

# AN ORATION,

DELIVERED

AT THE REQUEST OF PHŒNIX LODGE,

CHESTER COUNTY, (PENN.) DECEMBER 27, 1827:

PROVING THE

**“GREAT LIGHT OF MASONRY”**

TO BE FROM GOD;

AND THAT

ALL “FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS” ARE BOUND TO READ,  
OBEY, PRAY OVER, AND UNITE IN SENDING IT  
TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH.

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BY THE REV. B. ALLEN,  
RECTOR OF ST. PAUL'S CHURCH, PHILADELPHIA;  
G. CHAPLAIN OF THE G. LODGE OF PENNSYLVANIA.

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PUBLISHED by request of the Lodge. Brothers Dr. JOHN ELLISON, LEWIS W. RICHARDS, and JAMES WHITE, were appointed a Committee to make the request. The Oration is cheerfully yielded to the desire of the Brethren, with a prayer that the Divine blessing may rest upon every one who reads it.

*Philadelphia, January, 1828.*

## ORATION, &c.

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THERE IS no institution established for the good of man, that has not been evil spoken of. The Divine Author of our holy religion was crucified. His prophets were sawn asunder; driven into the wilderness; chained. His apostles stoned; cast into dungeons; and every hour, during the existence of the peaceable kingdom of Jesus, has witnessed the persecution of the followers of Jesus.

Masons place not their institution on the same level with the Gospel: for while the Gospel is *Divine*, Masonry is human in its origin. Still the tendency of Masonry is to benefit the human race: it cultivates the social virtues; cherishes kind feelings; is a useful handmaid of charity; forms a bond of union between different nations; utters the language of tradition in favour of the holy oracles; is calculated to be beneficial in a very high degree. We therefore, brethren, who are invested with its insignia, and enrolled among its members, ought not to be surprised at its being evil spoken of. The character of the human heart is such, that, though it requires Almighty power to correct it, it opposes every thing which aims at its good.

Let us endeavour to fulfil then the vows of our order, and heed not what a benighted world may say of us.

Invited by the brethren of Phœnix Lodge to appear among them in my capacity of Grand Chaplain, I cheerfully comply with their request;

and, conformably to the dictates of my own mind and heart, resolve, in selecting my theme, to address you as the apologist of Masonry.

I ask your candid attention, therefore, while I give to your view one declaration made by our order. That declaration is, that **THE BIBLE IS THE GREAT LIGHT.**

All who know any thing of the order, know that it continually asserts the Bible to be the great light. This assertion I will take upon me to prove true; and, as the foundation of my discourse, present to your notice part of the 105th verse of the 119th psalm, in which the declaration of the psalmist, addressing God, is—

*Thy word is a—light unto my path.*

Two distinct ideas are here presented.

I. That the scriptures are the word of God.

II. That word is a light.

Enforcing these ideas, I shall show the correctness of Masonry in this one selected particular, viz. calling the Bible the great light.

And O! may “the might of the Father in heaven, and the wisdom of his glorious Son, with the grace and goodness of the Holy Ghost,\* be with us” in our beginning, and continue with us to the end.

There is a necessity, W. M. and brethren, that Masons should stand up in defence of their great light. For there are those, neither Christians nor good Masons, who are endeavouring to extinguish it. There are men endeavouring to overthrow the Bible, not in the vulgar way in which Paine attacked it, but by doubting parts of it; turning its essential truths into mere allegory; substi-

\* Prayer at the opening of a Lodge.

stituting human speculations for divine verities; taking unhallowed liberties with the holy volume, in precisely that way which is intended in the end to destroy religion altogether. The prime mover is known. He is the same who once preached in the garden of Eden, and, contradicting the word of the Lord, said to Eve, "Thou shalt not surely die." Some are engaged in the evil work, who know not the whole design of the arch enemy.

Let, then, the voice of the brotherhood of Masonry be raised in defence of that which the Lord hath spoken.

I affirm that our order deserves attention, because it proclaims the divine origin of the Scriptures, and holds forth those Scriptures as THE GREAT LIGHT OF MASONRY.

Our theme is worthy the notice of all. Is it not of some consequence, friends and brethren, to know, whether you are, indeed, no better off, than the Hottentot, or savage warrior? Is it not of some consequence to know, whether, like the classic heathen, you have no assurance of a better home? whether you are left to blind chance, or the goddess Fortune? whether you are to direct your own steps along "the burning marle" of affliction and sorrow? or whether, indeed, there is a God ready to instruct, comfort, sanctify, and finally save you? The question with you is, whether you shall follow that pillar of a cloud, and pillar of fire, which, for six thousand years, has guided the camp of the Lord; or, whether you shall stray away among the idolatries of the heathen, and eternally perish.

How do we know our great light, the Bible, to be from God?

The greatest and the best of all evidence is that which exists in the heart renewed by divine grace. A converted man, whether learned or unlearned, "knows his Bible true." *The witness in himself* is so strong nothing can disprove it.

There is, however, a mass of evidence, of a most admirable character, intended and calculated, irrefragably, to prove to all, that the Bible is from God.

We know our great light, the Bible, to be from God; 1. Because it is now in existence. Why has it not been blotted out from under heaven? Judas Iscariot, and Simon Magus, were opposed to its truths. The Sadducees denied its doctrine of the resurrection. Magicians, heathen priests, Rome, and Persia, and Assyria, Chaldea, and Tyre, and Egypt; the whole world of idolaters were, *toto cœlo*, opposed to it. It keeps no terms with the wickedness of man, and the wickedness of man has ever assaulted it. Julian the apostate, Celsus, Porphyry, Hume, Voltaire, the whole nation of France, all that whole tribe, the spawn of every age of infidelity, have assaulted the Bible. They have corrupted it, shut it up in cloisters, tried to explain it away; every form of assault has been put in requisition; yet the Bible lives. Why? *The gates of hell cannot prevail against it.*

We know our great light, the Bible, to be from God; 2. Because of the character of its doctrines. So pure, so holy, never could have been invented by man. Even good men could not have invented them; for there are no writings of any age, that approach near to them in excellence. Bad men

would not have written them. Satan could not have devised them.\* God alone could have been the author of them.

We know our great light, the Bible, to be from God; 3. Because of its effects upon mankind. It has made nations, once the most barbarous, refined, civilized, and happy; it has made those, who before were in a slight degree civilized, holy: it has elevated man in the scale of being; it has filled him with high hope, invigorated his mind, purified his heart,

Winged his soul  
To fly at infinite, and reach it there,  
Where Seraphs gather immortality,  
On life's fair tree, fast by the throne of God.

Thus have I given you three proofs of the correctness of the assertion made by Masonry, that the word of God is the great light. But I may proceed to three times three.

We know Masonry to be correct in this assertion; 4. Because of the character of the Lord Jesus Christ. His character, as described in the sacred volume, is like to nothing known on the face of the earth; it is opposite to all beside. The elements which compose it are different. The forms of character, presented to view by mere men, are alike in their component parts; but his is opposite to all, in the very same respects in

\* Diderot, once found teaching the New Testament to his daughter, with an earnestness and energy surprising in an infidel, said to his friend who discovered him thus employed, and seemed to sneer at him, "I know what you mean, but after all, where can we find better lessons for her instruction." Infidels in general have made the same acknowledgment.

which Heaven is opposite to Hell. It must be divine.

5. By prophecy, the Bible has ever shed light upon the future.

This sacred volume predicted the coming of Christ; and he came. It predicted the destruction of Jerusalem. Read Josephus, and you will see whether that prophecy was fulfilled. It predicted that the Jews should be driven, scattered, trodden under foot, without prince, or ephod, or teraphim, without any of the symbols of their ancient grandeur, and, like no other instance ever known, remain distinct from all the nations of the earth. Look at the Jews—you have only to open your eyes, and you see this wonderful prediction fulfilled. Antichrist was foretold; and antichrist has his chapels even in our own lands. Mohammedanism was predicted: Mohammed has arisen. The gathering in of the Gentiles was announced: this has occurred. Assyria, Babylonia, Persia, Grecia, Rome, Tyre, &c. all have arisen, acted, perished, exactly as the Bible said they would. Egypt is the basest of kingdoms, as the holy volume declared it should be.

6. The Bible was supported by miracles.

These were not performed in a cave, like those of Mohammed, but in the presence of all the world; in courts, palaces, towns, cities, before hundreds, thousands; in the presence of the bitterest enemies, when every opportunity was given to contradict them. They were not, like the mummery of transubstantiation, opposed to the testimony of the senses; but were acts which the senses declared to be real. These miracles have memorials existing in the customs of the Jews, and



in the customs of christians, even to this hour. The infidel Hume says, miracles are not to be believed, because they are contrary to experience. Then, as one has well replied, the king of Siam ought not to believe there is any such thing as ice or snow, because he has never seen either. Then you might say, there are no such customs as those in the city of Peking, or in the region of Thibet, because you have not witnessed them. It is contrary to your experience for a Turkish mosque to exist; for you never saw one. We have evidence—the testimony of others—what can we have more? We have stronger evidence than if we saw them ourselves: we might then say that our senses deceived us; but we cannot say that so many myriads of men, in so many different generations, have been deceived. They testify. The utmost degree of evidence, that we can possibly desire, exists.

7. The principal facts narrated in the sacred volume agree with the traditions of all nations.

The most ancient empires give us no record of any thing earlier than the Holy Scriptures. Their traditions of the creation are similar to the Mosaic account. Their traditions of the deluge are almost as numerous as the drops of the morning dew. Their traditions of the building of Babel, of the destruction of Sodom, of every remarkable event recorded in the sacred page, are surprising. These traditions agree with the Bible better than they agree with each other, showing the Bible to be the true account, while they are partly mingled with fable. Virgil, Tacitus, Herodotus, indeed every ancient classic writer of any note, alludes to the prominent facts mentioned in

the Bible. So does Zoroaster. So do the Brahmins of India. Longinus quoted the—LET THERE BE LIGHT, AND THERE WAS LIGHT—of the sacred page, as the greatest specimen of the sublime. Even infidels\* acknowledge that mankind are all of one stock, and came from one quarter of the globe; the very quarter whence the Bible says they came.

8. The world is full of monuments, which agree with the Bible account.

The ruins of ancient cities; the relics of empires; the pyramids of Egypt; the sepulchres in the valley of Thebes; the ashes of Babylon; the discoveries in the neighbourhood of the capital of the Medes; the dust of Tyre; the pillars of Persepolis; the arch of Titus; coins, too, and medals, † bear the same testimony. They all proclaim that our GREAT LIGHT had a divine original.

9. The Holy Scriptures have ever been preserved with almost miraculous care.

When Moses wrote 3300 years ago, his writings were received as sacred, placed in an ark, read every seven years at full, every letter counted; the prince was obliged to copy them; the people were commanded to teach them to their children, to wear them as signs on their hands, as frontlets between their eyes. When the other prophets wrote, their books were regarded with the utmost veneration; the psalms were made a part of the daily temple service. At length, the prophets were read alternately with the law in the synagogues, three times every week.

\* As Buffon, &c. &c.

† See Horne's great work on the Scriptures.

The whole volume of the scriptures of the Old Testament was collected by Ezra, the last of the prophets, 2200 years ago. The Jews valued them more than life, preserved them as an inestimable treasure, carried them in all their dispersions, read them continually in all their captivities.— Though the Scriptures contain accounts of their characters, and the characters of their fathers, by no means agreeable to national pride; yet, to this very hour, they cleave to those Scriptures with an attachment uninterrupted by the lapse of so many generations.

The Bible in Hebrew is the same as the Bible in English. The Samaritans, a new and distinct witness, have the five books of Moses. Three hundred years before the coming of Christ, the whole of the Old Testament was translated into Greek, the language of the learned of that day, and deposited in the Alexandrian library, where all the world might read.

The New Testament was received as equally sacred by all christian assemblies; its pages were regularly read, carefully preserved, and looked to as authority, even to this hour. It was quoted in the first century by men whose writings we have, quoted in the second, quoted in the third, in every century since, by men whose writings we have.

All denominations of christians agree in holding the same Old and New Testaments in all parts of the world to this day. They unite in distributing the one Bible, whatever may separate them beside. The Ethiopic, Persic, Arabic, Syriac, every kind of translation handed down from ancient times, is found to agree. The whole life of a learned man has been spent in selecting various readings,

and ended in discovering nothing in the shape of difference worthy of note—nothing affecting either precept or doctrine.

We know the pentateuch was written by Moses; Moses himself says so. The concurring testimony of all antiquity, uninterrupted tradition, almost all the sacred writers, inform us that Moses wrote the pentateuch. Jews, Samaritans, and christians, say so. The writings of Moses speak of the Israelites as contemporary with himself; and the Israelitish practices, laws, worship, all they hold dear, are grounded entirely upon those sacred writings—the very laws and government of the people.

10. Egypt was the cradle of the sciences, and the country of the Israelites. Greece received the sciences from Egypt. The nations of the earth borrowed from the Jews, to whom light was communicated. At the very time they despised the Jews, they borrowed from them. As men of the world now despise christians, while they borrow all their best ideas from christianity.

11. The Greeks, Romans, and other heathen nations, translated Moses among their gods, acknowledged him the most ancient lawgiver, and an historian of unimpeached veracity. They adopted among their customs, laws, ceremonies, many of the Mosaic.

12. The candour of the writers of the Bible is remarkable. Thus Moses records his own failings. The sins of the Israelites in all their dark colours are recorded. The sins of Abraham, the sins of the Patriarchs, are faithfully set down.—David's sin.—Peter's sin is written in the New Testament. These records show that the inspired

men were honest, wrote not from evil motives, sought not their own aggrandizement.

Thus have I given you three times three, in addition to the first three proofs that our great light is from God.

13. The harmony of the various writers of the Scriptures is wonderful. They were of all conditions of life, from the king to the herdsman, and wrote in different parts of the world, during a period of sixteen centuries. Still their writings are as the radii of one circle, the rays from one sun.

14. The superstitions of the whole world have taken the simple ideas revealed in the Mosaic account, and amplifying, abusing, corrupting, have engrafted themselves upon them. Sacrifice, for instance, was commanded in the Scriptures. Every heathen nation under heaven has been in the practice of offering sacrifice. This rite of divine origin was commanded of old as a type of Christ. The nations of the earth have adopted, but abused it. The leading ideas of their superstitious worship have thus been abuses, and corruptions of scriptural ordinances.

15. Christ's resurrection is proclaimed by the Scriptures. To the truth of this proclamation, Rome bears testimony; and so does Galatia, and Thessalonica, and Corinth, and Ephesus, and a host of other cities and lands, in all of which were gathered churches whose faith rested on the truth of this doctrine.

No men ever died in attestation of a falsehood; many have died for a false opinion. The apostles died in testimony of the fact of the resurrection. This fact, the whole world of christianity at the present day proclaims.

16. Only holy scripture introduces God speaking as the infinite Jehovah. Jove, Jupiter, &c. as described in the writings of the heathen, are mere representatives of corrupt, lewd, wicked men. The sublimity of the scripture character of Jehovah is such, the mind humbles itself in veneration.

17. The Scriptures meet the longings of the human heart.

There is in man a consciousness of sin. The Bible points him to a Saviour. Man feels that he is depraved; the Bible tells him of the Holy Ghost. He is sorrowful; he finds the Holy Ghost a comforter. He discovers nothing on earth, that can satisfy. The Scriptures lead to peace, to joy unspeakable; bind up the wounds of his spirit; pour in oil and wine, which no heathen system, no cold speculation of philosophy, ever could find out. Yes, man feels that he deserves punishment: holy scripture tells us of an atoning sacrifice. Man desires immortality: holy scripture leads him to a mount, whence he can survey

“The land of pure delight  
Where saints immortal reign.”

Thus the Bible does, what nothing else can do, meets all the longings of the human heart.

18. The Bible meets the expectation of divine teaching, entertained by the ancient heathen. Plato, and Socrates, confessed their need of divine teaching. The latter said there was wanting some universal mode of saving men's souls, which no sect of philosophy had ever yet found out. Both acknowledge there was no means of reforming the world, but divine teaching. This, which

they so anxiously desired, we now possess. Aristotle exclaimed as he died, "in pollution I was born, anxious I have lived, doubting, I die; O thou cause of causes, pity me." More than Egyptian darkness brooded on the mind of this mighty philosopher. The Bible enables the peasant to lie on his dying pillow and exclaim, "*I know that my Redeemer liveth, and though after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God. I have fought a good fight; I have finished my course; I have kept the faith, henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the King, the righteous Judge, will give me at that day.*"

19. Let us for a moment cast our eyes over the world, and see what would be our condition if we had not the Bible. The examples I will select for the comparison shall not be those of Hottentots, and Esquimaux, merely; but the noblest, the most refined of the nations of the earth. Their ideas concerning God were dark and confused. They were sunk in the grossest polytheism. They worshipped the vilest things in creation. Their rites were cruel, absurd, most awfully licentious. Think of Venus, Bacchus, and all those of whom some of you have studied; who are spoken of now in lascivious songs; who are the theme of the drunkards of this day. Think of children being offered to Moloch; the casting of infants into a hollow brazen idol heated red hot, and drowning their cry with the dissonance of harsh music. Think of human sacrifices; of boys whipped to death at the altar of Diana of the Ephesians.

They were ignorant of the true account of the creation of the world. They were ignorant of the

origin of evil ; of the means of reconciliation with God ; of the aids of divine grace ; of the summum bonum, or real good, of life. They had faint notions indeed of the immortality of the soul. The very elysium their poets fancied, was as dreary as a Siberian winter. Hear Socrates saying at his death, "I am going out of the world, you are to continue in it; but which of us has the better part, is a secret to every one but God."

"Alas! the tender herbs, and flow'ry tribes,  
Though crush'd by winter's unrelenting hand,  
Revive and rise when vernal zephyrs call.  
But we, the brave, the mighty, and the wise,  
Bloom, flourish, fade, and fall,—and then succeeds  
A long, long, silent, dark, oblivious sleep;  
A sleep, which no propitious pow'r dispels,  
Nor changing seasons, nor revolving years."

What then would be your condition if our great light, the Bible, were extinguished? Could you reasonably expect it to be better than that of the ancient heathen? They questioned the providence, justice, and mercy of God. They had no idea of the certainty of a state of future rewards and punishments. Do you suppose your situation would be better than theirs, if the Bible were now to leave you? Are you so much superior to Plato, Socrates, and Aristotle, that you could have found out what they were enabled only to guess at? Plato encouraged adultery, and said, lying became a wise man. Nor was Socrates pure in his own personal habits. The exposure of children to perish was declared by Plato to be no crime. Pride was cherished universally; and love of popular applause. Revenge was accounted a virtue. Egypt and Sparta both permitted theft.



Lycurgus commanded infants, imperfect in form, to be put to death. Athens directed sick slaves to be killed. Seneca openly recommended suicide: Demosthenes, Cato, Brutus, and multitudes more, committed it. Now was there any virtue in society? Lying, stealing, and adultery, sanctioned by the wisest men. Tell me, were the body of the people not likely to practise such lessons? Teach men that their lusts are to be gratified, and the consequences soon follow.

Rome engaged in unceasing wars from the mere lust of domination, piracy, and pillage. The people were accounted no better than the mire of the streets. Licentious indulgence characterized all. Tyranny sat at the helm of state. The temples of the Gods were brothels; what were the dwellings of the people?

What, then, if you had not the Bible, would you do? Would you, like the Egyptians, worship an onion? or, like the Greeks, whip your child to death at the altar of Diana? or, like the Romans, believe in the flight of vultures? Would you believe in the gods of gold, silver, stone, which they worshipped? Alas! for the honour of human nature, men have *changed the glory of the incorruptible God, into an image made like unto corruptible man, and birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things. They have changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature, more than the creator, who is blessed forever, Amen.*

If you had not the Bible, the acknowledged great light of Masonry, perhaps you would be like Hume, who taught that adultery was no crime; or like Voltaire, who openly committed it; or like Rousseau, the corrupt sentimentalist; or

Herbert, who said that the vilest passions were not worse than hunger or thirst; or Hobbes, who taught that every man had a right to all things, and might get them, if he could; or Bolingbroke, who said, that self-gratification was the chief end of man.

Cannibalism; the murder of fathers and mothers, by burying them alive, or leaving them to perish in the open field, or on the bank of a river where the rising waters may overwhelm them;—the slaughter of infants, with a thousand nameless crimes, are the characteristics of heathen idolatry now. Hindostan has 330 millions of deities.

Would you go with the Druids into their bloody groves? Your fathers did so, and worshipped there with most savage rites. Why are you different? Because you have the Bible. Would you become a mere wild beast, like the Ajax of Homer? or a profane swearer, like Socrates? or a liar, like Plato, who openly taught there was no harm in it? Would you become a murderer of infants, like the Chinese? leave your mother to perish, like the Hindoo? be brutally licentious, like the Mohammedan? Would you worship serpents, like the Tartars? or the devil, like the natives of Africa? OR WILL YOU CLEAVE TO THE BIBLE, AND BE A LOVER OF GOD AND OF MAN?

20. Extinguish the great light, and you destroy the freedom of America.

The country of our ancestors was once under a despotism as complete as that of the Satraps of the east. The time when this existed was a time when the people were not allowed the Bible: the time of Cardinal Wolsey—the time of full blown popery: then your fathers were burnt at the

stake on account of the rising desire to possess the holy volume. Cranmer, Latimer, Ridley, Tindal, and others, achieved the reformation, and as a means of effecting their mighty work, circulated the Scriptures.

Despotism was lessened in that very hour. The Bible proved to the people that "the divine right of kings" was a mere fantasy. The people retained the king, but for a time introduced a commonwealth; and though they returned to kingly government, and yet retain a king, who does not see the superiority of the freedom enjoyed by England in the nineteenth century to that which she knew in the sixteenth. Henry VIII. was a despot. Look at a single instance in proof. They tell us, that on a certain occasion he was desirous that a bill should pass in the house of commons. The commons were unwilling to pass it. Henry sent for the speaker, and, as he knelt before him, laid his royal hand upon his head, saying, "have that bill passed to morrow, or your head shall be the forfeit." The bill was passed. The parliament of Britain now contends for at least a portion of the people's rights.

The perfection of freedom, however, is found in our beloved country. Who planted this land? Who brought liberty to it? Those that fled from intolerant church principles, from disguised popery. And who were they? The New-Englanders, the Friends, the Scotch who first sought refuge in the north of Ireland, those who, for a time, found a home in Holland, &c. Flying from persecution, they brought the Bible with them. That taught them the equality of all before God. They acted upon the truths thus taught; they

spread abroad the Bible. No country under heaven has it so universally disseminated. No country under heaven has it so universally possessed. And what is the consequence? America is free. Yes, a spectacle is here presented of what a people become who have the Bible in all their dwellings. The Bible alone is not only the religion of Protestants, but the fountain of civil liberty. The device of the wicked among the priesthood has ever been to put traditions along side of the Bible; to exalt traditions above the Bible; and finally, as the prime work of hell, to withdraw the Bible entirely out of the hands of the people. The destruction of civil and ecclesiastical liberty ever has followed in exact proportion to the degree in which this great light of Masonry has been eclipsed, or kept out of view. Masonry, then, should ever glory in holding forth the divine volume, and contending for it against all opposers.

Have we not here, brethren, one reason why popery, open or disguised, is ever found the enemy of Masonry?

France, ignorant of the Bible, because under the pope, disgusted with the mummeries of the Romish priesthood; France abolished the very name of religion; France sunk soon into the horrors of despotism. Popery every where produces the same result. It forbids the circulation of the Bible. The ignorance of the people is friendly to despotism; civil rights perish along with religious. Look at Spain—look at every other land where ecclesiastical intolerance reigns without opposition. The Bible, then, is our charter of civil freedom; we are bound to cherish it as such.

I congratulate you, brethren, that a resolution

has been taken to disseminate this great light of our order, and of the world, until each cottager in the remotest border of Pennsylvania shall be possessed of its radiance.

The Bible Society was opposed by the grand Turk. He issued his firman against it. The modern disciples of archbishop Laud, the hero of the starchamber, also oppose it. But let all the lovers of rational liberty, let freemen, especially let the brotherhood of Masons, rejoice in its progress. Ten States in the Union, I glory to inform you; ten States in the Union, have in whole, or in part, determined to proceed to the work of universal dissemination. I may say to you, brethren, (though it is not generally announced,) that one Bible Society, the Society of Philadelphia, has resolved, that as soon as this great light of our order is diffused throughout every hut in Pennsylvania, then, by the help of the most High, it shall be diffused throughout South America. Nor will the work cease there. The light shall be diffused until every people, and kindred, and tongue, and nation, rejoice in its splendour.

And O! are you not willing to enrol yourselves beneath the standard of the Lord God?

Masonry is designed to make you better men, better members of civil society: no man, indeed, can be a true Mason unless he be obedient to the Bible. The world, brethren, thinks ill of our order, because of the conduct of individuals, and of lodges. Ignorant of the principles which form the foundation of Masonry, men judge of it, by what they see in us. This is no more fair, than it is to judge of religious institutions by the conduct of ecclesiastical tyrants. The world, how-

ever, will thus judge, and we must act accordingly. Remember, then, I beseech you, that a single intemperate Mason is enough to ruin, in the eyes of many, the character of the whole order. A single profane Mason is enough to blast the reputation of our principles; and shall we not, for the sake of the brethren, as well as ourselves, take heed to our ways? Do we love Masonry? Let us prove the sincerity of our love, by doing what we profess to do; that is, following the guidance of the great light.

The way to become *wise unto salvation*, as well as happy in the attainment of civil and religious freedom, is to study, prayerfully to study, the holy word. Teach it to your children, brethren, and thus prove that you are real friends to the liberties of your country. Enrol yourselves, again I say, beneath the standard of the Lord God omnipotent; and engage, this hour engage, in the glorious work of disseminating the Bible to the remotest habitation of man.

“ From Greenland’s icy mountains,  
 From India’s coral strand,  
 Where Afric’s sunny fountains  
 Roll down their golden sand;  
 From many an ancient river,  
 From many a palmy plain,  
 They call us to deliver  
 Their land from error’s chain.

What though the spicy breezes  
 Blow soft o’er Ceylon’s isle;  
 Though ev’ry prospect pleases,  
 And only man is vile;  
 In vain, with lavish kindness  
 The gifts of God are strewn;  
 The heathen in his blindness  
 Bows down to wood and stone.”

Are you not desirous, brethren, enrolled under the banner of charity, to enter that army, which, with the Almighty for its guide, is severing the chains of the captive soul? bearing light among those who sit in darkness? That army is composed of all the good of every land. Are you not ready to enrol yourselves in this army against vice, ignorance, superstition; against the murder of parents, and the murder of children?—*to fight the good fight of faith, to lay hold on eternal life for yourselves, and endeavour to impart it?* Then cleave to the record of inspiration; to the great light, the Bible.

Are you willing to return to the darkness of heathenism; to return to the feeble glimmerings of the debauched age of Plato, and Socrates? Then listen to those, neither christians, nor good Masons, who advise you to substitute your own speculations, for the truth of the Eternal; who say, there is no need of the righteousness of a divine Redeemer; who refuse the bloody sacrifice God has constituted for an atonement, and, like Cain, offer only the offering of gratitude; who think faith unnecessary.—Yes, that faith which our great light declares to be *the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.* That faith by which *the elders obtained a good report.*

*You are compassed about with a great cloud of witnesses.* Enrol yourselves, then, under the banner of the KING OF GLORY. *At his name, the name of JESUS, every knee shall bow.* What, brethren, must be the fate of those who neglect to enlist under his banner? Read Josephus, and you will see what he did to Jerusalem. Stand in the plain of Moreh, and look abroad, and see the smoke of the whole

country ascending like the smoke of a furnace. Read Robert Kerr Porter's travels, and see what remains of her, who once was the *glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldee's excellency*. Behold, with the prophet Daniel, *the throne of fiery flame, its wheels as burning fire; a fiery stream issues and comes forth from before him*. See the whole earth covered with the fragments of nations and empires, all overthrown by the conquering arm of JESUS. Stand over the ashes of the Alexanders of the world; look at the graves of the Cæsars; ponder the monuments of the Belshazzars; say, then, as you remember how they fell, whether you are stronger than they. *Canst thou thunder with a voice like God? Canst thou send abroad the rage of thy wrath? Canst thou cast forth lightnings?* Remember, God hath said, **IF ANY MAN SHALL TAKE AWAY THE WORDS OF THE BOOK OF THIS PROPHECY, GOD SHALL TAKE AWAY HIS PART OUT OF THE BOOK OF LIFE, AND OUT OF THE HOLY CITY, AND FROM THE THINGS WHICH ARE WRITTEN IN THIS BOOK.**

May all "free and accepted Masons" engage in the combat with the principalities and powers of darkness, enter the path enlightened by the favour of the God of eternity—the path which SHINETH MORE AND MORE UNTO THE PERFECT DAY.