
Masonic Greetings and Responses

by **Howard L. Woods, PGM, MWPHGL of Arkansas**

A version of this well known greeting and response recently circulated over the Internet. We went to the source and asked for an update. Past Grand Master Woods, the author, obliged with the version that follows. We finish this issue of The Phylaxis with a closing charge to Prince Hall Masons, also written by Past Grand Master Woods.

To: The Shriners and Daughters of Isis, we say to you, “Aleikum Es Salaam,” and as Abraham was the father of Arab through Ishmael, and the Jews through Isaac as found in the 16th chapter of Genesis, and as you travel over the Rough Sands of Life, tie your El Jamal (camel) to an Alaraf (palm tree), drink from the well of Zem Zem as Hagar and Ishmael did, a loud voice from above, says, “Es Salaam Aleikum.”

To: The Illustrious Peers and Sublime Princes, as found in the 13th chapter of Genesis, “If you go to the right, I’ll go to the left. But, if you go to the left, I’ll go to the right.” We say to you in the words of Jacques de Molay, “Mea Speas in Deo Est, and Deus Memque Jus!”

To: the Loyal Ladies of the Golden Circle, see the 40th chapter of Isaiah, the only place the word “circle” is found in the Bible, and after that, Ephesians 4th chapter, then we say, “One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism.”

To: the Knights Templar, draw your sword in defense of Maidenhood and the Christian religion, “In Hoc Signo Vincas,” or as found in Isaiah 8, “Marharlalarhashbaz.”

To: The Cyrene/Crusaders, as found in John 12, choose the ‘good part,’ “for the poor shall be with you always.”

To: the Holy Royal Arch Masons, as found in Genesis 9, when putting on the Vestments, remember the last thing that goes on: “Holiness to the Lord,” then you will understand the “bow in the heavens.”

To: the Heroines of Jericho, as found in Joshua 2, God exalts those of low birth, as in Rahab, sometimes to save His people, “Our lives for yours, if you utter not this our business,” or Matthew 21, “Tell ye Daughter of Zion, Behold, thy king cometh.”

To: the members of the Order of Eastern Star, in the Book of Genesis, 1st Chapter, God had some ‘glory’ left and He flung it into the heavens and called them ‘stars.’ But in Matthew 2, there is a question asked of Herod, Where is He that was born King of the Jews, for we have seen His Star in the East ... and of all the thousands of stars God placed in the heavens His is ‘Fairest among Thousands, Altogether Lovely.’

Last, but not least, To the Master Masons: You are the foundations of all Prince Hall Masonry, all male and female houses, as found in the foundation of the Bible, the Book of Genesis, Chapter 1, verses 1, 2, and 3, testified to by John the Evangelist in his book, Chapter 1, verse 1, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God.” Therefore my brethren, as the plain white apron, which was given to you at the beginning, wear it proudly while you are living, and we will say it now, and as it floats down on your grave, at your home going, and all Master Masons will say with finality, “So Mote it Be!”

Response: Substitute “To” with “On behalf of.”



Brother Howard Woods is Grand Master Emeritus of the Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Arkansas and he served as Grand Master of that jurisdiction for several decades. He also served as President of the Conference of Grand Masters.