



The Kentucky Keystone



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*ME Companion Stewart F. Strickland
Grand High Priest Message*

Dear Companions of the Royal Arch Chapters of Kentucky:

Doesn't it feel good to enter upon the springtime of this capitular year? We have come through a winter that caused us some inconvenience, but in comparison to some years was rather mild. We tried something different with the Grand Veil meetings and I hope that they served well in the area of leadership development or at least whet your appetite to continue advancement in that direction. Evaluations are well underway and they seem to be going well from the reports I'm receiving from my Deputies. Good news from Iroquois Chapter, that they are not going to close but keep working and try to grow and keep the light of capitular masonry shining in their community. However, the Hopkinsville York Rite Bodies will be consolidating with the Princeton Bodies. We hate to

see them go, but it came down to there being no other viable recourse. This month will have me traveling, again, to the Eastern regions of the Commonwealth as well as to some out-of-state meetings and making reports to some of our Appendant bodies. It is a pleasure and I count it a privilege to carry the message of the Grand Chapter abroad. As we complete the first full half of this capitular year, let me thank you for the privilege of representing you across the state as well as throughout the East Central Region of the General Grand Chapter. On a slightly different note, please know that, as the full-time Pastor of a church, I am expected to be at my church on Sundays and Wednesdays, and I will be able to attend, but only a very few activities, meetings or events planned on those days. I appreciate the invitations, but don't expect me to attend. My last vacation Sunday and Wednesday will be reserved for the Grand Sessions in September.

Fraternally,

Stewart F. Strickland

Grand High Priest, 2015-2016

April Education Talk

The Twelve Tribes of Israel, Part 1.

The Twelve Tribes of Israel are the traditional divisions of the ancient Jewish people. Biblical tradition holds that the twelve tribes of Israel are descended from the sons and grandsons of the Jewish forefather Jacob and are called "Israel" from Jacob's name given to him by God.

The twelve tribes are as follows: Reuben, Simeon, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun, Benjamin, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Ephraim and Manasseh. (The Tribe of Levi will be mentioned separately in part 3 of this lesson in June)



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The numbering and listing of the twelve tribes is often misunderstood as to which clan(s) are actually included as a tribe because other tribes are, at times, mentioned. If one tribe were to withdraw from the union or to be absorbed into another, the number twelve would be preserved, either by splitting one of the remaining tribes into two or by accepting a new tribe into the union. For example, when the tribe of Levi is considered among the twelve tribes, the Joseph tribes are counted as one. However, when Levi is not mentioned, the Joseph tribes are counted separately as Manasseh and Ephraim. For the same duodecimal considerations, Simeon is counted as a tribe even after having been absorbed into Judah, and Manasseh even after having split in two (allotted land on both sides of the river) is considered one.

The story of the twelve tribes begins when Jacob and his family went down to Egypt as "70 souls" (Exodus 1:5). In Egypt the Israelite multiplied and increased very greatly; and there they became the "Israelite people." Following the death of Joseph (one of Jacob's sons), who had become viceroy of Egypt, Pharaoh began oppressing the Israelites by placing upon them burdensome labor.

God "remembered His covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob," made Himself known to Moses and rescued the Israelites from Egypt. By that time the nation numbered "600,000 men on foot" which is usually understood to be military-aged men excluding women and children.

At Mount Sinai, the Israelite nation was given its laws and regulations - the Torah - and affirmed their covenant with God. After wandering for 40 years in the desert under the leadership of Moses, the twelve tribes entered the land of Canaan with Joshua in command.

After conquering the land, each tribe was allotted an individual territory to settle. During the period of

settlement, and the subsequent period of the Judges, there was no predetermined pattern of leadership among the tribes though various crises forced the tribes into cooperative action against enemies.

Shiloh served as a sacral center for all the tribes, housing the Ark of the Covenant under the priestly family of Eli. Under the impact of military pressures, the Israelites felt compelled to turn to Samuel with the request that he establish a monarchy, and Saul was the first who was crowned to rule over all the tribes of Israel.

Upon Saul's death, David became king. Despite a lengthy struggle with the house of Saul, eventually, all of the tribal elders turned to David for royal leadership. He ruled from Hebron and later Jerusalem over all the tribes of Israel and following his death was succeeded by his son, Solomon. After the death of Solomon, the tribes once again split along territorial and political lines, with Judah and Benjamin in the south loyal to the Davidic house and the rest of the tribes in the north ruled by a succession of dynasties.

Reading and discussing this in open Chapter counts as an educational meeting on your annual inspection. Please record such in your minutes.)

Grand High Priest Itinerary April 2016

Upcoming Itinerary (Tentative and Subject to Change)

- 5- Plain City Lodge
- 7-9 - Grand Chapter Indiana
- 12- Clay Chapter, Princeton
- 14- Gr Ct of Amaranth, L'Ville
- 18- Antioch Lodge
- 19-Morehead Chapter
- 21- West KY Scottish Rite
- 26- Paducah York Rite
- 28- Edmonds Chapter, Lebanon