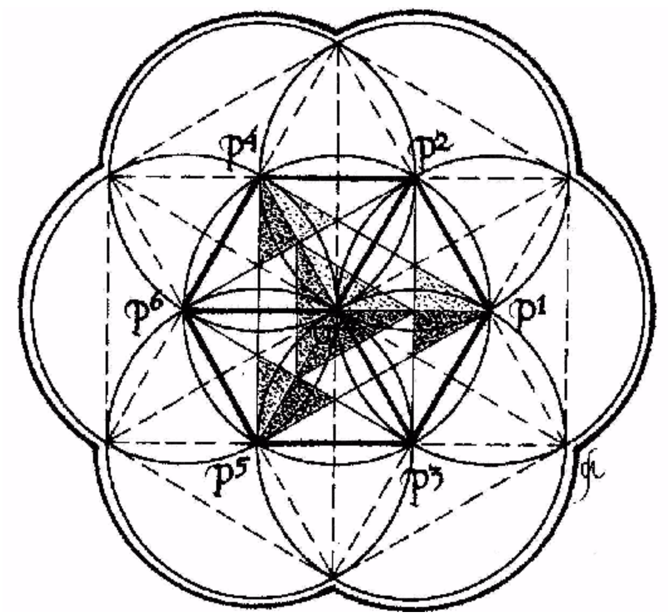
FREEMASONRY
AND A VIEW OF THE
PERENNIAL
WORLD PHILOSOPHY

PERCEPTIONS OF THE CRAFT RITUAL,
THE PREVAILING VIEW AND THE PERENNIAL SEARCH FOR LIGHT



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CHAPTER VI

SECTION III

The Point of Masonry

THE RICH SYMBOLISM of Masonry speaks softly to us at every opening and closing of the lodge, at every degree and in hundreds of other quiet ways. Something within us is stirred with a vague remembrance that this symbolism should, could or does stand poised to reveal to us the deepest meaning of ourselves and of life. From the very first moment we are **accepted** into Masonry this is brought to our attention.

The symbolism of the Point Within the Circle has come down to us from time immemorial. Our operative brethren used the point to construct the circle. (Allen E. Roberts, <u>The Craft and Its Symbols</u>) We are likewise informed that to be received "on the point of a sharp instrument . . . is to teach us that . . .."

In <u>The Standard Work and Lectures of Ancient Craft Masonry</u> (New York), the 'Ritual' book, an interesting passage was inserted in the 2002 Edition of the Middle Chamber Lecture. In the 1944 edition of <u>King Solomon and His Followers NY</u>, the old 'Ritual' book, this passage appeared in the Geometry section of the Middle Chamber Lecture:

GEOMETRY

(Never omit this)

> Geometry treats of the powers and properties of magnitudes in general, where length, breadth, and thickness are concerned . . .
> *from a point to a line, from a line to a superfices, and from a superfices to a solid.*
>
> - *A point is that which has position, but not magnitude, and is the beginning of all geometrical matter.*
> - *A line has length without breadth.*
> - *A superfices is that which has length and breadth without thickness.*
> - *A solid is a magnitude which has length, breadth and thickness.*

This passage is not unique to Masonry. The Masonic tradition encompasses in its symbols the "Forty-seventh Problem (Proposition) of Euclid," also referred to as the Pythagorean Theorem. Iamblicus' <u>Life of Pythagoras</u>, in the Additional Notes concerning the line of the Golden Verses of Pythagoras which reads, "I swear by him who the tetractys found," records the following passage:
". . . But the third tetractys is that which according to the same analogy or proportion comprehends the nature of all magnitude . . . . Hence, this is the third tetractys, which gives completion to every magnitude ***from a point, a line, a superfices, and a solid.***"

It is recorded that Iamblicus lived during the reign of Constantine (died circa 330 A.D.). There was a certain comfort which arose from the finding of this passage in our Middle Chamber Lecture; it is somewhat disconcerting that it has been deleted from the NY Ritual from about 1962-2002. Masonry further focuses on geometry in the Middle Chamber Lecture when it treats of the "Moral Advantages of Geometry," wherein we find the passage:

". . . geometry, *the basis of Freemasonry* . . ."

The 'basis of Freemasonry!' This seems to be a rather plain yet powerful statement. It seems to present a subject which would appear to be worthy of further light. Let us further explore the point . . .

Let us assume that the Supreme Architect of the Universe, the Creator, the Nameless One, has a little bit of compassion for His Creation . . . we, the poor, huddled masses, yearning to be Free (and Accepted). Do you honestly think that a Perfect Creator would actually create something imperfect; do you honestly think that a Perfect Creator would deny any of His (or Her) Creation the right to Know His, Her or Its Creator?

Geometry illustrates some very interesting points concerning this. Not the Geometry we were taught in school, but the Geometry of Life. Academic geometry is like finding yourself in the Labyrinth with the Minotaur, there is no seeming end to the possibilities (infinitude), but through the geometry of Life, sometimes referred to as Contemplative, Sacred, c*orpo transparente** or Philosophical geometry, you may in terms understood by all, come to better know 'from whence you came and wither you may travel.'

[* the contemplation of transparent bodies placed one within the other.]

And now we may get on to the point . . .

Above it was written (from the Middle Chamber Lecture, 1944 edition) that a 'point' is "that which has position, but not magnitude, and is the beginning of all geometrical matter." We will be looking a little further into this matter as we go along. A point is generally said to be that which has neither height, nor width, nor depth. If we may focus our attention on this for a moment, we will come to understand something of the deeper significance of it. To do this we will need to get off of the highway, off of the path, off of the trodden way and listen to that little voice inside of us which is the ultimate teacher of all that we 'really know.' The concept of the discussion which follows was not read in any book, nor heard in any class, but is presented to you for your consideration with an abiding faith in the little voice which relayed it to me.

From where you are presently sitting , standing or laying down, pick a point in the 'air' (in space) to observe. Study it carefully and note that it IS a point, but that it has neither height, nor width, nor depth. Now, it doesn't really matter if you are considering an atom, an ant, an elephant, a jumbo jet or a planet. When it comes to a 'point' it is enough to say that the 'thing' is, was or will be 'there,' at 'that point.' That is enough to create the desired 'focus.' By way of illustration, please get a pencil or pen and a sheet of paper. Without making any mark on the paper, select a point of your own choosing, a little to the left of the center of the horizontally viewed sheet. Observing the point, become aware that the point you have selected has neither height, nor width, nor depth.

Now take your pencil or pen and make a dot at the point you had selected. This is the way that we normally represent a point, as a dot, but remember that the mark you made is not the point you selected; it 'marks' the point, but it is not the point itself. In like fashion you could have selected any point in the universe upon which to focus, none of which would have had height, or width, or depth, but each of which could be marked in some manner or another, if only with words or a thought.

Before we proceed to the next step, let's illustrate a related point. Immediately next to the dot you have just made, mark another one lightly and then make another dot about five inches to the right of the two. Your sheet should now have three dots, at three points, looking something like this:

Figure 6.3.1: The Focal Point.

o• • •

Now hold the sheet (or this page) at arm's length from you in good light and look at the left dot (time for your glasses if you need them). Focus on the left dot and then look at the far right dot, focusing upon it. Now look from the far right dot to the far left dot and so on, back and forth slowly, focusing each time, and become aware that your eyeballs are moving each time you shift your focus from one dot to the other. Now look at the far left dot again and focus. Shift your focus to the dot immediately to the right of it and so on, back and forth slowly, focusing each time, and become aware that your eyeballs are moving each time your shift your focus. Now become aware that every 'thing' you see, other that the dot upon which you are focusing, is being perceived with your peripheral vision. Next become aware that you are only seeing the ‘surface’ of the dot, but can see neither the back of the sheet, nor the back of the dot upon it. This is why the geometry which we are here discussing is sometimes referred to as ‘Contemplative Geometry.’ Take a look around the room and see how much of it you are really ‘seeing’ -- focusing upon -- and how much of it you are ‘perceiving’ -- or ‘seeing’ with your ‘perceptual’ vision. A further discussion of this ‘sense’ and ‘perception’ is in Chapter VII of this book, “The Five Senses and Perception.”

To resume . . .

With some understanding of the ‘difference’ between a point and a dot, we are now ready to proceed from a point to a line. Above it was noted (from the Middle Chamber Lecture, 1944 Edition) that a ‘line’ has length without breadth. In the space below, without making a mark, select a point toward the left margin and another point toward the right margin, then *perceive* a line connecting the two points.

We may now ‘mark’ the two points with dots as shown below:

Figure 6.3.2: Two Points.

and may connect the two dots by marking the ‘line’ (or ‘line-segment’ as it is now called in school) between them:

Figure 6.3.3: The Line.

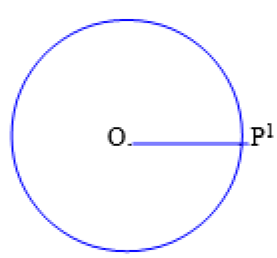
Masonically, we have proceeded from a point (.) to a line (._____.), but Masonically we are taught that the compasses and square play an important role in what we are and do, so let us apply ‘the point of a sharp instrument.’

One day I was sitting at my desk and noted that the two points of the compasses, when brought together into the ‘closed’ position, theoretically become ‘one point,’ having neither height, nor width, nor depth. The ‘moment’ that there is the slightest dividing (opening) of the compasses (dividers), even so small as one trillionth of a millimeter (or as wide as a trillion light-years), there is no longer ‘one’ point, but ‘two.’ Between the two points there arises a ‘line’ which gives rise to a perception of time and space from ‘here to there’ or ‘now until then.’

We have said that the two points give rise to a ‘line,’ but let us say that ‘science’ says that the shortest distance between two points is a (straight) line (segment). Masonically and geometrically there is more to this than we may have thus far considered. If we were to place the points of a compass on the two dots (O and P^1) below, we will find that we indeed have the line which is implied between the two points, but we ‘also’ have a ‘radius.’

Beginning with the original point or point of origin 'O' and opening the compasses to point or radius P^1, permits us to now draw radius OP^1 and the circumference of the corresponding circle of that same radius, as follows:

Figure 6.3.4.
The Line as a Radius



At this ‘point’ we now have a point, a line, a radius and a circumference, but we must now draw on a very ancient saying (credited to Hermes Trismegistus, the Thoth of Egypt) for the next step. Simply stated, the ancients said, “As above, so below.” They weren't much for explaining themselves, because they knew that we all have the facility to go within to learn what was meant by statements such as this, that inner experience was the true teacher. This saying could be taken past the four words given above to mean such things as:

If there is an up, there is a down.
If there is a past, there is a future.
If there is an inner, there is an outer.
If there is a hot, there is a cold.
If there is a happy, there is a sad.
If there is a right, there is a left.
If there is a sweet, there is a sour.
and so on . . . in the realm of Duality . . .

In the Pillars we find these 'extremes' and the mystery of the Veil (see Chapter VIII). We find these 'extremes' again in the Golden Ratio, a:b::b:c or a:b::b:(a + b) (see Section I of this Chapter). We find these extremes wherever we find ourselves for they are always with us, whispering gently . . . within . . . their silent mystery of Unity, of the Middle Chamber, of the Sanctum Sanctorum. The implication of it is not so much concerning the extremes, as it is of the ‘balance,’ to the effect of the 'miracle' of:

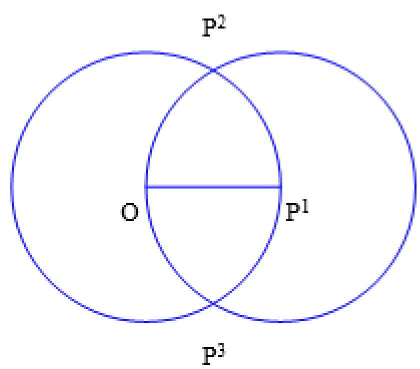
What keeps the extremes from flying further apart into Chaos,
and what keeps them from suddenly
crashing in on 'themselves' into something like a
black hole?

Many feel that to have balance, two or more things must be the elements of that which is in balance, but the ancients saw the Uni-verse as Unity (. . . where two or more are gathered together in Thy Name, Thou wilt be in their midst and bless them . . .). Under this concept, the radius and circumference shown above would be acceptable, because what wasn't shown would be implied or understood, in Unity. Applying this to our modern need to have these abstract concepts spelled out a little more clearly, let us consider the following:

If line OP^1 is the radius of the circle shown above, then of what is line P^1O the radius?

We tend to see only a line or radius that extends from the center outward to the circumference, but the ancients knew that the line or radius also extended from the circumference to the center; where we see ‘one’ line, they saw ‘two’ overlaying each other to produce a Unity . . . balance. This explanation is a little short of the deeper significance of this, but it is enough for us to now illustrate what occurs when we do consider ‘of what is line P^1O the radius:’

Figure 6.3.5: The Objective and Subjective Radii.



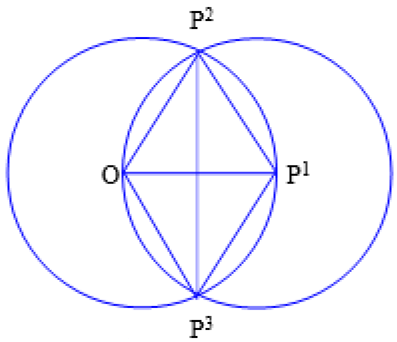
Circumference of Circle with Radius O P^1

Circumference of Circle with Radius P^1 O

Having now represented the radius in its twofold (dual) aspect, we may now see that we have drawn one of the universal symbols for ‘marriage,’ the mystic tie, known as the *Vesica Pisces* (also known as the Gothic Arch). Masonically, remember that the open compasses which rests upon our altar does not have pencil lead at its points. If the two points of the compasses (dividers) are placed at points O and P^1 respectively, a circle of radius OP^1 may be described with a center of O, and another circle of radius P^1O may be described with a center of P^1.

Having now drawn these two ‘intersecting circles,’ it may be noted that they do in fact intersect at two points (P^2 and P^3). Pretty much as we learned when we were children, in Contemplative Geometry there is a version of the game we learned as ‘connect-the-dots.’ Let us now connect the points generated by the intersection of the circles:

Figure 6.3.6:
The First Extension
(P^2,P^3)



We have also generated the *First* Proposition of Euclid! (see Sections V and VI of this Chapter), and Hermes Trismegistus' injunction "As Above, So Below."

The following lines have now been generated from the intersection of the circles:

LINES:	P^1 P^2	P^2 O
	O P^3	P^3 P^1

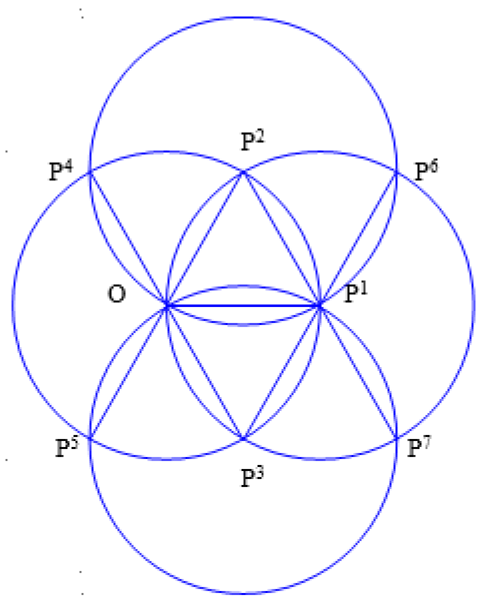
And also the following lines which many may have seen, and some may have missed:

LINES:	O P^1	P^1 O	P^2 P^1	O P^2
	P^3 O	P^1 P^3	P^2 P^3	P^3 P^2

for a total of twelve lines in the diagram (there are many others, showing, which we will not discuss in this book).

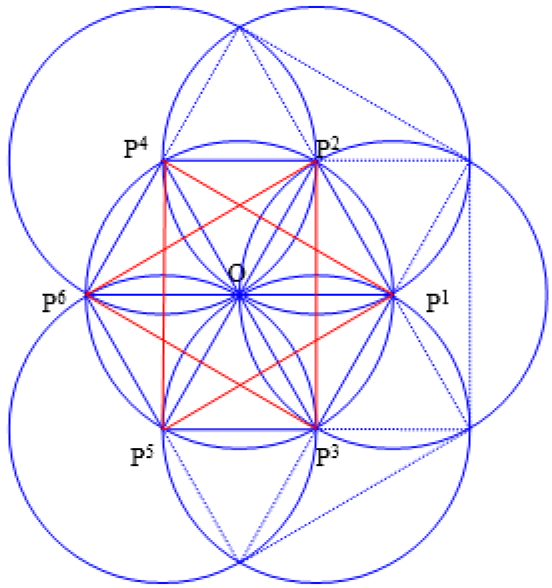
We began with point O, then proceeded to line OP^1 which is also the 'radius' of the circle with its center at O. Looking at Figure 6.3.6 above we will see radius OP^1, but we will also be able to observe that OP^2 and OP^3 are also 'radii' of the same circle with a center of O. We have already drawn the circle with a center of O, and we have drawn the circle with a center of P^1. We may now draw the circles with the centers P^2 and P^3 as follows:

Figure 6.3.7:
The Second Extension.
(P^4-P^7)



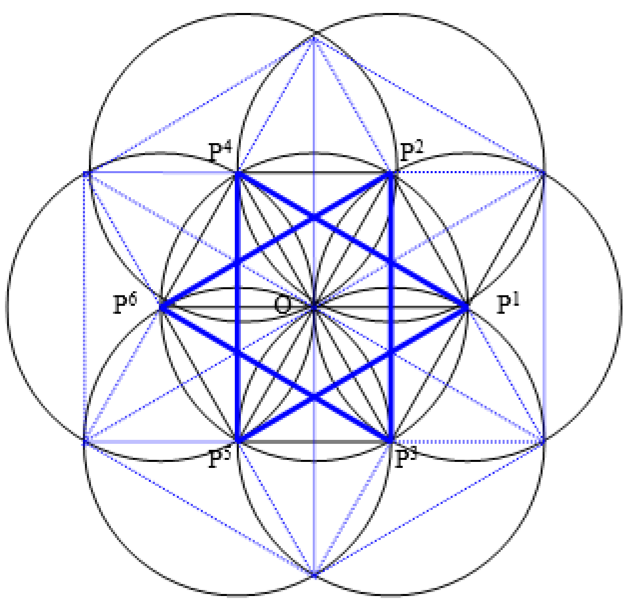
From this point, other possibilities are arising, but we will for now concern ourselves with those arising around the circle with a center point of O. Observe that in inscribing the two circles with center points of P^2 and P^3, the resultant circles cut the circumference of the circle with a center of O at two new points, the points noted as P^4 and P^5. Having created these two points by the intersection of the two circles, we now have the formation of lines OP^4 and OP^5 which are also 'radii' of the circle with a center of O. We may now describe the next two circles with centers of P^4 and P^5, as follows:

Figure 6.3.8:
The Third Extension
(P^6)



We have now created P^6 from the intersection of the two circles with centers of P^4 and P^5 respectively, giving us line OP^6 , which is also the 'radius' of a circle with a center of P^6. This is drawn as follows (note also the connecting lines of all of the points drawn thus far):

Figure 6.3.9:
The KST SS Module with
Star of David.

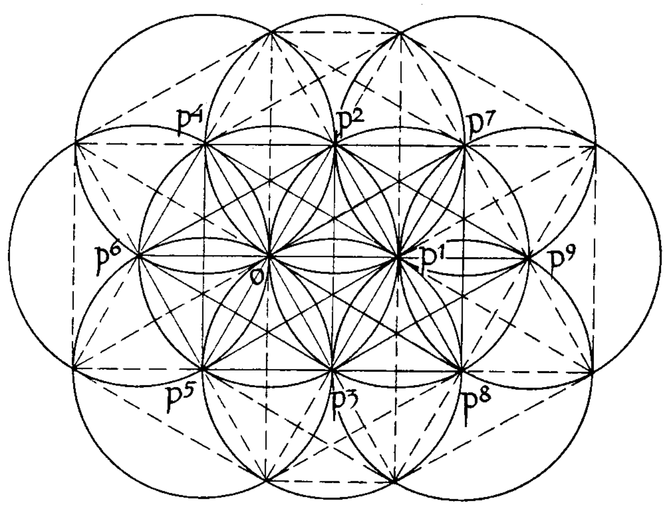


We have now proceeded from a 'point', to a 'line,' to a 'superfices' (a plane surface). Note that the first superfices to arise from this progression, in Figure 6.3.6 above, were two equilateral triangles (when there were only two circles). Note also that the first superfices to appear 'immediately' conforms to the ancient saying of "as above, so below."

In the figure immediately above, note the two large triangles which fill the circle with a center of O, forming a Star of David, also known as the Seal of Solomon. This too conforms to the ancient saying of "as above, so below."

We may now complete the remaining circles which surround the circle with a center of P^1, as we did for the circle with a center of O as follows:

Figure 6.3.10
The KST 'Sanctorum' Module



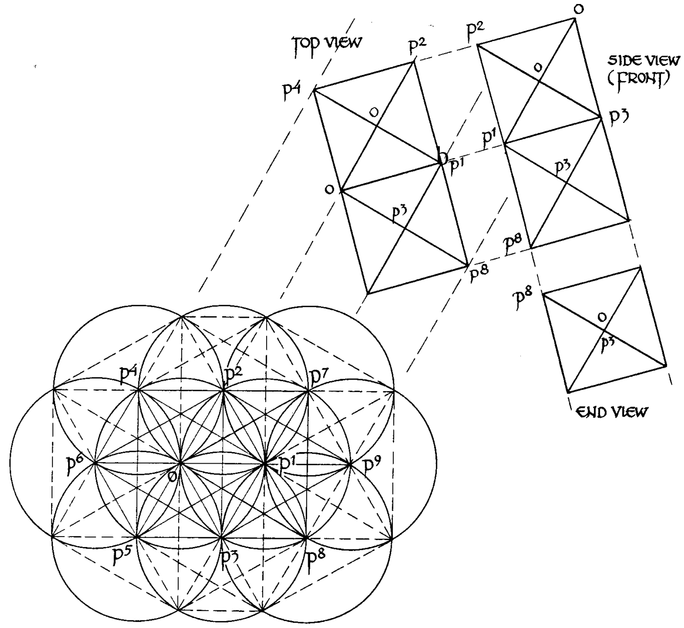
On pages 23 and 23 of the A. J. Holman Co., 1940 Masonic edition of "The Holy Bible" it is recorded that, "The Holy Place, or Greater House, was a double cube '40 cubits long, 20 cubits wide, and 20 cubits high' . . .. The Holy of Holies was a perfect 40 foot cube '20 cubits broad, 20 cubits long, and 20 cubits high' . . ." (also, I Kings 6:20). We have thus far proceeded from a point, to a line, to a superfices. The 1944 Ritual records that:

"A solid is a magnitude which has length, breadth and thickness."

We have shown in Figures 6.3.1 through 6.3.10 a development from the point to the Star of David, or the Seal of Solomon. The Geometric Allegory should continue if we were to proceed to the next step, a 'solid.' To begin this process, let us recognize that what has thus far been shown as 'circles' above have 'also' been 'spheres.' Let us also propose that the Seal of Solomon, consisting of two interlaced equilateral triangles is 'both' a 'superfices' and a 'solid.' Let us further propose that if it were to be found in a really appropriate allegorical place, that place would be in *both* the allegorical Holy Place (the Sanctorum, a double cube) *and* the Holy of Holies (the Sanctum Sanctorum, a single cube). Remember, too, the Altar of Burnt Offerings was located on the 'porch' of the temple, in the outer court -- not in the Holy Place(s) -- where the animals were sacrificed, just as we must sacrifice our animal nature before entering the Holy Places, to be fitting tools for the builder's use in erecting that house not made with hands where sound of "neither hammer, nor axe nor any tool of iron (was) heard in the house, while it was in the building."

Beginning with the allegorical Holy of Holies, 20 by 20 by 20 cubits, we will commence to look for the cube in the original circle/sphere with a center of 'O,' as shown in figures 6.3.8 through 6.3.10. In Figure 6.3.11 below it is shown that *both the cube and the cubic Seal of Solomon* (Star of David) are present in the geometric configurations which were shown in figures 6.3.8 through 6.3.10.

Figure 6.3.11:
Projection of Double Cubes in the ‘Sanctorum’ of KST.



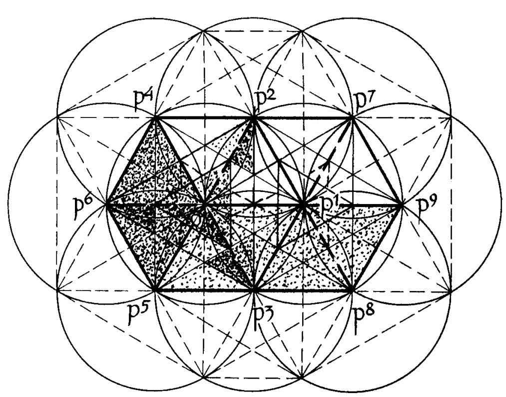
This figure is a classic example of how things which have been right in front of our eyes for centuries may remain hidden to us. Consider, though, this wonderful old saying:

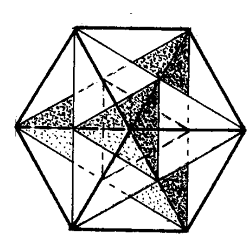
“All of our best thoughts were stolen by the Ancients."

Let it be noted here that we are not representing that King David or King Solomon laid out their temple plan based upon the geometric logic shown in this book. What has been shown is good geometric logic and a very nice allegory with strong co-incidental ties to Masonic symbolism. Much more could be said and written regarding the depth and breath of further 'co-incidences' concerning this subject, but such is beyond the scope of this present writing.

Figure 6.3.11 has been drawn in such a manner that the two central Stars of David may be seen relatively easily (with center points of O and P^1), and the upper and lower stars (with center points of P^2 and P^3) may be seen with slight difficulty. The ‘cubes’ are relatively difficult to see, even with the top, side and end views shown above to the right. There are also many additional figures present in the Star of David (such as the Star Tetrahedron and Octahedron -- a double four-sided pyramid) which require further study or significant contemplation to detect. Defining the lines of Figure 6.3.11 will help us to see the stars and cubes more clearly, as in the following figures:

Figure 6.3.12: a.
Double Cubes





Star Tetrahedron in a Cube

. . . From a point to a line, from a line to a superfices, and from a superfices to a solid. “As above, so below.” If we may go from a point to a line, *we may also go from a solid to a point*. As we could easily see, the instant we ‘stepped off of’ the original point ‘O’ (consider if you will how it may be possible to step off of a point which has neither height, nor width nor depth - nor time nor space) the more complex the drawings and allegories became. The pattern of the circles/spheres is such that it is repeated to infinity, creating an infinitude of possibilities.

But let us assume for a moment that one day we were to come across a huge drawing of endless circles and Stars of David, such as are shown as only two in Figure 6.3.10. In the endless drawing, with no labeling of the sequence in which the circles and stars were drawn, how would we ever find the beginning -- the Source -- of where the artist began the drawing? Or could it be that it really doesn't matter, because if all of the circles and stars are ‘identical’, which they *are*, then all we have to do is to go to the Center Point of *any* of the circles or stars and our journey, our search, would end, for to truly *know* just *one* would be to know ALL.