

Royal Arch (part 2)



Royal Arch Zodiac

We are told in the E.:A.: 1° that since the time of the Saints John; "there *is represented in every regular and well governed Lodge, a certain Point within a Circle, embordered with two perpendicular parallel lines.*

We are taught in Geometry (or Masonry) that a point is simply a location, without either length, breath, or thickness. It has no dimension. It does not exist. It is in fact Nothing. It is *Infinity* in smallness. It cannot be observed by any of the senses, yet we know that it must exist, because it was "In *the Beginning*" of Geometry and all processes in that science started from it. "All things made through **HIM**, and without **HIM** was not anything made ". We can only become aware of the Point when it becomes a Creator, by movement ("upon *the face of the waters* ") to become a line, which line moves to form a surface, which surface moves to become a solid. The point within the Circle is a worldwide symbol of the Sun.

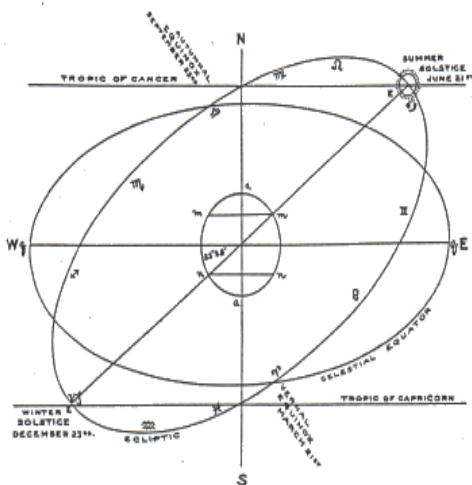


Fig. 14
PRECESSION OF THE EQUINOXES
(Angle of Ecliptic to Equator continually varies slightly from the mean angle of 23°28')

The point is as invisible as **G~d** in invisible, but, by a singular substance, we have a symbol or visible sign of this Divine Presence in the Dot " • ", which we usually see in the center of the Circle of **HIS** Universe. The very word "dot" is a vestige of the Hebrew letter " *Yod* "It is the very first letter in **HIS** divine and Holy Name

YHVH
Yahweh

Yod, Heh, Vau, Heh

On the Royal Arch of Heaven itself, It will be noted that the sun crosses the Celestial

Equator twice in a yearly circuit, at two opposite points, distant 180° from each other and in time six months. The point where the sun crosses in the spring while coming north, is called the *Vernal Equinox*, which occurs on the 21st of March; the other, where it crosses six months afterward, coming south, is called the *Autumnal Equinox*, and occurs on the 23rd of September. At these periods the days and nights are equal, and that is the reason why they are called equinoctial points, from the Latin words *Æquus* = Equal, and *Nox* = Night.

Now imagine another great circle running thru the summer solstice and another thru the winter solstice, each being parallel to the Celestial Equator and therefore parallel to each other. Where the planes of these circles cut the earth are formed what we call the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn, which are delineated on all globes and maps, the Tropic of Cancer passing thru Mexico and North Africa, and the Tropic of Capricorn passing thru South America, southern Africa, and Australia.

A person standing on the earth and looking toward the sun will find- although they are invisible to the eye in the daytime- that the sun is apparently among a certain group of stars at a particular time. It is found that there are twelve separate and distance groups of these stars, called *constellations*, thus to be found along the path of the sun. They extend about 8° on each side of the ecliptic. This belt of stars 16° in width is divided into twelve equal parts of 30° each, denoting the particular place which the sun occupies during each of the twelve months of the year.

These twelve constellations are ranged in their apparent places around the great zodiacal circle as follows: :

The Zodiac

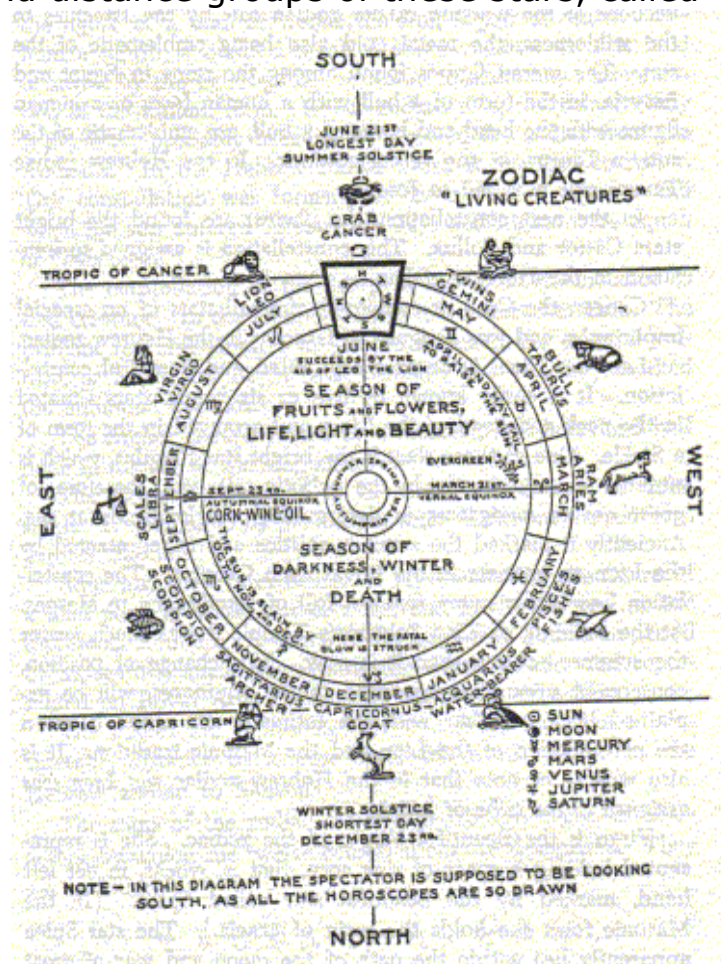
Aries :: the Ram

Taurus :: the Bull

Gemini :: the Twins

Cancer :: the Crab

Leo :: the Lion



Virgo :: the Virgin
Libra :: the Scales
Scorpio :: the Scorpion
Sagittarius :: the Archer
Capricorn :: the Sea-Goat
Aquarius :: the Water-Bearer
Pisces :: the Fish

Aries was the first constellation in the zodiac. Aries is assigned to Gad

The constellation of the Bull is next to Aries in the zodiac, and is one of the most celebrated and splendid. The famous stars called the *Pleiades* are in Taurus, and near it is the magnificent constellation *Orion*. In it, too, is the bright star *Aldebaran*, which was formerly much used by navigators and is related to the symbolism of the **Royal Arch Degree**, referring to the Ox, and anciently marked the Vernal Equinox. The mighty sun-star *Sirus*, the deified *so this* or *Anubis* of the Egyptians, the *Dog Star*, Our Masonic *Blazing Star*, also appears in this constellation. Before the time of Abraham, or over 4000 years ago, it adorned and marked the vernal equinox. Taurus is ascribed to Joseph.

The next constellation, the twins, is found the brightest stars, *Castor* and *Pollux*. It is assigned to Benjamin.

Caner, the crab, is composed of small stars of no special importance. It is assigned to Issachar.

Leo, the Lion, is another celebrated and beautiful constellation. It is easily known by five or six bright stars situated in the neck and head of the lion, and arranged in the form of a sickle. One of these stars is the bright star *Regulus*, which is situated almost exactly in the ecliptic. It was, therefore, of great use to navigators in determining the longitude at sea. At the building of King Solomon's Temple, it was much nearer the summer solstice than it is now. It is worthy to note that this sign is attributed to the tribe *Judah*.

Virgo is the Beautiful Virgin of the zodiac. She is represented holding a spear of ripe corn, that is, wheat, in her left hand, marked by the beautiful star called *Spica*. (In *Masonic form, she holds the sprig of Acacia*). The star *Spica* apparently lies within the path of the moon and was of great use to navigator. This constellation is attributed to Naphtali.

Libra, the Scales, or Balance, was anciently represented by the figure of a

man or woman holding a pair of scales. This constellation was formerly at the autumnal equinox and when the sun entered its stars the days and nights were equal, or, balanced. This sign is ascribed to Asher.

The sign of Scorpio has some resemblance to that creature. In Hebrew zodiac it is referred to Dan. The brilliant red star *Antares* in Scorpio refers to the Celestial Vulture, or Eagle, on Our Royal Arch Banners, and anciently marked the autumnal equinox.

The Archer is represented by a monster, half horse, half man, in the act of shooting an arrow.

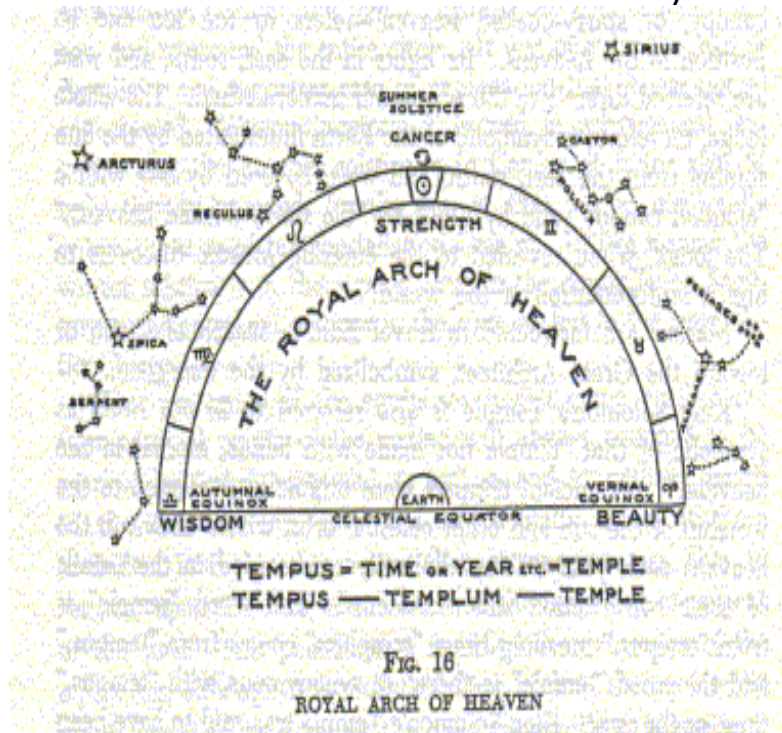
The Goat is composed of 15 visible stars, most of them small. It was called by the ancient oriental nations the southern gate to the sun.

Aquarius, the Water-Bearer, represents Reuben. It contains the large star *Fomalhaut*, used by navigators, anciently marking the winter solstice and represented on Royal Arch banners by the figure of a man.

The Fishes are represented by two fishes joined at a considerable distance by a loose cord, and are ascribed to Simeon.

A Masonic Lodge is situated due East and West because the sun, apparently rises in the East, and sets in the West. Likewise, the Lodges covering is nothing less than the "clouded canopy, or starry-decked Heavens" refers to the sun and its position in the Heavens. Its lights in the East, South, and West are referred directly to the sun in our modern ritual and ceremonies. The whole Lodge, therefore, is symbolic of the Earth illuminated by the Sun shining from the East, South, and West; covered by by day with a "cloudy canopy" and by night by "the starry-decked Heavens". The Lodge, when revealed to the entering Mason, discovers to him a representation of the world.

Masons are instructed to travel East in search of Light, or toward the Great

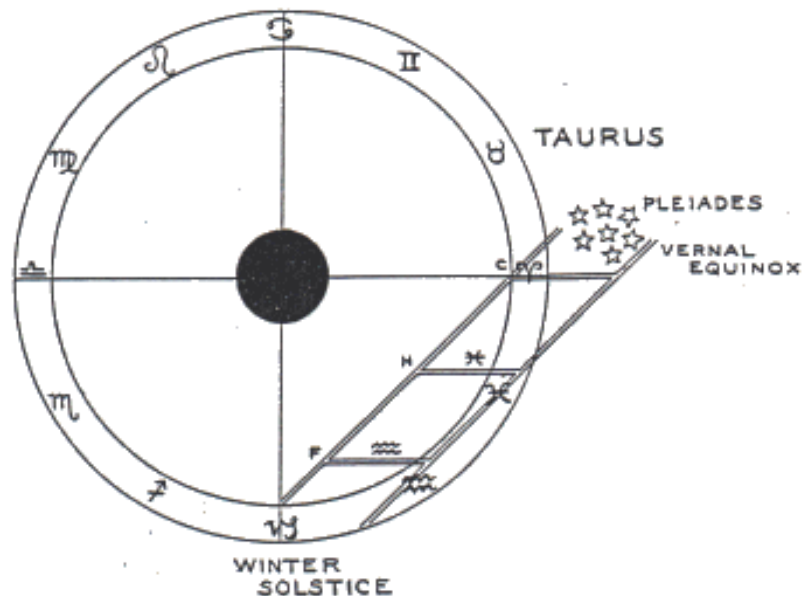


Architect, symbolized by the rising sun.

King Solomon's Temple is also referred to in Our ritual as symbolic of that "Temple *not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens*". All ancient temples were originally dedicated to the worship of the sun and other celestial orbs, whose circuit in the Heavens each year was symbolically represented in the details of their construction and ornaments. The word "temple" is from "tempus" meaning time.

Frequent reference has been made to what is known as "precession of the equinoxes". That is a name that is given to a gradual change of place that is going on constantly of the point where the sun each year crosses the

Celestial Equator. The zodiac has four principal points : the two solsticial and the two equinoctial points, which, dividing the circle of the zodiac into four equal parts, are properly designated in these diagrams.



These points were marked anciently by the stars *Fomalhaut, Aldebaran, Regulus, and Antares*, as has been remarked to be of interest to Royal Arch Masons, they having represented these stars by their images upon the Chapter Banners of the four Veils men. But these stars do not now mark these points, for the sun has been found to have crossed the equator in a different place each year. As completes the annual circuit of the zodiac, it crosses the equator at a point a small distance back of the place on the ecliptic where it did so the previous year-in consequence of which the equinoctial point is annually falling back at a uniform rate. If placing the equinoctial points and compare the two great circles of the celestial equator and the ecliptic to two great intersecting hoops, and imagine the hoop representing the ecliptic being slowly turned around its center toward Cancer, within the circle of the Celestial Equator, which remains fixed, the contact between the two hoops being maintained, and no change in the angle at which they intersect each other, we shall gain a clear idea of the effect produced by this phenomenon. The point

Aries would then slowly advance above the equator until the point Pisces was at the intersection of the two circles. The Fishes would then be on the equinox, which is now the case, since approximately during the birth of Jesus Christ, hence, *Ichthus* [The Fish]. In time, this motion being continued, the Water-Bearer will occupy that place, and so on...

The point where the sun crossed the equator was once in the constellation of Aries, but the long progress of the centuries the place of the sun's crossing has fallen back 30° from the 1° of that constellation, so that the vernal equinox is now really in the constellation Pisces, the Fishes; or in other words, the sun enters the stars of the constellation Pisces on March 21st, and not those of the constellation Aries, as it did 22 centuries ago, as we are informed by the ancient astronomer Hipparchus. The *place*, however, where the sun crosses the Celestial Equator has continued to be, and still is, and will continue to be, marked by the sign of Aries, so that the sign of Aries now marks the place in the zodiac of the constellation of the Fishes. The signs and the constellations are therefore no longer in the same places. Hence, in order to make our figure of the zodiac strictly correct, the sign Aries should be placed against the constellation Pisces. The sign Pisces against the constellation Gemini: The sign Gemini against the constellation Cancer, and so around the entire circle.

This precession of the equinoxes is still going on, but the four cardinal points of the zodiac will always continue to be marked by the signs Aries and Cancer, and Libra and Capricorn without regard to the constellations which the sun actually enters at those periods. It is by this means that astronomers are able to register upon the face of the Heavens this apparent motion of the stars. This precession rate motion has been determined by long continued observations, and is a little more than $50\frac{1}{4}$ seconds of a Degree each year. It therefore takes the equinoctial point about 2140 years to fall back an entire sign, or 30° . In 25,791 years (about *26,000 years*) it will make a complete revolution of the whole circle of the zodiac belt. This period is called the Great Platonic Year, because that philosopher taught that after it had elapsed the world would begin anew.