

ORATIONS

Grand York Rite of California May 2020 – May 2021 – May 2022

Orations

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Golden State Chapter of Research of the Holy Royal Arch
Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of California

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DEDICATION

MOST EXCELLENT COMPANION

STEVEN R. GOAD, KYGCH

GRAND LECTURER 2022



Masonry is a very personal philosophical journey of exploration guided by Masonic precepts of what is proper when laying out the draftsman's plan for our own Temple erected to the great architect of the universe. If we are fortunate, we will be guided in that journey by someone whose knowledge and commitment to Masonry compels us, of our own volition, to think about the meaning of our rituals as they apply to our lives. Our guide's knowledge is not attested by a degree from a prestigious university, nor certification from a controlling authority. Rather, it is the tacit acknowledgement by the fraternity that the individual has acquired sufficient knowledge of all aspects of our craft and has willingly shared that knowledge without hope of fee or reward. When the journey is unclear, they are the ones who shine a light where there is darkness and show us the safe path.

It is proper that a book containing the Orations delivered at Grand Sessions of the Grand Chapter of California should be dedicated to a Mason's Mason, a giant upon whose shoulders one can stand with sure footing. I so dedicate this book to Most Excellent Companion Steven R. Goad, Grand Lecturer of the Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of California. His commitment to Royal Arch is well known within and without the State of California. His enthusiasm, his energy, and willingness to do whatever is needed to help a companion or chapter has been of invaluable assistance on more than one occasion I have witnessed.

Written by Raymond A. Broomfield, KYGCH

Grand High Priest, 2021-2022

PREFACE

Royal Arch Masonry continues to provide the path for those seeking to build their Masonic edifices. The Grand Orations are just one of many ways that allow us to experience Masonry from another's point of view, enriching all of us traveling along that path we have not known.

I commend to you this collection of addresses for Capitular Years 2020, 2021 and 2022.

R. Scott Husmann, KYGCH
168th Grand High Priest

This publication of the Golden State Chapter of Research is a compilation of interesting and informative papers and talks. This issue is very special because of the timeframe it covers as well as the varied presentations. Presiding officers can bring interesting subject matter to their Convocation, Assembly and Conclave membership through the use of these papers. In addition, sharing how to receive their own copy, as well as urging them to easily join our Research Chapter – with no dues and a single small application fee good for life, can only aid them on their Masonic journey!

Bruce A. Rick, Secretary and Editor
Golden State Chapter of Research

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INTROUCTION

GRAND ORATIONS, 2020-2021-2022

The papers in this compilation were presented at the California York Rite Grand Sessions in May 2020, May 2021 and May 2022. In addition to the Grand Orations for the Grand Chapter and Grand Council, we have included talks from speakers at other Grand Session meetings and luncheons, including the Grand Commandery.

Year 2020

Lynn Wallingford

Grand Orator, Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons,

Bill Miklos

Grand Orator of the Grand Commandery of Knights
Templar

Steve Goad

Grand Lecturer, Grand Chapter of Royal Arch
Masons

Phil Hardiman

Grand Secretary, Grand Chapter of Royal Arch
Masons

Bill Miklos

Grand Orator of the Grand Commandery of Knights
Templar

Year 2021

John Cooper

Grand Orator, Grand Council of Cryptic Masons,

Year 2022

Marty Cusing

Grand Orator, Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons

Jonathan Prestage

Grand Orator, Grand Council of Cryptic Masons

Bob Sachs

Grand Council Luncheon Speaker

Jeff Bolstad

Deputy Grand Master, Grand Encampment, Grand
Commandery Luncheon Speaker

Year 2022

David Studley

Grand Commander, Grand Commandery of Knights
Templar, Call to Vespers

Craig Flagtwet

Deputy Grand Commander, Grand Commandery of
Knights Templar, Vespers Invocation

Roger Ross

Grand Generalissimo, Grand Commandery of
Knights Templar, Vespers Pastoral Prayer

Raymond Davies

Grand Prelate, Grand Commandery of Knights
Templar, Vespers Message and Remembrance For
Our Ladies

2020
I
GRAND CHAPTER ORATION
MAY 2020

Masonic Character
By Lynn R. Wallingford

The topic for my oration is Masonic Character. The dictionary provides many definitions for the word “character.” One of those definitions is “an odd, eccentric or noteworthy person.” Each of us probably knows a companion who we think of as a real character. Generally a senior member in actual age or masonic age or both. These men have wonderful and sometimes colorful stories to tell about their experiences in life and in Masonry. They bring knowledge from the past and help us shape the future of the craft.

Another definition is “moral strength, self-discipline and fortitude.” These are but three examples of a broad range of attributes and strengths that we as a fraternity try to impart to our members. We do this through our ritual. We use obligations, working tools and allegorical symbols and stories to teach moral lessons. The goal is to help develop men of true moral or “Masonic” character who will lead lives of compassion, caring and service to each other, to their families and to society in general.

From the very first moment that a man enters a lodge room he begins to be taught what it means to accept responsibility for his own actions and for his behavior toward others. He is firmly and pointedly instructed on what it means to be steadfast and true in his relationship to those who will soon be his Masonic brothers. This lesson is followed by another

at the altar, where he assumes an obligation to adhere to the ancient usages and customs of the fraternity. It is a simple obligation, but a powerful one. It teaches a man that his word should be his bond and that he should never enter into any agreement with a hidden agenda, but rather that he should be forthright in all his dealings.

The first degree also teaches lessons about how to conduct one's life using some of the working tools of operative masonry as symbols. They teach us to have balance in our lives and that all of us, to one degree or another, have rough edges that need to be worked on and smoothed out. The importance of charity or relief is also introduced in this degree.

This pattern is repeated in the second degree where the lessons are centered around how one acts toward others and the importance of learning all throughout one's life. And in the third degree, the candidate is asked to contemplate his own mortality and the need to prepare for eternity, so that at the end of his years he may reflect with happiness on a life well spent.

A common thread or theme runs through these degrees, that of the building of King Solomon's temple. That magnificent edifice and its construction are used symbolically to impart lessons on how we should conduct our own lives, the importance of remaining steadfast to our principles and that failure to do so can lead to drastic consequences. It also includes practical lessons on leadership and commitment to a common goal. This theme is expanded upon in the several degrees of the Royal Arch.

The Mark Master Degree can be viewed as an historical drama that takes place during the construction of the temple. In this degree, candidates learn important lessons in responsibility, cooperation, commitment and honor. When

working together on any project, each individual may be assigned a different part of the job. We have a responsibility to do our jobs to the best of our ability so that, when all the parts are put together, they fit according to the master plan. Cooperation among the team members is important. This degree also teaches that when a person makes a commitment or pledge, he demonstrates honor by fulfilling that pledge.

The Past Master Degree is not specifically related to the building of King Solomon's temple, although reference is made to King Solomon. It teaches practical lessons in leadership and some of the responsibilities inherent in being a presiding officer of a masonic organization. Not all masons have the opportunity and privilege of serving their lodge as Worshipful Master. The Past Master Degree provides candidates with a sense of what it is like to sit in the East and conduct a meeting. They are instructed in the use of the gavel as an emblem of power and authority. They are also taught not to act in an arbitrary or unconstitutional manner, but to govern according to our ancient customs and usages.

The Most Excellent Master Degree returns to the theme of King Solomon's Temple but centers around the completion and dedication of that magnificent building. The most skilled stonemasons, sculptors and polishers available were selected to complete the interior of the building. As a reward for their zeal and fidelity, they were invited to be present at the dedication and consecration of the finished edifice.

The tenets of charity and brotherly love are reinforced again in this degree. It is a mason's obligation to assist those brethren and their families who are in need, to the best of their abilities. By the time a mason reaches this degree, he is sufficiently qualified to dispense light and truth to his less informed brethren. As Masons we are encouraged to

demonstrate our zeal for and fidelity to the principles of Masonry by a lifelong study of our degrees and the important lessons imparted by them and by sharing that knowledge with others.

The Royal Arch Degree is the culmination of the Capitular degrees. In this degree, the candidates represent sojourners traveling from Babylon to Jerusalem to assist in rebuilding King Solomon's temple. Their pathway is a representation of the journey of life, often filled with trials and hardships. But if we keep our trust in the Great Architect of the Universe and have faith in His promise to aid and protect us, we can accomplish all things. This is the great lesson of this degree.

The use of symbols and allegories to teach lessons of moral character are used throughout the remaining degrees and orders of the York Rite. They are also used by the Scottish Rite, Eastern Star, our youth groups and other masonically- related organizations. Through repetition and lifelong study our aim is to enlighten men, women and young adults in the morals, virtues and principles of good character, and thus to prepare them to lead lives as beacons of light and civility in a society that is all too frequently fractured by individualism and discord.

Thank you.

2020
II
VIRTUAL MEETING PRESENTATION-A.M.
NOVEMBER 2020

The Path to the Second Temple in Jerusalem
By Steven R. Goad

THE BIG PICTURE!

Assyrian Rule in the western states of the Mesopotamian region was established from 878 - 610 BCE (Before Christian Era). This area included the Damascus (then part of the Medes empire), and Israel states already pre-existing from more ancient times. The Kingdoms of Damascus and Israel combined and rebelled against Assyria in 735 BCE and were defeated in 723 BCE¹. Assyrian retribution on the Kingdom of Israel was great and over 27,000 were relocated to the area around NE Syria and Western Iran. This marks the beginning of what later became the Diaspora of the Jews. The Kingdom of Israel ceases to exist as a separate country from this timeframe and Judah, which did not directly rebel, was left intact as a vassal state of the Assyrians.

The Assyrians however never solved the question of how best to control Babylonia. They never took over the country directly but allowed the Babylonians to govern themselves somewhat independently from direct rule at their capital in Nineveh. This ultimately resulted in Damascus and the Babylonians joining and sacking Nineveh in 612 BCE. This event triggered a power vacuum in the western states between the Egyptian empire which the Kingdom of Judah

¹ 2nd Kings discusses the end of the Kingdom of Israel and 2nd Chronicles discusses Judah in the King James Bible.

had allied with and Babylonia until Nebuchadnezzar II (604-562 BCE) of Babylonia defeated the Egyptians at Carchemish north of Israel in 605 BCE and then went on to subdue Jerusalem for the first time in 597 BCE². The Governor of Judah at the time was Jehoiachin, son of Jehoiakin who had recently died while in office as Governor for the Assyrians. Jehoiachin who sided with the Egyptians was taken prisoner and removed to Babylon while Nebuchadnezzar II made his uncle, Zedekiah, Governor of Judah in his stead.

The Jewish Prophet Jeremiah predicts the fall of the Temple before Zedekiah even becomes Governor of Judah! He therefore stays on the side of Babylonia without living there throughout the next eleven years. Zedekiah reaches back out to the Egyptians and secures their alliance. He feels confident in his position and then rebels by not paying tribute to Nebuchadnezzar II. Nebuchadnezzar II angers and then returns with his army and lays siege to Jerusalem in 588 BCE. The siege lasted 2 years and the Judeans eventually ran out of food. Interestingly, the site for Jerusalem was well chosen as the spring of Gehon under the Temple Mount kept them supplied with water during the siege. Zedekiah and his army fled and were intercepted near Jericho. Bad things happen after that! Sariah the High Priest is beheaded at Riblah and his son Johozadak, the new High Priest, is carried into exile to Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar II in retribution sacks Jerusalem thoroughly in 586 BCE destroys the first Temple and carries off the best and brightest captive to Babylon. This event leads to the Judean Diaspora begun by the Assyrians in 723 BCE in Israel.

² End of Jehoiachin on March 16th 597 and the beginning of Zedekiah's reign.

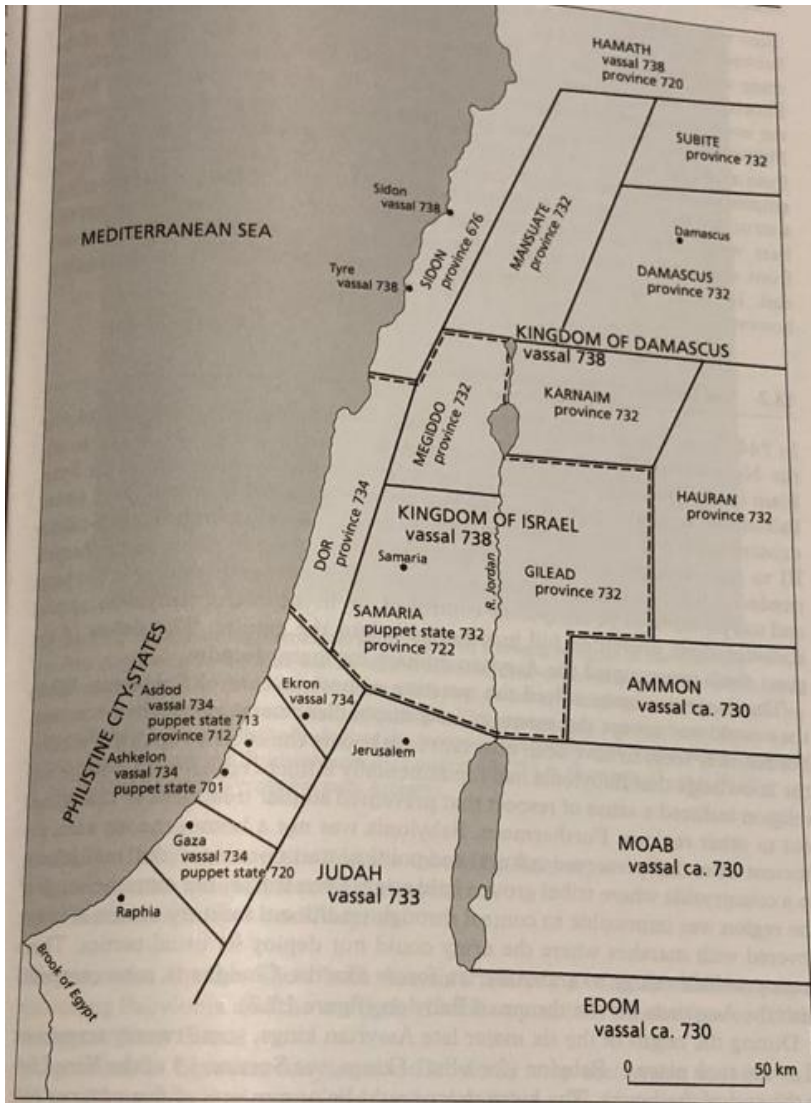


Fig 1. Assyrian annexation of the western states in the eighth century BCE. After Benedict Otzen “Israel under the Assyrians” in M. T. Larsen, ed. *Power and Propaganda (Mesopotamia 7*, Copenhagen: Akademisk Forlag, 1979) p. 272.

Jeremiah stays in Judah with Gedaliah as Governor for the Babylonians who was subsequently assassinated by Ishmael who was himself carried away to Egypt when they

emerged again as a rival to Babylonia! The Prophet Ezekiel prophesized from Babylon during most of the captivity and was joined by the Prophet Isaiah at the end successfully predicting the Persian invasion. During the period of the Babylonian captivity, the Prophets, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Isaiah were all active!

THE PERSIANS ARRIVE!

The Persians were located where Iran is today. Cyrus (the Great) came to power in 559 and in 550 BCE defeated the Medes (including Damascus) from the south thus establishing the Persian Empire suzerainty in the western states. Cyrus captures Babylon (capital of the Babylonia Empire) in 539 BCE and starts the expansion of the Persian Empire. He succeeded in establishing the largest Empire of states and territory that the world had ever known to that time. While fighting the Egyptians in their home territory, he was killed in 530 BCE. His son, Cambyses, reigned from 529 – 522 BCE, was previously designated as heir and completed the task of subduing the Egyptians over the next seven years. Cyrus and most of his Persian successors (Cambyses was an exception however) ruled with a light touch and were known to allow conquered peoples to return to their home country unlike the Babylonians who were known to exile the peoples they conquered thereby making room for themselves and the mercenaries they employed in their army. So it is consistent with scripture and history that Cyrus issued the famous decree allowing the Judeans to return to Jerusalem from Babylon.

Cambyses interceded and prevented the Jews from returning to Jerusalem or working to restore the city or the Temple as requested by his appointed satraps surrounding Jerusalem when he came to rule. He was subsequently deposed (and mysteriously died on his way back to Babylon to take on Darius) by Darius I (also the Great) of Medes (his capital was at Ecbatana) and he ruled from 521-486 BCE.

He was not directly related to Cyrus, son of Hystaspes, but was elected by the seven leading families of Persia to take over from Cambyses' brother Bardiya in 522 who had been occupying the throne while Cambyses was away finishing the conquest of Egypt! Darius studied the governance of Cyrus and re-instituted the leniency that Cyrus had extended to those peoples he had conquered. He was able to extend the Empire that Cyrus had established until it was the largest known in the world at that time! It was not enlarged again until Alexander the Great in 330 BCE.

Xerxes was Darius I's son and ruled 485-465 BCE. It was between Darius I and Xerxes that the attempts to conquer the Greek City States were made as described by Xenophon and Herodotus. Marathon in 490 BCE was a loss by Darius I while Thermopile in 480 BCE was a Persian victory by Xerxes only to be followed by a Persian loss at Salamis a year later in 479 which ended the Persian attempts to conquer the Greek Islands and set the stage for the Greek Empire in 330 BCE under Alexander the Great!

THE SECOND TEMPLE

Cyrus acted soon after he became King of Persia and allowed some of the Jews in Babylon to start returning to Jerusalem. This resulted in the first of three waves of Judeans or Yahweh worshipers as they were then known returning to Jerusalem to restore the city and Temple in 538 BCE which the Babylonians previously were adamant should be left destroyed. The satrap Shesh-Bazzar was appointed Governor by Cyrus over Judah or the "Land beyond the River". He was to start the work of restoring the city and Temple.

The second wave after the interruption caused by Cambyses' reign was during the reign of Darius I circa 520 – 515 BCE under Zerubbabel, appointed as Governor by Darius. Zerubbabel, perhaps a son of Shealtiel, apparently

knew Darius from Babylon during the Jewish captivity. He was able to join Jeshua or Joshua the 12th High Priest from the first Temple, likely the son of Johozadak, and a Grandson of Sariah from the destruction of the first Temple in 586 BCE. The Prophet Haggai and Zechariah were active in the first years of Darius' reign from Babylon. They are the ones that cast Zerubbabel in the role as the Governor of Judah during the rebuilding of the Temple and pushed for his appointment as Governor. It is hard to trace Zerubbabel's lineage, a Davidic lineage is not mentioned by any of the prophets; therefore he is unlikely to be in the direct Davidic line of potential rulers of Judah which would normally rule out Shealtiel as his father!

He is most likely a non-Davidic line Jewish leader in exile in Babylon that knew Darius, Haggai and Zechariah and was chosen by them to succeed Shesh-Bazzar in Jerusalem as Governor. Darius was still weeding out the non-loyal followers of Cambyses throughout the Empire and was happy to oblige! Zerubbabel was prophesized by Haggai and Zechariah to deal with the contentions between the returnees and the existent Yahweh worshipers still remaining in Jerusalem. Non returning Yahweh worshipers included Samaritans, who had relocated from the Kingdom of Israel when it was destroyed by the Assyrians and now sought to control the rebuilding of the Temple. It was they that rebuffed the returnees (contentions among the workmen in the Temple at the introduction of 'strangers' among the workmen). The issue was over property and working rights between those that were taken to Babylon and those that stayed and took over! After the work on the 2nd Temple winds down (not fully completed or yet fully ornamented), but before it is dedicated in 515 BCE, Zerubbabel simply disappears from history and the scriptures! Speculation ensues, was he killed, died, removed or retired? No reference exists currently to answer for his fate in history!

Jeshua then remains as the anointed High Priest in Jerusalem at the dedication of the second Temple.

The third wave was completed around 445 BCE under the prophet Ezra and Nehemiah as Governor. Nehemiah was a Persian courtier at Susa after it was rebuilt by Darius I and who asked King Artaxerxes I (reign 464-424/3) sometime after 464 BCE to rebuild the city of Jerusalem, the Temple having been completed already, as his Governor. Archeologically, the city walls were rebuilt by him in 445 BCE. There wasn't much building activity within the walls after this time until later due to the re-emergence of the Egyptians as a threat and the need to control their advance.

The Persian Empire continues until 330 BCE with their defeat and consolidation within the Empire of Alexander the Great. 323 BCE marks the time when the Hellenistic period begins and Greek culture prevails throughout the region with the death of Alexander!

THE MASONIC CONNECTION!

The ritualistic degrees that draw inspiration from this bit of history and scripture are connected with the following Masonic bodies (among others): General Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons International; Grand Encampment of Knights Templar USA; General Grand Council of Cryptic, Royal and Select Masters International; Scottish Rite, Southern Jurisdiction; and Knight Masons.

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2020
II
VIRTUAL MEETING PRESENTATION-P.M.
NOVEMBER 2020

Who Was Moses?
By Philip A. Hardiman

WHO WAS MOSES?

Our Grand Lecturer gave a presentation earlier, at the end of which he closed with this question – “Who was Moses?” We know him, of course, as the great Prophet of the Israelites, who led them out of Egypt on the Exodus. We know him, also, as a central figure in the Royal Arch Degree, who, with Aholiab and Bezaleel, built the first Ark of the Covenant. It was he who directed the contents of the Ark – the Book of the Law, the Pot of Manna, and Aaron’s rod. It was he who received the signs we use at the Veils.

Scripture tells us also that he was a murderer, who killed an Egyptian for beating an Israelite slave. He also directed the killing of three thousand of the Israelites when he found them worshipping the idol upon descent from the mountain with the Book of the Law. He killed at least three thousand two hundred and fifty-one.

He may have been an Egyptian Priest and learned of monotheism there under Akhenaten. Did he lead the Israelites out of Egypt in order to preserve this concept when Egypt rejected it? In any event, he was instrumental in liberating the Israelites, and in giving them the Laws as promulgated in the Ten Commandments.

But to appreciate Moses as a Leader, in addition to being a Liberator and Lawgiver, we must understand the

environment of the Exodus, and what caused it. Were the ten plagues real? Was Manna a real substance? Did the Israelites actually wander for forty years? Was the man who led the Israelites out of Egypt the same man of the stories of his birth and youth and early manhood?

The answer of course, and the point of this paper, is YES to all those questions. But before we proceed, let us review a synopsis of his life, taken from *MOSES: A Life* (pp. 10-11): “A kingdom overpowers a community of aliens in their country. The kingdom enslaves the aliens, and they kill their male children. But one baby survives ... and he grows up in royalty. As an adult, he kills a man ... and when his manslaughter becomes known he flees to another land. There he rescues a priest’s daughters, and he stays in the land, marries one of the daughters, has sons, and lives tending flocks. And then he encounters God.

“Miracles occur. A mountain of God. A miraculous fire. An angel. The man’s staff becomes a snake, and then turns back as it was. The man’s hand becomes leprous, and then turns back as it was. ... God speaks, telling the man that God will free the enslaved people and that the man must be the one to carry it out. He must go back. And God reveals his name to him: Yahweh.”

“He returns. He faces the king. The king declines to let the people leave. The man initiates divinely ordered miracles: signs and wonders, ten plagues on the kingdom, on land and water and even blacking out the sun, suffering for humans and animals and plants, and finally, death, but only to firstborn humans and animals. The freed people leave the kingdom. The king has a change of heart, and he and his army pursue them to the sea. But the sea splits, they pass through it, and it closes on the pursuing army. ...

“More stories will follow. ... But all of these stories depend on and flow out of what happened with the man, Moses, and the departure, the exodus, from that kingdom, Egypt.”

How much can we consider real? Some biblical scholars suggest that the man Moses was only mythical. Some claim there were two Moses. In any event, there was most certainly one Man who led the Israelites out of Egypt. The need for forceful and commanding leader will be clear from the environment of the Exodus.

THE ENVIRONMENT OF THE EXODUS

(Reference corroborating sources of the ten plagues, and causes)

The Exodus occurred at a time when, as Immanuel Velikovsky describes it in his earth-shaking book *WORLDS IN COLLISION*, the Earth was assaulted by a large comet. The near collision created chaos over the entire globe, nearly destroying it. Civilizations around the globe experienced many of the same plagues as Egypt, and extensive research done by Velikovsky proves this point. He discovered a translation of the Ipuwer Papyrus that supports the biblical account of the plagues in Egypt. In addition, he cited evidence given “...from the Popol Vuh of the K’iche Maya, from the Annals of Cuauhtitlan, ...as well as from stories of the mythologies of Siberia and the East Indies.” (The Age of Velikovsky, C. J. Ransom, 1976).

This comet, which he claimed would later become the planet Venus, made at least two other close approaches. One approach at the time of Joshua at Jericho, and another, in conjunction with the planet Mars, about 700 years later. The damage to the Earth at the first approach was extensive, with thousands of volcanoes erupting, probably caused by the many earthquakes engendered by the comet. The earth’s

orbit was altered and the year became composed of 360 days. The moon was also affected, and a month became almost exactly 30 days. About 700 years later, Mars and Venus were involved in another catastrophe, close to the earth, and among other effects, this caused the year to change to 365+ days and the month to 29+ days.

The encounter with the comet explains the plagues of the Exodus. As the earth passed closer and closer to the comet, the content of the tail and atmosphere polluted the ground, waters, and air.

1. The tail of the comet was the source of red dust covering the earth and polluting the waters, turning them red. This dust was probably an iron-based substance, possibly ferric oxide, that killed fish and deprived the people of water. When the fish died they further contaminated the water, and led to a pervasive stench in the land.

2. Meteorites became common-place and were described as “hot rocks.” Petroleum precipitated as “fire rain.” “(This) fiery sticky liquid fell from the sky and caused great destruction.” (The Age ..., p. 23-24)

3. The ash from erupting volcanoes made for a deep darkness. Winds were of gale force, making it impossible to light fires. As a consequence, people could not see one another, even at very close proximity. Various sources consider this initial darkness to have lasted from 3 to 9 days, but it persisted for years and complicated the wandering in the desert.

4. Earthquakes around the world were devastating, and destroyed Egypt, according to biblical sources, as well as the Egyptian Ipuwer Papyrus.

5. The last plague is said to have caused the death of all the first-born of Egypt, which caused the Pharaoh to relent and allow the Israelites to depart. The term “first-born” may be a mistranslation, and might more realistically be translated as “chosen”, or “elite,” being a reference therefore

to all Egyptians, not just the youth (whatever their age!). Perhaps the homes of the Egyptians were more susceptible to destruction by the earthquakes, because of the difference in the building materials (rock and brick vs. clay and reeds), the size of the houses, and so forth. (*The Age...*, p. 26). But a key point is to understand that not just Egyptians” were killed by the plagues – probably 98% of the Israelites perished as well.

6. Since many Egyptian soldiers were killed, the Hebrews seized upon the opportunity as a reasonable chance for escape, and thus left Egypt.” (*The Age...* p. 27). But they were not the only peoples migrating. The Hyksos, or Amalekites as Velikovsky thought, were barbarian tribes that lived in southern Palestine at the time and invaded Egypt at the Exodus. The Israelites encountered and battled with them and as a result, possibly, delayed their journey to Canaan, in favor of wandering in the desert for forty years!

WHO DID MOSES LEAD OUT OF EGYPT?
AND HOW MANY WERE THERE?
Why the difference with scripture?

Scripture claims over six hundred thousand Israelites migrated, but this is an unreasonable number. Furthermore, a recent theory put forth by Richard Friedman (*The EXODUS*, 2017) suggests that only the Levites left with Moses, perhaps as few as eight thousand. Many of them killed during their sojourn to Canaan – by the Hyksos; by the waters at the Red Sea; and by Moses’ order upon descending from Mt. Sinai with the Book of the Law. So the wandering in the desert for forty years included far fewer Israelites than has been thought in the past. Jonathan Kirsch in *MOSES, A Life* says: “So the actual number of Israelites who marched out of Egypt on that day, according to the

cold-eyed calculations of Eric Auerbach, may have amounted to as few as eight or nine thousand men.” (P. 176). Three thousand of these men were purged by Moses after he descended from Mt. Sinai: “Then Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, Who is on the Lord’s side? Let him come unto me. And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together unto him. And he said unto them, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Put every man his sword by his side, and go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbor. And the children of Levi did according to the word of Moses: and there fell of the people that day about three thousand men.” Ex. 32: 26-28.

There were enough of them left, however, when finally arriving in Canaan under the leadership of Joshua. As Levites they became the Priestly Class for the Israelites they banded with in the Promised Land. Of note is the fact that the comet Venus revisited the earth, and the earthquakes that were caused by another close encounter probably explained the destruction of the walls of Jericho. Large earthquakes are known to create sound, which in this case led to the confusion with trumpets. But that’s another story for another day.

This does not diminish Moses’ skill as a leader.

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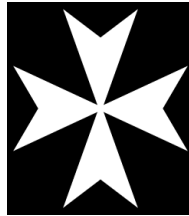
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2020
III
GRAND COMMANDERY
VIRTUAL QUIZ
MAY 2020

Knights Templar Quiz
By William J. Miklos III



This short quiz is meant to test your memory and knowledge of the Knights of Malta. I hope you enjoy it and learn something too!

1. In what year did the “Original” Hospitaller’s come into being?
 - a. 1492
 - b. 1115
 - c. 1080
2. What was the name adopted by the Hospitaller’s upon their becoming knights?
 - a. Knights of Christ
 - b. Knights Hospitaller
 - c. Knights of Columbus

3. Is the Castel at Krak des Chevaliers a Hospitaller's fortress or a Templar fortress?
 - a. Templar Fortress
 - b. Hospitaller Fortress

4. What was the date of the occupancy of Rhodes by the Hospitaller's?
 - a. 1010
 - b. 1310
 - c. 1910

5. After eight years of exile, the Hospitaller's become the "Knights of Malta." What was the year they occupied Malta?
 - a. 1530
 - b. 1538
 - c. 1930

6. The Battle of Malta would prove to be pivotal in world events. Did the Knights of Malta prevail?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

7. What was the year of this battle?
 - a. 1565
 - b. 1665
 - c. 1788

Disbanded by Napoleon in 1798 upon the capture of Malta. In 1803, the knights moved to Catania, Sicily and, in 1834, finally relocated to Rome.

In 1972, the Sovereign Military Order of Malta erected a monument and garden in the Muristan at Jerusalem where the Order's hospital had once stood.

From Bill Miklos
Grand Commandery Orator
Hint: Answers are below

Answers:

1. 1080
2. 1126
3. 1142 It became a Hospitaller castle.
4. 1310
5. 1530
6. Yes
7. 1565

2021
I
GRAND COUNCIL ORATION
MAY 2021

The Apocalypse of Freemasonry

By John L. Cooper III

(This oration was prepared for the virtual Grand Session, but not presented due to time constraints. The slides not added)

On March 19, 2020, the first general “Stay at Home” order was issued to all its citizens by the State of California. The COVID-19 pandemic had struck. We did not yet know the full extent of this deadly attack on our lives, but it was clear that the response to what we did know would be a life-changing experience for all of us. That was especially true for us as Masons. The day before Grand Master Trauner issued a directive that all “in person” Masonic activities be suspended, a directive that was based on a recommendation of the California Department of Public Health on March 16. Thus began the long descent into a world that none of us had experienced before, with no clear understanding of how this would affect one of the world’s most social organizations – Freemasonry. The next thirteen months would be an unnerving experience for members of our lodges, chapters, councils and Commanderies, a world that we had never experienced. The Apocalypse of Freemasonry was upon us.

For those who read their Bible on a regular basis, the imagery from the Book of Revelation must have come to mind. This work, the last book in the Bible, is also known by the name of The Apocalypse of St. John the Evangelist. Written during a great persecution of Christians in the Roman Empire around the year A.D. 96, its terrifying imagery has become a part of our literary as well as religious

heritage. Of all the images in this work of imaginative terror, that of the Four Horsemen is probably the best known. In the sixth chapter, the author describes a series of violent disasters that befall humanity. The first of these horses is a ghostly creature, and he and his riders carry a great plague, which threatens to wipe out all human beings on earth.

The words in this passage of Scripture are sobering, and especially when read as the Great Plague of 2020 came roaring into our lives, for its name was Death and Hades. Death and Hell. Death. As of May 2 this year, 3,214,706 human beings had died from the Great Plague of 2020. Most were strangers, but some were family and friends.

But as terrifying as was the Great Plague itself, the impact on those who did not sicken and die was even greater. The disruption of our daily life was a constant reminder that nothing was now normal anymore. This very meeting today of our Grand Council, conducted on the Internet and viewed remotely is the result of the disruption in our Masonic life caused by the Great Plague of 2020. We hope that we are on our way out of the woods – but we just don't know everything that we would like to know as yet.

However, let's return for a moment to the word "Apocalypse." The ordinary meaning of "Apocalypse" today is something akin to "disaster." We use the term apocalyptic to describe an event that is disastrous in nature – something that is terrible and evil in its very being. But that is not the original meaning of the word.

It is actually a Greek word, and the root of the word in Greek is *kaluptein* – which means "to cover" – to cover something up. Its antithesis is a word meaning "to uncover" – to take the cover off something. That is how the Apocalypse of St.

John the Evangelist got its other name – the Book of Revelation. It is a book that is revealing something – uncovering something.

This is the Greek word that is at the root of Apocalypse. It means to uncover something that is happening – to let us see something clearly that was previously hidden.

Richard Rohr, a Franciscan Priest from the Center for Action and Contemplation in New Mexico recently wrote this:

‘While we primarily use the word “apocalypse” to mean to destroy or threaten, in its original context, apocalypse simply meant to reveal something new. The key is that in order to reveal something new, we have to get the old out of the way.’

Father Rohr then quotes Neale Donald Walsh to explain what this means:

‘Yearning for a new way will not produce it. Only ending the old way can do that. You cannot hold onto the old all the while declaring that you want something new. The old will defy the new; the old will deny the new; the old will decry the new. There is only one way to bring in the new. You must make room for it.’

I want to put this into our Masonic context. One of the things that I have observed during the year of the Great Plague is that Masons were forced to do something different – something that they could always have done before, but didn’t, because they were so used to doing things just one way that they never took seriously the alternatives available to them – until they had to – until the Great Plague made the

“have to.” We talked about change from time to time, but never really got serious about it. We knew that many of the members of our lodges, chapters, councils and Commanderies lived too far away to attend meetings, or were too elderly to drive at night to attend meetings, or perhaps were not really interested in what we were doing in our lodges, chapters, councils or Commanderies. But, then we discovered that much of this was not true. We found that when we had to hold our meetings online, members who lived too far away to attend our “normal” meetings wanted to attend them; members that could not drive at night wanted to attend our meetings; and members that we did not know were interested in our meetings suddenly were interested in them. We had discovered that a new way of connecting with our members meant that they were now drawn into the orbit of what we were doing as Masons.

Well, not completely. In addition to holding stated meetings and reading the minutes of the previous meeting, Masons also confer degrees. And we could not do that online, which was no end of frustration for most of us. The teachings of Freemasonry are communicated through our degrees, even through the esoteric ritual that we use to open and close our lodges, chapters, councils and Commanderies. We could not do that electronically and remotely. But we could see and talk to our members via the Internet, and even more, we could bring into our fellowship online members that we otherwise would never see at our regular meetings. We discovered that Masonic fellowship is not just confined to those who can come in person to our lodges, chapters, councils and Commanderies – it can be available to those who otherwise we would never see. And this discovery – this change – is what Neale Donald Walsh is talking about. Listen, again, to what he is saying:

‘Yearning for a new way will not produce it. Only ending the old way can do that. You cannot hold onto the old all the while declaring that you want something new. The old will defy the new; the old will deny the new; the old will decry the new. There is only one way to bring in the new. You must make room for it.’

“You must make room for it.” Hear those words again: “You must make room for it.” In planning for the resumption of our “normal” life as Masons, we have to make room for what we discovered during the year of the Great Plague. If we merely go back to talking to and meeting with our brethren who can physically travel to a lodge room to experience Masonic fellowship, all those whom we discovered during 2020 will once more disappear from our “radar screen.” They will fade back into the obscurity to which we had consigned them because we did not have to think of them, nor talk to them, nor find out about their lives because we never saw them “in person.”

We cannot just go back to doing what we were doing before – or maybe I should say that we should not go back to doing what we were doing before. As Walton said, “You cannot hold onto the old all the while declaring that you want something new.” As leaders in Freemasonry we will have to make a conscious decision to keep on doing what we learned to do during the Great Plague – to keep on reaching out on a frequent basis to those that we drew into our circle of brotherhood during this apocalyptic year. We truly “uncovered” a hidden treasure as a result of being forced to do so – the treasure of our brothers that we never see at our degrees and meetings – and we found that we truly enjoyed their company as much as they enjoyed ours.

As you return to your lodges, chapters, councils and Commanderies, think about this. Think about how you can take advantage of what we learned during the Year of the Great Plague about the meaning of “inclusion,” and of how much so many of our brethren were so happy that you and I found a way to include them in our Masonic fellowship. Don’t let that go as you return to “normal.” Plan for continuing to use the medium of distant connection to all our members, and include it in your activities. In the words with which we close every lodge meeting, “Let Brotherly Love prevail, and every moral and social virtue cement us!”

So Mote It Be!

2022
I
GRAND CHAPTER ORATION
MAY 2022

“Future Proof” or Business as Usual?
By Marty M. Cusing

On March 9 of 2020, the first of many official communications from the Grand Lodge of California began reaching members via email stating that the Grand Lodge was monitoring the situation and growing public health concerns about the COVID-19 virus. Four days later, Most Worshipful John E. Trauner, then Grand Master, released another memo stating that some Grand Lodge activities would be postponed or cancelled that year. By May 16, 2020, the California Department of Public Health released new guidance on the prevention of COVID-19 transmission and found that all non-essential gatherings should be postponed or canceled until further guidance is provided. Most Worshipful Trauner would then release a statement that in accordance with these guidelines, all Masonic gatherings are non-essential, and by his direction there would be no Masonic gatherings of any kind in this state until further direction is given by the Grand Master. This essentially halted all semblance of Masonry as we knew it, through the rest of the 2020 year, and on through 2021 when Most Worshipful Arthur H. Weiss renewed this directive through his term as the successive Grand Master.

If you think Grand Lodge of California and its subordinate Lodges took a hit on social connections in those years, and the very basis of why many men seek out Masonry, I am sure you can guess our Grand York Rite of California did as

well – cancelling in-person gatherings and the 2020 and 2021 Grand York Rite Sessions [opting for a virtual session in those years]. Good morning Most Excellent Grand High Priest, Grand Chapter officers, distinguished guests, Brothers and friends, after 36 months since our last in-person Grand Chapter opening, it feels good to be back!

In the early part of 2022, I sparked a conversation with our Grand High Priest to see what topic he would like me to base my oration on this year. He asked me to focus on the future of Royal Arch five to ten years down the road: What kinds of candidates we will see and what will they expect, their reliance on technology, what impact do we see they will bring to the way we do business, and how we can pragmatically impart our traditions without stifling enthusiasm for necessary change? What a fitting topic to be covering this morning. I turn 42 in a couple of weeks and feel I am already an arm's length in age difference from the younger generation of leaders and potential candidates for masonry.

Up until a few months ago, Masonry, as we knew it, was closed for business, and [extroverted]-introverts like myself, would rejoice at the opportunity to be shut in and quarantined during the nationwide stay-at-home order by our President of the United States, Governor of California and Grand Master of Masons in California. I began taking up other hobbies in life, like spending more time with my family exploring the many old towns and historic sites of California, and hiking trails that we probably drove by hundreds of times and never noticed. We had to try to make do with what little entertainment resources were available to me, my wife and two daughters. I was even able to treat myself to a brand-new pair of hiking boots that promised to bring out that woodsman, extreme hiker, outdoorsy man

displayed right there on the box – but even if that didn't aid to my new persona with long hair and untrimmed beard I was starting to grow, the boots were guaranteed to be: waterproof. I contemplated on that word waterproof, believing that I could glean from so simple a word a double entendre to mean that this waterproof would: 1. keep my feet dry from the outside elements and allow me to hike through rough and rugged terrain, but at the same time 2. not allow my feet to dry from - natural perspiration. I wondered, could this double meaning also be applied to the word: futureproof? And there, it came to me, are we creating a type of Masonry that would be futureproof, or future proof? Are you confused already? I know this sounds like a heavy topic to be covering first thing on a Monday morning but let me explain further.

In the years leading up to the COVID-19 shutdowns, the topic of technology being incorporated into Masonry was a hotly debated topic in Lodges. Social media had taken evolutionary leaps in the last twenty to thirty years, but Lodges and Chapters often took a back seat to these changes and opted to keep much of our “secret” business procedures relatively intact and untouched. I wondered what my home Chapter was doing thirty years ago in 1992, so I had a look in our minutes. Besides the regular business one would hear read and taken care of during a stated, the High Priest reflected on the “Masonic Night” that was held the month before was successful, but applications were not coming in from the Blue Lodges that he thought would, but he noted that there was interest in York Rite outreach from the members, never alluding to what would interest these potential candidates. Minutes from twenty years ago in 2002 reads similar, albeit the narrative of meetings that year spanned about a half page of notes with nothing very interesting to note besides the statement that ”none of the

Dias officers would make Grand Sessions that year”. As I continued to read further through the years of minutes, there were many instances that the members understood there was a problem with entertaining interest in our York Rite Bodies, but by the end of a High Priest’s terms, little to no movement was made to remedy the problem and the issue fell into the lap of the next High Priest. If your meetings and minutes sound similar to this, your Chapter is already on pace of being futureproof: allowing all the sweat and muck to get stuck inside by remaining in that same shell of a mindset, which will inevitably lead to your Chapter or York Rite Bodies not being able to reach a future.

The hard work has already been done for the York Rite. A Brother has already made it through the doors of his Lodge, and those that remained after their own Raising are prime fodder for attracting into one of the many appendant or concordant bodies. The problem is, how do we get the attention of these new or seeking Brothers? Are we clear in our approach and mission as a body? I can only speak from my own experience when I was seeking further light after my third degree, and that is to say all I knew about the York Rite was from watching some conspiracy videos on YouTube, and a desire to become a Knight Templar someday - finding the ark of the covenant would only be a bonus! All the other stuff in between [read Chapter Degrees and Council Degrees] were just a distraction to get into the Commandery.

About a week ago, I had the honor of hosting my Scottish Rite Valley’s centennial celebration. Leading up to the celebration, I also did some digging into the membership and history of our Valley and found ups and downs, but I also saw that we were thriving as a body situated in an area in the Bay Area that lost much of it’s jurisdictional reach

when over half of the Blue Lodges in our area shuttered or consolidated in the last 100 years. What I did find was that we were led by committed leaders and committees willing to pivot with the times and continually reinvent themselves. When the pandemic hit, and while we were unable to meet in person, we immediately adopted virtual social connections to allow brethren and friends to join in on fellowship and discussion from anywhere in the world, and many other masonic bodies in our building took notice and joined together in collaboration. What began as weekly Tuesday night social meetings - with Burlingame Lodge - over Scotch and libations, widened into virtual masonry in the form of study groups, award nights, masonic memorial services, special interest discussion, guest speakers, and just plain old connecting with one another without focusing all of our time on the business meeting. I realized that not only were we maintaining a regular number of members equivalent to, and in many cases greater, to the numbers during in-person meetings, we saw more participation because there was something for everyone.

[Atlas Chapter example] Take an example from our youngest Chapter in California, Atlas Chapter UD, candidates and service projects.

The new generational young man must juggle his education, career path, family (both children and aging parent), social life (both in-person and social media) and all of the other responsibilities, leisure and pleasure that he has to balance as well. This places that average man with an attention span that can be measured in minutes and seconds, and he is required to make millions of unconscious decisions to see what, in his periphery, demands extra attention, and what can be slough off and replaced with something that is more personally meaningful and beneficial to himself. Think

about that for a second, I've been speaking for X minutes, and if I have not connected with you in some meaningful way, I probably lost you around "Good Morning". [Psychology Today] The 18 months away from traditional masonry taught us that we needed to refocus our efforts on the target we have been missing out on — being relevant.

Now there's no silver bullet or magic potion I can offer you because being relevant in my neck of the woods can be vastly different from the community of men and Masons you have living around you. The pandemic and the advent of the virtual Masonry we just witnessed gave us a freebie reset button to make vast changes in the way we do business, and ultimately become the futureproof that will attract those seeking something meaningful, something special, something relevant in our York Rite. Perhaps looking into the past will inspire you in where we go from here, because at one time, each one of our Chapters, Councils and Commanderies were formed by a group of men that were willing to step out and do something different for the future of our Craft.

2022
II
GRAND COUNCIL ORATION
MAY 2022

Interesting Times and Cryptic Masonry
By Jonathan H. Prestage

It has proven my sincere pleasure and privilege to serve the Grand Council of Cryptic Masons in California over this past year. Thank you to Most Illustrious Peter Champion for appointing me as the Grand Orator and for the opportunity to stand before our Companions assembled here this morning.

Each of us is truly blessed to be here, sitting next to one another in person, rather than viewing square frame digital projections of our faces through the astral realms of Zoom.

There is an old adage, a curse, unfortunately, “May you live in interesting times.” We have each just lived through; we have survived our interesting times. Not all of our companions are so lucky, and we have tragically lost several just over this past Cryptic year. However, again, we are blessed for the health of those who share this sacred space with us today.

As we exit months of sheltering in place and leave behind the difficulties of greeting our friends only at a distance, we convene again under new challenges, but also, new opportunities.

What we now face in the Grand Council and throughout Cryptic Masonry across the State of California is the opportunity for our own “Great Reset.” Now is the time,

beyond any other in our varied Masonic careers, to step back and re-assess who we are, what we're doing, and where we are going.

I charge you to begin at the micro-level and evolve into considering the macro, the greater purpose of our whole. Begin with your purpose in Cryptic Masonry. Ask yourself what first inspired you to become a Royal and Select Master, ask yourself why you became active in your own Council, and consider well the answers and implications to these questions.

Then, no matter how simple or complicated your conclusions, expand your introspection to envelop your whole Council itself. What is the purpose of your Cryptic Council? What does it mean to belong to your Council and Cryptic Masonry, and why should any other Companion care to join in the fruits of your labors? At either level, the micro or the macro, if the answer is not readily apparent, then stop, contemplate, and develop a response fit to share with any friend and aspiring Royal and Select Master.

Whether encouraged by friendship, higher symbolic learning, the work accomplished through the Cryptic Masons Medical Research Foundation, or even simply a sense of advancement and completion along a path began as an Entered Apprentice Mason, each of us should immediately develop an explanation for why we are here and what we are doing. How else will we inspire our future companions and rally our members under a common banner if we can't even explain why they should want to join our good works?

In our Councils, the representative of Hiram, King of Tyre, expresses his personal aspirations in the construction of the great temple we each venerate. He explains the necessity of completing the chamber wherein to safely deposit our

greatest treasurers and the satisfaction inherent in accomplishing one's own duties.

Who here has considered the meaning of these words? Who amongst us has truly dwelt upon the symbol of this chamber, meditated upon the treasures of the Cryptic Council, and set out to fulfill their duties, not only during their terms of office, but those duties we perpetually obligate ourselves to fulfill when amongst our Companions?

And the purpose given to the representative of Hiram, King of Tyre?

He is to exemplify the fellowship of Kings, to strengthen our friendships, to lend tribute and recognition to our ancient craft, and to support our Illustrious Chief in overseeing the workmen of the temple.

Whether an installed Deputy Master or not, each of our Cryptic Masons are therein guided towards the very foundations of our fraternity; exhibit the fellowship of kings; brighten the chain of friendship; furnish memorials to the ancient Craft; and aid and support our companions.

More profound wisdom is to be found in the duties of King Solomon's representative in Council: to teach the secret traditions, to exemplify the moral principles of our order, and to maintain with reverence the ancient landmarks of our fraternity.

Have you asked yourselves, "What are the secret traditions?"

When I first stood as the founding Captain of the Guard in our newly consecrated Cryptic Council, I was blessed with

the opportunity to stand in the West across from my dearest mentor and friend, who sat as Illustrious Master in the East. As our Illustrious Master locked his eyes upon me and began asking of whom I represented, and as we fell into a cadence that built up into a sublime chord, then and there during the creation of our sacred space I recognized the secret tradition at work.

Whether describing the immanence and transcendence of deity, or expressing the profound recognition of the gifts in sincere affection and friendship shared across time and space, our Council was exemplifying exactly what it was designed to perpetuate.

And now, when it is time to leave this space and return to our homes, I charge each of you to look towards where you came from. To cultivate the tools necessary to accomplish your duties, and to look towards those Royal Arch Companions who precede the Council and its nine arches. Consider how you will rightfully inspire our companions to join in our works and to share our duties.

As we renew our vision and return to our temples, now is the opportunity to begin again, to pick up our trowels and find those stones not yet cemented by the affections of brotherly love and truth. Inspire your fellows with the very words inherent in our foundations, and explain to them why it should be their sacred duty, their privilege, to become a Royal and Select Master of Cryptic Masonry.

After our sessions have concluded, and we quit this sacred space,
I want to leave you with this charge in mind, we have each heard,
yet perhaps not all accomplished:

“Companions, being about to quit this Sacred Retreat, to mix again with the world, let us not forget, amid the cares and vicissitudes of active life, the bright example of sincere friendship, so beautifully illustrated in the lives of the founders of these Degrees. Let us take the lesson home with us and may it strengthen the bonds of fraternal love between us; incite our hearts to duty and our desires to wisdom. Let us exercise Charity, cherish Hope, and walk in Faith. And may that moral principle which is the mystic cement of our fellowship remain with us and bless us.”

May the Great Architect bless each of you, and may he continue to bless Cryptic Masonry.

2022
III
GRAND COUNCIL
BATTAILIONS AND BELLES LUNCHEON TALK
MAY 2022

Integrity
By Robert M. Sachs

I am Robert Sachs, a Companion of San Luis Obispo Council #38. This is my wife, Melanie, who elected to join me in my journey today for this presentation.

Before I begin, I invite you to imagine that our dear friend, Most Illustrious Companion and Grand Master Peter Champion and his Lady, Janice, are sitting amongst us today. Sadly, they remain at their care facility, quarantined due to them both having Covid. Very slowly, they are recovering.

About a month ago, Right Illustrious Companion, Andy Pippin asked me if I would be willing to say something at this gathering. I asked him what he had in mind to which he gave me this very wise advice – whatever you like! He then said that I should talk for 45 minutes to an hour. I said, “How about 20 minutes,” to which he said, “Agreed.”

With these clear instructions, I decided to approach another good friend and companion, Bruce Rick, who suggested that I do a short talk on the concept of Integrity and Freemasonry. As the Orator for the Scottish Rite Valley of Santa Barbara, I had just written an article on this subject, which he encouraged me to present here. And as Cryptic Council degrees speak much of Grand Master Hiram Abif,

I thought I would cite him as an example, a model of integrity.

At my Blue Lodge, King David's #209 in SLO, a Brother, Richard Manuputy, painted a mural for our dining room. Central to the mural are our first three Grand Masters: King Solomon of Israel, King Hiram of Tyre, and Hiram Abif, the architect of the first Temple. Below them are three men in chains. Un-knowing visitors and those of conspiratorial minds have commented that this proves that Masonry condones slavery. Overhearing such comments, when present, a Brother will usually step forward to allay these suspicions.

We explain how the three men in chains were former workers on the Temple. They were Fellowcraft, the actual craftsman in the construction. Entered Apprentices were the men who lifted and carried materials. Master Masons were overseers or supervisors of the work, coordinating the activities of both the Entered Apprentices and Fellowcraft. In this time, there were no certificates or diplomas to distinguish who did what, so there needed to be a means to test a workman's competency for the work they were to be delegated. Thus, when coming to or being assigned a new job, to prove yourself capable of performing the obligations of a particular degree, you would have been given a universally recognized step and "sign," - a way of standing and using your hands with gestures that would let a Master Mason know where you were to be placed and what to do. You can imagine how critical this was in ensuring the safety of all concerned and stability in construction.

Fellowcraft on the Temple site had been informed that upon the Temple's completion, they would have earned the right to be designated Master Masons – meaning that they could

go to another worksite, show the main overseer of that project the step and sign of a Master Mason and thus be given a job as a Master or overseer.

But, although King Solomon's Temple was nearing completion, a group of Fellowcraft was anxious and decided they needed the step and sign of a Master Mason before that time. In the end, most of the disgruntled Fellowcraft recanted, but there were three who persisted and approached Grand Master Hiram Abif and demanded the "secrets" of a Master Mason. After all, he was just the architect, not a King like the other two Grand Masters.

Try as they might – from a plea to a demand to a threat – GM Hiram Abif would not comply. He "knew" how important the step and signs to identify competency were to the protection and safety of all and the integrity of the building itself. Was his refusal defiance? Was it bravery? Although these qualities may have been there, did his action have a deeper source, bespeaking more of his entire character?

If I were to summarize in one word all the qualities that went into that refusal, the word and characteristic that comes to mind is INTEGRITY.

Integrity is a powerful word and weighty concept. It has to do with things that do or are intended to come together in a synchronized and harmonious manner. A derivation of this word is integration, which can be viewed from a personal, social, or political lens – to name just three perspectives. Hence whereas in one sphere integration can come with immediate benefits, the synchronicity and harmoniousness demanded for things to come together as wished may demand the time, patience, and perseverance we Masons utter in our degree work. And, this can be what is demanded

of us in every aspect of our life for integration to take place and with it, the marks of integrity.

For me, in a nutshell, the first common phrase that comes to mind if I apply the word integrity as a feature of a Mason's character, is that "He walks his talk." His speech, what he utters in all aspects of his life, is matched, in synch, and harmonious with what he demonstrates through the actions he deploys in the world through his physical manifestation, i.e. his body. The body and speech of a Mason demonstrate his skill or intention in being civil, on the level, charitable, and compassionate to Brethren and his community at large.

No doubt, if each of us lived a life marked with integrity, the world we see around us would be a better place. The moral and civil education to be so is desperately needed in these times. What distinguishes us as Masons is that our degree work, through our Blue Lodges and every concordant body, provides us with allegories and scripted ritual to remind us of the qualities, tenets and virtues that are the foundation of integrity. Furthermore, before we go out into the world to act as such, we are encouraged within the cauldron of our Lodges to test ourselves – to assess how well we have integrated our words and deeds in relation to each other. In the mind-body spiritual tradition of Buddhism, the historical Buddha said it was the "sangha" or community, which was the best teacher – to make sure what we learned and how we practiced, i.e. how we walked and talked demonstrated integrity. In Masonry, our "sangha" is our Brethren – which is why it is so important for us to strive to "best work and best agree," and truly cherish them as friends and mentors on our Masonic journey.

As a side note to this, I would like to speak to you all as Masonic couples, partners, or those who have in the past or anticipate in the future to be in partnership as Beloveds.

Having a Beloved, a Sweetheart, a Belle with whom you travel alongside in your Masonic journey is to be part of a very special sangha. In this bond of affection, there is – for the most part – very little you don’t know about each other – the good, the bad, and the not-so pretty. In my classes and presentations focused on relationship, I tell folks that in general when it comes to the people around us, we always know or “feel” what is going on. We just agree not to blow each other’s cover. Except – in this very special sangha. Gentlemen, I would wager that when you walk in the front door from work, from Lodge, from whatever activity has you out in the world, your Belle knows and responds to you in accordance to whether or not in body, speech, and mind you are or are not in integrity. And the same goes for you, ladies. This is an amazing gift – really a fast track to coming back to center, getting honest, being real. And, if we come back from Lodge to our Beloveds in integrity, this is the best confirmation that our Lodges are healthy and making good men better as they should.

All this said, the rough to smooth path we tread cannot fully demonstrate full integration until we do the inner work to transform our thoughts and embrace with joy, the discipline of keeping our passions within due bounds. This is life-long work. And our degrees bear witness to how challenging this is. Our charges remind us of how we should walk our talk, but in each degree, there is some mention or teaching about contemplation, reflection, prayer, and meditation implicitly or explicitly. In fact, this aspect, the aspect of heart and mind, demands of us the “grit” to persevere, to be honest with ourselves, to accept in the words of the Christian

mystic and philosopher Teilhard de Chardin, that we are spiritual beings having a human experience. Thus, for me, integrity takes grit.

Which brings us back to the story of Grand Master Hiram Abif. And I ask this question: What was GM Hiram Abif doing just before he encountered his assailants?

He had entered the Sanctum Sanctorum to pray – in gratitude and to seek inspiration. In esoteric discussions about our Craft and its symbols, we hear that the Temple is a metaphor for ourselves and that through our attitude, actions, and gratitude we are building a Temple - not made of stone - as preparation for our final journey. As such, the Sanctum Sanctorum becomes a metaphor for us going within – to connect with our own hearts and minds. And from this spiritual act of gratitude and fortification, we emerge strengthened and resolved to do what is most pleasing to the Supreme Grand Architect by having our body, speech, and mind aligned – fully integrated to be the best version of ourselves in whatever comes next for us to do.

In a “perfect world”, GM Hiram Abif was supposed to emerge from the Sanctum Sanctorum and have inspiration to create the next phase in the Temple’s building. But, that is the plan of men, not necessarily of the Supreme Grand Architect. So rather than display his integrity through his architectural skills, he – as a Temple in the making – was mortally tested.

Was he prepared for such a test? Indeed, in our Cryptic degrees, we hear of the reflections GM Hiram Abif has about impermanence, the appreciation of the importance of the moment, and certainty that death comes to us all, regardless of our plans, what we need to finish, resolutions

to our life's conundrums and crises. Sometimes we leave this earthly existence with "unfinished" business. Grand Master Hiram Abif's understanding is profound and rests in the heart and mind of knowing where death no longer holds sway over his emotions. Thus, free of mortal fear, in a state of profound integrity, he refuses to abdicate what is so essential to leaving this life and meeting his Maker.

And thus, because of his actions fully integrated in body, speech, and mind, he leaves us as a legacy his example and the cornerstone of the precious craft in which we are so proudly engaged.

In summation, the path of Masonry is all about integrity. In the various aspects of our Fraternity – our allegories, our obligations, our charges, and the presence and support of true and trusted friends – we endeavor with the intention of becoming a Mason in body, speech, and mind. When we strive to do this, the actions we do in our communities, our homes, and with our loved ones, speak louder than our words.

But, there is a bit more I need to say...

We are living in a time where integrity is not valued and with it, gestures of civility in word and conduct. Cleverness is valued over wisdom. Doubling down on our errors and falsities is a macho display of some twisted sense of righteous coolness. And there seems displayed throughout our media streams an inordinate amount of time devoted to ogling and superficial respect for those with big bank accounts who display worldly command over the realm of commodities. In such a world, everything becomes a commodity where we hold to an illusion that anything – even love – can be bought.

Yet, we see that those seduced by this worldly aspiration – to which we are culturally entrained - are generally unhappy

– the rich as well as the poor. For, if it is true that we were made in the image of the Most High, then our limited and limiting self-ambitions always let us down as they can never be healthily integrated and at peace without bodies and emotions. And, if we put this within the context of pandemics, ecological crises, and the threat of nuclear war, anyone who claims to feel fantastic and that everything in their world is perfect and great is – to my mind – a liar, a psychotic, or under the influence of medication or some really great drugs.

Which brings us back to Freemasonry.

The world needs Freemasonry. Our spiritual traditions teach of virtuous action, but too often, in the form of religious organizations, the follies of human ambition and desire come alive and are cloaked in a veneer of virtuous pretense. And our secular education and organizations have tasks to which they hold, but rarely have as central in their operations a foundation of the morals and tenets espoused in spiritual traditions to which to adhere. Thus we see in so many spheres the toxicity of jealousy, petty rancor, cynicism, and incivility.

But, Freemasonry is a hybrid – and what I would claim to be a noble hybrid – where devotion to the Supreme Grand Architect is not displayed by devotional activities per se, but rather through works that benefit the great family to which we were born. With a mind fortified by ritual, reflection, and encouraged fraternal interaction infused with the tenets and virtues that are the essence of all great spiritual traditions, our task as Masons is to step into the world in any and all functions, be they industrial, educational, ecological, financial, social, political, even religious as men and women

with as much grit – as much integrity – as our Grand Master Hiram Abif displayed, even in his final moments.

Although we lament of dwindling numbers, our ranks are slowly being re-seeded by young men and women thirsty for something authentic and real. By standing tall, as men and women in integrity, we, as Masons and as a part of all the Masonic families will be beacons of light for the many who are now or may be in the future in search of more light.

Thank you.

2022
IV
GRAND COMMANDERY
LUNCHEON TALK
MAY 2022

Leadership
By Jeffery A. Bolstad

My talk is going to be a little different than what you are used to hearing. I like to give you, as a leader, something you can take home and put to use... wherever you happen to be in your leadership continuum.

Templary is different from any other Masonic body. We are a ministry masquerading as a fraternity. We are men of God and servant warriors for Christ.

All of us here have been called to leadership. Servant. Leadership.

A couple of Navy Seals wrote a book called “Extreme Ownership”In this book the point is made that there is no such thing as a bad platoon, only bad leaders.

The same can be said for Commanderies. The real question is why are we facing such a dearth of leadership? And what do we do about it? I would go so far as to say we don't have a membership problem. We have a leadership problem.

My theory is that 60 years ago when Masonry was at its peak, membership wise, we had good leadership because historically....most all of the community leaders belonged to the lodge. Maybe they joined because it was the popular thing to do, but we benefited from their leadership.

Today, very few of the leaders in the community are joining us, and even those that are on the rolls don't have much involvement other than paying their dues.

The upshot is that Masonic organizations end up with men in positions of leadership who have no idea about what leadership even looks like!

Poor leadership sometimes comes about because of us. We promote our friends into positions of leadership, when a better choice is ready and willing. So we pass over the best guy for the spot because we like our buddy "Old Joe" and we want to see him get to be the Commander. Or we practice law and we know a lawyer in town who would really like to be Grand Commander...and we like to take care of our fellow lawyers when we can, so despite the fact that there are much better choices for the job, we appoint the lawyer friend.

Now we've created a situation where the best guy for the spot gets discouraged, and we never see him again. Meanwhile, "Ol Joe" just fills the spot because he wants the title...and probably really wants the title of Past Commander...and nothing happens and the Commandery continues to swirl the drain. Or even worse, the power associated with the position goes to his head and he drives everyone away with micromanagement abuse of his position and highhanded edicts. I've actually heard a Past Grand Master say on more than one occasion, "what good is power if you don't abuse it".

And then he appoints one of HIS buddies to the bottom of the line, without any regard to leadership...because he doesn't care about it. He only cares that it's his buddy.

Or even worse....some PGC (or 2 or 3 or a whole herd) wants to control EVERYTHING and so he gets his puppets elected into the line so he can pull the strings. Or a Grand Secretary is up to the very same chicanery! And that brings us to this very day.

Our leadership situation is directly proportional to our membership situation.

I have never considered myself an expert on leadership, but I am an die-hard student of that subject. Many years ago, I set out to do what I can to help those who are in leadership positionsor to help those who have a desire to be in leadership.

So what do we do? First, I believe we need to check our personal friendships at the door of the ballot box and vote for the good of the order, not for the good of our buddy. Pray about it!!! It's ok to call on The Great Captain of Our Salvation for discernment in every matter! Templary is one of His important ministries!!!

Second, since whoever we elect probably has little to no leadership experience, we have to gently help them develop as they move up the line. Make sure to approach them out of love and care, not in a way that makes them feel like you're "telling them what to do."

All of you here are in some sort of leadership role. If you are a good leader, you are always working on getting better at it.

So let's talk about leadership. And further, what is known as leadership -- SERVANT Leadership. That stuff that was invented by Jesus. Really, I've got nothing new for you

today. Everything you need to know you already know. Because really all it is, is just doing the right thing.

Treat people the way you want to be treated. Be the boss you wish your boss would be. Be the neighbor you wish your neighbor would be. Everything you need to know you learned in kindergarten. Don't hit. Share. Meet needs.

We clearly know the difference between servant leaders and self-serving leaders.

And what's happening now is that people are choosing servant leadership because they recognize it's the right thing to do. To serve other people.

So that's what I do. I teach people about stuff that they learned a long time ago. I don't instruct, I remind. I remind people. Everything I talk about I stole all that stuff that has been around for centuries. I'm a thief, I admit it.

It's the right thing to do to have patience and self-control with people. It's the right thing to do to be kind. It's the right thing to do to listen. It's the right thing to be humble. The right thing to be respectful. It's the right thing, as a Christian filled with the Holy Spirit...to forgive those who YOU perceive have wronged you. Forgive and forget. Not seek retribution to gain your pound of flesh.

That's all leadership is - it's just doing the right thing. So this stuff's been around a long time.

You're not a leader unless there are those who volunteer to follow you. Particularly in a volunteer organization. You cannot force someone to follow you. They have to choose to follow you. Leaders inspire people to follow them, they inspire people to go in the direction they are going.

Leadership then is how do we inspire and influence people to action? And excellence? "Do it, or else" isn't real effective these days in case you haven't noticed.

Feel free to pass this on. It's not original material and I can't tell you where I heard it. You can steal it from me because I stole it from someone else.

So that's what leadership is - Can you inspire and influence a group of people to excellence? Can you get them to own the mission? Can you get them to create excellence in your Commandery?

Leaders get in the game and they meet needs.

And that's why character is so important. You want to be a better leader? You've got to work on your character.

Leadership is just doing the right thing even when you don't feel like it. What's character? Doing the right thing even when you don't feel like it. Especially when you don't feel like it.

So it's the right thing to do to hold your members accountable to excellence, to grow them, to listen to them, to appreciate them, to encourage them. To inspire them.

We're wrong to think people can't change. People CAN change. But we're wrong to think it's easy.

It doesn't happen reading books and watching YouTube videos. Nobody ever became a better leader by reading a book.

Leadership is exactly like being an athlete or a musician. It's exactly analogous. How do you get good at golf? You practice.

We need good leadership developed at the grassroots level in order to have good leadership at the Grand level. Leadership is a skill set that needs to be practiced, and Masonry has more opportunity to practice than any other venue I know of. One final story.

Story of the two stonemasons. Go to first One ...how do you like your job? I like my job. I've been working on this wall for as long as I can remember. The stones are heavy the work is backbreaking, it's monotonous, I stand in the scorching hot sun all day and I don't know if I'm even gonna finish this wall in my lifetime. But it's a job, it pays the bills. You get to the second guy and ask him "how do you like your job". He says I love my job, I'm building a cathedral. Sure, I've been building this wall as long as I can remember. Sure the stones are heavy and the work is backbreaking and I gotta stand out here in the scorching hot sun all day and it's monotonous and I don't even know I'm gonna finish this wall in my lifetime. But I'm serving my fellow man ...building a cathedral.

What they do is exactly the same.

This guy might even be a champion stone layer, the only difference is that only one of them knows why he shows up at work every day and the guy who knows why ...does not see himself as any more or less important than the architect or the guy doing the stained-glass windows or the landscaper ...they are all contributing to building something that they believe in...that is bigger than themselves

A leader is somebody who can put into words that which does not exist yet. The leader is the one who stands there and says in beautiful crystal clear words and he describes that cathedral that hasn't been built in words so clear that others can take that image and they can pass it on to others.

Why are you working so hard? Because I believe in it, we're building a cathedral. What cathedral? Let me tell you.

Are you describing your cathedral or are you just telling people about the wall you're building. The reason that everybody showed up here is because together we're gonna build a cathedral. We are all contributing to a world that we would rather live in.

There are leaders and there are those who lead. Leaders hold a position of power or influence. Those who lead inspire us ...they serve us....and we follow those who lead not because we have to but because we want to.

2022
V
GOLDEN STATE
CHAPTER OF RESEARCH
MEETING PAPER
MAY 2022

Breastplate of the High Priest
By Thomas C. Chavez



When you see the High Priest emblem on the Past High Priest Apron, the public can see the Breastplate and if you are asked, you can explain the twelve (12) colored square on the Tau.

"And Aaron shall bear the names of the children of Israel in the breastplate of judgment upon his heart when he goeth in unto the holy place for a memorial before the Lord continually" [Exodus 28.29]

Aaron was the first high priest and was Moses' brother. After Aaron died, subsequent high priests were his descendants, known as the sons of Aaron. The High Priest was the most glorious Jewish position. His representative dress was said to be "for glory and for beauty." It was made according to the design given by God to Moses.

The role of the breastplate becomes clear in the following text:

"Aaron shall bear the names of the children of Israel in the breastplate of judgment upon his heart when he goeth in unto the holy place, for a memorial before the Lord continually".

Why is the Breastplate so important? The breastplate was of great importance because by means of it, God revealed his Divine will to His chosen people. It was designed by God Himself and the directions as to how it was to be made were given to Moses as written in Exodus xxviii. 15, 20.

In the Septuagint (Old Testament in Greek), it is written by the Greek word "logeion," which means a speaker's platform. This describes exactly what the breastplate really was - the means by which God spoke to, i.e., answered, the inquiries of the high priest.

What did the Breastplate look like? The breastplate was clearly designed with the idea that the names of the twelve tribes engraved on the stones should be brought before God *"as a continual memorial."*

When we look at the breastplate, as we use in our ritual, we find it to be made of metal with twelve (12) gems. However, in reality, according to the Bible, the breastplate, or, as it is further named, the breastplate of judgment was, like the inner curtains of the Tabernacle, of "cunning work," which means that it was the work of a skilled weaver.

The material with which it was woven consisted of threads of gold and blue, purple and scarlet linen threads.

The breastplate was actually made of two pieces, which formed a sort of purse, or bag, in which also was kept two sacred stones. These stones were some divinely appointed

instruments by which the High Priest inquired of God about matters concerning the welfare of the Children of Israel. The Bible makes several references to these miraculous stones, but not anything physical, like the shape or size. They were probably two jewels.

When someone had to make an important decision, the request was made known to the high priest. He would stand before the lampstand near the altar. As the light from the candle reflected onto the two (2) stones from the Breastplate, this flash of light provided up to 24 combinations (2 x 12). Since there are twenty-two (22) letters in the Hebrew alphabet, the flashes of light could produce strings of letters.

It was said that God breathed through the wind, which in turn causes the veil to move, permitting a breeze to flicker the flames in the Lampstand to momentarily alter the angle of direction of the light onto the stones, and thence to the Breastplate. Thus God was able to communicate directly, but not audibly, to the high priest and answer the enquiry.

Which stones were on the breastplate? Upon the breastplate were set four rows of precious stones, three in each row, and upon them were engraved the names of the twelve tribes, and as the great Jewish historian Josephus adds, "in the order of their birth", but we are not told which stone to which tribe.

So which stones were used? This is a 2,000-year-old question. Although the Hebrew names of the twelve stones are not in question, the various translators cannot agree to a single translation. However, G. W. Kunz in "The Curious Lore of Precious Stones" says, *'the tribes are given in their order, with the stones appropriate to each and the color of the tribal standard pitched in the desert camp, this color corresponding in each case with that of the tribal stone.'*

Each of the twelve precious stones represented one of the tribes of Israel; thus, every time the High Priest entered the Holy of Holies, he would have the children of Israel on his heart.

What does this speak of but the love that the High Priest and, by extension, God himself, has for His children? Think of what a poignant and perfect picture this is. We are His jewels, and He has us on His heart.

2022
VI
GRAND COMMANDERY
VESPERS SERVICE READINGS
Written by Raymond E. Davis
MAY 2022

Call to Vespers
Delivered by David P. Studley

As we approach the evening of this day, let us pause to reflect on the glorious works of the creation and to adore our Great Creator.

At this time, it is our custom to remember those of our orders who were with us for a while as Companions and mentors and have recently been called home by our Creator to be with Him eternally.

These that we now remember have left impressions on our hearts and minds that direct us to the path they followed. Let us honor their dedication.

In Hebrews Chapter 13, Verse 7, we read:

“Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith.”

As we gather this evening in the quieting of the day, we bring our thoughts to reflect on the truth of the Love of our Father, and the Salvation gained by the loving gift of our Lord and Savior.

It is the time of day for us to hear and heed the comforting whisper of the Father's call to draw near His throne to pray.

Invocation

By Craig L. Flagtwet

As we now lift up our prayers to our Glorious and Merciful Creator, and offer our heartfelt appreciation for His gift of Grace, Jesus Christ, our Savior, let us also thank Him for the comforting touch of His Spirit.

All around us we see turmoil and dangers, in our schools, in our places of governance, in our places of commerce, and even in our places of worship.

Yet through all this we are calmed by His assurance that having His presence near us we are in a place of hope, and that we are blessed to be the means of distributing His message of hope. We thank Him for inspiring us to serve Him by feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, caring for the afflicted, and economically assisting those less fortunate than ourselves.

We humbly ask that we continue to be joined together in serving the needs of those whose burdens are even greater than our own. We do this because we are followers of Christ, and in His name and from His instruction for all His disciples, we now pray together:

'Our Father, Which art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but, deliver us from evil; for Thine is the Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory, forever.' Amen

Pastoral Prayer
By Roger S. Ross

Holy and Merciful Father, as we come before your throne in prayer, may the inspiring ideas of Your divine scripture fill our thoughts, so that the sure knowledge of Your divine presence among us will guide all that we do, and bring Glory to You. May our thoughts always be worthy of Your Holy Presence. With heartfelt gratitude, we seek the comfort of Your gift of grace, Your Son Jesus Christ as our Savior. We are very much aware of how far away from You we would be without Him, and we are equally aware of how close to You He has brought us. Father, Your scriptures remind us that we have a responsibility to reach others with the messages of our Savior. May the example of the touch of Your Glory in our lives inspire them to seek Your Grace and thereby make their burdens bearable. May we serve You with acts of caring for all Your children. For these things Lord, we seek Your divine blessing, through Your gift of Grace, Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. *Amen. 2022*

Vespers Message “Proclaim”
By Raymond E. Davies

Holy and Merciful Father, as we come to you we call out the Grand Commander’s Motto: “Fear Not: Proclaim and Celebrate our Faith”.

In Psalm 96 we read:

“Sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord, all the earth. Sing to the Lord, praise His name; proclaim His salvation day after day. Declare His glory among the nations, His marvelous deeds among all peoples.

Our Grand Commander's motto has three parts. While it appears to have two, be assured, there are three.

We, as Christian Knights, have chosen the task of maintaining the existence of the Christian church.

We know that we can be dedicated to our cause and be laborers for the Lord with the same dedication as these whom we are honoring this afternoon. These who were our companions, friends, and mentors.

These Companions and Sir Knights we honor this afternoon were of different denominations and different occupations, but they lived lives that are examples of how we should live. Not just displaying our beliefs only on our day of worship and one evening a week, but with our united Christian faith shining forth each and every day to the glory of God.

These companions we regard with respect in this time of remembrance sought our Creator's guidance faithfully in their daily lives. They labored for the needs of their families. They respected the efforts of those who labored before them and exhibited brotherhood for those who toiled with them. They were patriotic and considerate of their fellow citizens by public or military service and by being civically responsible in their communities. The Grand Commander's Motto recommends that.

They celebrated their faith by living the words. They talked the talk and walked in its light.

These who preceded us were not perfect human beings. Their significance to us is that they knew their own nature but decided each and every day to try to be better persons than the day they were before; and to live that way knowing that if they had shortcomings that their assurance of our

Father's Love and the saving Grace of our Savior would give them the needed strength.

Our society is successful today because of the steady positive united efforts of those who came before us and accomplished those efforts every day to implement the positive instructions of our Creator and Savior.

In our ranks, there were these who made the pathway of a worthwhile life clearer. These we honor today paid heed to the words of our Savior that humbleness and humility should be reflected in prayer and action. Especially action. They paid heed to the words of Jesus pointing to the responsibility of displaying the truth given to us from the beginning; that we are to love one another as He loves us.

These we honor today listened to the instructions in the epistles that believers are to be supportive and helpful of one another.

And they lived the traditions of our Orders. They provided funds for society's needs; they provided sustenance to those lacking nourishment; they saw to it that those bare to the elements were furnished shelter; they gave service to those in medical facilities; they donated their time to their communities; and they conducted their lives and occupations honestly and fairly. They never looked for pats on the back. They did these things because they knew they were the correct things to do. The Grand Commander's Motto recommends that also.

They proclaimed their faith by being the examples for us.

But the most inspiring part of the motto is: "Fear not:"

In the Old Testament, we find in Joshua Chapter 1 Verse 9:

Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.

And from our Savior, in the New Testament in Matthew Chapter 28 Verses 19 and 20:

Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.

Like these who preceded us, we need not fear. We too use our different God given abilities to inspire all we encounter to recognize the value of our Creator's gift of grace, our Savior's love, and to promote our Christian faith.

“Fear Not: Proclaim and Celebrate our Faith”

Remembrance For Our Ladies

Presented by Ladies Leslie Abbott, Susan Alderete, and
Kathy Miller

It is our honor to add to this Vespers Service a time to remember the ladies who have given alongside their husbands and has gone to her heavenly home since our last gathering.

We have lost ladies who in a bittersweet moment found their wings as angels and set off on their flight safely into the arms of God.

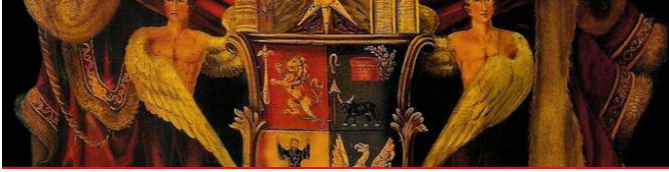
They have joined those who have gone before and were received with open arms as they made their way into heaven.

The Stars up in the Heavens, that light our lives tonight,
Are ones that always twinkle, and shine so very bright.
Placed in a Brilliant Galaxy, by God's Almighty Hand,
To shine throughout the Universe, like silver grains of sand.
As the flowers of this planet, when they fade away and die,

Bloom again in the Rainbow, that span's the evening sky.
When life is over, and our spirit takes it's flight,
Could it be re-born again and twinkle in the night?
To brighten up the Heavens for all the world to see,
And light the way through darkness, for folks like you and
me.

May the memories of our friends begin to bring comfort
rather than pain,
May the words, touch and presence of others bring solace,
And may you be blessed in your coming in and going out,
Grateful for a life lived and a legacy left behind.

The Golden State Chapter of Research



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Ex.: Comp.: William F. Kuhn

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