



Volume XIV, Issue 1

Spring 2026



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# The Virginia Light - Orient of Virginia



## Sovereign Grand Inspector General

### Orient of Virginia

Illustrious Alan W. Adkins, 33° GC

My Brethren,



The Scottish Rite Spring Workshop will be held on Saturday, March 28 at Acca Shrine Center. Phil Shortt, 32 KCCH, Director of Development for the Supreme Council, will be the featured speaker. We will receive reports from the Conference President, the Vice-Presidents and the Scottish Rite Foundation. In addition, the Valley of Danville will be providing details on their plans for the Scottish Rite Conference of Virginia scheduled for September 27-29 at the Caesars Casino Virginia in Danville. Lunch will be provided following the workshop. Please make plans to attend.

Phil Shortt, 32° KCCH

As Chairman of the Supreme Council Membership Services Committee, I will be unable to attend the Workshop due to my participation in the Rite Works Conference held in Dallas, Texas the same weekend. The Orient Personal Representative, Illustrious and Most Worshipful Clifford A. "Skip" Parker, 33°, will be presiding in my absence.

Recently, I sent an email to the Orient Personal Representative, Valley Personal Representatives, Assistant Personal Representatives, and Valley General Secretaries advising them of the due date for their Fiduciary Report and their Almoners Report.

I have received some preliminary membership statistics for the Orient of Virginia. The report revealed a 117 decrease in members or -2.98%. Excluding deaths, the Orient experienced a .99% positive change. There were 86 initiates which ranked well when compared to larger Orients. Currently, the Orient has 3,778 members. More details will be shared at the Workshop.

A good friend of mine, Joseph R. Conway, Past Grand Master and Past Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of Kentucky, likes to tell this story about the concept of **"integrity."**

Pulling into my service station 45 minutes late one morning, I shouted to the customers, **"I'll turn the pumps on right away!"** What I didn't know was that the night crew has left them on all night. But by the time I got to the office, most of the cars had filled up and driven off.

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Deadline for next issue:

Summer	May 1
Fall	August 1
Winter	November 1
Spring	February 1

# Sovereign Grand Inspector General Message

Only one customer stayed to pay. My heart sank. Then the customer pulled a wad of cash from his pocket and handed it to me. **“We kept passing the money to the last guy, he said. “We figured you’d show up sooner or later.”**

This story epitomizes what we as Master Masons and Scottish Rite Masons do each and every day. That is, doing what’s right with each other and our fellow man.

“Leadership is the art of getting someone else to do something that you want done because he wants to do it.”

*Dwight D. Eisenhower*



# Integrity

## Dates to Save

**March 17** Saint Patrick's Day

**March 20** Spring Equinox

**March 28** Scottish Rite Workshop in Richmond, all are welcome to attend.

**April 3** Easter Sunday

**June 10** Scottish Rite Day, Longwood University

**September 27 thru 29** Virginia Scottish Rite Conference at Caesar’s Casino in Danville, Virginia.

# A Lifelong Partnership with Purpose:

The Tidewater Scottish Rite and ODU's School of Speech-Language Pathology

Erica H. Howell



**Illustrious Alan Adkins presents check to Dr. Stacie Raymer.**

For more than three decades, the Tidewater Scottish Rite Foundation has played a transformative role in the success of Old Dominion University's School of Speech-Language Pathology. Their long-standing support has helped open doors for future clinicians and ensure access to critical care for clients with speech and language disorders.

On June 4, representatives from the Tidewater Scottish Rite visited the new health sciences building. Greeted by Bonnie Van Lunen, Ph.D., Dean of the Ellmer College of Health Sciences, the group toured state-of-the-art facilities including the Anatomage lab and the Activities of

Daily Living (ADL) apartment - spaces that provide hands-on learning and interdisciplinary collaboration opportunities for students and faculty. Eric Schussler, Ph.D., associate professor in the School of Rehabilitation Sciences, led the tour, which also highlighted community-engaged research and the clinics' innovative approach to care.

The visit concluded with a check presentation from Mr. Alan Adkins, Scottish Rite Sovereign Grand Inspector General of Virginia, for \$42,000, funding six additional scholarships for students in the Master of Science in Speech-Language Pathology program for the 2025–2026 academic year. This gift brings the Scottish Rite's total scholarship support to nearly \$1 million, with total contributions to the program exceeding \$1.4 million.

Since 1992, the Tidewater Scottish Rite Foundation has supported the ODU Speech and Hearing Clinic through the RiteCare® Childhood Language Program, enabling therapy for children with speech and language disorders. This includes a summer therapy program and therapy scholarships for families who would otherwise not be able to access services.

The Foundation's commitment—financial, personal, and enduring—continues to shape the future of speech-language pathology in the Hampton Roads region and beyond. Their involvement reflects not only a dedication to education and clinical care, but a heartfelt investment in the success of students and the well-being of patients.



Since 1992, the Tidewater Scottish Rite Foundation has supported the ODU Speech and Hearing Clinic through the RiteCare® Childhood Language Program, enabling therapy for children with speech and language disorders.

# Be Resolute

Maxium Ixxii

Bad execution of your designs does less harm than irresolution in forming them. Streams do less harm flowing than when dammed up. There are some men so infirm of purpose that they always require direction from others, and this not on account of any perplexity, for they judge clearly, but from sheer incapacity for action. It needs some skill to find out difficulties, but more to find a way out of them. There are others who are never in straits: their clear judgment and determined character fit them for the highest callings: their intelligence tells them where to insert the thin end of the wedge, their resolution how to drive it home. They soon get through anything: as soon as they have done with one sphere of action, they are ready for another. Affianced to fortune, they make themselves sure of success.

Balthasar Gracian *Worldly Art of Wisdom*

This guide examines the principles of leadership and decisiveness as outlined in the excerpt "Be Resolute" from *The Architect of Action*. The text explores the psychological and practical differences between those who are incapacitated by indecision and those who possess the clarity and determination to succeed in any sphere of action.

## Questions and Answers

1. **According to the text, why is bad execution preferable to irresolution?** Bad execution of a design is considered less harmful than the state of irresolution when forming those designs. The text suggests that the failure to act or decide causes more damage than a plan that is carried out poorly.
2. **How does the author use the metaphor of a stream to illustrate the danger of inaction?** The author compares human action to a stream, noting that flowing water does less harm than water that is dammed up. This metaphor suggests that movement and progress are natural and safe, while blocking action creates a build-up of potential harm.
3. **What characterizes the "infirm of purpose" individuals mentioned in the text?** These individuals are characterized by a "sheer incapacity for action," which forces them to constantly seek direction from others. Despite their inability to act, they may still possess the ability to judge situations clearly.
4. **Is a lack of action in "infirm" men caused by a lack of intelligence or poor judgment?** No, the text explicitly states that their hesitation does not stem from perplexity or poor judgment, as they often "judge clearly." Instead, their failure is a result of a fundamental inability to translate that judgment into action.

**The Lesson:** Scottish Rite is resolved in its purpose.



# Exploring the Hidden Meaning of the Letter G

Brother Brian Walaszczyk

In the center of Freemasonry's most well-known symbol, the square and compasses, sits a peculiar letter, the English G. In addition to being the centerpiece of the square and compasses, the G holds a position in the East of the Lodge where it radiates above the Worshipful Master. Early in our Masonic journey, we are told it represents God and Geometry. However, like many allegories and symbols found in Freemasonry, this letter may have a deeper, more esoteric meaning. A great deal of Masonic study is dedicated to the investigation into the origin and development of the symbols and allegories of the Craft, including the words, rituals, and legends. Applying the same methodology, it is logical to explore the source and ancient meanings of the letter G. This paper will identify the letter's origin and reveal several symbolic interpretations that are not found in any lecture or oral tradition of the Craft.

## The Origin of the English G

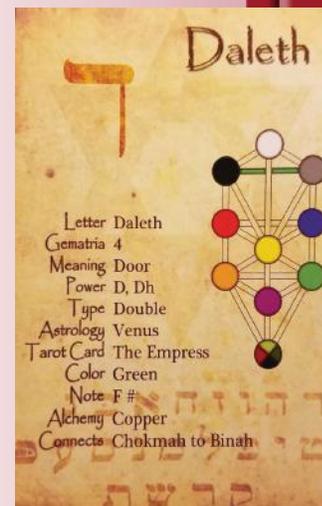
The English G evolved from the third letter of the Hebrew alphabet, gimel ג (also written as gimmel). Not only is G the third letter of the Hebrew alphabet, but it is also the third letter in other Semitic alphabets, including the Phoenician gml. According to the Encyclopedia Britannica, the G developed from the letter C from Byblos and other Phoenician and Canaanite centers. It was originally called gimal or gaml and the Greeks changed the name to gamma. The Romans took this letter into Latin, which was eventually developed into the English G (The Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica, 2020).

## Hebrew and Freemasonry

Knowing the G evolved from Hebrew, the next step in identifying whether its ancient origin is connected and important to Freemasonry is to see if there are any indications that Hebrew is important in the Craft outside of Hebrew speaking countries. Part of the Grand Lodge of England's second degree tracing board lecture states, "after our ancient Brethren had gained the summit of the winding staircase, they passed into the middle chamber of the temple where their attention was directed to certain Hebrew characters which are depicted in a Fellowcraft Lodge by the letter G, denoting God, the Grand Geometrician of the Universe to whom we must all submit and whom we ought to humbly adore" (Dwor, 2020). These characters possibly elude to the four-letter name of God. The fact that the G is connected to Hebrew letters poses the question, should we examine the Hebrew origin of the letter G?

There are other indications that the Hebrew language is particularly important in understanding Freemasonry's symbolism. In fact, the most important words associated with the Craft are Hebrew such as those associated with the Entered Apprentice and Fellowcraft degrees. Additionally, the "high degrees" of Freemasonry, particularly the Scottish Rite, have

One instance is the raising of the compasses above the square. This transition of the compasses is symbolic of a Mason subduing his materialistic animal passions and desires and rising to a more spiritual nature. Pike writes, "the compasses, which are a fit symbol of the heavens, are also a fit symbol of all that is heavenly and spiritual; the square which is a fit symbol of the earth is also a fit symbol of all that is earthly and material, in nature and man"

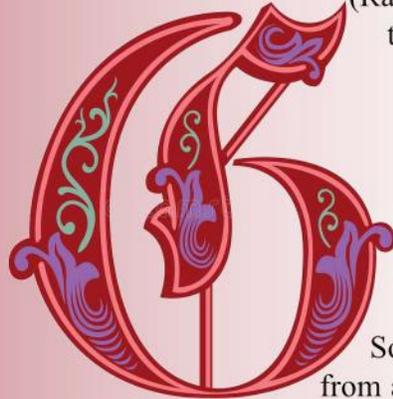


# Exploring the Hidden Meaning of the Letter G

According to the Hasidic Jewish organization Chabad, “the letter gimmel represents the benefactor or the giver of charity. The design of the letter gimmel is explained in the Talmud as a rich man running to give charity to a poor person”

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Another interpretation of gimmel is its Aramaic translation, gamla, which means bridge. This symbolism is connected to tzeda-kah, which is an extension of charity that relates to justice and doing the right thing. This meaning of charity stipulates that you have an obligation to help others. Rather than just providing a single thing, you build a bridge, or connection, to nourish others and the world so they may have a lasting benefit. As Rabbi Aaron L. Raskin notes on Chabad.org, “this is the concept of gimmel, the blending of disparate elements into a harmonious whole. Just as the gimmel signifies the connection between the poor and the wealthy person, so does it represent the merger, the bridge, between the material world and the reality of G-d” (Raskin, 2020). We find the importance of long-lasting charity in Freemasonry. As Albert Pike famously stated, “what we do for ourselves dies with us. What we do for others, and the world remains and is immortal” (Arturo De Hoyos, 2013).



Furthermore, gimmel represents the benefactor or giver of charity (Raskin, 2020). Therefore, in addition to associating charity with the individual Mason, we can associate gimmel with God, who is the ultimate giver of charity. Therefore, G is a virtuous symbol of God’s beneficence and indeed represents God as is explained early in one’s Masonic journey.

## Gimmel and the Door to the Lodge

The idea of gimmel representing a rich man approaching the poor to provide charity can be further developed. According to Soferut, the Jewish scribal arts of the Torah, gimmel is formed from a zayin and a yod, which symbolizes a sword and hand and is a picture of grace (Parsons, 2020). With this extra symbolism, we may now visualize a rich man, or Mason, who approaches a poor man, or candidate, with a sword and an open hand. He greets the poor man at the door or dalet, which is the next letter in the Hebrew alphabet. Dalet’s full meaning “is the door through which the humble enter into the realization of God’s dwelling place below” and the “doorway to truth” (Imry GalEinai , 2020).

As a candidate, we approach the temple door poor, blind, and destitute looking for light, which could be interpreted as truth. After knocking three times, we are received by the Lodge in a particular manner. We are then given an open hand that guides us until we are brought to light in Masonry. As we progress through the degrees, we become rich with more light and later provide the same charity and brotherly love to others. Therefore, the door of the Lodge is truly the doorway to light and truth. This truth, and its importance, is made even more prominent in the degrees of the Royal Arch, Knights Templar, and Scottish Rite.

## Gimmel and The Checkered Pavement



## Exploring the Hidden Meaning of the Letter G

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lessons that focus on the importance of the Hebrew language and the Kabbalah. Kabbalah is a form of mysticism that includes the belief that the Hebrew language has a divine origin, and creation takes place through the 22 Hebrew letters. In *Morals and Dogma*, Albert Pike writes that “the Holy Kabbalah [sic], or tradition of the children of Seth, was carried from Chaldea by Abraham, taught to the Egyptian priesthood by Joseph, recovered and purified by Moses, concealed under symbols in the Bible, revealed by the Savior to Saint John, and contained, entire, under hieratic figures analogous to those of all antiquity, in the Apocalypse of that Apostle.” Pike goes so far to state Kabbalah is “...is the key of the occult sciences...” and that “Masonry is a search after Light. That search leads us directly back, as you see, to the Kabbalah [sic]” (Arturo De Hoyos, 2013).

Hebrew and Kabbalah’s connection with Freemasonry leads to a logical examination of the letter G’s origin and symbolism. However, as a disclaimer, while Kabbalah was important to Pike, he did not associate the letter G with its Hebrew origin. Specifically, he wrote that the letter G in American Lodges was a substitute for the letter Yod and stood for God “with little reason” (Arturo De Hoyos, 2013). Although Pike did not associate the letter with any deep esoteric meaning, Masons are free to have their own interpretations of the allegories and symbolism of the Craft, and we can find a wealth of relatable symbolism in the Hebrew origin of this letter. Additionally, Pike may not have realized or put in writing this association, and it is entirely possible that the Brother who added the letter to American Lodges understood from whence it came and the ancient meanings it carried.

### Gimel and Charity

In order to understand the meaning of gimel, it is important to recognize a difference between the Hebrew and English languages. Hebrew letters are not used solely for linguistics. They are assigned special meanings and numerical values. In order to gain the deepest meaning of gimel, its esoteric symbolism will be investigated.

According to the Hasidic Jewish organization Chabad, “the letter gimmel represents the benefactor or the giver of charity. The design of the letter gimmel is explained in the Talmud as a rich man running to give charity to a poor person” (Ginsburgh, 2020). Freemasonry is rich in teachings of charity, and therefore the letter G is a perfect representation of this primary tenet. Masons are active in many social charities. The man’s richness does not necessarily have to be of material wealth; it may be interpreted as being full of wisdom and love. In fact, when we consider a candidate for initiation, it is the internal, not the external, qualities that we examine. This may be interpreted as a rich man representing a Mason full of knowledge, love, and compassion. Charity and brotherly love are not only provided to other Brethren, but to all mankind. This charity comes in many shapes and forms, including friendship, guidance, forgiveness, and an endless list of other caring and chivalric acts.

The English G evolved from the third letter of the Hebrew alphabet, gimel ג (also written as gimmel. Not only is G the third letter of the Hebrew alphabet, but it is also the third letter in other Semitic alphabets, including the Phoenician gṢml.

## Exploring the Hidden Meaning of the Letter G

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Chabad explains another meaning of the gimel noting, “gimel is derived from the word gemul,” which in Hebrew means the giving of reward as well as the giving of punishment (Ginsburgh, 2020). Here we find a concept of freewill and the Mason’s journey from youth to old age whereby he must choose between right and wrong. This duality is symbolized by the checkered pavement, emblematic of human life composed of good and evil. Chabad notes, “In Torah, both reward and punishment have the same ultimate aim: the rectification of the soul to merit to receive God’s light to the fullest extent” (Ginsburgh, 2020). Masonry’s goal is to come to light from darkness.

### Gimel and the Raising of a Master Mason

Gimel is also said to represent a camel or “something benefited or lifted up like a camel rising from his knees” (The Ancient Hebrew Alphabet, 2020). As we progress through the degrees, we see many instances of the concept of being raised. One instance is the raising of the compasses above the square. This transition of the compasses is symbolic of a Mason subduing his materialistic animal passions and desires and rising to a more spiritual nature. Pike writes, “the compasses, which are a fit symbol of the heavens, are also a fit symbol of all that is heavenly and spiritual; the square which is a fit symbol of the earth is also a fit symbol of all that is earthly and material, in nature and man” (Arturo De Hoyos, 2013). Therefore, placing the G in the middle of the square and compasses is an appropriate symbol to denote the transition of the Mason progressing through Masonry by overcoming his animal desires as symbolized with the compasses’ arms rising above the square. This may also be seen in the ritual of a Master Mason where a Master Mason raised to this sublime degree.

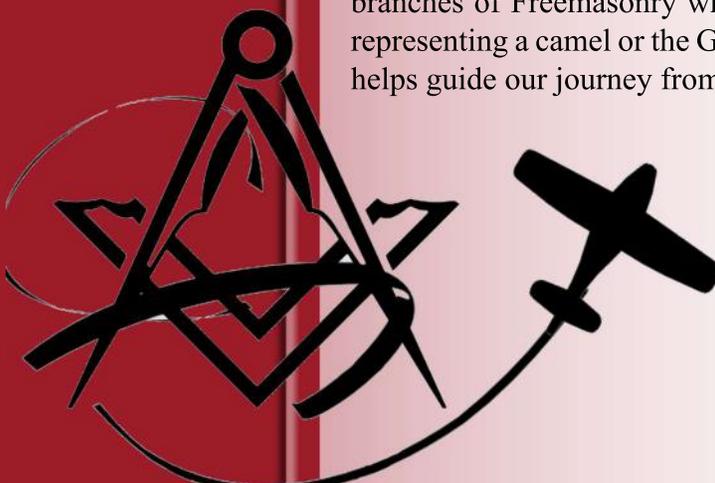
### Gimel and a Traveler

The camel also symbolizes a journey and can symbolize the mason as a traveler. A camel can sustain itself and help a sojourner on long trips. We find many instances within the many branches of Freemasonry where a candidate must sojourn. In this instance, we find the G representing a camel or the Grand Architect of the Universe, whom we put our faith and who helps guide our journey from East to West.

### Gimel and Saint John the Baptist

Another thought-provoking association between Freemasonry and the camel is seen in one of the Craft’s patron saints, Saint John the Baptist, who wore a garment made of camel’s hair and a leather girdle about his loins. When this symbolism is explored it uncovers a fascinating

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## Exploring the Hidden Meaning of the Letter G

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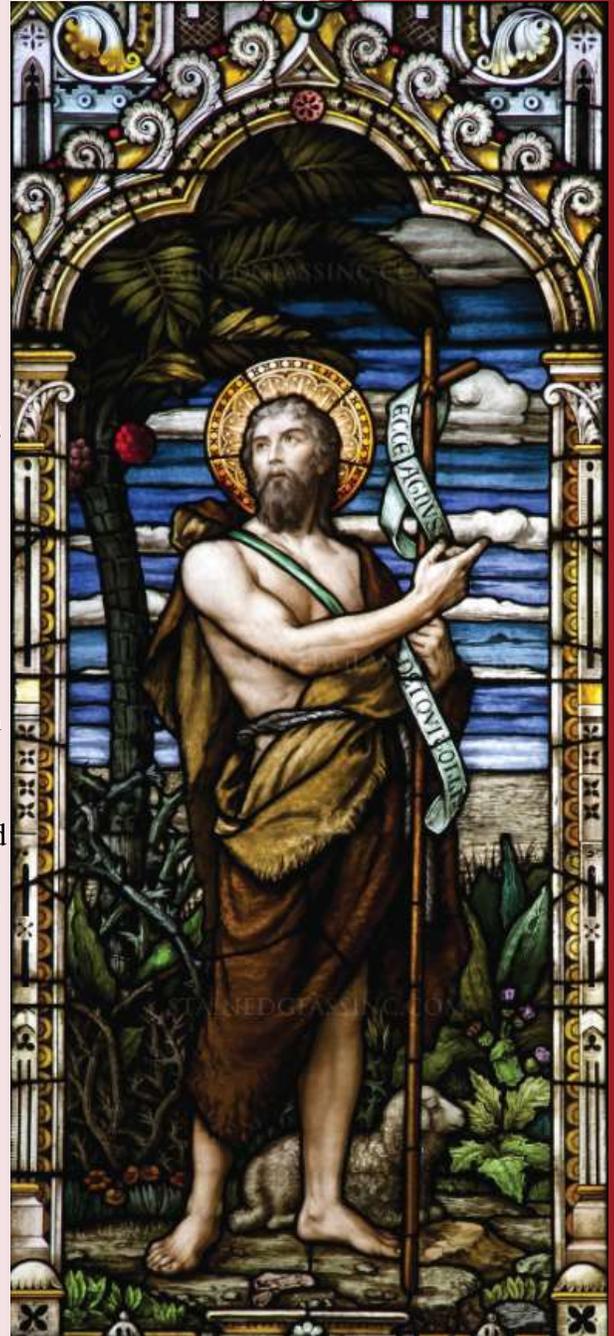
association with Saint John the Baptist and the Prophet Elijah. At Saint John the Baptist's birth it was announced, "and he will turn many of the sons of Israel to the Lord their God, and he will go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready for the Lord a people prepared" (Luke 1:16–17). In 1 Kings we discover Elijah essentially wore the same clothing as John the Baptist, "[Elijah] wore a garment of haircloth, with a girdle of leather about his loins" (2 Kings 1:8) (Barber, 2020).

When we explore the meaning of the name Elijah, we find that it means "my God is YAHWEH [YHVH]" (Smyth, 2020). YHVH, known as the tetragrammaton, is an important name in Freemasonry. As previously explained, this name may represent the Hebrew letters that the Fellowcraft sees when he enters the middle chamber, thus representing God and the letter G. The tetragrammaton is a particularly important concept in the Royal Arch and Scottish Rite.

Another interesting similarity to freemasonry is that Elijah has a leather girdle about his loins as did John the Baptist. Masons famously wear their leather apron in the same location. Lastly, and possibly one of the most profound associations, is the fact that Elijah was the first prophet to raise the dead. Coincidentally, the boy Elijah brought back to life was a widow's son in the town of Zarephath in Phoenicia, whom he raised through the word of God. Elijah stretched himself above the boy three times and cried to God for the boy's life to return. This is very reminiscent for those familiar with the manner Hiram Abiff was raised from the dead. Following the widow's son's restoration to life, she yelled "the word of the Lord in your mouth is truth" (1 Kings 17:24). Zarephath means a workshop for smelting metal. Thus, we find an interesting association with the widow's son and metal work, which loosely ties the raising of the widow's son to that well-known artificer in brass and other metals.

### Gimel and The Number Three

Another technique that Kabbalists use to unveil esoteric secrets of letters is Gematria, which is an alphanumeric code assigned to a name, word, phrase, or letter. The alpha numeric code assigned to



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## Exploring the Hidden Meaning of the Letter G

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gimel is three. As we know, three is an important number in freemasonry and is symbolized in many ways. As we previously noted, a candidate who wishes admittance into our Craft gives three knocks on the door. Other examples of the number three include the three principle officers who represent our three grand masters, the three degrees one must progress through to be raised to the sublime degree of master mason, the three great lights represented by three lesser lights, and many more.



The number three has long been a mystical and religious number. "In the Fourth Century B.C. Aristotle wrote: 'All things are three, and thrice is all: and let us use this number in the worship of the gods; for, as the Pythagoreans say, everything and all things are bounded by threes, for the end, the middle and the beginning have this number in everything, and these compose the number of the Trinity'" (United Church of God, 2020). Many religions utilized triads in their symbolism such as the father, son, and holy spirit; omnipotent, omnipresent, and omniscient; Osiris, Isis, and Horus; Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva; and Hermes Trismegistus.

### Gimel and the Triangle

Three may be symbolized in different ways, but one of the most important and archetypal ways is the triangle. Pike notes, "in geometry, a line cannot represent a body absolutely perfect. As little do two lines constitute a figure demonstratively perfect. But three lines form, by their junction, the triangle, or the first figure regularly perfect; and this is why it has served and still serves to characterize The Eternal; Who, infinitely perfect in His nature, is, as Universal Creator, the first Being, and consequently the first Perfection" (Arturo De Hoyos, 2013). In this sense, the letter G is a geometric representation of God.



The 47th problem of Euclid, known as the Pythagorean theorem, is a Masonic symbol. This theorem states that in any right triangle, the sum of the squares of the two sides is equal to the square of the hypotenuse. There is a lot that can be spoke of this symbol, but we will leave it at the fact that it deals with a triangle, which was sacred to the Pythagoreans.

In some of the "high degrees", the G is replaced by a triangle and a Yod and its symbolism is even more prevalent. The triangle is even present on the 14th and 33rd degree rings of the Scottish Rite. A triangle represents balance, perfection, and unity, and this balance is an important teaching in Freemasonry and Kabbalah. In Royal Arch Masonry, the Triangle and number three are prominent numbers Royal Arch companions will recognize.

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## Exploring the Hidden Meaning of the Letter G

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R. Yehudah Loew (the Maharal of Prague) explains that the power of the number three is its ability to combine two contrasting forces—to bring about integration (Raskin, 2020). The transition of the compasses rising from beneath the square symbolizes our ability to master our cardinal virtues of temperance, fortitude, prudence, and justice in subduing our passions and desires. The great key to this mastery is balance and equilibrium. In this sense, the G resting in between the square and compasses becomes the great symbol of balancing our contrasting animal passions and spiritual desires, good and evil, the checkered pavement. It may also represent the union of God and man through the holy spirit.

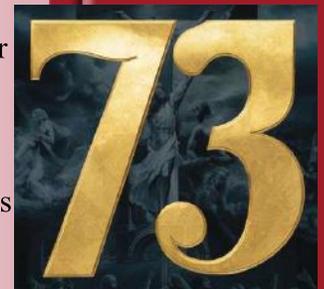
### Gimel and the Three Great Lights

The Talmud says that the number three represents the Torah (Raskin, 2020). With the G representing the Torah, or Bible, we find the volume of sacred law as a rule and guide of our Faith to follow in finding balance during our travels from youth to old age. Thus, we have the three great lights of Masonry represented by the square, compasses, and holy bible or volume of sacred law. These three great lights are proudly displayed in the Craft's most well-known symbol and is presented as a reminder to all Masons of the importance of balancing their spiritual and animal passions and desires through the word of God.



### Gimel and Wisdom

In gematria, when two words have the same numerical value, they are believed to be related. Using gematria, we can compare the value of gimel with the value of wisdom, or Chokmah. Chokmah has a gematric value of seventy-three, which is the same as gimel. Since gimel is related to Chokmah, it is a symbol of the pillar of wisdom in the East of the Lodge. Breaking down seventy-three, we find a seven and a three, which added together equal ten, which is the number of the ten emanations from God, or sefirot, and is symbolic of perfection.



### Gimel and the Square

As previously noted, the Greeks changed the gimel into the gamma (Γ). The Gamma has the appearance of a carpenter's square. Even more intriguing are the images of the early versions of the gamma. Specifically, looking at inscriptions of the letter from Crete dated approximately 800 B.C., we find the gamma appearing almost identical to the Mason's square (Λ) (Greek language, 2020). When associating this symbol with the modern G, we find the jewel of the Worshipful Master suspended in the air in the east of the Lodge.



# Exploring the Hidden Meaning of the Letter G

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## Summary

Given the importance of Hebrew in Freemasonry, it is a logical to explore the G's ancient symbolism. The letter has an amazing amount of similarities with the Craft. In fact, the letter G reflects the heart of Freemasonry beginning with the candidates three knocks on the temple door. We appropriately find the letter suspended in the East symbolizing the Worshipful Master's jewel and the pillar of Wisdom. We find the key concepts of charity, freewill, and subduing our passions and receiving light in Masonry. Its position in the center of the square and compasses reflects the transition of the Mason from the material to the spiritual and completes the symbology of the three great lights. Thus, we have the perfect triad of the square, compasses, and letter G to represent our Craft.

It is amazing what we may learn by contemplating a single letter. Whether the person who brought the letter G to Freemasonry understood its vast symbolism is unknown. However, this single letter represents many essential concepts within the Craft if one has the eyes to see. As always, every Mason is free to his own interpretation of the Craft's vast treasure trove of symbols and allegories. What other hidden meanings will you find with the letter G and Freemasonry?

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It is amazing what we may learn by contemplating a single letter. Whether the person who brought the letter G to Freemasonry understood its vast symbolism is unknown. However, this single letter represents many essential concepts within the Craft if one has the eyes to see.

# Terrestrial Hierarchy

Illustrious Christopher Winston Douglas, 33°

Grand Orator's part:

"The altar is the center by which we represent the Celestial Hierarchy and the nine members of the Supreme Council as originally constituted, and as some Supreme Councils are still constituted, symbolize that Terrestrial or Earthly Hierarchy which seeks to seize and hold the rays of Divine Truth emanating from its counterpart on the other side of Being and diffuse them among their fellow men, thus promoting their happiness and welfare."

So why nine? If we take this ritual at face value, each Supreme Council was originally founded with nine members, to reflect the nine ranks of the Angelic Hierarchy. Each rank has a tie to each member of the Supreme Council. So, what is so significant about the number nine? Numerology is the branch of knowledge that deals with the occult significance of numbers. We see many examples of numerology throughout Freemasonry.

Let's play with numerology a little. Take a number we are all familiar with, 33. There are thirty-three members of our Supreme Council today. Of course, the 33rd is the final degree in Scottish Rite. So we all know without being told, 33 divides evenly into 3. But if you add the digits 3 and 3 together, you get 6. Six divides evenly into 3, which means 33 is also divisible by 3. There are over 625,000 Scottish Rite Masons in the Southern Jurisdiction, according to one source. So, for the

sake of discussion, let's say that is correct and there are exactly 625,983 of us. Then we add those digits together, and get 33. Again, add those digits together, and we get 6, which divides into three. Any number, if you add the digits together, you can tell if it is divisible by three.

Now, let us go back to nine. If you take all the numbers from 1 to 9 and add them together, it is 45. Forty-five divides evenly into nine. If you add the digits 4 and 5, you get nine. Back to our Scottish Rite Masons in the Southern Jurisdiction. You began reading this, three new Brothers have received their degrees, so there are now total 625,986. We add those digits together, and we get 36. Again, add those digits together, and we get 9. Thus, the original number is divisible by nine. If you simply add the digits together, you can tell if it is divisible by three and also if it is divisible by nine.

What other instances do we have of the number nine?

Continued on page 15.

Let us play some games, there are nine squares in tic-tac-toe

There are nine players on a baseball team who play nine innings

There are nine rooms in the game of Clue

In Sudoku there are nine squares of nine, and you fill them in using the nine digits (sorry, zero)

# Terrestrial Hierarchy

Continued from page 14.

$$1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + 5 + 6 + 7 + 8 + 9 = 45$$

$$45 / 9 = 5$$

$$4 + 5 = 9$$

$$625,000$$

$$625,986 \Rightarrow 6 + 2 + 5 + 9 + 8 + 6 = 36$$

$$36 \Rightarrow 3 + 6 = 9$$

- There are nine Planets
- Nine Muses
- Nine Daughters of Zeus
- Nine Circles of Hell
- Nine Reindeer including Rudolph
- There are nine members in the

Fellowship of the Ring and nine Nazgul hunting them down

- Let us play some games, there are nine squares in tic-tac-toe
- There are nine players on a baseball team who play nine innings
- There are nine rooms in the game of Clue
- In Sudoku there are nine squares of nine, and you fill them in using the nine digits (sorry, zero)
- A popular version of billiards is nine ball
- When you play golf, you play eighteen holes, the front nine, and the back nine
- When we as Masons do something, we give it the whole nine yards
- Counting Alice, there are nine members of the Brady Bunch
- There are nine Justices on the Supreme Court
- Having a baby takes nine months
- Speaking of the ninth month, September has nine letters
- A cat has nine lives
- Gautama Buddha was thought to have nine virtues in Buddhism
- Just being here, attending this conference, you are on cloud nine and at the banquet, you will be dressed to the nines
- If you are keeping score, I just gave you twenty-seven examples of nine, and twenty-seven divides equally into nine

Continued on page 16.

Let's play with numerology a little. Take a number we are all familiar with, 33. There are thirty-three members of our Supreme Council today. Of course, the 33rd is the final degree in Scottish Rite..

# Terrestrial Hierarchy

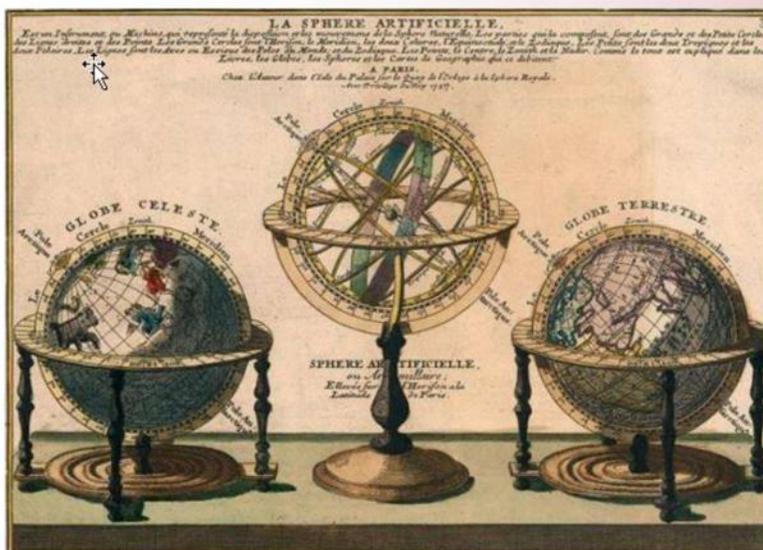
Continued from page 13.

Returning to the ritual passage, it says, "and as some Supreme Councils are still constituted". This made me ask the question, "How many of our Supreme Councils still have nine members?" There are seventy-nine regular Supreme Councils throughout the world, including the Southern Jurisdiction. Of those I could determine, ten of them have nine members, twelve have between 10 and 32 members, and ten have 33 members. It appears the ritual is correct, many of our Supreme Councils began with nine members, and a few have added more as time goes on.

Something worth noting, we speak of both the Angelic, or Celestial Hierarchy, and the Mundane, or Terrestrial Hierarchy. Both contain the number nine, and both are directly connected to each other by the Divine Current. But there is another place in our Masonic ritual where we speak of Celestial and Terrestrial: The Senior Deacon's Lecture from the Fellowcraft's Degree. The candidate's attention is drawn to the two columns or pillars within the outer porch of King Solomon's Temple. Surmounting both are two globes, representing the Global Celestial, and the Globe Terrestrial, which the candidate is informed are there to represent Masonry Universal.

You note in this illustration we have the Global Celestial on the left, which reflects the stars and constellations visible in the night sky. We have the Globe Terrestrial on the right, which reflects the seas and continents of Earth, which we all saw in school at some point. In the middle is an astrolabe, which is a versatile, ancient astronomical instrument used to measure the positions of celestial objects, determine time, and calculate latitude. There is not any mention of the astrolabe in any Masonic reference. That seems a pity, this wonderful device deserves to consideration as an honorary working tool.

## The Globes Celestial and Terrestrial



You note in this illustration we have the Global Celestial on the left, which reflects the stars and constellations visible in the night sky. We have the Globe Terrestrial on the right, which reflects the seas and continents of Earth, which we all saw in school at some point. In the middle is an astrolabe, which is a versatile, ancient astronomical instrument used to measure the positions of celestial objects, determine time, and calculate latitude.

# The Scottish Rite Research Society



Certain faculties of man are directed toward the Unknown thought, meditation, prayer. The unknown is an ocean, of which conscience is the compass. Thought, meditation, and prayer are the great mysterious pointings of the needle. It is a spiritual magnetism that thus connects the human soul with the Deity. These majestic irradiations of the soul pierce through the shadow toward the light.

Arturo de Hoyos,  
Ed., Albert Pike's  
Morals and  
Dogma.  
(Washington D.C.:  
The Supreme  
Council, 2011), 77

The benefits of membership in the Scottish Rite Research Society are many. Some are intangibles, such as the potential for interaction and discussions with the brightest minds in contemporary Masonic philosophy and debate. The most important benefit is the availability of what we all came here for, which is more light in Masonry. This is manifest most particularly in SRRS publications and Masonic conferences.

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- A 10% discount on Society books and certain items bought at the House of the Temple or via the on-line Store
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- The Society's quarterly research journal, The Plumblin®
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# The Twenty-fifth Degree “Knight of the Brazen Serpent”

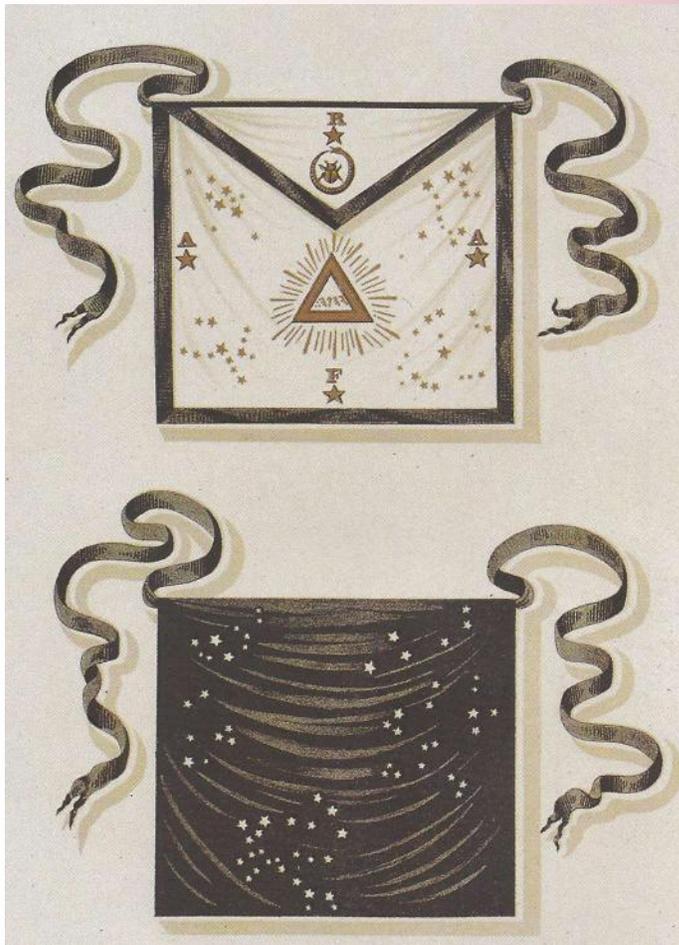
## Summary

This degree teaches the virtue of hospitality. One who shows hospitality to guests is obliged not to differentiate race, nationality or religion from whoever knocks at his door. The nature of Masonry is to heal those who are in distress from moral collapses, psychological crises, diseases by superstitions and ignorance. To save our fellows from these, to break the chains which represent moral slavery, to set men free, to be faithful and kind in every respect is the compulsory thing to do. We fulfill our destiny by re-creating ourselves, by enlarging our knowledge.

**DUTIES:**  
Fulfill your destiny and re-create yourself by reformation, repentance and enlarging your knowledge.

**FOR REFLECTION:**  
Is it possible to find your way to heaven alone?

**IMPORTANT SYMBOLS:**  
Sun, moon, brazen serpent, Pythagorean right triangle.



The apron is white, lined and edged with black; the white side spotted with golden stars, and the black side with silver ones. Those on the white side represent, by their positions and distances, the Pleiades, the Hyades, Orion and Capella. Those on the black side represent the stars of Perseus, Scorpio, and Ursa Major. In the middle of the white side is a triangle in a glory, in the center of which is the name of Deity in Phoenician characters. On the flap is a serpent in a circle, with his tail in his mouth; and in the circle so formed a scarab, or beetle. Over this is a star of gold, with the letter ‘R’ (for Regulus) over it; on the right side of the apron another, with the letter ‘A’ over it; and at the bottom of the apron another, with the letter ‘F’ over it. These last three letters have the same meaning as on the order explained next.

# The Twenty-fifth Degree “Knight of the Brazen Serpent”



Continued from page 18



The jewel is a Tau cross, of gold, surmounted by a circle - the Crux Ansata of Egypt - round which a serpent is entwined. On the upright part of the cross is engraved the Hebrew word meaning 'he has suffered' or 'been wounded', and on the arms the Hebrew word given in the Bible for the brazen serpent, 'Nakhustan'.

The order is a crimson ribbon, on which are embroidered the words, one under the other: OSIRIS, AHURA, OSARSIPH, MOSES. Under them a bull, with a disk, surmounted by a crescent between his horns. This is worn from left to right; and across it, from right to left, is worn a broad, white, watered ribbon, on which are the words ISIS and CERES over a dog's head and a crescent. On the right breast, on the left breast, and at the crossing of these orders is a star of gold. Under that on the right breast is the letter 'A' (for Antares); and under that, at the crossing of the orders, the letter 'F' (for Formalhaut).

On the crimson cordon is the word GEBURAH (valor) in Hebrew; and on the white, the Hebrew word AUN (force or strength). Together they mean the generative power and the productive power of nature.



Continued on page 20

# The Twenty-fifth Degree

## “Knight of the Brazen Serpent”

### Lessons of the Degree

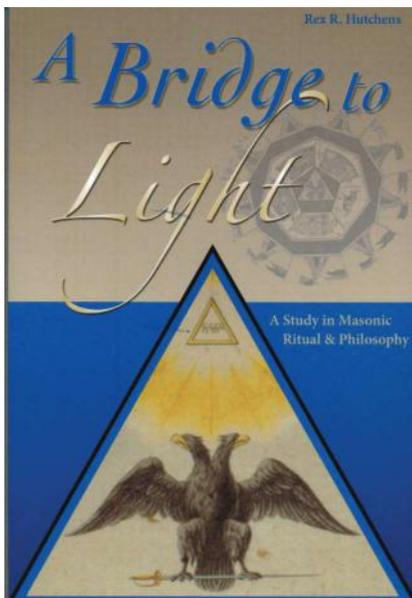
“Man is composed of the flesh, the soul and the intellect. Man is a reflection of the Divine. Do not weary God with petitions.”

Continued from page 19

“Islam, or Mohammedanism as Pike calls it, has been one of the major religions in the world for over eleven centuries. In this degree, some Islamic doctrine is presented through the re-creation of initiation into the elite group among the Druse, a quasi-Islamic religious sect living in the Lebanon area; we encountered the Druse previously in the 22nd Degree, Prince of Libanus.

The Druse are particularly known for secrecy and silence regarding their religious beliefs. Their vows of secrecy are so effective that very little is factually known of their beliefs. Any search for such an understanding is inhibited by the Druse practice of assuming the beliefs of the religion of their surroundings for the purpose of concealing their own doctrines; however, it is believed the Druse religious system is basically Islamic intermingled with Gnostic, Christian and Hebrew doctrine.

Pike radically changed this degree in his reworking of the old ritual of the Rite. The character in the old ritual were Hebrew, that is, Moses, Aaron, Joshua and the candidate, a traveler. In Pike’s version, the presiding officer is called Hakam, meaning wise or ‘skilled’ in Arabic, and the candidate represents an Ismaeli (a member of one of the major sects of Islam) in the area around Lebanon during the reign of Sayeed Abdullah, Great Emir of the Druses in 1450 A.D.. The candidate seeks initiation into the Druse system that he might become an Akal, a disciple of the Order of Truth. By 1450 the Druse and Ismaeli were clearly independent Islamic sects. Although it is believed the Druse do not recognize conversion to their faith, this may not have been known by Pike when he wrote the degree. In any event, history provides the general legend for the degree and Pike provides the details. In both cases, the emphasis is on the religion of Islam.” (Hutchens, pp.214-215)



#### A Bridge to Light

Dr. Rex R. Hutchens, 33°, G.C.

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