

The Broken Pillar of Freemasonry

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Freemasonry offers a series of interesting symbols which are designed to incite study and lead to a comprehensive knowledge of its fundamentals. One of the most impressive symbols in Masonry is that of the Broken Column¹ or the Unfinished Temple.

The symbol as explained in the ritual of the Master Mason Degree is that the column represents both the death of Hiram Abif as well as the unfinished work of the Temple of Solomon. The allegory is of “a beautiful virgin (Semiramis, wife of King Nimrod of Assyrian Empire) weeping over the broken column denoted the unfinished temple (tower) and the untimely death of our Grand Master Hiram Abiff (King Nimrod). The book opened before her, means Hiram Abiff’s virtues lay on perpetual record. “The sprig of acacia (the pagan symbol of life which led to discover her husband's grave) in her right hand denotes the timely discovery of the body.



“The urn in her left hand, his ashes safely deposited to perpetuate the remembrance of the amiable, distinguished, and exemplary character. And behind her standing, unfolding her ringlets (as she grew older) and counting her hair, Time (Osiris, Egyptian god of time) patience and perseverance will accomplish all things.”

A young candidate endowed with strength and vigor, flushed with anticipation, eager for knowledge, and fascinated by the mysteries of Freemasonry comes to the doors of the lodge. His reception is attended by spectacular ceremonies, introduced to the lectures, suffocated by a mass of ritualism. He attends lodge communications for a brief period, finding neither enlightenment nor nothing of interest to him, he soon stops attending—he is a mere dues paying unit.

In Kabalistic terms the “three great pillars” are emblematic of **Wisdom**, **Strength** and **Beauty** and represent the three Grand Masters at the building of the temple: King Solomon of Israel was wise to construct the temple, Hiram King of Tyre gave strong support with men and materials, and Hiram Abif adorned the temple with great beauty. Thus in Kabalistic thinking the death of Hiram Abif represents the severing of the path between God and man. And by the *Broken*

¹ Short Talk Bulletin, *The Broken Column*, Author Unknown, Masonic Service Association of North America, Vol. 34, February 1956

Column in the Master Mason Degree, we are reminded far too many men stop growing once raised a Master Mason; their Temple, that house not made with hands, is unfinished.

Masonry is the art of free thinking. It allows us to not only look back upon the knowledge of those who passed before us, but also to look deeper into ourselves, and temper our own understanding of the universe within us. Masonry is not a static thing, it has evolved and adapted over centuries. And the Masonic Lodge is not just a gathering of Masons. It is representations of the universe: the sun, the moon, the columns holding up the sky, and the stairs to the heavens. Freemasonry has been often defined as a "system of morality veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols." *A system of morality* reminds us of God's system, or pattern, which He established for us to follow each day of our lives. *Mysteries Veiled in allegory* reminds us that the Hidden Freemasonry can be found in the ritual and Holy Scriptures - expand your vision, seek the greater depth and understanding in those things deemed secretive in Freemasonry. Illustrated by symbols verifies the fact that Masonry is hidden within the Physical World, but open in the Spiritual and Intellectual Worlds.

The purpose of Freemasonry is to make good men even better. To achieve that purpose, we place an emphasis on the individual man, strengthening his character, improving his moral and spiritual outlook, and broadening his mental horizons. We impress upon Master Masons the principles of personal responsibility and morality, encouraging each to practice in his daily life the lessons taught through symbolic ceremonies within the York and Scottish Rites.

As the tools of the craftsman have both operative and symbolic purposes, also both have a material and a spiritual (or quality) state as it relates to the duality of man. A Master Mason in quest of Light must look beyond the physical lodge and study their metaphysical world as well.

Thus the Mason's duty is to restore and maintain the Pillar of Beauty within himself, and repair the spiritual bond between himself and the Grand Architect of the Universe.

**God said, "Your task is to build a better world."
I answered, "How? There's nothing I can do."
God replied, "Just build a better you." (Anonymous)**

Thank you and ...

So Mote It Be!

