

T.F.S. - Three, five, and seven - 3 5 7

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“We look forward to a world founded upon four essential human freedoms. The first is freedom of speech and expression. The second is freedom of every person to worship God in his own way. The third is freedom from want.... The fourth is freedom from fear.” Brother and President Franklin D. Roosevelt; 32nd President of the United States.

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“Every man is the builder of a temple, called his body, to the god he worships, after a style purely his own, nor can he get off by hammering marble instead. We are all sculptors and painters, and our material is our own flesh and blood and bones.” Henry David Thoreau

Dear Masonic Student,

Below is an article I think you will find interesting. I have often said that a Masonic Student will also become a Bible Student as he looks deeper into the allegories and references found in the Masonic Degrees. The article below refers to two degrees of the Blue Lodge, the 1° where we learn about the tabernacle in the wilderness, and the 3° where we learn more about King Solomon’s Temple.

If you were to want to have an interesting education program for your Lodge there is a power point that works for both Mac and Windows on the Tabernacle in the Wilderness. The ISBN # is 1-890947-74-1

I hope you enjoy the following paper.

Ark of the Covenant

By Ed Halpaus

In Blue Lodge Masonry we learn a that a Lodge should be situated due East and West because that was the way Moses set the Tabernacle that God had instructed him to build. The Tabernacle was a place for the Priests to worship, and for the people to offer sacrifices as well as a place to house the Ark of the Covenant.

We don’t hear much about the Ark of the Covenant in the Three Degrees of Masonry, except that it was placed in the Sanctum Santorum of King Solomon’s Temple. However those who pursue other degrees will find the Ark of the Covenant mentioned more in those degrees.

As long as I mentioned other degrees I will comment that in Freemasonry we say there is no higher degree than that of Master Mason, which is true; however there are other degrees such as the degrees contained in the Scottish and York Rites of Masonry, which will give the Masonic Student much more to learn and apply when it comes to studying Freemasonry. If you would like to know more about those degrees, so that you can enjoy

Masonry more, check with some of your Lodge Brothers about the York and Scottish Rites, I'm sure they will be pleased to tell you about them.

The Ark of the Covenant was constructed according to God's directions given to Moses. The Ark was constructed by Bezaleel and Aholiab. The Ark of the Covenant is referred to in the Bible by other names as well; The Ark of the Testimony, The Ark of the Covenant of the Lord, The Ark of the Lord God of Israel, and The Ark of God, to name some of them. The various names applied to the Ark of the Covenant indicate the high veneration in which the Ark was held by the people.ⁱ Among ancient people an ark was thought of as a symbol of the receptacle of life, and the interior of the ark symbolized the place where life came into being, so the Ark of the Covenant therefore was held in great reverence as the Holy of Holiesⁱⁱ and it should be kept in a sacred place such as the Tabernacle or Temple.

When we think of the Ark of the Covenant and the Tabernacle in the Wilderness we will remember that there was a cloud called The Shekinahⁱⁱⁱ. It first appeared when Moses consecrated the Tabernacle and then it appeared upon the consecration of the Temple of Solomon. The Shekinah is a visible cloud of light; it is a symbol of Divinity or Divine Glory, but as the true glory of Divinity is truth and righteousness therefore Divine Truth is The Shekinah of Masonry.^{iv} "As the disappearance of The Shekinah from the Ark of the Covenant of the Israelites signified the withdrawal of the divine presence, and was accompanied by disaster and destruction, so in like manner the disappearance of Divine Truth and Righteousness from Masonry would presage the same sad ending of this order."^v "Masonry is not a mere social institution. Its antiquity, its universality, and its active vitality under widely divergent conditions seem to prove that it was founded and continued under Divine Approval. It is for us to see to it that we do not, like the Israelites, become self-confident by reason of our strength and prosperity and wander away to strange gods and thus lose our Shekinah, our Divine Presence, and come to destruction."^{vi}

"Among all ancient races the ark was a symbol of salvation, its preservation implied safety, sanctifying the nation who honored it as the abiding place of Divine wisdom and power."^{vii}

To the Mason the word Ark suggests a mystery; an Arcanum or Arcana which are Latin words meaning secrets or mysteries.^{viii} "The Ark symbolizes the Divine Presence manifesting in us. The ark of the living temple- Man – is the soul, and between the mystic Cherubim (will and intellect) the Most High reveals himself to the true initiate. The ark was made of Acacia wood and Acacia is the symbol of eternity. The ark was overlaid with plates of gold, and gold is the emblem of the Sun, and the Sun is the ancient symbol of Deity."^{ix}

Words to live by: The trouble with self-made men is that they tend to worship their creator.

From volumes of Sacred Law:

"Beware that your hearts are not deceived, and that you do not turn away and serve other gods and worship them." Deuteronomy 11:16 Tanakh

"Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we saw His star in the east and have come to worship Him." Matthew 2:2 New Testament

"O people, worship only your Lord - the One who created you and those before you - that you may be saved." Qur'an 002:021 Khalifa Translation

"Living creatures are nourished by food, and food is nourished by rain; rain itself is the water of life, which comes from selfless worship and service." Bhagavad Gita

Please remember: if you would like to participate in the latest Masonic Monday Question, please go to <http://www.lodgebuilder.org> and click on the Lodge Education forum. When you have an answer send it to masonicmonday@gmail.com the Masonic Monday Question for the week of 04/19/10 is: **'Will you be off or from?' Is this a test-question or a 'catch-question'? Please explain.**

"The act of divine worship is the inestimable privilege of man, the only created being who bows in humility and adoration." Hosea Ballou

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"Try to treat with equal love all the people with whom you have relations. Thus the abyss between 'myself' and 'yourself' will be filled in, which is the goal of all religious worship."
Sri Anandamayi Ma

The newest Education video from the Grand Lodge of Minnesota has been posted by Brother Ian Luhm at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hAcUjBn8xI0>. Some of Ed's papers can be read at: <http://www.mn-masons.org>

TFS & Masonic Matters can also be read on Ed's Face Book page; <http://www.facebook.com/ed.halpaus>

Please remember – Ed's new email address is erhmasonic@gmail.com the old one is going away.

With "Brotherly Love", Ed Halpaus - Grand Lodge Education Officer

**Seek to mentor a Brother Mason:
It's good for him, it's good for you, and it's good for Freemasonry!**

ⁱ Masonic Concordance of the Holy Bible #5

ⁱⁱ ibid #13A

ⁱⁱⁱ Meaning 'Divine Presence:' Catholic Encyclopedia

^{iv} Masonic Concordance of the Holy Bible #7B

^v ibid #7C

^{vi} ibid #7D

^{vii} ibid #13D quoting Elizabeth Goldsmith in "life Symbols," page 283

^{viii} In Minnesota there are Lodges with the name Arcana and Shekinah

^{ix} Masonic Concordance of the Holy Bible #13F: Quoting Brother Henry R. Evans.