



*Tracing Board of the Knight of the East and West Degree, by Bro. J. Harris, "Artist and Engraver of the Royal Arch and Craft Tracing Boards, etc.," from George Oliver's Historic Landmarks of Freemasonry, Volume II, American Edition, 1852.*

## The Knight of the East and West

Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite

Albert Pike Recension, circa 1870s.



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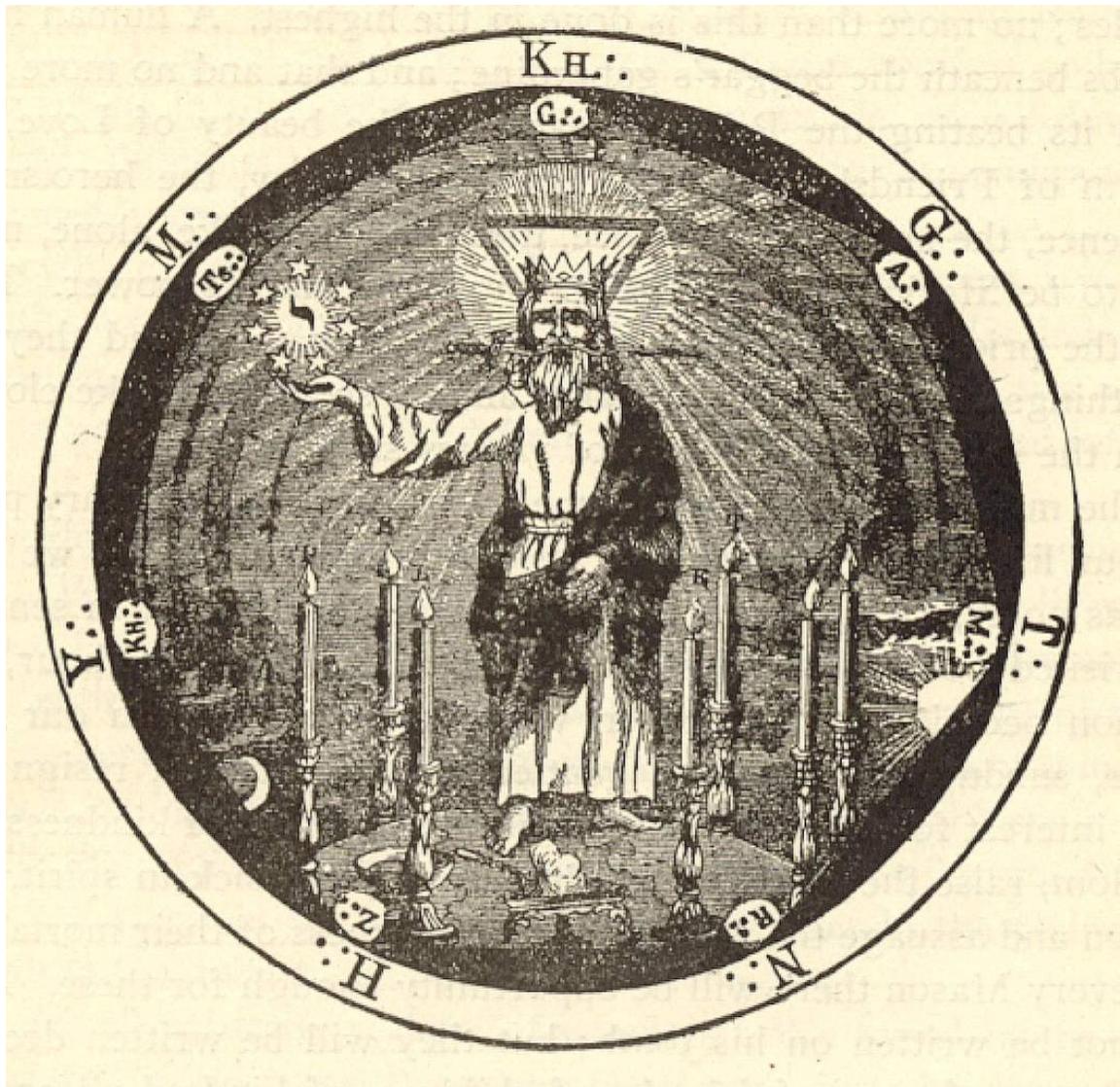
## TEMPLE LAYOUT.

[To be supplied later.]

## THE TRACING BOARD OF THE DEGREE.



This is from Pierre Lambert de Lintot's  
Engraving, "Rite of Seven Degrees at London."



This is from *Morals and Dogma*.

The tracing-board of the Degree is a heptagon, around which, near the edge, are the words whose initials are on the capitals of the columns, i.e., Chesed, Geburah, Tiphareth, Netzach, Hod, Yesod, Malkuth.

Inside of these, in the same order, are the words Union, etc., which appear on the columns. In the centre of the heptagon is the figure of a man in a long white robe, with a golden girdle round his waist, and long snow-white hair and beard; his right hand stretched out, and holding seven stars; his head encircled by an aureole, his eyes raying light, and in his mouth a two-edged sword. Around him stand seven golden candlesticks, and over each, one of these letters: E; Σ; Π; Θ; Σ; Φ; Λ: initials of the names of the

Seven Churches, EPHESUS, SMYRNA, PERGAMOS, THYATIRA, SARDIS, PHILADELPHIA, LAODICEA. On either side are the rising sun and crescent moon, and under these the basin and chafing-dish.



This is from George Oliver's *Historical Landmarks of Freemasonry*, Vol. 2.

## THE PRECEPTORY: ITS FURNITURE, ETC.

Bodies of this Degree are styled PRECEPTORIES; and each regularly consists of twenty-four members only. All others are deemed adjunct members.

The CHAMBER OF COUNCIL of the Preceptory is regularly in the shape of a heptagon, hung with crimson, sprinkled with stars of gold. In each angle is a square column, each of a different color. These respective colors are – beginning with the column in the South-east, and going round by the South, West, and North, to the North-east:

Direction	Color	Names [MO]	Names, base. [MO]	Capitals[Lit]	Halfway[Lit]
S. E.	Red	Beauty	Friendship	Khased	Union
S.	Orange	Divinity	Union	Geburah	Honour
S. W.	Yellow	Wisdom	Resignation	Tephareth	Duty
W.	Green	Power	Discretion	Netsach	Loyalty
N. W.	Blue	Honour	Fidelity	Hod	Courage
N.	Indigo	Glory	Prudence	Yesud	Discretion
N. E.	Violet	Force	Temperance	Malakoth	Silence

### OUR CORRECTIONS TO THIS FROM CLASSICAL ATTRIBUTIONS:

Direction	Color	Sephiroth	Names(middle)
S. E.	Indigo	Binah	Understanding
S.	Blue	Chesed	Mercy
S. W.	Red	Geburah	Severity
W.	Yellow	Tiphareth	Beauty
N. W.	Green	Netzach	Victory
N.	Orange	Hod	Splendour
N. E.	Violet	Yesod	Foundation

GOLDEN DAWN VAULT ATTRIBUTIONS:

DIRECTION	PLANET	COLOR
E. S. E.	Jupiter	Blue
S. S. E.	Saturn	Indigo
S. S. W.	Luna	Violet
W.	Venus	Green
N. N. W.	Mercury	Orange
N. N. E.	Sol	Yellow
E. N. E.	Mars.	Red

We present these attributions so that they can be referred to, and hopefully amended as more information becomes available to us.

On the capitals of the respective columns, beginning at the same place, and going round in the same order, are the letters Kh, G, Th, N, H, Y, M, the initials of the names of the last seven Sephiroth of the Kabalah, KHASED, GEBURAH, TEPHARETH, NETSACH, HOD, YESUD, and MALAKOTH.

[N. B. We will let Pike's instructions stand, and try to connect those *in Magnum Opus* with those in the *Liturgy*, but it doesn't always match. Any corrections or classical Western Attributes we might obtain from the Golden Dawn materials, we shall leave out of the Ritual proper, and let them be available for future reworkings of the Ritual. ]

Half-way down each column, in the same order, diagonally across each, in gilded letters, on a white scroll, are the words, respectively, UNION, HONOR, DUTY, LOYALTY, COURAGE, DISCRETION, SILENCE. On each of these columns should be a brilliant lamp or transparency. If a transparency, the Hebrew letters should be on these, and not on the capitals.

Over the seat of the Master, in the East, hangs a red transparency, on which is a two-edged, cross-hilted Sword, point upward, with three stars on each side of it, forming a triangle, and one over the point. Over all is the letter  $\beth$ , initial of the Hebrew word KETHER, the name of the first Sephirah of the Kabalah.

Over the Senior Warden is a yellow transparency on which is a Sun, rising, and amid his rays the letter  $\aleph$ , initial of the Hebrew word HAKEMAH, or CHOCHMAH, name of the second Sephirah.

Over the Junior Warden is a blue transparency, on which is a crescent Moon, its horns upward, and over it the letter **ב**, initial of the Hebrew word BINAH, name of the third Sefirah.

Around the room are twenty-four thrones, or arm-chairs, including those of the Master and Wardens. That of the Master is covered with *red* cloth; that of the Senior Warden, with *yellow*, and that of the Junior Warden, with *blue*. The others are covered with cloth of other colors of light as separated by the prism.

In the East is a platform, to which you ascend by seven steps. This is supported by four winged oxen, with the heads respectively of a Lion, an Ox, a Man, and an Eagle. On this platform is a square altar, and in front of the altar an arm-chair, covered with cloth of violet color, and always vacant. In front of this is a foot-stool, covered with violet-colored velvet.

On the altar are a silver basin with perfumed water, a chafing dish with live coals, and a large book sealed with seven great seals of wax, of the seven colors mentioned above, each seal being at least two inches in diameter, and each attached to a ribbon of the same color with itself, which at the other end passes through a hole in one lid, the seals lying on the other lid, and being slightly attached to it by a drop of wax, so as to be easily separated, leaving the seal whole.

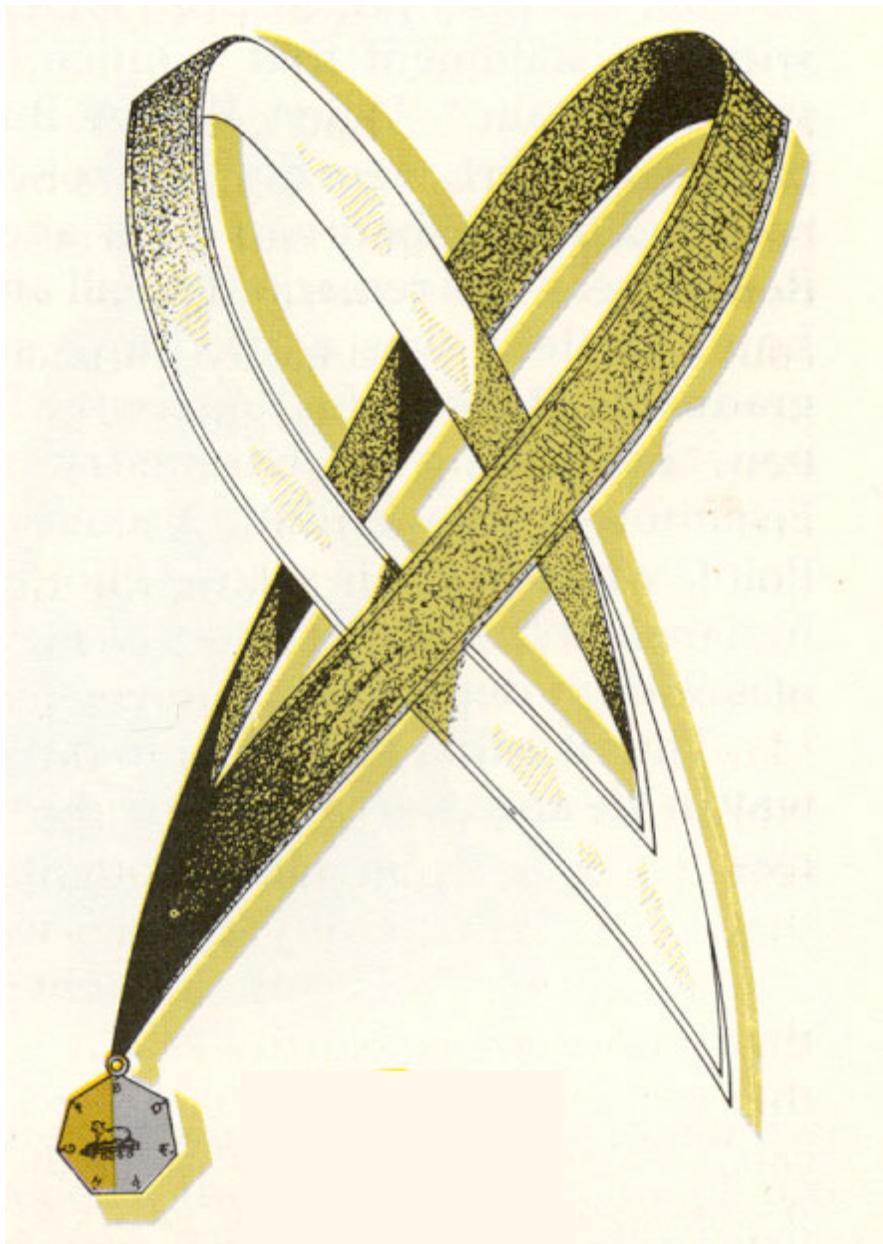
## OFFICERS, TITLES, DECORATIONS, ETC.

The Master is styled 'VENERABLE PRECEPTOR:' The other officers are the two Wardens, styled 'ZEALOUS'; the other Brothers styled 'FAITHFUL': the Orator, Almoner, Master of Ceremonies, Secretary, Treasurer, Expert, Assistant Expert, Captain of the Guard, and Sentinel.

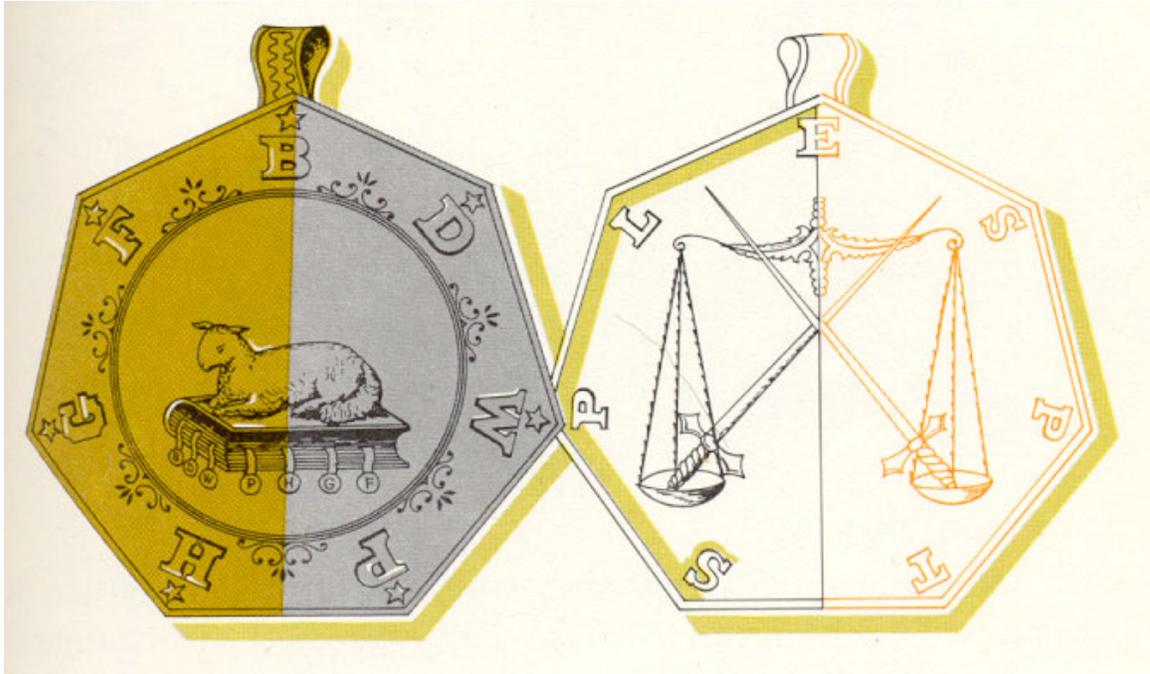
The Master represents JOHN THE BAPTIST: the officers and members, his most eminent disciples among the Essenes.



The APRON is of yellow silk, triangular in shape, and lined and edged with crimson. On it, in the centre, is the TETRACTYS, in dots of gold.

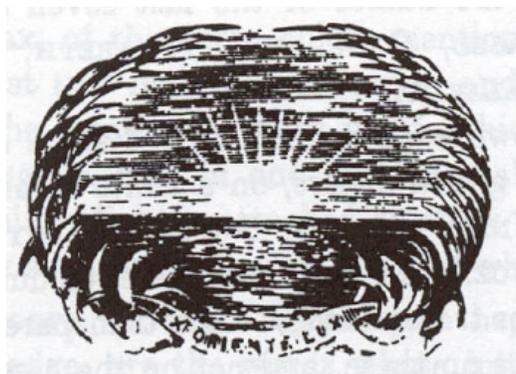


The ORDER is a broad, white, watered ribbon, worn from right to left, crossed by a black one of equal width, worn from left to right. The JEWEL is suspended from the latter. Or, it may be a broad ribbon, one half white and the other black, and worn from right to left.



The Jewel is a heptagonal medal, half gold, half silver or mother-of-pearl. On one side are engraved, at the angles, the same letters as are on the capitals of the columns, with a star over each. In the center of it, on the same side, is a lamb, lying on a book with seven seals, on which seals are, respectively, the same letters. On the reverse side are two swords, cross-wise, points upward, and the hilts resting on an even balance: in the corners, the initials of the names of the Seven Churches.

Each brother wears, under the Order and Apron, a long white linen robe, and on his head a cirlet of gold or gilded metal, like a coronet.



## TO OPEN.

The Battery is: Seven, by Six and One [¶¶¶¶¶¶¶ and ¶].

[Conventions used here: VM = Venerable Master; JD = Junior Deacon; E = Examiner; SD = Senior Deacon; L = Lecturer; JW = Junior Warden; SW = Senior Warden; R = Response; C = Candidate; Q = Question; A = Answer]

The VM, having on a table near him the Sealed Book, and his hand resting upon it, raps once, and asks:

VM: Faithful Brother Junior Deacon, the first duty of Knights of the East and West in Council?

JD: To see that they are secure from intrusion, Venerable Master.

VM: See to that, my Brother, and caution the Inner and Outer Guards to sleep not upon their posts, but be vigilant; for we are about to open this Preceptory, and must not be disturbed by the Profane or the Pharisees.

[The JD goes out, returns, gives the Pass-word for the night to the two Guards, and reports]:

JD: Venerable Master, the Guards are posted at the inner and the outer door, and have the Pass-word for the night, and we are secure from intrusion.

VM: It is well. Brother Junior Deacon, what is your duty as a Knight of the East and West?

JD: To work, to reflect, and to pray.

VM: Faithful Brother Senior Deacon, what is your duty as a Knight of the East and West?

SD: To hope, to trust, and to believe.

VM: Faithful Brother Examiner, what is your duty as a Knight of the East and West?

E: To be vigilant; that the bad, the base, and the selfish may not enter the ranks of the Faithful.

VM: Faithful Brother Almoner, what is your duty as a Knight of the East and West?

AL: To relieve the distressed widow and orphan, and minister to the wants of my Brethren.

VM: Faithful Brother Lecturer, your duty as such?

L: To teach the truths that are hidden in allegories, and concealed by the Symbols of Freemasonry.

VM: Zealous Brother Junior Warden, your duty?

JW: To revere God and love men; to be just and humane; to be true to all men.

VM: Zealous Brother Senior Warden, your duty?

SW: To bear persecution with patience, and affliction with resignation; to despise death, and prepare for eternity.

VM: The duty of the Venerable Master?

SW: To preach the Truth in the desert of human life; to proclaim the approach of the New Law; to instruct and baptize the accepted Candidate; to judge with justice; and to expound in its true sense the Old Law.

VM: I recognize the duty. Zealous Brother Senior Warden, what is the hour?

SW: It is the hour before day. The Morning Star glitters in the East, on the shoulders of the hills, over the desert; and the Seven are low in the North.

VM: My Brethren, the dawn of the new day approaches, bringing with it Light and the New Law. The time cometh, and the Man. To your knees, my Brethren!

[The Brethren all kneel [facing the East], on both knees. The VM repeats the following prayer, the Brethren all making the responses]:

## PRAYER.

Hear us, our Father, God of the ancient Patriarchs, whom they adored on the plains of Chaldaea!

R: BE GRACIOUS UNTO US, OUR FATHER!

We wander in the Desert in darkness, and turn anxiously to the East, and look longingly for the promised Light.

R: SEND US THE DAWN OF DAY, OUR FATHER!

We sit in the shadow of death, and our feet tread the margin of the sea that covers Sodom, and our tents whiten the desert upon its sterile shores. Send us Thy Light, our Father – Thy Light, promised to our Fathers! – Thy Light, to guide our feet into the way of Peace!

R: THY LIGHT, TO BE THE LIFE OF MEN!

Send us the New Law of Love, for which the world pines and languishes! and make war and bloodshed to cease among the nations, and strife and dissension in the cities, and heart-burnings in the desert among the Faithful!

R: HELP US TO LOVE THEE AND ONE ANOTHER, OUR FATHER!

Save us from our enemies and from the hand of all that hate us! And help us to serve Thee without fear, in Holiness and Righteousness before Thee, all the days of our life!

R: *Amen! So mote it be! AMEN!*

[The organ then plays, and the Brethren sing the following hymn]:

## HYMN.

Day-spring of Eternity!

Dawn on us this morning-tide;

Light from Life's exhaustless sea,

Now no more Thy radiance hide;

Let Thy glories put to flight

All the shades and cares of night!

Let the morning dew of Love

On our sleeping conscience rain;

Gentle comfort from above

Flow through life's long parchéd plain;

Flood the earth with peace and joy,

And the powers of Wrong destroy!

# ODE.

[17th DEGREE.]

TENORS, 1st & 2d.

Day - spring of e - ter - ni - ty! Dawn on us this morn - ing

*Allegro mod.*

This system contains the first line of music for the tenors and the piano accompaniment. The tenor part is written on a single staff with a treble clef. The piano accompaniment is written on two staves (treble and bass clefs) with a brace on the left. The tempo marking 'Allegro mod.' is placed above the piano part.

tide, Light from Light's ex - haustless sea! Now no more thy radiance

This system contains the second line of music for the tenors and the piano accompaniment. The tenor part continues on the same staff. The piano accompaniment continues on the two staves.

hide; Let Thy glo - ries put to flight All the shades and cares of night!

This system contains the third line of music for the tenors and the piano accompaniment. The tenor part concludes with a final note. The piano accompaniment concludes with a final chord.

VM: Zealous Brother Senior Warden, announce to the Brethren, through the Zealous Brother Junior Warden, that the first faint blush of the coming Dawn, long awaited for, begins to dim the splendor of the Morning Star. The glittering Seven fade into the far North, and the day cometh, and this Preceptory is about to be opened; charging them according to the ancient custom.

SW: Zealous Brother Junior Warden, the first faint blush of Dawn dims the light of the Morning Star, and this Preceptory is about to be opened. Announce this to the Brethren, with the ancient charge.

JW: [Rapping thrice, at which all rise]: Faithful Brethren, Essenes that wait for the Light and the new Law, the first faint blush of the coming Dawn, long waited for, begins to dim the splendor of the Morning Star. The glittering Seven fade into the far North, and the day cometh, and this Preceptory is about to be opened.

JW: Ye shall keep my Sabbaths and reverence my Sanctuary!

SW: Ye shall obey my judgments and keep my ordinances and my statutes!

VM: Ye shall not profane the name of your God!

JW: Ye shall love and venerate every man his father and mother!

SW: Ye shall not glean your vineyards, nor gather every grape, nor wholly reap the corners of your fields; but leave something for the poor and the stranger!

VM: Ye shall not steal, nor deal falsely, nor lie one to another!

JW: Nor despoil nor defraud your neighbors!

SW: Nor go up and down as tale-bearers among the people!

VM: Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart; nor suffer thy neighbor to go astray for want of warning!

JW: Nor take revenge, nor cherish old grudges; but love thy neighbor as thyself!

SW: Ye shall rise up respectfully before the hoary head, and honor the presence of the aged man!

VM: Ye shall not vex the stranger in your land, but shall love him as yourselves; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt!

SW: If thy brother be waxen poor, and fallen into decay with thee, thou shalt relieve him, even if he be a stranger or sojourner, that he may live with thee. Thou shalt not give him thy money upon usury, nor lend him thy victuals for increase!

VM: These are the statutes, and judgments, and laws of the Lord your God. Whatsoever He hath commanded you, observe and do it; nor add thereto, nor diminish from it; and it shall be well with you and your children!

[The Brethren all give the sign. Then the VM raps ㄥㄥ; the SW ㄥㄥ; the JW ㄥㄥ; and the VM ㄥ. Then the Brethren clap ㄥㄥㄥㄥㄥㄥ ㄥ, and cry once HOSCHEAH!

VM: This Preceptory is opened in due form. Brother Junior Deacon, inform the Guards.

### RECEPTION.



The Candidate is received in the preparation room by the Examiner (E), who divests him of his regalia and jewel, if he wear any. He is then made to bare his feet and place them in slippers, and a hair cloth is thrown over his shoulders, fastened together in front at the throat, and confined round the waist by a girdle of leather. He is then conducted to the door of the Lodge.

The Lodge room is thus prepared for his reception. The Brethren put off their regalia and jewels, and appear in their white robes only: The book with seven seals is placed upon the altar, and white curtains are let down from the ceiling to the floor, in front of the altar and platform, and of the hangings, all around the room, concealing the seats of all except the VM, who alone sits, while all the other brothers stand. The small table, which was at the right of the Master, is placed in the centre of the room, and covered with white linen, and on it are set the chafing dish, the basin of perfumed water, and a little vase with perfumed oil. The columns are also concealed.

The Examiner raps ¶¶¶¶¶¶ ¶ at the door, and it is partly opened by the JW, who asks:

JW: Who seeks admission here, and with what purpose?

E: A weary traveller, who, having crossed the desert, wanders on the shore of the Dead Sea in darkness, seeking for light.

SW: What does he desire?

E: To be admitted to know the Mysteries of the Twenty-Four Elders.

Q: Whence comes he?

A: From the Schools of the Philosophers of Greece and Egypt, and from sitting at the feet of the Pharisees and Kabbalists.

Q: By what title does he expect to gain admission here?

A: By being a Mason, a Prince of Jerusalem, and a patient and humble searcher after Truth.

Q: Do you vouch for him?

A: I do.

JW: Then let him wait, with patience and humility, until the Elders are informed of his request.

[The JW closes the door, and reports to the SW, where the same questions are asked and like answers returned, as at the door, except the last question and answer. The SW reports to the VM, the same questions being asked and the same answers given. Upon receiving the answers, the VM says]:

VM: Zealous Brother Examiner, go to this Candidate and strictly examine if he be a Mason, and if his principles be such that we may fitly admit him among us.

[The Candidate must come uninfluenced by curiosity, or the desire of worldly advantage, or any unworthy motive, and as an honest seeker after Truth. He must be a Mason and a Prince of Jerusalem, and so prove himself. In the Desert he must have found patience and submission, and on the shores of the Dead Sea have learned humility and veneration. Among the Knights of the East and West he expects to find the True

Light, though it is not yet day, and they have but reached Truth's threshold. They advance, nevertheless; and if he would do so, he must always have been, to the best of his ability, mindful of his Masonic obligations, and have striven to comply with them in spirit and in truth. He must not have wronged a Brother, without having afterwards repented and made reparation; and he must have no dissension or quarrel with a Prince of Jerusalem unreconciled.]

[The Examiner goes to the Candidate, and questions him as follows]:

Q 1: Do you declare that, uninfluenced by curiosity, or the desire of worldly advantage, or any base, low, or unworthy motive, and as an honest and earnest seeker after Truth, you have come hither?

A: I do.

Q2: Are you a Mason?

A: I am.

Q3: To what degree have you attained?

A: To that of Prince of Jerusalem.

Q4: Give me the Pass-word of a Prince of Jerusalem.

A: Tebeth.

Q5: The Sacred Word?

A. Adar.

Q6: The sign.

[He gives it.]

Q7: The grip.

[He gives it.]

Q 8: I accept and recognize you as a Brother. What found you in the Schools of Philosophy?

A: Empty babblings and vain janglings of words, and a confused mess of incoherent ideas.

Q9: What found you among the Kabbalists?

A: The rhapsodies and extravagances of insanity and delirium.

Q10: What found you in the Desert?

A: Patience and Submission.

Q11: What lesson have you learned on the shores of the Dead Sea?

A: Humility, and Veneration.

Q12: What do you expect to find among us?

A: The True Light.

Q13: It is not yet Day. We have but reached Truth's threshold. But we advance.  
Would you advance with us?

A: I would.

Q14: Have you hitherto, to the best of your ability, been mindful of your Masonic obligations, and striven to comply with them in spirit and in truth?

A: I have.

Q15: Have you ever wronged a brother, or allowed him to be wronged, when you could have prevented it; without afterwards repenting and making reparation?

A: I have not.

Q16: Have you any dissension or quarrel with a Brother Prince of Jerusalem unreconciled?

A: I have not.

X: It is well. Wait again with patience, until the Elders are informed of the answers you have made.

[The Brother Examiner enters the Preceptory, advances to the East, and says]:

X: Venerable Master, the Candidate has satisfactorily answered the sixteen questions.

VM: My Brethren, you hear the the report of our Faithful Brother Examiner. Shall the Candidate be received? If you assent, give me the sign.

[All who assent give the sign by putting the right hand to the forehead. If it is unanimously assented to, the VM says]:

VM: Faithful Brother Lecturer, you will please receive and introduce the Candidate.

[The Lecturer (L) goes out, and leads in the Candidate. The room is now lighted dimly, by one or two candles on the table in the centre, the lights on the columns burning low and being shaded. The Brethren, except the Master, stand facing the East. The Lecturer conducts him seven times around the room, the officers repeating at each circuit as follows]:

*1<sup>st</sup> Circuit:* He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches: To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the Tree of Life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.

*2<sup>nd</sup> Circuit:* He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches: He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.

*3<sup>rd</sup> Circuit:* To him that overcometh, will I give to eat of the hidden manna; and I will give him a white stone, and in the stone a New Name written, which no man shall know but he that shall receive it.

*4<sup>th</sup> Circuit:* He that overcometh, and laboreth in my service until the end, to him will I give power over the nations, and his influences shall control and guide them, and I will give him the Morning Star.

*5<sup>th</sup> Circuit:* He that overcometh shall be clothed in robes of white; and I will not erase his name from the Book of Life, but I will own him as mine before my Father and all his angels.

*6<sup>th</sup> Circuit:* Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the Temple of my God, and he shall remain there forever: and I will write upon him the name of God, and the name of the City of God, the New Jerusalem, which cometh down out of Heaven from God; and my own New Name.

*7<sup>th</sup> Circuit:* To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me near my Throne, even as I also overcame, and am seated with my Father near His Throne. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten; be zealous, therefore, and repent.

[The Lecturer and Candidate then halt in front of the VM, who asks]:

VM: Brother Examiner, whence come you, and whither do you travel?

L: From the desert and the darkness, towards the Light.

VM: Have you yet found the Light?

L: Venerable Master, no: but the Seven Stars sink low in the North; the Pleiades and Orion are in the Zenith; the Morning Star grows pale; the Dawn, long expected, approaches.

VM: Light comes from God. When clouds and darkness are around us, we should implore His aid. Let us do so, my Brethren!

[All kneel; and the VM repeats the following]

### **PRAYER.**

VM: Our Father, who, when darkness brooded upon the face of the vast chaos, and the Universe lay a confused mass of struggling forces, without form and void, didst move upon it, and said, LET LIGHT BE! – and light was; Thou who didst set the light against the darkness, and call one day and the other night; Thou who didst set the greater and lesser lights in the Heavens: Thou who didst bring forth Mazzaroth in his season, and guidest Arcturus with his sons: enable this Candidate to find the light for which he seeketh! Let the dawn of the new day arise, and shine upon the clouds of error, and cause the darkness of ignorance and superstition to flee away, and be seen no more forever. Amen!

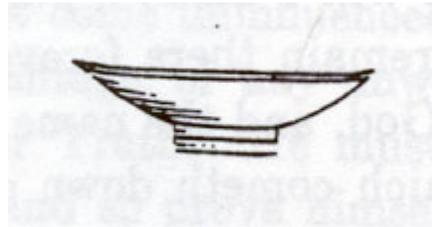
## CONSECRATION AND ORDEAL.

VM: My Brother, the innocent and pure of heart alone can be admitted to our mysteries.

[A brother brings a basin of pure water and a white towel, and places them on the table.]

In token of that innocence and purity; and as a pledge to us that your hands shall henceforward never be defiled by covetousness, unjust gain, tyranny, oppression, injustice, baseness or fraud, you will wash them in the pure water before you.

[The Candidate does so; and the VM proceeds]:



VM: The living know that they shall die; but the dead know not anything; neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten. Also their love and their hatred and their envy is now perished; neither have they any more a portion forever in anything done under the sun.

Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them: while the sun, or the light, or the moon or the stars are not darkened; and the clouds pass away after the rain:

In the day when the limbs are not yet trembling with age, nor the head bowed with sorrow, nor the eyes dim with weeping: before thou goest to thy long home, and the mourners go about the streets; before the silver cord is loosed and the golden bowl broken, and the pitcher shivered at the spring, and the wheel shattered at the cistern: before the dust returns to the earth as it was, and the spirit unto God who gave it.

My Brother, when you became a Mason, you placed your trust in God. Do you still continue to do so?

C: I do.

VM: Do you firmly believe that there is but one God, Supreme, Infinite, Eternal, Unchangeable; that He is infinitely good, wise, just and true; and that evil and pain, and sorrow and misery are but parts of the plan of Infinite Wisdom, working together to produce infinite good? and that the soul is Immortal?

C: I do.

VM: Kneel, then, and be consecrated to the service of Truth!



[He kneels in front of the VM, as he stands near the table, while the Brethren form a circle around him. Then the VM takes in his hand a small quantity of perfumed water from the basin, and pours it on his saying]:

VM: In imitation of our Ancient Masters, the Egyptians, and as a token and solemn pledge that you here, henceforth and forever, renounce all that is vicious, sordid, and base, I pour upon thy head this pure water; and I devote and consecrate thee to the service of Truth, Justice, Virtue and Benevolence. I do this as a symbol of repentance and reformation; but One cometh hereafter, whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose. He shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. His fan will be in his hand, and he will thoroughly sweep his threshing floor, and gather his wheat into his granary, and burn up the chaff with a devouring fire. His axe is prepared for the trees; and every tree that beareth not good fruit will be cut down and cast into the fire.



[A Brother puts live coals in the chafing-dish, or in some other way produces a heat over his head, that he sensibly feels].

Lo! a symbol of that baptism, with the Spirit and with fire; purified by which, man becomes God's soldier, to war against Fanaticism, Intolerance, Bigotry, Falsehood, and the whole brood of kindred fiends, that so long have made a hell of our earth, which was created a paradise: symbol also of that suffering and pain; and wo and want, and sharp ingratitude, and bitter injustice, that are God's baptism of fire, by which He strengthens the human soul, and gives occasion and incentive to the noblest virtues; and thys purifying it, lifts it above humanity. To suffer is the noblest lot of man here below; for none but those who suffer doth God baptize with fire and with his Spirit.

My Brother, you have been baptized with water and with fire: and you are clad in hair-cloth, and a girdle of leather, as a token of sorrow and penitence. Are you prepared to suffer and endure in the cause of Masonry and for the good of your fellow-men?

C: I am.

VM: My Brethren, who among you is worthy to open the Book with Seven Seals?

[There is no reply: and, laying his hand on the head of the candidate, he says]:

My Brother, Socrates drank the hemlock, when the doors of his prison were open, that he might not set the example of disobeying the laws of his ungrateful country. Curtius leaped in his armor, into the gulf that could thus only be closed, and else would swallow Rome. Daniel prayed three times a day, openly, to God, knowing that the penalty was exposure, naked, to hungry lions; and an army of martyrs have offered up their lives to prove their faith or to benefit mankind. None other can open the great book with the Seven Seals, and learn the mysteries that are hidden therein. Are you prepared to shed your blood, in proof of your fidelity and courage, and even for those who may have wronged you; because God has made men your Brethren?

C: I am.

VM: Prepare him, then, for the last trial, my Brethren!

[He is blindfolded, and seated in a chair. His right arm is bandaged, a slight incision made near the vein with a lancet, so as to draw a little blood, and tepid water is poured upon it in a small stream, and falls into a basin on the floor, *to produce the impression that* he is bleeding. After this has been continued some minutes, that arm is freed from the bandage, and the same process gone through with the left arm. Then the VM says]:

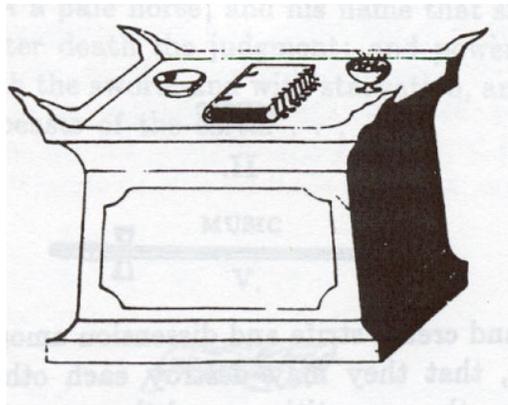
VM: Enough, my Brethren! The cause of Humanity does not now require our Brother's life. Whenever it shall, let him be ready to lay it upon the altar of his God, of friendship, of his country, or of the human race. Bind up his wounds!

[Both arms are dressed and bandaged, as after bleeding. In the mean time the Brethren have assumed their regalia, the white curtains are removed or rolled up, and all the lights are lighted. The table is placed again to the right of the Master's seat, and the little vessel of oil upon the altar].

VM: My Brother, thou hast wandered long in the desert of this world, and sought for Light in the darkness of Philosophy, on the shores of the Dead Sea of Human Life. Dost thou still pray for Light?

C: I do.

VM: My Brethren, *he* is also your Brother, for he seeks to find the Truth. Give him light!



[The bandage is removed from his eyes; and he is then led by the VM to the Platform, to which he ascends, and stands near the altar. He is then made to kneel, on both knees, with both hands on the Book with Seven Seals, and repeats the following]

## OBLIGATION.

I, A..... B....., in the presence of the One God, Creator of the Universe, and calling upon these Brethren as witnesses, do, upon this Sacred Book, most solemnly promise and sincerely swear, that I will never reveal the secrets of this Degree or the mode of my admission, to any person in the world, to whom the same may not lawfully belong, and only when I am authorized to communicate them.

I furthermore promise and swear that I will be ever ready to expose, and if necessary to yield up, my life, in the cause of Friendship, my Country, or of Common Humanity.

I furthermore promise and swear, that I will never fight or combat with a Brother of this Degree, except in the extremest and clearest case of self-defense: and that I will, at all times, when he has justice on his side, be ready to aid and support him against any who seek his life, or to destroy his honour, reputation, peace of mind or estate; that I never will slander, revile, or speak slightingly of a Brother, or endeavor to bring him into contempt or to cast ridicule upon him: nor suffer others to assail his character in his absence, without resenting it myself, or informing him thereof at the earliest opportunity: and that I will on all occasions consult his honor and his interest.

I furthermore promise and swear, that I will hereafter be just and upright, benevolent to my fellow-men, and indulgent of their errors.

I furthermore promise and swear, that I will pay due respect and obedience to the superior authorities of the Ancient and Accepted Rite; and especially to the Knights Kadosch, Sublime Princes of the Royal Secret, and Sovereign Grand Inspectors General of the 33<sup>rd</sup> Degree, within whose jurisdiction I may be; and that I will in every thing assist and support them in all proper and justifiable measures for the good of Masonry, according to the Constitutions of the Supreme Council.

To all which I do most solemnly promise and swear, invoking the just anger of the Deity, if I wilfully violate this my solemn, deliberate and voluntary obligation. So help me God, and keep me steadfast to perform the same!

## INITIATION.

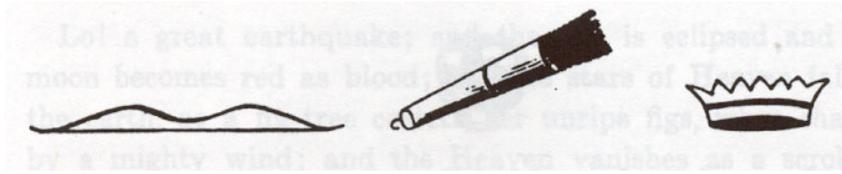
VM: My Brother, arise! I accept and receive you as a Brother of this Degree; and I now further devote you to its duties and to Masonry.



[Saying this, he takes the vessel of oil, and with the tip of his finger anoints his Head, Eyes, Mouth, Heart, the tip of his right Ear, his right Hand, and right Foot; and says]:

VM: Your brain, sight, speech, passions, hearing, and powers of work and action, instruments to man for good or evil, I hereby forever devote to Good; and charge you hereafter to let them aid in no base, dishonest or vicious thought, word, or action! Thus devoted, pledged and sworn, and having sealed your covenant with us with your blood, you are worthy to open the Book with Seven Seals. Approach, and open the first seal!

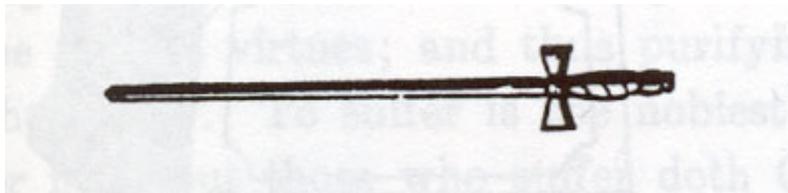
## I



[He opens the first seal. The organ plays a few notes; and the VM takes from behind the altar a bow, a quiver filled with arrows, and a coronet, and gives them to a Brother, and says to him]:

VM: Depart and continue the conquest! And I saw, and lo! a white horse; and he that sat on him held a bow; and a crown was given unto him; and he went forth conquering, and to conquer. Open now the second seal!

## II



[He does so: and the VM takes from behind the altar a naked sword; (Music is heard here, and as each seal is opened); and gives it to another Brother, saying]:

VM: Go forth and create strife and dissension among the Profane and Wicked, that they may destroy each other; and smite thou the vices, the superstitions, and the errors that infest and afflict the world! For there went out another horse that was red; and it was given to him that sat thereon to banish peace from the earth, and that the wicked should slay one another; and there was given unto him a great sword. Open now the third seal!

## III



[He does so, and the VM takes from behind the altar a pair of balances, and gives them to another Brother; and says]:

VM: Go thou and administer Justice and Equity, and see that the poor be no longer oppressed with false weights and false measures; and that their wages be punctually paid them; that they may no longer starve! Open now the fourth seal!

IV



[He does so, and the VM takes from behind the altar a human skull, and gives it to another Brother, saying]:

VM: Go thou and teach mankind that the soul which sins shall die; that they may learn humility and the vanity of all earthly things! – for lo! a pale horse; and his name that sits on him is Death; and after death the judgment: and power is given to him to slay with the sword, and with starvation, and with sickness, and the beasts of the earth. Open now the fifth seal!

V



[He does so, and the VM takes from behind the altar a linen cloth, stained with much blood, and gives it to another Brother, saying]:

VM: Go thou and accuse those who have persecuted and slain them who have come on earth to be the benefactors of mankind! For under the altar are the souls of those who have been slain because they taught God's Truth, and condemned the errors of those who ruled over the consciences of men: and they cry with a voice that ascends to God's footstool, "How long, O Lord, Holy and True, wilt Thou refrain from judging and avenging our blood upon these monsters of cruelty and oppression under whom the earth groans and mankind is crushed and trampled down?" And white robes are given unto them; and they are told to be patient yet a little while, until all who, like them, shall endeavor to serve mankind, shall, like them, be tortured and slain, and the great purposes of God, in His time, be fulfilled. Open now the sixth seal!

## VI



[He does so, and immediately there is a crash of loud music from the organ, thunder rolls near the Lodge, and the lights are all darkened.]

VM: Lo! a great earthquake; and the sun is eclipsed and the moon becomes red as blood; and the stars of Heaven fall to the earth, as a fig-tree casteth her unripe figs, when shaken by a mighty wind; and the Heaven vanishes as a scroll is rolled together: and the mountains and islands are moved out of their places: and earth's rulers, the great, the rich, the captains of armies, the powerful, the bondmen and the free, hide themselves in the caves, and take refuge among the rocks upon the mountains, and call upon them, crying, "Fall upon us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the Throne, and from the anger of God; for the great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?"

[The VM then, with a liquid of the color of blood, marks a Tau cross upon the forehead of the Candidate, and says]:

Hurt not the earth, nor the sea, nor the trees, until we have sealed the servants of God upon their foreheads! Glory to God who sitteth upon the Throne, and unto His Son, who as a Lamb for the sacrifice shall take away the sins of the world!

[The Brethren all kneel, and bow their heads to the floor, and say together]:

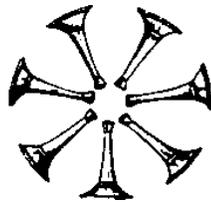
AMEN! BLESSING AND GLORY, AND WISDOM, AND THANKSGIVING AND HONOR, AND POWER, AND MIGHT, BE UNTO GOD, FOREVER AND EVER: AMEN!

[Then the VM takes from the candidate his girdle and hair-cloth, and puts upon him a white linen robe; and says]:

VM: And one of the Elders said unto me, "Who are these that are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?" and I said unto him, "Venerable, thou knowest." And he

said unto me, "These are they who have been purified by sorrow and suffering, and by the intercession and blood of the Redeemer. Therefore stand they before God's throne, and serve Him day and night in His Temple; and He that sitteth on the Throne shall dwell among them; and they shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; nor shall the sun scorch them, nor the fire again torture them. For the Lamb who sitteth upon his Throne shall sustain them, and shall lead them to the living springs of truth; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." Open now the Seventh Seal.

## VII



[He does so: and for a time there is a perfect silence. Then the VM takes from behind the altar seven trumpets, and gives them to the two Wardens, the Lecturer and Examiner, the Secretary and Treasurer and the Senior Deacon; and to the Junior Deacon a gilded censer, and incense, which he lights and places upon the altar. After it has burned a time, he takes it, and flings down the contents upon a place prepared to receive them. Immediately the First Trumpet sounds.]

### 1

VM: Hail and fire, mingled with blood, shall be cast upon the Earth; and the third part of the trees, and all the green grass shall be burned up.

[The Second Trumpet sounds.]

### 2

VM: A great mountain, vomiting fire, shall be torn up and flung into the sea; and the third part of the oceans shall become blood; and the third part of all living creatures in the sea shall die, and the third part of the ships thereon be destroyed.

[The Third Trumpet sounds.]

3

VM: A great star shall fall from Heaven, burning like a lamp; and a third part of the waters of all the rivers, and of the living springs that feed the rivers, shall become bitter as wormwood; and all who drink thereof shall die.

[The Fourth Trumpet sounds.]

4

VM: A third part of the sun, moon, and stars shall be eclipsed and darkened; and by day there shall be but a dim light, and the night shall be dark and gloomy.

[The Fifth Trumpet sounds.]

5

VM: The first Woe shall come upon the earth; the reign of the Spirit of Evil: and the Locusts of Ignorance, Fanaticism and Superstition, whose leader is Abaddon.

[The Sixth Trumpet sounds.]

6

VM: Then the four Demons that came among men, while yet they had not gone abroad from the banks of the Euphrates – Bigotry, Intolerance, Ambition, and Selfishness – shall be let loose, and with fire and the sword and all manner of savage torture, shall slay one-third of mankind; and yet the others shall not repent. And God's servants shall endeavor to reform the people; and Thought, and Speech, and Conscience shall struggle to be free; but those who would reform mankind, and free the world from slavery and oppression, shall be slain; and their dead bodies, denied burial, shall be flung to rot upon the Earth, which shall then be one great Sodom. But Truth shall still strive with Error; and the great earthquake of Thought shall at length shake the souls of the nations, and the second woe shall cease.

[The Seventh Trumpet sounds.]



VM: The Kingdoms of this world shall become the Kingdoms of God and His Anointed; and He shall reign forever and ever. The long war between the Evil and the Good, between Michael and his angels, and the Dragon and his angels, shall end; and the Serpent and his angels shall be overcome, and shall pass away and be seen no more forever; and salvation, and strength, and the Kingdom of God, which is Truth, shall come, and thenceforward remain forever: and sorrow and evil shall disappear: and the labors of those who have borne testimony to the Truth, and given up their lives to benefit the world, shall not have been in vain; but they shall have eternal fame, and glory, and honor, when the names of all Conquerors and Kings shall have faded out of the memories of men.

J and S W: We give Thee thanks, O Lord God Omnipotent, who art Eternal, and to whom the Past, the Present, and the Future, are one; because Thou wilt, in due time, assert Thy power, and vindicate Thy justice, wisdom, and loving-kindness, when evil shall no longer reign.

VM: For Thou wilt, in due time, judge all men, and reward thy servants, and those who have loved and served mankind, the known and the unknown, the lofty and the low; and those who have vexed and plagued the earth Thou wilt reward according to their evil works. Then shall Thy Temple be rebuilt, in the Heavens; and those who wear Thy name written upon their foreheads, and Thy law engraven in their hearts; shall inhabit its courts forever. Blessed, henceforward, are the Dead who fall in the cause of Truth: for they shall then rest from their labors and their sorrows, and their works shall follow them!

[The organ plays an exulting and triumphant air; and the VM and the Candidate descend from the Platform; the VM having first opened the Great Book, and laid upon it the Square and the Compasses. They halt at the Master's seat; when the music ends, and the VM invests the C with the collar, apron, jewel, and sword of the Degree, saying]:

## INVESTITURE OF APRON / ORDER / JEWELS AND SECRET WORK.

VM: I invest you with the apron of this Degree. The color of the Apron of this Degree is emblematical of the Dawn. Its shape is symbolic of the Deity, in His three first emanations; and the Tetractys upon it of the ten Sephiroth of the Kabalah.

I invest you with the order of this Degree. The two colors, white and black, of the Cordons of this degree, like the interlaced triangles white and black, enclosing the letters Yod and He, are symbolic of the dualism of the doctrines of Zoroaster and Manes, of the two Principles of good and evil.

I invest you with the jewel of this Degree. Its heptagonal shape will be hereafter explained to you, as also will the devices upon it. The gold and silver of the Jewel are emblems of the Sun and Moon, themselves symbols to the ancients of Osiris and Isis, since gold is the metal which they appropriated to the sun, representative of the male or generative power, and silver was by them appropriated to the moon, representative of the female or productive power; these two being symbolized by the two columns JACHIN and BOAZ, or strength, potency, energy, and stability; the active and the passive forces manifested in nature.

Receive now the Signs, Tokens, and Words of this Degree.



Sign: Look at your right shoulder.

Answer: Look at the left shoulder; one says ABADDON; the other YAH-BALIN.



First Token: Put the left hand in a brother's right. He covers yours with his left. Then look mutually at the right shoulder.



Second Token: Touch with your left hand the left shoulder of the Brother; who answers by touching your right shoulder with his left hand.



Sign to enter the Lodge: Put the right hand upon the forehead.

Pass-Word: YAH-BALIN.

JABULUM:

יְבוּל־וֹם, *Yabul-Om*, 'Issue, Progeny or Emanation from Om.'

Covered Word: ABADDON.

ABADDON:

אב, *Ab*, 'Father.'

אָדוֹן, *Adon*, The Phoenician Sun-God.

*Ab-Adon*, 'Adon the Father: God the Father.'

Also, from *The Book of the Words*:

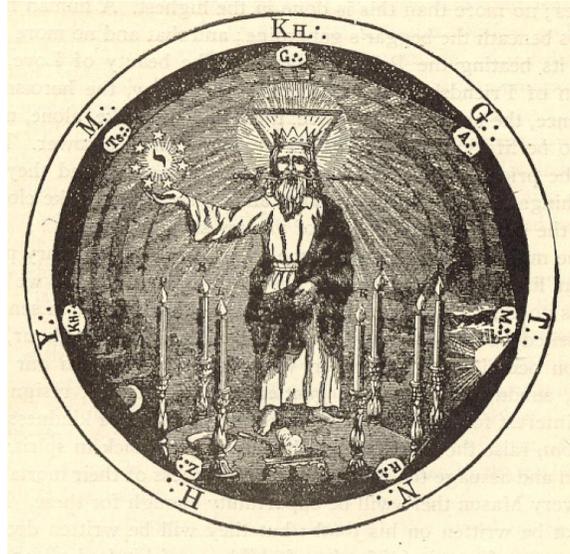
HOSCHEAH:

הוֹשָׁע, *Hushaa, Hoshaa, or Hoshang*. *Sch* on the Continent is used for *Sh*, as in *Kadosch*. The word means 'Salvation, Liberation, Aid.'

VM: I finally present you with this Coronet, the token of your present rank in Masonry. Remember that it, like the other insignia of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite, is honorable, only so long as it is worn with honor. On the brow of the dishonest, the dissipated, the vicious, or the base, honors undeserved are the extremest disgrace. See, therefore, that you wear it worthily and well.

**THE LECTURE, adopted from:**

*MORALS AND DOGMA* by Albert Pike,  
*MAGNUM OPUS*, by Albert Pike, and  
*LITURGY* for the 17°, by Albert Pike.



XVII.

**KNIGHT OF THE EAST AND WEST.**

**T**HIS is the first of the Philosophical Degrees of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite; and the beginning of a course of instruction which will fully unveil to you the heart and inner mysteries of Masonry. Do not despair because you have often seemed on the point of attaining the inmost light, and have as often been disappointed. In all time, truth has been hidden under symbols, and often under a succession of allegories: where veil after veil had to be penetrated before the true Light was reached, and the essential truth stood revealed. The Human Light is but an imperfect reflection of a ray of the Infinite and Divine.

We are about to approach those ancient Religions which once ruled the minds of men, and whose ruins encumber the plains of the great Past, as the broken columns of Palmyra and Tadmor lie bleaching on the sands of the desert. They rise before us, those old,

strange, mysterious creeds and faiths, shrouded in the mists of antiquity, and stalk dimly and undefined along the line which divides Time from Eternity; and forms of strange, wild, startling beauty mingled in the vast throngs of figures with shapes monstrous, grotesque, and hideous.

The religion taught by Moses, which, like the laws of Egypt, enunciated the principle of exclusion, borrowed, at every period of its existence, from all the creeds with which it came in contact. While, by the studies of the learned and wise, it enriched itself with the most admirable principles of the religions of Egypt and Asia, it was changed, in the wanderings of the People, by everything that was most impure or seductive in the pagan manners and superstitions. It was one thing in the times of Moses and Aaron, another in those of David and Solomon, and still another in those of Daniel and Philo.

At the time when John the Baptist made his appearance in the desert, near the shores of the Dead Sea, all the old philosophical and religious systems were approximating toward each other. A general lassitude inclined the minds of all toward the quietude of that amalgamation of doctrines for which the expeditions of Alexander and the more peaceful occurrences that followed, with the establishment in Asia and Africa of many Grecian dynasties and a great number of Grecian colonies, had prepared the way. After the intermingling of different nations, which resulted from the wars of Alexander in three-quarters of the globe, the doctrines of Greece, of Egypt, of Persia, and of India, met and intermingled everywhere. All the barriers that had formerly kept the nations apart, were thrown down; and while the People of the West readily connected their faith with those of the East, those of the Orient hastened to learn the traditions of Rome and the legends of Athens. While the Philosophers of Greece, all (except the disciples of Epicurus) more or less Platonists, seized eagerly upon the beliefs and doctrines of the East, -- the Jews and Egyptians, before then the most exclusive of all peoples, yielded to that eclecticism which prevailed among their masters, the Greeks and Romans.

Under the same influences of toleration, even those who embraced Christianity, mingled together the old and the new, Christianity and Philosophy, the Apostolic teachings and the traditions of Mythology. The man of intellect, devotee of one system, rarely displaces it with another in all its purity. The people take such a creed as is offered them. Accordingly, the distinction between the esoteric and the exoteric doctrine,

immemorial in other creeds, easily gained a foothold among many of the Christians; and it was held by a vast number, even during the preaching of Paul, that the writings of the Apostles were incomplete; that they contained only the germs of another doctrine, which must receive from the hands of philosophy, not only the systematic arrangement which was wanting, but all the development which lay concealed therein. The writings of the Apostles, they said, in addressing themselves to mankind in general, enunciated only the articles of the vulgar faith; but transmitted the mysteries of knowledge to superior minds, to the Elect, -- mysteries handed down from generation to generation in esoteric traditions; and to this science of the mysteries they gave the name of Gnosis.

The Gnostics derived their leading doctrines and ideas from Plato and Philo, the Zend-avesta and the Kabalah, and the Sacred books of India and Egypt; and thus introduced into the bosom of Christianity the cosmological and theosophical speculations, which had formed the larger portion of the ancient religions of the Orient, joined to those of the Egyptian, Greek, and Jewish doctrines, which the Neo-Platonists had equally adopted in the Occident.

Emanation from the Deity of all spiritual beings, progressive degeneration of these beings from emanation to emanation, redemption and return of all to the purity of the Creator; and, after the re-establishment of the primitive harmony of all, a fortunate and truly divine condition of all, in the bosom of God; such were the fundamental teachings of Gnosticism. The genius of the Orient, with its contemplations, irradiations, and intuitions, dictated its doctrines. Its language corresponded to its origin. Full of imagery, it had all the magnificence, the inconsistencies, and the mobility of the figurative style.

Behold, it said, the light, which emanates from an immense centre of Light, that spreads everywhere its benevolent rays; so do the spirits of Light emanate from the Divine Light. Behold, all the springs which nourish, embellish, fertilize, and purify the Earth; they emanate from one and the same ocean; so from the bosom of the Divinity emanate so many streams, which form and fill the universe of intelligences. Behold numbers, which all emanate from one primitive number, all resemble it, all are composed of its essence, and still vary infinitely; and utterances, decomposable into so many syllables and elements, all contained in the primitive Word, and still infinitely various; so

the world of Intelligences emanated from a Primary Intelligence, and they all resemble it, and yet display an infinite variety of existences.

It revived and combined the old doctrines of the Orient and the Occident; and it found in many passages of the Gospels and the Pastoral letters, a warrant for doing so. Christ himself spoke in parables and allegories, John borrowed the enigmatical language of the Platonists, and Paul often indulged in incomprehensible rhapsodies, the meaning of which could have been clear to the Initiates alone.

It is admitted that the cradle of Gnosticism is probably to be looked for in Syria, and even in Palestine. Most of its expounders wrote in that corrupted form of the Greek used by the Hellenistic Jews, and in the Septuagint and the New Testament; and there is a striking analogy between their doctrines and those of the Judaeo-Egyptian Philo, of Alexandria; itself the seat of three schools, at once philosophic and religious—the Greek, the Egyptian, and the Jewish.

Pythagoras and Plato, the most mystical of the Grecian Philosophers (the latter heir to the doctrines of the former), and who had travelled, the latter in Egypt, and the former in Phoenicia, India, and Persia, also taught the esoteric doctrine and the distinction between the initiated and the profane. The dominant doctrines of Platonism were found in Gnosticism. Emanation of Intelligences from the bosom of the Deity; the going astray in error and the sufferings of spirits, so long as they are remote from God, and imprisoned in matter; vain and long-continued efforts to arrive at the knowledge of the Truth, and re-enter into their primitive union with the Supreme Being; alliance of a pure and divine soul with an irrational soul, the seat of evil desires; angels or demons who dwell in and govern the planets, having but an imperfect knowledge of the ideas that presided at the creation; regeneration of all beings by their return to the *κόσμος νοετός*, [kosmos noetos] the world of Intelligences, and its Chief, the Supreme Being; sole possible mode of re-establishing that primitive harmony of the creation, of which the music of the spheres of Pythagoras was the image; these were the analogies of the two systems; and we discover in them some of the ideas that form a part of Masonry; in which, in the present mutilated condition of the symbolic Degrees, they are disguised and overlaid with fiction and absurdity, or present themselves as casual hints that are passed by wholly unnoticed.

The distinction between the esoteric and exoteric doctrines (a distinction purely Masonic), was always and from the very earliest times preserved among the Greeks. It remounted to the fabulous times of Orpheus; and the mysteries of Theosophy were found in all their traditions and myths. And after the time of Alexander, they resorted for instruction, dogmas, and mysteries, to all the schools, to those of Egypt and Asia, as well as those of Ancient Thrace, Sicily, Etruria, and Attica.

The Jewish-Greek School of Alexandria is known only by two of its Chiefs, Aristobulus and Philo, both Jews of Alexandria in Egypt. Belonging to Asia by its origin, to Egypt by its residence, to Greece by its language and studies, it strove to show that all truths embedded in the philosophies of other countries were trans- planted thither from Palestine. Aristobulus declared that all the facts and details of the Jewish Scriptures were so many allegories, concealing the most profound meanings, and that Plato had borrowed from them all his finest ideas. Philo, who lived a century after him, following the same theory, endeavored to show that the Hebrew writings, by their system of allegories, were the true source of all religious and philosophical doctrines. According to him, the literal meaning is for the vulgar alone. Whoever has meditated on philosophy, purified himself by virtue, and raised himself by contemplation, to God and the intellectual world, and received their inspiration, pierces the gross envelope of the letter, discovers a wholly different order of things, and is initiated into mysteries, of which the elementary or literal instruction offers but an imperfect image. A historical fact, a figure, a word, a letter, a number, a rite, a custom, the parable or vision of a prophet, veils the most profound truths; and he who has the key of science will interpret all according to the light he possesses.

Again we see the symbolism of Masonry, and the search of the Candidate for light. "Let men of narrow minds withdraw," he says, "with closed ears. We transmit the divine mysteries to those who have received the sacred initiation, to those who practise true piety and who are not enslaved by the empty trappings of words or the preconceived opinions of the pagans."

To Philo, the Supreme Being was the Primitive Light, or the Archetype of Light, Source whence the rays emanate that illuminate Souls. He was also the Soul of the Universe, and as such acted in all its parts. He Himself fills and limits His whole Being.

His Powers and Virtues fill and penetrate all. These Powers [Δυνάμεις, dunameis] are Spirits distinct from God, the "Ideas" of Plato personified. He is without beginning, and lives in the prototype of Time [αἰων, aion].

His image is THE WORD [Λογος], a form more brilliant than fire; that not being the *pure* light. This LOGOS dwells in God; for the Supreme Being makes to Himself within His Intelligence the types or ideas of everything that is to become reality in this World. The LOGOS is the vehicle by which God acts on the Universe, and may be compared to the speech of man.

The LOGOS being the World of Ideas [κοσμος νοητος, by means whereof God has created visible things, He is the most ancient God, in comparison with the World, which is the youngest production. The LOGOS, *Chief of Intelligence*, of which He is the general representative, is named *Archangel, type* and *representative* of all spirits, even those of mortals. He is also styled the man-type and primitive man, Adam Kadmon.

God only is Wise. The wisdom of man is but the reflection and image of that of God. He is the Father, and His WISDOM the mother of creation: for He united Himself with WISDOM [Σοφια, Sophia], and communicated to it the germ of creation, and it brought forth the material world. He created the ideal world only, and caused the material world to be made real after its type, by His LOGOS, which is His speech, and at the same time the Idea of Ideas, the Intellectual World. The Intellectual City was but the *Thought* of the Architect, who meditated the creation, according to that plan of the Material City.

The Word is not only the Creator, but occupies the place of the Supreme Being. Through Him all the Powers and Attributes of God act. On the other side, as first representative of the Human Family, He is the Protector of men and their Shepherd.

God gives to man the Soul or Intelligence, which exists before the body, and which he unites with the body. The reasoning Principle comes from God through the Word, and communes with God and with the Word; but there is also in man an irrational Principle, that of the inclinations and passions which produce disorder, emanating from inferior spirits who fill the air as ministers of God. The body, taken from the Earth, and the irrational Principle that animates it concurrently with the rational Principle, are hated by God, while the rational soul which He has given it, is, as it were, captive in this prison, this coffin, that encompasses it.

The present condition of man is not his primitive condition, when he was the image of the Logos. He has fallen from his first estate. But he may raise himself again, by following the directions of WISDOM [Σοφία] and of the Angels which God has commissioned to aid him in freeing himself from the bonds of the body, and combating Evil, the existence whereof God has permitted, *to furnish him the means of exercising his liberty*. The souls that are purified, not by the Law but by light, rise to the Heavenly regions, to enjoy there a perfect felicity. Those that persevere in evil go from body to body, the seats of passions and evil desires. The familiar lineaments of these doctrines will be recognized by all who read the Epistles of St. Paul, who wrote after Philo, the latter living till the reign of Caligula, and being the contemporary of Christ.

And the Mason is familiar with these doctrines of Philo: that the Supreme Being is a centre of Light whose rays or emanations pervade the Universe; for that is the Light for which all Masonic journeys are a search, and of which the sun and moon in our Lodges are only emblems: that Light and Darkness, chief enemies from the beginning of Time, dispute with each other the empire of the world; which we symbolize by the candidate wandering in darkness and being brought to light: that the world was created, not by the Supreme Being, but by a secondary agent, who is but His WORD [the Λογος], and by types which are but his ideas, aided by an INTELLIGENCE, or WISDOM [Σοφία], which gives one of His Attributes; in which we see the occult meaning of the necessity of recovering "the Word"; and of our two columns of STRENGTH and WISDOM, which are also the two parallel lines that bound the circle representing the Universe: that the visible world is the image of the invisible world; that the essence of the Human Soul is the image of God, and it existed before the body; that the object of its terrestrial life is to disengage itself of its body or its sepulchre; and that it will ascend to the Heavenly regions whenever it shall be purified; in which we see the meaning, now almost forgotten in our Lodges, of the mode of preparation of the candidate for apprenticeship, and his tests and purifications in the first Degree, according to the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite.

Philo incorporated in his eclecticism neither Egyptian nor Oriental elements. But there were other Jewish Teachers in Alexandria who did both. The Jews of Egypt were slightly jealous of, and a little hostile to, those of Palestine, particularly after the erection

of the sanctuary at Leontopolis by the High-Priest Onias; and therefore they admired and magnified those sages, who, like Jeremiah, had resided in Egypt. "The wisdom of Solomon" was written at Alexandria, and, in the time of St. Jerome, was attributed to Philo; but it contains principles at variance with his. It personifies Wisdom, and draws between its children and the Profane, the same line of demarcation that Egypt had long before taught to the Jews. That distinction existed at the beginning of the Mosaic creed. Moshah himself was an Initiate in the mysteries of Egypt, as he was compelled to be, as the adopted son of the daughter of Pharaoh, *Thouoris*, daughter of *Sesostris-Ramses*; who, as her tomb and monuments show, was, in the right of her infant husband, Regent of Lower Egypt or the Delta at the time of the Hebrew Prophet's birth, reigning at Heliopolis. She was also, as the reliefs on her tomb show, a Priestess of HATHOR and NEITH, the two great primeval goddesses. As her adopted son, living in her Palace and presence forty years, and during that time scarcely acquainted with his brethren the Jews, the law of Egypt compelled his initiation: and we find in many of his enactments the intention of preserving, between the common people and the Initiates, the line of separation which he found in Egypt. Moshah and Aharun his brother, the whole series of High-Priests, the Council of the 70 Elders, Salomoh and the entire succession of Prophets, were in possession of a higher science; and of that science Masonry is, at least, the lineal descendant. It was familiarly known as **THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE WORD**.

AMUN, at first the God of Lower Egypt only, where Moshah was reared [a word that in Hebrew means Truth], was the Supreme God. He was styled "*the Celestial Lord, who sheds Light on hidden things.*" He was the source of that divine life, of which the *crux ansata* is the symbol; and the source of all power. He united all the attributes that the Ancient Oriental Theosophy assigned to the Supreme Being. He was the  $\pi\lambda\epsilon\rho\omega\mu\alpha$  [Pleroma], or "*Fullness of things,*" for He comprehended in Himself everything; and the LIGHT; for he was the Sun-God. He was unchangeable in the midst of everything phenomenal in his worlds. He *created* nothing; but everything *emanated* from Him; and of Him all the other Gods were but manifestations.

The Ram was His living symbol; which you see reproduced in this Degree, lying on the book with seven seals on the tracing-board. He caused the creation of the world by the Primitive Thought [ $\text{Εννοια}$ , Ennoia], or *Spirit* [ $\text{Πνευμα}$ , Pneuma], that issued from

him by means of his *Voice* or the WORD; and which *Thought* or *Spirit* was personified as the Goddess NEITH. She, too, was a divinity of *Light*, and mother of the Sun; and the Feast of Lamps was celebrated in her honor at Saïs. The Creative *Power*, another manifestation of Deity, proceeding to the creation conceived of in her, the Divine *Intelligence*, produced with its Word the Universe, symbolized by an egg issuing from the mouth of KNEPH; from which egg came PHTHA, image of the Supreme Intelligence as realized in the world, and the type of that manifested in man; the principal agent, also, of Nature, or the creative and productive Fire. PHRE or RE, the Sun, or Celestial Light, whose symbol was ☉, the point within a circle, was the son of PHTHA; and TIPHE, his wife, or the celestial firmament, with the seven celestial bodies, animated by spirits of genii that govern them, was represented on many of the monuments, clad in blue or yellow, her garments sprinkled with stars, and accompanied by the sun, moon, and five planets; and she was the type of Wisdom, and they of the Seven Planetary Spirits of the Gnostics, that with her presided over and governed the sublunary world.

In this Degree, unknown for a hundred years to those who have practised it, these emblems reproduced refer to these old doctrines. The lamb, the yellow hangings strewed with stars, the seven columns, candlesticks, and seals all recall them to us.

The Lion was the symbol of ATHOM-RE, the Great God of Upper Egypt; the Hawk, of RA or PHRE; the Eagle, of MENDES; the Bull, of APIS; and three of these are seen under the platform on which our altar stands.

The first HERMES was the INTELLIGENCE, or WORD of God. Moved with compassion for a race living without law, and wishing to teach them that they sprang from His bosom, and to point out to them the way that they should go [the books which the first Hermes, the same with Enoch, had written on the mysteries of divine science, in the sacred characters, being unknown to those who lived after the flood], God sent to man OSIRIS and ISIS, accompanied by THOTH, the incarnation or terrestrial repetition of the first Hermes; who taught men the arts, science, and the ceremonies of religion; and then ascended to Heaven or the Moon. OSIRIS was the Principle of Good. TYPHON, like AHRIMAN, was the principle and source of all that is evil in the moral and physical order. Like the Satan of Gnosticism, he was confounded with Matter.

From Egypt or Persia the new Platonists borrowed the idea, and the Gnostics received it from them, that man, in his terrestrial career, is successively under the influence of the Moon, of Mercury, of Venus, of the Sun, of Mars, of Jupiter, and of Saturn, until he finally reaches the Elysian Fields; an idea again symbolized in the Seven Seals.

The Jews of Syria and Judea were the direct precursors of Gnosticism; and in their doctrines were ample oriental elements. These Jews had had with the Orient, at two different periods, intimate relations, familiarizing them with the doctrines of Asia, and especially of Chaldea and Persia; -- their forced residence in Central Asia under the Assyrians and Persians; and their voluntary dispersion over the whole East, when subjects of the Seleucidae and the Romans. Living near two-thirds of a century, and many of them long afterward, in Mesopotamia, the cradle of their race; speaking the same language, and their children reared with those of the Chaldeans, Assyrians, Medes, and Persians, and receiving from them their names (as the case of Danayal, who was called Baeltasatsar, proves), they necessarily adopted many of the doctrines of their conquerors. Their descendants, as Azra and Nahamaiah show us, hardly desired to leave Persia, when they were allowed to do so. They had a special jurisdiction, and governors and judges taken from their own people; many of them held high office, and their children were educated with those of the highest nobles. Danayal was the friend and minister of the King, and the Chief of the College of the Magi at Babylon; if we may believe the book which bears his name, and trust to the incidents related in its highly figurative and imaginative style. Mordecai, too, occupied a high station, no less than that of Prime Minister, and Esther or Astar, his cousin, was the Monarch's wife.

The Magi of Babylon were expounders of figurative writings, interpreters of nature, and of dreams, -- astronomers and divines; and from their influences arose among the Jews, after their rescue from captivity, a number of sects, and a new exposition, the mystical interpretation, with all its wild fancies and infinite caprices. The *Aions* of the Gnostics, the *Ideas* of Plato, the *Angels* of the Jews, and the *Demons* of the Greeks, all correspond to the *Ferouers* of Zoroaster.

A great number of Jewish families remained permanently in their new country; and one of the most celebrated of their schools was at Babylon. They were soon familiarized with the doctrine of Zoroaster, which itself was more ancient than Kuros. From the

system of the Zend-Avesta they borrowed, and subsequently gave large development to, everything that could be reconciled with their own faith; and these additions to the old doctrine were soon spread, by the constant intercourse of commerce, into Syria and Palestine.

In the Zend-Avesta, God is Illimitable Time. No origin can be assigned to Him: He is so entirely enveloped in His glory, His nature and attributes are so inaccessible to human Intelligence, that He can be only the object of a silent Veneration. Creation took place by emanation from Him. The first emanation was the primitive *Light*, and from that the King of Light, ORMUZD. By the "WORD," *Ormuzd* created the world pure. He is its preserver and Judge; a Being Holy and Heavenly; Intelligence and Knowledge; the First-born of Time without limits; and invested with all the Powers of the Supreme Being.

Still he is, strictly speaking, the *Fourth* Being. He had a *Ferouer*, a pre-existing Soul [in the language of Plato, a *type* or *ideal*]; and it is said of Him, that He existed from the beginning, in the primitive *Light*. But, that *Light* being but an element, and His *Ferouer* a type, he is, in ordinary language, *the First-born* of ZEROUANE-AKHERENE. Behold again "THE WORD" of Masonry; the *Man*, on the Tracing-Board of this Degree; the LIGHT toward which all Masons travel.

He created after his own image, six Genii called *Amshaspands*, who surround his Throne, are his organs of communication with inferior spirits and men, transmit to Him their prayers, solicit for them His favors, and serve them as models of purity and perfection. Thus we have the *Demiourgos* of Gnosticism, and the six *Genii* that assist him. These are the Hebrew Archangels of the Planets.

The names of these *Amshaspands* are Bahman, Ardibehest, Schariver, Sapandomad, Khordad, and Amerdad.

The fourth, the Holy SAPANDOMAD, created the first man and woman.

Then ORMUZD created 28 Iseds, of whom MITHRAS is the chief. They watch, with *Ormuzd* and the *Amshaspands*, over the happiness, purity, and preservation of the world, which is under their government; and they are also models for mankind and interpreters of men's prayers. With *Mithras* and *Ormuzd*, they make a pleroma [or complete number] of 30, corresponding to the thirty Aions of the Gnostics, and to the *ogdoade*, *dodecade*,

and *decade* of the Egyptians. *Mithras* was the Sun-God, invoked with, and soon confounded with him, becoming the object of a special worship, and eclipsing Ormuzd himself.

The third order of pure spirits is more numerous. They are the *Ferouers*, the THOUGHTS of Ormuzd, or the IDEAS which he conceived before proceeding to the creation of things. They too are superior to men. They protect them during their life on earth; they will purify them from evil at their resurrection. They are their tutelary genii, from the fall to the complete regeneration.

AHRIMAN, second-born of the Primitive Light, emanated from it, pure like ORMUZD; but, proud and ambitious, yielded to jealousy of the First-born. For his hatred and pride, the Eternal condemned him to dwell, for 12,000 years, in that part of space where no ray of light reaches; the black empire of darkness. In that period the struggle between *Light* and *Darkness*, Good and Evil will be terminated.

AHRIMAN scorned to submit, and took the field against ORMUZD. To the good spirits created by his Brother, he opposed an innumerable army of Evil Ones. To the seven *Amsbaspands* he opposed seven *Archdeus*, attached to the seven Planets; to the *Izeds* and *Ferouers* an equal number of *Deus*, which brought upon the world all moral and physical evils. Hence *Poverty*, *Maladies*, *Impurity*, *Envy*, *Chagrin*, *Drunkenness*, *Falsehood*, *Calumny*, and their horrible array.

The image of Ahriman was the Dragon, confounded by the Jews with Satan and the Serpent-Tempter. After a reign of 3000 years, Ormuzd had created the Material World, in six periods, calling successively into existence the Light, Water, Earth, plants, animals, and Man. But Ahriman concurred in creating the earth and water; for darkness was already an element, and Ormuzd could not exclude its Master. So also the two concurred in producing Man. Ormuzd produced, by his Will and Word, a Being that was the type and source of universal life for everything that exists under Heaven. He placed in man a pure principle, or Life, proceeding from the Supreme Being. But Ahriman destroyed that pure principle, in the form wherewith it was clothed; and when Ormuzd had made, of its recovered and purified essence, the first man and woman, Ahriman seduced and tempted them with wine and fruits; the woman yielding first.

Often, during the three latter periods of 3000 years each, Ahriman and Darkness are, and are to be, triumphant. But the pure souls are assisted by the Good Spirits; the Triumph of Good is decreed by the Supreme Being, and the period of that triumph will infallibly arrive. When the world shall be most afflicted with the evils poured out upon it by the spirits of perdition, three Prophets will come to bring relief to mortals. SOSIOSCH, the principal of the Three, will regenerate the earth, and restore to it its primitive beauty, strength, and purity. He will judge the good and the wicked. After the universal resurrection of the good, he will conduct them to a home of everlasting happiness. Ahriman, his evil demons, and all wicked men, will also be purified in a torrent of melted metal. The law of Ormuzd will reign everywhere; all men will be happy; all, enjoying unalterable bliss, will sing with Sosiosch the praises of the Supreme Being.

These doctrines, the details of which were sparingly borrowed by the Pharisaic Jews, were much more fully adopted by the Gnostics; who taught the restoration of all things, their return to their original pure condition, the happiness of those to be saved, and their admission to the feast of Heavenly Wisdom.

The doctrines of Zoroaster came originally from Bactria, an Indian Province of Persia. Naturally, therefore, it would include Hindu or Buddhist elements, as it did. The fundamental idea of Buddhism was, matter subjugating the intelligence, and intelligence freeing itself from that slavery. Perhaps something came to Gnosticism from China. "Before the chaos which preceded the birth of Heaven and Earth," says Lao-Tseu, "a single Being existed, immense and silent, immovable and ever active—the mother of the Universe. I know not its name: but I designate it by the word *Reason*. Man has his *type* and *model* in the Earth; Earth in Heaven; Heaven in Reason; and Reason in Itself." Here again are the *Ferouers*, the *Ideas*, the *Aions* – the REASON or INTELLIGENCE [Εννοια], SILENCE [Σιγή], WORD [Λογος], and WISDOM [Σοφια] of the Gnostics.

The dominant system among the Jews after their captivity was that of the Pharoschim or Pharisees. Whether their name was derived from that of the Parsees, or followers of Zoroaster, or from some other source, it is certain that they had borrowed much of their doctrine from the Persians. Like them they claimed to have the exclusive and mysterious knowledge, unknown to the mass. Like them they taught that a constant war was waged between the Empire of Good and that of Evil. Like them they attributed the sin and fall

of man to the demons and their chief; and like them they admitted a special protection of the righteous by inferior beings, agents of Jehovah. All their doctrines on these subjects were at bottom those of the Holy Books; but singularly developed and the Orient was evidently the source from which those developments came.

They styled themselves *Interpreters*; a name indicating their claim to the exclusive possession of the true meaning of the Holy Writings, by virtue of the oral tradition which Moses had received on Mount Sinai, and which successive generations of Initiates had transmitted, as they claimed, unaltered, unto them. Their very costume, their belief in the influences of the stars, and in the immortality and transmigration of souls, their system of angels and their astronomy, were all foreign.

Sadduceeism arose merely from an opposition essentially Jewish, to these foreign teachings, and that mixture of doctrines, adopted by the Pharisees, and which constituted the popular creed.

We come at last to the *Essenes* and *Therapeuts*, with whom this Degree is particularly concerned. That intermingling of oriental and occidental rites, of Persian and Pythagorean opinions, which we have pointed out in the doctrines of Philo, is unmistakable in the creeds of these two sects.

They were less distinguished by metaphysical speculations than by simple meditations and moral practices. But the latter always partook of the Zoroastrian principle, that it was necessary to free the soul from the trammels and influences of matter; which led to a system of abstinence and maceration entirely opposed to the ancient Hebraic ideas, favorable as they were to physical pleasures.

In general, the life and manners of these mystical associations, as Philo and Josephus describe them, and particularly their prayers at sunrise, seem the image of what the Zend-Avesta prescribes to the faithful adorer or Ormuzd; and some of their observances cannot otherwise be explained.

The Therapeuts resided in Egypt, in the neighborhood of Alexandria; and the Essenes in Palestine, in the vicinity of the Dead Sea. But there was nevertheless a striking coincidence in their ideas, readily explained by attributing it to a foreign influence. The Jews of Egypt, under the influence of the School of Alexandria, endeavored in general to make their doctrines harmonize with the traditions of Greece; and thence came, in the

doctrines of the Therapeuts, as stated by Philo, the many analogies between the Pythagorean and Orphic ideas, on one side, and those of Judaism on the other: while the Jews of Palestine, having less communication with Greece, or contemning its teachings, rather imbibed the Oriental doctrines, which they drank in at the source and with which their relations with Persia made them familiar. This attachment was particularly shown in the Kabalah, which belonged rather to Palestine than to Egypt, though extensively known in the latter; and furnished the Gnostics with some of their most striking theories.

It is a significant fact, that while Christ spoke often of the Pharisees and Sadducees, He never once mentioned the Essenes, between whose doctrines and His there was so great a resemblance, and, in many points, so perfect an identity. Indeed, they are not named, nor even distinctly alluded to, anywhere in the New Testament.

John, the son of a Priest who ministered in the Temple at Jerusalem, and whose mother was of the family of Aharun, was in the deserts until the day of his showing unto Israel. He drank neither wine nor strong drink. Clad in hair-cloth, and with a girdle of leather, and feeding upon such food as the desert afforded, he preached, in the country about Jordan, the baptism of repentance, for the remission of sins; that is, the necessity of repentance proven by *reformation*. He taught the people charity and liberality; the publicans, justice, equity, and fair dealing; the soldiery peace, truth, and contentment; to do violence to none, accuse none falsely, and be content with their pay. He inculcated necessity of a virtuous life, and the folly of trusting to their descent from Abraham.

He denounced both Pharisees and Sadducees as a generation of vipers threatened with the anger of God. He baptized those who confessed their sins. He preached in the desert; and therefore in the country where the Essenes lived, professing the same doctrines. He was imprisoned before Christ began to preach. Matthew mentions him without preface or explanation; as if, apparently, his history was too well known to need any. "In those days," he says, "came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea." His disciples frequently fasted; for we find them with the Pharisees coming to Jesus to inquire why *His* Disciples did not fast as often as they; and He did not denounce *them*, as His habit was to denounce the Pharisees; but answered them kindly and gently.

From his prison, John sent two of his disciples to inquire of Christ: "Art thou he that is to come, or do we look for another?" Christ referred them to his miracles as an answer;

and declared to the people that John was a prophet, and more than a prophet, and that no greater man had ever been born; but that the hum- blest Christian was his superior. He declared him to be Elias, who was to come.

John had denounced to Herod his marriage with his brother's wife as unlawful; and for this he was imprisoned, and finally executed to gratify her. His disciples buried him; and Herod and others thought he had risen from the dead and appeared again in the person of Christ. The people all regarded John as a prophet; and Christ silenced the Priests and Elders by asking them whether he was inspired. They feared to excite the anger of the people by saying that he was not. Christ declared that he came "in the way of righteousness"; and that the lower classes believed him, though the Priests and Pharisees did not.

Thus John, who was often consulted by Herod, and to whom that monarch showed great deference and was often governed by his advice; whose doctrine prevailed very extensively among the people and the publicans, taught *some* creed older than Christianity. That is plain: and it is equally plain, that the very large body of the Jews that adopted his doctrines, were neither Pharisees nor Sadducees, but the humble, common people. They must, therefore, have been Essenes. It is plain, too, that Christ applied for baptism as a sacred rite, well known and long practiced. It was becoming to him, he said, to fulfill all righteousness.

In the 18<sup>th</sup> chapter of the Acts of the Apostles we read thus: "And a certain Jew, named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, and mighty in the Scriptures, came to Ephesus. This man *was instructed in the way of the Lord*, and, being fervent in spirit, *he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John*; and he began to speak boldly in the synagogue; whom, when Aquilla and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him *the way of God* more perfectly."

Translating this from the symbolic and figurative language into the true ordinary sense of the Greek text, it reads thus: "And a certain Jew, named Apollos, an Alexandrian by birth, an eloquent man, and of extensive learning, came to Ephesus. He had learned in the mysteries the true doctrine in regard to God; and, being a zealous enthusiast, he spoke and taught diligently the truths in regard to the Deity, having received no other baptism than that of John." He knew nothing in regard to Christianity; for he had

resided in Alexandria, and had just then come to Ephesus; being, probably, a disciple of Philo, and a Therapeut.

"That, in all times," says St. Augustine, "is the Christian religion, which to know and follow is the most sure and certain health, called according to that name, but not according to the thing itself, of which it is the name; for the thing itself, which is now called the Christian religion, *really was known to the Ancients*, nor was wanting at any time from the beginning of the human race, until the time when Christ came in the flesh; from whence the true religion, which had previously existed, began to be called Christian; and this in our days is the Christian religion, not as having been wanting in former times, but as having, in later times, received this name." The disciples were first called "Christians," at Antioch, when Barnabas and Paul began to preach there.

The Wandering or Itinerant Jews or Exorcists, who assumed to employ the Sacred Name in exorcising evil spirits, were no doubt Therapeutae or Essenes.

"And it it came to pass," we read in the 19<sup>th</sup> chapter of the Acts, verses 1 to 4, "that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul, having passed through the upper parts of Asia Minor, came to Ephesus; and finding certain *disciples*, he said to them, 'Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye became Believers ?' And they said unto him, 'We have not so much as heard that there is any Holy Ghost.' And he said to them, 'In what, then, were you baptized ?' And they said 'In John's baptism.' Then said Paul, 'John indeed baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying to the people that they should believe in Him who was to come after him, that is, in Jesus Christ. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.'"

This faith, taught by John, and so nearly Christianity, could have been nothing but the doctrine of the Essenes; and there can be no doubt that John belonged to that sect. The place where he preached, his macerations and frugal diet, the doctrines he taught, all prove it conclusively. There was no other sect to which he *could* have belonged; certainly none so numerous as his, *except* the Essenes.

We find, from the two letters written by Paul to the brethren at Corinth, that City of Luxury and Corruption, that there were contentions among them. Rival sects had already, about the 57<sup>th</sup> year of our era, reared their banners there, as followers, some of Paul, some of Apollos, and some of Cephas. Some of them denied the resurrection. Paul

urged them to adhere to the doctrines taught by himself, and had sent Timothy to them to bring them afresh to their recollection.

According to Paul, Christ was to come again. He was to put an end to all other Principalities and Powers, and finally to Death, and then be Himself once more merged in God; *who should then be all in all*.

The forms and ceremonies of the Essenes were symbolical. They had, according to Philo the Jew, four Degrees; the members being divided into two Orders, the *Practici* and *Therapeutici*; the latter being the contemplative and medical Brethren; and the former the active, practical, business men. They were Jews by birth; and had a greater affection for each other than the members of any other sect. Their brotherly love was intense. They fulfilled the Christian law, "Love one another." They despised riches. No one was to be found among them, having more than another. The possessions of one were intermingled with those of the others; so that they all had but one patrimony, and were brethren. Their piety toward God was extraordinary. Before sunrise they never spake a word about profane matters; but put up certain prayers which they had received from their forefathers. At dawn of day, and before it was light, their prayers and hymns ascended to Heaven. They were eminently faithful and true, and the Ministers of Peace. They had mysterious ceremonies, and initiations into their mysteries; and the Candidate promised that he would ever practise fidelity to all men, and especially to those in authority, "because no one obtains the government without God's assistance."

Whatever they said, was firmer than an oath; but they avoided swearing, and esteemed it worse than perjury. They were simple in their diet and mode of living, bore torture with fortitude, and despised death. They cultivated the science of medicine and were very skillful. They deemed it a good omen to dress in white robes. They had their own courts, and passed righteous judgments. They kept the Sabbath more rigorously than the Jews.

Their chief towns were Engaddi, near the Dead Sea, and Hebron. Engaddi was about 30 miles southeast from Jerusalem, and Hebron about 20 miles south of that city. Josephus and Eusebius speak of them as an ancient sect; and they were no doubt the first among the Jews to embrace Christianity: with whose faith and doctrine their own tenets had so many points of resemblance, and were indeed in a great measure the same. Pliny regarded them as a very ancient people.

In their devotions they turned toward the rising sun; as the Jews generally did toward the Temple. But they were no idolaters; for they observed the law of Moses with scrupulous fidelity. They held all things in common, and despised riches, their wants being supplied by the administration of Curators or Stewards. The Tetractys, composed of round dots instead of jods, was revered among them. This being a Pythagorean symbol, evidently shows their connection with the school of Pythagoras; but their peculiar tenets more resemble those of Confucius and Zoroaster; and probably were adopted while they were prisoners in Persia; which explains their turning toward the Sun in prayer.

Their demeanor was sober and chaste. They submitted to the superintendence of governors whom they appointed over themselves. The whole of their time was spent in labor, meditation, and prayer; and they were most sedulously attentive to every call of justice and humanity, and every moral duty. They believed in the unity of God. They supposed the souls of men to have fallen, by a disastrous fate, from the regions of purity and light, into the bodies which they occupy; during their continuance in which they considered them confined as in a prison. Therefore they did not believe in the resurrection of the body; but in that of the soul only. They believed in a future state of rewards and punishments; and they disregarded the ceremonies or external forms enjoined in the law of Moses to be observed in the worship of God; holding that the words of that lawgiver were to be understood in a mysterious and recondite sense, and not according to their literal meaning. They offered no sacrifices, except at home; and by meditation they endeavored, as far as possible, to isolate the soul from the body, and carry it back to God.

Eusebius broadly admits "that the ancient Therapeutae were Christians; and that their ancient writings were our Gospels and Epistles."

The ESSENES were of the Eclectic Sect of Philosophers, and held PLATO in the highest esteem; they believed that true philosophy, the greatest and most salutary gift of God to mortals, was scattered, in various portions, through all the different Sects; and that it was, consequently, the duty of every wise man to gather it from the several quarters where it lay dispersed, and to employ it, thus reunited, in destroying the dominion of impiety and vice.

The great festivals of the Solstices were observed in a distinguished manner by the Essenes; as would naturally be supposed, from the fact that they revered the Sun, not as a god, but as a symbol of light and fire; the fountain of which, the Orientals supposed God to be. They lived in continence and abstinence, and had establishments similar to the monasteries of the early Christians.

The writings of the Essenes were full of mysticism, parables, enigmas, and allegories. They believed in the esoteric and exoteric meanings of the Scriptures; and, as we have already said, they had a warrant for that in the Scriptures themselves. They found it in the Old Testament, as the Gnostics found it in the New. The Christian writers, and even Christ himself, recognized it as a truth, that all Scripture had an inner and an outer meaning. Thus we find it said as follows, in one of the Gospels:

"Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the Kingdom of God; but unto men *that are without*, all these things are done in parables; that seeing, they may see and not perceive, and hearing they may hear and not understand . . . . And the disciples came and said unto him, 'Why speakest Thou the truth in parables ?' -- He answered and said unto them, 'Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, but to them it is not given.'"

Paul, in the 4<sup>th</sup> chapter of his Epistle to the Galatians, speaking of the simplest facts of the Old Testament, asserts that they are *an allegory*. In the 3<sup>rd</sup> chapter of the second letter to the Corinthians, he declares himself a minister of the New Testament, appointed by God; "Not of the letter, but of the spirit; for the letter killeth." Origen and St. Gregory held that the Gospels were not to be taken in their literal sense; and Athanasius admonishes us that "Should we understand sacred writ according to the letter, we should fall into the most enormous blasphemies."

Eusebius said, "Those who preside over the Holy Scriptures, philosophize over them, and expound their literal sense by allegory."

The sources of our knowledge of the Kabalistic doctrines, are the books of Jezirah and Sohar, the former drawn up in the second century, and the latter a little later; but containing materials much older than themselves. In their most characteristic elements, they go back to the time of the exile. In them, as in the teachings of Zoroaster, everything that exists emanated from a source of infinite LIGHT. Before everything,

existed THE ANCIENT OF DAYS, the KING OF LIGHT; a title often given to the Creator in the *Zend-Avesta* and the code of the *Sabaeans*. With the idea so expressed is connected the pantheism of India. KING OF LIGHT, THE ANCIENT, is ALL THAT IS. He is not only the real cause of all Existences; he is Infinite [AINSOPH]. He is HIMSELF: there is nothing in Him that We can call *Thou*.

In the Indian doctrine, not only is the Supreme Being the real cause of all, but he is the only real Existence: all the rest is illusion. In the Kabbalah, as in the Persian and Gnostic doctrines, He is the Supreme Being unknown to all, the "Unknown Father." The world is his revelation, and subsists only in Him. His attributes are reproduced there, with different modifications, and in different degrees, so that the Universe is His Holy Splendor: it is but His Mantle; but it must be revered in silence. All beings have emanated from the Supreme Being: The nearer a being is to Him, the more perfect it is; the more remote in the scale, the less its purity.

A ray of Light, shot from the Deity, is the cause and principle of all that exists. It is at once Father and Mother of All, in the sublimest sense. It penetrates everything; and without it nothing can exist an instant. From this double FORCE, designated by the two parts of the word I.: H.: U.: H.: emanated the FIRST-BORN of God, the Universal Form, in which are contained all beings; the Persian and Platonic Archetype of things, united with the Infinite by the primitive ray of Light.

This First-Born is the Creative Agent, Conservator, and animating Principle of the Universe. It is THE LIGHT OF LIGHT. It possesses the three Primitive Forces of the Divinity, LIGHT, SPIRIT and LIFE [φῶς, Πνευμά, and Ζωή]. As it has received what it gives, Light and Life, it is equally considered as the generative and conceptive Principle, the Primitive Man, ADAM KADMON. As such, it has revealed itself in ten emanations or *Sephiroth*, which are not ten different beings, nor even beings at all; but sources of life, vessels of Omnipotence, and types of Creation. They are *Sovereignty* or *Will*, *Wisdom*, *Intelligence*, *Benignity*, *Severity*, *Beauty*, *Victory*, *Glory*, *Permanency*, and *Empire*. These are attributes of God; and this idea, that God reveals Himself by His attributes, and that the human mind cannot perceive or discern God Himself, in his works, but only his mode of manifesting Himself, is a profound Truth. We know of the Invisible only what the Visible reveals.

To each of these attributes was given one of the most sacred names of the Supreme Being. *Wisdom* they termed JEH; *Prudence*, IHUH; *Magnificence*, EL; *Sternness*, ELOHIM; *Victory* and *Glory*, ZABAOTH; and *Empire*, ADONAI. *Sovereignty* was also styled OR, which is the OUR of the Sabeian system, that is LIGHT.

*Wisdom* was called NOUS and LOGOS [Νοῦς and Λογός], INTELLECT or the WORD. *Intelligence*, source of the oil of anointing, responds to the Holy Ghost of the Christian Faith.

*Beauty* is represented by green and yellow. *Victory* is YAHOVAH-TSABAOTH, the column on the right hand, the column *Jachin*: *Glory* is the column *Boaz*, on the left hand. And thus our symbols appear again in the Kabalah. And again the LIGHT, the object of our labors, appears as the creative power of Deity. The circle, also, was the special symbol of the first Sephirah, Kether, or the Crown.

We do not further follow the Kabalah in its four Worlds of Spirits, *Aziluth*, *Briah*, *Yezirah*, and *Asiah*, or of *emanation*, *creation*, *formation*, and *fabrication*, one inferior to and one emerging from the other, the superior always enveloping the inferior; its doctrine that, in all that exists, there is nothing purely material; that all comes from God, and in all He proceeds by irradiation; that everything subsists by the Divine ray that penetrates creation; and all is united by the Spirit of God, which is the life of life; so that all is God; the Existences that inhabit the four worlds, inferior to each other in proportion to their distance from the Great King of Light: the contest between the good and evil Angels and Principles, to endure until the Eternal Himself comes to end it and re-establish the primitive harmony; the four distinct parts of the Soul of Man; and the migrations of impure souls, until they are sufficiently purified to share with the Spirits of Light the contemplation of the Supreme Being whose Splendor fills the Universe.

The WORD was also found in the Phoenician Creed. As in all those of Asia, a WORD of God, written in starry characters, by the planetary Divinities, and communicated by the Demi-Gods, as a profound mystery, to the higher classes of the human race, to be communicated by them to mankind, created the world. The faith of the Phoenicians was an emanation from that ancient worship of the Stars, which in the creed of Zoroaster alone, is connected with a faith in one God. Light and Fire are the most important

agents in the Phoenician faith. There is a race of children of the Light. They adored the Heaven with its Lights, deeming it the Supreme God.

Everything emanates from a Single Principle, and a Primitive Love, which is the Moving Power of All and governs all. Light, by its union with Spirit, whereof it is but the vehicle or symbol, is the Life of everything, and penetrates everything. It should therefore be respected and honored everywhere; for everywhere it governs and controls.

The Chaldaic and Jerusalem Paraphrasts endeavored to render the phrase, DEBAR-YAHOVAH [דְּבַר יְהוָה], the Word of God, a personalty, wherever they met with it. The phrase, "And God created man," is, in the Jerusalem Targum, "And the Word of IHUH created man."

So, in xxviii. Gen. 20,21, where Jacob says: "If God [יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים, IHIH ALHIM] will be with me... then shall IHUH be my ALHIM; [וְהָיָה יְהוָה לִי לְאֱלֹהִים, UHIIH IHUH LI LALHIM]; and this stone shall be God's House [יְהוָה בֵּית אֱלֹהִים, IHIH BITH ALHIM]: Onkelos paraphrases it, "If the word of IHUH will be my help . . . then the word of IHUH shall be my God."

So, in iii. Gen. 8, for "The Voice of the Lord God" [יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים, IHUH ALHIM), we have, "The Voice of the Word of IHUH."

In ix. Wisdom, 1, "O God of my Fathers and Lord of Mercy! who has made all things with thy word. . . ἐν λόγου σου."

And in xviii. Wisdom, 15, "Thine Almighty Word [Λογος] leaped down from Heaven."

Philo speaks of the Word as being the same with God. So in several places he calls it "δεύτερος του Θεος Λόγος," the Second Divinity; "εἰχών του Θεου," the Image of God: the Divine Word that made all things: "the ὑπαρχος," substitute, of God; and the like.

Thus when John commenced to preach, had been for ages agitated, by the Priests and Philosophers of the East and West, the great questions concerning the eternity or creation of matter: immediate or intermediate creation of the Universe by the Supreme God; the origin, object, and final extinction of evil; the relations between the intellectual and material worlds, and between God and man; and the creation, fall, redemption, and restoration to his first estate, of man.

The Jewish doctrine, differing in this from all the other Oriental creeds, and even from the Alohayistic legend with which the book of Genesis commences, attributed the creation to the immediate action of the Supreme Being. The Theosophists of the other Eastern Peoples interposed more than one intermediary between God and the world. To place between them but a single Being, to suppose for the production of the world but a single intermediary, was, in their eyes, to lower the Supreme Majesty. The interval between God, who is perfect Purity, and matter, which is base and foul, was too great for them to clear it at a single step. Even in the Occident, neither Plato nor Philo could thus impoverish the Intellectual World.

Thus, Cerinthus of Ephesus, with most of the Gnostics, Philo, the Kabalah, the Zend-Avesta, the Puranas, and all the Orient, deemed the distance and antipathy between the Supreme Being and the material world too great, to attribute to the former the creation of the latter. Below, and emanating from, or created by, the Ancient of Days, the Central Light, the Beginning, or First Principle [Ἀρχὴ], one, two, or more Principles, Existences, or Intellectual Beings were imagined, to some one or more of whom [without any immediate creative act on the part of the Great Immovable, Silent Deity], the immediate creation of the material and mental universe was due.

We have already spoken of many of the speculations on this point. To some, the world was created by the LOGOS or WORD, first manifestation of, or emanation from, the Deity. To others, the beginning of creation was by the emanation of a ray of LIGHT, creating the principle of *Light* and *Life*. The Primitive THOUGHT, creating the inferior Deities, a succession of INTELLIGENCES, the Iynges of Zoroaster, his *Amshaspands*, *Izeds*, and *Ferouers*, the *Ideas* of Plato, the *Aions* of the Gnostics, the *Angels* of the Jews, the *Nous*, the *Demiourgos*, the DIVINE REASON, the *Powers* or *Forces* of Philo, and the Alohayim, Forces or Superior Gods of the ancient legend with which Genesis begins, -- to these and other intermediaries the creation was owing. No restraints were laid on the Fancy and the Imagination. The veriest Abstractions became Existences and Realities. The attributes of God, personified, became Powers, Spirits, Intelligences.

God was the *Light of Light*, *Divine Fire*, the *Abstract Intellectuality*, the *Root* or *Germ* of the Universe. *Simon Magus*, founder of the Gnostic faith, and many of the early Judaizing Christians, admitted that the manifestations of the Supreme Being, as FATHER, or

JEHOVAH, SON or CHRIST, and HOLY SPIRIT, were only so many different *modes* of Existence, or *Forces* [δυνάμεις] of the same God. To others they were, as were the multitude of Subordinate Intelligences, real and distinct beings.

The Oriental imagination revelled in the creation of these Inferior Intelligences, Powers of Good and Evil, and Angels. We have spoken of those imagined by the Persians and the Kabalists. In the Talmud, every star, every country, every town, and almost every tongue has a Prince of Heaven as its Protector. JEHUEL, is the guardian of fire, and MICHAEL of water. Seven spirits assist each; those of fire being *Seraphiel*, *Gabriel*, *Nitriel*, *Tammael*, *Tchimschiel*, *Hadarniel*, and *Sarniel*. These seven are represented by the square columns of this Degree, while the columns JACHIN and BOAZ represent the angels of fire and water. But the columns are not representatives of these alone.

To Basilides, God was without name, uncreated, at first containing and concealing in Himself the Plenitude of His Perfections; and when these are by Him displayed and manifested, there result as many particular Existences, all analogous to Him, and still and always Him. To the Essenes and the Gnostics, the East and the West both devised this faith; that the Ideas, Conceptions, or Manifestations of the Deity were so many Creations, so many Beings, all God, nothing without Him, but more than what we now understand by the word *ideas*. They emanated from and were again merged in God. They had a kind of middle existence between our modern ideas, and the intelligences or ideas, elevated to the rank of genii, of the Oriental mythology.

These personified attributes of Deity, in the theory of Basilides, were the Πρωτόγονος or *First-born*, Nous [Nous or Mind]: from it emanates Λογος [Logos, or THE WORD] from it Φρόνησις: [*Phronesis*, *Intellect*]: from it Σοφία [*Sophia*, *Wisdom*]: from it Δύναμις [*Dunamis*, *Power*]: and from it Δικαιοσύνη [*Dikaiosune*, *Righteousness*]: to which latter the Jews gave the name of Ειρηνη [*Eirene*, *Peace*, or *Calm*], the essential characteristics of Divinity, and harmonious effect of all His perfections. The whole number of successive emanations was 365, expressed by the Gnostics, in Greek letters, by the mystic word ΑΒΡΑΞΑΣ [*Abraxas*]; designating God as manifested, or the aggregate of his manifestations; but not the Supreme and Secret God Himself. These three

hundred and sixty-five Intelligences compose altogether the Fullness or *Plenitude* [Πληρωμα] of the Divine Emanations.

With the Ophites, a sect of the Gnostics, there were seven inferior spirits [inferior to Ialdabaoth, the Demiourgos or Actual Creator]: *Michael, Suriel, Raphael, Gabriel, Thauthabaoth, Erataoth*, and *Athaniel*, the genii of the stars called the Bull; the Dog, the Lion, the Bear, the Serpent, the Eagle, and the Ass that formerly figured in the constellation Cancer, and symbolized respectively by those animals; *as Ialdabaoth, Iao, Adonai, Eloï, Orai*, and *Astaphai* were the genii of Saturn, the Moon, the Sun, Jupiter, Venus, and Mercury.

The WORD appears in all these creeds. It is the *Ormuzd* of Zoroaster, the *Ainsoph* of the Kabalah, the *Nous* of Platonism and Philonism, and the *Sophia* or *Demiourgos* of the Gnostics.

And all these creeds, while admitting these different manifestations of the Supreme Being, held that His identity was immutable and permanent. That was Plato's distinction between the Being always the same [τὸ ὄν] and the perpetual flow of things incessantly changing, the Genesis.

The belief in dualism in some shape, was universal. Those who held that everything emanated from God, aspired to God, and re-entered into God, believed that, among those emanations were two adverse Principles, of Light and Darkness, Good and Evil. This prevailed in Central Asia and in Syria; while in Egypt it assumed the form of Greek speculation. In the former, a second Intellectual Principle was admitted, active in its Empire of Darkness, audacious against the Empire of Light. So the Persians and Sabians understood it. In Egypt, this second Principle was Matter, as the word was used by the Platonic School, with its sad attributes, Vacuity, Darkness, and Death. In their theory, matter could be animated only by the low communication of a principle of divine life. It resists the influences that would spiritualize it. That resisting Power is Satan, the rebellious Matter, Matter that does not partake of God.

To many there were two Principles; the Unknown Father, or Supreme and Eternal God, living in the centre of the Light, happy in the perfect purity of His being; the other, eternal Matter, that inert, shapeless, darksome mass, which they considered as the source of all evils, the mother and dwelling-place of Satan.

To Philo and the Platonists, there was a Soul of the world, creating visible things, and active in them, as agent of the Supreme Intelligence; realizing therein the ideas communicated to Him by that Intelligence, and which sometimes excel His conceptions, but which He executes without comprehending them.

The Apocalypse or Revelations, by whomever written, belongs to the Orient and to extreme antiquity. It reproduces what is far older than itself. It paints, with the strongest colors that the Oriental genius ever employed, the closing scenes of the great struggle of Light, and Truth, and Good, against Darkness, Error, and Evil; personified in that between the New Religion on one side, and Paganism and Judaism on the other. It is a particular application of the ancient myth of Ormuzd and his Genii against Ahri-man and his Devs; and it celebrates the final triumph of Truth against the combined powers of men and demons. The ideas and imagery are borrowed from every quarter; and allusions are found in it to the doctrines of all ages. We are continually reminded of the Zend-Avesta, the Jewish Codes, Philo, and the Gnosis. The Seven Spirits surrounding the Throne of the Eternal, at the opening of the Grand Drama, and acting so important a part throughout, everywhere the first instruments of the Divine Will and Vengeance, are the Seven Amshaspands of Parsism; as the Twenty-four Ancients, offering to the Supreme Being the first supplications and the first homage, remind us of the Mysterious Chiefs of Judaism, foreshadow the Eons of Gnosticism, and reproduce the twenty-four Good Spirits created by Ormuzd and inclosed in an egg.

The Christ of the Apocalypse, First-born of Creation and of the Resurrection is invested with the characteristics of the Ormuzd and Sosiosch of the Zend-Avesta, the Ainsoph of the Kabalah and the Carpistes [Καρπιστός] of the Gnostics. The idea that the true Initiates and Faithful become Kings and Priests, is at once Persian, Jewish, Christian, and Gnostic. And the definition of the Supreme Being, that He is at once Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end – He that was, and is, and is to come, *i.e.*, Time illimitable, is Zoroaster's definition of Zerouane-Akherene.

The depths of Satan which no man can measure; his triumph for a time by fraud and violence; his being chained by an angel; his reprobation and his precipitation into a sea of metal; his names of the Serpent and the Dragon; the whole conflict of the Good Spirits

or celestial armies against the bad; are so many ideas and designations found alike in the Zend-Avesta, the Kabalah, and the Gnosis.

We even find in the Apocalypse that singular Persian idea, which regards some of the lower animals as so many Devs or vehicles of Devs.

The guardianship of the earth by a good angel, the renewing of the earth and heavens, and the final triumph of pure and holy men, are the same victory of Good over Evil, for which the whole Orient looked.

The gold, and white raiments of the twenty-four Elders are, as in the Persian faith, the signs of a lofty perfection and divine purity.



Thus the Human mind labored and struggled and tortured itself for ages, to explain to itself what it felt, without confessing it, to be inexplicable. A vast crowd of indistinct abstractions, hovering in the imagination, a train of words embodying no tangible meaning, an inextricable labyrinth of subtleties, was the result.

But one grand idea ever emerged and stood prominent and unchangeable over the weltering chaos of confusion. God is great, and good, and wise. Evil and pain and sorrow are temporary, and for wise and beneficent purposes. They *must* be consistent with God's goodness, purity, and infinite perfection; and there *must* be a mode of explaining them, if we could but find it out; as, in all ways we will endeavor to do. Ultimately, Good will prevail, and Evil be overthrown. God, alone *can* do this, and He *will* do it, by an Emanation from Himself, assuming the Human form and redeeming the world.

Behold the object, the end, the result, of the great speculations and logomachies of antiquity; the ultimate annihilation of evil, and restoration of Man to his first estate, by a Redeemer, a Masayah, a Christos, the incarnate Word, Reason, or Power of Deity.

This Redeemer is the Word or Logos, the Ormuzd of Zoroaster, the Ain soph of the Kabalah, the Nous of Platonism and Philonism; He that was in the Beginning with God, and was God, and by Whom everything was made. That He was looked for by all the

People of the East is abundantly shown by the Gospel of John and the Letters of Paul; wherein scarcely anything seemed necessary to be said in proof that such a Redeemer was to come; but all the energies of the writers are devoted to showing that Jesus was that Christos whom all the nations were expecting; the "Word," the Masayah, the Anointed or Consecrated One.

In this Degree the great contest between good and evil, in anticipation of the appearance and advent of the Word or Redeemer is symbolized; and the mysterious esoteric teachings of the Essenes and the Cabalists. Of the practices of the former we gain but glimpses in the ancient writers; but we know that, as their doctrines were taught by John the Baptist, they greatly resembled those of greater purity and more nearly perfect, taught by Jesus; and that not only Palestine was full of John's disciples, so that the Priests and Pharisees did not dare to deny John's inspiration; but his doctrine had extended to Asia Minor, and had made converts in luxurious Ephesus, as it also had in Alexandria in Egypt; and that they readily embraced the Christian faith, of which they had before not even heard.

These old controversies have died away, and the old faiths have faded into oblivion. But Masonry still survives, vigorous and strong, as when philosophy was taught in the schools of Alexandria and under the Portico; teaching the same old truths as the Essenes taught by the shores of the Dead Sea, and as John the Baptist preached in the Desert; truths imperishable as the Deity, and undeniable as Light. Those truths were gathered by the Essenes from the doctrines of the Orient and the Occident, from the Zend-Avesta and the Vedas, from Plato and Pythagoras, from India, Persia, Phoenicia, and Syria, from Greece and Egypt, and from the Holy Books of the Jews. Hence we are called Knights of the East and West, because their doctrines came from both. And these doctrines, the wheat sifted from the chaff, the Truth separated from Error, Masonry has garnered up in her heart of hearts, and through the fires of persecution, and the storms of calamity, has brought them and delivered them unto us. That God is One, immutable, unchangeable, infinitely just and good; that Light will finally overcome Darkness,-- Good conquer Evil, and Truth be victor over Error ;-- these, rejecting all the wild and useless speculations of the Zend-Avesta, the Kabalah, the Gnostics, and the Schools, are the religion and Philosophy of Masonry.

Those speculations and fancies it is useful to study; that knowing in what worthless and unfruitful investigations the mind may engage, you may the more value and appreciate the plain, simple, sublime, universally-acknowledged truths, which have in all ages been the Light by which Masons have been guided on their way; the Wisdom and Strength that like imperishable columns have sustained and will continue to sustain its glorious and magnificent Temple.

It is very surprising that the Essenes, whose exemplary virtues elicited the unbounded admiration of even the Greeks and Romans, and whose doctrines and practices contributed so materially to the spread of Christianity, should be so little known among intelligent Christians. The current information upon this remarkable sect or order of Judaism, to be found in ecclesiastical histories and cyclopaedias, is derived from the short notices of Philo, Pliny, Josephus, Solinus, Porphyry, Eusebius, and Epiphanius. Not only is this combined testimony insufficient, but it is too much tainted with the peculiar docmas of the respective witnesses, to furnish the general reader with an unbiased notion of the character and doctrines of this ancient sect. Nor can the modern descriptions of the Essenes, as given in the histories of the church and in the popular cyclopaedias, be always relied upon when they profess to give the results of the afore-mentioned garbled scraps of ancient information.

The impartial statement which follows of the doctrines and practices of the Essenes, is derived, not only from the seven writers mentioned above, but from the information upon the subject, scattered throughout the Midrashim and the Talmud.

The cardinal doctrines and practices of this sect are as follows: They regarded the Inspired Law of God with the utmost veneration. The highest aim of their life was to become the temples of the Holy Ghost, when they could prophesy, perform miraculous cures, and, like Elias, be the forerunners of the Messiah. This they regarded as the last stage of perfection, which could only be reached by gradual growth in holiness, brought about through strictly observing the commandments and the Levitical laws of purity contained in the Pentateuch, mortifying the flesh and the lusts thereof, and being meek and lowly in spirit, inasmuch as this would bring them into closer communion with Him who is the Holy One of Israel. To this end they abstained from oaths; their

communication was 'yea, yea'; 'nay, nay'; whatsoever was more than these came of evil. The desire to secure themselves from all impure contact with persons not equally scrupulous with themselves altogether from the society of their Jewish brethren, to form a separate community, and to live apart from the world. This fear of impurity, joined with the wish to escape all hindrance to spiritual communion with God, also made the Essenes abstain from marriage, although some weak brethren, who could not be like the angels in heaven, neither marrying nor being given in marriage, were allowed to take wives. But these could never advance to the highest orders of the Brotherhood.

In their separate community, whatever any one of them possessed was deposited in the general treasury, from which the wants of the whole community alike were supplied by stewards appointed by the whole Brotherhood; so that they had all things in common. There were no distinctions among them, such as rich and poor, masters and servants; they called no one 'master' upon earth, but all ministered to the wants of one another. They lived peaceably with all men, reprobated slavery and war, were governed by an elective president-judge, had trials conducted by juries of at least one hundred members, who must be unanimous in their verdict, and the brother who was found guilty of walking disorderly was excommunicated, yet was he not regarded as an enemy, but was admonished as a brother, and received back again after due repentance.

They always got up before the sun rose, and never talked about any worldly matters till they had all assembled together, and, with their faces turned towards the sun, offered up their national hymn of praise for the renewal of the light of the day. Labor followed until eleven o'clock, when all of them again assembled together, had a baptism in cold water, put on their white garments, the symbol of purity, and then made their way to the refectory, which they entered with as much solemnity as if it were the Temple. The meal was a common one, and each member took his seat according to the order of age. . . . The repast commenced after the Priest had invoked God's blessing upon it. A mysterious silence was observed during the meal, which had the character of a sacrament, and may have been designated as a substitute for the sacrifices which they refused to offer in the Temple. The Priest concluded it by offering thanks to the Bountiful Supplier of all our wants. Then all laid aside their white garments for their work-dress, and resumed labor until evening, when they again assembled for a common meal. Everything was

done under the direction of the Overseers, yet in two things they were at perfect liberty to act as they pleased, viz., they could relieve the distressed with as much money as they thought proper, and manifest their compassion for those who were not of the Brotherhood as much as they liked, and whenever they liked.

The Sabbath they observed with the utmost rigor. . . . On this day they took special care not to be guilty of forsaking the assembling of themselves together, as the manner of some is. . . . They had no ordained Ministers, whose exclusive right it was to conduct the service; any one that liked took up the Bible and read it, whilst another, who had much experience in spiritual matters, expounded what was read.

Celibacy being the rule of Essenism, the ranks of the Brotherhood had to be filled up by recruits from the Jewish community at large. They preferred taking children, whom they educated most carefully, and taught the practices of the Order, believing that of such the Kingdom of Heaven is best made up. Before a grown-up candidate for membership in the Order could be finally admitted into close fellowship, he had to bind himself by a most solemn oath (this being the only occasion on which the Essenes used an oath) to observe three things. (1) *Love to God*; (2) *Merciful justice toward all men*; especially to honor nobody as master, to avoid the wicked, to help the righteous, to be faithful to every man, and especially to Rulers, for without God no one comes to be Ruler; and (3) *Purity of character*, which implied humility, love of truth, hatred of falsehood, strict secrecy toward Profanes, so as not to divulge the secret doctrines to any one, and perfect openness with the members of the Order, and, finally, carefully to preserve the books belonging to their sect, and the various mystical names held sacred among them.

Eight different stages marked the gradual growth in holiness: (1) the state of outward or bodily purity by baptisms; (2) the stage which imposed celibacy; (3) that of inward or spiritual purity; (4) that which required the banishing of all anger and malice, and the cultivation of a meek and lowly spirit; (5) the culminating point of holiness, upon the summit of which he became (6) the temple of the Holy Spirit, and could prophesy, and whence he advanced to (7) that stage in which he was enabled to perform miraculous cures and raise the dead, after which he reached (8) the position of Elias, the forerunner of the Messiah.

The earnestness and determination of these Essenes to advance to the highest state of holiness were seen in their self-denying and godly life; and it may fairly be questioned whether any religious system has ever produced such a community of saints. Their absolute confidence in God and resignation to the dealings of Providence; their uniformly holy and unselfish life; their unbounded love of virtue, and utter contempt for worldly fame, riches, or pleasure; their industry, temperance, modesty, and simplicity of life; their contentment of mind and cheerfulness of temper; their love of order and abhorrence of even the semblance of falsehood; their benevolence and philanthropy their love for the brethren, and their following peace with all men; their hatred of slavery and war; their tender regard for children, and reverence and anxious care for the aged; their attendance on the sick, and readiness to relieve the distressed; their humility and magnanimity; their firmness of character, and power to subdue their passions; their heroic endurance under the most agonizing sufferings for righteousness' sake; and their cheerfully looking forward to death, as releasing their immortal souls from the bonds of the body to be forever in a state of bliss with their Creator – have hardly found a parallel in the history of mankind. No wonder that Jews of different sects, Greeks and Romans, Christian church-historians, and heathen writers have been alike constrained to lavish the most unqualified praise on this holy Brotherhood. Jesus himself showed what is required for a holy life in the Sermon on the mount, by a description of the Essenes. So remarkably does this Brotherhood exemplify the lessons which Christ propounds in Matthew, chap. v., etc.

The Essenes were not related to Pythagoras, although Josephus and Philo assumed that they were, and Zeller, in his History of Philosophy, has made a very able summary of supposed resemblances between Neo-Pythagorism and Essenism. For, in fact, the parallels between Pythagorism and Essenism are more imaginary than real, and the few things which might be considered as being analogous are unimportant, and are such as will naturally develop themselves among any number of enlightened men who devote themselves almost exclusively to a contemplative religious life. Several important peculiarities of the Essenes may be mentioned in which the Pythagoreans were quite unlike them: Thus, the Essenes were real monotheistic Jews, worshipers of the Holy One of Israel; they did not consider a leader or founder as the centre of their faith, but

regarded the inspired Scriptures as their sole source of spiritual life, and called no man master on earth; they made celibacy the rule, marriage the exception; they knew nothing of metempsychosis; they forbade scientific studies as injurious to a devotional life, avoided investigation of the origin and constitution of the universe as inconsistent with piously looking to God as the Creator of all things, and devoutly accepted fate as heavenly Providence; they were most exemplary in their charity toward all men, and in their unbounded kindness to those who were not of the Brotherhood; and instead of being aristocratic and exclusive, they were meek and lowly in spirit, and were so much beloved by those who belonged to the different sects, that Pharisees and Sadducees, Greeks and Romans, Jews and Gentiles, joined in lavishing the highest praise upon them.

As to the relationship which Essenism bears to Judaism, the facts that the Essenes, like the other Jews, professed to be guided by the teachings of the Bible, that a rupture between them and the Jewish community at large is nowhere mentioned, and that on the contrary they are always spoken of in the highest terms of commendation, would of themselves be sufficient to prove it. In doctrine, as well as in practice, the Essenes and the Pharisees were nearly alike. Besides many other points of exact likeness, both looked upon their meal as a sacrament; amongst both, the priest began and concluded the meal with prayer; both were very strict observers of the Sabbath, and both abstained from using oaths, though it is true that the Essenes alone uniformly observed it as a sacred principle. The differences between Essenes and Pharisees were the simple result of the greater rigor of Levitical purity aimed at by the former. The Essenes could avoid impure contacts only by isolating themselves in a separate Brotherhood, and by adopting the rule of celibacy, as they did, although their less rigorous brethren of the Pharisaic order regarded marriage as a most sacred institution, and laid it down as a rule that every man is to take a wife at the age of eighteen. Hence the declaration in the *Aboth* of Rabbi Nathan – ‘there are eight kinds of Pharisees, . . . and those Pharisees who live in celibacy are Essenes.’ So, also, the Essenes could not frequent the Temple to offer sacrifices, because of their anxiety to avoid defilement by contact with persons and things not Levitically pure. And, though they firmly believed in the immortality of the soul, yet, unlike the Pharisees, they did not believe in the resurrection of the body.

The identity of many of the precepts and practices of Essenism and Christianity is unquestionable. Essenism urged on its disciples to seek first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness: so Christ (Matt. vi. 33; Luke xii. 31). The Essenes forbade the laying up of treasures upon earth; so Christ (Matt. vi. 19-21). The Essenes required those who wished to join them to sell all their possessions, and to divide the price among the poor brethren: so Christ (Matt. xix. 21; Luke xii. 33). The Essenes had all things in common, and appointed one of the brethren as steward to manage the common fund: so the primitive Christians (Acts ii. 44, 45; iv. 32-34; John xii. 6; xiii. 29). Essenism put all its members on the same level, forbidding the exercising of authority of one over the other, and enjoining mutual service: so Christ (Matt. xx. 25-28; Mark ix. 35-37; x. 42-45). Essenism commanded its disciples to call no man Master upon the earth: so Christ (Matt. xxiii. 8-10). Essenism laid the greatest stress on being meek and lowly in spirit: so Christ (Matt. v. 5; xi. 29). Christ commended the poor in spirit, those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, the merciful, the pure in heart, and the peacemakers; so the Essenes. . . . Christ combined the healing of the body with that of the soul; so the Essenes. Like the Essenes, Christ declared that the power to cast out evil spirits, to perform miraculous cures, etc., should be possessed by his disciples as signs of their belief (Mark xvi. 17, 18; compare also Matt. x. 8; Luke ix. 1, 2; x. 9). Like the Essenes, Christ commanded his disciples not to swear at all, but to say yea, yea, and nay, nay. The manner in which Christ directed his disciples to go on their journey (Matt. x. 9, 10) is the same which the Essenes adopted when they started on a mission of mercy. The Essenes, though repudiating offensive war, yet took weapons with them when they went on a perilous journey; Christ enjoined his disciples to do the same thing (Luke xxii. 36). Christ commanded that elevated spiritual life, which enables a man to abstain from marriage for the Kingdom of Heaven's sake, and which cannot be attained by any save those to whom it is given (Matt. xix. 10-12; compare also 1 Cor. vii.); so the Essenes who, as a body, in waiting for the kingdom of heaven, abstained from connubial intercourse. The Essenes did not offer animal sacrifices, but strove to present their bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God, which they regarded as a reasonable service; the apostle Paul exhorts the Romans to do the same (Rom. xii. 1). It was the great aim of the Essenes to live such a life of purity and holiness as to be the

temples of the Holy Spirit, and to be able to prophesy: the apostle Paul urges the Corinthians to covet the gift of prophecy (1 Cor. xiv. 39). When Christ pronounced John *to be Elias* (Matt. xi. 14), he declared that the Baptist had already attained to that spirit and power which the Essenes strove to obtain in their highest stage of purity. It will therefore hardly be doubted that he himself belonged to this holy Brotherhood. This will especially be apparent when we remember that the whole Jewish community, at the advent of Christ, was divided into three parties, the Pharisees, the Sadducees, and the Essenes, and that every Jew had to belong to one of these sects. Jesus, who in all things conformed to the Jewish law, and who was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners, would therefore naturally associate himself with that order of Judaism which was most congenial to his holy nature. Moreover, the facts that Christ, with the exception of once, was not heard of in public till his thirtieth year, implying that he lived in seclusion with this Fraternity; and that though he frequently rebuked the Scribes, Pharisees, and Sadducees, he never denounced the Essenes, strongly confirm this conclusion. But he repudiated their extremes. They were ascetics; he ate and drank the good things of God (Matt. xi. 19). They considered themselves defiled by contact with any one who practiced a lower degree of Levitical holiness than their own; Christ associated with publicans and sinners, to teach them the way to heaven. They sacrificed the lusts of their flesh to gain spiritual happiness for themselves; Christ sacrificed himself for the salvation of others.

The accounts given by Josephus first mention their existence in the days of Jonathan the Maccabaeus, B. C. 166; and they most unquestionably show that the Essenes existed at least two centuries before the Christian era, and that they at first lived among the Jewish community at large. Their residence at Jerusalem is also evident from the fact that there was a gate named after them. When they ultimately withdrew themselves from the rest of the Jewish nation, the majority of them settled on the northwest shore of the Dead Sea, sufficiently distant to escape its noxious exhalations, and the rest lived in scattered communities throughout Palestine and Syria. Both Philo and Josephus estimated them to be above four thousand in number. This must have been exclusive of women and children. We hear very little of them after this period (*i.e.*, 40 A.D.); and there can hardly be any doubt that, owing to the great similarity which existed between their precepts and

practices, and those of the primitive Christians, the Essenes, as a body, must have embraced Christianity.

As to the meaning of the name Essenes, not less than twenty explanations of it have been given. Perhaps that is most probable which derives the term from a Hebrew word which means *pious*, as this plainly connects the Essenes with an ancient Jewish brotherhood, called Khasidim, *the pious*, who preceded the Essenes, and from whom the latter took their rise.

Some sentences of the ancient accounts of them are as follows:

Philo (born in Alexandria, between the years 20 and 1 B.C., and died about 60 A.D., and thus a contemporary of Jesus and Paul) says, "Palestine, and Syria too, which are inhabited by no slight portion of the numerous population of the Jews, are not barren of virtue. There are some among them called Essenes – in number more than four thousand – from, as I think, an incorrect derivation from the Greek homonym *hosiotēs*, piety, because they are, above all others, worshipers of God. They do not sacrifice any animals, but rather endeavor to make their own minds fit for holy offerings. They do not lay up treasures of gold or silver, nor do they acquire large portions of land out of a desire for revenues, but provide themselves only with the absolute necessities of life. Yet they regard themselves as the richest of mankind, because they hold that the supply of our wants, and contentment of mind, are riches, as in truth they are. No maker of things belonging to war is found among them. They repudiate every inducement to covetousness. There is not a single slave to be found among them, for all are free, and mutually serve each other. They condemn owners of slaves, not only as unjust, inasmuch as they corrupt the principle of equality, but also as impious, because they destroy the law of nature, which, like a mother, brought forth and nourished all alike, and made them all legitimate brethren, not only in word but in deed.

"They omit the logical part of philosophy, and the natural part, excepting that which treats upon the existence of God and the origin of the universe; but the ethical part they thoroughly work out for themselves, using as their guides the laws which their fathers inherited. They are instructed in piety, holiness, righteousness, economy, politics, in knowledge of what is truly good, bad and indifferent, to choose things that are necessary, and to avoid the contrary. They use therein a three-fold rule and definition, viz.: love of

God, love of virtue, and love of mankind. Of their love of God, they give innumerable demonstrations – *e. g.*, their constant and unalterable holiness throughout the whole of their life; their avoidance of oaths and falsehoods: and their firm belief that God is the source of all good, but of nothing evil. Of their love of virtue they give proofs in their contempt for money, fame, and pleasures, their continence and endurance, in satisfying their wants easily, simplicity, cheerfulness of temper, modesty, order, firmness, and everything of the kind. As instances of their love to man, are to be mentioned their benevolence, and equality, and having all things in common, which is beyond description. They manifest respect, reverence and care for the aged, just as children do for their parents, administering to them a thousand times, with all plentifulness, both with their hands and their counsels, in their old age. Such champions of virtue does a philosophy produce which is free from the subtlety of Greek word-splitting, and which deals with subjects tending to the exercise of praiseworthy actions, and giving rise to invincible freedom, so that neither the cruel tyrant nor the wily hypocrite could gain any advantage over this Brotherhood of Essenes or *holy ones*, but, disarmed by the virtues of these men, all recognized them as independent and free by nature, praised their common meals, and their community of goods, which surpasses all description, and is an evident proof of a perfect and very happy life.”

The above is from Philo’s treatise entitled ‘*Every Virtuous Man is Free.*’ Eusebius has preserved another account from Philo’s lost treatise, entitled ‘*Apology for the Jews,*’ in which Philo says: “Their order is not founded upon natural descent, but upon admiration for virtue and sincere love for man. They all dwell together in the same place, form themselves into companies, societies, combinations, and unions, and work together all their life, for the common good of the Brotherhood. The different members of the Order are engaged in different employments; they work cheerfully and industriously, and never try to leave their labor on account of cold, heat, or any change of weather. They believe that their employment is a sort of gymnastic exercise, of more benefit to life, greater pleasure both to soul and body, and of a more enduring advantage than any mere athletic labors, because they can cheerfully continue in their work as a recreation even when youth and bodily strength are gone. They eat at the same table, and have every day the same food, being lovers of frugality and moderation, and averse to luxury and

extravagance, as diseases of both mind and body. If one of them is sick, he is cured from the common resources, and is attended to by the general care and anxiety of the whole body. The old men, even if they happen to be childless, that is, if they are celibates, end their lives in a most happy, prosperous, and tenderly cared-for old age, as if they were not only the fathers of many children, but were even also particularly happy, in an affectionate offspring. Such is the enviable system of the life of the Essenes.”

Josephus, who was born about 37 *a.d.*, and at one time actually belonged to the Essenian Brotherhood, gives more than one account of the Order, in the course of his works. The following sentences are from his *Jewish War*: “Jews by birth, they love each other more than the others. They reject pleasure as an evil, and regard continence and not yielding to passion as virtues. They despise marriage, and adopt the children of others while still tender and susceptible of instruction, and regard them as their own relations, and train them in their practices. They despise riches, have all things in common in a very admirable manner, and there is not one to be found among them who is richer than another; for it is a law that those who enter the sect must give up their possessions to the society as common property, so that there is not to be seen among them all, either the abjectness of poverty or the distinction of riches; but as every man’s goods are cast into a common treasury, they all, like brothers, have one patrimony. If any of the society come from other places, whatever they have lies open for them, just as if it were their own; and they go to those whom they have never seen before, as if they had been most intimate. Hence they take nothing with them when they go on a journey, but arms for defence against robbers. A steward is appointed in every city of this Order to provide strangers with clothes and other necessaries. The keeping and appearance of their body are such as of children brought up in fear; they change neither garments nor shoes till they are worn out or made unfit by time. They neither sell nor buy any thing among themselves, but every one gives of that which he has to him that wants, and gets from him that which he needs; and even without requital they can freely take whatever they want.

Their piety toward God is extraordinary, for they never speak about worldly matters before the sun rises, but offer up, with their faces toward it, some of the prayers transmitted by their forefathers, as if they supplicated it to rise. Hereupon, they are all

sent by the overseers, every one to work in the department in which he is skilled; and having diligently labored till the fifth hour, assemble again together in one place, girt round with their linen apron, and have a baptism with cold water. After this lustration they resort to a special house, in which no one of another faith is admitted, and go to the refectory, purified, as into a holy temple. Having quietly taken their seats, the baker gives every one a loaf of bread according to order, and the cook places before each one a dish with one sort of food. The priest commences with prayer, and no one is allowed to taste his food before grace is said. He also returns thanks after the meal; for both at the commencement and at the conclusion they praise God as the giver of their food. Whereupon they put off their white garments as if they were sacred, and betake themselves again to their work till evening. On returning again they take their supper together, at which strangers who happen to be in the place, are allowed to sit down with them. No noise or tumult ever desecrates their house, but they let every one take part in the conversation in turn; and the silence of those who are within appears to those that are without as some awful mystery. Whilst they do nothing without the injunctions of their overseers, yet there are two things in which they have free action, viz., helping the needy and showing mercy; to help the deserving when they are in want, and to give food to the hungry, they are at perfect liberty. They are just dispensers of their anger, curbers of their passions, representatives of fidelity, ministers of peace; and every word with them is of no more force than an oath. They avoid taking an oath, and regard it as worse than perjury; for they say that he who is not believed without calling on God to witness is already condemned of falsehood.

“When any one desires to enter the sect, he is not immediately admitted, but although he has to remain a whole year without, yet he is obliged to observe their ascetic rules of living, and they give him an axe, an apron and a white garment. If he has given proof of continence during this time, he approaches nearer to their life and partakes of the holier water of purification; but is still not as yet admitted to their common table. Having thus given proof of his perseverance, his conduct is tested two more years, and, if found worthy, he is admitted into the society. But before he touches the common meal, he swears, by most awful oaths, first to fear God, and next to exercise justice toward all men – neither to wrong any one of his own accord nor by the command of others; always

to detest the wicked and side with the righteous; ever to keep faith inviolable with all men, especially with those in authority, for no one comes to office without the will of God; not to be proud of his power nor to outshine his subordinates, either in his garments or greater finery, if he himself should attain to office; always to love truth and strive to reclaim all liars; to keep his hands clear from stealing, and his mind from unholy gain; not to conceal anything from the Brotherhood, nor disclose anything belonging to them to those without, though it were at the hazard of his life.

“Such as are caught in heinous sins are excommunicated from the society, and the excommunicated frequently die a miserable death. For, being bound by oaths and customs, they cannot receive food from any out of the society, so that they are forced to eat herbs till their bodies being famished with hunger, they perish. Hence they compassionately receive many of them again when they are at their last gasp, thinking that suffering, approaching unto death, is sufficient for their sins.

“They live to a great age, so that many of them attain above a hundred years – arising from the simplicity of their diet, as it appears to me, and from their regular habits. They despise suffering, and overcome pain by fortitude. Death, if connected with honor, they look upon as better than long life. Of the firmness of their minds in all cases, the war with the Romans has given ample proof; in which, though they were tortured, racked, burned, pressed, and subjected to all the instruments of torment, that they might be forced to blaspheme the lawgiver or eat what was forbidden, yet they could not be made to do either of them; nor would they even once flatter their tormentors or shed a tear, but, smiling through their torments and mocking their tormentors, they cheerfully yielded up their souls, as those who would soon receive them back again. For they firmly believe that the bodies perish and their substance is not enduring, but that the souls are immortal, and that when freed from the bonds of the body, they, as if released from a long servitude, rejoice and mount upward.

“There are also some among them who undertake to foretell future events, having been brought up from their youth in the study of sacred Scriptures, in divers purifications, and in the sayings of the prophets; and it is very seldom that they fail in their predictions.”

Josephus also relates instances in which Essenes foretold future events. The last account given by him of this Order is in his *Antiq.*, book xviii., chap. i., § 2 and 5. He says in § 5 – “The doctrines of the Essenes delight in leaving all to God. They regard the soul as immortal, and say that the attainment to virtue must be fought for with all our might. Although they send consecrated gifts to the Temple, yet they never bring any sacrifice, on account of the different rules of purity which they observe; hence, being excluded from the common sanctuary, they offer sacrifices in themselves (spiritually). Otherwise they are in their manner of life the best of men, and employ themselves wholly in the labors of agriculture. Their uprightness is to be admired above all others who endeavor to practice virtue; such uprightness, which is by no means to be found among the Greeks and foreigners, is not of recent date, but has existed among them from times of yore, striving most scrupulously not to disturb the community of goods, and that the rich should not enjoy more of the common property than the poor. This is the conduct of this people, who are more than four thousand in number. They never marry wives, nor endeavor after the possession of property; for they believe that the latter leads to injustice, and the former yields opportunities for domestic discord. Living by themselves, they serve each other. They choose good men, who are also priests, to be the stewards of their incomes and of the produce of the fields, as well as to procure them corn and food.”

These accounts are the principal ancient testimonies as to the Essenes.

Modern study has gathered other evidence from the records of Jewish tradition, through the labors especially of Rappaport, ‘the corypheus of Jewish critics,’ who found that what Philo and Josephus describe as peculiarities of the Essenes, tallies with what the Mishna, the Talmud and Midrashim record of the Khasidim, and that they [the Essenes] are most probably the so-called *old believers*, who are also described in the Talmud as *the holy community in Jerusalem*; who also rightly recognized in them an intensified form of Pharisaism, and remarks that what is said in the Mishna about the moderation observed in eating and drinking, the great humility, endurance under sufferings, zeal for everything that is holy, community of goods, etc., refers to this holy community, or the Essenes. Rappaport, too, was the first who pointed out that the prayer which Josephus tells us the Essenes offered up at the rising of the sun, is the national hymn of praise, which still constitutes a part of the Jewish daily service, and is as follows:

“He in mercy causes His light to shine upon the earth and upon the inhabitants thereof; and in His goodness unfaithfully renews every day the work of creation. How numerous are Thy works, O Lord! Thou hast made all in wisdom; the earth is full of Thy possessions. O King, Thou only art the Exalted One from everlasting, the Praised and Glorified and Extolled since the days of yore! Lord of the universe, in Thy great mercy have mercy upon us! Lord, our Might, Fortress of our strength, Shield of our salvation, defend us! O Lord, be Thou praised, Thou great in wisdom, who hast ordained and created the rays of the sun: the Infinitely Good has formed a glorious testimony for His name. He surrounded His Majesty with luminaries. The chiefs of His heavenly hosts are holy beings; they glorify the Almighty; they continually declare the glory of God and His holiness. Blessed be Thou, the Lord, our God, for the excellency of the works of Thy hands, and for the shining luminaries which Thou hast created. They shall glorify Thee forever.

“God, the Lord of all created things, is praised and blessed in the mouths of all the living. His power and goodness fill the universe; wisdom and intelligence are round about Him. He exalts himself above the angels, and beams in glory upon his chariot throne. Interceding goodness and rectitude are before His throne, loving-kindness and mercy before His Majesty. Benign are the luminaries which our God has created. He has formed them in wisdom, intelligence, and understanding; he has endowed them with power and strength to bear rule in the midst of the world. Filled with splendor and brightness, their glory illuminates all of the world; rejoicing in rising, and joyous in setting, they perform with awe the will of their Creator. They give praise and glory to His name, joy and song to the memory of His kingdom. He called the sun, and light rose; He saw and shaped the form of the moon. Praise Him all ye heavenly hosts; ascribe glory and majesty to Him, ye Seraphim, Ophanim, and holy Angels.”

These, as Rappaport rightly remarks, are some of the remains of the ancient prayer used by the Essenes.

Of Ewald's view of the Essenes Dr. Ginsburg says, This profound and merciless critic, without having access to the Jewish information gathered from the Talmud and Midrashim, saw that Essenism was no Greek plant transplanted into Palestine, but, like Pharisaism, grew out of the Chasidim. He remarks that people, who left the great community in order to lead a specially holy life, with the permission and under the direction of the law, were to be found in Israel from the remotest times, yet in its first form there were only the Nazarites, of whom each one lived for himself; and in the second, the Rechabites combined themselves already into a larger union; but now the whole conscience of the people itself, as it were, departed into solitude with numerous Essenes. For it cannot be denied that they, proceeding from the Chasidim, represent the direct and legitimate development of Judaism in the form which became the ruling one

since Ezra. . . . Their new features and endeavors merely consisted in their intensely earnest and rigorous application of the demands of the law, as understood and interpreted since Ezra. Finding that the rigorous and logical application of these laws was impossible in the great community, especially in that community as regulated by the Pharisees, they preferred to congregate and live in solitude.

The studies of Frankel are held by Dr. Ginsburg to have been of the highest value for correct knowledge of the Essenes. Frankel substantiated, by numerous quotations from the Talmud, that the Essenes are the offspring of Judaism, that they are noting but stationary, or more correctly speaking, consequential Chasidim, that they were therefore not so far distant from the Pharisees as to be regarded as a separate sect, but, on the contrary, that they formed a branch of Pharisaism.

Two other learned investigators of the subject, Graetz and Jost, have accepted the same conclusions. The latter says, The Essenes are exactly the same that the other Rabbis wished to be who endeavored to practice the Levitical law of purity, as leading to higher consecration. They have neither another creed nor another law, but simply institutions peculiar to this brotherhood, and endeavor to reach the highest consecration by their manner of life, in defining the different stages, according to preliminary exercises and certain years of preparation. Their views and tenets are therefore also to be found in the utterances of the learned Rabbis who did not enter their order, so that they did not look upon the Essenes as opponents or apostates, but, on the contrary, as holding the same opinions with increased claims and some fewer enjoyments, whom many of their own midst joined. Graetz has lately maintained that Jesus simply appropriated to himself the essential features of Essenism, and that primitive Christianity was nothing but an offshoot from Essenism, a view which Dr. Ginsburg's orthodoxy leads him to question. He says, however, of Westcott's article on the Essenes in Smith's Dictionary of the Bible – His fear lest any shining virtues in the Essenes might be thought by some to pale some of the brightness of the Sun of Righteousness, prevented him from appreciating the true character of this Order, as well as from seeing that they paved the way to Christianity. Dr. Ginsburg also says of another eminent writer's treatment of the subject, that "The description of the Essenes in the new edition of Dean Milman's History of the Jews, gives a very imperfect idea both of the development and morality of this brotherhood."

The general opinion about the Essenes, Dr. Ginsburg states, has been largely based upon an account given by Dr. Thomas Godwyn, in a learned English work, which first appeared in 1625, and the statements of which, though drawn chiefly from Josephus and Philo, have been found incorrect and inadequate, in not a few respects, since later studies have brought forward much new evidence. One capital error of Godwyn's account was in confounding the Essenes, who lived in Palestine, with the *Therapeutae*, who lived in Alexandria, and who made contemplation their chief aim, while the Essenes made practical holiness the chief thing. To complete Dr. Ginsburg's account, it should be distinctly added that he does not think it necessary to admit, in view of the true story of Essenism, that Jesus was indebted to it for the Christian system of faith and life. He does almost say this while telling the story, but his opinion he thus expresses: "Those who style themselves the true evangelical Christians are very anxious to destroy every appearance of affinity between Essenism and Christianity, lest it should be said that the one gave rise to the other; whilst those who are termed Rationalists multiply and magnify every feature of resemblance, in order to show that Christianity is nothing but a development of Essenism – so that the poor Essenes are crucified between the two."

Essenism had fully developed a doctrine and practice of pure spiritual religion, not without marked limitations and eccentricities, yet with a purity and truth of religious sentiment and life never surpassed. In it were found the great truths of God's perfection in goodness and power, of the divine law of human brotherhood, and of undefiled righteousness as the aim and law of life. That sweetness and humility which are deemed so significant signs of divine grace in the human heart, shone like stars of morning in the Essenistic practice of heavenly things. The best thought ever attained of human life visited by the divine light, was found by this sect of Jewish saints. No believers that ever were have more profoundly felt and more perfectly trusted the indwelling presence of God. This was the finest, as it was the most sober and most practical mysticism that this earth has ever seen. Whatever is possible to man, of marvelous exercise of exceptional power, in healing, in doing wonders upon body and mind, perhaps in shaking off the fixed grasp of death, was achieved by these pure confessors, whose stainless lives, whose spotless souls, commanded unparalleled intimacy with heaven. As much as it is possible for the contemplative spirit to read the unrolled page of events and to veritably foretell

what is to be, these forecasting, watching, divinizing masters of grace and truth exercised the highest prophetic gift, and made daring mention of things which lay fully open to the divine eye only. They realized a communion the most brotherly ever known on earth, and celebrated it every day with sacrament simpler and more heavenly than any other which communism, religious or social, has been able to establish. It cannot be strongly enough represented that they loved one another, and that they practiced a charity and kindness towards all men worthy a company of sons of God, and a forgiveness and compassion singularly divine. The great steps of reform which it is the latest effort of the modern world to initiate, they had taken with the clear intelligence of divine enlightenment and the unswerving courage of them that walk with God, and regard neither the fear nor the favor of man. In presence of the urgent instinctive cries of the human soul for atonement, they had found the secret of the divine discipline, and accepted the law which is heaven's highest, that of union with the divine will by sacrifice offered in the soul itself. And in respect of the outlook of human life, they had watched the aurora of eternity, and the sun-break of life and immortality, and knew the forward path as children know the familiar way which brings them to their father's house. If there were any star in heaven not familiar to the eyes of these simple Judean folk, any deep truth of religion which did not light their steps through the world, we have as yet no revelation which will enable us to point it out. Their limitations and eccentricities we may remark upon; the garb in which their faith clothed itself was strikingly individual; but by them, nevertheless, came grace and truth, and in their faith and life was opened a fountain the purest ever known on earth.

## TO CLOSE.

VM: Brother Junior Warden, what is the hour?

JW: Venerable Master, the Dawn is bright in the East, and the Sun is about to rise.

VM: The Dawn of Hope and the Sun of Righteousness! – My Brethren, we may rest from our labors. Brother Examiner, are any poor brethren unrelieved?

X: None, Venerable Master.

VM: Brother Lecturer, doth any offense of a Brother remain unproved, that hath been made known to us?

L: None, Venerable Master.

VM: What then, my Brethren, remains to be done?

JW: To be patient.

SW: To watch.

JW: To meditate.

SW: To pray.

VM: Let us pray then, my Brethren, in silence. [He raps ¶¶¶, all rise.]

[There is a few minutes' silence; and the VM says]:

VM: Faithful Brethren, – Essenes that have long waited for the Light and the new Law, the Sun is about to rise upon the waters of the Dead Sea. Aid me to close this Preceptory. Together, my Brethren!

[All give the sign. Then the VM raps ¶¶; the SW ¶¶; the JW ¶¶; the VM ¶; Then the Brothers clap¶¶¶¶¶¶ ¶, with their hands, and all cry HOSCHEAH!].

VM: The Preceptory is closed.

## F I N I S .