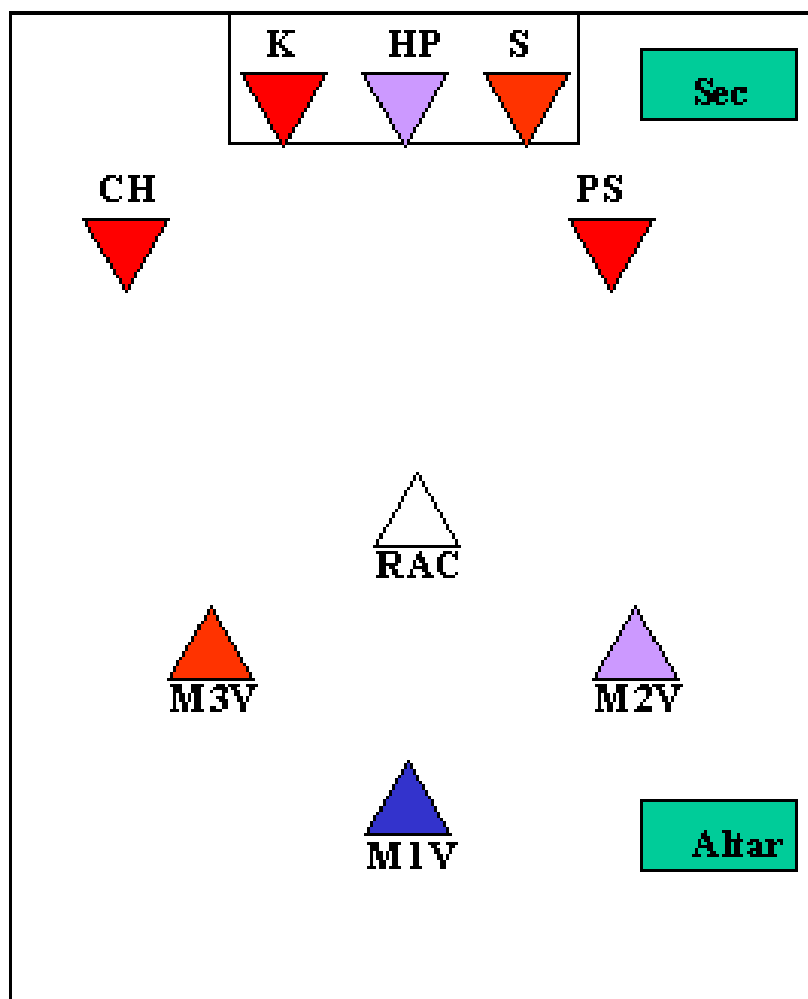


Ritual of the Royal Arch Degree Iowa

2003

Royal Arch Part 1 layout



*HP, * to quiet the Chapter:* Companion Captain of the Host.

CH rises, faces HP and salutes and comes to officer's present. HP returns with hand salute.

Have you anything for the action of this Chapter of Royal Arch Masons?

CH: Several Brothers, Most Excellent Masters, are in waiting and desire to be exalted to the most sublime degree of the Royal Arch.

Carries sword, right faces and is seated.

HP, rises. Companions, you have heard the announcement of the Captain of the Host. If there is no objection we will proceed to confer the degree. *Takes seat.*

Companion Captain of the Host.

CH rises, left face, salute, remaining at officers present.

HP: You will perform that part of your work which required you to preside at the introduction of strangers

among the workmen.

CH, carries sword: Companion Principle Sojourner.

PS. rises, right face and salutes with right hand.

CH responds with sword. Comes to carry: You will retire, prepare and introduce the candidates.

Right face and is seated.

*PS, left face and goes in direct line to altar, gives DG and S to HP, who responds, then proceeds to the preparation room in a direct line. C are prepared by being hoodwinked, a cable-tow places seven times around their bodies, connected in threes, on to the other and clothed in white aprons. Sandals replace shoes. Led in single file to the preparation room door and PS gives alarm *** *** *.*

RAC: Companion Captain of the Host. *Salutes and remains at officers present.*

CH rises, returns salute and comes to carry.

There is an alarm at the door of the preparation room.

CH: Attend the alarm, Companion Royal Arch Captain. *Takes seat.*

*RAC carries sword, goes in a direct line to the preparation room and gives *** *** *:* Who comes here?

PS: Several Brothers, who have been received and acknowledged Most Excellent Master, and now wish to receive further light in Masonry by being exalted to the Most Sublime Degree of the Royal Arch.

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

K: It is.

RAC: Are they duly and truly prepared?

PS: They are.

RAC: Worthy and well qualified?

PS: They are.

RAC: Have they made suitable proficiency in the preceding degrees?

PS: They have.

RAC: You will wait with patience until the Captain of the Host is informed of your request and his answer returned.

Closes the door and returns in a direct line to his station.

Companion Captain of the Host.

CH rises, RAC salutes and remains at officers present. CH returns salute and comes to carry.

The alarm was caused by several Brothers who have been received and acknowledged Most Excellent Masters, and now wish to receive further light in Masonry by being exalted to the most sublime degree of the Royal Arch.

CH: Is it of their own free will and accord?

RAC: It is.

CH: Are they duly and truly prepared?

RAC: They are.

CH: Worthy and well qualified?

RAC: They are.

CH: Have they made suitable proficiency in the preceding degrees?

RAC: They have.

CH: Let them enter and be received in due form.

RAC carries sword and goes in a direct line to the preparation room door.

CH: Companions Masters of the Veils.

M1V, M2V, M3V rise, salute and remain at officers present.

Form the living arch for the reception of the candidates.

MIV, M2V, M3V carry and place swords on their chairs. Advance to the north side of the room, where living arch is formed. MIV and M2V face north. M3V faces south directly opposite others. Each grasp his own left wrist with his right hand and with his left hand grasps the right wrist of the one on his left. CH advances to position south and west of the Arch, facing north. When arch is formed and CH is in position RAC opens the door.

RAC: Enter in the name of the Lord.

PS conducts C into room, halting first C before the arch. RAC returns sword.

CH: Brethren, on your first admission into a Chapter of Royal Arch Masons, you are received under a living arch, to teach you that the principal secret of this degree can only be communicated under a living arch, and also to teach you a lesson in humility, for he that humbleth himself shall be exalted. Stoop low, brethren, stoop low.

PS passes C under arch, with MIV, M2V and M3V giving slight downward pressure. C are moved south. CH returns to station, as do M2V & M3V. All remain standing. RAC and MIV will wait at rear of C to assist in guiding them around the room. MIV guides second K, RAC guides third.

I will bring the blind by a way that they know not: I will lead them paths that they have not known. I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight; these things I will do unto them and not forsake them.

Arriving at the south. My brethren, as no Mason should ever enter upon any great and important undertaking without first invoking the blessing of Deity, you will kneel for the benefit of prayer.

*Assist C to kneel, gives *** with staff. All rise.*

O thou Eternal and Omnipresent JEHOVAH, the glorious and everlasting I AM, permit us, thy frail, dependent and needy creatures, to approach thy Divine Majesty.

May the solemnities of the ceremonies of our institution be duly impressed upon our minds, and have a happy and lasting effect upon our lives.

And finally, O merciful Father, when we shall have passed through the outer veils of these earthly courts, 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.

A Chaplain may give Prayer. All respond: So Mote It Be. *PS gives *.*

Brethren arise and follow me.

*Conducts C around room, stopping as they pass west of the altar. C are placed as follows: First C placed by PS one pace north of the altar facing west. Second C is placed by the MIV one pace west of the altar, facing north. Third C is placed by RAC one pace south of altar, facing north. While C are placed CH returns sword and advances in a direct line to east of altar. When all is ready, PS gives *** ** **

CH: Who comes here?

PS: Several Brothers, who have been received and acknowledged Most Excellent Masters, and now wish to receive further light in Masonry by being exalted to the most sublime degree of the Royal Arch.

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

K: It is.

CH: Are they duly and truly prepared?

PS: They are.

CH: Worthy and well qualified?

PS: They are.

CH: Have they made suitable proficiency in the preceding degrees?

PS: They have.

CH: My brethren, you are again at the Altar of Freemasonry, but before proceeding farther, it will be

necessary for you to take upon yourselves a solemn obligation pertaining to this degree, which will not conflict with your duty to GOD, your country, your neighbor or yourself. With this promise on my part, I ask you, are you willing to take such and obligation as all Royal Arch Masons have done before you?

K: I am.

CH: Advance one step with your left foot; bring the heel of the right to the heel of the left and form an angle of a square. Kneel on both knees, both naked hands resting on the Holy Bible, Square and Compass. The class and the active candidates will say I, your names, and remain silent.

Of my own free will and accord, in the presence of almighty God, and this Chapter of Royal Arch Masons, erected to Him, and dedicated to Zerubbabel, do hereby and hereon, most solemnly and sincerely promise and swear, as I have heretofore done, but with these additions, that I will not communicate the secret of the Royal Arch to any person in the world, except it be to a true and lawful companion of this degree, or in the body of a just and lawfully constituted chapter of Royal Arch Masons, nor unto him or them, until by strict trial, due examination or lawful information, I shall have found him or them, as lawfully entitled to the same as I am myself.

I furthermore promise and swear, that I will conform to and abide by, all the laws, rules and regulations of a Chapter of Royal Arch Masons, and that I will maintain and support the Constitution, Laws and Edicts of the Grand Chapter under which the same is held, together with the Constitution and Regulations of the General Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons, so far as they shall come to my knowledge.

I furthermore promise and swear, that I will keep the secrets of a Companion Royal Arch Mason, when communicated to and received by me, inviolate.

I furthermore promise and swear, that I will espouse the cause of a Companion Royal Arch Mason, when in difficulty and danger, and will endeavor, in a lawful manner, to assist him.

I furthermore promise and swear, that I will not unlawfully make, retain or reveal, the key to the mysterious characters of this degree, and will destroy it immediately after using it.

I furthermore promise and swear, that I will not be present at the opening of a Chapter of Royal Arch Masons, unless there be present at least nine royal Arch Masons, myself included.

I furthermore promise and swear, that I will not be present at the exultation to this degree, of a greater or less number than three at one and the same time.

I furthermore promise and swear, that I will not communicate the Grand Royal Arch Word, nor the Ineffable Name of Deity, except in the presence of three, by three times three, under a living arch, and over a triangle.

The class and the active candidates will now repeat after me:

All this, / I most solemnly and sincerely promise and swear, / without the least equivocation, / mental reservation / or self-evasion whatsoever, / binding myself under no less penalty, / than that of having my skull smote off, / and my brain exposed / to the scorching rays of the meridian sun, / should I in the least, / knowingly or wittingly, / violate or transgress, this / my Royal Arch Masons obligation, / so help me God / and keep me steadfast.

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

PS leads C to a position where they will face the screen. Begin slides.

Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro, his father-in-law, the Priest of Midian, and he led the flock to the backside of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb. And the Angel of the Lord appeared *SI* unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush; and he looked, 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.

S2 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 **S3** not nigh hither; put off thy shoes from off thy feet, 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, **S4** and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God.

God said unto Moses: Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of **S5** Israel out of Egypt. And Moses said unto God: Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of you fathers hath sent me unto you, and they shall say to me, What is his name? What shall I say unto them? And God said unto Moses: I AM THAT I AM; and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.

Moses was faithful to the Divine Command, and thus became the great emancipator, prophet, leader and judge of the children of Israel. He led his people out of bondage, through the wilderness to the border of the promised land, where on Nebo's lonely mountain, his eyes undimmed by age and his natural **S6** force unabated, God took him. Joshua became their leader. They entered the promised land. Here they became a great nation. Mighty kings and the world's greatest prophets and teachers rose among them. As long as they were faithful to God, they prospered, but when the children of Israel forgot and forsook God, national ruin came upon them.

S7 Zedekiah, the last King of Judah, was one and twenty years old when he began his 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, and stiffened his neck, and hardened his heart from turning unto the Lord God of Israel.

S8 Moreover all the chiefs 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 **S9** 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.

S10 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 hands. And all the vessels of the House of God, great and small, and the treasures of the **S11** King and of his princes; all these he brought to Babylon.

My brethren, we now represent descendants of those Most Excellent Masters who were present at the destruction of the Temple by **S12** Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, who besieged the city, burned the House of God, destroyed the Holy vessels thereof, and the residue of the people that escaped the sword he carried away as captives to Babylon. Here in Babylon our ancestors died, here in captivity we were born, and the rebuilding of the House of the Lord **S13** seems afar off. When Cyrus was King of Persia, he issued a decree saying: "the Lord God of Heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of earth; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of 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."

Our enemies in Judah and the poverty of our people have prevented the fulfillment of our fondest hope. But the dawn of the great day when a new temple shall arise in Jerusalem **S14** is near, for Darius, having ascended the throne, has given commandment that the people be not hindered, and that expenses be paid out of the King's treasury for the rebuilding of the Temple. We are needed to assist in the noble and glorious work of rebuilding the city and Temple of our God. **S15** Shall we go up? Will you? Will you go

up? We will go up and the prophesy of Jeremiah will be fulfilled when he said that "after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon, I will visit you and perform my good word toward you *SI6* in causing you to return to this place." And, remembering the symbol of the burning bush, which is to impress upon our minds in the most solemn manner that the words and signs following are of Divine institution, and as such must be sacredly regarded by us and transmitted to our posterity as means by which they may be known and distinguished forever after, let us also remember the words of the Lord which we will give to our brethren in Jerusalem, "I AM hath sent me unto you."

Let us commence our journey from Babylon to Jerusalem.

Projector off.

Here begins the Journey.

Exit with K, add additional C if available, up to nine may be used. All will remove shoes and socks and roll up pants legs. C will be bound together with halter ropes, each placing one hand on the shoulder of the C in front. PS, RAC and MIV will lead. Other Companions may assist as necessary. While C are being prepared, lodge room is set up for the journey.

PS: Thanks be unto God we are once more without the walls of the wicked and abominable city – Babylon.

We have left its domes and spires behind us, and I can just see them glittering in the sunlight over the hills and plains of Chaldea.

Our trust is in the Great I AM, and although our journey may be long, tedious and dreary, our path rough, rugged and dangerous, yet we will endeavor to overcome every obstacle, endure every hardship and brave every danger, to promote the noble and glorious work upon which we have entered.

Brethren, here the routes diverge, one leading through the desert of Arabia, the other up the Euphrates, and around by the way of Anath, Tadmora and Damascus. The desert may be less frequented by travelers owing to its extensive sandy plains, its intense heat and great scarcity of provisions and water. The other is much more pleasant, though longer and mountainous. There are hardships and dangers in each, but I think, all things considered the river route is most desirable. Let us pursue it.

Moving toward Companions with branches. As C pass, branches are presented near their feet and heads, causing them to step over some and duck under others.

The recent inundation of the valley seems to have brought trees or limbs and other obstructions down from the mountains and deposited them directly in across our pathway. There seems to be no choice but to go over some and under those which have lodged higher. It is a dangerous pass; but our trust is in the Great I AM and if we are careful we will soon be safely through.

Be careful, Brethren, Stoop beneath that limb; now over this – now under that – Ah! We are safely past.

Move to east of lodge room where artificial grass is set up. Seat the C and provide with water and fruit.

We are now on the grassy banks of the ever-running Euphrates. How beautiful the scenery around us! We will tarry here for a while and rest and refresh ourselves. Sit down Brethren. Here is some cool water from the river and fruit that grew on its fertile banks. Eat and drink while you listen to a portion of Ancient History.

On this river was built Babylon, the Chief City of the Chaldees, it was situated on both sides of the Euphrates, being connected, however, by a bridge of wondrous construction.

This city, from the splendor and magnificence of its public edifices and its immense wealth, became the seat of empire, and was the wonder and admiration of all beholders. History, both sacred and profane, informs us that Cyrus, King of Persia, with his victorious armies, besieged the city, and after having invested it for two years, finally took it by strategy, in this manner.

He caused ditches to be dug on either side of the city, into which he turned the waters of the Euphrates,

thereby draining the bed of the river dry, through which he marched his victorious armies, and bursting through the tunnels, at midnight the assembled before the gates of the king's palace; and those of the Babylonians who escaped the sword were doomed to captivity.

But not having time to dwell further on this interesting portion of Ancient History, arise, Brethren, let us be going.

PS, RAC & MIV remove fruit and water and assist K's to rise and get back in line.

PS: We have left the river and are traversing the Syrian Desert. We have come to the ruins of Tadmor in the wilderness. It was situated in the midst of a vast and arid plain – an oasis – a green spot in the desert. Its high antiquity and almost countless remains of former architectural beauty and splendor with which it still abounds, have rendered it the wonder and admiration of all beholders. The city is now waste and desolate and naught awakens the echoes in its empty courts and ruined palaces save the cry of the jackal and the hyena.

For years caravans have stopped at the oasis on their long journeys from the Euphrates to the Mediterranean and from the mountains of Lebanon to the Red Sea.

Two Companions with swords and shields make a loud clanging noise by striking sword on shield, yelling hoarsely as they do so.

Stop! What is that I see? Two caravans engaged in combat; let us go around and avoid them. *PS speeds up and moves around to the bridge.* That was a narrow escape, and it has brought us into an abandoned path. The old bridge over this ravine appears to be unsafe. Stop! Let me examine it. *Examines the bridge by lifting one end and letting it fall to make a crashing sound.* It is nearly gone, but by care we may cross it. Let us make the attempt. Be careful! The bridge trembles but we will soon be safely over. It seems ready to fall – be careful! Be careful! Ah! We are safely over!

K's are lead over the bridge carefully. Two companions, stationed at either end make the bridge wobble and shake. When last C is across, the bridge collapses.

We are now approaching the flourishing city of Damascus. Through the long lapse of centuries it has experienced the various vicissitudes incident to wars and revolutions; but while cities, kingdoms and empires have arisen, flourished, fulfilled their destiny and fallen, this venerable city still survives – her towers still pointing heavenward.

Now we journey toward the south. To the right we may see the Lebanon forest, where our fathers felled and prepared timbers for the first Temple.

We are now on the plains of the Jordan and will soon be in sight of the river itself. We are weary, and although borne up by the nearness of our journey's end, we feel almost overwhelmed and desolate, lest the enemies and robbers of this infested route should, at the last, cut off all hope of final success.

Stops to instruct K.

Here is the ford through the Jordan leading to Jericho that fell before Joshua's conquering hosts.

Come; let us attempt the passage. Now we enter the Jordan. Its waters are not cold, but yonder banks seems to be covered with rough stones and rocks, so be careful!

K's are lead into the river and across, closely watched by attending companions.

Brethren, be careful! We are at last safely over and soon will be near to our beloved Jerusalem.

Rough and rugged has been the road, long and toilsome the march, but sustained and favored by the Great I AM, we are at last near our journey's end. You will remain here in this vale, while I ascend yon eminence.

Remove blindfolds.

Last Slide

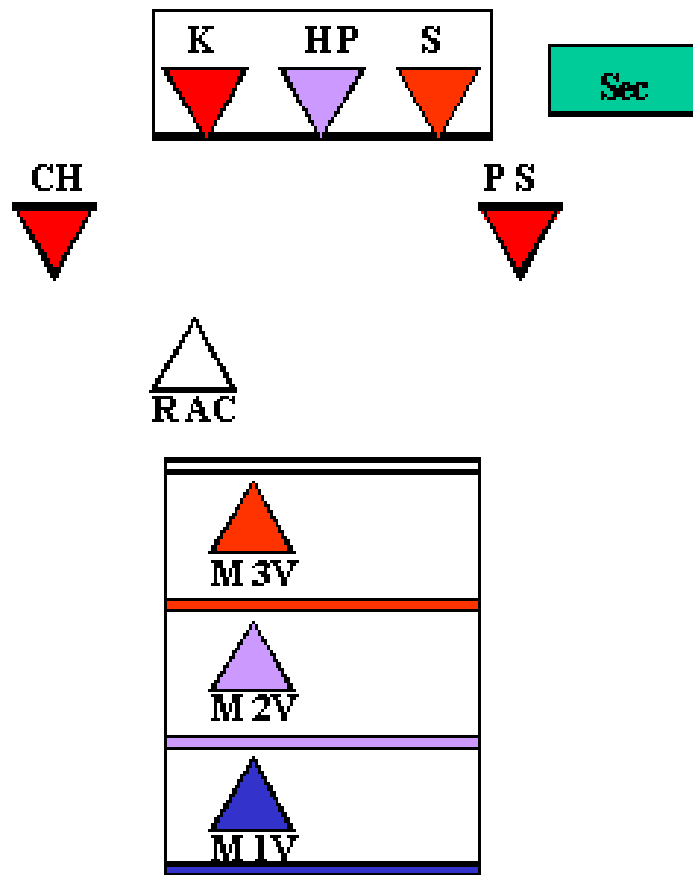
As I live, I behold the city of our Fathers.

"Oh Jerusalem, Jerusalem: If I forge Thee, let my right hand forget its cunning".

Song Jerusalem.

K's are removed to preparation room where their shoes and socks are returned. They are allowed to view the rough and rugged road.

Royal Arch Part 2 layout



Part 2

Room is darkened, with veils illuminated (if possible). Chairs for the Veils-men are on the north, facing south. Banners should be placed in the south of each compartment. RAC's banner is to his left side.

PS: I see before us a tabernacle; let us endeavor to gain admission.

*PS and candidate halt at the entrance to the 1st veil and PS gives *** ***

M1V: Guards, assemble.

M2V and M3V rush to 1st veil and stand one on each side and slightly to the rear of M1V, swords at charge. Conversation is carried on behind closed veils.

An enemy approaches! Who comes here? Who dares approach the First Veil of our sacred Tabernacle?

PS: Three weary sojourners from Babylonian captivity, who have come up thus far to help, aid and assist in the noble and glorious work of rebuilding our city and the House of the Lord, without the hope of fee or reward.

MIV: Difficulties having arisen from the introduction of strangers among the workmen, the Grand Council now in session has issued an edict that none shall be permitted to engage in the noble and glorious work except the true descendants of the twelve tribes of Israel; your will therefore be particular in tracing your genealogy. Who are you, and what are your intentions?

PS: We are of your own people and kindred; true descendants of those noble Giblites who wrought so faithfully at the building of the Temple, and of those who were present at its destruction by Nebuchadnezzar, King of the Chaldeans, and by him carried away captives to Babylon, where they remained subjects to him and his successors, until the reign of Cyrus, King of Persia, by whom proclamation, and that of Darius, his Successor, we have been liberated, and have now come up to help, aid and assist in the noble and glorious work of rebuilding our city the House of the Lord, without the hope of fee or reward.

MIV: How do you expect to gain admission?

PS: By the words of Him who hath sent us.

MIV: Who hath sent you?

PS: The God of our fathers.

MIV: What is his name?

PS: I Am that I Am.

M2V and M3V return to their stations, closing curtains at entrances to their veils.

MIV turns on light.

Enter within the 1st veil. *Done.*

Good men and true you must have been, or thus far you could not have come. Further you cannot go without my Passwords, Sign and Words of Explanation. The Passwords are Shem, Ham, and Jaythus. The Sign is casting a rod upon the ground and taking it up. *Gives sign while describing it.* The words of explanation are found in the writings of Moses and are as follows:

"And the Lord said unto him, What is that in thine hand? And he said, A rod. And he said, Cast it on the ground. And he cast it on the ground, and it became a serpent; and Moses fled from before it. And the Lord said unto Moses, Put forth thine hand, and take it by the tail. And he put forth his hand, and caught it, and it became a rod in his hand."

You will now advance to the 2nd Veil, where you will give the regular alarm of seven knocks.

*MIV steps to north side of his veil. PS advances to entrance of the second veil and gives *** ***. Veil is NOT closed.*

*M2V answers with *** *** *: Who comes here? Who dares approach the 2nd Veil of our sacred Tabernacle?*

PS: Three weary sojourners from Babylonian captivity.

M2V: How do you expect to gain admission?

PS: By the Passwords and Sign of the Master of the 1st Veil.

M2V: You will give them.

PS: The Passwords are Shem, Ham, and Jaythus. The Sign is casting a rod upon the ground and taking it up. *Gives sign while describing it.*

M2V: The Passwords and Sign are right.

Turns on the light and opens the curtains at the entrance to his veil and steps back until he is in front of entrance to 3rd veil, facing west, saying as he opens the curtains: Enter within the 2nd veil. *Done.*

Good men and true you must have been, or thus far you could not have come. Further you cannot go without my Passwords, Sign and Words of Explanation. The Passwords are Moses, Aohlab and Baszelleal.

The Sign is putting the hand into the bosom and plucking it out. *Gives sign while describing it.* The Words of Explanation are found in the writings of Moses and are as follows:

"And the Lord said furthermore unto him, Put now thine hand into thy bosom. And he put his hand into his bosom; and when he took it out, behold, his hand was leprous as snow. And he said, Put thine hand into thy bosom again. And he put his hand into his bosom again, and plucked it out of his bosom, and behold, it was turned again as his other flesh."

You will now advance to the Third Veil, and give the regular alarm.

*M2V steps to north side of his veil. PS advances to entrance to third veil and gives *** ***. Veil is NOT closed.*

*M3V returns *** ***. Who comes here? Who dares approach the Third Veil of our sacred tabernacle?*

PS: Three weary sojourners from Babylonian captivity.

M3V: How do you expect to gain admission?

PS: By the Passwords and Sign of the Master of the 2nd Veil.

M3V: You will give them.

PS: The Passwords are Moses, Aohlab and Baszelleal. The Sign is putting the hand into the bosom and plucking it out. *Gives sign while describing it.*

M3V: The Passwords and sign are right.

Turns on light and opens curtains to his veil and steps back until he is in front of entrance to fourth veil, facing west, saying as he opens the curtain:

Enter within the 3rd Veil.

Good men and true you must have been, or thus far you could not have come. Further you cannot go without my Passwords, Sign and Words of Explanation. The Passwords are Joshua, Zerrubebel and Haggai. The Sign is pouring water on dry land. *Gives sign while describing it.*

The Words of Explanation are found in the writings of Moses and are as follows:

"And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe also these two signs, neither harken unto thy voice, that thou shalt take of the water of the river, and pour it upon the dry land; and the water which thou takest out of the river shall become blood upon the dry land."

You will now advance to the 4th Veil and give the regular alarm, and present this Signet for admission.

*M3V presents signet to PS and steps to north side of his veil. PS advances to the entrance of the 4th veil and gives *** ***. Veil is NOT closed.*

RAC, rises: Companion Captain of the Host

CH rises. RAC salutes with sword and comes to officers present. CH rises, responds and carries sword.

RAC: There is an alarm at the 4th Veil.

CH: Attend to the alarm, Companion Royal Arch Captain.

*RAC carries and faces the 4th Veil. Gives *** *** * with sword:*

Who comes here? Who dares approach our sacred Tabernacle where incense burns upon our Holy Altar both day and night?

PS: Three weary sojourners from Babylonian captivity.

RAC: How do you expect to gain admission?

PS: By the Passwords and Sign of the Master of the Third Veil.

RAC: You will give them.

PS: The Passwords are Joshua, Zerrubebel and Haggai. The Sign is pouring water on dry land. *Gives sign while describing it.*

We are Most Excellent Masters and present this Signet for admission. *Done.*

The curtain is opened enough to permit the Signet to pass from PS to RAC.

RAC: The Passwords and Sign are right. You will wait until the Captain of the Host is informed of your request and his answer returned.

Returns to station.

Companion Captain of the Host *Salutes, comes to officer's present. CH rises, returns salute.*

The alarm was caused by three weary sojourners from Babylonian captivity. They claim to be Most Excellent Masters and present this Signet for admission.

Comes to carry, goes in direct line to CH and presents signet.

CH: You will admit them.

Lights come up. RAC returns to his station by the same route, opens curtain to 4th veil and says:

RAC: Enter within the Fourth Veil.

Done. Closes curtain after PS and Ks have entered. Then is seated. Curtains at the entrance to the first through third veils are not closed after PS and C pass. Curtain at the Fourth Veil is kept closed except when RAC opens it to permit PS and C to pass. M1V, M2V, M3V and RAC will all rise and stand at present while they pass.

PS and C will enter the 4th veil and advance in single file, PS leading, in direct line to station of the CH, then turn right and advance to the front of the Grand Council, halt and face east when second C is in front of HP. As PS turns right, S will start speech while seated. HP & K will pay close attention.

S: Companion Zerubbabel, in the seventh day, in the month, in the one and twentieth day of the month, came the word of the Lord unto me, saying: Speak now to Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, Governor of Judah, and to Jeshua, the son of Josedech, the High Priest, and to the residue of the people, saying: who is left among you that say this house in her first glory? And how do ye see it now? Is it not in your eyes in comparison of it as nothing? Yet now be strong, O Zerubbabell, and be strong, O Jeshua, son of Josedech the High Priest; and be strong all ye people of the land, saith the Lord, and work; for I am with you, saith the Lord of Hosts; according to the word that I covenanted with you when you came out of Egypt, so my spirit remaineth among you; fear ye not. For thus saith the Lord of Hosts: yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; and I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come, and I will fill this house with glory. The silver is mine and the gold is mine. The glory of this house shall be greater than that of the former, and in this place will I give peace.

CH, faces left: Excellent Grand Council.

Salutes and comes to officer's present. HP returns.

There are before you three weary sojourners from Babylonian captivity, who have come up thus far to help, aid and assist in the noble and glorious work of rebuilding our city and the House of the Lord, without hope of fee or reward. They claim to be Most Excellent Masters, and have presented this Signet for admission.

S, addressing K: In that day will I take thee, O Zerubbabel, my servant, the son of Shealtiel, saith the Lord, and will make thee a Signet, for I have chosen thee.

HP: The Signet of Zerubbabel which means truth.

Addresses candidates: You claim to be Most Excellent Masters? Convince the Grand Council you are Most Excellent Masters.

C give due guard and sign of a MEM. PS does not give due guard or sign, having instructed C in preparation room before entering.

They are indeed Most Excellent Masters. What part of the work are you willing to undertake?

PS, steps forward one pace: To promote the noble and glorious work of rebuilding our city and the House

of the Lord, we are willing to undertake any part of the work, even the most humble.

Steps back into line.

HP: Your modesty bespeaks your merit. The Grand Council has no doubt of your ability to perform any part of the work which may be assigned to you. It is necessary that the rubbish of the old Temple be removed preparatory to laying the foundation of the new. The Captain of the Host will furnish you with the necessary working tools, repair with you and designate the scene of your labors. You will be careful to observe and preserve everything which may be deemed of importance in rebuilding the Temple.

CH returns sword, takes crow, pickax, and spade, which are placed near his station and advances south in front of K, saying: Your proper working tools are the Crow *hands crow to nearest K*, the Pickaxe *hands to next K* and Spade *hands to third K*.

Takes position on the right of the PS, draws sword, faces east and gives command: Right, FACE. Follow me.

Advances in a direct path to the Fourth Veil. RAC rises, opens curtain and stands at present swords, as do MIV, M2V & M3V. Leads PS & C to room set with necessary props, stopping out side the open door.

Brethren, you will commence your labors here, in the ruins of the Temple, remembering the injunction of the Grand Council to observe and preserve everything which may be deemed of importance in the rebuilding of the Temple.

CH returns to his station. MIV, M2V, M3V stand at present as he passes. RAC opens curtain to 4th Veil. No alarm is given. CH, RAC, MIV, M2V, M3V are seated together.

PS: Brethren, let us begin our labors.

They do so, and find Keystone.

This may be of importance in the rebuilding of the Temple; let us take it up for the inspection of the Grand Council.

*PS conducts K, one of whom carries the keystone to the entrance of the 4th Veil. The working tools are left in the closet. Arriving at 4th Veil, PS gives *** **.*.*

RAC, rises: Companion Captain of the Host.

Salutes and comes to officer's present. CH rises and returns salute: There is an alarm at the Fourth Veil.

CH: Attend the alarm Companion Royal Arch Captain.

*RAC carries sword and faces veil. Gives *** **.* with sword:* Who comes here?

PS: Workmen from the ruins with a discovery.

RAC, returns to station: Companion Captain of the Host.

Salutes and comes to officer's present. CH rises and returns salute.

The alarm was caused by workmen from the ruins with a discovery.

CH: You will admit them.

RAC, carries sword, opens the curtain and says: Enter within the Fourth Veil.

Closes curtain after PS & C pass. RAC, MIV, M2V, M3V are seated together. PS & C enter and advance in a direct path to the front of the Grand Council, halting and facing east when second C is in front of HP. The Grand Council is deliberating.

HP: Let us read what the prophet Zechariah hath said concerning your success, O Zerubbabel, in the rebuilding of the House of the Lord!

Reads from a scroll: "This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel, saying: Not by might or by power, but by my spirit; who art thou O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain, and he shall bring forth the headstone thereof with shouting, crying: Grace, Grace unto it.

"Moreover, the Word of the Lord came unto me, saying, The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the

foundations of this house; his hands also shall finish it; and thou shalt know that the Lord of Hosts hath sent me unto you. For who hath despised the day of small things? For they shall rejoice, and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel with those seven."

CH: Excellent Grand Council. Salutes and comes to officer's present. Acknowledged by HP. There are before you workmen from the ruins with a discovery. Comes to carry and right faces.

PS steps forward one pace while talking:

Excellent Grand Council, agreeable to your orders we repaired to the place designated by the Captain of the Host, and there began our labors. We wrought diligently for several days among broken columns and ruined arches without discovering anything of importance. At length, one of my brethren struck with his crow what seemed to be an impenetrable rock, but which gave forth a hollow sound. We redoubled our exertions, and upon removing the rubbish, discovered an arch, in the vertex of which was a curiously wrought stone, which with considerable difficulty, we succeeded in raising. Deeming this of importance, we have brought it up for your inspection.

The keystone is presented to the HP. Grand Council consults, then HP says:

HP: The Grand Council recognizes this as the keystone of an arch, wrought by our Grand Master, Hiram Abiff. This is a valuable discovery, and from its position in the arch, it will doubtless lead to further discoveries. Are you willing to descend into the vault beneath the Arch?

PS: To promote the noble and glorious work of rebuilding our city and the House of the Lord, we are willing to descend into the vault beneath the Arch, although the descent be attended with difficulty and danger.

HP: Then go Brethren, and be mindful of our injunction.

PS gives commands, "Right Face", and "Follow Me". Goes directly to the entrance of the 4th Veil, curtain is opened by RAC, who with M1V, M2V and M3V rise and stand at present as PS & C pass.

CH, RAC and veilsmen are seated together. PS & C return to vault.

Brethren, let us resume our labors. Let us widen the aperture. Will one of you volunteer to descend? Will you AB (designates smallest of active K, who on agreeing has a cable tow placed seven times around his body.) Take this rope in your right hand and this rope in you left. Should you wish to descend, signal with the left hand; to ascend, signal with the right. Should you find anything of importance, signal to ascend and we will draw you up.

C is lowered into the vault to retrieve the Ark. On signal to ascend he is drawn back up.

Brethren, the workmen whom you represent repaired to the scene of their labors and one of their number, volunteering to descend into the vault, they widened the aperture and let him down, first taking the precaution of placing a cable tow seven times around his body, he holding a rope in each hand, with the instructions that should he wish to descend to signal with his left hand; to ascend, to signal with his right hand. He gave the signal to ascend, and they drew him forth, he bringing with him a curiously wrought box with three squares lying thereon; and mindful of the injunction they took them up for inspection. Imitating them, let us take them up for inspection.

*With box, they return to the 4th veil, where PS gives *** ** **

RAC, rises: Companion Captain of the Host.

Salutes and comes to officer's present. CH rises and acknowledges salute.

There is an alarm at the Fourth Veil.

CH: Attend to the alarm, Companion Royal Arch Captain.

*RAC comes to carry and faces veil. Gives *** ** * with sword:* Who comes here?

PS: Workmen from the ruins with a further discovery.

RAC returns to station: Companion Captain of the Host.

Salutes coming to officer's present. CH rises and acknowledges salute.

The alarm was caused by workmen from the ruins with a further discovery.

CH: You will admit them.

RAC comes to carry, opens the curtain to the 4th veil and says: Enter within the Fourth Veil.

After PS & C pass, closes curtain. Seated with M1V, M2V & M3V.

PS enters with K, goes in direct line to Grand Council.

HP: Let us not be discouraged in our noble and glorious work, for the prophet Amos has said:

Reads from scroll: "In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins and I will build it as in the days of old."

CH left faces and interrupts: Excellent Grand Council

Salutes and comes to officer's present. Acknowledged by HP.

There are before you workmen from the ruins with a further discovery.

Carries and returns sword, remains standing, facing south.

PS steps forward: Excellent Grand Council, we again repaired to the scene of our labors, when one of our number, volunteering to descend into the vault, we let him down, first taking the precaution of placing a cable tow seven times around his body, he holding a rope in each hand, with instructions, that should he wish to descend, to signal with the left hand; to ascend, to signal with his right hand.

The sun being at its meridian height, darted its rays into the innermost recesses thereof, where, upon a pedestal, he discovered a curiously wrought box, on the sides and ends which were inscriptions, in characters to him unknown. The box was overlaid with gold, and on the top were deposited three ancient squares. Availing himself of the treasures, he gave the signal to ascend, and we drew him forth, he bringing with him this curiously wrought box and these three ancient squares. Mindful of your injunction we have brought them up for your inspection.

Hands squares to HP.

HP hands one square each to K & S. Each inspects their square. Each will hold up square in turn as speaking: The Jewel of Office worn by our Ancient Grand Master, Solomon, King of Israel.

K: The Jewel of Office worn by our Ancient Grand Master, Hiram, King of Tyre.

S: The Jewel of Office worn by our Ancient Grand Master, Hiram Abiff.

HP collects the squares from K & S: The Grand Council these as the jewels of officer worn by our Ancient Grand Masters, Solomon, King of Israel; Hiram, King of Tyre; and Hiram Abiff. They are indeed valuable discoveries.

CH places pedestal three feet in front of dais. C place Ark on pedestal at his direction. PS takes position west of Ark, facing east. CH turns box slowly counter clockwise on pedestal so that Council may see its sides and ends. Box is finally placed with AL 3000 facing east.

HP: The Grand Council is also ignorant as to the box and the several mysterious characters on its sides and ends. Companion Captain of the Host. (*CH does not salute.*) you will open the box and see what it contains.

CH opens box by turning the lid counter clockwise, looks inside and removes the pot of manna. Closes the box and hands pot to HP, then returns to his station, remains standing facing south.

HP examines pot and hands it to K (on right): Companion Zerrubabel, what is your opinion?

K examines pot: A pot of manna.

Hands pot back to HP.

HP hands pot to S: Companion Haggai, What is your opinion?

S examines pot: A pot of manna.

Returns pot to HP.

HP: A pot of manna, the bread wherewith our fathers were fed in the wilderness.

Places pot on side of throne. Says to CH: Companion Captain of the Host, you will see what further the box contains.

CH looks into box and removes the rod. Closes box. Hands rod to HP.

HP examines the rod and hands it to K: Companion Zerrubabel, what is your opinion?

K examines the rod: Aaron's rod.

Returns rod to HP.

HP hands rod to S: Companion Haggai, what is your opinion?

S examines rod: Aaron's rod.

Returns rod to HP.

HP: Aaron's rod, that that budded, blossomed and brought forth fruit in a single night.

Places rod on the side of the thorn.

Companion Captain of the Host, you will see if the box contains anything further.

CH looks into the box and removes the scroll. Closes box. Hands scroll to the HP.

HP hands scroll to K: Companion Zerrubabel, what is your opinion?

K examines scroll (does not unroll): An ancient book.

Returns scroll to HP.

HP receives scroll from K and gives to S.: Companion Haggai, what is your opinion?

S examines scroll (does not unroll): An ancient book.

Returns scroll to HP.

HP unrolling scroll only far enough to read: Let us read from this ancient book.

"In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth, and the earth was without form and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said: Let there be light, and there was light."

Pauses for effect, as if thinking.

Let us read further from this ancient book.

"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."

Rolls up the scroll. K and S rise in unison with HP, taking cue from him. Holds scroll aloft, saying as he does so: The Book of the Law, long lost, now found; *gives due guard with scroll saying as he does so,* Holiness to the Lord! *Gives scroll to K.*

K following the same procedure as HP, described above: The Book of the Law, long lost, now found, Holiness to the Lord! *Passes scroll to S.*

S, following the same procedure as HP & K: The book of the Law, long lost, now found, Holiness to the Lord! *Scroll to HP.*

*HP hands scroll to CH, who has approached the dais. CH returns to station and gives *** with right foot.*

Following same procedure, holds scroll aloft and says:

With me Companions, the Book of the Law, long lost, now found, Holiness to the Lord.

*Gives * with right foot. Returns scroll to K, who returns it to HP.*

HP: Let us read further from this Book of the Law.

"And thou shalt put the mercy-seat above upon the Ark; and in the Ark thou shalt put the testimony that I

shall give thee."

"And Moses said: This is the thing which the Lord commandeth: Fill an omer of manna, to be kept for your generations: that they may see the bread wherewith I 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."

"And the Lord said unto Moses: Bring Aaron's rod again before the testimony, to be kept for a token."

Places scroll on dais pedestal without comment.

Companion Captain of the Host.

CH rises, left faces and gives hand salute. Acknowledged by HP.

You will see if you can read the inscriptions on the box.

CH passes around the box, studying the inscription on sides and ends. Does not touch the box nor glance at the top: Excellent Grand Council.

Salutes with hand, HP acknowledges: I am unable to read the inscriptions on the box; they are in characters to me unknown.

Returns to his station, remains standing, facing south.

HP examining the Book of the Law, finds a key: In the Book of the Law I find what appears to be a key. Let us apply it.

HP, K & S rise together, and descend one step. In council, they compare the key to the characters without walking around the ark.

Brethren, the Grand Council is of the opinion that this most valuable discovery is an imitation of the Ark of the Covenant, containing a true copy of the Book of the Law, imitations of a pot of manna and of Aaron's rod, and a piece of parchment, having on it apparently a key, by means of which we may be able to read the characters. The original Ark of the Covenant, built by Moses, Aholiab, and Bezaleel, disappeared when the Temple was destroyed. As the Ark of the Covenant was the symbol of the Divine Presence with, and protection of, the Jewish people, and a pledge of the stability of their nation, as long as they obeyed the commands of God, so is this copy of the Ark a symbol of God's presence with us as long as we live in conformity to the precepts contained in the Book of the Law.

HP, K & S descend to floor and pass around the box, counter clockwise, K in the lead, followed by HP & S. They compare the characters to the key in HP's hand. When they have made a full circuit, they return to their original position. HP will read the characters, pointing them out without touching the box.

By this key we are enabled to read these mysterious characters.

On this side is inscribed S K I; on this end, H K T; on this end, H A; on this side, AL 3000, meaning deposited in the year of Light 300 by Solomon, King of Israel, Hiram, King of Tyre, and Hiram Abiff, for the benefit of the Craft in general, but the Jewish Nation in particular.

Pauses, looking at the top of the box, studies it and the key, then in surprise says:

And on the top, engraved in a triangular plate of gold, is the long lost Master's Word, which was lost upon the death of our Grand Master Hiram Abiff and which the faithful Craft were to receive when future generations should discover it. We will now invest you with this Word.

CH forms groups, passing from his station to the rear of the C, and takes position to left of HP. PS passes from his station to rear of C and takes position to left of K. RAC returns sword, advances from his station to position to left of S. Groups are formed with C in west, officer in east, second companion in the south. Take positions by each one grasping with his right hand the right wrist of the Companion on his left, and with his left hand the right wrist of the Companion on his right, right arms over left. Left feet form a

triangle by touching toe of shoe to heel of Companion on the left.

HP: "And God spake unto Moses and said unto him, I am the Lord and I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob by the name God Almighty; but by my name Jehovah was I not known to them." We will now communicate the Master's Word. Kneel (or symbolically kneel) on your right knee. Balance three times three.

Word is given in syllables, each syllable being repeated by each person in the group, starting with officer in the east, then repeated in alternate syllables starting in east, with Companion on left starting the first syllable on the next rotation, as follows:

East – Ja; South - Ja; West – Ja;

East – Ho; South – Ho; West Ho;

East – vah; South - Vah; West - Vah;

East Ja; South – Ho; West - Vah;

South – Ja; West – Ho; East – Vah;

West – Ja; East – Ho; West – Vah.

HP: It is the Ineffable name of Deity. Arise.

All rise and groups are broken.

We will now communicate the Grand Royal Arch Word.

Groups are formed as before.

HP: Companions, you will repeat after me; "As we three did agree – in Peace, Love, and Unity, - the Sacred Word to search; - as we three did agree – in Peace, Love, and Unity, - the Sacred Word to keep; - so we three now agree – in Peace, Love, and Unity – to raise a Royal Arch. Companions, balance three times three.

Grand Royal Arch word is given as the was the sacred name of Deity. Syllables are Ja – Bel – On. After word is given, groups are broken, all return to their positions, C's are returned to their seats. RAC & CH draw swords before being seated.

HP: An explanation of the Key by means of which we were enabled to read the characters on the box will be given to you by Companion

Key

Tradition informs us there was a secret vault under the Temple in which our three ancient Masters met and deposited many treasures belonging to the Craft.

It was closed after the death of our Grand Master Hiram Abiff and in time its location was forgotten until discovered by three brethren from the Babylonian captivity during the building of the second Temple.

You have represented then today and you have also rediscovered the vault and again brought to light the treasures therein concealed.

The characters in this alphabet can be made with two squares and a mallet. The Key shows the characters arranged in alphabetical order. There are thirteen characters with dots and thirteen without dots. The dots represent the use of the mallet to indicate that the characters belong to the last half of the alphabet. The Key is read from left to right.

The Master's Word is composed of four Hebrew Characters, corresponding in our language to JHVH, and cannot be pronounced without the aid of vowels which are supplied by the Key or covering words which are found on the sides of the triangle in the characters of the Royal Arch key.

The Hebrew characters JHVH are in the center of the triangle and are read from right to left. As Hebrew is

read from right to left, the characters on the sides of the triangle will be read in that manner in searching for the vowels which enable us to pronounce the Word.

Applying the Key we find on this side B .., containing the vowel " "; on this side O .., containing the vowel " "; on this side J ... containing the vowel " ". Placing these vowels in order between the Hebrew characters in the center of the triangle we are enabled to pronounce the Master's Word, the name the Jews were not permitted to pronounce.

The key or covering words, when combined form a word of three syllables, which has become the Grand Royal Arch Word. As these words, when so combined, form the Grand Royal Arch Word, written in the Royal Arch key, they are read from left to right.

You have solemnly sworn that you will not communicate either of these words, except in the presence of three, by three times three, under a living arch and over a triangle, also that you will not unlawfully make, reveal or retain the key to the mysterious characters of this degree and will destroy it immediately after using it.

Complying with this obligation this will now be destroyed.

HP: The step, due guard and sign, and the working tools of this degree will now be explained to you by

Tools

I will now explain to you the step, due guard and sign of a Royal Arch Mason. You were taught to advance one step with your left foot, bringing the heel of the right to the heel of the left, forming an angle of a square.

The due guard and sign of a Royal Arch Mason are given by placing the right hand against the forehead, palm downward, then drawing across the forehead and dropping your hand to your side. It alludes to the penalty of the obligation, where reference is made to having your skull smote off.

The working tools of this degree are the Crow, the Pickaxe, and the Spade. The Crow is used by operative Masons to raise things of great weight and bulk; the Pickaxe to loosen the soil, and prepare it for digging; and the Spade to remove rubbish. But the Royal Arch Mason is emblematically taught to use them for more noble purposes. By then he is reminded that it is his sacred duty to lift from his mind the heavy weight of passions and prejudices which encumber his progress toward virtue, loosening the hold which long habits of sin and folly may have had upon his disposition, and removing the rubbish of vice and ignorance, which prevents him from beholding that eternal foundation of truth and wisdom upon which he is to erect the spiritual and moral temple of his second life. In addition to the Crow, Pickaxe and Spade, are the Square and Compass, which have been presented to your view in every degree of Freemasonry through which you have passed. The Square teaches us as Royal Arch Masons that God has made all things square, upright and perfect.

The Compass is used by operative Masons to describe circles, every part of which is equally near and equally distant from the center. The Circle is, therefore a striking emblem of the relation in which the creature stands to his Creator. As every part of the circumference of a circle is equally near and equally distant from its center, so is every creature whom God has made, to Him equally near and equally distant. The equilateral or perfect Triangle is an emblem of the three essential attributes of Deity, namely Omnipresence, Omniscience and Omnipotence; and as the three equal sides or equal angles form but one triangle, so these three equal attributes constitute but one GOD.

Excellent High Priest, the duty is performed.

HP: The Apron of this degree will be presented to you by

Apron

I now present you with the Apron of a Royal Arch Mason. Its color is white, embroidered in red, symbolizing the purity of your intentions and the fervency and zeal that should actuate you in the performance of every duty in promoting the noble and glorious work of building the Temple of your life, and in your labors for all mankind.

The Triple Tau in a triangle, within a circle, is the emblem of emblems of a Royal Arch Mason, typifying the Sacred Name, the Author of Eternal Life. It is worn as a mark of distinction, separating us who know and worship the true Name from those who are ignorant of this august mystery. May you wear it as one who, knowing and believing, may find in it the highest hope and faith ever given to man.

HP: The Historical Lecture will be presented by

Lecture

My Companions, having passed through the ceremonies of this degree, may we express the hope that it is not an idle or vain curiosity that merely grasps at novelty which has induced you to receive this sublime degree of Freemasonry, far more important than all which have preceded it. It is calculated to impress upon our minds a firm belief in the Being and existence of God, it teaches a due reverence for His Great and Holy name. It also brings to light some of the most important secrets of the Craft which lay buried in darkness from the death of our Grand Master Hiram Abiff to the erection of the second Temple, and without which the Masonic character is not complete. The degree of the Royal Arch is founded upon the destruction of the first and the building of the second Temple.

The ceremonies of this degree have an interesting and graphic historical setting, and a profound and reverential moral significance. The Royal Arch degree is the complement of the Master Mason degree, the unfolding into a second volume the history of that which was lost to its final recover. Without the Royal Arch, the Master mason degree is like a song half sung, a tale partly told, or a promise unfulfilled.

The history of the 418 years from the completion of the first Temple to its destruction by Nebuchadnezzar is filled with the glories, the triumphs, the final fall and degradation of the Kingdom of Judah, and the dispersion and loss of the Kingdom of Israel, and their enslavement in Babylon.

Forty-eight years after the destruction of the first Temple, in the first year of his reign, Cyrus, King of Persia, issued an edit granting permission to the captives to return to their own land and to rebuild the Temple of their God.

In this degree you represented three of these Hebrew captives, who, rejoicing in their newly found freedom, made their toilsome and weary march over rough and rugged roads from Babylon to Jerusalem, and having proven worthy, were admitted into the presence of the Grand Council as three weary sojourners from Babylonian captivity, who had come hither to assist in the noble and glorious work of rebuilding the city and House of the Lord without the hope of fee or reward. You expressed a willingness to undertake any portion of that work, however humble it might be. You began your labors, during which certain important discoveries were made, the chief of which was the long lost Master's Word.

And, my Companions, if, in all these things, you have seen only a series of unmeaning rites – if the spirit of truth has not applied to your hearts the morals of these ceremonies – then, indeed, have we labored in vain,

and you have spent your strength for naught. But I am persuaded to believe better things of you. I trust that you have entered into the spirit of these solemn ceremonies, and understand the full import of these interesting symbols; that all the forms and ceremonies through which you have passed from the moment you first trod the outer courts of the Temple until your final reception within the veils, have impressed deeply on your minds the great fundamental principles of our time-honored institution; for then, and only then, can you justly claim the noble name of Freemason; then, and only then, can you feel that friendship, that union, that zeal, and that purity of heart, which should actuate everyone who would appropriate to himself the proud title of a workman that needeth not be ashamed.

HP: The class will please rise *pause* and give their attention to the charge of this degree:

CHR: 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 developed 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 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 failing, by advice, admonition and reproof.

While such are our members we may expect to be united in one object, without lukewarmness, inattention or neglect; but zeal, fidelity, and affection will be the distinguishing characteristics of our society, and that satisfaction, harmony and peace may be enjoyed at our meetings which no other society can afford. You will now be seated.

At this point visiting dignitaries should be escorted through the veils and introduced to the Chapter. On completion:

HP: Has any Companion anything to offer for the good of Masonry in general or of this Chapter of Royal Arch Masons in particular before we proceed to close?

If nothing: Companion Captain of the Host,

CH rises, left faces, salutes with sword coming to officer's present. HP responds: It is my will and pleasure that Blank Chapter Number 999, be now closed. Communicate this order to the Companions for their government.

*CH carries sword, right faces, gives *** with right foot. All rise:* Companions, it is the will and pleasure of the High Priest that Blank Chapter Number 999, be now closed. Take notice and govern yourselves accordingly.

RAC, MIV, M2V, M3V return swords with CH. CH left faces, PS right faces.

HP: As proclaimed by the Captain of the Host, so let it be done; together Companions.

All give due guard and sign.

S: *** ** *

K: *** ** *

HP: *** ** */

CH right faces, PS left faces.

HP: By the wisdom of the Supreme High Priest may we be directed, by His strength may we be enabled, and by the beauty of virtue may we be incited, to perform the obligations here enjoined on us; to keep inviolably the mysteries here unfolded; and invariably to practice all those duties out of the Chapter which

are inculcated in it. Amen.

All respond "So mote it be."

In the name of God and Zerubbabel, I declare ... Chapter Number ... closed in form on the Royal Arch Degree.

Companion RAC, *RAC draws sword, salutes, coming to officer's present. HP responds:* Inform the Sentinel.

*RAC carries sword. Proceeds through veils using a direct route to door. Gives *** ** * with sword.*

Response by Sentinel: Companion Sentinel.

Sentinel salutes, coming to officer's present. RAC responds: ... Chapter, Number ... is now closed on the Royal Arch Degree.

Returns to station by the same route.

Excellent High Priest,

Salutes, coming to officer's present. HP responds.

The duty is performed.

Carries and returns sword.

*HP: *.*

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