

The Temple Artisan

Oct-Nov-Dec 2017

Behold, I give



unto thee a key.

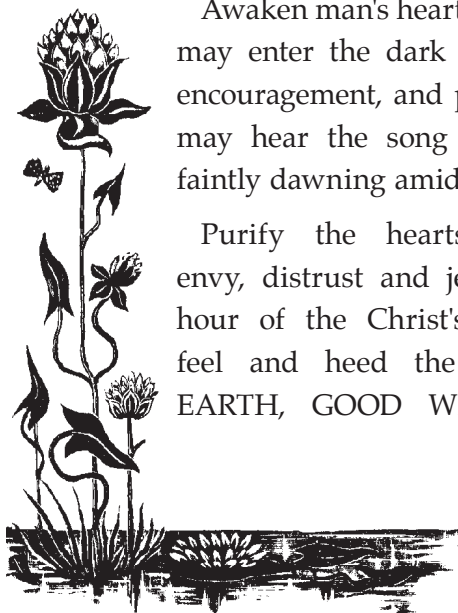
CHRISTMAS

Thou, O Son of God, the Christ Child, Who radiatest Light from Thy throne: Thou, O builder of worlds, Who sendest forth that inner energy of love and compassion that man may find his way back to Thee through the maze and entanglement of his lower creations.

Awaken man's heart that Thy Christly forces may enter the dark places and bring hope, encouragement, and peace; that Thy children may hear the song of the New Day now faintly dawning amidst the world's confusion.

Purify the hearts filled with hatred, envy, distrust and jealousy, so that at this hour of the Christ's Day they may hear, feel and heed the words, "PEACE ON EARTH, GOOD WILL TOWARD MEN!"

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EDITORIAL MIRROR

The final quarter of this Temple year 2017 has been one of preparation, welcome, and celebration. Much of October was spent planning for the mid-November commemoration of the 119th anniversary of the founding of the Temple, an annual event that grew into an international gathering with the arrival of two groups of Russian-speaking Temple members. Special meetings were held over the weekend of November 11 and 12, before the formal service for the actual Temple birthday on November 15.

The Open Gate was pressed into service in early November, when nine Templars arrived from St. Petersburg, Russia, for their three-week stay in Halcyon. Eleven more Temple members traveled from the San Francisco Bay Area in time for the celebratory weekend, which was filled with special meetings, a group luncheon, study classes, and other ceremonies. Since only half the group spoke only Russian, it was truly a time for communicating heart to heart, made memorable and meaningful through the efforts of resident Russian speakers who translated the proceedings.

This celebration was followed in short order by the Thanksgiving holiday, and then Christmas — a season to “Commune with thy God, thy Higher Self, and thine own Soul, for in that communion lies thy strength, thy fortitude,” as we are counseled in the Mountain Top message entitled Commune. With the onset of winter’s shorter days, the season of the Christ guides us to look within and be grateful for lessons learned.

Two articles in this issue of the Artisan may interest you. The first is a paper written by Damian Rollison, entitled “Who Are You?” Damian was born and raised here at the Center, and we welcome his thoughts on the problems confronting all of us as we grow and explore the meaning of life for ourselves and others. The second, “Faith in Gratitude,” was presented by our good friend Paul Ivey at this year’s Temple Convention. Both encourage thoughtful reflection during this time of inner quiet.

We look forward to a new year during which we have endless opportunities for demonstrating the depths of our love, faith, and hope to all we encounter.

— *Eleanor L. Shumway*
Guardian in Chief



Backyard Beauty. Photo by Anne R. Dunbar

WHO ARE YOU?

It's been five years since I've written a Temple talk. I suppose I've written six or seven of them over the years. Back when I wrote my first talk on Thoreau, which Harold Forgostein asked me to do when I was about eighteen, I would imagine that it didn't seem like an odd thing at all to spend a few hours musing about the meaning of life and man's place in the universe in order to share my point of view on these matters with an audience. When I was eighteen, I did that sort of thing all the time. I filled journals with poetry and prose, shared my writing with friends, expressed my thoughts in classes on literature, philosophy, and art. I used to carry a little pocket journal wherever I went so I wouldn't miss the chance to write down some chance thought when the mood struck me. Funny to think how those pocket journals were roughly the size and shape of a cell phone.

The great poet John Ashbery, who died a few weeks ago, wrote a line that goes, "In school all the thought got combed out." I think about that line in relation to what happened to me during college and especially in graduate school. Grooming, refining, and expanding my brain was great up to a point, but somehow it ended up combing out a lot of what made me curious to learn, write, and think in the first place. I was left less inspired and more stressed out about whether I could ever compete for tenure and whether I really believed in the goals of literary scholarship. Eventually my doubts got the better of me and I drifted away from that world into what is euphemistically called private enterprise.

I began working to design computer software for commercial purposes, which is still my profession today. If I think about how that career relates to the values I had as a young man, I would say that in the most obvious sense, it doesn't. But I also think that in some ways it protects those values and allows me to retain them, even though that might seem contradictory.

My mother said something to me years ago that struck me as incredibly odd, and I've been trying to figure it out ever

since. She said whatever you're really good at you should never use that talent to make money. It cheapens the gift. At the time, and even still today, it strikes me that this point of view stands in opposition to almost everything you hear in this culture, no matter what someone's background. A singer's dream is to win American Idol. A computer programmer wants to create the next Facebook. A writer wants to publish the great American novel. Making money may not be the best way to sum up those goals, but surely that's part of it. In America, money is the most common measuring stick of value. Value is the measure, in turn, of success. And if you have a gift, isn't success its fulfillment?

I still don't know if I agree with her but it makes me think about things, including my current job. The software I help to build does not create good in the world in any obvious way. It's software for companies who want to get more customers. But in an odd moral twist, I find the very venality of that goal to be somewhat purifying. When I started out in the academic world, I was naïve enough to think that that world would be populated by pure-hearted idealists who only lived to seek the truth. In actuality, it was full of politics and backbiting, and even worse, the scholarship we produced seemed designed to be a special kind of commercial product, one that would advance your career, rather than something borne of a desire to gain and share knowledge for its own sake. We talked and wrote in an odd jargon that made us sound very smart to each other but sometimes it felt like we weren't saying much of anything that mattered.

The feeling was similar to the one that I had while working in publishing at Random House, my first real job after college. I started there with some grandiose ideas about what literary publishing would be like – Random House after all was the publisher of Charles Dickens, John Steinbeck, George Orwell, and James Joyce. But after a few months it became clear to me that for the most part, we might as well have been mass producing shoes or bricks or refrigerators. Working in publishing was all about marketing a product. I moved on with the same

disillusionment that would later cause me to quit grad school.

Where I work now, no one pretends they are doing anything but marketing a product, which leaves me a certain freedom to focus on the abstract intellectual challenges of software design without worrying about whether or not I'm selling my soul. I know damn well I am. It's comforting in a way.

Which is not to say that the capitalistic dreams of conquering the market with which I'm surrounded on a daily basis mean very much to me. They don't. I think of it as all so much theater. At this stage in my life, the greed and materialism of the business world doesn't shock me in the least, and neither does it interest me. I recognize that the engines of commerce are fueled by it and I accept that. It's a basic human function after all, not the noblest of the human functions but undoubtedly necessary.

But this brings me back to writing Temple talks. It occurs to me as I sit down to write another one today, five years from the last time, that Temple talks act as markers in my life, moments when I've been asked to sit down and reflect on what matters to me, not for an academic purpose or a commercial purpose or any external purpose at all, except to share some ideas with you. And if I compare myself at eighteen with myself at twenty-six or thirty-five or myself today, I have to candidly admit that the time I give myself to do that sort of thing is much less abundant now than it was then.

I could chalk it up to a lot of things. I work many hours a day. I travel a lot for work. I spend my leisure time with my wife and kids. Life is rich and full but it doesn't leave a lot of room for reflection. I wonder too whether in the natural course of things, it makes sense that in the middle of your life, the phase I solidly occupy now, earning a living and raising a family consume most of us. These are important and worthwhile pursuits after all. And during this time, we are outward-directed rather than inward.

That doesn't mean, of course, that inwardness should be entirely neglected. It's just a matter of remembering to create occasions for reflection, such as this occasion now. Whereas in the past I might

have written a Temple talk all day in a café, with no particular distraction to worry about except the meanderings of my own attention, today I'm writing late in the evening after a day of soccer games, bake sales, baby diapers, and dishes, with a cup or two of green tea to keep me awake. It's not the same. But something endures.

I'm thinking today about what that something is. Hence my title, "Who Are You?" When I ask this I'm also asking "Who am I?" or "Who are we?" What is that being within us that persists amidst the changes that seem to transform us so dramatically?

When it comes to examining who we really are, we can set some notions aside very quickly. We know we are not our occupations. This is true whether the occupation is a calling or merely a job. Doctor or computer programmer; lawyer or teacher; builder of homes or roads or bridges; these occupations might reflect your values or your talents, but they don't define who you are. I know this because of the feeling I get when I meet someone new and the inevitable question is spoken by one of us: "So, what do you do?" We want to know because we think it tells us something useful about the person, but mostly what it tells us is where to slot them in the social matrix we all carry in our heads. A person's occupation may tell you what type of person he or she is, how much education they've received, how much they probably earn, maybe even something about their politics or values, but it doesn't tell you who they are.

What about education, since we've brought that up? Are we perhaps the sum total of everything we've learned? I think of how I've been transformed by certain teachers or books I've read, and I'm tempted to conclude that I wouldn't be all that I am without them. But I don't think my education defines me any better than my occupation does. One reason I say that is because some of the most profound educational experiences in my life have been experiences of recognition rather than transformation. I'll just mention one example – *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* by Mark Twain, a book I read countless times as a child. Because I related to Huck on a deep level, as a clever child who didn't fit in and who had to face tough moral challenges on his own, I

was drawn to him and wanted to learn from him. But the most important thing I learned from Huck was to recognize myself more clearly. I didn't change as a person by reading that book. I merely opened the shutter a little wider on my own camera lens.

What about our beliefs? I'll admit that some of my beliefs, whether spiritual or political or moral or otherwise, are so dear to me that they're almost impossible to separate in my mind from who I am. I couldn't imagine myself believing any differently. I relate to other people on the basis of these beliefs, finding myself drawn to those who agree and frustrated by those who don't. Try as I might, I often simply can't see the world through the lens of the opposing view. So surely my beliefs define me as a person?

Not really. There's a chink in that armor as well. I see that clearly when my beliefs change profoundly and without notice. I'm glad that I can sometimes be open-minded enough to allow that to happen, because it seems to me we should always be willing to change our position when presented with new and compelling evidence that refutes it. But it must be true by extension that if I can sometimes completely change my mind about some specific belief I previously held very strongly, then all of my beliefs must be at least somewhat fragile and subject to change. Therefore, my beliefs couldn't possibly define me.

I think the problem presents itself even more clearly when beliefs contradict each other. This happens more often than you think. You might, for instance, believe in the sacredness of all life but have no qualms about squashing a fly. You might feel we are ruining the earth with our dependence on fossil fuels, and you might be so convinced of that that you go out and put a bumper sticker advertising your views on your gas-guzzling automobile. Our beliefs are full of these contradictions, probably because they are mostly felt rather than reasoned out.

But I think there's a seed of an answer in this. Walt Whitman wrote, "Do I contradict myself? Very well then, I contradict myself. I am large. I contain multitudes."

Contradiction gets at the inner truth behind the belief, an inner truth that simply can't be accessed using words. It's that same inner truth that I felt when I read *Huckleberry Finn*.

When I lived in New York in the 1990s and worked at Random House, they gave us a free pass to the Museum of Modern Art. Still a young idealist, I used to walk six blocks on my lunch break from the Random House building on Lexington Avenue to the museum, just so I could look at Van Gogh's *Starry Night*. It was a short lunch break and a long walk so I didn't have time to look at anything else. But for some reason I couldn't get enough of that painting. It was such an overwhelmingly real thing, after so many years of seeing it in books and postcards. The painting was nothing like the reproductions. It was full of marks of the artist's hand and signs of his intense feeling. The painting takes a nondescript scene and transforms it into a field of unbridled energy. Whoever could see the world like that must be either a saint or crazy.

But again, if I had to sum up the feeling of looking at *Starry Night* day after day and asking it to tell me something, I'd sum it up by saying that I was doing nothing more than recognizing myself in an unexpected guise. That's what I've always gotten from art, music, literature, and even in a way from history, science, and math. A better vantage point from which to view oneself.

But I don't read that as a selfish sentiment. In fact, it would be just as accurate to say that when I recognize myself in *Starry Night* or *Huckleberry Finn*, it's a matter of seeing oneself in the other. I don't have any special connection to Van Gogh or Mark Twain. They lived decades before me in different parts of the world and had life experiences far distant from my own. Yet I see myself in their works. Probably this is a hint that what I usually think of as myself, that loose assembly of occupation, education, beliefs, upbringing, appearance, social standing, or whatever you might list, is just so much furniture. What I really am is that something I share with others.

I don't know what to call it although I know it's been given many names. I suspect that naming it is part of the problem.

There's a layer of perception that you can point to with words but you can't really access it in a manner external to the thing itself. Scientists talk about the fact that when we measure the motion of subatomic particles, we're confronted by the challenge of seeing something that moves faster than the frequency of light. What we perceive as an instantaneous jump from one spot to another might in fact be a smooth line of motion, but our eyes can't see it because light itself cycles more slowly than the particle moves. You can think of language in a similar way. We illuminate something when we talk about it, but the instrument will never be fine-tuned enough to catch the thing as it actually is.

I think the self is that subatomic particle within us, connected by mysterious tendrils to the consciousness of us all. It awakens to knowledge of itself most noticeably when the barrier is broken between self and other, such as when we suddenly recognize ourselves in a book or a painting or a person standing in front of you who seems so different at first, until you realize you both are, in essence, the same. It's also true of our own self across time, that the changes you may undergo have very little to do with who you really always were.

— *Damian Rollison*



December Leaves. Photo by Anne R. Dunbar

FAITH IN GRATITUDE

In 1998, Dr. Martin Seligman developed a new school he and his colleagues called “positive psychology,” which emphasizes studying emotions such as optimism, gratitude, and forgiveness, as opposed to the traditional emphases on trauma, addiction, and mental illness. It led to practices such as gratitude journals, gratitude meditations, and even gratitude walks.

By 2007, psychologist Robert Emmons also began to study gratitude. His findings led philosopher Christopher Kaczor to ask readers of a 2015 issue of the *Washington Post* “Does belief in God enhance gratitude?” He directed us to “recent findings in positive psychology [that] point to the enormous psychological and even physical benefits of gratitude,” and even suggested that “Giving thanks leads to increased energy, generosity, enthusiasm, sociability, health and resiliency in the face of stress. Gratitude is an empirically proven path to a longer, happier life.”

In defining gratitude, we are reminded that it is “an inherently social trait because it involves a benefit, a benefactor and a beneficiary.” What is the frequency and depth of gratitude? Do we feel grateful once a year, say, on Thanksgiving, or all the time? Are we grateful for only a few things?

Faith in a larger purpose and spiritual forces adds another dimension altogether. As the article concluded: “Given faith. . . our existence is not a chance occurrence, but a divine blessing. Indeed, all the seemingly random good things in life can be seen as gifts from a loving God. . .”

It’s also important for us to remember that “Gratitude is much more than a verbal expression of thanks. Action expresses more gratitude than speech.” This active gratitude is a force that opens a gateway beyond what I like to think of as the “constipated self,” the “I deserve it” or the “world owes me” self where ego is all. Gratitude flows through one that is receptive to it, blessing oneself and others. Temple teachings tell us that gratitude is a

force that is “closely allied to the law of supply and demand” and that “Without the outpouring or setting free of this force of gratitude-thankfulness, on the accomplishment of an act of will, it is impossible for that act to be fully consummated.”

Who to thank? The teachings tell us “simply turn your thoughts inward to Omnipotent Love, and cultivate the will and the desire for awakening this force within yourself, which, when cultivated, will flow forth as naturally as does desire for the accomplishment of wish or purpose.” As Master Jesus put it in Matthew: “You are the world’s light—it is impossible to hide a town built on the top of a hill. Men do not light a lamp and put it under a bucket. They put it on a lamp-stand and it gives light for everybody in the house.” Gratitude bestows its own light.

—Paul Ivey



I BELIEVE THAT IN ME DWELLETH
EVERY GOOD AND PERFECT SPIRIT.
BELIEVING THIS, I WILL SHOW FORTH THIS DAY,
BY THOUGHT, WORD AND DEED,
ALL THAT PEFECTION THAT DWELLETH IN ME.
I AM ONE WITH GOD AND ALL GOOD.
EVIL HATH NO POWER OVER ME.
THOUGH CLOUDS AND DARKNESS
SEEM TO BE ABOUT ME,
YET DWELL I ETERNALLY IN THE LIGHT.

TREE CLEANUP

Cleanup of the trees in town continues in the wake of last winter's hurricane-force winds. Two different storms in January and February toppled dozens of trees in Halcyon, including most of the beloved Builders Grove in the center of town. It is a miracle that the memorial monument and dedication plaque from the Temple Builders to Blue Star were in no way damaged by the 25 eucalyptus trees that fell, many of which were as much as 110 feet in length. Before the storm, there were approximately 45 stately trees in that group that were planted by Temple members back in the 1920s. Sadly, most the few still standing must be taken down as they are leaning precariously. The Halcyon Cemetery lost many trees as well, but no headstones were damaged.

This continues to be a long, expensive process, and the Temple needs your help. I am asking for donations in any amount to help defray the \$15,000 in expected costs for cleanup just in the next month. We are grateful to Perry for his oversight of the process, and Calvin Cobb of Cobb Tree Service, whose company has donated time and equipment to the community.



Blue Star Memorial in the Builder's Grove. Photo by Anne R. Dunbar

WISDOM AND THE PATH OF SELF

As we have just celebrated the 119th anniversary of the founding of the Temple, it is in order to look at the timelessness of the teachings on Wisdom that we have been given. We must also be aware that, in this world of negativity and doom and gloom, it is amazing how many uplifting and harmonious things go on among and about us, as people help people, one at a time, simply because it is the right thing to do. These actions have been especially evident after the succession of recent earthquakes, hurricanes, and acts of violence that have challenged the human family all across the globe. Harold Forgostein, the fourth Guardian in Chief, used to maintain that there is always at least 51% of Good happening, for otherwise the world would fly apart. The real question is this: How do we gain the knowledge and wisdom to continue on the Path? I would like to share with you three perspectives on Wisdom that hold meaning for me.

The first is from *Teachings of the Temple*, volume 2, where we read about Wisdom and its source:

“Through the senses, we contact the different grades of universal substance, material and spiritual. By the material senses, we contact the material world. By the spiritual senses we contact the spiritual world. Therefore by contact of the polarities, these ‘pairs of opposites,’ we sense pleasure and pain, gain and loss, victory and defeat, all of which impart what is called Experience. By experience, we arrive at knowledge, by knowledge we win the power to discriminate between good and evil. We enter into the light of Wisdom. To strike another key, in the beginning the evolving pilgrim soul possesses the innocence of ignorance. Then at the end by traveling the Path, which is our self, and by contacting its shine and shadows, we evolve through the gateway of Experience to the innocence of Wisdom. We have consciously identified with the Highest Good, which is another name for God.”

As we strive for experience and the power to discriminate between good and evil, this second perspective, an analogy by

retired Presbyterian pastor Ervin G. Roorda, offers practical help as can be observed in the animal kingdom:

The Wisdom of Geese

Fact One: As each goose flaps its wings, it creates uplift for the birds that follow. And by flying in a V formation, the whole flock adds 71 percent greater flying range and is able to fly 75 percent faster than if each bird flew alone.

Lesson: People who share a common direction and sense of community can get where they're going quicker and easier because they're traveling on the thrust of one another.

Fact Two: Whenever a goose falls out of formation, it suddenly feels the drag and resistance of flying alone. It quickly moves back into formation to take advantage of the lifting power of the other birds immediately in front of it.

Lesson: If we have as much sense as a goose, we stay in formation with those headed where we want to go. We're willing to accept their help and to give help to others.

Fact Three: When the lead goose tires, it rotates back into the formation and another goose flies into the point position.

Lesson: It pays to take turns doing the hard tasks and sharing leadership. As with geese, people are interdependent on each other's skills, capabilities, and unique arrangements of gifts, talents, or resources.

Fact Four: The geese flying in formation honk to encourage those up front to keep up their speed.

Lesson: We need to make sure our honking is encouragement. In the group where there is encouragement, the production is always greater.

Fact Five: When a goose gets sick, wounded, or shot, two other geese always drop out of formation and follow it down to help or protect it. They stay with it either until it dies or is able to fly again. Then they launch out with another formation and catch up

with the flock.

Lesson: If we have as much sense as a goose, we will stand by each other in difficult times as well as when we are strong.

Overall: Though I frequently want to fly off on my own, I do well to remember the power of the flock. My theological reflection is: May God help us to be as wise as a goose.

The third source of perspective is in the form of this extensive interview with Master Hilarion. Although it was given years ago, the wisdom expressed is as fresh and new as if He is here speaking with us today:

My Children:

I told you when last I came that it might be some time ere I could come again, and it has so proven. It has been for your sake more particularly that I remained away. I believed that it was full time for you to be left for a season without special guidance, for if you were not able to stand alone after these years of contact with us, there would seem but little hope of your becoming so in the near future.

You have had much to meet from one standpoint, but that which seemed much to you was, in fact, little by comparison to that which every student of occultism must endure who passes beyond the first portal; and even now I can say but little that will be of great help to you unless you are able to bring your intuition to bear upon it and find the meat in the shell.

You must learn to seek out the hidden meaning of the messages I send you, either in instruction or by personal direction, for I am seldom able to put into comprehensible statements that which I wish to convey, not that I would infer that you are lacking in intelligence, but you put a veil over your own understanding when you carry out some personal wish or desire that is in opposition to some statement I have made, or some deep truth you have learned from other lips than mine.

Question: A member has questioned the advisability of Dr. Dower entering upon a business that brought him so

continuously among the people who were under the influence of drugs or liquor, instead of devoting his whole time to the Temple's work. I would like to have your opinion on this.

Answer: This is a very important question and involves much more than I can say in a few moments. It is sufficient for the present to say that when I first came to Blue Star and Red Star, I said to them that Red Star could engage in no business by which he could do the same amount of good to humanity that it was possible for him to do, in the way he had chosen, and I can only repeat these words tonight. Not even those most closely associated together along the line of prohibition, or physicians and others, who are treating the diseases engendered by indulgence in either narcotics or stimulants, have any true idea of the facts. Even Red Star does not fully appreciate this at present.

You know something of the pineal gland and pituitary bodies of the brain, but they are a mystery to all but the deep occultist today, and they are, and will remain, something of a mystery for some time to come, for the reason that the truth might lead to license in some instances.

The fact is that whatever may cause a higher, more rapid vibration of the molecules of those bodies (pineal and pituitary) will produce the same results, whether it be high aspiration, prayer, and concentration, or whether it be stimulation or narcotizing. This is not fully understood, as I have said. The great difference lies in the fact that, in the case of aspiration, prayer, and concentration the effect remains to a great degree, and the more rapid vibration does not tear down the structural form of those bodies, as does unnatural stimulation from any cause, such as stimulation or narcotizing. In the first instance the vibrations grow more rapid continuously during one period of life, until the neophyte raises himself, or rather becomes conscious of the universal consciousness of the Godhead and identifies himself, to some degree, with that Godhead.

In the case of stimulation or narcotizing, the victim of his own desires is very liable to wish to continue the experience gained

at first and, in his effort to do so, breaks down the structure and finally causes his own degeneration and death if the desire is not finally controlled.

So, when you understand what this process means, you will see that, not only the death of the body will ensue in many instances, but also the breaking down of the only vehicle through which intuition and higher light can be transmitted to the body.

Anything which can help or hinder this process is of corresponding benefit to the race. While it is, in many respects, to be regretted that it is necessary for Red Star to devote himself to exterior work, as said before, he could do nothing that would confer more benefit to physical man.

You must never lose sight of one fact: the Temple was not formed exclusively for the benefit of those immediately concerned. The higher purpose, the aim of all those who are true Templars, was and still is the preparation of a place where it might become possible for the overshadowing Christ to enter and send forth the message which the world has waited for so long. It would be truly impossible for such an overshadowing of the spiritual forces to enter and dwell with a number of disaffected, treacherous, inhuman elements. It could not do the work for which it came, even if it were possible to come. Such a place requires quiet, concentration, aspiration, unified endeavor, and faith in each other and in the common purpose. These are essentials; all else is nonessential.

Knowing this, you can understand that whatever ties now exist between you and those whom you have found it impossible to draw into the right relationship, you should sever those ties completely from the interior and exterior aspect and build such an inner wall of protection around yourselves in the center that no extraneous force could enter to tear it down. However, remember this very important point: if such a thing were to be done, it must not be done in a spirit of retaliation or unbrotherliness; it must be done from the standpoint I have indicated, namely that such preparation could not be made in disunion. It would not matter so much were those

people at a greater distance from you, but because of their close vicinity it is all the more needful that you put up such an inner wall.

I told you some years back just exactly what might happen to this section of the country, or to any other section where a similar center was established, if the will and thought forces of a number of people were bent in its direction with malefic intent. It seems all but impossible to you that such dire results could follow the action of a few men and women of little influence and power; it is difficult to make even advanced students realize the truth in such an instance.

You and others would be inclined to question my word if I were to tell you that the greater part of all the calamities which have occurred in this section of the country in particular, were the result of just such thought forces sent forth by design on the part of those who were inimical to the Temple work, yet such is lamentably the case. The pests, the changes of atmospheric conditions, and many other things which have and are occurring, are the final results of just exactly what I have told you would be inevitable if such actions arose.

If you will consider carefully what I have now said, I think you will see a way out of your present difficulties, if you are inclined to take it. Think with your heart, as well as your head.

Question: What is the fundamental cause of the lethargy of the Temple members and the difficulty experienced in increasing membership?

Answer: It is largely due to the causes I have before mentioned. There have been many complications in the past few months and years that would inevitably have produced just such conditions. There has been such a force opposed to the Temple that nothing but the highest aspiration and unified endeavor could have met and conquered it. You have not had sufficient help, for one thing. Blue Star is incapacitated more than half of her time by lack of the right kind of help. You require a pull, as it were, out of the slough you have permitted yourselves to sink into, AND IT IS ONLY YOUR HIGHER SELVES AND YOUR REALIZATION OF YOUR

OWN RESPONSIBILITY THAT CAN GIVE YOU THAT PULL.

Question: Has the man who is now with us, known as Mr. R., any direct relationship to the Temple movement which would warrant his recognition as a head of the Temple work by us?

Answer: This is a difficult question for me to answer in some respects. You are well aware of the signs I have given you in relation to the coming of an Avatar, which this man claims to be. Your own intuition must show you who and what he is, to a great degree. I would not be warranted in going beyond a certain point in regard to him or any other man holding a similar position. He is one of a number of people whom you have never met, or even heard of, who belong to one order of the 36th cosmic degree. He is no higher from the spiritual aspect than others belonging to some other order of the same degree. He is a man who has devoted the larger part of his life to the deep study of symbology and comparative religions. He has utilized every opportunity to acquaint himself with all the ancient symbology which he could obtain access to, and consequently has acquired a vast store of treasure in that respect which has enabled him to throw open many doors of knowledge that are closed to the average man.

I have repeatedly told you, and striven to impress upon your consciousness, that symbolism was the most important study that you could pursue, from many points of view, for he who can unravel the symbology of the ancient races can also unravel much of the phenomena of the different planes by correspondence, and that is exactly what this man has done. He has attained to a measure of knowledge which would be of incalculable benefit to each one of you, and you have the opportunity and, incidentally, an even greater opportunity than he had in the beginning. The main trouble is that he has taken much of the phenomena of the higher planes and personalized it and by so doing has shut the door to higher phases of life to which he might have attained with more humility. He could, without doubt, give you much information as regards exoteric symbolism which would be of undoubted

merit, but he cannot give you what he has not yet received.

Question: Is there any other organization of people on this planet that has any communication with Masters or entities spiritually higher than the Masters who direct the Temple movement?

Answer: That seems a needless question from some points of view. If you have understood, to any degree, of what the Great White Lodge consists with its varied Orders and Degrees, you could answer that question yourselves. The Temple, and I mean by "the Temple," the cosmic organization of the Temple, is the highest phase of manifestation on the plane of matter, and a Degree or Order of the Temple may exist without the consciousness of other Orders and Degrees touching it for a definite length of time; just as one man could belong to a lodge, or a Square of the Temple, and not be conscious of other Lodges or Squares in other lands or places, while all would belong to the Temple.

A member of any organization of acknowledged occult power could not fail to recognize as a comrade or brother any other member of the same Order or Degree. He would do so by interior rather than exoteric means. There are, you know, the various Degrees of the Great White Lodge. The Temple, that is the Cosmic Temple, is one Degree of the Great White Lodge, and any Master of any higher Degree of the Lodge might contact any individual or any group of members associated together, if they had reached a point of development which would render it possible to do so. There would be no question of higher or lower; it would depend entirely on the development of the individual himself.

Question: Father, you have reminded us very forcibly of our self-responsibility. Can you tell us in what direction lies the greatest responsibility?

Answer: I could hardly point out any single line, for the work, as a whole, is included. There is no department of the Temple work at the present time that is not crippled for lack of sufficient help in one direction or another, and I understand

largely what has been the cause of this, in one respect; but this much I say to you all, that you, individually and collectively, are responsible for the success or failure of the Temple work. The action of no one individual, no group of individuals, should occasion, by any means, a member of the Temple to desert, or to sink into a spirit of lethargy regarding the work as a whole. The plan is too big, the responsibility too great, for any one person to take it all in at any one time. So, it is only in the minutiae (the seeming little things) that any one member can work until he or she comes to the point where personal guidance is obtained.

Question: What can be done to bring in members?

Answer: Even that duty must be exercised in the right spirit. It is of great importance that people now outside our lines should be brought to a point, or place, where they can have access to the instructions and directions given by us, for they have, undeveloped to this time, a degree of force and power which could be utilized to a great degree. As far as recognition of the same is concerned, neither you nor I, nor any other person, can tell what qualities are in a man or woman until they have been given the opportunity to develop them.

Question: Should we ignore any condition here that seems unwise or wrong, and strive to help in every way?

Answer: Any condition that may seem to you unwise, or to be even wrong, in your estimation, has nothing whatever to do with your duty to the Great White Lodge and the obligations you have taken. That Lodge is perfectly capable of guiding any individual brought under its guidance in the best way possible for them. You would object to having the smallpox if it were forced upon you. You would not like it; you might feel that it was unjust and unwise and altogether wrong, and yet, your having that case of smallpox might be the means of protecting the whole section of the country from the same disease, if you did your duty in the meantime. As I have repeatedly told you all, you have no concept of the real Temple work. Every individual

in it might fail and pass out and before twenty-four hours would elapse, we would have another center of operation formed.

Remember, it is you, individually, (I say this to each one of you) that is on trial, it is not your neighbor, whoever that neighbor may be. You, the real you, have applied to the Great White Lodge for opportunity to advance, whether or not it is comfortable or convenient for your personality. The Lodge has given you the opportunity, it is for you to take advantage of that opportunity if you would win what you started out for. I have told you repeatedly that I would protect you and the work, that I would not permit Blue Star to make a mistake in anything that concerned the real interests of the Temple, for I have the power over her which would make it possible for me to exercise that right. Knowing this, can't you, for your own sake, as well as ours, keep the obligations you took to me, to the Great White Lodge, and never mind what your neighbors do? You may depend upon it, if it is wrong, the way will be blocked for them; if it is right, nothing you nor I, nor any other human being, can do will block their way. It is, as I have repeatedly stated, self-responsibility, first of all.

Question: The Pledge to the Order of the 36 speaks of blood kin. Can that strong protecting center exist if we do not have the feeling of blood kin, referred to in the instructions?

Answer: No, it cannot; no center can be formed and maintained, from the occult point of view, where that condition does not obtain. It would be utterly and entirely against all the laws of occultism which make for centralization. Your Temple Home Association, the Orders or Degrees of the Temple, rests entirely, for future existence and growth, on a condition of harmony and mutual helpfulness.

Question: I bring this out because it seems to me that conditions of inharmony that exist are due to the members saying things they ought not to say, which has caused irritation. It is the little things that cause the most trouble, and it seems to me they forget their 36 obligations.

Answer: The trouble is that both sides forget; one side may

entirely ignore and forget another promise equally important: Go to the person giving offense, in a brotherly / sisterly spirit, and ask for forgiveness. If any wrong has been done, make some endeavor to find the cause of friction, whatever it may be, and remove it. One person cannot quarrel; it takes two to do so every time. More trouble is caused in the Temple, and other organizations, through miserable misunderstandings, which make members forget the purpose of the work, than any or all things else combined. There are today conditions existing between some members of the Temple that are entirely due to misunderstandings of the motives and real purpose back of the thing which appears on the surface. The trouble is you do not get close enough together.

Question: We try to. What can we do to accomplish this that is most important?

Answer: It is the same old story, my child, of mutual effort. As said before, one cannot quarrel alone, neither can one make up a quarrel alone. It has to be a mutual attempt. This matter of feeling is one that should be put aside. If it were possible, by any means in my power, to make you understand the necessity for mutual forbearance, forgiveness, and for mutual helpfulness, regardless of apparent causes that we may have for the opposite, I should have done more for you than if I were able to give you a planet for a plaything.

Your whole development for the future depends upon what I say. If you are not able, if you have not developed to this point where you can understand and accept as truth the statement that I have made, there is no possible chance of taking a single interior step from that on which you now stand, for it is a fundamental truth of occultism. It is not a matter of convenience, or anything else in this world or another; it is a fundamental law of occultism, without recognition of which it is impossible to take a step forward. Until man has learned to love and trust his fellow man, to give him the benefit of a doubt, if there is one, to try to understand his motives and desires, even if he cannot agree with them, he is at a great disadvantage. He must put all

else aside and remember the right of each one as a human being.

Question: Whenever there is a disagreement on both sides how are we to know which side to take?

Answer: I would say one word in relation to a subject that has been brought to my knowledge. There has been, for many years, a karmic action between some of our people here that has been difficult to overcome. It has been the cause of more misunderstandings, it has drawn apart those whose every object in life should be to get closer together, if they only understood or knew their relationship to each other. Can you imagine how the devils of the eighth sphere laugh when they are able to put a stone in the way where two people might meet in mutual understanding and love; for that is exactly what occurs when discord comes between any two of this Temple family who have been in close relationship to each other for century upon century. This relationship is not fiction; it is a real thing. No two people now at this center are strangers to each other by any manner of means. You have been together over and over and over again, as I have told you, and that very close relationship is, in one sense, the cause of present friction; for you are so close together that every exterior thing that can be brought to bear to cause anything in the form of separation between close kindred makes the devils laugh, for they know what depends upon your success and harmonious evolution.

If you ever attain to the White Robe of Pure Innocence it will be because you have walked barefoot through the very worst phases of life and scratched your feet so severely that the remembrance will cling to you forever afterwards. It is only by washing the dirty garment that it becomes clean. You are now endeavoring to wash your dirty garments; be very careful that you do not get more mud on all of you, My Children, than you can wash off.

I hope that you will take with you, and seriously consider, what I have said to you tonight on all subjects, for your future, not only interiorly but exteriorly, depends entirely upon your believing and acting upon the words I have spoken.

I leave with you tonight — MYSELF. I ask you: What are you going to do with me? With my tender love and blessing,

— *Hilarion*

Acting for good is a choice we each must make as individuals, and more importantly to make together as Temple members walking the Path toward the Light of Wisdom. Then, as the Teachings tell us, “have we consciously identified with the Highest Good, which is another name for God.”

— *Eleanor L. Shumway*
Guardian in Chief



THE OFFERING OF CHRIST

ALL that thou canst take, and I have power to give,
of that I prize above all else,
I offer thee this holy day in token of the love
the greatest Friend of Man hath freely given thee and me.

May the glorious Sun of Righteousness
cast its brightest beams across thy path today,
and evermore may the shadows fall only
where there is need to halt too swiftly flying feet.

— *From the Mountain Top, Vol. III, p. 44*

NOTES ABOUT TOWN

As the days grow shorter our attention turns inward to home, holidays, and spirit ways. Even in sunny Central California winter is a time of rest and introspection, a time of planning for spring in our gardens as well as a time for nurturing our souls. All of us wish all of you a most nourishing time of year.

Andrew took a wonderful trip to India to visit sites beloved by the Roerichs. He accompanied a group from Chicago composed of Agni Yoga and Temple members. Others from Halcyon have visited sites much closer to home this fall including Lake Tahoe, Santa Barbara, San Francisco and Los Angeles. No matter where we go we are always delighted to return home.

Life here at the Center flows on in measured pace with gardens, householding, and work getting their proper attention. With Christmas rapidly approaching our focus turns to the advent of Christly forces, coupled with decorating, programing, caroling, and gift giving. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all of you.



Temple Shadows. Photo by Anne R. Dunbar

TEMPLE ACTIVITIES AND NOTICES

Temple Groups: There are Temple groups in New York City; London, England; and in Moscow and St. Petersburg, Russia; as well as several locations in Germany. Anyone wishing more information about these groups can call the Temple office in Halcyon.

The William Quan Judge Library serves Temple members, residents of Halcyon, and friends with an interest in Theosophy or who are doing research involving some of our special collections. Our library is staffed by volunteers. Hours are 9:30-11:30am on Tuesdays. Other hours are by appointment through the Temple office.

The University Center Gallery is now showing the inspiring *paintings of Alfredo Arciniaga and Harold Forgostein*. Call the Temple office at 805.489.2822 for information.

The Temple Healing Service is held at Noon each day in The Temple. All are welcome to attend.

Sunday Services are held at 10:30am in The Temple. The *Feast of Fulfillment*, the Communion Service of The Temple, is celebrated on the first Sunday of each month. *Enter the Silence*, a prayer and meditation meeting, is held the last Sunday of the month. Speakers present programs on other Sundays. The public is cordially invited to all services.

Study Classes under the auspices of Temple Officers and various Temple Orders are held regularly at 5:30pm in The Temple on Tuesdays and Fridays. Everyone is welcome to attend.

Speakers in the Sunday Services were: Speakers: August 20, Eleanor L. Shumway: *What Shall We Do?*; September 10, Jan Scott: *Blessed are the Pure in Heart* by Gertrude Tedford; September 17, Eleanor L. Shumway: *Not Again?*; October 8, Eleanor L. Shumway: *Building the Temple*; October 15, Damian Rollison, *Who are You?*; October 22, Margaret Thyrring: reading *Let There be Light* by Master Hilarion; November 19, Eleanor L. Shumway: *Wisdom and the Path of Self*.

The Temple of the People

PO Box 7100 • Halcyon, California 93421-7100

Tel: 805.489.2822 • Fax: 805.481.9446 • ginc@templeofthepeople.org
www.templeofthepeople.org