

Chichester Chapter of Improvement.

Lesson / Tutorial 1. (15th March 2025.)

Introduction. Course aims and objectives. (Educator 1or 2)

Course / Chapter of Improvement Objectives.

By the end of this Chapter of Improvement Course the student Companion will be able to:

- Explain how the Royal Arch connects with Craft Masonry through allegory and esoteric reflection.
- Recite, analyse and understand the ritual of 'Exaltation', including the three lectures, Historical, Symbolic and Mystical.
- Examine and demonstrate the floorwork of each of the officers of the Chapter in the ceremony of Exaltation.
- Investigate, analyse and understand the esoteric meaning behind the officers of the Chapter and reflect upon them.
- Analyse and apply the purpose of Royal Arch Masonry to personal growth and development.

Lesson. Opening and Closing

By the end of this lesson/tutorial the student Companion will be able to:

- Explain the circumstances that lead to the Jews escaping captivity.
- Identify the 'Grand Originals' and the part they play in the allegory and ceremony of 'Exaltation'.
- Explain and demonstrate the Opening and Closing ceremonies.
- Explain and demonstrate the Reverential Sign.
- Explain how the chapter represents a catenarian arch.
- Discover the reason for seven steps and how they are taken.
- Demonstrate and explain how the 'word' is communicated and its link to the Craft.

Recommended Ritual: Practice Opening and Closing the Chapter.

Distance Learning:

Mentors Notes: <https://thesquaremagazine.com/mentorsnotes/>

Solomon: <https://solomon.ugle.org.uk>

Brief Introduction. History. (Educator 1)

1666 – Great Fire of London. Many stonemasons came to the city to rebuild St. Paul's Cathedral and about fifty other clerical establishments.

Operative Lodges were formed to house the intake of 'craftsmen'.

Grand Masters. (Optional)

1666 Thomas Savage, Earl of Rivers.

1674 George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham

1679 Henry Bennet, Earl of Arlington

1685 Sir Christopher Wren

1698 Charles Lennox. Duke of Richmond. (Link to Cyrus Chapter No. 38)

1699 Sir Christopher Wren

1717 First Grand Lodge

History Continued.

By the 1690's most of the building work had been complete and so the stonemasons left the city for work elsewhere meaning that many of these operative Lodges were abandoned.

However, as the operatives moved on it left the speculative masons without lodges and so the numbers of these 'Free and Accepted or Speculative Masons' began to dwindle. In 1698 there was an initiative that by putting a 'Royal' as Grand Master it would keep the numbers from falling. The **Duke of Richmond**, son of Charles II was therefore made Grand Master. He was only Grand Master for a year and then Sir Christopher Wren was reinstated in 1699.

By the turn of the century, (1700) Sir Christopher was getting elderly and losing interest. In 1717, as an initiative to reboot Speculative Masonry, Four Lodges united to form the Grand Lodge of London and Westminster which later became the Grand Lodge of England.

One of those 'original' Lodges was the Rummer and Grapes Tavern, Channel Row, later to move to the Horn Tavern, Palace Yard,

Westminster, whose Master was 2nd Duke of Richmond (Grand Master 1724). Among its members were George Payne, Dr. Desaguliers, and the Duke of Montagu. These men forged ahead in establishing Freemasonry around the world.

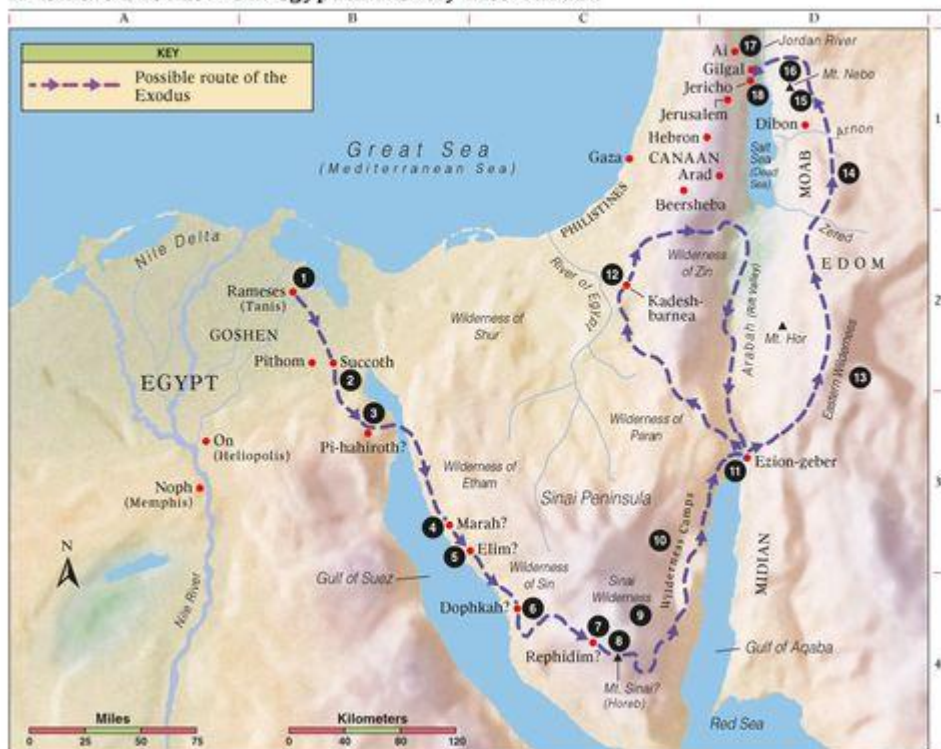
So what has this to do with Pure Ancient Freemasonry?

At the turn of the 1700's there were only two degrees worked. The Entered Apprentice and the Fellowcraft degrees. They symbolised the man entering the workplace, learning about his 'craft' and then being examined to become a 'craftsman', a 'Journeyman'. These were the degrees associated with Operative and Speculative Masons.

However, when the likes of Dr. Desaguliers (a French Huguenot), and others looked at these ceremonies they found that there was something missing if it was to show the development of man, which was the intention of 'Free and Accepted or Speculative Masonry'. That something was a man's faith. If 'speculative masonry' showed the development of man then there has to be something in its ceremonies to show the discovery of his faith. And so we have the development of the Third Degree, part 1 and part 2. Something that is found, but in order to discover, something it has to be lost.

The writers, being men of faith, looked into the stories of the Old Testament. The story of Noah was a strong contender in which to build a ceremony around and so was the story of the 'birth of a nation' (Exodus). Ceremonies relating to both these biblical stories were made but it was the 'birth of a nation', which captured the writers imagination the most.

2. Israel's Exodus from Egypt and Entry into Canaan



Characters:

Abraham (meaning High Father; Father of multitudes; Father of Nations) Who made a covenant with God. If he followed the path of God, God would offer protection and land to Abraham and his descendants.

Isaac (meaning 'he will laugh') Son of Abraham. The name signifies the joy of new birth. Abraham's wife Sarah was past child bearing age when Isaac, their only child, was born. God tested Abraham and ordered him to sacrifice his only son. Abraham made all the preparations but God spared him. As a result both Abraham and Isaac had total faith in God.

Jacob (meaning 'to follow'; 'may God protect') Grandson of Abraham son of Isaac. Although Jacob cheated his brother Esau out of his birthright he wrestled with God, with his faith, and God prevailed. Jacob changed his name to Israel and set up as father of the Jewish nation.

Israel (meaning 'let God prevail') Jacob changed his name to Israel. He had twelve sons from four wives which later became the twelve tribes.

Abraham, Isaac, Jacob were Nomads. Sheep herders in Canaan.

Jacob led his people to Egypt to escape the famine and pestilence.

Receiving the Ten Commandments.

Moses (meaning 'to pull out/draw out') Abandoned by his mother and put in to a basket on the river. Discovered by Pharaoh's sister and brought up in the royal household. Led the 'children of Israel' out of Egypt and across the desert. Met with God at the foot of mount Horeb in the wilderness of Sinai, when God appeared to him in a 'burning bush' and gave to him the ten commandments which were carved on to tablets of stone.

Bezalel (meaning 'in the shadow[protection] of God') Filled with the creative spirit of God. Bezalel had the skill and ability to design pieces from gold and silver. He could carve wood and put precious stones into metal. He built the Ark of the Covenant. The place where Moses' tablets of stone were stored.

Aholiab (meaning 'tent of the Father') He helped Bezalel build the Ark of the Covenant and make the Tabernacle, the tent to house the 'Ark'.

The Tabernacle then became the blueprint for the Temple at Jerusalem

Building the First Temple. (Craft Masonry)

Solomon (meaning 'peaceful one') The son of King David. King David had the vision to build a temple for all his people. He had a close relationship with Hiram King of Tyre. On David's death Solomon carried out his father's wishes.

Hiram (meaning 'Most noble, high born; Exalted brother') Hiram King of Tyre close friend of King David and was like a brother to Solomon. King Hiram supplied materials and labour for the building of the Temple at Jerusalem. He also provided the man to put the vision together, Hiram Abiff.

The fall of Jerusalem. Jews led into captivity with Jehoiakin their king by Nebuzaradan, captain of the guard to Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon.

Building of the Second Temple. (Holy Royal Arch)

Zerubbabel (meaning “the one sown of Babylon”) Born in Babylon, he was a Jew in the line of David who led the first wave of Jews out of Babylon when Cyrus the Great conquered Egypt. Zerubbabel became the governor of Judaea and led the rebuilding of the Second Temple at Jerusalem.

Haggai (meaning ‘circle, festival’) God sent the prophet Haggai to chastise the leaders and people for their self-centred attitude.

Jeshua (meaning ‘the Lord is my saviour’) He was the first high priest during the construction of the Second Temple at Jerusalem

Ezra (meaning ‘God is my helper’) He was a scribe and priest in the second Temple at Jerusalem. He led a group of Jewish exiles from Babylon and enforced observance of the Torah.

Nehemiah (meaning ‘God comforts’) He was sent by Artaxerxes, a Jewish noble, to rebuild Jerusalem’s city walls. When this was complete Nehemiah and Ezra read the Torah to the people of Jerusalem where upon the people entered into a covenant to keep the law and separate themselves from all other peoples.

How could the writers connect the building of the First Temple to that of the Second Temple? So we have the Hiramic allegory.

So with this information the writers put together the ceremony of the Third Degree, Part 1 and Part 2. Part 1 losing something of value and Part 2 finding it again.

How the 'Word' is linked to the Craft.

It is the 'Word' which is lost when Hiram Abiff is slain. Which means the triangle is incomplete. The wisdom and vision of Solomon, the strength of Hiram, King of Tyre, the Beauty of Hiram Abiff. It is the capability of the artist to make the vision a reality that is lost. His part in the building process and his unique knowledge. Symbolically that of building the complete man. A moral, educated man of faith.

In many cultures local legends and myths include a 'resurrection' of some kind. In Mesopotamia there is the legend of 'Tammuz', in Egypt 'Osiris', India 'Satyavan', China 'Bodhidharma' and Scandinavia 'Odin'. All are legends and stories of resurrection which gives gravitas and interest to the story which has a moral lesson. And we have, of course, the story of Jesus's resurrection in the Christian faith. So we have the writers of the Third Degree including in the allegory an event which brings such gravitas and mystery. How the 'Word' is lost but a substitute is put in place until the original is found.

The Tracing Boards and the name given to God in each of the degrees.

The First Degree Tracing Board's predominant feature is Jacob's Ladder which takes us from Earth to Heaven to be in the presence of "The Great Architect of the Universe".

In Jacob's story it is said that he 'wrestled with God and God prevailed'. Jacob had twelve sons from four wives. He changed his name to Israel meaning "Let God Prevail" and his twelve sons started tribes of their own, the twelve sons of Jacob became the twelve tribes of Israel. This is the First Degree link to the Holy Royal Arch.

The Second Degree Tracing Board shows the steps on the south of the Temple leading up to the Middle Chamber. 3 – 5 - 7 steps. Three steps, Square conduct, level steps, upright intentions. Five Steps, the five senses. Seven steps, education; Arithmetic, Geometry, Astronomy, Grammar, Logic, Rhetoric and Music. The sequence of steps taken in

the Holy Royal Arch. The name of the 'Great Architect' is changed in the Second Degree to the 'Grand Geometrician of the Universe'.

The Third Degree Tracing Board. The 'Josiah Bowring'(1757–1832) style tracing board of the Third Degree shows Jeshua between the pillars of an arch, swinging a censor. The name given to God when we pray in this degree is 'The Most High'.

Royal Arch. Name given to God is 'TTALGMH'

What is discovered??????

Reverential Sign. (Explained by Educator 1 Practical by S & P Tutor)

"We are taught by the Reverential Sign to bend with humility and resignation beneath the chastening hand of the Almighty (*shields eyes*) and at the same time to engraft His laws on our hearts. (*places hand on heart*) (*the Laws being the Ten Commandments*)

It is to be used when entering or retiring from the Chapter, at all prayers and as directed in the ritual. It is **always** given towards the Name on the Pedestal and with thumbs closed. You will note that no step is taken when giving it.

It is said that this sign was used by Moses (*a Grand Original*) who, when the Lord appeared to him in the burning bush at the foot of Mount Horeb in the wilderness of Sinai, thus shaded his eyes – *demonstrate*- from the brightness of the Divine Presence, and at the same time placed his hand on his heart – *demonstrate* – in token of obedience. It should be discharged before speaking." (Ritual)

Why is the sign given to the Name on the Pedestal? Because that is the name of the TLGMH who is "omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent", meaning that He is there with you at all times and you bend with humility at acknowledging his presence. When addressing the Principles it is a 'court bow'.

How the 'Word' is communicated. (Practical by the S & P Tutor)

The Sacred Name, which is the Word of the Degree is given on a series of triangles. Stand to order with the R. sign.

- Place your r.f with ours which forms the first triangle.
- With your r.h. grasp my r.e. forming the second triangle.
- With your l.h. grasp the l.w. of E. Comp. H. forming the third triangle.
- We raise our l.h.
- The word is communicated by syllables three times.

Seven Steps, 3, 2 and 2.

(Explained by Educator 1 Practical by S & P Tutor)

(Excerpt from "Some Explanation of Features in the Royal Arch" by VWBro. Neville Barker Cryer PGChap.)

Let us examine this further. We take three steps to the pedestal in the E.A. degree. We take two more, making 5, in the Fellowcraft degree; and we take two more, making 7, in the Master Mason degree.

Why then do we only take 7 steps to approach the sacred vault in the Royal Arch? Could it actually be that seven is the true and complete number in ancient Masonry and marks the point at which a Free and Accepted Mason has attained his goal? Three rule a Lodge, the WM, SW and JW. Five make a Lodge, add two fellowcraft and Seven make a Perfect Lodge adding two EA to the five.

What is perhaps even more surprising when we think about it is that the first three steps in modern Masonry signify a candidate's entry, as a free man, into a new life as an E.A. The next two steps take us into the fellowship of our free family where we are called to study the secrets of nature and science; whilst the last two steps are meant to take us from the entrance of the temple to where the Holy of Holies stood with the Ark of the Covenant, as shown beyond the parted curtains displayed on many third degree tracing boards. That is why Ancient Masonry did consist of 3 degrees ONLY, INCLUDING the Holy Royal Arch. There are NO MORE ancient steps to take.

We will talk about a ceremony called the 'Passing of the Veils' when we have the lesson on the Sojourners journey.

Practicals. (Standards and Performance Tutor)

Students in teams of three. One tri ribbon with two white ribbons.

Opening:

DC / ADC the red bits

Making the sign. (Brightness of the Light and the Ten Commandments.)

Promise. (Note the position of the feet. Not a triangle)

Seven steps. (3 -5 -7 Bowing at the altar.)

Sharing the word. (Three Triangles.)

Unveiling the altar. (3-5-7)

Closing:

DC / ADC the red bits

Making the Sign.

Reveil the altar. (3-5-7)

Promise.

Glory to God.

Commands PS to close the Chapter.

IPZ – Fidelity.

Conclusion (Educator 1 or 2)

Wrap up and Future Learning.

L & D Learning Packages. www.wgsm.co.uk