

# Masonic Prayers

Gordon Leo Sanders

Virginia Research Royal Arch Chapter No. 1753

July 16, 2005

I spent a period of time researching the prayers of the degrees, at my church library using the Interpreters Bible research material, York Rite Bible, and Holy Bible Tears. After hearing the prayers in lodge time and time again I often wondered what are they trying to relate to us. I went looking for answers.

I have not been able to find out the name of the person who has written the prayers for our degrees. They go back many years in England and Scotland before coming to this country, but in trying to understand them and their interpretation. I believe Freemasonry is teaching us to make good men, and be better men.

As an Entered Apprentice we are born to new light, as a Fellow of the Craft we mature and the light brightens. In the raising we are given instructions on how to live with our fellowman and use the gift of charity kindness and assistance to others. Pass on what we have learned for the future generations.

The beginning and ending of these prayers are not in the bible, buy we are asking a God to understand us, walk in his light and ending with asking God to care for us.

I will still continue this research for there is more light undiscovered.

## Entered Apprentice Prayer

Psalm 133

**Behold how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity**

It refers to family members, men who travel from distance places to unite in a common bond or religious celebrations.

But we as Masons to meet on the level, share a common bond in fellowship and good will and unity with each other.

**It is like the precious ointment upon the head that ran down his beard, even Aaron's beard that ran down to the skirts of his garments**

It is the light and knowledge and trust you are about to receive to help you become a better person to walk upright and share your thoughts and knowledge to become a better man to serve your fellow man in faith, hope and charity.

**As the dew of Herman and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion for there the Lord commanded the blessing "Life for Evermore"**

As the dew of Herman cooled the mountains and sent the water to the valleys and brought life to the land.

The dew of Herman refreshes our lives and our minds with good thoughts and actions that binds us together in unity, peace, and harmony and after we have laid down our working tools of life we shall hope to obtain the Lord's blessing.

## Fellowcraft Prayer

Amos Chapter 7 — verse 7

**Thus he showed me, and the Lord stood upon a wall made by a plumb line, with a plumb line in his hand**

As God spoke to Amos, as he set a plumb line for him to see, not just the plumb line but what does not meet the eye for there was trouble in the land, and the Lord was not pleased.

**Then said the Lord, Amos, what seest thou, and I said a plumb line.**

**Then said the Lord, behold I will set a plumb line in the midst of my people Israel.**

The Lord set the plumb line for all to see and, for the people to change their ways or a suffer disaster. The plumb line was set. They had a choice, change or suffer the wrath of the Lord.

As the plumb line is set for us to walk upright in life and do good until all.

As the plumb leads to the square and level, our working tools of life. As the Great Architect of the Universe has given us our tools. The plumb to walk upright before God and man, squaring our actions by the square of virtue, and by the level we are reminded that we all come from that same almighty parent and are no better than that of the humblest citizen.

**I will not again pass by them anymore.**

We only pass this way once it is ours to pass on knowledge faith, hope and charity.

## Master Mason Prayer

### Ecclesiastes Chapter 12

The Entered Apprentice represents the young child beginning his life and going forward into youth learning and studying for the next stages of life which will take him through his teenage days.

As a fellow of the craft or young man we have completed one learning process and now as a young man put our skills to work proving what we have learned, and have learned well and look forward to the day when we will become a master of our craft or Master Mason. Then, to teach others from what we have learned and reflect in the joy of it. To look upon the younger men who will replace us to say what we have done is good and the joy of old age will become a pleasure, for we having given that which was taught to us, is now theirs to carry on.

**Remember now thy creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not,**

Reflect and rejoice in your life and your family, on all things in your life. The days of old age will take its toll.

**Nor the years draw nigh, when thou shall say, I have no pleasure in them; while the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars be not darkened, nor do the clouds return after the rain,**

Old age is depicted as a time of fading light and coming of winter, the time of ending, man's body is afflicted by old age, his household entered upon hard times, and that of caring for himself and family becomes a burden.

**In the days when the keepers of the house shall tremble and the strong men shall bow themselves,**

The keepers of the house are your arms that can no longer work or have the strength to perform a task; the strong men are your legs that can no longer carry your weight or work.

**And the grinders cease because they are few, and those that look out of the window be darkened; and the doors shall be shut in the streets,**

The grinders are your teeth, you can no longer chew, and eating becomes difficult. The windows your eyes, with age and the coming of years your eyesight fades, and the doors your ears, as deafness cuts you off from the world, and conversation becomes difficult.

**When the sound of the grinding is low, and he shall rise up at the voice of the bird, and all the daughters of music brought low,**

The sound of the grinding is the household at work. The voice of the bird, you can't hear high pitch sounds, the daughters of music brought low. Voices seen lower and softer and conversations become difficult to understand.

**Also when they shall be afraid of that which is high, and fear shall be in the way,**

The time is coming to lay down our working tools, sight fails, burdens grow heavy, the back bends, and the hands grope, life becomes a peril, and the lamp of life has no longer the oil to feed it. Now is the time to look to our creator for his saving grace.

**And the almond tree shall flourish, and the grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire shall fail,**

The almond tree having a white flower represents the white hair, the grasshopper the weight of it brings pain and discomfort to the body, desire shall fail, your desire and energy for life fail.

**Because man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the street, or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bow! be broken at the fountain,**

A time of impending death, hiring mourners. The wheels are the veins carrying the blood to sustain life.

**Or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern,**

His long home, his grave or tomb, the mourners in the streets waiting to be hired at his death, the silver cord, golden bow, pitcher and wheel at the cistern, these refer to items of life. The silver cord holds the lamp, the golden bowl the oil, the pitcher for the water and the wheel at the cistern to your heart to keep the blood of life flowing. These are items of life for man to see, live and quench his thirst.

**Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was, and the spirit shall return to God, who gave it,**

For God breathed upon the clay and gave life, now you must be returned to it. The spirit returned to Him who gave it. This prayer or song is longer and a part of what it has to say to us. if man lives many years, rejoice in them, for days of darkness are many, rejoice in thy youth, be happy in the days of your life, walk upright and true, do good unto all, for all you do in his sight he shall bring into judgment. Keep the Lord in your heart, follow his commandments.

## Prayer at the Grave

Job Chapter 14 verse 1-14

The book of Job, Job was one man the Lord looked upon with great favor and that was put to the test. He suffered many painful trials and losses, sickness, his land, his children his fortune, all was gone. But his faith in the Lord never wavered, he never gave up on the Lord. In the end, for his faith in God his fortunes more than tripled in all the good things in life, children, family and his land and fortune was returned to him.

**Thou O God! Knowest our down sittings and our uprising and understandest our thoughts afar off.**

Our down sittings and uprisings and thoughts afar off, could mean many things. Our failures and disappointments, our success and challenges, our dreams and thoughts of years ahead of what the future may bring. A contemplation of all things relating to our very own life.

**Shield and defend us from the evil intentions of our enemies, support us under the trials and afflictions we are destined to endure while traveling under this vale of tears.**

We are asking God's support in our daily endeavors of life, to protect us, care for us and comfort us as we go about our daily lives. But we in turn must take time to thank him for his many blessings.

**Man that is born of a woman is of a few days and full of trouble. He cometh forth as a flower and is cut down; he fleeth as a shadow and continueth not.**

Man is like the spring flower full of life and color, and in a short time begins to fade and disappear. We are here only a brief period of time, how swiftly the grains of sand pass in the hour glass. How many generations have gone before us?

**Seeing his days are determined, the number of his months is with Thee, Thou hast appointed his bounds, he cannot pass. Turn from him that he may rest, till he shall accomplish as a hireling his day.**

Job is asking God not to add to man's labor, but show compassion, let him finish his task without strict account for his every action. Man's burdens are heavy enough.

For suddenly there is an empty place by the fire, a footstep never heard again. There would maybe be no tomorrow, only today and it's infinitely dear and precious hours.

**For there is hope of a tree if it be cut down, that it will sprout again and the tender branch will not cease.**

That man's generations will continue to go on as before with the same obligations.

**But man dieth and wasted away. Yea man giveth up the ghost and where is he?**

This we do not know and it's not clearly taught or fully understood.

**As the waters fail from the sea and the floods decayeth and drieth up, so man lieth down and riseth not up again till the heavens shall be no more.**

Is there a time when man will rise up again? Job is asking the Lord, are you keeping a secret from me? Hast you put me away in a grave till thy wrath has passed? Will thou call me again and find work for me, to do thy will?

**Yet O Lord, have compassion on thy children of thy creation. Administer them comfort in their time of trouble, and save them with an everlasting salvation.**

Once again we are asking the Lord for compassion, comfort, and salvation. In all our prayers we ask these things many times over, may we give as much in return for all of our blessings.