



**The Temple Legend
A Challenging Alternative**

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by

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The Temple Legend: A Challenging Alternative

Introduction

This evening, I would like to present to you a version of the Temple Legend that few Brethren will have heard before. While similar in many respects, it presents challenging differences that, whether correct or not, are nonetheless insightful.

The presentation constitutes what is hoped to be the beginning of a more detailed study of the Temple Legend in both Masonic and Non-masonic writings. It is based on a lecture given by Rudolf Steiner in Berlin on 4th November 1904 and published under the title *The Temple Legend: 20 Lectures by Rudolf Steiner*, published by Rudolf Steiner Press.

Steiner is best known for his associations with Theosophy, his own School of Anthroposophy and such applications of his knowledge as Steiner (or Waldorf) Schools, biodynamic agriculture and even the labour movement just to mention a few. While open to criticism for a lack of rigour in the presentation of his ideals and beliefs, he was, undoubtedly, an incredibly knowledgeable and insightful man if not an unacknowledged genius.

Many legends contain esoteric truths in the form of images and associated symbology and allegory. Steiner believed that these were given to man in this form at a time when he was not mature enough to receive the truths directly. These pictures took hold of man's causal body (that part of man which bore the germ of his future higher being) and thus made him ready to understand the truths directly in a future incarnation.

One such Legend will be familiar with all Master Masons and yet differs in a number of details which we will revisit once the Legend has been told. The version told here is that believed to have been left by an enigma of the 17th Century - Christian Rosenkreutz, for the Brethren of the 'Fraternitae Rosae Crucis' or the Brotherhood of the Rose Cross.

While many believed this Brotherhood to have been an elaborate hoax at a time of religious and political turmoil in Europe, others firmly believe that it did exist in the form of the 'Invisible College'. Regardless, the legend about to be retold and many other texts associated with the Rosicrucians hold much knowledge worthy of study. Characters such as Francis Bacon, Robert Fludd, Sir Christopher Wren, Dr. John Dee and Elias Ashmole, among others, all studied the Rosicrucian texts. Many of these also played significant roles in the development of Freemasonry during the 17th and 18th centuries.

As it is in Freemasonry, so it was in Rosicrucian circles that this Legend was only to be shared within the closed group of the initiated.

The Temple Legend

There was a time when one of the Elohim created a human being whom he called Eve. That Elohim united himself with Eve and she gave birth to Cain. After this, another Elohim, named Yahveh, created Adam. Adam also united himself with Eve and from this union came Abel.

(Thus we see that Cain is a direct descendant of the gods, but Abel is a descendant of Adam and Eve who are human. Now the myth proceeds.)

The sacrifices that Abel made to Yahveh were pleasing to him, but the sacrifices brought by Cain did not please him because the birth of Cain was not ordained by him. The result was that Cain committed fratricide. He killed Abel and for this he was excluded from communion with Yahveh. He went away into distant lands and founded his own race there.

Adam again united himself with Eve and from this union came Seth, also mentioned in the Bible, who took over the role of Abel. Thus we have two generations of mankind: the race of Cain, who was a descendant of Eve and of the Elohim, and the other race which had human parentage and was brought into existence at the command of Yahveh. Among the descendants of Cain are all those who have been creators of art and science, as, for instance, Methuselah, the inventor of the Tau script, and T.... C..., who taught the use and working of metal ores and iron. In this line of descent, stemming from the Elohim, were all those who trained themselves in the arts and sciences.

Hiram also descended from the race of Cain, and he was the inheritor of all that had been learned by the others of his line in technology and art. He was the most significant architect we can imagine.

Out of Seth's line came Solomon, who excelled in everything that came from Yahveh. He was endowed with the wisdom of the world and all the attributes of calm, clear, objective wisdom. This wisdom can be expressed in words that go straight to the human heart and can uplift a person, but it is unable to produce anything tangible of a technical nature, in art or science. It is a wisdom which is a directly inspired gift of God and not attained from below through human passions welling up from the human will—that would be the wisdom pertaining to the sons of Cain, a legacy of the other Elohim, not Yahveh. They are the hardworking industrious ones who seek to accomplish everything through their own efforts.

Solomon now decides to build a temple and calls upon Hiram, the descendant of Cain, to be his master builder. It was at the time when Balkis, the Queen of Sheba, was visiting Jerusalem because she had heard of the wisdom of Solomon. And she was certainly impressed and charmed by the exalted and clear wisdom and beauty of the King when she first arrived, and when he made love to her she consented to be his bride. Now she heard about the temple which was being built and she desired to make the acquaintance of the master builder, Hiram. When she first met him she was captivated merely by his glance. As a result, a certain mood of jealousy arose between Hiram and Solomon and the latter wished to do something or other against Hiram, but he was dependent upon him for the completion of the temple.

Now came the following. The temple was almost complete. Only one thing was still lacking, which was to have been Hiram's masterpiece; that was the Molten Sea, which was to represent the ocean cast in bronze and was to have adorned the temple. All the necessary mixtures of ores had been prepared by Hiram in a most wonderful manner, ready to be cast. Now, however, three apprentices got to work, whom Hiram had found so lacking in skill that he had been unable to promote them to become masters. They had therefore sworn to be revenged on him and desired to prevent the casting of the Molten Sea. A friend of Hiram, who got to know about these plans, confided them to Solomon, so that he should prevent their realization. But Solomon, through jealousy, did nothing to stop them, because he wished to destroy Hiram. The result was that Hiram had to look on while the whole casting disintegrated due to the addition of a wrong ingredient in the mixture by the three apprentices. He tried to quench the bursting flames by pouring water over them, but this only made matters worse.

Just as he was on the point of despairing about the work ever being completed, T....-C..., his ancestor, appeared to him and told him that he should not hesitate to cast himself into the fire, as he was invulnerable to the flames. Hiram did as he was advised and came to the centre of the earth. He was led by T....-C... to Cain, who there resided in a condition of pristine divinity. Hiram was thus initiated into the Mystery of Fire and into the secret of bronze casting, receiving from T....-C... a hammer and a golden triangle which he was able to carry with him as a pendant round his neck. Then he returned and was able to complete the casting of the Molten Sea and to put everything in order again. Hereupon the Queen of Sheba consented to become Hiram's bride. He, however, was set upon by the three apprentices and murdered. But before

he died, Hiram managed to throw the golden triangle into a well. As no one knew where he had disappeared, a search was made. Even Solomon was afraid and was anxious to find out what had happened. It was thought that the ancient Master Word could be betrayed by the apprentices, and therefore another one was devised. The first word to be spoken when Hiram was discovered should be the new Master Word. At last Hiram was found and was able to utter a few last words. He said: 'T....-C... had promised me that I shall have a son who will be the father of many descendants who will people the earth and bring my work—the building of the Temple—to completion.' Then he pointed to the place where the golden triangle was to be found. This was then collected and brought to the Molten Sea and both were preserved together in the Holy of Holies. They are only to be discovered by those who can understand the meaning of the legend of the Temple of Solomon and its master builder Hiram.

Meaning and Interpretation

The Temple is the Temple of the Ancient Mysteries and its Societies, that is to say, what is being built up by the whole of mankind. The Holy of Holies is the place where these Societies have their abode. The latter are aware of what is meant by the Molten Sea and the golden triangle.

We are dealing with two races of mankind: with those who, like Solomon, are in possession of divine wisdom; and with those of the Race of Cain, who are conversant with fire and know how to make use of it. This fire is not physical fire, but the fire of wishes, desires and instincts.

There were two kinds of Elohim. The one kind of Elohim did not remain static with the union of wisdom and fire; they went further. And during the creation of man they were no longer filled with desires and so they were able to endow their creation with calm and clear wisdom. That is the essential Yahveh—or Jehovah—religion, the wisdom of which is quite without personal desire. The other Elohim, those in whom wisdom was combined with fire, created the Sons of Cain.

Therefore, in the case of the Sons of Seth, we find representatives of the religious type of human being with detached wisdom, and in the case of the Sons of Cain, we find those who possess an impulsive nature, who are capable of flaring up and showing enthusiasm for wisdom. These two types are creative within all races of mankind and in all periods of history. Out of the desire life of the Sons of Cain all arts and the sciences originate; out of the Seth-Abel current all detached piety and wisdom, lacking enthusiasm, has its origin. Hiram is the representative of the initiates among the Sons of Cain.

The Queen of Sheba is representative of the soul of humanity—every female character denotes the soul in esoteric terminology. She has to choose between the detached piety that does not concern itself with worldly conquest and the masterful wisdom that is achieved through the overcoming of earthly passions and desires. She is the representative of the true human soul, taking her position between Hiram and Solomon.

The Molten Sea is what is created when the appropriate amounts of water and molten metal are cast. The three apprentices do it wrongly, and the casting is destroyed, but when the mysteries of fire are revealed to Hiram by T... C..., he is thereby enabled to unite water and fire in the proper way. This brings the Molten Sea into being. It is brought about when the water of calm wisdom is united with the fire of passion and desire. A union must be brought about which is 'of bronze', that is to say, is lasting and durable. It must endure into the next epoch, when the secret of the sacred golden triangle is added to it.

What was disseminated by Christian Rosenkreutz in the Temple Legend through the Brotherhood, the Rosicrucians have made into their task: to teach not merely religious piety but also science in an external way, not merely knowledge of the outer world but also knowledge of spiritual forces.

The basis of the whole of Freemasonry is to be found in the Temple Legend concerning Hiram-Abiff or Adonhiram. Everything to do with the secret of Freemasonry and its tendency is expressed in this Temple Legend.