

MASTER MASON

STUDY GUIDE

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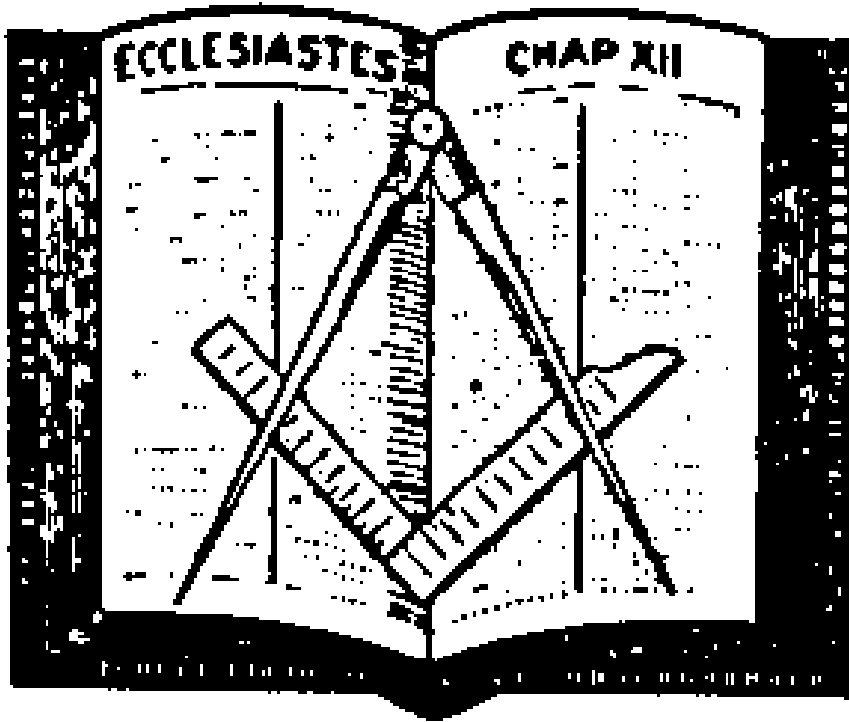


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THE BIBLE VERSE OF A MASTER MASON

Ecclesiastes, Chapter 12: 1-7

"Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth,
while the evil days come not nor the years draw nigh,
when thou shalt say I have no pleasure in them."

The lesson here conveyed: Think who made you and for what purpose you were made. Reflect, that as a sentient being, you were molded by the hand of God and to him made responsible for the proper use of the faculties with which you have been endowed, for the proper employment of the years, and the acceptance of the opportunities offered during the period of active, vigorous manhood.

"While the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh,
when thou shalt say I have no pleasure in them."

The grievance of old age, the days of sorrow, the years of pain, when the natural decay of the faculties brings the "ills that flesh is heir to" and ushers in the years of mental and physical decrepitude, when there is no longer any pleasure in life.

"While the Sun, or the light, or the Moon,
or the Stars be not darkened,
nor the clouds return after the rain."

And as the Ecclesiastic continues the imagery, picturing the abiding and increasing infirmities of age, defer not the duties of life to intend accomplishment.

"In the days when the keepers of the house shall tremble,
"And the strong men shall bow themselves"

When the hands and arms that guard and protect this tenement of clay are palsied with old age and we are no longer firm and erect.

"And the grinders cease because they are few,
And those that look out of the windows be darkened.
And the doors shall be shut in the streets."

The teeth now few in number and the eyes which are the windows through which the soul of man looks out are now curtained by the shadow of declining years. The ears lose their activities in old age.

"When the sound of the grinders is low,
And he shall rise up at the voice of the birds,
And all the daughters of music shall be bought low.

The pressing of food upon the toothless gums; The soundness of slumber no longer his, the old man sleeps lightly and rises from restless couch at the crowing of the cock at dawn; The daughters of music are the organs of speech.

"Also, when they shall be afraid of that which is high,
and fear shall be in the way.
And the almond tree shall flourish,
And the grasshopper shall be a burden,
and desire shall fail."

When the dizziness of old age prevents the mounting to high places; the silver hair of old age; no longer able to sustain the lightest weight and sensual desire no longer occurs.

"Because man goeth to his long home,
And the mourners go about the streets"
That undiscovered country from whose bourne no traveler returns;
those who sorrow at his death.
"Or even the silver chord be loosed,
or the golden bowl be broken.
Or the pitcher be broken at the fountain,
or the wheel broken at the cistern."

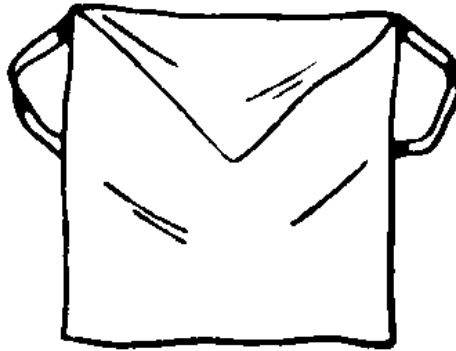
The golden bowl is the head and the silver chord is the spinal column which supports it. Golden and Silver denote the preciousness of man's life and nature. The wheel is the heart, the pitcher the great vessels which pour blood into the arterial system.

"Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was,
and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it."

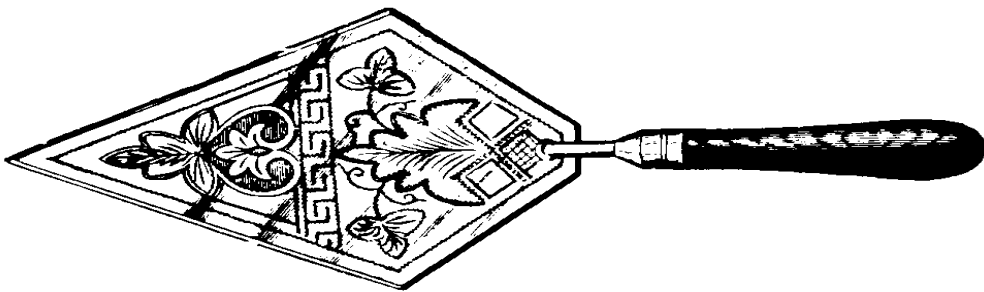


MASTER MASON SYMBOLS

1. HOW SHOULD A MASTER MASON WEAR HIS APRON?



2. WHAT ARE THE WORKING TOOLS OF A MASTER MASON?



3.



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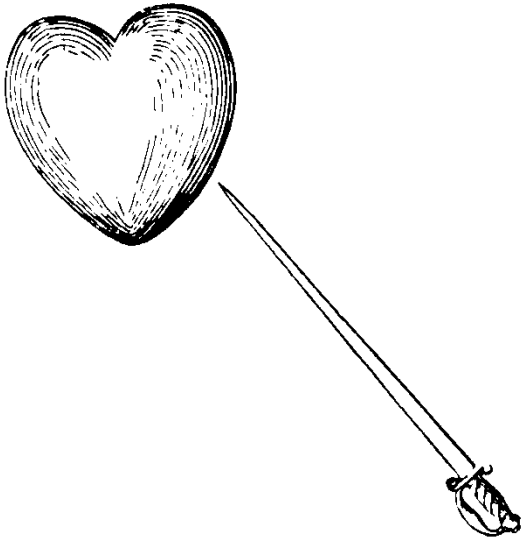
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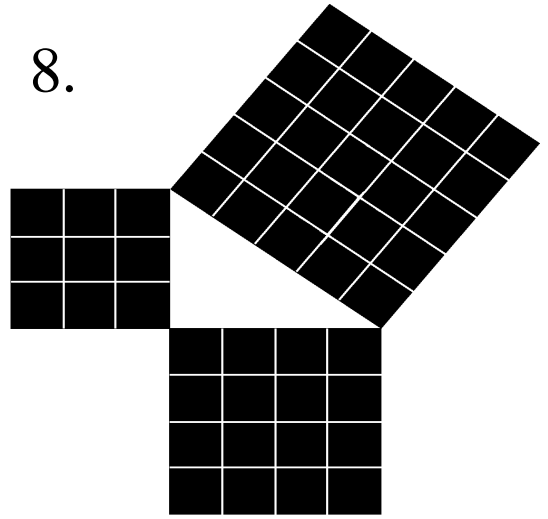
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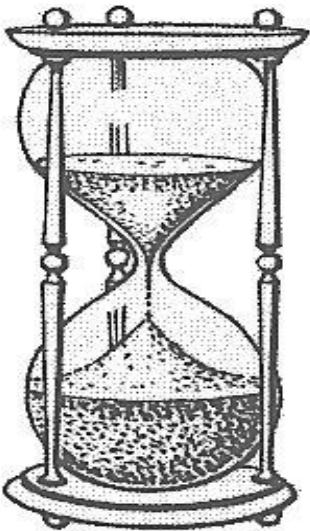
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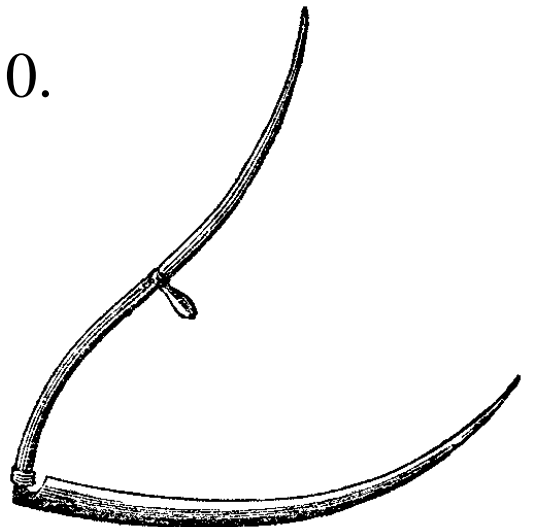
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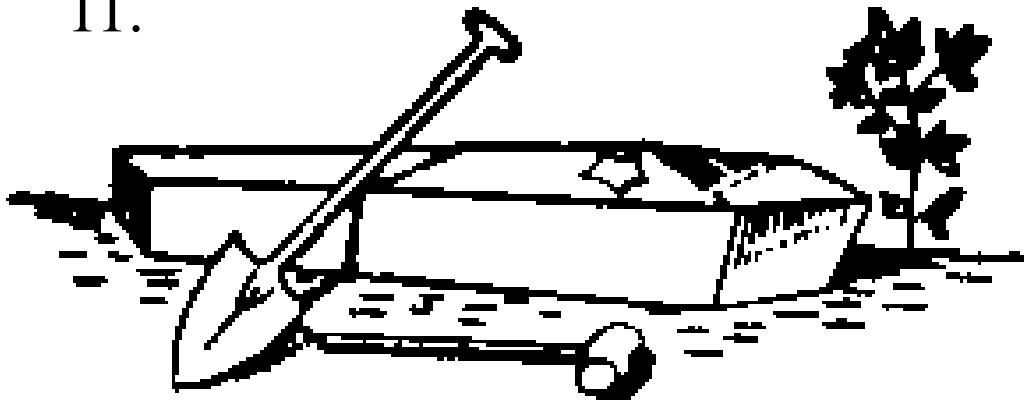
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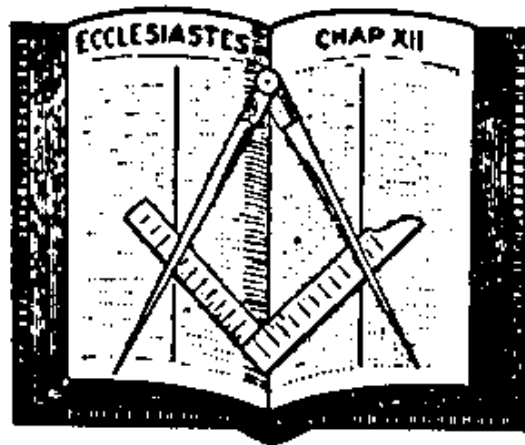
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SYMBOLS OF A MASTER MASON

Study Guide Answers

1. As an Entered Apprentice you were taught to wear your apron with the top turned up, for reasons then explained. As a Fellowcraft, you were taught to wear it with the top turned down and the left corner turned up in the form of a triangle to form a pouch, representative of our ancient brethren who, as the hewers of stone, carried the working tools of a Fellowcraft. As a Master Mason, you are entitled to wear it in the form of a square to designate you as a Master, or overseer of the work.
2. The working tools of a Master Mason are all the implements of Masonry, indiscriminately, but more especially the Trowel.

The trowel is an instrument made use of by operative Masons to spread the cement which unites a building into one common mass; but we as Free and Accepted Masons are taught to use it for the more noble and glorious purpose of spreading the cement of brotherly love and affection; that cement which unites us into one sacred band or society, of friends and brothers, among whom no contention should ever exist, save that noble contention, or rather emulation of, who can best work and best agree.
3. The Pot of Incense is an emblem of a pure heart, which is always an acceptable sacrifice to Deity, and as this glows with fervent heat, so should our hearts continually glow with gratitude to the great and beneficent Author of our existence for the manifold blessings and comforts we enjoy.
4. The Beehive is an emblem of industry, and teaches the practice of that virtue to all men, from the highest seraph in heaven to the lowest reptile in the dust. It teaches us that as we came into the world rational and intelligent beings, so we should ever be industrious ones; never sitting down contented while our fellow creatures around us are in want, especially when it is within our power to relieve them without inconvenience to ourselves. When we take a survey of nature, we view man, in his infancy, more helpless and indigent than the brutal creation; he lies languishing for days, months, and years, totally incapable of providing sustenance for himself, of guarding against the attack of the wild beasts of the field, or sheltering himself from the inclemencies of cold weather. It might have pleased the great Creator of Heaven and Earth to have made man independent of all other beings; but as dependence is one of the strongest bonds of society, mankind were made dependent on each other for protection and security, as they thereby enjoy better opportunities of fulfilling the duties of reciprocal love and friendship. Thus was man formed for social and active life, the noblest part of the work of God; and that he will so demean himself as not to be endeavoring to add to the common stock of knowledge and understanding, may be deemed a drone in the hive of nature, a useless member of society, and unworthy of our protection as Masons.
5. The Book of Constitutions, guarded by the Tiler's Sword, reminds us that we should ever be watchful and guarded in our thoughts, words and actions, particularly when before the enemies of Masonry, ever bearing in remembrance those truly Masonic virtues, Silence and Circumspection.
6. The Anchor and the Ark are emblems of a well-grounded Hope and a well-spent Life. They are emblematical of that Divine Ark which safely wafts us over this tempestuous sea of troubles, and that Anchor which shall safely moor us in a peaceful harbor, where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary shall find rest.

7. The Sword, pointing to a Naked Heart, demonstrates that Justice will sooner or later overtake us, and, although our thoughts, words and actions may be hidden from the eyes of man, yet that ALL-SEEING EYE, whom the sun, moon and stars obey, and under whose watchful care even comets perform their stupendous revolutions, pervades the inmost recesses of the human heart and will reward us according to our merit.
8. The Forty-Seventh problem of Euclid was an invention of our ancient friend and brother, the great Pythagoras, who, in his travels through Asia, Africa, and Europe, was initiated into several orders of priesthood, and raised to the sublime degree of a Master Mason. This wise philosopher enriched his mind abundantly in a general knowledge of things, and more especially in Geometry, or Masonry : for this subject, he drew out many problems and theorems : and among the most distinguished he erected this, which, in the joy of his heart, he called Eureka, in the Grecian language signifying, I have found it. And upon the discovery of which he is said to have sacrificed a hecatomb. It teaches Masons to be general lovers of the arts and science.
9. The Hour Glass is an emblem of human life. Behold! How swiftly the sands run, and how rapidly our lives are drawing to a close. We cannot, without astonishment, behold the little particles which are contained in this machine, how they pass away almost imperceptibly and yet, to our surprise, in the short space of an hour they are all exhausted. Thus wastes man! Today he puts forth the tender leaves of hope, tomorrow blossoms, and bears his blushing honors thick upon him; the next day comes a frost which nips the shoot, and when he thinks his greatness is still aspiring he falls, like autumn leaves, to enrich our mother earth.
10. The Scythe is an emblem of time, which cuts the brittle thread of life and launches us into eternity. Behold! What havoc the Scythe of Time makes in the human race. If by chance we should escape the numerous evils incident to childhood and youth, and with health and vigor arrive at the years of manhood, yet withal we must soon be cut down by the all-devouring Scythe of Time, and be gathered into the land where our fathers have gone before us.
11. These are the Setting Maul, Spade and Coffin. The Setting Maul, is that by which our Grand Master Hiram Abif was slain; the Spade was that which dug his grave; the Coffin, was that which received his remains; and the sprig of acacia was that which bloomed at the head of his grave. These are all striking emblems of mortality and afford serious reflection for a thinking mind; but they would still be more gloomy were it not for the sprig of acacia that bloomed at the head of the grave, which serves to remind us of that imperishable part of man which survives the grave, and bears the nearest affinity to the supreme intelligence that pervades all nature, and which can never, never, never die. Then, finally, my Brethren, let us imitate our Grand Master, Hiram Abif, in his virtuous conduct, his unfeigned piety to God, and his inflexible fidelity to his trust; that like him, we may welcome the grim tyrant, Death, and receive him as a kind messenger sent by our Supreme Grand Master to translate us from this imperfect to that all-perfect, glorious, and celestial Lodge above, where the Supreme Architect of the Universe presides.

12. The altar of a Master Mason is the same but now there is more than the candidate has heretofore discovered; both points of the circle are bare, which is to teach us to never lose sight of the Masonic application of this useful and valuable instrument, which teaches friendship, morality, and brotherly love.
13. This is a marble monument dedicated to the memory of our slain Grand Master Hiram Abif, consisting of a beautiful virgin weeping over a broken column, before her a book open, in her right hand a sprig of acacia, in her left an urn, behind her stands Time, unfolding and counting the ringlets of her hair.

The beautiful virgin weeping over a broken column denotes the unfinished state of the Temple, likewise the untimely death of our Grand Master Hiram Abif; the book open before her, that his virtues there lie on perpetual record; the sprig of acacia in her right hand, the timely discovery of his grave; the urn in her left, that his ashes were therein safely deposited to perpetuate the remembrance of that amiable, devoted and exemplary craftsman. Time, unfolding and counting the ringlets of her hair, denotes that time, patience and perseverance will accomplish all things



MASTER MASON

Study Guide Questions

1. How is an Fellowcraft duly and truly prepared to be a made a Master Mason?
2. How is a candidate for raising received into a Lodge of Master Masons in due and ancient form?
3. What is the due form in which a candidate takes the obligation of a Master Mason?
4. What is the Bible verse of a Master Mason?
5. After the candidate takes the obligation, which officer's jewel is he invested with?
6. Who prays for the candidate before he sets out to prove himself worthy of being a Master Mason?
7. Before being raised, who must the candidate first represent?
8. What was Hiram Abif's usual custom at high twelve?
9. What were the names of the three Ruffians?

10. What did the three Ruffians want from Hiram Abif and what were they willing to do to secure it?
11. What were the Ruffians' weapons of choice?
12. After killing our ancient Grand Master, how did the Ruffians dispose of his body?
13. How did the Ruffians attempt to escape the country? And why were they not successful?
14. Why was there confusion in the Temple and the Craft not at their labors?
15. How did King Solomon find out about the Ruffians' plans to extort the secrets of a Master Mason?
16. How did King Solomon learn the names of the Ruffians?
17. How did the workmen from the Temple find the Ruffians?
18. After being brought before King Solomon and convicted of the enormous crime, what were the Ruffians' punishments?

19. After executing the Ruffians, what did Solomon then order the workmen to do?
20. What did the workmen find?
21. What is the first sign given at the grave of Hiram Abif once the Grand Procession reaches the gravesite?
22. What happens when the body of Hiram Abif is endeavored to be raised by the grip of an Entered Apprentice and the grip of a Fellowcraft?
23. What is the Craft inclined to do when the first two grips fail to raise Hiram Abif?
24. Which grip is strong enough to raise Hiram Abif?
25. After raising the candidate, in which position does the Master place himself to give him the Grand Masonic Word?
26. What are the five points of fellowship?
27. When being prepared to become a Master Mason, why is the cable-tow wrapped around the candidates body three times?

28. Which part of King Solomon's Temple does a Lodge of Master Masons represent?
29. Where does the due guard of a Master Mason come from?
30. Where does the name of the pass-grip of a Master Mason come from?
31. How many Grand Masonic Pillars are there and by whom are they represented?
32. What supported the King Solomon's Temple?
33. How many Grand Masters and Master Masons were at the building of King Solomon's Temple?
34. What is meant by the three steps usually delineated on the Master's Carpet?
35. How many classes of Master Mason's emblems are there? Name them.

MASTER MASON

Study Guide Answers

1. Divested of all metallic substances, neither naked nor clothed, barefoot nor shod, both knees and breasts bare, hood-winked, and a cable-tow thrice around his body.
2. On his first admission into a Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons, he was received on the point of a sharp instrument piercing his naked left breast. On his second admission, he was received on the angle of a square applied to his naked right breast, for reasons then explained. He is now received on both points of the Compasses, extending from his naked left to right breast, which is to teach him that as the most vital parts of man are contained within the breast, so are the most excellent tenets of our order contained within the points of the Compasses, which are friendship, morality and brotherly love.
3. Kneeling on both naked knees and body erect. Both naked hands resting on the Holy Bible, Square, and Compasses.
4. Ecclesiastes Chapter 12.
5. The Plumb – the jewel of the Junior Warden.
6. Before, he had a worthy Brother pray for him, but now, he must pray for himself.
7. Our Ancient Operative Grand Master, Hiram Abif.
8. It was the usual custom of our Grand Master Hiram Abif, at high-twelve, when the craft was called from labor to refreshment, to enter into the unfinished Sanctum Sanctorum, or Holy of Holies of King Solomon's Temple and there offer his devotions to Deity and draw his designs on the trestle board, after which it was his usual practice to retire by the South gate.
9. Jubela, Jubelo, Jubelum.
10. They wanted the secrets of a Master Mason and they were willing to kill Hiram Abif for them.
11. Jubela – a twenty-four inch gauge; Jubelo – a square; and Jubelum – a setting maul.

12. The ruffians then buried the body in the rubbish of the Temple until low-twelve, when they met according to agreement and conveyed it a Westerly course from the Temple to the brow of a hill West of Mount Moriah where they buried it in a grave, situated due East and West, six feet perpendicular, at the head of which they planted an acacia in order to conceal it and that the place might be known should occasion ever require.
13. They traveled to the port of Joppa and asked a seafaring man there if they could secure passage to Ethiopia on his ship. But since they did not have express permission or a pass from King Solomon to leave the country, he could not take them.
14. Because Hiram Abif was missing and there were no designs drawn upon the trestle board.
15. Twelve workmen from the Temple, clothed in white gloves and aprons sought and received an audience with King Solomon. They proceeded to tell the King about their plans, with three other workmen, to extort the secrets of a Master Mason from Hiram Abif or take his life. Those twelve recanted but were afraid the other three may have persisted in their murderous plot.
16. By having the Grand Secretary call the rolls of the workmen and noting their absence.
17. They traveled as directed by King Solomon – North, South, East, and West; and as the party who pursued a Westerly course came down near the port of Joppa, they fell in with a seafaring man of whom they inquired if he had seen any strangers pass that way. He informed them that he had, three, who appeared to be workmen from the Temple at Jerusalem seeking a passage to Ethiopia, but not having King Solomon's pass, they were unable to obtain passage and returned into the country. They returned and brought this information to King Solomon who ordered them to disguise themselves and travel as before with positive injunction not to return without the ruffians, and with a positive assurance that if they did, the twelve should be deemed the murderers and severally suffer for the crime committed. They traveled as before, and as they were returning after many days of fruitless search, one of them, being more weary than the rest, sat down on the brow of a hill West of Mount Moriah to rest and refresh himself. On arising he accidentally caught hold of an acacia which, easily giving away, excited his curiosity; upon which he hailed his comrades, and on examination, they found the appearance of a newly made grave. And in the distance, the workmen could hear the voices of Jubela, Jubelo, and Jubelum.

18. Their punishments were taken from their own exhortations – and they coincide with the three penalties from the obligations of the first three degrees of Freemasonry.
19. King Solomon then ordered the twelve Fellowcrafts to go in search of the body and, if found, to observe whether the Master's Word, a key to it, or anything appertaining to the Master's degree was on or about it.
20. The body was found on the brow of a hill West of Mount Moriah where our weary brother sat down to rest and refresh himself, but nothing was found on or about it except the jewel of his office by which the body was identified.
21. The Penal sign or due-guard of a Master Mason.
22. The skin slips from the flesh and the flesh cleaves from the bone.
23. They are inclined to pray.
24. The real grip of a Master Mason or the Lion's Paw.
25. On the five points of fellowship.
26. The five points of fellowship are: foot to foot, knee to knee, breast to breast, hand to back, cheek to cheek or mouth to ear, and are thus explained. Foot to foot, that you will never hesitate to go on foot or out of your way to assist and serve a needy brother. Knee to knee, that you will ever remember a brother's welfare as well as your own while on your knees offering your devotions to Deity. Breast to breast, that you will ever keep within your breast a brother's secrets when communicated to and received by you as such, murder and treason excluded. Hand to back, that you will ever be ready to stretch forth your hands to aid and support a falling brother, that you will vindicate his character as well behind his back as before his face. Cheek to cheek, or mouth to ear, that you will ever caution and whisper good counsel in the ear of a brother, remind him in the most friendly manner of his error, and if possible, aid in his reformation; give him due and timely notice that he may ward off approaching danger.
27. It is to signify that his duties and obligations become more and more extensive as he advanced in Masonry.
28. The unfinished Sanctum Sanctorum or Holy of Holies.

29. It comes from the position of the hands while taking the obligation, but more importantly, it comes from when our Ancient Brethren returned to the grave of our Grand Master, Hiram Abif, they found their hands placed in this position to guard their nostrils from the disagreeable effluvium that arose from the grave.
30. From the first know artificer or cunning worker in metals.
31. There are three Grand Masonic Pillars denominated Wisdom, Strength and Beauty, because there should be wisdom to contrive, strength to support and beauty to adorn all great and important undertakings. These Pillars also represent our three ancient Grand Masters: Solomon, King of Israel, Hiram, King of Tyre, and Hiram Abif. The Pillar of Wisdom represents Solomon, King of Israel, because by his wisdom he erected that monument of magnificence which immortalized his name. The Pillar of Strength represents Hiram, King of Tyre, because he aided and assisted King Solomon in that great and glorious undertaking. The Pillar of Beauty represents our Grand Master Hiram Abif, because by his cunning work the Temple was beautified and adorned.
32. This magnificent structure was supported by fourteen hundred and fifty-three columns, and two thousand nine-hundred and six pilasters, all hewn from the finest Parian marble.
33. There were three Grand Masters and thirty-three hundred Master Masons.
34. The Three Steps are emblematical of the three principal stages of human life: youth, manhood and age. In youth, as Entered Apprentices, we ought industriously to occupy our minds in the attainment of useful knowledge; in manhood, as Fellowcrafts, we should apply that knowledge to the discharge of our respective duties to God, our neighbor and ourselves; so that in age, as Master Masons, we may enjoy the happy reflections consequent on a well-spent life, and die in the hope of a glorious immortality.
35. There are nine : the pot of incense, the beehive, the sword pointing to a naked heart, the book of Constitutions, the hourglass, the scythe, the anchor and ark, the forty-seventh problem of Euclid, and the coffin, setting maul, spade, and sprig of acacia.

SUMMARY OF THE MASTER MASON DEGREE

THE SUBLIME DEGREE:

It is called this not only for the solemnity of the ceremonies, but also for the profound lesson of wisdom it teaches. This Degree symbolizes the great lessons of the immortality of the soul. The Master Mason Degree differs in many ways from the previous two Degrees. Many of the symbols are the same, but they are interpreted differently. In other Degrees, the Lodge is a symbol of the world in which we live - trying to sustain life; striving to obtain knowledge; and becoming virtuous through wisdom.

In this Degree, the Lodge becomes a representation of the Sanctum Sanctorum, or Holy of Holies, of Solomon's great Temple at Jerusalem. This magnificent structure was a symbol of the abode of God to the Hebrew people. According to Scripture, Solomon built it as the dwelling place of Jehovah, that he might be in the midst of his people, Israel. The Hebrew law of cleanliness was strictly enforced and nothing earthy or unclean was permitted to enter. When you attain the Sublime Degree of a Master Mason, you receive this most valuable lesson and truth - that having been faithful to your trust, you must at last die, in order to attain the ultimate reward of your fidelity and faith.

In this state of life, man is represented to have died; and then, he is raised from the grave to another and better place. Thus, these ceremonies of the Degree lead to the inevitable conclusion that youth, properly directed, leads to an honorable and virtuous maturity; and that, regulated by morality, faith and justice, life will be rewarded in its closing hours by the prospect of eternal bliss and immortality. However, it is important to the principles of Masonry, that each man shall seek his own method of achieving this goal. We hope that these lessons and meanings will lead to new and undiscovered inspirations each time you study them.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE DEGREE:

The significance can best be understood when we compare it to the Entered Apprentice and Fellow Craft Degrees. The first two Degrees center on the art of architecture. Their purpose is to teach you, in the first, to be a builder of yourself; in the second, a builder of society. The symbols in the Degree of Master Mason refer to life, its tragedy, and its ultimate triumph. Although its background continues to be architecture, and its action takes place in and about the Temple, it is a spiritual symbol of life and death. Its principal teaching is immortality.

PREPARATION:

The preparation of the candidate reminds him of several things. First, through the clothing, he is reminded that he is to be humble. He is also taught that his obligations become more extensive and binding each time he advances. Finally, he is reminded that he is able to attain many of his desires only with the assistance given him by a friend or brother.

RECEPTION:

At the reception at the door, you are reminded that all the lessons of Freemasonry must be implanted in the heart if they are to serve a useful purpose and become a part of your way of life, and that you should practice these in your daily life.

OBLIGATION:

The obligation is the heart of the Degree. By taking the Obligation, the candidate obtains the privileges, the rights and the benefits of the Masonic institution. It is necessary that the Obligation is known and understood in order that it can be enjoyed and obeyed.

CLANDESTINE LODGE AND CLANDESTINE MASON:

A clandestine Lodge is one that has not been issued a charter from a duly recognized Grand Lodge and, therefore, you may not visit such a Lodge. One who belongs to one of these Lodges is a clandestine Mason and therefore, not entitled to visit your Lodge. A Master Mason from a regular Lodge should also not conduct Masonic related discussions with a clandestine Mason.

MASONIC DEFINITION OF NON-AGE, DOTAGE AND FOOL:

In the jurisdiction of Oklahoma, non-age refers in this Degree to one who is not yet 21 years of age. Dotage is a condition associated with old age, and is marked by juvenile desires, loss of memory and failure of judgment. Being old does not bar someone from seeking membership, but we require that he be mentally alert and mentally healthy. A fool is a mature man without good sense. Legally, he is of age, but mentally he is retarded.

WOMEN:

The question of not allowing women to become Masons has arisen many times. When we were an Operative craft, Operative Masons built buildings. They, in turn, hired men who could carry large and heavy objects. Thus, it was a requirement that only men could become Operative Masons. This has continued down through the years to us, today; but, as you know, masonry embraces many organizations that include women.

SIGNS, TOKENS AND WORDS:

We feel they are very important because they provide modes of recognition. Also, each Sign, Token and Word has a symbolic meaning which serves to enrich the mind and improve our lives as Masons. You should know how to properly execute all signs at all times, in order to properly show your respect for the dignity of our ceremonies.

THE WORKING TOOLS:

The working tools of a Master Mason are all the instruments of Masonry. In the United States, the Trowel is especially assigned to this Degree. The Master Mason uses the Trowel to cement ties between Masons, and to spread Brotherly Love.

THE LEGEND OF HIRAM:

Hiram Abif, the skilled artificer, was the son of a widow of the Tribe of Naphtali. The earlier accounts of Hiram are recorded in the 1st Book of Kings, Chapter 7, and Verses 13 & 14. His coming to work on the great Temple at Jerusalem is mentioned in a letter written to King Solomon by Hiram, the King of Tyre, and recorded in II Chronicles, Chapter 2, and Verses 13 & 14. The word Abif means "his father", and the name is translated to "Hiram, my father". He was regarded as the father of all his workmen on the Temple. By using the legend of Hiram Abif, we are taught the magnificent lessons of fidelity.

THE THREE GRAND MASTERS:

The three Grand Masters mentioned often in our rituals concerning the building of the Temple are: Solomon, King of Israel; Hiram, King of Tyre; and Hiram Abif. In early times, it was thought that Deity was regarded as three persons working together to get things done. The secrets known only to these Three Grand Masters typify Divine Truth, which was known only to Deity, and was not to be communicated to man until he had completed his own spiritual temple. Once these secrets were attained, a Mason could reap the rewards of a well-spent life, and travel to the well-known country toward which all of us are traveling. By knowing the meaning of these names and references to their offices, you will better understand what the ritual means. All of us are forever reaching outward and upward, looking for further knowledge of God and our relationship with Him, which is Divine Truth.

THE TEMPLE OF SOLOMON:

This magnificent structure was located on Mount Moriah, at Jerusalem. It was near the place where Abraham was about to offer up his son, Isaac. David, King of Israel, purchased the site and it was here that the hand of the Destroying Angel was stayed after David had repented. The incident is recorded in II Samuel, Chapter 24, and Verses 15 through 25; and I Chronicles, Chapter 21, Verses 14 through 30. The building of the Temple was begun around 967 B.C., or as others say about 1012 B.C., and finished almost eight years later, around 960 B.C., or as given by the chronology of some, about 1005 B.C. It was about 480 years after the people of Israel came out of Egypt as a band of refugees. The people lost their sense of spiritual direction and destiny, so Nebuchadnezzar destroyed their Temple in the year 586 B.C.

THE SYMBOLISM OF THE TEMPLE:

The chief purpose of Solomon's Temple was to provide a dwelling place for God in the midst of his people, Israel. In those days, people thought that God dwelled with man and this should be a fundamental human thought today. Some people of that day claim this was the most perfect building ever erected by man.

Whether it was, or not, is open to conjecture, but perfection was certainly the goal of both David and Solomon. The symbol of the Temple for each of us is founded upon the idea that man himself is a living Temple where God desires to reside. Freemasonry tries to undertake the task of helping each of its members build a statelier mansion within them where God can reside. Each of us should be aware of the fact that each of us are a symbolic Temple and that we should work toward the same type of perfection in our own Temple as that which was sought for in the Temple in Jerusalem. Our Individual temples are mental, physical and spiritual, and our work on these temples should not be inferior.

SOLOMON, KING OF ISRAEL:

Solomon was the son of David and Bathsheba. He was born about 992 B.C., or according to the chronology of others, about 1036 B.C. He became King at the age of 20 and reigned 40 years. During Solomon's reign, Israel had its greatest power, prosperity and recognition. The name Solomon means peaceful, and his reign was one of peace.

HIRAM, KING OF TYRE:

Hiram was a friend of King David, and became both ally and friend of King Solomon. According to the Biblical accounts, he assisted Solomon by supplying certain materials for the construction of the Temple; and, in return, received a gift from Solomon of ten cities.

HIRAM ABIF:

Hiram Abif was the son of a man of Tyre, and his mother was one of the daughters of the Tribe of Dan. Masonic tradition teaches us that he was sent by King Hiram to assist King Solomon in building the Temple.

TO TRAVEL TO FOREIGN COUNTRIES:

The ultimate goal of our ancient Operative Brothers was to become Masters so they might possess secrets and knowledge which would enable them to practice the arts of builder no matter where they traveled, even in foreign countries. "Foreign countries" as used in Freemasonry, is a symbolic place and is not meant to refer to a certain geographical location. Freemasonry, it self, is a foreign country to every new member. If he is to travel in it, if he is to earn Master's wages, he must learn its language; understand its customs; and study its history. He must become a part of it to fully appreciate and enjoy its privileges and pleasures. We, as Speculative Masons, still desire to travel in foreign countries; and some of us feel the urge strongly enough to diligently study Masonry, so we may receive proper instructions and be permitted to travel in foreign countries in Freemasonry. All you have to do is learn the work and keep yourself in good standing, in order to find Lodges everywhere open to you. By studying the writings of Freemasonry, you will find pleasant traveling. These areas include history, philosophy, and many other areas, leading to countless treasures, which each of you must discover for you. These are some of the rewards of each Master Mason who travels in foreign countries.

THE WAGES OF A MASTER MASON:

Our ancient, Operative Brethren performed manual labor and received wages that would contribute to their physical welfare. These nominal wages were Corn, Wine and Oil. The wages of a Speculative Mason must come from within, as he is concerned with the moral, rather than the physical, labor. The intangibles of love, friendship, respect, opportunity, happy labor, and association, are the wages of a Master Mason who earns them. Not everyone earns them; and that is why the Senior Warden, in the opening of the Lodge, declares: "To pay the Craft their wages, if any be due..."

THE THREE RUFFIANS:

There are many symbolic explanations for the appearance of these three ruffians in our ritualistic work. Their attempt to obtain the secrets not rightfully theirs, and the dire consequences of their acts, are symbolic of many things. Trying to obtain knowledge of Divine Truth by some means other than a reward for faithfulness makes the culprit both a thief and a murderer. Each of us is reminded that rewards must be earned, rather than obtained by violence or devious means. The Ruffians are also symbols of the enemies we, each one, have within us our own ignorance, passions and attitudes, which we have "come here to control and subdue". There is another symbolism that can be applied to today's world. When man is enslaved, the first of his privileges to be denied or curtailed is that of free speech and unrestricted communication with his fellow man. Man's affection is the next area attacked; for, those who control a people also force the families to comply with their orders. Finally man's reason is attacked; because your enemies will always seek to destroy your mind, as the final step to enslavement.

LOW TWELVE:

In ancient symbolism, the number twelve denotes completion. We are not sure whether this sign arose from the twelve signs of the Zodiac, or the twelve edges of the cube, which is the most stable geometric figure. The number twelve did denote fulfillment of a deed, and was, therefore, an emblem of human life. High Twelve denoted noon, with the sun at its highest; while, Low Twelve, denoted midnight, the blackest time of the night.

THE LION OF THE TRIBE OF JUDAH:

The lion has always been the symbol of might and royalty. It was the sign of the Tribe of Judah, because this was the royal tribe of the Hebrew Nation. All Kings of Judah were, therefore, called the Lion of the Tribe of Judah. This was also one of the titles of King Solomon. This was the literal meaning. The Lion of the Tribe of Judah also describes a mediator of some of the ancient religions. There is no definite meaning to any individual Mason. He is left to his own description, and that is one of the reasons, over the centuries, that Masonry has had followers from all religions.

THE LOST WORD:

In reality, we are not searching for a particular word. What we are searching for is Divine Truth, which should be the ultimate goal of all men and Masons. Having the power of speech is perhaps the noblest attribute of man, because he can communicate his thoughts to his fellows - no other animal has this power. Thus, the word has been carried down over the ages as synonymous with every manifestation of Divine Power and truth. The Masonic search for the Word symbolizes the search for truth, more particularly, Divine Truth. We must always search diligently for truth, and never permit prejudice, passions, or conflicts of interest, to hinder us in our search. We must keep our minds open to receiving truth from any source. Thus, Masons are devoted to freedom of thought, of speech and of action. In Freemasonry, we do not teach the true Word, but rather, a substitute. Thus, we are reminded that, in this life, we may approach an approximation of truth. Each man must seek the True Word through his own individual chosen faith.

THE SETTING MAUL:

This was a wooden instrument used by Operative Masons in the building of Solomon's Temple, to set polished stone firmly into the wall. The Maul has been shown to be a symbol of destruction from prehistoric times, and is shown many times in mythology. One of the best known is that of Thor, God of Thunder who is shown as a powerful man armed with a mighty hammer.

THE SPRIG OF ACACIA:

Hebrew people used to plant a sprig of acacia at the head of a grave for two purposes - to mark the location of the grave, and to show their belief in immortality. Because of its evergreen nature, they believed it to be an emblem of both immortality and innocence. The true acacia is a thorny plant, which abounds in Palestine. Both Jews and Egyptians believed that, because of its hardness; its evergreen nature; and its ability to live in the face of despair; it signified immortality. It is believed that the acacia was used to construct most of the furniture and the tabernacle in the Temple.

THE RAISING OF A CANDIDATE:

Most people do not understand what being "raised to the Sublime Degree of a Master Mason" means. This Degree is the sublime climax of Symbolic Freemasonry. If you learn only that living, dying and raising of a Master is a drama, designed to teach the virtues of fidelity, faith and fortitude, you have received only partial light and have seen nothing but a drama and a moral. This Degree seeks to answer the age-old question put forth by Job - "If a man die, shall he live again?"

The Degree delves into the deepest recesses of man's nature. While it leads the initiate into the Sanctum Sanctorum of the Temple, it probes into the Holy of Holies in his heart. As a whole, the Degree is symbolic of that old age and by the wisdom of which we may enjoy the happy reflections consequent on a well-spent and properly directed life, and die in the hope of a glorious immortality.

It teaches no creed, no dogma, no doctrine, and no religion; only, that there is a hope of immortality; and, through God's mercy, we may live again. It teaches the power, and the powerlessness, of evil. For those of us who are happy, believing in the resurrection of the physical body, then the Degree assures us of all we wish. The ceremony is not physical, but one of inner life; the home of the spirit where each man thinks the secret thought he tells no one.

EMBLEMS OF THE THIRD DEGREE:

If we consider our ritual the “Meat” of Masonry, our actions and deeds as Masons the “Potatoes” of Masonry, then we must call our emblems the “Gravy” of Masonry. They add substance, flavor and meaning to our daily lives. One after another of the emblems of the Third Degree, is set before us, apparently in no given order, and each with only a hint of what it signifies. Yet, each of them stands for some great idea or ideal. Each of them is a master truth.

In **THE THREE PILLARS** we have the three great supports of Masonry - Wisdom, Strength and Beauty. **THE THREE STEPS** remind us of how Youth, Manhood and old Age is each an entity in itself, each possessing its own duties and problems, and each calling for its own philosophy. **THE POT OF INCENSE** teaches that, to be pure and blameless in our inner lives is more acceptable to God than anything else, because that which a man really is, is of vastly greater importance than that which he appears to be. **THE BEE HIVE** recommends the practice of that virtue of Industry and teaches us that we should be industrious, never sitting down while our fellow creatures are in need of assistance. And that he who does not seek to improve himself is not worthy of our protection as Masons.

THE BOOK OF CONSTITUTIONS GUARDED BY THE TYLER'S SWORD is the emblem of law and order, and reminds us that our moral and spiritual character is grounded in law and morality as much as is government and nature. It teaches that no man can live a satisfactory life that lives lawlessly. **THE SWORD POINTING TO A NAKED HEART** discovers that one of the most rigorous of these laws is justice, and that if a man were unjust in his heart, the inevitable results of injustice will find him out. **THE ALL SEEING EYE** shows that we live and move and have our being in God; that we are constantly in His Presence, wherever or whatever we are doing. Every Freemason should keep in mind that the thing we do before man, and the things we do in secret will be recorded by the All-Seeing Eye, and will bear witness for or against us at judgment time. **THE ANCHOR AND THE ARK** stand for that sense of security and stability of a life grounded in truth and faith, without which sense there can be no happiness. **THE FORTY-SEVENTH PROBLEM OF EUCLID** is an emblem of the arts and sciences; they remind us that next to sinfulness, the most dangerous enemy of life is ignorance. In **THE HOURGLASS** we have the emblem of the fleeting quality of life. **THE SCYTHE** reminds us that the passing of time will end our lives as well as our work, and if ever we are to become what we ought to be, we must not delay.

