

SELECT MASTERS DEGREE

Bible: Deuteronomy xxxi:24-26

TIM: * The Council will now come to order. Companion Conductor, you will retire, instruct, and send in the Candidate. Companions, you will resume your labors.

COC: (*Outside*) Companion, you will enter the room and approach the East unless halted; if halted, you will say, "A zealous Brother wishing to partake of your labors."

Candidate: (*Enters as directed*)

CG: Who comes here?

Candidate: A zealous Brother wishing to partake of your labors.

CG: Give me the password and sign of your entrance! (*None given*) Give me the password and sign of your entrance! (*Slight pause*) Intruder! Intruder!!!

TIM: Companion Captain of the Guards, what is the cause of this alarm?

CG: An intruder has penetrated the secret vault, Thrice Illustrious Master.

TIM: Put him to death instantly!

CG: Hold, Thrice Illustrious Master, I beg you will consider for a moment upon whom you are about to inflict this awful penalty, this is no less a person than your particular friend Zabud.

TIM: Zabud? Zabud, is it possible? Is it possible? Companion Captain of the Guards, you will bind him in

chains and have him forthcoming when called for, or your life shall answer for his escape. My Illustrious Companions of Tyre, let us now retire to the ninth Arch for consultation.

(Done -- go to white veil, do not pass through)

My Illustrious Companions of Tyre, how can we avoid this awful sacrifice?

RIDM: I know not, Thrice Illustrious Master, how it can be avoided. There are but nine Arches, but three can be employed at an arch, twenty seven in all, and our numbers are full.

IPC: Why, Thrice Illustrious Master, you have not the power to pardon him.

TIM: True, I have not the power to pardon him and he must die. Let us advance and pronounce the sentence. *(Advances)*

Companion Captain of the Guards, you will bring forth the prisoner.

(Done)

Alas my unfortunate friend Zabud, by curiosity, and disobedience you have forfeited your life. I have consulted my worthy colleagues and find them inflexible, besides, I myself have not the power to pardon you and you must die.

CG: *(Kneeling with Zabud)* Thrice Illustrious Master, I beg you will remember how long and how ardent has been my attachment to your sacred person and secrets. Of late observing a secret work going on here with which I had not been made acquainted, I feared I had lost the confidence of my sovereign and grieved in silence. At length I mentioned the subject to your majesty, when you assured me that your confidence in me remained the same as ever, and directed me

to be patient, that a door would soon be left open for my reception. That assurance satisfied me. On this occasion, having important business with your majesty, I sought you at your most retired room. Finding a door open and unguarded, I supposed it had been left open for my reception and boldly entered. I beg you will believe it was not from a spirit of curiosity or disobedience that I did so.

RIDM: Why Thrice Illustrious Master, it appears that your friend Zabud is not guilty as charged. This difficulty seems to have arisen from some unguarded remark of your own. I therefore propose that he be pardoned and admitted a member among us.

TIM: How can that be done, my Illustrious Companion of Tyre? There are but nine arches, but three can be employed at an arch, twenty-seven in all, and our numbers are full.

IPC: True, Thrice Illustrious Master, our numbers are full. But see, Ahashar the Guard is there asleep at his post and is now no longer worthy of our confidence. I therefore propose that he be discharged and executed, and that your friend Zabud be placed in his stead.

TIM: I thank you, my Illustrious Companion of Tyre, for the suggestion, it shall be done. Zabud, are you willing to take upon yourself a solemn obligation not to discover to any person unlawfully any of the secret work going on here, and be admitted a member among us?

Candidate: I am!

TIM: Companion Captain of the Guards, you will release Zabud from his chains, let him be seated, and return to your post. (*done*) Companion Captain of the Guards, it is my order that you take Ahashar the Guard in custody; remove

him hence and let him be executed instantly for being found asleep at his post.

CG: Ahashar, awake and hear your doom.

Ahashar: My doom! What doom!

CG: You must die.

Ahashar: Die! Die for what!

CG: For being found asleep at your post.

Ahashar: Is there no mercy!

CG: Mercy for Zabud, but not for you.

(retires and executes orders and returns to his post and says)

Thrice Illustrious Master, your order has been duly executed.

TIM: Companion Captain of the Guards, you will conduct the Candidate to the Altar. (done) Companion, you have stated that you were willing to take upon yourself a solemn obligation not to discover to any person, unlawfully, any of the secret work going on here, and be admitted a member among us. You are now presented at the Holy Altar to take that obligation. You will kneel at the Altar, place your hands upon the Bible, announce your name, and repeat after me:

I _____, % m on f w @ ac, in t prs % t S G A %
t u @ ths i C % S M's, ddcd t th mst p, mst m @ mst t C, do
hb @ hn m s p @ s, tt I wl nt revl t s % ths d t ny prsn unlfl,
eithr b spkg, wrtg, ctng, mkg or ngrvg, o b ay dmb s o mtn,
whrb t lst ht mgt b takn % t xstnc % t s v or tt ny sac tres r
thrn cntnd.

An I mst s p @ s tt I wl std t @ abd b t B-ls, rls @ rgltns
% ths o ay oth Cnc % S Ms % wh I ma bcm a mb @ wl sprt t

cnst, res @ eds % t G Cl ndr whs jrsdtn I ma b, s fr a thy ma cm t my kdlg @ r nt sbvrsv % t prnpls @ grnd wk % fmy, @ wl oby al du sgs @ sms snt o hndd t m frm a reg C o by a kn wrty Cmp S M, i wthn lngt % my c t.

An I mst s p @ s tt I wl nt b pres at o ast n cnfrg ths d, upn ay prsn wh hs nt rglry rcvd al t ds frm E A t R M ncisv, @ thn onl n a jst @ lgly const C % S M's.

An I mst s p @ s tt I wl nt wrg a Cl or a Cmp S M t t vlu % aythg, nr pmt i t b dn i wn my pr t prv i.

An I mst s p @ s tt I wl nt pntrt t nth rch unls by athrty % t T I M.

To al % wh I mst s p @ s wthot ay eqv, sl-ev, o mtl rsrvn wtv, bn msf ndr t pnlt % hvg my hs chpd of a t stmps, my is tr ou fm tr skts @ my bd qd @ th ag t rb, sh I wlf vl ay pt % t sl o % a S M, so hl m G.

In token of your sincerity, you will kiss the Book before you which is the Holy Bible.

My Companion, I now hail and greet you Royal and Select Master and give it you strictly in charge ever to remain dumb and blind concerning all things pertaining to the secret vault. I will now invest you with the signs of the degree of Select Master. This, is the due guard and alludes to the manner in which you were bound in chains, and this, that and this, are the signs and allude to the penalties of the obligation wherein you said you would have your hands chopped off at the stumps, your eyes torn out from their sockets, and your body quartered and so forth. These are all signs of a Select Master. This, is the grand hailing sign and this the working sign of the degree, the sign to be given on entering or retiring from a Council of Select Masters. Place your right hand on your left breast and pronounce the word, "S_____, " left hand over mouth, "S_____, " right over eyes, "D_____, " drop the left hand down by the side, bring the right down over the mouth and pronounce the words "I__ S_ D__" which is the

word of the degree and signifies, man of my choice or select man. These are the signs in which you were deficient when challenged by the Captain of the Guards, and with his assistance, I will now instruct you in the manner of their use. Who comes here?

CG: G_____!

TIM: Give me the password and sign of your entrance.

CG: S_____.

TIM: S_____....S_____

Both together: D_____.....I__ S_ D__.

TIM: With these signs you will be enabled to pass the first eight arches, but to the ninth arch, you can only be admitted by authority of the Thrice Illustrious Master. You now have that authority, and I now introduce you into this apartment which represents the ninth arch

(Opens white veil, enters and takes station and remains standing and continues)

Companion Captain of the Guards, you will clothe the Companion as a Select Master and conduct him to the ninth arch.

My Illustrious Companions being deeply impressed with the zeal you have uniformly displayed in our service, have in unison with myself, decided to reward your devotion by admitting you to the secrets of the ninth arch. God has revealed to us in his Holy word, that unless the people yield obedience to his laws and commandments, this beautiful city and the Temple we are now building will at some future time be destroyed, the people taken captive and carried into captivity, when the worship of the true God will cease for a

time, and the forms and ceremonies he has enjoined upon us will be forgotten. To avert so dire a calamity as their loss to the craft and Jewish people, we have constructed this secret vault in which to securely hide from the eyes of an invader duplicates of those treasures the people most revere. For God has also promised that after three score years and ten, he will release his people from their captivity and raise up a prince of the house of Judah to rebuild the Temple to his Holy name. And he will give him a sign as a reward and encouragement for his zeal and fidelity and the sign shall be the recovery of the word.

(Thrice Illustrious Master sits)

My Illustrious Companions of Tyre, if you concur, we will now proceed to make the deposit.

RIDM: I concur, Thrice Illustrious Master.

IPC: I concur, Thrice Illustrious Master.

TIM: *(reads)* 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, 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)*

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)

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

My Illustrious Companions of Tyre, we have now placed the sacred treasures in the Ark of the Covenant as we agreed to do. Nothing now remains to be done but to place our names upon the Ark of the Covenant, together with the date of the deposit and the purpose for which it was made. If you concur, we will now proceed to do that.

RIDM: I concur, Thrice Illustrious Master.

IPC: I concur, Thrice Illustrious Master.

TIM: Solomon, King of Israel.

RIDM: Hiram, King of Tyre.

IPC: Hiram Abif.

TIM: Deposited in the year of the world 3000 for the benefit of future generations and the Jewish nation in particular.

My Illustrious Companions of Tyre, I propose that we now make the deposit in the ninth arch.

(done)

My Illustrious Companion of Tyre, this is sad and afflicting intelligence we have of the death of our Grand Master Hiram Abif. I fear the secret word of a Master Mason is forever lost. You remember well the agreement entered into between our

Grand Master Hiram Abif, yourself, and myself, that the secret word of a Master Mason should not be given by either of us, unless all three were present. Hiram Abif is no more and that word can no longer be used by us; but I now recall the wise suggestion of our Grand Master Hiram Abif, that in case either of us three should be removed hence by death before the final completion of the Temple, the secret word should be deposited in the ninth arch, and I have conceived of a plan by which it may be perpetuated for the benefit of future generations by placing it upon the top of the Ark of the Covenant in the principal languages now known to the world, the Assyriac, Chaldaic and Hebrew, and by placing a key to the word within the Ark of the Covenant and also by placing one of our squares upon each of the words, so that should our worst fears be realized, the Temple be destroyed, the people taken captive and carried away, they may at some future time return, and wish to rebuild the Temple, in which event this deposit may be discovered; and in as much as a true description of our jewels will be handed down to latest posterity, it will be known by these little squares by whom and for what purpose the deposit was made. If you concur, we will now proceed to do that.

RIDM: Thrice Illustrious Master, I think your suggestion eminently wise and proper, I therefore most heartily concur.

(place squares and key, on and in Ark and return to stations)

TIM: Companion, I will now explain the ceremonies through which you have been made to pass on this occasion.

Sometime before the completion of the Temple, our three Grand Masters discovered that a state of disaffection, demoralization, and want of congeniality existed among those in and about the Temple. This state of things finally assumed such alarming proportions as to cause a Grand Council to be held for the purpose of deliberating upon the unfortunate

condition of affairs surrounding them, on which occasion they bore it firmly in belief that unless a speedy reformation took place, and the people yielded obedience to the laws and commandments, their enemies would take advantage of their distracted and demoralized condition, their beautiful city and Temple would be destroyed, and all the sacred treasures and valuable deposits destroyed and lost to the world.

The fact that valuable treasures had been deposited in the Sanctum Sanctorum had become notorious and could no longer be concealed. Our Grand Masters, however, determined to make an effort to preserve them to the world. With a view to that end they decided to construct a secret vault underground, commencing at King Solomon's most retired room, and extending in a westerly direction to end under the Sanctum Sanctorum, to be divided into nine apartments or arches, and when finished to place in the ninth arch a complete duplicate of everything contained in the Sanctum Sanctorum, together with the Ark of the Covenant, the Book of the law, Aaron's rod and so forth, so that should their worst fears be realized, the Temple be destroyed, the people taken captive and carried away, they might at some future time return and wish to rebuild the Temple, in which event, they cherished the fond hope and belief that this deposit might be discovered and brought to light and made useful to future generations.

In order to accomplish this object, it was necessary that the existence of this vault should be and forever remain a profound secret to the world. To effect this they decided to select such assistance to construct the work as were known to them to be true, tried, and trustworthy craftsmen.

They decided that three only should be employed at an arch, making twenty-seven in all; that our Grand Masters themselves should construct the ninth arch, and that they should select twenty-four others to construct the other eight

arches. They selected twenty-two from Gebal, a city of Phoenicia, also Adoniram and Ahashar, making twenty-four, and the three Grand Masters, making twenty seven. They adopted as the time for work from nine o'clock at night until midnight, when all prying eyes were supposed to be closed in sleep. In order to make it a greater certainty that the construction of this vault should not become known to any but this select number, they covenanted and agreed with each other that should any person penetrate the secret vault without authority, he should be instantly put to death.

The work going on when you entered the room was intended to represent those twenty-seven craftsmen constructing that secret vault. While this work was going on, a particular and bosom friend of King Solomon by the name of Zabud, penetrated the secret vault without authority. He was instantly accosted by the Captain of the Guards, "Who comes here?" He answered, "A zealous brother, wishing to partake of your labors." He was then asked for the password and sign of his entrance and being unable to give it, the Captain of the Guards seized him and gave the alarm, "Intruder! Intruder!!!"

All were fully impressed with the importance of the agreement they had entered into, in case an incident of this kind should occur. The work instantly ceased and all repaired to the place of the alarm. The Thrice Illustrious Master said, "Companion Captain of the Guards, what is the cause of this alarm?" He replied, "An intruder has penetrated the secret vault, Thrice Illustrious Master." The Thrice Illustrious Master ordered, "Put him to death, instantly."

As the Captain of the Guards was about to carry this order into execution, he suddenly discovered who it was. He paused, and thus addressed the Thrice Illustrious Master, "Hold, Thrice Illustrious Master; I beg you will consider for a moment upon whom you are about to inflict this awful

penalty. This is no less a person than your particular friend Zabud."

King Solomon was exceedingly pained at this announcement. But a short time before, he had entered into an agreement that the first one who entered this vault without authority should be instantly put to death. The first one who does enter is his particular friend Zabud. Solomon seems to have cherished a hope that he might in some way save the life of his friend. He ordered the Captain of the Guards to bind him in chains and have him forth-coming when called for or his life should answer for his escape. They then retired to the ninth arch for consultation when it was decided that their obligation was such that Zabud must die. They advanced and the Thrice Illustrious Master said, "Companion Captain of the Guards, you will bring forth the prisoner", whom he thus addressed, "Alas, my unfortunate friend Zabud, by curiosity and disobedience you have forfeited your life. I have consulted my worthy colleagues and find them inflexible; besides I myself have not the power to pardon you and you must die."

Zabud knelt and made this plea, "Thrice Illustrious Master, I beg you will remember how long and how ardent has been my attachment to your sacred person and secrets. Of late, observing a secret work going on here with which I had not been made acquainted, I feared I had lost the confidence of my sovereign and grieved in silence. At length I mentioned the subject to your majesty, when you assured me that your confidence in me remained the same as ever, and directed me to be patient, that a door would soon be left open for my reception. That assurance satisfied me. On this occasion, having important business with your majesty, I sought you at your most retired room. Finding a door open and unguarded, I supposed it had been left open for my reception and boldly entered. I beg you will believe it was not from a spirit of curiosity or disobedience that I did so."

On hearing this plea, the Right Illustrious Deputy Master said, "Why Thrice Illustrious Master, it appears that your friend Zabud is not guilty as charged. This difficulty seems to have arisen from some unguarded remark of your own. I therefore propose that he be pardoned and admitted a member among us."

The Thrice Illustrious Master replied, "How can that be done my Illustrious Companion of Tyre? There are but nine arches, but three can be employed at an arch, twenty-seven in all, and our numbers are full."

The Illustrious Principal Conductor then came to his relief and said, "True, Thrice Illustrious Master, our numbers are full, but see, Ahashar the Guard, is there asleep at his post, and is now no longer worthy of our confidence. I therefore propose that he be discharged and executed and that your friend Zabud be placed in his stead."

The Thrice Illustrious Master said, "I thank you my Illustrious Companion of Tyre, for the suggestion. It shall be done. Zabud, are you willing to take upon yourself a solemn obligation not to discover to any person unlawfully, any of the secret work going on here and be admitted a member among us?" He answered, "I am!" The Thrice Illustrious Master then ordered, "Companion Captain of the Guards, you will release Zabud from his chains, let him be seated and return to your post." This being done the Thrice Illustrious Master said, "Companion Captain of the Guards, it is my order that you take Ahashar the Guard, in custody, remove him hence and let him be executed instantly for being found asleep at his post." Ahashar the Guard was discharged and executed, and Zabud obligated and placed in his stead. You have on this occasion been made to represent Zabud.

The work was resumed and finally completed when duplicates of all things contained in the Sanctum Sanctorum were

deposited in the ninth arch, and upon the sides of the Ark of the Covenant were placed the names of our three Grand Masters, together with the date and purpose of the deposit for the benefit of future generations and the Jewish nation in particular. Some time after this was done our Grand Master Hiram Abif was assassinated as was represented in the Masters Degree. According to an agreement between our three Grand Masters, the secret word could not be used by the remaining two. They decided, however, for the benefit of future generations, to place it upon the top of the Ark of the Covenant in the Assyriac, Chaldaic and Hebrew languages, the principal languages known to the world at that time. And that it might be known as the true word when discovered, they placed one of their squares upon each of these words, knowing well that a true description of their jewels would be handed down to latest posterity, thus if the Temple should be destroyed, the people taken captive and carried away, as they had reason to fear might happen, they might at some future time return and wish to rebuild the Temple, in which event, should these valuable deposits be discovered, it would be known by whom they were placed there.

As was feared by our ancient brethren, the Temple was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar, the people taken captive and carried away to Babylon, with all the holy vessels and sacred treasures, and after a period of seventy years they were liberated by the proclamation of Cyrus and permitted to return to Jerusalem to rebuild the Temple.

At the commencement of the work, this secret vault and the deposits therein, were discovered and brought to light, as was represented in the Royal Arch Degree, 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. It was the same which was communicated by God

himself to Enoch and was in use three thousand years when it was lost by the death of Hiram Abif.

(*Council Summary*)

AND NOW COMPANIONS, YOU HAVE RECEIVED ALL THE INSTRUCTION THAT PERTAINS TO THE ROYAL CRAFT. STEP BY STEP YOU HAVE ASCENDED TO THE VERY SUMMIT OF OUR SUBLIME AND NOBLE ART.

AS AN ENTERED APPRENTICE, AFTER YOU WERE PRESENTED WITH THE LAMBSKIN OR WHITE APRON, AND TAUGHT ITS SUBLIME EMBLEM, YOU WERE CONDUCTED ABOUT THE OUTER COURTS OF THE TEMPLE, THAT YOU MIGHT VIEW ITS MAGNIFICENT PROPORTIONS, ITS MASSIVE PILLARS, ITS STARRY DECKED CANOPY, ITS MOSAIC PAVEMENT, ITS LIGHTS, ORNAMENTS, JEWELS AND FURNITURE.

BY A WINDING STAIRWAY YOU WERE CONDUCTED INTO THE MIDDLE CHAMBER, WHERE YOU LEARNED THE WAGES OF A FELLOWCRAFT, AND BY THE EXAMPLES OF OUR ANCIENT BRETHREN WERE TAUGHT TO REVERENCE THE SABBATH DAY AND KEEP IT HOLY.

YOU VISITED THE UNFINISHED SANCTUM SANCTORUM, AND THERE, IN THE INTEGRITY AND INFLEXIBLE FIDELITY OF THE ILLUSTRIOS TYRIAN, WITNESSED AN EXAMPLE OF FIRMNESS AND FORTITUDE NEVER SURPASSED IN THE HISTORY OF MAN; AN ALLEGORY REPRESENTING OLD AGE, DEATH, THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY, AND THE IMMORTALITY OF THE HUMAN SOUL IN A MANNER OF INDESCRIBABLE BEAUTY AND GLORY.

YOU WROUGHT IN THE QUARRIES AND BROUGHT FROM THENCE A SPECIMEN OF YOUR SKILL, AND WERE TAUGHT HOW TO RECEIVE YOUR MASONIC

WAGES IN A PROPER MANNER, WITH THE FORCIBLE LESSON OF JUSTICE AND RIGHT THAT YOU ARE NEVER TO RECEIVE FROM ANYONE THAT WHICH IS NOT YOUR OWN; AND IT HAS BEEN STRIKINGLY IMPRESSED UPON YOUR MIND THAT GOD WILL RECEIVE NOTHING AT YOUR HANDS BUT THAT WHICH IS GOOD, TRUE, AND SQUARE.

IN IMITATION OF THE GREAT WISE SOLOMON, YOU WERE REGULARLY SEATED IN THE ORIENTAL CHAIR, AND THERE TAUGHT HOW TO PRESIDE OVER THE SONS OF LIGHT-MAY A PORTION OF HIS WISDOM REST UPON AND ABIDE WITH YOU. AND YOU THERE LEARNED THAT NO MAN CAN LIVE UNTO HIMSELF ALONE, BUT THAT THE WISEST AND MOST EXALTED ARE AT ALL TIMES DEPENDENT UPON THEIR FELLOW BEINGS AND THE MERCY OF DIVINE PROVIDENCE.

YOU WERE PRESENT AT AND ASSISTED IN THE CEREMONIES OF THE COMPLETION AND DEDICATION OF THE MYSTIC TEMPLE, AND FOR YOUR ZEAL AND FIDELITY TO THE CRAFT RECEIVED THE CONGRATULATORY TITLE OF MOST EXCELLENT MASTER; AND IN THAT SUBLIME SCENE IT WAS FORCIBLY IMPRESSED UPON YOUR MIND THAT A JUST AND GENEROUS DEITY WILL NOT WITHHOLD HIS APPROVAL WHEN YOU HAVE BUILDED YOUR LIFE IN ACCORDANCE WITH DIVINE COMMAND, BUT THAT THE GLORY OF THE LORD WILL SHINE UPON AND ABOUT YOU, AND IN ITS GLORIOUS RADIANCE YOU CAN INDEED KNOW THAT HE IS GOOD, AND THAT HIS MERCY ENDURETH FOREVER.

YOU WITNESSED THE MOURNFUL DESOLATION OF ZION, THE SACK AND DESTRUCTION OF THE BEAUTIFUL CITY AND TEMPLE OF GOD; YOU SAW THOSE CHOSEN PEOPLE OF GOD FORCED BY A FOREIGN DESPOT FROM THE PLEASANT GROVES AND PEACEFUL VINEYARDS OF THEIR NATIVE ISRAEL, AND

DRAGGED INTO CAPTIVITY ON THE BANKS OF THE FAR-AWAY EUPHRATES, AMID A NATION MOST VILE, WICKED AND CORRUPT, WHO BOWED THE KNEE ONLY TO BAAL, IN A LAND WHERE IT IS SUPPOSED WAS ONCE THE BEAUTIFUL GARDEN OF EDEN. AGAIN, YOU SAW THOSE DISTRESSED SONS OF ZION VISITED IN THE DARKEST HOUR OF THEIR ADVERSITY BY A PRECIOUS LIGHT FROM HEAVEN, WHICH GUIDED THEM BY ROUGH AND RUGGED PATHS BACK TO THE SCENES OF THEIR FORMER GLORY, WHERE, BY THE SIGNET OF ETERNAL TRUTH THEY WERE ENABLED TO PASS THE VEILS WHICH INTERPOSED BETWEEN THEM AND THEIR FONDEST HOPES. AND YOU THERE WITNESSED THE RESTORATION OF THE LONG LOST WORD-THAT INEFFABLE WORD-WHICH ENOCH SAW IN A VISION, WHICH COULD BE SPOKEN BUT ONCE A YEAR BY THE HIGH PRIEST AT THE FEAST OF EXPIATION, WHEN AMIDST THE SOUND OF TRUMPETS AND THE CLASH OF CYMBALS HE WOULD ENTER THE MOST HOLY PLACE ALONE, AND THERE SPEAK THE WORD ALOUD, SO THAT ITS TRUE PRONUNCIATION MIGHT NOT BE LOST TO THE CHILDREN OF MEN. YOU WITNESSED THE RESTORATION OF THAT WORD TO THE CRAFT FOR ITS USE THROUGH ALL COMING TIME.

YOU IMITATED OUR ANCIENT BROTHER, ADONIRAM, DEPOSITING THE HOLY VESSELS IN THE SANCTUM SANCTORUM, WHEN HE HOPED TO RECEIVE HIS MASONIC REWARD FROM THAT MOST CELEBRATED ARTIST, HIRAM ABIF, AND IN THAT MOST PROFOUND AND MAGNIFICENT MEDITATION UPON THE SOLEMN THOUGHT OF DEATH YOU LEARNED THE MEANS BY WHICH THE SACRED TREASURES OF A FORMER TEMPLE WERE PRESERVED THROUGH THE CENTURIES OF MORAL DARKNESS BY THE WISE SUGGESTION OF THE WIDOW'S SON.

YOU HAVE BEEN ACKNOWLEDGED AND HONORED AS THE FRIEND OF THE MOST ILLUSTRIOUS AND RENOWNED OF KINGS, AND WITH A FAITHFUL FEW HAVE BEEN ADMITTED WITHIN THE SECRET VAULT, WHERE YOU WITNESSED ONE OF THE MOST BEAUTIFUL LESSONS OF JUSTICE AND MERCY THAT THE WORLD EVER BEHELD, AND YOU THERE LEARNED HOW THE SACRED VOLUME OF GOD WAS SAVED FROM THE DESTRUCTIVE RAGE OF THE ENEMIES OF TRUTH AND FINALLY RESTORED TO THE LONGING EYES OF THE DISTRESSED ISRAELITES, TO BE THE RULE AND GUIDE, THE COMFORT AND SUPPORT OF THE PEOPLE OF GOD AS LONG AS TIME SHALL LAST.

AND NOW, COMPANIONS, IF THE SEVERAL FORMS AND CEREMONIES THROUGH WHICH YOU HAVE PASSED, FROM THE TIME YOU FIRST TROD THE OUTER COURTS OF OUR MYSTIC TEMPLE UNTIL YOUR FINAL RECEPTION WITHIN THE VEILS, HAVE SEEMED TO YOU A SERIES OF UNMEANING RITES, THEN HAVE WE LABORED IN VAIN, AND YOU HAVE SPENT YOUR TIME AND STRENGTH FOR NAUGHT; BUT WE TRUST THAT YOU HAVE ENTERED INTO THE FULL SPIRIT OF THOSE SOLEMN CEREMONIES AND LEARNED THE FULL MEANING OF THOSE IMPORTANT SYMBOLS, FOR THEN-AND THEN ONLY-CAN YOU CLAIM THAT FRIENDSHIP, THAT UNION, THAT FERVENCY AND ZEAL, THAT PURITY OF HEART, WHICH SHOULD ACTUATE ALL THOSE WHO WOULD APPROPRIATE UNTO THEMSELVES THE TITLE OF WORKMAN THAT NEEDETH NOT BE ASHAMED-THEN, AND THEN ONLY CAN YOU JUSTLY CLAIM THE PROUD TITLE OF ROYAL ARCH MASON, AS WELL AS THAT OF ROYAL AND SELECT MASTER.

AND FINALLY, COMPANIONS, WHEN THE SUN OF YOUR LIFE IS FAST DECLINING BENEATH THE

HORIZON, AND BUT A FEW MORE GRAINS OF SAND SHALL REMAIN IN YOUR GLASS, MAY YOU HAVE SO LIVED AS TO HAVE AN ABIDING HOPE IN AN ETERNAL INHERITANCE THROUGH THE MERITS OF THE LION OF THE TRIBE OF JUDAH; AND MAY YOU BE ABLE TO LOOK FORWARD WITH CONFIDENCE TOWARD THAT KING OF KINGS WHO HAS ASCENDED INTO HEAVEN TO PREPARE A MANSION FOR YOU. TOWARD THAT HEAVENLY LAND-THAT CITY DIVINE, PATRIarchs AND PROPHETS, JEWS, GENTILES, AND CHRISTIANS, HAVE LOOKED WITH AND EARNEST HOPE OF GAINING THE REALMS OF THE BLEST. THIS HOPE HAS CHERISHED AND COMFORTED THEM, LIFTING THEM ABOVE EARTHLY TEMPTATIONS AND SHIELDING THEM FROM A THOUSAND SNARES. IN THE SOON COMING SWEET BYE AND BYE SOME EYE WILL SEE THAT GLORY LAND AND SOME EAR WILL LISTEN TO ITS ENRAPTURED SONG-MAY GOD, IN HIS INFINITE MERCY GRANT THAT IT MAY BE YOURS AND MINE-WHEN THE SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS SHALL FOREVER SHINE IN TRANSCENDENT BEAUTY AND SPLENDOR IN THAT ETERNAL PARADISE, THE BLISS OF WHICH IT HATH NOT ENTERED INTO THE HEART OF MAN TO UNDERSTAND.

(Charge to the Candidate)

COMPANION: HAVING ATTAINED TO THIS DEGREE, YOU HAVE PASSED THE CIRCLE OF PERFECTION IN ANCIENT MASONRY. IN THE CAPACITY OF A SELECT MASTER YOU MUST BE SENSIBLE THAT YOUR OBLIGATIONS ARE INCREASED IN PROPORTION TO YOUR PRIVILEGES. LET IT BE YOUR CONSTANT CARE TO PROVE YOURSELF WORTHY OF THE CONFIDENCE THAT HAS BEEN REPOSED IN YOU, AND THE HIGH HONOR THAT HAS BEEN CONFERRED UPON YOU IN ADMITTING YOU TO THIS SELECT DEGREE.

LET UPRIGHTNESS AND INTEGRITY ATTEND YOUR STEPS; LET JUSTICE AND MERCY MARK YOUR CONDUCT; LET FERVENTY AND ZEAL STIMULATE YOU IN THE DISCHARGE OF THE VARIOUS DUTIES INCUMBENT UPON YOU. SUFFER NOT AN IDLE AND IMPERTINENT CURIOSITY TO LEAD YOU ASTRAY, OR BETRAY YOU INTO DANGER. BE DEAF TO EVERY INSINUATION WHICH WOULD HAVE A TENDENCY TO WEAKEN YOUR RESOLUTION, OR TEMPT YOU TO AN ACT OF DISOBEDIENCE. BE VOLUNTARILY DUMB AND BLIND WHEN THE EXERCISE OF THOSE FACULTIES WOULD ENDANGER THE PEACE OF YOUR MIND, OR THE PROBITY OF YOUR CONDUCT, AND LET SILENCE AND SECRECY, THOSE CARDINAL VIRTUES OF A SELECT MASTER, ON ALL NECESSARY OCCASIONS, BE SCRUPULOUSLY OBSERVED. BY A STEADY ADHERENCE TO THE IMPORTANT INSTRUCTIONS CONTAINED IN THIS DEGREE, YOU WILL MERIT THE APPROBATION OF THE SELECT NUMBER WITH WHOM YOU ARE ASSOCIATED, AND WILL ENJOY THE HIGH SATISFACTION OF HAVING ACTED WELL YOUR PART IN THE IMPORTANT ENTERPRISE IN WHICH YOU ARE ENGAGED, AND AFTER HAVING WROUGHT YOUR REGULAR HOURS, MAY YOU BE PERMITTED TO PARTICIPATE IN ALL THE PRIVILEGES OF A SELECT MASTER, AND ENTER THE CELESTIAL COUNCIL, WHERE YOU WILL BEHOLD THAT DIVINE FOUNDATION STONE ON WHICH RESTS ETERNAL TRUTH.

You will now take your seat among the Companions.