

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

By Ed Halpaus, Grand Lodge Education Officer.  
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**“Most books, like their authors, are born to die; of only a few books can it be said that DEATH has no dominion over them; they live, and their influence lives forever.” J. Swartz**

Dear Masonic Student,

We have a very good essay by Brother and Dr. Stanley Shapiro for this issue of T.F.S. Brother Stan is the Lodge Education Officer for Albert Pike Lodge # 237 in Hopkins, Minnesota. As I have mentioned at other times, when the newsletter comes from his Lodge, (and it is a very good newsletter,) his column is the first item I read; I always learn from what he writes. His comments and review of the book “Unplugged – A Medical and Metaphysical Journey,” illustrates a truth; there are many Masons who can write articles and books on subjects of interest to Masons, and, they, through their writing can mentor those of us who read and learn from what they write. The article below is from Brother Stan’s column in the summer 2008 issue of “Further Light.” Through this article Brothers Robert Strauss and Stan Shapiro are mentoring us.

**Masonic Musings by the Leo**

By Stanley Shapiro, Lodge Education Officer

“The wise man looks at death with honesty, dignity and calm, recognizing that the tragedy it brings is inherent in the great gift of life” (Corliss Lamont - Humanist and Philosopher 1902-1955).

I found this quote after I read Robert Strauss's book and it illustrates one of the powerful messages in his book.

Robert Strauss, who was a lawyer, accountant, and a 32<sup>nd</sup> degree Mason, died on June 9, 2005 after a three and one half year battle with cancer. He wanted to write about philosophy when he retired. His book "Unplugged—A Medical and Metaphysical Journey" was published in 2004 and it has guiding principles to help one live one's life to the fullest. The book is a rich source of quotes from ancient and contemporary philosophers.

This book was started after his first operation for a mass in his abdomen and begins with his thoughts for the first eight days when he was being unplugged from the various postoperative tubes. During those eight days he questioned whether it was worth continuing living and societies ethical values including nudity and sexuality. He also asked himself if there is a benevolent God and how does one lead a good life?

He discusses how life and death can be meaningful, and how life, ethics and meaning fit into the physical and spiritual world.

He concludes life is what we make of it. "We have the power to think, the free will to act, and the ability to live happy, fulfilling and meaningful lives. Happiness and contentment require personal action extending beyond ourselves. Family, friendships, and the ultimate extension of our tribal affiliations and responsibility to all humanity are basic to a philosophy that provides personal meaning and human advancement." "Death is the end of life as we know it but is also part of life."

He believed that "public policy should recognize the equal rights for all members of society, provide for the greatest personal freedom, and protect the individual as well as the group...

Human ethics requires a code of conduct and a philosophy which seeks to advance all humanity now and in the future."

On the eighth day in the hospital he decided the rest of his life starts now. He quoted Lucius Seneca (c. 4 B.C.E. to 65 C.E.) "Begin at once to live, and count each separate day as a separate life."

**Words to live by:** "Those who welcome death have only tried it from the ears up." Wilson Mizner

**From volumes of Sacred Law:**

**"Then the LORD God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being."** Genesis 2:7 Tanakh (Old Testament)

**"Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life."**  
John 5:24 New Testament

**"And who believe in that which is revealed unto thee (Muhammad) and that which was revealed before thee, and are certain of the Hereafter."** Qur'an 002:004 Pickthall

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](mailto:masonicmonday@gmail.com) the Masonic Monday Question for the week of 09/27/10 is: **What is Freemasonry's Greatest Treasure?**

**"Leisure without literature is death and burial alive."** Seneca

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**"Without knowledge, life is not more than the shadow of death."** Moliere

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[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=om\\_yq4L3M\\_l#!q=glmned](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=om_yq4L3M_l#!q=glmned)

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<http://www.facebook.com/ed.halpaus> - <http://halpaus.blogspot.com> - <http://www.mn-masons.org> - <http://sites.google.com/site/edsmasonicmatters/>

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!**