



Making good men better

GILA VALLEY TRESTLE BOARD

Safford Lodge #16 F & AM

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February 2018



From the
Worshipful Master

Douglas W. Jones

Greetings Brothers,

Happy February! It is time to auction the pies... The Masonic Family will be celebrating not only the birthday, but the life and times of our Brother George Washington on Saturday, February 17 at 5:00 PM. Come on out and enjoy the pot-luck feast. I understand that Brother John Hancock will be there.

We have several petitions out – hopefully to be read in Lodge. Join us, we need your support Brothers – and we enjoy your presence and camaraderie.

Masons do make a difference!

I'll see you in Lodge.

Yours in Brotherhood,

Douglas W. Jones

Ecclesiastes Chapter 12

Brothers, as a refresher, you may remember these verses from the Master Mason Degree. They remind us of our journey and are beautifully written. But, do you understand their meaning?

Verse 1: "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them;

Verse 2: While the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars, be not darkened, nor the clouds return after the rain:

Verse 3: In the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble, and the strong men shall bow themselves, and the grinders cease because they are few, and those that look out of the windows be darkened.

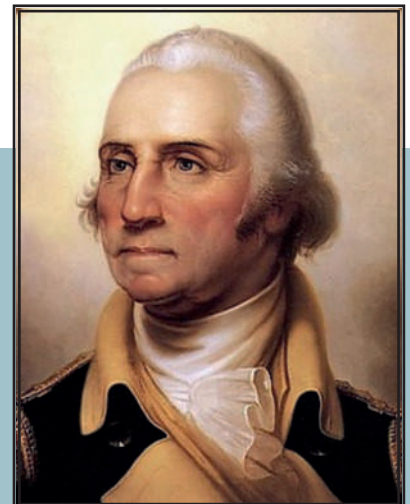
Verse 4: And the doors shall be shut in the streets, when the sound of the grinding is low, and he shall rise up at the voice of the bird, and all the daughters of musick shall be brought low;

Verse 5: Also when they shall be afraid of that which is high, and fears shall be in the way, and the almond tree shall flourish, and the grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire shall fail: because man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets:

Verse 6: Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern.

Verse 7: Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it."

This Masonic Degree verse found in Ecclesiastes Chapter 12 describes the infirmities of age. When a Master Mason degree, (or third degree) is being worked, the Holy Book is opened to this passage in Ecclesiastes, which according to Jewish tradition, was written by King Solomon as a book of contemplation and his own personal self reflection. See the explanations of the verses on the enclosed page.



Stated Communication:

Tuesday, February 6, 2018
7:00 PM at Safford Lodge,
1421 S. 2nd Ave., Safford

Lasagna Dinner @ Lodge
5:30 PM. Ladies are invited.

**Labor to keep alive in your
breast that little spark of
celestial fire, called
conscience.**

Bro. George Washington

What do these lines of Masonic Degree Verse actually mean?

Let's take a look at them again.

VERSE 1: YOUTH ... Entered Apprentice

"Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth": This alludes to the fact that as we grow older, each of us fondly remembers the glorious days of our youth when all things were possible.

With the hindsight of age and experience, advice is given to youth to "gather the harvest while they are young" because as we age, we change and are not able to enjoy things with the same lightness of heart.

VERSE 2: MANHOOD ... Fellow Craft

"While the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars, be not darkened," refers to the fact that as we grow older, our eyes begin to fail.

It is also an allegory to remembering back to the time when life looked bright with promise before the "twilight years" and "sunset years" of our lives.

"nor the clouds return after the rain:" Rest and recuperation take longer as we age.

VERSE 3: AGE Master Mason

"In the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble", refers to no longer being able to take care of yourself.

"and the strong men shall bow themselves" refers to the body's degeneration process and the inability to physically walk without stooping.

"and the grinders cease because they are few," refers to the loss of teeth.

"and those that look out of the windows be darkened" refers to failing eyesight.

VERSE 4:

"And the doors shall be shut in the streets" refers to no longer being able to hear the noisiness of life due to deafness.

"and he shall rise up at the voice of the bird," refers to aged people being unable to sleep and arising early.

"and all the daughters of musick shall be brought low" refers to changes in the vocal chords which change and bring about a coarser and less melodious quality to the voice.

VERSE 5:

"When they shall be afraid of that which is high, and fears shall be in the way."

Elderly people become unfamiliar with the speed of which the world changes. Also, as we become older, our reflex speed decreases and things that we once tackled with abandon; we are now more cautious to attempt.

"And the almond tree shall flourish."

Almond trees have large, delicate, snow-white blossoms. Figuratively, this means that our hair turns to white.

"And the grasshopper shall be a burden."

When we are young, hope springs eternal. The grasshoppers that plagued the farmers were something to be dealt with by completely replanting the field, as a young man can withstand a total loss and look forward to the hope of the following seasons.

However due to his decreased energies, an elderly farmer would find that the loss of an entire year's harvest (and all the work of replanting) to be a devastation and the elderly farmer would not look upon the same issue as "lightly" as when he was a youth.

"And desire shall fail."

The dreams which take a long time to come to fruition are not as desirous in the elderly as in youth because they know they do not have the time to learn and work them to obtain the desired results. The gradual decrease in physical desire also diminishes in both male and female.

VERSE 6:

"Or ever the silver chord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken."

The loosed silver cord is believed to denote the spinal column and therefore the physical infirmities (stooped back) of age. The golden bowl is believed to denote the brain and the gradual decline of mental powers, which in dotage is described as senility.

"Or the pitcher be broken at the fountain."

Having a desire to urinate but being unable to do so.

"Or the wheel broken at the cistern."

The body contains all its blood, (the cistern is full), but the heart's pumping action (the wheel) ceases.

VERSE 7:

"Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was; and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it."

This last portion of the Masonic degree verse refers to "ashes to ashes, dust to dust", which are still the words voiced when we inter (bury) the dead.

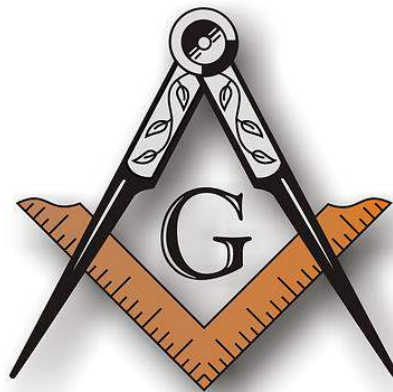
While this Master Mason, third degree Masonic degree verse may seem unduly depressing to some, as it describes the deterioration of each individual part of the body; it accurately describes our journey through life and makes us ponder on our choices.

While it describes the deterioration of our physical "temple", and the passages of time which happen to each of us, we must remember that our ending is the same as our beginning.

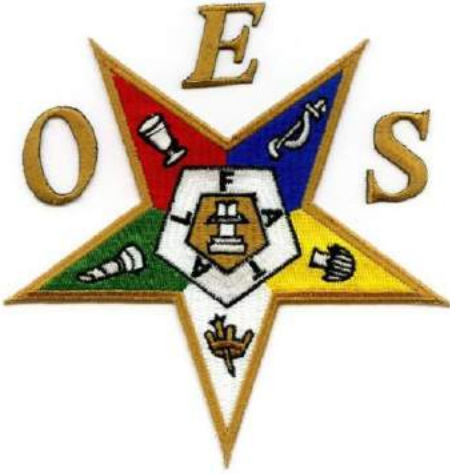
The LORD created us, gave us HIS commandments of law and it is to him that we return...which is the final triumph...the one treasure in life that cannot be taken away.

If you have lived your life properly, old age is no longer "the evil days", but becomes instead, reminiscent of the harvest...the love, the friendships, the experiences and the fond memories...

...the true cornucopia of receiving the "plenty".



Order of the Eastern Star
Arcadia Chapter #9, Safford, AZ
February 2018



Recent Events: Star Point Adah was honored by members answering questions from the Initiation lecture. Sister Judy answered the most questions and received Adah's emblem memento and booklet.

Arcadia #9 members were once again saddened with the passing of Sister Margaret Cochran on December 7th. She was a member of the Order of the Eastern Star for 52 years. Sister Margaret will certainly be missed.

The Chapter continues to collect canned goods so that they may be donated to the local food pantries. There will be boxes available in the dining room for your items.

Upcoming Events: The Official Visit is on Saturday, February 3, 2018. This will be a combined Official Visit with White Mountain #8 (Globe) and Arcadia #9 (Safford) co-hosting the event. Reservations are needed vcpage@aznexus.net for the lunch at Casa Manana Restaurant beginning at 11:00 a.m. The meeting begins at 1:00 p.m. at the Safford Masonic Lodge (1421 S. 2nd Ave and 15th Street). We hope you will join us. Remember to bring a new, stuffed animal to be given to the First Responders in Globe and Safford.

Our stated meeting is on Tuesday, February 13th beginning at 7:00 p.m. We will recognize our Chapter Sweetheart. We will also be honoring the Star Point Electa. So study her story and wear red! We will also honor our Organist.

We will join the Masons of the Safford Lodge for their annual celebration of George Washington's birthday on Saturday, February 17th beginning at 5:00 p.m. This is a potluck dinner with the meat being provided. The presentation will be followed by their famous pie auction. Family members and friends are welcome. So bring a side dish for the dinner, a pie or two for the auction, money (including those bid-raising quarters!!!) and join in the celebration.

At our March meeting we will be honoring the station of Martha and will have an Irish pot of gold scavenger hunt. Be sure to wear green.

At our April meeting we will honor the station of the Chaplain and will have an Easter hat parade.

Our May meeting will be election of officers. Please come – your Chapter needs you! WM Kerry wants us all to wear “prom” attire reminiscent of the last century.

Stars Make A Difference: This month I would like to combine this topic with the **Circle of Concern.** Speaking from personal experience I am honored as well as very impressed by the great out-pouring of love and concern by the members of Arcadia Chapter #9. In talking with other members dealing with tough times I have found that they also have been “cared for” through the cards, e-mails, and phone calls that have passed among our members. This concern and support certainly helps with the recovery process. So, I want to say a huge THANK YOU to each of you who took the time to let our members know they are remembered during the rough times.