

*A Mason's Journey:*

*Memorial Day and Jacob's Ladder – An Appropriate  
Masonic Symbol*

**By Bro. Bill Boyd, Past Master, Valley-Hi Lodge No. 1407, San Antonio, Texas**

Brethren, while the nation sets aside a day to remember the sacrifices of our military family members who have made the ultimate sacrifice, Freemasons can take fraternal pride in our rich history of service to this great nation. A particular Memorial Day image circulates every year that reminds us - whether intentionally or not - that masons have served honorably in the uniformed services since their founding.



In looking at the image, you cannot help but be impressed by the masonic symbolism of Jacob's Ladder which we learn about through the lessons and tracing board of our first degree. It is the only reference in our Volume of Sacred Law that is referenced twice in craft ritual\*.

Why is Jacob's Ladder an entirely appropriate symbol for the remembrance of our fallen brethren? Typically, in masonic use, we see the representatives of Faith, Hope, and Charity (Love) along the climb with Charity (Love) being the highest aspiration at the top. John 15:13 tells us "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends".

In masonry, we are taught those lessons of faith, hope, and charity, and within masonic symbolism we also understand "charity" to mean "love". I do not know if the creator of this image was a mason (I'm willing to guess, however), or if the artist is steeped in the symbolism of Jacob's Ladder. But we as

masons are free to take in the beauty of this symbol and apply our understanding the emotional relationship between military service and the masonic rendering of Jacob's Ladders.

Brethren, please reflect this Memorial Day on this beautiful symbol and pay tribute in some fashion to our departed brethren who have served and laid down their lives for their friends. Take encouragement that through our fraternal ties that these brothers, these heroes, have given the full measure of their honor and their word as a mason and shown us each and every one that such commitment to the nation, our fraternity, and our obligations has continued through the ages.

I am, sincerely and fraternally yours

\*I used a lecture - "Jacob's Ladder", published by Museum of Freemasonry, Sydney Masonic Centre, Sydney, Australia, in the development of this blog post. That lecture can be found at:

<https://www.masoniclibrary.org.au/research/list-lectures/93-jacobs-ladder.html>

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