



NEWSLETTER OF THE

ORIENT OF VIRGINIA

Volume XVI, Issue 2

Summer 2023



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Sovereign Grand Inspector General Orient of Virginia

Illustrious Alan W. Adkins, 33° GC “Scottish Rite Conference of Virginia”

My Brethren,

The Scottish Rite Workshop was held on Saturday, March 25, 2023, at Acca Shrine Center in Richmond with good representation from the eight Valleys. We were pleased to have Donald E. Strehle, 32° KCCH, Grand Master of Masons in Virginia, and several elected and appointed Grand Lodge officers present. The highlight of the workshop was the “fireside chat” by Illustrious and Worshipful Arturo de Hoyas, 33° GC, Grand Archivist and Grand Historian, Supreme Council, 33°, Southern Jurisdiction, United States of America. Brother de Hoyos remarks and answers to several questions posed to him were well received.

Brother Timothy Shrum, 32° KCCH, Valley of Alexandria, gave a report on the campaign to establish an Endowed Scholarship in the name of Illustrious and Admiral William “Gene” Sizemore, former Grand Executive Director. The Orients of District of Columbia, Florida and Virginia are collaborated in the campaign, along with support from the Active and Emeritus Members of the Supreme Council and Deputies. The original goal was \$50,000 and in excess of \$124,000 has been raised with six days remaining in the campaign.

We were pleased to welcome Brother Kenneth Ellis “Chief” Rhodes, Jr., a member of the Northern Masonic Jurisdiction to the workshop.

I shared with the attendee’s information an several topics, which included: Fiduciary reports, State of the Rite report, Honors selection, Biennial Session registration, and Workshops for officer training.

The statistics for the calendar year ending December 31, 2022, are as follows.

South Jurisdiction:

Membership, January 1, 2022	119,292
Membership, December 31, 2022	114,618
Net Change	-4,674
% Change	-3.9%
% Change w/o deaths .	6%
New Initiates	2,606

Orient of Virginia:

Membership, January 1, 2022	4,436
Membership, December 31, 2022	4,243

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Illustrious James D. Cole, 33°
Sovereign Grand Commander
of the Supreme Council, 33°,
Ancient and Accepted
Scottish Rite, SJ, USA

Illustrious Alan W. Adkins, 33° GC
SGIG Orient of Virginia

Bro. Gerald L. Frey, 32° KCCH
Virginia Light Editor

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virginialighteditor@gmail.com

**Deadline for next issue:
December 1, 2021**

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“Scottish Rite Conference of Virginia”

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Net Change	-193
% Change	-4.4%
% Change w/0 deaths 0.0%	
New Initiates	82

I look forward to seeing you at Scottish Rite Conference in September, which will be hosted by the Valley of Alexandria.

Recently, I sent a letter to the Orient Personal Representative, Valley Personal Representatives, Valley Assistant Personal Representatives, and Valley General Secretaries advising them of due dates for Fiduciary Reports and Honors Selection, and the Biennial Session to be held in August. The Headquarters Hotel will be the Washington Hilton. Registration for the session will commence on May 1. Every Valley, Valley Secretary, individual member, etc. will register on-line and will be linked to a site for hotel registration. The staff at the House of the Temple cannot and will not be available to assist with hotel registration. Take due notice thereof!

In closing, I want to thank you for the effort put forth and time spent in your respective Valley.

I shared with the attendee’s information an several topics, which included: Fiduciary reports, State of the Rite report, Honors selection, Biennial Session registration, and Workshops for officer training.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 2023	
8:30am-4:30pm	Registration Open
11:30am-1:00pm	Lunch for All
1:00pm-2:00pm	Education Session #1
2:00pm-3:00pm	Education Session #2
3:15pm-4:00pm	SGIG/PRs/Secretaries/Treasurers
3:15pm-4:00pm	SR Foundation Directors
3:15pm-4:00pm	Knights of St. Andrew
5:00pm-6:00pm	Social Hour
6:00pm-7:30pm	Banquet
7:30pm-	Hospitality

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 2023	
8:00am-1:00pm	Registration Open
9:00am-10:00am	SR Conference of VA
10:00am-10:15am	Break
10:15am-11:30am	SR Conference of VA (cont.)
11:30am-11:50am	SR Foundation Annual Meeting
11:30am-1:00pm	Ladies’ Lunch
2:30pm-4:00pm	KCCH Investiture
5:00pm-6:00pm	Social Hour
6:00pm-7:30pm	Banquet
7:30pm-	Ice Cream Social & Hospitality

The Message of Freemasonry, to Our Community

III. Edmund Cohen, 33°

Personal Representative of the Sovereign Grand Inspector General in Alexandria

Great minds discuss ideas, average minds discuss events, and small minds discuss people. We see this in our magazines. The *Wilson Quarterly* and *Lapham's Quarterly*, for example, with a relatively small but elite readership deals with ideas; Time and Newsweek with a larger audience deals with events and people.

So, it is in our growth as men and Masons. As Entered Apprentices or rough ashlar, we focus on people. This is both good and bad. On the positive side we talk about each other's daily doings and on the less positive side tend to gossip. As Virginians we know that "bless his heart" is the introduction to some negative comment.

As Fellowcrafts, we move on to talk about events, something that we have been accomplishing in our personal and business lives and events in our community and news reports from around the world.

Then, as Master Masons, we make use of the trestleboard to lay out our designs and think about the great issues of our time and how we might influence or impact them. And here, in the Alexandria Scottish Rite, as Master Masons, and even more as 32° Degree Masons, we contemplate the meaning of life itself and the role we might play in shaping events. In the current climate, and we talk about "climate" both literally and figuratively, there is much to be concerned about.

We, as Masons, have lamented the lack of civility in our society, the divisiveness, the fracturing of what used to be a national consensus, and the pettiness and mean spiritedness in our interactions with each other. But as our Grand Master, Most Worshipful Donald E. Strehle has said, it is our mission to counter these trends. It is Freemasonry's sacred duty to make sure our Lodges play a positive role in the Community. We want to be remembered for our acts of service. So, we need to have our Lodges go into our communities and provide things that are needed by parents and children, and by our friends and colleagues. We should be providing food for those children and families who have to choose between getting the medicines they need or the food they should have. We should be giving clothing and backpacks to school children, and providing counseling and guidance for adults who have issues they are unable to deal with. We should be giving our loved ones a big hug and telling them how much we love them while they are still here to enjoy us saying this to them.

Let the world know we are Masons and are willing to provide, not only to members of our Fraternity, but to the world at large, a smile, a word of encouragement and other acts of kindness. These actions will long be remembered, and Freemasonry will be seen as a force for good in a world which is too often divided along partisan lines.

None of this will occur by accident. Things do not just fall into place; they depend on the team we put together to take the lead and to take the steps necessary to make things happen. Our team must take the actions needed to mobilize the Brethren who are waiting for a call to

But Freemasonry works to join men of all nationalities, religions, political persuasions, and social and economic groups in an environment where we can learn from and support each other. So now is the time for Freemasonry to step up to the plate and play a larger role in reestablishing civility and bringing a renewed sense of order, stability, and unity to our great nation.

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The Message of Freemasonry, to Our Community

Continued from page 4.

We, as Masons, have lamented the lack of civility in our society, the divisiveness, the fracturing of what used to be a national consensus, and the pettiness and mean spiritedness in our interactions with each other. But as our Grand Master, Most Worshipful Donald E. Strehle has said, it is our mission to counter these trends. It is Freemasonry's sacred duty to make sure our Lodges play a positive role in the Community. We want to be remembered for our acts of service.



action to do what has to be done. We need to go from being a happen. Our team must take the actions needed to mobilize the Brethren who are waiting for a call to action to do what has to be done. We need to go from being a follower to being a leader and it takes a real man to step up to the plate; to stop being one of the boys, and instead to set an example by saying the things that need to be said, even when that makes him unpopular.

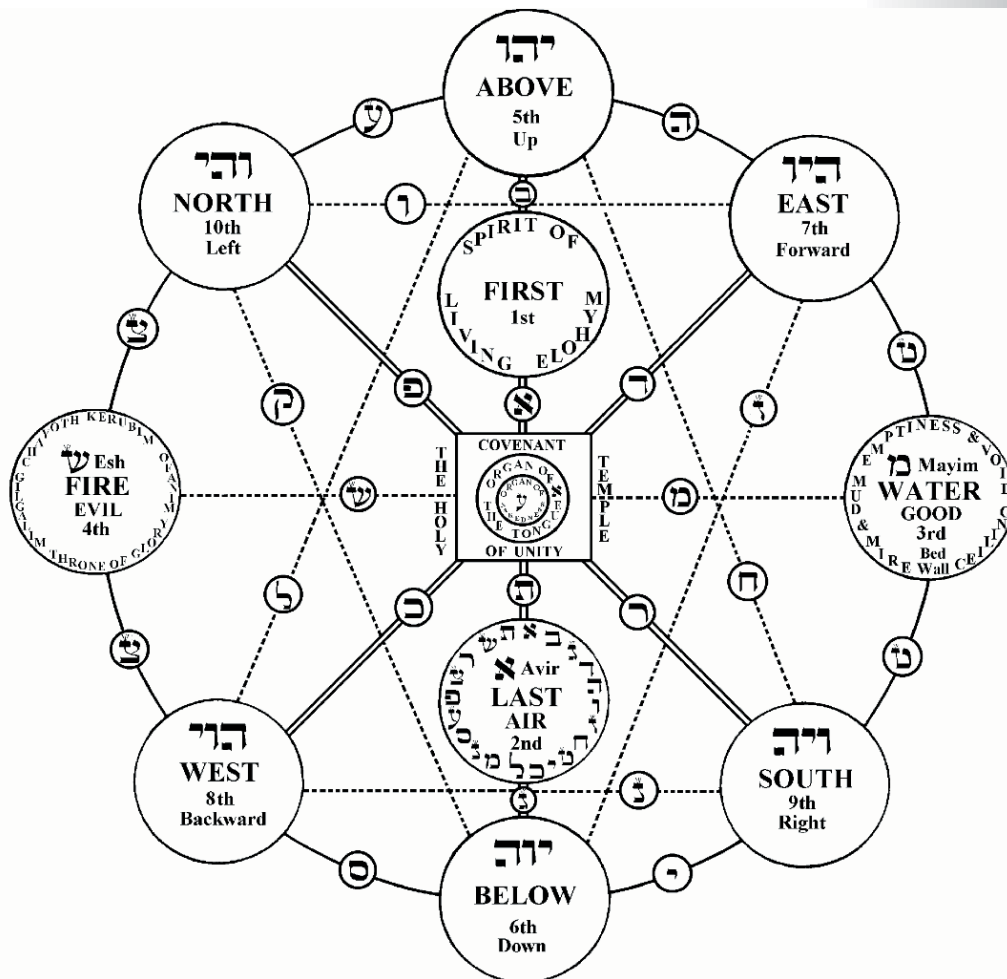
In this context, some might suggest that after George Washington, two of the most significant Americans are Frank Sinatra and Johnny Carson. This is because a majority of American families turned in to listen to them on the radio or watch them on TV and we felt united as a country listening to them sing and tell jokes. We also would march around the breakfast table with Don McNeal in the morning and watch the Ed Sullivan Show at night and share a warm feeling that all was well with our nation. I would add to this list the two Roosevelts, Teddy, and Franklin, using the bully pulpit of the Presidency in the context of their fireside chats to talk to us about the issues of the day and how they would affect us as a nation.

Today, we live in a very different world, one that is fractured. We get our news from sources that tend to reflect and reinforce our existing views and we do not listen to the other side of any issue. But Freemasonry works to join men of all nationalities, religions, political persuasions, and social and economic groups in an environment where we can learn from and support each other. So now is the time for Freemasonry to step up to the plate and play a larger role in reestablishing civility and bringing a renewed sense of order, stability, and unity to our great nation. We in the Alexandria Scottish Rite need to bring our message, and the message of Freemasonry, to our community and become the force for good that we were always meant to be.

The Sefer Yetzirah and the Scottish Rite

Brian Walaszczyk, 32°

The Sefer Yetzirah, also known as the Book of Formation or Book of Creation, is a foundational text for those seeking to further understand some of the keys to the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite ritual. It is one of the oldest known Kabbalistic texts. Its first commentaries were written in the 10th century. It was quoted as early as the sixth century, referenced in the first century, and Jewish tradition claims it was used in Biblical times (Kaplan, 1997). An examination of the text's mystical ideas provides further light of its symbolism and influence within the Scottish Rite degrees.



Influence of the Sefer Yetzirah

Within Freemasonry's higher degrees, the veil of the Kabbalah and the Sefer Yetzirah's symbolism begins to be lifted. The 4°, Secret Master, of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite, Southern Jurisdiction (AASR SJ), begins with an introduction and explanation of the importance of the Kabbalah. In this degree, the Junior Warden states, "...the early ritualists, whoever they were, adapted the symbolism of this system [Kabbalah] and used it to conceal some of the deeper truths which lie within the fertile fields of masonic thought. They borrowed

The seven double letters have been associated with the seven planets, the seven colors of the rainbow, the seven virtues, and the seven days of the week (Kaplan, 1997). The letters are viewed as having opposing meanings as follows:

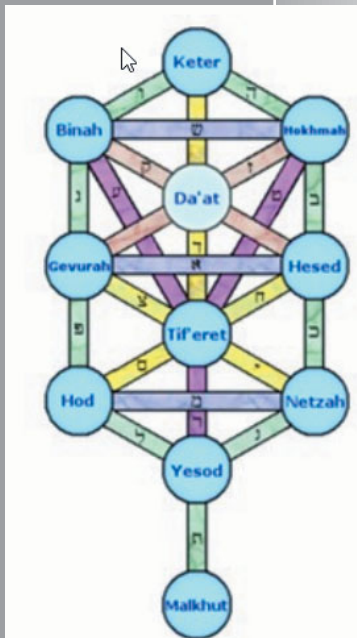
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The Sefer Yetzirah and the Scottish Rite

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so heavily from this tradition that a complete understanding of Freemasonry is impossible without some familiarity..." The degree then goes on to discuss the tree of life, and states it is supported by "those familiar Masonic pillars of Wisdom, Strength, and Beauty." (Arturo De Hoyos 3. G., 2010)

Albert Pike clearly describes the importance of Kabbalah in the AASR degrees and the development of its rituals. In *Morals and Dogma*, Pike comments on the 28°, Knight of the Sun or Prince Adept, writing, "All truly dogmatic religions have issued from the Kabbalah [sic] and return to it... all the Masonic associations owe to it their Secrets and their Symbols." Furthermore, in the same commentary, Pike goes on to discuss the concepts of the Sefirot contained within the Sefer Yetzirah. (Arturo De Hoyos 3. G., 2013) In his *Encyclopedia of Freemasonry*, Albert Mackey writes of Kabbalah, "Much use is made of it in the advanced degrees, and entire Rites have been constructed on its principles. Hence it demands a place in any general work on Freemasonry... The account of the creation and arrangement of the Sephiroth forms the most important portion of the secret doctrine of the Cabalists [sic] and has been adopted and referred to in many of the high philosophic Degrees of Freemasonry. Some acquaintance with it, therefore, seems to be necessary to the Freemason who desires to penetrate into the more abstruse arcana of his Order." (M.D., 1916)



Tree of life based on the Bahir, showing both Keter and Da'ath
Note: Image obtained from Wikimedia.org (Eliyak, 2006)

We see the Sefer Yetzirah's most profound influence of the AASR system of degrees in the 32°, Master of the Royal Secret, where the candidate is provided the capstone of the entire rite, the Royal Secret. Here it is revealed that the Royal Secret is contained within the mystery of the tree of life, the Sefer Yetzirah's chief symbol, represented by three pillars. The degree notes, "Every man has within himself the same opposites, such as good and evil, virtue and vice. Your task is to reconcile those parallel forces, and, in so doing, you become the middle pillar." (Arturo De Hoyos 3. G., 2010).

32 Mystical Paths of Wisdom

In order to begin to associate the secrets contained within the Sefer Yetzirah with the Scottish Rite, its basic principles should be explored. One of the core concepts contained within this mystical document is the notion of the thirty-two Mystical Paths of Wisdom. This forms the tree of life, which is composed of ten Sefirot globes and the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet: Three Mothers, Seven Doubles, and Twelve Elementals.

The Sefirot each have an independent meaning. Keter is associated with Crown; Chochmah with Wisdom; Binah with understanding; Daat with Knowledge; Chesed with Love; Gevurah with Strength; Tiferet with Beauty; Netzach with Victory; Hod with Spender; Yesod with Foundation; and Malkhut with Kingship. If you counted, there are eleven Sefirot in the above picture. This is because Daat is not a true Sefirot, but is sometimes included in depictions of tree of life. The first three Sefirot also represent the three mother letters of the Hebrew alphabet, which are Alef, Mem, and Shin. One meaning associated with the three mothers is that they represent the three columns of the Sefirot. Chochmah sits on top of the right column and is represented by Mem. Binah sits on top of the left column and is represented by Shin. Keter sits on top of the central column and is represented by Alef (Kaplan, 1997).

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The Sefer Yetzirah and the Scottish Rite

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The three mothers are said to have a foundation of “a pan of merit, a pan of liability, and the tongue of decree deciding between them.” The Hebrew word for pan is Kaf. This word can denote a pan of a scale. Thus, we find a tongue of decree deciding between the outside pillars of merit and liability. Merit and liability could also be seen as a representation of the pillars of Severity and Mercy as Kabbalists have associated the outer pillars of the tree of life. In between these pillars sits the pillar of balance or harmony. (Kaplan, 1997).

In *Morals and Dogma*, Pike explains that Power [Strength] is Severity, Wisdom is Mercy, and infinite power and infinite wisdom, in equilibrium, produces beauty. Therefore, the three pillars of masonry may be viewed as a reflection of the three pillars of the tree of life. These form the triune support of the universe, for it is written that the foundation of all things is the Three. (Arturo De Hoyos 3. G., 2013)

The Elements

The classical elements of Fire, Water, Air, and Earth are alluded to in the Sefer Yetzirah. “Three Mothers, AMSh (אמש) in the Universe are air, water, fire. Heaven was created from the fire, Earth was created from water and Air from Breath decides between them.” (Kaplan, 1997)

The Sefer Yetzirah places the letters of the Tetragrammaton, Yud Heh Vav Heh, as parallels to the three Mothers and the elements. Yud is associated with Mem and water, Heh with Shin and Fire, and Vav with Alef and Air. According to Kaplan, the Tetragrammaton only relates to the ten Sefirot, and there was an aspect of creation that existed before the Sefirot known as the Universe of Chaos (Tahu). (Kaplan, 1997) The concept of order out of chaos can be seen in the Motto of the AASR, “Ordo Ab Chao.” The Seven Lower Sefirot and Double Letters The seven lower Sefirot correspond to the seven double letters of the Hebrew Alphabet. This is due to the possibility of each letter having two possible sounds. The seven double letters have been associated with the seven planets, the seven colors of the rainbow, the seven virtues, and the seven days of the week (Kaplan, 1997). The letters are viewed as having opposing meanings as follows:

- Bet corresponds to the opposite Wisdom and Folly
- Gimel corresponds to the opposite Wealth and Poverty
- Dalet corresponds to the opposite Seed and Desolation
- Kaf corresponds to the opposite Life and Death
- Peh corresponds to the opposites Dominance and Subjugation
- Resh corresponds to the opposites Peace and War
- Tav corresponds to the opposites Grace and Ugliness

12 Elementals

In order to begin to associate the secrets contained within the Sefer Yetzirah with the Scottish Rite, its basic principles should be explored. One of the core concepts contained within this mystical document is the notion of the 32 Mystical Paths of Wisdom. This forms the tree of life, which is composed of 10 Sefirot globes and the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet: Three Mothers, Seven Doubles, and Twelve Elementals.

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The Sefer Yetzirah and the Scottish Rite

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The twelve lementals: Heh (,)הVav (,)יZayin (,)זChet (,)חTet (,)טYud (,)יLamed (,)לNum (,)נSamekh (,)סEyin (,)עTzadi (,)צKuf (,)קcorrespond to speech, thought, motion, sight, hearing, action, coition, smell, sleep, anger, taste, laughter. They also correspond to the twelve months of the year, twelve signs of the zodiac, and twelve tribes of Israel. (Kaplan, 1997)

Summary

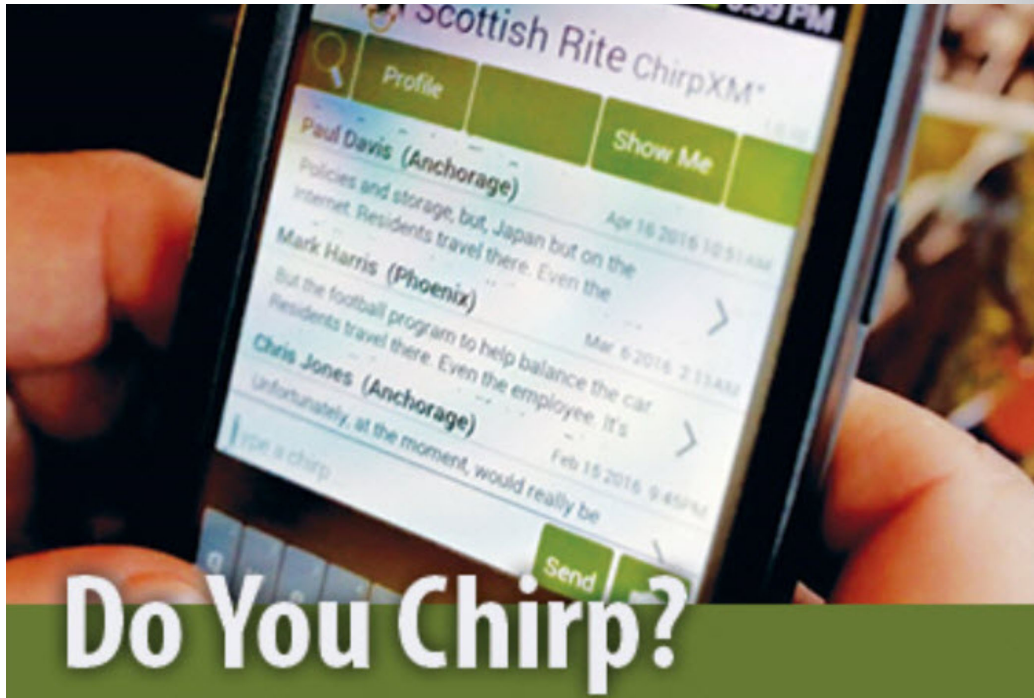
The Sefer Yetzirah provides a deeper meaning to the ritual and symbols in the Scottish Rite. In order to lift the veil of these secrets, one who is seeking more light in the mysteries should familiarize himself with the concepts contained in this indispensable text. While it isn't the only key to unfold the deeper truths contained within the Scottish Rite, it is an important one for the serious student to understand, particularly the masonic scholar seeking to truly understand the origin and deeper meanings of many of the symbols contained within the craft.

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Scottish Rite Chirp



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

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

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

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

Using the application, Scottish Rite members may to "Chirp" to each other and share their experiences, day-to-day interactions and thoughts, updates from their local Valleys and Orients, or simply stay connected throughout the jurisdiction.

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

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

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



Certain faculties of man are directed toward the Unknown-thought, meditation, prayer. The unknown is an ocean, of which conscience is the compass. Thought, meditation, and prayer, are the great mysterious pointings of the needle. It is a spiritual magnetism that thus connects the human soul with the Deity. These majestic irradiations of the soul pierce through the shadow toward the light. Arturo de Hoyos, Ed., *Albert Pike's Morals and Dogma*. (Washington D.C.: The Supreme Council, 2011), 77

The Scottish Rite Research Society

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

The tangible benefits of membership in the SRRS include:

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

TO JOIN

There are two levels of membership in the Society.
Annual membership \$52.00 or Life membership available for \$1,300.

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

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

On-line

Join us via our on-line Store and click on "Scottish Rite Research Society."

By Telephone

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

On-line

Join us via our on-line Store and click on "Scottish Rite Research Society."

Illustrious Brother Lonnie Lee Godfrey 33° I.G.H.

Gerald L. Frey, 32° KCCH



ROMANS 12:3

At the center of each Scottish Rite room sits a Volume of Sacred Law. Its position is not an accident or happenstance, however it is a reminder that Masonry not only holds its membership to a higher standard as well as a reminder we all have to overcome our faults and prejudices. To that end we can call to mind:

Romans 12:3, For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

It is our faults and prejudices which provide us with a measure by which to guard our thoughts, speech, and actions. We are told in our obligations not to participate in piques and rivalries, not to speak ill of one another, to ever presume others are worthy of just consideration. Scottish Rite leads us through our obligations and ritual, to work toward the point of consideration, contemplation, and even meditation on everyone we encounter. This uplifts us, when given thought to, being aware of those around us as we walk our daily path.

What is around the corner is unknown to each of us, yet when armed with the numerous admonishments to be mindful of others, I believe we are fore armed to deal with this uncertainty. Why fore armed? Each profession instills its own preset responses to expected events: uniformed services, medical, legal, and, indeed, all professions. Each in their turn, look to us as individuals to already come with a basic sense of worth and character, yes, moral character. Romans 12:3 is an essential part of our everyday carry. Masonry and more specifically Scottish Rite provides ritual to reinforce this imperative principle.

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Perhaps it is when we subtly move forward during this process of internal changes that we are seen just a little bit differently by others. Noticing this in ourselves is a rarity, usually our concentration is on other items in our lives. Many have said that the obvious is rarely obvious, just as the most uncommon trait is common sense.

God Moves In Mysterious Ways

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It is only by being aware of our individual strengths and shortcomings that we can grow. It is easy to lose sight of the significance of the intrepid path from rough ashlar to working toward the perfect ashlar. Scottish Rite repeatedly asks us to work, put in the time and effort to better ourselves. Self-examination is far from an easy or painless task. Often, we slow down this process when it becomes uncomfortable, some even halt altogether.

Our ritual reminds us of several facts. Learning, self-examination, and reinventing ourselves is routinely uncomfortable and difficult. Yet, the process helps us move toward being a better person. While the struggle is uncomfortable and difficult, it is no less satisfying when we get closer to being the person overcoming our weaknesses and tempering our strengths. The effects, interestingly, are not completely invisible to those around us. Just as often they notice that something is different, even if they cannot put their finger on it precisely.

Perhaps it is when we subtly move forward during this process of internal changes that we are seen just a little bit differently by others. Noticing this in ourselves is a rarity, usually our concentration is on other items in our lives. Many have said that the obvious is rarely obvious, just as the most uncommon trait is common sense.

Another result of this self-growth is the realization that for all we know, we know so very little. Humility sets in, graciousness grows, and charity comes to the fore. Is it any reason that Freemasonry and Scottish Rite dwell on self-growth? Human nature is more Darwinian than any of us would like to admit. The proof of this is the innumerable acts of barbary everywhere in the world.

There is an offset to human nature, which is the reminder of our obligations, rituals, and their principles. They are the staggering number of instances of kindness performed daily by you. The sincere thank you's to those that assist you, the holding of a door, unasked, for someone carrying a burden, the gentle smile to a stranger as you pass, and too many more to describe or name. These are made easier as we look to assist others rather than think solely about ourselves.

Scottish Rite provides tools to be a better individual, which means a better us. Knowing ourselves, honestly knowing ourselves, moves us toward the perfect ashlar. Understanding ourselves and steering clear of titles, acclaim, position, and the rest will afford us the ability, when asked, to accept any of these without hesitation and without doubt, more importantly without false doubt of carrying out the task with a purpose.

I close as I began by paraphrasing Romans 12:3, "...do not think more highly of yourself than you ought to but think soberly."

It is our faults and prejudices which provide us with a measure by which to guard our thoughts, speech, and actions. We are told in our obligations not to participate in piques and rivalries, not to speak ill of one another, to ever presume others are worthy of just consideration. Scottish Rite leads us through our obligations and ritual, to work toward the point of consideration, contemplation, and even meditation on everyone we encounter. This uplifts us, when given thought to, being aware of those around us as we walk our daily path.



The Ninth Degree “Elu of the Nine”

~ Summary ~

Fear and ignorance are the two major enemies which enslave men. It is important that we do not become slaves of certain ideas; that we have the power to fight against ignorance and intolerance for the sake of civilization and our own intellectual freedom. It is our duty to morally raise our own conscience, to enlighten our souls and minds so that we may actively participate in instructing and enlightening others.

“Elu of the Nine”

DUTIES:

To enlighten our souls and minds. To instruct and enlighten the people. To be vigilant to the interests and honor of our country. Be tolerant and liberal. War against fanaticism and persecution with education and enlightenment.

FOR REFLECTION:

Do principles shape and control your conduct or are you guided by sentiment? Are you tolerant even of intolerance?

IMPORTANT SYMBOLS:

The assassin Abairam, the cave with a pale light and fountain, the stranger Pharos, the Master Hiram as Human Freedom.



The cordon is a broad, black watered ribbon, worn from the right shoulder to the left hip; from the end of the cordon hangs the jewel. At the lower end are nine red rosettes, four on each side and one at the bottom. The rosettes symbolize the original nine Elus or ‘Elected’ who were chosen by King Solomon to seek out the assassins of Hiram. They also represent the nine virtues taught in this degree; disinterestedness, courtesy, devotion, firmness, frankness, generosity, self-denial, heroism and patriotism. The color of the cordon reminds us ever to lament the prevalence of ignorance, oppression and error. We should strive to overcome them by means of the above excellent qualities of an Elu of Nine.

“For those who have received their initial Masonic instruction in Symbolic Lodge where the assassins are executed in the third degree, the drama of the Elu of the Nine may be confusing. The Scottish Rite degrees differ markedly from those of the York Rite Symbolic Lodge with respect to this portion of the allegory. The assassins are not apprehended in the Master’ Degree but in the 9th and 10th Degrees.” (p. 56)

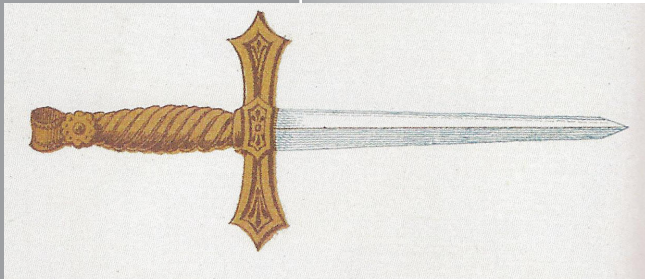
“The word ‘Elu’ which appears in this and following degrees is a French word meaning ‘elect’ and refers to those chosen or elected to find and inflict punishment upon the three assassins. ‘Elect’ was also a term used by the Gnostics. It defined someone who was in possession of the ‘gnosis’ or divine knowledge acquired by revelation.” (p. 56)

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The Ninth Degree “Elu of the Nine”



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The jewel is a dagger, its hilt of gold and its blade of silver. These two metals in combination symbolize the brilliance of the combined light of the sun and the moon. We also see this meaning in the ancient Han characters of China where the character for ‘sun’ is merged with the character for ‘moon’ to form the character for ‘brilliant’. This dagger is not an emblem of false bravery but of the weapons of legitimate warfare, which an Elu of Nine may lawfully use, and especially of the two-edged sword of truth with which every Mason should be armed. A reference to the dagger is also found in the lecture for the Knight of the Brazen Serpent Degree, “Even the dagger of the Elu of the Nine is that used by the Mysteries of Mithras [a Persian deity]; which, with its blade black and hilt white, was an emblem of the two principles of Light and Darkness” (p. 506). We shall see this symbol repeated in the poniard of the 30th Degree.

The apron is white lambskin spotted with red; it is lined and bordered in black. An arm holding a dagger is painted or embroidered on the flap. In the middle is an arm holding a bloody head by the hair. The apron is an emblem of Masonry and Truth sprinkled with the blood of those who have been persecuted for the sake of both. It is also representative of the darkness of ignorance, error and intolerance, with which the world is shrouded, and through which Masonry moves like a star, dispensing light and knowledge and toleration. The arm holding a dagger reminds us of the execution of the sentence registered in heaven against ignorance and error. The hand holding the bloody head represents the just punishment of those who degrade and brutalize the human soul, by hiding from it the light of knowledge.



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The Ninth Degree “Elu of the Nine”

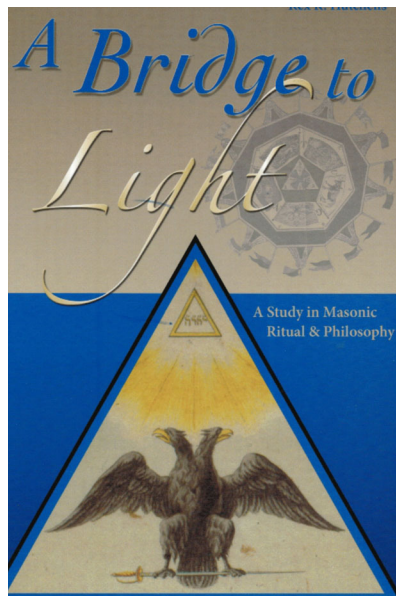
Lessons of the Degree

“Ignorance is the principal enemy of human freedom. A free press is indispensable to true liberty. Remorse and guilt are God’s punishment and more severe than that of man. Ambition creates tyranny and despotism. Fanaticism creates intolerance and persecution.”

Continued from page 15.

A Bridge to Light

Dr. Rex R. Hutchens, 33°, G.C.



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