

takes her foundation principles from the holy religion upon which she herself is established.

No human society without such principles and objects could possibly exist so many ages as this society has done. For Freemasonry is not a child of yesterday, nor is she content to count her years by centuries, but by the millenniums. Her origin is twofold. As an organization, a visible body intended to live and thrive and work for the good of mankind and the glory of God, she has an establishment from a very remote period, the date being fixed very near the completion of King Solomon's Temple, built to the honor of God in the year 1004 B. C., and is thus 2894 years old. But as a Science, it dates from a period little less than that of the Creation itself. Indeed, the science of Freemasonry has always been considered as coeval with the systematic regulation of that chaotic mass over which the Spirit of the Great Architect of the Universe moved as He began the great work of those memorable six days, in which all things of earth were formed, and Father time started out on his primeval movements.

The grand reason why the science of Freemasonry is justly held to be thus coeval with the creation of our world is, not because the Order has been in existence from so remote a period—which no enlightened man or mason will maintain—but because the Principles and Truths sought to be inculcated upon every member of the Craft by its beautiful symbolism, are coeval with the world's birth-day.

These Principles are sublime, yea, I may say divine, for they are based on the same foundation as is our holy religion; and hence Masonry has always been defined by words which declare exactly what it is, and what every intelligent mason recognizes it to be, as he receives each new burst of masonic light. It has been defined as "a science of morality, veiled in allegory, and illustrated by symbolism," having one high end and aim, viz.: to teach Truth and Fact—truth which is scriptural truth, and facts which are scriptural facts.

Its whole design as a speculative science is the investigation of Divine Truth, and I well remember my own surprise and delight when I so unexpectedly found the whole symbolism and teaching of the initiation, passing, and raising to the sublime degree of a Master Mason, so full of scriptural reference and instruction.

From the moment that a candidate for the mysteries of Masonry starts out on his pilgrimage in search of light till he is finally rewarded, he is an investigator, ever seeking and always finding new light and new truths; learning more and more of these at every step, while yet, as anticipating from the start, never fully finding that of which he is in search; and thus learning what we should all ever remember that the great question asked by Pilate, the governor of Judea, of our Lord and Master, viz.: "What is Truth," has never yet been, and never will be fully answered in this world. Not till mortality has been swallowed up in victory, and the gates of the kingdom of heaven have opened to receive the children of the King, will it receive its answer; but when we shall know even as we