

NEW!

Golden State College

February 2024

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Special points of interest:

- Grand Council Grand Session on May 17th, 2024
- Grand Commandery Grand Session on May 18th, 2024
- Grand Chapter Grand Session on May 20th, 2024
- Golden State College Annual Convocation on May 26th, at 2:00 PM
- SRICF High Council Annual Meeting on November 15-16th, 2024 in Louisville, KY

From The Editor

It is with great pleasure and excitement that we bring forth the latest edition of our newsletter, marking a significant milestone for our Golden State College. As we reflect on our journey, we remember the anticipation and enthusiasm that surrounded the publication of our inaugural newsletter back in 2018. It was a moment filled with hope and promise, an eagerness to share knowledge, insights, and stories amongst ourselves.

While the initial fervor short lived with no other publication over the years, the spirit of our college remained steadfast. Last year, our Advisory Council deliberated on the best course of action to ensure that our newsletter continues to serve as a vital conduit for communication and inspiration. After careful consideration, it was decided that an annual publication schedule, with each issue released in February, would best align with our goals and resources. This decision was not made lightly, but with the collective vision of fostering a stronger sense of unity and engagement among our members.

In our pursuit of enlightenment and scholarly discourse, we

From The Celebrant, VW Bud Ramsey, VII^o

Worthy Fratres,

We are finally beginning to “get back to normal” in our ability to meet and have our membership present at our meetings. I encourage those of you who haven’t been really active to attend, participate, and get back to all that being a member of this Order has to offer.

We have hosted many presenters and they have provided insights in areas that we may not have even thought about, enabled us to learn, allowed us to ask questions, and have expanded

have also embarked on an exciting new initiative - the Philologi Societas. This esteemed inner order, designed by Right Worthy Frater Bruce Renner, IX^o, KGC, the Junior Deputy Supreme Magus, is dedicated to honoring the pursuit of knowledge and the art of writing. Through this recognition program, we seek to stimulate a culture of research and inquiry, encouraging our members to delve deeper into the mysteries of our craft and share their insights with the wider community.

We'll not only celebrate individual achievements but also inspire others to engage in meaningful discourse and contribute to the intellectual richness of our College.

As you peruse the pages of this edition, you will find more information about the Philologi Societas and we encourage you to immerse yourself in the wealth of knowledge and insights shared within these pages. From thought-provoking papers to insightful articles, each piece represents a testament to the passion and dedication of our fellow scholars. It is through their collective efforts



Philologi Societas

that we continue to enrich and enliven our tradition, forging ever onward in the pursuit of intellectual growth.

Indeed, this newsletter signifies a major step forward for our Golden State College. It is a symbol of our commitment to excellence, innovation, and the enduring spirit of fellowship that binds us together. As we embark on this new chapter, let us carry forth the torch

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our horizons. Our meetings also provide us with the opportunity to look into subjects that we care about and give us the opportunity to share with the rest of our membership in the form of a paper, an article, or a presentation. If you're prepared to do a presentation, let me know. Don't let days that you feel unmotivated or incapable of doing this, keep you from stepping up to the plate.

Although a little motivation makes it easier to get things done, you have the power with-

in yourself to develop and harness the necessary energy to push past delays or frustration and achieve something that will help and be of interest to others. And in doing so, you'll find that you have also made a difference in your own life. You'll feel better about yourself and will recognize that you have value (and you will show others that as well).

By letting something such as inconvenience or embarrassment in others prevent you

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(From The Celebrant.... Continued from Page 1)

from taking an opportunity to write a paper, you do yourself an injustice. So how do you make this happen? By picking a topic that is of interest to you, you can stir up enough enthusiasm within yourself for moving forward. Tap into this inner drive and you'll find yourself making impressive progress each day.

Most of us find, when faced with a task we're not confident about completing, that looking forward to taking pleasure in the outcome of our success makes it easier to push on. Take a little time out to form a mental image that depicts success and real-

ize how it can improve your life down the road. It is easy for long-term and short-term goals in the distance seeming to be too daunting to face. Break the project into bite-sized pieces so you can tackle one "bite" at a time to make it easier to accomplish your task.

It also helps to take a break now and then so you can stay focused. Tackle one task at a time otherwise trying too much at once can cost you motivation. Also, rewarding yourself for progress can go a long way in keeping your motivation up and giving you energy to

complete the task. Feeling good about what you have achieved will make it that much easier to continue moving forward. Be sure to celebrate your success whether big or small./.

Degree Structure:

First Order
Grade I – Zelator
Grade II – Theoricus
Grade III – Practicus
Grade IV – Philosophus

Second Order
Grade V – Adeptus Minor
Grade VI – Adeptus Major
Grade VII – Adeptus Exemptus

Third Order
Grade VIII – Magister



Grade IX – Magus



KGC – Knight Grand Crosses are awarded to IX grade Magi for exemplary effort in the work of the Society & Rosicrucianism in general.



Are you Familiar With The Masonic Blue Slipper? by David Kampschafer, IV^o

It is a small lapel pin in the shape of a blue slipper.

To find out the meaning of this pin, let us go back in history to Boaz's time from the Book of Ruth. It will be remembered that Elimelech, his wife, Naomi, and their two sons, Mahlon and Chilon, fled to the land of Moab to escape the famine in their homeland of Bethlehem-Judah. Things went well for a while. Then life fell apart for them. Elimelech died. The two sons married Moabite girls - Orpha and Ruth. Yet again tragedy struck. Mahlon and Chilon died. This left Naomi a widow in a foreign land with two widowed daughters-in-law from the land of Moab.

In times of trouble, people think of home and more importantly of God. Naomi found out that the famine back home had subsided, and there was grain and food again. So, she confided with Orpha and Ruth that she would journey back home and be among her kinsmen. Certain laws, rules, or customs governed her thinking at this time. Of first consideration was the fact that Naomi was too old to bear a son for her daughters-in-law to marry. Even if she could, the daughters-in-law would not wait for the son to

grow up. So, the girls should remain among their own people. The girls resisted and started to go with Naomi. Orpha was finally convinced she should stay in Moab. But Ruth remained steadfast and went with Naomi to her homeland. Naomi and Ruth arrived back in Bethlehem-Judah at harvest time. Naomi also had to take into consideration another law.

When Elimelech died, his next of kin was duty-bound to redeem his possessions and take care of his widow and her family. Since Naomi was getting old, Ruth tried to earn a livelihood. While gleaning in the fields, she was seen by Boaz. And when he found out about her (that she was Naomi's daughter-in-law, etc.), he arranged special treatment for her. She could work with his girls in the field, and the young men were warned not to bother her.

Since Boaz was not married and was kin to Naomi, Naomi decided that she should somehow make Boaz understand his duty to Elimelech's family. So, Naomi advised Ruth to bathe and anoint herself and go to the threshing floor after dark and lay at the feet of Boaz. Boaz awoke at midnight and discovered her there. So as not to create a scandal, he gave her some barley and asked her to leave before dawn so that

watching eyes would not recognize her would not wait discovered her there. So as not to create a scandal, he gave her some barley and asked her to leave before dawn so that watching eyes would not recognize her.

Business among the tribe of Bethlehem-Judah took place at the gate of the city. So Boaz sat down at the gate the next day because he knew there was a kinsman more closely related to Elimelech than he. So when the kinsman came by, Boaz called him aside and asked ten men of the elders of the city to sit with them. Boaz bargained with his kinsman. The kinsman said he would redeem Elimelech's property. But, when he found out that he would have to take care of Naomi and Ruth, he reneged and told Boaz he would not redeem or protect Elimelech's interest. He would leave it to Boaz. The passage from Scripture for these events is the following:

"And the kinsman said, I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I mar mine own inheritance: redeem thou my right to thyself; for I cannot redeem it. Now this was the manner in former time in Israel concerning redeeming and concerning changing, for to confirm all things; a man plucked off his shoe, and gave it to his neigh-

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"...this was the manner in former time in Israel concerning redeeming and concerning changing, for to confirm all things; a man plucked off his shoe, and gave it to his neighbor: and this was a testimony in Israel".





OFFICERS JULY 2023 to JUNE 2024

Chief Adept	Ara Maloyan, IX ^o , KGC
Celebrant	Howard Ramsey, VII ^o
Exponent	Brandon Dueñas, VII ^o
Treasurer	Phil Hardiman, IX ^o
Secretary	Joseph Dongo, IX ^o
1st Ancient	Michael McKeown, VII ^o
2nd Ancient	Patrick Muldoon, VI ^o
3rd Ancient	Isaac Dikeocha, VI ^o
4th Ancient	Thomas Pryor, VI ^o
Conductor	Jonathan Prestage, VII ^o
Herald	Carl Brickner, IV ^o
Torch Bearer	Thomas Ellison, VI ^o
Acolyte	Bob Strohmeyer, V ^o
Prelate	Richard Fonseca, IV ^o
Web./Lib.	Patrick G. Bailey, IX ^o

Members meet on Sundays in February (4th), May(4th), August (4th), and November (3rd) At 2:30 PM



During February and August:
At the Los Altos Lodge No. 712
Masonic Temple
146 Main Street, Los Altos, CA
94022-2905



And in May and November
At the Woodland Lodge No. 81
Masonic Temple
228 Palm Ave, Woodland, CA
95695



Los Altos Masonic Lodge No. 712

(Are You Familiar With The Masonic Blue Slipper?.... Continued from Page 2)

bor: and this was a testimony in Israel.”

So the kinsman drew off his shoe and gave it to Boaz. Boaz held it up for all in the gate to see. He asked them to be witnesses that he became Naomi's protector, Ruth's husband, and a redeemer of Elimelech's property. Thus, today we have the little blue slipper as an emblem of the protective influence of Masons for their wives, widows, and daughters./.

(From the Editor Continued from Page 1)

of knowledge with renewed vigor and enthusiasm, knowing that our collective endeavors will illuminate the Rosicrucian path of our shared knowledge and camaraderie—and uphold the timeless principles of Freemasonry./.

The Wolfgang Lochner Files

Report By RW Patrick Bailey, IX^o

As you may know, our dear Frater Wolfgang passed on June 21, 2023. He will be missed. Over the years, Wolfgang collected many files on his computer's OneDrive, and he allowed the sharing of those files with myself and only a few other Masons.

After his passing, I became very worried about what was going to happen to all of these files in the coming weeks, because at some point in the near future, those files will all disappear. So, I downloaded them all over 4 days to my hard drive. There are over 10,000 files taking up over 130 GB.

I would like to share what files were found in the Rosicrucian area folder (49 GB) with our college members by storing those files on a 64 GB USB drive. Each drive takes about 5 hours to create.

A summary description of these files, and a complete listing of the file names in an Excel file, can be found on our Public Papers webpage, dated August 30, 2023, with the titles:

“The Wolfgang Lochner Memorial Library – Report by Patrick Bailey” and “Rosicrucian 49.1 GB - Wolfgang Lochner TOC-Excel File by Patrick Bailey”

The best way for members to obtain these Rosicrucian area files (49 GB) is to email me your request. The cost is \$20 each. I can then bring a drive to you at the next meeting, or I can mail one to your address wrapped in heavy aluminum foil.

Thank you Wolfgang!./.



“..... our collective endeavors will illuminate the Rosicrucian path of our shared knowledge and camaraderie—and uphold the timeless principles of Freemasonry”



Fountain of Truth by RW Ed Fentum, IX°

In somnambulant meditation I sat on the Masonic Home Outlook bench that scans a broad landscape of urban homes, parks, trees, fields, the bay and distant hills. The sunset swathed the deep blue sky from a vibrant crimson to a dark rose hue. The pale downy clouds with radiant fringes flowed over the rolling hills. In the distance, the glint of San Francisco Bay was like a silver knife-edge bisecting the plains from the distant hills.

I became aware, that beside me sat, my very good Masonic brother, Lorenzo Matson. Lorenzo is a veteran of the Korean War where he served in the Navy as a young seaman and then later in the Vietnam war as a heroic Navy Seal. He claims ancestry to one of the Ohlone tribes that inhabited this area and were prominent fishermen. His genealogical research suggests his name sounded similar to Mutsun that over time became Matson. His father's Lodge in San Francisco is where he became a Mason and like me, he is a resident in the Masonic Home.

"Didn't hear your knocks!" I quipped. 'What brings you out this beautiful evening?'

"Saw you sitting here and wanted to ask you a question or two." He replied.

"Make it one and maybe I can find an answer."

"I walked past the fountain on the patio near the auditorium where are written the three Masonic tenets of Freemasonry, Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth and it got me thinking again about truth in light of what I had just experienced." He stated.

"What happened?" I asked.

"Freemasons are exposed to Brotherly Love through osmosis in the fraternal context of the Lodge and its' activities. Relief is ever present in the charitable works we support within the Lodge, in the community and through the auspices of the Grand

Lodge of California that includes the Masonic Homes, Outreach services, scholarships and more. Truth, I understand, is expressed in many ways through our ritual and in our obligation where we assume an oath upon the Holy Testament. I was with a brother when we saw a road accident. We reported it to the Police to find our written reports differed. What he saw and what I saw was almost contradictory'.

"So, I asked myself. What is Truth?"

"A good summation of the Masonic tenets of Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth together with a thought-provoking question. You have opened a door that has given thinkers, religious leaders, philosophers and lawyers endless discussion, argument and introspection. This is where we enter the door of metaphysics." I responded.

"Let's kick the door open." He quipped in a jocular voice. I stamped my foot on the wooden floor of the outlook.

"Let me warn you that I have a paper seventeen pages long that would take over two hours to read, spent several years writing it and the past few years trying to understand it and agree with what I had written! So, I will keep it simple."

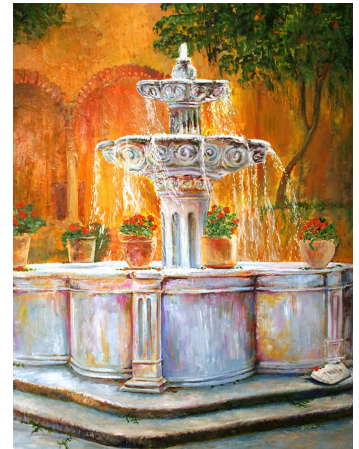
"Let us start with Freemasonry. Truth is for each of us to acknowledge and discover both on a personal and social level. Its application enhances a Mason's life and differentiates him from those who do not hold the same values. The handshake is an example of a Mason giving his word and an indication that his word is, in truth, his bond and word of honour. That is one reason, I prefer to shake a Masonic Brother's hand rather than embrace! The application of Masonic principles, the symbolism and esotericism contained with-

in the rituals and practices of Freemasonry sets many standards that follow a moral ethical code in helping us towards the goal of self-improvement. We never stop learning and exploring truth. Let me quote: *This above all: to thine own self be true, and it must follow, as the night the day, thou canst not then be false to any man". Shakespeare

"Sounds reasonable." He remarked emphatically. "So where do we go from here?"

"Now comes the fun part. So, pin back your ears and listen carefully. Plato states that knowledge is essential to discern truth from fiction. In his allegorical concept of the "Cave" where shadows are only visible to the onlookers, he shows that knowledge based upon images or perception do not necessarily appertain to truth. Plato also emphasises that knowledge is based upon a changeless and eternal order of forms. However, the source of that knowledge has to be established. That brings us to Socrates who implies that "higher levels" of truth and knowledge are attained through natural science, mathematics, logic and geometry.' 'Don't agree.' responded Lorenzo. "Truth is truth so how can there be a higher level?"

"Bertrand Russell states that the use of words can be misunderstood, misinterpreted or misapplied. So, "higher level" can be a misnomer. As we sit here, I view the sunset and describe the colours but what would someone who is colour blind understand from what I have described?' 'You just stated your experience with an accident that both you and your friend observed. What he saw was the truth to him and what you saw was the truth to you but what neither of you saw or had knowledge of, that may have caused the accident, could be the truth!



Fountain of Truth by Alan Schwartz

"Truth is for each of us to acknowledge and discover both on a personal and social level. Its application enhances a Mason's life and differentiates him from those who do not hold the same values"



"It may well happen that what is in itself the more certain on account of the weakness of our intelligence, which is dazzled by the clearest objects of nature; as the owl is dazzled by the light of the sun. Hence the fact that some happen to doubt about articles of faith is not due to the uncertain nature of the truths, but to the weakness of human intelligence; yet the slenderest knowledge that may be obtained of the highest things is more desirable than the most certain knowledge obtained of lesser things."

~THOMAS AQUINAS

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(Fountain Of Truth.... Continued from Page 4)

So, truth and knowledge (epistemology) are compatible and inter-dependent and are multidimensional process of discovery."

"So! How would you describe truth?"

Looking into the fast-disappearing sunset, I said. "Truth can be categorized in many different, abstruse ways so let's keep it simple under these headings: Comprehensive, Cohesive and Pragmatic theories of truth. Note I said 'theories', that word raises many issues, discussions and suppositions! Truth incorporates fact, knowledge, experience, senses, perception, belief, reality, mathematics, science and faith in part or in various degrees of application.

Lorenzo looked bewildered. "That makes no sense. We speak of the 'simple truth' so how can it be so encompassing." He quipped in a disbelieving tone.

"To add further to your confusion Aristotle defines truth as "To say of what is that it is not, or of what is not that it is, is false, while to say of what is that it is, and of what is not that it is not, is true" It is not clear whether Aristotle was acknowledging a correspondence theory of truth in mind, space or time or something more like a deflationary theory."

"So, that is a start, but if I try to explain it fully, we will be here until dawn! Do we have all night?" I said jokingly.

"Only until my wife phones." He laughed.

"Let me expand on three major aspects of truth:

First: The Comprehensive Theory of truth is explained in "Truth and Falsehood" by Englishman Bertrand Russell. He states that Truth is clouded in complexity and understanding by the precise meaning of words. Facts, in the purest sense are indisputable until they are proven untrue! The earth was thought to be flat until it was

disproved. If I say "the cat sat on the mat" I establish by sight "the cat", not a dog. I confirm "the mat" not the floor and then place a connection between "the cat" and "the mat". There is yet another dimension when I said "sat on the mat". I need to confirm the past tense and prove time as a fact. Bertrand Russell also included the precision of mathematics as a component. Scientific theory requires that in order to establish a precedent it should have at least three corresponding facts. These may be proved by empirical testing to establish factual knowledge.

Descartes claimed that mathematical propositions are true as there is verification. Spinoza followed Descartes concept by adding geometry to a philosophy that depends upon a complete set of axioms to prove facts."

"I think I see that," said Lorenzo gazing into the distance.

"Second: The Coherence theory states that the truth of any proposition consists in its coherence with some specified set of propositions or in other words, it remains consistent. Consider it as the relationship of truth in the context of beliefs, trust and faith in propositions. These can carry a logical explanation that claim a coherence and consistency. It implies that these properties are sufficient proof of truth with or without the fact. In this regard, faith is an integral aspect of coherence when it relates to the Holy writings as the basis for coherence. "Sanctify them through Thy truth, Thy word is truth" John 17:17. This quotation refers to God's word as truth. What is God's truth, as documented in various religions, is an interesting study that opens a vast area of thought and discussion."

"Third: There is the Pragmatic theory of truth." I

expanded. "This is less conclusive and more complex than the other two and depends upon practical application. The Pragmatic theory was first introduced by the American scholar Charles Sanders Price 1839-1914. Based upon logic and suppositions where a "truth bearer" is a proven proposition or precept and is believed to be true. "Seeing is believing" could be justifiable proof until disproven. For example, a Doctor is pragmatic when he makes a diagnosis based upon only 99 percent of the information at his disposal. In most cases the doctor is right. This now enters an area of probability based upon previous knowledge. Probable Truth is a contradiction in terms but is also used to make predictions into future events based upon the past. In many cases these predictions are false. According to some the world ended in 2000 AD!"

Lorenzo looked puzzled. "It doesn't stop there as further headings include: Truth as Intimate, Ontological, Essential, and even Ultimate. So, there is a very brief introduction and much for you to consider."

Lorenzo stood up. He'd had enough.

"Did you hear my cell phone? It just buzzed. Must get back to my wife!"

He really has had enough. I thought.

"Briefly put Truth and Knowledge are compatible as truth depends upon knowledge and knowledge depends upon truth." I paused.

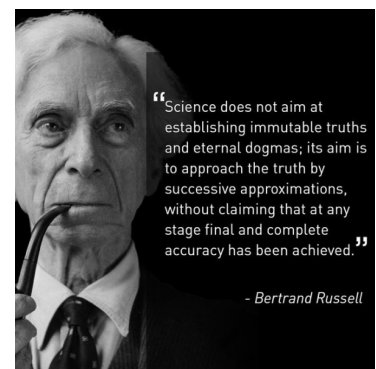
"Finally let me end with this light hearted remark by Winston Churchill. "Men occasionally stumble upon truth, but most pick themselves up and hurry off as if nothing had happened."

Just when the sun, leaving an orange afterglow, disappeared below the now dark hills. Lorenzo left as quietly



Rosslyn Chapel - The only inscription in the Chapel reads 'Wine is strong. The king is stronger. Women are stronger still: but truth conquers all (1 Esdras 3:10-12)

"Based upon logic and suppositions where a "truth bearer" is a proven proposition or precept and is believed to be true. "Seeing is believing" could be justifiable proof until disproven."



"Science does not aim at establishing immutable truths and eternal dogmas; its aim is to approach the truth by successive approximations, without claiming that at any stage final and complete accuracy has been achieved."

- Bertrand Russell

(Continued on Page 6)



as he arrived. A gentle breeze embraced the illuminated flag of the United States of America where, since 1898, Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth have graced the Masonic Home at Union City, California. 'Good night, my brother.' I whispered into the darkness around and within me./.

* Act 1. Scene 3. Hamlet.

Elisha And The Two Bears by W.Fra. Peter Cardilla, IV^o

Kabbalah gave me a way to believe scripture that I previously found difficult. This is perhaps the thing I most appreciate about it. It's not always easy for me to explain exactly what I mean when I say this. However, the other day I was reminded of a story from the Bible. The prophet Elisha, mocked by a group of children, responds by putting a curse on them. Immediately 42 of the children are mauled by bears. This is a perfect example of what I mean.

On its plain meaning, this brief encounter is, of course, troubling. Forty-two kids were savagely killed by wild animals as retribution for childish insults. Believing that God would, should, or did cooperate with a man to do this, presents obvious difficulties. A response so severe and violent, brought against children, would be hard to believe of a cruel general or maniacal king, let alone a loving God. Before finding Kabbalah, this is the kind of story I personally would not have been able to believe.

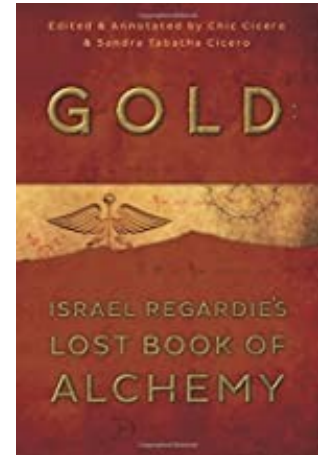
There are those who believe this biblical account is an authentic record of

history. They have no other choice but to believe that the children deserved it. That may seem like an unlikely position to take but it is exactly the position of many religious commentators. The children are recast as a gang of ruffians, no longer little, but a band of outlaw teenagers. The taunts of "baldy", have been reformed as death threats from an organized crime syndicate. Of course, none of that is explicitly contained in the Bible. The entire story is encompassed in two short verses, leaving little opportunity for back story.

2 Kings 2:23-24

23 And he went up from thence unto Bethel: and as he was going up by the way, there came forth little children out of the city, and mocked him, and said unto him, Go up, thou bald head; go up, thou bald head. **24** And he turned back, and looked on them, and cursed them in the name of the

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Gold: Israel Regardie's
Lost Book of Alchemy

"I believe that –
now - the solution
has been found,
the instructions
have been given,
and the path is
now open for
those who wish to
follow their
Master."

In Plain Sight by Bro. James Dimmitt, Washington Lodge #20

Imagine a beautiful Renaissance painting of life by the seaside. You've owned it all your life, and having looked at it so often, you assumed you knew everything about it. Then, one day, your child asked who was drowning in the picture. "What?" you exclaim. "Nobody is drowning in the picture!" Such a silly child. Then, with innocence in their eyes, the child points to the feet of a person in the painting, afar off, going under¹.

An easter egg, if you will, has the potential to make the mundane interesting again.

With this in mind, let's reflect on the ho-hum world of numbers, specifically, the counting numbers 1-9.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

Consider the counting numbers. If you take the numbers 1-9, then continue on to, say, 22, you will find something like this:

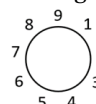
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13
14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22..

Not very exciting. Mundane. Boring.

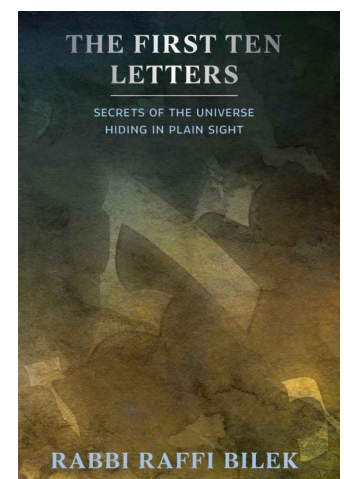
But now, consider applying a concept known by the ancients (Vedic Indians, Jew-

ish mystics, etc.) called "digital roots," we will find something much deeper going on—a substructure of sorts. Digital roots are obtained by adding all numbers together in a larger number (ex., 192: 1 + 9 + 2 = 12. Continuing, we find 1 + 2 = 3). Thus, the digital root of the number 192 is 3.

The Vedics described this in the following fashion:



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LORD. And there came forth two she bears out of the wood, and tare forty and two children of them.

King James Version

Each reader is, of course, free to interpret this story in whichever way they prefer. It's not my point to say how a band of small children may or may not have deserved to be mauled by bears. This is an example of the type of bible story that begs for a better explanation than it normally gets. Admittedly, there probably is no way to *rationaly* explain such an event that removes its many obvious difficulties. Those who attempt a reasonable explanation, inadvertently acknowledge this by the great lengths they often take to justify the story.

Typically it will be pointed out that the Hebrew word נערים (na'arim), *young males*, translated here as "children", can also be translated as "youths". This word appears hundreds of times in the Bible, in many places presumably referring to young adults. Therefore, expositors often suggest, this verse should be understood to refer not to little children, but to teen-age ruffians; a youth gang. The problem with that explanation is that it conveniently overlooks what is actually written in the Hebrew scripture. It doesn't just read נערים (na'arim), but נערים קטנים (na'arim qettanim), *small young males*.

Kabbalah, in many ways, avoids this problem and others by employing a symbolic language for interpreting the scripture of the Hebrew Bible. According to Kabbalists, all of the Bible, or Torah, describes the nature of God, the ongoing story of creation, and the relationship of God with man and the created

world. If a story about children being mauled by bears doesn't seem to fall into any of those categories, it's because it doesn't. To Kabbalists, this is not a story of God directing a nightmarish punishment against incorrigible youth. This is another story of God's wisdom and the mechanisms of divine justice.

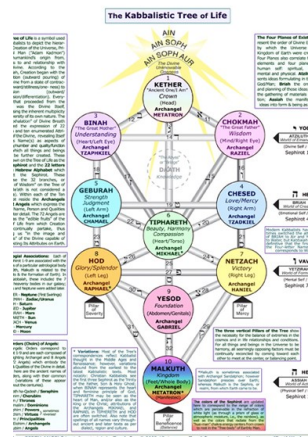
Before explaining the Kabbalistic symbolism of 2 Kings 2:23-24, it will be helpful to give some overview of Kabbalah for the uninitiated. The central symbol of Kabbalah is the עץ חיים (etz chayim), the *Tree of Life*. This usually consists of 10 circles, arranged symmetrically, and joined by a series of 22 lines. These are said to represent the 10 ספירות (sephirot) at times understood as emanations of the Godhead or as divine attributes -- and the 22 mysterious paths that connect them to each other. It is these paths by which divine energy traverses the structure, descending to Earth as the providence of God, and rising toward Heaven as the righteous acts of man's worship.

Along with the perfectly balanced structure of the Tree of Life, there is another element to creation. Sometimes attributed to a "divine catastrophe," this by-product of creation is known as the סטרה אכרה (sitra achra), the *Other Side*. This is the source and domain of all evil, imperfection, and corruption. The Other Side burst forth during the act of Creation, as the counter and opposite of the perfect balance and arrangement of the Tree of

Life. Because of its disorder and imbalance, it was immediately overwhelmed by the divine outpouring, and its vessels were shattered, leaving broken husks as a remnant, and littering creation with shards.

The sephirot, occupies a hierarchy, with the lowest, called Malkuth, sometimes being referred to as the Shekinah, *dwelling*, God's presence in the world. The Shekinah, being the most distant from the Godhead, is therefore the most susceptible to the corruption of the material world. This also puts her, at times, within the reach of the influence of the dark forces of the Other Side, who, because they have no part in the "world to come," hope to draw her to them and perhaps achieve for themselves some measure of permanence. It is by way of this world of symbolism that the Kabbalists extract their understanding of the verses in question.

Those familiar with the Zohar, a principle text of Kabbalah, know that it rarely deals with a subject directly. In this case, it gives an excellent treatment, though with the Zohar's peculiar style. The explanation opens with a conversation between rabbis discussing God's Judgement. (Zohar 2:223b) One asks why God seems to withhold judgement of the wicked, allowing them to enjoy the benefits of their unrighteousness. The answer he receives suggests that God understands two distinct forms of judgement, one divine and the other worldly. (Zohar 2:224a) Wishing not to mingle divine Judgement with the "filthy" judgement of Earthly consequences, God allows the lower judgement to run its course in "the world that is", and reserves divine Judge-



Each of the names of God in Kabbalah represents one of God's characteristics

"The sephirot, occupies a hierarchy, with the lowest, called Malkuth, sometimes being referred to as the Shekinah, *dwelling*, God's presence in the world. The Shekinah, being the most distant from the Godhead, is therefore the most susceptible to the corruption of the material world."



Balak and Balaam: The Bible Characters

ment for the "world that is coming."

According to the Zohar, "all is arranged" before God and "nothing is lost." (ibid.) This being the case, supplications, even though ill-intended, if they are properly made, may still have their effect. Subject to the flawed pronouncements of worldly judgement, blessings rightfully meant for the Shekinah are temporarily misappropriated by the Other Side, who maintains a portion in "the world that is." Ultimately however, offerings made from the Other Side are not legal tender in the "world that is coming." This is where the Zoharic rabbi mentions the biblical account of Balak and Balaam.

The story of Balak and Balaam (Num. 22:1-24:13) occurs as Israel has been wandering the desert following their flight from Egypt. When Israel takes over the land of the Amonites, Balak, the king of neighboring Moab, fears he's next. He asks Balaam, a holy man, to curse Israel and secure victory for the Moabite army. They are unsuccessful. Moab is conquered by Israel. However, in their attempts to secure the favor of the God of Israel, they make a total of 42 sacrifices. This produces, the Zohar tells us, 42 outstanding claims.

Though Balak's sacrifices are ultimately rejected, he does, the rabbis say, succeed in visiting at least a portion of evil upon his enemy Israel. Soon after his sacrifices, the men of Israel stumble, mixing with Moabite women (Num. 25:1-5). When they begin worshiping Moabite gods, many are executed. Balak's sacrifices do, by way of imperfect judgement, result in punishment for Israel. They will not, however, be acceptable in the "world that is coming". The Other Side persisted in making these ill-founded claims until all was finally corrected in the time of Elisha.

Elisha, "on the way up" to

Bethel, encounters his nemeses, the little children, who taunt him, calling him "bald." The rabbi explains that these נערים (na'arim) are so called here to suggest they are מנוערם (meno'arim), empty. Specifically they are devoid of the Torah and so lack any value. Relating words that sound alike or share root letters, as these two words do, is a common Kabbalistic technique. Indeed, he continues, they are קטנים (qettanim), little -- that is, of little faith. They have come "out of the city", which is explained to mean, they have left "the mystery of faith." They symbolically represent the empty and faithless sacrifices of Balak, partially redeemed in this world but worthless in the world to come.

It is these insignificant and empty claims that taunt Elisha. The rabbi translates ויפן אחריו (vayapen aharon), *he turned back*, as "he turned *behind him*." The "him" is normally understood to refer to Elisha, i.e. "he turned behind himself" or "he turned around." The rabbi however, tells us that "him" refers to the Shekinah. That is, Elisha turned behind the Shekinah and there he "saw" from the Other Side, the irredeemable offerings of Balak. The verb "saw" suggests more than simple vision. It's the same verb used in the Creation account in Genesis when it is said that God "saw" what He had done that day and that it was good. Elisha saw these sacrifices, and that they had no value.

The rabbi then uses another Kabbalistic tool. The same phrase ויפן אחריו (vayapen aharon), "turned behind him," is connected with a phrase used in the book of Numbers ויפן אחריו (vayapen a'aron), "Aaron turned." When Miriam and Aaron criticize Moses's marriage to a Cushite wom-

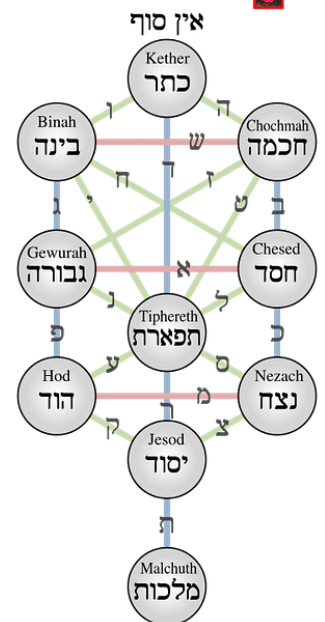
an (Num. 12:1), both are chastised for speaking against Moses, but Miriam is afflicted with a rash while Aaron, seems to avoid punishment. The rabbi references a tradition recorded in the Babylonian Talmud where it was said "Aaron turned for he was freed". Here too, he says, the expression suggests that Elisha would be freed from punishment. Assured of this, he curses "the children", dismissing Balak's claim in the "world that is coming."

If this explanation has left you with more questions than answers, that is not surprising. This is why I said that Kabbalah gave me "a way to believe" and not "something to believe." The understanding is still mine. The goal in interpreting words symbolically is not to unlock the secret meaning, but to give a foothold for their further consideration. In this example, I much prefer contemplating the divine or spiritual consequence of good deeds performed by bad people, than imagining how God or His prophet might justify the horrifying death of so many juvenile delinquents.

This is the gift of Kabbalah. It doesn't always give you an explanation, at least not a perfectly clear one. Instead it gives you something to contemplate. It gives you a way to consider God, the world He created, and mankind's role in that world. It opens even the most mundane elements of both scripture and life, to a spiritual understanding.

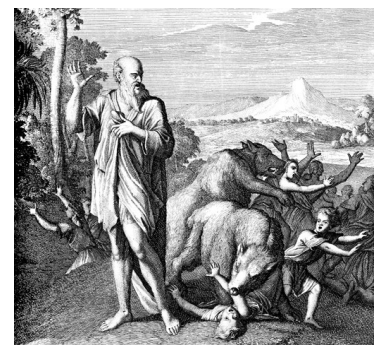
The interpretation above is not the only one. Highly esteemed Kabbalist and professor, Daniel Matt, gives a different interpretation. Balak and Balam usually worshiped foreign gods, i.e., the Other Side. According to Matt, when they directed their sacrifices to the God of Israel, the Other

(Continued on Page 11)



Kabbalah

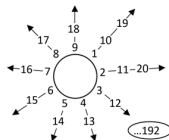
"This is the gift of Kabbalah. It doesn't always give you an explanation, at least not a perfectly clear one. Instead it gives you something to contemplate. It gives you a way to consider God, the world He created, and mankind's role in that world."



Elisha and the Bears (2 Kings 2:23-24)

In Plain Sight—Continued from Page 6

By adding a 9 in a clockwise fashion to every consecutive number, the number was magnified as much. Thus, by reviewing this chart, we would find our original number, 192, somewhere down the #3 arm.



By applying this method to the counting numbers, we will discover the substructure.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 ...
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 ...

Continue through all the counting numbers; all you will ever get is a series of digital roots 1 through 9, ad infinitum. Hence, in a manner of speaking, there are only nine numbers³.

How does this fit within the world of Masonry? Are there symbols so common that they are used in every culture and society, Freemasonry included? Symbols so common they seem almost ingrained in us as humans?

Consider the following. How many degrees are within a perfect circle? What is its digital root?



360°

$$[3 + 6 + 0 = 9]$$

Now consider the following symbols. How many degrees are contained therein?

What are their digital roots?



$$[1 + 4 + 4 = 9]$$



$$[1 + 2 + 3 = 6]$$

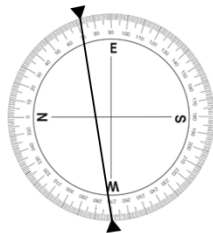


$$[1 + 6 + 6 = 13]$$

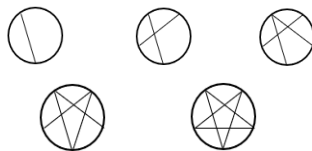


$$[1 + 5 + 5 = 11]$$

The last one, the star, can be tricky, but consider the following. If you take a perfect circle and start at the bottom, draw a 72° line $[7 + 2 = 9]$ until you reach the circle's edge.



Recenter the new connection point at the bottom and repeat four more times. What have we found?



This principle plays out in every major religion. Consider the names of God in just three of the major world religions. In Judaism, there are 72 names of God. In Islam, there are 99 names of God or Allah. In Hinduism, there are 108 names of God. In Islam, the 99th name of God, or Allah, is represented by two overlapping squares offset by 45°, a symbol that can be found hundreds of times in temples of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints throughout the world. This symbol conceals many other symbols within if one digs a little deeper. Hint: consider the various crosses of the appendant bodies.



In Gematria, possibly originating as a Judaic concept, each of the letters of the Hebrew alphabet contains both a numerical value and a meaning. For example, the name Adam” (ADM) holds deep

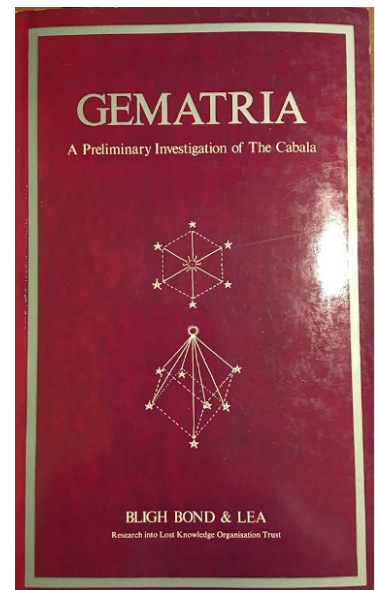
meaning when considering the numerical value and meaning. A, or Aleph, has a numerical value of 1 and basically symbolizes God or the first source. D, or Dalet, has a value of 4 and symbolizes a door or doorway (both of which have four points or corners). M, or Mem, has a numerical value of 40 and symbolizes mankind. Thus, by adding the numerical value of Adam, you get $1 + 4 + 40 = 90$; $9 + 0 = 9$.

Interestingly enough, the number nine in Hebrew means “completion,” correlating perfectly with the principles of digital roots previously discussed.

Beyond that, one can draw the deeper meaning to the name ADM, in that Adam was a doorway (4) between God (1) and Man (40). What deeper doctrine would we learn if we applied all these teachings to the remainder of the Great Light of Masonry? There are deeper concepts than this yet to be illuminated.

Consider our initial teachings found in the degree of Entered Apprentice. We are given a visible system of recognition and concealment and when addressing the Lodge's Worshipful Master. Without revealing what should already be known, consider the positions of the hands during these initial periods of recognition. I will list this only in terms of the number of degrees found therein: 45°; 180°; 270°. Here, concealed within our due guards and penal signs, is the principle of completion—the principle of 9.

(Continued on Page 10)



“Consider the names of God in just three of the major world religions. In Judaism, there are 72 names of God. In Islam, there are 99 names of God or Allah. In Hinduism, there are 108 names of God..”



In Plain Sight – Boundary Theory and the Masonic Rosicrucian Society by RW John Cooper, III, Ph.D., IX°

Recently, in honor of a fellow Brother for his receipt of the Hiram Award, we celebrated his achievement by performing what? A battery of 3 X 3. These revelations beg the question, “Where else is this principle to be found in our craft?” If we do not look, we will not see.

Now that the seed is planted within your minds, what truths will grow therefrom? All I know is that once you’ve seen it, you will never be able to “unsee” it again./.

¹Landscape with the Fall of Icarus, by Pieter Bruegel the Elder

²The method to determine how many spaces down the #3 arm, would be to divide 192 by 3, which shows us 192 is found 64 spaces from it’s digital root.

³While no mathematical proof exists for this idea, since we are talking about infinity, there is nothing to indicate anything would act upon the basic principle to alter it’s procession.

Vanity is The Ultimate Illusion by Dinesh Chhabra, IV°

“If you have seen four things, I have seen Sixteen”, mocked my builder-client, in one of our discussions. Needless to say, I kept quiet and ended the meeting, knowing that there was no need to respond.

It was my last interaction with him. But my nightmares continued.

I wrote a short story to get it off my chest. I was overwhelmed by his panache. His Vanity, albeit being a small fry in his business, was to prance like a stag and preen like a peacock – and add that slyness of fox to the mixture. I walked away from him, but it took a few days to get such overwhelming vanity off my mind.

When somebody is vain, there are lines crosse and sense disappears.

The Ordinance and Regulations of Golden State College of the *Societas Rosicruciana in Civitatibus Foederatus*, sets for the requirements for membership in this organization in Article VIII as follows:

*“No Aspirant shall be admitted to membership in a College unless he be of the Christian faith, a Master Mason in good standing, of good moral character, intelligent, and possessing a mind free from prejudice and anxious for instruction.”*¹

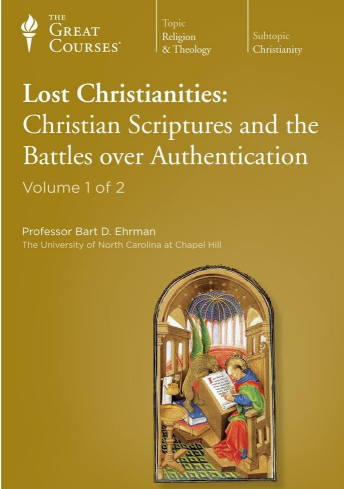
That requirement seems simple enough, although some interpretation is required. A “Master Mason in good standing” is currently interpreted as a member of a lodge under the Grand Lodge of F. & A. M. of California, or a lodge of a jurisdiction recognized by the Grand Lodge of California. “Of good moral character, intelligent, and possessing a mind free from prejudice and anxious for instruction” is subject to interpretation, but as this same article further states that “A unanimous ballot is necessary for an election,” the safeguard for these requirements is the individual opinion of those casting a ballot. But what does it mean that an Aspirant shall “be of the Christian faith?” There does not seem to be any definition of “the Christian faith” anywhere in the Ordinance and Regulations of Golden State College, and perhaps that is intentional. The further requirement that the Aspirant be “intelligent, and possessing a mind free from prejudice” is probably the only answer intended for these purposes, but how does a member form an opinion as to whether an Aspirant is “of the Christian faith” without some definition of what that means?

In the Introduction to the 2003 book by biblical scholar Bart Ehrman, *Lost Christianities: The Battles for Scripture and the Faiths We Never Knew*, Ehrman states:

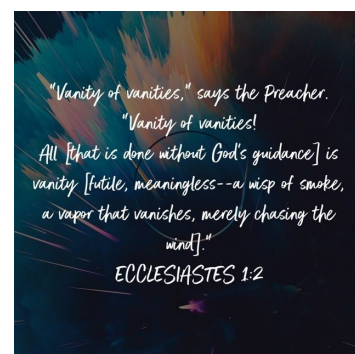
“It may be difficult to imagine a religious phenomenon more diverse than modern-day Christianity. There are Roman Catholic missionaries in developing countries who devote themselves to voluntary poverty for the sake of others, and evangelical televangelists who run twelve-step programs to ensure financial success. There are New England Presbyterians and Appalachian snake handlers. There are Greek Orthodox priests committed to the liturgical service of God, replete with set prayers, incantations, and incense, and fundamentalist preachers who view high-church liturgy as a demonic invention. There are liberal Methodist political activists intent on transforming society, and Pentecostals who think that society will soon come to a crashing halt with the return of Jesus. And there are the followers of David Koresh—still today—who think the world has already started to end, beginning with the events at Waco, a fulfillment of prophecies from Revelation. Many of these Christian groups, of course, refuse to consider other such groups Christian.”

*All this diversity of belief and practice, and the intolerance that occasionally results, makes it difficult to know whether we should think of Christianity as one thing or lots of things, whether we should speak of Christianity or Christianities.”*²

Ehrman goes on to point out that as diverse as “Christianity” may be today it was even more diverse in the



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¹ Ordinances of Golden State College, adopted on August 25, 2019 and subsequently approved by the Supreme Magus of the High Council of the *Societas Rosicruciana in Civitatibus Foederatus*

² Ehrman, Bart, *Lost Christianities: The Battles for Scripture and the Faiths We Never Knew*.

(Elisha and The Two Bears -
Continued from Page 8)

Side demanded restitution. He suggests the expression "he turned behind him" should be understood to mean that the Other Side, not Elisha, turned. When they did, they saw among Israel, those who were destined to evil. Elisha brokered the exchange of 42 of these as payment for the sacrifices rightfully belonging to the Other Side. Every interpretation gives something else to consider.

Nor is the explanation here exhaustive or complete. It's only a beginning. A lot is left to be explored. Elisha is headed to Bethel, meaning "house of God". The children confront him while he is going up "by the way", בדרך (b'derek). Kabbalah notes an interesting difference between "a way" and "a path" which adds another context. Elisha "curses" the children. The word קלל (qalel), "curse" means to minimize something as to make it small or insignificant. He curses them "by way of the name of the Lord," which suggests magic power in the divine name. A separate magical tradition tells that Elisha summoned the bears by the magical use of God's name and was punished. In Kabbalah, there are endless paths to explore and

doors to unlock.

It is this brand of contemplative Kabbalah which appealed to me and added faith and the beauty of scripture to my life. I hope it might do the same for others who want to receive more than they currently are from Holy Scripture and Bible study. Those who follow this speculative path, experience God by contemplating His divine attributes, His laws, and what has been revealed in Creation and by His holy prophets. By learning the symbols of Kabbalah and developing an understanding of how to apply them, both in your daily life and in your spiritual journey, every aspect of human experience takes on a divine significance and everywhere appear opportunities to worship, serve the Creator, and participate in the divine workings of the world./.

**Life And
Death by Dinesh
Chhabra, IV^o**

Growing understanding of spirituality at the end of life demands more theoretical research on the subject. Empirical studies

highlighted the need for exploring philosophical and cultural concepts to facilitate a fuller understanding of spirituality at the end of life. This paper expresses Indian philosophy to inform the conceptualization of spirituality at the end of life in the Indian context, which basically applies to all.

**Three key themes from
discourses on spirituality
at the end of the life
have been analyzed:**

--The concept of the Human person, --The purpose of life and --The meaning of Death.

The human person is from and of the Divine, eternal and is capable of cognition and experience.

The purpose of human life is to unite with ultimate Reality, the Divine, by living life righteously according to prescribed ways and by achieving detachment from the illusion of the world.

(Continued on Page 14)

**(Boundary Theory and the Masonic
Rosicrucian Society -Continued from Page 10)**

first three centuries of the Common Era. We have been made keenly aware of this by the fortuitous discovery of "Nag Hammadi Library" in Egypt in 1945 and the recovery of the text of many Christian groups from those early times whose writings had disappeared or had been suppressed by their opponents who eventually formed mainstream Christianity.

What could be more diverse than this variegated phenomenon, Christianity in the modern world? In fact, there may be an answer: Christianity in the ancient

world. As historians have come to realize, during the first three Christian centuries, the practices and beliefs found among people who called themselves Christian were so varied that the differences between Roman Catholics, Primitive Baptists, and Seventh-Day Adventists pale by comparison.³

If the definition of "the Christian faith" in our Ordinances includes not only current-day diversity, does it also include all the di-

verse groups who have, down through history, considered themselves to be "Christian"? And if so, what constitutes "Christian" in the first place. If a member of our college is to cast a vote on an Aspirant, and is casting it in accordance with the provisions of our regulations, how can he do so as an "intelligent" member of the society, exercising his mind as "free from prejudice and anxious for instruction?"

The history of Christian-

(Continued on Page 12)



The Nature of Life and Death.

**Three key
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--The concept of
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--The purpose of
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Death.."



Caption describing picture or graphic.

³Ehrman, op. cit. page 2.



(Boundary Theory and the Masonic Rosicrucian Society—Continued from Page 11)

ity, both as an idea and as an institution, demonstrates that the answer to the question, "What is Christianity?" has been not only of continuing interest, but of continuing conflict within as well as between communities which have considered themselves to be a part of "the Christian faith." We find this concern expressed in the earliest literature of Christianity, for it was mentioned by the Apostle Paul in his letter to the Romans: "I urge you, brothers and sisters, to keep an eye on those who cause dissensions and offenses, in opposition to the teaching that you have learned; avoid them. For such people do not serve our Lord Christ, but their own appetites, and by smooth talk and flattery they deceive the hearts of the simple-minded."⁴

The problem is, of course, who gets to determine what “the teaching that you have learned” is – and therein lies the problem. One solution was the paradigm of individuals speaking for God while “inspired” by the Holy Spirit, but of course that raised the further question as to whose “inspiration” was authentic and whose was inauthentic. Another paradigm was the idea that leaders of the local church community could trace their “legitimacy” back to one of the original Apostles (the “Apostolic Succession”) and that therefore the teaching of the incumbent bishop of the local church was authentic because he had learned it from his predecessor, and his predecessor from another predecessor all the way back to the beginning. That paradigm is still the prevailing one in many Christian churches, but not in all by any means.

Another paradigm was reliance upon a set of Scriptures, except that there were competing lists of which

Scriptures were to be used, and the further difficulty of who was authorized to interpret those Scriptures as an “authentic” expression of the Christian faith. And then there was the paradigm of the “agreed-upon” statement – the creeds – the first major one being the Nicene Creed put together under the supervision of the Emperor Constantine in 325 C.E. at the Council of Nicaea. And, of course, the problem with that paradigm was that there followed a succession of revisions and “clarifications” to the earlier creeds, and – once more – the question of who was authorized to interpret them.

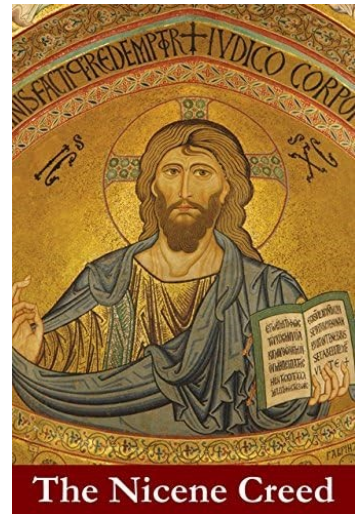
The fact that there are so many expressions of Christianity today, not to mention those expressions of earlier times that have disappeared, means that the definition of “the Christian faith” as a requirement of membership in our society is not an easy one to apply. Those conversant with history know that the dispassionate consideration of these differences in the definition of “the Christian faith” have been anything but peaceful. And they have had practical consequences as well. Charles Freeman, in his book *The Closing of the Western Mind: The Rise of Faith and the Fall of Reason* explains why determining the “true church” was important to the Emperor Constantine:

“The immediate challenge for the new emperors, as it had been for Constantine, was to bring some form of order to the Christian communities, above all by establishing and, if necessary, imposing a doctrine that defined the natures of God and Jesus and the relationship between them. It was not only a matter of good order. Once Constantine had provided tax exemptions for

Christian clergy, eventually including exemptions for church lands, it became imperative to tighten up the definition of "Christian." As Constantine had put it in a law of 326, "The benefits that have been granted in consideration of religion must benefit only the adherents of the Catholic [e.g., 'correct'] faith. It is our will, moreover, that heretics and schismatics shall not only be alien to those privileges but shall be bound and subjected to various compulsory public services." The definition of "Catholicism" and heresy took on a new urgency for the state."⁵

And things only got worse for those who were not on the “right side” of the government’s definition of the “correct faith.” Persecution of those who did not agree with the “official religion” of the state became a common practice. Michael Frassetto in his 2008 book, *The Great Medieval Heretics: Five Centuries of Religious Dissent* noted that:

“A new heresy is born in this world and in our days.’ So declared the Monk Heribert at the turn of the first millennium. Addressing himself to ‘all Christians in the Orient and in the Occident, North and South, who believe in Christ,’ he warned that a new heresy was being spread throughout Périgord in France by ‘men of iniquity’ who claimed the authority of the Apostles. Displaying a horror soon to be characteristic of the members of the established Church, the ‘orthodox’ throughout Europe, Heribert sought to secure their well-being from the, in his view, perilous doctrines advanced by these new preachers of iniquity.”⁶



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⁴ Romans 16:17-18.

⁵Freeman, Charles, The Closing of the Western Mind: The Rise of Faith and the Fall of Reason, 2003, page 178.

Frassetto, Michael, *The Great Medieval Heretics: Five Centuries of Religious Dissent*, 2008, page 1.

(Boundary Theory and the Masonic
Rosicrucian Society – Continued from Page 12)

And this attitude is still around today. Karen Armstrong in her book *The Battle for God: A History of Fundamentalism*, points out:

“One of the most startling developments of the late twentieth century has been the emergence within every major religious tradition of a militant piety popularly known as ‘fundamentalism.’ Its manifestations are sometimes shocking. Fundamentalists have gunned down worshippers in a mosque, have killed doctors and nurses who work in abortion clinics, have shot their presidents, and have even toppled a powerful government. It is only a small minority of fundamentalists who commit such acts of terror, but even the most peaceful and law-abiding are perplexing, because they seem so adamantly opposed to many of the most positive values of modern society. Fundamentalists have no time for democracy, pluralism, religious toleration, peacekeeping, free speech, or the separation of church and state.”⁷

Common sense, however, says that there must be some definition of “the Christian faith” that works generically for purposes of our membership requirement. The “Christian faith” is obviously not Buddhism, Hinduism, or Islam. It also probably is not Judaism, although there are some schools of thought that think that Christianity is a sub-set of historical Judaism which became a separate religion within a few years of the life of Jesus of Nazareth, who was, of course Jewish himself. If Christianity is a separate religion, then what makes it distinctive? That, in turn, loops us back to the same problem discussed earlier in this paper – What is the correct definition of “Christianity,” and who gets to define it? In other words, what are the boundaries that

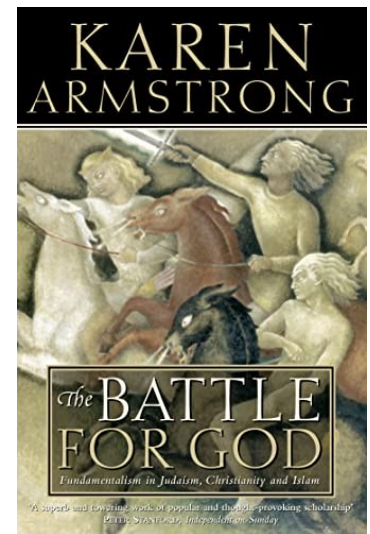
define it as an entity? The approach to this is a sociological one rather than a theological one, and as a religion shares with other such entities a social structure with boundaries that define it as an entity, entering a list of boundary descriptors that are its characteristics is a religion distinctive from other religions. Creating a set of descriptors will be a challenge because of the nature of historic disputes over this subject from a theological perspective, but it is necessary in order to distinguish it as an entity. I would suggest the following descriptors that might work: Christianity is

- ◆ A set of beliefs positing the existence of a supreme being that is
- ◆ Drawn from Judaism, now a separate religion, which
- ◆ Centers on the person and teachings of Jesus of Nazareth, and which
- ◆ Considers this person and his teachings as an explanation of our human condition and our responsibility to a supreme being as well as to this person and his teachings.

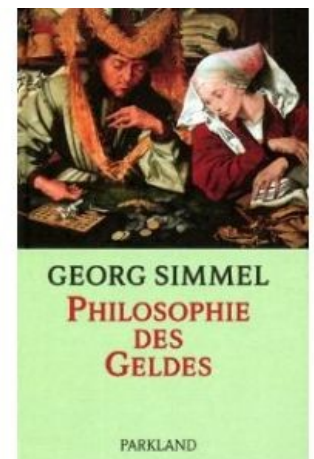
This list should be considered a starting point for defining “the Christian faith” as a requirement of membership in Golden State College, but one that should work for most Aspirants who seek such membership. The definition is based on the idea of *boundary theory*, a sociological concept first developed by the German sociologist, Georg Simmel (1858-1918). Simmel was trying to find a neutral definition for a social entity that would distinguish it from other social entities, and was first enunciated in his 1900 work, *Philosophie des Geldes* (Philosophy of Money), a title that is somewhat misleading because it really deals with the nature

of social organizations and how one social organization is distinguished from another.

“Boundary Theory” was used by Daniel Boyarin, a Professor of Talmudic Culture in the Department of Near Eastern Studies and Rhetoric at the University of California, Berkeley in his book *Borderlines: The Partition of Judeo-Christianity*⁸. This particular book looks at the roots of many Christian religious concepts from within Judaism of the First Century, and in particular at the Jewish idea of “heresy” which became a major concern within Christianity. He also notes how evolving Christianity affected the development of Judaism, transforming it from a kinship-based religion and a religion based on land (the Land of Israel) to a more individualist religion – a religion of “choice” as was Christianity. In both Judaism and in Christianity there is what Boyarin called the “epistemic shift,” or a “knowledge shift.” Both religions became much more a set of beliefs held by – or supposedly held by – the individual rather than a set of inherited cultural norms. In both, “community” was being replaced by “creed” – and with this development the warfare over the “correct creed” began. But more than in Judaism, Christianity became a set of fixed beliefs, the obedience to which defined its very nature. This is the source of the hostility between competing sets of Christian belief systems, which not only have developed as separate denominations of Christianity but which have been the source of destructive behavior against those who do not hold the “true beliefs” espoused by a particular sect or denomination.



“The building constructed to house it was made with no iron in its construction, was made of solid stone, and the inside lined with thick solid sheets of gold.”



⁷Armstrong, Karen, *The Battle for God: A History of Fundamentalism*, 2000, page xi.

⁸Boyarin, Daniel, *Borderlines: The Partition of Judeo-Christianity*, 2006



(Boundary Theory
and the Masonic
Rosicrucian
Society...Continued
from Page 13)

Such destructive behavior not only causes exclusion from the community (shunning) but sometimes outright violence against those who are excluded.

This paper is intended to cause us to think about what we mean when we require an Aspirant to be of "the Christian faith," and to examine an alternative approach from the field of sociology that might be a better way of defining the Christian religion than that theological approach which has dominated our thinking for so long. In a way a Masonic organization, such as SRICF, is a good place for this to happen. After all, this year – 2023 – is the 300th anniversary of the First Charge in Anderson's Constitutions of 1723, "Concerning God and Religion."

I. Concerning God and Religion. A Mason is obliged, by his Tenure, to obey the moral Law ; and if he rightly understands the Art, he will never be a stupid atheist, nor an irreligious Libertine. But though in ancient Times Masons were charged in every Country to be of the Religion of that Country or Nation, whatever it was, yet 'tis now thought more expedient only to oblige them to that Religion in which all Men agree, leaving their particular Opinions to themselves ; that is, to be good Men and true, or Men of Honour and Honesty, by whatever Denominations or Persuasions they may be distinguished ; whereby Masonry becomes the Center of Union, and the Means of conciliating true Friendship among Persons that must have remained at a perpetual Distance./.

References Consulted

Armstrong, Karen, *The Battle for God: A History of Fundamentalism*, Alfred Knopf, ©2000.
Boyarin, Daniel, *Borderlines: The*

(Life And Death...Continued from
Page 11)

Death is part of life and not that which ends it. The moment of death is an opportunity for the ultimate transformation, "**Moksha**".

Attempts to explore and understand the concept of spirituality and its implications for end-of-life care are on the increase around the world. Studies have demonstrated that Indian philosophical and religious concepts such as **karma**, **dharma**, **atman** and the notion of rebirth, for example, have a considerable influence on Indian perceptions of spirituality at the end of life.

Despite the historical link between spirituality and theology/philosophy, the recent approaches to studying spirituality lack attention to philosophical and theological underpinnings of spirituality. Most studies on spirituality at the end of life seek empirical evidence based on interviews and the historical and cultural components of spirituality are often left unexplored.

Vedic texts of ancient India consider the care of the dying as one of life's major responsibilities. Movements within Hinduism (e.g. bhaktimarga) have specific teachings about how to approach end of life along with teachings on monastic life, celibacy, etc., which are also found in classical literature. While the Vedic traditions represent the philosophical streams of the north India, resources from the philosophical traditions of **Siddhars** offer the Dravidian perspective from the southern part of the country.

Empirical studies from the Indian context indicate the influence of Indian philosophical thoughts on current notions of spirituality at the end of life. Considering the profound relationship between Indian spirituality and Indian philosophy, exploring the philosophical founda-

tions of aspects of Indian thought and worldview that impact the understanding of spirituality at the end of life becomes crucial.

It is necessary to highlight some features of Indian philosophy and its relationship to spirituality. India has a rich philosophical heritage over several thousands of years. These ancient philosophical traditions had many schools of thought and had a substantial body of intellectual argumentation about reality, the human person and their inter-relatedness. It is important to recognize that there is no "Indian philosophy" that represents the whole of the Indian subcontinent.

There are specific regional traditions that represent the historical and philosophical worldview of parts of the country and over several periods of time. For example, Vedic philosophy captures the Aryan cultural tenets predominant in the northern parts of the country and **Shaiva Siddhanta** is a tradition that has a specific Tamil lineage referring to the life and culture in South India, popularly known as the **Dravidian** culture.

Indian scholars have shown that philosophy, religion, and medicine belonged together in ancient India and that they together captured Indian worldview. Despite variations between the different traditions, three main doctrines remain commonly significant for all of them: the doctrines of **karma**, the principle of causality, **mukti** – release from the cycle of life in this world, and soul, **atma** – the 'inner-self' of the human person.

These common doctrines of Indian philosophical traditions also testify to

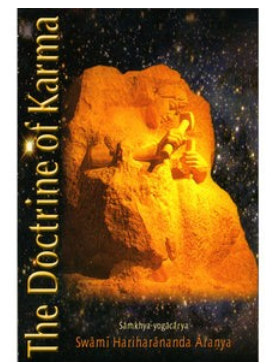


Dravidian culture

"Concerning God

and Religion. A

Mason is obliged, by his Tenure, to obey the moral Law ; and if he rightly understands the Art, he will never be a stupid atheist, nor an irreligious Libertine."



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24)

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(Life And Death – Continued from Page 14)

the relationship between philosophy and spirituality in the Indian context.

Spirituality as an “essence of the human person” and its close association with the “meaning and purpose of life” feature as the most prominent themes in defining spirituality at end of life. In addition, the context of end of life can be considerably influenced by philosophical and cultural meanings of death. I therefore engage in an Indian philosophical exploration of the three concepts that seem to be the key in shaping the understanding of spirituality at the end of life, namely: the concept of the human person, the purpose of human life and the understanding of death.

Concept of The Human Person

The human person is often referred to as *atman*, (soul), meaning ‘the self’, the ‘inner spirit’, the person’s true self or the inner person, in Indian philosophical literature. The perception of the human person is one of the most principal concepts in the Indian philosophical traditions. Acknowledging that there have been many and varied philosophical constructions concerning the notion of the human person, I present a selection of them, which several Indian scholars have identified as considerably influential in Indian thought. One of the ways to enter into the discussion about the concept of the human person is by exploring the theories of the origins of the universe according to the Indian philosophical traditions. The description of the origins of the universe as depicted in *CHANDOGYOPANISA*, part of the Vedic philosophy, one of the earliest known philosophical traditions in India, is a typical example.

In the beginning there was Existence alone – One only, without a second. He, the One (*Brahman* – Sanskrit word to represent ‘the ultimate reality underlying

all phenomena’, often translated as ‘God’), thought to himself: ‘Let me be many, let me grow forth. Thus, out of himself he projected the universe, and having projected out of himself the universe, he entered into every being. All that it has itself in Him alone. Of all things He is the subtle essence. He is the Truth. He is the Self. And that... THAT ART THOU!!

This description of Vedic cosmology, in common with other Indian philosophical traditions, conveys a number of prepositions regarding the concept of the human person. I identify two of them that I consider are relevant for the understanding of spirituality at the end of life: firstly, that the human person, *atman*, soul is directly connected with the ultimate reality, God, just as every other being in the universe is, because everything came to existence from God, the ‘eternal Existence’. Vedic philosophy thus presents the notion of ‘the reality of cosmic unity’, originating from one and the same Reality, where one is constantly interconnected with everything and everyone else, which are all of the same substance, originating from Brahman (Supreme Divinity).

Vedic philosophy explained the connectedness of the individual human person to the rest of the universe using an illustration, of the ocean and its waves. Individuals are like waves in an ocean forming the crest of the body of the ocean, which is the rest of the cosmic order:

The fact of Organic connection of the individual with the Vaishvanara (Universal or Cosmic Self) implies that there are cosmical aspects operating even in the individual, just as everything that is in the ocean is also in the wave, notwithstanding the difference between the crest called the wave and the body which is the ocean.

Secondly, the Vedic philosophy, as well as most

Indian traditions hold that the human spirit, *atman*, is eternal. Because the soul is from the Eternal One, the human soul also takes the characteristic of being eternal – they exist before they take the form of a human person and after, because the human spirit is part of the Eternal one, Brahman. *Atman*, the spirit of vision, is never born and never dies... the Eternal in man cannot die.

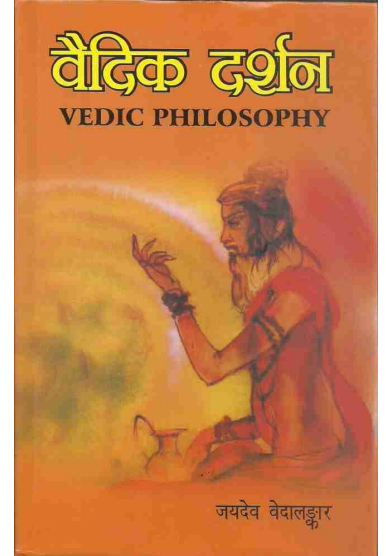
The following quote from Bhagavad Gita, further illustrate the belief that the human soul is part of the divine and because it is part of the Divine, it is also eternal:

An eternal portion of Myself (God) having become a living soul in the world of life, draws to itself the five senses with the mind for the Sixth, abiding in Nature.

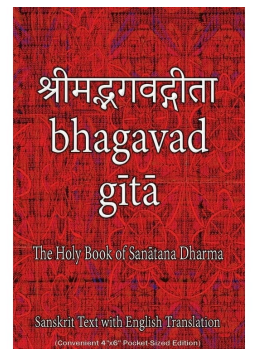
These prepositions clearly indicate that the predominant discussion about the human person in Indian philosophy is about the *atman*, the soul of the human person. Another significant notion in Indian thought regarding the human person is that *Atman*, the soul, is central to the understanding of epistemology. Indian philosophers hold that the soul, *atman*, as ‘the spirit of vision’ represents the capacity of the ‘self of cognition or awareness, to ‘see and to know’. The possibility of ‘knowing’ is given to the human person through the self, the soul.

The deliberations of the Indian philosophical traditions on the relationship between the body and the soul further demonstrate the significance of the soul in the understanding of the human person in Indian philosophical thinking. Many traditions have laid much emphasis on the relationship between the soul and the body as the ‘embodied self’. Buddhist philosophers give the analogy of a chariot to describe this relationship. They explain that just as neither the different parts of a chariot, nor combination of them make a

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“An eternal portion of Myself (God) having become a living soul in the world of life, draws to itself the five senses with the mind for the Sixth, abiding in Nature”





(Life And Death ... Continued from Page 15)

chariot, the 'self' cannot be perceived independent of the body and the cosmos in which it lives. In this view, the body and the soul are seen as part of each other making the whole – the person. The view of most Indian philosophical traditions on the human person is that of an 'embodied self', where the body is understood as the part of the person that makes 'experiencing' possible and the 'self' making sense of that experience.

Indian philosophers have dedicated much discussion on the role of the body and the embodied nature of the human person in achieving *mukti*, the eternal liberation. **Upanishad**, an important Hindu scripture emphasizes the thought that this eternal liberation is the union of the soul with its true nature, the Divine and that this union is possible only after the soul has departed from this earthly life, form the body.

The concept of "the embodied nature of the human person" follows that the body, through the experiences of "ignorance" (of the soul's true, divine essence and nature), pain and suffering, persist as a hindrance for the soul to attain *mukti or nirvana*, the ultimate liberation from the bondage of the body to the possibility of the

union with the soul's true nature, the Eternal one, God.

Contrary to the notion that the embodied status of the human person is a hindrance to attaining union with the divine. *Dravidian* philosophical traditions from south India reveal a positive view on the body. For example, the Siddhar philosophy considered the human body as "the dwelling place" of the Divine in the form of the spirit, the soul of the person. According to this school of thought the body is not an obstacle, but a facilitator. The body is considered the vehicle of spiritual evolution towards achieving *moksha*, the realization of the Divine within. Philosophers from this tradition also believed that this realization can be achieved while still being in this embodied self and not after the death of the body.

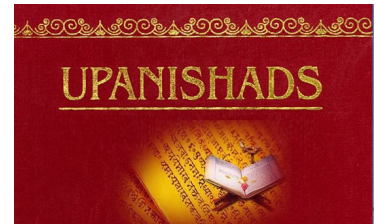
It is, therefore, evident that the notion of the human person is expressed as the 'self', the indwelling spirit, which is from and of the Divine. It is this 'self', the soul, that is capable of cognition that makes experience possible through being embodied in this world. Despite the differences in their approach to the body, the various

schools of thought maintain that the soul is at the center of all the deliberations about the human person. They also hold that because the 'self' is immortal and a portion of the divine, the ultimate liberation for the soul is to be united with the Divine. This ultimate liberation is considered the purpose of human life.

The Purpose of Human Life

Perceptions of the purpose of human life in the Indian philosophical traditions have substantial links to the conception of the human person. All major schools of Indian thought suggest that the purpose of human life is to achieve the union of the 'self', the soul with the Divine. The Vedic tradition holds that the human life is the opportunity for spiritual improvement in order to achieve the ultimate goal of realizing the fundamental truth about oneself, which is the realization that I am the Eternal One, '*Aham Brahmasmi*' (meaning: "the soul and the world are one", that is, to achieve a state of self-realization, where the "self", the soul is indistinguishably identical and one with the Brahman, the Divine. This realization is the ultimate

(Continued on Page 18)



"According to the orthodox Indian philosophical view it is in achieving perfection through three goals of life: **artha** (prosperity), **kama** (desire) and **dharma** (righteous living) that the fourth and the ultimate goal of life, **moksha** can be attained."

Roman Rite of Mithras, Christianity And Freemasonry by RW Ed Fentum, IX^o

My entire research into this subject has been frustrated by contradictions, controversy and misinformation. Early scholars made assumptions that have since been disproved and although there are many sites and relics of the Roman Rite of Mithras there is limited evidence as to their ceremonies, rites and practices. These have been subjected to interpretation and guess work.

One assumption was that a religion in which an

omnipotent God similar to Mithras came from India. It is stated that this God was carried there by the Hittites in about 1400 B.C. A belief system then evolved, taking on different forms and guises that travelled through Egypt, Persia and Greece to find a niche in the Roman Army as the Rites of Mithras at the beginning of the first Century A.D.

In support of this theory it is cited that Mitra is an Indian deity¹ and has a near affinity to the Zoroastrian

Mithra as both share similar characteristics of peace, friendship and identify with Sol (the sun god).

The hypothesis continues that the Roman Mithraic cult of the first Century was derived from these two Gods and was carried by the Roman Army throughout the Roman Empire. Modern scholars discount this much lauded theory and believe that the Roman Rite was syncretic and used features from other Roman

(Continued on Page 17)

¹ Rigveda – refers to as the diety that 'brings forth light' and is worshipped in a mantra by Hindus in the morning



Hindu Mitra
(मित्रः)



(Roman Rite of Mithras, Christianity And Freemasonry from Page 16)

religions. It was created in the first century A.D. as a complete new religious entity.

Roman Temples to Mithras, called Mithraeum are found in locations throughout Europe and in the Middle East. The crypt of the Christian cathedral at the Basilica of San Clemente in Rome is one such example. In London the ruins of a Mithraeum was excavated at the site of an early Christian Church. There are also many sites in Italy, Germany, France, Iraq, along the coast of Israel and in Britain.

"The Mithraeum represented the cave in which Mithras carried and then killed the bull; and where stone vaulting could not be afforded, the effect would be imitated with lath and plaster. They are commonly located close to springs or streams; fresh water appears to have been required for some Mithraic rituals, and a basin is often incorporated into the structure. There is usually a narthex or ante-chamber at the entrance, and often other ancillary rooms for storage and the preparation of food. The extant mithraea present us with actual physical remains of the architectural structures of the sacred spaces of the Mithraic cult. Mithraeum is a modern coinage and mithraists referred to their sacred structures as speleum or antrum (cave), crypta (underground hallway or corridor), fanum (sacred or holy place), or even templum (a temple or a sacred space)."

Mithraeums were often abandoned when the Roman Army was re-posted or demolished by the Christian Church. It would also seem that unlike other religions and cults The Rite of Mithras did not accumulate funds nor was there a governing body. The Temples were usually

furnished with at least two Altars with one for sacrificial purposes. This fashion was opposite to the popular form of Temple where the sacrificial Altar was in open view to the public. Another indication of the secret nature of the organization.

Constantine (272 -337 A.D.) was Emperor from 306 to 337 A.D. and the first Christian Roman Emperor. He was born in Britain of an English mother, where his father was Governor. His father became Emperor of the Roman Empire. As a Roman soldier, Constantine would have been a follower of the Cult of Mithras. His conversion to Christianity is documented and forms part of the Masonic Order of the Red Cross of Constantine.

The evolution of Mithraism is not fully authenticated nor is it clear if it evolved from Zoroastrianism. Popular opinions suggest that it had an influence upon Neo-Platonism, Zoroastrianism, Egyptian, Assyrian, Greek and Roman paganism, Christianity, Islam, Gnosticism and even on northern Buddhism. In my opinion these influence are circumspect.

Some scholars point out similarities with Christianity, Mithraism and Freemasonry. It is my belief the import of Mithraism upon Freemasonry is tenuous. The similarities to Christianity are also unsubstantiated. However, this Paper is intended to explore the hypothesis.

Mithras. The Roman deity is said to have been born out of a rock or stone. His birth was claimed to be a virgin birth – which as he was born out of a stone or rock would be considered a virgin birth!

Various depictions show him killing a bull. The Bull is found in Greek mythology

with the legend of Hercules and the Bull of Minos. The killing of the bull as depicted on various edifices that formed a centerpiece of a Mithraeum are thus described:

"The center-piece is Mithras clothed in Anatolian² costume and wearing a Phrygian cap; who is kneeling on the exhausted bull, holding it by the nostrils with his left hand, and stabbing it with his right. As he does so, he looks over his shoulder towards the figure of Sol. A dog and a snake reach up towards the blood. A scorpion seizes the bull's genitals. A raven is flying around or is sitting on the bull. Three corns of wheat are seen coming out from the bull's tail, sometimes from the wound. The bull was often white. The god is sitting on the bull in an unnatural way with his right leg constraining the bull's hoof and the left leg is bent and resting on the bull's back or flank. The two torch-bearers are on either side, dressed like Mithras, Cautes with his torch pointing up and Cautopates with his torch pointing down. Sometimes Cautes and Cautopates³ carry shepherds' crooks instead of torches."

The symbolism of the above is interpreted by Tobias Churton⁴ as follows: The two torches represent dualism of mind and body. Corn represents plenty and together with the scorpion seizing the genitals represents renewal. The dog, bull, scorpion and serpent refer to the heavenly stars and constellations. Looking back at the sun is a representation of day giving away to night.

The killing of the bull which is the central depiction represents the suppression of sexual desire which as it takes place in an underground temple is indicative of subjugated libidinous pas-



Zoroastrian Persian
Ahuramazda/Mithra

"The evolution of Mithraism is not fully authenticated nor is it clear if it evolved from Zoroastrianism"



Roman Mithras

² From the Greek, Turkish seaboard

³Torch bearers – Cautes with his torch up and Cautopates with his torch down

⁴Gnostic philosophy

liberation of the human soul, which is also commonly known as mukti or moksha.

Different schools have laid emphasis on different aspects of human life that lead to achieving this liberation, moksha. According to the orthodox Indian philosophical view it is in achieving perfection through three goals of life: **artha** (prosperity), **kama** (desire) and **dharma** (righteous living) that the fourth and the ultimate goal of life, **moksha** can be attained. However, most schools consider dharma (righteous living) as the foremost of the three goals. They regard Dharma as the canon that gives moral foundation for human life; to be honest, attempt to fulfil moral obligations, to be genuinely concerned about others, etc. Dharma, in addition to facilitating the attainment of the ultimate liberation of the individual soul, also maintains social stability and harmony. For example, dharma implies responsibility of the 'self' in the society is the 'moral obligation' a father has to his children; a son has to his parents, and everyone in the society to everyone else. The self being able to accomplish these moral obligations is important for the attainment of the ultimate liberation of the soul. Scholars have argued that the role of rituals in the Indian society was to operationalize dharma – providing a framework for executing these moral obligations.

It is evident that many of the Indian philosophical traditions emphasize 'living a disciplined life with righteous actions' is the way to achieve the ultimate purpose of human life, the ultimate liberation, moksha.

We must recognize the truth that all the **Sadhana** (Sadhana refers to a disciplined life undertaken towards a goal. That we do is not the sake of a pleasurable life but for a good and peaceful death. All the great saints

and yogis (sage) direct all their prayers towards aspiring for an easy and good death, and they pray that they be enabled to merge into the Lord easily. Our attempts should be directed to the objective of ultimately merging with divinity.

Philosophers who follow this thought argue that the righteous actions of disciplined living of human persons bring a good and pleasurable life both for oneself and for others. However, the purpose of living a disciplined life is not to be limited to the good and pleasurable life for all here in this life. It is so that the self will attain the ultimate purpose of human life, moksha, the union with the Divine.

The understanding of the concept of Karma is important in this regard. Karma is significant and complex concept in the Indian philosophy that governs the perception of 'duty', indicate that Karma – action or work (resultant of previous actions and having implications for the future of the soul) – and Dharma – accomplishing duties in the 'right way' – embody the way Indians make sense of the present as well as the possibility of the achievement of the union with the Divine. Many Indian philosophical traditions commonly hold the belief that being able to complete one's duties destined to a person in this life (Karma) in the right way (dharma) helps the 'self' achieve the ultimate goal of liberating their soul from the cycle of rebirth to be united with the divine. The purpose of human life, therefore, is to complete the responsibilities, which are moral obligations for the soul, in righteous ways.

The concept of 'rebirth' is a significant and popular notion in Indian thought, which is connected with Karma. After the death of a living being, depending on the Karma of the 'self', Jiva, the immortal essence or soul of the living being, will take the

form of another life. Scholars clarify that the soul takes the form of life in this world several times before it can achieve the ultimate liberation of the union with the Divine.

The purpose of human life is to use the opportunity of living as a human person to live a righteous life, fulfilling all moral obligations in the right way and thus to try not to get back into another life or rebirth in this world, but to liberate oneself from the cycle of rebirth and to be united with the Divine.

While the thoughts expressed so far signified an action orientated approach to achieving the purpose of life, in terms of 'doing the right thing', others focus on having a compassionate heart and 'God-thought'.

Another important aspect of understanding the purpose of human life is presented in the notion of the temporality of human life. The most popular concept in this regard relates to the notion of **Maya**, often translated as 'illusion'. **Neo - Vedanta** school of Indian thought refers to maya as the human person's clinging to life, one's inability to release oneself from the bondage of life in this world. He explained that the real freedom is liberating oneself from this clinging and bondage to life to the realization of the union with the Divine, which according to the Vedanta school is within the human being, the soul. This freedom is about detachment from the illusion of life in this world in order to be united with the Reality, the Divine.

It is in this context that the ideas of 'detachment' and 'renouncing earthly pleasures' become crucial. Implying that the human body and the physical world we live in are temporal and will be destroyed. One

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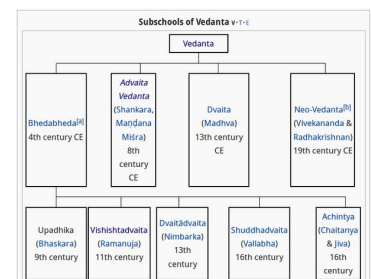
WHAT IS SADHANA?

Sadhana is any spiritual practice that leads to self-realization. Everything we do can be sadhana. For example, we can turn eating into consecration, and work into Karma Yoga. Try to make everything you do today a spiritual practice. This will be difficult to do at first, but the more you practice, the easier it will be.



@SPIRITFACTS

"The purpose of human life is to use the opportunity of living as a human person to live a righteous life, fulfilling all moral obligations in the right way and thus to try not to get back into another life or rebirth in this world, but to liberate oneself from the cycle of rebirth and to be united with the Divine."





(A Life and Death – Continued from Page 18)

should remember that death is awaiting at the corner and should not depend on the body and the physical world. The detachment from the body and physical world is the way to achieve what it takes to embrace death to this world, and the realization of the ultimate purpose of human life. In the words of Swami Sivananda, a Hindu spiritual teacher: 'You must get yourself buried in God. Then only you shall live. You gain by losing. You live by dying'. He emphasized the view that losing or detaching from everything from this world and life is the way to attain God, which is gain for the human soul.

The purpose of human life, according to Indian thought, is to unite with the ultimate Reality, the Divine. I have identified several ways prescribed by different schools of thought to achieve this purpose. They include living a virtuous life, completing the moral obligations in the 'right way', having a compassionate heart, having God-thought and by renouncing and detaching from the world of illusion. These ways offer the possibility of achieving the ultimate purpose of human life, which is to realize the potential and to unite with the Divine, the ultimate Reality.

The meaning of Death

The understanding of the meaning of death in Indian thought is characterized by the concept of the human person and the understanding of the purpose of life, which I have discussed in the previous sections. In the Indian philosophical understanding, **'death is not the opposite of life – it is the opposite of birth.'** The two events simply mark a passage'. Death is that event where the breath of life leaves behind a worn-out body, just like we get rid of worn-out clothes. 'Death is like a deep slumber and birth like waking from that sleep'. At birth, the soul wakes up to a new life as an embodied

self and at death it goes to sleep leaving the body behind.

What we call death is the departing of life from a particular body. So, death is not the death of the life principle itself. *Na jivo mriyata – life itself does not die.* The vitality is transferred from one location to another. It is withdrawn from a particular formation.

From these and many other analogies and metaphors that are used to explain the philosophical understanding of death, it can be recognized that death in the Indian thought is much more about the soul than about the body becoming dead. It is more about the breath of life – the soul – continuing its journey, leaving the body behind in order to unite with the divine. Death of a human being, according to most schools of Indian thought, can be the final passage for the soul, which may have had many births and rebirths, if the soul has achieved the ultimate purpose of human life. Because death of a human thus potentially denotes the ultimate liberation of the soul. Vedanta school, remarks that the death of a human being brings the experience of joy to the soul.

Since this liberation from the bondage of the embodied self and the union with the Divine mark the ultimate purpose of human life, death, which marks this liberation from the attachment to the body and attainment of the union with God, is the opportunity where the soul merges with and becomes one with its true self, the ultimate Reality.

The essence of this understanding can be found in Bhagavad Gita, one of the most important Hindu scriptures.

And whoever, at the end of his life, quits his body remembering Me (God) alone at once attains My

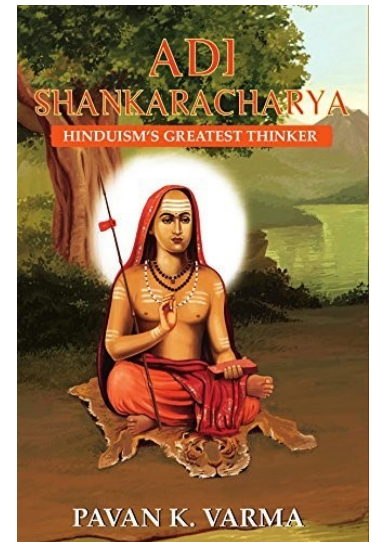
nature. Of this there is no doubt.

This verse clearly emphasizes the importance of 'remembering God alone' at the time of death. One should have dealt with or detached oneself from everything else in life so that s/he has only one thought – the thought of God at the time of death. Such renunciation of human life as well as the world and the unified God-thought, according to most schools of Indian thought is the only way to realize one's true nature, the realization that 'I am part of the Divine'.

A well-known Hindu scripture Bhagvat Puran cites a story from ancient times where a sage, Shukmuni, advises the king how to prepare for his death. In his advice the sage emphasized the difference between the mortal body and the immortality of the 'Self,' the human soul and draws the king's attention 'to know', i.e. to realize the true nature of his soul.

When you know that your true nature, 'Self', is divine and immortal or you are assured that God is always with you, there is nothing to fear.

Fundamental to all these thoughts on the subject of death in the Indian understanding is that death is not the end of life, but rather a moment of transition where the 'self, the soul of the person leaves the body behind. When doing so, if the self also renounces all the illusions and attachments of this earthly life and is able to have only God-thought at the time of death, then the soul will attain the realization of its true self, the union with the Divine. To use an analogy from Shankara, the most influential philos-



"In the Indian philosophical understanding, **'death is not the opposite of life – it is the opposite of birth.'** The two events simply mark a passage"

(Continued on Page 20)



(A Life And Death – Continued from Page 19)

opher of the Advaita school, **Death is when the 'divine spark' within the human person can merge with the 'Divine flame'.**

Most of the Indian literature that deal with the understanding of death refer to the state of the soul and its transition to being united with the divine. However, in my review I also noticed that some literature dealt with 'preparing for death' with much importance.

In the earlier sections, I captured the notion that the purpose of human life is to attain the union with the Divine, or the merger with the Eternal one. This verse from Gita demands that what remains in the mind of the person at the time of death affects the prospects of this ultimate liberation of the soul. I have also indicated that having God-thought at the time of death was considered crucial to have this deliverance. Therefore, Gita implies that the mind of the person should be free from all worries and desires of this world in preparation – i.e. to have such a state of mind at the time of death, through which the soul's unequivocal thoughts and awareness is on God.

I found that the experience of fulfilment at the time of death is connected with the idea of preparation for death. Several important Indian texts illustrated the notion of the experience of fulfilment and peace at the time of death.

These and other references to a sense of fulfilment and peace at the time of death in Indian literature clearly exemplify that being prepared for death was considered as one of the most crucial aspects of the understanding of death. Viewing death as a peaceful end to a complete and fulfilled life. There are references in the literature to several rituals that were practiced in order

to help the dying persons achieve peace and fulfilment.

The period between third-century BCE and fourth-century CE, during which period a lot of poetic and philosophical literature was written. They offer valuable resources regarding the history, social and cultural practices of ancient Tamil Nadu. There are several references in these literature to the practice of "**Vadakkiruthal**", where people who have lived a complete life, attained fulfilment, and desired death, sat facing the north and fasted until death. Death in this case was desired by those who have attained fulfilment in their lives and wanted to detach themselves from the embodiment of the human nature and awaited release from the body. They voluntarily deprived themselves of food and water and awaited their own death. The attention to the attainment of spiritual goals, the sense of fulfilment and detachment from the world and the body, overpowers the suffering of the body. Thus, letting go of the body was considered essential and desirable and not a matter of fear. Death, therefore, is a process of transition where one moves from this world to be united with the divine with a sense of having attained fulfilment and have detached from this world.

A review of Indian literature on the understanding of death suggests that death is seen as part of human life, just as birth is. However, it does not mark the end of the person. Death marks the end of the embodied nature of the self in this world and the passage to the next form of existence of the 'self', the soul. Death of a human person offers the possibility of attaining the ultimate purpose of

human life, which is to unite with the Divine. Literature clearly suggested that detachment from the worries and desires of this world and having a sense of fulfilment and peace and God-thought at the time of death are crucial to achieve the ultimate liberation for the soul.

I have represented significant thoughts on the concept of the human person, the purpose of human life and the meaning of death based on my review of Indian philosophical literature. The findings reveal that the concept of human person, the understanding of the purpose of human life and the meaning of death were the three conceptual areas that influence the understanding of spirituality at the end of life. Despite differences between the various schools of thoughts all of them present the importance of the soul, the ultimate aim of attaining moksha and the requirement of living virtuously in order to be prepared for a death characterized by fulfilment and peace in order to attain the union with the Divine./.

(Roman Rite of Mithras, Christianity And Freemasonry ...
from Page 17)

sions. ".....circumscribe your desires.....". The drinking of wine and eating of bread was also part of the ritual. Similar to a Festive Board! The above interpretation is based not upon original text but on modern supposition.

There is no extant ritual to indicate the form of ceremonies other than a catechism

(Continued on Page 21)



Vadakkiruthal (fasting facing north) is a form of Tamil ritual by fasting till death

"There were three grades of Mithraism called syndexioi or translated as 'joined by a handshake'. After the three grades there were a further four grades making a total of seven. ."





(Roman Rite of Mithras, Christianity And Freemasonry... Continued from Page 20)

relating to the third grade of which only parts remain and appear as the Socratic Method used in Freemasonry. Records do show that the sun, bull, miracle of Mithras shooting an arrow into a rock which spout water and the ascension of Mithras were included in the ceremonies.

There were three grades of Mithraism called syndexioi or translated as 'joined by a handshake'. After the three grades there were a further four grades making a total of seven. Symbolically, the first grade with the killing of the bull indicated strength. The second was symbolized with a hammer and tongs and represented creativity. The third grade with a crown and sometimes depicted with a lion indicated supreme or supernatural power. Depictions in various Mithraeum show that the grades were linked to the planets and illustrated by a symbol. After the third 'degree or grade' the followers could chose to become monks and experience the remaining four grades in a cloistered environment. However, there are no adjacent rooms or cloisters on any of the Mithraeum discovered.

Records show names with the various grades including those of the seventh grade. There being only two or three of the seventh grade called 'Pater' or 'Father'. There are also those with the first grade moving from one Mithraeum to another and then progressing to a high grade. Once again, suggesting the transitory nature of the membership and an indication of a Roman Army being transferred from place to place. A similarity to the early Military Lodges of the 1700's in Freemasonry.

If Symbolism was a major part of Roman Mithraism there are many depictions. However, to presume that the symbols of Freemasonry or Christianity were derived from Mithraism would be unjustified as there were

many other sources!

Much speculation has been placed on a symbol that depicts a crescent shape below surmounting with what appears to be a square above. Symbolically it is said to represent spirituality over the material world and likened to the square and compasses. Once again – pure speculation!

The lion, Ox, man, eagle, spade, moon, stars, serpent, whip, caduceus are some of the many symbols carved in Mithraeum. The closest in appearance to any Masonic organization is the lion-headed man. In Roman Mithraism it is often depicted as having the body of a man, head of a lion and wings about the head with either one or two serpents entwined about the body in a form similar to a caduceus. Similar depictions are to be found in other ancient cultures: Assyrian winged ox from the 8th Century B.C. Similarities may correspond to the Royal Arch Degree and the figures on the Arms of the United Grand Lodge of England:

From the variety of Mithraeum to be found it would seem that there was a considerable variation in the 'ritual', symbols, and lay out. There does not appear to be a corporate structure or organization that controlled the Rite and it would seem that much of the ceremony was committed to memory.

Roman Mithraism was an elitist, fraternal secret society which may have corresponded to the Cult of Isis for women. The initiates were required to undergo a trial before admission and only a select few were admitted. Membership was regarded as an honor and the members as possessing high moral standards and ethical values.

Persecution of the Christians did not fully cease until the Edict of Milan by Constantine the Great in 313 A.D. Christianity in its growth competed between the estab-

lished Roman Catholic Church, the Orthodox Catholic Church, established pagan religions of Rome and Greece, Gnosticism and the Rites of Mithras. The Rites of Mithras established in the early first Century found rapid growth. In most towns and cities a Mithraeum and a Christian Church were part of the community. The growth of Mithraism continued until the 4th Century A.D., then it declined as Christianity became dominant and by the 5th Century Mithraism was relatively unknown.

The rise of Christianity and the power base generated by the Church of Rome suppressed many cults including Mithraism, destroying temples and places of worship. It is significant to note that December 25th is given as the birth date of Mithras!

As to the impact on Freemasonry it is very doubtful that knowledge of the cult was widespread during the emergence of Operative and Speculative Freemasonry./.

Vanity is The Ultimate Illusion ... Continued from Page 10)

Many heroes and villains have fallen because vanity was the only chink in their armor.

In a different universe, I imagine a minimalist life – where I have only those things that I need to live, and not anything by name, luxury. Modesty is always tied with minimalism, and vanity is always tied with luxury. These are inseparable. But there is an extreme form of modesty, and that denies one's own existence. Such a philosophy, called 'nihilism', considers that life itself is vain and that the end of life is the only positive element.

Vanity is the ultimate illusion. To explore the two shades of vanity – one of materialistic nature, and the other one, which question existence itself

(Continued on Page 22)



Mithraism



The lion, Ox, man, eagle, spade, moon, stars, serpent, whip, caduceus are some of the many symbols carved in Mithraeum. The closest in appearance to any Masonic organization is the lion-headed man."



United Grand Lodge of England Seal



Vanity is The Ultimate Illusion ... Continued from Page 21)

and says, 'existence is vanity', is a tall order.

Peacocks are considered to be majestic and proud. At a biological level, peacocks, like many males of different species, flash their tails and spread their plumes, in what is called a 'dance', to impress the female of the species. The dance and plume are tools of courtship – the beginning of the act of progeny.

Yet, beyond the basic biological ingredient, there is a 'human quotient' in the act. The act of showing off – 'vanity'.

On the surface, vanity is a superficial attribute – almost fleeting and flashy, but there is an undercurrent to the word.

The brief yet cautious words demand our attention. 'Pomp' is ceremonial and spectacular, and anything that is pomp is alluring. Watch the 'Olympic games opening and closing ceremonies' or the 'march past on national days' – you will agree that the show-off, while is celebratory, is also alluring.

The underlying need is vanity. Vanity needs splendor and show off. Vanity is never modest. It appeals to the baser senses – visual and aural, in particular. It is an extrinsic attribute. Since the fall for our senses to allure is inevitable, the caution just about sounds right.

There it is the real point of function over form. Peacock is a bird that has lot of feathers. Yet most of its tail feathers – also called plumes – are decorative in nature. These plumes, used in spectacular display, are the ingredients of the pomp.

Who has not fallen for a peacock's magnificence? Yet, when it comes to the main function of the feathers is to fly.

Feathers form wings. Wings are organs of flight. Yet, the plumes, albeit being gorgeous, are heavy. When a peacock tries to fly, it cannot

reach the top of a ten feet tree. The plumes weigh them down.

Vanity is hollow, yet heavy. Vanity is attractive, yet abysmal. It can sink one, when it adorns their mental makeup, like the glittering yet heavy jewelry adorning the arms and neck of an Indian bride.

Vanity attracts baser souls. Relationships that vanity can build are very materialistic, because pomp is the allure.

Let us visit 'pomp' again. The pomp of a peacock is not only in its feathers but in its tuft as well. The tuft of feathers called 'panache', above its head, ornamental mostly, much like the tail.

"Panache" comes from the Latin word pinnaculum, which means "small wing" or "tuft of feathers." When you decorate yourself with a flourish, have an elegant appearance, or do something with style, you are said to have panache. Panache is the crown, hence is a better representation than the tail of vanity.

Vain people are insecure underneath. Insecurity leads to layers – curtains of secrecy – that lead to lack of probity. The layers hide the truths or reality, and are normally decoys, and when peeled, the inside (or the truth) is ugly. So vainglory is nothing but superficial splendor, with underlying layers hiding the reality.

There is a crossover of the 'playful vanity' that we see in the megalomaniacal and glamorous parts of our society – like in cinema or politics and there is a more serious take on the vainglory of life itself, immersed in deep philosophy.

I dropped the buffalo somewhere, because it is bit offensive as is obvious, and in our line of thought, buffaloes are those who do not understand vanity.

The counterpoint is, if you think that vanity is alluring,

seeing your won reflection in the mirror, like the peacock, you might end up being narcissistic.

I see your eyes, my dear brother; but in your eyes, I see my own reflection. While you think that I appreciate the beauty of your eyes, I love my own perfect image in your flawless eyes.

So when you look at the a peacock (a vain person), are you another? That is vanity, mirrored. Vainglory mirrored. Narcissism, twice over.

So, the lake or the sea is the peacock of peacocks, because it can be narcissistic or vainglorious itself, and hence, that is no proof of probity. What paradox.

Let us get back to the buffaloes, now. Buffaloes are supposed to be insipid creatures. They do not understand poetry. Yet, they resemble us – the people who live life as if there is no purpose, and for whom existence is a burden. Buffaloes live their day like nihilists.

The burden of life is too much to bear. Life is vainglorious. Death, my dear brother, is the ultimate truth and modesty.

Who appreciates life? The best tunes are melancholies, the best verses are philosophical, and they come from suffering.

From the first breath till the last, life is a journey of suffering. The only truth and the liberation from this suffering is death. Yet, people pray to live and are afraid to die. That is 'existential nihilism' at its best.

We make efforts to 'learn our lines'. If we have to strip life of all its vainglory, all one has to do is to exist. We create something called 'purpose', and then put efforts to achieve that purpose. The purpose could be 'internal' or 'external'.

To achieve the purpose, we 'rise and fall from grace'. Grace, as explored before, is

(Continued on Page 23)



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Vanity is The Ultimate Illusion ... Continued from Page 22)

poised vanity – vanity that makes us preen like peacocks. It is like walking with stilettoes on a thin fence, and in such a tip-toed walk, we rise and fall.

The thin fence is this 'tainted stage' of life, and the taints themselves are stains of colored views and stereotypical perspectives of this society. To survive this 'tainted stage', we have to be on our toes, 'wearing our wits' all the time.

Tell me this is not suffering. It is. This tiptoed walk on the tainted stage with our weary wits, and the fall and rise, and the walk again...I am tired am tired, my brother, of this effort, and this pain.

Indeed, life is a journey of suffering. A few years later, with what we call as 'maturity' or 'experience', we must have 'learnt our lines', but for most of us, who are trying to get our act together, the only thing is remains is our late arrival of the party.

Suffering and unhappiness are rooted in "the nature of things" itself; they are neither accidental nor temporary. By placing suffering, pain and unhappiness into "the nature of things", that is, into the heart of life and existence themselves.

Humans rarely notice or acknowledge the great things that they might have as long as they have them, which are health, youth and freedom. Such blessings are only noticed when they disappear and are lost. This is always the case because suffering is felt more than happiness, suffering is felt more than the absence of suffering; "we become conscious of time when we are bored, not when we are amused...our existence is happiest when we perceive it least; from this it follows that it would be better not to have it".

Life presents itself as a

continual deception in small things as in great. If it has been promised, it does not keep its word, unless to show how little worth desiring were the things desired; thus, we are deluded now by hope, now by what was hoped for. If it has given, it did so in order to take. The enchantment if distance shows us paradises which vanish like optical illusions when we have allowed ourselves to be mocked by them. Happiness accordingly always lies in the future, or else in the past, and the present may be compared to a small dark cloud which the wind drives over the sunny plain; before and behind it all is bright, only it itself always casts a shadow.

The present is therefore always insufficient; but the future is uncertain, and the past irrevocable. Life with its hourly, daily, weekly, yearly, little, greater, and great misfortunes, with its deluded hopes and its accidents destroying all our calculations, bears so distinctly the impression of something with which we must become disgusted, that it is hard to conceive how one has been able to mistake this and allow oneself to be persuaded that life is there in order to be happy. Rather that continual illusion and disillusion, and also the nature of life throughout, presents itself to us as intended and calculated to awaken the conviction that nothing at all is worth our striving, our efforts and struggles, that all good things are vanity, the world in all its ends bankrupt, and life a business which does not cover its expenses – so that our will may turn away from it.

"The way in which this vanity of all objects of the will makes itself known and comprehensible to the intellect, which is rooted in the individual, is primarily *time*. It is the form by means of which that vanity of things appears as their perishableness; for on account of this all our pleasures and joys disappear in our hands, and we after-

wards ask, astonished, where they have remained. That nothingness itself is therefore the only objective element in time, i.e. that which corresponds to it in the inner nature of things, thus that of which it is the expression.

"Our life is like a payment which one receives in nothing but copper pence, and yet must then give a discharge for; the copper pence are the days; the discharge is death. For at last time makes known the judgement of nature concerning the work of all the beings which appear in it, in that it destroys them.

Thus, old age and death, to which every life necessarily hurries on, are sentence of condemnation on the will to live, coming from the hands of nature itself and which declares that this will is an effort which frustrates itself. "What thou hast wished," is says, "ends thus: desire something better." Hence the instruction which his life affords to every one consists, as a whole, in this, that the object of his desires continually delude, waver, and fall, and accordingly bring more misery than joy, till at last the whole foundation upon which they all stand gives way, in that his life itself is destroyed and so he receives the last proof that all his striving and wishing was a perversity, a false path.

Death arrives much faster. The curtains of this flimsy stage have fallen, and the audience have long since left. So, neither we get to perform our best, nor the audience get to see a great performance. This fickleness of life is what makes it vainglorious and meaningless.

Of the billions of humans who lived before, how many do we remember? Does that mean that these humans did not chase purpose in their lives? Then they somewhere lost their way and ended up as ashes and dust.

In our lives, when we seek external validation, we are

Once a wise man was asked, "What's the meaning of life?" He replied, 'Life itself has no meaning, life is an opportunity to create meaning.'



"The present is therefore always insufficient; but the future is uncertain, and the past irrevocable"

(Continued on Page 24)



Vanity is The Ultimate Illusion ... Continued from Page 23)

embarking on a journey of quenching our thirst from other's ponds, and so we can never have a thirst-free life. In many cases, like the billions of humans before, there is no external validation (no applause) and no credits (no curtain calls) at the end of your story. All we get, at the end of our life is an 'earthly plot', a 6' x 3' piece, beneath which we are buried.

All the human interactions have some expectations, and by the expectations, we mean purpose, and by extension, there will be disappointments and delight. The vicissitudes in their lives bring out the worst in humans, thereby questioning the spirit behind such efforts to achieve any purpose.

In our interactions, we give and get love. We have hurt and broken a few hearts and down the line, we seek to mend our relationships with people. Mending fences means letting go of our ego, meaning vanity, and that comes into us tad too late.

We have seen how our vanity and purpose makes itself vain. Such a thought, in its full form is Nihilism.

"Nihilism brings us down to earth by forcing us to confront our puniness, our failures and our finitude. It reminds us that we are not gods, and thus helps to put us back into our appropriate place."

The human life is fractious and unpredictable. Human minds, society and other attributes are vain, if one strips them of all the frills. Such vanity disappears when we understand that our intellectualism or evolution is our making, and it plays up to our own vainglory.

We are like any other living being, who are born, live and die. Animals, on the oth-

er hand, don't understand fame, fortune, education and currencies. All these, which human underline as purpose, is their own creation, and if stripped, it is life at its basics amounts to nothing. We are nothing but children of chance and misery.

"There is an ancient story that King Midas hunted in the forest a long time for the wise Silenus, the companion of Dionysus, without capturing him. When Silenus at last fell into his hands, the king asked what was the best and most desirable of all things for man. Fixe and immovable, the demigod said not a word, till at last, urged by the king, he gave a shrill laugh and broke out into these words: 'Oh, wretched ephemeral race, children of chance and misery, why do you compel me to tell you what it would be most expedient for you not to hear? What is best of all is utterly beyond your reach; not to be born, not to be, to be nothing. But the second best for you is – to die soon.'"

Given the utter shoot-down of life, is it possible to then face the ultimate truth of life – death?

Alas, no prayers at Sunday church No Hallelujahs - No cries for help

No amulets no talismans could keep the dark chariot at bay.

The "dark chariot" is upon all of us. It carries us to the ultimate truth – death, which means something to all of us.

Many of us are afraid to face death, yet it is the truth. So why are we so gung-ho about life, which is a series of chance and misery, while feel tragic and afraid of death,

which is singular even of certainty and liberation? 'No prayers, songs of Hallelujahs, cries for help, amulets or talisman' can prevent our escape from death.

Understanding the vanity of life is not itself in vain. Vanity is a human element and has influenced human history further and further as it evolved. Yet, sometimes, we need doses of existentialism to make life colorful, keeping aside the extensive discussion of blandness of life (which we had just now).

Further if life was so disinteresting and bland, humanity will itself, will come to an end. 'Curiosity', a key factor for survival and progress of the human society, will seek answers above and beyond this final understanding of life.

Any attempt at thinking the Being of the world is forever destined to incompleteness and exhaustion. There will forever be what is unexplained and unexplainable withing any attempt at explaining the Being of the world, there will forever be that which is unsolvable within any attempt at solving the problem of the Being of the world./.

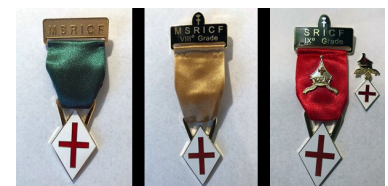
(Boundary Theory and the Masonic Rosicrucian Society...Continued from Page 14)

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We are on the Web!

<https://sricf.org/golden-state/>



Golden State College
Societas Rosicruciana in Civitatibus Foederatis
The Northern California College of SRICF



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First & Second Order Jewel - Grades I thru VII (Green)	\$20.00 ea
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SRICF



Societas Rosicruciana in Civitatibus Foederatis –

Encyclopedic Entry
By RW Frater David Lindez IX^o, KGC
Grand Archivist, SRICF High Council

The Societas Rosicruciana in Civitatibus Foederatis is a Rosicrucian Society based in the United States of America extending from its formation of a Grand High Council on April 21st, 1880 and its official consecration on September 21, 1880, by three Colleges chartered by

the Societas Rosicruciana In Scotia.[1] High Grade Christian Freemasons in the United States in search of the Classical Rosicrucian Society for Masons in the United Kingdom became interested in organizing a similar body in the United States and did so under Scotland's authority (Societas Rosicruciana In Scotia) with the help of Most Worthy Charles Matier of the SRIS, as early as 1873[2]. This effort died

Secretary's Corner

Worthy Fratres,



The Golden State College year ends June 30th, and a new year begins July 1st.

Your dues can be paid online at <https://gscsricf.org/pay-dues.html> or by check at the mailing address across.

Joseph Dongo, IX^o
Secretary

served in 1876. Harold Van Buren Voorhis insists that the Illinois College under Dr. French was never truly active, and it certainly was short-lived as Dr. French died an untimely death in 1879. Harold Voorhis also insisted that Frater Stodart Blackie's early charter in New York had been nothing more than an unsubstantiated rumor. It has since been established as historical fact.

In 1878 a group of senior U.S. Masons (Daniel Sutter, and Charles W. Parker) led by Charles E. Meyer (1839-1908) of Pennsylvania traveled to England and on July 25th, 1878 were initiated into the grade of Zelator at Yorkshire College at Sheffield[4]. They applied for a charter, but getting no response, turned to Scotland and received a charter from the college in Edinburgh in 1879. Scotland's Society is actually the oldest as Walter Spencer is recorded as having been initiated into the SRIS by Anthony Oneil Haye in 1857, and there are documents in the SRIA archives that show that both Robert Wentworth Little and William J. Hughan were initiated in 1866 & 1867 by Anthony O'Neal Haye, Magus Max, Ros. Soc. Scot. With H.H.M. Bairnfathur signing as Secretary. The Societas Rosicruciana in Anglia[5] was formed in England in 1866 by Robert Wentworth Little. The SRIA later felt the need to charter the current SRIS on October 24, 1873. [6]

A second charter was granted by the SRIS for a college in New York, and Fratres from Philadelphia and New York met in Philadelphia on April 21, 1880 and formed a High Council, then known as the SRRCA or the Societas Rosicrucianae Reipublica Confoedera America, was later changed to the Society of Rosicrucians in the USA by Most Worthy

out two years later under the care of R.W. Frater George S. Blackie VIII and was then re-chartered by the SRIS later again in 1878. Dr. Jonathan J. French[3] was a IX grade head of the Rosicrucian Society of the United States & opened the Matier Royal Provincial College with a charter from Lord Inverurie, Earl of Kincore and Supreme Magus of the SRIS. The college was named after Charles Fitzgerald Matier, the first Supreme Magus of SRIS who



Tam and Tassel of Philologi Societas

Philologi Societas

Philologi Societas (Society of Scholars or Learned Men)

Qualifications:

- Write an original research paper
- Write a philosophical essay or meditation
- Read a book on an esoteric subject and write and present a report and/or critique
- Arrange for a guest speaker (not a Frater of our College) to speak on a esoteric subject
- Create a work of art around an esoteric theme, present and discuss
- Create a PowerPoint presentation around an esoteric theme, and use it to present an overview
- Lead a practical demonstration such as creating a natal chart, various forms of Tarot divination, meditation exercises and the like. Can be participative or demonstrative
- Undertake a project for the college such as the construction of furnishings
- Etc...

Presentation #	Title	Tassel Color
1	Philologus Zelator	Plain Tam (black) no tassel
2	Philologus Theoricus	Black
3	Philologus Practicus	Yellow
4	Philologus Philosophus	Blue
5	Philologus Adeptus Minor	Red
6	Philologus Adeptus Major	Purple
7	Philologus Adeptus Exemptus	White

Worthy Frater John Smith, V^o et Philologus Zelator
V(ery)W(orthy) Frater John Smith, VII^o et Philologus Zelator
R(ight)W(orthy) Frater John Smith, VIII^o et Philologus Zelator