



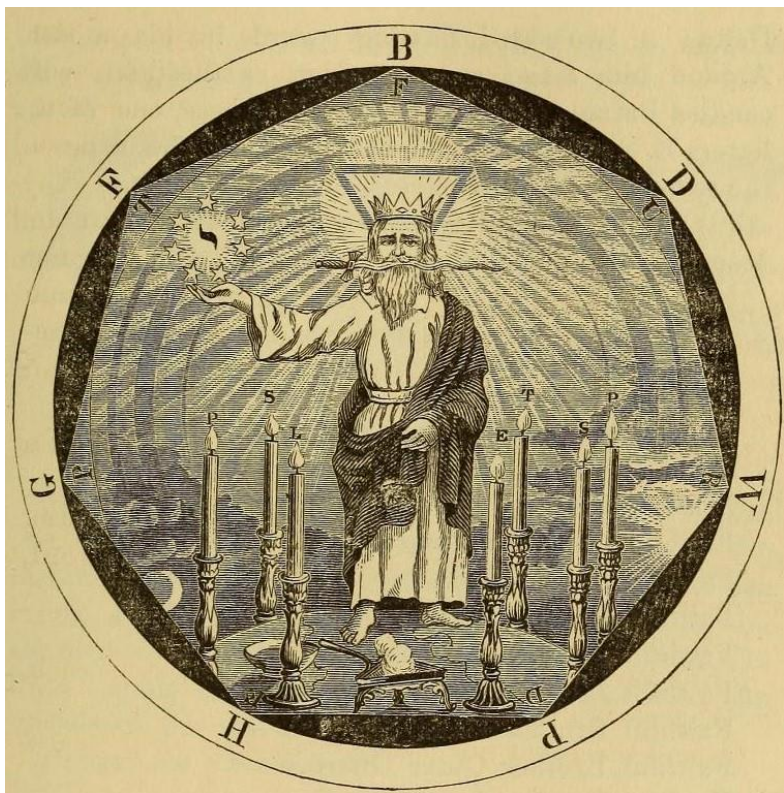
# THE HOUSTON VALLEY HERALD

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## First of the Philosophical Degrees Knight of the East and West



By Jason D. Rees 32° KCCH

The Knight of the East and West is the first of the philosophical degrees of the Scottish Rite. A degree rich in symbolism, the candidate symbolically becomes an Essene. The Essenians were a mystic Jewish sect that observed a strict accordance to their lifestyle. According to Philo, who was Jewish himself, “they had four degrees and the membership was divided into two orders.” Their brotherly love was exceptional for one another. They despised riches and they all shared in equal amounts of everything. They would wake before sunrise to begin their devotions and never spoke a word about profane matters.

As their prayers and hymns rose to the heavens as the sun dawned, the Essenians were just as firm in their oaths as well. They would avoid swearing and considered it worse than perjury. The Master of this degree represents John the Baptist who was believed by some to have been a member of this ancient sect. The Council chamber is a heptagon (seven sided) shape. There are seven candles sticks, and over each one is a Greek letter, represents each of the seven churches of antiquity.

In this degree the candidate is symbolically baptized with water and fire, which is a reference to Matthew 3:10-11, which states “The ax is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire. I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me comes one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.”

Throughout the Scottish Rite degrees, many faiths and lessons and are referenced and used in allegory to help instruct the lessons within the degree. Pike believed the lessons in this degree were gathered from truths from the doctrines of the East and the West. These truths come from the Zend-Avesta of the Persians, the Vedas of the Hindus, from Greece and Egypt, and from the Holy Bible.

## A House Divided, Brothers lend me your ears!



By Jason D. Rees 32° KCCH

Our country has become very divided; many Americans with different opinions seek to hurt one another for just simply having a different outlook on life. I believe we are all guilty of becoming overly passionate when it comes to politics or something we hold sacred. But does that give us the right to harm physically or do harm to a fellow American or Brother through our words? On July 13, 2024 a horrific tragedy was averted. Former President Donald Trump was shot; only by God’s grace he escaped with minor wounds.

In 1776 when forming our beloved nation there were many heated exchanges and disagreements. Let’s not forget the solemn closing words of the Declaration of Independence:

*“And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor.”*

These men of varying backgrounds, after all the debating and differences, pledged to each other their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor! Our country was conceived and formed by divine providence by men who were not perfect, but who worked hard to put forth a solid foundation of an unfinished nation that we all enjoy today. Let us not forget the symbol of the unfinished pyramid that represents unfinished work, which will never and should never be finished. When men act out with barbarism and the inner beasts of their own nature to resolve conflicts and disagreements, we descend into chaos.

There is one word that describes the Scottish Rite and it should be the watch word for all: DUTY. Duty to God, duty to family, and duty to our brothers. Let us recall the obligation we took, not just to God but to one another. It should not matter how a brother votes nor his faith. Our country is in desperate need of leadership, which I believe begins with each of us. Start now, and let not this near tragedy divide us further but link us all in a common goal.

*Cont’d on next page*

**Something to Think About:**

**“A MAN, WHO CARRIES A CAT BY THE TAIL, LEARNS SOMETHING HE CAN LEARN NO OTHER WAY.” Mark Twain**

***Sometimes in life the best teacher is through experience.***

**“Journey Passport” Program**

The Houston Valley is participating in the “Journey Passport” program which includes 33 challenges that allow participants to earn six unique Scottish Rite challenge coins. The passport program is designed to take brothers throughout the Valley of Houston and the Southern Jurisdiction of the Scottish Rite. To learn more and get a passport, contact Brother Jason Rees 32° KCCH at: [acompass@yahoo.com](mailto:acompass@yahoo.com)

**The Houston Valley Herald Email List**

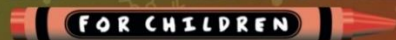
This publication is printed monthly and distributed at stated meetings of the Valley of Houston for the benefit of the brethren assembled. *The Houston Valley Herald* is also available online at [www.HoustonScottishRite.org](http://www.HoustonScottishRite.org) (Click the “Newsletter” tab). Anyone is welcome to receive this publication via email as well. To join our mailing list, email [acompass@yahoo.com](mailto:acompass@yahoo.com)

**Attention Brothers!  
Join the Challenge!**

**THE HOUSTON VALLEY SCOTTISH RITE**  
Christmas Toy Lodge Challenge  
September 1 - December 1, 2024



**TEXAS  
SCOTTISH RITE HOSPITAL**



[www.tsrhc.org](http://www.tsrhc.org)

Attention to all Houston Valley area Masonic Lodges  
Donate toys to win a Christmas Dinner provided and served by  
the Houston Valley Scottish Rite at your lodge's stated meeting.  
The Rules are simple!!

The Lodge who donates the most toys wins.  
Toys can be dropped off at the Houston Valley Scottish Rite building  
starting September 1, 2024

Please call and coordinate before delivery  
713-432-1980

Any and All Questions please email [acompass@yahoo.com](mailto:acompass@yahoo.com)

*Cont'd from front, "A House Divided..."*

The common goal is to follow the law of love. Love one another. Let us recall the words of President John F. Kennedy:

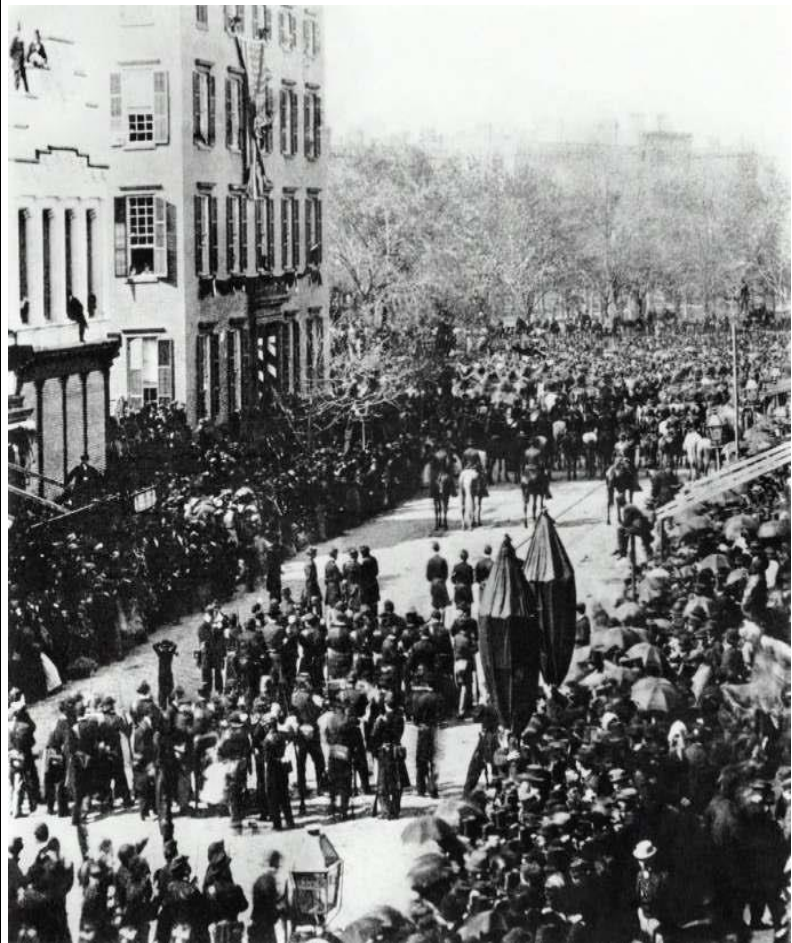
**“Our most basic common link is that we all inhabit this small planet. We all breathe the same air. We all cherish our children's future. And we are all mortal.”**

Brothers I hereby charge you and challenge you to renew your oaths to God and to one another. To be the leaders and set the examples in our communities. Share what we, members of our ancient craft, have learned and are still learning. To accept one another, to not judge a man by his creed, color, religion, nor political affiliation. Where we meet, act, and part upon the level.

It is our DUTY to show the world our light and let the light of our Brotherly love push away the darkness of ignorance and violence.

One of the most honorable men in history is Abraham Lincoln. After he was assassinated, he was beloved not just by his friends, but also by men that once referred to him as their enemy. Below were the closing words from his second inaugural address on April 4, 1865, only eleven days before he was struck down:

***"With malice toward none with charity for all with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right let us strive on to finish the work we are in to bind up the nation's wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow and his orphan ~ to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations."***



**In the above picture of Abraham Lincoln's funeral procession there are two children in the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor window. One of them is 7 year old future President, and future Mason, Teddy Roosevelt!**

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