

Chapter 1

The Temple Legend

“What is Freemasonry?”

“A system of morality veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols.”

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An allegory is a story in which people, things, and/or events have a hidden or symbolic meaning. In ancient times, such stories were often used to teach Spiritual, moral, and natural principles. These tales included the myths of Ishtar and Tammuz, Aphrodite and Adonis, Isis and Osiris, Eve and Adam, Demeter and Persephone, and Orpheus and Eurydice, among many others.

These mystery tales were often based on secret initiation rites. The hidden rites were both a pictorial expression, and a part of the experience, of the path of spiritual growth and development. Thus, the ancient mysteries consisted of:

- The actual path of spiritual growth and development
- Secret initiation rites that portrayed and provided an experience of the path
- Popular mystery tales that told the story of the path (using accessible symbols) and helped prepare potential candidates for the initiation rituals.

The mystery tales attracted candidates to the rituals and the rituals prepared seekers for, and were an outer expression of, the inner spiritual initiations.

Unfortunately, intolerance forced freemasonry to remain hidden, and popular editions of its mystery tale were seldom told or circulated. Fortunately, the growing tolerance of our times has made it possible to finally tell the story. Thus, the follow-

ing version of the central myth of Freemasonry is offered with the intention of restoring a missing piece of the craft, the popular tale that was common to other expressions of the mysteries, a tale that was, and is, the beginning of the path of spiritual growth and development.

Freemasonry is a modern expression of the spiritual path. Its rituals are both expressions of that path, and (when properly performed) a part of it. The mystery tale of Freemasonry is based on an allegory of the Temple of Solomon. The Masonic version of this story is neither biblical, nor historical, but a symbolic portrayal of the teachings of the ageless wisdom.

The symbols in an allegory may have several levels of meaning, encompassing physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual realities. The Temple Legend includes all of these.

Over the eons, many expressions of the mysteries have arisen, expressing the same central truths but with differing emphasis. Many of them have been merged and blended in Freemasonry, producing a modern synthesis that can be quite confusing to the uninitiated observer.

This fusion in Freemasonry includes:

- Settings: Three settings have been merged into a single setting.
- Characters: Multiple characters have been combined into single characters.
- Initiations: Three levels of spiritual growth and development have been merged into one level.

One result of this fusion is that most Masonic symbols have multiple meanings,

enabling each mason to find a level of meaning that is appropriate to him or her.

Those levels include:

- Individual persona awareness.
- Group consciousness or Soul awareness.

Over the centuries, there has been a great deal of speculation about the meanings of Freemasonic ritual and symbol. A few of those speculations have been groundless, some contain a kernel of truth, and others are quite accurate. Sifting through these various qualities and levels of interpretations is quite a challenge.

The levels that relate to individual growth include:

- Personal, including:
 - Physical
 - Emotional
 - Mental

The personal are embodied in the moral and ethical teachings of Freemasonry, centered on the principles of brotherhood and charity. These principles are discussed at length in other works, and there is little need to examine them here. However, the spiritual meaning of the allegory has been a topic of speculation for centuries.

These spiritual aspects can be roughly divided into that which relates to:

- The spiritual growth and development of the Soul of the Freemason,
- the Inner Work of the Order, and
- the nature of the universe.

These multiple levels give Freemasonry a broad appeal. Most candidates find within it precisely what he or she needs, whether that is personal improvement, spiritual growth, or service to the One Life.

The legend hides these mysteries in plain sight, using symbols that are readily understood by any true initiate of the Path of Wisdom. These initiates understand those symbols because they have experienced the spiritual growth that the symbols portray. They recognize it because they have lived it.

This inner growth begins the moment the candidate first turns her/his inner gaze from the world of affairs toward the mount of initiation, and continues through the moment when she/he reaches the top of the mountain and achieves at-one-ment with the Spiritual Soul.

In the following pages, we will unfold some of this blending, cutting through much of the confusion. Our primary focus will be on clarifying the Temple Legend from the perspective of the spiritual growth and development of the individual Freemason. We will touch on the inner work of the order, and the cosmic meaning of the legend, and will provide an inner exercise through which you may experience that truth for yourself.

The best place to begin is with the Legend itself. The Legend of the Temple is normally portrayed, in Freemasonic Lodges, in the initiation ritual that raises a Fellow Craft or second degree Freemason to Master Mason or third degree. It is a very powerful ritual, but is meant to be enacted rather than read. Thus, I have transformed it into a dramatic short story, containing all the pertinent elements of

the allegory.

The Legend of the Temple¹

Sacred silence hung over *Mount Moriah*. There was *no sound of axe, hammer or any tool of iron*, either in the courtyard or inside the Temple itself. Workmen swarmed about, setting the stones that had been hewn, squared and numbered in the quarries, and placing the beams that had been prepared in Lebanon.

When the sun reached its zenith, the supervisors called a halt to the work, and dismissed the men. Dusting themselves off, the workers poured over the courtyard and out the gates, seeking their refreshment outside the sacred precincts. Reaching the gates last, the supervisors looked about, and when satisfied that all the workmen had left, pushed the gates closed with a thud that echoed through the Temple courtyard.

Up in the inner sanctum of the Temple, a robbed figure stood before the Ark of the Covenant, with his left hand under one cherubim and his right hand over the other. After a time, he backed away, bowed low (with the jewel of his office hanging from his neck), and shuffled backwards, between the huge cherubim guarding the arched entryway and out of the Holy of Holies.

Stopping immediately inside the middle chamber, he straightened, turned, and gazed around the nearly completed temple, pausing to stare at incomplete portions. Stepping to a stand holding the trestleboard, he concentrated on its surface, and

¹ This version of the Legend is based on that found in *Duncan's Ritual of Freemasonry*, by Malcolm C. Duncan, David McKay Company, Inc., New York

then erased the old instructions and laid out the next days work.²

When done, he carried the trestleboard out of the temple, past the spiral stair that led to the upper rooms, beneath the arch supported by the two bronze columns on the porch. There, he paused to set the trestleboard at the base of the pillar of the moon (where all the builders could see it) and then walked down the stairs.³ In the courtyard, he passed between the huge bowl of the Brazen Sea and the great bronze sacrificial altar, and headed toward the *south gate*. The period of refreshment was over, and it was time to readmit the workmen.

Deep in thought, he was almost there before he noticed a dark figure in the shadows of the gate, claspingsome sort of rod. Startled, he wondered who he was and why he was there.

“Perhaps it is a messenger from the King?” he thought. His pace faltered as he neared, and then he recognized Jubela, one of the workmen.

Jubela’s brow and nose crinkled as he strode up to Hiram, kicking up dust with his sandals. He grabbed Hiram by the collar of his robe and snarled, “I’ve been waiting for a chance to get you alone! You promised to give us the secrets of a Master Mason when the Temple was complete! We’ll, it’s almost done, and we’ve waited long enough! I want to travel and receive a Master’s wages!

Jubela twisted Hiram’s robe and roared, “*Give me the secrets of a Master Mason!*”

² Some versions of the Legend indicate that the work was nearly complete, with the events portrayed starting on “the very day appointed for celebrating the cap stone of the building.” However, this appears to conflict with the indication that the Fellow Crafts, lacking further instructions on the Tracing Board, remained at refreshment.

³ The two columns are free standing in most versions. However, in some they supported an arch.

Astounded, *Grand Master Hiram* replied, “Brother this is neither the proper time nor place. Be true to your oaths, and I will be true to mine. Wait until the Temple is completed, and then, if you are found worthy and well qualified, you will receive the secrets of a Master Mason; but until then, you cannot.”

Jubela shook Hiram, raised his measuring rod like a club, and said, “Don’t talk to me of time or place! *Give me the secrets* of a Master Mason, or I’ll kill you!”

Hiram replied, “*I can’t! Both Kings Solomon and Hiram must be there!*”

Jubela shouted, “No more delays!” grabbed even more of Hiram’s robe, and screamed, “*Give me the Master’s word!*”

Hiram calmly replied, “*I shall not!*”

Jubela raised his measuring rod, and brought it whistling down on Hiram’s throat.⁴ The tip tore into flesh, and splashed his robe with crimson.

Jubela released Hiram, and the wounded Grand Master fled toward the west gate of the Temple compound.

At the west gate a second journeyman named *Jubelo*, wielding a metal mason’s square, confronted the wounded Grand Master.

Jubelo grabbed Hiram even more roughly than had *Jubela*, and raising his square demanded, “*Give me the secrets* of a Master Mason!”

Grand Master Hiram replied, “*I cannot.*”

Jubelo shook the Master and shouted, “*Give me the secrets* of a Master Mason!”

Hiram calmly replied, “*I shall not.*”

Jubelo shouted, “*Give me the Master’s word*, or I’ll kill you!” and shook him vio-

⁴ Other versions of the Legend have the three blows delivered to Hiram’s head.

lently.

Master Hiram replied, “*I will not!*”

Jubelo struck Master Hiram on the *left breast*. His square tore through the robe, into the Master’s flesh, dashing scarlet to the courtyard.

Jubelo thrust him away, and the bleeding Grand Master staggered toward the east gate of the Temple.

At the east gate a third journeyman named *Jubelum*, with a heavy gavel thrust through the sash of his robe, confronted the wounded Grand Master.

Jubelum seized Master Hiram with both hands by the collar of his robe, and swung him round, placing the Master’s back toward the east. Then Jubelum screamed, “*Give me the secrets of a Master Mason!*”

The dazed Master replied, “*I cannot!*”

“Give me the secrets of a Master Mason, or I’ll kill you!”

“*I shall not!*”

Jubelum seized the Master even more fiercely, and slowly ground out, “You have escaped the others, but you cannot escape me! I do what I say! Give me the Master’s word, or I *will* kill you!”

“*I will not!*”

Jubelum screamed, “Then die!” grabbed his gavel, and smote Master Hiram in the *forehead*. The Grand Master collapsed to the stones, twitched briefly, and lay without moving.

The three ruffians gathered around the body, and one asked, “Is he dead?”

“His skull is smashed in.”

“My God! What have we done?”

“Murdered our Grand Master, without obtaining the word. The question is, what shall we do with the body?”

“*Bury it in the rubbish* of the Temple, until low twelve, and then we will meet and give it a decent burial.”

“Agreed!”

They rolled the body in canvas, buried it in the rubbish heap, and departed.

Long hours later, at the hour of midnight, as the last notes of the hour of twelve died away, each of the three ruffians snuck through the shadows toward the body. They met, identified each other, and Jubelum said, “I suggest we carry the body to the west, to the brow of the hill there, where I’ve dug a grave.”

The others agreed, and they took up the body, still rolled in canvas, raised it to their shoulders, and carried it to the grave. After they lowered the body and filled in the grave, they planted an *acacia* above it, as was the custom. When they were done one of them exclaimed, “Now, let’s get out of here!”⁵

The three headed for the nearest port, intending to sail beyond King Solomon’s reach, but discovered that they could not take ship without a pass. Turned away, they returned to a hiding place near the body. There, they discussed their plight.

First Ruffian, “What shall we do?”

⁵Some versions have the ruffians plant the acacia in order to conceal the grave in a manner that enables them to find it later. Other versions have the ruffians leave the grave unmarked. The party that discovers it then marks it with the acacia so they can find it later. The version used above is said to be based on an ancient custom of marking grave sites with acacia bushes.

Second Ruffian, “Go to some other port?”

Third Ruffian, “But the rules are as strict in other ports as in this.”

First Ruffian, “What will become of us?”

Second Ruffian, “We shall be taken and put to death.”

Third Ruffian, “Let’s hide until night, steal a boat and put to sea.”

First Ruffian, “That won’t work! Our escape would be discovered, and the coast lined with our pursuers before we can steal a boat!”

Second Ruffian, “Then let’s flee inland, and avoid being taken as long as possible.”

Third Ruffian, “Agreed!”

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Back at the Temple, King Solomon strode into the courtyard, found the workmen lounging around in confusion, and demanded, “What’s going on? Why are the men not at work?”

The Junior Grand Warden replied, “Your majesty, no work has been laid out for us on the trestle-board.”

King Solomon exclaimed, “No work laid out on the trestle-board? What is the meaning of this? Where is our Grand Master, Hiram Abiff?”

The Junior Grand Warden replied, “We do not know, your majesty. He has not been seen since high twelve yesterday.”

King Solomon exclaimed, “Since high twelve yesterday! Something must be wrong. Search for him through the apartments of the Temple, and make due inquiry. Let him be found!”

The workers began a frantic search for Grand Master Hiram Abiff, searching the temple grounds and asking each other if they had seen him. It soon became apparent that he had not been seen since he retired for his noon prayers the previous day.

After a time, the Junior Grand Warden reported, “Your Highness, we cannot find him. He has not been seen in or about the Temple.”

King Solomon frowned, exclaimed, “something must have happened!” turned to his secretary and said, “Brother Grand Secretary, call the rolls of the craft, and report to me as soon as possible.”

The Grand Secretary strode up to the porch of the Temple and announced, “Assemble, Craftsmen!”

When all had gathered, he said, “It is Grand Master King Solomon’s orders that the rolls be called, and report made as soon as possible.”

The Secretary then called out the names of the workers, receiving a response to each until he asked, “Jubela? ... Jubela! ... Jubela!” After calling more names, which also received replies, he asked, “Jubelo? ... Jubelo! ... Jubelo!” and after a few more names, he called, “Jubelum? ... Jubelum! ... Jubelum!”

Finishing the rolls, the secretary left the brethren on the porch, closed the Temple doors, and reported to King Solomon. “Your Highness, the rolls have been called, and it appears that three Fellow Crafts are missing, namely, Jubela, Jubelo, and Jubelum. From the similarity of their names, I presume they are *brothers*, and men *from Tyre*.

At that point, the Junior Grand Warden entered, knelt before King Solomon, and

said, “Your highness, twelve Fellow Crafts wish to be admitted. They say they have important tidings.”

King Solomon replied, “Admit them.”

The Junior Grand Warden opened the door, and said, “Come in, you *twelve Fellow Crafts*.”

The twelve stepped into the Temple, clothed in clean white gloves and aprons, and advanced toward King Solomon in the east. They formed a line across the outer chamber, and made the sign of a Fellow Craft. King Solomon replied with the same sign, and one of the Fellow craft said, “Your highness, we come to inform you that fifteen of us Fellow Crafts, seeing the Temple about to be completed, and being desirous of obtaining the secrets of a Master Mason, so that we could travel in foreign countries and receive Master’s wages, entered into a conspiracy to extort the secrets from our Grand Master.

“After thinking it over, we twelve changed our minds. However we fear the other three have taken the Grand Master’s life. We therefore now appear before your Majesty clothed with *white gloves and aprons*, in token of our innocence, and, acknowledging our premeditated guilt, we humbly implore your pardon.”

They knelt, and waited in silence. Finally, King Solomon said, “Arise, you twelve Fellow Crafts. Divide yourselves into parties and *travel – three east, three north, three south, and three west* – with others whom I shall appoint, in search of these ruffians.”

King Solomon signed to his secretary, and said, “Send word to the ports and

frontier towns by the fastest messengers. The boarders are to be closed and none are to leave the kingdom without a *pass*.”

The Fellow Crafts divided into four groups and departed as instructed. Those who headed west made their way to the sea, and after questioning many people, found the same sea captain who had turned away the ruffians.

The first craftsman said, “Hallo, friend! Have you seen any strangers pass this way?”

“I have, three.”

“What did they look like?”

“I believe they were three brothers, workmen from the Temple. They sought passage to Ethiopia, but did not have a pass, so I turned them away. Last I saw, they were headed inland.”

The second craftsman said, “That’s them! They turned back inland?”

“Yes.”

The third craftsman said, “After them!”

A Fellow Crafts, one of the twelve conspirators, said, “Let’s report!” and three headed back to the Temple while the others searched inland.

Reporting to King Solomon, one of them said, “Your highness, we are among those who searched to the west. In the port of Joppa, we met a sea captain who had spoken with the ruffians. They sought passage to Ethiopia, but he refused them as they did not have your pass, and they then fled inland.”

King Solomon replied, “You will find the ruffians, traveling as before, and if you

do not find them you twelve conspirators shall be deemed the murderers, and be punished for it!”

The three left, complaining about the “unjust” fate that awaited them if they failed. Heading west, they searched avidly for some time, until, near the summit of a near-barren hill, one of them sat down and said, “I’m tired! I must rest.”

One of his companions exclaimed, “I am tired, too!” and plopped down.”

Another asked, “What do we do now? We can’t go back and report. The twelve would be put to death. Let us take a northwesterly or a southwesterly course. Which way shall we go?”

One of the seated brethren replied, “Southwesterly. That way we will link up with our brothers.”

As he stood, he grabbed an *acacia* bush for support. It pulled loose, and he nearly fell. Staring at the roots, he exclaimed “Hey, how come this came up so easily?”

He stooped, examined the ground closely, and said, “This looks like a fresh grave!”

They began to dig, fearing what they would find.

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Some distance away, the rest of their party was quietly searching among the rocks and crags of the western hills. Finally, exhausted, they sat down to rest, and shortly heard someone wailing, “Oh! That my *throat had been cut across, my tongue torn out*, and my body buried in the rough sands of the *sea*, at low tide, where *land*

and water meet, ere I had been accessory to the death of so good a man as our Grand Master, Hiram Abiff.”⁶

One of the listening craftsmen whispered, “Hey, that’s Jubela!”

Then they heard a groan, followed by, “Oh that my *left breast* had been cut open, my *heart torn out*, and placed upon the *highest pinnacle of the Temple*, there to be devoured by the vultures of the *air*, ere I had consented to the death of so good a man as our Grand Master, Hiram Abiff.”⁷

Another craftsman whispered, “That’s Jubelo!”

Then they heard a low moan, follow by, “Oh! That my *body had been cut in two*, my *bowels taken from thence and burned to ashes*, the ashes scattered to the *four winds of heaven*, that no more remembrance might be had of so vile and wicked a wretch as I.⁸ Ah! Jubela, Jubelo, it was I that struck the fatal blow!”

The third listening craftsman whispered, “Jubelum!”

The three craftsmen huddled together, and one of them asked, “What shall we do? There are three of them, and only three of us.”

Another replied, “Our cause is just! Let’s rush them.”

The three Fellow Crafts rose and leapt onto the crag where the murderers lay hid. The ruffians fought back, but were finally subdued, and hauled back to the scene of their crime.

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⁶ Based on the penalty phase of the Obligation of an Entered Apprentice, as found in Duncan’s Ritual of Freemasonry, Third Edition, David McKay Company, Inc., New York, p. 35

⁷ Based on the penalty of a Fellow Craft, as found in Duncan’s Ritual of Freemasonry, pp. 65-66

⁸ Based on the penalty of a Master Mason, as found in Duncan’s Ritual of Freemasonry, p. 96

Meanwhile, the three Fellow Craft who'd found the grave reported to the Temple. After signing, one of them stepped forward and said, "Most Worshipful King Solomon, I was among those who pursued a westerly course, and, on my return, after several days of fruitless search, sat down on the brow of a hill to rest and refresh myself. On rising, I accidentally caught hold of a *sprig of acacia*, which, easily giving way, excited my suspicions. Having my curiosity aroused, I examined it, and found it to be a grave."

No sooner had this craftsman finished his report, than the rest of his party arrived with the ruffians. They signed to King Solomon, and reported, "Your highness, while searching among the rocks and crags of the hills to the west, we heard the voices of Jubela, Jubelo, and Jubelum."

They reported what the three had said, and then threw the bound ruffians to the floor before King Solomon. The three ruffians squirmed into kneeling positions, with their heads to the floor.

King Solomon glared down at them, and said, "Jubela, you stand charged as accessory to the death of our Grand Master, Hiram Abiff. What say you, guilty or not guilty?"

"Guilty, Grand Master."

"Jubelo, you also stand accessory to the death of our Grand Master, Hiram Abiff. What say you, guilty or not guilty?"

"Guilty, Grand Master."

"Jubelum, you stand charged as the willful murderer of our Grand Master,

Hiram Abiff. What say you, sir, guilty or not guilty?”

“Guilty, Grand Master.”

King Solomon replied, “Vile, impious wretches! Despicable villains! Reflect with horror on the atrocity of your crime, and on the amiable character of your Worshipful Grand Master, whom you have so basely assassinated. Hold up your heads, and hear your sentence.”

The three rose onto their heels, and King Solomon intoned, “It is my orders that you be taken beyond the gates of the court and executed, according to your several imprecations, in the clefts of the rocks. Brother Junior Grand Warden, you will see my orders duly executed. Begone!”

The craftsmen dragged the three ruffians out of the Temple, and carried out the sentence. When they returned, one of them reported, “Your majesty, your orders have been duly executed upon the three murders of Grand Master, Hiram Abiff.”

King Solomon nodded, fixed his gaze on the twelve and said, “You twelve Fellow Crafts will go in search of the body and, if found, *observe whether the Master’s word, or a key to it, or any thing that appertains to the Master’s Degree, is on or about it.*”

The twelve repentant conspirators left, and one among them asked, “Well, brothers, can we find where the *acacia was pulled up?*”

Another replied, “I know the way,” and lead them to the hill to the west.

There, he said, “This is the place. Let’s dig here.”

Reaching *a canvas-wrapped form*, a third lifted the canvas aside, revealing a mangled, putrid body. He stared carefully at the face, and said, “Yes, this is the

body of our Grand Master, Hiram Abiff. Does anyone see anything pertaining to the Master's word, or a key to it, or any thing appertaining to the Master's Degree?"

Being but Fellow Crafts, they did not know what they were looking for, but they had to search. They drew off the canvas and searched the body, but found nothing. Finally, one of the brethren, took hold of the *jewel around the Grand Master's neck*, and exclaimed, "This is the jewel of his office!"

"Let's report that we found nothing on or about the body excepting the Jewel of his office."

One of them carefully removed the jewel's chain from the Master's neck, and they all reported to King Solomon. As they bowed before him, one said, "Tidings of the body!"

King Solomon asked, "Where was it found?"

"A *westerly course*⁹, where our weary brother had sat down to rest and refresh himself."

"Was the Master's word, or a key to it, or any thing appertaining to the Master's Degree, on or about it?"

Your majesty, we are but Fellow Crafts, and know nothing about the Master's word or Degree. There was nothing found on or about the body excepting the jewel of his office.

They presented the jewel to King Solomon, who examined it and said, "This is the jewel of our Grand Master, Hiram Abiff; there can be no doubt as to the identity

⁹ Note that the sun sets in the west, thus it is the place where the light "dies." Osiris rode his boat into the West each night.

of the body. You twelve Fellow Crafts will now go and assist in raising it.”

After they left, King Solomon turned to King Hiram of Tyre and said, “My worthy brother of Tyre, as the Master’s word is now lost, *the first sign given* at the grave, and *the first word spoken* after the body is raised, shall be adopted for the regulation of all Masters’ Lodges until future generations shall find out the right.”¹⁰

King Hiram replied, “Agreed.”

King Solomon turned to the Fellow Crafts and said, “Given the solemnity of the occasion, you will all dress in clean, white aprons and gloves, without any *silver or other metal*.”

When they had made themselves ready, King Solomon, King Hiram, the Junior Warden, and The Fellow Crafts returned to the grave, and gathered in a circle around it. The Fellow Crafts removed the coverings of the body.

King Solomon waved his arms in distress, and said, “O Lord my God, I fear the Master’s word is forever lost!” He then turned to the Junior Warden and said, “You will take the body by the *Entered Apprentice grip*, and *see if it can be raised*.”

The Junior Warden stooped and attempted to lift the body by its right hand, using the *grip of an Entered Apprentice*. However, the body slipped out of his hand and fell back into the grave.

The Junior Warden turned to King Solomon and reported, “Most Worshipful King Solomon, owing to the high state of putrefaction, it having been dead already *fifteen days*, the skin slips, and the body cannot be raised.”

¹⁰ Note that the tradition plainly states that all three are Grand Master’s, and thus King Solomon and King Hiram must have known the word. It was not lost at the death of Hiram Abiff, but could not then be conveyed to another Master because it took all three G.M.’s to convey the word.

King Solomon again waived his arms in distress, and exclaimed, “O Lord my God, I fear the Master’s word is forever lost!”

Turning to King Hiram, he asked, “My worthy brother of *Tyre*, I will thank you to endeavor to raise the body by the Fellow Craft’s grip.”

King Hiram of *Tyre* stooped and took the body’s right hand in the *grip of a Fellow Craft*, but the body again slipped away.

King Hiram straightened, turned to King Solomon and reported, “Owing to the reason before given, the flesh cleaves from the bone, and the body cannot be so raised.”

Waiving his arms in distress at each exclamation, King Solomon cried, “O Lord my God! O Lord my God! O Lord my God! Is there hope for the widow’s son?”

Then he turned to King Hiram and asked, “My worthy brother of *Tyre*, what shall we do?”

King Hiram replied, “Let us pray.”

Grand Master Solomon directed the brethren to kneel around the body on one knee. He knelt by the head and led the brethren in prayer. When done, they rose, and King Solomon said, “My worthy brother of *Tyre*, I shall endeavor, with your assistance, to raise the body by *the strong grip, or lion’s paw, of the tribe of Judah.*”

King Solomon stepped to the feet of the body, bent over, and gripped the right hand. He then placed his right foot against Hiram Abiff’s right foot, and his left hand to his back, and raised him up perpendicularly to a standing position, and

with the body clasped tightly to him whispered the *Masonic word* in his ear.¹¹

Highlights

This is the traditional allegory. The actual ritual performance varies somewhat from one branch of Freemasonry to another, but the above is fairly standard. We will examine the higher meanings of the Legend in the following pages, unraveling the conflated settings and revealing the true identities of the characters. As in the Legend, our quest begins in the Temple.

¹¹ Other versions indicate that Solomon mumbled “it stinks” upon lifting the body, and that this thus became the replacement word.

Receptivity Technique

- ◆ Opening alignment:
 - Sit in a comfortable chair with you back straight, your feet flat on the floor and your arms in your lap or on the arm rests. Place *The Temple and The Word* in your lap or (if its weight is distracting) within easy reach.
 - Close your eyes and relax your physical body, beginning with your toes and moving upward to your head. You may command each portion to relax, imagine a relaxing warmth or tingling sensation, or use whatever other method works for you. Include every portion of your body and pay special attention to the muscles of your diaphragm, throat, tongue, jaw, and behind the eyes. Complete the relaxation with your consciousness focused in your head and endeavor to remain there throughout the following.
- ◆ Imagine yourself in the shadow of the wall, before the gate.
 - Step forward, knock on the gate, and step back.
 - When the portal opens, take three steps into the courtyard of the Temple.
 - The gate booms shut behind you, your vision clears, and you see the four white walls of the temple compound around you, with gates visible to your right and left. Straight ahead rises the Temple, atop its steps, and before you stand the Brazen Altar, slightly to your right, and the Brazen Laver (basin), slightly to your left.
 - The altar is cold, but kindling stands nearby ready to light. The Laver, where the sacrifices are cleansed, is perfectly still. Begin walking to the Laver, and

as you approach note that it is a large brass bowl, whose lip rises above your waist. Its base is formed in the shape of animals that you recognize from the zodiac. The feet of the animals stand in the bottom of a small square pool, which is filled with overflow from the Laver. A stone ring surrounds the pool, and small bars of salt and several brass ladles sit on the ring.

- When you reach the Laver, stand at its edge and gaze inside at the calm, clear pool of water within, a perfect mirror of the deep-blue sky above.
- ◆ Turn your gaze upward to the sky and aspire upward to your higher self or Soul.

Holding that note of aspiration, audibly state the seed-thought:

“I stand receptive to the Wisdom overshadowing the Legend of King Solomon’s Temple.”

Recognize that before you can reach the Soul, before you can proceed on your quest, you must purify the house in which you dwell.

In your imagination, slowly remove all your clothes and jewelry, fold them, and set them aside, until you stand naked, bereft of all possessions.

Pick up a bar of purifying salt and rub it over your entire body. When done, put down the salt and take up the nearest ladle. Dip the ladle into the Laver, and pour the pure, clean water over your head and shoulders. Feel the chill water streaming downward from your brow to your toes.

- Trembling in the morning light, put down the ladle, pick up your raiment, turn to the cold Altar and lurch over to its potential warmth.
- Take a deep breath, drop the image, and open your eyes.

Perform this technique before continuing your study of this book. If you are interrupted, repeat the seed-thought before continuing.

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