



THE GRAND COMMANDERY OF KNIGHTS TEMPLAR OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA NOVEMBER 2023 NEWS

SK Annas Kamara, Grand Commander; SK Carter L. Diggs Jr. Editor

Sir Knights,

In the performance of our Masonic duty, we are surrounded with signs and symbols. New and old, they represent the qualities, characteristics, and esoteric mysteries of man and Deity; helping to serve as signposts along the way as we navigate this thing called life. One of the most familiar to us is the all-seeing eye. Indeed, it is so familiar that most people, whether Mason or not, can make a reasonable interpretation of its meaning. And yet, the Eye which has been used in virtually every kind of personal or commercial artistic representation remains strangely powerful and secretive to us. Where did it come from, what does it really mean, is it good or is it evil, or does it have any significance at all? Perhaps the best-known symbol of the All-Seeing Eye is on the back of our One Dollar Bill. It is known the world over as a typical All-Seeing Eye. The difference of this representation from others is the triangular predominance of the Eye atop the form of an incomplete pyramid. As has been suggested by conspiracy theorists and supported in numerous books and movies, this representation is an obvious secret symbol of Masonic intention of world domination. Or is it?

Our own brother S. Brent Morris managing editor of the Scottish Rite Journal and Past Master of Quator Coronati Lodge No.2076 has expounded in his work "Eye in the Pyramid" and other published works that neither the eye nor the pyramid has ever been a uniquely Masonic symbol.

Still, many Grand Lodges, including the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia, have incorporated the radiating eye into their seal, while many more of the blue lodges display such an eye on their aprons to remind a Mason that the Great Architect of the Universe is aware of his words and deeds. In this Jurisdiction, and throughout the Craft, all our brethren would generally agree the All-Seeing Eye represents the Supreme Being and is the omniscience of God – the eye that never sleeps.

But if the answer is so obvious, what is it about the all-seeing eye that continues to raise such controversy? Why in this world of instant access to information do so many continue holding claim to the notion that the Eye is representative of Masonic world-domination, suggests evil connections to the Devil and witchcraft, or holds long forgotten intelligence to some secret, buried treasure. And why would religious institutions frown so grievously on a representation once commonly used to represent a spiritual connection to Deity as well as the ancient mysteries and a higher vision?

A definitive answer to most, if not all of these questions and a host of others, is nearly impossible to say. But one conclusion is certain, the All-Seeing Eye, Divine Eye, Sacred Eye, or Eye of Providence is one of the oldest recorded symbols in history. It dates back more than 4,500 years to the Old Kingdom of Pharaonic Egypt using powerful hieroglyphics to invoke the blessings of Deity. There are even references to the Divine Eye during the time the ancients called Zep Tepi, meaning “the first time.”

So let us journey for a moment to a time and place when pursuit of the mysteries was a vibrant, living part of man’s greatest endeavors. Perhaps we will find more enlightenment for ourselves in the sands of antiquity as we attempt to trace the radiating lines back to their original source of the All-Seeing Eye. To go back to the beginning, let us first examine what the Bible says about an all-seeing eye.

In the book of Genesis, Adam and Eve are promised that if they ate of the forbidden fruit their “eyes shall be opened, and they shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.” A compelling interpretation offered by Francis Huxley suggests there is much more to the meaning therein than has usually been explained. Using the language of ancient Hebrew, the translations shed a vastly different light on the collective understanding. It seems, the word “eyes” used in the previous passage means not only physical sight, but knowledge.

Equally intriguing we learn the translation for “opened” means “broadened.” Most profound however, is the discovery that the Hebrew expression for “eyes” is singular, not plural as we comprehend it. Thus, it seems a more accurate understanding of the scripture would be that by taking the forbidden fruit, Adam and Eve would gain a greater wisdom into understanding the All-Seeing Eye of God. In other words, they would receive an esoteric insight into the mind or the soul of man.

The accounts of the Old Testament certainly transport us far back into antiquity to a time credited by many to Abraham of Ur, the forefather of Judaism circa 1,900 BCE. Nearly 1,000 years before the reign of King Solomon and construction of the First Temple of Jerusalem. But to investigate the source of the All-Seeing Eye more comprehensively, we must travel to a time much further back in the chronology of mankind.

Dating back at least another 1,500 years before the earliest history of the Hebrews, we find ourselves in a place as mysterious then as it is today – the land of Pharaoh. An age when we can better consider the history of the Egyptians and their reverence for the Sacred Eye as recorded in the Pyramid Texts.

Archeologists suggest that 4,600 to 5,500 years ago, a collection of hundreds of spells called utterances, which we now call the Pyramid Texts, eventually formed the basis of theological literature creating “The Books of the Dead, Gates, Caverns and the Am-Dwat”. After being etched and painted on the tomb walls, sarcophagus, linen wrappings, and other important objects, they were vocalized by priests in special mortuary rituals on behalf of the dead pharaoh to assist his resurrection and ascension into the afterworld.

From “The All-Seeing Eye” Lecture of the Royal Arch School of Instruction by Marcus Trelaine.