

THE PAST MASTER'S DEGREE

Bible: Psalm XV

W M: ** / Brother Senior Deacon,

S D: (*Rises, Gives sign*)

W M: you will take with you suitable assistance and prepare the candidate to be received in the first section of the Past Master's Degree in due and ancient form.

S D: (*Goes to ante-room, prepares Candidate returns to station*)

M C: ** ** *

S D: (*Rises*) Worshipful Master, (*Sign*) there is an alarm at the inner door.

W M: Brother Senior Deacon, you will attend to the alarm and report the cause.

(*At ante-room door*)

S D: ** ** *

M C: *

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

M C: A Worthy Brother who has been regularly initiated an Entered Apprentice Mason, passed to the degree of Fellowcraft, raised to the sublime degree of Master Mason, advanced to the honorary degree of Mark Master, and now

prays for further light in Masonry by being regularly seated in the Oriental Chair.

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

Candidate: It is.

S D: Brother Master of Ceremonies, is the candidate duly and truly prepared, worthy and well qualified?

M C: He is.

S D: By what further right does he expect to gain admission into this Worshipful Lodge of Past Master Masons?

M C: By benefit of the password.

S D: Has he the password?

M C: He has it not, but I his conductor have it for him.

S D: Advance and give it.

M C: G_____.

S D: The password is right. The candidate will await the time with patience until his request shall be made known to the Worshipful Master, and his answer returned.

(Closes door, goes to Altar.)

S D: Worshipful Master, (*Sign*) the alarm at the inner door was caused by a Worthy Brother who has been regularly initiated an Entered Apprentice Mason, passed to the degree of Fellowcraft, raised to the sublime degree of Master Mason, advanced to the honorary degree of Mark Master, and now prays for further light in Masonry by being regularly seated in the Oriental Chair.

W M: Brother Senior Deacon, is it of his own free will and accord he makes the request?

S D: It is.

W M: Is he duly and truly prepared, worthy and well qualified?

S D: He is.

W M: By what further right does he expect to gain admission into this Worshipful Lodge of Past Master Masons?

S D: By benefit of the password.

W M: Has he the password?

S D: He has it not, but I his conductor have it for him and will give it at the proper time.

W M: It is my order that the candidate be permitted to enter and be received in due and ancient form.

S D: (*At ante-room door, opens it*) It is the order of the Worshipful Master that the candidate be permitted to enter and be received in due and ancient form. (*Senior Deacon backs up but does not touch Candidate*) My Brother, you will halt.

The manner of your reception in the preceding degrees has already been explained to you. In this Past Master's Degree you are received upon the mallet applied to your naked breast. (*Done*)

The mallet is an instrument made use of by operative masons to knock off the rough and superfluous parts of stones, the better to fit them for the builder's use, but we, as Past Masters, are taught to make use of it for the more noble and glorious purpose of divesting our minds and consciences of all the vices and superfluities of life, thereby fitting ourselves as

living stones for that spiritual building, that house not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens.

Worshipful Master, the candidate has been received in due and ancient form.

W M: Brother Senior Deacon, it is my order that the candidate be conducted five times around the Lodge and caused to halt at the South, West and East.

S D and Candidate: (*In South, JW rises, SD & Cand. give Entered Apprentice sign*)

J W: (*returns Entered Apprentice sign*) *

S D and Candidate: (*In West, SW rises, SD & Cand. give Entered Apprentice sign*)

S W: (*returns Entered Apprentice sign*) *

W M: (*WM rises and uncovers.*) *LORD, WHO SHALL ABIDE IN THY TABERNACLE? WHO SHALL DWELL IN THY HOLY HILL?*

S D and Candidate: (*In East, WM rises, SD & Cand. give Entered Apprentice sign*)

W M: (*returns Entered Apprentice sign*) *

S D and Candidate: (*In South, JW rises, SD & Cand. give Fellowcraft sign*)

J W: (*returns Fellowcraft sign*) **

S D and Candidate: (*In West, SW rises, SD & Cand. give Fellowcraft sign*)

S W: (*returns Fellowcraft sign*) **

W M: (*WM rises and uncovers.*) *HE THAT WALKETH UPRIGHTLY, AND WORKETH RIGHTEOUSNESS AND SPEAKETH THE TRUTH IN HIS HEART.*

S D and Candidate: (*In East, WM rises, SD & Cand. give Fellowcraft sign*)

W M: (*returns Fellowcraft sign*) **

S D and Candidate: (*In South, JW rises, SD & Cand. give Master Mason sign*)

J W: (*returns Master Mason sign*) ** *

S D and Candidate: (*In West, SW rises, SD & Cand. give Master Mason sign*)

S W: (*returns Master Mason sign*) ** *

W M: (*WM rises and uncovers.*) *HE THAT BACKBITETH NOT WITH HIS TONGUE, NOR DOETH EVIL TO HIS NEIGHBOR, NOR TAKETH UP A REPROACH AGAINST HIS NEIGHBOR.*

S D and Candidate: (*In East, WM rises, SD & Cand. give Master Mason sign*)

W M: (*returns Master Mason sign*) ** *

S D and Candidate: (*In South, JW rises, SD & Cand. give Mark Master sign*)

J W: (*returns Mark Master sign*) ** **

S D and Candidate: (*In West, SW rises, SD & Cand. give Mark Master sign*)

S W: (*returns Mark Master sign*) ** **

W M: (*WM rises and uncovers.*) *HE THAT SWEARETH TO HIS OWN HURT AND CHANGETH NOT.*

S D and Candidate: (*In East, WM rises, SD & Cand. give Mark Master sign*)

W M: (*returns Mark Master sign*) ** **

J W: ** ** *

S W: ** ** *

W M: (*WM rises and uncovers.*) *HE THAT PUTTETH NOT OUT HIS MONEY TO USURY, NOR TAKETH REWARD AGAINST THE INNOCENT. HE THAT DOETH THESE THINGS SHALL NEVER BE MOVED.* ** ** *

S D and Candidate: (*In South*)

S D: ** ** *

J W: ** ** * (*Rises*) Who comes here?

S D: A Worthy Brother who has been regularly Initiated an Entered Apprentice Mason, passed to the Degree of fellowcraft, raised to the sublime Degree of Master Mason, advanced to the honorary Degree of Mark Master, and now prays for further light in Masonry by being regularly seated in the Oriental Chair.

J W: My Brother, is it of your own free will and accord you make the request?

Candidate: It is.

J W: Brother Senior Deacon, is the candidate duly and truly prepared, worthy and well qualified?

S D: He is.

J W: By what further right does he expect to gain admission into this Worshipful Lodge of Past Master Masons?

S D: By benefit of the password.

J W: Has he the password?

S D: He has it not, but I his conductor have it for him.

J W: Advance and give it.

S D: G_____.

J W: The password is right, he has my permission to pass.

S D and Candidate: (*In West*)

S D: ** * *

S W: ** * * (*Rises*) Who comes here?

S D: A Worthy Brother who has been regularly Initiated an Entered Apprentice Mason, passed to the Degree of Fellowcraft, raised to the sublime Degree of Master Mason, advanced to the honorary Degree of Mark Master, and now prays for further light in Masonry by being regularly seated in the Oriental Chair.

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

Candidate: It is.

S W: Brother Senior Deacon is the candidate duly and truly prepared worthy and well qualified?

S D: He is.

S W: By what further right does he expect to gain admission into this Worshipful Lodge of Past Master Masons?

S D: By benefit of the password.

S W: Has he the password?

S D: He has it not, but I his conductor have it for him.

S W: Advance and give it.

S D: G_____.

S W: The password is right, he has my permission to pass.

S D and Candidate: (*In East*)

S D: ** * *

W M: ** * * (*Rises*) Who comes here?

S D: A Worthy Brother who has been regularly Initiated an Entered Apprentice Mason, passed to the Degree of fellowcraft, raised to the sublime Degree of Master Mason, advanced to the honorary Degree of Mark Master, and now prays for further light in Masonry by being regularly seated in the Oriental Chair.

W M: My Brother is it of your own free will and accord you make the request?

Candidate: It is.

W M: Brother Senior Deacon is the candidate duly and truly prepared, worthy and well qualified?

S D: He is.

W M: By what further right does he expect to gain admission into this Worshipful Lodge of Past Master Masons?

S D: By benefit of the password.

W M: Has he the password?

S D: He has it not, but I his conductor have it for him.

W M: Advance and give it.

S D: G_____.

W M: The password is right. It is my order that the candidate be reconducted to the Senior Warden in the West, who will teach him how to approach the East, the place of Masonic Light, in due and ancient form.

(Senior Deacon conducts Candidate 5 paces West of Altar, then to SW station on square lines.)

(If one candidate, SD takes one side step to North as SW comes down from station. SW goes South of and beyond candidate then returns between candidate and SD, pivots counter clockwise until facing East. If more than one candidate, SD takes one side step to South and SW moves directly into vacant space and directs candidates and SD to face the East. (All turn to left.)

SW instructs candidates (SD takes steps with them), reports and returns to station. SD closes on candidates as SW leaves Altar.)

S D: Brother Senior Warden, (SW rises) it is the order of the Worshipful Master that you take charge of the candidate and teach him how to approach the East, the place of Masonic Light, in due and ancient form.

S W: My Brother, you will step off on the left foot, bring the heel of the right to the hollow of the left. Step off on the right foot, bring the heel of the left to the hollow of the right. Step off on the left foot, bring the heel of the right to the heel of the left. Step off on the right foot, bring the heel of the left to the toe of the right. Step off on the left foot and bring the heel of the right to the toe of the left, feet forming a right angle, body erect. Worshipful Master, the candidate awaits your pleasure.

W M: (*Rises*) My Brother, it becomes my duty to inform you that you cannot proceed further without taking upon yourself 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 family, or yourself. With this assurance upon my part, are you willing to proceed?

Candidate: I am.

W M: Brother Senior Deacon, you will place the candidate in proper position to receive the obligation.

S D: (*SD steps to South side of altar and faces North.*) My Brother, you will kneel on both knees and place both hands upon the Holy Bible. (*Done; SD returns to a position adjacent to Cand., faces East and reports.*) Worshipful Master, the candidate is in position and awaits your pleasure.

W M: *** (*At Altar*) My Brother, you will announce your name and repeat after me.

I, _____, % m on f w @ ac, in t prs % A G @ ths w :: % P M Ms, er t hm @ dc to t H Ss J, do hrb @ hn m s pr @ s, tt I wl nt cmc t scs % ths d t an on ex it b i a r :: or t a kn wr br P M M, @ nt unl aft stc trl, d ex, or lfl Mc inf I shl hv fd hm o thm jstl entl t rc t sm.

An I ms sl p @ s tt I wl st t @ ab b t b-ls, rls @ rgs % ths or any oth :: % P Ms % wch I ma bcm a mb, @ wl supt t cnstn, rslns, @ edcts % t Gr Ch und whs jrsdcn I ma b, so fr as thy ma cm t m knl @ r nt subvr % t prnc @ grwk % Fmy; @ wl ob al du ss @ sms snt or hnd t m fm a rglr :: or by a kn wr br P M M, if wthn lgh % m c-t.

An I ms sl pr @ s tt I wl nt op @ cls a :: ov wch I ma b cld upn t prsid wtho gvg a lct, o a pt % a lct, or csng t sm t b dn.

An I ms sl p @ s tt I wl nt prsd ov ths o any oth :: in a hty or arbt mn.

An I ms sl pr @ s tt I wl prsv t chtr @ hnd it ovr t m suc i ofc or t th grd bd % t stt as t cs m b.

An I ms sl p @ s tt I wl nt embz t fnds % ths o an oth ::, nr prmt it t b dn if wthn m pr to prv it.

An I ms sl p @ s tt I wl nt wrg a :: or a br P M M t th vl % anth, nr prmt i t b dn if wthn m pr t prv it.

T al % wch I m sl pr @ s, wtht an eqv, slf evs, or mn rsvn wtev, bndng msl und t pn % hvg m tg sp fm tp t rt @ m bd qrd, shd I wlfl vl any prt % t s ob % a P M M; s h m G.

In token of your sincerity, you will kiss the book before you, which is the Holy Bible. (*Done*) Brother Senior Deacon, you will release the Brother from the cabletoe as he is bound to the fraternity by stronger ties. (*At East*) *

My Brother, you now observe me as Worshipful Master of this Lodge approaching you from the East upon the step, under the due guard, and sign of a Past Master Mason. (*takes steps*) This is the step, this the due guard, and this the sign.

It alludes to the penalty of the obligation wherein you said you would have your tongue split from tip to root and your body

quartered and so forth. It is also the working sign of the degree, the sign to be given on entering or retiring from a Lodge of Past Masters.

As a further token of my brotherly love and esteem I extend to you the right hand of fellowship, and with it the grip and word of this degree. (*Raises Candidate on North side of Altar facing him South*) You will take me as I do you. Here I left you and here I find you; will you be off or from?

S D: From

W M: From what to what?

S D: From the grip of a Mark Master to the grip of a Past Master.

W M: Pass.

S D: From a grip to a span.

W M: From a span to a grip. A twofold cord is strong.

S D: A threefold cord is not easily broken; a twofold cord is strong.

W M: A threefold cord is not easily broken. What is this?

S D: The grip of a Past Master Mason.

W M: Has it a name?

S D: It has. G_____.

W M: G_____ is the word and this is the grip of a Past Master Mason. Tradition informs us that the expert workmen who executed the designs in sculpture upon the columns and arches of King Solomon's Temple were men from Gebal, a city of Phoenicia. In order to designate those ancient

craftsmen who, by their skill and industry, had become Past Masters in the art, our Ancient Brethren denominated them G_____; hence, the word of the degree.

(Returns to East.)

(Senior Deacon and Candidate go West of Altar, await order.)

W M: The newly-made Brother will approach the East.

My Brother, in the earliest ages, the Past Master's Degree was conferred upon Masters of lodges only, to qualify them to preside over the Lodge and to teach them the respect and obedience the Brethren were due them as presiding officers.

It has also been the custom among Masons from time immemorial that none but those who had presided as Master of a Lodge could be exalted to the Royal Arch Degree. In accordance with that ancient custom, it therefore becomes necessary that I should retire from the room for a time and leave you in charge of the Lodge, to preside over it during my temporary absence, in order to qualify you to receive the sublime degree of Royal Arch Mason.

The Brethren knew you would be required to act as Master of this Lodge, and therefore expressed their confidence in your ability to preside when they elected you to receive the degree, and with the instructions which I shall now give you, I trust you will be able to preside with equal pleasure to yourself and honor to the fraternity.

Previous to your investiture, it is necessary that you should signify your assent to those ancient charges, rules, and regulations which point out the duties of a Master of a Lodge.

I. YOU AGREE TO BE A GOOD MAN AND TRUE, AND STRICTLY TO OBEY THE MORAL LAW.

II. YOU AGREE TO BE A PEACEABLE CITIZEN, AND CHEERFULLY TO CONFORM TO THE LAWS OF THE COUNTRY IN WHICH YOU RESIDE.

III. YOU AGREE TO HOLD IN VENERATION THE ORIGINAL RULES AND PATRONS OF THE ORDER OF MASONRY.

IV. YOU AGREE TO AVOID PRIVATE PIQUES AND QUARRELS AND TO GUARD AGAINST INTEMPERANCE AND EXCESS.

V. YOU AGREE TO BE CAUTIOUS IN CARRIAGE AND BEHAVIOR, COURTEOUS TO YOUR BRETHREN, AND FAITHFUL TO YOUR LODGE.

VI. YOU AGREE TO PROMOTE THE GENERAL GOOD OF SOCIETY, TO CULTIVATE THE SOCIAL VIRTUES, AND TO PROPAGATE THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE ART.

VII. YOU ADMIT THAT IT IS NOT IN THE POWER OF ANY MAN OR BODY OF MEN, TO MAKE INNOVATIONS IN THE BODY OF MASONRY.

VIII. YOU ADMIT THAT NO NEW LODGE SHALL BE FORMED WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE GRAND LODGE.

IX. YOU ADMIT THAT NO PERSON CAN REGULARLY BE MADE A MASON IN, OR ADMITTED A MEMBER OF, ANY REGULAR LODGE, WITHOUT PREVIOUS NOTICE, AND DUE INQUIRY INTO HIS CHARACTER.

X. YOU AGREE THAT NO VISITORS SHALL BE RECEIVED INTO YOUR LODGE WITHOUT DUE EXAMINATION, AND PRODUCING PROPER VOUCHERS OF THEIR HAVING BEEN INITIATED IN A REGULAR LODGE.

These are the regulations of Free and Accepted Masons. Do you submit to these charges and promise to support these Regulations, as Masters have done in all ages before you?

Candidate: I do.

(If more than one candidate, keep all together until all have acquiesced to Ancient Charges then take all to anteroom, no sign, and return each singularly, without sign to West side of Altar and await order of WM.)

W M: In consequence of your cheerful conformity to the ancient charges, rules, and regulations governing the order, you are now about to be installed Master of this Lodge, in full confidence in your care, skill, and capacity to govern the same.

S D: *(Places jewel on Candidate.)*

W M: You will now take your seat in the East. As a mark of distinction you, as Master, will be covered while the rest of the Brethren remain uncovered.

(Places hat on Candidate, and uncovers)

I will now instruct you in regard to the furniture and implements of the Lodge and, in doing so, will first call your attention to the Holy Bible upon the Altar, that Great Light in Masonry, which will guide you to all truth, direct your path to the temple of happiness, and point out to you the whole duty of man. The three Great Lights in Masonry are the Holy Bible, square, and compasses, which you should always see are in their place upon the Altar when the Lodge is open.

You will now receive in charge the Charter, by the authority of which this Lodge is held. You are to carefully preserve it and hand it over to your successor in office.

You will now receive the Book of Constitutions, which you are to search at all times. Cause it to be read in your Lodge, that none may pretend ignorance of the excellent precepts it enjoins.

You will now receive the By-Laws, which you are to read carefully, see them strictly enforced, and that proper decorum is maintained.

I will now instruct you in the use of the gavel. This is an emblem of power, one blow of which calls the Lodge to order.

- * Two blows call up the subordinate Officers of the Lodge.
- ** Three blows call up the entire Lodge. *** And one blow will seat them. *

Having been duly elected and installed with a constitutional number of Brethren present, a Charter or warrant empowering you to work, and the Great Lights in their place upon the Altar, this in your hands is truly an emblem of power.

I now place you in charge of the Lodge. *** (*Hands gavel to Candidate*) Brethren, you will approach the East. Behold your new Master and salute him with the grand honors. Together, Brethren.

(*Brethren give public grand honors in silence, three times. Wardens remain in stations during Grand Honors. Grand Honors must be given without noise, as follows: Hands above head, fingers touching, Arms right over left on breast, Hands down by side. SD takes seat on right side of candidate for assistance as candidate drops gavel.*)

My Brother, you will now drop one gavel and seat the Lodge.

Candidate: *

S D: (*Seats himself on right of Candidate.*)

W M: With the consent and assistance of the Brethren, you are now installed Master and fully empowered to preside, and the Brother Secretary will inform you if there is anything to come before the Lodge for its action at this time. With your permission, I will now retire. (*Leaves*)

Secretary: (*Rises and reads at least 2 usual bills, followed by 1 objectionable bill.*)

(*Confusion; objections are made to the Secretary, completely ignoring the Master.*)

W M: (*In South*) * (*All resume seats.*) My Brother, I am not surprised to find the Lodge in confusion. But a short time ago, I placed you in charge of the Lodge, together with its furniture and implements, and among them was the Holy Bible upon the Altar. I found it outside the lodge room.

(*Moves to West side of Altar, replaces bible.*)

The Brethren knew you had not the Bible in its place upon the Altar, and for that reason would not suffer you to govern them with the gavel.

(*Moves to North side of Altar.*)

The ceremony through which you have been made to pass on this occasion is intended to qualify you to preside over a Lodge by impressing upon your mind in the most lasting and substantial manner possible that Masons have no right to meet as a Lodge without having present both the Bible and Charter.

On this occasion the Bible was intentionally retired from the room in order that you might have a striking exemplification of the ridiculous position a Master would occupy in attempting to preside over or govern a Lodge without having present both the Bible and Charter, to the end that, should you at any time be called upon to preside over a Lodge, you will be certain to

know that you have both the Bible and Charter in their places before you make use of the gavel; and also to teach you that it is your duty and province, when visiting a Lodge, to know that both are present, and if they are not, to rebel against the assumed authority of the Master, as these Brethren have rebelled against you.

In your charge was placed the Charter, and you were told to carefully preserve it because without a properly authorized Charter, no regular Lodge can exist.

You were instructed that you should always see the Great Lights in their place upon the Altar when the Lodge is open because, from the Holy Bible, the Great Light in Masonry, our institution derives its wisdom, strength, and beauty, and within it are contained those divine laws and moral precepts which point out our duties to God and to man, which we as Masons should reverence and obey.

No sooner was the Bible retired from the Lodge than harmony ceased and discord prevailed. So is its influence upon our hearts and lives. It demands from every good Mason the most profound veneration as the revealed word of the Great Architect of the Universe. It will confirm your faith, strengthen your hope, encourage your charity, and guide you to that magnificent Temple above where all is harmony, joy, and peace.

You will now come down in front of the East and, in accordance with an ancient custom of the fraternity, be regularly seated in the Oriental Chair.

*(Senior Deacon Conducts Candidate to Oriental Chair.
Worshipful Master moves to Candidate's right, Senior Deacon
on Candidate's left. Each takes Candidate by grip of Past
Master.)*

W M: You will now suffer yourself to be seated, representing as nearly as possible an aged and decrepit man.

(*Place Candidate in chair, lift him out, and repeat.*)

Tradition informs us that when our Grand Master Solomon, King of Israel, became very aged and infirm, he occasionally visited the Lodges to see our Ancient Brethren work. A chair was provided especially for his accommodation. No one else ever occupied it. It was called the Oriental Chair.

It was the custom of our Ancient Brethren on those occasions to take him in this manner and lift him into and out of that chair. This ceremony alludes to that ancient custom, and is denominated being regularly seated in the Oriental Chair.

(*Senior Deacon conducts Candidate to West side of Altar for Bible Lecture.*)

(*Bible Lecture*)

**MY BROTHER, THERE COMES A TIME IN THE LIFE OF
EVERY MAN WHEN IT SEEMS THAT NO FRIEND CAN BE
DEPENDED UPON, AND HE IS LEFT ENTIRELY TO HIS
OWN RESOURCES. THE LESSON OF TONIGHT FITLY
ILLUSTRATES SUCH A CONDITION.**

**UPON REFLECTION YOU WILL DOUBTLESS REMEMBER
THAT AMONG THE FIRST THINGS BROUGHT TO YOUR
ATTENTION IN YOUR MASONIC CAREER WAS THIS OLD
BOOK, AND YOU WERE TOLD THAT IT ALONE WAS TO
BE THE RULE AND GUIDE TO YOUR FAITH AND
PRACTICE. AT EACH SUCCEEDING STEP IN YOUR
ADVANCEMENT YOU HAVE BEEN REMINDED THAT IT
WOULD GUIDE YOU TO ALL TRUTH, DIRECT YOUR
PATH TO THE TEMPLE OF HAPPINESS AND POINT OUT
TO YOU THE WHOLE DUTY OF MAN.**

AND NOW AT THIS MOST AUSPICIOUS HOUR, WHILE SURROUNDED BY THOSE WHO TAKE YOU BY THE HAND AS A BROTHER, AND IN WHOSE EVERY HEART YOU CAN HAVE NO DOUBT OF A SINCERE WISH FOR YOUR FUTURE HAPPINESS, LET ME IMPRESS UPON YOUR MIND, IN THE MOST LASTING AND SUBSTANTIAL MANNER POSSIBLE, THAT THIS BOOK CONTAINS THE MIND OF GOD, THE STATE OF MAN, THE WAY OF SALVATION, THE DOOM OF SINNERS, AND THE HAPPINESS OF BELIEVERS.

ITS DOCTRINES ARE HOLY, ITS PRECEPTS ARE BINDING, ITS HISTORIES ARE TRUE, AND ITS DECISIONS ARE IMMUTABLE.

READ IT TO BE WISE, BELIEVE IT TO BE SAFE, PRACTICE IT TO BE HOLY. IT WILL FURNISH LIGHT TO GUIDE YOU, STRENGTH TO SUPPORT YOU AND COMFORT TO CHEER YOU. IT IS THE TRAVELER'S MAP, THE PILGRIM' STAFF, THE PILOT'S COMPASS, THE MASONS LIGHT, AND THE CHRISTIAN'S CHARTER.

THROUGH IT HEAVEN IS OPENED, PARADISE RESTORED, AND THE GATES OF HELL DISCLOSED. THE MESSIAH IS ITS GRAND SUBJECT, OUR GOOD ITS DESIGN, AND THE GLORY OF GOD ITS END.

READ IT SLOWLY, FREQUENTLY, PRAYERFULLY. IF YOU WILL OBEY ITS PRECEPTS IT WILL BE TO YOU A RIVER OF PLEASURE, A MINE OF WEALTH, AND A PARADISE OF GLORY.

IT IS FURNISHED YOU IN LIFE TO PREPARE YOU FOR THE JUDGMENT, AND AS YOU CHOOSE, SO SHALL YOUR DESTINY BE. IN PROSPERITY OR ADVERSITY, MAY YOU NEVER FORGET IT.

THEN, WHEN DEATH'S COLD WINDS SHALL BLOW AROUND YOU AND ITS ICY DEW SHALL GATHER ON YOUR FOREHEAD YOU CAN DROP TO SLEEP WITH THE SWEET ASSURANCE THAT WHEN THE AWAKENING COMES YOU WILL BE PRONOUNCED A JUST AND UPRIGHT MASON BY THE SUPREME GRAND MASTER ABOVE, WHO HAS FURNISHED YOU THIS MEANS OF SALVATION, AND HAS WRITTEN YOUR DESTINY BETWEEN ITS LINES.

(*Senior Deacon conducts Candidate to East*)

W M: You will now receive the charge.

(*Charge*)

MY BROTHER: IN THE EARLIEST AGES, THE PAST MASTER'S DEGREE WAS CONFERRED UPON MASTERS OF LODGES ONLY TO INSTRUCT THEM IN THE DUTIES THEY OWED TO THE LODGES OVER WHICH THEY WERE ELECTED TO PRESIDE, AND ALSO THE RESPECT AND OBEDIENCE THE BRETHREN WERE DUE THEM AS PRESIDING OFFICERS. BUT ROYAL ARCH MASONS CONFER THIS DEGREE FOR A MORE IMPORTANT PURPOSE, TO QUALIFY YOU TO RECEIVE THE SUBLIME DEGREE OF ROYAL ARCH MASON; ALSO TO GUARD YOU AGAINST A BREACH OF YOUR MASONIC OBLIGATIONS.

WE ARE ALL, MY BROTHER, TOO APT TO COME FORWARD SMILING AND KNEEL AT OUR HOLY ALTAR, OF OUR OWN FREE WILL AND ACCORD, TAKE THE MOST SOLEMN OBLIGATIONS TO PERFORM CERTAIN DUTIES, THEN ACT CONTRARY TO THEM, SEEMINGLY TO HAVE FORGOTTEN THEM. MY BROTHER, THIS SHOULD NOT BE SO.

NEVER FORGET YOUR DUTIES AND OBLIGATIONS AS A MASON; BUT BY JUST, UPRIGHT, AMIABLE, DISCREET AND VIRTUOUS CONDUCT, CONVINCE THE WORLD OF THE GOODNESS OF OUR INSTITUTION; SO THAT WHEN YOU ARE KNOWN TO BE A MASON, THAT OUGHT TO BE YOUR BEST RECOMMENDATION.

NEVER TURN AWAY FROM A BURDENED HEART AS IT POURS OUT ITS SORROWS; PITY THE DISTRESSED, POOR, WEAK AND FALLEN; LET YOUR HAND BE GUIDED BY JUSTICE, AND LET YOUR HEART BE EXPANDED BY BENEVOLENCE. IF YOUR DUTIES TO THE WORLD ARE NOT THOROUGHLY UNDERSTOOD, A DAILY RE COURSE TO THAT HOLY BIBLE, LIGHT OF DIVINE TRUTH, WILL SET YOU RIGHT.

AS A MASON, LET THE SCENE THROUGH WHICH YOU HAVE JUST PASSED MAKE A DEEP AND LASTING IMPRESSION UPON YOUR MIND. NEVER IN FUTURE LIFE ACCEPT ANY MASONIC OFFICE UNLESS YOU MAKE UP YOUR MIND TO QUALIFY YOURSELF TO FILL THAT OFFICE PERFECTLY AND CREDITABLY AND MERIT THE HONORS THE BRETHREN HAVE CONFERRED UPON YOU.

W M: You will now take your seat among the Brethren.
(At conclusion of degree, candidate(s) is(are) seated near station of the SD.