

MIZPAH BULLETIN

December 2019





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

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 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 an-
other”

-Genesis 31:49-

May the Lord Watch
MIZPAH
302
Between Me and Thee

From the West

Good day brethren, we are about to have our final business meeting for 2019 and elections are in the books for 2020.

This past month we've settled on the officer team for 2020, decided a date and time for our installation of officers, made our annual donation to the local firehouse, eliminated some committees and created others!

Elected officers for 2020 are:

Worshipful Master: Tom Gibbs

Senior Warden: Jeremiah Jones

Junior Warden: Dalton Kock

Secretary: Ben Zaayer

Treasurer: Adam Lowder

Installation for 2020 is at Mizpah 302 on Saturday January 4th at 3pm, my principal officers will be wearing dark suit and tie (please be 2 hours early to make sure we setup properly), other officers are requested to wear business casual with a jacket.

As far as committees go for next year, we're eliminating the finance committee as its primary purpose is to advise on external commercial investment and we have no desire to pursue such courses at this time and so is superfluous, likewise the scholarship committee is being dismantled and effectively incorporated into the CCOC group for simplicity. We are creating a fundraising committee for next year to see if we can increase our income so that we don't need to raise dues as high or fast, as well as have better social outreach. We are also creating a Youth Group Liaison committee comprised of former DeMolay members that are active in our lodge, the intention is to establish 2-way communication for how youth groups can support lodges and lodges can support youth groups. Finally, we are creating a By-Laws committee to review our present and past by-laws and how we should adjust them for the future!

I'm very much looking forward to being your worshipful master during 2020 and with this team of officers we are ready for the challenge cooperatively.

Sincerely and Fraternally,

Tom Gibbs

Worshipful Master-elect



Calendar

Wednesday December 4

Potluck Dinner 6:30pm

Business Meeting 7:00pm

Education:

Topic: Cabletows - Ben Zaayer

Wednesday December 11

Dark

Wednesday December 18

Officers Meeting

All members welcome

6:30 PM

Wednesday December 25

Dark—Merry Christmas!



Saturday January 4

Installation of Officers 3pm

Wednesday January 8

Potluck Dinner 6:30pm

Business Meeting 7:00pm

Education TBD

The Length of My Cabletow

By W.:B.: Ben Zaayer

The cabletow is an interesting piece of our Masonic ritual. There is very little in the ritual about the cabletow except for the position in which each candidate should wear the cabletow during each of the degrees and a vague mention agreeing to perform certain duties "if within the length of my cabletow."

Extrapolating from the few mentions of the cabletow it is symbolic of our obligations, both Masonic and personal and teaches a lesson of restraint. We cannot aid a poor, distressed brother if we are unable to meet our own obligations. We cannot give money which we do not have. This lesson seems the obvious one, but I think the cabletow affords deeper thought to the contemplative Mason.

Several questions immediately come to mind. How do you stay within the bounds of your cabletow? How long is your cabletow? Does the length of your cabletow change day to day? Year to year? How do you know something is within the length of your cabletow? How do you know something is not within the length of your cabletow? Does the length of the cabletow change as different people make demands of you?

These are questions on which we as Masons must reflect. Each individual brother must answer these questions for themselves. In the end it is their own decision and they must feel good about their choices. A brother must be keep close guard against the demands made of him and ensure that each is within his means.

There are a couple of fables involving ropes that I have read over the years that remind me in one way or another of the cabletow. The original meaning of the fable was not inherently Masonic, and sometimes the Masonic lesson imparted is not entirely what the author intended. Nonetheless, I found them insightful when piecing together this topic for education.

The fable of the bridge by Rabbi Edwin Friedman

A young man was wrestling with thoughts of uncertainty regarding his future and what choices he wanted to make for himself. A great opportunity has arisen, but he must make a foot journey to another town and he must be there by the next morning or the opportunity will pass. He sets off in earnest.

He walks for many hours and growing more and more excited with each step to make this opportunity his future reality. As he is crossing a bridge, a stranger approaches him and raises his hand as if to greet the man, but instead hands him a piece of rope and asks him to hold on to it. Perplexed, the man agrees. The stranger has the other end of the rope tied around his waist and suddenly jumps off the bridge, hurtling toward the river, far below.

"Hold on!" the stranger screams as he is free falling toward the river. The man holds tight and as the stranger reaches the end of the rope, the man feels a strong jerk and is nearly pulled over the bridge himself. But he holds fast.

"What are you trying to do?" the man yells staring over the edge of the bridge. "I am your responsibility," the stranger cries "If you let go, I will be lost."

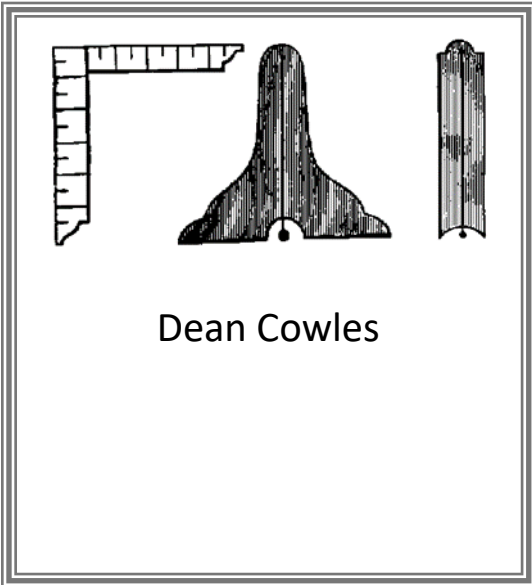
The man waited many hours hoping another person would pass and help pull the stranger back up, but no one came and he was unable to pull the stranger back up onto the bridge. The man tried for hours to reason with the stranger but he would not work to help pull himself up and remained dangling over the river.

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On the face of this fable the message starts to become predictable. What is the man to do? To drop the stranger and continue on his journey or be held back by the choices of another. I challenge you to look deeper and harder at this tale. It is easy to focus on the stranger and his willingness to put himself in such peril and his unwillingness to work to get himself out of the predicament. The harder part, is to focus on the man walking off to a destiny of his choosing, disrupted by this stranger. In a way, the rope in this tale becomes a very tangible cabletow. The man can hold the stranger above the river, but his ability to pull the stranger up is beyond his means. So, what is the length of the man's cabletow? Is helping this stranger within the length of his cabletow considering he is physically able to hold the stranger in the current predicament?

2019 Officers

- W Jeffrey Coleman (Brenda) Worshipful Master
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- 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



Let's change the story slightly and put it into a more common situation that many Masons likely find themselves in daily. Instead of leaping over the side, the stranger falls and in a serendipitous turn of events finds that a rope was tied about his waist and the man was able to hold the end of it. While the stranger may not have landed in that situation by his own choosing, does it change the length of the man's cabletow?

In short, the fable, as written, ends with the man deciding that his future is more important and give the stranger and ultimatum: begin climbing back up or the man will let go of the rope. The stranger persists in his behavior and the man releases the rope. This ending begs us as Masons to evaluate who we allow to cling to our cabletows. Are we truly helping or they holding us back from something far greater?

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The fable of the mountain climber

There was a mountain climber who wanted to conquer the tallest mountain. He prepared for years and wanted all the glory for himself, so he went up alone.

The night came and he did not make camp and kept climbing. There was no moon and clouds covered the stars. Visibility was zero.

As he was nearly to the top he slipped and plunged into the darkness below. Then a jolt hit him as he came to a stop at the end of the rope. The anchors held and the rope broke his fall.

He groped in the darkness all around him, but he could not feel anything. He cried out in desperation, "Help me God! Help Me!"

Then he heard a voice from Heaven. "Cut the rope."

"What?!" he screamed "I have been faithful to you and followed your direction at every step. Help me from this horrid situation!"

"Cut the rope!" the voice returned.

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Our protagonist finds himself on the other end of the rope in this fable. Frantic, he cries out to God for help; a logical choice as we learn in Masonry, when the strength and wisdom of man fail, there is an inexhaustible supply above yielded through the power of prayer. In what situations does the length of your cabletow become a detriment? Perhaps he over-extended himself by continuing to climb after dark and despite his ability and talent, he made a mistake and fell. God is answering him to cut the rope; to cut his cabletow that connects him to entirety of his desire and life's ambition. When we extend our cabletow too far and take on too much obligation, we can find ourselves clinging to that rope just like the mountain climber.

To close the story, the mountain climber refused to cut the rope. The next morning, climbers below found him frozen to death, only a few feet above a small flat place where he could have made camp, made a fire, and saved his own life. Sometimes in life we have to cut our own cabletow short. It never feels good, but often it is necessary for us to tend to our exalted duties. Our own emotional, physical, and financial well-being always have to be placed at the forefront of our obligations. Masons must keep a watchful eye over the demands placed upon them by others and the demands they place upon themselves. Situations where we must evaluate the length of our cabletow occur daily and we need to remember that our cabletow extends as far as our moral principles will go and our material conditions will allow. Underscoring our evaluations must always be trust in Deity. Whether we can continue to hold the rope or have cut the rope, trust that God will see us through in the end.

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From the Secretary's Table

Brethren,

It is dues season again! How exciting is that? Everyone should have received a dues notice by now. If you have not, please email me so I can get one out the door to you. Dues for 2020 are payable no later than 1 January 2020. You can send a check, pay by PayPal or drop off cash to me in person. However you choose to pay your 2020 dues, we appreciate them on time as these funds go towards maintaining our operations.

If you have any questions, please call, email, or text and I will be happy to help.

Thanks!

Fraternally,
Ben Zaayer
Secretary