

ROYAL ARCH DEGREE

Bible: 2 Chronicles XXXVI

M E H P: ** Companion Captain of the Host,

C O H: (*Rises, sign*)

M E H P: It is your province to preside at the introduction of strangers among the workmen, I therefore tender you the gavel.

C O H: ** Companion Principal Sojourner,

P S: (*Rises, sign*)

C O H: you will take with you suitable assistance and prepare the candidates to be received in the first section of the Royal Arch Degree in due and ancient form.

P S: (*Takes Royal Arch Captain into ante-room with him, prepares Candidates, then returns to station*)

R A C: ** ** ** *

P S: (*Rises, gives sign*) Companion Captain of the Host, there is an alarm at the inner door.

C O H: Companion Principal Sojourner, you will attend to the alarm and report the cause.

P S: (*At door*) ** ** ** *

R A C: *

P S: * (*Opens door*) Who comes here?

R A C: Three Worthy Brothers who have been regularly initiated Entered Apprentice Masons, passed to the Degree of Fellowcraft, raised to the sublime Degree of Master Mason, advanced to the honorary Degree of Mark Master, regularly seated in the Oriental Chair, received and acknowledged Most Excellent Masters and now pray for further light in masonry by being exalted to the sublime Degree of Royal Arch Mason.

P S: My Brothers, is it of your own free will and accord you make the request?

Candidates: It is.

P S: Companion Royal Arch Captain, are the candidates duly and truly prepared, worthy and well qualified?

R A C: They are.

P S: By what further right do they expect to gain admission into this Chapter of Royal Arch Masons?

R A C: By benefit of the password.

P S: Have they the password?

R A C: They have it not but I their conductor have it for them.

P S: Advance and give it.

R A C: R _____.

P S: The password is right. The candidates will await the time with patience until their request shall be made known to the Companion Captain of the Host and his answer returned. (*closes door, returns to station, sign*) Companion Captain of the Host, the alarm at the inner door was caused by three

Worthy Brothers who have been regularly initiated Entered Apprentice Masons, passed to the Degree of Fellowcraft, raised to the sublime Degree of Master Mason, advanced to the honorary Degree of Mark Master, regularly seated in the Oriental Chair, received and acknowledged Most Excellent Masters and now pray for further light in masonry by being exalted to the sublime Degree of Royal Arch Mason.

C O H: Companion Principal Sojourner, is it of their own free will and accord they make the request?

P S: It is.

C O H: Are they duly and truly prepared, worthy and well qualified?

P S: They are.

C O H: By what further right do they expect to gain admission into this Chapter of Royal Arch Masons?

P S: By benefit of the password.

C O H: Have they the password?

P S: They have it not, but I their conductor have it for them and will give it at the proper time.

C O H: It is my order that the candidates be permitted to enter and be received in due and ancient form.

P S: *** * Companions, you will assemble at the inner door to assist in receiving the candidates in the first section of the Royal Arch Degree in due and ancient form.

Six Companions: (*Form arch at the inner door*)

P S: (*Passes under archway, opens inner door*) It is the order of the Companion Captain of the Host that the candidates be permitted to enter and be received in due and ancient form.

Candidates: (*Enter and halt under archway*)

P S: My Brothers you will halt. The manner of your reception in the preceding degrees has already been explained to you. In this Royal Arch Degree you are received under a living arch, (*Hands upon heads*) the secrets thereof being of divine origin.

C O H: *

Six Companions: (*Drop hands*)

P S: (*At Altar*) My Brothers you will halt. Masonry in all ages teaches us that before engaging in any great or important undertaking, we should first invoke the blessing of Almighty God. You will therefore kneel at the Holy Altar for the benefit of prayer.

C O H: *** *O THOU ETERNAL AND OMNIPOTENT JEHOVAH, WHO BY THINE ALMIGHTY WORD DIDST SPEAK INTO BEING THE STUPENDOUS ARCH OF HEAVEN, PERMIT US, THY FRAIL, DEPENDENT AND NEEDY CREATURES, IN THE NAME OF OUR MOST EXCELLENT AND SUPREME HIGH PRIEST, TO APPROACH THY DIVINE MAJESTY; INCLINE THINE EAR TO THE VOICE OF OUR PRAISES AND OF OUR SUPPLICATIONS. WE WOULD RENDER THEE THANKSGIVING AND PRAISE FOR THE INSTITUTION, AS MEMBERS OF WHICH, WE ARE AT THIS TIME ASSEMBLED, AND FOR ALL THE PLEASURES WE HAVE DERIVED FROM IT. WE THANK THEE THAT THOSE HERE ASSEMBLED HAVE BEEN FAVORED WITH NEW INDUCEMENTS, AND BEEN LAID UNDER NEW AND STRONGER OBLIGATIONS OF VIRTUE AND HOLINESS.*

TEACH US, WE PRAY THEE, THE TRUE REVERENCE FOR THY GREAT, MIGHTY, AND TERRIBLE NAME. INSPIRE US WITH A FIRM AND UNSHAKEN RESOLUTION IN OUR VIRTUOUS PURSUITS. MAY THE SOLEMNITY OF THE CEREMONIES OF OUR INSTITUTION BE DULY IMPRESSED ON OUR MINDS, AND HAVE A HAPPY AND LASTING EFFECT ON OUR LIVES. ENKINDE, WE BESEECH THEE, IN EACH OF OUR HEARTS A FLAME OF DEVOTION TO THEE, OF LOVE TO EACH OTHER, AND OF CHARITY TO ALL MANKIND. MAY THE INCENSE OF PIETY ASCEND CONTINUALLY UNTO THEE FROM OFF THE ALTAR OF OUR HEARTS. MAY HOLINESS TO THE LORD BE ENGRAVEN UPON ALL OUR THOUGHTS, WORDS, AND ACTIONS; AND FINALLY, O MERCIFUL FATHER, WHEN WE SHALL HAVE PASSED THROUGH THE OUTWARD VEILS OF THESE EARTHLY COURTS, WHEN THE EARTHLY HOUSE OF THIS TABERNACLE SHALL BE DISSOLVED, MAY WE BE ADMITTED INTO THE HOLY OF HOLIES ABOVE, INTO THE PRESENCE OF THE GRAND COUNCIL OF HEAVEN, WHERE THE SUPREME HIGH PRIEST FOREVER PRESIDES, FOREVER REIGNS. AMEN. *

P S: My Brothers, you will arise and follow me.

(End of second circuit, Captain of the Host places his left hand on each Candidate's left breast)

C O H: Who comes, who comes, who comes here?

P S: Three Worthy Brothers who have been regularly initiated Entered Apprentice Masons, past to the Degree of Fellowcraft, raised to the sublime Degree of Master Mason, advanced to the honorary Degree of Mark Master, regularly seated in the Oriental Chair, received and acknowledged Most Excellent Masters and now pray for further light in

masonry by being exalted to the sublime Degree of Royal Arch Mason.

C O H: My Brothers, is it of your own free will and accord you make the request?

Candidates: It is.

C O H: Companion Principal Sojourner, are the candidates duly and truly prepared, worthy and well qualified?

P S: They are.

C O H: By what further right do they expect to gain admission into this Chapter of Royal Arch Masons?

P S: By benefit of the password.

C O H: Have they the password?

P S: They have it not, but I their conductor have it for them.

C O H: Advance and give it.

P S: R _____.

C O H: The password is right. My Brothers, it becomes my duty to inform you that you cannot proceed further without taking upon yourselves a solemn obligation appertaining to this degree, while I take pleasure in informing you that there is nothing contained in it which will interfere with the duties you owe to God, your country, your families, or yourselves. With this assurance upon my part, are you willing to proceed?

Candidates: I am.

C O H: Companion Principal Sojourner, you will place the candidates in proper position to receive the obligation.

P S: My Brothers, you will kneel on both knees, and place both hands upon the Holy Bible. (*Done*) Companion Captain of the Host, the candidates are in position and await your pleasure.

C O H: *** My Brothers, you will announce your names and repeat after me.

I, _____, % m on fr w @ ac, in t pr % A G @ ths Ch % R A Ms, ercd to Hm @ ddc to Z, d hb @ hn m s pr @ s, tt I wl nt cmc t scs % ths d t an on ex it b in a rg Ch or t a knn wr C R A M, @ nt unl aft stc trl, du xmn, or lfl mc infm I shl hv fd hm o thm js entl t rc t s.

An I ms sl p @ s tt I wl stn to @ ab by t B-ls, rls @ rgls % ths or any oth Ch % wch I ma bcm a mbr, @ wl supt t cnstn, rslns @ edcs % t Gr Ch und whs jrs I ma b, s fr as thy ma cm to m knlg @ r nt sub % t prcpls @ grwk % fmy; @ wl oby al d ss @ sms snt or hnd t m fm a rgl Ch or by a knn wr C R A M, if wthn ln % m c-t.

An I ms sl p @ s tt I wl empl a C R A M in prfc t an oth pr, prvd h wl svr m as wl @ as chp.

An I ms sl p @ s tt I wl nt b at t opg or cls % a Ch unls thr b prsnt fv cs R A Ms, msl mkg on % t nmb.

An I ms sl pr @ s tt I wl nt b at t exltn % mr or ls thn thr cdts at on @ t sm tm, expt i ths css spcfly authzd b t Gr Ch und whs jsdtn I ma b @ in no evnt unls thy hv bn ad t th hon d % Mk M, rgly std i t Ori Chr @ rcd @ ack M E Ms.

An I ms sl p @ s tt I wl nt gv t G O Wd i an oth mnrr thn tt i wch I shl rc it.

An I ms sl p @ s tt I wl nt rvl t k t th msts chcts upn t tp @ sds % t A % t Cv unls fr instn, @ wl nt rtn it msl, bt wl dst it s sn as it shl hv srvd t prps fr wch it ws md.

An I ms sl p @ s tt I wl nt trdc a Cmp R A M, nr prmt it to b dn if wthn m pr t prv it.

An I ms sl p @ s tt I wl nt strk a C R A Mm nr drw hs bld in angr unls i dfns % msl o ths dpndt upn m.

An I ms sl p @ s tt I wl nt wrg a Ch or a C R A M t th vl % anthg nr pr i t b dn if wthn m pr t pr it.

An I ms sl p @ s tt I wl nt st in a cldstn Ch nr hld mc cmctn wth a cldstn, sspdd, or xpd R A M whl und sch sntc, if wthn m kn.

To al % wch I ms sl pr @ s, wght an eqv, slf ev, or mn rsv whtev, bndng msl und t pn % hvg t tp % m s sm o, @ m br exp to t sc rs % t s at mrd ht, shd I wlfl vi an pt % t sl ob % a R A M; s hl m G.

In token of your sincerity you will kiss the book before you, which is the Holy Bible. (*Done*) You will now arise and follow your leader. *

C O H: NOW MOSES KEPT THE FLOCK OF JETHRO,¹
HIS FATHER-IN-LAW, THE PRIEST OF MIDIAN; AND HE
LED THE FLOCK TO THE BACK SIDE OF THE DESERT,
AND CAME TO THE MOUNTAIN OF GOD, EVEN TO
HOREB.² AND THE ANGEL OF THE LORD APPEARED
UNTO HIM IN A FLAME OF FIRE OUT OF THE MIDST
OF A BUSH; AND HE LOOKED ³

(remove hoodwinks)

AND BEHOLD THE BUSH BURNED WITH FIRE, AND
THE BUSH WAS NOT CONSUMED. AND MOSES SAID, I
WILL NOW TURN ASIDE AND SEE THIS GREAT SIGHT,
WHY THE BUSH IS NOT BURNT. AND WHEN THE LORD
SAW THAT HE TURNED ASIDE TO SEE, GOD CALLED
UNTO HIM OUT OF THE MIDST OF THE BUSH, AND
SAID, MOSES! MOSES! AND HE SAID, HERE AM I. AND
HE SAID, DRAW NOT NIGH HITHER;⁴ PUT OFF THY
SHOES FROM OFF THY FEET

(remove shoes)

FOR THE PLACE WHEREON THOU STANDEST IS HOLY GROUND. MOREOVER, HE SAID, I AM THE GOD OF THY FATHER, THE GOD OF ABRAHAM, THE GOD OF ISAAC, AND THE GOD OF JACOB.⁵ AND MOSES HID HIS FACE

(replace hoodwinks)

FOR HE WAS AFRAID TO LOOK UPON GOD. (*Exod. III, 1-6*)

ZEDEKIAH WAS ONE AND TWENTY YEARS OLD WHEN HE BEGAN TO REIGN, AND REIGNED ELEVEN YEARS IN JERUSALEM. AND HE DID THAT WHICH WAS EVIL IN THE SIGHT OF THE LORD HIS GOD, AND HUMBLED NOT HIMSELF BEFORE JEREMIAH THE PROPHET, SPEAKING FROM THE MOUTH OF THE LORD. AND HE ALSO REBELLED AGAINST KING NEBUCHADNEZZAR, WHO HAD MADE HIM SWEAR BY GOD: BUT HE STIFFENED HIS NECK, AND HARDENED HIS HEART FROM TURNING UNTO THE LORD GOD OF ISRAEL. MOREOVER, ALL THE CHIEF OF THE PRIESTS, AND THE PEOPLE, TRANSGRESSED VERY MUCH AFTER ALL THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE HEATHEN, AND POLLUTED THE HOUSE OF THE LORD, WHICH HE HAD HALLOWED IN JERUSALEM. AND THE LORD GOD OF THEIR FATHERS SENT TO THEM BY HIS MESSENGERS, BECAUSE HE HAD COMPASSION ON HIS PEOPLE AND ON HIS DWELLING PLACE. BUT THEY MOCKED THE MESSENGERS OF GOD, AND DESPISED HIS WORDS, AND MISUSED HIS PROPHETS, UNTIL THE WRATH OF THE LORD AROSE AGAINST HIS PEOPLE, TILL THERE WAS NO REMEDY. THEREFORE HE BROUGHT UPON THEM THE KING OF THE CHALDEES, WHO SLEW THEIR YOUNG MEN WITH THE SWORD IN THE HOUSE OF THEIR SANCTUARY, AND HAD NO COMPASSION UPON YOUNG MAN, OR MAIDEN, OLD MAN, OR HIM

THAT STOOPED FOR AGE; HE GAVE THEM ALL INTO HIS HAND. AND ALL THE VESSELS OF THE HOUSE OF GOD, GREAT AND SMALL, AND THE TREASURES OF THE HOUSE OF THE LORD, AND THE TREASURES OF THE KING, AND OF HIS PRINCES; ALL THESE HE BROUGHT TO BABYLON. AND THEY BURNT THE HOUSE OF GOD, AND BRAKE DOWN THE (Confusion) WALL OF JERUSALEM. (II Chron. XXXVI, 11-19)

P S: (*in ante-room, removes hoodwinks*) MY BROTHERS, THE NOISE AND CONFUSION WHICH YOU HAVE JUST HEARD IS INTENDED TO REPRESENT THE CONFUSION WHICH OCCURRED AT THE DESTRUCTION OF KING SOLOMON'S TEMPLE.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR, KING OF BABYLON, RAISED A LARGE ARMY, MARCHED AGAINST JERUSALEM, BESIEGED THE CITY, DESTROYED THE TEMPLE, TOOK THE PEOPLE CAPTIVE AND CARRIED THEM AWAY TO BABYLON, WHERE THEY REMAINED SERVANTS TO HIM AND HIS SUCCESSORS UNTIL THE REIGN OF CYRUS, KING OF PERSIA. THE MANNER IN WHICH YOU WERE BOUND AND VIOLENTLY USHERED OUT AMIDST GREAT NOISE AND CONFUSION IS INTENDED TO REPRESENT THE MANNER IN WHICH THOSE CAPTIVES WERE BOUND AND CARRIED INTO CAPTIVITY.

THIS ENDS THE FIRST SECTION OF THE ROYAL ARCH DEGREE.

THE DEGREE IS DIVIDED INTO TWO SECTIONS. THE INTERMISSION BETWEEN THE FIRST AND SECOND SECTIONS IS INTENDED TO REPRESENT THE BABYLONISH CAPTIVITY WHICH CONTINUED FOR A PERIOD OF SEVENTY YEARS.

(*then blindfold and says*)

You will now consider yourselves as representing those captives in Babylon.

C O H: (*At station*) Good news! Good news for the captives!

Companions: Huzza! Huzza! Huzza!

P S: Hark! That sounds like a shout of victory.

C O H: (*At door*) Good news! Good news for the captives!

P S: *IT MAY BE TO YOU, BUT NOT TO US. WHAT IS IT?*

C O H: CYRUS HAS ISSUED HIS PROCLAMATION LIBERATING THE CAPTIVES AND GRANTING THEM LEAVE TO RETURN TO THEIR HOMES. WILL YOU HEAR THE PROCLAMATION?

P S: *IT IS GOOD NEWS INDEED. LET US HEAR THE PROCLAMATION.*

C O H: (*Reads from inside*) THUS SAYETH CYRUS, KING OF PERSIA, THE LORD GOD OF HEAVEN HATH GIVEN ME ALL THE KINGDOMS OF THE EARTH, AND HE HATH CHARGED ME TO BUILD HIM A HOUSE AT JERUSALEM, WHICH IS IN JUDAH. WHO IS THERE AMONG YOU OF ALL HIS PEOPLE? HIS GOD BE WITH HIM, AND LET HIM GO UP TO JERUSALEM, WHICH IS IN JUDAH, AND BUILD THE HOUSE OF THE LORD GOD OF ISRAEL (HE IS THE GOD), WHICH IS IN JERUSALEM.
(Ezra 1,2-3)

P S: What say you, Brethren? I am for going up at once, but, hold! We have no passwords by which to make ourselves known when we get there. (*To Captain of the Host*) When we arrive at the land of our fathers and are asked who we are and who hath sent us, what shall we say?

C O H: When you arrive at the land of your fathers, and are asked who you are and who hath sent you, you will say, "I a_t _ I a_ , I a_ h _ s _ m _ u _ y _ ."

P S: WE WILL GO UP. REMEMBER THE PASSWORDS, BRETHREN.

BY THE ROYAL PROCLAMATION OF KING CYRUS WE HAVE BEEN RELEASED FROM OUR CAPTIVITY AND HAVE PERMISSION TO RETURN TO THE LAND OF OUR FATHERS. WE ARE NOW WITHOUT THE WALLS OF THE CITY OF ABOMINATION, WHERE WE HAVE BEEN HELD AS CAPTIVES EVER SINCE THE DESTRUCTION OF OUR CITY AND TEMPLE, AND ARE ONCE MORE UPON THE OPEN PLAIN. THE CITY OF BABYLON, WHICH WE NOW LEAVE, WILL BE EVER MEMORABLE TO US AS THE PLACE OF OUR DEEP HUMILITY AND LONG CAPTIVITY. IT HAS NOT BEEN ONE OF CLOSE CONFINEMENT OR ABJECT SLAVERY. WE HAVE BEEN PERMITTED TO FOLLOW OUR USUAL AVOCATIONS, TO KEEP UP A REGULAR SUCCESSION OF KINGS AND PRIESTS, TO PRESERVE A KNOWLEDGE OF THE TRUE AND EVER LIVING GOD, AND HAVE PRACTICED THE ART OF GENUINE FREE MASONRY, WHEREBY WE EXPECT TO BE RECOGNIZED BY OUR BRETHREN OF THAT ANCIENT AND HONORABLE FRATERNITY UPON OUR RETURN TO JERUSALEM, AND RECEIVE FROM THEM A CORDIAL WELCOME.

OUR COURSE WILL BE UP THE EUPHRATES AND A BEAUTIFUL DAY IT IS FOR STARTING. THE SYRIAN SUN SHINES BRIGHTLY, FILLING THE GREAT HEART OF NATURE WITH HOPE AND GLADNESS. THEN LET US WITH THANKFUL, HOPEFUL HEARTS LIGHTLY PURSUE OUR JOURNEY.

WE HAVE ALREADY BEEN INFORMED THAT WE WILL MEET WITH SERIOUS OBSTRUCTIONS ON OUR WAY. HENCE, BEFORE STARTING, IT IS NECESSARY FOR US TO AGREE WITH EACH OTHER THAT WE WILL RESOLUTELY PERSEVERE AND OVERCOME ALL OBSTACLES THAT MAY PRESENT THEMSELVES. WITH THAT UNDERSTANDING, LET US START ON OUR JOURNEY.

HOW DELIGHTFUL IT IS TO CONTEMPLATE THAT WE ARE ONCE MORE FREE AND ARE NOW STARTING TOWARD OUR HOME IN JERUSALEM, AND ONCE MORE FREE TO ENJOY LIFE AND LIBERTY.

WE ARE APPROACHING A DIFFICULT ARCH WAY THROUGH THE MOUNTAINS AND WE HAVE TO GO THROUGH IT. WE HAVE ALREADY AGREED TO PERSEVERE AND OVERCOME ALL OBSTACLES THAT MAY PRESENT THEMSELVES ON OUR WAY. WE MUST PASS THIS ARCH WAY OF ROCKS TO ACCOMPLISH IT. YOU MUST STOOP LOW, MY BROTHERS.

He that humbleth himself shall be exalted (*Luke xiv, 11.*)

WE ARE SAFELY THROUGH THAT DIFFICULT ARCH WAY. LET US CONTINUE OUR JOURNEY. ON OUR WAY UP THE RIVER WE WILL PASS THE RUINS OF THE CITY OF ANATH, OPPOSITE TO WHICH AND BEYOND THE RIVER IS THE CITY OF ACHOD. THE RUINS OF OLD RABBAH ARE NOW IN FULL VIEW. WHEN WE REACH THEM WE MAY EXPECT TROUBLE, AND IT WILL BE DIFFICULT IF NOT DANGEROUS TO PASS. WHAT HEAPS OR RUBBISH, STONES AND TIMBERS IN GRAND CONFUSION TOWERS TOPLESS, COLUMNS LEANING AND READY TO FALL. THERE IS A ROUGH AND RUGGED WAY BEFORE US, BUT WE ARE COMPELLED TO KEEP OUR COURSE, SO LET US PASS OVER IT.

"I will bring the blind by a way (that) they knew not; I will lead them in paths (that) they have not known; I will make darkness light before them and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them."

(*Isaiah xlii, 16*)

WE ARE OVER THIS DIFFICULT PLACE, BUT WHAT HAVE WE HERE? AN ALTAR LEFT UNINJURED. LET US KNEEL BEFORE IT AND LOOK TO HIM WHO IS ALONE ABLE TO SUPPORT US IN ALL OUR TRIALS AND DIFFICULTIES. WE OUGHT TO FEEL THANKFUL TO HIM FOR OUR SAFE PROGRESS THROUGH SO MANY DANGERS.

LORD, I CRY UNTO THEE; MAKE HASTE UNTO ME; GIVE EAR UNTO MY VOICE. LET MY PRAYER BE SET FORTH BEFORE THEE AS INCENSE, AND THE LIFTING UP OF MY HANDS AS THE EVENING SACRIFICE. SET A WATCH, O LORD, BEFORE MY MOUTH; KEEP THE DOOR OF MY LIPS. INCLINE NOT MY HEART TO ANY EVIL THING, TO PRACTICE WICKED WORKS WITH MEN THAT WORK INIQUITY. LET THE RIGHTEOUS SMITE ME, IT SHALL BE A KINDNESS; LET HIM REPROVE ME, IT SHALL BE AN EXCELLENT OIL. MY EYES ARE UNTO THEE, O GOD, THE LORD; IN THEE IS MY TRUST; LEAVE NOT MY SOUL DESTITUTE. KEEP ME FROM THE SNARES WHICH THEY HAVE LAID FOR ME, AND THE GINS OF THE WORKERS OF INIQUITY. LET THE WICKED FALL INTO THEIR OWN NETS, WHILST THAT I, WITHAL, ESCAPE. (Psalm CXLI)

LET US PURSUE OUR JOURNEY. AT THIS BEND OF THE RIVER WE LEAVE THE EUPHRATES (WHICH AT THIS POINT WINDS OFF IN A NORTHERLY DIRECTION) AND GO OUT UPON THE OPEN DESERT. OBSTRUCTIONS EXIST ON THIS ROUTE, YET IT IS ATTENDED WITH LESS

DANGER THAN ANY OTHER PART OF THIS STERILE COUNTRY. ON THE OPPOSITE OR EASTERN SHORE OF THE RIVER IS MESOPOTAMIA, WHERE ABRAHAM DWELT.

HERE IS ANOTHER ARCH WAY THROUGH THE MOUNTAINS, BUT WE MUST KEEP OUR COURSE AND GO THROUGH IT. PERHAPS IT IS MORE DIFFICULT TO PASS THAN THE OTHER WAS. YOU MUST STOOP LOW, MY BROTHERS.

He that humbleth himself shall be exalted
(*Luke xiv, 11.*)

OUR PERSEVERANCE HAS ENABLED US TO GET THROUGH THIS DIFFICULT PLACE. LET US PROCEED ON OUR JOURNEY. THE FIRST PLACE WE WILL COME TO WILL BE OLD TADMOR OF THE DESERT. THE HEBREW NAME OF THIS CITY SIGNIFIES A PALM TREE, HENCE THE GREEKS CALLED IT PALMYRA, OR CITY OF PALMS. IT WAS BUILT BY OUR GRAND MASTER KING SOLOMON AS A SITE FOR A CITY, AND RESTING PLACE FOR THE RICH CARAVANS ON THEIR WAY TO THE SEAPORTS OF THE MEDITERRANEAN. THE LOCATION WAS A BEAUTIFUL OASIS, SHELTERED BY LOFTY PALMS, AND REFRESHED BY COOL SPRINGS OF WATER. TO PROTECT THESE CARAVANS, AS WELL AS DIRECT THE TRADE BY WAY OF JERUSALEM, THENCE TO TYRE, THE GREAT NAVAL MISTRESS OF THE WORLD. SOLOMON BUILT TADMOR IN THE DESERT, AND PROVIDED SAFE ESCORTS TO JERUSALEM, THENCE TO TYRE, WHERE THE SHIPS OF TARSHISH RECEIVED THEIR RICH MERCHANDISE, AND CONVEYED IT TO ALL THE KNOWN PARTS OF THE WORLD.

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HELLO! WHAT HAVE WE HERE? A DELIGHTFUL POOL OF WATER, CLEAR AND COLD. TAKE A DRINK OF IT THERE IS NO TELLING WHEN WE MAY FIND ANY MORE AS GOOD AND PURE.

THE RUINS OF TADMOR CAN NOW BE DISTINCTLY SEEN. WHAT MAGNIFICENCE! WHAT DESOLATION! STUPENDOUS ROWS OF COLUMNS AND OBELISKS OF THE MOST EXQUISITE WORKMANSHIP BROKEN ARCHES AND FRAGMENTS OF PILLARS OF THE RICHEST SCULPTURE LIE SCATTERED ON THE SAND. LET US PURSUE OUR JOURNEY THROUGH THIS ROUGH AND DANGEROUS WAY.

"I will bring the blind by a way (that) they knew not; I will lead them in paths (that) they have not known; I will make darkness light before them and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them."

(Isaiah xlii, 16)

BUT HERE IS AN ALTAR WHICH HAS ESCAPED THE HANDS OF THE DESTROYER. LET US AGAIN KNEEL AND INVOKE THE BLESSING OF HIM WHO IS ALONE ABLE TO SAVE.

I CRIED UNTO THE LORD WITH MY VOICE; WITH MY VOICE UNTO THE LORD DID I MAKE MY SUPPLICATION. I POURED OUT MY COMPLAINT BEFORE HIM; I SHOWED HIM MY TROUBLE. WHEN MY SPIRIT WAS OVERWHELMED WITHIN ME, THEN THOU KNEWEST MY PATH. IN THE WAY WHEREIN I WALKED HAVE THEY PRIVILY LAID A SNARE FOR ME. I LOOKED ON MY RIGHT HAND, AND BEHELD, BUT THERE WAS NO MAN THAT WOULD KNOW ME; REFUGE FAILED ME; NO MAN CARED FOR MY SOUL. I CRIED UNTO THEE, O LORD; I SAID, THOU ART MY REFUGE, AND

MY PORTION IN THE LAND OF THE LIVING. ATTEND UNTO MY CRY; FOR I AM BROUGHT VERY LOW. DELIVER ME FROM MY PERSECUTORS; FOR THEY ARE STRONGER THAN I. BRING MY SOUL OUT OF PRISON, THAT I MAY PRAISE THY NAME.

(*Psalm CXLII*)

WE ARE PAST THIS SCENE OF DESOLATION, AND CONTINUE OUR JOURNEY ON THIS OLD ROAD THAT LEADS TO DAMASCUS. HERE IS A MOUNTAIN PASS WHICH PRESENTS GREATER OBSTRUCTIONS THAN ANY WE HAVE EXPERIENCED, BUT WE MUST PERSEVERE AND GO THROUGH IT. STOOP LOW MY BROTHERS.

He that humbleth himself shall be exalted

(*Luke xiv, 11.*)

WE ARE NOW UPON THE HIGH SANDY PLAIN EXTENDING EASTWARD FROM THE BASE OF MOUNT HERMON. IN THE MIDST OF THIS PLAIN STANDS THE VENERABLE CITY OF DAMASCUS, EMBOSOMED IN A SEA OF VERDURE AND FLOWERS. LIKE AN OASIS IN THE DESERT IT SMILES IN EVERLASTING GREEN. WE ARE OVER MOST OF OUR DIFFICULTIES, AND EXCEPT A FEW MOUNTAIN PASSES IN THE LEBANON RANGE AND BROKEN BRIDGES, THE WAY WILL NOT BE DANGEROUS.

YONDER IN THE NORTHWEST, RISING LIKE A BLUE CLOUD, IN DISTANT DREAMY GRANDEUR, IS SEEN THE OUTLINES OF THE NOBLE MOUNTAIN WHERE THE LEVITES UNDER ADONIRAM PREPARED THE TIMBER FOR THE TEMPLE OF OUR GOD.

HERE WE WILL CROSS THE JORDAN ON THIS DILAPIDATED OLD BRIDGE. WE WILL THEN SOON

PASS THE QUARRIES OF ZARADATHA WHERE THE MARBLE WAS PROCURED FOR THE TEMPLE. (BE CAREFUL HOW YOU STEP.)

"I will bring the blind by a way (that) they knew not; I will lead them in paths (that) they have not known; I will make darkness light before them and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them."

(Isaiah xlii, 16)

HERE ARE THE BROKEN REMAINS OF AN ALTAR. LET US KNEEL AND THANK THE ETERNAL ONE FOR HIS PROTECTION AND SUPPORT DURING OUR WEARY JOURNEY, AND HUMBLY ASK FOR ITS CONTINUANCE DURING THE SHORT REMAINDER.

HEAR MY PRAYER, O LORD, GIVE EAR TO MY SUPPLICATION; IN THY FAITHFULNESS ANSWER ME, AND IN THY RIGHTEOUSNESS. AND ENTER NOT INTO JUDGMENT WITH THY SERVANT; FOR IN THY SIGHT SHALL NO MAN LIVING BE JUSTIFIED. FOR THE ENEMY HATH PERSECUTED MY SOUL; HE HATH MADE ME TO DWELL IN DARKNESS. THEREFORE IS MY SPIRIT OVERWHELMED WITHIN ME; MY HEART WITHIN ME IS DESOLATE. HEAR ME SPEEDILY, O LORD; MY SPIRIT FAILETH; HIDE NOT THY FACE FROM ME, LEST I BE LIKE THEM THAT GO DOWN INTO THE PIT. CAUSE ME TO HEAR THY LOVING KINDNESS IN THE MORNING; FOR IN THEE DO I TRUST. CAUSE ME TO KNOW THE WAY WHEREIN I SHOULD WALK; FOR I LIFT UP MY SOUL UNTO THEE. TEACH ME TO DO THY WILL; FOR THOU ART MY GOD; BRING MY SOUL OUT OF TROUBLE, AND OF THY MERCY CUT OFF MINE ENEMIES, FOR I AM THY SERVANT. (*Psalm CXLIII*)

WE ARE NOW ENTERING THE PLAINS OF JERICHO. FAR IN THE WEST THE MOUNTAINS OF JERUSALEM REFLECT THE LAST RAYS OF EXPIRING DAY. AWAY TO OUR RIGHT, AND STRETCHING ALONG THE EASTERN COAST OF THE MEDITERRANEAN, IS SEEN THE PLAIN OF SHARON, THE LAND OF LILIES AND ROSES. THROUGH THIS PLAIN RUNS THE BROOK KISHON, ON WHOSE BANK THE PROPHET SLEW THE FOES OF ISRAEL'S GOD.

WE ARE NOW ASCENDING THE MOUNT OF OLIVES, FROM WHOSE SUMMIT, I HAVE BEEN TOLD, JERUSALEM CAN BE DISTINCTLY SEEN.

AS WE NEAR THE CITY, THE THICK COMING THOUGHTS OF THE PAST CROWD UPON THE MIND WITH OVERWHELMING POWER. AH! THERE IS JERUSALEM, GLORIOUSLY SLEEPING IN THE EVENING SUNLIGHT, NESTLING AMONG HER EVERLASTING HILLS.

YON WESTERN ASCENT IS MOUNT ZION, AND OPPOSITE, SWEEPING UP FROM THE SLUMBERING POOL OF SILOAM, IS MOUNT MORIAH, WHOSE SUMMIT, ALAS! IS COVERED WITH THE FRAGMENTS OF OUR ONCE GLORIOUS TEMPLE AND WHERE MOLDERING IN THE DUST ARE SCATTERED THE MIGHTY WORKS OF SOLOMON AND THE MATCHLESS SCULPTURE OF HIRAM ABIF. THERE, TOO, ARE THY WALLS AND THY BULWARKS, O, JERUSALEM TORN DOWN AND SCATTERED ON THE HILL SIDES. AYE! WHICH EVEN JEWISH VALOR COULD NOT PRESERVE.

(Conduct Candidates out by members' door.)

Hc

AMID THE DIN OF BATTLE AND THE RUSH OF CHARIOTS, WE WERE LED INTO CAPTIVITY BY THE HANDS OF THE SPOILER. BY THE WATERS OF

BABYLON WE SAT DOWN AND WEPT. WHEN WE REMEMBERED ZION, WE HANGED OUR HARPS UPON THE WILLOWS. THEY WHO CARRIED US AWAY CAPTIVES REQUIRED OF US A SONG; AND THEY THAT WASTED US, REQUIRED OF US MIRTH, SAYING, "SING US ONE OF THE SONGS OF ZION." HOW COULD WE SING JEHOVAH'S PRAISE IN A STRANGE LAND?

(Re-enter by anteroom door)

THERE SEEMS TO BE A NEW BUILDING ERECTED AMONG THE RUINS OF MOUNT MORIAH. IT MUST BE THERE THE GRAND COUNCIL IS HOLDING ITS SESSIONS. LET US REPAIR THITHER, INFORM THEM OF OUR ARRIVAL, AND OFFER OUR HUMBLE SERVICES TO ASSIST IN REBUILDING THE HOUSE OF THE TRUE AND EVER LIVING GOD.

P S and Candidates: (*At first veil*)

1st V: Who comes here? Who dare approach this first veil of our Sacred Tabernacle, the Grand Council now in session? Guards assemble! The enemy approaches.

2nd and 3rd Vs: (*Rush up with swords at thrust*)

1st V: Who are you?

P S: Three weary sojourners from Babylon, who have come up through great tribulation to assist in the noble and glorious undertaking of rebuilding the house of the Lord, without the hope of fee or reward.

1st V: How do you expect to gain admission?

P S: By benefit of the passwords which we received in Babylon.

1st V: What are those passwords?

P S: I a_, t__ I a_; I a_ h__ s__ m_ u__ y__.

1st V: You have my permission to enter.

2nd and 3rd Vs: (*Come to carry sword and return to stations*)

P S and Candidates: (*Enter first veil, hoodwinks and cabletow are removed and shoes are put on*)

R A C: (*Resumes station*)

1st V: Good men and true you must be to have come thus far, but farther you cannot go without my passwords and words of exhortation. My passwords are S __, H __, and J _____. My words of exhortation are explanatory of the first sign which the Lord commanded Moses to make use of when he brought the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt and house of bondage, which was to cast his rod upon the ground, which he did and it became a serpent and Moses fled from before it, and the Lord commanded Moses to stretch forth his hand and take it by the tail, which he did, and it became a rod in his hand as before. You will now approach the second veil and give this alarm ** ** ** * together with my passwords and sign.

P S: (*At second veil*) ** ** ** *

2nd V: ** ** ** * Who comes here?

P S: Three weary sojourners from Babylon, who have come up through great tribulation to assist in the noble and glorious undertaking of rebuilding the house of the Lord, without the hope of fee or reward. We have passed the first veil and now seek admission through the second.

2nd V: How do you expect to gain admission?

P S: By benefit of the passwords and sign of the Grand Master of the First Veil.

2nd V: What are those passwords?

P S: S_____, H_____, and J_____.

2nd V: What is the sign?

P S: It is the first sign which the Lord commanded Moses to make use of when he brought the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt and house of bondage, which was to cast his rod upon the ground, which he did, and it became a serpent and Moses fled from before it and the Lord commanded Moses to stretch forth his hand and take it by the tail, which he did, and it became a rod in his hand as before.

2nd V: You have my permission to enter. (*Done*) Good men and true you must be to have come thus far, but farther you cannot go without my passwords and words of exhortation. My passwords are M_____, A_____, and B_____. My words of exhortation are explanatory of the second sign which the Lord commanded Moses to make use of when he brought the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt and house of bondage, which was to put his hand in his bosom, which he did, and when he drew it forth it was leprous as snow and the Lord commanded Moses to put his hand in his bosom again, which he did, and when he plucked it forth it was whole as his other flesh.

P S: (*At third veil*) ** ** ** *

3rd V: ** ** ** * Who comes here?

P S: Three weary sojourners from Babylon, who have come up through great tribulation to assist in the noble and glorious

undertaking of rebuilding the house of the Lord, without the hope of fee or reward. We have passed the first and second veils, and now seek admission through the third.

3rd V: How do you expect to gain admission?

P S: By benefit of the passwords and sign of the Grand Master of the Second Veil.

3rd V: What are those passwords?

P S: M_____, A_____, and B_____.

3rd V: What is the sign?

P S: It is the second sign which the Lord commanded Moses to make use of when he brought the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt and house of bondage, which was to put his hand in his bosom, which he did, and when he drew it forth it was leprous as snow and the Lord commanded Moses to put his hand in his bosom again, which he did, and when he plucked it forth it was whole as his other flesh.

3rd V: You have my permission to enter. (*Done*) Good men and true you must be to have come thus far, but farther you cannot go without my passwords and words of exhortation. My passwords are J_____, Z_____, and H_____. My words of exhortation are explanatory of the third sign which the Lord commanded Moses to make use of when he brought the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt and house of bondage, which was to dip up water from the river and pour it upon the dry land, which he did, and it became blood upon the dry land. I now present you with the Signet of truth, (*Done*) Its name is Z_____.

(*At fourth veil*)

R A C: Who comes here, who dare approach this fourth veil of our Sacred Tabernacle, the Grand Council now in session, before whom incense burns upon the Holy Altar both day and night. Who are you?

P S: Three weary sojourners from Babylon, who have come up through great tribulation to assist in the noble and glorious undertaking of rebuilding the house of the Lord, without the hope of fee or reward. We have passed the first, second, and third veils, and now seek admission through the fourth.

R A C: How do you expect to gain admission?

P S: By benefit of the passwords and sign of the Grand Master of the Third Veil.

R A C: What are those passwords?

P S: J _____, Z _____, and H _____.

R A C: What is the sign?

P S: It is the third sign which the Lord commanded Moses to make use of when he brought the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt and house of bondage, which was to dip up water from the river and pour it upon the dry land, which he did, and it became blood upon the dry land. I now present you with the Signet of truth; its name is Z _____. (*Gives signet to Royal Arch Captain*)

R A C: You will await the time with patience until your request shall be made known to the Grand Council now in session and its answer returned. (*Closes veil, faces Captain of the Host*) Companion Captain of the Host, without the fourth veil stand three weary sojourners from Babylon, who have come up through great tribulation to assist in the noble and glorious undertaking of rebuilding the house of the Lord without the hope of fee or reward. They have passed the first,

second and third veils and now seek admission through the fourth. They have given the proper passwords and signs, and have presented what they claim to be the Signet of truth; which I now present to you. (*Done*)

C O H: Most Excellent High Priest, without the fourth veil, stand three weary sojourners from Babylon who have come up through great tribulation to assist in the noble and glorious undertaking of rebuilding the house of the Lord without the hope of fee or reward. They have passed the first, second, and third veils and now seek admission through the fourth. They have given the proper passwords and signs, and have presented what they claim to be the Signet of truth; which I now present to you and with it return you the gavel.

M E H P: Excellent King, is this your Signet?

E K: That is my true Signet, Most Excellent.

M E H P: Excellent Scribe, this is the true Signet of Z_____. Companion Royal Arch Captain, the Grand Council have decided that this is indeed the true Signet of Z_____, but owing to the great confusion which has arisen by the introduction of strangers among the workmen, they have also decided that none shall be admitted but the true descendants of the twelve tribes of Israel. They will therefore be very careful in tracing their genealogy. (*Hands signet to Royal Arch Captain*)

R A C: The Grand Council have decided that this is indeed the true Signet of Z_____, (*Returns signet to Principal Sojourner*) but owing to the great confusion which has arisen by the introduction of strangers among the workmen, they have also decided that none shall be admitted but the true descendants of the twelve tribes of Israel. You will therefore be very careful in tracing your genealogy; who are you and what are your intentions?

P S: We are of your own tribes and families, descendants of those noble Giblemites who wrought so hard at the building of the Temple, and were present at its completion and dedication by King Solomon to the service of Almighty God. We ourselves were present at its destruction by Nebuchadnezzar, by whom we were taken captive and carried away to Babylon where we remained servants to him and his successors until the reign of Cyrus, King of Persia, by whose proclamation we were liberated and have now come up through great tribulation to assist in the noble and glorious undertaking of rebuilding the house of the Lord, without the hope of fee or reward.

R A C: Most Excellent High Priest, they are of our own tribes and families, descendants of those noble Giblemites who wrought so hard at the building of the Temple, and were present at its completion and dedication by King Solomon to the service of Almighty God. They themselves were present at its destruction by Nebuchadnezzar, by whom they were taken captive and carried away to Babylon where they remained servants to him and his successors until the reign of Cyrus, King of Persia, by whose proclamation they were liberated and have now come up through great tribulation to assist in the noble and glorious undertaking of rebuilding the house of the Lord, without the hope of fee or reward.

M E H P: Companion Royal Arch Captain, you will admit them into the presence of the Grand Council.

R A C: (*Opens veil*) It is the order of the Most Excellent High Priest, that you be admitted into the presence of the Grand Council.

P S: Most Excellent High Priest, I take pleasure in introducing to the Grand Council, three Most Excellent Masters, who have come up through great tribulation to assist

in the noble and glorious undertaking of rebuilding the house of the Lord without the hope of fee or reward.

M E H P: If you are Most Excellent Masters, you will convince the Grand Council that you are such by giving the signs from the Entered Apprentice Degree up to Most Excellent Master. (*Done*) Excellent King and Excellent Scribe, they are indeed Most Excellent Masters; what do you think of the propriety of employing them?

E K: Their zeal seems to indicate their earnestness, Most Excellent.

E S: I think it proper that they should have an opportunity, Most Excellent.

M E H P: What part of the work are you willing to undertake?

P S: Any Most Excellent, be it ever so difficult.

M E H P: Your modesty bespeaks your merit. Companion Captain of the Host, you will let them be clothed and furnished with the necessary working tools. (*Done*) In order to promote the noble and glorious undertaking of rebuilding the House of the Lord, it is necessary to remove the rubbish from the northeast corner of the old ruins. You will therefore repair to the northeast corner of the old ruins and commence your labors in removing the rubbish, and be very careful to observe and preserve everything having marks of antiquity upon it and bring it up to the Grand Council for its examination. (*Retire and return to the first veil*)

P S: ** ** ** *

1st V: ** ** ** * Who comes here?

P S: Workmen from the ruins with discoveries.

1st V: Workmen from the ruins with discoveries.

2nd V: Workmen from the ruins with discoveries.

3rd V: Workmen from the ruins with discoveries.

R A C: Workmen from the ruins with discoveries.

M E H P: Admit them.

R A C: Admit them.

3rd V: Admit them.

2nd V: Admit them.

1st V: Admit them.

(Veils open simultaneously, Principal Sojourner and Candidates before Grand Council)

P S: Most Excellent High Priest, in obedience to your orders, we repaired to the northeast corner of the old ruins and commenced our labors in removing the rubbish. After working very hard for some time, we came upon what appeared to be an impenetrable rock. One of the brothers sounding his crow upon it, it returned a hollow sound. Upon further examination we discovered an arch, in the apex of which was this curiously wrought stone which we succeeded in raising and have brought up to the Grand Council for its examination.

M E H P: (*Takes stone*) Excellent King and Excellent Scribe, this is evidently the keystone of a Mark Master Mason. (*To Principal Sojourner*) The Grand Council have decided that this is the keystone of a Mark Master Mason and will doubtless be of great service to the craft in the

construction of the new building. Are you still willing to pursue your labors?

P S: We are, Most Excellent, be they ever so dangerous.

M E H P: Then go as before, instructed as before, and rest assured that your labors shall not go unrewarded.

(Principal Sojourner and Candidates retire and return to first veil)

P S: ** ** ** *

1st V: ** ** ** * Who comes here?

P S: Workmen from the ruins with discoveries.

1st V: Workmen from the ruins with discoveries.

2nd V: Workmen from the ruins with discoveries.

3rd V: Workmen from the ruins with discoveries.

R A C: Workmen from the ruins with discoveries.

M E H P: Admit them.

R A C: Admit them.

3rd V: Admit them.

2nd V: Admit them.

1st V: Admit them.

P S: (*In front of Grand Council*) Most Excellent High Priest, in obedience to your orders we again repaired to the northeast corner of the old ruins and resumed our labors. After working very hard for some time we succeeded in removing the arch

when we discovered a deep vault. One of the brothers agreeing to descend, we placed a rope seven times around his body with one end in his right hand and the other in his left, with these instructions, that should he wish to descend he would give the signal with his left hand, and should he wish to ascend, he would give the signal with his right. After being down for some time, he gave the signal of ascent, when we drew him up and with him these three little squares which we have brought up to the Grand Council for its examination.

M E H P: (*Takes squares*) Excellent King and Excellent Scribe, these are evidently the squares of our three Grand Masters. (*To Principal Sojourner*) The Grand Council have decided that these are the squares of our three Grand Masters: Solomon, King of Israel, Hiram, King of Tyre, and Hiram Abif and will doubtless be of great service to the craft in the construction of the new building. Are you still willing to pursue your labors?

P S: We are, Most Excellent, even at the risk of our lives.

M E H P: Then go as before, instructed as before, and may the blessing of the God of your fathers, of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob go with and protect you.

(*Principal Sojourner and Candidates retire and return to first veil*)

P S: ** ** ** *

1st V: ** ** ** * Who comes here?

P S: Workmen from the ruins with discoveries.

1st V: Workmen from the ruins with discoveries.

2nd V: Workmen from the ruins with discoveries.

3rd V: Workmen from the ruins with discoveries.

R A C: Workmen from the ruins with discoveries.

M E H P: Admit them.

R A C: Admit them.

3rd V: Admit them.

2nd V: Admit them.

1st V: Admit them.

P S: (*In front of Grand Council*) Most Excellent High Priest, in obedience to your orders, we again repaired to the northeast corner of the old ruins and resumed our labors. Another of the brothers agreeing to descend the vault, we placed a rope seven times around his body as before, instructed as before. After being down for some time, the sun having attained its meridian height casting its rays through the several arches, enabled him to discover a curiously wrought box or coffer overlaid with pure gold. The confined air becoming very oppressive, he suddenly seized the treasure with his left hand, and gave the signal of ascent with his right, when we drew him up, and with him this little box or coffer which we have brought up to the Grand Council for its examination.

M E H P: Excellent King and Excellent Scribe, that box evidently contains treasures of untold value to the craft. Companion Captain of the Host, you will proceed to open it. (*Done*) Excellent King and Excellent Scribe, what a curious looking old book this is. What can it be? Let us open it and see if we can ascertain what it is by reading.

*AND IT CAME TO PASS, WHEN MOSES HAD MADE AN
END OF WRITING THE WORDS OF THIS LAW IN A*

*BOOK, UNTIL THEY WERE FINISHED, THAT MOSES
COMMANDED THE LEVITES WHICH BARE THE ARK OF
THE COVENANT OF THE LORD.*

Excellent King and Excellent Scribe, that must be the Ark of the Covenant.

*SAYING, TAKE THIS BOOK OF THE LAW, AND PUT IT IN
THE SIDE OF THE ARK OF THE COVENANT OF THE
LORD YOUR GOD, THAT IT MAY BE THERE FOR A
WITNESS AGAINST THEE. (Deut. XXXI,24-26.)*

Excellent King and Excellent Scribe, that is the Ark of the Covenant (*King and Scribe stand*) and this the Book of the Law, long lost, now found, Holiness to the Lord.

E K: The Book of the Law, long lost, now found, Holiness to the Lord.

E S: The Book of the Law, long lost, now found, Holiness to the Lord.

M E H P: Here is a pot with some peculiar substance in it, what can it be? Let us open the Book and see if we can ascertain what it is by reading.

*AND MOSES SAID, THIS IS THE THING WHICH THE
LORD COMMANDETH, FILL AN OMER OF IT TO BE
KEPT FOR YOUR GENERATIONS; THAT THEY MAY SEE
THE BREAD WHEREWITH I HAVE FED YOU IN THE
WILDERNESS, WHEN I BROUGHT YOU FORTH FROM
THE LAND OF EGYPT. AND MOSES SAID UNTO AARON,
TAKE A POT, AND PUT AN OMER FULL OF MANNA
THEREIN, AND LAY IT UP BEFORE THE LORD, TO BE
KEPT FOR YOUR GENERATIONS. AS THE LORD
COMMANDED MOSES, SO AARON LAID IT UP BEFORE
THE TESTIMONY, TO BE KEPT. (Exodus XVI,32-34.)*

Excellent King and Excellent Scribe, this is an Omer of Manna laid up in the Ark of the Covenant, as a testimony to be kept of the bread wherewith the children of Israel were fed when they were brought through the wilderness. (*Hands to King*) Here is a rod with buds and leaves and flowers upon it; what can it be? Let us open the book and see if we can ascertain what it is by reading.

AND THE LORD SAID UNTO MOSES, BRING AARON'S ROD AGAIN BEFORE THE TESTIMONY, TO BE KEPT FOR A TOKEN. (Num. XVII, 10)

Excellent King and Excellent Scribe, this is Aaron's rod which budded, blossomed, and brought forth fruit in a day, laid up in the Ark of the Covenant to be kept for a token. (*Hands to Scribe*) Here is a parchment with mysterious characters inscribed upon it; what can it be?

E K: Most Excellent, perhaps it is a key to those mysterious characters upon the side of the Ark of the Covenant.

M E H P: It is indeed a key to these characters, Solomon, King of Israel.

E K: Most Excellent, there are some characters upon this end of the box.

M E H P: You will apply the key, Excellent King, and see if you can read it.

E K: Hiram, King of Tyre.

E S: Most Excellent, there are some characters upon this end of the box.

M E H P: You will apply the key, Excellent Scribe, and see if you can read it.

E S: Hiram Abif.

P S: Most Excellent, there are some characters upon this side of the box.

M E H P: You will turn the box around, Companion Principal Sojourner. (*Done*) Deposited in the year of the world, three thousand, for the benefit of future generations and the Jewish nation in particular.

C O H: Most Excellent, there are some characters upon the top of the box.

M E H P: You will place the cover on the box, Companion Captain of the Host. (*Excellent King and Excellent Scribe stand*)

IN THE BEGINNING WAS THE WORD, AND THE WORD WAS WITH GOD, AND THE WORD IS GOD.

The Council will advance and assist me in communicating the word to the Companions. (*Excellent King, Candidate, Captain of the Host; High Priest, Candidate, Royal Arch Captain; Excellent Scribe, Candidate, Principal Sojourner*)

I WILL NOW EXPLAIN THE WORKING TOOLS.

THE IMPLEMENTS JUST LAID ASIDE BY YOU ARE THE WORKING TOOLS OF A ROYAL ARCH MASON -- THE CROW, PICK, AND SPADE. THE CROW IS MADE USE OF BY OPERATIVE MASONS TO RAISE THINGS OF GREAT WEIGHT, THE PICK TO LOOSEN THE SOIL, AND THE SPADE TO REMOVE THE RUBBISH. AS ROYAL ARCH MASONS THEY MORALLY TEACH US THAT WE SHOULD LIFT FROM OUR MINDS AND HEARTS THE WEIGHT OF PASSIONS AND PREJUDICES, WHICH IMPEDE OUR PROGRESS TOWARDS VIRTUE AND HAPPINESS, LOOSEN THE HOLD WHICH HABITS OF SIN AND FOLLY

HAVE TAKEN UPON OUR DISPOSITIONS, AND REMOVE THE RUBBISH OF VICE AND IGNORANCE WHICH HIDES THAT ETERNAL FOUNDATION OF TRUTH AND WISDOM, UPON WHICH SHOULD BE ERECTED THE MORAL AND SPIRITUAL TEMPLE OF OUR SECOND LIFE.

(*Lecture*)

As Royal Arch Masons, we hail and address each other as Companions. Companions, you doubtless remember you said in the obligation that you would not give the Grand Omnific word in any other manner than that in which you should receive it. The word just communicated to you is the Grand Omnific word alluded to in the obligation. It is G_____ and was communicated to you in three different languages; the Assyriac, Chaldaic, and Hebrew, the principal languages known to the world at the time the Royal Arch Degree was organized, on which occasion it was communicated in these three different languages in order that Royal Arch Masonry might become coextensive with civilization. You received it by three and three times three, over a triangular pavement and under a living arch, which means by three Companions Royal Arch Masons passing the word around three times by each. Each time it was the same word spoken in a different language, over a triangular pavement formed by the right foot of each Companion, under a living arch formed by the right hand of each Companion, raised above the head and at low breath. It is to be given in this way and no other. The password of this degree is R_____. You will remember that R_____ was given you as the word of the Most Excellent Masters Degree syllabled. It has been adopted as the password of the Royal Arch Degree spoken in full, R_____. This (*give it*) is the sign of the degree. It alludes to the penalty of the obligation wherein you said you would have the top of your skull smote off, and your brain exposed to the scorching rays of the sun at meridian height and so forth. It is also the

working sign of the degree, the sign to be given on entering or retiring from a Chapter of Royal Arch Masons. This (*Gives it*) is the Grand hailing sign of the degree. I will explain to what it alludes hereafter. You stated in the obligation that you would not reveal the key to the mysterious characters upon the top and sides of the Ark of the Covenant, unless for instruction and so forth. This is the key and is thus explained: It consists of right angles in various attitudes with the addition of a dot. Being dissected it forms twenty-six distinct characters corresponding with the twenty-six letters of the alphabet.

There were two ways of forming these characters. One was by taking the thirteen angles without the dot for the first half of the alphabet, and with the dot for the latter half; but the more common way was to take the first left hand angle without the dot for A and with the dot for B and so on.

I will now explain the ceremonies through which you have been made to pass on this occasion. On your first introduction into this Chapter you were received under a living arch, the secrets thereof being of divine origin. You then made one circuit around the room and were halted at the Holy Altar for the benefit of prayer, because masonry in all ages teaches us that before engaging in any great or important undertaking we should first invoke the blessing of Almighty God. You made a second circuit of the room and were halted at the Holy Altar where you received the obligation of a Royal Arch Mason. You made a third circuit of the room and were presented at the burning bush, the exhortation there read was explanatory of that ceremony. You made a fourth circuit of the room and were violently ushered out amidst great noise and confusion. This confusion was intended to represent the confusion which occurred at the destruction of King Solomon's Temple. Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, raised a large army, marched against Jerusalem, besieged the city, destroyed the Temple, took the people captive and carried

them away to Babylon. The manner in which you were bound and violently ushered out amidst great noise and confusion was intended to represent the manner in which those captives were bound and carried into captivity. That ended the first section of the Royal Arch Degree. The degree is divided into two sections. The intermission between the first and second sections is intended to represent the Babylonish captivity which continued for a period of seventy years.

When Cyrus ascended the throne he issued his proclamation liberating the captives and granting them leave to return to their homes. The captives at that time were scattered all over the Babylonish dominion. It was the intention of Cyrus to have them collected together and sent back under escort in order that they might reach their homes in safety. At the time of the destruction of the Temple by Nebuchadnezzar, the highest degree known in masonry was the Most Excellent Masters Degree completing what is known as ancient craft Masonry, which commences with the Entered Apprentice Degree.

At the time of the proclamation of Cyrus, liberating the captives, there were but three Most Excellent Masters among all those captives in Babylon. These were pious men and zealous Masons. They did not like to await the time required to collect the captives together. Being very anxious to return to their homes they conceived the idea of undertaking the hazardous enterprise of traveling a direct course through the country, avoiding all roads and public places, hoping in that way to reach their homes in safety and much sooner than they otherwise could. Cyrus did not deem it expedient for them to do so owing to the rough and rugged state of the country through which they would have to pass and the many obstacles they would meet with on their journey. Nevertheless, as they were determined to undertake it, he caused them to be invested with the proper Babylonish passwords.

In the second section of this degree we undertake to represent that journey which those three ancient brethren took by putting you under an arch and over a rough way, three different times, as a representation of the difficulties our ancient brethren encountered on their return to Jerusalem. Tradition informs us that they had to pass through difficult arch ways of rock in the mountains and over very rough and dangerous places, often endangering their lives. It was their invariable custom after passing these rough and dangerous places to kneel and render thanks to God for his protection and deliverance, hence the prayers recited each time after passing over the rough way. Their enterprise was crowned with success and they reached their homes in safety. Some time after the destruction of the Temple by Nebuchadnezzar, those of our ancient brethren who had escaped the sword and captivity desired to revive Masonry, but they were surrounded by their enemies and especially were the Persians on the opposite side of the river exceedingly hostile to them, threatening to defeat every such attempt. Nevertheless our ancient brethren determined to undertake it. With a view to that end they erected a Tabernacle near the old ruins, with outer courts where guards were stationed to protect them from their enemies while holding their meetings in the Tabernacle. This room, while we are at work in the Royal Arch Degree, is intended to represent the Tabernacle and the outer courts. The apartment this side the white veil represents the Tabernacle, the apartments without represent the outer courts where veils were placed as stations and coverings for the guards. When God commanded Moses to lead the children of Israel through the wilderness, Moses held converse with God as to the difficulties he might meet with on his journey and how to dispose of them, and God directed him in case he met with difficulties to cast his rod upon the ground and it would become a serpent, to stretch forth his hand and take it by the tail and it would become a rod in his hand as before. If that sign was not understood he was to put his hand in his bosom and when he should draw it forth it would be leprous as snow,

to put his hand in his bosom again and when he should pluck it forth it would be whole as his other flesh. If that sign was not understood he was to dip up water from the river and pour it upon the dry land and it would become blood upon the dry land. One or the other or all of these signs would be understood and convincing in case he met with the difficulties he anticipated.

When the Tabernacle was first instituted these three signs were given to the three guards, the first sign to the first guard, the second sign to the second guard, and the third sign to the third guard. While our ancient brethren were thus holding their meetings in the Tabernacle, the Grand Council discovered that great confusion existed in their midst in consequence of the introduction of strangers among the workmen, and they decided that this was owing to the incongeniality existing between the families of the original twelve tribes and those whom they denominated the profane. With a view of avoiding this unhappy condition of affairs in the future they decided that none should thereafter be admitted but the true descendants of the twelve tribes of Israel.

In order to guard that point more effectually the third guard was invested with the Signet of Zerubbabel with instructions that should any apply for admission, being in every other respect worthy and well qualified, they should in addition to their passwords and signs be entrusted with the Signet of truth. You have on this occasion been made to represent those three ancient brethren. At the time of their arrival at Jerusalem, our ancient brethren were holding their meeting in the Tabernacle as has been explained. When those three Most Excellent Masters came up and made application for admission, the Master of the First Veil hearing them coming supposed them to be enemies coming up to attack the Tabernacle, he hailed them, "Who comes here, who dare approach this first veil of our Sacred Tabernacle, the Grand

Council now in session. Guards assemble, the enemy approaches. Who are you?" They answered, "Three weary sojourners from Babylon who have come up through great tribulation to assist in the noble and glorious undertaking of rebuilding the House of the Lord without the hope of fee or reward." He asked, "How do you expect to gain admission?" They answered, "By benefit of the passwords which we received in Babylon." He asked, "What are those passwords?" They answered, "I a_, t__ I a_, I a_ h__ s__ m_ u__ y__." The Master of the First Veil admitted them and said, "Good men and true you must be to have come thus far, but farther you cannot go without my passwords and words of exhortation. My passwords are S__, H__, and J_____. My words of exhortation are explanatory of the first sign which the Lord commanded Moses to make use of when he brought the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt and house of bondage, which was to cast his rod upon the ground, which he did, and it became a serpent and Moses fled from before it and the Lord commanded Moses to stretch forth his hand and take it by the tail, which he did, and it became a rod in his hand as before. You will now approach the second veil and give this alarm ** * * * together with my passwords and sign." This alarm is the battery of the Royal Arch Degree. By means of these passwords and this sign they gained admission through the second veil where they were invested with the passwords and sign of the Grand Master of the Second Veil, by means of which they gained admission through the third veil where they were invested with the passwords and sign of the Grand Master of the Third Veil, together with the Signet of truth. With these they approached the Tabernacle guarded by the Royal Arch Captain who hailed them, "Who comes here? Who dare approach this fourth veil of our Sacred Tabernacle, the Grand Council now in session, before whom incense burns upon the Holy Altar both day and night? Who are you?" They answered as before and in addition presented the Signet of truth, which was sent up and recognized by Zerubbabel as his Signet, the Grand

Council so decided, but, owing to the great confusion which had arisen by the introduction of strangers among the workmen, they also decided that none should be admitted but the true descendants of the twelve tribes of Israel. They were therefore required to be very careful in tracing their genealogy, which they did in these words, "We are of your own tribes and families, descendants of those noble Giblemites who wrought so hard at the building of the Temple, and were present at its completion and dedication by King Solomon to the service of Almighty God. We ourselves were present at its destruction by Nebuchadnezzar by whom we were taken captive and carried away to Babylon where we remained servants to him and his successors until the reign of Cyrus, King of Persia, by whose proclamation we were liberated and have now come up through great tribulation to assist in the noble and glorious undertaking of rebuilding the House of the Lord without the hope of fee or reward." The High Priest then ordered, "Companion Royal Arch Captain, you will admit them into the presence of the Grand Council." They were admitted and proved themselves Most Excellent Masters.

When it was decided by the Grand Council to receive and employ them, they were asked what part of the work they were willing to undertake. They answered, "Any, Most Excellent, be it ever so difficult." It was ordered that they be clothed and furnished with the necessary working tools, when they were informed that in order to promote the noble and glorious undertaking of rebuilding the House of the Lord, it was necessary to remove the rubbish from the northeast corner of the old ruins, and they were ordered to repair to the northeast corner of the old ruins and commence their labors in removing the rubbish, and to be very careful to observe and preserve everything having marks of antiquity upon it and bring it up to the Grand Council for its examination. They retired and returned with this their first report, "Most Excellent High Priest, in obedience to your orders, we

repaired to the northeast corner of the old ruins and commenced our labors in removing the rubbish. After working very hard for some time we came upon what appeared to be an impenetrable rock. One of the brothers sounding his crow upon it, it returned a hollow sound. Upon further examination we discovered an arch, in the apex of which was this curiously-wrought stone which we succeeded in raising and have brought up to the Grand Council for its examination." The Grand Council decided that this was the keystone of a Mark Master Mason and would doubtless be of great service to the craft in the construction of the new building.

They were asked if they were still willing to pursue their labors. They answered, "We are, Most Excellent, be they ever so dangerous." They were ordered to go as before, instructed as before and were assured that their labors should not go unrewarded. They retired and resumed their labors and returned with this their second report, "Most Excellent High Priest, in obedience to your orders we again repaired to the northeast corner of the old ruins and resumed our labors. After working very hard for some time we succeeded in removing the arch when we discovered a deep vault. One of the brothers agreeing to descend, we placed a rope seven times around his body with one end in his right hand and the other in his left, with these instructions, that should he wish to descend he would give the signal with his left hand and should he wish to ascend he would give the signal with his right. After being down for some time he gave the signal of ascent when we drew him up and with him these three little squares which we have brought up to the Grand Council for its examination." The Grand Council decided that these were the squares of our three Grand Masters, and would doubtless be of great service to the craft in the construction of the new building. They were asked if they were still willing to pursue their labors. Having become deeply interested in the enterprise in which they were engaged, they answered, "We

are, Most Excellent, even at the risk of our lives." They were ordered to go as before, instructed as before, and the blessing of the God of their fathers, of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, was invoked to go with and protect them. They retired and resumed their labors and returned with this their third report, "Most Excellent High Priest, in obedience to your orders we again repaired to the northeast corner of the old ruins and resumed our labors. Another of the brothers agreeing to descend the vault, we placed a rope seven times around his body as before, instructed as before. After being down for some time the sun having attained its meridian height, casting its rays through the several arches, enabled him to discover a curiously-wrought box or coffer overlaid with pure gold. The confined air becoming very oppressive he suddenly seized the treasure with his left hand and gave the signal of ascent with his right, when we drew him up and with him this little box or coffer which we have brought up to the Grand Council for its examination." Upon examination the Grand Council discovered that that box was the Ark of the Covenant and that it contained a copy of the Book of the Law, a pot of Manna, Aaron's rod, and so forth.

These facts were developed by reading the book. When Nebuchadnezzar destroyed the Temple he ordered that every copy of the Book of the Law should be destroyed and that every person found in possession of that book thereafter should suffer a severe penalty. Under these circumstances our ancient brethren supposed that there was not a copy of that book in existence until it was found as has been represented on this occasion, and such was their exceeding joy and delight at finding it that they involuntarily exclaimed, "The Book of the Law, long lost, now found, Holiness to the Lord." They also found that the Ark of the Covenant contained a pot of Manna laid up as a testimony to be kept of the bread wherewith the children of Israel were fed when they were brought through the wilderness; also Aaron's rod, laid up to be kept for a token. They also found a key to the mysterious

characters upon the top and sides of the Ark of the Covenant by which they were enabled to read the names of Solomon, King of Israel, Hiram, King of Tyre, and Hiram Abif, and that it had been deposited there in the year of the world, three thousand, for the benefit of future generations and the Jewish nation in particular. Upon the top of the Ark of the Covenant they found a triangle of three equal sides, and within the triangle was inscribed the name of G_____ in three different languages, the Assyriac, Chaldaic, and Hebrew.

You doubtless remember in the Master Masons Degree that upon the death of our Grand Master Hiram Abif, the secret word of a Master Mason was supposed to be forever lost, and that a substitute was adopted until future generations should find the right one. It was at the time of these discoveries that the Royal Arch Degree was organized when the supposed lost word of a Master Mason was adopted as the Grand Omnipotent word of the Royal Arch Degree. As such it has been in use ever since and will continue to be so used until time shall be no more. Those three Most Excellent Masters, for their skill and industry in bringing to light the important secrets of this degree, were rewarded by being appointed Grand Masters of the Veils, which offices it is supposed they held during life as we have no Masonic tradition of their having been removed. Thus ends the explanation of the ceremonies through which you have been made to pass on this occasion and brings us to the Sacred History of the degree, which will be given by Companion _____.

(*Sacred History*)

ENOCH PRAYED TO THE LORD THAT HE MIGHT BE INSTRUCTED HOW TO ADDRESS HIM BY HIS TRUE NAME. WHILE HIS MIND WAS DEEPLY ABSORBED IN MEDITATION UPON THIS SUBJECT, LOOKING UP TOWARD HEAVEN, HE SAW, AS IT WERE IN A VISION, A TRIANGLE OF THREE EQUAL SIDES AND WITHIN THE

TRIANGLE WAS INSCRIBED THE SACRED NAME OF DEITY, WHICH HE WAS FORBIDDEN TO SPEAK ALOUD.

THE TRIANGLE WAS SURROUNDED BY THREE BRILLIANT CIRCULAR RAYS OF LIGHT AND GLORY, ALL EMANATING FROM THE CENTER, AS ONE COMMON CENTER, IN EFFULGENT AND REFULGENT RAYS. IN ORDER TO PROTECT HIS EYES FROM THE BRILLIANCE OF THE RAYS HE INVOLUNTARILY PLACED HIS HANDS IN THIS POSITION (*sign given*) AND TURNING AROUND, LOOKING UPON THE GROUND (THIS IS THE G.H.S. OF THE DEGREE AND TO WHAT IT ALLUDES), HE IMAGINED A DEEP VAULT, AT THE BOTTOM OF WHICH HE SAW UPON A TRIANGULAR PEDESTAL OF WHITE MARBLE, A TRIANGLE OF THREE EQUAL SIDES, AND WITHIN THE TRIANGLE WAS INSCRIBED THE SACRED NAME OF DEITY, THE SAME AS HE HAD SEEN IN THE HEAVENS.

THE TRIANGLE WITH THE JEWS, ALLUDES TO THE ATTRIBUTES OF DEITY: OMNISCIENCE, OMNIPOTENCE, AND OMNIPRESENCE; WITH CHRISTIANS IT ALLUDES TO THE HOLY TRINITY: GOD, THE CREATOR, JESUS CHRIST, THE MEDIATOR, AND THE HOLY GHOST, AS SANCTIFIER AND COMFORTER.

THE THREE BRILLIANT CIRCULAR RAYS OF LIGHT AND GLORY, ALL EMANATING FROM THE CENTER, AS ONE COMMON CENTER, IN EFFULGENT AND REFULGENT RAYS, DENOTE THAT HIS CREATIVE POWER AND INFLUENCE EXTEND THROUGHOUT ALL SPACE, THAT HE IS, WAS, AND WILL BE, THE ALPHA AND OMEGA, THE BEGINNING AND THE END, THE FIRST AND THE LAST, AND THAT DEPENDENT UPON HIM, AS CREATOR, PRESERVER, AND BENEFATOR, ARE ALL CREATED BEING, FROM ZOOLPHILITE TO MAN, MAN

TO ANGELS, ARCHANGELS, CHERUBIM, AND SERAPHIM.

TRADITION INFORMS US THAT ENOCH BUILT A TEMPLE UNDER GROUND AND CONSECRATED IT TO THE SERVICE OF THE TRUE AND LIVING GOD. HIS SON, METHUSELAH, CONSTRUCTED THE WORK WITHOUT KNOWING HIS FATHER'S MOTIVE. HE THEN CAUSED TO BE MADE A TRIANGULAR PLATE OF PURE GOLD AND WITHIN THE TRIANGLE HE INSCRIBED THE SACRED NAME OF DEITY, THE SAME AS HE HAD SEEN IT IN THE HEAVENS. HE ENCRUSTED IT UPON A STONE OF AGATE AND SURROUNDED IT WITH PRECIOUS STONES. THIS HE PLACED UPON A TRIANGULAR PEDESTAL OF WHITE MARBLE AND DEPOSITED IT IN THE BOTTOM OF THE DEEPEST ARCH. HE THEN CAUSED TO BE MADE A FLAT STONE DOOR, IN THE TOP OF WHICH WAS PLACED A COPPER RING, BY MEANS OF WHICH IT MIGHT BE RAISED IF IT SHOULD BECOME NECESSARY. THIS HE PLACED AT THE OPENING OF THE UPPER ARCH, TO PROTECT THE SACRED TREASURE THEREIN CONTAINED AGAINST THE UNIVERSAL DELUGE THEN PENDING. THIS HAPPENED IN THE LAND OF PALESTINE, AND NONE BUT ENOCH KNEW OF THE SACRED TREASURES THOSE ARCHES CONTAINED. WHEN ENOCH WAS TRANSLATED THE WORD WAS LOST TO THE WORLD.

GOD ALSO GAVE TO MOSES THE TRUE PRONUNCIATION OF HIS NAME, WHICH HE TOO WAS FORBIDDEN TO SPEAK ALOUD. WHEN MOSES DIED THE WORD WAS AGAIN LOST TO THE WORLD.

SOLOMON IN HIS TIME WAS REGARDED AS THE WISEST OF PRINCES; HE WAS WELL VERSED IN ALL THE HIDDEN MYSTERIES OF THE WORLD. HE BORE FULL WELL IN REMEMBRANCE THE PROMISE OF GOD

TO MOSES THAT HE WOULD AT SOME FUTURE TIME REVEAL TO SOME OF HIS SUCCESSORS OR DESCENDANTS THE TRUE PRONUNCIATION OF HIS NAME; BUT SOLOMON DID NOT BELIEVE THIS WOULD HAPPEN UNTIL HE HAD BUILT A TEMPLE IN WHICH THE SACRED TREASURE COULD BE SAFELY DEPOSITED. HE THEREFORE, IN THE FOURTH YEAR OF HIS REIGN, IN THE YEAR OF THE WORLD 2992, JUST 480 YEARS AFTER THE PASSAGE OF THE RED SEA BY THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL, COMMENCED TO BUILD THE TEMPLE. HE SELECTED AS THE SITE THE BROW OF MT. MORIAH, WHICH WAS REGARDED AS THE MOST BEAUTIFUL AND HEALTHFUL SPOT IN ALL JERUSALEM.

THE WORKMEN EMPLOYED IN REMOVING THE EARTH, TO LAY THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE BUILDING, CAME UPON A FLAT STONE DOOR IN THE TOP OF WHICH THEY FOUND A COPPER RING, BY MEANS OF WHICH THEY SUCCEEDED IN RAISING IT, WHEN THEY DISCOVERED A DEEP VAULT, AT THE BOTTOM OF WHICH THEY SAW UPON A TRIANGULAR PEDESTAL OF WHITE MARBLE, A TRIANGLE OF THREE EQUAL SIDES, AND WITHIN THE TRIANGLE WAS INSCRIBED MYSTERIOUS CHARACTERS. THE TRIANGLE WAS SURROUNDED WITH PRECIOUS STONES CASTING UP BRILLIANT RAYS OF LIGHT. THIS BEING REPORTED TO KING SOLOMON, HE ORDERED THE WORKMEN TO DESIST FROM DIGGING, FOR HE BELIEVED THAT THAT SPOT HAD IN SOME AGE OF THE WORLD BEEN DEDICATED TO HEATHEN WORSHIP. IT IS BELIEVED THAT SOLOMON WAS THEN INFORMED BY DIVINE INSPIRATION THAT THAT SPOT HAD BEEN THRICE DEDICATED TO THE SERVICE OF THE ONLY TRUE AND LIVING GOD: FIRST BY ENOCH, WHEN HE BUILT HIS TEMPLE UNDERGROUND; SECOND BY ABRAHAM, WHEN HE ATTEMPTED TO OFFER UP HIS SON ISAAC

AS A SACRIFICE; AND THIRD BY HIS FATHER, DAVID, WHEN HE APPEASED THE WRATH OF THE DESTROYING ANGEL, WHO WAS VISIBLE OVER THE THRESHING FLOOR OF ORNAN THE JEBUSITE.

HE THEN ORDERED THE WORKMEN TO RESUME THEIR LABORS AND IN A LITTLE MORE THAN SEVEN YEARS THE TEMPLE WAS COMPLETED IN ALL ITS PARTS AND DEDICATED TO THE SERVICE OF THE ONLY TRUE AND LIVING GOD.

FOUR HUNDRED AND SIXTEEN YEARS THEREAFTER THE TEMPLE WAS DESTROYED BY NEBUCHADNEZZAR, THE PEOPLE TAKEN CAPTIVE AND CARRIED AWAY TO BABYLON, WHERE THEY REMAINED SERVANTS TO HIM AND HIS SUCCESSORS UNTIL THE REIGN OF CYRUS, KING OF PERSIA, BY WHOSE PROCLAMATION THEY WERE LIBERATED AND PERMITTED TO RETURN TO JERUSALEM TO REBUILD THE HOUSE OF THE TRUE AND EVER LIVING GOD.

M E H P: You will now receive the charge by Companion

WORTHY COMPANIONS: BY THE CONSENT AND ASSISTANCE OF THE MEMBERS OF THIS CHAPTER YOU ARE NOW EXALTED TO THE SUBLIME AND HONORABLE DEGREE OF ROYAL ARCH MASON.

THE RITES AND MYSTERIES CONTAINED IN THIS DEGREE HAVE BEEN HANDED DOWN THROUGH A CHOSEN FEW, UNCHANGED BY TIME, AND UNCONTROLLED BY PREJUDICE; AND WE EXPECT AND TRUST THEY WILL BE REGARDED BY YOU WITH THE SAME VENERATION, AND TRANSMITTED WITH THE SAME SCRUPULOUS PURITY TO YOUR SUCCESSORS. NO ONE CAN REFLECT ON THE CEREMONIES OF GAINING ADMISSION INTO THIS

PLACE WITHOUT BEING FORCIBLY STRUCK WITH THE IMPORTANT LESSONS WHICH THEY TEACH. HERE WE ARE NECESSARILY LED TO CONTEMPLATE, WITH GRATITUDE AND ADMIRATION, THE SACRED SOURCE FROM WHENCE ALL EARTHLY COMFORTS FLOW. HERE WE FIND ADDITIONAL INDUCEMENTS TO CONTINUE STEADFAST AND IMMOVABLE IN THE DISCHARGE OF OUR RESPECTIVE DUTIES; AND HERE WE ARE BOUND BY THE MOST SOLEMN TIES TO PROMOTE EACH OTHER'S WELFARE, AND CORRECT EACH OTHER'S FAILINGS, BY ADVICE, ADMONITION, AND REPROOF.

AS IT IS OUR EARNEST DESIRE, AND A DUTY WE OWE TO OUR COMPANIONS OF THIS ORDER, THAT THE ADMISSION OF EVERY CANDIDATE INTO THIS CHAPTER SHOULD BE ATTENDED BY THE APPROBATION OF THE MOST SCRUTINIZING EYE, WE HOPE ALWAYS TO FIND AMONG US NONE BUT SUCH AS WILL PROMOTE, TO THE UTMOST OF THEIR POWER, THE GREAT END OF OUR INSTITUTION, BROTHERLY LOVE, RELIEF AND TRUTH, TAUGHT BY OUR INTERESTING SYMBOLS, AND SO FORCIBLY IMPRESSED BY THESE IMPORTANT CEREMONIES.

BY PAYING DUE ATTENTION TO THIS DETERMINATION, YOU WILL NEVER RECOMMEND A CANDIDATE TO THIS CHAPTER WHOSE ABILITIES AND KNOWLEDGE OF THE PRECEDING DEGREES YOU CAN NOT FREELY VOUCH FOR; AND WHO, YOU DO NOT FIRMLY AND CONFIDENTLY BELIEVE, WILL FULLY CONFORM TO THE PRINCIPLES OF OUR ORDER, AND FULFILL THE OBLIGATIONS OF A ROYAL ARCH MASON.

WHILE SUCH ARE OUR MEMBERS, WE MAY EXPECT TO BE UNITED IN OUR OBJECT WITHOUT JEALOUSY, STRIFE, INATTENTION OR NEGLECT; BUT ZEAL,

FIDELITY AND AFFECTION WILL BE THE DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS OF OUR ORDER; AND THAT SATISFACTION, HARMONY AND PEACE MAY BE ENJOYED, AT OUR MEETINGS, WHICH NO OTHER SOCIETY ON EARTH CAN AFFORD.

You will now take your seat among the Companions.