



Volume IX, Issue 3

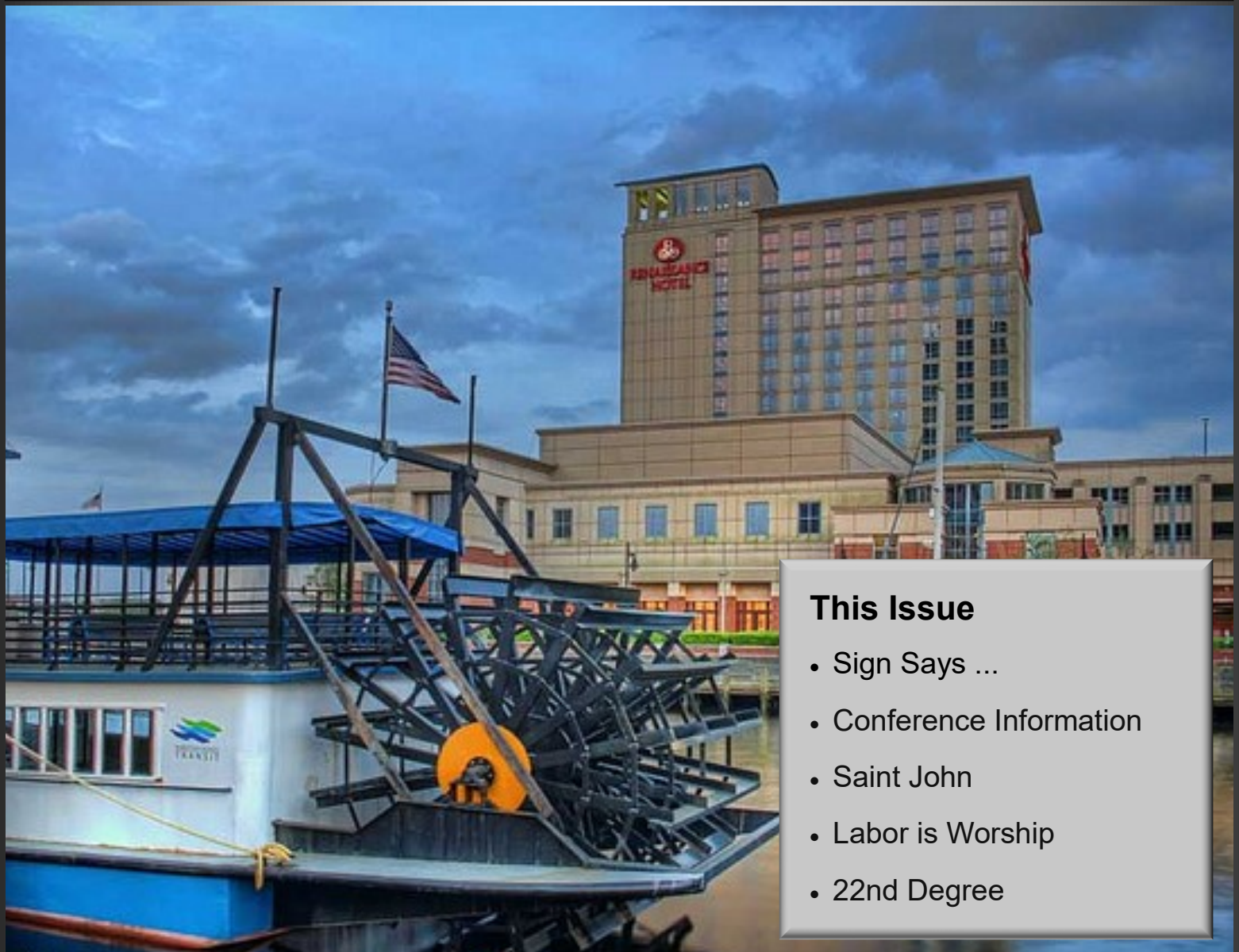
August 2017

## 93<sup>rd</sup> Virginia Scottish Rite Conference

Friday, September 29—Saturday, September 30, 2017

Olde Towne Portsmouth, Virginia

(See page 3 for details)



### This Issue

- Sign Says ...
- Conference Information
- Saint John
- Labor is Worship
- 22nd Degree



## Sovereign Grand Inspector General Illustrious James D. Cole, 33<sup>o</sup>

### The Sign Says Open

Illustrious James D. Cole, 33<sup>o</sup>

Lt. Grand Commander and S.G.I.G. in Virginia

It happens every odd-numbered year, ... as the months get warmer in late spring, Active and Deputy members of the Supreme Council often find themselves sitting at their desk, stealing glances out the window of the beautiful outdoors, while they pound away at a computer keyboard in order to complete a series of reports for the upcoming Biennial Session.

Since my mind works in (to be kind) weird ways, as I sat at this desk in front of this computer, I was reminded of a store I recently visited. The sign on the door said "OPEN," but the door was locked. I was certain that what I needed was just beyond that locked door.

The point is this --- in Scottish Rite, like the rest of Freemasonry, we have lots of information available, but between the fact that some folks are sometimes not sure how to answer reasonable questions about these facts and the reality that many of our members are unwilling or afraid to inquire about the information, the "store" of information often appears "closed."

As Sovereign Grand Inspector General, I have tried to keep the doorway to information always OPEN. At each Orient Conference, I have an "open mike" hour in which anyone attending can ask me anything about Scottish Rite. Granted, I may not have the answer, but if I do not know, I will always find the answer and pass it along.

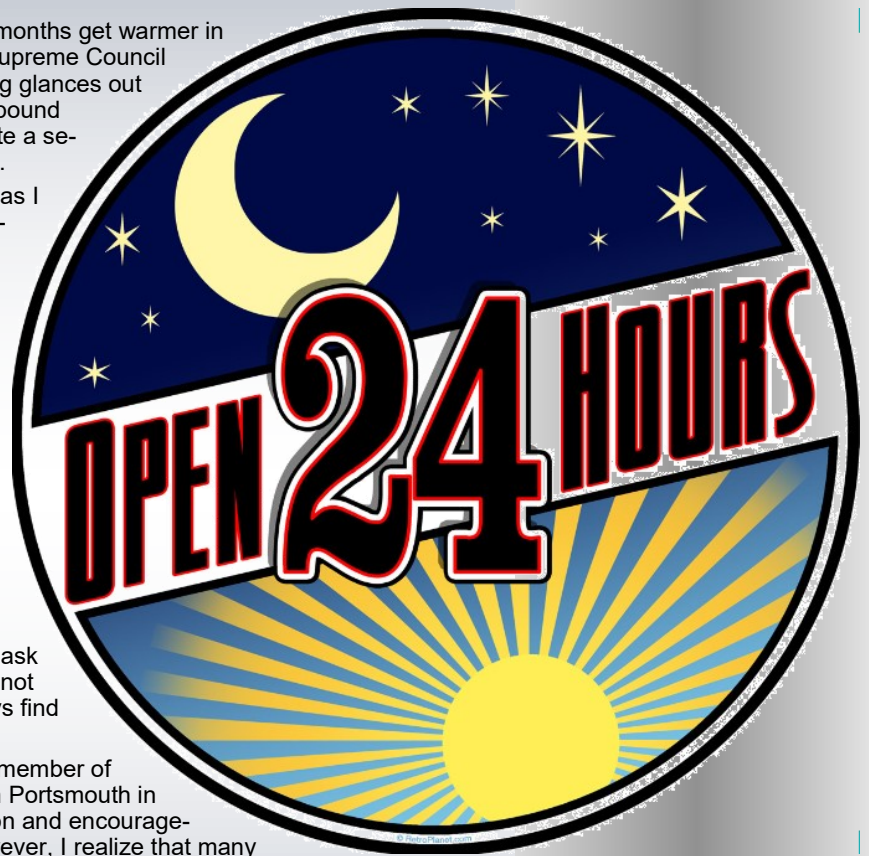
Elsewhere in this newsletter, we encourage any member of Virginia Scottish Rite to attend our Conference in Portsmouth in late September. I extend now a personal invitation and encouragement to each reader of this article to attend. However, I realize that many of our members will be unable to attend. Therefore, I encourage you to email me any questions, ideas, or comments about Scottish Rite. My address is [jdcoble2001@gmail.com](mailto:jdcoble2001@gmail.com)

I sent a lot of information to the Supreme Council this year concerning what we are doing in the Orient of Virginia. The Council also has a lot of information available and they employ several experts to help a little country boy like me answer questions that might be beyond my grasp.

What I ask is for every member to think about a question that they need answered. Or, if any member has a comment or an idea or suggestion, just email me.

The Virginia Scottish Rite "information store" is open for business.

Now, back to my computer..... Gee, it sure looks nice outside.



... I have tried to keep the doorway to information always OPEN. At each Orient Conference, I have an "open mike" hour in which anyone attending can ask me anything about Scottish Rite. Granted, I may not have the answer, but if I do not know, I will always find the answer and pass it along.

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The Virginia Light©  
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**August 1, 2017**

**Renaissance** (2017 SRCVA Conference Headquarters) Renaissance Portsmouth Hotel &

Waterfront Conference Center 425 Water Street, Portsmouth, Virginia 23704 T)

757.673.3050 - W) [www.renaissanceportsmouth.com](http://www.renaissanceportsmouth.com)

**Golf Outing** (Player Registration and Course Information Will be on: [www.srcva.com](http://www.srcva.com))

Thursday, September 28, 2017 (\*12:00 Noon)

Elizabeth Manor Golf and Country Club (Home of the Eastern Amateur Golf Tourna-  
ment Since 1957) One "Ace" Parker Drive, Portsmouth, Virginia 20701

**Ladies Luncheon**

Saturday, September 29, 2017 (\*11:00 a.m.)

Renaissance Hotel, 425 Water Street, Portsmouth, Virginia 23704

**KCCH Investiture** (Open ceremony performed by the Norfolk Valley)

Saturday, September 30, 2017 (Afternoon)

Portsmouth Scottish Rite Masonic Center, 3401 Cedar Lane, Portsmouth, Virginia  
23703, (5 Miles from HQ)

**Information** [www.srcva.com](http://www.srcva.com) (To Launch on Monday, May 1, 2017 - Detailed Conference

Agenda to Follow) Franklin D. Edmondson, KCCH: C) 757.635.5544, E)

[fde123@verizon.net](mailto:fde123@verizon.net), M) P. O. Box 934, Portsmouth, VA 23705

**Meals** (Evening Banquets - Friday 09/29 and Saturday 09/30) Please Make Evening

Meal Reservations with Your Valley Secretary as Outlined on: [www.srcva.com](http://www.srcva.com)

**Host** Portsmouth Scottish Rite Temple

\* Times Subject to Change



# St. John the Baptist

Worshipful Joel Bundy, 32° KCCH

John 5:35, *King James Version*

He was a burning and a shining light; and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light.

Harper Lee, *To Kill a Mockingbird*

“Summer was our best season: it was sleeping on the back screened porch in cots, or trying to sleep in the treehouse; summer was everything good to eat; it was a thousand colors in a parched landscape; but most of all, summer was Dill.”

Toni Morrison, *The Bluest Eye*

“I have only to break into the tightness of a strawberry, and I see summer — its dust and lowering skies.”

Samuel Pritchard, *Masonry Dissected* (1730)

“Q. From whence came you?

From the Holy Lodge of St. John's.”

Three hundred years ago this month, four lodges met in London. It was on St. John the Baptist's day, June 24<sup>th</sup>, 1717 that the Grand Lodge of England was born. In Anderson's *Constitutions*, it is stated that “Accordingly on St. John the Baptist's day in the 3rd year of King George I., A. D. 1717, the ASSEMBLY and Feast of the Free and Accepted Masons was held at the Goose and Gridiron Ale-house.”

Who was St. John the Baptist? Why symbolism does he represent? When and how was he introduced into Freemasonry? What else is important about June 24<sup>th</sup>? What about his zeal?

Who was John the Baptist?

John was a forerunner of Jesus and is mentioned in all four Gospels and by the historian Josephus. His story is well known-

From Matthew 3- In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, “The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. And the same John had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey.”

When he baptized Jesus, in verse 17 of Matthew 3: “And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”

Mark also tells us that John is a fulfillment of prophesy. From Mark 1: As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

Luke writes about the birth of John. Zacharias and Elisabeth were both past the age of having children. The angel Gabriel spoke to Zacharias. Here we learn that Zacharias is a priest working in the temple, thus a descendant of Aaron. Later in Luke chapter 1, we also learn that Elisabeth is a relative of Mary, the mother of Jesus. From verse 41 -And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost. After John's birth, when he was to be circumcised, Elisabeth elected not to call her son Zacharias after his father, but instead she names him John.

Masonry cannot be that single candlelight, feebly lighting the cavern. The measurement of foot-candles would objectively tell us how we are failing to illuminate the cave, or our minds. We are taught to be the Light of Truth. Plato tells us that the light needed to show the truth is the light of the Sun.



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# St. John the Baptist

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We also learn from Luke 1 that Gabriel tells Mary here cousin Elisabeth is in her 6<sup>th</sup> month of pregnancy. This is celebrated as the Annunciation and is on March 25<sup>th</sup>. Three months later, John would be born, thus on June 24<sup>th</sup>. Nine months after the Annunciation would be the birth of Jesus. Thus, six months exist between the births of John the Baptist and Jesus. Since John the Evangelist's day is near Christmas, we find the two days for the patron Saints of Freemasonry to be June 24<sup>th</sup> and December 27<sup>th</sup>, for John the Baptist and John the Evangelist, respectively.

In the first chapter of the Gospel of John we read: There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.

In addition to the four Gospels, there is mention in Acts chapters 18 and 19 that some of John's disciples became followers of Jesus. The apocryphal Gospel of the Nazarenes (probably written before the end of the second century) tells of John the Baptist. Finally, the historian Josephus in his Antiquities of the Jews, speaks about the death of John.

Now some of the Jews thought that the destruction of Herod's army came from God, and that very justly, as a punishment of what he did against John, who was a good man, and commanded the Jews irate, both as to righteousness towards one another, and piety towards God, and so to come to baptism; for that the washing [with water] would be acceptable to him, if they made use of it, not in order to the putting away [or the remission] of some sins [only], but for the purification of the body; supposing still that the soul was thoroughly purified beforehand by righteousness. Now when [many] others came in crowds about him, for they were very greatly moved [or pleased] by hearing his words, Herod, who feared lest the great influence John had over the people might put it into his power and inclination to raise a rebellion, (for they seemed ready to do anything he should advise,) thought it best, by putting him to death, to prevent any mischief he might cause, and not bring himself into difficulties, by sparing a man who might make him repent of it when it would be too late. Accordingly, he was sent a prisoner, out of Herod's suspicious temper, to Macherus, the castle I before mentioned, and was there put to death. Now the Jews had an opinion that the destruction of this army was sent as a punishment upon Herod, and a mark of God's displeasure to him.

What symbolism does he represent?

As noted above, John the Baptist was not the light, but told everyone else about the Light. From the Gospel of John's first chapter, we read that the Word was the Light. John the Baptist was witness to the Light, about the Word. In the same way, at the Altar of our lodges, we have the Great lights, and the lesser lights. The lesser lights are to enable us to perceive the greater lights, in much the same way, John the Baptist enabled the Jews of his day to perceive the Word of God. John was a burning and a shining light, he was a burning taper.

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# St. John the Baptist

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Why did the early Freemasons choose John the Baptist as a patron saint? Perhaps they were thinking of Plato and the allegory of the cave. Here Plato describes, "Restoring the soul to that state, from whence it fell, as from its native seat of perfection." Albert Pike, from *Morals and Dogma*, felt Plato was telling us "the object of the Mysteries was to reestablish the soul in its primitive purity." Here we learn that Socrates is teaching us that men are chained in a cave, facing a far wall, and only seeing shadows dancing on the walls from a fire somewhere behind them. To be free of the shackles and see the true forms of reality is the goal, and for Plato, that of himself as the philosopher.

It could be said that man has been living inside the cave, never seeing or understanding that his life has been seeing only shadows and not the true "forms" of reality. On the other hand, perhaps, finally, man has been freed, and because he gazed into the light, he was afraid, and it hurt his eyes, and found it easier to return to the shadows. According to Socrates/Plato, the only way to become free from the cave was to be forced outside into the Sun. After the initial pain and anguish, his eyes adjust from the shadows, to reflections, and finally to actually seeing what has been the reality all along.

My take is that it will take more than a single candle to dispel ignorance. In some regards a candle, although casting off some light, can produce its own nuanced confusion and distortions that can be as frightening as the underlying darkness. Recently my wife and I had the pleasure of touring Wind Cave National Park in South Dakota under the convenience of modern lighting. Towards the end of the tour, the guide turned out the lights and lit the cavern we were in with a single candle. It did not cast much light, and reminds me of what it might be like to return to Plato's cave-blind and lost, again.

Masonry cannot be that single candlelight, feebly lighting the cavern. The measurement of foot-candles would objectively tell us how we are failing to illuminate the cave, or our minds. We are taught to be the Light of Truth. Plato tells us that the light needed to show the truth is the light of the Sun. For the ancients, the Sun was the cause of life; it was the manifestation and image of God. Ephesians 4:18 paints a picture that through ignorance of this Light, men have their understanding darkened.

So how can Freemasonry dispel ignorance? By working together as one, each of us with our own candle. Each with "this little light of mine," men of one accord, and in the harmony, we speak "at" in our lodges, truly becoming that great cloud of witnesses for the truth, bringing the light to those ignorant and lost inside of the darkness of Plato's Cave. It is "us," together with the witness of John the Baptist, that shows the light to those still in bondage. Pondering the words of Martin Luther King, Jr., "Darkness cannot drive out darkness: only light can do that."

We know the additional symbolism of the two parallel lines that touch the circle with a point at its center, with the volume of sacred law overseeing the rest. We are the point, the circle to circumscribe our bounds between those parallel lines of zeal on one hand and knowledge on the other. We use the Logos, or Word, to guide us. This symbolism occurs soon after a man first enters the Lodge when he is led with his cable tow once around the lodge. This depicts our journey through the various phases of life. Circumambulation means to walk around, and the etymology is from the Latin prefix *circum* meaning around, and *ambulare* meaning to walk. It represents that part of initiation where the candidate was led around a consecrated object, typically something sacred or Holy. Dr. Albert Mackey states that the ancient Greeks would walk around an altar three times before making a sacrifice. They called it from the right to the right. Plato would make sure that wine, food and conversation would pass from the right. The Romans added lustration with its symbology of purification, to the

The Baptism of John was an allegory of a new birth. Water has long been seen as a way to remove impurities, both exoteric and esoteric.

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# St. John the Baptist

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circumambulation, and over time purification became associated with the walking movement itself. The movement is typically from East through the South to the West, being clockwise, or sun-wise.

Being a circular movement, the symbolism of this act reflects that of the circle. The circle is a symbol of perfection, and of eternity, with neither beginning nor end. It has been suggested that it represents the "cycle of life" from darkness to light through purification by rebirth, from a life of blindness to one of enlightenment. If the altar and the three great lights in masonry are the point within the circle, then the circumambulation creates the circumpunct, or circled dot. The circumpunct has many possible meanings, in particular the wheel of life, and when combined with the brethren forming two parallel lines also alludes to that moment when we became a mason.

As St. John, the Baptist, who represents the Summer solstice, this also represents the birth of a Mason, and as St. John the Evangelist represents the Winter solstice, this movement of the sun from Summer to Winter reminds us of the lessons of the Master Mason's degree and that we all journey from birth to that undiscovered country.

The typical figure of John the Baptist has him standing with one hand pointing above him and the other below. This reminds us of the Hermetic teaching- as above, so below. Reading from *The Emerald Tablet of Hermes Trismegistus*: "That which is below corresponds to that which is above, and that which is above corresponds to that which is below, to accomplish the miracle of the One Thing." What does this mean? Most would understand this (and our early Freemason forbearers would have) to teach us that to understand ourselves, we must understand the universe and God, and vice versa.

The Baptism of John was an allegory of a new birth. Water has long been seen as a way to remove impurities, both exoteric and esoteric. Wine was poured on the altar to accompany sacrifices during the Jewish Temple periods. During Sukkot, there is a unique ceremony, a pouring out of water on the altar. This is called *nisukh ha-mayim*. As it was associated with Sukkot and the thanksgiving of the fall harvest, it may have represented a prayer for winter water. The Talmud would tell of the priests and sages obtaining the water from the banks of a stream near the Temple, and with it singing and dancing, juggling torches, knives and eggs all while drinking wine. This dancing and festivities continue even today in remembrance of this water ritual.

For millennia, there has been purification by water. It is purification through lustration and baptism. God purified through The Flood. Man purified spiritually and morally through the washing of the hands or body with water. Albert Mackey wrote that its symbolism was "of the internal purification of the heart." According to his *Revised Encyclopedia*, lustration de-

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In the 1700's many lodges were called St. John Lodges, and were identified by number only. They were thought of as pure lodges, not associated with innovations.



# St. John the Baptist

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rives from the Latin for both washing and atonement. These are intertwined with the purification of the soul, to lustrate with water then made incarnadine from the stain of wine, sacrifice, or our transgressions. Even Lady Macbeth hoped that “a little water clears us of this deed.” Purification can be related to a ritual or ceremonial cleansing, to be made morally or spiritually pure, or the removal of impurities or undesirable elements. Whether cleansing “humours”, bacteria, or our own calumnious language and transgressions, we should remain ever vigilant to constantly be prepared to put our hands back under the water, again, even seventy times seven. May we become that river of living water as a testimony to others in our lives, and therefore find change for that paradigm- to be a new creation.

When was he introduced into Freemasonry?

Under the early Grand Lodge ritual after 1717 is found the following-

Q. From whence came you?

A. From the holy Lodge of St. John.

Q. What recommendation do you bring from thence?

A. A recommendation from the brothers and fellows of that right worshipful and holy lodge of St. John from whence I came, who greet you thrice heartily.

Three score years later, from the Old York Lecture in 1770 in England, this is part of the Entered Apprentice catechism:

Q. To whom were the lodges dedicated during the Mosaic dispensation?

A. To God.

Q. Thank you, brother, and can you tell me to whom they were first dedicated?

A. To Noah, who was saved in the Ark.

Q. And by what name were the Masons then known?

A. They were called Noachidee, Sages, or Wise Men.

Q. To whom were the lodges dedicated during the Mosaic dispensation?

A. To Moses, the chosen of God, and Solomon, the son of David.

Q. And under what name were the Masons known during that period?

A. Under the name of Dionysiacs, Geometricians, or Masters in Israel.

Q. But as Solomon was a Jew, and died long before the promulgation of Christianity, to whom were they dedicated under the Christian dispensation?

A. From Solomon the patronage of Masonry passed to St. John the Baptist.

Q. And under what name were they known after the promulgation of Christianity?

A. Under the name of Essenes, Architects, or Freemasons.

Q. Why were the lodges dedicated to St. John the Baptist?

A. Because he was the forerunner of our Saviour, and by preaching repentance and humiliation, drew the first parallel of the Gospel.

Q. Had St. John the Baptist any equal?

A. He had; St. John the Evangelist.

Q. Why was he said to be the equal of the Baptist?

A. Because he finished by his learning what the other began by his zeal, and thus drew a second line parallel to the former; ever since which time Freemason's

John the Baptist died for what he believed in. His was of a simple and devout existence, of integrity and persistence. He called things as he saw them, saying that the Pharisees were a “brood of vipers.” Deviation from holiness was not acceptable.

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# St. John the Baptist

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lodges in all Christian countries, have been dedicated to the one, or the other, or both of these worthy and worshipful men.

We know that there were Lodges of "St. Johns' Masonry" long before 1717 when the Grand Lodge of England was formed. In 1740, Chevalier Andrew Michael Ramsey, the Orator of the Grand Lodge of France, suggested the following Templar theory-

During the time of the holy wars in Palestine, several principal lords and citizens associated themselves together, and entered into a vow to re-establish the temples of the Christians in the Holy Land; and engaged themselves by an oath to employ their talents and their fortune in restoring architecture to its primitive institution. They adopted several ancient signs and symbolic words drawn from religion by which they might distinguish themselves from the infidels and recognize each other in the midst of the Saracens. They communicated

these signs and words only to those who had solemnly sworn, often at the foot of the altar, never to reveal them. This was not an oath of execration but a bond uniting men of all nations into the same confraternity. Some-time after our order was united with the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem. Hence our lodges are, in all Christian countries, called Lodges of St. John.

In 1723, an exposure had the following catechism which is the only catechism at this time not relating to a lodge of Saint John or both Saints John.

Q. What Lodge are you of?

A. I am of the Lodge of St. Stephen's.

From the Whole Institution of Free-Masons Opened of 1725 is the following-

Q. What Lodge are you of

A. St. John.

In the 1700's many lodges were called St. John Lodges, and were identified by number only. They were thought of as pure lodges, not associated with innovations. It was also common for lodges to communicate to each other as such: "From the Lodge of the Holy Saints John of Jerusalem, under the distinctive name of \_\_\_ Lodge No. \_\_\_"

Brothers of these numerous St. John's Lodges were able to freely travel to lodges beholden to the Grand Lodge of England. It is interesting that the two St. John's are the patron saints of freemasonry while St. Thomas is the patron saint of Masonry. Some feel that this is because together the two saint's John demonstrate harmony and equilibrium and guide us towards enlightenment.



A world without tolerance for differing positions will move to the extreme, and by doing so will marginalize those outside the norm.

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# St. John the Baptist

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What else is important about June 24?

There are several theories as to why June 24<sup>th</sup> is the feast day for St. John the Baptist. We have already reviewed above the liturgical thinking between the birth of John and Jesus based on the scriptures and meeting between Elisabeth and Mary.

Much is written about the Christianization of the pagan celebrations of the summer and winter solstices. The summer solstice is the longest day of the year, and the beginning is summer. This is Midsummer's Day and the tilt of the earth's semi-axis with the sun at the highest point in the sky as seen from the North Pole. To many pagan people, as the sun moved farther North during the seasons, this represented a festival of new life.

There have been many pagan festivals during the solstices. St. John's Day is a "charmed" festival with hidden treasures waiting for the lucky person to find them. Accordingly, herbs harvested on this day are said to have healing powers. It was felt that demons and witches are allowed to roam the earth and bonfires would drive them away. For the Romans, the Rites of Mithras had their banquet to the Sun; The Egyptians, Isis, Osiris and Horus, and the Greeks the myth of Ceres.

When Rome became Christianized, many pagan festivals became Christian holidays dedicated to Christ or a saint. The Summer solstice became St. John the Baptist's day with the Winter solstice becoming St. John the Evangelist's day.

Father Weiser writes about the origin of the feast of St. John the Baptist. Since the church determined that John was born exactly six months before Jesus, he states that-

...the real reason why Saint John's Day falls on June 24 lies in the Roman way of counting, which proceeded backward from the kalends (first day) of the succeeding month. Christmas was "the eighth day before the Kalends of January" (*Octavo Kalendas Januarii*). Consequently, Saint John's nativity was put on the "eighth day before the Kalends of July." However, since June has only thirty days, in our way of counting the feast falls on June 24.

What of his zeal?

John the Baptist died for what he believed in. His was of a simple and devout existence, of integrity and persistence. He called things as he saw them, saying that the Pharisees were a "brood of vipers." Deviation from holiness was not acceptable. Reverend Baderstadt wrote it this way, that John thought, "It was better to die for truth than to live a lie because he knew that the Great Light upon the Altar, the Holy Scriptures, pointed to a better way, a life with God." His life was about zeal. Most think of John the Baptist as one of the two parallel lines in masonry.

From the *Ahiman Rezon* we read, "the stern integrity of Saint John the Baptist, which induced him to forego every minor consideration in discharging the obligations he owed to God; the unshaken firmness with which he met martyrdom rather than betray his duty to his Master; his steady reproof of vice, and continued preaching of repentance and virtue. make him a fit patron of the Masonic institution."

This made me consider the book *Zealot: The Life and Times of Jesus of Nazareth*. Putting the main thrust of the book aside (that of whether Jesus was part of a group of Galileans bent on purifying their land by cleansing it of Roman rule), the idea of a group of men full of zeal, whether in the first century or today, seems germane to the teachings of this degree. This group of Zealots in Judea were considered a fourth philosophy according to Josephus- essentially a different view on how to live one's life with purpose, in contradistinction to the Pharisees, Sadducees and Essenes. This they accomplished by challenging leadership and even resorting to violence. The assassination in 54 C.E. of the High Priest Jonathan by the Sicarii is an example. The

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Then today, more than in our past, we need to surround ourselves with a King Solomon and a King Hiram, if we are a John the Baptist, or consider adding the parallel line of John the Evangelist. Jungian personality profiles are often used in team-building and executive retreats for just such a purpose, and if out of line can point to "storming" in the future, or an explanation of disharmony already present.

# St. John the Baptist

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Sicarii were those who lived with unfettered zeal, not tempering their other duties. Chief among other causes, these actions led Vespasian to make an example of Palestine and destroy the Temple, slaughtering and enslaving thousands and finally leading the Sicarii to commit suicide at Masada.

What is zeal? A simple definition is that it is great energy or enthusiasm in pursuit of a cause or an objective. Its etymology emanates from the romantic languages and early synonyms would have included emulation and a noble passion, but also the darker tones of ardor and jealousy. It was not until the mid-15<sup>th</sup> century that it connoted devotion.

This notion of passionate zeal without temperament runs parallel to many other factions seen today, some religious, many secular. Many think of Islamic terrorism, but corruption of governmental leaders, back-stabbing executives, gang member initiations and sports fanaticism fall under the same umbrella. If a person is out of balance emotionally, they may be seen as delusional or mentally unstable; for a government, there cannot be fairness and justice; a society would display prejudice and oppression of the helpless.

For this reason, there has to be an equilibrium in our lives, society, government... essentially in all areas of our lives if we are to find harmony. Albert Pike attempts to show this through the story told in the 6<sup>th</sup> degree, Confidential Secretary, with different individuals demonstrating an ability to assess these necessary "duties" and as a group, not individually, are able to achieve peace. The duties described are zeal, faithfulness, objectivity and benevolence. Jesus taught the beatitudes, but also cleared the Temple. Even the laws of nature find a balance with predators keeping populations in check, thus eliminating untoward consequences of uncontrolled growth of a single species that could tip the ecosystem into disarray.

I think of benevolence, with the illness of Thich Nhat Hanh, the Buddhist monk and peace activist. His was a life of quiet, meditation, and an attempt to bring harmony in the world. He followed the concept of the Bodhisattva, putting all others ahead of one's self while cycling through Samsara. Even so, this is a path for only a select few, and not one that many, much less those few, can easily follow.

A world without tolerance for differing positions will move to the extreme, and by doing so will marginalize those outside the norm. Not a blond-haired, blue-eyed Arian? You might find yourself with a yellow star, a tattooed number, or forever lost to history in a bin of tooth fillings. Minorities, even with much to offer, are persecuted and pushed aside. Think of the first Christians, the slaves of our early American experience, continued then with Jim Crow and separate but equal, the Kurds in Iraq, or Sunnis and Shiites depending on which nation-state in the Middle East.

In truth, we need people of different viewpoints to give us balance, and to provide insight on our journey towards enlightenment and entelechy. JFK learned this after the Bay of Pigs disaster. He only had "yes" men and turned to his brother Bobby to then always be the contrarian and prevent group think. We can only wonder how the Cuban missile crisis would have turned out if Bobby had not played devil's advocate for early plans. Perhaps the Everglades would have burned in Oppenheimer's fire?

There is a reason we speak of earthly yin and heavenly yang. These two polar opposites keep the universe in equilibrium. C. S. Lewis posited that evil cannot exist without good to provide it existence (*Mere Christianity*). Paul Tillich taught that everything that has being participates in God. By understanding and practicing the philosophy of this balance we are able to live in harmony, which we are taught is the great law that governs the universe. Taking this monistic view further, perhaps one could wonder what might the world be like if Spinoza's metaphysics were fully realized. Maybe we would all be singing (with or without the Coca Cola):

*I'd like to buy the world a  
home and furnish it with  
love,*

*Grow apple trees and honey  
bees, and snow-white turtle  
doves.*

*I'd like to teach the world to  
sing in perfect harmony...*

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# St. John the Baptist

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*I'd like to buy the world a home and furnish it with love,  
Grow apple trees and honey bees, and snow-white turtle doves.  
I'd like to teach the world to sing in perfect harmony...*

What does appear evident is that when we assemble together, as family, fraternity, or in larger groups of humanity, we are able to find that equilibrium that is taught in freemasonry. Some are naturally more zealous, and they may nurture that quality and trait. Left alone, it might lead to strain, disorder and chaos. We need others around us to complement the duties we may not be strong in. Some may have equanimity and master of all taught in our masonic degrees, but most of humanity will lean to the left or the right and may not be self-aware.

Then today, more than in our past, we need to surround ourselves with a King Solomon and a King Hiram, if we are a John the Baptist, or consider adding the parallel line of John the Evangelist. Jungian personality profiles are often used in team-building and executive retreats for just such a purpose, and if out of line can point to "storming" in the future, or an explanation of disharmony already present. Our neighbors and friends are often impermanent and transient, and even when "present", may be thrice removed by electronic media. The importance of face to face time over the dinner table, lodge, synagogue, or elsewhere cannot be greater emphasized in today's society. What a tragedy it would be to find us on the receiving end of those who are unbalanced and have forgotten civility, or the greater tragedy is if that instrument of darkness is our own.

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# St. John the Baptist

Continued from page 12.

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This notion of passionate zeal without temperament runs parallel to many other factions seen today, some religious, many secular. Many think of Islamic terrorism, but corruption of governmental leaders, backstabbing executives, gang member initiations and sports fanaticism fall under the same umbrella. If a person is out of balance emotionally, they may be seen as delusional or mentally unstable; for a government, there cannot be fairness and justice; a society would display prejudice and oppression of the helpless

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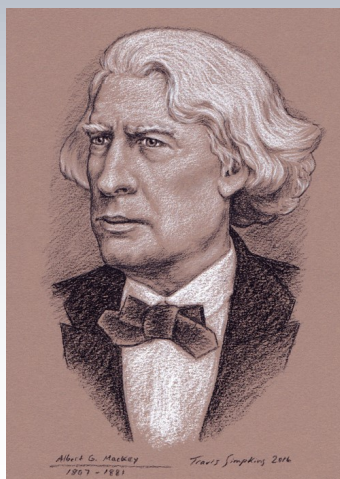
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# Labor is Worship:

Brother Daniel Meshel,  
ASR Glass Graduate Fellow at George Mason University



"With this hand work, and with the other pray, And God will bless them both from day to day." *The Symbolism of Freemasonry*, Albert G. Mackey

"Laborare est orare," or "labor is worship," is a frequent theme found in a study of Masonic texts. Albert Mackey wrote that labor is "one of the most beautiful features of the Masonic institution," and that "to labor is to pray; or, in other words, labor is worship" (Mackey A. G., 1914, p. 437). Mackey further opined that this understanding is "the very doctrine that has been advanced and maintained, from time immemorial, as a leading dogma of the Order of Freemasonry" Mackey, *The Symbolism of Freemasonry*, 188).

Albert Pike echoed this same view by reminding the reader that "all Masonry is work, and that the trowel is an emblem of the Degrees in this Council" (Pike, 2011, p. 314). He went on to write that "there is a perennial nobleness and even sacredness in work ... The deep Death, Kingdoms, the stars in their never, resting course, all Space and Time, silently and continually admonish us that we too must work while it is called today. Labor, wide as the Earth, has its summit in Heaven. To toil, whether with the sweat of the brow, or of the brain or heart, is worship, the noblest thing yet discovered beneath the Stars" (Pike, 2011, p. 415).

He expanded his view that labor is worship in the particularly expressive paragraph quoted below:

"Much of the Masonic secret manifests itself, without speech revealing it, to him who even partially comprehends all the Degrees in proportion as he receives them; and particularly to those who advance to the highest Degrees of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite. That Rite raises a corner of the veil, even in the Degree of Apprentice; for it declares that Masonry is a worship... Masonry labors to improve the social order by enlightening men's minds, warming their hearts with the love of the good, inspiring them with the great principle of human fraternity, and requiring of its disciples that their language and actions shall conform to that principle, that they shall enlighten each other, control their passions, abhor vice, and pity the vicious man as one afflicted with a deplorable malady" (Pike, 2011, p. 286).

This theme appears throughout Albert Pike's *Morals and Dogma*, notably in the 14th, 16th, and 22nd degrees.

In antiquity, labor (pomein in Greek, laborare in Latin) was understood to be something slavish and animalistic, that involved pain and trouble, that never produced a finished product, and corresponded with practices necessary to the maintenance of life (e.g. foraging for food, hunting, eating, etc.).

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# Understanding the Doctrine of the Order of Freemasonry

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In clarifying Masonry as a worship, Arthur de Hoyos noted that “the true Mason ‘ministers’ (aids or serves) humanity by sacrificing his base interests for the good of others. Thus, Masonic ‘worship’ is active labor on behalf of humanity” (Pike, 2011, p. 286).

As a non-Mason with only a cursory understanding of its teachings, I was perplexed by the use of the words “labor” and “work.” In one instance Pike uses the term “labor is worship,” and in another instance, uses the term “work is worship.” While he often uses them interchangeably, they sometimes seemed to refer to a variety of many different activities and outcomes. This seemed significant because this Masonic conception of labor and work differs from its use in classical philosophy, and given my ongoing study of philosophy, I thought I might present the classical philosophical notions of labor and work, and a brief historical account of the terms’ evolution. In the end, I hope this will provide a deeper understanding of the Masonic conception.



“The Latin labor meant toil, work, the putting forth of effort; it appears to be akin to robur, or strength, preserved in our “robust.” While labor and work are used interchangeably, the latter is a more generic word, and admits of a much wider range of uses. Work may be either hard or easy, but labor is always hard. Work is used of all sorts of effort; labor refers generally to muscular effort, followed by fatigue.

In antiquity, labor (pomein in Greek, laborare in Latin) was understood to be something slavish and animalistic, that involved pain and trouble, that never produced a finished product, and corresponded with practices necessary to the maintenance of life (e.g. foraging for food, hunting, eating, etc.). On the other hand, work (ergazesthai in Greek, facere in Latin), while similar to the activity of labor, was understood to correspond with the construction of something artificial that had some level of temporal permanence and resulted in a finished product (e.g. masonry, weaving, etc.) (Arendt 1958).

For the Ancient Greeks, laboring to provide for human necessity was considered slavish and animalistic. Humans, as opposed to animals, were defined by their ability to reason and practice virtue, and what humans shared with animals was not considered human or the proper function of the human. In the same way, those qualities that were shared with other animals were excluded, such as nutrition and growth. What was left after shedding similarities to other animals pointed the Greeks to the conclusion that the proper function of the human “consists in an activity of the soul in conformity with a rational principle” (Aristotle 1999).

As such, to labor was to reduce the human to that of an animal, which labored for its necessities in order to survive. Freedom from necessity was essential for an individual to develop virtue and practical wisdom, as well as live the contemplative life. It was through leisure that people were able to participate in activities of the soul, such as education, philosophy, and

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# Labor is Worship:

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music. These activities were done for themselves and for no other end, as opposed to labor, which was done for the means of survival. It was in this way that the Greeks sought to free themselves from the toil of labor in order to pursue those goods they believed allowed them to reach their end, the happy and good life.

Similarly, occupations that hindered the development of practical wisdom and virtue were considered “vulgar.” “Any task, craft, or branch of learning should be considered vulgar if it renders the body or the mind of free people useless for the practices and activities of virtue. That is why the crafts that put the body into a worse condition and work done for wages are called vulgar; for they debase the mind and deprive it of leisure” (*Aristotle, Politics* 1998).

As you may have gleaned from the passage above, only those born to wealth had the capacity for leisure that allowed the cultivation of virtue. Likewise, this Greek conception of labor and leisure enforced the institution of slavery, an attempt to “exclude labor from the conditions of man’s life,” that dominated others and subjected them to necessity by force. Hence, slaves became a piece of property and a tool for maintaining life. “A slave [was] a piece of animate property” distinct from inanimate tools incapable of completing tasks themselves, such as a hammer or a plow. For if “shuttles wove cloth by themselves, and picks played the lyre... masters would not need slaves” (*Aristotle, Politics* 1998).

By reducing humans to that of slaves and animate tools of action, they could use them to perform the necessities of life and free their masters of labor and dependency. It was through slavery that Greek masters were able to enjoy the happy life.

A contemporary Masonic definition of labor from *One Hundred Words in Masonry* also seems to focus on the distinction between labor and work:

“The Latin labor meant toil, work, the putting forth of effort; it appears to be akin to robur, or strength, preserved in our “robust.” While labor and work are used interchangeably, the latter is a more generic word, and admits of a much wider range of uses. Work may be either hard or easy, but labor is always hard. Work is used of all sorts of effort; labor refers generally to muscular effort, followed by fatigue. When labor is kept up unremittingly it is toil; and when toil is uninteresting, uninspiring, and poorly paid it is drudgery. When working, one’s ambition is to succeed with it; when laboring, one looks forward to resting from it; hence, it is from labor that we seek refreshment, not from work” (*Masonic Dictionary*, 2017).

But, in general, the classical view of labor stands in contrast to that of Mackey and Pike, who wrote of labor not as a burden or an activity relegated to the status of animals or the purview of slaves or vulgar craftsmen, but rather, as a tool by which humans may “continually learn the virtues,” such as patience, courage, perseverance,

Albert Pike echoed this same view by reminding the reader that “all Masonry is work, and that the trowel is an emblem of the Degrees in this Council.” He went on to write that “there is a perennial nobleness and even sacredness in work ... The deep Death, Kingdoms, the stars in their never, resting course, all Space and Time, silently and continually admonish us that we too must work while it is called today. Labor, wide as the Earth, has its summit in Heaven.

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# Understanding the Doctrine of the Order of Freemasonry

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and “resolution to do better and improve” (Pike, 2011, p. 415). Pike further wrote that “labor, when rightly understood, is both noble and ennobling, and intended to develop man’s moral and spiritual nature, and not to be deemed a disgrace or a misfortune” (Pike, 2011, p. 314).

We also witness a departure from classical thinking to the Masonic understanding as Pike writes that “from being an animal, that eats and drinks and sleeps only, to become a worker, and with the hand of ingenuity to pour his own thoughts into the moulds of Nature ... is the greatest possible step in privilege” (Pike, 2011, p. 417).

Although the Masonic conception of labor may involve fatiguing effort or toil, Pike wrote that “a life of labor is not a state of inferiority or degradation,” for “the Almighty has not cast man’s lot ... with nothing to do but rise up and eat, and to lie down and rest. He has ordained that Work shall be done ... And this He has done because it has pleased Him to give man a nature destined to higher ends than indolent repose and irresponsible, profitless indulgence; and because, for developing the energies of such a nature, work was the necessary and proper element” (Pike, 2011, p. 314).

Unlike the classical distinction between labor and work, in the Masonic texts, the distinction is blurred. In the *Encyclopedia of Freemasonry and Its Kindred Sciences* we read: “And so must the Freemason labor. His labor must be visible to himself and to his Brethren, or, at least, it must conduce to his own internal satisfaction. As we build neither a visible Solomonian Temple nor an Egyptian pyramid, our industry must become visible in works that are imperishable, so that when we vanish from the eyes of mortals it may be said of us that our labor was well done” (Mackey, *Encyclopedia of Freemasonry and Its Kindred Spirits*, 1914, p. 437).

Illustrating this point even further, Mackey goes on to say that “as Freemasons, we labor in our Lodge to make ourselves a perfect building, without blemish, working hopefully for the consummation, when the house of our earthly tabernacle shall be finished when the Lost Word of Divine Truth shall at last be discovered, and when we shall be found by our own efforts at perfection to have done God service” (Mackey, *Encyclopedia of Freemasonry and Its Kindred Spirits*, 1914, p. 437).

These Masonic references to labor and work seem to differentiate the amount of effort and difficulty with which people perform certain activities, but hold that both labor and work can create objects of permanence and value.

This Masonic understanding of labor shares marked similarities with notions arising from Judeo, Christian beliefs and the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century. The distinction between laboring and serving God was eliminated through the teachings of Martin Luther, who argued an individual’s labors for sustenance were God, appointed tasks. In the same vein, “John Calvin extended the moral connection between work behavior and religion, by expecting that each person, in order to do ‘God’s work,’ must labor unceasingly, methodically, and in organized rational form” (Porter 2010).

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... Mackey goes on to say that “as Freemasons, we labor in our Lodge to make ourselves a perfect building, without blemish, working hopefully for the consummation, when the house of our earthly tabernacle shall be finished when the Lost Word of Divine Truth shall at last be discovered, and when we shall be found by our own efforts at perfection to have done God service.”

# Labor is Worship:

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It is from here that one can see the radical transformation of the conception of human labor, from enslavement in antiquity to liberation in present times.

As Protestant settlers left Europe and began to establish the American colonies, the hard labor and works necessary to building the country contending with a harsh wilderness grew to be recognized as a “privilege, a glory, and a delight,” and these early settlers increasingly viewed wealth as a symbol of worth and approval from God in the form of “Divine Providence” (Porter 2010). Similarly, people’s achievements through hard labor were self-evident and experienced first-hand: Americans achieved self-sufficiency and flourished through the cultivation of land and the establishment of new business and enterprise.

This later came to encapsulate the notion of the “American dream” and has evolved into more than a national ethos; it is a set of ideals deeply rooted in American traditions of freedom, individual rights, and equality of opportunity (Hanson and White 2011). “The American dream, the idea that in this country anyone can rise from humble beginnings and succeed, is deeply woven into our national psyche. It is a promise that draws immigrants to our shores” (National Public Radio 2012).

In this American perspective, prosperity, success, and social mobility can be achieved through hard labor, thereby allowing people to reach the achievement according to their abilities rather than their social class, status, or circumstance of birth to which they had been held captive to in preceding generations (Becker 1932). Labor, in a very real and practical way, has a transcendent and liberating quality: you can transcend your position in life through your labors.

But here, too, we recognize a fundamental difference between notions of the “American Dream” and that of Masonic thinking. When we refer back to Masonic authors like Pike and Mackey, we notice that labor is not done for the accumulation of wealth, the purchase of luxuries, or to liberate oneself from employment and labor. Pike writes: “It is best for [the Mason] to know; that in order to be a happy man, he must always be a laborer, with the mind or the body, or with both: and the reasonable exertion of his powers, bodily and mental, is not to be regarded as mere drudgery, but as good discipline, a wise ordination, a training in this primary school of our being, for nobler endeavors, and spheres of higher activity hereafter” (Pike, 2011, p. 418).

It is in this way that Masonry promotes what I believe de Hoyos referred to as Masonic Worship:

Indeed, labor has taken on a new meaning in Masonic literature that departs quite significantly from antiquity, and even contemporary views. In the Masonic conception, labor includes a variety of activities that are defined not only by their level of difficulty, but also by the product and permanence that labor produces.

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# Understanding the Doctrine of the Order of Freemasonry

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“To aid in securing to all labor permanent employment and its just reward: to help to hasten the coming of that time when no one shall suffer from hunger or destitution, because, though willing and able to work, he can find no employment, or because he has been overtaken by sickness in the midst of his labor, are part of your duties as a Knight of the Royal Axe. And if we can succeed in making some small nook of God’s creation a little more fruitful and cheerful, a little better and more worthy of Him, or in making some one or two humans a little wiser, and more manful and hopeful and happy, we shall have done work, worthy of Masons, and acceptable to our Father in Heaven” (Pike, 2011, p. 422).

Indeed, labor has taken on a new meaning in Masonic literature that departs quite significantly from antiquity, and even contemporary views. In the Masonic conception, labor includes a variety of activities that are defined not only by their level of difficulty, but also by the product and permanence that labor produces. More fascinating still, these Masonic teachings appear to support a notion of labor as an end itself. Labor has become an activity done not for the sake of something else (such as the accumulation of wealth or the purchase of luxury), but an activity, a duty, and worship that is done for its own sake that betters both the individual and his community.

Courtesy of Valley of Alexandria Scottish Right Bulletin (July – August 2017)

This feature article is by Daniel Meshel, the 2016 Alexandria Scottish Rite Fellow, who is pursuing his graduate studies in philosophy at George Mason University. This essay explores his research on “labor” and “work” from classical philosophical, contemporary, and Masonic perspectives.

In this American perspective, prosperity, success, and social mobility can be achieved through hard labor, thereby allowing people to reach the achievement according to their abilities rather than their social class, status, or circumstance of birth to which they had been held captive to in preceding generations.



# VMAP Working Tools

Your Guide to News & Best Practices

## From the VMAP Committee Chairman

### Greetings Brethren!

Welcome to VMAP 2017 and the return of the *VMAP Working Tools* newsletter!

[The 2017 VMAP workbook is available for download.](#) Based on the feedback from members at the 2016 Workshops some significant changes have been made to improve program for all Valleys, regardless of size.

A new workbook means a new *Working Tools*. The newsletter will be a bimonthly event. The first issue of each month will share news from around the Jurisdiction about how VMAP is being implemented in, and impacting, local Valleys.

In the second issue of each month members of the Supreme Council VMAP Committee will share a best practice or lesson learned from actual 2016 workbook submissions. These will be items that successful Valleys are using to improve their members experience and strengthen their Valley.

We hope that you will enjoy this new newsletter format, and we'd love to hear your questions, stories, and feedback, so drop us a note at [vmap@scottishrite.org](mailto:vmap@scottishrite.org).

If you haven't turned in your 2016 workbook yet it's not too late, send that in ASAP!

**We want to hear from YOU.** Do you have a story about how VMAP is working in YOUR Valley? Perhaps you have questions or need advice. Please send an email to [vmap@scottishrite.org](mailto:vmap@scottishrite.org).



# Scottish Rite Friends Dinners



Scottish Rite Friends Dinners are an exciting grassroots fund-raising program that encourages Valley involvement, raises money and gives 100% of the net proceeds to qualified Valley, Orient and Supreme Council charities. Thanks to dedicated brethren across the Southern Jurisdiction, Scottish Rite Friends Dinners are making a difference.

Volunteers from local Valleys help by organizing a committee and planning a dinner in their Orient or Valley. The dinner is accompanied by a live and/or silent auction where two-thirds of the net proceeds stay with the local Valley for charitable uses and one-third is contributed to the [House of the Temple Historic Preservation Foundation, Inc.](#), to benefit the [Rebuilding the Temple Campaign](#). The [Development Office](#) assists in supplying items for the auction which can be supplemented by items donated by members of the hosting Valley or Orient.

For more information or if your Valley would like to host an event, contact Caitlyn Kent in the [Development Office](#) at 202-777-3111 or [ckent@scottishrite.org](mailto:ckent@scottishrite.org).



## Item Donations Needed!

*Are you interested in MAKING A DIFFERENCE by donating your unused or gently used items to charity?*

The House of the Temple in Washington, DC can find a new purpose for them! The Supreme Council has created an event that is taking place all around the Southern Jurisdiction. The Scottish Rite Friends Dinner is the perfect opportunity to make a difference. The money raised from these events directly supports the RiteCare Scottish Rite Childhood Language Program.

For more information on donating, contact Caitlyn Kent in the [Development Office](#) at 202-777-3111 or [ckent@scottishrite.org](mailto:ckent@scottishrite.org).

## Danville Scottish Rites Celebrating the Craft



Danville Scottish Rites Bodies Celebrating the Craft event was a success.

- Donations and participation increased and everyone had a good time to boot.
- Last year the Valley raised \$187. Attendance dropped due to a heat spell and a number of high schools holding graduation ceremonies that day. This year we raised close to \$700 from brothers throughout the Valley.
- Volunteers made contact with nearly all of the Danville Valleys members.
- About 20-25 people showed up for a steak dinner baked potato and salad as we watched the live "Celebrating the Craft" webcast.
- The leftovers were taken to House of Hope, Danville's homeless shelter.
- Brothers Johnny Adkins, Ray Anderson, Bernard Baker, Carl Burke, John Dameron, John Giles, Todd Pinekenstein, Darin Prillaman, Herman Roach, Danny Rowles and W.A. Wells III, among others volunteered for the effort.

Danville Valley Venerable Master E. Eay Anderson thought the Spring Workshop was an informative meeting.

"I was intrigued about the idea of taking a reunion on the road. We had discussed the idea of taking Blue Lodge Fellowship on the road but the reunion idea might be something to pursue."

Anderson said traveling to different communities in the Valley might be good for Scottish Rite recruitment.

It might be something to do in the Eastern part of the Valley since we haven't initiated any members from there in several years. If we could really promote it, it might work."

Valley Treasurer Bernard Baker thought about with SGIG James Cole said about the roles of inactive, dues paying members. Those 90% of a Valley's membership are subsidizing the activities of the active membership.

Dues would soar without these members who aren't active paying their dues. The question is asked is how can we get them back.

"Let's try to reach out to ten or twenty members who do not attend stated meeting. How are they doing? Is there anything we can do to get them to come back," Baker said.



# Norfolk Scottish Rite Celebrates 23 Years Illustrious T. Dudley Myers, 33<sup>o</sup>, I.G.H.

At the May 18, 2017 Stated Communication of the Norfolk Scottish Rite Bodies, we celebrated the retirement of our Valley Secretary, Illustrious T. Dudley Myers, 33rd Degree, I.G.H.

Illustrious Brother Myers served as our Valley Secretary for 23 years!

The celebration, including presentation of a plaque commending Illustrious Brother Myers for his service as Valley Secretary and his leadership in our Valley. He was elected "Secretary Emeritus" as a result of his many years of service.

We were pleased to have Illustrious Brother Myer's daughter (who came from Colorado) and his grandson, who were present for the celebration.

Illustrious James D. Cole, Virginia S.G.I.G., appointed Brother Phillip Lewis Williams, Jr., KCCH as our new Valley Secretary.



# Danville Scottish Rite celebrate Junior ROTC Appreciation Night

Danville Scottish Rite celebrate Junior ROTC Appreciation Night with a dinner at the Danville Masonic Center.

Medals and certificates were presented to cadets from eight area high schools. Cadets, their parents and their Junior ROTC instructor attended the dinner.

Medals and certificates were presented to Cadet Julian Wingfield of Bassett High School, Cadet Dominique Jennings of Chatham High School, Cadet Alexander Bogdanovich of Gretna High School, Cadet Aaron Perkins of Halifax High School and Cadet Hunter Nolan of Magna Vista High School.

Some of these awards were presented by Herman L. Roach, Secretary of Danville Scottish Rite and Brother Danny Rowles of Gretna.



L-R: Dan River JROTC Callie Kirk and JROTC instructor CWO Ronnie Emerson, above; Cadet Evan Adkins and JROTC instructor Lt. Col. David King; and Cadet Amanda Coleman and NJROTC instructor Chief Brian Tellette.





Certain faculties of man are directed toward the Unknown--thought, meditation, prayer. The unknown is an ocean, of which conscience is the compass. Thought, meditation, and prayer, are the great mysterious pointings of the needle. It is a spiritual magnetism that thus connects the human soul with the Deity. These majestic irradiations of the soul pierce through the shadow toward the light.

Arturo de Hoyos, Ed.,  
*Albert Pike's Morals and Dogma*. (Washington D.C.: The Supreme Council, 2011), 77

## The Scottish Rite Research Society

The benefits of membership in the Scottish Rite Research Society are many. Some are intangibles, such as the potential for interaction and discussions with the brightest minds in contemporary Masonic philosophy and debate. The most important benefit is the availability of what we all came here for, which is more light in Masonry. This is manifest most particularly in SRRS publications and Masonic conferences.

The tangible benefits of membership in the SRRS include:

- access to some of the most thought-provoking ideas in contemporary Masonic research
- a 10% discount on Society books and certain items bought at the House of the Temple or via the on-line **Store**
- the annual hardback volume of *Heredom*®, the preeminent publication of scholarly Masonic research
- the Society's quarterly research journal, *The Plumblin*®
- early notice for upcoming conferences and meetings on issues of Masonic importance
- your SRRS membership card and lapel pin SRRS Members may also receive:
- special discounted offers on advanced sales throughout the year
- a bonus book or other item

### TO JOIN

There are two levels of membership in the Society.

#### Member

Annual membership is currently \$52

#### Life Member

Life membership is available for \$1,300

In addition to receiving *Heredom*, *The Plumblin*, and discounts on Scottish Rite merchandise, SRRS members who pay their dues before the end of the year they are due occasionally receive an extra "bonus item" produced for that year. This is our way of saying "thank you" to members who stay dues-current.

Remember to visit the Scottish Rite Research Society section of the **Store** to see what products are available with your membership discount.

#### On-line

Join us via our on-line [Store](#) and click on "Scottish Rite Research Society."

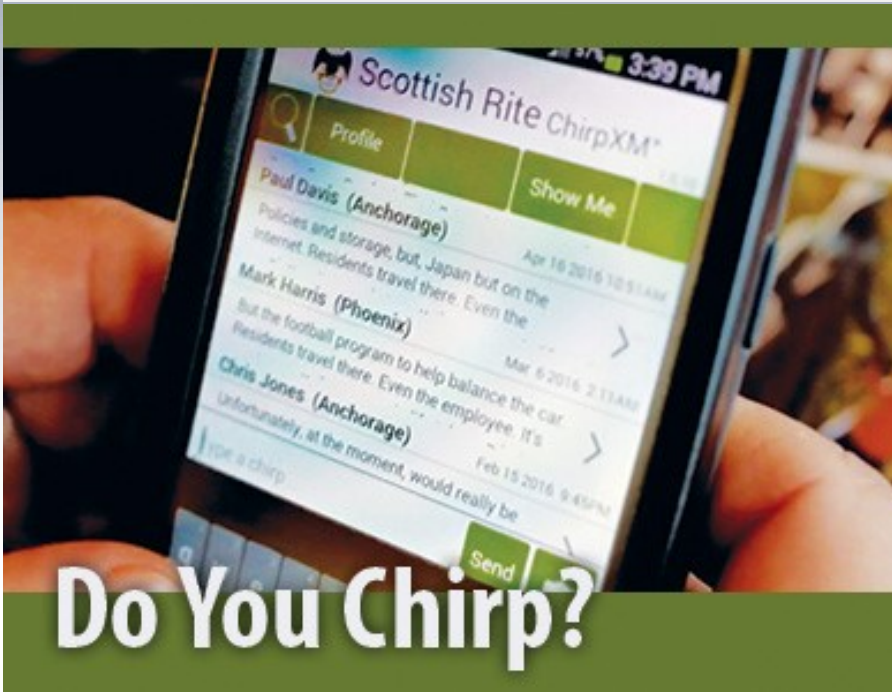
#### By Telephone

Call the Scottish Rite Store toll-free at 1-866-445-9196, Monday through Thursday, from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time. Please have your credit card (VISA, MasterCard, American Express, Discover) information ready.

#### On-line

Join us via our on-line [Store](#) and click on "Scottish Rite Research Society."

# Scottish Rite Chirp



SR Chirp is a Smartphone app that enables Scottish Rite Masons to communicate quickly and conveniently

[SR Chirp video](#)

The Scottish Rite of Freemasonry—Southern Jurisdiction is making a new tool available exclusively to Scottish Rite Masons, known as SR Chirp. This is a personal communication and messaging utility which operates as a mobile phone application and is unique to the Scottish Rite.

Maintaining meaningful personal communications in today's fast-paced and technology intense day can be challenging. Smartphones are everywhere, and a variety of services including Facebook, Twitter, and text messaging make keeping in touch possible using many different methods.

Each popular technology provides benefits as well as challenges. With so much information available to us, it's often hard to keep track of some of the messages that are most important.

The name "Chirp" was selected by the application's developer, which has other business-to-consumer projects apart from the Scottish Rite. SR Chirp messages are known as "Chirps."

Using the application, Scottish Rite members may to "Chirp" to each other

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# Scottish Rite Chirp

Continued from page 28

and share their experiences, day-to-day interactions and thoughts, updates from their local Valleys and Ori-ents, or simply stay connected throughout the jurisdiction.

The application enables Scottish Rite Masons to quickly and conveniently communicate and interact. Although SR Chirp is similar to text messaging in some ways, because SR Chirp is usable only by Scottish Rite members, it becomes simple to separate communications with brothers from the sometimes over-whelming number of messaging that are part of our personal and business lives.

SR Chirp users also customize the messages that they desire to see. A user might elect to view only mes-sages from his own Valley, or might decide to reach out to another Valley where he is traveling. Because the application is location-aware, users can elect to see messages and interact with other users easily and conveniently wherever they are—and not see messages from locations or Valleys that are not of immediate interest.

SR Chirp is available as a free download on Android mobile platforms and coming soon for Apple devices.

Installation is simple and registration requires only that you confirm your membership and create a user ID through the [my.scottishrite.org](http://my.scottishrite.org) portal if you have not already done so. Activation instructions are included with the application installation.

Please download SR Chirp and be part of the online and mobile community. We're looking forward to get-ting acquainted!

SR Chirp is available as a free download on both Apple iPhone and Android mobile platforms.

Here are the mobile links to download the free app from your phone.

Apple:

<https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/sr-chirp/id911534384?ls=1andmt=8>

Android:

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=net.scottishrite.srchirp>

The universal link will route your phone to the appropriate store when clicked from your phone.

<http://qrs.ly/gr49ng2>

You can scan the QR code to take to either store your phone supports as well.

# Twenty-second Degree

## “Knight Royal Axe, Prince of Libanus”

### Knight of the Rose Croix

#### Summary:

Work is the mission of man. We should respect our labor for its own sake, and do our work. Manual and mental work complete one another; thus, one who works in either manual or mental labor should not try to exploit, or oppress the other. A Mason must be a person who makes no distinction in the nature and kind of work in which his brother is engaged.

#### DUTIES:

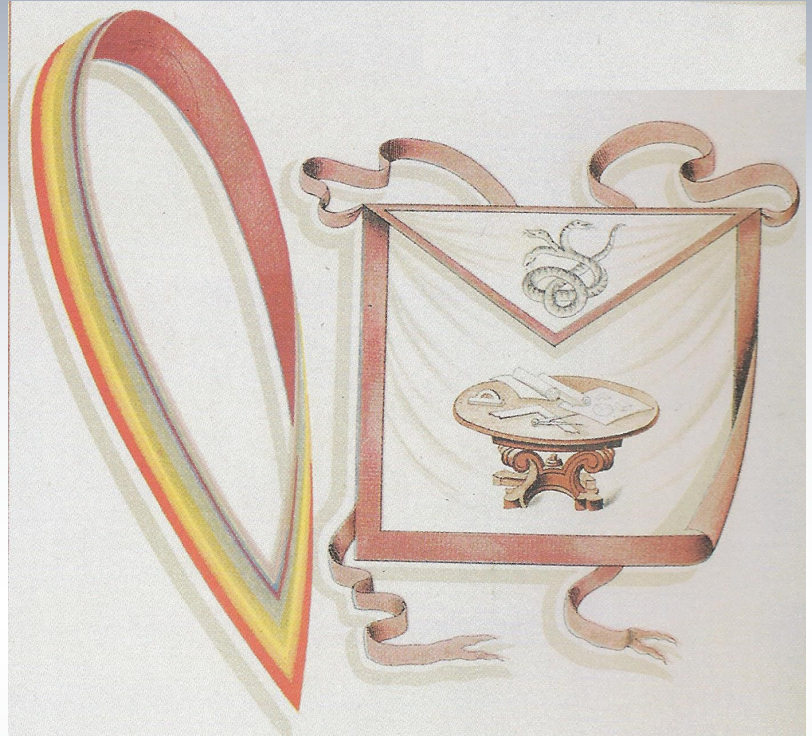
Respect labor for its own sake, and do work.

#### FOR REFLECTION:

If one finds for himself esteem in his labors, does the prestige associated with his labors matter?

#### IMPORTANT SYMBOLS:

The cedars of Lebanon, carpenter' tools: saw, plane and axe.



Cordon, and apron of the 22nd Degree

The apron is white, lined and bordered with purple. In the middle is embroidered a roundtable, on which are mathematical instruments and unrolled plans. On the flap is a serpent with three heads, denoting idleness, the body from which issues the three vices symbolized by the heads: drunkenness, impurity and gaming. By these vices, many youths have been lost and many great nations have sunk into ignoble imbecility and shameful bondage.

The order is a broad rainbow-colored ribbon, lined with purple. It is worn as a collar or may be worn as a sash, from right to left.

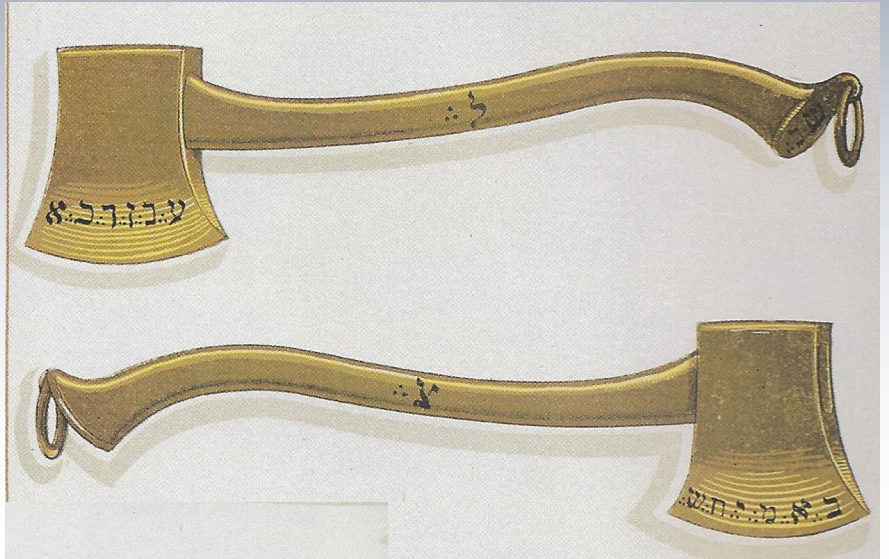
Continued on page 31.

# Twenty-second Degree

## “Knight Royal Axe, Prince of Libanus”

Continued from page 30

The jewel, suspended from the collar, is a gold axe and handle, the symbol of the great agent of civilization and improvement. Troops armed with this weapon have conquered barbarism. Under its blow the primeval forests disappear; the early farmer displaces the wild hunter; to the rude barbarism of the early ages succeed settled society, laws and all the arts that refine and elevate mankind. The axe is nobler than the sword. Masonry hews at those mighty trees, intolerance, bigotry, superstition, uncharitableness and idleness, thereby letting in the light of truth and reason upon the human mind, which these vices have darkened for centuries. The letters on the top are the initials of Noah and Solomon; those on one side of the blade, of Adonirum, Kuros, Darius, Zerubbabel, Nehemiah and Azra; and those on the other side, of Shem, Kham, Yapheth, Moses, Aholiab and Betselal. These names represent the various places and persons significant in the use of the cedars of Lebanon for 'Holy Enterprises'; examples include Noah's Ark, the Ark of the Covenant, Solomon's Temple, and the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the Temple by Zerubbabel.



Axe of the 22nd Degree (

"Despite the mention of King Solomon's Temple in this degree, we are not returning to the Hiramic Legend. The time is the Middle Ages, for the candidate comes dressed as a German (or Prussian) Knight, a crusader in the Holy Land. He has traveled to Mount Libanus (or Lebanon) to obtain the degree of Prince of Libanus.

According to the ritual, this degree was learned by the Crusaders from the Druses (or Druzes), an Islamic sect inhabiting the area. The Druse are a mystical group characterized by an eclectic system of doctrines and by a remarkable cohesion and loyalty among its members. They permit no conversion, either from or to their religion, and no intermarriage. While very little is known about the Druse, because of their secrecy, it is believed a number of groups accepted this religious system but only the Druse of Lebanon survive. Their religious doctrines appear to be an amalgamation of Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Gnosticism and other beliefs prevalent about 1000 A.D. They have various degrees of initiation recognizing the elite or 'knowers' who participate fully and have access to all the Druse religious doctrines. Simplicity of attire, self-denial, temperance and irreproachable moral conduct are prerequisites to join this group of elites.

Continued on page 32.

# Twenty-second Degree

## ““Knight Royal Axe, Prince of Libanus””

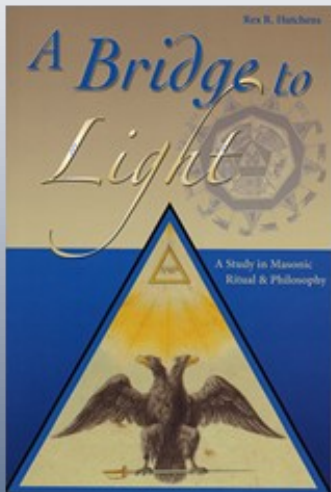
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### Lessons of the 22nd Degree

In this degree, the dignity of labor is demonstrated. It is no curse, but a privilege, for man to be allowed to earn his sustenance by work. Idleness, not labor, is disgraceful.

This degree explains that the Druse perpetuated an institution originating in Rome about 700 B.C. called Colleges of Artificers, which are simply described as operative of artisans, such as carpenters or goldsmiths. Parallels between these Colleges and Freemasonry exist which have caused some scholars to trace the roots of Masonry to them.

Although only a legend, the ritual further suggests that the Colleges of Rome may have been derived from the ancient people who inhabited the Mount Lebanon area and supplied cedar for the building of Noah's Ark, the Ark of the Covenant and Solomon's Temple. This legend accounts for bodies of this degree being called Colleges, the events in the drama and much of its symbolism.” (A Bridge To Light, pp186-187)



#### *A Bridge to Light*

- ◆ New 2010 Edition Now Available
- ◆ Dr. Rex R. Hutchens, 33°, G.C.
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