symbolize the ten aspects of the divine through which the infinite become the finite. It demonstrates the principles of balance, harmony and unity that underlie the structure of the universe.



The Seed of Life.

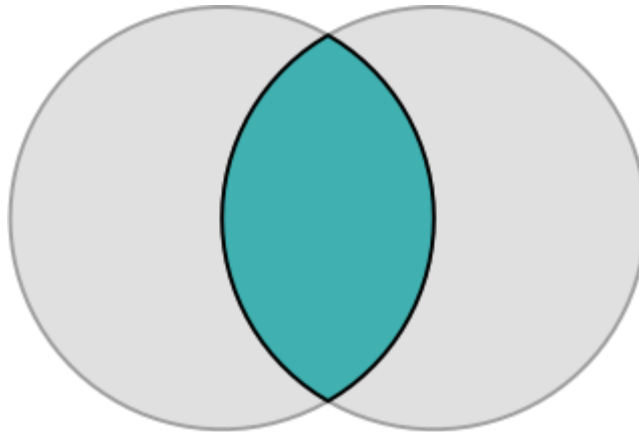
The 'Seed of Life' consists of seven overlapping circles interconnecting in the centre. Symbolizing the interconnection of life on earth, universal existence and that all life originated from a single source in a divine plan.



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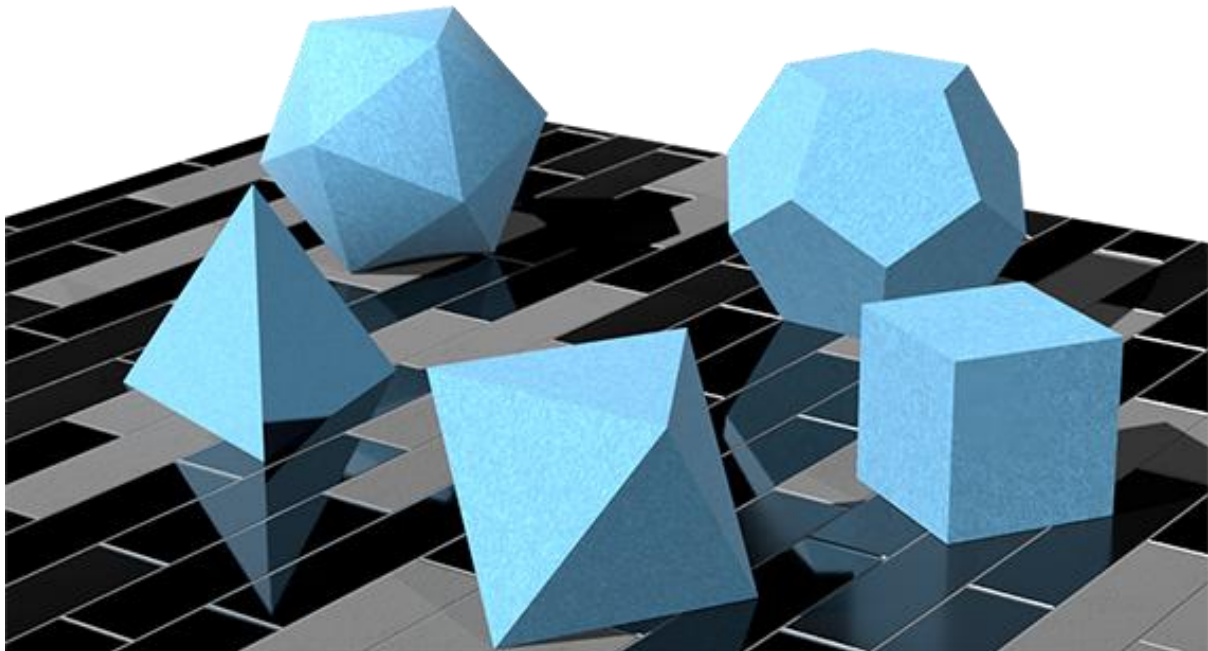


Vesica Piscis

Two spheres, Vesica Piscis, is the blue print for more complex structures. It represents the Creator's ability to build such structures by just adding another sphere. Could this be the evolution of reproduction?

The Five Platonic Bodies.

Fire, Air, Earth, Water, Universe.



During the early eighteenth century, when the Grand Lodge of London and Westminster, which later to became the Grand Lodge of England, whose principals were ‘



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Enlightenment, Scientific Revolution and Tolerance', Speculative Masons studied Newton, Pythagoras, Aristotle, Plato and other classical philosophers and educationalists. But it was Plato and his explanation of 'creation' that sparked the imagination of those who put together the 4th Step in Freemasonry, the Holy Royal Arch.

Plato (427-347 BCE) was a student of Socrates and a teacher of Aristotle whose teachings had a lasting impact on Western thought. In his writing, 'Timaeus', he considered the Platonic Solids were the building blocks of the universe, each representing the fundamental elements—earth, air, fire, water, and the cosmos.

As Plato put his thoughts into mathematical and geometrical form it was easily transcribed into Masonic coding using triangles and right angles. The Triple Tau contains 8 right angles and became the 'Masonic Key' to the coding of the Platonic bodies, the explanation of God's 'creation'.

Fire, the lightest of the elements, gives off heat and light. Being the lightest element Plato gave it the geometrical form, the tetrahedron, whose two right angles are equal to that of one Triple Tau. It was 'Masonically' coded and is represented in the jewel by the a large triangle and the central triangle all intersecting.

Air, the element that gives life, is represented by the octahedron. It consists of 8 triangles, 16 right angles, which is equal to two Triple Taus'. In the jewel it is represented by the two large triangles without regard to their intersections.

Earth, the most substantial form and the most immovable on its basis is represented by the hexahedron (cube). In the jewel it is represented by the two larger triangles and the central triangle without regard to intersections. This is equal to three Triple Taus'.

Water, represented by the icosahedron, was considered by Plato to be the heaviest element. It is shown in the jewel as the inverted triangle divided into 4 lesser ones by the intersection of the central triangle. It consists of twenty triangles and forty right angles and is equal to five Triple Taus'.



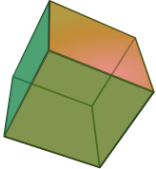







The **Cosmos** or **Universe** is represented by the dodecahedron, twelve pentagons, fifty six right angles. Seven Triple Taus'. It is represented in the jewel by the six triangles around its circumference.

But, as we see from the work on the 'Sacred Symbols', Plato was really explaining or expounding upon the philosophy that had been known for centuries.



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Fire	Air	Earth	Water	Universe
Tetrahedron	Octahedron	Hexahedron (Cube)	Icosahedron	Dodecahedron
				
4 triangles	8 triangles	6 squares	20 triangles	12 pentagons
8 right angles	16 right angles	24 right angles	40 right angles	56 right angles
Triple Tau's				
1	2	3	5	7
Jewel				
1 large triangle plus 1 central triangle all intersected.	2 large triangles without regard to their intersections.	2 larger and 1 central triangle without regard to intersections.	Inverted triangle divided into 4 lesser ones by the intersection of the central triangle.	6 small triangles round the circumference of the jewel
				

The Triple Tau.

The Holy Royal Arch is the 'essence' of Freemasonry. The Triple Tau represents the "Deity" (Divine Nature). It is the 'Masonic Key' that unlocks the mystery of creation. It is at the centre of the Holy Royal Arch philosophy. It is 'Faith', no matter how practiced, as the key to our very being.





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The 'KEY'. The Triple Tau.

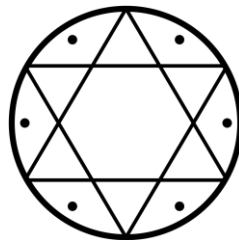
The Royal Arch Jewel.

The Holy Royal Arch is considered to be the 'essence' of Freemasonry. The 'Jewel' marks that status and is worn in Craft Lodges to indicate that the wearer is on the 4th Step of his Masonic journey, to find his 'spiritual centre. His faith.

Within the 'Jewel' are clues as to where the spiritual centre concludes. It uses the ancient culture of sacred geometry, which has been in existence for thousands of years, to guide the Companion to 'spiritual enlightenment'.

Follow that journey in the diagrams, the sacred geometry, below.

Seal of Solomon.



Inscriptions.



Small Circle:

"Nil nisi clavis deest" - "Nothing is wanted but the key."



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The key is the Triple Tau which is within this small circle hanging at the bottom of the Jewel.

Large Circle

Front - "Si talia jungere possis sit tibi scire satis" – "If though canst comprehend these things, though knowest enough"

What things? It is the elements that Plato considers to be the forms, which together, created all things.

Reverse - Deo, regi, et fratribus; honor, fidelitas, benevolentia." - "For God, king, and the brethren; honour, fidelity and benevolence."

The importance of these elements, "*God, King and Brethren*", are explained in the 'Charge' after initiation.

Large Triangles (Seal of Solomon):

"(Eurekamen) invenimus cultor dei civis mundi" – "We have found the worship of God, O citizen of the world."

Referring again to the 'Charge' after initiation.

"As a citizen of the world I am to enjoin you to be exemplary in the discharge of your duties..."

The Holy Royal Arch ritual takes us on a journey of discovery. The discovery of finding our faith and enlightenment.

"Wisdom, Strength, Beauty. Peace, Concord, Truth." So mote it be.

Central Triangle:

"Templum Hierosolyma" – "The Temple at Jerusalem".

The 'Temple at Jerusalem' represents your very essence. The centre of who you are and what you believe.

"Clavis ad Thesaurum" – "A Key to a Treasure".

The key to unlock the treasure is represented by the 'Triple Tau'

"Theca ubi res pretiosa deponitur". – "A place where a precious thing is concealed".



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or

“Res ipsa pretiosa” – “The Precious Thing Itself”.

The centre of all that is our true essence lies within us and is unlocked by a simple key – “faith”.

And so the Holy Royal Arch Jewel takes us to the very beginning of creation and guides us on our spiritual journey to find our spiritual centre and ‘enlightenment’.

The Fourth Step completes Man’s development in being the best man he can be.

Ex. Comp. Stephen J. Goulding. SLGCR.

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