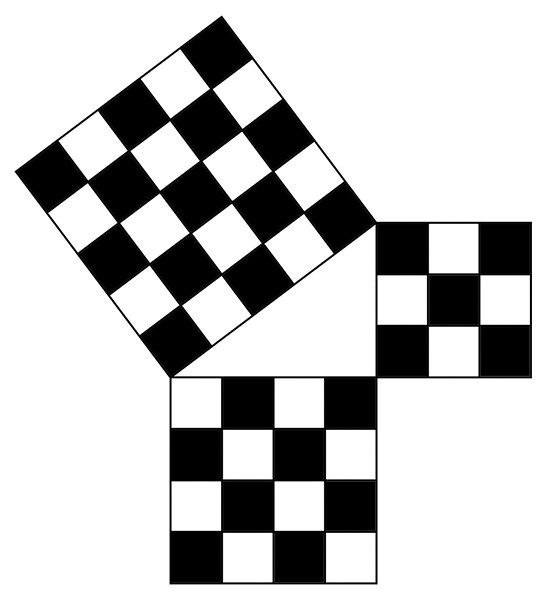
|  |
| --- |
| GREAT SYMBOL OF PYTHAGORAS |
| 190 {d, |
| Figure 12. Pythagoras. |
| From Pierre Mussard, Historia Deorum Fatidicorum (1675). |



Sheet178

|  |
| --- |
| GREAT SYMBOL OF PYTHAGORAS |
| THE 47TH PROBLEM - Euclid |
|  |
| The 47th problem is this: |
|  |
| In every right-angled triangle the sum of the squares of the base and |
| perpendicular is equal to the square of the hypotenuse, i.e. the line |
| which connects the ends of the other two sides. |
|  |
| If the base be 3 measures and the perpendicular 4, of the same length each, |
| the hypotenuse will be 5. If it be not, the base and perpendicular form either |
| an obtuse or acute angle, and the triangle is not right-angled. |
| I have seen several large sheets of paper, covered with intricate diagrams, |
| largely intended to illustrate the 47th Problem, in all of which (and they were |
| most elaborately and with vast labor drawn), the triangle supposed by its author to |
| represent that problem was an obtuse angle, of at least 120 degrees, instead of go, |
| (which is a right angle): and yet the geometrician in question, who would"illustrate" |
| his figures in the discourse of hours, without communicating to us here a single |
| lucid idea, simply because he had none, in regard to his fantastic figures, has estab- |
| lished a special Masonry of a Degree or two, in which his diagrams were intended |
| to be used; and is a fluent writer for Masonic periodicals, a Master in Israel. |
| If a Mason is carrying up the corner of a building, and wishes to know |
| whether it is square, he will measure 3 feet from the corner one way and 4 the |
| other. If then a line drawn from the termini is more or less that exactly 5 feet, he |
| has not made a square corner. This is a practical use of the problem or theorem. |
| It is said that when Pythagoras discovered this problem, he sacrificed a hun- |
| dred oxen. Why? As a mathematical theorem it is of no more importance or interest |
| than fifty or seventy five others in Euclid; and of much less than most of them. |
|  |
| em} 191 |

Sheet179

|  |
| --- |
| + THE SYMBOLISM OF THE BLUE DEGREES OF FREEMASONRY + |
| The explanation is a simple one. He styled it great symbol:Mathematical |
| theorems are not ordinarily symbols. He never styled any other theorem a |
| symbol, great or small. A circle, a triangle, a square, a cube are symbols, but I |
| do not know that any other Problem has ever been so styled. He did not call |
| or consider the figure, the right-angled triangle, itself, as a figure, a "symbol." |
| Only one which represented the numbers 3, 4, 5 was a symbol for him. Its |
| symbolism consisted in its representation of these Numbers; and he called |
| it a symbol, and used it as such, because he could, by means of it, express |
| to the adepts and entrust to his pupils some great philosophical or religious |
| truth or creed, by the use of the measures 3 and 4, the sum of which is the |
| always sacred number 7. |
| The square of a number is produced by multiplying the number by itself. The |
| cube of a number is obtained by multiplying its square by the original number. |
| The square of 3 is 3 times 3, 9; the square of 4 is 4 times 4, 16; the square of 5 is |
| 5 times 5, 25; 3 x 3 = 9; 4 x 4 = i6; and 5 x 5 = 25, and 9 + 16 = 25. |
| Formerly every Masonic square represented the base and perpendicular, |
| one being 3 measures in length, and the other 4. But I have seen in the Monitor |
| used by all the Lodges in a State, three squares, each of different dimensions |
| and neither of them correct. |
| Formerly, also, the altar-lights of the Lodge represented this theorem, two |
| on the East side of the altar, North and South of each other, and 3 feet apart, |
| and a third due West of the North light and 4 feet from it. This was in the |
| Apprentice's Lodge. In the Master's Lodge there was a group of three lights at |
| each of the same points, making 3 times 3. |
| It is curious how continually the number 7 is forced upon our notice in |
| both the Old and New Testaments. The 6 days of creation and one of rest, |
| the 7 sprinklings and purifications again and again prescribed, the seven |
| churches, seven seals, seven trumpets of the Apocalypse, are a few out of |
| the great number of instances. |
|  |
| 192, ,fra5 |

Sheet180