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Peace

on

Earth!

Happy Holidays

To

ALL

HAPPY NEW YEAR

FROM THE

MLR STAFF

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MLR RP 11-05
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FLORIDA COURT SETS ATHEIST HOLY DAY

In Florida, an atheist created a case against the upcoming Easter and Passover Holy days. He hired an attorney to bring a discrimination case against Christians and Jews and observances of their holy days. The argument was that it was unfair that atheists had no such recognized days.

The case was brought before a judge. After listening to the passionate presentation by the lawyer, the judge banged his gavel declaring, "Case dismissed!"

The lawyer immediately stood objecting to the ruling saying, "Your honor, How can you possibly dismiss this case? The Christians have Christmas, Easter and others. The Jews have Passover, Yom Kippur and Hanukkah, yet my client and all other atheists have no such holidays. "

The judge leaned forward in his chair saying, "But you do. Your client, counsel, is woefully ignorant."

The lawyer said, "Your Honor, we are unaware of any special observance or holiday for atheists ... "

The judge said, "The calendar says April 1st is April Fools Day. Psalm 14:1 states, "The fool says in his heart, there is no God." Thus, it is the opinion of this court, that, if your client says there is no God, then he is a fool. Therefore, April 1st is his day. Court is adjourned."

(Above reprinted from September 2011 SCRL newsltr)

If Within the Length of My Cabletow

“The Accountable Mason”

By Archie Nimmer, III, PHA

(A rough ashlar in progress...)

Introduction

One of the first questions we are asked to answer in our Masonic journey is, what came you here to do? To learn to subdue my passions and improve myself in Masonry is the learned answer that should reference all who come into the order of their own free will and accord. Then upon swearing an oath in various degrees, we as Masons all recite with our hand upon the holy book of law, “all this I most solemnly and sincerely swear” with the certainty of penalty if we violate our obligations. However, do we understand that taking an oath and obligation and placing it's actions within the length of our cabletows is simply adding the burden of accountability to the candidate, Fellowcraft, Brother, Companion, Sir Knight, Sublime Prince, and/or Noble. So, are you an accountable Mason?

Accountability is the concept in ethics and governance with several meanings. It is often used synonymously with such concepts as responsibility, [1] answerability, blameworthiness, liability, and other terms associated with the expectation of account-giving. As an aspect of governance, it has been central to discussions related to problems in the public sector, nonprofit and private (corporate) worlds. In leadership roles,[2] accountability is the acknowledgment and assumption of responsibility for actions, products, decisions, and policies including the administration, governance, and implementation within the scope of the role or employment position and encompassing the obligation to report, explain and be answerable for resulting consequences. As Masons, we are to be better men and in a sense, by design, leaders of men through moral and ethical practices that brought us from darkness and into a world of illuminated understanding. So an accountable Mason is a Mason who acknowledges and assumes responsibility for actions, decisions and policies and practices including the administration of Masonic governance (within his lodge, chapter, commandery, temple, etc...), and the implementation within the scope of the role of every brothers Masonic position and encompassing the obligation to be answerable for the resulting consequences of any

brothers actions and the outcome of his order. In short, if you were in the room when decisions are made; if you are within the room when words are spoken; if you were in the room when actions were taken; then you are accountable for the outcome unless you did ALL you could (within the length of your cabletow) to prevent harm to a brother, the defamation of his character, or the creation of the disruption of harmony within your Masonic body.

Now, to paint a more vivid picture for you, consider the following excerpt from “The 85% Solution, by Linda Galindo”. You’re lying on your stomach on a cold, metal gurney in an operating room, woozy from the anesthesia that will in just a few moments, render you unable to speak or feel or react. Four others are in the room, too: The orthopedic surgeon who will repair the errant disk in your back; the anesthesiologist who is monitoring your reaction to the medicine she just gave you; a circulating nurse who will watch out for your safety; and a scrub nurse who will pass sterile instruments to the doctor. Through your haze you hear the two nurses arguing. One is chiding the other because she thinks the scalpels and clamps on the sterile tray have not been sufficiently cleaned. “Mind your business,” the scrub nurse retorts. “I know how to do my job.” The circulating nurse takes her worries to the anesthesiologist. “Leave me out of it”, the anesthesiologist tells her. “That’s not my responsibility”. So the nurse turns to the surgeon, but before she can speak, he snaps to the bickering group, “Quiet! It’s time to start!” As you lose consciousness, the scrub nurse hands a scalpel to the doctor, who uses it to cut your back. Which of those four professionals is responsible for the safety of the scalpel? Suppose you wake up from the surgery with a painful infection from the cut. Now who do you think is responsible?

Which member of the surgical team will you hold accountable? Perhaps each of the four is one-quarter responsible for your infection. Sound good? Next time you need surgery, will it be good enough to know that each person participating in a procedure that involves cutting your skin, touching your organs, or removing a diseased body part is willing to take one-quarter of the responsibility for making sure you don’t die on the table? The same is true for your

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lodge, Chapter, Commandery, Temple, Brother, Companion, Noble, etc... When your charter is pulled, your ability to vote removed, or your lodge is not prospering...were you in the room? Are you an accountable Mason?

As a Mason, one understands that the foundation is the most important part of the development and existence of any edifice. So as a Mason, our foundation is the 1st three degrees of Masonry and in these degrees lies the foundation of our understanding and roadmap of accountability. In these degrees, we are initiated Entered Apprentice, passed to the degree of Fellowcraft and raised to the sublime degree of Master Mason. In accordance, we are given our tools of accountability in self management, duties to another brother, and responsibility to the morals of the world around us.

Accountable Entered Apprentice

So let's begin with the entered apprentice's accountability. As a now declared Master Mason, what truly are your passions and are you working diligently to subdue them. As a Master Mason, are you free of alcoholism, womanizing, bigotry, lying, politics, poor moral character, envy, and /or defaming another brother? The effort to find such a Mason, would be as difficult a task as that undertaken by Diogenes. However, the attempt to be accountable is what must be sought after and reflects the work in subduing those passions. As a Master Mason, have you ever found yourself in lodge meeting and been involved in a discussion about who will be in the chair next? Have you ever disobeyed an order of the worshipful master and created lengthy discussion in the lodge? How accurate are you in executing the rituals of opening and closing your lodge and setting examples for newly raised sublime Master Masons? How many times has a brother been in distress and could not rely on the same Masonic members for support that leaves the lodge only to head to the nearest lounge or pub for refreshment? And with the same, a brother coming before the altar and declaring need that is actually not there? Is there trust and faith in your lodge within the length of your cabletow? Are you an accountable Mason? As a Mason, are you prepared to truly list your passions and create a personal action plan with corrective actions and due dates?

An Entered Apprentice Mason is taught to divide

his time in order to equally contribute to the fulfillment of himself mentally and physically, the world around him by being a practitioner of morality. How much time each day do you set aside to exercise the body physically? Many of the illnesses we suffer on a daily basis are because we do not take the time to perform preventive maintenance on our temples. How about your mind? Do you take, if only a moment, to glance at some Masonic information daily to ensure you constantly strive to be a better man and Master Mason? Every Master Mason should challenge himself to identify which actions he takes daily and under which division of the 24" inch gauge that action resides.

Accountable Fellowcraft

As a Fellowcraft Mason, the accountability begins with the "furthermores". If you do not understand this concept, you may want to refer back to your obligation as a Fellowcraft as this encompasses the bulk of your accountability. At this stage of development, a Fellowcraft is taught about responsibility to his lodge and fellows. A Fellowcraft swears to respond to all lodge communications, especially those making a specific request of him. A Fellowcraft swears to support his brother and not defoul, denounce or sabotage any of his activities or efforts to improve himself. This also applies to one lodge not supporting the efforts of another lodge and attempt to prevent their prosperity due to the competition of materialistic gain. It is in this degree that the question could be raised that if we are truly Fellowcrafts, why would we not all work and labor under the same lights of one lodge in an individual city or township. However, we are not able to work together or eliminate our personal interest and become no different than the proverbial church on every corner. As an accountable Fellowcraft, do you support your brothers of all lodges fundraisers, programs and activities?

As a Fellowcraft and a true Master Mason, do you wrought in the quarry of life on a daily basis? How do you present your work for inspection? As a Fellowcraft, what actions are you taking to improve the Masonic order in which you are an obligated member. On several occasions, brothers look to other lodges and compare to their own. However, the work in quarry helps provide the items needed to build a

Continued Page 4

grand edifice to be proud of. The work in quarry ensures that brothers are proficient in their work. The work in the quarry acts as a viable attraction to draw others to participate and seek membership in which strength lies. An accountable Fellowcraft is one who does all he can to improve the overall condition of Masonry and is a beacon of morality that acts as a guide for the world to see. So as an accountable Fellowcraft, do you take the time to observe who is observing you? Are you conscious of your appearance when you step out of your vehicle adorned with emblems throughout? Can you explain to an uninitiated person the purpose and background of every emblem you display in order to provide proper education? Are you truly accountable? If you are accountable, you have no problem submitting your work for inspection but not by the SW but by the Grand Architect of the Universe. I would truly hate to be at that apartment and be declared an "Imposter".

Accountable Master Mason

What is a master? A Master as defined by Webster is one having authority over another; a worker or artisan qualified to teach apprentices or a presiding officer in an institution or a society. All these definitions can apply to our craft and as well have applicable parallels to accountability as a Mason. Therefore one could say a Master Mason is a Mason who is a worker or artisan qualified to teach apprentices and who has authority over and presides over the institution of Masonry...not just a lodge, but an institution of Masonry. A Master Mason is first accountable for all the obligations of the preceding degrees and must have the understanding of these obligations that he may teach and guide a brother of a lesser degree in these obligations. Along with this level of accountability also comes the additional responsibility of not harming a brother mentally or physically and the sworn protection and respect of the family of another brother and places himself in such regard that he could be held accountable for the well being of that family. Are you accountable enough to be in the presence of your brothers, daughter, niece, wife, and significant other without the allure of advancement or the mental weakness of desire or comment? Can you look past the superficial beauty or attraction to only see those of whom you should preside over in the presence of your brother? Are you accountable enough to be held accountable for the life of your brother as long as yours is not at risk? We as

Master Masons are accountable for ensuring that Brothers are not only breathing but doing so in good manner. When we see Brothers performing acts that may place their lives in danger or that may be endangering their eternal life, do we step forward? For it would be a far greater disgrace to allow a brother to perform an act that would condemn him to eternal damnation. If an Entered Apprentice Mason is the foundation, then the Fellowcraft is the frame and the Master Mason must be the bricks and cement that is spread with the trowel that completes and solidifies the temple. Without walls, all under the protection of the house would surely fall to the winds of storms and drown in the rains of despair. There would be no shelter from the heat of immorality and the cold of those living in darkness. As a Master Mason, are you accountable on a daily basis in all that you do to ensure that the institution of Free Masonry is practiced according to the laws and edicts as stated in lodge guidelines, by-laws and landmarks?

Closing

So, as you walk upright and approach the east in all your regalia and honor, are you accountable for the outcome of your institution of Masonry? Do we as Masons truly practice craft Masonry as it was conceptualized in the lower levels of King Solomon's Temple? Does the state of free Masonry in your lodge, district, state, and country reflect the state of your leadership and accountability? As a Master Mason, when you see lodges not able to perform their duties, when you see brothers not proficient and not upholding their obligations, when you see brothers not taking proper care of themselves and conducting themselves as prescribed in the closing of your lodge, when you hear the negative comments of crabs pulling the craft back into the barrel, when you find envy in other lodges but complaints of your own...ask yourself, were you or are you in the room. Are you an accountable Master Mason?

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Heard on an Airplane

'Your seat cushions can be used for flotation, and, in the event of an emergency water landing, please paddle to shore and take them with our compliments. '

LOVE THOSE MASONIC USED WORDS

D E T A R C E S N O C T N E S
 E R V E N E R A B L E N D U E
 T E E I C O P P R E S S S N T
 A P R V R I I T S E V I D F A
 L R T E E T F T L O D G E E I
 E E E E F R N I C Z E A L I L
 S H X M E O E O D I U B U G I
 S E E H E R R N C E D L G N C
 E N V A O R C M T E N E E E N
 T D N L I R I S A I N O N D O
 E W O L L A T D I T A S R E C
 N I C E T Y M E I D I L U P B
 E M U L A T I O N A R O D R A
 T P I O U S U S T E N A N C E
 S E G A M O H Y P O C R I S Y

ALLOW	ENDUE	REFORMATION
ARDOR	EXHORT	REPREHEND
BENEDICTION	HALL	REVERENTIAL
CENSURE	HOMAGE	SENT
CONCILIATES	HYPOCRISY	SUSTENANCE
CONSECRATED	LODGE	TENETS
CONTRIVE	MERIDIAN	TESSELATED
CONVEX	NICETY	UNFEIGNED
DELUGE	OPPRESS	VENERABLE
DISCREET	PIOUS	VERTEX
DIVEST	PRONE	ZEAL
EDIFICE		
EMULATION		

RULES FOR PLAY:

You must **circle each of the letters individually** in each of the state capitol names listed above. Then check off or line out the city/state found in the list. **Do NOT BLACK or BLOT out** the letters in the puzzle as each letter may be used in a different city name also. When all the words have been lined through, you should then have the 7 letters left which have not been circled. Write down **these letters only**, from upper left to lower right and this will spell out the word. You have heard the word many times. Do you know what it means?? Why not look it up in a dictionary or on-line just to be sure.

Oh, by the way. The answer to our last puzzle was: **STANTON T BROWN II**

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RP 11-05

A Reminder

Back in the days of World War II, M.W. Brother and President Harry S. Truman made a national appeal to get 10 cents per Mason per year to help support this charitable work, that goal was never accomplished. If we were fortunate enough to receive 10 cents per member today we would be able to expand our program to include all 172 V.A. Medical Centers and all State Veterans Homes.

Every community in the nation would hear about this benevolent work and our Fraternity would benefit from it. We would erase the false impression that the Masonic Fraternity is a secret organization only interested in itself.

The M.S.A. Hospital Visitation Program is wholly supported by the voluntary contributions of Masons and Masonic bodies. Your tax deductible contribution to this great Masonic benevolent effort is earnestly solicited, greatly appreciated and is a true indication that "Masons Care" for the welfare of our hospitalized veterans.

Please make checks payable to "MASONIC SERVICE ASSOCIATION" and mail them to:

THE MASONIC SERVICE ASSOCIATION
HOSPITAL VISITATION PROGRAM
8120 FENTON ST
SILVER SPRING MD 20997-1001

Contributions to M.S.A. are tax deductible and will be acknowledged.