

# Ritual for Exaltation into Royal Arch Chapter

Dit engelstalig rituaal is het (In Engeland meest gebruikte) 'Perfect'-rituaal; deze versie dateert uit 1990. In Nederland wordt een vertaling gebruikt van een iets andere variant, het 'Domatic'-rituaal, dat op enkele punten verschilt van de onderstaande tekst.

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## CEREMONY OF OPENING

*The three Principals, and all Past Principals, properly clothed, enter the Chapter, and halt in the West. Other Companions present Prayer facing the East.*

**Joshua:** O Lord our Heavenly Father, Almighty and Everlasting God, we offer our unfeigned thanks for this opportunity to unite in social compact, to reveal Thy most holy name. Grant us a proper frame of mind to worship Thee in spirit and in truth, banish discord, and whatever else may have a tendency to disturb our harmony, or interrupt our fraternal union; be pleased, O Lord, to grant a blessing on this our undertaking, that we may from henceforth dedicate ourselves to Thy service. Endue us with Thy heavenly wisdom, so that by patience and perseverance in righteousness, we may obtain everlasting life in those heavenly mansions, veiled from mortal eyes, there to enjoy Thy glorious presence through all eternity.

**PPZ:** So mote it be.

*Bible opened at Isaiah, chap. XII. The MEZ then takes the Bible, with his left hand upon it Haggai and Joshua do the same respectively on right and left of Zerubbabel, and repeat:*

We three,  
do meet and agree,  
in love and unity,  
this Royal Arch Chapter to open,  
and not again,  
to close the same,  
until we three,  
or three such as we,  
do meet and agree, agree, agree. *Repeated three times, so that each gets a separate sentence each tune.*

*Zerubbabel reads Zech., chap. IV, v. 4-10:* So I answered and spake to the angel that talked with me saying, What are these, my lord?

Then the angel that talked with me answered and said unto me, Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my lord.

Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.

Who art thou, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain: and he shall bring forth the headstone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it. Moreover, the word of the Lord came unto me saying,

The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house, his hands shall also 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, they are the eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro through the whole earth.

*The three Principals then advance by seven steps, thrice halting and bending, and giving the reverential sign at the third, fifth, and seventh. At the third step, the third Principal says, Grand Omniscent, at the fifth step, the second Principal says, Grand Omnipresent, at the seventh step, the first Principal says, Grand Omnipotent.*

*Haggai:* To the all-wise, all-present, and all-powerful being, around whose throne may we hereafter encircle.

*Zerubbabel:* Almighty God, unto whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid, cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of Thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love Thee and worthily magnify Thy Holy Name.

*PPZ:* So mote it be.

*Zerubbabel then advances to his chair. Haggai and Joshua do the same in like manner, Zerubbabel in the centre, Haggai on his left, and Joshua on his right, they form the triple ... and say ..., they then unveil the pedestal to see that they correspond, which being ascertained, they reveal, turn round, and take and salute their sceptres, repeating their word of office men tally.*

*Zerubbabel:* In the name of the Grand Overseer of the Universe, to whom this chapter was originally dedicated, I declare this Chapter duly and solemnly opened.

*Zerubbabel, Haggai and Joshua each give one knock with their sceptres in succession, and a fourth is given by the Zerubbabel. Later Companions then enter, give the sign, and take their seats.*

## CEREMONY OF EXALTATION

*Zerubbabel:* Brother ... is this evening a candidate to be exalted to the supreme Degree of Royal Arch Mason. Companion Principal Sojourner, will you retire to prepare him, and ascertain his proficiency in his former Degrees.

*PS retires and examines the Candidate by putting the test questions of the 3rd Degree. These questions being satisfactorily answered, the examiner proceeds.*

*PS:* Do you seriously declare, on your honour as a man, and your fidelity as a Mason, that you will steadily persevere through the ceremony of being exalted to the supreme Degree of a Royal Arch Mason?

*Candidate:* I do.

*PS:* Do you further pledge yourself, under the penalty of your former obligations, that you will conceal what I am now about to impart to you with the same strict caution as the secrets previously communicated to you?

*Candidate:* I do.

*PS:* Then I will entrust you with a test of merit, consisting of a Pass Word, leading to the Degree to which you seek to be exalted; it is Amm Ruhamah, which signifies, "my people having obtained mercy." These words are to be found in the 2nd chap. of Hosea. You will be particularly careful to remember these words, as without them you cannot gain admission to be exalted.

*The Candidate is then prepared as a MM, with a hood winc, and cable tow round the body in addition.*

*PS gives four knocks.*

*Nehemia:* Most Enlightened, there is a report. *Giving court bow.*

*Zerubbabel:* Exalted Companion Nehemia, see who wants admission.

*Nehemaia, opens the door:* Whom have you there?

*PS:* Brother ..., who had duly and truly served his time as an Entered Apprentice, passed the Degree of Fellow Craft, and has been raised to the sublime Degree of a

Master Mason, in which character he has exercised himself for four weeks and upwards, and, in consequence of his proficiency, has been rewarded with a Pass Word as a test of merit, and now presents himself properly prepared and approved to be exalted to the supreme Degree of a Royal Arch Mason.

*Nehemia:* How does he hope to obtain those privileges?

*PS:* By the help of God and the benefit of a Pass Word.

*Nehemia:* I will thank you for the Pass Word.

*Candidate:* Ammi Ruhamah.

*Nehemia:* What does it signify?

*Candidate:* My people having obtained mercy.

*Nehemia:* Halt while I report to the Principal Zerubbabel

*Closes the door.*

*Nehemia, gives court bow:* Most Enlightened, there is at the door of the Chapter Brother ..., who has duly and truly served his time, as an Entered Apprentice, passed the Degree of Fellow Craft, and has been raised to the sublime Degree of a Master Mason, in which character he has exercised himself for four weeks and upwards, and, in consequence of his proficiency, has been rewarded with a P.W. as a test of merit, and now presents himself properly prepared and approved to be exalted to the supreme Degree of a Royal Arch Mason.

*Zerubbabel:* How does he hope to obtain those privileges?

*Nehemia:* By the help of God and the benefit of a Pass Word.

*Zerubbabel:* We acknowledge the powerful aid by which he seeks them. Do you, Enlightened Companion, vouch that he is properly prepared and in possession of the Pass Word?

*Nehemia:* I do, Most Enlightened.

*Zerubbabel:* Then let him be admitted with all due caution; previously to which, Enlightened Scribes, veil the pedestal.

*Scribe Nehemia, PS and 1st Assistant Scribe go to the door and Scribe Nehemia opens it. The PS takes the Candidate's right hand. and the 1st Assistant Scribe his left hand and conduct him to the centre of the Key Stone in the West, facing East. 2nd Assistant Scribe now moves to side chair, but disrobes when other Scribes disrobe. Scribe Nehemia resumes his seat.*

*Zerubbabel:* Brother ..., as you seek preferment in our Order, and have been honoured with a Pass Word as a test of merit, I must now demand whether you freely and voluntarily present yourself with a hope of being exalted to the supreme Degree of a Royal Arch Mason?

*Candidate:* I do.

*Zerubbabel:* Do you likewise declare that you are prompted to seek admission into our Order from a desire of increasing your Masonic knowledge, and of applying the same to the welfare of your fellow-creatures?

*Candidate:* I do.

*Zerubbabel:* And are you ready and willing to take a solemn obligation, restricted to this Degree, to preserve inviolate our mystic rites?

*Candidate:* I am.

*Zerubbabel:* Thus assured, I will thank you to kneel, whilst a blessing from Heaven is invoked in aid of our proceedings.

*Candidate kneels, and Companions stand with Sign of Reverence.*

## PRAYER

*Joshua:* Almighty and Eternal Father of the Universe, at whose command the world burst from chaos, and all created matter had its birth, we, Thy unworthy servants, humbly implore Thee to bestow Thy spiritual blessing on this convocation, grant that the Brother who now seeks to participate in the light of our supreme mysteries may be induced with a portion of Thy Holy Spirit; may he not enter into our Order lightly, nor recede from it hastily, but pursue it steadfastly, ever remembering that the great object of this Institution is the happiness of our fellow-creatures, and, above all, the glory of Thy holy name.

*PPZ:* So mote it be.

*Zerubbabel:* In all cases of danger and difficulty, on whom do you rely for support?

*Candidate, prompted by PS:* The true and living God most high.

*Zerubbabel:* Since your confidence is so firmly placed you may safely rise. The Companions will take notice that Brother ... is about to pass in view before them, to show that he is a Candidate properly prepared to be exalted to the sacred degree of a Royal Arch Mason.

*PS leads the Candidate round the Chapter by the cable tow, and places him in the West.*

*Zerubbabel:* As you seek to be admitted to a participation in the Secrets of this sacred degree, I call upon you to advance towards the East, to the sacred shrine on which they are deposited; you will advance by seven steps, thrice halting and bowing with reverential awe at the 3d, 5th, and 7th, for at each step you will approach nearer to the sacred and mysterious name of the True and Living God Most High. You are now arrived at the crown of a vaulted chamber, into which it is necessary that you should descend, and in order to do so, you must remove two of the Arch or Keystones in a figurative manner.

*PS picks up Crow Bar and holds it about its middle in his right hand. The Assistant Scribe raises Candidate's left hand palm upwards and PS places the Crow Bar on it so that the Candidate grasps it between the middle and the claw. PS then places the Candidate's right hand so as to grasp the Crow Bar from above to the right of the PS's right hand. The PS then places his left hand on the Candidate's left hand and using both his hands on the Crow Bar makes a wrenching movement at each of two different points. He then removes the Crow Bar and replaces it where he found it.*

*Zerubbabel:* Let, the Candidate be duly lowered into the vault, and attend to a portion of the writings of our Grand Master King Solomon.

*PS lowers Candidate on his knees before the pedestal.*

*Joshua reads Proverbs, chap. II, v. 1-9, and chap. III, v. 13-20.:* My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee;

So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thy heart to understanding;

Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding;

If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hidden treasures:

Then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God.

For the Lord giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding.

He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous: he is a buckler to them that walk uprightly.

He keepeth the paths of judgment, and preserveth the way of his saints.

Then shalt thou understand righteousness, and judgment, and equity; yea, every good path.

Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding.

For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold.

She is more precious than rubies; and all the things thou canst desire are not to be

compared unto her.

Length of days is in her right hand; and in her left hand riches and honour.

Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.

She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her: and happy is every one that retaineth her.

The Lord by wisdom hath founded the earth; by understanding hath he established the heavens.

By His knowledge the depths are broken up, and the clouds drop down the dew.

*Joshua resumes his seat.*

*Zerubbabel:* You will now endeavour to discover something in the vaulted chamber.

*PS puts the scroll into the hands of the Candidate and prompts:* It is found.

*Zerubbabel:* What is found?

*Candidate:* Something like a scroll of vellum or parchment.

*Zerubbabel:* What are its contents?

*Candidate:* Deprived of light I cannot tell.

*Puts scroll in his bosom.*

*Zerubbabel:* Let that want of light remind you that man by nature is the child of ignorance and error, and that he would ever have remained in that deplorable situation, under the darkness of the shadow of death, had it not pleased the Almighty to call him to light and immortality, by the revelation of His most holy word and will, therefore, and draw forth the third arch or keystone, and receive the light of the Holy word.

*Candidate rises and figuratively draws forth the third arch or keystone.*

*Zerubbabel:* Let the Candidate be again lowered into the vault, and attend to a portion of the writings of the prophet Haggai.

*PS lowers Candidate as before.*

*Haggai stands and reads Haggai, chap. II., v. 1-9:* In the seventh month, in the one and twentieth day of the month, came the word of the Lord by the prophet Haggai, saying, Speak now to Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua, the son of Josedech, the high priest, and to the residue of the people, saying,

Who is left among you that saw this house in her first glory? and how do you see it now? is it not in your eyes in comparison of it as nothing?

Yet now be strong, O Zerubbabel, saith the Lord; and be strong, O Joshua, 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 ye 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, saith the Lord of hosts.

The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of hosts.

The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of hosts: and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts.

*All stand with Sign of Reverence.*

*Zerubbabel:* You will now prepare yourself in the most solemn manner to take the sacred obligation restricted to this Degree, by which alone you can be admitted to the light of the mysteries of our Order. Place your right hand on the Volume of the Sacred Law, and repeat your several names at length, and say after me:

I, ..., in the presence of the True and Living God Most High, and this Holy Royal Arch Chapter of Jerusalem, here assembled, regularly congregated, lawfully constituted, and

properly dedicated, of my own free will and accord hereby and hereon most solemnly and fervently swear that I will for ever conceal and never divulge any of the secrets and mysteries restricted to this illustrious Order, denominated the Holy Royal Arch of Jerusalem, to any individual whomsoever, unless it be to him or them who may lawfully be entitled thereto. I further solemnly promise that I will not dare to pronounce the Sacred and Mysterious Name of the True and Living God Most High lightly or irreverently; nor to share it by syllables unless in the presence and with the assistance of two or more Royal Arch Companions. I further solemnly promise that I will faithfully and punctually answer and obey all lawful signs and summonses which I may receive from a Royal Arch Chapter, and offer no excuse save sickness, or the unavoidable circumstances of actual necessity.

All these points I solemnly swear to observe without evasion, equivocation, or mental reservation of any kind. So help me the True and Living God Most High, and keep me steadfast in this the sacred and solemn Obligation of a Royal Arch Mason.

*Zerubbabel:* As a pledge of your fidelity, and to render this binding as a solemn obligation so long as you shall live, you will seal it with your lips four times on the Volume of the Sacred Law. Let the Candidate be duly raised out of the vault.

Rise, Brother ..., now a Companion of our Order.

*The organist plays a solemn tune, the Companions place themselves on each side of the Chapter in a row, their staves pointing to each other, not close, but forming an open arch, the three principals take their sceptres, and form a vertical triangle. The PS loosens the hoodwink. Zerubbabel knocks four times:* What is now the prevailing wish of your heart?

*Candidate:* To be restored to light.

*Zerubbabel:* Let that blessing be restored. *PS drops the hoodwink* Being now restored to the blessings of material light, I call upon you to read the contents of the scroll you found in the vaulted chamber.

*Candidate reads Gen., chap. I, v. 1-3:* 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.

*Zerubbabel:* Such, newly-exalted Companion, are the first words of the Sacred Volume, which contains the treasures of God's revealed Will. Let us praise and magnify His Holy Name, for that knowledge of Himself which He has vouchsafed to us, and let us walk worthily in that light which has shone around us. You may now retire, and on your return you will be permitted to participate in the further mysteries of the Order.

*The Sojourners and the Candidate retire. A report is given. Four knocks.*

*Nehemia:* Most Enlightened, there is a report.

*Zerubbabel:* Enlightened Companion Nehemia, enquire who comes here.

*Nehemia, opening the door:* Who comes here?

*PS:* Three children of the captivity.

*Nehemia:* What is your request?

*PS:* Having heard that you are about to rebuild the Temple at Jerusalem to the Lord God of Israel, we beg permission to sojourn among you and assist in that great and glorious undertaking.

*Nehemia:* Halt, until I report you

*Nehemia closes the door, and reports with court bow to Most Enlightened Zerubbabel.*

*Nehemia:* Most Enlightened, outside the door of the chapter, are three Master Masons from Babylon, having heard that you are about to rebuild the Temple at Jerusalem to the

Lord God of Israel, we beg permission to sojourn among you and assist in that great and glorious undertaking.

*Zerubbabel:* Let them be admitted with due caution. Enlightened Scribes, cover the pedestal, before the strangers are admitted. Let the strangers enter.

*They are then admitted and stand in the West, the PS in the centre.*

*Zerubbabel:* Strangers, we are informed that you are desirous of communicating with us. Whence come you?

*PS:* From Babylon.

*Zerubbabel:* What is your request?

*PS:* Having heard that you are about to rebuild the temple of the Lord God of Israel, we beg permission to sojourn among you, and assist in that great and glorious undertaking.

*Zerubbabel:* Before we take your request into consideration, we must inform you that on no account can a stranger be employed in that holy work I must, therefore, demand to know who you are.

*PS:* Brethren of your tribes and families.

*Zerubbabel:* But are you of those who basely fled when the Temple and holy city were oppressed, or of those who were left behind by the Babylonish General to till the land?

*PS:* We would scorn to be descended from those who basely fled when the Temple and holy city were oppressed, neither are we of the menial tribe left behind by the Babylonish General to till the land, but we are nobly born, and, like yourselves, descended from a race of patriarchs and kings.

Most Enlightened, we are descended from those princes and rulers of Judah, who for their sins and those of the people were, together with their King Jehoiachim, led into captivity by Nebuzaradan, Captain of the Guard to Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, where we were to remain for 70 years, and then return to our native land, as foretold by the prophet Jeremiah; the 70 years of our captivity expired in the first year of the reign of Cyrus, King of Persia, whom it pleased the lord to inspire to issue this proclamation: "The Lord God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and He hath charged me to build Him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah, Who is there among you of all 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 (He is the God) which is in Jerusalem." We eagerly availed ourselves of this permission, and have come to offer our assistance in the glorious undertaking, and to request that we may be permitted to sojourn in our native land, where, as the prophets foretold, we are to dwell in peace for ever.

*Zerubbabel:* We congratulate you on your noble ancestry, and from the accuracy with which you have narrated the circumstances, we acknowledge you brethren of our tribes and families. It now only remains for me to enquire in what way you wish to be employed?

*PS:* We shall be glad to be employed in any way in which you may be pleased to appoint us.

*Zerubbabel:* Your humility is a sure indication of merit, and we doubt not of your being qualified for offices of importance, but from the lateness of your application those are all filled. We, therefore, appoint you to prepare for the foundation of the most holy place, for which purpose you will be furnished with the necessary implements; and if in removing the ruins of the former structure you should make any discovery of importance, you will communicate to none but ourselves, sitting here in council.

*PS:* We cheerfully accept the trust reposed in us, and will endeavour to evince our gratitude by our zeal and fidelity.

*Zerubbabel:* Go, then, and may the God of your forefathers be with you and prosper

your handiword. *They retire.*

*Nehemia:* Most Enlightened, there is a report.

*Zerubbabel:* Inquire who comes here.

*Nehemia, opening the door:* Who comes here?

*Janitor:* The three sojourners who, having made a discovery of importance, entreat permission to impart it to the august Sanheidrim.

*Nehemia:* Halt, until I report you.

*Nehemia closes the door and reports with court bow:* Most Enlightened, three Sojourners, who have made a discovery of importance, which they entreat permission to impart to the council.

*Zerubbabel:* Let them be admitted.

*Nehemia goes to door and opens it, closes it after the entry of the Sojourners and Candidate, and resumes his seat. The 1st Assistant Sojourner enters first, the PS next and the Candidate last. They line up in this order close to the Sojourner's chairs, the 1st Assistant Sojourner and Candidate holding the life-lines. They hold their implements in front of them, retaining the handles in their hands. No salutes.*

*Zerubbabel:* We are informed you have made a discovery which you deem of importance; you will relate the circumstances.

*PS:* Most Enlightened, early this morning on, resuming our labours, we discovered a pair of pillars of exquisite beauty and symmetry; proceeding with our work, we discover six other pairs of equal beauty, which, from their situation, appeared to be the remains of the subterranean gallery leading to the Most Holy Place, on cleaning away the fragments and rubbish which obstructed our progress, we came to something which seemed to be a solid rock, but accidentally striking it with my crow, it emitted a hollow sound. We then cleared away more of the loose Barth and rubbish, when we found that instead of a solid rock there was a series of stones in the form of an arch, and being aware that the architect of the former structure had designed no part of it in vain, we determined to examine it, for which purpose we removed two of the stones, when we discovered a vault of considerable magnitude, and immediately cast lots who should descend. The lot, Most Enlightened, fell on me, when, lest any noxious vapours or other causes should render my situation unsafe, my Companions fastened this cord or life line round my body, and I was duly lowered into the vault. On arriving at the bottom, I gave a preconcerted signal, and my Companions gave me more line, which enabled me to traverse the vault; I then discovered something in the form of a pedestal, and felt certain marks or characters thereon, but from the want of light I was unable to ascertain what they were. I also found this scroll, but from the same cause I was unable to read its contents. I therefore gave another preconcerted signal, and was drawn out of the vault, bringing the scroll with me. We then discovered, from the first sentence, that it contained the records of the Most Holy Law, which had been promulgated by Moses at the foot of Mount Horeb. This precious treasure stimulated us to further exertion. We therefore enlarged the aperture by removing another stone, and I again descended into the vaulted chamber. By this time the sun had attained its greatest altitude, and shining in all its splendour, darted its rays immediately into the aperture, which enabled me to distinguish those objects I had before but imperfectly discovered. In the centre of the vault I saw a pedestal of pure virgin marble, in the form of an altar of incense, with certain mystic characters engraven thereon, and a veil covering the upper face of the altar. Approaching with reverential awe, I lifted the veil, and beheld what I humbly supposed to be the Sacred and Mysterious Name itself. I replaced the veil on the sacred pedestal, and was again raised out of the vaulted chamber. We then closed the aperture, and hastened hither, to report to your Excellencies the discoveries which we have made.

*Zerubbabel:* Will you communicate the word which you discovered?

*PS:* That, Most Enlightened, we must beg to be excused from, for we have heard with our ears, and our forefathers have declared that in their time, and in the old times before them, it was lawful for none but the High Priest to pronounce the name of the True and Living God Most High, nor him but once a year, when he alone entered the Holy of Holiness, and stood before the Ark of the Covenant to make propitiation for the sins of Israel.

*Zerubbabel:* We command your pious caution, and will depute certain of our Companions to proceed with you to the spot, and examine into the nature of your discovery.

*PS hands Crow Bar and Scroll to 1st Assistant Sojourner, who steps to the right side of the Candidate, and whispers to him to keep looking East. Scribes Ezra and Nehemia accompany the PS to the North West corner of the Chapter, where the Name is communicated. The PS, facing East, is on the right of Scribe Ezra.*

*Scribe Ezra whispers to the PS:* State what you saw on that plate of gold.

*PS gives the first syllable; Scribe Ezra gives the second and Scribe Nehemia the third. Scribe Ezra then begins with the first syllable, followed by Scribe Nehemia, and so on until the Name has been communicated by all three. PS returns to his place on the right of the Candidate, receiving back the Crow Bar and Scroll from the 1st Assistant Sojourner, who moves to his original place on the right of the PS. Scribe Ezra goes to the North West of the Chapter and Scribe Nehemia to the South West. They advance towards the altar with the steps and bow as described for the Principals at the opening ceremony, with this difference that they make no Sign Approaching the altar, they remove the veil and place it on the floor at the East side of the altar. They examine the plate of gold on the top of the altar to see that all is correct.*

*Scribes:* It is correct, Most Enlightened. *Give court bow.*

*Zerubbabel:* Companions, I am to acquaint you that my colleagues in office, as well as the other members of this august assembly, concur with me in opinion, that as a recompense for your zeal and fidelity, you should be called to the great and glorious rank held by your illustrious ancestors. Exalted Companions Ezra and Nehemia, divest them of those implements of labour, clothe them in the robes of innocence, and instruct them to advance hither.

*Scribes Ezra and Nehemia take the implements, lifelines and Scroll from the three and replace them on the floor in their proper positions. They then assist the Sojourners and Candidate to divest themselves of their MM's aprons. The Sojourners resume their RA-clothing and robe with collar over robe, the Candidate puts on a robe only. Scribe Ezra attends to Candidate Scribe Nehemia attends to the PS. The Director of Ceremonies assists the 1st Assistant Sojourner to robe and remains standing on right of 1st Assistant Sojourner. Scribe Ezra resumes his seat.*

*Scribe Nehemia advances along North with the steps as directed above but with no Sign. 1st Assistant Sojourner remains standing in front of his chair. PS places Candidate in North West and instructs him to follow and copy Scribe Nehemia. PS follows behind Candidate but does not take the steps. Scribe Nehemia moves round by the East to his seat. The Director of Ceremonies advances to stand beside the Ensign of the Tribe of Judah, the most North Easterly of the Ensigns. All three Principals rise. MEZ hands his Sceptre to Joshua. PS places Candidate in front of MEZ and stands behind him a little to his right. The Director of Ceremonies gets the jewel, sash and apron from behind Principal's chairs, where they should be ready, with the apron belt of the correct length ascertained before the ceremony.*

*Zerubbabel:* The robe with which you are invested is an emblem of that purity of heart

and rectitude of conduct which ought to actuate all those who have been admitted to this sublime Degree. I decorate you with this jewel as a token of our approbation of your conduct, and receive you as Companions of this excellent and illustrious Degree; I adorn you with this sash and badge, which is the insignia of our Order. I also present you with this staff or ensign, to be borne by you as an emblem of regal power and dignity, and which you will ever have a right to bear, unless 72 of your elders happen to be present; and we hereby constitute you Rulers among us, and if you persevere in the same faithful and honourable course, we shall by a regular gradation admit you to the entire participation of the secrets of our exalted Order.

*PS:* Thus rewarded, intrusted, decorated, and invested by your Excellencies, it shall ever be our pride to endeavour to secure a continuance of your approbation, by assiduously and faithfully discharging the duties of the exalted vocation to which we have this day been called.

*Zerubbabel:* I will now communicate to you the signs, and the manner of sharing the Sacred Name. The Sacred and Mysterious Name on the pedestal is that which you have been supposed to have discovered during your exaltation, and can only be given by three persons jointly, and in a particular position. I will thank Companion Haggai to assist me in giving it.

*Haggai leaves his Sceptre on his chair and steps down to the right side of the MEZ, facing South. The Candidate is in front looking East, and the PS is behind and to the right of the Candidate ready to prompt him.*

*Zerubbabel:* Stand to order thus. *The two Principals, and Candidate give Reverential or Hailing Sign.* The Sacred Name is shared on a series of triangles formed first with the right foot *here all three form first triangle with their right feet as previously explained in opening ceremony*, second, with right knee *here the right knees of all three are slightly bent and made to touch*, third, right hand on right elbow *here all three move right hand from left breast and rest it on the right elbow of the Companion on his left*, and fourth, left hand grasping left wrist *here the left arms are extendedluly above the heads and the wrists grasped*. The sacred Name is Jehovah. It is shared in a series of syllables. I will commence and you will follow. *MEZ gives the first syllable, Candidate, prompted if necessary by PS gives the second, Haggai gives the third syllable and so on.* Note that on this occasion, the communication is clockwise.

*Zerubbabel:* You will now take your seats in the Chapter.

*They take their seats in the West.*

*Zerubbabel:* Companions, let me now congratulate you on your admission into this sublime Degree of Freemasonry, which is at once the foundation and keystone of our whole Masonic structure. You perhaps conceive that you have this day received a fourth Degree of Freemasonry; but such, strictly speaking, is not the case; it is only the Master Mason's Degree completed. For you will recollect, that when you were raised to the third Degree, you were informed that, by the untimely death of our Master Hiram Abiff, the genuine secrets of a Master Mason were lost, and that therefore certain substituted secrets were adopted to distinguish the Master Mason, until the genuine secrets might be discovered. Those secrets were lost for a period of nearly 500 years, and were recovered in the manner which has been explained to you in a peculiar and impressive form, for the purpose of fixing more strongly on the mind the providential means by which the ancient and genuine mysteries were regained.

It is now time we should impart to you the historical, symbolical, and mystical knowledge of our Order, and I request your attention first to the Historical Part from the Most Enlightened Companion Joshua.

## **Address of the Third Chair.**

### **Historical Lecture.**

*Joshua:* Exalted Companions, there are three epochs in Masonry which particularly merit your attention: the history of the first or Holy Lodge; the second or Sacred Lodge; and the third or Grand and Royal Lodge.

The first or Holy Lodge was opened two years after the exodus of the Israelites from their Egyptian bondage by Moses, Aholiab, and Bezaleel, on consecrated ground at the foot of Mount Horeb, in the wilderness of Sinai, where the host of Israel had assembled and pitched their tents, to offer up prayers and thanksgivings for their signal deliverance from the hands of the Egyptians. In this place the Almighty had thought fit to reveal Himself before that time to His faithful servant Moses, when he commissioned him His high ambassador of wrath against Pharaoh and his people, and of freedom and salvation to the house of Jacob. Here were delivered the forms of those mysterious prototypes, the tabernacle and the ark of the covenant; here were delivered the sacred laws, engraven by the hand of the Most High, with those sublime and comprehensive precepts of civil and religious polity, which, by separating His favoured people from all other nations, consecrated Israel a chosen vessel to His service; for these reasons this is denominated the first or Holy Lodge.

Solomon, King of Israel, Hiram, King of Tyr and Hiram Abiff, presided over the second or Sacred Lodge. It was opened in the bosom of the holy Mount Moriah, under the very centre of the ground on which the Sanctus Sanctuarum was afterwards erected. On this consecrated spot Abraham had proved his intuitive faith by leading his beloved son Isaac a destined victim to the altar of his God. Here, on the thrashing floor of Araunah, the Jebusite, David offered the mediatorial sacrifice by which the plague was stayed; here he received in a vision the form of that magnificent temple afterwards erected by his illustrious son; and here the Almighty declared His sacred name should dwell; for which reasons we distinguish this the second or Sacred Lodge.

The third or Grand and Royal Lodge was holden at Jerusalem; it was opened after the return of the Children of Israel from their Babylonish captivity, under Zerubbabel, prince of the people; Haggai, the Prophet; and Joshua, the son of Josedech, the High Priest. Now was the kingly power restored in the person of Zerubbabel to the royal line of David and princely tribe of Judah. Nor was a vestige thereof again effaced until after the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans under Titus, in the year 70 of the Christian era; to commemorate which restoration this is called the third or Grand and Royal Lodge, and the resemblance in the Chapter before us to these great originals is, that in every regular Royal Arch Chapter we acknowledge the representatives of the Grand and Royal Chapter at Jerusalem. The three Principals represent Zerubbabel, Haggai, and Joshua, whose names they bear; the two Scribes represent Ezra and Nehemia, Selectors and Expounders of the sacred law, and attendants on the august Sanheidrim, by whose names they are distinguished. Your three selves represent the three faithful sojourners, by whom the secrets of the Royal Arch were found, in consequence of which discovery they were honoured with seats in the august assembly, composed of the rulers and elders of the people, represented by the rest of the Companions now present.

*Zerubbabel:* Such is the Historical account of this Degree. I shall now claim your attention, while our Most Enlightened Companion Haggai gives an account of the symbolical part.

## **Address of the Second Chair.**

### **Symbolical Lecture.**

*Haggai:* Exalted Companions, the forms, symbols, and ornaments of Royal Arch Masonry, together with the rites and ceremonies at present in use among us, were adopted by our predecessors at the building of the Second Temple, as well to preserve in our minds the providential means by which the great discovery was effected, as in our hearts those lessons of exalted morality which we, as members of this sublime Degree, are bound to practice. The form in which the Companions of every Royal Arch Chapter is arranged approaches as nearly as circumstances will permit to that of the true Catenarian Arch; thus we preserve the memorial of the vaulted shrine, in which the Sacred Name was deposited, while from the impenetrable nature of this strongest of all architectural forms, we learn the necessity of guarding our mysteries from profanation by the most inviolable secrecy; it also strongly typifies that inviolable adherence to order and spirit of fraternal union, which has given energy and permanency to the Constitutions of Masonry, enabling them to survive the wreck of mighty empires and resist the destroying hand of time. And as the subordinate members of the Catenarian Arch naturally gravitate towards the centre, or keystone, which compresses and cements the whole structure, so we are taught to look up with reverence, and submit with cheerfulness, to every lawfully constituted authority, whether of Masonic or civil regulation. The keystone and two contiguous arch stones are represented by the three Principals of the Chapter; for as the secrets contained under the Royal Arch could only be obtained by wrenching forth the three principal stones thereof, so the complete knowledge of this Degree can only be obtained by passing through these several offices. In this Degree we acknowledged six lights; the three lesser representing together the light of the law and the prophets, and, by their number, alluding to the patriarchal, Mosaical, and prophetical dispensations; the three greater representing the sacred name itself, and the creative, preservative, and annihilative power of the Deity. These lights are placed in the form of an equilateral triangle, each of the lesser bisecting the line formed by two of the greater, thus geometrically dividing the great triangle into three lesser triangles on the extremities, which, by their union, form a fourth triangle in the centre, and all of them equal and equilateral, emblematical of the four points or divisions of Masonry, viz., Entered Apprentice, Fellow Craft, Master Mason and Holy Royal Arch. This symbolical arrangement corresponds to the triple tau, which forms two right angles on each of the exterior lines, and two others at their centre, by their union, for the three angles of each triangle are equal to two right angles; this serves to illustrate the jewel worn by some of the Companions of the Order, which forms by its intersections a given number of angles; these may be taken in five several combinations, and when reduced into their amount in right angles, will be found equal to the five regular platonic bodies, which represent the four elements and the sphere of the universe.

The ribbon worn by the Companions of the Order is a sacred emblem, denoting light, being composed of the two principal colours with which the veil of the temple was interwoven; it is further signified by its irradiated form, and in both these respects it has ever been considered as an emblem of regal power and dignity. The ensigns which the Companions bear on their staves were the distinctive bearings of the twelve tribes of Israel, and figuratively of a peculiar blessing bequeathed to each by the patriarch Jacob, who, before his death, assembled them together for that purpose, as we find in the 49th chapter of Genesis. The leading tribes are pointed out in the 2nd chapter of Numbers. The four principal banners represent the leading standards of the four divisions of the

army of Israel, as described in the Book of Genesis. They unitedly bear a device of an angelic nature, under the figures of a man, a lion, an ox, and an eagle: a man, to personify intelligence and understanding; a lion, to represent strength and power; an ox, to denote the ministration of patience and assiduity; and an eagle, to display the promptness and celerity with which the will and pleasure of the great I Am are executed. The several bearings of the sceptres denote the regal, prophetical, and sacerdotal offices, which all were, and still ought to be, conferred in a peculiar manner, accompanied with the possession of particular secrets. The Bible, Square, and Compasses are considered as appropriate emblems of the three Grand Masters who founded the First Temple: the Bible denotes the wisdom of King Solomon; the Square, the power of King Hiram; and the Compasses, the exquisite skill of Hiram Abiff; but the truly speculative Mason regards them as the mysterious symbols of the wisdom, truth, and justice of the Most High. His wisdom is most amply exemplified in the Volume of the Sacred Law, which contains the records of His mighty acts and the treasure of His revealed will. His truth is justly represented by the Square, it being the acknowledged symbol of strength, and the criterion of perfection. His impartial and unerring justice, which has defined for our instruction the limits of good and evil, and assigned to each its due proportion of pleasure, is elucidated by the Compasses, which enables us to ascertain the limits of all geometrical figures, and to reduce our ideas of their proportion and equality to a certain standard.

The Sword and Trowel have been adopted by Masons of the Royal Arch to commemorate the valour of those worthy Masons who carried on the building of the Second Temple, with the Trowel in their hands and the Sword by their sides, that they might be ever ready to defend the holy city and sanctuary against the unprovoked attacks of their enemies; by which they left a sacred and impressive lesson to succeeding ages: that next to the obedience due to lawful authority, a manly and determined resistance to lawless violence is the first step to social duties.

The pickaxe, crow, and shovel were the instruments used by the Sojourners in clearing away for the foundation of the Second Temple: with the pickaxe they loosened the earth, with the crow they made purchases, and with the shovel they cleared away the rubbish and loose earth. These we spiritualise thus: the sound of the stroke of the pickaxe represents to us the sound of the last trump, when the graves shall be loosened and deliver up their dead; the crow, being an emblem of uprightness, displays to us the erect manner in which we shall rise on that awful day to meet the tremendous but merciful judge; the mortal state in which the body is laid in the grave is powerfully impressed on our minds by the work of the shovel, so that when the rubbish of the body is shovelled away we may with humble but holy confidence hope that the spirit may arise to immortal and eternal life.

*Zerubbabel:* Such is the symbolical account. I shall now proceed to explain the mystical part.

### **Address of the First Chair The Mystical Lecture Part 1**

*Zerubbabel, knocks 4 times, but remains seated:* Companions the mystical knowledge of this Supreme Degree comprehends the forms and explanation of the Signs, the nature and import of the Sacred Name, and the traditional ceremony to be observed in sharing it. In Royal Arch Masonry there are five signs, corresponding in number to the five

Points of Fellowship, in which the Master Mason is instructed; and as these point out our relative duties to each other, so do the former mark in a peculiar manner the relation we bear to the Almighty as creatures offending against His power, yet still as the adopted children of His mercy.

The first is called the Penal Sign, *gives it* and alludes to the fall of Adam and of the dreadful penalty entailed thereby on all his sinful posterity, no less than death. It intimates, by the very action itself, that the stiff-necked and disobedient shall be cut off from the land of the living by the judgment of God, even as the head was severed from the body by the sword of human justice. To avert this we are taught, by the Reverential or Hailing Sign, to bend *gives first part of Sign* with submissive resignation beneath the chastening hand of the Almighty, and at the same time to engraff His law on our hearts *completes Sign and retains*. This expressive form, in which the father of the human race first presented himself before the face of the Most High, to receive the denunciation of His just and terrible judgment *disengages Sign* was afterwards adopted by Moses, when the Lord appeared to him in the Burning Bush, in Mount Horeb, thus he covered his face *does so* from the brightness of Divine presence and laid his hand on his heart *does so*, in token of obedience; which act of salutation was afterwards accounted to him for righteousness *drops Sign*. The Reverential of Hailing Sign may be considered as the parent of the Penitential or Supplicatory Sign, since it justly denotes that frame of heart and mind, without which our prayers and oblations of praise cannot obtain acceptance at the throne of grace, before which how should a frail and erring creature of the dust present himself but with bended knees *kneels* and uplifted hands *does so*, betokening at once his humility and dependence? Thus did Adam first kneel to God and bless the author of his first being; thus, too, did he bend with contrite awe before the face of his offended Judge, to avert His wrath and conciliate His mercy, and has transmitted this sacred sign to his posterity for ever *drops Sign and rises*. The Monitorial Sign reminds us of the weakness of human nature, unable of itself to resist the powers of darkness, unless assisted by that light which is from above *points up*. By this defenceless posture *gives it* we acknowledge our own frailty, and confess that we can do no good or acceptable services, but through Him from whom all good counsels and just works proceed, and without whose Divine and special favour we must ever be found unprofitable servants in His sight; therefore, according to the manner of our ancestors, and atoning priests, we adopt this outward sign of contrition and humility *dismisses Sign*. The Fiducial Sign *shows it and maintains it* shews that as we would prostrate ourselves with our faces to the earth, so we must throw ourselves upon the mercy of our Creator and Judge, looking forward with holy confidence to His gracious promises, by which alone we hope to pass through the ark of our redemption into the mansions of eternal bliss and glory to the presence of Him who is the Great I Am, the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last *dismisses Sign*.

## The Mystical Lecture

### Part 2

On the plinth or front of the pedestal are the initials of the names of the three Grand Masters viz., Solomon, King of Israel; Hiram, King of Tyr and Hiram Abiff, which are intended to perpetuate their names as well as to commemorate the circumstance of their presiding during the erection of the first Temple. There is also the triple tau, which is a character affixed to the summonses of Royal Arch Masons. The tau is the sign or mark spoken of by the angel which Ezekiel saw in spirit, when it was said to the man with the

writer's inkhorn, "Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof," by which mark they were preserved alive from amidst those who were slain for their idolatry by the wrathful displeasure of the Lord. It was also a mark, in ancient times, placed on the forehead of those who were acquitted by the judges, as a proof of their innocence; and military commanders put it on those who were saved unhurt from the field of battle: for which reasons it has been denominated the mark of life. The union of the three taus here represented alludes to the grand triunison, by which the horrific, gloomy, and unshapen chaos was changed into regular form and peaceful existence.

The Name you behold on the plate of gold is the grand, awful, and tremendous name of the Most High, signifying I Am that I Am, the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the ending, which was, and is and is to come, the Almighty. It is the Sacred and Mysterious Name of the actual, future, eternal, unchangeable, and all-sufficient God, who alone has his beginning in and on himself and gives to all others their being; so that he was what he is, is what he was, and shall be both what he was and what he is, from everlasting to everlasting, all creation being dependent on his mighty will.

*Zerubbabel returns to East side of altar. PS brings Candidate to South of altar. 1st Assistant Sojourner attends to left side of Candidate.*

It may be here observed, that the upper part of the tablet in the pedestal or altar should be a plate of pure gold, and the triangle and circle consequently of the same metal. The selection of those mathematical figures, the circle and triangle, deserves your attention: the latter seems to have been always considered as bearing an allusion to the Deity; for even in the remote times of antiquity names of God, or symbols of divinity, were generally enclosed in a triangular figure. The Circle has always been the particular emblem of Eternal power, for as a circle has neither beginning nor ending, it is with great propriety said to be a type of God who alone is without beginning or ending, and from whom all other beings are derived; it also calls to our remembrance the great and awful hereafter or futurity, when we hope to enjoy everlasting life and endless bliss. In fine, Companions, this sublime Degree inspires its members with the most exalted ideas of God, and leads to the exercise of the most pure and sublime piety, and a reverence for the incomprehensible Jehovah the eternal ruler of the Universe, the elemental life, the primordial source of all its principles, the very spring and fountain of all its virtues.

*The PS, Candidate, and 1st Assistant Sojourner return to Sojourner's Chairs and sit facing East, the 1st Assistant Sojourner on the right, the PS in centre and Candidate on the left. Director of Ceremonies now conducts Candidate to MEZ.*

*Zerubbabel, stands up:* Companion ...., I now exhibit to you the Charter of the Chapter which I strongly recommend you to read on some future evening.

I also strongly recommend you to read and refer to the Royal Arch Regulations which are published in the Book of Constitutions. I now present to you this copy of the By-Laws of the Chapter. On behalf of all the Companions I give you a hearty welcome as a member of the Chapter.

*Director of Ceremonies then conducts Candidate to a side seat and 2nd Assistant Sojourner may now resume his seat at left of PS.*

## CEREMONY OF CLOSING

*Zerubbabel asks if there is anything to offer for the good of the Chapter.*

*PS reads Hebrews, chap. IX, v. 2-8:* For there was a tabernacle made; the first, wherein was the candlestick, and the table, and the shewbread; which is called the sanctuary. And after the second vail, the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of all; Which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded. and the tables of the covenant; And over it the cherubims of glory shadowing the mercy seat; of which we cannot now speak particularly.

Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God.

But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people: The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made man jfest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing.

*Haggai and Joshua reveal Pedestal.*

*Zerubbabel, Haggai and Joshua take the Bible as at opening, and repeat:* We three, do agree, in love and unity, this Royal Arch Chapter to close, and not again, to open the same, until we three, or three such as we, do meet and agree, agree, agree.

*Salute open, and hand round closed for the othet Camps All then form in groups of three, and give the words.*

*Zerubbabel:* Glory be to God on high.

*Haggai:* On earth peace.

*Joshua:* Goodwill towards men.

*Zerubbabel:* O! Almighty God, Grand Architect of this Stupendous Universe, who hath filled the immensity of space with innumerable systems or worlds, and hath enlightened each by its central sun and their attendant moons, you glorious and amazing phenomena which beautify and adorn the celestial hemisphere, for the heavens declare thy glory and the firmament sheweth thy handywork, Thou who hast often declared that where thy sacred name is placed there will thine eye be also, Inspire, we beseech thee, these thy servants with Thy preventive grace, that they may be ever careful not to transgress Thy sacred law; and may they place their whole trust and confidence in Thy Almighty power and protection; grant us that peace which the world cannot give, and pardon our offences as we forgive those who offend against us.

*PPZ:* So mote it be!

*Zerubbabel:* In the name of the True And Living God Most High, I declare this Chapter duly closed.

*PPZ:* Nothing now remains but, according to ancient custom, to lock up our secrets in a safe and sacred repository uniting in the act, fidelity, fidelity, fidelity, fidelity.

*Zerubbabel then gives one knock with his sceptre, followed by one each from Haggai and Joshua. Zerubbabel then gives another knock, making altogether four.*