

FREEMASONRY, HERMETIC QABALAH & SOLOMONIC MAGICK

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In the supplementary literature and research pertaining to Freemasonry's ritual and symbolism, one will periodically encounter references to kabbalah (note: kabbalah may be succinctly defined as a mystical, Judaic, exegetical method and ontological schema, having its origins in medieval Europe). This tradition is also explicitly referenced in certain degrees of the Masonic appendant body, the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite, and also in the Masonic invitational order, *Societas Rosicruciana*. When we consider kabbalah's association with Freemasonry, we are generally referring to the system's occult adaptation, commonly known within the Western Esoteric Tradition as hermetic qabalah. Hermetic qabalah is differentiated from Judaic kabbalah, and the Renaissance-era Christian cabala of Pico della Mirandola et al., primarily in its syncretization with hermeticism, astrology, alchemy, tarot symbolism and various mythologically archetypal elements from pagandom, particularly that of the Egyptian & Greco-Roman cultures. Hermetic qabalah is the form which was utilized by Freemasons such as Samuel Liddell MacGregor Mathers, William Wynn Westcott, Arthur Edward Waite (all members of the *Societas Rosicruciana* and its splinter group, the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn), Paul Foster Case (of the post-Golden Dawn orders, *Alpha et Omega* and the Builders of the Adytum) and Manly Palmer Hall (author of *The Secret Teachings of All Ages*, an encyclopedic compendium of the Western Esoteric Tradition).

Largely due to the scholarship of Ill. Bro. Albert Pike and his liberal referencing of Eliphas Levi, the Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry was infused with numerous overtly qabalistic references [Pike, *Morals and Dogma*, L. H. Jenkins Inc., 1947, pp. 744-745]. In fact, it has been conjectured that the 32 Degrees of the A.A.S.R. are esoterically related to the 32 paths on the *Etz Chaim*, or qabalistic Tree of Life [Hall, *The Secret Teachings of All Ages*, Dover, 2010, p. 333]. Therein lies a primary and observable connection, in the company of several others less conspicuous, in terms of the various qabalistic tributaries which lead to both Ceremonial Magick and Freemasonry.

All truly dogmatic religions have issued from the Kabalah and return to it: everything scientific and grand in the religious dreams of all the illuminati, Jacob Boehme, Swedenborg, Saint-Martin, and others, is borrowed from the Kabalah; all the Masonic associations owe to it their Secrets and their Symbols.

Eliphas Levi, *Transcendental Magic: Its Doctrine and Ritual*, Martino Publishing, 2011, p. 19

Parallels have also been drawn between the Officer's stations, positioning of the Lodge furniture, the 'floor work' of ritual, and the composition of Masonic tracing boards to certain *sephirothic* patterns on the *Etz Chaim* [MacNulty, *Kabbalah and Freemasonry* PDF, hayaryakanch.files.wordpress.com, 2015, retrieved online]. A more explicit example of these qabalistically derived patterns may be found in the Grade rituals of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, which openly make use of such configurations [Regardie, *The Golden Dawn*, Llewellyn, 2014, p. 114]. The Grades of the Golden Dawn, which correspond to the *sephiroth* of the *Etz Chaim*, are (in ascending order): *Neophyte* 0=0, *Zelator* 1=10, *Theoricus* 2=9, *Practicus* 3=8, *Philosophus* 4=7, (Intermediate Portal Grade), *Ademptus Minor* 5=6, *Adeptus Major* 6=5,

Adeptus Exemptus 7=4, *Magister Templi* 8=3, *Magus* 9=2, and *Ipsissimus* 10=1. These Grades were directly patterned on those of the Masonic *Societas Rosicruciana in Anglia*, which were themselves patterned on those of the *Orden des Gold und Rosenkreutz*, a Rosicrucian fraternity founded in 1750 by German Freemason and alchemist, Hermann Fichtuld. The stations and movements of the officers and candidate, during the initiations of the Outer Order Grades of the H.O.G.D., also follow qabalistic patterns that may choreographically be traced on the *Etz Chaim* [Regardie, *The Golden Dawn*, Llewellyn, 2014, p. 115].

The *Etz Chaim* itself is primarily an ontological model in that it graphically depicts the qabalistic conception of (meta)physical manifestation and the intermediate stages of being, from *Ain*, or ‘Nothing’, to *Malkuth*, or ‘Kingdom’ which represents the material world. The diagram (below) also contains archetypal points along the segment in the form of the *sephiroth* (plural), or ‘emanations’, and the thirty-two Paths connecting them. Each *sephirah* (singular) is an archetypal placeholder, containing various mythological, astrological and hermetic correspondences. The *Etz Chaim*, and qabalism in general, is an integral component of the Western Hermetic Tradition and, as such, the use of this discipline as an interpretive tool is crucial to a well-rounded perspective of both Freemasonry and Ceremonial Magick. An in-depth exposition of qabalism – at least one that would do the topic justice – is outside of the scope of the present volume; however, many of the volumes in the bibliography of the present work are recommended for further qabalistic study.

Legends and narratives associated with King Solomon arise quite frequently in both Freemasonry and certain strains of Ceremonial Magick. Goetic Magick, which is based upon the *Ars Goetia* section of the 17th century grimoire *The Lesser Key of Solomon* [Mathers/Crowley, *The Goetia*, Weiser, 1997, pp. xxiii-xxiv], deals with the evocation of seventy-two daemons and their confinement in a brass vessel which was then sealed by magical sigils of King Solomon’s creation. While the Blue Lodge makes use of the building of King Solomon’s Temple as the setting for its allegorical rites, Goetic or Solomonic Magick understands King Solomon himself as the supreme Magus, wielding the power of these seventy-two daemons [Ibid. pp. xxiii-xxiv]. These spirits have been interpreted as concentrations of astrological influence whose zodiacal distributions are two per decan and six per house [Ibid. pp. 127-134], thus dividing the ecliptic into seventy-two equal parts, further illustrating a hermetic current, vis-à-vis the sympathetic relationship between the microcosm and the macrocosm. The very same daemons appear in the *One-Thousand and One (Arabian) Nights*...

Then he opened the meshes and found therein a cucumber-shaped jar of yellow copper, evidently full of something, whose mouth was made fast with a leaden cap, stamped with the seal-ring of our Lord Sulayman (Solomon) son of David (Allah accept the twain!). Seeing this the Fisherman rejoiced and said, ‘If I sell it in the brass-bazaar, ‘tis worth ten golden dinars.’ He shook it and finding it heavy continued, ‘Would to Heaven I knew what is herein. But I must and will open it and look to its contents and store it in my bag and sell it in the brass-market.’ And taking out a knife he worked at the lead till he had loosened it from the jar; then he laid the cup on the ground and shook the vase to pour out whatever might be inside. He found nothing in it; whereat he marvelled with an exceeding marvel. But presently there came forth from the jar a smoke which spired heavenwards into æther (whereat he again marvelled with mighty marvel), and which trailed along earth’s surface till presently, having reached its full height, the thick vapour condensed, and became an Ifrit, huge of bulk, whose crest touched the clouds while his feet were on the ground. His head was as a dome, his hands like pitchforks, his legs long as masts and his mouth big as a cave; his teeth were like large stones, his nostrils ewers, his eyes two lamps and his look was fierce and lowering. Now when the fisherman saw the Ifrit his side muscles quivered,

his teeth chattered, his spittle dried up and he became blind about what to do. Upon this the I frit looked at him and cried, 'There is no god but the God, and Sulayman is the prophet of God.'

The Fisherman and the Jinni from The Arabian Nights

...as well as in the Qur'an (Surahs XXVII & LXXII – both of which are numerically significant since there are seventy-two Djinn), wherein they are referred to as *Jinn*, and are under the power of Sulayman – who is, of course, King Solomon.