

12 LANDMARKS OF THE ORDER OF THE EASTERN STAR

By CORRINE MALIN

A LANDMARK IS A MARK TO DESIGNATE THE BOUNDARY OF LAND; IT IS ANY CONSPICUOUS OBJECT ON LAND THAT MARKS A LOCALITY OR IT MAY BE AN EVENT WHICH MARKS A TURNING POINT. ANY OF THESE THREE DEFINITIONS ARE SUITABLE TO OUR USE IN EXPLAINING THE LANDMARKS OF THE ORDER OF THE EASTERN STAR.

ROB MORRIS, IN FOUNDING THE ORDER OF THE EASTERN STAR, GAVE TO THE ORDER THESE GREAT LANDMARKS. WE HAVE TWELVE OF THESE MARKERS, WHICH IF GIVEN PROPER PLACE IN OUR LIVES WILL BIND US IN SUCH A WAY THAT ALL WITH WHOM WE COME IN CONTACT WILL KNOW THAT WE ARE FOLLOWERS OF THE STAR IN THE EAST. OUR LANDMARKS SHOULD BECOME CONSPICUOUS ENOUGH OBJECTS TO MARK THE LOCALITY OF OUR CHAPTERS AND, IN ACCEPTING THEM UPON OUR INITIATION, TO GIVE US AN EVENT WHICH SHOULD SURELY BE A REAL TURNING POINT IN OUR LIVES.

THE LANDMARKS OF THE ORDER OF THE EASTERN STAR ARE THE FOLLOWING AND NONE OTHER:

FIRST, AND MOST IMPORTANT, OUR BELIEF IN THE EXISTENCE OF A SUPREME BEING, WHOM WE HONOR WITH REVERENCE AND OBEDIENCE. WITHOUT THIS FIRST MARK WE WOULD HAVE NONE OF THE OTHERS. IT MIGHT BE CALLED THE CORNERSTONE.

SECOND, THE FIVE DEGREES OF OUR ORDER BUILT UPON THE EMBLEM OF THE MASTER'S CARPET - UPON THE FIGURE HAVING FIVE SIDES AND FIVE ANGLES, THE PENTAGON AND SIGNET OF KING SOLOMON. WE HAVE THE DEGREES - ADAH, THE DAUGHTER, FIDELITY AS EXPRESSED BY JEPHTHAH'S SACRIFICE OF HIS DAUGHTER TO GOD; - RUTH, THE WIDOW, DEVOTED TO RELIGIOUS PRINCIPLES AND CONSTANCY; - ESTHER, THE WIFE, HEROIC LOYALTY, REMAININ TRUE TO KINDRED AND TO NATION; - MARTHA, THE SISTER, FAITH IN THE HEALING AND SAVING POWER OF JESUS THE CHRIST; AND - ELECTA, THE MOTHER, A PRESENTATION OF COURAGE, CHARITY, AND HOSPITALITY.

THIRD, THE STABILITY OF OUR ORDER, PROCLAIMING IT TO BE UNCHANGEABLE. DIFFERENT JURISDICTIONS SOMETIMES DIFFER IN MINOR DETAILS OF FORM, BUT OUR NAME, THE NAMES OF OUR DEGREES, AND THE MODES OF RECOGNITION ARE THE SAME THE WORLD OVER. TRULY, A DEPENDABLE LANDMARK.

FOURTH, THE TRIANGLE IN A BALANCED WHOLE, TEACHING ITS LESSONS OF MORAL AND BENEFICENT PURPOSES. OUR LESSONS ARE SCRIPTURAL, OUR TEACHINGS ARE MORAL, AND OUR PURPOSE BENEFICENT. WHAT MORE COULD ONE DESIRE IN ANY ORGANIZATION. THE ORDER MAKES NO CLAIM TO BE OUR SUBSTITUTE FOR THE CHURCH. IT IS RATHER A SUPPLEMENT TO IT. IN THE CHURCH, WE EMPHASIZE SPIRITUAL MATTERS FIRST; IN OUR ORDER OUR PURPOSE IS MORAL. HOWEVER, THE TEACHINGS OF BOTH ARE INTERTWINED AS BOTH TAKE THE SCRIPTURES AS A BASIS FOR THEIR BELIEFS; BUT ONE DOES NOT TAKE THE PLACE OF THE OTHER.

FIFTH, OUR SACRED TRUST, THE OBLIGATION OF REMAINING TRUE TO THE ORDER UNTIL DEATH. THIS IS BASED UPON THE HONOR OF THOSE WHO OBTAIN THEIR SECRETS AND IS FRAMED UPON THE PRINCIPLE THAT WHATEVER BENEFITS ARE DUE THE MASONS TO RELATIVES, RECIPROCAL DUTIES ARE DUE FROM THE RELATIVES TO THE MASONS.

SIXTH, OUR OBLIGATION ITSELF WHICH IS VOLUNTARILY ASSUMED, IS PERPETUAL, FROM THE FORCE OF WHICH THERE IS NO RELEASE. TOO OFTEN, WE FEAR, THE OBLIGATION BECOMES FORMAL WORDS RATHER THAN SOLFVN OATH. THERE IS NO RELEASE FROM OUR OBLIGATION.

SEVENTH, THE SACRED TRUST OF OUR BALLOTING, BINDING US TO SECRECY, JUSTICE, AND GOOD FAITH. THE BALLOT MUST ALWAYS BE CLEAR TO SECURE AN ELECTION. IT MUST BE ABSOLUTELY WITHOUT DEBATE AND MUST BE KEPT INVIOLEBLY SECRET. LET ME REPEAT THAT AGAIN - IT MUST BE KEPT INVIOLEBLY SECRET. MORE UNHAPPINESS HAS COME TO

CHAPTERS OVER DISOBEDIENCE TO THIS PRECEPT. PERHAPS, THAN TO ANY OTHER IN THE ORDER.

EIGHTH, THE DEGREES CANNOT BE CONFERRED UNLESS A BROTHER IN GOOD STANDING SHALL PRESIDE - PROVIDING IN CASE OF EXTREME EMERGENCY THE MOST WORTHY GRAND MATRON MAY GRANT PERMISSION IN WRITING FOR A SISTER TO ACT IN PLACE OF A BROTHER. THIS LANDMARK BRINGS TO US THE CLOSENESS OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE MASONIC LODGE AND THE ORDER OF THE EASTERN STAR. AS MEMBERS OF THE ORDER, I AM SURE WE ALL VALUE AND APPRECIATE THIS RELATIONSHIP.

NINTH, THE LEGAL OUTLET FOR ANY ILL-OFFENSE WHICH, THROUGH CARELESSNESS, MISUNDERSTANDING, PETTY DESIRE, MIGHT COME TO THE ORDER. EVERY MEMBER IS AMENABLE TO THE LAWS OF THE ORDER AND MAY BE TRIED FOR OFFENSES BY HER/HIS OWN CHAPTER OR A CHAPTER WITHIN WHOSE JURISDICTION THE MEMBER WHO COMMITTED THE OFFENSE RESIDES. WE ARE GLAD THAT WE HAVE SO SELDOM HAD TO INVOKE THIS

DISCIPLINE AND THAT THE GREAT MAJORITY OF OUR MEMBERS ARE FINE UPSTANDING PEOPLE.

TENTH, THE MEMBERS HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO APPEAL A DECISION BY TAKING FROM THE SUBORDINATE CHAPTER THE DECISION AND APPEALING TO THE GRAND CHAPTER ON ITS EXECUTIVE BOARD TO INSURE JUSTICE. THUS WE HAVE JUSTICE AND TOLERANCE EXEMPLIFIED.

ELEVENTH, PLACES IN THE HANDS OF THE CHAPTER MEMBERS THE POWER TO DECIDE UPON THE MEMBERSHIP OF ELIGIBLE CANDIDATES. EACH SUBORDINATE CHAPTER IS A UNIT IN ITSELF AND GOVERNS ITSELF. IT ALONE DECIDES WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR MEMBERSHIP.

TWELFTH, THE RIGHT OF VISITATION TO ANY REGULAR CHAPTER UNLESS LAWFUL OBJECTION IS MADE TO SUCH VISITOR.

THUS WE ARE BOUND. INTERLOCKED WITH BONDS OF LOVE AND SYMPATHY WE FIND THESE TWELVE GREAT LANDMARKS OF OUR ORDER. WE ARE ALL PROUD OF OUR LANDMARKS, OF THEIR STRENGTH, THEIR UNCHANGEABILITY, AND THEIR JUSTICE. IN KEEPING THEM IN MIND AT ALL TIMES AND MAKING THEM OUR INDIVIDUAL MARK, WE SHALL TRULY BECOME MEMBERS WHO ARE WORTHY OF SAYING: "I HAVE SEEN HIS STAR IN THE EAST AND HAVE COME TO WORSHIP HIM."