

Inaugural Address
Quincy G. Gant
Grand Worthy Patron

December 18, 2010

Deuteronomy 1:6-7 states: The Lord God spake, saying, “Ye have dwelt long enough on this mountain: Turn you and take your journey.” As I read this passage I couldn’t help but symbolically look at my Masonic career up to this point as being on a mountain, and the Lord saying, “Ye have dwelt long enough on that mountain, it’s time to turn, and take up another journey.” So as I embark upon it, I ask that you join me in prayer before entering this great undertaking:

Almighty and Heavenly Father, I ask that you continue to shower your blessings, mercy, and grace upon me, so that everything I do will be pleasing in your sight, for I know that nothing I have accomplished in this world or will accomplish has been my own doing, but the gift of opportunity and love that you have shown to me. I pray for the wisdom, guidance, and strength to perform the duties of this office, and that you will always oversee my decisions, acts, and actions. And as I know that you will not place anything on me that I cannot bear, I humbly accept this position, because I know I’m in your entrusted care, For I dare not trust the sweetest frame, but wholly lean on Jesus name. I pray that your blessings continue to be upon me, and us all. Amen

[Salutations]

Fifteen years or so ago when I joined the Masonic Fraternity, someone asked me, or should I say told me, “I want you to start thinking about what you want your place in history to be with this organization.” And I remember distinctively saying, “My who in what! My place in this organization? I’m busy just trying to find a place to learn all this stuff that I need to get through!” And he re replied,” If you are going to be in this organization, there are a lot of opportunities to do great things, opportunities that most people never get. To become leaders, speakers, learn, teach, better ones self and the list goes on and on.” But never did I imagine that a portion of “My place in history with this organization” of GWP can sometimes be an easy or not so easy decision, would be standing before you as the Grand Worthy Patron (GWP) of The Jurisdiction of the District of Columbia.

And Although I do recognize the seriousness and importance of this position (and I will touch on serious and important things later), I will break the ice with this - I am honored, excited, eager, and glad to be the 105th GWP this Jurisdiction has had. I’m thrilled, ecstatic, elated, and grateful, as I observed my predecessors’ one has to be committed and faithful. I’m also delighted and pleased to try and build upon what these great men have done, from our very first in Thornton A. Jackson, to our most recent in Leonard L. Young. I’m enthused and overjoyed and ready to operate in high gear. In other words, I guess I can just say- I’m happy to be here!

I must start by thanking Redemption Lodge #24 for accepting me into this great organization and starting me on my way. I will forever be grateful and I love you. To Redemption Chapter #14, you have always been one of the most supportive bodies I have joined while in this Jurisdiction. Your collective words of encouragement and never ending support in my endeavors are not forgotten and for that I am greatly appreciative. I must initially credit the late Worthy Matron Valerie Carter who asked me to be her Patron, because it was a thought that I never had, and I actually thought she was joking! I am eternally thankful for the time I served with her and the lessons learned.

And to the Worthy Matron I last served with, Past Matron Gwendolyn Marcus, I certainly thank you for the time spent and the lessons learned as well, and most important, my second year as Patron which is giving me one of the rights to be here today! But there is no truer statement that one's steps are already ordered by the Almighty, and you know not what He is preparing you for or what He has in store for you.

To every member individually and collectively of the allied, appendant, concordant, and special fraternal bodies, you all hold a special place in my heart, and I thank you as well for all that you have done for me thus far.

To the very capable Grand Lecturer and the Grand Lecturer team, you have an awesome responsibility which requires a myriad of skill sets and talents, and I have no doubt that as you deal with the multiple personalities, personas and characteristics of the Chapters and their members, that you will succeed and exceed as we work together to ensure the compliance and conformity of the work of the Chapters.

To Grand Worthy Matron (GWM) G. Delores Ellerbe, it is my pleasure to serve with you because I know you have the Order and this Jurisdiction's best interest at heart and will do nothing less than further its progress and growth, and I look forward to assisting and supporting you in the implementation of those ideas and goals.

To Most Worshipful Grand Master (MWGM) MacKinnon W. Myers, we have a long standing history as you were Worshipful Master of your lodge respectively with mine when I joined this fraternity. I thank you for your words of encouragement and advice from then until now. The selection so I thank you for the selection and the trust you have reposed in me.

Now, on to the business of the GWP. Any one of us can pick up a copy of the Grand Lodge Constitution, or the Georgiana Thomas Grand Chapter (GTGC) Constitution and By-Laws and read the duties of the GWP. How he is the official Representative of the MWGM and the Grand Lodge to the Order of the Eastern Star (OES), how he is to assist and advise the GWM in the discharge of her duties and to have a supervisory care over the affairs of the Grand Chapter, to preside over certain private and public ceremonies, grant dispensations under his private seal for the institution of new Chapters, have supervision over the Ritualistic work of the OES with the assistance of the Grand Lecturers, and to perform such other services and duties as may be deputed or entrusted

to him by the GWM or the Grand Chapter etc., etc. And MWGM, GWM, my Sisters and Brothers, I will not spend time talking about that because rest assured, so THAT is written, so THAT shall be done.

But there are some unwritten duties he is to perform. What about the unwritten duty he has to remind the brothers that the OES was created by Master Masons as an adoptive body to the Masonic Organization. And that if you adopt something it is your duty to what? Take care of it, make sure no harm comes to it, provide when it is in need, and help it to grow. Now as I have heard Inaugural Addresses of GWPs' every year for 42% of my life, a portion of them is a reoccurring theme, that there is improvement needed in this department. The time of excuses, reasons, and misconceptions need to come to an end. The time of multi-serving Worthy Patrons by necessity and not by choice need to come to an end, and the time of populating the Chapters with more brothers willing to perform their duties as adopter to adoptee need to begin.

And just as contagious as looking up is, let also be the good words that's disseminated about our great Chapters amongst the brothers who are not yet members, and to those who are new to their respective Masonic Lodges. And brothers as I do my best to lead by example, I ask that you take up the banner, walk beside me and help oversee the Chapters which contain the wives, widows, mothers, sisters, and daughters which make up what our forefathers have created, known as the OES. And to all males who are members of the Order, I may have labeled these MY unwritten duties, but my brothers they are yours too.

To the Past Grand Worthy Patrons, Past Patrons, Present Patrons and brothers who are diligently working in the Chapters, we commend you and thank you for your continued support and untiring efforts.

Now, a few words to my sisters. I have previously stated that one of my duties with the assistance of the Grand Lecturers is to oversee the work of the Chapters. Since approximately 85% of the chapters are females, most of this will pertain to you. Overall, I am satisfied with the sisters in the performance of their work (those that do it). But there is still always the necessity to minimize the replacement of officers, and Past Matrons sitting in most if not all of the seats. And this is directly related to another area that we are also working on, the increase and retention of our members. Because in increasing and retaining our membership, we in turn raise the probability of those areas being corrected.

Now I will not run down a litany of my solutions, but I will close this particular area out with this: As we continue to work on, look at, and hope for tomorrow, let us be reminded that the hope for tomorrow is in the members of today that teach, listen to, and welcome new ideas. Because we certainly do not want to reach a point where sooner or later we will have members that do not know what it means to be an Eastern Star, or just plain and simple a Chapter who has run out of tomorrows. Because whether we believe it or not, want to hear it or not, Abraham Lincoln in one of his addresses aptly put it as "The past is the cause of the present, and the present will be the cause of the future."

In conclusion, my goals and intentions for the ensuing year were intertwined in the last 10 minutes and 42 seconds of this address, but just in case you missed it—the summary of it is to better and attend to all areas that require such, and to strive to go above and beyond in the performance of the duties of the office of the GWP. To all my sisters and brothers, I am an arm tug, a tap on the shoulder, a phone call, a “Do you have a minute,” a letter, a fax (and in today’s age) a text or an e-mail away. In other words if there is anything that I can do to positively assist any of you, just let me know.

And in closing, on December 25, 1939, when addressing the citizens of the British Army as they were about to face another war with the declaration against Germany, King George VI left them with this statement: I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year,” Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown”, and the man replied, “Go out into that darkness and put thine hand into the hand of God. That shall be to thee, better than light and safer than a known way.” While I don’t believe I’m ready to go to war, nor tread into complete darkness, I do know that the hand of God.....

Fraternally Submitted,

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