

**Masonic Education**  
following the  
**MASTER MASON DEGREE**  
for  
**MISSOURI LODGES**



**The Grand Lodge of  
Ancient, Free & Accepted Masons  
of the State of Missouri**

**MASONIC EDUCATION**  
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# Grand Lodge of Missouri

## Ancient Free and Accepted Masons

This Publication "Masonic Education following the Master Mason Degree for Missouri Lodges" was developed for the purpose of providing additional education to the Master Mason.

The Questions are designed as an educational tool, and to provide an overview of the more important topics in this degree.

The Committee on Masonic Education wishes to thank everyone who contributed to the completion of these educational booklets. In particular, we wish to express our sincere appreciation to RWB Elmer D. Copeland and RWB Wilfred G. Soutiea, Jr. for their immeasurable assistance in the editing of these booklets.

Lodges are encouraged to provide this booklet to each new Master Mason. Additional booklets are available from The Grand Lodge of Missouri A.F. & A.M., 800 Hwy 63 North, Columbia, MO 65201-6697. 314-474-8561 Fax 314-474-3601

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# **THE DEGREE OF MASTER MASON**

## **THE SUBLIME DEGREE**

It is called this not only for the solemnity of the ceremonies, but also for the profound lessons of wisdom it teaches. This Degree symbolizes the great lessons of victory over death and the immortality of the soul.

In this degree, man is seen in his latter stages of life, to die, and then to be raised from the grave to another and better place. Thus, these ceremonies of the Degree lead to the inevitable conclusion that youth, properly directed, leads to an honorable and virtuous maturity; and that, regulated by brotherly love, relief and truth, life will be rewarded in its closing hours by the prospect of eternal bliss and immortality.

We hope that these lessons and meanings will lead to new and undiscovered inspirations each time you study them.

## **THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE DEGREE**

The significance can best be understood when we compare it to the Entered Apprentice and Fellow Craft Degrees. In the first two Degrees, architecture was the theme of the symbols. The lessons in the Degree of Master Mason refer to life, its tragedy, and its ultimate triumph. In other words, this Degree deals with the spiritual part of man's life. We should keep in mind that, in our later years, we are getting closer and closer to life's end, and that we have work yet to perform. Victory over death and the immortality of the soul are the significant lessons in this Degree.

## **RECEPTION**

In the reception at the door, you are reminded that the lessons of brotherly love, relief and truth, should be implanted in the breast. If they are to serve a useful purpose and become part of your way of life, you should practice these daily. These are the tenets of Freemasonry.

## **OBLIGATION**

The obligation is the heart of the Degree. By taking the Obligation, the candidate obtains the privileges, the rights, and the benefits of the Masonic institution. You must know the Obligation if you are to abide by it.

## **CLANDESTINE LODGE AND CLANDESTINE MASON**

A Clandestine Lodge is one that has not been issued a charter from a duly recognized Grand Lodge. One who belongs to one of these lodges is a clandestine mason.

## **MASONIC DEFINITION OF NONAGE, DOTAGE, FOOL, AND LIBERTINE**

Nonage is a young man who lacks the maturity to know or understand the meanings of masonry. It also may refer to being under the Masonic legal age for membership which in Missouri is eighteen. Dotage is defined as a diminished state of mind. Being old does not bar someone from membership, but we require that he be mentally alert. A Fool is a mature man without good sense. Legally, he is of age, but is incapable of understanding the meaning in our rituals. A Libertine is someone who acts without moral restraints and often opposes religious or moral precepts.

## **SIGNS, TOKENS, AND WORDS**

These are very important because they provide modes of recognition. Each Sign, Token, and Word has a symbolic meaning which serves to enrich the mind and improve our lives Freemasons. You should know how to properly execute and recognize all the Signs. These will be required when attending lodges.

## **THE WORKING TOOLS**

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

## **THE LEGEND OF HIRAM**

Hiram Abif was the son of a man of Tyre, and his mother was of the tribe of Naphtali. Legend states he was sent by King Hiram to assist King Solomon in building the Temple. He was a very well-known person which is attested to in the Second Book of Chronicles, which tells us of his skill in the arts and crafts and he is referred to as the widow's son.

The word Abif means "his father" or "my father", and the name is translated to "Hiram, my father." He was regarded as the father of all his workmen and master overseer of all the work on the Temple. By imitating Hiram Abif, we are taught many important lessons, including the magnificent lesson of Integrity, Piety and Fidelity.

## **THE THREE GRAND MASTERS**

The three mentioned often in our rituals concerning the building of the Temple are: Solomon, King of Israel; Hiram, King of Tyre; and Hiram Abif. They are represented by three Masonic columns named Wisdom, Strength and Beauty.

## **THE TEMPLE OF SOLOMON**

This magnificent structure was located on Mount Moriah at Jerusalem. It was near the place where Abraham was about to offer up his son, Isaac. The site was purchased by David, King of Israel, for it was here that the hand of the Destroying Angel was stayed after David had

repented. The incident is recorded in II Samuel, Chapter 24, Verses 15 through 25; and Chronicles, Chapter 21, Verses 14 through 30.

Freemasonry tries to undertake the task of helping each of its members build a more perfect spiritual building within themselves where God can reside. Each of us should be aware of the fact that we are a symbolic Temple and that we should work toward the same type of perfection in our own Temple as that sought for in the Temple at Jerusalem.

## **MASONIC EDIFICE**

A Masonic edifice is a term used to describe a building, especially a large and impressive structure, constructed by masons. The Temple of Solomon, for example, was considered the greatest of Masonic edifices.

## **SOLOMON, KING OF ISRAEL**

Solomon was the son of David and Bathsheba. He became king at the age of 20 and reigned 40 years. During Solomon's reign, Israel had its greatest power, prosperity, and recognition. The name "Solomon" means peaceful. Masonically, King Solomon personifies wisdom.

## **HIRAM, KING OF TYRE**

Hiram was a friend of King David, and Masonically represents Strength. He became brother and friend of King Solomon. According to the Biblical accounts, he assisted Solomon by supplying certain materials for the construction of the Temple; and, in return, received a gift from Solomon of ten cities. It is interesting to note that although they were not of the same religion or political background, they were able to ignore their differences and work in peace and harmony.

## **TO TRAVEL IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES**

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

countless treasures which each of you must discover for yourself. Recognized lodges anywhere in the world will welcome you as a visitor.

### **THE THREE RUFFIANS**

The main lesson taught by the actions of the three ruffians who expected to obtain secrets not rightly theirs, and the due consequences of their acts, is that rewards must be earned, rather than obtained by illicit means.

### **LOW TWELVE**

Low Twelve, or midnight, was the hour at which the three ruffians agreed to meet and is often associated with death.

### **THE POINTS OF FELLOWSHIP**

The points of fellowship refer to the way each Master Mason is expected to treat a fellow mason. They are designed to promote peace and harmony in the Lodge, as well as strengthen a Master Mason's character.

### **THE LION OF THE TRIBE OF JUDAH**

The lion has always been the symbol of might and royalty; and was the sign of the Tribe of Judah. All Kings of Judah were, therefore, called the Lion of the Tribe of Judah. This was one of the titles of King Solomon. The lion's paw is symbolic of the bond between Masons and the strength that comes from unity.

### **THE SPRIG OF ACACIA**

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

### **THE RAISING OF A CANDIDATE**

Symbolically, the raising of a candidate represents resurrection after death and our Masonic hope in the immortality of the soul. This Degree is the climax of Symbolic Freemasonry. The raising of a candidate is designed to dramatically illustrate the virtues of Integrity, Fortitude and Fidelity.

The Degree delves into the deepest recesses of man's nature. While it leads the initiate into the Sanctum Sanctorum of the Temple, it probes into the Holy of Holies in his heart. As a



whole, the Degree is symbolic of that old age by the wisdom of which we may enjoy the happy reflections consequent on a well-spent life and die in the hope of a glorious immortality.

Freemasonry teaches no creed, no dogma, no religion, and offers no salvation: only the hope of victory over death and the immortality of the soul. This degree teaches that even when facing the dark portal of death, man can be comforted that the soul is immortal.

### **THE ALL-SEEING EYE**

This is a very old symbol of Deity. In Psalm 121, it says "He that keepeth Israel shall not sleep nor slumber." Thus, the idea that God watches over man is symbolized by the All-Seeing Eye to demonstrate that God is ever-present and ever-watchful. Every Freemason should keep in mind that the things we do before man and the things we do in secret will be recorded by the All-Seeing Eye, and will bear witness for or against us at Judgment.

### **THE RIGHTS OF A MASTER MASON**

Masonic Relief may be applied for by any Brother — either to his own Lodge or to an individual Master Mason. In every case, the individual has the right to determine the worthiness of the request and whether such aid can be granted without material injury to his own family.

Visitation of other Lodges is a right you acquire when you can prove yourself to be a Freemason in good standing, and if no member of the Lodge you are visiting objects. In order to get into another Lodge, you should learn the memory work in each Degree and at all times be prepared to present your paid-up dues card.

Masonic Funeral Rites are conducted only at the request of some member of a Mason's immediate family. The choice belongs to the family, not to the Lodge. These Rites can be held in the church, funeral home or at graveside.

### **LODGE MEMBERSHIP**

Upon being raised to the sublime degree of Master Mason and passing a satisfactory proficiency examination, you become eligible to vote and hold office in your lodge.

You can apply for a dimit (or transfer to another Lodge) if you are currently a paid-up member and in good standing. You can also hold multiple membership in more than one Lodge in Missouri.

### **MASONIC LAW**

Every Lodge is governed by the Grand Lodge of its jurisdiction and must adhere to the Rules and Regulations of that Grand Lodge. These Rules and Regulations are discussed at Grand Lodge sessions, and amendments or alterations are made if passed by the required vote.

# QUESTIONS FOR THE MASTER MASON

1. What does this degree symbolize for man?
  - a. Culmination of your Masonic career
  - b. Symbolizes man's domination over man
  - c. Victory over death and the immortality of the Soul
  - d. The mortality of the Soul
  
2. What stage of Life does this degree represent?
  - a. Youth
  - b. Manhood
  - c. Middle age
  - d. Age
  
3. What are the most significant lessons taught in the Master Mason Degree?
  - a. Work hard all of your life
  - b. Victory over death and the immortality of the Soul
  - c. Should be charitable to Master Masons
  - d. Should lead virtuous lives
  
4. Of what are you reminded by your reception at the door?
  - a. Reminded of all the lessons of Freemasonry
  - b. Reminded of the tenets of Freemasonry
  - c. Reminded of your obligations
  - d. Reminded of your last degree
  
5. What is considered the heart of this Degree?
  - a. Entry into the Lodge
  - b. Placement of the Lodge Officers
  - c. Sprig of Acacia
  - d. Obligation
  
6. What is a clandestine Lodge?
  - a. A Lodge located in another state
  - b. A Lodge without its own building
  - c. A Lodge not in session
  - d. A Lodge not issued a charter

7. What is meant by the term "dotage"?
- A young man who is unformed
  - The condition in which you were expected to be found
  - A diminished state of mind
  - The loss of membership by vote of the Lodge
8. What is a Libertine?
- One who believes in liberty for all
  - One who acts without moral restraints
  - A medal worn by Master
  - The baton carried by Marshal
9. What do signs, tokens and words mean to a Mason?
- Modes of recognition
  - Nothing
  - Symbol of Rank
  - Language of Freemasonry
10. Who was Hiram Abif?
- Son of King Solomon
  - Uncle to Hiram, King of Tyre
  - Tent designer and builder
  - The widow's son worthy of imitation
11. What are we trying to teach by the use of the three Ruffians?
- Rewards can not be attained by illicit means
  - Rewards can be gained by illicit means
  - Good things always come in threes
  - Three principle stages of human life
12. What is the Masonic definition of "Low Twelve"?
- Midnight
  - Noon
  - Number of craftsman
  - Number of Lodge Officers
13. What do the points of fellowship promote?
- Fidelity and unity
  - Peace and harmony
  - Love and hope
  - Charity and forgiveness

14 Who was a lion of the Tribe of Judah ?

- a. Boaz
- b. Hiram Abif
- c. King Solomon
- d. Hiram of Tyre

15. What does the Sprig of Acacia represent?

- a. Immortality
- b. Truth
- c. Honesty
- d. Charity

16. What does "the All-Seeing Eye" represent?

- a. Holy of Holies
- b. Lodge of Master Masons
- c. Sanctum Sanctorum
- d. Deity

17. What are the rights of a Master Mason?

- a. Masonic Relief, Masonic Visitation and Funeral Rites
- b. Masonic Charity, Masonic Relief
- c. Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth
- d. Masters Wages

18. Who can establish Masonic Law?

- a. The Grand Lodge officers
- b. The Worshipful Master
- c. A Master Mason
- d. The Grand Lodge

# ANSWERS

1. c
2. d
3. b
4. b
5. d
6. d
7. c
8. b
9. a
10. d
11. a
12. a
13. b
14. c
15. a
16. d
17. a
18. d