

"Knight of the Loom or Servant of the Craft"

Our Grand Lodge has been making preparations for our 275 celebration for the last 4 years. During this time I have spent many nights going through past Annual Proceedings of our Grand Lodge as well as examining events that took place during our time line as a Grand Lodge. It was late one night as I went through books in my library, when I was reacquainted with a familiar story that was first published 100 years after we received our charter from England as a Provencal Grand Lodge.

The Emperor's New Clothes written by Hans Christian Andersen was first published April 7th 1837. The plot is of an Emperor who cares nothing for his subjects; his only concern is for his wardrobe. One day he hires two swindlers proclaiming to be weavers who promise him the finest suit of clothes from a fabric invisible to anyone who is unfit for his position or "just hopelessly stupid". Shortly after the weavers began the Emperor was eager to know how much of the cloth was finished, however, somewhat uneasy. "Suppose," he thought secretly, "I am unable to see the cloth. That would mean I am either stupid or unfit for my post. He decided to send for his faithful minister to go and see. "He will best be able to see how the cloth looks. He is far from stupid and splendid at his work." Regrettably his faithful minister would not tell the truth and dare not say he saw nothing.

The Emperor sends another official with the same result. The time came for the Emperor to view his new cloths and behold he could not see the cloth himself, but pretends that he can for fear of appearing unfit for his position. The Emperor presents each of the swindlers with an award titled "Knight of the Loom". They dress him in mime and the Emperor then marches in procession before his subjects. All the people standing by cheered. Suddenly a child in the crowd calls out that the Emperor is wearing nothing at all and the cry is taken up by others. The Emperor cringes, realizing the assertion is true. Then holding his head higher than before; in vain glory he continues to march and the courtiers held on to the train that wasn't there at all. Now here is a story that has repeated itself far too often. Here we see a leader concerned with self and one who thinks he is higher than the position of service he occupies.

Recently I was approached by a young mason and he asked me "what is the best advice I have received since being in Grand Lodge?" Truly the best advice I received as I have advanced through the elected line was from our Past Grand Master's. I was reminded and challenged to remove myself from the office which I was occupying. My brothers the position of Worshipful Master, an appointed or elected Grand Lodge Office, an appointed or elected subordinate office, and the office of Grand Master is a temporary office of service. Those of us elected or appointed to a position of service must never consider ourselves higher than the position of service we occupy. Because the instant we become consumed in vain glory, we will no longer be worthy of the office.

We will merit the title of "Knight of the Loom", because we allowed our integrity to be swindled through arrogance. Brethren titles and honors are fleeting, but the love which unites us will never, never no never die.

Your friend and brother from Inman

Jay Adam Pearson

Grand Master

Masonic Education Corner

The Two Hiram

In masonry we are introduced to two prominent figures in the erecting of Solomon's temple. They are Hiram, King of Tyre and Hiram, the artisan. The first is Hiram, King of Tyre, who was associated with King David and King Solomon. David was a son of Jesse of Bethlehem and was a shepherd boy when God called him to be king. He was anointed by Samuel the prophet to be the successor of Saul, the first king of Israel. Solomon was a son of David who would later become king but that is lesson for another article.

Hiram was the son of Abibaal and was nineteen years of age when he succeeded his father as king of Tyre, located on the Phoenician coast. He reigned some thirty-four years and is said to have died at age fifty-four. During his reign he began to expand and improve his kingdom. When David became king of Israel, Hiram sent him gifts congratulating him. Among the gifts were laborers (craftsmen) and materials to build a palace (II Samuel 5:11). Their friendship grew and so did commerce between the two nations and continued into Solomon's reign as the third king of Israel. David and Hiram of Tyre made an agreement which resulted in the construction of the temple (I Kings 5:1-12).

The relationship between Tyre and Israel was beneficial to both nations. Jerusalem was inland and had the advantages of the overland trade routes. Tyre, a major seaport, offered the advantages of sea trade and Hiram controlled that trade during this time. His friendship with David and Solomon explains the prosperity and success of their reigns.

Although King David desired to erect a permanent temple for God to dwell in, he wasn't allowed to build it because of his sin in taking a census (I Chronicles 21); however, he employed stonemasons and carpenters from Tyre and used cedar trees from that area in building his palace. He was allowed to plan and organize some of the materials in preparation for the building of Solomon's temple.

King David and King Hiram, of Tyre, entered into an alliance and assisted him in building David's palace by sending him stonemasons and carpenters, cedar and fir trees from Lebanon. After the death of David, Hiram entered into a similar agreement with Solomon and helped him greatly in the building of the temple.

In return Solomon gave Hiram great quantities of wheat and oil each year. "At the end of twenty years, Solomon had built the two houses, the house of Yahweh and the king's houses." Solomon gave Hiram a gift of twenty cities in the land of Galilee but he wasn't at all pleased with them, calling them "Cabul" which means "good for nothing." Apparently his displeasure with Solomon's gift didn't hurt their relationship because Hiram sent the king of Israel 120 talents of gold. (I Kings 9:10-14).

The second Hiram mentioned in the account from I Kings is the name of a skillful craftsman who did artistic work in metals, such gold, silver, iron, and brass in the building of Solomon's temple. King Solomon secured this artisan from Hiram, king of Tyre. This craftsman's father was also a brass-worker of Tyre who had died which resulted in widowing Hiram's Jewish mother from the tribe of Naphtali.

From the two Hiram's we learn the value of friendship and the truth of God's Word. From historical records we also learn that the temple of King Solomon took seven years to complete and how the stones were put in place by wooden mauls or "Hiram's." In speculative masonry the Master's gavel is called a Hiram because as Hiram the artisan governed the craft during the construction of the Temple, the Worshipful Master should guide his Lodge with equal regularity and precision.

Reference: The Holy Bible, KJV

Word of the Month:

Licentiousness—Lacking legal or moral restraints, disregard for rules.

Question of the Month: Why is modern Masonry termed "Speculative?" Search in Ahiman Rezon (2010)

Answer for June and July issue:

Ahiman Rezon (2010) pages 159 and 160 and Mackey's Encyclopedia of Freemasonry, pages 253 and 254.

Fraternally,

William B. Rogers, Senior Grand Warden

Masonic Education Committee Chairman



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