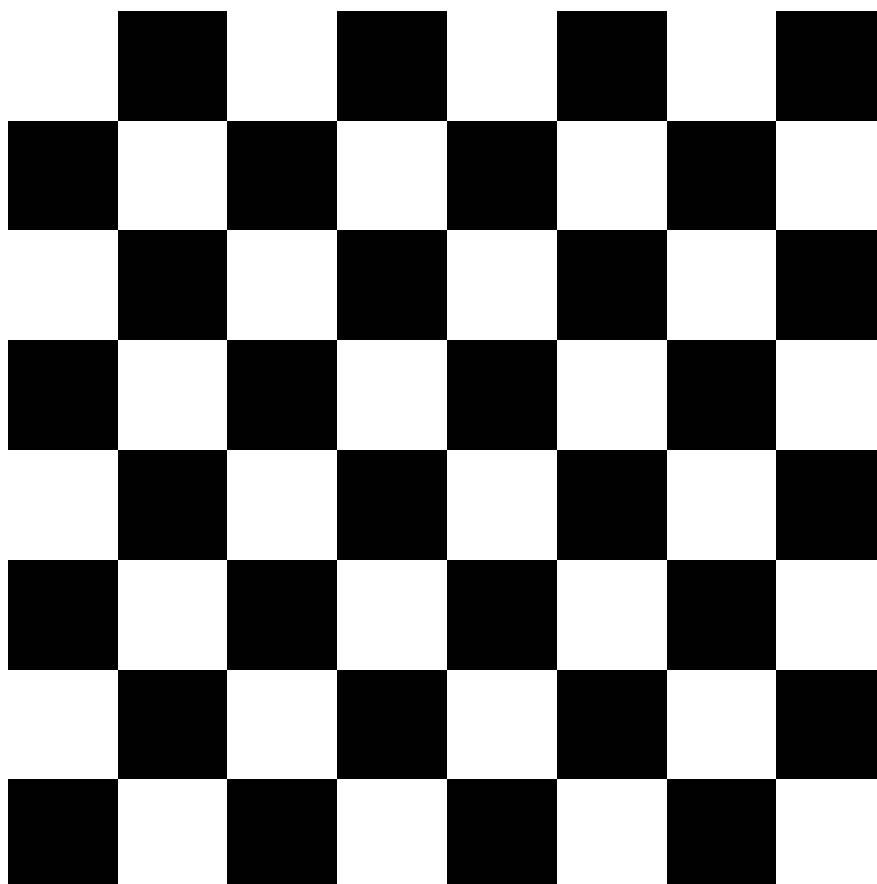


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MASONIC TILES

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MASONIC TILES

This is commonly described as the checkered carpet which covers the floor of the lodge. The lecture says that the mosaic pavement “is a representation of the ground floor of King Solomon’s Temple” and is “emblematic of human life, checkered with good and evil.”

In the account of King Solomon’s Temple in the Bible, the ground floor is said to be made of pine or fir, depending on which translation of the Bible that you read (1 Ki 6:15). It is hard to imagine that pine or fir flooring would be particularly mosaic in nature. However, it can be agreed that the mosaic pavement represents the ground floor of King Solomon’s Temple in the Entered Apprentice degree because that ceremony symbolically takes place in that location.

“The mosaic pavement in an old symbol of the Order. It is met with in the earliest rituals of the last century. It is classed among the ornaments of the lodge along with the indented tessel and the blazing star. Its party-colored stones of black and white have been readily and appropriately interpreted as symbols of the evil and good of human life.”

When thinking about the idea of duality and the concept of good and evil, black and white, sacred and profane, an image that immediately enters my mind is that of the Yin-Yang. While this symbol has become a sort of pop culture icon in recent times, its symbolism is deep and its meaning applicable to this subject. While it has numerous interpretations, the yin-yang demonstrates the concept of duality and balance.

The synonym balance is an important term because of the position of the checkered carpet: the floor, where the foundation of the erect human body may be found. The Mason is taught to avoid irregularity and intemperance and to divide his time equally by the use of the twenty-four inch gauge. These lessons refer to the importance of balance in a Mason’s life. Therefore, the symbolism of the mosaic pavement could be interpreted to mean that balance provides the foundation for our Masonic growth.