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FIDELITY

By Bro. J. L. Humphrey,
Sec. Nanaimo, No. 110

Our ritual is studded with many beautiful words, verbal gems, that sparkle in a kindly firmament, that twinkle, or that shine simply with a calm lustrousness, beneficent, reassuring and serene.

It would be a most interesting benefit to select those words and have them explained by a Brother well alive to their charms. But the least of us can appreciate some of them.

One of the most beautiful to me is "fidelity;" beautiful of itself for what it connotes but more so because of the very sound of it. The first syllable "fi" is a strong sound suggesting strength of character, energy, resourcefulness; the other three, "de-i-ty" roll from the tongue with an ease which suggests smoothness, kindness, tenderness; so that the word seems to be a veritable representation of all that our Order should mean to us. What do you think? Suppose that when next we hear the word in Lodge we regard it as a gentle prompting to be strong in the pursuit of right and kindly in the application of that right in daily life.

In my Mother Lodge, which does the Canadian work, the evening is always closed with a sentence in which we are urged "to lock our secrets in the safe and sacred repository of a faithful breast, uniting in the act of fidelity, fidelity, fidelity."

Now to me this is a truly beautiful ritual, and the word "fidelity," spoken thrice, seems to stand out with all the urgency, reverence and intimacy of a triune benediction. It is most fitting that it should be amongst the last words spoken. I always like to pause when it is said, to suspend all judgment, to trust and wait as it is being uttered.

May its beauty surround us all and may its lesson, as it suggests itself to me, be an inspiration until once more we shelter in the tyled recesses to partake again of its inexhaustible refreshment.

Word of strength, strong in beauty and in simple kindness, prompting us to love and duty in the quiet of the tyled recess, is there any sound more tender, or syllabled with more power and charm? That we might live and truly render all its benefits and calm.

Uttered thrice at end' of evening,
While we stand in simple awe,
 Blessing us and always seeming"
Our best qualities to draw;
 Quiet and soothing benediction,
Help us ere we outward go,
 Soothing every contradiction
In thy beneficent flow.
 And when last the Supreme Tyler
Holds aside life's final door,
 May thy blessing lift us higher,
O Fidelity, most sure.

Ron Bushby
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FREE WILL AND ACCORD.

There is one peculiar feature in the Masonic institution that should commend it to the discerning mind-Masonic membership should be sought by the aspirant, and never should be solicited or offered by any member, under any circumstances. In some organizations; honored institutions in themselves proselytizing is the proper thing. But not so with us ; quite the contrary.

Whoever seeks admission to our ranks must first be prepared within himself. Not only must he become endowed with the necessary moral qualifications, but he must come also entirely uninfluenced by friends and unbiased by unworthy motives. For this is a landmark of our Order. And nothing is more irritating to a good Freemason than to see this landmark violated by a well-meaning but misguided Brother. For make no mistake about it-it has been, and still is often violated. Without a doubt some Brothers thoroughly enjoying their own membership, and in a misguided zeal to increase membership of the Institution, persuade a friend to come and partake and share the pleasures they themselves enjoy. Any Freemason .who so misunderstands the true policy of our Institution should be instructed by older and more experienced ,Brethren that it is absolutely against all of our laws and principles to ask any man to become a Freemason or to exercise any kind of influence over the minds of others-except by Masonic example and precept -by the observance of which they may be induced to ask Admission into our ranks. We must not seek members; we are to be sought. And even though this were not Masonic law, policy alone would dictate adherence to the voluntary usage. We need have no worries about suffering from lack of membership. Our danger lies in the too ready acceptance of undesirable material for membership. When too little attention is paid to the proper selection of candidates, the Institution will suffer as a result, for the tree is known by its fruit. There can therefore be no excuse for the practice of persuading candidates, and every hope of safety in avoid-ing such a practice.

We must not seek aspirants!

Rather, we must be sought by them.

-The Masonic World

FREEMASONRY

I think it is safe to say that Freemasons everywhere, of whatever rank or degree, have always shown a keen interest in the origins and history of the Craft. This is well illustrated by the fact that scholars of England, France, Germany and North America have, over the last 250 years published a great number of papers, essays and books on this subject.

Succeeding writers more fully developed theories of the establishment of the Order at the Temple of Jerusalem and the division of the Craft into Lodges, with degrees and offices. In short, an organization precisely such as now exists. So important, and indeed essential to speculative Masonry is the Temple of Solomon as a symbol, that to eradicate it from Masonic symbolisms would be equivalent to destroying the identity of the institution.

They attempted to solve the complex question of the origin of Freemasonry in the following way - In ancient Rome, almost from its origin, there existed certain Guilds or corporations of workmen, which are well known in history as the Roman Colleges of Artificers. From the Roman writers we learn that there was a great similarity in their form of government to that of the modern Masonic Lodges, especially in their initiations and the instructions to which candidates for admission and younger members were subjected. The "authentic" historians do not claim, as their "mystical" counterparts might have done, that these colleges were in fact Masonic Lodges. They do, however, contend that the facts of history prove that Freemasonry of today derives from these Roman Guilds, although important changes have taken place.

When Rome fell, the descendants of the Roman College of Artificers established schools of architecture throughout Europe. The principal seat of this body of architects was Como, a city in Lombardy. From this school of Master Masons and architects grew the society of architects and builders who were known at that time by the name of Freemasons. They traveled all over Europe designing and building the magnificent cathedrals, churches and monasteries of that period. These Freemasons were necessarily operative masons, working at the craft with their hands. However, as time went by, a certain number of non-operative masons were admitted. These were high ecclesiastics, wealthy nobles, and men of science who were patrons of the art. The operative Masons always held the ascendancy in numbers until the seventeenth century, but the speculative Masons exerted a greater influence by reason of the higher culture, wealth and social position.

In time there came a total and permanent severance of the two elements. At the beginning of the 18th century there were several lodges in England but for a long time there had been no meeting of a great assembly. In the year 1717 Freemasonry was revived and the Grand Lodge of England established by four of the Lodges which then existed in London.

Personally, I am inclined to the theory that the Romans probably based the system of government used in their colleges on what they had learned from a more ancient society. Is it

too far-fetched to assume that this ancient society was in fact that which existed at the time of the building of the Temple in Jerusalem? I think not.

Excerpts of a paper by Bro. Peter Atkinson; Star of the West Lodge, No. 34;
Published in GRAND LODGE BULLETIN; GRA.; March, 1971.

FREEMASONRY IS A PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE

Freemasonry is a philosophy of life which calls into play all the forces of life in building that Temple of the soul as a symbol of the temple built by King Solomon, and in that building process Masonry has set out certain well defined principles and objectives as well as the ancient landmarks to be observed, wherein there is nothing inconsistent with civil, moral or religious duties and loyalties. Its task and program consists in the growing and development of the soul, or in other words, making the rough ashlar more perfect, and in inculcating the highest principles in society and in the State.

'A mason is a man and a Brother whose trust is in God. He meets you on the level and acts on the square. Truth is his Compass and his is ever PLUMB. He is loyal to his Order, and whatever his degree, his is MASTER of himself.'

In the building of that Temple of Brotherhood there are certain ingredients which take priority over all others - there are some which are vital and that is CHARACTER. Now character does not come cheap; nature has few bargain counters and this appears to be true especially in the realm of morals. Everyone knows it requires little energy to slide down hill and drift unconsciously, but climbing 'the winding stairs' may test every muscle and every ounce of conviction. Character is what a man is in the dark. Character is likened to the foundation of a house - that part which is below the surface and which automatically gives that house strength and stability. Character is what a man really IS, while one's reputation is the record we've made in our respective communities.

Horace Greenley once reminded his readers that Fame is a vapour; popularity an accident; riches have the tendency to take wings and fly away; those who cheer today may curse tomorrow. Only one thing endures - CHARACTER.

Character is a priceless asset. Some years ago at a State dinner given in honour of Hon. Herbert Asquith, the chairman paid this tribute - 'He has brought to the work of leadership the most priceless of all assets - the asset of character. Believe me, however deceptive appearances may be, it is and always will be the one sure passport to the respect and homage of the British people. It is a happy assembling of qualities great in themselves, but greater and rarer in their combination.

Men everywhere respect and admire noble characters wherever they are found. There is always something in right-being which attracts, moves, wins and compels. Character is difficult to explain or define. It is an element factor of life and is what God knows us to be. It is something that exists entirely independent of the accessories and the accidents of life.

There is a story told of Sir Harry Lauder who, as a boy, worked in a coal mine in his beloved Scotland. He possessed a fine voice and in due time became a talented singer. For a generation he was before the public as an entertainer and a singer of humorous songs. A few years later he was knighted by King George and many people were surprised. Why did the King so singly honour a public entertainer? It was because of his rugged character for amid all the temptations associated with and connected with a music hall, he clung to the simple virtues taught him in his youth; he kept himself pure; he was sober as well as thrifty; he always observed the Sabbath and maintained his faith in God. His whole personality is a shining example of what sterling character can be.

THE MEASURE OF A MAN

A man's no bigger than the way he treats his fellow man This standard has his measure been since time itself began. He's measured not by social rank when characters' the test Nor by his pomp and earthly show displaying wealth possessed. He's measured by justice and with right his fairness in his play His squareness in all dealings made his honest upright way. These are man's measures ever near to serve him when he can For man's no bigger than the way he serves his fellow man.

Author Unknown: "Editorial"; Published in
THE TRACING BOARD, GRS; September, 1973

FREEMASORNY, AS A RULE, IS NOT RIGHTLY UNDERSTOOD

The real nature of the ancient institution of Freemasonry is but imperfectly understood even by many of the initiated, who generally have only a faint idea of its true character. With most of them, the ceremonies are everything: of their secret and deep meaning they are entirely ignorant.

But the very existence of a Masonic Lodge strongly exhibits the Brotherhood which exists among Freemasons, and all the ceremonies of Masonry, as well as the symbols usually depicted upon the altar, and on the ceilings and walls of Lodges; all the insignia of office-bearers and members of the Order, jewels, etc. have an important significance, with all the particulars of which every Freemason should be acquainted.

How many symbolic or adopted, as well as capitular Masons are there who have ever inquired into the Book of Constitutions, the Ahiman Rezon, and the Book of Law of Historical Masonry? Unfortunately, a very small percentage of its members. Then again, what are the essentials to success in the attainment of the ideals of Freemasonry by the earnest Mason? In answer thereto, and as an illustration, the following advice, suggestions or hints, by M. W. Bro. George W. Kendrick, Jr., P.G.M. of Pennsylvania will be found as a valuable guide.

"No longer are men banded together in our Fraternity to erect physical structures to overcome physical foes. The light we follow leads to a keener insight, a better understanding and a nobler expression of the human faculties. The materials which we labor are constituent elements of every human being, and our purpose is to learn how to use the materials to construct temples of the mind and soul which will be pleasing in the eyes of the Great Architect.

For this work certain essentials are preliminary to success. We must have faith in each other; confidence in the success of our efforts as long as they are rightly directed; and we must cast out every hatred and all uncharitableness. Constituted as we are, we strive towards the highest and best, confined to no creed, not bound by any political or social lines. Our strength is greatest and our opportunities for good most numerous, and therefore our responsibilities weightiest in times like these, when suspicion lurks in every nook and cranny, ready to be swept by the winds of ignorance and discontent to shake the foundations of confidence in God's greatest work - Man."

It is these lines of thought that should be impressed on the mind of every intelligent and thinking member of the Fraternity, to have a thorough knowledge of the institution to which he belongs, and to which he can educate himself by the reading and studying of such a work as the "Library of Freemasonry", especially the newly initiated member.

(From the Forward to the "Library of Freemasonry");
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Submitted by D. Roy Murray
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Victoria Lodge, No. 13, GRA

Function of a Masonic Lodge

From Wenatchee Masonic News

Published in Masonic Bulletin-BCY-Nov. 1946

It is not the primary function of Freemasonry to initiate candidates, nor the enlarge its membership. Were it so, there would be no basis for our laws against proselyting. The primary function of a Masonic Lodge is to train its members to an understanding of the truths which its rituals and ceremonies are designed to inculcate.

The chief concern of the Lodge is with the welfare, the happiness, and the Masonic development of its members. Its success as a Masonic Lodge cannot be gauged by the length of its membership roll or by the size of its accumulated funds.

The beauty of our ritual, and the good-fellowship among the members of our Lodges cannot be conserved when the chief aim is to make Masons and to make money-"for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth"-and a Lodge's life does not consist in its acquisitions, but in the contribution which it makes to civilization and society through the influence of those whom it has helped to train, to what we call Masonic character.

Therefore, it should be the duty of every Masonic Lodge to put in action a plan for the education of its members in Masonic History, Symbolism, and Philosophy, devoting more of its meetings to this much neglected function.

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Gate of the Year

by C.K. Saunders, Vancouver & Quadra, No. 2
Published in Masonic Bulletin, BCY, March 1945.

The Bulletin for January 1945 concludes, very appropriately, with those lines quoted by the King some years ago in his Christmas message to the Empire.

I wonder how many people know that the quotation embraces only a portion of the whole poem, the concluding lines of which are to my mind as striking as the first and deserve to be equally well known.

"And I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year; 'Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown.' and he replied, "Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the hand of God. That shall be to you better than light and safer than the known way'."

"So I went forth, and finding the hand of God, trod gladly into the night. And He led me towards the hills and the breaking of day in the lone East."

I am sure that those last lines will appeal to all for their splendid imagery and for the courage and confidence which they inspire. Who, indeed, with the mental picture of his hand in God's and being led by Him through the darkness of the night towards the dawn of a new day would shrink from any trial; even "that last and greatest trial" which awaits us all when we must take leave of those who have accompanied us thus far on the journey through life, and go out, alone, into the vast and mysterious Unknown.

Ron Bushby, PM
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Here is a paper I wrote shortly after my entry into Freemasonry.

HIDDEN SYMBOL, OR THE TRUE MEANING OF FREEMASONRY*

subtitled **Goats and other things**

A short time ago when I entered a Masonic Lodge for the first time I was very apprehensive. I had heard many stories and rumors about what was going to happen to me.

**

There are those that say that these stories are a detriment to our Order but I disagree, to become a Freemason requires that you must make a **STRONG COMMITMENT TO OUR PRICIPLES** and the Masonic way of life, until one is at the point where you are prepared to make any sacrifice, real or imagined, you are not ready to embrace Freemasonry and make that commitment. It is a fact that nothing that comes easy is appreciated or valued. These rumors may lose us a few good Freemasons, but they also weed out those that would join on a whim or out of idle curiosity.

* *

I had only three things to support me as I waited in the preparation room.

* *

The first was my belief in the Great Architect of the Universe. At that time I wondered if I was about to meet Him face to face very shortly.

* *

The second was my belief that I was in the company of just and upright men, this belief was supported by two of the elder brethren of the Lodge who assured me that nothing would take place that would violate my moral beliefs or ethical standards, this comfort did not last few minutes later as those same brethren came back, put me in a strange outfit, rolled up one of my sleeves and pant leg, and opened a flap over my left breast, (the thought crossed my mind- to save cleaning off the blood? Or repairing the slits) then they put a rope around my neck and blindfolded me.

* *

To say that at that point I was apprehensive would be the understatement of the year.*

* *

As I entered the Lodge I had only one concrete thing to support my flagging spirits, and it was solid and real. THAT WAS THE STRONG ARM OF A FREEMASON that led and supported me. It did not direct me from afar but was there for my help guidance and comfort.

* *

It did not care that I was not dressed as were the rest of the members of the Lodge.

It did not** falter** or abandon me when my life was in danger from the point of the sword, the noose of the cable-tow, or the blade across my throat, even though it could be in danger from its association with me.*

* *

It led me when I could not see, and later when I could see, but was unsure of my path, it guided me and kept me on a straight course.

* *

It did not even abandon me when at the Northeast Angle I made a promise (that of charity), that I found few seconds later that I could not keep. It was there both in my trials and finally in my relief and joy.

* *

I find this to be the true meaning of a Masonic Life, that I too must extend that strong arm to those who need it, not only in the Lodge, but to all those that I meet on the rocky road of this life.

* *

I must not falter or abandon them no matter what their dress, station, or condition. It is no good directing them from afar or offering vague words of advice, but I must be there with them for support and encouragement.*

* *

I must not start them on the straight and narrow path and leave them to their own devices while they still might need help.

* *

I must not desert them when they make promises that /we /both know or find they cannot keep.*

* *

I must stand by them no matter what difficulties and dangers we both face.

* *

And finally I must be there to share their joy, not -For my own sake but for theirs.

* *

That is why I feel that the strong supporting arm of a Freemason is both the hidden symbol of our Order and is also the true meaning of Freemasonry.

* *

Written by then Brother Mike Raynor shortly after he was initiated into Kerrisdale Lodge # 117*

A message from the Deputy Grand Master
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Hiram

The name and fame of Hiram, the widow's son, will always hold a central place in the ritual of Freemasonry. His memory is forever a part of the rich spiritual of Freemasonry. His memory is forever a part of the rich spiritual heritage of our Craft.

"Every true man," says Emerson, "is a cause, a country, and an age ...Posterity seems to follow his steps as a train of clients. And all history resolves itself very easily into the biography of a few stout and earnest persons."

Genius may command admiration, wisdom and learning excite wonder, power impress, and wealth allure, but character alone, secures the respect and homage of men, and exerts a transforming influence on their lives. The world is upheld by the integrity and veracity of worthy men and women.

The American Declaration of Independence affirms certain so-called "inalienable" rights: Life, Liberty, etc. But to the heroic Hiram his right to life was not absolute nor inalienable. It was a relative right only, and was limited and determined by his relationship and responsibility to his two royal associates. His profound sense of moral obligation, and the "must" of the Moral Imperative, saved him from listening to the counsel of cowardice and thus meriting the poet's scorn.

"Tis man's perdition to be safe,
 When for the Truth he ought to die!"

To the presumptuous demands and threats of the recreant Fellow Craft he replied in words that are immortal: "My Life you can have, my integrity never!" He refused to be disintegrated emotionally or spiritually, and won immortality in "one crowded hour of glorious life." His sovereign loyalty to his Master companions was the centre of reference which kept him throughout an "integrated" person. Reverence for persons is always the ultimate basis of all morality. Persons, not things are sacred in this world of moral order, meaning, and purpose. Falsity and the breaking of a promise is disloyalty, and a moral wrong to the person who trusted us.

Lord Moulton, eminent English Jurist, calls this type of response in a crisis "The obedience of the unenforceable." He illustrates the idea by reference to the unwritten code of the sea in time of disaster: "Women and children first!" Under the duress of the moment Hiram could excusably have complied with the ruffians' demands. There was no written law compelling him to keep faith and silence in the face of such an emergency. But there was an unwritten law, the moral sanctions of Truth and Fidelity. Therefore he stood fast, unmovable, loyal to the royal within himself, even unto death.

There is a closely parallel scene in Pilgrims Progress, when, in the Valley of Humiliation, Pilgrim meets "the foul fiend." Then Apollyon straddled quite over the whole breadth of the way and said: "Prepare thyself to die, here will I spill thy soul!"

Had Hiram yielded in those agonizing moments, he might have saved his life, but he would have lost his soul. We remember the words of the Grand Master of Life: "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul." Life is much more than mere biological existence. Its essential values are qualitative not quantitative. As Freemasons, we are inheritors of the unconquerable spirit and example of the inflexible Tyrian. He kept the faith, and by his sacrifice taught us the secret of the victorious life and all great living; the consciousness that I am being trusted-therefore I will be trustworthy.

Were we to attempt a fitting epitaph, we might appropriately adopt the tribute paid to Captain Oates, of the ill-fated Scott Polar Expedition, who walked out into the white immensities of the Antarctic wilderness to die as a voluntary sacrifice to save his companions:

"Here Died a Very Gallant Gentleman!"

G. ROY LONG

THE HOLY BIBLE

The Holy Bible is the rule and guide, the volume of the sacred law, and one of the great lights of masonry. It lies upon the altar supporting the square and compasses. It is opened when the lodge opens and is closed when the lodge closes.

The Bible upon the Masonic altar signifies that man must look for a light higher than human light, to guide him. Almost every name found in the Masonic ceremonies are Biblical names. There are about seventy five references in the Masonic ritual.

The open Bible upon the altar is there for all the brethren to read and interpret as they see fit. It may be likened to a quarry, the deeper one digs the more information will be unearthed. It is rich in symbolism and is itself a symbol. It is a record of the Will of God for the conduct of man.

As we enter the lodge for initiation in each of the three degrees, almost the first words we hear are from the Bible, admonishing us to work toward God's divine plan. Upon it we take our obligation and when brought to Masonic light the first thing we observe is the Holy Bible upon the altar supporting the square and compasses.

In the Middle Ages the craft was a Christian order employed for the most part in the building of cathedrals for the church. During this period the church ruled supreme in matters religious and moral. The Bible was a secondary source of light. However, after the Reformation the Bible became regarded as the great source of divine guidance in the Protestant churches as well as in the Masonic lodges. It was mentioned in some of the old manuscripts before 1717 as being the book upon which masons took their obligations. It was due to the efforts of Preston and his fellow works that the Bible obtained its place of honor in the lodge.

When one studies the Bible it soon becomes apparent that this is no ordinary book. It has been four thousand years in the making; the first thousand was utilized in the oral transmission of its history and legend, the next thousand in writing and rewriting, the third thousand years in bitter canonical debate over what should or should not be included in its Sacred pages, the last thousand years in its translation into hundreds of modern tongues and its distribution throughout the four corners of the world.

The Bible is printed in over 1100 languages and many dialects. It is estimated there are over 35,000,000 copies sold annually, and many thousand of copies are given away because the recipients do not have the money to purchase them.

In its 773,742 words the Bible tells a very dramatic story. Most people believe it to be the record of God's revelation to man. There are a few, however, who believe it to be the history of an ancient people.

The Bible was the first printed book and is the most printed book. It is the cheapest and also the most expensive depending on whether you are interested in a 1454 or a 1982 copy. There are many who love it, read it and follow as best they know how its teachings. In some quarters it is the most censured, burned and banned of all books. It has been written on clay tablets, bark, papyrus, leather, and in smoke in the sky. It has also been printed in Braille, on billboards, and every type of paper. In addition there is also a talking Bible on long play records for those who cannot read Braille.

The Bible is a book whose theme is love and peace yet its story is marred with wars and persecutions. It has been responsible for countless humanitarian and social reform. On the other hand it is accused of being responsible in part at least, for the Crusades, the Inquisition, and the thumbscrew. It is unfortunate that man has always found in the Bible what he desires to find and it is a simple task to twist it to unworthy and inhuman causes.

The teachings of the Bible do not become dated or obsolete; they are as applicable to day as they were when first printed thousands of years ago. It began as an exclusive national book and became the world's most international book, and thereby gave the world its most influential religion.

The Old Testament began as a record of Hebrew history and law. It existed for many years before the appearance of the New Testament. The Christians selected various writings from the literature about Christ and His Ministry which they added to the Bible to form the New Testament. Today the Bible exists in a number of different versions. The official Roman Catholic Bible is the Vulgate and its English translation is called the Duoi. The one that Protestant recognize is the King James version. This Bible has a shorter Old Testament than the Vulgate or the Duoi. The official Bible of the Eastern Christian churches is the Peshitta which does not contain Revelation and several of the New Testament epistles.

It has been said the Bible has carried Christianity around the world. The strength which Christianity possessed and which competing religions did not have was its inspiring literature,. In simple and convincing prose the Bible set down its promise of immortality and won Christians wherever it went.

The Jews who were the source for the Bible accepted only the Old Testament as sacred literature. For over 2000 years they had been a people without a home until 1948. They are made up of almost every nationality on earth and speak a hundred different tongues, yet as a race they have remained intact wherever they have settled. This strength of survival has not been due to any racial peculiarities but to the binding influence of their unique cultural inheritance, the Old Testament and its supporting book of law, the Talmud. This is history's supreme example of the power of the written word.

The Bible ranks as the world's outstanding book of literary beauty. Christ's Sermon on the Mount and the Twenty-third Psalm have never been excelled. For masons the King James version of the Song of Solomon is one of the most charming love songs in the English language.

Translating the Bible has been a tremendous task. Translators have had to contend with errors and misprints. However, repeated revisions and translations of the Bible have gradually eliminated the literary imperfections of the originals. On occasion, translators have had to depart from the exact translation. For instance, in the translation for the Tanaki tribe our Revelation 3, v 20; "Behold, I stand at the door and knock" had to be altered to "Behold I stand at the door and call" for only thieves knock at their door while friends call out the name of the dweller within.

In our day, Bible translating and foreign tongue publishing is done primarily by interdenominational Bible societies. The first society to be established was the British and Foreign Bible society in 1804. Its first translation was for the Mohawk Indians near Brantford, Ontario. The American Bible society was established in 1816.

New English editions of the Bible are being turned out in Britain and the United States. There are Bibles with atlases. Bibles in comic form, Bibles with concordances, Red letter Bible with the words of Jesus in red, and four color Bibles with the "Theme of Salvation" in red, "Temporal Blessings" in brown, "Prophet Subjects" in purple and "Theme of the Holy Spirit" in green.

When the first Bible society was formed in 1804 it was estimated there were in existence, 4,000,000 complete Bibles. Today there are approximately 50,000,000 copies. Since the first Bible was printed around 1450 A.D. more than 2,000,000,000 copies have rolled off the presses of the world.

Christians believe the writings in the Bible were directed by God and the authors were Moses, Joshua, Samuel, David, Solomon, and the Prophets. Masonic teachings inform us that when Solomon built the Temple he deposited the various Old Testament books there for safekeeping. Later the Temple was destroyed by the armies of Nebuchadnezzar and that the authentic version was restored by the scribe Ezra.

There does not exist any original Bible manuscripts in the handwriting of the original authors. Egyptian papyrus, on which the earlier manuscripts were written, decayed from dampness or became brittle and powdered from dryness. There are a few fragments of Biblical manuscripts dating back to the time of Christ but there are very few copies of the Bible older than 350 A.D. During this period, vellum, which was more durable than papyrus, came into use. The Old Testament was at least 500 years old and the New Testament 150 years old before copies of our present day Bible were first written.

The art of writing reached the Hebrews around 1000 B.C. at which time they began writing their history and literature. Some of the shorter books of the Old Testament are believed to be the work of a single author. In the case of the larger books it is thought there were a number of authors involved. For instance, it has been suggested the first two chapters of Genesis originated 500 years apart.

Biblical scholars have discovered four main influences they believed were woven into sacred Hebrew literature to produce the Old Testament. The earliest writer was a scribe whom scholars referred to as scribe J because of his use of the Hebrew original of the name of Jehovah for God. He lived about 1000 B.C. and his writings covered the period from Creation to Solomon and included such items as the story of the first sin, the flood, and the journey through the wilderness. Scribe J's God was depicted as ferocious, a God of war and revenge who occasionally visited earth in person. Scribe J worshipped the Hebrew monarchy believing it be the Divine origin.

A century after the time of scribe J another writer appeared on the scene. He was known as scribe E because his God was known as Elohim. Scribe E wrote a history covering about the same period as did scribe J. Scribe E's God was less violent and more elusive than was the God of scribe J. Further, Scribe E differed with Scribe J in his estimation of the Hebrew monarchy. To Scribe E the monarchy was an indication of political decline.

The third development of Hebrew literature was the appearance of the Prophets around 700 B.C. They were prominent for about two centuries. They were religious teachers with God-inspired prophetic powers. Much of their writings found its way into our Bible. The three greatest Prophets were Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel. The minor Prophets, twelve in number, also made contributions to the Bible. The last seventeen books of the Old Testament with the exception of Daniel, are the work of the Prophets. Under them the old Jewish religion of fear and retribution made its first steps toward the Christ-taught religion of mercy and forgiveness. Isaiah, who was the greatest of the prophets, was the first to predict the coming of the Messiah. His reputation became so great that any unidentified piece of prophetic writing that turned up were automatically attributed to him. The book of Isaiah grew into an unwieldy collection of sixty-six chapters which is the largest book in the Bible.

The Prophets were still very active when Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon overtook the Hebrew kingdom and took the Jews as Babylonian slaves. Going into exile they took with them the JE documents which correspond roughly with the period from Genesis to Kings and also much of the writings of the Prophets.

During the fifty year period of captivity and the gradual return to Palestine, the fourth development in Hebrew literature became evident. It was referred to as the P or Priestly Document, because it was the work of the Hebrew priests. The religion of the Prophets was of a private nature; under the influence of the priests it gradually became one of mass worship, ritual and ceremony.

The writing of the New Testament was completed in about fifty years. The earliest New Testament writer was a wiry little tent maker named Paul who wrote a series of missionary letters known as the Epistles of Paul. These letters were instrumental in transforming Christianity from a local religion into the beginnings of a world religion. The first of these Epistles to survive is the First Epistle to the Thessalonians which was written about 50 A.D. The first Christian writings were circulated among the early churches as letters. A century or more later they were placed on a level with the Old testament books as sacred and God-inspired. For 300 years after the life of Christ there was no collected New Testament as we know it today, only scattered letters which were treasured by the various churches. There were many Epistles which have not been included in the New Testament. The dispute over what was entitled to a place in the new Testament went on for a long time, with different branches of the church accepting different books and Epistles as sacred.

As the Bible moved from nation to nation it required more and more translations. About 385 A.D. Pope Damasus appointed a brilliant scholar known as St. Jerome to produce a Latin version that could be regarded as the true Bible. After many years of labor St. Jerome produced what is known as the Vulgate Bible which after sixteen centuries is still the official Roman Catholic Bible. It was also the Bible of the British church until the Reformation and is the parent of our present English Bible, the King James version first printed in 1611.

The Bible is the most Divine of books. It is the Great Light of masonry, and the brethren are admonished to read, study, trust, obey, and follow its teachings. The gentle craft is fully aware there is no more powerful force for good in the world than a positive idea in the mind of a brother mason who is walking in the will of the Supreme Architect of the Universe.

By: Albert J. Marshall, P.M.; Discovery Lodge, No. 149;
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THE GOLDEN RULE

Brahmanism	This is the sum of duty: "Do naught unto others which would cause you pain if done unto you."
Buddhism	"Hurt not others in ways that you yourself would find hurtful."
Confucianism	"Do not unto others what you would not have them do unto you."
Taoism	"Regard your neighbour's gain as your gain and your neighbour's loss as your loss."
Judaism	"What is hateful to you, do not to your fellow man. That is the entire law, all else is commentary."
Islam	"No one of you is a believer until he desires for his brother that which he desires for himself."
Christianity	"Do unto others, as you would have others do unto you."

Submitted by D. Roy Murray, King Solomon Lodge, No. 58, GRS, Victoria Lodge, # 13, GRA

HOW SHOULD THE NEW FREEMASON BE PREPARED ?

When we intend to erect a structure we spend considerable time in the Planning Stage. Long before the materials are ordered or the actual construction gets underway, plans are drawn and studied. Sometimes they are modified and even redrawn. Great effort is expended so that everything possible may be done to insure the building will be as useful to our purpose as possible.

As Freemasons we are told that we are Builders, and I think that this fact is recognized by all in the Craft. Therefore we should see to it that our planning is well done and that our material is well prepared.

My thought is, Brethren, that our preparation for our new members should be as carefully planned as is our approach to the erection of a new structure. We must plan every step carefully, remembering that every candidate should be treated as an individual irregardless of the fact that he may be initiated as one of a group.

This, of course, is to be done without changing any of our precepts or ideals. After a man is raised he may be interested in one or many phases of our Craft, and he should be encouraged to follow whichever phase most appeals to him.

However, I feel that we should give him the fundamentals right from the time he asks for an application form. We should tell him as much as is reasonable, and then after each Degree, we should go over it with him step by step, up to and including the M.M. Degree.

The question then arises, if we are to prepare them properly before they enter the Craft - what and how much should they be told?

I would, I think, take the following course. Before I personally signed the application recommending a petitioner, I would make up my mind that I was going to be a personal guide for this man, and see that even after he is raised, everything is done for at least a year, to insure that he fits into our Lodge structure and activities. Certainly this will take time but it will be time well spent.

I think that before he fills out the application he should be asked the following questions:

Why do you want to become a Mason?

What benefits do you expect to gain from membership?

Can you afford the Initiation Fee and the Annual Dues?

Do you expect the same type of activities in Masonry as in Service Clubs?

I would expect the proper answers to these questions before proceeding with the completion of the Application Form.

I would explain to him that we are not a charitable organization in the sense that we promise any material benefits. Rather, I would point out the many various forms of Charity, not just the giving of money, but the giving of something greater - himself.

I would explain to him our belief that kind words and deeds expressed and carried out amongst his fellow men will bring him greater happiness than just giving out money. Tell him, of course, that we do our share as far as our resources permit in helping less fortunate members of society, but that is secondary.

We should endeavor to explain to him that Masonry is a way of life. While it doesn't take the place of a man's religion, the acceptance of a Supreme Being is a must. All races, classes, creeds can belong, but our doors are barred to Atheists. Inform him that we are not a secret society, although we have secrets which are used in our Degree work, and also as a means of recognition.

Stress the fact that there is nothing secret about our ideals and aspirations.

He should be told that he will be expected to take part in Lodge activities. That there will be ritual to be learned and memorized, and that the task of becoming a good Mason will be much easier if he understands the lessons given him during the ceremonies.

We should try to give him a fair idea of what Freemasonry is, so that he would be better able to decide whether or not he wished to proceed. Then if his decision is affirmative, tell him you are willing and happy to present his petition to the Lodge.

Assuming his petition is passed I would then have an informal discussion with him explaining that there will be certain ceremonies that he must go through, and I would stress that the Ceremonies will be of a solemn and dignified nature, and that he has nothing to fear regarding any personal embarrassment. **THERE WILL BE NO HORSEPLAY.**

I would advise him that he would be wise to cleanse himself both in body and soul before he arrives for Initiation.

On the night of his Initiation, I would call for him personally, taken him to the Lodge, and introduce him to as many members as possible. Then when the members go into the Lodge Room to open the meeting I would stay with him and endeavor to keep him from feeling uneasy.

I should make certain that when the Worshipful Master asks him, "In whom do you put your trust?" he is able to answer without prompting.

After the Degree is over I would make it a point to be with him, and take him to the refreshment table, and see that he talks to as many Brethren as possible.

During the entire time, from Initiation into the E.A. Degree to the final raising to Master Mason, I think we should maintain close contact with him and encourage his questions or requests for enlightenment, and I am convinced that by the time he receives his M.M. Degree, he will be a far better qualified Mason than those Brethren who are left to find their own way!

Also we should be aware that our responsibilities to our newly raised Brother do not end here. We should impress on him the importance of attending Lodge Meetings, encourage him to take part in Lodge activities, attend committee meetings, mingle freely with the Brethren, and advise him of Library facilities.

Above all we should not fail to give him a proper outlook on the need of World Brotherhood, and help him to understand just what it implies to us as Masons.

To be kind to one another, to relieve the necessities of the needy and to live peaceably with all men.

These are the principles we should try to instill in our Brother's mind.

I think the greatest lessons he will learn, however, are by Example. He must see that his fellow Masons live their lives in such a way as to bring credit to the Craft. We cannot tell our new members to do one thing, and then refuse to follow these teachings ourselves. Teaching is a wonderful science, but it is useless unless it is followed by example.

By Bro. R. Wilkins, Red Deer Lodge, No. 12, GRA;
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Submitted by D. Roy Murray
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How Stands the Time?

by Bro. E.B. Baker, Tyee Lodge No. 66
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To which enquiry the J.W. responds, "It is high twelve, Wor. Master." There was, however, another version, namely, "It is the high hour of twelve, Wor. Master."

I have not seen it in an authentic ritual. I have never heard it used in a Lodge; I found it in the diary of an old soldier, who, with the customary reticence of his class in things Masonic, does not claim to be a Freemason, yet demonstrates the proof thereof by his repeated use of such allusions to our Masonic phraseology.

The meaning of "high twelve" is plain. Full twelve o'clock, or even past the hour. The significance of "the high hour of twelve" is not quite the same. It emphasizes the peculiar import of that particular hour, rather than the mere fact that the sun is at its meridian. It recalls to mind that hour at which our G.M., H.A., was wont to retire for the purpose of offering up his prayers to the Most High.

Within the compass of this slight transposition of words lies a worthy suggestion. This method of expression is calculated to remind us that the hour of refreshment (the recess from labour) is ordained not less for the purpose of prayer and praise to the Most High, with benevolence to all mankind, than it is for bodily refreshment of the inner man.