Worshipful Master: Joseph Felix Editor: Henry Spomer, PM

Edition: October 2022

Taft, William H. (William Howard), 1857-1930; 27th President, 1909 – 1913 – Chief Justice Supreme Court 1921 – 1930, made a “Mason at Sight” in an “Occassional Lodge” called for that purpose on February 18, 1909, Cincinnati, Ohio, by Charles S. Hoskinson, Grand Master of Masons in Ohio.

William Taft was not seen as brilliant as a child, but was a hard worker; his demanding parents pushed him and his four brothers toward success, tolerating nothing less. At Yale College, which he entered in 1874, the heavyset, jovial Taft was popular and an intramural heavyweight wrestling champion. One classmate said he succeeded through hard work rather than by being the smartest, and had integrity. He was elected a member of Skull and Bones, the Yale secret society co-founded by his father. In 1878, Taft graduated second in his class of 121. He attended Cincinnati Law School, and graduated with a Bachelor of Laws in 1880. Shortly before graduating from law school, Taft went to Columbus to take the bar examination and easily passed.

In October 1880, Taft was appointed assistant prosecutor for Hamilton County. January 1882 after President Chester A. Arthur appointed him Collector of Internal Revenue for Ohio's First District, an area centered on Cincinnati. Taft refused to dismiss competent employees who were politically out of favor, and resigned effective in March 1883.

It is not clear when Taft met Helen Herron (often called Nellie), but it was no later than 1880, when she mentioned in her diary receiving an invitation to a party from him. By 1884, they were meeting regularly, and in 1885, after an initial rejection, she agreed to marry him. William Taft remained devoted to his wife throughout their almost 44 years of marriage. Nellie Taft pushed her husband much as his parents had. The couple had three children, of whom the eldest, Robert, became a U.S. senator. May 1909, his wife Nellie had a severe stroke that left her paralysed in one arm and one leg and deprived her of the power of speech. Taft spent several hours each day looking after her and teaching her to speak again, which took a year.

Taft served as Solicitor General, Federal judge, Chaired the Commission to organize a civilian government in the Philippines, and Secretary of War.







AGE 21





Roosevelt Intro-

duce’s Taft

Check out our Web Page at mm56.org. It has posts and **new** Masonic Education articles on it.

**From Our Worshipful Master:**

As I look at the calendar, I see that my year is already ending, wow how fast that time does pass. For the last three installments I thought I would share one of the most impact stories that was shared with me, “Jonathan Livingston Seagull” By Richard Bach. The story is in three parts so I can not think of a more fitting way to share my thoughts. I hope you enjoy, and it is as impactful for you as it was for me.

PART ONE

IT WAS MORNING, AND THE NEW SUN SPARKLED GOLD across the ripples of a gentle sea. A mile from shore a fishing boat chummed the water, and the word for Breakfast Flock flashed through the air, till a crowd of a thousand seagulls came to dodge and fight for bits of food. It was another busy day beginning. But way off alone, out by himself beyond boat and shore, Jonathan Livingston Seagull was practicing. A hundred feet in the sky he lowered his webbed feet, lifted his beak, and strained to hold a painful hard twisting curve through his wings. The curve meant that he would fly slowly, and now he slowed until the wind was a whisper in his face, until the ocean stood still beneath him. He narrowed his eyes in fierce concentration, held his breath, forced one ... single ... more ... inch ... of ... curve ... Then his feathers ruffled, he stalled and fell. Seagulls, as you know, never falter, never stall. To stall in the air is for them disgrace and it is dishonor. But Jonathan Livingston Seagull, unashamed, stretching his wings again in that trembling hard curve - slowing, slowing, and stalling once more - was no ordinary bird.

Most gulls don’t bother to learn more than the simplest facts of flight — how to get from shore to food and back again. For most gulls, it is not flying that matters, but eating. For this gull, though, it was not eating that mattered, but flight. More than anything else, Jonathan Livingston Seagull loved to fly. This kind of thinking, he found, is not the way to make oneself popular with other birds. Even his parents were dismayed as Jonathan spent whole days alone, making hundreds of low-level glides, experimenting. He didn’t know why, for instance, but when he flew at altitudes less than half his wingspan above the water, he could stay in the air longer, with less effort. His glides ended not with the usual feet-down splash into the sea, but with a long flat wake as he touched the surface with his feet tightly streamlined against his body. When he began sliding into feet-up landings on the beach, then pacing the length of his slide in the sand, his parents were very much dismayed indeed. “Why, Jon, why?” his mother asked. “Why is it so hard to be like the rest of the flock, Jon? Why can’t you leave low flying to the pelicans, the albatross? Why don’t you eat? Jon, you’re bone and feathers!” “I don’t mind being bone and feathers, Mum. I just want to know what I can do in the air and what I can’t, that’s all. I just want to know.” “See here, Jonathan,” said his father, not unkindly. “Winter isn’t far away. Boats will be few, and the surface fish will be swimming deep. If you must study, then study food, and how to get it. This flying business is all very well, but you can’t eat a glide, you know. Don’t you forget that the reason you fly is to eat.” Jonathan nodded obediently. For the next few days, he tried to behave like the other gulls; he really tried, screeching and fighting with the flock around the piers and fishing boats, diving on scraps of fish and bread. But he couldn’t make it work. It’s all so pointless, he thought, deliberately dropping a hard-won anchovy to a hungry old gull chasing him. I could be spending all this time learning to fly. There’s so much to learn! It wasn’t long before Jonathan Gull was off by himself again, far out at sea, hungry, happy, learning. The subject was speed, and in a week’s practice he learned more about speed than the fastest gull alive. From a thousand feet, flapping his wings as hard as he could, he pushed over into a blazing steep dive toward the waves, and learned why seagulls don’t make blazing steep power-dives. In just six seconds he was moving seventy miles per hour, the speed at which one’s wing goes unstable on the upstroke. Time after time it happened. Careful as he was, working at the very peak of his ability, he lost control at high speed.

Climb to a thousand feet. Full power straight ahead first, then push over, flapping, to a vertical dive. Then, every time, his left wing stalled on an upstroke, he’d roll violently left, stall his right wing recovering, and flick like fire into a wild tumbling spin to the right. He couldn’t be careful enough on that upstroke. Ten times he tried, and all ten times, as he passed through seventy miles per hour, he burst into a churning mass of feathers, out of control, crashing down into the water. The key, he thought at last, dripping wet, must be to hold the wings still at high speeds — to flap up to fifty and then hold the wings still. From two thousand feet he tried again, rolling into his dive, beak straight down, wings full out and stable from the moment he passed fifty miles per hour. It took tremendous strength, but it worked. In ten seconds, he had blurred through ninety miles per hour. Jonathan had set a world speed record for seagulls! But victory was short-lived. The instant he began his pullout, the instant he changed the angle of his wings, he snapped into that same terrible uncontrolled disaster, and at ninety miles per hour it hit him like dynamite. Jonathan Seagull exploded in midair and smashed down into a brick-hard sea.

When he came to, it was well after dark, and he floated in moonlight on the surface of the ocean. His wings were ragged bars of lead, but the weight of failure was even heavier on his back. He wished, feebly, that the weight could be just enough to drag him gently down to the bottom and end it all. As he sank low in the water, a strange hollow voice sounded within him. There’s no way around it. I am a seagull. I am limited by my nature. If I were meant to learn so much about flying, I’d have charts for brains. If I were meant to fly at speed, I’d have a falcon’s short wings, and live on mice instead of fish. My father was right. I must forget this foolishness. I must fly home to the Flock and be content as I am, as a poor limited seagull. The voice faded, and Jonathan agreed. The place for a seagull at night is on shore, and from this moment forth, he vowed, he would be a normal gull. It would make everyone happier. He pushed wearily away from the dark water and flew toward the land, grateful for what he had learned about work saving low altitude flying. But no, he thought. I am done with the way I was I am done with everything I learned. I am a seagull like every other seagull, and I will fly like one. So, he climbed painfully to a hundred feet and flapped his wings harder, pressing for shore.

He felt better for his decision to be just another one of the flocks. There would be no ties now to the force that had driven him to learn, there would be no more challenge and no more failure. And it was pretty, just to stop thinking, and fly through the dark, toward the lights above the beach. Dark! The hollow voice cracked in alarm. Seagulls never fly in the dark! Jonathan was not alerted to listen. It’s pretty, he thought. The moon and the lights twinkling on the water, throwing out little beacon-trails through the night, and all so peaceful and still ... Get down! Seagulls never fly in the dark! If you were meant to fly in the dark, you’d have the eyes of an owl! You’d have charts for brains! You’d have a falcon’s short wings! There in the night, a hundred feet in the air, Jonathan Livingston Seagull — blinked. His pain, his resolutions, vanished. Short wings. A falcon’s short wings! That’s the answer! What a fool I’ve been! All I need is a tiny little wing, all I need is to fold most of my wings and fly on just the tips alone! Short wings! He climbed two thousand feet above the black sea, and without a moment for thought of failure and death, he brought his forewings tightly in to his body, left only the narrow-swept daggers of his wingtips extended into the wind, and fell into a vertical dive.

The wind was a monster roar at his head. Seventy miles per hour, ninety, a hundred and twenty and faster still. The wing-strain now at a hundred and forty miles per hour wasn’t nearly as hard as it had been before at seventy, and with the faintest twist of his wingtips he eased out of the dive and shot above the waves, a grey cannonball under the moon. He closed his eyes to slits against the wind and rejoiced. A hundred forty miles per hour! And under control! If I dive from five thousand feet instead of two thousand, I wonder how fast ... His vows of a moment before were forgotten, swept away in that great swift wind. Yet he felt guiltless, breaking the promises he had made himself. Such promises are only for the gulls that accept the ordinary. One who has touched excellence in his learning has no need of that kind of promise. By sunup, Jonathan Gull was practicing again. From five thousand feet the fishing boats were specks in the flat blue water, Breakfast Flock was a faint cloud of dust motes, circling. He was alive, trembling ever so slightly with delight, proud that his fear was under control. Then without ceremony he hugged in his forewings, extended his short, angled wingtips, and plunged directly toward the sea. By the time he passed four thousand feet he had reached terminal velocity, the wind was a solid beating wall of sound against which he could move no faster. He was flying now straight down at two hundred fourteen miles per hour. He swallowed, knowing that if his wings unfolded at that speed, he’d be blown into a million tiny shreds of seagull. But the speed was power, and the speed was joy, and the speed was pure beauty. He began his pullout at a thousand feet, wingtips thudding and blurring in that gigantic wind, the boat and the crowd of gulls tilting and growing meteor-fast, directly in his path. He couldn’t stop; he didn’t know yet even how to turn at that speed. Collision would be instant death. And so, he shut his eyes. It happened that morning, then, just after sunrise, that Jonathan Livingston Seagull fired directly through the center of Breakfast Flock, ticking off two hundred twelve miles per hour, eyes closed, in a great roaring shriek of wind and feathers. The Gull of Fortune smiled upon him this once, and no one was killed. By the time he had pulled his beak straight up into the sky he was still scorching along at a hundred and sixty miles per hour. When he had slowed to twenty and stretched his wings again at last, the boat was a crumb on the sea, four thousand feet below. His thought was triumph. Terminal velocity! A seagull at two hundred fourteen miles per hour! It was a breakthrough, the greatest single moment in the history of the Flock, and in that moment a new age opened for Jonathan Gull. Flying out to his lonely practice area, folding his wings for a dive from eight thousand feet, he set himself at once to discover how to turn. A single wingtip feather, he found, moved a fraction of an inch, gives a smooth sweeping curve at tremendous speed. Before he learned this, however, he found that moving more than one feather at that speed will spin you like a rifle ball ... and Jonathan had flown the first aerobatics of any seagull on earth. He spared no time that day for talk with other gulls but flew on past sunset. He discovered the loop, the slow roll, the point roll, the inverted spin, the gull bunt, the pinwheel. When Jonathan Seagull joined the Flock on the beach, it was full night. He was dizzy and terribly tired. Yet in delight he flew a loop to landing, with a snap roll just before touchdown. When they hear of it, he thought, of the Breakthrough, they’ll be wild with joy. How much more there is now to living! Instead of our drab slogging forth and back to the fishing boats, there’s a reason to life! We can lift ourselves out of ignorance, we can find ourselves as creatures of excellence and intelligence and skill. We can be free! We can learn to fly!

The years ahead hummed and glowed with promise. The gulls were flocked into the Council Gathering when he landed, and apparently had been so flocked for some time. They were, in fact, waiting. “Jonathan Livingston Seagull! Stand to Centre!” The Elder’s words sounded in a voice of highest ceremony. Stand to Centre meant only great shame or great honor. Stand to Centre for Honor was the way the gulls’ foremost leaders were marked. Of course, he thought, the Breakfast Flock this morning; they saw the Breakthrough! But I want no honors. I have no wish to be leader. I want only to share what I’ve found, to show those horizons out ahead for us all. He stepped forward. “Jonathan Livingston Seagull,” said the Elder, “Stand to Centre for shame in the sight of your fellow gulls!” It felt like being hit with a board. His knees went weak, his feathers sagged, there was a roaring in his ears. Centered for shame? Impossible! The Breakthrough! They can’t understand! They’re wrong, they’re wrong! “... for his reckless irresponsibility,” the solemn voice intoned, “violating the dignity and tradition of the Gull Family ...” To be centered for shame meant that he would be cast out of gull society, banished to a solitary life on the Far Cliffs. “... one day, Jonathan Livingston Seagull, you shall learn that irresponsibility does not pay. Life is the unknown and the unknowable, except that we are put into this world to eat, to stay alive as long as we possibly can.” A seagull never speaks back to the Council Flock, but it was Jonathan’s voice raised. “Irresponsibility? My brothers!” he cried. “Who is more responsible than a gull who finds and follows a meaning, a higher purpose for life? For a thousand years we have scrabbled after fish heads, but now we have a reason to live — to learn, to discover, to be free! Give me one chance, let me show you what I’ve found ...” The Flock might as well have been stone. “The Brotherhood is broken,” the gulls intoned together, and with one accord they solemnly closed their ears and turned their backs upon him. Jonathan Seagull spent the rest of his days alone, but he flew way out beyond the Far Cliffs. His one sorrow was not solitude, it was that other gulls refused to believe the glory of flight that awaited them; they refused to open their eyes and see. He learned more each day. He learned that a streamlined high-speed dive could bring him to find the rare and tasty fish that schooled ten feet below the surface of the ocean: he no longer needed fishing boats and stale bread for survival. He learned to sleep in the air, setting a course at night across the offshore wind, covering a hundred miles from sunset to sunrise. With the same inner control, he flew through heavy sea fogs and climbed above them into dazzling clear skies ... in the very times when every other gull stood on the ground, knowing nothing but mist and rain. He learned to ride the high winds far inland, to dine there on delicate insects. What he had once hoped for the Flock, he now gained for himself alone; he learned to fly and was not sorry for the price that he had paid. Jonathan Seagull discovered that boredom and fear and anger are the reasons that a gull’s life is so short, and with these gone from his thought, he lived a long fine life indeed.

They came in the evening, then, and found Jonathan gliding peaceful and alone through his beloved sky. The two gulls that appeared at his wings were pure as starlight, and the glow from them was gentle and friendly in the high night air. But most lovely of all was the skill with which they flew, their wingtips moving a precise and constant inch from his own. Without a word, Jonathan put them to his test, a test that no gull had ever passed. He twisted his wings, slowed to a single mile per hour above stall. The two radiant birds slowed with him, smoothly, locked in position. They knew about slow flying. He folded his wings, rolled, and dropped in a dive to a hundred ninety miles per hour. They dropped with him, streaking down in flawless formation. At last, he turned that speed straight up into a long vertical slow roll. They rolled with him, smiling. He recovered to level flight and was quiet for a time before he spoke. “Very well,” he said, “who are you?” “We’re from your Flock, Jonathan. We are your brothers.” The words were strong and calm. “We’ve come to take you higher, to take you home.” “Home, I have none. Flock I have none. I am Outcast. And we fly now at the peak of the Great Mountain Wind. Beyond a few hundred feet, I can lift this old body no higher.”

“But you can, Jonathan. For you have learned. One school is finished, and the time has come for another to begin.” As it had shined across him all his life, so understanding lighted that moment for Jonathan Seagull. They were right. He could fly higher, and it was time to go home. He gave one last long look across the sky, across that magnificent silver land where he had learned so much. “I’m ready,” he said at last. And Jonathan Livingston Seagull rose with the two starbright gulls to disappear into a perfect dark sky.

Fraternally,

Joe Felix, WM

**Know Your Lodge Officers/Members**

**Updates/Reminders:**

**October-2022**

**10/3/2022 6 pm - 6:30 pm Trustee's Meeting MM**

**10/3/2022 6:30 pm - 7:30 pm Dinner Open**

**10/3/2022 7:30 pm - 8:30 pm Stated Meeting (Move Up Night) EA +**

**10/15/2022 Social Event Open**

**10/18/2022 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm 3rd Degree Practice MM**

**Move Up night for Marion McDaniel will be on October 3. Brother Josh Sticht will be taking the East. Trustee will be meeting before the meeting at 5:30 pm.**

**And much more to come . . .**

**REACH OUT AND HELP SUPPORT YOUR LODGE CHARITIES**

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*The Lodge has Raffle Tickets for three great prizes in the Jim Click Tucson Millions drawing. The offered prizes are A new 2022 Ford Maverick Lariat Hybrid, two round-trip first-class airline tickets to anywhere in the world or $5,000 cash. Tickets are $25 each or 5 for $100.* ***The lodge gets 50% of the sale for own school charity while the other 50% goes to our Arizona Masonic Foundation for Children charity.*** *Yes 100% goes to our Masonic Charities. Anyone can purchase tickets and the funds raised stays within the Masonic Fraternity. Please contact Henry Spomer to purchase tickets. 1papapie@comcast/net or text @ (520) 661-2021*

The Business Meetings are only about an hour in length. Come join us as we move into the future. Let us all come together and take a small job to make our lodge stronger. See you in Lodge.

Dinner: The meal for the Monday October 3rd meeting is **$10** for BBQ chicken & ribs with potato salad, salad and cake, starting at 6:30 with Lodge opening at 7:30. Please RSVP by September 29 to Henry Spomer at: 1papapie@comcast.net

**Helping Hands**: *Brothers, some of us are healthier and in better shape than others and some may need some help. If you are in need of some minor help, please reach out to your brothers, maybe we can give you a hand.*

*If you or you know of one of our Lodge Brothers who has fallen on hard times and needs help with his dues or help in general, please let WM Joe Felix or Secretary Dave Brown know. The lodge and Brothers are there to help you. Please let someone know so we can help.*

*If you would like to participate in a degree, please contact, Josh Sticht at* *joshsticht@gmail.com**. He will work to schedule practices. We really want to beef up our degree team so please step up.*

*Please contact the Worshipful Master to obtain a blank form for Ritual Proficiency that you can fill out. This form will give the Senior Warden information as to who can current and able to provide certain Ritual Work. This will greatly help him when planning degrees and also when other lodges request help.*

**Educationally:**

**EA Tracing Board**

**(Continued from last month’s TB)**

**Each month I will add additional Sections**

**Sections 7 & 8**

**Section 7**

This section of the Entered Apprentice Tracing Board deals with the physical attributes of the Lodge and in particular the flooring of the Lodge.

From experience, I note that not all Lodge rooms are as complete as the lecture suggests, however, for those of us who have the privilege of being able to meet or visit the Masonic Temple in Victoria B.C, or others equally as beautiful, this section should prompt you to take the time to examine the flooring carefully and probably allow you to see and understand it in a more beautiful and clearer light.

*“The interior of a Freemason’s Lodge is composed of Ornaments, Furniture and Jewels. The Ornaments of the Lodge are the Mosaic pavement, The Blazing Star, and the Indented of Tessellated Border; the Mosaic pavement is the beautiful flooring of the Lodge, The Blazing Star the Glory in the Center, and the Indented or Tessellated Border the skirt work round the same. The Mosaic pavement may justly be deemed the beautiful flooring of a Freemason’ Lodge, by reason of its being variegated and checkered.*

*This points out the diversity of objects, which decorate and adorn the creation, the animate as well as the inanimate parts thereof. The Blazing Star or Glory in the center refers to the Sun, which enlightens the Earth, and by its benign influence dispenses its blessings to mankind in general. The Indented or Tessellated Border refers us to the Planets, which in their various revolutions form a beautiful border or skirt work round that Grand Luminary the Sun, as the other does round that of a Freemasons Lodge.”*

I never cease to be amazed by the absolutely beautiful wordings in our lectures and give thanks to our forefathers who so diligently created these wonderful works and left them for our pleasure and enlightenment.

**Section 8**

Having spent some time on the “Ornaments of the Lodge” this appears to me to be the first time in this lecture that we move from a description of Masonry itself and start describing the Furniture of the Lodge and how it symbolically applies itself to the actions & responsibilities of Masons as a whole, and as individuals in particular.

Please take some time to study this section and appreciate where it is directing us as Masons.

*“The furniture of the Lodge consists of the Volume of the Sacred Law,* [*the Compasses*](http://www.theeducator.ca/working-tools/the-compasses/)*, and the Square. The Sacred Words are to govern our faith, on them we obligate our Candidates for Freemasonry,* as are [the Compasses](http://www.theeducator.ca/working-tools/the-compasses/) and Square, when united, to regulate our lives and actions.

*The Sacred Volume is derived from God to man in general,*

[*The Compasses*](http://www.theeducator.ca/working-tools/the-compasses/) *belong to the Grand Master in particular and the Square to the whole craft”*

Dealing firstly with the “Volume of the Sacred Law” it is extremely important to note that this statement is **NON SPECIFIC** and should, include all premier Books of Faith that are followed by members of your Lodge whether they are present at the meeting or not.

This, particular point, was addressed by Past Grand Master, M.W.Bro.Bill Ferguson, (Grand Lodge of BC&Yukon) during his term in office, and he has admonished us all to ensure that all Brethren are shown the religious respect they so properly deserve.

It might be a good idea to check if your Lodge has considered this matter and is prepared to put it into effect.

Next we deal with the “Compasses” which to my understanding is an instrument of [geometry](http://www.theeducator.ca/symbolism/geometry/) and used for the drawing of circles among other things. This particular instrument is utilized by our Grand Master in that to him falls the responsibility of keeping all Brethren in his jurisdiction in due bounds one with the other.

This instrument is not to be confused with the “Compass” which is used for navigational purposes.

And lastly the “Square” being an instrument used for the drawing of 90 Degree angles, frequently referred to as RIGHT &/or PERFECT angles.

It’s connotation to Masons in general and to each of us in particular should require no further explanation, save to say that it represents one of the standards by which we attempt to live by.

**Section 8**

This section deals with the **Jewels of the Lodge**, and in particular the **Movable Jewels**. As this can be a rather exhaustive task the intent is to move slowly and give each piece the attention it so rightly deserves.

The relevant Section reads as follows:-

*“The Jewels of the Lodge are three movable and three immovable. The three movable jewels are the Square, the Level and the Plumb Rule. Among operative Masons the Square is to try and adjust rectangular corners of buildings, and assist in bringing rude matter into due form; the Level is to lay levels and prove horizontals; the Plumb Rule is to try, and adjust uprights, while fixing them on their proper bases.*

*Among, Free and Accepted Masons,* ***The Square teaches morality****, the Level equality, and the Plumb Rule justness and uprightness of life and actions. They are called the movable jewels because they are worn by the Master and his Wardens, and are transferable to their successors on nights of Installation. The Master is distinguished by the Square, the Senior Warden by the Level and the Junior Warden by the Plumb Rule.”*

You will note that I have highlighted “**The Square teaches Morality**”, this is due to the fact that I have located an excellent lecture on the Square that I wish to share with you. This paper has been amended by me, to make it suitable for all readers, irrespective of their progression in the craft.

**The Square**.

The ethics and good reputation of the Craft have been impressed on the public more by the word **‘SQUARE”** than by any other means, although “LEVEL” is a close second.

A **SQUARE DEAL** is a phrase that can be readily understood by virtually anyone in today’s society and implies open and honest bargaining wherein the transaction being entered into ends in mutual satisfaction to all the contracting parties.

As with other symbols, it is impossible to explain the meaning of the **SQUARE** completely by the use of language alone. If this were possible, we would miss the charm of symbolism and speculation. But being indefinite, we have the privilege of reading a variety of meanings and abstractions into it, depending on our skill and experience.

The Masonic Square is essentially a **TRY-SQUARE** and is distinguished from the carpenter’s square.

The arms that include the angle are not necessarily of equal length. Indeed in operative Masonry, it would be an advantage to have them of unequal length, for on occasions the workman, when using this tool, might find it inconvenient to use a long arm for lack of space, whereas by adjusting it, the desired trial could be made.

This applies also to our own personal square. If the degree of accuracy or error of the moral problem under consideration is not revealed by one position of the Square, it (the square) should be applied in another manner. **Thus we may approach the TRUTH**.

Furthermore, it is to be remembered, that our Square is to be tried on our own work, not on that of a fellow Brother.

He should be encouraged to try his square on his own work, and in a manner that satisfies his own conscience.

As previously mentioned, the Masonic Square is a **TRY-SQUARE** and therefore any marks of measurement are out of place. There can, however, be no objection to decorating one or both arms of this useful tool in any way that might make it a thing of beauty and a joy to the possessor.

And it is exactly the same with our **PERSONAL** **SQUARE**. Masonry concerns itself more with the broad principles of conduct rather than with degrees of efficiency, for such degrees vary with the talents that have been entrusted to us, the environment in which we live and the arches of experience through which we have passed.

So, as you can now readily see, no two of us have the exact same decorations on the arms of our Try-Squares, with the passing of time, we constantly add to the decorations or alter them according to our experiences in life, and finally we hope to apply this square with satisfaction to the Perfect Ashlar.

Adapted from “The Square”, written by W.Bro. Dr.F.W. Andrew, and published in the

Masonic Bulletin – BCY- February 1939.

**Wisdom:**

AMOS WHAT SEEST THOU?

**by Ray W. Burgess, Past Grand Master of Louisiana *July 12, 2014 By*** [**Norm**](http://www.theeducator.ca/author/Educator/)

Thank you Brother Norm for this research and your comments. Henry

In all the Lodges under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of the State of Louisiana
(and many other Grand Jurisdictions) the VOSL is open at the Seventh Chapter of Amosin the FC Degree.
Why do we do this? This practice is not universal, but ours has the sanctity of long use and sacredness.
Also, since one of [the working tools](http://www.theeducator.ca/working-tools/the-working-tools/) of a FC is the Plumb, it is appropriate to open the Bible at the story about the plumb line of God.

What do we really know about this man, the prophet Amos? Do we know why the God called him to deliver His message of judgment to His people of Israel?

Solomon received from his father, David, a powerful empire. During his latter years, however, it began to fall apart. Expensive building projects sapped the strength and loyalty of native Israelites. As the adjoining nations saw the opportunity to assert their independence they did so and Solomon was unable to prevent the disintegration of the empire.

Before Solomon’s death the Aramaeans had severed themselves from his kingdom,
and shortly after the succession by Rehoboam, a further split took place.
With this breakdown of the monarchy, subject states declared their independence so that the territory once ruled by David became divided into autonomous units.

That portion of Solomon’s empire north of Mount Hermon, extending as far as the Euphrates, revolted and formed the kingdom of Syria, with Damascus as its capital.
South of Syria was the kingdom of the ten tribes, known as Israel, or the Northern Kingdom, with its capital at Shechem. The Northern Kingdom included the larger portion of Palestine proper, an area of about 9,400 square miles. The kingdom of Judah included the tribe of that name, a portion of Benjamin, and Simeon, which had been incorporated earlier into Judah. Kings of the Davidic line reigned over Judah until the fall of Jerusalem to Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon (587 B.C.) Solomon retained control over Moab; but his successor found the Moabites hard to keep in subjection. Moab disappeared as a political power when Nebuchadnezzar conquered the country.

South of the Dead Sea was the kingdom of Edom which had been conquered by David
and remained tributary during the reign of Solomon.

The three kingdoms which developed from Solomon’s kingdom in western Palestine—Syria, Israel and Judah—strove for supremacy. Wars were constant between Israel and Judah. With the threat to both Israel and Judah from the powerful Syrian state of Damascus, there developed a need & desire for the two states to reconcile their differences. During the reigns of Ussiah, king of Judah (783-742 B.C.), and Jeroboam II, king of Israel (786-746 B.C.), the sister states pushed their boundaries out to include the territories which once belonged to Israel under David and Solomon.

Many of the smaller nations were required to pay tribute to Israel and Judah.
Both kingdoms collected tolls from the caravans that passed through their lands.
In this period in both Israel and Judah there was a transition from an agricultural
to a commercial way of life. Industries and cities sprang up which gave rise to a class
of wealthy merchants and landholders.

This new wealthy class built winter and summer houses out of hewn stone elaborately
adorned and decorated. They had couches inlaid with ivory, covered with the tiniest imported silk, upon which they reclined while eating prime cuts of meat, drinking wine out of bowls, and listening to strains of varied music.

But the presence of great wealth did not mean that there was no poverty in the land.
The extremely rich had obtained much of their wealth by their merciless oppression of the poor, taking exactions of wheat from them. The merchants used false weights and measures in their business transactions, in addition to selling refuse wheat. Because these unscrupulous men were able to bribe the judges, no redress was left for the innocent.

The tragedy of all this was that Israel’s social structure was completely disrupted.
Israel had originally been a very liberal community in which there was no class distinction. All men were equal before the law, God, and one another. Now all this had changed. Wealth, power, and affluence came to some but not to the majority. But the affluent, rather than using their wealth to benefit all of God’s people, squandered it on luxuries and status symbols and used their newly-gained power to keep their poor brothers in subjection.

One would think that, in the light of the conditions just described, there would have been little interest in religion in those days. Just the reverse was true. The people were very religious, especially the rich. Religious services were well attended; tithes and offerings were freely and punctually given; impressive festivals were held; and pilgrimages were made to the important religious centers. They thought they were in the favor of God and under His protection. However, just the opposite was true.

The Lord despised their feasts and would not accept their sacrifices. Their worship was a profane travesty. It was an act of men and women morally unclean and unwilling to submit themselves to the searching discipline of God.

God had entered into a covenant with Israel.

God had chosen Israel out of all the families of the earth.
God had given her a land and had given her people special laws to guide them in the way they should go. It seems that Israel believed the covenant to be inviolable and that it gave her privileges and a license that no other nation had. But Israel broke her covenant. She used her freedom from bondage to enslave a large segment of her own people. The gift of the land she used for selfish purposes. She rejected the law of God and walked after lies.

What was God going to do in the face of Israel’s sin?
Would he ignore it?
Would he wink at it?
Or would he stop turning away the punishment from Israel?
The answer was “No,” he would stop turning away the punishment from Israel.
The end had come upon Israel. Was there no hope for Israel? Was there no way to escape the impending judgment of God? There was only a slight possibility—only that possibility found in the sovereignty of God. Here is where we begin the story about Amos. Very little is known about the man Amos. He is never mentioned by any other biblical writer. All the information we have about him comes from the little book which bears his name. Amos’ name probably means “burdened” or “burden-bearer.”

Amos lived in Tekoa, a village in Judah about 11 miles south of Jerusalem and 18 miles west of the Dead Sea. Tekoa was located in a barren rockbound region surrounded on three sides by limestone hills and a breath-taking view of the Dead Sea.

Amos was a shepherd or herdsman and dresser of sycamore trees (wild figs). He was probably a very poor man since his sympathies were with the poor against their rich oppressors. Although he was a shepherd and one who performed menial tasks, he was by no means uneducated. His formal training might have been nil, but he was a keen observer of the ways of God and men. Awareness and sensitivity characterized the man. His literary style was free and pure. Amos lived in the time of the earthquake, just as the Northern Kingdom of Israel was coming to a close.

Seemingly before anyone else in his generation, Amos heard the lion’s roar of God’s wrath. He is generally recognized as the first of the writing prophets in Israel.
He introduced a new element into Old Testament prophecy. He was the first to preach a message of judgment that meant the end of the kingdom of Israel.

At about 760 B.C. God called Amos to deliver His message of judgment to the people of Israel. In spite of his humble background, he was the one God chose to preach his message. That message was of repentance and warning to a rebellious nation. Amos possessed a sense of unquestioned [obedience](http://www.theeducator.ca/symbolism/obedience/) and a clear proclamation of God’s message. He was committed to the Lord and His principles of holiness and righteousness.

Amos began his ministry with biting words of judgment against the six nations
surrounding the land of Judah and Israel. Next he announced God’s judgment against Judah, but Amos was only warming up to his main objective: a vivid description of God’s judgment against the nation of Israel. Amos condemned the people of Israel for their oppression of the poor; worship of idols; rejection of God’s salvation; and defilement of the Lord’s holy name.

Twice Amos saw the judgment of God coming and interceded for Israel, and God turned away his judgment. But with the third vision of the plumb line, we come to the title of this dissertation. “Thus He showed me: and behold
the Lord stood upon a wall made by a plumb line, with a plumb line in His hand.

*“And The Lord said unto me, Amos, what seest thou? And I said, a plumb-line.*
*And said the Lord, Behold, I will set a plumb line in the midst of my people Israel:*
*“I will not again pass by them any more. ‘ ‘ Amos 7:7-8*

The prophet Amos was the prophet of righteousness and he saw the Lord God as judging Israel by means of the plumb line, signifying the unchanging standards of that righteousness.

Let us look further at this plumb line!!!!

What is a plumb line? It is a simple tool made of a cord with a weight attached to one end. It is used by brick masons and other builders to test the verticality of a wall or other structures. If a wall or a foundation leans, it is out-of-plumb. Why did God say,

*“I will set a plumb line in the midst of my people Israel?”*
Because the plumb admonishes us to walk uprightly in our several stations before God and man. The people of Israel had sinned and in spite of the warnings of Amos, they had not reentered the fold. God made it very plain that each man must try himself by the unerring standard of the plumb line. The plumb line is the symbol of uprightness of character, of [integrity](http://www.theeducator.ca/philosophy/integrity/), of honest and fair dealings among persons. To plumb one’s life and actions is to test them by the eternal laws to God.
In all these tests, the people of Israel had failed. That’s why He said,
“*I will set a plumb line in the midst of my people Israel.”*

So it is with Freemasonry.
The real worth of a Mason can never be measured in the opinion of his fellows
or in the Masonic honors he has attained. The standard by which a Mason must be judged is by his own evaluation of his conduct and by the principles which he knows to be the unerring and unchanging ones.

What can a Freemason expect to get from Freemasonry?
The rewards of Freemasonry and the wages of Masons are endless, so long as a man is willing to strive for them. If he is content to be a “button Mason,” paying his dues merely for the privilege of wearing a pin, this is just what he will get out of Masonry.
If he is content to be a “knife-and-fork Mason,” showing up at his lodge only when there is some type of banquet, he will receive only this from Masonry. If, however, he measures himself by the plumb, and sets his standards accordingly, he will benefit from Masonic education, Masonic philosophy and from the association with the finest men in his community.

The standard by which a man judges himself as a Mason is the same unerring principle
by which he judges himself as a family man, as a business-man, and as a citizen. He will learn to walk uprightly in all his endeavors, learning from the plumb the lesson of rectitude of conduct. Each man must stand by the plumb line which is set in the midst of God’s people.

Comment

I have heard this piece of Ritual many, many times and wondered why the wording was so weird. At first I thought it meant that the Israelites were the chosen people, however, that still did not explain the wording. This paper quite correctly points out that the opposite was the case & they were to be held to account for their actions. Very well written & explained.

Have a wonderful day & God Bless Norm

**Word Scrambler:**

*October Scrambled Word is: RRCIMIBSDCCUE*

*September Scrambled Word is:* EENCINME – eminence solved by Pat Zech

*August Scrambled Word was: ECREFCMRNEUCI –* circumference solved by Pat Zech.

*Decrypt:*  *JOHN WAYNE solved by Pat Zech*

***October Masonic History:***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| October 1 | On this date in 1928, the Philalethes Society was organized. |
| October 5 | On this date in 1874, the Grand Lodge of Oklahoma (Indian Territory) was formed |
| October 11 | On this date in 1911, Franklin D. Roosevelt (U.S. President 1933-1945) received his 1st degree in Holland Lodge #8, New York City. |
| October 13 | On this date in 1778, the Grand Lodge of Virginia was organized |
| October 14 | On this date in 1989, the Grand Lodge of Connecticut recognized the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Connecticut. This was the first U.S. recognition of Prince Hall Masonry that remained in force, and led to similar actions by more than 2/3 of all U.S. Grand Lodges. |
| October 15 | On this date in 1794, the Grand Lodge of Vermont was organized |
| October 16 | On this date in 1800, the Grand Lodge of Kentucky was established |
| October 20 | On this date in 1953, the Grand Lodge of the State of Israel was constituted |
| October 30 | On this date in 1937, Lyndon B. Johnson (U.S. President 1963-1969) received his 1st degree in Texas. |

**Members Birthdays** **DOB** **Masonic**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Eric | Allan | Miller |  | 10/6/1965 | 3/23/1987 |
| William | Rolland | Ruenger |  | 10/7/1949 | 11/26/1984 |
| Wael | Wahid | El-Gamal |  | 10/3/1970 | 5/31/2016 |
| Harold | Frederick | Walton |  | 10/14/1932 | 10/20/1980 |
| Harold | Wayne | Butler |  | 10/5/1923 | 4/16/1962 |
| Raymond | Phillip | Cohen |  | 10/6/1947 | 7/29/2004 |
| Shayn | Alan | Sukta |  | 10/3/1978 | 5/21/2012 |
| Gilbert | Arnold | Schlierer |  | 10/7/1942 | 7/19/2010 |
| Michael | Allan | Brewer |  | 10/29/1956 | 11/16/1987 |

**Officers for 2022**

Worshipful Master--Joseph Felix Senior Warden--Josh Sticht Junior Warden--Matt Hedrick PM

Secretary--David Brown PM Treasurer--Pat Zech PM Chaplain—Henry Spomer PM

Sr. Deacon—Carl Warren Jr. Deacon—Tyler Rivas Tyler—Sam Talvy

Sr. Steward—Thomas Christopherson Jr. Steward—Joe Santisteban PM Marshall--- Stephen Lamb

1 yr. Trustee--Jeff Horton PM 2 yr. Trustee--Jim Wild PM 3 yr. Trustee--Gordon Beatty

May Brotherly Love Prevail,

Joseph Felix, WM Matt Hedrick, PM JW

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Pictures of events of President W.F. Taft (All from wikipedia.org)

 Sultan Jamalul Kiram II w/Taft of the Philippine Commission in Jolo, Sulu (March 27, 1901)

 Roosevelt introduces Taft as his crown prince: Puck magazine cover cartoon, 1906.

 1909 inauguration

 1909 Puck magazine cover: Roosevelt departs, entrusting his policies to Taft

 Newton McConnell cartoon showing Canadian suspicions that Taft and others were only interested in Canada when prosperous.

 Taft and Porfirio Díaz, Ciudad Juárez, Mexico, 1909

 Taft with Archibald Butt (second from right), his military aide.

 Taft and Roosevelt – political enemies in 1912. This split of friendship cost Taft a second term as President

 Taft (left) with President Warren G. Harding and Robert Lincoln at the dedication of the Lincoln Memorial, May 30, 1922

 Chief Justice Taft, c. 1921

 The U.S. Supreme Court in 1925. Taft is seated in the bottom row, middle.

 Taft's boyhood home in Cincinnati