

Royal Master

Iowa

2003

1st Section

The council room should be set up as in ppt#1. A representation of the Cherubim should be formed by the use of nine standards, each with a burning taper, connected by silk rope enclosing the altar with an opening in the south.

In the north east corner of the room there should be a table on which are several articles as described in Kings I, verses 48-50 and a trestle board on which are several geometric designs. HA is at work there as the degree opens.

Candles on the table remain lighted throughout the entire first section. House lights are dimmed throughout first section.

Each of the three GMs should have a pedestal with a lighted candle upon it. All three are at their stations when the class is brought in. HA remains there until after the prologue.

Aprons should not be worn over robes, except HA, who puts his on after repairing to the northeast corner. When all is ready the CC will conduct the candidates into the Council chamber and seat them on the south side of the room east of the CC station. CC assumes station and is seated.

All candidates should wear white aprons. Only one active candidate should be used. The IM may give the prologue, or it can be done by another companion.

Prol: I will take a moment at this time to explain to you in my own words, the setting of this "The Royal Master Degree" and its officers so you may better understand the work.

I represent Solomon, King of Israel, on my right is Hiram, King of Tyre and on my left is Hiram Abiff. The station in the west is known as the Captain of the Guard. In the south is the Conductor of the Council. The Steward and Sentinel complete the Officers that work in the degree. The three roughens are to remind you of the Master Mason degree.

The alter is distinguished with the nine standards to represent the Sanctum Sanitarium into which we learned in the 3rd degree that Hiram Abiff entered to offer up his adorations to Deity. As the work begins, Hiram Abiff will take his place at the Trestle Board.

Companions, you have repeatedly been informed that Masonry is a never-ending search for light. In the Craft degrees you received light, more light and further light, but your search was not ended. In the Chapter degrees additional light was imparted to you, and you found, as you find in life, that each advancement in knowledge simply opens the eyes to a vaster field of knowledge yet to be attained. Every revelation in Masonry is also a veiling. Every discovery of new truths also reveals a veil in front of some other truth, to be again the object of further search. Ultimate Truth will be discovered only when we have passed the final veil and entered into the presence of Him who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. In taking our degrees there is one thing you must remember, namely, the order in which events happen is seldom the order in which we learn about them. The successive degrees in Masonry picture events in the order we learn about them, not the chronological order in which they occurred. For instance, the events of the Mark Master degree took place before those of the Master Mason degree, but they were not presented

to you in that order. The degree you are about to receive pictures events that happened prior to and after the tragedy of the third degree, and we would have you notice how well they fill the gaps in our knowledge of that tragedy and its meaning.

In this degree you, as a candidate, will represent Adoniram, one of the most skilled of the craftsmen employed by King Solomon at the building of the Temple, who was a close personal friend of the Grand Master Hiram Abiff.

Lights are dimmed.

KS: Companion CG *CG rises* see that the candidate is prepared and presented.

CG retires with K to the prep room and prepares him by divesting him of his coat and rolling up his sleeves, clothes him in an apron as a Fellowcraft and places a beautiful piece of work in his hands. This piece of work should be a miniature representation of the three lesser lights, which can actually be lighted. As K is taken out, HA leaves his station, goes to table in the northeast corner, puts on his apron and is working there as CG and K enter.

CG takes K by the right arm. They enter without an alarm and pass directly to the northeast corner of the room where HA stands at the table examining the Holy Vessels.

The K now represents the character Adoniram.

KS, holding up the piece of work: My Illustrious Companion Hiram Abiff, this is a piece of work which I myself gave orders to be made, and which, I observe, has been executed according to my command. It is intended to serve as a reminder of the mysterious triad, expressive of the essence and attributes of Deity and of those great Masonic virtues – Faith, Hope, and Charity. You will deposit it in the Holy of Holies, with the other sacred furniture, and hereafter, in every Regular Masonic Lodge, let there be displayed about the Altar of Obligation, three burning tapers, placed in a triangular position; and may the virtues which they symbolize, be a light unto the feet of every true and faithful Mason, in all walks of life, until that perfect day when the glory of the Lord shall illumine our souls forever.

HA advances and receives the work, then turns to Ad: Adoniram, your work is accepted, and in due time you shall receive your reward.

HA places the work on the table with the other Holy Vessels and CG & K stand aside to west facing south.

HA, after examining all the vessels on the table: Yes, the furniture of the Holy of Holies is now nearly completed.

Gong sounds 12 times.

KS: Illustrious Companion Hiram Abiff, what is the hour?

HA: High twelve, Illustrious King Solomon.

KS, stands: It being high twelve, call the craft from labor to refreshment.

*HA: *** All rise:* Companions, it is the order of the Illustrious King Solomon, that the craft be now called from labor to refreshment. Take due notice and govern yourselves accordingly.

The craft remain standing. HA removes his apron and proceeds to the Altar, going south, then west to south of Altar, then north to center of west of the Altar, proceeding by right angles as he goes. When HA starts for the Altar, CG & K turn west, timing to speech, stop directly north of Altar, faces south and says "to enter" just as HA enters from the south.

CG: It is now high twelve, at which hour it is the custom of our Grand Master Hiram Abiff to enter the Sanctum Sanctorum and offer up his devotions to Deity.

HA kneels at Altar and prays: Let me do my work each day and if the darkened hours of despair overtake me, may I not forget the strength that comforted me in the sadness of other times.

May I still remember the bright hours that found me walking over the silent hills of my childhood or dreaming on the margin of the quiet river, when a light glowed with in me and I promised my early God to

have courage amid the tempest of the changing years.

Spare me from bitterness and from the sharp passions of unguarded moments. Though the world know me not, may my thoughts and actions be such as shall keep me friendly with myself. Lift my eyes from the earth and teach me the uses of the stars. Forbid that I should judge others lest I condemn myself. Let me not follow the glamour of the world but walk calmly in my path.

Give me a few friends, who will love me for what I am and not for what little I may possess. And though age and infirmity overtake me and I come not within sight of the castle of my dreams, teach me still to be thankful for life and for time's olden memories that are good and sweet, and may the evening's twilight find me gentle still. Amen.

CG, as the prayer ends, CG & K proceed to a point just west of Altar, then south to wait HA: Our Grand Master Hiram Abiff, having concluded his devotions, let us await his return by way of the south gate.

HA passes around the Altar and out at the opening in the south, then turns west. The CG & K meet and stop him as he turns west. CG does not touch HA.

CG: Grand Master Hiram Abiff, when shall I receive the Master's Word?

HA: My worthy friend Ad, I do not know that you will ever receive it, for it is agreed by Solomon, King of Israel, Hiram, King of Tyre and myself that the Master's Word can only be given when the Temple is completed, and then only in the presence of all three.

HA again attempts to proceed westward and is again interrupted by CG:

Grand Master Hiram Abiff, suppose one of you three, even you yourself, should be removed by death prior to that event, how shall I then receive it?

HA hesitates, meditating a few moments, then takes K by the left arm, goes west to a line one pace east of CG's station, then north; the CG follows directly behind K, until opposite his station where he turns west and assumes his station. As CG reaches his station KS gives one knock () which seats everyone except HA & K. HA proceeds slowly north, then east, and should not begin talking until all are seated. HA with K moves slowly around Altar, speaking as they go, and pausing west of Altar, one pace west of standards, each time around, faces east, gives three taps with toe (***) and pointing down (to a point beneath the Altar), with right hand over left, says: "It will be ..." etc.:*

Companion Adoniram, death is a theme not lightly to be broached by those subject to its power. The young may die, the old must die, and the wisest knoweth not how soon. There is none that escapes the inexorable doom. The youngest EA upon the checkered pavement below dwells ever in shadow of death, while the invisible hand extends equally above KS on his ivory throne. We walk upon the ashes of the generations who have gone this way before us, to which our ashes must in turn contribute. It is not for me, Companion Adoniram, to hope for an exemption from the common doom of man. I may not live to see the Temple completed; the Master's Word may be lost, but if I die, (***, pointing down) it will be buried there.

Circumambulates 2nd time: Companion Adoniram, death terminates the labor of a man. Thenceforth the generations may build and occupy, but he will not be there. The teeming brain, the skillful hand and the sinewy arm are alike useless and superfluous in the grave. As our Most Excellent King Solomon has said, "The dead know not anything; their love, their hatred and their envy is no perished; neither have they any more a portion forever of anything that is done under the sun." What an incentive is this to an industrious use of our time and our faculties, that we

should build industriously while our strength endures and labor to complete our work ere the week closes and the Sabbath of Eternity sets in. My work, Companion Adoniram, is not complete, though I have labored long and faithfully to execute it. I may not live to see the Temple completed; the Master's Word may be lost, but if I die, (***, pointing down) it will be buried there.

Circumambulates 3rd time: Companion Adoniram, it is through the gate of death that we find an entrance to the place of wages, refreshment and rest.

The Supreme Master of the Universe, before whom we bow in adoration, and whose All-Seeing Eye has marked our labors in the Lodge below, promises to spread before us in the Celestial Lodge above all the joys and glories of His eternal Sabbath. After the strong hand of death has leveled all in the humiliation of the grave, the Almighty Hand of the Supreme Master shall prevail and exalt every brother to the glorious companionship of that un-dissolving Lodge. There the designs upon the trestle board will be seen completed. There the adoration of the 12th hour will be everlasting joy. There the noontide bliss will eternally shine. There the scales of doubt and darkness shall fall from my eyes, and the wise purposes of the Divine Architect will be displayed in all their splendor.

With the light of this faith beaming upon me, O death, where is thy sting? My hope, Companion Adoniram, rests in the higher Lodge to which I am advancing. I may not live to see the Temple completed, but if I die, *** (pointing down) the Word will be buried there.

*CG gives ***, HA rises and goes to right rear of K, stepping up as HA leaves.*

HA proceeds clockwise around the Altar, again enters from the south and kneels a few moments in prayer. He then rises and proceeds around the Altar and out at the south as before. This time he is met by the 1st X, who thrice demands (in pantomime) the Word of a Master Mason. On being refused the 1st X gives him a low across the chest with a 24 inch gauge.

HA proceeds west to a point on a line just east of the CG's station, then north. Opposite the CG's station he is met by the 2nd X who also thrice demands the Word and is refused. The 2nd X gives him a blow across the chest with a square.

HA proceeds north to a point in line opposite his station, turns east. When he reaches a point just east of the Altar he is met by the 3rd X who likewise demands of him the Word, and likewise refused, where upon the 3rd X gives him a blow on the forehead with a setting maul, which fells him on the spot. The three ruffians then carry him out to the prep room.

As ruffians leave with HA a single gong is sounded.

KS: Companion CC CC rises what is the hour?

CC: One hour past high twelve, Illustrious King Solomon.

KS, stands: It being one hour past high twelve, call the craft from refreshment to labor.

*CC ***, all rise: Companions, it is the order of the Illustrious King Solomon, that the craft be now called from refreshment to labor. Take due notice thereof, and govern yourselves accordingly.*

CC takes position at right of K and says: The Craft being called from refreshment to labor, we will repair to the clay grounds between Succoth and Zaredatha, and there resume our labors.

Leads K & CG south, west, north and west out preparation room door.

Second Section

In this section the IM and DM represent SKI & HKT respectively The PCW (HA) jewel lies on the table, his seat is vacant and draped in mourning. The light at his station is extinguished.

The standards representing the Cherubim should be placed in a line equidistant between CG's station and the Altar and extending almost to the marching lines on the north and south as in ppt#2. House lights should be bright.

CC will instruct all candidates regarding due guards and signs and inform them that events depicted in this section should occur shortly after the death of Hiram Abiff. All candidates should be in white aprons. All candidates should take part in the cumambulations, but if the class is too large one candidate may be used and the others brought, after being instructed, and seated on the south side, east of the CC's station before

*the work begins. The CC is with K in the prep room and give *** *** **.*

CG rises: Illustrious King Solomon, there is an alarm.

KS: Attend to the alarm.

*CG goes to the door and gives *** *** **. Opens the door:* Who comes here?

CC: A Companion Royal Arch Mason, who wishes to be advanced to the rights and honors of a Royal Master.

CG: Is it of your own free will and accord?

K: It is.

CG: Is he duly and truly prepared?

CC: He is.

CG: Worthy and well qualified?

CC: He is.

CG: Has he made suitable proficiency in the preceding degrees?

CC: He has.

CG: By what further right or benefit does he expect to gain admission?

CC: By the benefit of the pass.

CG: Has he the pass?

CC: He has it not I have it for him.

CG: Advance and give it. *The pass, Alas, poor Hiram, is given without a grip.*

Wait until King Solomon is informed of your request and his answer returned.

CG closes door and goes to his station to report: Illustrious King Solomon, there is without a Companion Royal Arch Mason who wishes to be advanced to the rights and honors of a Royal Master.

KS: Is it of his own free will and accord?

CG: It is.

KS: Is he duly and truly prepared?

CG: He is.

KS: Worthy and well qualified?

CG: He is.

KS: Has he made suitable proficiency in the preceding degrees?

CG: He has.

KS: By what further right or benefit does he expect to gain admission?

CG: By the benefit of the pass.

KS: Has he the pass?

CG: He has it not I have it for him.

KS: Give me the pass. *The pass, Alas, poor Hiram, is given.*

The Pass is right. Admit him.

CG goes to door and opens it: Enter.

Steps aside until CC & K enter and have passed, then closes door and returns to his station.

CC with K on right, enter and make one circuit, halting in the east.

When CC & K arrive in the east, M rises and remains standing during the scripture reading.

IM gives reading from scroll, giving each set of knocks. The K will give due guard and sign of each degree, lead by the DM.

KS: And he set the Cherubim within the inner house, and they stretched forth the wings of the Cherubim so that the wing of one touched the wall and the wing of the other Cherub touched the other wall, and their wings touched one another in the midst of the house. *(I Kings, VI:27) *.*

And Solomon made all the vessels that pertained unto the house of the Lord; the Altar of gold and table of gold where upon the shewbread was. **.

And the candlesticks of pure gold, five on the right and five on the left, before the oracle, with the flowers, and the lamps, and the tongs of gold. ***.

And the bowls, and the snuffers, and the basins, and the spoons and the censers of pure gold; and the hinges of gold, both for the doors of the inner house, the most holy place, and for the doors of the house, to wit, of the Temple. (*I Kings, VII: 48-50*). *** *.

And Hiram made the lavers and the shovels and the basins. So Hiram made an end of doing all the work that he had made King Solomon for the house of the Lord. (*I Kings, VII: 40*) *** **.

So was ended all the work that King Solomon made for the house of the Lord. (*I Kings, VII:51*) *** ***.

And behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according to his work shall be. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. *** *** *.

After giving the due guard and sign of the Royal Arch the CC & K will make one circuit and halt again in the east. The DM is seated. The last scripture reading will begin as they pass the CG's station.

Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have a right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. (*Rev, XXII:12-14*). *** *** **.

*CC gives with foot: *** *** **.*

KS rises: Who comes here?

CC: A Companion Royal Arch Mason, who wishes to be advanced to the rights and honors of a Royal Master.

KS: Is it of your own free will and accord?

K: It is.

KS: Is he duly and truly prepared?

CC: He is.

KS: Worthy and well qualified?

CC: He is.

KS: Has he made suitable proficiency in the preceding degrees?

CC: He has.

KS: By what further right or benefit does he expect to gain admission?

CC: By the benefit of the pass.

KS: Has he the pass?

CC: He has it not I have it for him.

KS: Advance and give it.

CC ascends the dais and gives the pass in a low breath. Grip is not given. Backs down the dais to his position on the right of K.

KS: The pass is right. Reconduct the candidate to the CG in the west, who will teach him how to advance to the Altar for the eighth time in Masonry in due and ancient form.

CC conducts K to the west, where they halt and face the CG:

Companion CG *CG rises* it is the order of Illustrious King Solomon, that you teach this candidate how to advance to the Altar for the eighth time in Masonry in due and ancient form.

CG: Face to the east.

CC will direct K to about face, and he will hold his position on the north.

Advance one step with our right foot; bring the heels together, feet forming two sides of an equilateral triangle. *Done.*

CG steps to the right front of K: I will now conduct you to the Altar where you are about to be made a

Royal Master in due and ancient form.

Takes K by the left arm and leads him to the altar, passing around the south end of standards; CC follows in the rear.

Which is by kneeling on both knees *done* both hands resting upon the Holy Bible, Square and Compass *done*. Illustrious King Solomon, the candidate is in due form.

KS: Companions, you are again kneeling at the Sacred Altar of Freemasonry and are in due form to take upon yourselves the solemn obligation of a Royal Master, which can contain nothing that will conflict with your duty to God, your country, your neighbor or yourself. With this assurance on my part are you willing to take the Obligation?

K: I am.

KS: The class, and the active candidate will say, "I", your name, and remain silent.

Of my own free will and accord, in the presence of the Supreme Architect of the Universe, and this council of Royal Masters, do hereby and hereon most solemnly promise and swear, that I will forever keep and conceal the secrets of this degree, and will not reveal them except to him or them to whom they of right belong.

I furthermore promise, that I will not be present, or assist at the conferring of this degree, upon any person unless he shall have regularly received, all the preceding degrees, from entered apprentice to Royal Arch Mason inclusive, and then only in a legally constituted Council of Royal Masters.

The class, and the active candidate will now repeat after me:

All this, I most solemnly and sincerely promise and swear, without equivocation, mental reservation or secret evasion in me whatever, binding myself under no less penalty, than that of being buried alive, should I ever, knowingly or willfully, violate this my solemn obligation of a Royal Master, so help me God and keep me steadfast in the due performance of the same.

KS remove K's hands from the Bible.

In token of your sincerity of purpose in these solemn engagements, you will kiss the Holy Bible now open before you.

Done.

Arise.

KS moves K to front of class so all may see the following:

The step of a Royal Master is made by advancing one step with the right foot, bringing the heels together, feet forming two sides of an equilateral triangle. *Demonstrates as he explains.*

This is the sign of a Royal Master *demonstrates*. With the fingers interlaced; place both hands palms down on top of the head. It alludes to the penalty of your obligation, that of being buried alive, and is the sign with which you salute the Illustrious Master on entering or retiring from a Council Royal Masters.

The sign of recognition of this degree is given as follows:

CC advances to left of KS. KS takes broken triangle from Altar, hands it to CC and says: Do you know anything about this?

CC: I do. I know the beginning. What do you know about it? *Returns triangle.*

KS: I know the ending. What is the beginning?

CC: Alpha. What is the ending?

KS: Omega.

CC: The first.

KS: The last.

CC: The beginning.

KS: The ending.

CC returns to his position on the right rear of the K. HKT approaches KS and they start to form a living triangle, but one of the indispensable three being missing, they place their hands on each other's shoulders, and KS, pointing to feet says:

KS: What do you see there?

HKT: A Broken Triangle.

KS & HKT raise hands above heads and exclaim:

KS: Alas! Drops hands to side.

HKT: Poor Hiram. Drops hands to side.

KS: This is the grip of a Royal Master. Demonstrates with HKT. With the left feet forming two sides of an equilateral triangle, place both hands on each others shoulders and the words "Alas Poor Hiram!" is the pass of this degree.

The principle words of this degree are Alpha and Omega.

We learn from Masonic tradition that the origin of this grip is as follows:

Demonstrating with HKT as he explains.

Solomon, King of Israel and Hiram, King of Tyre, meeting in the Sanctum Sanctorum shortly after the death of Hiram Abiff, placed themselves involuntarily in the position to give the Master's Word, when suddenly realizing that one of their number was wanting, the immediately placed their hands on each other's shoulders, Solomon, pointing down, asked, "What do you see there?" Hiram, King of Tyre replying, "A broken triangle." Both throwing up their arms, Solomon exclaiming, "Alas", Hiram King of Tyre replied, "Poor Hiram."

Companion Conductor of the Council, you will now seat the candidates.

KS, HKT and CG return to their stations. CC conducts class to seats and returns to his station. When all are in position, KS gives one knock and all are seated.

Historical Lecture

This degree originated in consequence of a conversation between Grand Master Hiram Abiff and Adoniram, just before the death of the former.

After the Sanctum Sanctorum was completed, and a portion of the furniture deposited therein, Adoniram, on a certain day near high twelve, went there to deposit one of the Holy Vessels. At high twelve, when the craft were called from labor to refreshment, Adoniram did not retire with the rest, but lingered behind with Hiram Abiff, whose custom it was at that hour to enter the Sanctum Sanctorum and offer his devotions to Deity and to draw designs upon the Trestle Board. After the rest of the Craft had retired, Adoniram asked Hiram Abiff when he should receive the Master's Word. He answered, "I do not know that you will ever receive it, for it is agreed by Solomon, King of Israel, Hiram King of Tyre and myself that the Master's Word can only be given when the Temple is completed, and then only in the presence of all three." Adoniram then said, "Suppose one of you three, even you yourself should be removed by death prior to that event, how then shall I receive it?" After commenting on the subject of death, Hiram Abiff with a significant gesture replied, "If I die, it will be buried there."

This conversation having been related to King Solomon by Adoniram, the Master's Word was deposited in the Secret Vault, as will be more fully explained to you in the succeeding degree, to which this is a preparatory.

After the untimely death of Grand Master Hiram Abiff, the two surviving Grand Masters instituted this degree of Royal Master in token of their respect for his memory, and as a partial substitute for the Master

Mason degree. Being unable to form the triangle in giving the Master's Word, as one of their number was dead, they substituted the broken triangle, being the nearest they could come to the original. They first conferred the degree upon the noble Adoniram, and then upon other particular friends of Hiram Abiff. As his friend we now confer it upon you, and we give it as illustrative of the Master Mason and Royal Arch degrees.

The furniture of the Sanctum Sanctorum consisted of many Holy Vessels made of pure gold, but the most important article there was the Ark of the Covenant, called the Glory of Israel, which was seated in the midst of the Holy Place under the wings of the Cherubim. It was a small chest, or coffer, three feet nine inches long, two feet three inches wide and deep. It was made of wood excepting only the mercy seat, but overlaid with gold; both inside and out. It had a ledge of gold surrounding it at the top, into which the cover, called the mercy seat was let in. The mercy seat was of solid gold, the thickness of a hand's breadth. At the two ends of it were two Cherubs, looking inward toward each other, with their wings extended; which, embracing the whole circumference of the mercy seat, met on each side in the middle; all of which, the Rabbis say, was made out of the same mass without any soldering of parts.

Here the Shekina, or Divine Presence, rested and was visible in the appearance of a cloud over it. From hence the Bathkol issued, and gave answers when God was consulted. And hence it is that God is said in the Scriptures to dwell between the Cherubim; that is between the Cherubim on the mercy seat, because there was the Seat or Throne of the visible presence of His Glory among them.

IM: This concludes the degree of Royal Master. You will now retire with your conductor, while necessary preparation is made for the succeeding degree.

CC leads the candidates to the west of the altar, where they receive the Prologue.

Prologue

Companions: The degree you have just received was preparatory to the one that is to follow, but the events it pictures occurred prior to those of the Third Degree and those of the Royal Master.

As a candidate in the various Masonic degrees, you represented a seeker for Truth symbolized by the Master's Word. In the craft degrees this Word was lost when it seemed almost attained. You were given a substitute with the hope that the true one would be recovered. You again became a seeker for the Word, and in the Chapter degrees it was found. Then the question arose: How was it thus preserved, and how came it to be in the place where you found it? In the Royal Master degree you had the definite assurance, not given in the Third Degree, that it would be preserved, and you were given a hint as to where it would be buried. In the degree you are about to receive, you will learn how and why it was buried there.

In the Select Master degree, Hiram Abiff is still alive and the three original Grand Masters are the principle characters in the scenes portrayed.

You, as a candidate, will represent Zabud, who was the son of Nathan, and a very close personal friend of King Solomon.

CC leads the class in giving the signs, IM responds. CC conducts class to the preparation room.

*IM: ***, all rise:* I declare this Council of Royal Masters closed and labor resumed in the Secret Vault. Companion Captain of the Guard, inform the Sentinel.

CG: Companion Steward, inform the Sentinel.

*Stew goes to door: *** ***, answered by S:* Companion Sentinel, the Council of Royal Masters is duly closed and labor resumed in the Secret Vault.

*S gives * answered by Stew.*

Stew: Companion Captain of the Guard, the Sentinel is informed.

CG: Illustrious Master, your order has been obeyed.

IM: *.

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