



# 29th Grand Masonic Day

Saturday, 5 March 2011



# Food for the Body and the Mind

Presented at the G.V.R.D. Grand Masonic Day, 5 March 2011  
by R.W. Bro. Donald E. Stutt, Junior Grand Warden

My brothers, how was your lunch to-day? Did the meal satisfy your body? How were the presentations this morning? Did they make you think? Did they stimulate the mind, create discussion?

Today, these two items work together. For one feeds the body and sustains life, while the other, feeds, nourishes and stimulates the mind.

These are not just snacks for a short period of time, but food for the mind to sustain you through a lifetime; they allow you to expand your horizon well into the future and to contemplate what could be.

Snack foods are not fulfilling for the body or the mind. They may plant seeds or thoughts but if we fail to use the nourishment of our mind for the betterment of mankind and society it is a waste.

For today, you brethren have figuratively moved from the comfort of your lodge and district into a new zone of knowledge, by attending this Grand Masonic Day. Location is irrelevant, for you have met and heard brethren from around our jurisdiction, created new friendships, and enjoyed each others fellowship.

And how about the fellowship? There is nothing better than to shake a brother's hand in greeting, meet new brothers and renew old acquaintance from lodges and districts you have not attended in a while. For this is, truly a place of fellowship.

For this is a Saturday not like any others. For today you are not running errands, or taking your children to soccer or hockey, for example. No to-do list here. Today at this moment you are immersed in the shared fellowship of thoughts, points of view, discussions, things that make you say "hmm" and cause you to pause and reflect. As George Bernard Shaw once said, "Some men see things as they are and say why — I dream things that never were and say why not."

When you are in your lodge room, within your district, that is your quiet place in life, away from the outside the world.; where you can sit and reflect upon the previous events of the past hours, days, weeks or months ... contemplating what you could have done, would have done or will do. This is your place to relax and reflect without any external influences. This is your place of solitude and comfort, knowing that the world is outside of those four walls and will not disturb you for the next little while. You are with like-minded brethren who love a good discussion. Where thoughts and opinions are valued and accepted.

Discussion without attitudes, without cheapening of the Craft or craftsman. One does it one way while another does it another. It does not matter that it is right or wrong, it is the results that count. For example making tea for the lodge festive board or working with MS Windows, there are many ways or paths, and the results are same.

We have to assist our new brother in the Craft. How? By being examples, showing them better ways to be freemasons. We need to make

adjustments in the way we say things. I have some pet peeves, simple thing I call masonic viruses. These may just be words to some, but in the ears of the learned *and* the uninitiated they cause problems. Listen to the differences:

- Doing or putting on vs conferring the degrees;
- Brother Bob vs Brother Brown;
- Emergent vs regular business

Listen to the difference, and understand the difference.

My brothers, we are being watched, and others believe that when we say these things we know what we are talking about. Therefore we must be correct. If we are able to amend our ways we will assist others. It's like fine tuning a stereo.

Remember our thoughts and actions, for we are measured constantly by others and how they interpret our actions. Let us continue to prosper and deliver messages that will continue to stimulate their minds as well as our own in a positive manner.

When we're hollering at the game on television, what does it get us? As our significant others will let us know, we are not the coach. Remember, as passionate as we can be, nothing changes if we are only spectators. Let us put that passion inside our fraternity, to keep the fires burning in the intellect of our body.

I would like to leave you with a quote from H. A. N. Puddicombe from his book *Masonic Foundation*:

"As we look at the Perfect Ashlar, suspended from the derrick, we remember that the stone, when perfected, is only about to enter upon another career of boundless possibilities. It has only attained its present form after long and tedious toil. But all that is past, and it now awaits the pleasure of the master builder to be lowered into its resting place.

"When we have arrived at that awful moment when we, too, are about to take flight to that boundless and unexplored expanse above, we will be suspend awaiting the pleasure of the Great Architect. To him we cannot dictate, but merely await the application of His attesting square and compasses. Thus do we learn to bend with humility and resignation to His will, content in the one certainty that He, in His wisdom, has assigned to every approved stone its place in His Everlasting Temple, and that nothing we have accomplished towards the attainment of perfection but will meet its reward in His approbation."

*If you can conceive it, And believe it, You can achieve it!*

-Napoleon Hill (1883-1970) author of *Think and Grow Rich*.

# Cement and adorn: Building capability and engagement among brethren in Freemasonry

Presented at the G.V.R.D. Grand Masonic Day, 5 March 2011  
by W. Bro. Daniel Zrymiak, St. James Lodge No. 80

## Overview:

- Leverage management practices to improve Freemasonry;
- Describe impacts of individual Capability and Engagement;
- Categorizing brethren by Capability and Engagement;
- C.E.M.E.N.T. the Capability of our brethren;
- A.D.O.R.N. the Engagement of our brethren;
- Benefits of improving Capability and Engagement.

## Leverage Management Practices

The author Eric Thompson described Capability and Engagement as the key to success and productivity.

**Capability** – *Ability to deliver on commitments.* The individual must be capable of doing the job. The individual's capability will depend on their history. Capability is accumulated along the way. It depends on the education, training and experience that the individual has had.

**Engagement** – *Willingness and desire to perform.* The second criterion is engagement. This is the greater challenge for the organisation, because the issues that cause each individual to engage are different and change with time

## Existing Solutions

The current Five Pillar Plan from GLBCY aspires to address both elements.

### Capability – Ability to deliver on commitments

Capability can be increased through training, development, coaching and mentorship. The employee needs to be developed both for the short term and for the long term.

### Engagement – Willingness and desire to perform.

In parallel with addressing the individual's capability, the organization needs to work on engagement (*e.g.*, Fellowship, Fraternal Bond)

## Implications of Capability-Engagement

Brethren who are highly engaged with high capabilities in Freemasonry are our STARS as they should readily embrace the challenges and opportunities to lead our Craft and lodges, and be mentors and positive examples to our brethren.

A highly capable brother with low engagement could be termed a DIVA, in that the participation and involvement may involve animosity or hesitation, and the leadership challenge is to find common areas to rebuild the engagement and restore the connections.

A highly engaged brother with low capability could be termed a STRUGGLER in that the effort and energy is applied, but the outcomes are not always up to an acceptable standard. Like the rough ashlar, brethren in this category need mentorship and guidance, while ensuring that their engagement is not diminished through discouragement.

The area of highest risk are the brethren who are neither engaged nor capable. This category does not serve the fraternity, and the best approach is to take an "up or out" mentality by providing the opportunities to improve capabilities and enhance engagement.

If these efforts are not successful, it may be in everyone's highest good to allow the BUDS to "bloom" with a group or pastime which more closely aligns with their preferences and talents.

## Categories of masonic brethren

Based on an evaluation of relative levels of Capability and Engagement, we can categorize our brethren and adapt our communications to them accordingly.

<b>High Capability</b>	High-Low "DIVAS"	High-High "STARS"
<b>Low Capability</b>	Low-Low "BUDS"	Low-High "STRUGGLERS"
	<b>Low Engagement</b>	<b>High Engagement</b>

## C.E.M.E.N.T. Capability

- C- Ceremony** – Display proper Freemasonry for excellence
- E- Education** – Cover the landmarks and key components
- M- Mentorship** – Direct guidance on all masonic aspects
- E- Enforcement** – Validate lessons, live by masonic example
- N- Nomination** – When ready, advance brother to higher rôle
- T- Transition** – Transition from Learner to Leader, continuously

## A.D.O.R.N. Engagement

- A- Acceptance** – Formalize and confirm Masonic acceptance
- D- Development** – Connect to brother with common interests
- O- Orientation** – Expose brother to other Masonic initiatives
- R- Recognition** – Construct sequential growth and rewards
- N- Naturalization** – Establish a "New Normal" pattern

## Quick Wins: Capability and Engagement

Examples of small gestures to turn brethren into STARS!

- Include brother in long-term planning discussions
- Arrange calls and visits during illness or distress
- Recognize personal masonic milestones at all levels (even "baby steps") to create a positive momentum of achievement.

Promote brethren with a particular competency or talent who can assist other brethren or lodges.

## Risks of inadequate attention

Compare the relative value with the attrition of a brother and the subsequent loss.

## Benefits of a successful programme

A highly capable brother is versatile and adaptable. A highly engaged brother provides support which is necessary for overall success. Both Capability and Engagement are essential for the sustainability of our craft, particularly to retain positive involvement brethren in the face of demographic declines

Fulfills ritual promise to "Shine As The STARS".

Comments and questions:  
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# Masonry as meditation: A paper on the pillars

Presented at the G.V.R.D. Grand Masonic Day, 5 March 2011  
by Bro. Wesley S. Regan, Mount Hermon Lodge No. 7

**PASSING THROUGH** anything as monumental as these two great pillars, should not be taken lightly. Because just like passing through a time in one's life, there is as much to be learned when we reflect as there was when we were there. In fact there is often more. And now it is much easier in many ways to focus, without distraction, on what we saw and what we learned. Today I would like to share how useful and fun that I believe it is, to utilize the rich symbolism of the Craft for reflection, and for self-exploration. I invite you to focus in on those moments we've spent with these pillars, and join me as I abstract some ideas from them and reflect on the.

## Boaz and Jachin

Boaz (strength) derived from "b" (beth) and "oaz" (vau and zayin): *left hand pillar facing northeast*.

A paper could be presented on the life and rôle of Boaz the man himself, but I'll keep it short and say that he was a man of great charity, selflessness and compassion, a man who did the right thing in his time. Together, he and Ruth had a son, Obed, father of Jesse and grandfather of David, who of course was the father of Solomon. <sup>1</sup>

Jachin (Establishment) deriving from the Hebrew "Ja" (Yah) meaning God,<sup>2</sup> a shortened version of the sacred Hebrew YHVH ) and "iachin" (will establish): *right hand pillar facing southeast, (often called the pillar of establishment)*.

Where were these pillars cast? On the banks of the Jordan between Succoth and Zeradatha. Being a geographer I'm inclined to question the importance of these locations. Is something else located here? Did something important happen here? Turns out that yes, something important did happen here, aside from someone discovering that this place had the best clay in the middle-east.

Both of these places directly relate with the crossing of the Jews out of Egypt.<sup>3</sup> When the Israelites embarked on their exodus from captivity in Egypt they passed through or between these places of Zeradatha and Succoth, where later the pillars of the temple were figuratively cast by Hiram Abiff, these same pillars that we pass through from captivity in ignorance to our journey through Freemasonry; our journey of self mastery, and the discovery of our own time and place. These ancient Israelites brought with them the mysterious ideas of the Egyptians. Moses himself was trained as an Egyptian priest,<sup>4</sup> receiving a provocative distinction courtesy of Sigmund Freud, who on pondering the mnemohistory of Moses'



The enlightened being.

person, suggested that the patriarch was a re-animation or reiteration of the Pharaoh Akenhaten, the first pharaoh to challenge the traditionally polytheistic Egyptian religions by practicing a monotheistic worship of Aten, or Ra, the sun god.<sup>5</sup> Freud's position on this has been largely discredited by the academy, but it stands as an important inquiry into deeper ties between the Judeo-Christian tradition and ancient Egypt from a more mainstream source than some modern masonic writers may choose. J.S.M. Ward also draws a comparison between these pillars and the pillars Tat and Tattu in the *Egyptian Book of the Dead*. (Ward, No. 2 *The F.C.'s Handbook*, Lewis Masonic, 1974, p. 26)

What is far less debated is that these same Jewish thinkers brought out of Egypt by Moses also brought us the western hemisphere's first notion of a monotheistic religion and of a singular metaphysical and omnipresent God, if we discount Zoroastrianism, which had been practiced in Iran and elsewhere since the fourteenth century BCE.<sup>6</sup> The conceptualization or discovery of this deity which was not tied to a specific geography, like many nature-based or fixed tribal deities, creates the underpinnings and foundation of

western theology, contributes powerfully to our laws and values, and many of our notions of divinity, virtue, judgment and afterlife. It is intrinsically woven into our collective psyche and our cultural discourse. So it seems very fitting that these pillars would be cast in the place where the mystical and philosophical ideas of ancient Egypt were carried out by the ancient Jews, on their way to such a revelation and contribution. It was the revelation not of a new god, but The God; the source of creation and energy of the living universe. And it opened the minds of men to question all kinds of philosophical, metaphysical and other complex ideas; ideas that to this very day we are still challenged by whether we're quantum physicists or just curious souls.

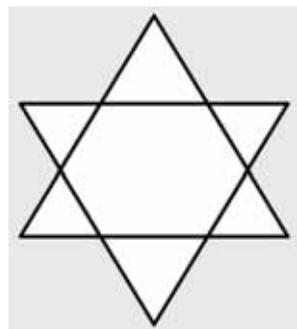
We pass through these pillars on the way to our discovery of our self, which by nature of us being a creature of this universe and the force which created it, the discovery too of our personal relationship with the divine. In Freemasonry this is left open to personal interpretation of course, but I believe that the western traditions of mysticism and theology have an indelible imprint in our rituals, as do other pre-Christian traditions too. Other scholars like J.S.M. Ward<sup>7</sup> or modern writers like Knight and Lomas have their own interpretations which fall one way or the other on a similar pile as mine, Knight and Lomas invoking the Celtic or Druidic traditions and

J.S.M. Ward a whole host of eastern and near eastern traditions in which he finds common ties to masonic symbolism and practice. I believe that these pillars tell us more about the human psyche, myth, belief and mnemohistory than most of us may at first realize.

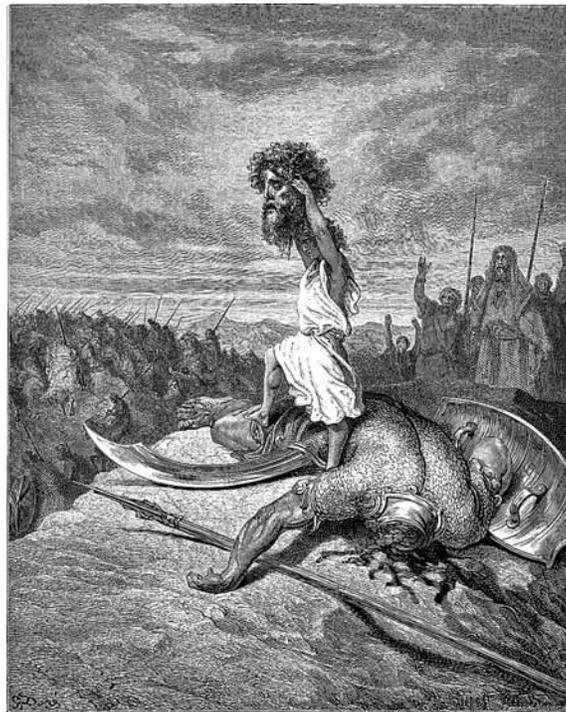
So what are some of the particulars that the western traditions of philosophy, mysticism, spirituality and theology owe to the Jewish scholars of old? What do we owe David and Solomon whom these pillars are both associated with? Well, we owe a lot, we being the western civilization that Freemasonry flourished in during the enlightenment and hereafter. And in my opinion the Kingdom of David and his son Solomon may be more about the mystical and monotheistic traditions of the west and the influence it has had on academics, scientists, philosophers and spiritual thinkers, as it is the men and their time.

*Establish his kingdom in strength*, this line from the Ancient Work lecture always resonated in my head. The Kingdom of David didn't last much longer than the man himself, but yet thousands of years later in our ritual there is reference made to it still. In fact it plays a very important part in our ritual. I see the kingdom that was established in strength being, in my opinion, more of a metaphysical, intellectual kingdom than a physical one. Because as we all know, eventually the flesh cleaves from the bone as our corporeal efforts on this planet come to an end. But intellectually, philosophically, metaphysically, the Kingdom of David and the Temple of Solomon live on in the work of the civilizations that have followed, not to mention in the rituals of our degrees.

David defeated the giant Goliath, which has been interpreted by some Jewish thinkers as a metaphorical representation of the victory of monotheism over paganism and by Christian thinkers as representative of the Church's struggle against Satan, or evil.<sup>8</sup> This giant vs youngling episode is paralleled in other faiths or mythologies as well, perhaps most similarly in Homer's *Iliad*.<sup>9</sup> In the case of David and Goliath it is the metaphorical allusion to the defeat of paganism and establishment of the monotheistic theological and philosophical western tradition that I am most concerned with in this paper, along with the related geometries, geographies, and esoteric ideas that accompany it.



Today we see the symbols named the Star of David or the Star of Solomon, important symbols or images not only to the Jewish but to alchemists and magicians of the middle ages who gave way to the chemists and other scientists of the renaissance and enlightenment, including Isaac Newton,<sup>10</sup> purported though not proven to be a freemason himself and counted among the founders of the Royal Society, the preeminent college of scientific and social theorists still held in acclaim today. Though dating back thousands of years and found in other parts of the world,<sup>11</sup> this talismanic symbol is known most commonly now as the Star of David. Its number of points and the idea of a

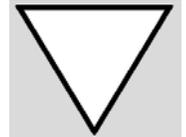


David and Goliath.

seventh in its centre conform with the sacred numbers 6 and 7 of which the creation myth and eschatology explore. It is held that this symbol was the famed Seal of Solomon, featured in his signet. It was claimed to have given him mystical powers, domination over demons, and the ability to speak with animals among other things.<sup>12</sup> It is also perceived to be a talisman denoting creation and redemption, life and death and the most commonly accepted symbolic statement of the dual nature of God, his divine nature and his human nature.<sup>13</sup> In alchemy, the precursor to modern chemistry and other sciences practiced by the Hermetic philosophers, this shape combines the symbols for fire (equated with masculine energy) and of water (equated with feminine energy), they being an upward and downward triangle respectively.<sup>14</sup> The symbol can therefore be equated with balance, unity, wholeness, similar to the concept of yin and yang. John Sebastian Marlow Ward emphasizes the masculine-feminine overtones coming from

the Entered Apprentice degree to Fellowcraft degree, the Entered Apprentice degree being representative of the creative feminine side, the weaker side as represented by the left knee, and the stronger masculine or preservative side of the Fellowcraft degree as represented by its own particulars.<sup>15</sup>

Aside from the mystical connections of David and Solomon and the geometries associated with their names, the western philosophical and theological tradition also carries with it a prominent focus on death, the afterlife, resurrection and a period of salvation or perfection to one day arrive. King David plays prominently in this promise of reward for our suffering. Therefore the line of David and thus the intellectual and metaphysical Kingdom of David in this context are important not just in Jewish culture but in the western tradition itself, one which includes Christianity, Islam, epistemology, natural philosophy and a host of other schools of thought which stem from our most primitive sacred notions, organized into the language of the dominant spiritual or intellectual paradigm of which we've existed in for millennia.



Is this the kingdom of ideas, the western (or human) tradition of theology and mysticism, man's search for his connection with the divine, the close examination and mastery of the physical realm we're born into that these pillars are representative of? Because after all, the Fellowcraft degree encourages us to familiarize ourselves with the liberal arts and sciences that have matured from our ancient ideas into the intellectual tapestry that supports modern society today. I believe this is one aspect of these pillars and the importance of the five pillars in general in the Fellowcraft degree — a sort of acknowledgement of the birth of western thinking as a blend of Greek and proto-Judeo-Christian traditions that have coalesced with informed and subsumed many other belief systems and cultures scattered throughout vast geographies. The birth of writing after all, began the fertile-crescent, arcing from Mesopotamia to Egypt, and the Greeks too offered us further insight into the human condition upon

pondering through language and debate, reality, shapes, sounds, morals and virtues, gods and goddesses correlating to previous ancients. And through the expansion and dissolution of the Roman Empire was birthed the European Kingdoms followed by their nation-states and modern union. And so in this ritualistic sense I see these pillars as a spiritual and intellectual birth canal for both the western traditions, including the mystery traditions and for the candidate himself. In fact there are fertility images right on them. Lilies and pomegranates being representative of fertility, spiritual purity, birth and rebirth. The lily is also a symbol of motherhood.<sup>16</sup> (*Lehner*, p. 119) This is fitting, being that we refer to these places where we pass through the pillars for the first time as our Mother Lodge.

Where else have lilies figured prominently? To the ancient Egyptians, the trumpet-shaped lily was a symbol of Upper Egypt and has been associated with Ishtar (*aka* Astarte) who was herself a goddess of creation and fertility as well as a virgin.<sup>17</sup> The Greeks and Romans linked the lily with the queen of the gods, called Hera by the Greeks and Juno by the Romans. And likewise the pomegranate was also linked to Hera and Juno (*Lehrer*, p. 123). The lily was also one of the symbols of the Roman goddess Venus.<sup>18</sup> In Western art the angel Gabriel is seen giving Mary a branch of pure white lilies, proclaiming that she is to be the mother of the Christ. Featured in the *Song of Solomon* the lily has been historically associated with the Hebraic Flower of Solomon, or Star of David, which we just examined earlier.<sup>19</sup> Thus the lily denotes spirituality, fertility, purity and rebirth in this and other contexts much older than Christianity and even Judaism. In fact one form of lily, the lotus is featured prominently in the very birth of the physical universe itself. In the Hindu creation myth, the god Brahma is birthed in a water lily or lotus that grows from the navel of lord Vishnu upon the great expanse of endless ocean that is the cosmic nothingness. The water lily enjoys pride of place in botany as the earliest of the blooming flora to come forth from the angiosperm — classified as basal-angiosperm. Lilies are important; they are the genetic missing link in the plant world, so to speak, that allowed the staple foods of human societies such as corn, wheat, and rice, to emerge.<sup>20</sup> Notice the bed of cobras Vishnu is resting upon. The serpent in both India and Egypt symbolizes something much different than modern westerners have come to equate it with today.<sup>21</sup> Something I contemplate nearly every time I clasp my apron on, that is if haven't frantically rushed to lodge after work.

The lotus of course is also a very important flower in Buddhism. As Joseph Campbell beautifully puts it, "The jewel of eternity is in the lotus of birth and death" (*Campbell*, p. 130)<sup>22</sup> And as you can see in the image at the beginning of this paper the enlightened being is quite androgynous. This comment isn't made in jest. The



The Annunciation

both the feminine and masculine, of fire and water, destruction and creation. A representation of the perfection of our unity as a potentially divine creature, so in need of salvation, and of answers, so imperfect yet with such potential, and able to see beyond the veil of the mystery- but perhaps never able to fully comprehend it in this our present form and in this life. Through the liberal arts and sciences we see its beautiful geometry, and hear its beautiful harmony, but like animals we humans claw and defile the physical world and each other despite these ever-present glimpses of the divine. Those glimpses can become gazes here in the Lodge, and in the symbols that aggregate the accoutrements of our Furniture and ritual. These Lodge rooms are full of symbolism, these pillars alone can tell us the story of the creation of man and the physical universe he inhabits, the purity of our divine nature and the oneness we seek with it as told by many different cultures. They speak to the richness of the symbolism of the Craft, that the few symbols and concepts meditated on here alone, in a rich collage of others, contain so much meaning and mystery. That they can inspire an intellectual and spiritual journey that takes us right to the core of our being and deep into the collective psyche of Western civilization and human civilization at large, and the mysticism that forms the spiritual and intellectual soil from which it grows.

Freemasonry is a gymnasium for the mind, and a puzzle for the soul.

To conclude, in contemplating just one aspect of our ritual, one fleeting moment in a career of revelations we find that we can go much deeper in exploring their meaning to us, in ways that become as intensely introspective or as broad as we choose. When wand tips meet, when metal touches your chest, when your naked feet touch the ground and walk through this mystery- we are being introduced to so much more than one can imagine at first glance. And so if you like to exercise your mind, if you enjoy asking big questions and familiarizing yourself with exotic places and times, travelling even to the beginning



Lord Vishnu and the goddess, Lakshmi.

of the universe and deep into the psyche of human civilization, then I encourage you to take a moment and enjoy the rich symbolism and ritual found within Freemasonry. And if you don't, just bear with me till Festive Board and we can be a little more laid back! But I firmly believe that we shouldn't just pass through Freemasonry, particularly the Craft Lodge experience, like we pass through these pillars, without taking time to really ponder and admire them, because as I hope I've just demonstrated there is so much more beauty and wisdom to appreciate when we take the time to honor and examine these experiences that have been so thoughtfully compiled and governed for our benefit.

## Notes

1. *Ruth R.* to ii. 14; Shab. 113b
2. [http://www.hebrew4christians.com/Names\\_of\\_G-d/Esoteric/esoteric.html](http://www.hebrew4christians.com/Names_of_G-d/Esoteric/esoteric.html)
3. <http://encyclopedia2.thefreedictionary.com/Zeredatha> (on Zeretan or Zeredetha) and <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/succhoth>, both associate the exodus from Egypt with these locations.
4. Acts 7:22 "Moses was trained in all the wisdom of the Egyptians"
5. Freud, S. *Der Mann Moses und die monotheistische Religion* (Moses and Monotheism), (1937), (1939 English)
6. its reach or influence has been limited in the western tradition compared to Judaism but nonetheless deserves mention
7. In JSM Ward's EA, FC and MM *Handbooks* he liberally draws comparisons to other traditions and faiths, including Hinduism, prehistoric Solar Cults and Pythagorean Mystery School teachings. JSM Ward, *The E.A., F.C and M. M Handbooks*, Lewis Masonic, Middlesex, Seventh Impression, 1974
8. The metaphorical interpretations of David and other Jewish scriptures are scattered through the early Christian writers (Augustine most notably). see Raymond-Jean Frontain and Jan Wojcik (eds.), "The David Myth in Western Literature" (1979). See JSTOR.
9. Homer, *Iliad Book 7 II.132–160*
10. *Moonlighting as a Conjuror of Chemicals*, Natalie Angier, *New York Times*, October 11, 2010. accessed 20 January, 2011. [nytimes.com/2010/10/12/science/12newton.html?pagewanted=1&r=1](http://nytimes.com/2010/10/12/science/12newton.html?pagewanted=1&r=1)
11. "Of all talismans, there is none, except, perhaps, the cross, which was so generally prevalent among the ancients as this Seal of Solomon or Shield of David. It has been found in the cave of Elephanta, in India,

accompanying the image of the Deity, and many other places celebrated in the Brahmanical and the Buddhist religions. Hay, in an exploration into Western Barbary, found it in the harem of a Moor, and in a Jewish synagogue, where it was suspended in front of the recess in which the sacred rolls were deposited. In fact, the interlaced triangles or Seal of Solomon may be considered as *par excellence*, by merit, the Great Oriental talisman" *Mackey's Encyclopedia of Freemasonry*, accessed from [masonicdictionary.com/sealsolomon.html](http://masonicdictionary.com/sealsolomon.html)

12. Drury, N and Tillett, G. (1997), *The Occult: A Sourcebook of Esoteric Wisdom*, Saraband, Connecticut (p. 53)
13. "...But at length the ecclesiologists seem to have settled on the idea that the figure should be considered as representing the two natures of our Lord-His Divine and His human nature." *Mackey's Encyclopedia of Freemasonry* accessed from [masonicdictionary.com/sealsolomon.html](http://masonicdictionary.com/sealsolomon.html)
14. [scs.illinois.edu/~mainzv/HIST/Logo/logo.php](http://scs.illinois.edu/~mainzv/HIST/Logo/logo.php) American Association of Chemistry
15. JSM Ward, *The F.C.'s Handbook*, Lewis Masonic, Middlesex, Seventh Impression, 1974, p19
16. Lehner, Johanna and Ernst, (1960) *Folklore and Symbolism of Flowers Plants and Trees*, Tudor Publishing, New York,
17. [mythencyclopedia.com/Fi-Go/Flowers-in-Mythology.html](http://mythencyclopedia.com/Fi-Go/Flowers-in-Mythology.html)
18. [mythencyclopedia.com/Fi-Go/Flowers-in-Mythology.html](http://mythencyclopedia.com/Fi-Go/Flowers-in-Mythology.html)
19. "In Egyptian empires they have been an emblem of the sovereignty of kings and a symbol of virginal innocence and the bridal state (Solomon's Song of Songs, 2, 1–2). This citation has also been taken as an association of this lily with the Hebrew Flower of Solomon, Judaism's Star of David" Riklef Kandeler and Wolfram R. Ullrich, *Symbolism of plants: examples from European-Mediterranean culture presented with biology and history of art*. Oxford University Press [on behalf of the Society for Experimental Biology]. accessed December 2010 from [jxb.oxfordjournals.org/content/60/7/1893.full](http://jxb.oxfordjournals.org/content/60/7/1893.full)
20. *Water Lily is "Missing-Link of Plants"* CBC News, Monday 4 February 2002 Accessed 30 January 2011 at [cbc.ca/health/story/2002/01/30/waterlily020130.html](http://cbc.ca/health/story/2002/01/30/waterlily020130.html)
21. Ward touches on this aspect of the regenerative qualities of snakes, who shed their skin and are reborn anew, being representative of rebirth
22. Campbell, Joseph, *Hero With a Thousand Faces*, 3rd edition (2008) Pantheon Books, New York.



# Learning and performing ritual

Presented at the G.V.R.D. Grand Masonic Day, 5 March 2011  
by RW Bro. Phil ip Durel I , Maple Leaf Park Lodge No. 63

This paper is intended as a guide for experienced and inexperienced freemasons alike because I believe that we can all improve our performance in Lodge. It is a work in progress. As I get additional ideas and comments from brethren I will update and improve the paper.

## Contents

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6. Conclusion

## Introduction

In one survey public speaking was ranked as the number one fear among men — above the fear of death — so you are not alone if the very thought of giving a lecture in lodge fills you with dread, yet most freemasons, to varying degrees, have conquered their fears by performing ritual in lodge. What I want to talk about this evening are the methods by which I and others are able to learn the ritual, overcome our public speaking fears, and perhaps most importantly, perform the ritual to the best of our ability. That last point is very important because it represents the most we can expect out of any brother — to do his best — and in my view this makes comparisons of one brother's ritual to another a non-issue. But I also strongly believe that we can *all* improve our individual and collective performance of the ritual.

## Planning and allocating the ritual

Lodges can greatly assist by planning their degrees early— giving two weeks, or even less, notice to even an experienced ritualist is only acceptable in an emergency and last minute planning doesn't qualify! In most lodges the Worshipful Master and Director of Ceremonies would be responsible for allocating all the lectures and parts in a degree. Doing so with three or more months notice gives the brethren ample time to study. It also allows an opportunity for other than “the good old standbys” a chance to be part of the degree. Those that already know the lectures can then be kept in reserve for last minute replacements if necessary. Always call the practice a week before the degree and insist on a full rehearsal of all parts as that will help those doing parts for the first time. This is important as those participating then know that they have to have their parts ready for the practice. The week between the practice and degree should be used for polishing the performance not learning the lines for the first time.

## Memorizing and learning the ritual

There are four main stages to learning ritual;

1. Memorize all the words soon after you are allocated a part;
2. Repeat it aloud often;
3. Repeat it aloud often;
4. Repeat it aloud often.

When accepting a part in a degree too many brethren procrastinate and don't start learning their parts until it is too late to do them justice.

Some men can memorize the work quickly, and for others it is a considerable time commitment. In my experience the more memorizing you do the quicker the brain will learn.

Before attempting to memorize any words, read your part two or three times over. Our ritual was mostly written over 150 years ago and although the English is exquisite there are many words not in common use today so look them up in a dictionary or Google them online. By reading it aloud you will get a preliminary idea of how to communicate the lecture.

In our busy lives we often find it difficult to set aside time to memorize ritual but we have to make time otherwise we will end up doing it when we have no choice and that is always way too late. Consider what time of the day you are most alert — for some this will be early in the morning, some later in the day, but it is rarely late at night. Try to get somewhere away from interruptions and on no account try to learn when the hockey playoffs are on!

There are many different ways of approaching memorization. For some making a voice recording of the whole lecture and repeating it at home or in the car works well. Others will write out the whole lecture by hand as this not only reinforces the memory but it also allows time to think about the meaning of the words. I generally use the old fashioned way of covering up the ritual with an old envelope and learning sentence by sentence and eventually paragraph by paragraph. For me it depends on the length of the lecture or the part — but the principal aim is the same — to memorize *all* the words as soon as I am able.

1. For a relatively short piece, say less than half a page, I simply learn the words sentence by sentence until I can repeat the whole piece. If it's in a couple of paragraphs then I will do it paragraph by paragraph.
2. For a one to multiple page single lecture I will learn it paragraph by paragraph — imagining them as a series of smaller lectures. I will spend exactly the time I need to repeat each paragraph roughly right and then move on to the next paragraph and repeat the procedure until I have gone through the whole lecture. Note: I know that I will have forgotten most of the first paragraph by the end of this process. But that doesn't matter because I am going to repeat the process all the way through the lecture and for a third or fourth time if necessary — the brain is a wonderful computer that recognizes that I've been over these words before and each time I go through the whole piece more sticks in my memory until I have it all down roughly right.

The aim here is to spend as much time on the last third of the lecture as the first third. Too often you hear a lecture in lodge where the first third sounds like Laurence, Lord Olivier or Sir Anthony Hopkins, the second third is good with the odd prompt and the final third requires a lot of prompting. Usually this is because the brother has repeated the first paragraphs learned every time he learned a new paragraph — thereby giving far more attention and repetition to the first third of the lecture.

3. For a major part in a degree, such as that performed by a Worshipful Master, I start with what I consider to be the most important section of my part — in the case of the WM that would be the obligation — and learn that first, applying the principles outlined in 1. and 2. As the obligation will be repeated by the candidate it is useful to practice the

obligation by repeating both the Worshipful Master's part and the candidates responses. When you have it down have someone else act the candidate's part. After learning the obligation I will memorize the next largest pieces, until finally I go through all of my part from beginning to end. Remember that all I'm trying to do at this stage is get the words memorized roughly right.

Some people find it easier to memorize the whole degree so that they know their cues — particularly in what I call the Q&A sections (like opening a lodge). What I do at this stage is have my wife or another brother 'test' me on the memorization by giving me the previous line to my part. I intersperse this testing by repeating the whole part out aloud until I know my lines and my cues. Some brethren are good at improvising, but I'm not, so I try and be close to word perfect — never quite achieved but close. There is a reason for this which I'll get to when under performance.

For a long lecture it is important to remember the sequence of paragraphs. Many brethren use cue cards which I think is great for practice but I'd prefer not to see used in lodge unless they are unobtrusive — say on a pedestal but not held in the hand when on the floor of the lodge. Far better to be prompted. For me I can see the sequence of paragraphs on the page in my mind so please don't give me the lecture in a different font!

## Stage fright and nerves

Most people get very anxious when they are about to perform even if they've done it 100 times before. How often have you been perfect reciting ritual in the shower or in the car only to go blank in lodge due to anxiety. There are some pointers to overcoming nerves;

- Lay off caffeine — particularly coffee and colas. It may make you feel more alert but it will increase heart rate and heighten any anxious feelings. Maintain normal eating habits and don't skip meals before a big part as the body and brain need energy.
- Remember to breathe. If you feel a panic coming on before your part take several deep and slow breaths. You can also imagine how you'll feel after your performance — i.e. relaxed. This will help calm you down.
- Make sure you learned your lines days before and show up early on the night. A combination of last minute revising and late arrival can be deadly!
- Lastly, remember that all those Past Masters out there are just people and your performance is not a matter of life and death — even if it feels like it at the time!

## Performance and delivery

No matter how good your memory, always have a prompter. There should only be one prompter at a time who has no other responsibility — preferably not the Secretary or even the Director of Ceremonies. It is okay to have different prompters for major lectures in the degree provided that this is planned beforehand and the Worshipful Master, Director of Ceremonies and other prompter/s are informed. The prompter should be close to the brother performing the ritual — not at the other end of the lodge! It is important that the prompter have a clear and distinct voice and that you agree on the signals to be made when you need a word.

Always speak in a clear and distinct voice loud enough to be heard in all corners of the lodge. You may be addressing a candidate but all the brethren want to hear you.

There is one difference between a good piece of ritual and a great piece of ritual and that is the performance and delivery of the brother. The first is often characterized by good memorization but to be truly memorable the delivery has to match the standard of memorization — in fact I'd say it is even more important. This is why I try to memorize as close to word perfect as I can — because you cannot achieve a great delivery if

your brain is using its capacity trying to remember the next sentence. That's why it is essential to memorize the words early and repeat the whole piece as often as possible. The more repetitions the more automatic will become the recall of the sentences and as the repetitions progress you will find yourself beginning to interpret their meaning. This is really important as it is your interpretation of their meaning that you will be communicating in lodge.

To truly communicate a lecture we have several tools at our disposal. First is our voice which has a range of options to help us:

- tone
- volume
- speed
- pauses
- pitch

If we are close to a candidate we can also use facial expressions and body language. If we are performing a drama portion as in the second half of the Ancient work MM degree or in the Scottish Rite degrees, please enroll in one of W Bro. Mark Brandon's acting classes!

The ritual gives us plenty of clues as to what we should emphasize. Take the *Address to the Brethren* which is performed at the end of each installation. Consider this passage; the first part is a narrative but there are key phrases that need emphasis — by my interpretation the ones I've highlighted — phrases like 'fundamental principles of our order' and 'the chief point of Freemasonry' beg for emphasis.

The object, however, of meeting in the lodge is of a two-fold nature, namely moral instruction and social intercourse. Our meetings are intended to cultivate and enlighten the mind, to induce a habit of virtue, and to strengthen the fundamental principles of our Order: Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth. And if these meetings are blended with social mirth and a mutual interchange of fraternal feelings, then Freemasonry will be shown in its true light, as an institution which fosters and improves the best affections of our nature, and carries into active operation the practice of the four cardinal virtues: Temperance, Fortitude, Prudence and Justice, combined with the theological virtues — Faith, Hope and Charity — thereby demonstrating to the world at large that in Freemasonry there is found the true import of the three great social treasures: Fraternity, Liberty and Equality. Therefore the utmost extension of fraternal feeling and affection which can subsist between man and man is expected to be displayed among the Brethren of our Order in a lodge of freemasons, and then will be attained the chief point of Freemasonry, namely, to endeavor to be happy ourselves, and to communicate that happiness to others.

## Conclusion

Most brethren are capable of performing ritual and all of us are capable of improving our performance. Remember:

1. Lodges to plan the degree early and set the practice a week before the degree;
2. Learn the words as soon as you can;
3. Repeat out loud often;
4. Endeavour to interpret the meaning of your part;
5. Be ready to perform your part by the practice date;
6. Control your anxiety;
7. Have one prompter near the performer;
8. Speak clearly and distinctly and loud enough for all to hear.

## Questions

Please forward suggestions to pdurell@shaw.ca

# Parking karma, part II

Presented at the G.V.R.D. Grand Masonic Day, 5 March 2011  
by R.W. Bro. Stephen MacKenzie, Mount Hermon Lodge No. 7

At last year's Grand Masonic Day I endeavored to present some ideas on life and how one's attitude to life gets reflected back to each of us in some way or another. In the course of a trip to Centre Lodge's Installation last summer I had the opportunity to converse with W Bro. Raphael Ching on many topics, some of them related to Freemasonry. At one stage he declared that he would send me a presentation that would change my life. It is a seven minute slide show by the author Steven Covey and simply encapsulates in those seven minutes what I could not so effectively do in twenty.

## The 90/10 Principle by Stephen Covey

Discover the 90/10 Principle. It will change your life, or at least, the way you react to situations. What is this Principle? 10% of life is made up of what happens to you, 90% of life is decided by how you react.

What does this mean?

We really have *no* control over 10% of what happens to us. We cannot stop the car from breaking down. The plane will be late arriving, which throws our whole schedule off. A driver may cut us off in the traffic.

We have *no* control over this 10%. The other 90% is different. You determine the other 90%.

How? By your reaction.

You cannot control a red light, however, you can control your reaction. Do not let people fool you. *You* can control how you react. Let us use an example...

You are having breakfast with your family. Your daughter knocks over a cup of coffee onto your business shirt. You have no control over what has just happened. What happens next will be determined by how you react. You curse. You harshly scold your daughter for knocking the cup over. She breaks down in tears.

After scolding her, you turn to your wife and you criticize her for placing the cup too close to the edge of the table. A short verbal battle follows.

You storm upstairs and change your shirt. Back downstairs, you find your daughter has been too busy crying to finish her breakfast and getting ready to go to school. She misses the bus.

Your spouse must leave immediately for work. You rush to the car and drive your daughter to school. Because you are late, you drive forty miles per hour in a thirty miles per hour speed limit zone. After a fifteen-minute delay and throwing a \$60 traffic fine away, you arrive at school. Your daughter runs into the building without saying goodbye.

After arriving at the office twenty minutes late, you realize you forgot your briefcase. Your day has started terrible. As it continues, it seems to get worse and worse. You look forward to coming home. When you arrive home, you find a small wedge in your relationship with your wife

and daughter. Why? Because of how you reacted in the morning.

Why did you have a bad day? Did the coffee cause it? Did your daughter cause it? Did the policeman cause it? Did you cause it? The answer is you.

You had no control over what happened with the coffee. How you reacted in those five seconds is what caused your bad day.

Here is what could have and should have happened. Coffee splashes over you. Your daughter is about to cry. You gently say: "It's okay, honey, you just need to be more careful next time." Grabbing a towel you go upstairs and change your shirt. You grab your briefcase, and you come back down in time to look through the window and see your child getting on the bus. She turns and waves. You arrive five minutes early a cheerfully greet the staff.

Notice the difference? Two different scenarios. Both started the same. Both ended different. Why? Because of how you reacted.

You really have no control over 10% of what happens in your life. The other 90% was determined by your reaction. Here are some ways to apply the 90/10 Principle.

If someone says something negative about you, do not be a sponge. Let the attack roll off like water on glass. You do not have to let the negative comments affect you. React properly and it will not ruin your day. A wrong reaction could result in losing a friend, being fired, or getting stressed out.

How do you react if someone cuts you off in the traffic? Do you lose your temper? Pound on the steering wheel? (A friend of mine had the steering wheel fall off). Do you curse? Does your blood pressure skyrocket? Who cares if you arrive ten seconds later at work? Why let the cars ruin your drive? Remember the 90/10 Principle and don't worry about it.

You are told you lost your job. Why lose sleep and get irritated? It will work out. Use your worrying energy and time to find a new job.

The plane is late. It is going to mangle your schedule for the day. Why take out your frustration on the flight attendant? She has no control over what is going on. Use your time to study, get to know the other passenger, why stress out? It will just make things worse.

Now you know the 90/10 Principle.

Apply it and you will be amazed at the results. You will lose nothing if you try it. The 90/10 Principle is incredible. Very few know and apply this Principle. The result? You will see it by yourself!

Millions of people are suffering from undeserved stress, trials, problems and headaches. We all must understand and apply the 90/10 Principle. It can change your life!

Enjoy it...it only takes willpower to give ourselves permission to make the experience.

**Dr. Stephen R. Covey is author of *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*. The text above is taken from a PowerPoint presentation currently available on over 40,000 websites.**

# Serbian anti-masonic postage stamps

Presented at the G.V.R.D. Grand Masonic Day, 5 March 2011  
by Bro. Goran Ivankovic, Capilano Lodge No. 164

## The political situation in Serbia

On 25 March 1941 the Kingdom of Yugoslavia joined the Axis Powers by signing the Tripartite Pact in Vienna. This immediately led to a coup in the night between 26 -27 March, and the formation of a new government headed by General Dusan Simovic. There were nine freemasons as ministers.

Without a declaration of war, on 6 April 1941, Germany, with the help of its allies Italy, Hungary, Bulgaria and Albania, attacked Yugoslavia. After eleven days, the Yugoslavian resistance was broken and Yugoslavia surrendered. German occupation forces established a Serbian puppet government led by a Council of Commissioners under the direct command of German occupation forces.



## The anti-masonic exhibit in Belgrade, 1941

With the approval of Ribbentrop, German military commander for Serbia, Harold Tuner issued orders in mid-May 1941 to establish a special commission to determine responsibility for the coup of 27 March 2 and assign guilt for the outbreak of the war. This commission was under the direct supervision of German SS officer, Hans Richter.

The coup was determined to be the responsibility of England, the Freemasons and the Yugoslav government in exile. A special committee was formed to present these results to the Serbian nation for which purpose they prepared the anti-masonic exhibition. This anti-masonic exhibition was organized to also contain anti-communist and antisemitic materials.

The exhibition was scheduled for 23 June 231941 and was scheduled to be held on the premises of the former Grand Lodge of Yugoslavia. The opening had to be postponed, as a large quantity of explosives was found in the basement. Someone had wanted to blow up the building at the opening of the exhibition. An investigation was conducted, but the perpetrator was never found.

The exhibition was finally opened on 22 October 1941.

The opening ceremony was attended by high-ranking

representatives of the German occupation forces and representatives of the Serbian authorities. The exhibition was closed on 29 January 1942.

Four anti-masonic stamps were printed to note this exhibition.



## Symbolism of anti-masonic stamps

On the left edge of the first stamp, in Cyrillic letters, is written "Serbia." In the left bottom corner the price, 0:50 + 0:50 in dinars, is written in Cyrillic font

At the bottom is written, in Cyrillic letters, "the Anti-masonic Exhibition" and in the top right corner is the date of opening of the exhibition. In the top left corner is a round shield with a cross and four Cyrillic letters "S", from which light penetrates a cowering, hooded figure.

The shield symbolizes the strength of the Serbian people, the sun above Serbia., the light that destroys all enemies of Serbia. The hooded figure wearing a Star of David on his chest which represent the Jewish people and the masonic apron of Freemasonry. The sword is dropped as a sign of surrender

The stamp symbolizes the victory of the Serbian nation, led by the Serbian puppet government. The stamp also symbolizes an international conspiracy of freemasons and Jews against Serbia.

The figure representing the freemasons and the Jews is hidden under a hood, a mask symbolizing hoe freemasons and Jews have infiltrated into every facet of society. The stamps symbolized the power of the Serbian nation to defeat every enemy.

During the time of the exhibition many freemasons were arrested, with many fired from their jobs and some killed.

On the left edge of the second stamp, in Cyrillic letters, is written "Serbia." In the left bottom corner is printed the price, 1 + 1, in dinars, written in Cyrillic letters. At the bottom of the stamp is written, in Cyrillic letters, "the Anti-masonic Exhibition" and printed above that is the date of the opening of the exhibition. In the upper right corner is a round shield with a cross and four Cyrillic letters "S."

Here, a hand comes out of the light and grasps the snake by the

neck. The snake is placed on the masonic square and compasses which lay over a world globe.

The light here represents the Serbian nation, with justice and faith in God. The hand symbolizing the strength that springs from the light as God's will and defeating the snake, a biblical symbol of evil, a venomous snake that tried to poison Serbia.

A pattern of Star of David on the viper reinforces the image of the Jews as the main enemies of Serbia.

The viper head is pressed on the symbol of Freemasonry, the square and compasses, showing that the Jews are the ones who control Freemasonry.

The globe symbolizes the international nature of Freemasonry and the Jewish conspiracy. The whole image symbolizes the failed international conspiracy of freemasons and Jews against the Serbian people and the strength of the Serbian nation of that Serbian puppet government

The third stamp is red and dedicated to anti-communist propaganda. On the upper edge is written, in Cyrillic, "Anti-masonic Exhibition." Again, in the lower left corner, is a price written in dinars. On the bottom edge is written "Serbia", using Cyrillic alphabet, and in the right lower corner is the date of opening of the exhibition.

A cross with four firesteels dominates the picture with its central position. On them is tied a sheaf of wheat. The bottom of the cross is sword point, breaking a five-pointed star with hammer and sickle. Here, the five-pointed star lies on the world globe.

The cross with four firesteels symbolizes Serbian nationality and the sheaf of wheat the Serbian people. At that time 90% of the population in Serbia was living in rural areas while only 10% lived in cities. The five-pointed star with sickle and hammer symbolized the communist



partisans who led the uprising against the Germans in Serbia.

The star rests on a globe, symbolizing earth, depicting the international character of communism and the international conspiracy against Serbia. The cross breaks the five-pointed star in two and symbolically announce victory of Serbia over partisans and, even better, over communism.

On the upper edge of the fourth stamp is written in Cyrillic "Anti-mason Exhibition." In the lower right corner is a price written in dinar. On the bottom edge is written "Serbia", in Cyrillic. In the upper left corner is the emblem with a cross and four firesteels. In the top right corner is the date of opening of the exhibition. At the bottom of the picture is a globe with a Star of David and the two pillars, Jachin and Boaz.

In the background is the shining sun. In the middle is a figure wearing Serbian folk costume, in a posture like the biblical Samson breaking the pillars. He stands on the Star of David. Again the Star of David on a globe symbolizes the international character of the Jews and their desire for world domination.

The two pillars of Jachin and Boaz represent Freemasonry, which is closely related in the service of Jewish conspiracy for world domination.

The message contained in the four stamps is that the real enemies of the Serbian people are the jews, freemasons and communists. But neither Jews nor Freemasonry can resist the force of the Serbian nation, whose power comes directly from God, symbolized in the light from which the Serbian Samson draws his strength.

The intent of the images found on these four stamps is to evoke the successful struggle of the Serbian nation, led by a puppet government, against an international conspiracy against Serbia, led by, and organized by, Jews and freemasons.



# Working tools of A.F. & A.M.

Presented at the G.V.R.D. Grand Masonic Day, 5 March 2011  
by R.W. Bro. R. Al an Webster, Alliance Lodge No. 193

## Ancient Free and Accepted Meteorologists

As I start I would acknowledge the inspiration for this talk was our late brother RW Bro. Chuck Oxley who gave a similar talk using a different profession as the underlying subject. It is given, as was the previous presentation, in a spirit of light-heartedness and I trust it will be received in the same spirit.

What if our ancient brethren had been men of science looking not at the building of buildings but at the natural world about them, particularly the wind and weather... how different would our Craft be today?

I present you with a different set of working tools ... the working tools of the Antient Free and Accepted Meteorologists. In this Craft the degrees would be classified as the Climatological Degree (Past Weather), the Observational Degree (Present Weather) and the Predictive Degree (Future Weather) with working tools used in each degree. Allow me to explain both their operative use and their speculative meanings.

## The Climatological Degree

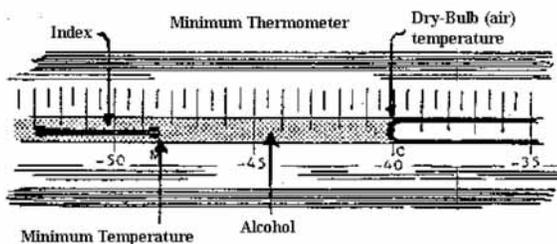
The instruments or working tools of this degree are used at nearly 1,000 stations across Canada run mainly by volunteers who take observations twice a day, recording maximum and minimum temperatures, amount of precipitation and its character and depth of snow on the ground. Let me show you how these instruments are used.

**Snow Ruler** – it is divided into increments of 0.2 cm (2 mm). It is operated by getting several readings over an area of about 25 square metres (250 sq. ft.) and averaging the amount to get a representative value for the station.



**Maximum thermometer** – This instrument use the same principle used by nurses and moms for many years.

A constriction in the thermometer allows mercury to expand out of the bulb as the temperature increases but does not allow the mercury to return as the temperature decreases, thus remaining at the highest temperature.



**Minimum thermometer** – A small index stays in the alcohol column being pushed down the column as the temperature decreases but it

is left behind as the temperature increases and the column moves upward.

The observer needs to record the position of the index to record the lowest temperature since the thermometer was reset.

**Rain Gauge** – With a catchment area of known size a graduated cylinder can be devised to measure rainfall to the nearest 0.1 mm. At the top of the graduate is a hole to allow excess water (more than 25.0 mm) to use the outer cylinder to collect the overflow, a feature required for those of us living in a temperate rainforest. My personal record for most rainfall measured in a six hour period was 134.0 mm or 5 1/4 inches.

However we are not Operative Meteorologists but rather Free and Accepted, or Speculative Meteorologists and we apply these instruments figuratively to our morals. In this sense the snow ruler teaches us the true measure of a man is not recorded once but over the course of time so an accurate account can be presented to the Great Meteorologist of the Universe.

The Maximum and Minimum thermometers teach us that all your life is contained between the highest and lowest point of your existence and it is here where your day to day life takes place.

The Standard Rain Gauge teaches us that blessings, like rainfall, can be in short supply for long stretches and then in abundance. One must learn to keep the overflow to be used when they are in short supply.

## The Observational Degree

The instruments or working tools of this degree are used at more than 200 stations nationally. These stations provided aviation weather reports including air temperature, visibility, current weather, wind and air pressure readings vital to the safe operation of aircraft. Let me show you three such instruments:

**The Tipping Bucket Rain Gauge (TBRG)** – This low tech device has been used since the late 1930s and is used to measure the intensity of rainfall. It acts like a teeter-totter. When one side fills with 0.2 mm of rain, it tips over and empties, exposing the other side to the rain. As it tips, a mercury switch causes an electrical circuit to be completed and triggers a step on a recorder inside the office. By measuring the number of steps in a given time the observer can determine the intensity of the rainfall, more accurately than "It's raining cats and dogs" or "It sure is a gully-washer out there."

**The Stevenson Screen** – An instrument invented by Thomas Stevenson, a civil engineer and the father of Robert Louis Stevenson. Its purpose is to allow airflow across the thermometers without exposing those thermometers directly to rain or snow, sunshine or wind. The screen I have here this evening is a small version used aboard thousands of ships. Its small size is better suited for onboard use.

**The Anemometer** – The wind speed and direction has come in many forms over the years with the traditional cups and vane design being replaced with this RM Young propeller on the vane configuration. This particular device is completely digital and can produce wind speed and direction in any unit required (e.g. knots, metres per second, kilometres per hour, etc.).

However we are not Operative Meteorologists but rather Free and

Accepted, or Speculative Meteorologists and we apply these instruments figuratively to our morals. In this sense the Tipping Bucket Rain Gauge teaches us that the intensity of emotions, both good and bad, are measured and recorded so when one accounts for one's life an accurate record is available for all to see.

The Stevenson Screen teaches us a simple design to protect critical information is always the best. Over protection can lead to inaccurate results and bad decision making.

The Anemometer teaches us one must accept there are things bigger than man and you cannot change them anymore than you can stop the wind from blowing.

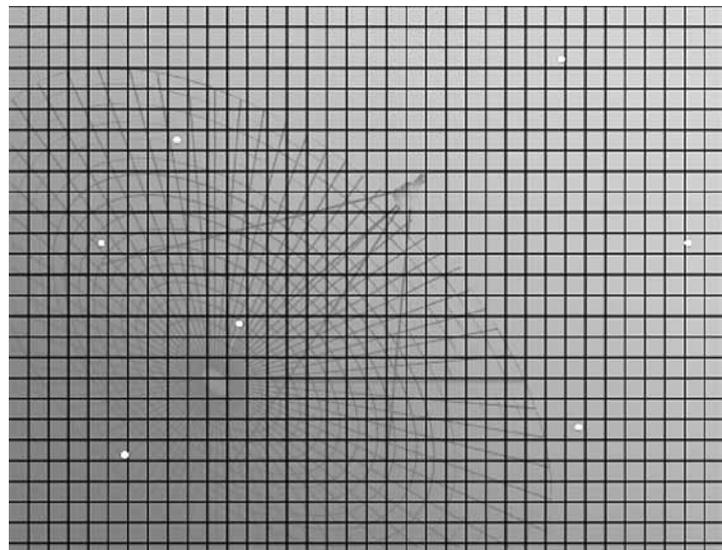
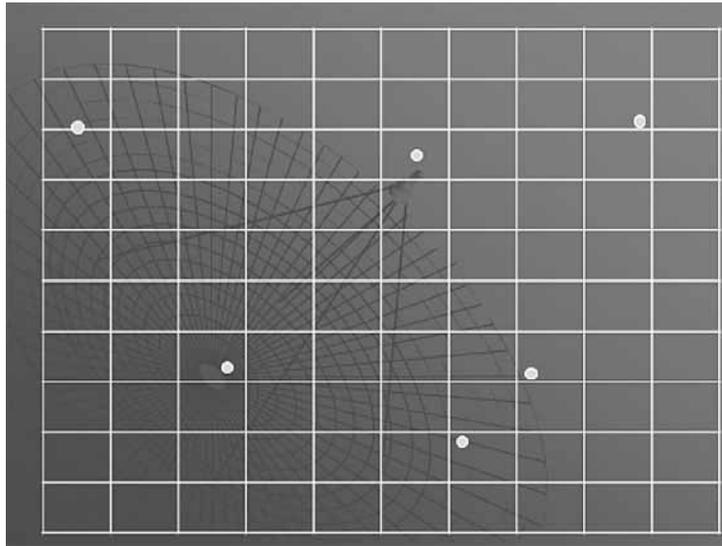
### The Predictive Degree

The instruments or working tools of this degree have evolved over the years from pencil, eraser and paper to the world's larger supercomputers.

**Numerical Weather Prediction** – A supercomputer is fed with weather data from thousands of locations from around the world at every level of the atmosphere from the surface up to 100,000 feet.

Equations related to the thermodynamic principles of the atmosphere need to be processed on a global scale but with enough detail to have meaning to small geographic regions and their weather influencing patterns. Even with some of the fastest computers available the level of resolution is still a grid 10 km by 10 km.

At each intersection the computer model will run all the equations based on interpolated data from each observing point, represented above by the dots in the grid. As you can see a 10 by 10 km grid allows for a lot of gaps between forecasting and data points. Let's not forget to put in a



vertical dimension with data collected at 10 specific heights using the same surface grid but the upper air data is much sparser. Elevation changes are not accounted for in the model, being simply too complex to handle. The Greater Vancouver forecast region could be divided into sixteen separate forecast zones depending on conditions.

### Good news and bad news

**Good News:** UBC has developed a model that is much more refined, using a grid of 2.5 km by 2.5 km and its accuracy in predicting Day Two (tomorrow)

conditions for the Pacific Northwest and SW BC is outstanding.

**Bad News:** The forecast for Day Two (in our case Sunday) will not be ready until Tuesday morning because the computing power to produce the forecast is not sufficiently fast (*ye!*).

However we are not Operative Meteorologists but rather Free and Accepted, or Speculative Meteorologists and we apply these instruments figuratively to our morals. In this sense we are taught while we are getting better at forecasting further into the future there will always be missed events and surprises. This is but one example of where God's plan will manifest itself.

I have enjoyed the opportunity of sharing with you some of the tools of my trade from the very basic snow ruler to the fastest supercomputers yet invented. We have made great strides in the advancement of the science of meteorology but for the foreseeable future human input and intuition will be required to make all the measurements, calculations and outputs useable to mankind. In conclusion I believe I have presented an alternative course we could well have taken and I am sure you are glad my profession was not liquid waste engineering.

# In the footsteps of Pythagoras

Presented at the G.V.R.D. Grand Masonic Day, 5 March 2011  
by Bro. Troy M. Spreeuw, Duke of Connaught Lodge No. 64

## Introduction

So how does the first “philosopher”, this giant of history dead nearly 2500 years affect us in the here and now?

The core text this talk is based on is from Thomas Stanley’s *The History of Philosophy*. This sweeping text was published by Stanley in 1687 at the age of 29. This work, which referenced all known material on Pythagoras at the time, has been reprinted with the assistance of Mr. James Wasserman and Mr. Daniel Gunther. I am in their debt and this presentation is dedicated to them.

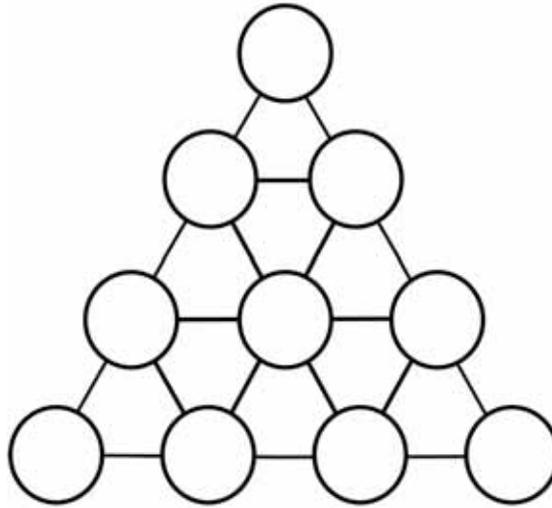
My intention with this talk is not to deliver an exhaustively researched paper detailing the direct influences of this great man to the western esoteric tradition in general and Freemasonry in particular. I will not stand here and relate a list of facts. That would be a fruitless exercise. We are so far removed from the time and place that provable facts are nearly impossible. Suspend your disbelief for the next twenty minutes. What we will talk about are the similarities, what I believe are remnants of the Pythagorean philosophy still found in Freemasonry.

## His Life

Pythagoras was born on the Greek island of Samos around 570 BCE. He travelled the world as a young man and it is believed he studied as far east as India. His studies included Persian, Chaldean, Egyptian, Hebrew, and Greek mystery schools. In all his travels he was recognized as a learned man and it was said that he was welcomed wherever he went. Students of his school recount many of these tales; of particular interest, they recount stories of initiation or the sharing of secret or privileged knowledge.

When he settled in Croton, a Greek colony in southern Italy, he was immediately recognized as a wise and learned man. He set up a school to teach the wisdom he accumulated in his travels and attracted many disciples. Teachers at this time were typically hailed as “sophos” meaning literally wisdom or wise one. Pythagoras would come to be known as “philio – sophos” meaning a lover of wisdom. The existence of the Pythagorean school ushered in a golden age of Greek philosophy. Counted among those most influenced by him are Epedocles, Euclid and Plato. It is primarily from Plato that the ideas and principles of Pythagoras come to the rest of western society through the vast influence of Platonic philosophy.

Students in his school were required to live an austere life. In joining the Pythagorean school followers were required live in silence five years, during which they attended lectures by Pythagoras where he spoke from behind a screen. All followers lived with all property in common and lived an essentially ascetic life. Not all were admitted to the group, which was primarily male, only those deemed of exceptional character. Some recounted this group as a “college”, others a “system”, still others a “family”.



The tetractys.

Pythagoras never committed his thoughts to paper or tablet. He believed that doing so might make his secrets known by those who were unworthy. This is said to be common practice of mystery schools of the time. Little, if any, of the true mystery traditions of the ancient world survive in writing, at least in any understandable sense. What we do know of him survived in the oral and written traditions of his admirers and followers, notably Iamblicus and many of the other notables of Greek philosophy.

There are four concepts that relate to many western mystery traditions – in particular both Freemasonry and the Pythagorean School. Among many other important ideas, these four items point out a clear relationship between the Pythagorean School and almost every mystery school

since. One might even say that what was started and expanded by Pythagoras and his students has been distilled through 2500 years of experience down to modern Freemasonry. These four ideas that I allude to are

1. Numerological symbolism;
2. The use of mnemonic axioms;
3. The proper integration of the religious impulse];
4. A study and contemplation of ones own death.

## Numerological Symbolism

To begin, the numerological system values numbers as the highest and purest form of the realm of ideas. The system of numerology that Pythagoras seems to have worked with was similar to Greek and Hebrew qabalah.

Stanley talks about the value of numerology, in the way that one can assign all things a numerological value and create relationships between things according to that value. These interrelationships allow one to draw connections and like properties from idea to idea, sentence to sentence, *et cetera*. In Thomas Stanley’s words:

“For all things which are ordered in the world by nature [...] appear to be distinguished and adorned by Providence and the All-creating Mind according to number.” (Stanley 143)

The first ten numbers are grouped in general qualities like “even and odd” and “male and female” and then have a very specific meaning for each number. The *tetractys*, a triangular symbol consisting of ten dots used for contemplation of these mysteries, was considered by Pythagoras’s students his greatest achievement. The *tetractys* would compare to a modern tree of life in the hermetic qabalah. Three was considered the greatest number of all, even more important than the unified Monad, or one. Amongst the most interesting studies for freemasons is their adoration of the number three as

the balance, the first truly odd number. Stanley writes that,

“The Triad is the first number actually Odd: the first perfect number. It is middle and proportion. It causes the power of the Monad to proceed to act and achieve extension. It is the first and proper joining together of unities.” (Stanley 153)

And further he also points out:

“Prudence, Wisdom, [...] Piety, Temperance. All Virtues depend upon this number, and proceed from it.” (Stanley 153)

These principles can then act as a mnemonic tool, but they can also serve as a way to access the sacred in all that you see. The true essence of a thing can be related to numbers. This is why Pythagoras, known to non-esoterics as primarily a mathematician, is so fond of numbers and mathematics. His system of numerology, perhaps even taught to Pythagoras by the Hebrews, is comparable with the various systems of qabalah.

## Mnemonic Axioms

The use of many axioms that contained language to express their philosophy meant to impart both an obvious meaning and a hidden meaning. This served not only as a mnemonic tool to remember and recall particular tenets; it also created a specific group of phrases that could be used in casual conversation for the purposes of recognition. An example from Iamblicus:

“Decline highways, and take the foot path!” (Stanley 270)

This means the adherent should avoid the excesses of wider society and live a slower, more contemplative life.

“ ‘Turn away from the self every edge.’ [...] This symbol commands to use prudence, not anger. For that edge of the mind which we call anger is void of reason and prudence.” (Stanley, quoting Iamblicus 275)

As freemasons we can immediately recognize this in our own practice. Something we are known for even outside of our own communities. This is not “word, grip and sign” but something much more subtle. This is the penetration, the complete assimilation of ideas that occurs when you memorize passages so well that you can recite them when called on. Many of us can produce long passages of memory work with little prompting, word perfect, every time. These pieces become important to us, becoming a part of the way we think and speak. This is the intention! This is what is truly meant by the phrase “the living word”. The ideas, the principles, the tenets are inculcated so deeply that they affect us in our everyday life. It is my assertion that they affect us on an unconscious level. Using this language comes naturally to us in our personal lives outside of the tyled security of our lodges. It is this effect of memorization and recall that is referred to as mason-speke. Using phrases from our ritual in casual conversation might get you recognized by other masons.

## The proper integration of the religious impulse

“When you to the temple, worship, neither do nor say anything concerning life.” (Stanley, quoting Iamblicus 272)

Pythagoras spoke often of worshipping the gods, but always with a caution of temperance. Religious beliefs and practices were to be kept private and separate from the rest of your life. The idea was to keep the mind open to possibilities and not shrouded in dogma or rigid thinking. The Pythagoreans desired among all other traits an open mind. Pursuant to this same principle they found it helpful to organize their day, as freemasons might, with proper amounts of contemplation, work, refreshment and sleep.

Philosophy is best practiced with an open mind; using the religious

interpretations of others as a basis for one’s own truth leaves individuals open to manipulation. The principles of philosophy are about discerning for one’s self what is and is not true. This idea of an open mind, or seeing things with fresh eyes, cannot be underestimated. As one learns and grows, what was once seen as true is seen as illusion or falsehood. The idea is to keep not only the mind, but also the self, evolving.

It is all too common among religious adherents that they accept what they are told by the religious authority rather than by learning and testing it for themselves. The proper integration of the religious impulse, then, is the subjugation of dogma by truth.

## A Contemplation of Death

Though this is not unique to the mystery school of Pythagoras, what is most interesting about this tenet is the language that mentions it. Specifically, the lack of details around this particular topic indicate that it was a closely guarded secret. It is said that Pythagoras considered the contemplation of one’s own death to be one of the greatest mysteries. The historical texts state almost universally that Pythagoras’s own rituals and teachings on this topic were of the utmost secrecy. This should come as no surprise to freemasons, since our own secrets and mysteries relate to this topic.

## Conclusion

The symbols or mysteries we are discussing today may seem obvious. The connections between our predecessors and modern mystery movements are not provable facts, but the reason these symbols keep recurring is because they are part of the collective unconscious, that well of knowledge that some might call genetic memory or the “mind of god”. The ideas themselves have a life of sorts, and they reach out to us across the ages because they are timeless. They occur to thoughtful and contemplative people. They come from a place far more powerful than simple instinct or reflex. To me, this is proof of our divine inheritance.

All that we have discussed thus far is concerned with ideas of history or symbolism. What follows is my own interpretation of the system of initiation that Pythagoras exemplified.

Pythagoras was a man who sought after wisdom. His path led him away from his family and peers to travel widely and learn from those who also were lovers of wisdom. He “wandered in the wilderness” many days. The primary thing he learned was who he was. He became Pythagoras. His initiation was one of self knowledge. Pythagoras was very familiar with the common Greek axiom *Gnothi Seauton*, which he would have seen inscribed on the temple of Apollo at Delphi. Many of us would not recognize this Greek phrase as well as we would the Latin one: *Temet Nosce*. It means “know thyself”. Popularized by the *Matrix* movies, *Temet Nosce* is written over the door Neo enters when he first meets the Oracle.

I would argue that the path of initiation, or the story of the rude matter made perfect, is the same now as it was 2500 years ago when the Pythagoreans practiced it. The futuristic story of Neo in the three *Matrix* movies shows a man evolving from a dreamlike state of “false life” to the confrontation with the enemy and his own ego – some might say they are the same. The Pythagoreans in their own way were trying to elevate their own minds to operate in the world of forms, or the higher and purer methods of thought. They were trying to “wake up” from a life lived in pointless pursuit of wealth, power or pleasure.

The tale of a person going away typical and coming back remarkable is repeated throughout history. Pythagoras exemplified it for his students, and many other mystics in history have exemplified it for theirs. Freemasonry, in fact the path of initiation in general, differs from the rest of society in this fundamental way: We seek to improve ourselves in order that we might achieve what we were created to do. Freemasonry is a

proven, systematic method of “waking up” the divine spark that indwells our physical vehicle. We do the work of applying forces to the rough ashlar in hopes of achieving the goal: know thyself.

There is one more thing I would like to bring up before we move on. It is my belief that this system of initiation points toward the next step, one we must each work on in our own way. When the knowledge of the self made perfect is attained — and I believe it can be — once we have become what

we are, we must devote all to the union with what we are not. It is a truth that is best exemplified in the natural process by which we as humans create new life. Herein lies a great mystery.

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