

MIZPAH BULLETIN

July 2019



Mizpah Lodge #302
A.F. & A.M.
Omaha, Nebraska

1124 South 48th Street
Omaha, Nebraska 68106
(402) 558-0666

Mailing Address:
PO Box 6362
Omaha, Nebraska 68106

Online?

 www.omahamasons.com

 mizpah302sec@cox.net

 Mizpah Lodge #302

Instituted November 12th, 1918
Chartered June 4th, 1919

Stated communication on the first
Wednesday of every month

Mizpah Benediction

“May the Lord watch between me and thee when we are absent one from another”

-Genesis 31:49-

May the Lord Watch
MIZPAH
302
Between Me and Thee

From the West

Brethern,

I am proud to write this article as the current Senior Warden of Mizpah Lodge #302. We are nearing the end of June and there are some exciting things going on at Mizpah both in the recent past and in the near future. To start with let's talk about what we did this past month, look at what we are currently doing, and then look at what we plan to do for the remainder of the summer months.

June 2nd we had our centennial rededication ceremony attended by the Grandmaster Robert Moninger and several Grand Lodge members, I am proud to state that all Mizpah elected officers were enthusiastically present and appreciated as well as the appointed officers that stepped up and helped out with running a fine event. The Grand Lodge officers dedicated a beautiful cornerstone commemorating the event that is on display at the lodge, stop on by to see it if you have not already. Worshipful brother Mike Stuhr gave a beautiful speech about the records of our past as we move forward into the future, it was inspiring to hear about all the accomplishments of our lodge over 100 years, and humbling to count ourselves among such a distinguished group with such a great history.

The Templecraft committee is planning to have our first lodge beautification of the summer this upcoming Saturday July 6th at 10:00 am to tend to the external needs to keep our space looking good and exemplary as is our charge in Masonry. All brothers with a couple hours free on that Saturday are encouraged to attend. Rest assured that all who come to help out in this, and future cleanup measures this summer will receive their wages if aught be do as we will meet for breakfast and fellowship preceding the cleanup. Subsequent cleanups for the remainder of the summer will be during the last Saturday of July (July 27th) and August (August 31).

Lodge proficiency will be happening during July and August to ensure that we maintain our 70th straight year of being proficient at Mizpah. Many have been contacted already for specific parts but if anyone else wishes to be involved we always welcome your attendance. Planning is under way for our “Ladies at the Table” event set to be sometime in August and we also welcome our brothers in attending this fun and ceremonious event as we pay respect and admiration to our better halves as they support our masonic journey.

Sincerely and Fraternaly,
Thomas A. Gibbs
Senior Warden



Calendar

Wednesday July 3

Potluck Dinner 6:30pm

Business Meeting 7:00pm

Special Guest Presenter WB Ed Nolte on Patriotism in Freemasonry

Wednesday July 10

EA Practice 6:30pm

JW Jeremiah Jones in charge

Wednesday July 17

FC Practice 6:30pm

SW Tom Gibbs in charge

Wednesday July 24

MM Practice or Proficiency 6:30pm

WM Jeffrey Coleman In Charge

Wednesday July 31

Practice or Proficiency 6:30pm

WM Jeffrey Coleman In Charge

What's in a Name? by WB Ben Zaayer

At the end of every meeting at Mizpah Lodge, before the last rap of the gavel, we end our meetings with the Mizpah Benediction, Genesis 31:49 "The Lord watch between me and thee, when we are absent one from another." I have stood in lodge for many years and said those words without really wondering much about them. Periodically I would read a bit about the verse, the events leading up to it, and those that follow. Every now and again I would dive a bit deeper to see what others have to say about the verse and began to ask does it really mean what we think it means?

In today's words, we mean Mizpah as a watchtower, lookout, or a meeting place. A quick Google search of Mizpah turns up many references to friendship, pendants bearing the benediction, broken in two, meant to be worn by friends or loved ones as a symbol of their connection, and even sites advertising services to inscribe the benediction on wedding rings. At face value this makes sense. We cannot always be with our loved ones. Our usual vocations often pull us away, sometimes for extended periods of time, and while we miss them, all we can do is pray that God watch over them and return them back to us safely. This seems to fit nicely but misses some important context from earlier Bible verses leading up to the confrontation between Jacob and Laban, and the Mizpah Benediction.

I encourage you all to read the entire story of Jacob as it is a very interesting story, however, here is the short version. Jacob married Laban's daughters, Leah and Rachel. Jacob saw that as he acquired wealth, envy began to take hold of Laban and his sons and Jacob saw that Laban began to turn against him. God tells Jacob to leave Laban and return to his home in Canaan. Jacob then sneaks off with his wife and sons and is pursued by Laban who eventually catches up with Jacob. An argument ensues, but God had come to Laban and warned him that He was protecting Jacob. Laban finally seeing that his efforts to reclaim the wealth that Jacob had acquired relents. Jacob and Laban take stones and make a heap and Laban says the familiar words "The Lord watch between me and thee when we are absent, one from the another."

In this context, Laban is defeated and exasperated. He knows that God is protecting Jacob and he knows that Jacob has not wronged him, but he is still envious of Jacob and concerned that Jacob has his daughters and grandchildren. Laban also does not want Jacob to return to his lands. The heap of stones essentially serves as a demarcation between Laban and Jacob and the words of the benediction show Laban's suspicion of Jacob, promising that if Jacob does anything to wrong Laban's daughters God will see it and will punish accordingly. The original meaning of the words is therefore more of an armistice between two warring parties, or a promise of mutually assured destruction, than expression of love or concern.

2019 Officers

W Jeffrey Coleman (Brenda) Worshipful Master
2327 Hanscom Blvd.
Omaha, NE 68144 Cell (402) 290-7243

Thomas Gibbs Senior Warden
55269 Fallow Rd
Pacific Junction IA 51561 Cell (402) 680-6678

Jeremiah Jones (Kimberly) Junior Warden
2804 Jackson St.
Bellevue NE 68005 Cell (402) 507-7190

W Adam Lowder (Mollie) Treasurer
10925 Weber St.
Omaha NE 68142 Cell (402) 850-6001

W Ben Zaayer (Stacy) Secretary
5604 N. 162nd St. Res (402) 933-4668
Omaha NE 68116 Cell (402) 880-3028

W Michael Tomaszewicz (Annette) Chaplain
1404 P St.
Tekamah NE 68061 Cell (402) 838-9977

Dalton Kock (Bri) Senior Deacon
6757 S. 90th St
Lincoln NE 68526 Cell (402) 719-0942

James Schmidt (Elizabeth) Junior Deacon
3021 S 72nd Ave
Omaha NE 68124 Cell (402) 916-0262

T.J Brumfield (Sarah) Senior Steward
1210 S. 25th Ave
Omaha NE 68105 Cell (402) 880-7823

Charles Davis Junior Steward
9336 Berry Plz. Apt. 192
Omaha NE 68127 Cell (402) 980-5394

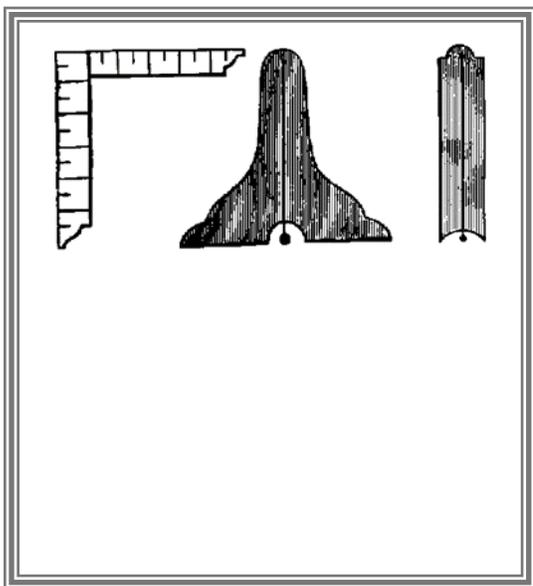
W Tyler Goodman (Tracey) Tyler
8702 S. 17th St.
Bellevue NE 68147 Res (402) 292-2801

Given all of that, how should we as Mason's interpret this benediction, the name of our lodge, and a symbol of our identity? The meaning of symbols often change over the years. They are abstracted, co-opted, or rebranded and we, as a society, adapt to a collective understanding of the new meanings of these symbols and employ them accordingly. While Laban may have meant Mizpah as a warning to Jacob and a promise that if Jacob crossed the line, he would kill him, I think we as Masons can look at this a little differently.

Although Mizpah was borne out of contention between two parties, it symbolizes that the two parties were able to find a common ground in the end and not resort to violence or harm. They were able to put aside their differences. While Jacob and Laban were not able to remain in contact with one another following their confrontation, perhaps we as Masons can view Mizpah as our opportunity to accomplish what they could not; to display the beauties of brotherly love, be patient with one another, forgive each other, and build a society of friends and brothers among whom no contention should exist, but that noble contention or rather emulation of who best can work and best agree.

Lastly brethren, keep in mind that Mizpah lodge, like the original heap of stones erected by Jacob and Laban, is a watch tower, a place for us as brothers to look out for one another. While we have so many methods of communication today, phones, emails, text messages, social media, etc. Mizpah still serves as central place to meet on the level, face-to-face, to promote each other's welfare and celebrate each other's prosperity. I hope to see you all at Mizpah soon.

The Lord watch between me and thee, when we are absent, one from another.



Mizpah Lodge No. 302 A. F. & A. M.
P O Box 6362
Omaha, NE 68106-0362

NON-PROFIT
US POSTAGE
PAID
OMAHA, NE
PERMIT NO. 446

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



From the Secretary's Table

Brethren,

As part of our communications, I am emailing this Newsletter monthly and generally send weekly updates about the goings on at Mizpah. If you'd like to be included in these emails, please let me know.

Fraternally,
Ben Zaayer
Secretary