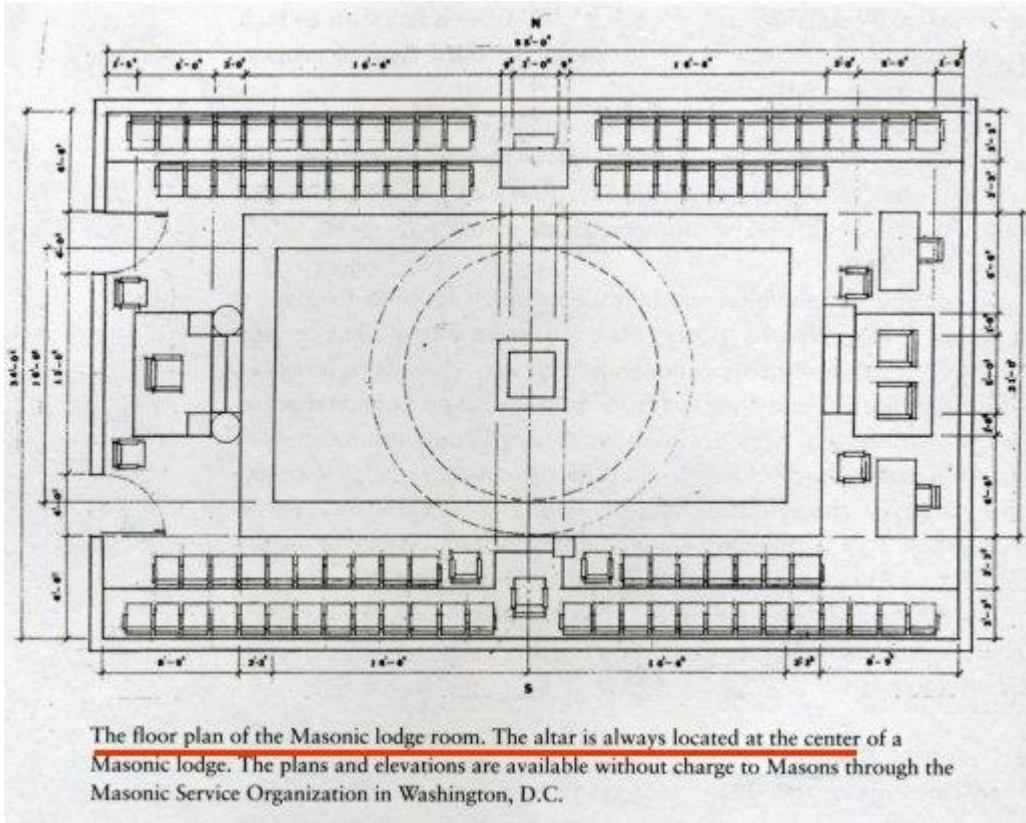


The Masonic Lodge Floor Explained



HPH Bromwell

As always, I direct the serious student of Masonry to HPH Bromwell's book '[Restoration of Masonic Geometry and Symbolry](#)' as *the book* to read to learn about the work of the Craft.

Restoration

The restoration that Bromwell speaks of refers to the existence of an ancient system of geometry and symbolic ritual that has fallen into disuse due to a lack of people who understand the system; what John Michell called 'a living canon of proportion, formed after the perfect model of the cosmos'. He points to the (supposed) state of the understanding of astronomical facts in 1600 when Bruno was burned at the stake for proclaiming the sun to be the center of the system.

Actually, we don't know whether the people who burned Bruno didn't know better, or if they knew but didn't want the 'common man' to have that knowledge;

but if you read older writings you will see that the ancients had a pretty good understanding of the facts, but that this knowledge was some how 'lost', just like lost passwords that we read about. It's a sociological fact, meanings changes and get lost. Then again, sometimes they get suppressed.

At one point Michell says that, "monuments all over the world were designed in accordance with one scheme of proportion in units of measure which are every where the same ... founded on principles of which we are now ignorant". When Michell says 'we', I presume he is speaking of himself, and not people in general. Had he ever read Bromwell, he would see that we he (Bromwell) was not ignorant of those principles. Also, Peter Tompkins, writing at the same time as Michell was not ignorant of the facts. The difference between what Bromwell and Tompkins write and what John Michell wrote is that their work was based on looking at ancient astronomy in terms of observational techniques based on measurements, rather than on the the theological persuasion or psychological projections of the author or investigator.

Michell speaks repeatedly about 'the collapse of the former ancient world order and the loss of the ancient canon of proportion on which it was founded'. Here in, I intend to introduce you to the basis of that system of proportion, which is not lost to modern Masonry for those who know where to look. I will show how the system relates to the geometry of the lodge floor, and point to modern examples that reflect the patterns in the Lodge.

G - nosticism

You will recall that one of the main themes in the Kaballah is the preservation and transmission of knowledge, which is played out in stories of 'loss and recovery', like the Enoch legend of the Royal Arch. The other main Kaballistic theme is the journey of the soul, seen as an exile and return, as in the Tree of Life.

Bromwell suggests that 1717 was not the beginning of Masonry for all time, but was the beginning of an attempt at the restoration of the ritual and symbolry of World Masonry. Joseph Campbell describes (modern speculative) Masonry as "a scholarly attempt to reconstruct an order of initiation that would result in spiritual revelation". That is the Gnostic component of the Craft.

As John Michell puts it -

"The tradition of the kabbalists and gnostics is not merely a collection of facts or beliefs jealously guarded by masonic and other hermetic groups, but consists of a method whereby certain incommunicable knowledge can be gained through a

course of study in preparation for induced moments of perception, in which aspects of the hidden universe stand out clear and orderly to the inner mind...
Revelation comes to those who invoke it through intense studies and a lively curiosity of mind."

Floor Work

But what Bromwell is talking about is the actual work of the Craft, what we will call the 'floor work', which is all geometry and astronomy related. In his book, he explains the ritual, its physical connections to the lodge room, and its symbolic geometric and mathematic relationship to the Ark of the Covenant, the Tabernacle, the Hebrew camp in the desert, the breast plate of the Preiest, the Temple, the Holy of the Holies, Ezekiel's descriptions, and the New Jerusalem in Revelation 21; all of which are closely related.

The key is that the three degrees are symbolic representation of stations of the sun. The first degree is the June Solstice, the second is the December Solstice and the third degree pertains to the equinoxes and the equator, and equilibrium, balance etc.

The idea is of a continuous approach to 'the light' which is symbolized as the rising sun. Watching the sun for a year we see that it is at its farthest from the Equator to the north in June, to the south in December, and due east in March and September. Left, right and center as they say. By the way, a lot of the vernacular shows that it has inherited from Masonic phraesology, like on the level.

Bromwell shows how the floors of the three degrees are developed astronomically, then relates that to the Bible proportions showing that it is part of the same system. I have shown that St. Peter's Bascilica and the Rose Cross Lamens are derived from this pattern. As are so-called 'magic circle'. In all cases the model is the earth in the cosmos, so that all are oriented to the cardinal directions.

I repeat. The Masonic Symbolic Floor (seen above) reflects the essential template for THE TEMPLE.

James Frazer, in 'The Golden Bough', points out that while rituals stay the same for long times, the legends that surround them change, and 'the old meanings' get lost. The Real Meanings. Such is the case here. Its hard to tell how many Masons even suspect the meanings of the movements of the officers in the ritual. By that I mean the astronomical details.

I wouldn't blame them if they didn't. I studied Bromwell's book for four years before I 'got it'. But when I did a lot of other things made sense. In particular

magic circles. Lodge work is the template of ceremonial sympathetic astronomical magic. What a modern magician calls a magic circle is this without astronomy. Astronomy is an essential part of the Masonic system.

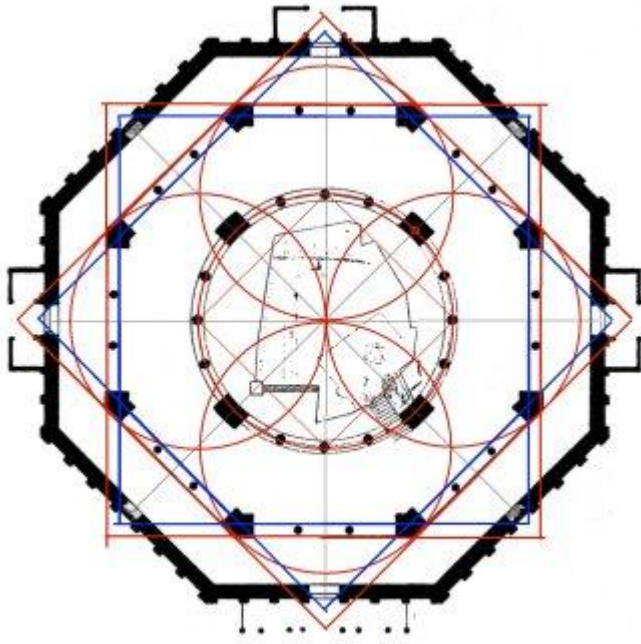
I contend that Michell is correct when he suggests 1) that this system of philosophy sees the cosmic order as the model for a perfectly harmonious way of life, 2) that the inner secrets of this tradition were preserved in the local Temple which sheltered and displayed the sacred canon, and 3) that the Temple was a canonical work and a model of the local cosmology.

Having said that, and pointing to Michell's admitted ignorance of the astronomical and geometric principles upon the system is based, I will assert that Michell was not qualified to speak in any but the most general terms about the subject. Michell never got to the nitty-gritty of the system because he didn't understand the details of it, which I will present here.

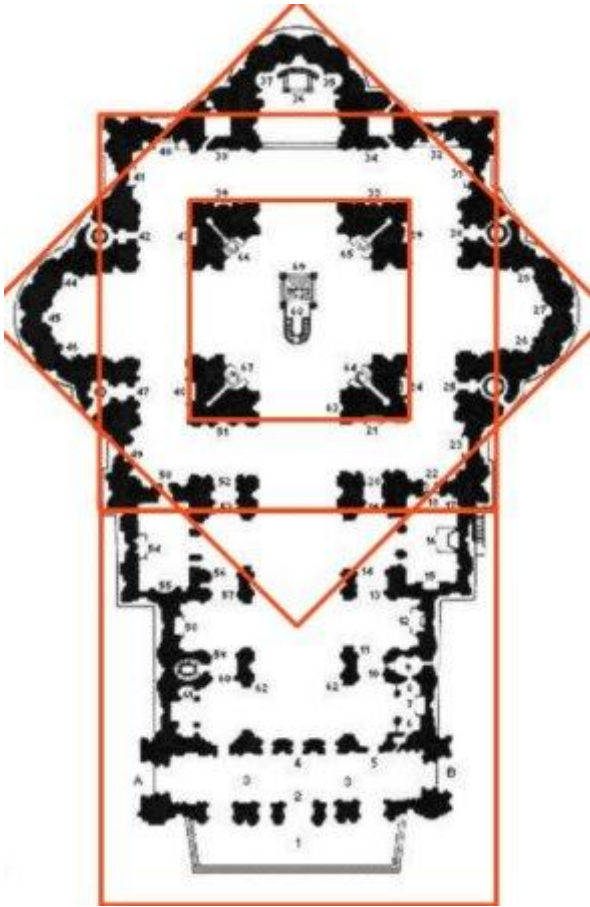
Square Tiles

Bromwell notes that in depictions of the 'form and situation' of the cosmos (mandalas), the earth, the central element, is represented by a square, while the heavens are represented by a circle. Enoch's Nine Arches are the planetary spheres, and nine concentric circles. Each circle has a square inscribed inside of it. The center most square is the earth. The outer most circle is the circle of the heavens (Nuit). Hindus make square astrology charts still.

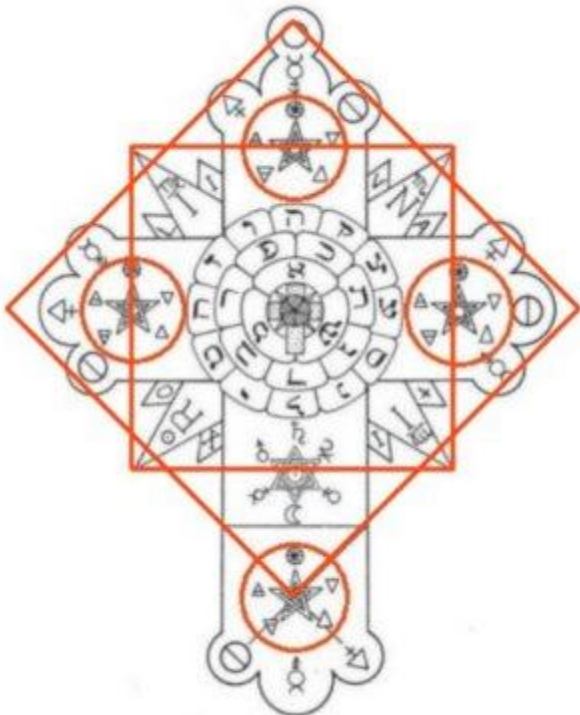
Reading Bromwell, it doesn't take long to think about tile work on sacred buildings (masonry = architectural geometry at one level). Then there is the duality depicted in the 'back and white' floor pattern and we are back to dualistic gnosticism. Astronomy dictates two floor patterns. One is sets of lines parallel to the equator, latitude lines. The square tile has one face in the north, one in the East, south and west.



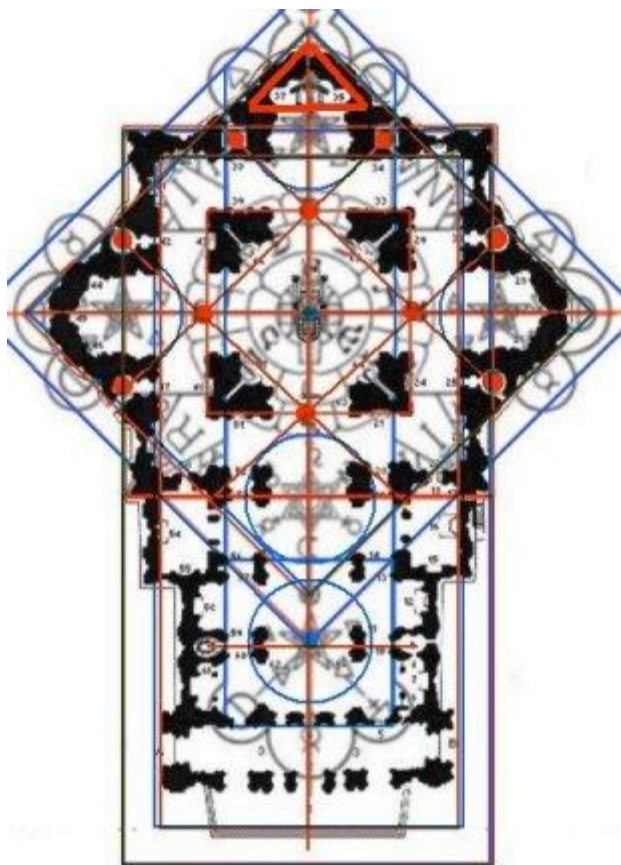
Masonically ‘orienting’ something entails aligning it to the cardinal directions. We can also do this with corners of oblique squares (like the so-called baseball diamond or boxing ring). This tile is rotated 45 degrees from the one above. The figure of two overlapping squares is very popular in World Masonry. Both St Peter’s (below) and the Dome of the Rock (above) share this form.



The Rose Cross Lamén (below)



Looking closely at the Rose Cross Lamén, we note the four symbols for the elements (circled) in the four cardinal directions. Compare that layout with the one of St Peter's above it. Below we see these two images merged, and below that a magic circle which is actually a protective square.

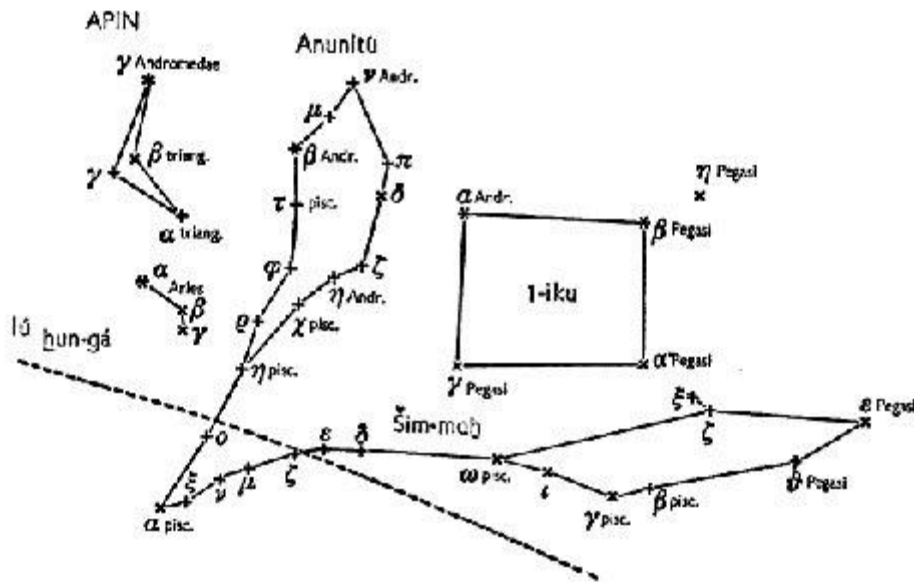




Square of Pegasus

Consider the square of stars in the Pegasus constellation. They very nearly form a 15 degree square in the sky. The constellation is located near the vernal equinox point of the sun, so you can't see it then, but if you look at it at the autumnal equinox, it is opposite to the sun. That is, in the spring, the Pegasus accompanies the sun across the sky. As it comes over the eastern horizon, it rises with the point up (oblique square), at the meridian its lines are parallel to long and lat lines, and it is oblique again as it sets.

[Robert Graves suggested in 'The White Goddess' that the Solar Year was symbolized by a horse.]



The Pegasus-square, called "I-Iku" (i.e., the standard field measure of the Sumerians), with the circumjacent constellations, as reconstructed out of Mesopotamian astronomical texts.

Peter Tompkins, in 'Secrets of the Great Pyramid', compares general notions about measuring and mapping the earth and the sky (symbolized by the terrestrial and celestial globes of Masonry) to those of measuring and mapping the sky. In his notes on ancient measures in that book, Livio Stecchini suggests that just as the ancients began a land survey by marking a square of a standard dimension, then measure of from that. Cuneiform texts call this *basic surveying square* iku. Conceptually the square of Pegasus was considered the starting point for mapping the sky. The name iku also pertained to that square in the sky and units of land surface.



Procession - Initiatory Theater - Ceremonial Magic

That brings me to something that Bromwell states about the Masonic notion of ‘approaching the light’ and the idea of a procession. Architecturally, The TEMPLE experience is designed to represent the movement from a mundane to a more and more sacred space. It’s *processional* theater. In Solomon’s Temple there was an outer court, the Holy place and the Holy of Holies. Concerning the Divine Order of things, Bromwell states that "Masonry follows the order itself by beginning at the lowest and outmost and ascending and penetrating by the higher and inner to the highest and inmost".

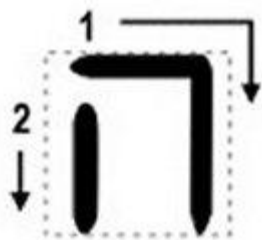
In Solomon's Temple the Ark was in the holiest place; other cultures substitute something else but we see a similar pattern world wide. The Egyptians liked long open avenues lined by columns and sphinx that brought you to a closed in space, what architect Paul Rudolph called the A-B effect where you move from one kind of space to another, horizontal to vertical for instance. The same ideas are used in city architecture.

Conceptually, the approach in Masonry is ‘to the light’, which is represented Masonically as the rising sun. The place of the Worshipful Master is in the east, and as such is approached from the west past the altar on the center. Cathedrals usually share this same theater of the approach to the sunrise. Remember sunrise services at Easter? If you were in a cathedral facing due east at east-er at sunrise and their was a window in the east, the sun would be rising there.

The Journey of the Soul

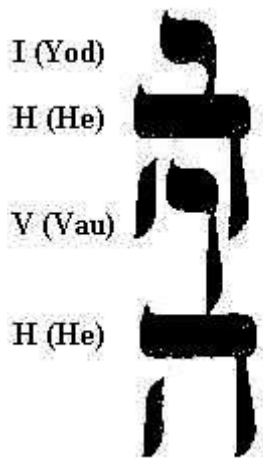
Short note to introduce the notion that the Mysteries surrounding ancient Masonry were more than just astronomy. While geometry and astronomy went hand in hand as far as the 'measure' of the orderly universe, they were connected through legends to what we call the soul's journey. The Greeks taught that we came from and returned to the stars via seven planetary spheres. If we include the stars at the top and the earth at the bottom, we have a total of nine spheres, arks, arcs, or arches. OUR TEMPLE reflects all of this. THE TEMPLE is a library of the sciences.

The equilateral triangle represents the sky god (whose representative is the sun, just stepping in for a bit), and the square represents mother earth, who are separated from one another and would like to get back together. The sky god is so powerful that we can't even say or write his name, as a matter of fact the word triangle isn't even in the Bible, and I can't believe I used it h*r*. E by the way is He, as in yod he vau he. So he is e. HVH is EVE. The bifold name, Jehovah; one part male, three parts female.



The letter He is drawn like this (above). "And Adam called his wife e-v-e because she was the mother of all living." Genesis 2:20 Fulcanelli tells us that the cathedral appears to be based on the alchemical science which investigates the transformations of the original substance, elementary matter (L. from mater for mother). The Virgin Mother, stripped of her symbolic veil is (like Isis) the personification of that primitive substance.

You will notice that it is an open square. Or a 'square' and a rule. The tetragrammaton, the four letter name of God in Hebrew looks like this (below), reading from the top down. Man in God's image, both male and female he made them. Note that the head is male and the body is female.



So, a basic part of the whole ‘mystery’ as they put it, is the mystery of birth and the journey of the soul, and it has to involve sexual metaphors. The Alpha, like the letter Tau, besides being an architect's working tool, were phallic images. Omega on the other hand was a feminine version of that. Here we see the lower case and upper case letter Omega in Greek. As you can see, the upper case version is a womb in a protective square. Compare to the architectural forms above.



Note that as three denotes divinity while four denotes material matters, the four letter name is not a name of the Transcendent God concealed from comprehension. It is rather a name to designate the revealed nature of God. The earthly representative so to speak. The Greeks substituted a three letter name for the Hebrews four letter name, IAO. Unlike the Hebrew names which were no to be spoken, the Greeks sang there' out.



I Am The Alpha And Omega

Some architectural 'vistas' or procession spaces are large, while some are not so. Some depict the sensation of climbing to the top of a high place. But not all cosmologies entail the central mountain component, others advance to a protowomb center point. Others utilize columns or trees. In the case of the House of the Temple in Washington DC, we can see that 'mountain' was the model, just as we suspect that the pyramids were mountains to 'the people' but scale models of the globe to priests.

Speaking of scale, Bromwell notes again and again that the measurements in the Bible that we read pertaining to 'sacred objects' are more for the purposes of scale and ratios. The Tabernacle's measurements were half those Solomon's Temple, but the size of the Ark remained the same. The ratio of the volume of the Tabernacle to the Temple was 1:8. Conceptually we have the 'foundation stone' on the center, surrounded by the floor of the holiest area, surrounded by the Tabernacle, and the Temple; then the 'cities' that we see in Ezekiel and in Revelation 21.

But what does all that mean you are asking? It means that the Bible is describing the Lodge Floor in form and situation. And that, as you suspected it is all about astronomy. The boxes-within-boxes refer to the celestial or planetary spheres.

In a passage in Bromwell's book he refers to the direction of procession. He is discussing ideas about which way the Tabernacle was 'open' to, from which direction one entered. He suggests that Masonically the motion is from the west to the east, as the sun on the opposite side of the earth from 'a viewer'. 'Journey to the East' by Hermann Hesse is a veiled story about a league of people on a journey to the east. Hesse liked women apparently and allowed them into HIS TEMPLE.

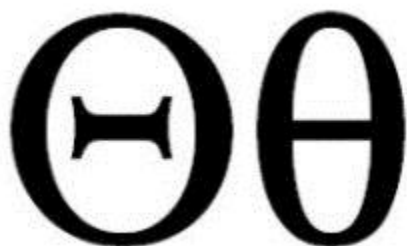
Then he says, besides, what if the approach was from the east to the west? The Bible says that the Glory of the Lord (Shekinah) came into the Temple from the east, and that for that reason, the east facing gate should be kept closed; to be opened only at new moons and on the sabbath. If the Masonic Light is in the east then an approach

from the east to the west would represent worship of the forces of darkness. The west traditionally represents the notion of death to ‘the people’, but to the Hermeticists sundown represent Birth.

Hebrews, Muslims and Egyptians begin their day at sun down because that represents the soul entering a body to them. The dark of night represents the soul in the body or underworld. Sunrise, death, is the symbolic release of the sun soul from the Demons of Darkness which had swallowed it at sundown. You can see the parallel to the idea of sowing a seed in the ground. The year begins in these culture at the September Equinox when the sun moves below the equator. It's a northern hemisphere mythology that sees the southern hemisphere as an underworld.

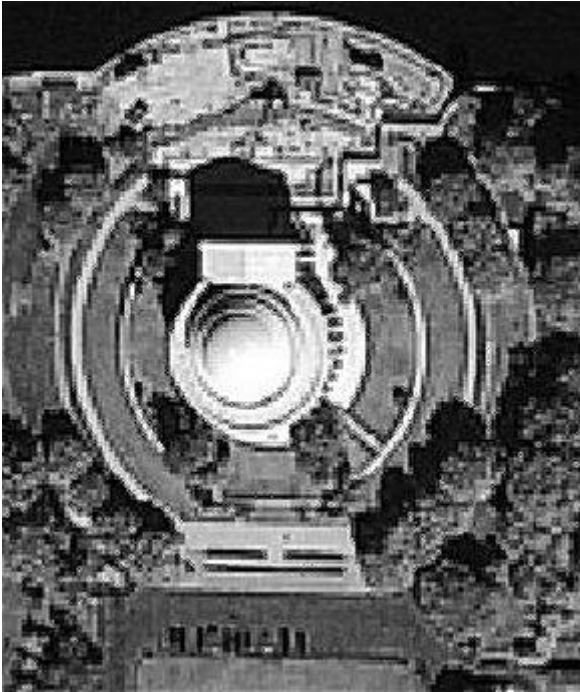


Theta is the eighth letter of the Greek alphabet, and is very similar to the Egyptian symbol for the sun, a point in a circle. Remember that ellipses have two focii (focal points), and that the earth is not really a sphere but a flattened oblate spheroid. It's flat at the top and bulges at the equator a little.



Teitan (or Titan) was a Greek solar figure whose number was 666. Saturn was worshipped by the Romans as an offspring of the sun, and ruled the Titans before the Olympians were in power. The magic square of the Sun is 6x6, contains the first 36 numbers and totals to 666.

Now tell me what that says about St Peter's Basilica in Rome with its long processional avenue entering from the east. Bromwell never mentions this, but undoubtably had it in mind when he wrote that. Looking at the Jefferson Memorial (based on the Pantheon in Rome and oriented to the north like it) we see that the direction of approach is to the south, where the sun is exalted at noon, in the northern hemisphere that is.



You can tell the Jefferson Memorial was designed to be above 23.5 degrees north, because it is oriented south to the sun at noon. South of 23.5 degrees south you would look to the north for the noon sun.