



THE HOUSTON VALLEY HERALD

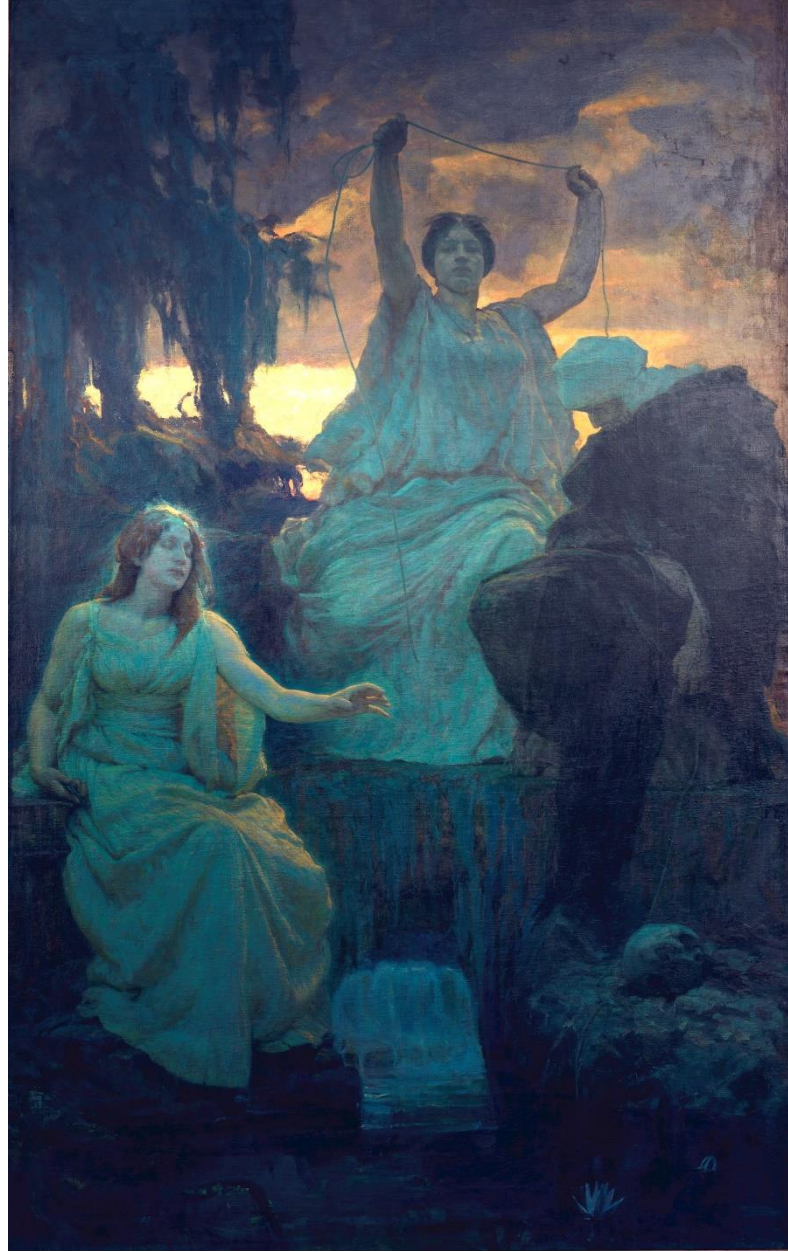
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The Noblest Destiny of Man

By ADAM B. OLIVIER 32°
Editor-in-Chief

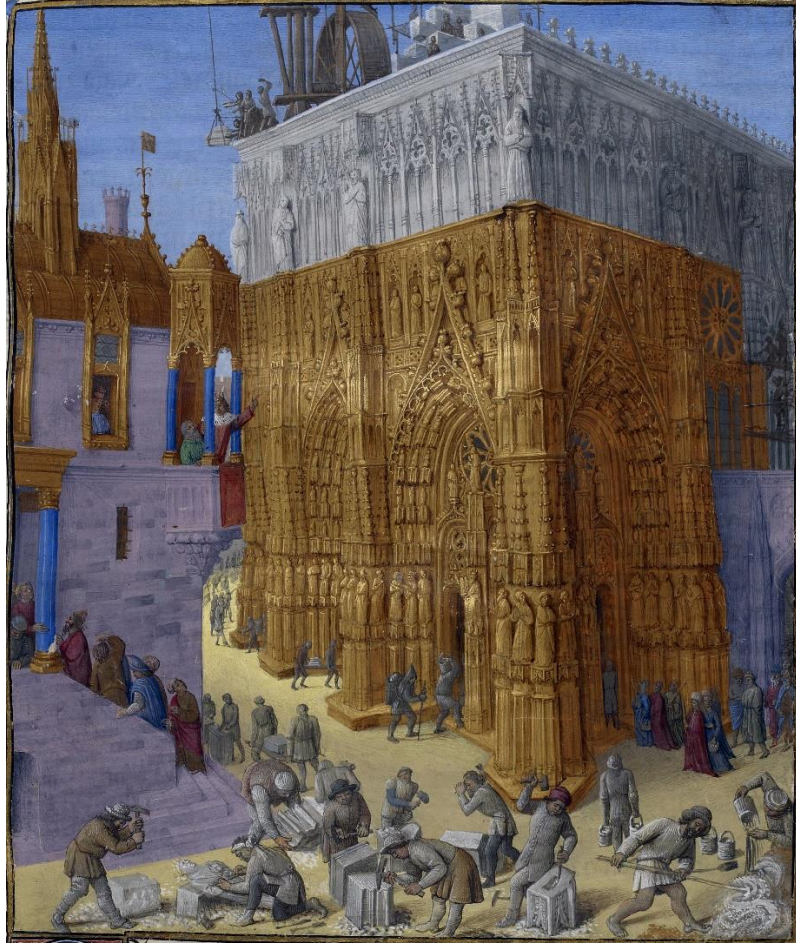


The Norns (1894) by Alois Delug. In Norse mythology, Norns are deities who spin the threads of fate, meaning that they choose the fate of human destiny.

There is a temptation in life to slowly age while on autopilot. This is not easy to notice over the course of a few days, but it is something that most middle-class or working age American men have experienced. Sure, every day is unique in some way. But what is really going on in your life? You wake up, get ready, go to work, and come home fast enough to maybe eat dinner before the sun sets. Then you go to sleep and repeat the process.

At some point we evaluate where we are in life and hopefully we have long-term goals and short-term objectives to get somewhere beyond where we are now. But even then, when a man has a future that he is working towards, is it enough or is it what he truly wants in life?

It can be easy to lose sight of what is important, especially for those of us who started with, or currently have, very little money or material things. It is hard to understand for some people that after the initial rush wears off, most material objects will not offer us sustainable meaning and fulfillment. Think of a new apartment or
Continued on the back.



Construction of The Temple of Jerusalem (c. 1470) by Jean Fouquet.

Work Distinguishes a Scottish Rite Reunion

Researched By SETH D. HUDSON 32° KCCH
Contributor

As our next reunion is upon us, it is doubtful that many appreciate the angles of activity and preparations necessary to make ready for a Scottish Rite Reunion. There are committees which perform necessary functions, so many of them that as a matter of justice an attempt to enumerate them will not be made here, as the work of all committees are pertinent; then there are degree workers, rehearsals of degrees, and many other items necessitating careful planning. This is why the whole presentation of the degrees runs so smoothly in the Houston Valley and why there is no confusion. All of this makes more forcible the lessons and knowledge gained from each degree by the candidates.

Just as the work of the properties crew and booth arranges the props, virtual drops, and lights so that the whole operation “clicks” on time, there is a fundamental characteristic Scottish Rite Masonry accomplishes by work in all Masonic endeavors. Albert Pike, in *Morals and Dogma*, says:

“It is because Masonry imposes upon us these duties that it is properly and significantly styled *work*; and he who imagines that he becomes a Mason by merely taking the two or three first degrees, and that he may, having leisurely stepped upon that small elevation, thenceforward worthily wear the honors of Masonry is strangely deceived.”

The idea of striving, with intensity, so that one’s whole
Continued on the back.

Continued from front, "The Noblest Destiny of Man."

home you may have moved to in the past. After a while, it just becomes your home.

If upgrading from a house with nine rooms to a house with ten and a half rooms does not bring you sustained meaning, or buying a new processor for your computer, or upgrading to a new table saw, then what will? The specificities change from person to person, but Illustrious Brother Albert Pike 33° briefly writes on this topic in chapter four of *Morals and Dogma*, "Secret Master."

"That our influences shall survive us, and be living forces when we are in our graves; and not merely that our name shall be remembered; but rather that our works shall be read, our acts spoken of, our names recollected and mentioned when we are dead, as evidences that those influences live and rule, sway and control some portion of mankind and of the world, - this is the aspiration of the human soul.

"To learn, to attain knowledge, to be wise, is a necessity for every truly noble soul; to teach, to communicate that knowledge, to share that wisdom with others, and not churlishly to lock up his exchequer, and place a sentinel at the door to drive away the needy, is equally an impulse of a noble nature, and the worthiest work of man," Pike wrote.

In essence, the meaning of life is to do meaningful things. While a working man may not have a job he particularly enjoys, he still has his free time to pursue his hobbies and do his part to make the world a better place, or to create something incredible.

An elderly man who no longer works and has lost the youthful flexibility and energy his body once had has something that young men do not: the better part of a century of experience, wisdom, and knowledge. In one way or another, he has the ability to create some kind of masterpiece that his younger self would never be able to do, or did not have the time to do.

Meaningful things do not have to be physical creations or abstract creations like a book. Serving in the military can be a meaningful thing, volunteering in your local community can be a meaningful thing, running for mayor and changing your town for the better is a meaningful thing.

We build monuments for men who did great things, meaningful things. Some of these things changed the world and the course of civilization, and some of these things were smaller like protecting a forest, founding a hospital, or writing down truths in a time when it was illegal to do so.

"To attain the truth, and to serve our fellows, our county, and mankind – this is the noblest destiny of man," Brother Pike wrote. "Hereafter and all your life it is to be your object. If you desire to ascend to that destiny, advance!"

Announcements

416th Houston Valley Reunion

The 416th Reunion will be held in honor of our departed brother, Patrick G. Lovitt, 32°. The reunion will be held on the Saturdays of: April 29, May 6, and May 13, 2023. The 4° - 17° shall be conferred on April 29; the 18° - 29° shall be conferred on May 6; and the 4°, 14°, 18°, 30°, 31°, and 32° shall be conferred on May 13. Breakfast will be available each day.

"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

The Houston Valley Herald Email List

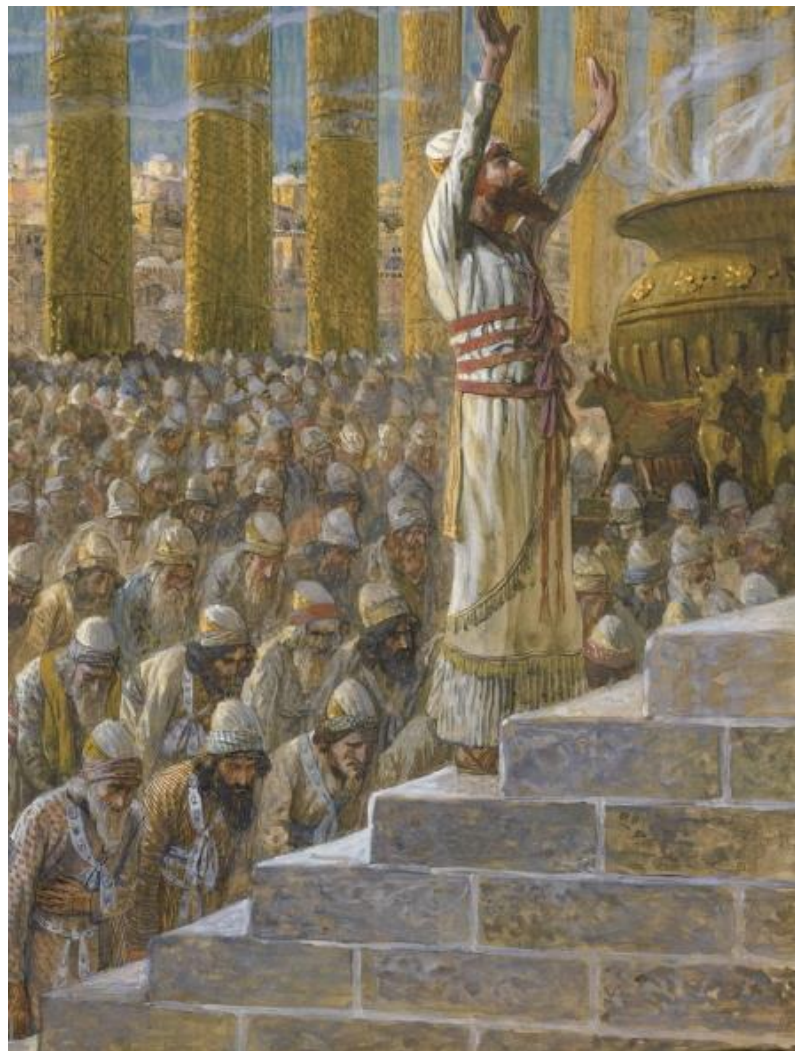
This publication is printed monthly and distributed at stated meetings of the Valley of Houston for the benefit of the brethren assembled. *The Houston Valley Herald* is also available online at www.HoustonScottishRite.org (Click the "Newsletter" tab). Anyone is welcome to receive this publication via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

Continued from front, "Work Distinguishes a Scottish Rite Reunion."

surrounding is charged with that inwrought attitude is noted by the late Dr. W.C. Crutcher, a brother of the Dallas Valley and the last mayor of East Dallas, when he said, "Man may achieve what he requires, when he desires sufficiently strong. There is not limit to his capacity, if he labors to his ability."

Those who erect material structures find delay and hinderances many times in not being able to secure skilled workmen, needed materials, because the weather is unfavorable, or an account of labor troubles. It is a happy thought that there are no shortages or hindrances of this kind in the master plan of the Scottish Rite; the degrees here give us the blueprints and the various plans for workmen to follow which will bring the sections into harmony.

Scottish Rite Masonry, through its beautiful and impressive series of degrees: the Ineffable Degrees, from the 4° to 14°; the Historic and Religious Degrees, from the 15° to the 18°; the Philosophic and Chivalric Degrees, from the 19° to the 13°; and the official Degrees, the 31° and 32°, endeavor to teach what the wisest and best of our race, in all the past ages, learned and taught of all systems of Religion, Worship, Philosophy, and Morals. These degrees enlarge your mental vision that you may develop greater Love for God, Humanity, and Country.



King Solomon Dedicates The Temple at Jerusalem (c. 1896) by James Tissot.

In his poem entitled "The Temple of Living Stones," Lawrence N. Greenleaf wrote these words:

*Although our past achievements we with honest pride review,
As long as there's rough ashlar there is work for us to do;
We still must shape the living stones with instruments of Love
For that eternal Mansion in the Paradise above;
Toil as we've toiled in ages past to carry out the plan, -
'Tis this, -The Fatherhood of God, the Brotherhood of Man!*

Men are not only taught to work but to strive toward improvement "by an unconquerable faith in God." The particular "Book" of each brother is revered, and those who seek may find the Master's Word there.

As we begin our various labors to make the upcoming reunion a success, let us be reminded of the words of Brother Truth in the 27°, "Masonic labor is to learn – and to teach others," and the charge for each of us to the performance of that duty.