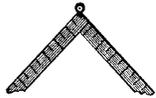




January 2017

From the East



thyself, therefore, to purity of heart, and thou shalt be like Saint John, a beloved disciple of Jesus, and shalt be filled with heavenly wisdom.”(Goffine’s Devout Instructions)

The feast of the Evangelist is little remembered today, except within Masonry where it is observed only in passing by a few lodges. In the past, it was considered a feast day of high importance for Freemasonry because of its proximity to the holidays and the presence of lodge members being close to home. It gave the brothers such as Bro. Washington a festive reason to gather and celebrate the end of the year with a table lodge. Meetings like this though is something less convenient today time, or lack of it, creates scheduling conflicts in additions many families traveling to celebrate Christmas.

Because it is not formally celebrated does not diminish the importance of the day, nor the symbol itself, as in the modern ritual we are reminded that we come from the Holy Saint John’s in Jerusalem, and as such we should pause and reflect on just what that means. John the Evangelist gives us an important lesson to pursue knowledge and wake from the darkness and renew our commitment to the awakening light of the Glorious Sun. Even taken out the Christian metaphor, we can salute with Sol Invictus, as knowledge is re-awakened from its cold wintry defeat.

John the Evangelist gives us a means to find harmony with the Christmas holiday of giving and compassion to the fraternity with brotherly love, relief, and truth.

Greeting Brethren,

The Christmas season is upon us and the end of the year rapidly approaches, we should not forget those less fortunate, as well as our men and women in uniform at home and abroad.

The Christmas holiday has no fundamental connection to the fraternity of Freemasonry, nowhere in the degrees or historical writings is there evidence of a link to any holiday in its practice, in particular the Christmas holiday season.

There are, however, certain celebrations that have become a part of the fraternity which are linked to one of the interesting symbols that resides at the heart of the practice. Without any specific reference, Masons are said to come from a Lodge of the Holy Saints John, the specific why and how of this connection is lost in the sands of metaphorical time, but some connection supposes a balance of the celestial equinox (from darkness to light).

Through this link, winter is said to be represented by **Saint John the Evangelist**, whose feast day falls on December 27th. This Holy Saint John has an interesting symbolic significance, in that, John the Evangelist is said to be the first disciple to recognize the Christ and believe that he had risen. Of the Saint it is also said that he was the only disciple of Christ to not to abandon him in the hour of His Passion at the foot of the cross. John the Evangelist is also called the Apostle of Charity, which enhances, his connection to Freemasonry in addition to his unwavering resolve and purity of his love of the divine.

The message of the church, and something each of us can take away from John the Evangelist is to *“Apply*



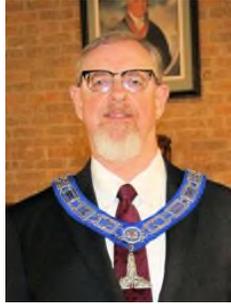


FROM THE WEST

From the West

SEEK - AND YE SHALL FIND

excerpted from the September, 1939
Short Talk Bulletin



Freemasonry is greater than any man; she is to be sought; she never seeks.

Four men sat in the smoking room of a Pullman. Three who wore Masonic pins fell into easy conversation. After a while one turned to the fourth and asked "Are you a Mason?" "No" came the slow answer. "I'm not, I'm sorry to say. My father was, but he never asked me to join. Many of my friends are - but none of them ever asked me. I have often wondered why - what I am or do or say, that they don't want me." There was a moment's silence. Then: "Well, you have a tongue in your head, why not ask?" And then, of course, the non-member was instructed that Masonry never seeks; it must be sought. A man must come to the Order "of his own free will and accord. *"The strength of the Fraternity is in its voluntary association.* Presumably, he who had never been asked went home and requested a petition from a friend.

Who knows how many good and true men have failed to become Masons because of this unwritten law. Freemasonry could become double, triple, and even quadruple her present size, if in some miraculous way the unwritten law could be repealed and all Lodge members "put on a drive" for membership. What sudden, if temporary, prosperity would follow in Lodge and Grand Lodge bank accounts! But the increase in size would only be for a little while and the prosperity would soon fade, to be succeeded by an interminable period of depression. Once Freemasonry departs from her ancient principles and practices, she becomes just another organization - of which there are hundreds - and loses that dignity and importance associated with that which is desirable yet unattainable without effort.

Naturally, Freemasons want their friends to share this ennobling experience with them. Yet if the desire to have a friend as fellow Lodge member is satisfied by breaking the law and proselytizing, injury is done to him who asks, to him who is asked, and to the Fraternity. He who joins a Lodge not because he wants but because another wants him to, misses

something in the Ancient Craft which other men possess and hold dear. It is human to hold as little value and small worth that which comes unsought, which is easy to get, or which requires no effort.

Today we disregard the future to gain the immediate good. It is seen in all walks of life; in "drives" for membership; in special association "for" or "against" something; in government actions which count the immediate present of more importance than the far future. "After me, the deluge" is the motto of too many. And the deluge will come! What is quickly built is jerry built. Circus stunt "evangelists" have converted thousands by mass psychology and theatrical appeal - and in a short time the "backsliders" equaled the conversions. Freemasonry is guarded against this danger by her strict law that no Freemason indulge in proselytizing. It is not Masonic to ask our friends to join our Lodges for the good and sufficient reason that unless a man seek the good in Freemasonry, he can neither benefit from it himself nor help the Ancient Craft to help others.

It is an ideal of Freemasonry that a man must come to it not by persuasion, not by threats, not by pressure, not even by invitation, but of his own motion, desire, free will and accord. This ideal can no more be laid aside and have Freemasonry remain Freemasonry, than can the Volume of the Sacred Law be taken from the Altar, meetings be held in the public square, or elections for candidates decided by majority vote.

However, there is nothing in any law, written or unwritten, which prevents a brother giving legitimate information to him who seeks it. The man in the smoking compartment did not ask to become a Freemason yet he indicated his desire, and so was told why he was not asked. There was nothing improper in his acquaintances informing him, provided he had initiated the matter. Just how far to go is a problem each brother must settle for himself. Follow, do not lead or initiate the conversation. When any one expresses any interest in becoming a Freemason, even if in the most general terms, it is legitimate to pursue the subject as long as, but no longer than, he who has initiated it desires. Thus, the man who says "I've thought of becoming a Freemason, but I just don't know how to go about it" can be told "how to go about it", but he should not be urged to "go about it." To him who says "I'd like to become a Freemason, tell me how," it is perfectly proper to offer a petition, so long as one knows the inquirer as a good man and true.

Let this chat end with the words which began it, that all may know and heed: *"Freemasonry is greater than any man; she is to be sought; she never seeks."*



From the South



Brethren,

I hope the holidays went off without a hitch and that everyone had a safe and happy holiday season. Now it's back to the daily grind with the added tasks of recovering finances, and waist lines which have an inverse relationship during the holidays; finances go down, waist lines get bigger. This month we will continue our exploration of virtues, this time looking at the virtues within the Jewish religion.

As I did the research for this article it didn't take long before I realized I was in trouble. The problem: I could not find a neat package of virtues within Judaism to present as there exists within the Christian religion and other major religions. Even more problematic, the subscribed virtues changed depending on the branch of Judaism, albeit subtly, but enough to disallow an academic packaging across the board. Among all the denominations of Christianity they all seemingly adhere to the seven virtues previously discussed in last month's article. Judaism, on the other hand, seemed to have so many virtues that this article would be several pages long if we were to go into them, and they varied depending on the branch. To help with this task I recruited a Doctor of Jewish studies, who sent me several sources to help guide my thoughts on the subject, while acknowledging the difficulty of packaging Jewish virtues. So, as you read the following, please keep in mind the enormity of this subject in relation to Jewish ethics. My task in this short paper will be to present a very condensed summary of Jewish virtues in as packaged a manor as possible. Lastly, before I begin, if there are brethren out there who wish to discuss this subject further, meaning outside the limited confines of the trestleboard, I would encourage you to contact me through the lodge.

Let us begin this brief study of Jewish virtues with the ten commandments. Before Jewish thought collided with Greek, there did not exist, as previously stated, a neat system of moral virtues by which an individual should govern their behavior and actions, but rather a series of laws that governed morality. In the study of moral ethics this type of moral system is based on duty and I will leave it at that. The first "moral system" of Judaism consisted of six hundred and thirteen laws, which we commonly break down to the ten commandments (14 really). It wasn't until the Hellenistic period (merging Jewish and Greek thought) that we really begin to see a change. This change appears to occur over a long period of time, and is seen as a shift from the strict adherence to law, to more spiritually influence thought. Here we really begin to see the development of Jewish virtues that appear to be influenced by the Stoics.

For the sake of this article I will quickly summarize a lot of history into a paragraph, and unfortunately leave out, what in my opinion, are important details. Around the time of Roman occupation, war and hardships threatened the Hebrew people's history, past and present, and there became a concern that the oral tradition was in danger of being wiped out. Due to this concern Rabbis began to record the oral tradition of the Torah and also began to

write commentary on such. Two books emerged, one called the Mishnah and one called the Gemara, which collectively became known as the Talmud meaning instruction and learning.

These books are important to the development of Jewish virtues as they contain other books specifically explaining such virtues as are important to the Jewish religion. A passage from the Talmud quickly summarizes the reduction of laws to the development of virtue based ethics: "R. Simlai said, 'Six hundred and thirteen commandments were given to Moses. King David came and reduced them to eleven (Ps. xv.). The prophet Isaiah further reduced them to six (Isa. xxxiii.). Micah (vi. 8) reduced them to three: "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good . . . to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God." Isaiah again reduced them to two (Isa. lvi.). The prophet Amos placed them all upon one principle (Amos v. 4): "Seek me and live"; or, as the prophet Habakkuk said, "The just shall live by his faith." Below is a core list of what is considered the most important virtues within the Jewish religion and an explanation if such is warranted. Please keep in mind this is a core list, as there are well over fifty virtues, and we simply do not have the time, nor the space, to do such an in-depth study.

Within Judaism there exists a version of the **Golden rule** formulated by Hillel the Elder, "What is hateful to you, do not do unto others." While this is not a virtue, accordingly, a virtuous person would always act, or not, with this in mind.

Humility - this is a virtue of the wise. According to the ancients, humility and wisdom go hand in hand

Patience – the practice of the virtue of patience creates endurance under difficult circumstances

Trustworthiness - acting in a way that inspires trust in others; also creates faith

Generosity – giving to others freely without obligation.

Justice, Truth and Peace

Loving Kindness and Compassion

Self-Respect – "In addition to teaching caring for others, Jewish sources tend to teach that man is duty bound to preserve his life (Berachot 32b) and his health. Foods dangerous to health are more to be guarded against than those ritually forbidden. Jewish ethics denies self-abasement. "He who subjects himself to needless self-castigations and fasting, or even denies himself the enjoyment of wine, is a sinner" (Taanit 11a, 22b). A person has to give account for every lawful enjoyment he refuses (Talmud Yer. Kid. iv. 66d). A person should show self-respect in regard to both his body, "honoring it as the image of God" (Hillel: Midrash Leviticus Rabbah 34), and his garments (Talmud Shabbat 113b; Ned. 81a). According to Judaism, real life goes beyond the concept of breathing and having blood flow through our veins, it means existing with a purpose and connecting to God and others".

Please join us this month Brethren at the stated meeting; I look forward to seeing you out there and starting out the new year with good fellowship and good food.

Fraternally,
Matthew Archilla



January Birthdays

Brother	Date
Jeffery A. Sill	1/4
Zane L. Maltsberger	1/5
Ryan Maltsberger	1/5
Zachary P. Adams	1/6
Jonathan B. Cluck Jr.	1/6
Jimmie B. Black II	1/12
Wayne H. Gately	1/14
Richard L. Fulk	1/16
Rodney G. Edmondson	1/18
Dean C. Reynolds	1/18
Stephen L. Hill	1/18
Thomas I. Pipes	1/19
Mark D. Armstrong	1/21
Jerry L. Kelley	1/24
Mac M. Hopkin	1/25
Richard D. Baggs	1/26
Maurice R. Rose	1/30

Building Preservation December Donations

<u>Donor</u>	<u>In Memory/Honor of</u>
Billy Lemmons Jr.	Bro. Billy Lemmons Sr.
Robert Easterling	Easterling Family Christmas
David Bruton	The Loechelin Family
Paul Lemon	Bro. Richard Leeder

Kendall Masonic Lodge No. 897 Deaths

Jack Larry Greenfield



Almighty Father! Into Thy hands we commend the soul of our beloved Brother.

January Service Anniversary

Brother	Years MM
John W. Angle	55
Cletus A. Kleen	54
Morris C. Jernigan	54
Abner L. Kestler Jr.	49
James R. Schmitz	40
Robert F. Todd	24
John D. Smith	11
Roger W. Hall	10
Lyle B. Schichner Sr.	10
Roger D. Curry	7
William R. Lemmons Jr.	7

A Masonic End - Gallows Humor

As a man was standing on the gallows, his executioner asked if he had any last words. "Yes," the man replied "I hate Masons."

The executioner was surprised by this and asked "Why do you hate Masons? They do much good in our world."

The condemned man said, not hiding his anger, "They are killing me. The man who turned me in is a Mason; the cop that arrested me is a Mason; the prosecuting attorney that tried me is a Mason' the jury that convicted me were all Masons; and the judge that sentenced me to hang is a Mason. That is why I hate Masons!"

"I see." said the executioner. "Are you ready to proceed?"

"Yes." said the man with sadness in his voice.

"O.K. Then you will advance one regular step with the left foot...."



SECRETARY'S CORNER



SECRETARY'S CORNER

Brethren... I hope that you and your family had a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Believe it or not... we've now put half of the 2016-2017 Masonic Year behind us. WM Smith has but six (6) remaining Stated Meetings over which to preside. Before you know it we'll be planning the 2017-2018 Masonic Year's Installation of Officers. However there is a lot of year left and things to do. So before we get ahead of ourselves, here are some of the things going on this month.

The **2017 Grand Lodge Calendar Year for dues has begun.** Dues notices went out in mid-November so if you didn't receive yours then let me know. Many of you have already paid and your cards are in the mail back to you. To be in good standing in 2017, dues were to be received before January 1st, which is the beginning of the 2017 Year for Grand Lodge of Texas dues. If you haven't sent them in then please take the time to do that now.

January has always been defined as a month of new beginnings. Here are a few things to put on your calendar:



This year is the first year that our Grand Communication for the Grand Lodge of Texas is in January. It will start with the public session on Thursday, January 19th, at 1:00 PM. Tiled sessions will begin on Friday morning, January 20th, and run through Saturday, January 21st, around Noon. Elections will be held starting at 10:00 AM on Saturday. Come and join us in Waco.



We will soon be receiving our new District Deputy Grand Master, **Right Worshipful Jim Harrell** at a stated meeting. If you see him, congratulate him on the honor of representing the Grand Master of Texas Masonry in our district.



Monday, January 16th, will be our **January Stated Meeting** with Dinner starting at 6:15 PM, Food and Fellowship lasting until 7:20 PM or so, and our Stated Meeting starting at 7:30 PM. Some of our wives stay in the Banquet Room during the meeting so bring your wife and/or other family members and come to the dinner and meeting.



No date set yet, but we approved by a ballot of the lodge for one petitioner to receive the degrees and we read the petitions and assigned committees to investigate two other petitions. **That means that there will be one Entered Apprentice degree and possibly three in the next few months.** Come and give us a hand. According to our 1905 Charter the primary reason we are here is to... instruct candidates to learn, improve, and become Master Masons in every sense of the word.



On Monday, February 23rd, we will have our Fellowcraft Education Night presented by our Junior Warden Matt Archilla. Brother Archilla's presentations are always thought provoking and interesting. Plan on being there.



PUT ON YOUR CALENDAR: Saturday, February 11th for a Luncheon honoring our Masonic Sweethearts (our Widows and Ladies). Plan on coming, visiting, eating, and a short program.

Brethren Remember: That a fire whose coals and embers are scattered is destined to go out and provide no heat or comfort to anyone. However, a fire whose coals and embers are banked together remains warm and will spring back to life when additional fuel is added. Which of these descriptions describes Masonry to you? It is important to get together and socialize with the Brethren from time to time and rekindle that fuel that first brought you to Masonry in the first place.

Gary L. Bausell

Secretary
January 2017