





PIETRE-STONES

REVIEW OF FREEMASONRY



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PSALM 133: ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

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PSALM 133 | The Blessings of Brotherly Unity | A Song of degrees of David

Ecce quam bonum et
Quam iucundum habitare fratres in unum
Sicut unguentum in capite
Quod descendit in barbam barbam Aaron
Quod descendit in ora vestimenti eius
Sicut ros Hermon quod descendit

Behold, how good and how pleasant it is
for brethren to dwell together in unity!
It is like the precious ointment upon the head,
that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard:
that went down to the skirts of his garments;
as the dew of Hermon,
and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion:

In montem Sion quoniam illic mandavit Dominus
Benedictionem et vitam usque in saeculum.

and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion:
for there the LORD commanded the blessing,
even life for evermore. (*The Holy Bible: King James Version*)

Introduction

PART I

1.0 Landmarks

2.0 The Bible

2.1 - The division of the Bible

2.1 - The opening of the Bible - Psalm 133

3.0 The Psalms: classification

4.0 Biblical figures

4.1 - David

4.2 - Aaron

4.2.1 - Tabernacle, precursor of the Temple

4.2.2 - The Ark of the Covenant

4.2.3 - The symbolism of the Ark

4.2.4 - Garments of Aaron

4.2.5 - The Oil of the unction

5.0 The Mounts

5.1 - Hermon

5.2 - Zion

PART II

6.0 Interpretative analysis

1. Oh! How good and pleasant it is that the brothers live in
unity...

2. It is like the precious oil on the head...

3. It is like the dew of Hermon...

Conclusion

Bibliographical notes

Bibliography



Introduction

Great part of the Masonic ceremonial has its origin in the rites of the antiquity, adapted to the modern demands. From the ancient rites, the today's most visible influence is the Hebraic one (Castelani, 1993, p.19).

In the mentioned author's saying, the modern Freemasonry is considered as heiress of the Hebraic rites, practices and traditions, beginning by the Temple of Jerusalem, that is the archetype of the Churches, and indirectly of the Masonic Temples.

In order that I could analyze the Psalm 133, denominated Psalm of the Fraternity or of the Concordance, I divided the work in two parts. The first one - developed in a descriptive way - tries to place two biblical figures inside of a historical context: Aaron, mentioned nominally, and David, that is considered as the author of the mentioned psalm. In the same way, two geographical points also deserved analysis: the mounts Zion and Hermon.

I also intend to comment the existent relationship between the Landmarks and the obligation of opening a Book of the Law, in our case, the Bible, that the psalms are part of.

In the second part of this work, I will analyze in a subjective way the sayings of Psalm 133 and the teachings that can be extracted from it.

For the attainment of the objective, I leaned on several sources: The Catholic Bible, books, Magazine "A Trolha", bulletins of lodges, and several sites of Internet, all related with the appropriate bibliography.

PART I

1.0 – LANDMARKS

This word (that originated from the own English Language), in its etymologic sense, can be understood as "frontier limits" (*land* = a portion of the earth's surface, and *mark* = a bounder of this portion) that delimit a territory and that, for this reason, cannot be altered or removed.

The Grand Masonic Lodges of Minas Gerais define the Landmarks as "*... the oldest laws that govern the Universal Freemasonry, which is characterized by the antiquity*".⁽¹⁾ Allec Melor (1989) defines Landmarks in the following way:

"Landmarks are the rules of conduct that exist since immemorial times – under the form of written or not written law -, that are co-essential to the society, that are unalterable, and that every freemason is forced to maintain intact, by virtue of the most solemn and inviolable commitments ".⁽²⁾

In the origins of our order, norms and written rules didn't exist, differently of the Order of the Temple that had

them in the written form.⁽³⁾ Brother Francisco José Lucas, of the August and Respectable Symbolic Lodge Baden Powell, no. 173 of G L S P, expresses as follows, about the subject:

"... the philosophical thought went forming itself vocally, consolidating and being transmitted by inheritance from masters to disciples, because always existed those who taught and those who heard and learned. All existing oral tradition, however, submits itself to alterations and interpretations, and only with basic principles could that philosophy of life subsist and stay up to now. Such are the venerable Landmarks of the Regular and Universal Freemasonry."⁽⁴⁾

In the same work brother Francisco tells us that no legislator wrote the Landmarks; it is not less veridical that, no matter how much a masonic historian looks for its origins, he will find texts related to its existence. He says textually:

"... since the operative era, the Old Charges mention their principles: faith in God, respect to the Moral Law, Lodge, secret, manliness. The Poem "Regius" attributes to them a didactic form".⁽⁵⁾

In 1723, Freemasonry proclaims in Anderson's Statutes, which mention the General Regulations of Payne:
*"... Provided always that the **Old Landmarks** be carefully preserved"*.

We can conclude that the *Landmarks* are rules of conduct that exist since long time (without being able to precise *since when*), be under the form of written law or not; that they are unalterable, and that every freemason is forced to maintain them intact.

The great North American writer Albert G. Mackey compiled twenty-five Landmarks, all as having accepted, and that the Grand Lodges adopted. In the present work interests us the twentieth first that says:

"It is indispensable the existence in the Altar, of a Book of the Law, the Book that according to the faith, is supposed to contain the truth revealed by the Great Architect of the Universe. Not taking care the freemasonry of intervening in the peculiarity of the religious faith of its members. For that, this Landmark demands that a Book of the Law is a indispensable part of the implements of a lodge".⁽⁶⁾

We can ask: why the Book of the Law? Because it is there that we find the religious precepts. It is the written word; it is the "Verb", the symbolic representation of His Presence among us. The designation Book of the Law should be understood as "Book of the Sacred Law", therefore, it can be changed in agreement with the own workers' religion, since there is the need to believe in a supreme being, a creator, in order that one can become a freemason. Definitively, a freemason cannot be atheistic.

The Book of the Law can be:

The Book the Deads - for the Egyptians

The Bible - for the Catholics
The Vedas – for the Hindus
Torah - for the Jews
Al (Quran)- The Koran - for the Muslims

2.0 - THE BIBLE (7)

Printed by Gutenberg in the 15th century, and the most sold book of the History, the Bible gathers fundamental writings for the three great monotheistic religions: Judaism, Christianity and Islamism. Actually, the Bible is a library of 73 books written in different historical moments. Until today, the archaeologists didn't find anything that could prove the authorship of any biblical book. The oldest texts of the Old Testament are part of the Manuscripts of the Dead Sea. Integral or partial copies of all the books of the Old Testament compound those manuscripts, whose date investigation, however, showed that the oldest ones among them were from 200 B.C., or, in other words, about one thousand years more recent than - according to the Bible - they would have been written. Concerning to the New Testament, the oldest writings are the papyruses containing passages of the Apostle John's Book, 130 A.D. The discussion on the authorship of the bible texts has been heavy. The Bible mentions, for instance, Moses as the writer of the first five books, but some scholars see some differences in the literary style of Pentateuch - " five books ", in Greek -, what would demonstrate little probability that they could have been made by the same person's hands. Greek specialists did the first known compilation of the Bible that today appears in the shelves of the faithful ones in the whole world. About 200 A.D. they gathered in only one book all the sacred texts, with the Old Testament in Hebrew and the New Testament in Greek. Little more than 100 years later, the Council of Nicaea recognized it and made official that collection as being the Holy Bible.

The Old Testament, accepted as sacred by Jews, Christians and Muslims, is composed of 46 books that intend to summarize the history of the Hebrew people, from the calling of Abraham by God, which would have happened about 1850 B. C., until the conquest of Palestine by the armies of Alexander the Great, and the revolts of the Jewish people against Greek domain, about 300 B. C.

The Torah of the Judaism (the word torah means "law" in Hebrew) compound the heart of the Old Testament. In Greek, this group of books received the name Pentateuch (five books). These five books are considered the historical texts of the Bible, because they intend to count what happened since the beginning of the times, besides the man's creation that, according to some theologians, would have happened by 5000 B.C.⁽⁷⁾

The 27 books of the New Testament embrace a very smaller period: about 70 years, which go from the birth of Jesus to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, in 70 A.D.

21. THE DIVISION OF THE BIBLE⁽⁸⁾

The several books of the Bible, as we spoke previously, are contained in two testaments: the Old and the New.

OLD TESTAMENT

I - HISTORICALS

.Pentateuch, which is composed by five books, namely:

1. Genesis - that treats of the man's origin
2. Exodus - that counts the exit of the Hebrews from Egypt
3. Leviticus - it treats of the origin of the Hebrew people
4. Numbers - it tells the history of the Hebrew people
5. Deuteronomy - representations of the laws with exhortations.

| | | | |
|---------|---------|---------|-------------------------|
| ·Joshua | ·Judges | ·Ruth | ·Books of Kings I & II |
| ·Ezra | ·Tobias | ·Judith | ·Esther ·Maccabees |

II - DIDACTICS

| | | | | |
|------|---------|-----------|---------|---------------|
| ·Job | ·Psalms | ·Proverbs | ·Wisdom | ·Ecclesiastes |
|------|---------|-----------|---------|---------------|

III - PROPHETICS

. Larger (longer texts)

1) Isaiah 2) Jeremiah 3) Baruch 4) Ezekiel 5) Daniel

. Smaller (briefer texts)

1) Hosea 2) Joel 3) Amos 4) Obadiah 5) Jonah 6) Micah 7) Nahum
8) Habakkuk 9) Zephaniah 10) Haggai 11) Zechariah 12) Malachi

NEW TESTAMENT

1 - HISTORICAL

·The four Gospels
·Acts of the Apostles

2. DIDACTIC

·Epistles of Saint Paul
·Epistles to the Catholics

3 - PROPHETIC

·Apocalypse

It is necessary to keep in mind that the formation of the Bible was slow and very complicated. Actually, it is the

result of the work of several hands, which lasted centuries in a time when the oral tradition was the most influential.

In the Bulletin "The Apprentice", of the Lodge Duque de Caxias, no. 99, p.16, it can be find the following citation that corroborates our affirmative:

"The Bible was written in a period of 1600 years, since 1500 B.C. to the year of 90 A.D., when John wrote his Saint Evangel, in Minor Asia. It (the Bible) was written originally in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek, in papyrus leaves, and later in sheep skin".⁽⁹⁾

2 - THE OPENING OF THE BIBLE: PSALM 133

The opening of the Sacred Book marks the real beginning of the works in a masonic lodge, since that act, although simple - and however solemn - is of great importance, because it symbolizes the effective presence of the Word of the Great Architect of the Universe in that works.

In an article published by magazine "A Trolha" (The Trowel), August 1997, it can be read that the practice of using the Book of the Law was established in 1717, beginning with G. L. of England, although there is reference to its use starting from 1670.⁽¹⁰⁾ According to Castelani, the reading of the psalm was used for the first time by the middle of the 18th century, by some lodges of Yorkshire, England, when still there was no fully organized rite.

In a little period of time, that habit was abandoned, and yet with the adoption of the English Rite of Emulation (that we, improperly call "of York") the Bible used to be opened up in any of its parts, without the reading of the verses. Nevertheless, some North American Grand Lodges, mainly the Grand Lodge of New York, retook that habit.

In USA, in the symbolism, only the Rite of York is practiced, because the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite (AASR) is only practiced in the High Degrees. From the Grand Lodge of New York, by copying, the psalm was introduced in Brazil and in some other Obediences of South America, in the AASR. Actually, in this one, the Book is traditionally opened up in John, and the verses to be read are 1-5 of the 1st chapter.

There are varieties in terms of the opening of the Bible: the Grand Orient Paulista adopted, in the Apprentice's degree, to begin the meetings by reading John 1:1-5,⁽¹¹⁾ what confirms the sayings of Bro. Castelani. There are unconfirmed notices that Book of Ruth is opened up in some lodges of USA, and also of England.

As far as we know, referring to the Grand Lodges, the Bible is open in the Book of the Psalms, and the psalm number 133, which specifically points out the excellence of the fraternal love, is the one that is read. It is also called Psalm of the Concordance.

The 133rd Psalm, in the saying of Bro.Valdir Fernandes,⁽¹²⁾ is an eloquent description of the beauty of the fraternal love, and for this reason, much more appropriate to illustrate a society whose existence depends on those noble principles.

It is important to register that the reading of this psalm was already adopted by the ancient knights

Templar, in their initiations, in the year 1128, as it is demonstrated to us by Gomes (1999), who, in his book "the Primitive Rule of the Knights Templar", on pages 81 and 149, translating the " Canons of the Ritual of the Reception in the Order of the Temple", number 678, tells us:

"...Et lê frere chapelain dait lê saume dire que l'on dit, Ecce quam bonum et quam incubum,/habitare frates in unum..."

"... And the brother chaplain should recite the psalm that says: Here is, how it is good, how it is delicious,/ to live the brothers in good unity".

3.0 - THE PSALMS: Classification

The name Psalms (of Hebrew = psalmus) is given to the religious and patriotic songs of the Israelites. According to the Bible, with the movement of fixation of the Israeli traditions in writing form by prophet Ezekiel and by his disciples, and continuing after the restoration of Israel by several scribe generations, several collections of the Psalms went being formed. Some of those collections can be older, and be dated from the same time of David or even of Isaiah. ⁽¹³⁾

To Bro. Valdir, previously mentioned, the Psalms were songs destined to the choral services of the Temple or of the Synagogues, and they were intoned under the accompaniment of a "psaltery " (from = psalterium), that could be perhaps a harp, zither or a lyre, as it is read in Psalms 108:1-2:

*"Prepared is my heart, oh God: I will sing and make psalmody with all my soul.
Wake up **psaltery** and harps; I will wake up by the break of the dawn".*

The Psalms ⁽¹⁴⁾ (Book of the Psalms) are part of the so-called didactic books of the Old Testament (O.T.); they are composed by 150 psalms and they embrace the whole field of the emotions, from the happiness to the hate, from the despair to the hope. We can classify them in:

- **Laudatory** ® praise God, to His greatness, magnificence and mercy.
- **Deprecatory** ® in which the psalmist expose the misfortunes and complaints.
- **Gratulatory** ® thanking for benefits or assisted prayers.
- **Penitential** ® asking forgiveness for personal sins or sins of the people.
- **Historical** ® deal with the history of Israel.
- **Messianic** ® refer to the future Messiah,
for example, those from No. 2 to No.108
- **Fraternity** ® refer to the concordance among the brothers, for instance, the one of No. 133

The psalms are attributed to David. It is not that David is the author of them all. Some are attributed by the own text to Azaph, to the sons of Core, etc., and others are simply anonym.

The Psalms, after meticulous historical researches, allow to suppose the possibility that the compositions cover a period of almost a thousand years, with its apex in the monarchic era, subsequent to David, before the exile of Babylon (between 800 and 600 B.C.).⁽¹⁵⁾

4.0 - BIBLICAL FIGURES

4.1 – DAVID⁽¹⁸⁾

The Bible defines king David as the singer of the songs of Israel for his ability in playing zither, thanks to which he entered king Saul's court.⁽¹⁶⁾ David, or King David, was an excellent psalmist, and the historians don't know precisely how many psalms can be attributed to him: 73 of them are designated with the formula "Le David ", which can mean "of David", but that can also mean "regarding" David.⁽¹⁷⁾

Before talking about David, it is necessary to insert him in the context of his time.

The first civilizations of the History appeared and developed between 2.800 and 400 B.C., in the riverine areas of Middle East. They were the civilizations of the oriental antiquity, which lived in the context of the Asian production way, and which dispersed for five areas that were geographically and culturally interlinked: Mesopotamia (current Iraq), Egypt, Phoenicia (area of Lebanon), Persia (Iran) and Palestine.

About 1050 B.C., two centuries after the exodus (escape of the Jews from Egypt to Palestine), the Hebrews had to struggle with persistence against the Canaanites and Philistines. Joshua, successor of Moses, grouped the several clans in 12 tribes, in the conquered lands. The Canaanite and Philistine resistance turned indispensable the political unit of the tribes, and the religious fidelity to a unique God, Jehovah ("YAHWEH", The One That Is).

Saul, the first king of the Hebrews, was succeeded by David (1006 B.C.), who stood out for defeating the giant Goliath. Under the command of David, the Israelites took Jerusalem in the fight against the Canaanites, transforming it in their capital. Other victories against Philistines, Moabites and Aramaic guarantee the independence of the Kingdom of Israel. David reinforced the Jewish tradition starting from the union of the twelve tribes.

His reign, highly prosperous, lasted 40 years. Of his union with Bath-Sheba, Salomon, that succeeded him, was born. David was born in Bethlehem, and he is considered as an ancestor of Jesus.

David brought to Jerusalem (Zion) the Ark of the Covenant, named the priests' chiefs, and did everything to maintain its cult.

4.2 – AARON

The genealogy of Aaron shows that he was great-grandson of Levi, and for this reason he is mentioned as being from the "house of Levi". Being the older brother of Moses and firstborn son of Amram and Jochebed he helped Moses to free the Hebrew people of the Egyptian captivity.

He was Moses' interpreter before the pharaoh of Egypt and before the elders of Israel. ⁽¹⁹⁾ Also, he was the founder of the Hebraic priesthood, and, because of that, he became the patriarch of the priestly class. His name means "illuminated", "elevated", or "sublime".

After the liberation of the Israelites from the servitude in Egypt (Ex.13:1-2), the firstborn ones were "elected" for the Priesthood of the Lord, which became a definitive institution that would be ratified with the construction of the Temple (Ex.28: 1-43).

4.2.1- Tabernacle, precursor of the Temple.

According to the instructions that Moses would have received in Mount Sinai, the Law (Tablets of the Laws, or Decalogue), containing the foundations of the doctrine, should accompany the Hebrew people during the whole time that the exodus would last.

"So Moses ordered to build the Tabernacle or Awning (of Hebrew = suká), that would be the sanctuary (in Hebrew =mishkan) for the guard of the Torah, and for the religious occupations, during the long trip in direction to Palestine" (Castelani, 1993, p. 61).

The Bible tells us that the Tabernacle was set up in a oblong shaped terrain that was a hundred cubits of length by fifty of width (45 for 27,5 meters). The awning, that was the most important part of the set, was formed by four put upon tents. The most intern tent was made of linen and the others of purple colored skins. The larger tent was the "Kodesh" (Holy) and contained: to the entrance, the Altar of the Perfumes; to the north, the Altar of the Propitiatory Breads; to the south, the chandelier of seven candles (Menorah).

The smaller tent was the "Kodesh há Kodeshim" (The Most Holy), and it was considered the most intimate and sacred place of the whole set, because it represented the terrestrial house of God. Only had entrance in it the most graduate priest, and just in a day of the year, the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur). ⁽²⁰⁾ It was entrusted to Salomon, son of David, the task of building the Temple.

4.2.2 – The Ark of the Covenant.



According to the Bible, Moses would have received in Mount Horeb, in the Peninsula of Sinai, during the trip to the Promised Land, divine instructions that the Hebrew people should accomplish (Ex. 24:12).

"Then said the Lord to Moses, 'arise to me, to the mount, and stay there; and I



will give you Tablets of Stone and the laws, and the commandments that I have".

To keep the Tablets of the Law the Lord orders Moses to build an ark that would be kept in the Tabernacle (Ex. 25:10-22).

"They will make a tabernacle and I will inhabit in their middle... they will make an ark of acacia wood... and you will put inside the ark the testimony that I gave you..."

The Ark of the Covenant (Tyrb Nwra-árow beriyth) was a trunk built of acacia wood, and measured 1.25 meters in length, 0.75 meters in height, and 0.75 meters in width (considering that a cubit measured about 45 to 50

centimeter).⁽²¹⁾

Bezalel, the same person that built the Tabernacle (the dismountable temple that was used during the crossing of the desert) built the ark.⁽²²⁾

The Ark was made of acacia, fully gold lined inside, with an embroidery around it on the outside, also made in gold. It had four rings and two poles, which could not be removed from their place, and also covered with gold. The gold, as much as the acacia, was considered as incorruptible, and for that reason they were both used in the making of the ark.

The Ark was covered with a lid called propitiatory, which was adorned with two cherubs, also made of solid gold, both turned to its center. Inside the Ark were laid the Tablets of the Law, the Pot of Manna and the rod of Aaron that budded (Heb. 9:4)

4.2.3 – The Symbolism of the Ark

The Ark was the most important symbol of the Jewish faith, and it served as the only physical manifestation of God in the earth. The importance of the Ark can be seen by its location in the Tabernacle, and later in the Temple (Sanctum Sanctorum) as well as by the restrictions around it as, for instance, the one that only the Supreme Priest (Aaron) could penetrate in the very holy place and, even so, only once in a year, by the occasion of the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur) (Lev. 16:2).

From the reading of the Book of Exodus (25:22), one infers that the Ark represented the Throne of God inside the Tabernacle, who was there to judge the actions of the Hebrew people and also to transmit the principles and teachings of His word.

According to the tradition, the Ark contained the Decalogue (the Ten Commandments dictated by God to Moses), the rod of Aaron and a recipient with manna. For the Israelites, the Ark represents God accompanying the Jews during the crossing of the desert. The Ark disappeared in the seize of Jerusalem, in 586 B.C., although it is mentioned in subsequent legends.

4.2.4 – The Garments of Aaron

The priests, for their position as speakers of the word of God, should distinguish themselves from the other Israelites.

In fact, Aaron and his brothers were already distinguished, since they belonged to the House of Levi, to which the Lord had granted the mission of giving priests (with respect to that, see Castelani, op. cit. p. 83).

The garments of the priests should reflect the dignity of the function. In Ex. 28:4... the Lord said to Moses: *"You will make to your brother Aaron sacred dresses in dignity sign, of ornament... such that he be consecrated to my priesthood. Here are the dresses that should be made: a **pectoral**, an **ephod**, a **mantle**, an **embroidered tunic**, a **mitre**, a **belt**; it will have to be used threads of red and blue-purple wool, gold threads of pure linen... you will also **make the pectoral**... and you will fill it with clamp stones... and those stones will have the names of the twelve tribes of Israel"*.

In the sequence of the verses, up to the number 29, we have the whole range of details of those garments, not only of Aaron, but also of his brothers.

It should be pointed out that those dresses should be used whenever they, serving as priests, arrived close to the altar, in order not to incur fault and die.

4.2.5 – Oil of the Unction

The Bible always speaks about the oil of the unction, which was used in the ceremonies of the priests' consecration. It is what is found in Ex. 28:14 and 29:

"...and you will anoint them, investing them and consecrating them for they serve me as priests... you will take the oil of the unction and you will anoint him pouring on his head". (29)

In the Psalm 133, now analyzed, we have: *"...it is like the precious oil on the head, that goes down to the border of his garments"*.

Then, it appears the question: what oil was that? Which composition did it have? The own Bible explains to us, included the explanation about its amount, Ex. 30:22-33:

"The Lord said to Moses, 'choose the most precious aromas: 500 cycles of myrrh... 250 cycles of odoriferous rush, 500 cycles of cassia and a hin of olive oil. It will be this the oil for the sacred unction; this will be for me the oil of the sacred unction, from generation to generation".

Making the conversion of the amounts for the current measures;
a cycle = 12 grams;

500 cycles x 12 grams = 6 kilos of myrrh.

250 cycles x 12 grams = 3 kilos of odoriferous rush.

500 cycles x 12 grams = 6 kilos of cassia.

1 hin = 6 liters of pure olive oil. ⁽²³⁾

5.0 THE MOUNTS

5.1 – Hermon

To the north of Israel (Palestine), the Anti-Lebanon Mountain Range exists (from “Anti-Lebanon”, one of its mountains) in opposition to the Lebanese one, in the territory of Lebanon. In this cordillera is located Mount Lebanon, famous for its cedars, on its hillsides.

This mountain range progresses from the northeast to the southeast for several kilometers, and its extensions and heights are seen starting from Mediterranean Sea. Inside of this cordillera, making boundary among Israel, Lebanon and Syria, it is found Mount Hermon with its 2,814 meters of height, and its hilltop always snow-covered.

According to the site execulink.com/~wblank/index.htm it is read:

"Mount Hermon, from the Hebrew word pronounced ker-mone, meaning abrupt, is the eastern extension of the Anti-Lebanon mountain range. Consisting of a ridge about 20 miles (32 kilometers) long with three peaks rising up to 9,200 feet (2,800 meters) above The Mediterranean Sea, it marked the northern boundary of Israel (Deuteronomy 3:8, 4:48, Joshua 11:3, 11:17, 12:1, 13:11 ".⁽²⁵⁾

Hermon, to the Sidonians (people that inhabited the valley of Sidon), it was *Sarion*, and to the Amorites (another people) it was *Sanir*, meaning sacred.

Because of being considered sacred, there where on its hillsides, and even on its summit, small religious temples, whose ruins were discovered by archaeologists.

According to Castelani, previously mentioned, Mount Hermon, for its supplying of wood for the construction of ships, for its sacred character, for its dew that went down over the whole Palestine, irrigating its lands, it was, without any doubt, in the antiquity, the most famous and important mountain of the region.

Due to the height, the draughts coming from its cordillera take the fog to the whole area (besides Zion), condensing there, under the dew form.

On the other hand, the thaw of its snow is the main source of water feeding for Jordan River, and, by extension, for the Lake of Galilee and the whole area of Palestine.

5.2 - Zion

The encyclopedia Delta Larousse defines Zion, in Arabic Djabal Sahyun, as one of the hills on which Jerusalem was built. Geographically Mount Zion is an elevation of about 800 meters, between the valleys of Kidron and Tyropocon, and, according to the Bible, David took it from the Jebusites, more or less about 1,000 B.C.

After the victory, it became called City of David ⁽²⁵⁾ because David moved to it, leaving the city of Hebron, taking with him the Ark of the Covenant. Zion or Jerusalem, ⁽²⁷⁾ in the Bible, it is called by other names, namely: Zion, City of Judah, Holy City, City of God, City of the Justice, City of the Great King, *Aelia Capitolina* (in Emperor Adriano's time), and El-Kuds ("the saint") given by the Arabs.

Later, when the Ark was transferred to the Temple that Salomon had built in Mount Moriah, the name Zion also comprehended the whole city of Jerusalem ⁽²⁶⁾.

Sîyōn or Zion became the symbolic name of Jerusalem, of the Promised Land, and of The City of David. From Zion came the word Zionism.

*In the Michaelis Dictionary, it is found: **ZIONISM** [From the top. Zion, Jewish denomination of Jerusalem, where there is a hill with that name, + ism]. m. 1. Study on things referring to Jerusalem. 2. Political and religious Jewish movement started in the 19th century, that sought the re-establishment, in Palestine, of a Jewish state, and that became victorious in May of 1948, when it was proclaimed the State of Israel.*

PART II

6.0 - INTERPRETATIVE ANALYSIS

It is necessary to keep in mind that everything that is written suffers the influence of the time in which the act of writing happens. As this work consists of the analysis of one of the Psalms, and since it (the Psalm) is part of the Bible, it is necessary to remember that the Bible was written more than 2,000 years ago. Making use of the words of Pious XII, that Pope, when referring to the Bible, expressed as follows:

"In the old oriental authors' written words, differently from what happens with our contemporary writers, it is not frequently clear which is the literal sense... it is indispensable that the interpreter goes mentally back to those ancient centuries of the East... distinguishes and sees clearly what kind of literary gender wanted to use, and in fact used, the writers of that respectable age. Because the ancient Orientals, in order to express what they had in mind, they didn't always use the same forms and manners of saying that we use today, but (on the contrary) they used the ways of saying that ran among the men of their time and of their nation".⁽²⁹⁾

The form usually used in the poetry of the psalms is called "parallelism", that is the repetition of an idea, with different words, in the same line or in the following lines. In other words, it is a repetition of ideas, from verse to

verse. ⁽³⁰⁾ That parallelism, in its several forms, and with the wealthiness of comparisons, is what gives grace and beauty to the Hebraic poetry.

It will be under this perception that we will try to make the analysis of the Psalm 133, denominated the Psalm of the Concordance or of the Fraternity.

" OH! HOW GOOD AND PLEASANT IT IS
LIVING THE BROTHERS TOGETHER IN UNITY.

IT IS LIKE THE PRECIOUS OIL ON THE HEAD
WHICH GOES DOWN ON THE BEARD, THE BEARD OF AARON.

AND THAT GOES DOWN TO THE BORDER OF HIS GARMENTS.

IT IS LIKE THE DEW OF HERMON THAT GOES DOWN ON ZION
BECAUSE, THERE, THE LORD ORDERS
THE BLESSING AND THE LIFE FOREVER ".

It is attributed to David the authorship of this psalm in which he exalts the gracefulness of the fact of being the brothers together, in harmony. It must have been written and sung with the sound of a psaltery, by the occasion of the party of the Tabernacle, when the Israelites used to go to Zion, or Jerusalem, in order to pray in the Temple. David, when taking the Ark of the Covenant to his city, he also organized the religious service there. With that, it didn't delay the flowing of Israelites to that place in order to adore YAHWEH, the Lord. ⁽³¹⁾

It is important to register that before the construction of Salomon's Temple, that would shelter the Ark of the Covenant, the Ark remained in the Tabernacle, in the city of David, or, in other words, Zion. The Tabernacle was the Temple of the Israelites and the religious center of the Hebraic nation.

"OH! HOW GOOD AND PLEASANT IT IS LIVING THE BROTHERS TOGETHER IN UNITY"

This first sentence is the David's song for the confraternization of the pilgrims that spend the day gathered in the great esplanade of the Temple. People from the entire Israel, that badly know each other, coming from all the areas, congregate there as brothers and sisters, as members of a great family of the same nation, that lives under the deep happiness of adoring only one God, YAHWEH, or Jehovah.

Transporting this image to the present days, we could ask: is it not the same thing we can see in our cities of Juazeiro do Norte, Congonhas, and Belém do Pará? Does not the television show the Muslims making their annual pilgrimage to the cities of Mecca and Medina? Or doesn't it display the Catholics in Aparecida's Sanctuary in São Paulo,

or Fátima in Portugal, or Lourdes in France? Or still the Party of Easter, now in the Holly Land?

"IT IS LIKE THE PRECIOUS OIL ON THE HEAD..."

In the Bible, in Lev. 8:12, we find an allusion the that passage, which says: *"...he poured some of anointing oil upon Aaron's head and anointed him so as to sanctify him"*.

That oil was a kind of myrrh and olive based perfume only used to anoint the kings and priests, as we can conclude by reading Ex. 28:15. The verb to pour, conjugated in the past "poured" , means that he "gushed", without parsimony, without reservation, the oil on the head, and so abundant the oil was that it went down on his beard; then the allusion:

"and which goes down on the beard, the beard of Aaron".

In the vulgate Bible translation, head is understood as the ear, the vision, the palate, the sense of smell, and the hands or the tactile sense. Therefore, "the forehead", "the head", also means the five senses, and the poured oil means the purification of the same ones.

Bro. Minoru Tamura ⁽³²⁾ from A R S L (August and Respectable Symbolic Lodge) Ferraz de Vasconcelos, Orient of São Paulo, referring to this verse, tells us:

"The scene presented by the psalmist about the unction of AARON contains a majestic symbology. The head is the emblem, the vital center of the existence; the beard is the emblem of the honor, because in the antiquity, it always expressed honorability and probity, mainly in the East, by reason of the old traditions; the garments are the emblem of the honesty and chastity, and of special liturgical ritualistic meaning".

"AND THAT GOES DOWN TO THE BORDER OF HIS GARMENTS"

Yet Bro. Francisco Luís Nanci ⁽³³⁾ gives, by analyzing this psalm, a very interesting interpretation, where he says that in a mystic and esoteric sense, our own physical body lives together with several other bodies of subtle nature, through which our divine particle, our inner God, shows himself in his multiple personalities, to diffuse his force and his will in us.

That in the works in Masonic Lodges (he says), when all are united, harmonized and concentrated, that "precious" oil comes to our heads and infuses us gradually with the Divine Energy.

The dresses represent our physical body, our external parts.

He concludes his reasoning saying that the precious oil (Divine Energy), before flooding our dress (our body), it pours itself on our head and beard (receiver of the manifestations coming from the presence of God), to the border of our dresses (they are the emanations that are distributed by all our body).

"IT IS LIKE THE DEW OF HERMON..."

Israel makes boundary to the north with Lebanon and to west with Syria; Mount Hermon marks the boundaries among those countries. Because of its height, of 2,814 meters, his peaks are permanently covered with snow (image on the side).

In the desert regions, the evaporation of the humidity concentrates on the mountains and comes back during the night under the dew form, suppressing by this way the lack of rains, and providing the conditions for a good crop, and giving, with that, the conditions for the fixation of the man in the area.

On the other hand, the thaw of Mount Hermon's snow is source of alimentation for Jordan River, which supplies the area, irrigating the Palestinian soil, bringing with that the food (blessing) for the people; bread to be eaten.

Mount Hermon, in the vision of David, by means of its dew, is a sign of life.

"THAT GOES DOWN ON ZION"

Mount Zion has approximately 800 meters of altitude, therefore the expression "*...to go down on Zion*", willing to say "*on the hills of Zion*", because in the psalms 87:2 and 51:18, and 179 more times, Jerusalem is called Zion. ⁽³⁴⁾.

In the psalm 125:1-2 there is a beautiful reference to this respect, as one can read:

*"The ones that trust the Lord are like Mount Zion that is not affected, but remains forever. As the hills persist around Jerusalem, like this the Lord stays around his people **from now, and forever**"* (highlights ours).

"BECAUSE, THERE, THE LORD ORDERED THE BLESSING AND THE LIFE FOREVER"

David, when conquering the fortress of Zion, he transported to the same fortress the Ark of the Covenant, and built for it (for the Ark) a Tabernacle. Since then, Zion became "the city of the Lord", a place of His dwelling, a place for His rest.

"...this is my rest forever; here I will inhabit, for I wanted it (Psalm 132:13-14).

With the presence of the Ark of the Covenant, Zion became the religious capital of the Israelites, a holy place, sacred, as it is inferred from the reading of the Psalm 135:21, that tells us:

"...blessed be the Lord from Zion, that inhabits Jerusalem ".

David compares the oil descending on the head of Aaron with the dew descending on Zion. Aaron is the supreme priest, the religious chief of the Israeli nation, he is the spiritual "head" of the Hebrew people, in the same way that Zion is the spiritual capital of Israel. The first (first image) purifies, consecrates a priest for the service of the Lord, making Aaron a man pure, fair and perfect for the priestly functions.

In the second image, the dew on Zion is the water that, besides purifying, makes possible the life around Jerusalem. It is like the oil (water) falling on Aaron (Jerusalem), because there, in Zion, YAHWEH, the Lord (represented by the Ark of the Covenant), had ordered His blessing forever.

The fact of the pilgrims' being in that place, gathered together, made possible that the blessing, besides purifying, went down for all. This to David is something concrete. It shows itself in the nature, in the oil, in the dew, in the rains, in Jordan River's waters, which irrigates the land and makes it fertile, making possible the ownership of the Promised Land.

David uses a practical language to show that Zion is the religious center of Israel, because that was the place the Lord had chosen for His home.

CONCLUSION

The objective of this work was to try to analyze, in a historical context, the figures of David and Aaron, and their importance inside of the religious formation of the Hebrew people, by making an analysis of the Psalm 133.

By extension, I also analyzed the importance of the Book of the Law and its division in Old and New Testament. I made an approach of the geographical location of mounts Hermon and Zion, and also the inclusion of the same hills in the historical context now analyzed. For extension of the own work, I could not stop referring to the role of the Ark of the Covenant and of the Tabernacle.

As illustration of my work, I enclosed several pictures of the figures now mentioned, as well as others that I judged interesting for a better understanding of the text.

The 133rd Psalm is known as the Psalm of the Fraternity. The achievement of this beautiful exhortation should be the base of our conduct, the support of the society, not only masonic but also profane.

The divine word, the teachings of the **G**reat **A**rchitect of the **U**niverse, which we should follow in order to accomplish our works with perfection, touches us like the oil, just as the dew arrives on Zion, because He himself told us to love our neighbor "like I loved you".

To David, the unity among the brothers should be the pledge of prosperity, and of satisfaction. The Psalm, that is allusive to the concordance, teaches us how it is good and pleasant, living the brothers in unity, and how it is pleasing to feel the sensation of the saint oil running by our forehead.

The oil, as much as the dew; they have the same meaning: both come – or fall - from the high, from heaven, from the Lord. To fall is understood as going down without obstacles, because the friendship, the fraternity, should reign among all, without reservations, barriers or sophisms.

Our fraternity - or that one which we understand as such - should not have the same concept as that one of the profane world. For the own fact of belonging to an order to which we swore fidelity is enough reason to make it different. Here, my neighbor is my brother (frater), and like the dew that falls without obstacle should be our

friendship: without sophisms, without reservations.

Because only by doing so we will be sure that the Lord will make the life and His blessing to be poured among us, now and forever.

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