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King Solomon's Temple and its Sacred Altars
Submitted By: Allan Miller, Secretary of the Lodge in Tulare, California

The Most Excellent Master, or Sixth Degree in the American York Rite, celebrates the Completion of King Solomon's Temple. The cup of life is placed upon the Holy of Holies, and after King Solomon offers the dedicatory prayer, fire descends upon the Altar of Sacrifice and the Shekhinah also appears. The lecture of the degree talks to us specifically about building our own inner or spiritual Temple, and draws our attention back to the progress we have made in the preceding degrees.

Let us review the various Degrees and observe how the Altar of Freemasonry represents the various Altars of King Solomon's Temple as we progress through the degrees.

Entered Apprentice Masons we are taught hold their meetings on the ground floor of King Solomon's Temple. The ground floor is the Courtyard, where the Altar of Sacrifice is located. It was upon this Altar that the Sacred Fire from Heaven descended and consumed the Sacrifice at the dedication of Solomon's Temple. Once burning, the Fire from the Altar of Sacrifice is never extinguished. It is carried into the Holy Place and used to light the Lampstand and its coals are used to kindle the Incense Altar, and is carried by the priests in censers whenever the Tabernacle must be moved. It is the manifest presence of that Eternal Flame which never goes out, the Aur Ein Sof (Light Without End) of the Kabbalists, universally depicted over the Master's Chair in Freemasonry as the letter G.

Fellow Craft Masons hold their meetings in the Middle Chamber of King Solomon's Temple. In the Middle Chamber we find the Incense Altar, where incense burns both day and night before the veil, and prayers ascend like smoke up over the veil into the Sanctum Sanctorum or Holy of Holies. We also find the Seven-branched Lampstand and the Table of Shew-bread which are symbolized by the Wages of a Fellowcraft Mason, corn (wheat), wine and oil, and which, in the Temple, provided sustenance for the priests.

Master Masons hold their meetings in the Sanctum

Master Masons hold their meetings in the Sanctum

CONTINUED:
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There goes Sam Ridgeway riding that old mare of his. Notice his hat is tattered and the saddle looks more like a piece of old leather. Well that is the same hat that he says he wore and the same saddle that he sat while riding with Teddy Roosevelt while charging up San Juan Hill. He loves to talk about his times with Teddy and the Rough Riders.

You know Clyde Lee the owner of the hardware store. Well there he is marching with others who served in WWI. Clyde has breathing problems from some gas that he received while in the bunkers. You’ll never hear him complaining and notice that he never fails to march in the parade. He lost a son at Anzio and a Grandson at Pork Chop Hill, but you’ll never hear him complaining.

Here comes those WWII Veterans. Note that your Uncles William and Isaac are leading the parade. Both served in Europe. Uncle Lehr could not be with them this year as he is back in the VA Hospital again. And there are Val and LaVerne Fraser. Both served in the Navy during the war. LaVerne sailed on three different ships that were sunk by German Subs. He was luckier than many and survived each of them.

And there is Fred Parker. Fred was on Normandy during the D-Day Invasion. He was captured by the Germans, escaped, recaptured and was patriotized by the Russians just before the end of the war.

And there is Norm Mueller, your baseball coach. He was captured by the Japanese in Burma. Always stand on his right side when speaking with him as he received a fungus in his left ear while on the march through the jungles.

Do you see Mrs. Greensstreet, the third grade teacher, over on the other side of the street? You probably note that it appears that she’s crying. Those are tears of joy and sorrow. She was in a concentration camp in the big War. She survived, she parents, 2 brothers and 1 sister did not. Never ask her why she always wears a long sleeved blouse. Her husband, Hiram, was one of the soldiers who released her from the camp at the end of the war.

Here comes Jake Smith. Once known as the biggest bell raiser in town. Just back from Korea. He says, with a twinkle in his eyes, that he will be soon be fitted for his new leg and be back to his old ways.

Notice how each of them walk upright, straight and stiff. Notice the seriousness on their faces, even when they are smiling and waving.

They love this country. They are proud of what that flag stands for and that they helped in some small way to preserve it. They are true Americans!

Wipe the tear from your eyes and let’s get going. We have to get the car packed in order to get to the lake.

The Order of the Scarlet Cord - or more correctly, the Royal Order of Masonic Knights of the Scarlet Cord - has always been an integral part of the Order of the Secret Monitor and was worked until 1929 when it fell into abeyance.

The Ritual of the Scarlet Cord had been deposited in the archives of the OSM at Mark Masons’ Hall where, prior to his Installation as Grand Supreme Ruler, Peter Williams, had not only been Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of Mark Master Masons, but also Grand Recorder of the OSM.

On Tuesday, December 5, 2006 another 40 members joined and the OSM Scarlet Cord Conclave No. 500 was consecrated with 52 Founders, with the purpose of providing an environment for fostering the future development of the Scarlet Cord.

Such has been the success of the Conclave that it now has in excess of 700 members and still growing.

Knowledge of the revival of the Scarlet Cord has even spread around the world. In November 2008, the Grand Supreme Ruler accompanied by a team of senior Grand Officers travelled to India where in New Delhi and Chennai the degree was conferred on members of the English Constitution. Some 20% of the membership of the OSM is based in India, and hence it was no surprise that the Scarlet Cord would be warmly embraced by the brethren from all parts of the Indian sub-continent.

The team from Grand Conclave then travelled to Singapore where members of the OSM from Hong Kong, Malaysia and Singapore were inducted into the Scarlet Cord, and where the Scarlet Cord Conclave of the East had previously been consecrated to facilitate the development of the Order in that part of the world.

In addition to conferring the Scarlet Cord on members of the English Constitution, the Grand Supreme Ruler also conferred the Order on Grand Supreme Rulers and senior representatives from Oceania, including Northern Australia, Papua and New Guinea, Southern Australia; New South Wales and ACT, and New Zealand. In so doing, he was also able to authorize and enable the Order to be developed within those Sovereign bodies.

Having established the Scarlet Cord in the Eastern and Southern hemisphere, the Grand Supreme Ruler travelled in February 2009 to Washington D.C., again accompanied by senior Grand Officers to confer the Order on over two hundred brethren from the USA and Canada, thus establishing the Scarlet Cord in the Northern and Western hemisphere.

It is truly remarkable that, in such a relatively short period of time, yet another Masonic order has so captured the imagination of so many senior Freemasons, whose thirst for Masonic knowledge seems to know no bounds.
Concerns and thoughts about our beloved Freemasonry's Ritual
Submitted By: Frederick J. Potter
Member of Cornerstone Lodge #216 Portland, Maine

We should be concerned that our ritual is not what it should be. We have a very serious problem! Our membership does not have the required interlineal fortitude to stay the course and spend the time to learn the work. Must we form Degree Teams in our districts Blue Lodge and York Rite? Our candidates deserve the very best and we are not giving them their money’s worth. I see disappointment in their faces and am afraid that we will lose them to other interests. We must have pride in our ritual and in all of Masonry. It starts in the Blue lodge; they are conferring degrees without any practices and not enough members of their own lodge to confer the work. What has happened to Masonic pride and self improvement? Officers' coaches are appointed who are not doing their jobs just to have an Officers Coach; is this good for our Fraternity? Inspectors should be looking for the best ritualist with a great attitude toward the ritual not just fill a void. Ritual is done solely for the benefit of the candidate, not one’s ego.

We must improve our ritual however or with whatever it takes. It is not just in Blue Lodges it is in the Scottish Rite Valleys and York Rite Bodies throughout this state. We have bodies throughout this state where one member of a cast knows his part and everyone else reads them and they can not even read them well. We have bodies that can barely open or close in York Rite. In the Scottish Rite Valleys they read the opening and the closing and that’s not acceptable either. York Rite reduced its problem by having Degree teams in the Departments, but is that really an answer?

I see this in the York Rite bodies, Chapters, Councils and Commanderies; in Scottish Rite bodies, Lodges, and Consistories. Where will it stop? I understand a last minute substitute reading a part but someone who does not think enough of himself or have enough pride in themselves to learn the part should at least be able to read it fluently. What has happened to pride in our ritual? Heads of Scottish Rite Bodies through the state serve 12 months and do not bother to either learn opening and closing or even read it fluently but just muddle through it. Where is the pride in our Fraternity?

Old timers have a mini practice between sections of a degree so that the work gets done and who plays what part? They stopped speaking, yet their eyes never left that flag. Notice how all the men removed their hats and placed them over their hearts. They are wearing a uniform and it is not just a uniform. We love that old flag and all that it stands for.

The parade is to honor all who have served over the years to preserve this country and permit that flag to continue to flow over our great land. Let me point out a few of those marching in the parade.

The Boy Scout Troop which is being led by Mr. Markum. He lost an eye while flying over Germany in WWII. The Scout Leader George has signed up for the Marines and will be going in the end of June, shortly after graduation.

The Girl Scout Troop. Do you recognize Elizabeth and Maryann Grower? They lost their father in Korea last year.

That old gentleman on the hay wagon is Amos Scruggs. Amos is the oldest member of town at 104, but he never misses a parade. He says the first big parade that he ever saw was after the signing of the peace treaty at Appomattox Courthouse. He was serving in the Union Army as an aided-camp for some General at the time. The first parade he said he ever participated in was ten years earlier. That was when his parents had him quietly in the parade that traveled through the Underground Railway. They settled just west of town and the family still live there.

CONTINUED: Pg. 10
Sanctorum, or Holy of Holies. Here we find an “Altar” called the Ark of the Covenant, which is a small chest or coffer, made of Acacia wood, and overlaid inside and outside with gold, into which were placed the tablets of the Law (both the broken and the unbroken sets), a pot of Manna, and Aaron’s Rod which budded and blossomed with almonds. A copy of the Torah was also kept within the Holy of Holies, next to or possibly upon the Ark. The Jewish High Priest, standing before this Ark, or Altar, would offer prayer for his own sins and the sins of his people, and this was also where, according to Masonic legend, Hiram Abiff offered his prayers each day during the building of the Temple.

Upon the lid of the Ark (called the Mercy Seat) rested two additional Cherubim, made of the same piece of beaten gold as the Mercy Seat, facing inward, with their wings covering over and supporting the Ark. The Holy Writings describe the Cherubim as having four faces, those of a Lion, an Ox, a Man and an Eagle, with one face towards each direction. These same creatures were also depicted on the standards of the four principal tribes of Israel, as described in the Royal Arch, or Seventh Degree, and when the Israelites were traveling in the wilderness for forty years, in their Encampment, it was these very same four tribes, Judah, Ephraim, Rueben, and Dan, who respectively camped directly to the East, West, South, and North of the Tabernacle.

Through a study of the Volume of Sacred Law, particularly Leviticus chapter 16, and also of the Talmud, we may learn a great deal about the ceremonies in which the High Priest engaged. He would enter the Holy of Holies on only one day of the year, Yom Kippur, and upon entering, he would pass beneath the Wings of the Cherubim. The Cherubim referred to are the large ones which stretched from one wall of this chamber to the other, touching the tips of their wings together in the midst of the room, as described in the Royal Master, or Eighth Degree. After entering, the High Priest would place a golden censer filled with coals and incense upon the floor before the Ark of the Covenant, and retreat outside the room, where he would offer a prayer before the vail with hands uplifted before YHWH. It was on this occasion, during this prayer, that he was permitted to speak aloud the Great and Sacred Name of Deity, and upon offering this prayer, the Shekhinah or Divine Presence would descend and rest above the Mercy Seat of the Ark of the Covenant. He would then re-enter the Holy of Holies, and indirectly behold the Shekhinah through the hazy cloud of smoke which had emanated from the his Golden Censer and filled the room. This smoke was so thick that he was required to use his hands to block the smoke from entering his nostrils. As also described in the Royal Master degree, as well as in the Sacred Writings, the Bath-Kol (Literally, “Daughter of Voice,” in Hebrew), or Voice of God Unseen issued forth from between the wings of the Cherubim and was heard by the High Priest.

**Temple: CONTINUED**

**Pillar Talk...**

Freemasonry is all about HOPE.

The hope of a better world for all creatures, great and small.

That mankind evolves to be a shining example of such HOPE.

That each child learns by example all people are created equal.

That no man, woman or child suffers from hunger, injustice or tyranny.

That the profane will turn away from ignorance and self importance.

YES, Freemasonry is all about HOPE.

...it starts in the Blue Lodge and is supported further by the Chapter, Council, and Commandery.
For all Master Masons
An Opportunity to assist in a Greater Masonic Life
And Perform a Great Part of Your Obligation
At one and the same time.

Brethren: In our obligation as a Mason, we obligated ourselves “to help, aid and assist” all distressed worthy Brothers, their widows and orphans. Now is the time for us to put that obligation into practice.

LIVING ALONE IS JUST AN ACCIDENT WAITING FOR A TIME AND PLACE TO HAPPEN!
Many of our older Brethren and/or their widows face obstacles everyday. One of their largest obstacles in living alone is having no one to check on their daily health and other needs. This could lead to disaster.

For example: an older Brother, and/or his widow may have any number of debilitating diseases: diabetes, high blood pressure, anemia, arthritis, etc., or any number of diseases that could leave you immobile and helpless in case of an attack. A good example is a chemical reaction to prescribed medication can lead to a diabetic coma where a loved one may lie helpless and possibly die before help or assistance may arrive. A stroke or heart attack may leave you speechless and immobile. A fall may break a bone leaving you helpless and unable to reach a phone. Any of all of these instances can be life threatening.

We strongly encourage slowing down and being more careful. When you get up from the bed or a chair, do so slowly. Pause for a few seconds to let all of your body functions get into their proper mode. It might be a good idea to get rid of “throw rugs” or any other loose items that might lead to a trip and fall.

Be especially careful at night; leave a “night-light” burning. Older people have trouble with night vision and are especially vulnerable at night or even in the daylight hours when there is not enough illumination. A small “night-light” in the bedroom or bath will cost very little to operate and they shine automatically only in dimly lighted areas and it more than pays for itself by the safety it provides.

Many in our fraternity are suffering from instability and have difficulty walking around in their homes. If you fit into this category, be sure to call a good Brother for help in the installation of “grab-bars” for your bathrooms and “hand railings” in rooms that will give you confidence and security walking within your home – especially in low lighting situations. This is especially important when you live alone.

A cordless phone or cellular phone is a “must” and is worth its weight in gold – if it is always with you or within arms reach – even when you go to take a shower or to the bathroom.

Many, many older people have accidents in the bathroom, resulting in immobility or a broken bone and need immediate assistance.

You can have a minor or even a MAJOR accident in the bathroom – living room – kitchen – pantry – front porch – back porch – or anywhere in the home. Ready access to a phone for emergency help or communications is an ABSOLUTE NECESSITY.

ALWAYS HAVE YOUR PHONE AT YOUR FINGERTIPS!
Remember 911 is always there to help you; not embarrass you. Call 911, or a Brother or close friend and neighbor, for immediate assistance. DO NOT HESITATE TO MAKE EITHER CALL! We all need help at one time or another. Pride is a great attribute but do not let pride get in the way of your health or safety!

There are many of our brethren, and/or their widows who live alone without any family member or close friend to help them in an emergency or just in the every day necessities of life. We must know who they are so that we may set up a “calling committee” of brothers and wives to check on our needy Brothers, and/or their widows. They desperately need to know that someone sincerely cares about them.

Our intention and goal is to set up a system throughout our Masonic fraternity so that those Brethren, and/or their widow get called once a day just to see that they are OK and that their every day needs are met. Why are we here if not to help aid and assist our Masonic brother and/or his family?

Let us go a little further, let’s check with each needy Brother, and/or his widow to see if they need someone to do whatever is necessary for a good quality of life. A phone call is a necessity but a visit is pure heavenly pleasure. Please go for at least a short visit. It will put a star in your crown.

Let’s check and see if the brother, and/or his widow would be willing to share a house key with a Brother or a reliable friend in order to get entrance to their home in case of an emergency. Some of our Brethren, etc., for security purposes and peace of mind, live in forts these days and the only way in is with a fire axe.

Please give this some thought. Please arrange to give a key to a good friend or friends or a Brother or Brothers and their wives or widow so that they may gain access to your home and help and assist you in times of emergency.

There is no reason that anyone should lie helpless on the floor or in bed for any length of time when a phone call to “911”, a Brother, his wife and/or widow would produce immediate help. If there are other items we need to cover please contact your Lodge Master. Please let us help you enjoy the quality of life that you desire and are entitled to have.
## Grand Commander Itinerary 2009/2010

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## Commandery Orders

- 18 Sir Knights, Knighted
- August 22, 2009
- San Bernardino, California

### NOTABLES

**Mark Master Mason to Royal Arch Mason**

Submitted By: njdgusa@aol.com

The American Masonic ritualist Thomas Smith Webb (1771-1819), in the 1812 edition of his Freemason’s Monitor or Illustrations of Masonry, records 2 Mark lodges existing in Rhode Island and 17 in New York. The Grand Chapters of both of these states were organized in 1798. But there were Royal Arch Chapters in existence before this date, and Mark lodges also.

Webb has long been known as the founder of the American system of Chapter and Encampment Masonry. His book had a significant impact on the development of Masonic ritual in America, and especially that of the York Rite. He has been called the “Founding Father of the York or American Rite” for his efforts to promote that Masonic body.

The first constitution adopted in 1798 by the Grand Royal Arch Chapter of the Northern States of America, which afterward became the General Grand Chapter of the United States, recognized the Mark Master Mason’s degree as a part of its system of degrees. The Constitutions adopted in 1799 expressly provided for the granting of warrants to hold Mark Master Masons’ Lodges separately. For a long time afterward Mark lodges were held generally in Chapters and under Chapter Warrants, and sometimes in distinct lodges under Warrants issued by the State Grand Chapters.

But in 1856 the General Grand Chapter abolished independent Mark lodges, and ever since the degree has been conferred in a Royal Arch Chapter and under the Chapter Warrant. Independent Mark Masters’ lodges then no longer existed in America.

Most students of Freemasonry agree that the story of the Craft as presented in the three degrees is incomplete and that the degrees of the Royal Arch complete the story and answer many of the questions in the mind of the Master Mason.

The Chapter or Royal Arch Masonry consists of four degrees:

- **Mark Master** - this degree is believed to have originated as a ceremony of registering a craftsman mark. It was developed into a full-fledged degree as we know it today.
- **Past Master** - this degree was originally only conferred on actual Past Masters. It was instituted to make it possible for all worthy Brethren to receive the Royal Arch Degree.
- **Most Excellent Master** - this degree is a product of American innovation, and is by far the most spectacular degree in Freemasonry. It is the only degree that brings forcibly to our attention the completion and dedication of King Solomon’s Temple.
- **Royal Arch Mason** - this degree depicts the work of rebuilding the city and the Temple. During this rebuilding a discovery is made that brings to light the greatest treasure of a Mason - the long lost Master’s Word.

The value of Royal Arch Masonry will be appreciated by all who are exalted to that most sublime degree, particularly by those who are seeking to complete their Masonic education. It reveals the full light of Ancient Craft Masonry, presents it as a complete system in accordance with the original plan and justly entitles you to claim the noble name of Master Mason.