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A Discussion of the Symbolism and Meaning of Being a Knight Kadosh

A COLORADO COUNCIL OF KADOSH ORATION

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When you became a Scottish Rite Mason, you may have thought to yourself as I did, what does the word Kadosh mean or how do I live my life with the new personality of a Knight Kadosh?

Kadosh is an adjective coming from the ancient Hebraic root word, the verb Kadash meaning holy, to sanctify or to be made holy. The distinction of the adjective is that it further means or describes someone or something that is inherently sacred, has been selected or set apart, made holy or sacred by divine rite or ceremony. Is there a better way to describe the meaning or intent of the ceremonies we undergo in the Ancient & Accepted Scottish Rite?

Much of Freemasonic ritual and study, including the first two bodies of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of the Southern Jurisdiction, is spent on searching for

the Lost Word. What is this Word and why the focus on it in the lessons of Freemasonry? The search for the Word is as old as Mankind's search for why we are here, what is our purpose or the purpose of life. In the Book of John 1:1-5 the Scriptures read "1. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2. The same was in the beginning with God. 3. All things were made from him; and without him was not anything made that was made. 4. In him was life; and the life was the light of man. 5. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not." Here we have one of the two Patron Saints of Freemasonry, St. John the Evangelist equating the Word, which was the creative potency of God, with the Light which is at the root of Masonic study, Lux e tenebris - Light out of darkness.

Leaving the degrees of the Lodge of Perfection and Chapter of Rose Croix we come to the Council of Kadosh. While Mackey considered the Knights Rose Croix to be a select group of Knights Templar, within the Council are truly housed the Chivalric degrees of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite. Illustrious Brother Albert Pike included much Templar symbolism in the Council of Kadosh when he reorganized the degrees of the Southern Jurisdiction due to his intimate knowledge of the Orders having been the chartered Eminent Commander of Hugh de Payens Commandery No. 1, in Little Rock Arkansas on December 20, 1853 shortly after being appointed the Deputy of Arkansas for the Scottish Rite, March of that same year.

Knights and Knighthood were not well thought of in the middle ages, as most were lazy high born rouses accustomed to getting what they wanted with nothing much to do but drink, copulate and fight with one another. The petty infighting and skirmishes were literally tearing Christendom apart. They had the royal families at wits end, unable and not knowing how to keep control. They needed something to rally them against one common enemy not one another. Enter Pope Urban II who on November 27, 1095, preached a sermon Clermont which was the answer to the trouble making knights, as one way or the other, they would not be able to cause trouble since they wouldn't be in Christendom or they'd be killed off. He saw it as a

win/win. Urban cried "A horrible tale has gone forth. An accursed race utterly alienated from God has invaded the lands of the Christians and depopulated them by the sword, plundering and fire." He made his appeal at the end, "Tear that land from the wicked race and subject it to yourselves!" To which the people responded, "Deus vult! God wills it!," which Urban II made the battle cry of the first Crusade.

Born from the Crusades were two Chivalric Orders the Knights of St. John or Hospitallers and the Poor Fellow Soldiers of Christ and of the Temple of Solomon or Knights Templar. The Knights Templar were founded by Hugh de Payens and Godfrey de St. Omer with seven other Knights who offered their services to Baldwin II of Jerusalem in 1119 to escort Pilgrims safely to the Holy Land. In recognition of their service, Baldwin offered them quarters in a wing, more accurately the stables, of the Royal Palace on the Temple Mount, where Al Aqsa Mosque stands today. From then nefarious rumors were born.

When Bernard of Clairvaux wrote a rule for the Templars based on his Cistercian Order, chivalry was officially born. Each knight had to swear that he would defend the weak, the poor, the widows, orphans, and the oppressed. He was to be courteous, especially to women, brave, loyal to his leaders, concerned with the welfare of his subordinates. A fitting prayer of knightly ideals carved in stone at the cathedral of Chartres in France states "Most Holy Lord, Almighty Father...thou who hast permitted on earth the use of the sword to repress the malice of the wicked and to defend justice...cause thy servant here before thee, by disposing his heart to goodness, never to use this sword or another to injure anyone unjustly; but let him use it always to defend the just and right. Far cry from earlier thought by the knightly nobility.

In the Council degrees we are tried, tempted and tested multiple times in order to verify our worth before being received into the several Orders of Knighthood. This was not only to learn truths about ourselves but ensure that we learned the

profound lessons of duty and honor. In addition to a representation of the physical trials we were also educated, as were the Templars of old while they were in the Holy Land, on the several mysteries of the region that was the birthplace of Judaism, Christianity and Islam, albeit more of a Gnostic or spiritual focus than dogmatic. These trials and spiritual education lead up to the culmination of our lessons in our Order of Knight Kadosh.

Why are we provided these secular, moral and spiritual lessons and what are the duties of a true Knight Kadosh? A Knight Kadosh must first be educated with the seven liberal arts & sciences symbolically represented with the Mystic Ladder and by the mystery systems of old which teach us there is but one truth before we can undertake the duties of a Kadosh as it states in the Legenda of the degree: to War against Ignorance, against Spiritual Tyranny, against Despotism and against Vice. A Knight Kadosh must be Steadfast in adversity, as our predecessors the Knights Templar or exemplars of many traditions were persecuted such as Yeshua ben Joseph, we also can expect to be persecuted. As is preached in several schools of thought, we must not be quick or act hastily toward seeking vengeance when wronged, as is evident in the motto of the Knight Kadosh: Nekam Adonai! "Vengeance is Thine, O Lord!"

Remember the meaning of the word Kadosh, that the Knights Kadosh are set apart or selected to be the Warriors of all that is Holy or sacred. While we learn in the Lodge of Perfection why the Word was lost; in the Chapter of Rose Croix, how the Word was found; we are sworn in the Council of Kadosh to be defenders of the Word, of the one true, Most High God! If "you wish to proceed!," proceed with me! Take up your sword and your mantel. Spes mea in Deo est!

My hope is in God!