



Easter/Passover Message

VWBro Canon Dan Van Alstine, Grand Chaplain, Grand Lodge of Alberta

Before long we will be in the season of spring. Soon the sun will be warmer. Birds, both human and feathered varieties, will be heading home from their winter playgrounds. Gradually, the natural world will turn green, trees will bud and plants will flower. Spring is my favorite season. It is a season of hope and maintaining hope is very important.

Two of the world's great religions, Judaism and Christianity, celebrate major festivals in the spring of the year.

In Judaism, the Festival of Passover is celebrated in the spring of the year.

The background of this festival is well known. After living for several hundred years in Egypt, the Hebrew people had fallen into disfavour with their rulers. They had become nothing more than indentured labourers, almost slaves. They had few rites and were the objects of persecution. They prayed that God would relieve their distress; God called a man named Moses to be their rescuer. Moses pleaded with the rulers to let the Hebrews go from the land of Egypt. Moses performed many signs to convince the rulers, but they refused over and over again. Finally, a dramatic event took place which convinced the rulers to let the Hebrews go: a great plague swept over the land of Egypt.

Only the Hebrews were saved when the Angel of Death passed over the land. From this story, the Jewish people have drawn strength to face the most terrible of circumstances.

When Jesus was born, his homeland was occupied by the Roman army. This army was well known for its brutality. There was no room for popular dissent — it was crushed ruthlessly and new ideas were unwelcome. While Jesus was neither a military nor a political



The tomb of Christ? Although it cannot be proven to be so, this is an excellent example of the style of tomb used at the time of Jesus' death.

leader, his teaching was considered to be subversive by some. This led ultimately to his death on a cross, a death reserved for political agitators. A few days after he died, his followers reported that He had been raised by God and had appeared to many of them. This story continues to offer hope to millions of people as they face life's challenges.

Passover and Easter are all about hope. They teach us that God does care and will help those who have faith. As He preserved the Hebrews in their time of need and as He gave new hope to Jesus' followers after their leader's death, so we can count on God to be there for us in our times of difficulty.



When killing the first sons of Egypt, the Angel of Death "passes over" a Jewish household where the blood of a lamb had been sprinkled on the door. Passover commemorates this event and the resultant freedom from Egyptian rule.

Ritual in Freemasonry — Its Importance

A Paper delivered in Lodge Dunedin, No.1316, Grand Register of Scotland

By Brother Robert B. Reid, Right Worshipful Master, No.1316 (<http://www.grandlodgescotland.com>)

The word that I take up this evening is ritual. Here is the very basis of Freemasonry. I would not go as far as saying that ritual is what Freemasonry is all about, but without ritual we would not have Freemasonry as we know it. Ritual has been described as the be-all and end-all of Freemasonry — it is not and never has been. Yet without ritual there is no such thing as Freemasonry. What is ritual?

You have all heard the Brother described as a good ritualist; the Brother admonished for not knowing his ritual; the Lodge which attracts visitors by

virtue of its ritual work; the Lodge which is characterised by ritual books clandestinely slipped out of pockets, hurriedly glanced at, or secretly propped up for the convenience of the Brother who had not learnt his ritual before coming to the meeting. What is ritual?

For most people ritual is something they can recognise happening but cannot really explain. It is a word they use but only use in the vaguest sense. It is not confined to Freemasonry. It is part of all human experience. Indeed such a statement has to be amplified lest it is too lightly dismissed. Ritual is part of

all human experience. It is probably an essential part of all human experience. Man cannot live without ritual — not just Masonic man, not even just modern man — but man at all times in history, and in all societies from the most primitive to the most modern, has needed and practised rituals. What is ritual?

Ritual is the practising of rites. That is a smug and self-satisfying definition. It is also most unhelpful. Ritual, if we can simplify it, is the performing of certain acts in order to demonstrate some mystery. As a definition that again is no doubt very accurate, but it does

not tell us what ritual really means. Let us rather approach the definition by examples. There are elementary rituals in social living. When we see a friend, we wave — not merely to exercise our muscles, but as an indication of friendship. When we greet a lady, we doff our hat — or at least we did when we wore hats and in the days when there were ladies. Presumably, we did not doff our hat to show off our waves or the sheen on our bald pate. The act of raising the hat conveyed our notions that somehow ladies were beings of another kind from us, who merited some show of respect. What we could only feel without expressing in words, we expressed in action. Similarly the salute exchanged between warriors shows a mutual regard and admiration for each other's skills and attributes — but you try explaining this to old soldiers and stand back. These then are three simple rites. Actions of a particular kind each conveying a deeper meaning.

Let us move on to deeper rituals. These rituals referred to are those practised between man and man and meaningful to each. There are other more significant rituals which indicate relationships not between man and man but between man and God. Those of you who are members of a Presbyterian church know that the service begins with the Beadle carrying in the Bible. This is the last remnant of ritual. The Bible is needed for the service. It could be brought into Church at any time during the week or left at the lectern from Sunday to Sunday. Instead it is brought in a dignified manner each time the service is about to commence. The simple physical act is charged with meaning. The act tells us that the service is concerned with proclaiming the Gospel as contained in the Scriptures. Because the Beadle is

aware of the enormity of the message, he carries the Book with dignity and solemnity. The act of Communion likewise is a sharing of bread and wine, a simple act indeed. Yet it is treated with solemnity. It is carried out according to certain prescribed rules which in themselves have no sanction other than what those sharing in the rite give them. In the Roman Church the mere act of raising the bread or the cup of wine are charged with meaning and significance — the full force of sharing in such a Communion is not derived only from the acting out of a sequence but from how the sequence is acted out.

Ritual is weakened when the manner in which it is practised is divorced from the reason for its being practised. When the old soldier throws a salute and it is

becomes the thing? We all know the phrase “hocus-pocus.” When anything is trivial or magical in a childish sense it is dismissed as so much “hocus-pocus.” Likewise no children’s party appears to be complete without a magician who will say “abracadabra.” Without “abracadabra” the spells will not work and the children will not be mystified. But how many people know that “hocus-pocus” derives from the action of the priest elevating the host, or the bread, before the people. He accompanied it with the words, *Hoc est corpus*, Latin for “This is [the] body.” When the meaning of the action was lost in the action itself, hocus-pocus was the derisory comment. In an obscure religious sect, long since forgotten, it was the practice to wear badges in the form of an equilateral

triangle containing the opening words of their great prayer against the powers of darkness. The words of the prayer were “abracadabra”; what came after is long forgotten and the significance of it all has been reduced to stage magicianship.

We meet this evening in a Freemasons’ Lodge. We constituted ourselves according to certain practices accepted by us and inherited by us. We would normally have welcomed a new member

among us according to forms practised in this room for over fifty years and introduced into this room by those who had learnt these forms elsewhere and before they came. In these ways we have practised rituals. But then there are numerous bodies of men who meet, who constitute themselves, who welcome new members. In these things we are not unique. In these things other bodies have their rituals. They seek to show by handshakes or applause their friendship one to another. The rituals of most other bodies are human rituals. They belong to



A Masonic initiation of a “seeker,” Stich, in France, ca. 1745.

acknowledged in an offhand manner by a subaltern are they always seeing their actions as an exchange of compliments between warriors? The salute soon loses significance. The ritual is weakened.

When the Beadle thinks what a splendid figure he makes as he enters the church carrying the Bible has he not undermined the significance of the entry? The ritual is weakened. When the priest holds up the bread before the congregation a bell rings to draw attention to the act. But what happens when the act and not its meaning

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the plane of man-to-man relationships. The rituals of Freemasonry have a much deeper significance.

Freemasonry is nothing without man-to-man relationships. We lay stress on friendship. Indeed we push it further and refer to Brotherhood. But the rituals practised in a Masonic Lodge seek to give us an awareness of something more. There is another dimension to our thinking. Freemasonry seeks to illustrate truths which stretch beyond the here and now. The practice of Masonry is not confined within the walls of our Lodge room. Nor is it merely extended to the practice of rituals within any Lodge room or all Lodge rooms. Freemasonry seeks to demonstrate the truths of life itself. It is a man-made organisation and seeks to reveal to all who join those things which cannot be put clearly into words, those truths which underpin society. It realises the inadequacy of

words and understanding. The words and actions of a Masonic Degree are both essential. Words require understanding intellectually, actions can often be appreciated more immediately. The philosopher who would hold forth and explain life, what it is about, what it means, and what is man's place in the scheme of things will use words. The Freemason searching after the same truths uses pictures and actions. He tells stories. He uses object lessons.

Two yardsticks can be used to measure the value of any action: will it lead to an improvement in the lot of mankind generally, will it lead to an improvement in the one who performed the act? Supposing we apply these criteria to our Masonry. Does our ritual contribute to the sum of human happiness, will it lead to an improvement in the lot of mankind generally, will it make those who perform it better

people? I believe it can do both. It will be better able to do both if we all seek to realise the significance of what we are doing. When we know that everything we do, everything we say, is meaningful, then our ritual will be worthwhile. When we believe that what we are doing is worthwhile, then we will apply ourselves to the practice of our ritual. When we apply ourselves to the ritual, we may find our own experience enriched. It may be then that on Monday at work we will all be the better for having been in the Lodge on Friday evening. If we cannot be better men through joining any organisation, it is, in my mind, not worth joining. If men can look at your actions and praise them saying, "He's a Mason!" then you have succeeded and the Craft has succeeded. What is Ritual? Ritual is the performing of common acts in such a way that they show forth eternal truths and mysteries.

Honour Roll

Recognition Through Long Service Awards — January to December 2011

The following Brethren were awarded the indicated jewel or bar, and are to be applauded for their many years of loyalty and contributions to their Lodges and to Freemasonry. Should you see one of these Brethren, be sure to congratulate him.

60-Year Bars

Barrie, R.J. Patricia Lodge No. 91
 Berreth, A.I. Irricana Lodge No. 137
 Coates, G.F. Zetland Lodge No. 83
 Dunnwebber, E.A. Lochearn Lodge No. 151
 Earl, W.H. Red Deer Lodge No. 12
 Gibson, R.C. Drumheller Lodge No. 146
 Green, J. Charity Lodge No. 67
 Hansen, H.P. Vulcan Lodge No. 74
 Hilker, R.G. Apollo Lodge No. 27
 McIntyre, H. Hinton Lodge No. 178
 Poeter, V. Mayerthorpe Lodge No. 148
 Robertson, F.A. Edmonton Lodge No. 7
 Wright, R.H. Irricana Lodge No. 137

50-Year Past Master Jewels

Bate, T.E. Ivanhoe No. 142
 Milligan, W.A. Saskatchewan No. 92

50-Year Jewels

Annis, C.F. Ashlar Lodge No. 28
 Armstrong, A.J. Drayton Valley Lodge No. 182
 Barnes, R.J. Patricia Lodge No. 91
 Bernicki, R.W. Excelsior Lodge No. 80
 Bischoff, J.V. Foothills Kelvingrove Lodge No. 174
 Bott, S.W. Westlock Lodge No. 114
 Brewster, R.J. Renfrew Lodge No. 134
 Campbell, J.D. Avon Glen Lodge No. 170
 Caunt, J.H.B. Highlands-Unity Lodge No. 168
 Collier, S.L. Beaver Lodge No. 56
 Comstock, G.C. Rockyford Lodge No. 123

Cook, I.H. Foothills Kelvingrove Lodge No. 174
 Cox, D.C. Northland Lodge No. 147
 Devalter, V.S. Mizpah Lodge No. 35
 Dickson, W.J. Ashlar Lodge No. 28
 Dowdell, L.C. Crescent Lodge No. 87
 Eastly, A.C. Harmony Lodge No. 75
 Elston, L.R. Highlands-Unity Lodge No. 168
 Evans, E.W. Nanton Lodge No. 17
 Findlay Sr., J. Exemplar Lodge No. 175
 Fuller, L.T. Cornerstone Lodge No. 19
 Glimsdale, D.L. Cairo Lodge No. 32
 Gottschlich, I.R. Highlands-Unity Lodge No. 168
 Graham, G.E. Vulcan Lodge No. 74
 Gundry-White, F.L. Cascade Lodge No. 5
 Harris, K.E. Vulcan Lodge No. 74
 Hunt, A.J. Westlock Lodge No. 114
 Kerr, R.D. Foothills Kelvingrove Lodge No. 174
 Kornelson, E.H. Medicine Hat Lodge No. 2
 Langdon, H.E. Carstairs Lodge No. 20
 Lawn, James Jr. Mosaic Lodge No. 176
 Macaulay, G.V. Foothills Kelvingrove Lodge No. 174
 MacDonald, I.M. Northland Lodge No. 147
 Maskell, A.D. Griesbach Lodge No. 191
 McKnight, H. Airdrie Wild Rose Lodge No. 2001
 Meinig, E.R. Mount Lebanon Lodge No. 54
 Miller, K.I. Mayerthorpe Lodge No. 148

Milne, J.R. Calgary Lodge No. 23
 Morgan, C.D. Corinthian Lodge No. 22
 Newell, R.L. Exemplar Lodge No. 175
 Newman, R.B. Granite Lodge No. 127
 Ormiston, R.W. Renfrew Lodge No. 134
 Parsons, H.A. Ashlar Lodge No. 28
 Piper, G.A. Medicine Hat Lodge No. 2
 Prior, L.A. St. Mark's Lodge No. 118
 Sawers, W.B. Vermilion Lodge No. 24
 Schmidt, E.F. Eureka Lodge No. 10
 Seehawer, K.D. Carstairs Lodge No. 20
 Shugarman, M. Dominion Lodge No. 117
 Sired, R.R. Drayton Valley Lodge No. 182
 Skakun, J. Victoria Lodge No. 13
 Stanley, D.C. Kitchener Lodge No. 95
 Stitt, G.S. Mosaic Lodge No. 176
 Stuart, C.G. Calgary Lodge No. 23
 Such, Fred Saskatchewan Lodge No. 92
 Thomas, H.J. Highlands-Unity Lodge No. 168
 Thompson, R.I. Mayerthorpe Lodge No. 148
 Wilson, T.A. Zetland Lodge No. 83

Grand Master's Itinerary

April

20-22 47th Annual Masonic Spring Workshop; Delta Lodge at Kananaskis
 28 Griesbach Lodge No. 191 Annual Mess Dinner; Jefferson Armoury, Edmonton; Cocktails 18 00 h; Dinner 19 00 h; Guest Speaker Chris Hodapp; Cost \$85.

The Awakening

Awakening: A sudden manifestation or perception of the essential nature or meaning of something.

Kevin P. Jay, Administrative Assistant to the Grand Master, The Grand Lodge of the Free and Accepted Masons of the District of Columbia; *The Voice of Freemasonry* 27: 2 (2010)

The purpose of Freemasonry has often been called “making good men better.” I believe it should be “helping good men achieve their potential.” I refer to this as the Awakening.

What is the Awakening? A time comes in your life when you finally get it. When, in the midst of all your fears and insanity, you stop dead in your tracks and somewhere the voice inside your head cries out “**Enough!**” Enough fighting, and crying, or struggling to hold on. And, like a child quieting down after a blind tantrum, your sobs begin to subside, you shudder once or twice, you blink back your tears and begin to look at the world through new eyes. This is your awakening.

You realize it’s time to stop, hoping and waiting for something to change or for happiness, safety and security to come galloping over the next horizon. You come to terms with the fact that you are neither Prince Charming nor Cinderella; that, in the real world, there aren’t always fairy tale endings (or beginnings, for that matter); and that any guarantee of “happily ever after” must begin with you — and in the process, a sense of serenity is born of acceptance.

You awaken to the fact that you are not perfect and that not everyone will always love, appreciate, or approve of who or what you are, and that’s OK. They are entitled to their own views and opinions. And you learn the importance of loving and championing yourself — and in the process, a sense of new found confidence is born of self approval.

You stop complaining and blaming other people for the things they did to you (or didn’t do for you) and you learn that the only thing you can really count on is the unexpected. You learn that people don’t always say what they mean or mean what they say, and that not everyone will always be there for you, and that it’s not always about you. So you learn to stand on your own and to take care of yourself — and in the process, a sense of safety and security is born of self-reliance.

You stop judging and pointing fingers and you begin to accept people as they are and overlook their shortcomings and human frailties — and in the process, a sense of peace and contentment is born

of forgiveness.

You realize that much of the way you view yourself and the world around you is as a result of all the messages and opinions that have been ingrained into your psyche. And you begin to sift through all the junk you’ve been fed about how you should behave, how you should look, how much you should weigh, what you should wear, what you should do for a living, how much money you should make, what you should drive, how and where you should live, whom you should marry, the importance of having and raising children, and what you owe your parents, family, and friends.

You learn to open up to new worlds and different points of view. And you begin reassessing and redefining who you are and what you really stand for. You learn the difference between wanting and needing and you begin to discard the doctrines and values you’ve outgrown, or should never have bought into to begin with, and in the process you learn to go with your instincts.

You learn that it is truly in giving that we receive. And that there is power and glory in creating and contributing and you stop maneuvering through life merely as a “consumer” looking for your next fix. You learn that principles such as honesty and integrity are not the outdated ideals of a by-gone era but the mortar that holds together the foundation upon which you must build a life.

You learn that you don’t know everything, that it’s not your job to save the world, and that you can’t teach a pig to sing. You learn to distinguish between guilt and responsibility and the importance of setting boundaries and learning to say “**no.**”

You learn that the only cross to bear is the one you choose to carry and that martyrs get burned at the stake. Then you learn about love. You learn how to love, how much to give in love, when to stop giving, and when to walk away. You learn to look at relationships as they really are and not as you would have them be.

You stop trying to control people, situations, and outcomes. And you learn that alone does not mean lonely. You also stop working so hard at putting

your feelings aside, smoothing things over and ignoring your needs.

You learn that feelings of entitlement are perfectly OK, and that it is your right to want things and to ask for the things you want — and that sometimes it is necessary to make demands. You come to the realization that you deserve to be treated with love, kindness, sensitivity, and respect — and you won’t settle for less. And you learn that your body really is your temple. And you begin to care for it and treat it with respect. You begin to eat a balanced diet, drink more water, and take more time to exercise.

You learn that being tired fuels doubt, fear, and uncertainty and so you take more time to rest. And, just as food fuels the body, laughter fuels our soul. So you take more time to laugh and to play. You learn that, for the most part, you get in life what you believe you deserve — and that much of life truly is a self-fulfilling prophecy.

You learn that anything worth achieving is worth working for and that wishing for something to happen is different from working toward making it happen. More importantly, you learn that in order to achieve success you need direction, discipline, and perseverance. You also learn that no one can do it all alone — and that it’s OK to risk asking for help.

You learn the only thing you must truly fear is the greatest robber baron of all: **fear** itself. You learn to step right into and through your fears because you know that whatever happens, you can handle it and to give in to fear is to give away the right to live life on your own terms. And you learn to fight for your life and not to squander it living under a cloud of impending doom.

You learn that life isn’t always fair; you don’t always get what you think you deserve, and that bad things sometimes happen to unsuspecting, good people. On these occasions you learn to not personalize things. You learn that God isn’t punishing you or failing to answer your prayers. It’s just life happening. And you learn to deal with evil in its most primal state — the ego.

You learn that negative feelings such as anger, envy, and resentment must be understood and redirected or they will

suffocate the life out of you and poison the universe that surrounds you. You learn to admit when you are wrong and to build bridges instead of walls.

You learn to be thankful and to take comfort in many of the simple things we take for granted, things that millions of people upon the earth can only dream about: a full refrigerator, clean

running water, a soft warm bed, a long hot shower. Slowly, you begin to take responsibility for yourself by yourself and you make yourself a promise to never betray yourself and to never, ever settle for less than your heart's desire.

And you hang a wind chime outside your window so you can listen to the wind. And you make it a point to keep

smiling, to keep trusting, and to stay open to every wonderful possibility. Finally, with courage in your heart, you take a stand, you take a deep breath, and you begin to design as best you can the life you want to live.

Wake up, Brethren.

Musical Ideas and Strategies for Lodge Meetings

VWBro Hu Puffer, Grand Organist, Grand Lodge of Alberta

Music can be a powerful force, if it is carefully selected and presented at an appropriate level of volume. Music will complement the work, act as a soothing force and also punctuate the eloquence of the lecture. It is often said that "music hath charms to soothe a savage breast,"* and therefore the lecturer may often proceed in a more relaxed and dramatic fashion.

Selection of musical effects is a task that takes considerable care and practice. A musician should constantly think ahead when Masonic work is being exemplified and anticipate the most effective musical scores that will serve best. Sometimes a single note, chord, or progression of notes is all that

is required. Maybe a simple arpeggio will punctuate a lecture and cause the thought to linger for a moment or two. Side benchers may think that the organist is asleep, but actually he is carefully following the degree work, anticipating and planning the next sounds and phrases that he will blend with the lecture or use as a bridge to the next lecture. A few bars of *Amazing Grace* has often brought a tear to the eye or a few rousing bars of *Trumpet Voluntary* has often stimulated a little toe tapping. Conversely, a wrong choice or an inappropriate selection could easily be distracting and damaging.

Hymns provide practical and inspiring sources of suitable music. Selected excerpts of a few bars of a well-known hymn can create a bridge between lectures and set a mood for the series of lectures. Most of our organists are familiar with *Masonic Musical Ritual for Ceremonials and Degrees*, (Grand Lodge of Canada, 1918.) This is an excellent hymnal that provides music and words for all three Degrees of Masonry.

Music can also add humour in the lodgeroom. Some may recall an occasion when a Grand Lodge procession required extra time to assemble. The organist could not resist playing *Send in the Clowns* while waiting. This soon generated considerable laughter at the expense of those in the lineup. It is surprising how much influence an organist can have on a meeting at times like this.

Our faithful and talented Lodge musicians dedicate a great deal of time and effort sharing their music. They deserve our recognition, appreciation, encouragement and support. These musicians will always be in demand. Their impact is immeasurable. Keep up the good work Brethren.

[*Quote is from William Congreve's *The Mourning Bride*, Act 1, Scene 1.]

Still Time to Register



Masonic Spring Workshop

20-22 April 2012,

Delta Lodge at Kananaskis

Our Future Through Our Past

The 47th Masonic Spring Workshop will open its doors soon, but there is still time to register to hear great speakers, attend stimulating sessions and enjoy lively discussion with your friends and Brothers. Speakers include authors Robert L.D. Cooper and Andrew Hammer. Guest speaker Zane Velji will explore basic volunteerism, applicable in Lodge and community. There are sessions on such diverse topics as Masonry's mythology, the ancient charges, what is the correct formal wear for Lodge, and effective presentations.

Workshop information and the agenda can be found on our website www.masonicspringworkshop.ab.ca or contact the Secretary, Garth Cochran through the website or at 403-274-0563.



The Masonic Foundation of Alberta is a registered charitable foundation, whose primary aim is to assist Alberta youth oriented charities. A partial list of organizations that received funding during the past year is as follows:

- Zebra Child Protection Centre
- The Mustard Seed Foundation
- YWCA Sheriff King Home
- Association for the Rehabilitation of the Brain Injured
- Boys and Girls Club (Red Deer, Calgary and Edmonton)
- WINHOUSE Edmonton Women's Shelter
- Camp Sunflower for Disabled Children
- Crystal Kids Youth Centre
- ISTAR (Institute for Stuttering Treatment and Research)
- Wellspring Family Resources and Crisis Centre (Whitecourt)
- McMann Youth Services
- Camp He-Ho-Ha
- The Doorway (Youth Services)
- Betty House Project in Yellowknife

Some of these organizations have received funding directly. Other groups have been assisted by funds raised by a lodge and having those funds matched by a grant from the Masonic Foundation.

The fund matching works as follows:

- A Lodge chooses a **registered charity** to support.
- The Lodge raises some money (and has some fun doing so).
- The Lodge then sends a letter or email to the MFA requesting fund matching. The letter may be sent to:

Secretary

Masonic Foundation of Alberta
PO Box 77069, Station Main
St. Albert AB T8N 6C1

An email may be sent to: secretary@masonicfoundationofalberta.ca.

Angus Stewart, President

Corn, Wine and Oil — Part 2

Short Talk Bulletin August, 1930, Masonic Service Association of North America
This article is continued from the March Alberta Freemason, pages 5-6.

Corn, wine and oil form important and necessary parts of the ceremonies of the dedication, consecration and constitution of a new Lodge.

Lodges were anciently dedicated to King Solomon, but as we all know, our modern Lodges are dedicated to the Holy Sts. John. "...and since their time there is represented in every regular and well-governed Lodge a certain point within a circle, embordered by two parallel perpendicular lines, representing those saints."

This symbol of the point within the circle is far older than King Solomon's Temple. The two lines which emborder it, and which we consider represent the Saints, were originally representative of the summer and winter solstices. The Holy Sts. John have their "days" so closely to the summer and winter solstices (June 24 and December 27 are almost coincident to June 21 and December 21) that there can be little doubt that both lines and dates represented to our "ancient Brethren" the highest and lowest points which the sun reached in its travels north and south. They are, most intimately connected with the time of fecundity and harvest, the festivals of the first fruits, the depths of winter and the beginning of the long climb of the sun up from the south towards the days of warmth which that climb promised.

Hence corn, wine and oil — the produce of the land — are natural accompaniments to the dedication of a Lodge which it is hoped will prosper, reap in abundance of the first fruits of Masonic cultivation and a rich harvest of ripe character from the seeds it plants. Corn, wine and oil poured upon the symbolic Lodge at the ceremony which creates it, are essential to "erection" or "consecration." All Lodges are "erected to God and Consecrated to the services of the Most High." From earliest times consecration has been accompanied by sacrifice, a free-will offering of something of real value to those who thus worship. Hence the sacrifice of corn, wine and oil — the wealth of the land, the strength of the tribe, the comfort and well-being of the individual — at the consecration of any place of worship or service of God.

Like so much else in our ceremonies, the idea today is wholly symbolic. The Grand Master orders his Deputy (or

whatever other officer is customary) to pour the Corn, the Senior Grand Warden to pour the Wine and the Junior Grand Warden to pour the oil upon the "lodge" — usually a covered structure representing the original Ark of the Covenant. The corn is poured as an emblem of nourishment; the wine as an emblem of refreshment and the oil as an emblem of joy and happiness.

The sacrifice we thus make is not actual, any more than Masonic work is physical labour. The ceremony should mean to those who take part in it, to those who form the new Lodge, that the symbolic sacrifice will be made real by the donation of the necessary time, effort, thought and brotherly affection which will truly make the new Lodge an effective instrument in the hands of the builders. When the Grand Master constitutes the new Lodge, he brings it legally into existence. A man and a woman may be married in a civil ceremony of consecration. But as the joining of a man and woman in matrimony is by most considered as a sacrament, to be solemnized with the blessing of the Most High, so is the creation of a new Lodge, but the consecration is also its spirit.

In the laying of a corner stone the Grand Master also pours, or causes to be poured, the corn, wine and oil, symbolizing health, prosperity and peace. The fruits of the land are poured upon the cornerstone to signify that it will form part of a building which shall grow, be used for purposes of proper refreshment, and become useful and valuable to men. The ceremonies differ in different Jurisdictions — indeed, so do those of the dedication, consecration and constitution of a Lodge — but the essential idea is the same everywhere, regardless of the way in which they are applied in the ritualistic ceremonies.

It probably matters very little what varieties of grain, of oil and juice of the grape are used in these ceremonies. The symbolism will be the same, since the Brethren assembled will not know the actual character of the fruits of the earth being used. The main theme is that "Fruits of the Earth" are being used, no matter which fruits they are! To be quite correct though, barley or wheat should be used for the corn, olive oil for the oil, and sacramental wine, such

as is permitted by the Volstead Act (during the days of the prohibition!) for religious purposes for the wine. It may be noted, however, that "new wine" or unfermented grape juice was used by the children of Israel as a sacrificial wine; the ordinary grape juice in no way destroys the symbolism. Mineral oil, of course is oil, and is a "fruit of the earth" in the sense that it comes from the "clay which is constantly being employed for man's use." The oil of Biblical days, however, was wholly vegetable, whether it was the olive oil of commerce, or the oil of cedar as was used in burials.

Corn, wine and oil were the wages paid our ancient Brethren. They were the "Master's Wages" of the days of King Solomon. Masons of this day receive no material wages for their labours; the work done in a Lodge is paid for only in the coin of the heart. But those wages are no less real. They may sprout as does the grain, strengthen as does the wine, nourish as does the oil. How much we receive and what we do with our wages depends entirely on our Masonic work. A Brother obtains from his Lodge and from his Order only what he puts into it. Our ancient brethren were paid for their physical labours. Whether their wages were paid for work performed upon the mountain and in the quarries, or whether they received corn, wine and oil because they laboured in the fields or vineyards, it was true then, and it is true now, that only "in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread." To receive the equivalent of corn, wine and oil, a Brother must labour. He must till the fields of his own heart or build the temple of his own "house not made with hands." He must labour to his neighbour or carry stones for his brother's temple.

If he stands, waits, watches and wonders he will not be able to ascend into the Middle Chamber where our ancient Brethren received their wages. If he works for the joy of working, does his part in his Lodge work, takes his place among the labourers of Freemasonry, he will receive corn, wine and oil in measures pressed down and running over, and know a Fraternal Joy as substantial in fact as it is ethereal in quality; as real in his heart as it is intangible to the profane of the world.

For all of us then corn, then wine and then oil are symbols of sacrifice, of the fruits of labour, of wages earned. For all of us,

"So Mote It Be!"