

The Masonic Celebration of Saint John's Day

St. John the Baptist, whose "day" is set aside as June 24th and St. John the Evangelist, whose "day" is December 27th, are our Patron Saints of Masonry. While most Master Masons are aware of the celebration of these two days, few may realize why it is cause for celebration within their lodge.

After being admitted into the Masonic fraternity, we hear references made about Masonic Lodges being dedicated to the Holy Saint's John at Jerusalem. The Lodge of St. John was the primitive Mother Lodge, held in Jerusalem and was the place from whence we came as we took our first steps in our Masonic journey.

A segment of the obligation in each degree contains a similar reference. A portion of the Entered Apprentice lecture mentions the theory that St. John the Baptist and St. John the Evangelist are perfect parallels in Christianity and Masonry represented by two parallel lines placed so they are touching the outer circumference of a circle.

If you stop to think about it, the symbolism of the point within a circle is actually quite easy to follow. The Point represents an individual Brother, and The Circle is the boundary line of his duty to God and to his fellow man, beyond which a brother should not allow his passions, prejudice, or interests to betray him.

Little is known about either of the Saints John in the Masonic sense. What we do know is that: St. John the Baptist was a stern and morally just man. He was a direct descendant from Ishmael's bloodline (Ishmael was Abraham's eldest son, born of his servant, Hagar.) John's mother, Elizabeth was a relative of Mary, the mother of Jesus, and both John and Jesus were contemporaries in history. John the Baptist baptized Jesus and proclaimed Him as the "Lamb of God". John the Baptist is probably best known for his survivalist instincts, (as we read in the Scriptures of his living off of locusts and honey) and for his zealous virtue in keeping God's laws.

St. John the Evangelist, also known as John the Apostle, is said to be the disciple whom Jesus dearly loved. He is probably best known as a teacher of knowledge, the author of the Gospel book of John, the book of Revelation in the New Testament, and later wrote the 3 Epistles in the Bible. He was the only one of the 12 disciples who did not forsake Jesus at the hour of his death. He is remembered as a gentle teacher of brotherly love and was the last surviving apostle, and believed to have died at a very old age (90+) in about 101 A.D. at Ephesus, Turkey.

There is no historical evidence that either of the Saints John were ever members of the Craft of Stonemasons, but because of their righteous lives and their strength of character, both of these Godly men have been adopted as the Patron Saints of our gentle Craft.

Source: With permission, adapted from several writings of Rt. Ex. William Adrian Brown, Missouri Lodge of Research.

Image: Point within the Circle: Freemasonry on line - Grand Lodge of Alberta, Canada



...Another 'nugget from the quarry of Freemasonry'. ❧

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