The Sacred Symbol

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This symbol is regarded, and rightly so, as one of the most sacred of the Masonic emblems. It constantly keeps to the forefront of Masonic thought and teaching Him in whom we live and move and have our being.
The writer's mind is carried back to the scene at the burning bush,

"And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is His Name? What shall I say unto them? and God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and He said, Thus shalt thou say . . . I AM hath sent me unto you."

Among the ancients a name stood for some special trait or characteristic; men gave names to their gods to specialize some attribute of their nature that seemed predominant, e.g., the Egyptians set much store by the names of their gods, which in every case they had a significance. Ammon was "the concealed;" Phthah was "the revealer;" Ra was "the swift."

Previous to the scene at the burning Bush, God had been described by various names, now is selected for the first time, from among them, one that shall be distinctly His own, meaning the "Eternal Self-existent One"-I AM THAT I AM.

1. It signifies Personality. Over the veiled statue of the Egyptian Isis was the famous inscription, "I am the thing that is, and was, and shall be." But the name I AM goes far beyond this. I AM is a Living PERSONALITY, distinct from all other beings and things, transcending them all. Not IT but HE. *"There is one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all."* "Grace to you, and Peace, from Him which is and which was and which is to come . . . the Almighty."

2. It denotes His Eternal Unchangeableness. With Him there is no past and no future but one eternal NOW. "Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of Thy hands: they shall perish; but Thou continuest: and they all shall wax old as a garment, and as a mantle shalt Thou roll them up . . . and they shall be changed: but Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail." I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like Me." I AM THAT I AM. It is His signature written across nature, history and religion; the keepsake and forget-me-not in the hearts of those who love Him.

3. It symbolizes the ineffable name which no Jew would pronounce and when coming across it in his reading of the Volume of the Sacred Law, be would substitute the name Adonai.
Its position in the Lodge denotes the fact of His Very Presence-His Very Presence is ever in the midst of His people. Before this Sacred Symbol every true Mason reverently uncovers and bows his head. It is a perpetual condemnation of profanity, impiety, vice. A true Mason will never speak the name of the Grand Master of the Universe but with reverence, respect, love. He will study the mystic meaning of the LETTER and strive to model his life after the Divine plan. He will travel forward from error to truth; from darkness to light; from vice to virtue; from death to life. "He hath

showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God.