

# May The Fourth Be With You

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South Norfolk Lodge No. 339

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Here we are on this special evening, celebrating May the Fourth. In honor of this occasion, I was asked to deliver a research paper, with the stipulation that it must be related to Star Wars. Never one to turn down a challenge, I spent some time thinking on this subject and here are my results. I hope you will enjoy it, and receive this paper in the spirit in which it is presented.

Tonight, you enter not only a Masonic Temple but a Jedi Temple. Please take note of the Tyler guarding the door, with a drawn lightsaber in his hand. His duty is to keep out all Sith and Bounty Hunters, that we may enjoy our meeting in peace, and in harmony with the Force. As you enter the Lodge Room, you see two pillars: That on your right, C-3P0, to complain. That on your left, R2-D2, to beep and boop.

My first thoughts were, can the symbolism of Masonry find a correlation with the images of the Star Wars movies? Certainly, the number three is prevalent in both. In Masonry, you have the three steps, the three degrees of the Blue Lodge, the three stationed officers, the three immovable jewels that they wear, the three Great Lights, and the representation of the three Lesser Lights: The sun of Tatooine, the OTHER sun of Tatooine, and... that's no moon!

In Star Wars, you have the three main characters: Luke Skywalker, Princess Leia, and Han Solo. You have three Jedi: Luke, Obi Wan, and Master Yoda. You have three villains: Grand Moff Tarkin, Darth Vader, and the Emperor. You have three TIE fighters, one piloted by Darth Vader, chasing Luke over the Death Star. You have the three movies of

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the original saga: *A New Hope*, *The Empire Strikes Back*, and *The Return of the Jedi*. You also have three trilogies of movies, three times three.

Speaking of our three main characters, they being heroic figures, certainly their actions would coincide with our Masonic virtues. Is heroism a Masonic virtue? I know that loyalty and honor certainly are. One could argue that Hiram Abiff was heroic in his final moments. Masonry teaches us to look out for our brothers, to defend them as well as their loved ones. We champion the oppressed. Does a Jedi do any less?

Let us turn our attention to Luke Skywalker. Anyone would naturally see his symbolism as an Entered Apprentice. He knows nothing about the real world. He is rash and impulsive, short-sighted and selfish; he wants to go to Toshi Station and pick up some power convertors. In his heart, he is a good man, who can be made better. He joins a secret organization, coached by his new mentor, who informs him that he has just taken his first steps into a larger world. Certainly, when a candidate takes his first steps as an E.A., those are also his first steps into a larger world that was previously unknown to him.

In the movies, we follow Luke on his journey. He travels to many planets; he is caught in many dangerous situations and he grows and evolves along the way. In the same manner, each of us have undertaken a Masonic journey, we start as an Entered Apprentice and make our way to a Master Mason, and beyond. Not as dangerous a journey as Luke has endured, but a journey nonetheless – with both highs and lows.

The white Lambskin is an emblem of innocence and the badge of a Mason. Luke at first wears white, a symbol of innocence and purity. Leia also wears white as a symbol of the purity of her actions and her purpose.

We say a Lodge extends from East to West and between North and South. As high as a Cloud City, and as deep as a Sarlacc pit. There are three great pillars supporting the

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Lodge, representing the Wisdom of Obi Wan, the Strength of Chewbacca, and the Beauty of Princess Leia.

The floor of the Lodge is a mosaic pavement, checkered with Sith and Jedi. Behold, a fully functional Death Star blazing in the center.

The canopy of the Lodge are the starry decked heavens, where all good Jedi hope at last to arrive through hyperspace. Within those heavens, we can picture the planets of Tatooine, Hoth, Dagobah, and the moons of Yavin IV and Endor.

Our ancient Brethren dedicated their Lodges to the Holy Saints John. But we, as Jedi Masons, dedicate ours to the Holy Saints Luke: George Lucas, the creator; and Luke Skywalker, the hero. As a Jedi travels across the galaxy, he is kept within the circle by following the rules of the Order and the training of his Master, even when it is personally difficult. In like manner, we keep our own actions within the circle using wisdom and our Masonic training.

The rough ashlar describes Luke at the beginning of his journey and throughout his training. He lacks focus, always thinking about the future, never on the task at hand. He resents being forced to stay at home when his friends have joined the Academy and become pilots. There are many rough edges that will need to be smoothed.

By the third movie, Luke is a Jedi Master, he has found inner calm, he is in control of his emotions just as he is skilled in the ways of the Force, he has moved closer towards becoming a perfect ashlar.

The trestle board can be compared to the instructions given to him, first by Obi Wan and then by Master Yoda. They are training him to become a better Jedi. In like manner, we follow the instructions of our trestle board to make ourselves better men and better Masons.

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We are taught brotherly love, relief, and truth. The Star Wars saga displays these virtues as well. Brotherly love unites those who would otherwise remain at a perpetual distance. It also brings Luke and Han Solo closer together. Although initially at odds, their shared experience unites them and they become close as Brothers.

A Mason seeks to relieve those who are suffering, we are taught to aid a Brother in his time of need. A Jedi Knight is also charged to provide relief to those who are suffering.

To seek the truth is a tenant of Freemasonry. A Jedi is also taught to seek the truth, regardless of where it leads him; to set aside his emotions and follow that truth. Yoda teaches Luke to seek the truth about himself, to understand that his anger will lead to suffering.

The four cardinal virtues of a Mason are Temperance, Fortitude, Prudence, and Justice. We are able to find these virtues reflected in the story of Star Wars. Temperance teaches us to subdue our passions. Luke is taught to control his feelings, to reign in his emotions which have made him act recklessly. By tempering himself he is able to focus on the task at hand. Fortitude is inner strength. Luke requires fortitude to press on, even when his problems seem insurmountable. Prudence is the ability for self-control, to not behave rashly. Luke learns prudence in controlling himself and choosing a wiser course of action instead of just running off to rescue his friends. Justice is seeking fairness and equity in all things. A key trait of a Jedi is their ability to pursue justice in the face of oppression.

Chalk is a substance that from the slightest touch leaves a trace. This has a deeper meaning than just the material itself; it alludes to the impact our lives leave on the people around us. As Luke, Leia, and Han travel together their actions leave a deep impression on the people they meet along the way.

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Charcoal is a substance to which, when heated, the most obdurate metals will yield. Through the heat of intense training, Luke becomes stronger in the Force and more in control of himself, the same way metals are forged by fire.

Clay is defined as the source from which God created Adam. By extension, all men originate from clay, or Mother Earth, and to it we must one day return. Thus, within every man there is clay. The force, we are told, is found not only within the Jedi and Sith who seek to control it, but within all living things, as well as all non-living.

The three steps are emblematical of youth, manhood, and old age. Luke begins the story as an Entered Apprentice, the symbol of youth. As an apprentice, Luke is learning about becoming a Jedi. Obi Wan is a Fellowcraft, applying the knowledge he has gained to discharging his duties as a Jedi in his daily life. Master Yoda represents a Master Mason, looking back on a life well spent in the service of the Jedi Order and in service to others, who fades away in the hope of the glorious Jedi version of immortality, becoming a Force Ghost who continues to advise Luke in this world.

The Beehive is an emblem of industry. We see an example of this in the Ewoks who work as a team to help the rebellion defeat the evil Empire and destroy the Death Star. We also see the rebel forces coming together to fight against overwhelming odds to defeat a greater enemy.

The sword pointed to a naked heart reminds us that our thoughts may be hidden from the world, but The Supreme Architect knows all our secrets. There are several secrets in Star Wars that are revealed for all to see.

The all-seeing eye pervades all nature and under his watchful care even the Sun, Moon (that's no Moon!) and stars must obey. By the same token, the Force pervades all objects in the universe, and any object may be controlled by a Jedi with sufficient concentration.

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The Anchor and Ark represent faith and anchoring yourself to your beliefs which will safely lead you to a peaceful harbor. The anchor in Luke's journey is his reliance on the Force and the power of the Force leads him through several perilous journeys to arrive at his goal of rescuing his friends and bringing peace to the Galaxy.

The 47th problem of Euclid symbolizes the journeys and education of Euclid who enriched his mind abundantly in a general knowledge of things, especially in Geometry. By Geometry all things in the universe can be expressed mathematically. By a knowledge of Geometry, we are enabled to understand the universe and the various ways in which everything is tied together in the same manner that the force ties all things together.

The Hourglass tells us that our time on Earth is short and that it must be well spent, because we do not know how rapidly our lives will draw to a close. In the movies we see both Obi Wan and Yoda pass away. No matter how powerful they became or how much they have achieved, eventually all living things must return to the Earth – or to whatever planet you happen to find yourself on when you die.

The Scythe of Time represents that illness or infirmity which must at some point overtake all of us. The death of Master Yoda reminds us that nothing escapes the Scythe of Time, even a Jedi Master who lived for 900 years.

The Setting Maul, Spade, and Coffin are grim reminders of death. In these movies, several characters die, death cannot be eluded forever. We are reminded of that immortal or better part of man, being the immediate inspiration of deity, which pervades all Nature. In the Star Wars movie, it is the Force that pervades all Nature and affects all living things.

In Masonry, we are reminded of that Lodge not built with human hands which awaits all of us when we die. In the Star Wars universe, there is no talk of life after death, and there is no reference to a God or Gods. However, certain characters do have an afterlife.

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Jedi may gain the ability to become Force Ghosts and return to advise those who remain. It is not an exact comparison, and I am not attempting to equate the path of a Jedi with a belief in a Supreme Being. But there are similarities and comparisons which may be drawn.

There are great works of literature which can be tied directly to Masonic teachings. Mozart wrote two operas that drew heavily upon Masonic symbolism. There is no one claiming, least of all myself, that George Lucas was a Mason or that he in any way drew upon Masonic symbolism in creating his movies. However, in my efforts to connect our Masonic teachings to the symbolism found in the Star Wars movies, we may observe that there are universal truths to be found in any great work of art. These universal truths are identical to those found in our Masonic philosophy, because a universal truth, by its very definition, IS universal. Sometimes inspiration may be found in the most unexpected places, even a long time ago, and even in a galaxy far, far away.