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The Royal Arch Province of West Lancashire



Enhanced Ceremony of Exaltation



Enhanced Exaltation Ceremony

The ceremony of Exaltation is one of the most colourful and emphatic ceremonies in Freemasonry. It is the natural follow-on from the three Craft degrees and has the potential to inspire the Candidate if well executed. There are some aspects of how it is often undertaken that can readily be improved, enhancing the enjoyment of all attending.

Without changing the ritual, it is possible to enhance the experience of the Candidate and indeed all attending by fine tuning what is being done.

This document offers a number of suggestions. It is based on the ritual that was circulated by the Province following the various changes approved by the Grand Chapter in November 2004. In addition, suggested enhancements are shown in green. In the main the enhancements are aimed at increasing the dramatic impact of the ceremony. Others are directed at minimising the episodes of 'dead time' that are often in evidence in Chapters.

Use of lighting is also made to enhance the ceremony; these are shown as '**lighting cues**' at various points. This is particularly the case when the Sojourners return to the Chapter to communicate the discovery they have made. A dim light is recommended to pick out the floor of the vault when the Principal Sojourner is lowered for the first time, with a bright light to highlight the pedestal when the sun darts its rays with meridian splendour into the vault as he descends for the second time.

For the Readings or other pages to be read while the lighting is dimmed, small torches or other forms of lighting may be required

CEREMONY of EXALTATION

The ballot is undertaken. Scribe E and the Treasurer retire, returning after some time to report that the Candidate has signed the necessary declaration and paid the necessary fee. Whilst they are out, nothing happens. There are two solutions. The first is to undertake the ballot at the previous meeting and this should usually be possible. Where it is not, another solution is to open the Chapter, then conduct the ballot, after which the Treasurer and someone other than Scribe E could retire to get the Declaration book signed and cheque handed over. Whilst those two are out of the Chapter, the admin matters could be processed by Scribe E.

Whichever of the above solutions is adopted at a convenient moment whilst the Can. is outside with the Janitor, or his Proposer or indeed the Chapter Mentor should set the scene by reading the following passage:

"Bro. A. B., the story about to unfold builds on, and is inextricably linked to, your three Degrees in Craft Masonry. It takes place some 500 years after the dedication of Solomon's Temple. King Solomon has long since died. Jerusalem has been attacked by the Babylonians, the city and its once magnificent temple have been destroyed and its inhabitants taken into captivity into Babylon where they remained for 70 years.

We are now at that period in history where the Babylonian Empire itself has been attacked and defeated by Cyrus, King of Persia. Cyrus has recently issued a decree allowing the descendants of the Hebrew exiles to return to Jerusalem. As a candidate for Exaltation, you represent one of those exiles returning to Jerusalem as a Sojourner or Journeyman builder. You will discover that the Temple and Holy city are in ruins and, with your colleagues, offer your assistance in building a new temple when, as you will eventually see, a discovery of very great importance is made.

Before the story begins, however, you will shortly be admitted into the Chapter where you will be tested in the Three Degrees of Craft Masonry and then entrusted with a password leading to this Supreme Degree. I trust therefore that the Janitor, your Proposer or the Chapter Mentor has ensured that you can advance in the Three Degrees and communicate the Wds of a M.M. on the f.p.o.f.”

NOTE: This passage can also be read to the Companions within the Chapter room at a suitable moment, explaining that this is the context that is being set for the Can.

Z - Comp S.E., are the papers in order?

SE - M.E. the papers are in order, I have examined the Candidate's Craft Certificate and have received Clearance Certificates from the Candidate's Craft Lodges.

Note: Particulars of Rule 67, R. A. Regulations, having been dealt with proceed with ballot for Can. If the Can. has been elected at a previous Convocation the ceremony can precede without the above.

Z (knocks)— Companions, Bro is this evening a candidate to be exalted to the Supreme Degree of Royal Arch Masonry. Companion Second Assistant Sojourner, you will retire to entrust the Candidate.

2ndAS gives court bow and retires.

EITHER: He returns with the Can. who is hoodwinked and clothed as a M.M. without gloves. He places the Can. in a suitable part of the Chapter room where the following exchange can be seen and heard by the other Companions. To support the Can. during this process, his Proposer or the Chapter mentor should join alongside him - shoulder to shoulder - prompting when necessary, re the signs or Wds.

OR: He returns with the Can. clothed as a M.M. The Can. is lead backwards into the Chapter and placed in a suitable position near to the entrance so that the entrusting can be observed by the Companions but so that the Can. cannot see the form of the Chapter.

2ndAS (to Can.) - Bro. A. B., advance to me in the three Degrees, communicating the Ws of a M.M. on the f. p. o. f. **(done).**

Contd

Do you pledge your honour as a man, and your fidelity as a Mason, that you have been raised to the Sublime Degree of a M.M. for four weeks and upwards?

(Can. assents)

Do you likewise pledge yourself, that you will conceal what I am about to impart to you with the same strict caution as the other secrets in Masonry?

(Can. assents)

Then I will entrust you with the Passwords leading to this Supreme Degree. They are A..... R..... **(Candidate repeats both words)** which signify, "My people having found mercy" **(Candidate repeats words)**. You must be careful to remember these passwords and their signification as without those qualifications you cannot be re-admitted into the Chapter.

(He leads the Can. out of the Chapter room)

Jan gives M.M. ks

SN (after giving ct. bow) - Your Excellencies, there is a report.

J - Comp. S.N., see who seeks admission.

Lighting Cue 1: All lights are turned off leaving only the candles to light the room

SN (to Jan) - Whom have you there?

Jan - Bro. A. B., who has been regularly initiated into Freemasonry, passed to the Degree of a Fellow Craft, and in due time raised to the Sublime Degree of a M.M. in which capacity he has exercised himself for four weeks and upwards, and has made such progress that as a reward of merit he has been entrusted with the Passwords leading to this Supreme Degree, to which he seeks to be admitted, and for which ceremony he is properly prepared.

SN - How does he hope to obtain the privileges of this Supreme Degree?

Jan - By the assistance of T. T. A. L. G. M. H., the united aid of the c . . . and t. and the benefit of the Passwords.

SN (To Can.) - Will you give me the PWs.

Can does so prompted by Janitor

SN - Their meaning? **(Given)**

SN - Wait, while I report to their Excellencies (**Closes the door**).

SN - Your Excellencies, Bro. A. B., who has been regularly initiated into Freemasonry, passed to the Degree of a F. C., and in due time raised to the Sublime Degree of a M. M., in which capacity he has exercised himself for four weeks and upwards, and who has made such progress that as a reward of merit has been entrusted with the Passwords leading to this Supreme Degree, to which he seeks admission and for which ceremony he is properly prepared.

J - How does he hope to obtain the privileges of this Supreme Degree?

SN - By the assistance of T. T. A. L. G. M. H., the united aid of the c . . . and t . . . and the benefit of the P. Ws.

J - Do you Comp N vouch that he is in possession of the P. Ws?

SN - I do, M. E.

J - Then let him be admitted in due form.

The Can. is placed in the West, between the Soj., the 2ndAS on the Candidate's right and the 1stAS, on the left.

2ndAS - Salute the three Principals as M.Ms, penal sign only. (**They do so**)

J - Bro. A. B., as you seek preferment in our Order, and have been entrusted with the Passwords leading to this Supreme Degree, we must enquire if you freely and voluntarily offer yourself as a Candidate for R. A. Masonry?

Can (**2ndAS prompts throughout following questions**) - I do.

J - Do you present yourself with a view to improving in Fmy and dedicating that improvement to the glory of God and the good of man?

Can - I do.

J - Are you willing to take the sacred and solemn Obligation, restricted to this Supreme Degree and to keep inviolate our mystic rites?

Can - I am.

J - Then you will kneel whilst the blessing of heaven is invoked on our proceedings.

4 ks. All stand to order with sign of prayer.

PRAYER

J (or Chapter Reader) - Almighty God, at whose command the world burst forth from chaos and all created nature had its birth, we humbly implore Thee to bestow Thy spiritual blessing on this Convocation assembled in Thy Holy Name and grant that the Bro. who now seeks to participate in the light of our mysteries may be endued with a portion of Thy Divine Spirit. May he not enter our Order lightly, nor recede from it hastily, but pursue it steadfastly, and may he ever remember that the object of our institution is the welfare of our fellow-creatures, but, above all, the honour and glory of Thy Most Holy Name.

All - So mote it be. **(Drop sign)**

J - In all cases of difficulty and danger, in whom do you put your trust?

Can - In T. T. A. L. G. M. H.

J - Glad are we to find your faith continued on so firm a basis. You will now rise and follow your Conductor. **(Can. rises)**

J (4 ks) - Companions, take notice that Bro. A. B., who has been regularly initiated into Freemasonry, passed to the degree of F. C., and in due time raised to the Sublime Degree of a M.M., is about to pass in view before them, to show that he is the Candidate properly prepared to be exalted to the Supreme Degree of RA Masonry.

The 2ndAS takes Can. by the right hand, and walking in front and backwards the 2ndAS conducts Can. round the Chapter in due form, and places him in the West immediately in front of the Sojs' chairs. 2ndAS stands to the Can's right, 1stAS his left.

In only a few Chapters are there Organists and all too often this is an unimpressive element. In the absence of music it can be rendered emphatic by having the following Scriptures read in a well delivered manner. They reflect the working in Chapters in Ireland and America where the hoodwinked Candidate is led across rough and rocky material to emphasise the rough journey he is making and how dependent he is on the guidance and support of another. The text is divided into four pieces which are read in turn either as the Can. is led up the North, East, South and West sides of the Chapter, or spoken by the 2ndAS, as he leads the Can.

Contd

As the Can. is led up the North side of the Chapter: "I will lead the blind by paths they know not and through paths they have not yet trod."

As led across the East side: "I will turn darkness into light before them, and the rough places I will smooth."

As led down the South side: "These things I will do unto them, and I will forsake them not."

As reaches West: "Halt. Stoop low, Brother, for he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

J (to Can.) - Bro as you seek to participate in the light of our mysteries, we must call upon you to advance towards the Sacred Shrine where they are deposited by seven steps, halting and bowing at the third, fifth, and seventh, for at each step you will approach nearer to the S. and M. name of T. T. A. L. G. M. H.

The 2ndAS instructs the Can. how to proceed, thus:

2ndAS - Take three steps forward, commencing with the l. . f. . .; halt and bow. Take two steps, commencing with the r. . . f. . .; halt and bow. Take two more steps commencing with the r. . . f. . .; halt and bow.

(1stAS stands on left)

J (to Can.) - You are now arrived at the crown of a Vault, into which it is necessary that you should descend. You will, therefore, wrench forth two of the Arch-stones.

(1stAS hands crow to 2ndAS instructs Can. to remove two arch stones then 1stAS replaces crow)

J - Let the Candidate be duly lowered into the vault, and attend to a portion of the writings of our G. M. K. S. ... n.

(2ndAS lowers Can. on his knees before the pedestal)

J or Chapter Reader (stands and reads Proverbs, chap. ii., v. 1-9; chap. iii, v. 13-20; H and Z and Companions sitting) "My son, if thou will 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.

Contd

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 geteth 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 that 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".

J - You will now endeavour to find something in the vault.

(2ndAS causes Can. to grope and places scroll in his right hand. prompting Can.)

Can - It is found.

J - What is found?

Can - Something like a scroll of vellum of parchment.

J - What are its contents?

Can - From the want of light I am unable to discover.

J (to Can) - Let the want of light remind you that man by nature is the child of ignorance and error, and would ever have remained in a state of darkness, had it not pleased the Almighty to call him to light and immortality by the revelation of His Holy Will and Word. Arise, **(does so)** wrench forth the Keystone, **(does so)** and prepare to receive the light of the Holy Word.

(1stAS supplies crow to second assistant as before.)

J - Let the Candidate be again lowered into the vault, and attend to a portion of the writings of the Prophet Haggai.

(2ndAS again instructs Can. to kneel)

H - or Chapter Reader stands and reads Haggai, chap ii., v. 1-9, b **Z** and **J** and Companions sitting.) "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, and work: for I am with you, 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. The silver is mine, and the gold is mine. The glory of this latter house shall be greater than the former, and in this place will I give peace"

Z - You will now prepare to take a sacred and solemn Ob. without which none can be exalted to the Supreme Degree.

2ndAS (to Can.) - Support the V. of the S. L. on your left hand; place your right hand upon it.

(4 ks -The Principals advance to the pedestal, Comps. stand round the ensigns, and all give sign of reverence)

Z (to Can.) - State your names at length, and say after me -

OBLIGATION

I, in the presence of T. T. A. L. G. M. H., and of this H. R. A. Chapter, duly constituted, consecrated, and congregated, of my own free will and accord, do hereby and hereon most sincerely and solemnly promise and swear that I will always hele, conceal, and never divulge any of the secrets restricted to this Supreme Degree, denominated the H. R. A. C. of J., to anyone in the world, unless it be to a true and lawful Companion of the Order, whom I shall find to be such after due examination.

Contd

I further solemnly promise that I will not dare to pronounce lightly or irreverently the Sacred and Mysterious Name of T. T. A. L. G. M. H.; nor to share it by syllables unless in the presence and with the assistance of two or more R. A. Companions. All these points I solemnly swear to observe without ev., eq., or men. res. of any kind. So help me T. T. A. L. G. M. H., and keep me steadfast in this my sacred and solemn Obligation of a Royal Arch Mason.

Z - As a pledge of your fidelity, and to render this binding as a solemn Ob. for so long as you shall live, you will seal it four times with your lips on the V. of the S. L.

Z - Comp. Second Asst Soj., you will raise the Candidate in due form.

2ndAS (to Can.) - Bro. A. B., now a Comp. of Our Order - rise.

(2ndAS takes Can. by r.h. l.h. under forearm)

Z (to Can.) - Having been kept for a considerable time in a state of darkness, what, in your present position, is the predominant wish of your heart?

Can - Light.

Z - Comp. Second Assistant Sojourner, let that light be restored to the Candidate.

(Principals. stand to order with sceptres forming a triangle, Comps. standing round ensigns, tilt them slightly inwards, SE and SN standing either side of the Ped, raise the veil slightly; 2ndAS. then removes hoodwink.) When the Can. is restored to light, Z should give a prolonged pause so the candidate can absorb what he can now see. A slow silent count by Z to five is recommended.

Z (to Can.) - We congratulate you upon being admitted to the light of our Order, and it is with gratification that we express our confidence that your future conduct will fully justify our partiality in exalting you to this Supreme Degree, so truly denominated the essence of Freemasonry. You will now read the contents of the scroll you brought with you out of the vault.

Can (Can. reads Genesis, 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".

Z - Such, my newly-exalted Comp., are the first words of the Sacred Volume, which contains the record of God's revealed will and word. Let us, therefore, bless, praise, and magnify His Holy Name for the knowledge vouchsafed to us, and walk worthily in the light which shines around.

(Note - The Province particularly recommends that the following two paragraphs are all given/read as they provide the Can. with a good insight into the purpose of the Royal Arch)

J - In the degrees which you received in the Craft, you were taught that Freemasonry is a system of morality based on a belief in TGAOTU and promoting brotherly love, relief and truth as the rule for your earthly pilgrimage. The ceremony of Raising implies that there is more to learn for it urges us to lift our eyes to Him whose Divine Word brings peace and salvation to the faithful and obedient of the human race.

H -The Royal Arch develops this theme. It is therefore concerned with truth in the light of eternity and so leads its Companions to a higher understanding of the purpose of our mortal existence. It is in this sense that you should consider the vision revealed to you when you were restored to light. The meaning of your actions whilst in a state of darkness and the significance of this revelation is about to be explained to you, so that you may understand and enjoy the companionship of the Order of which you are now a member.

Z - You are now at liberty to retire and on your return to the Chapter the ceremony will be resumed. (2ndAS instructs Can to salute as M.M.)

(Can. retires taken out by SN - 2ndAS sits down removes surplice, puts it on right hand chair and sits down at side. PS joins 1stAS, they remove their RA clothing, give ct bow and retire from Chapter where they put on M.M. aprons.)

Lighting Cue 2: Lighting is restored.

The Arch stones should be rebuilt.

(Jan reads the following passage to set the context for the next part of the ceremony for the Can:

"You will shortly return to the Chapter as one of the three Sojourners journeymen builders. You will go right back to the start of the story but, this time, you will not be hoodwinked and therefore be able to see what happened in the previous part of the ceremony. Whilst the scenery in the Chapter has not changed, the room now represents the Grand Sanhedrim, the Council of 72 Elders which sat together to regulate the affairs of the Temple and the religious life of the Jews. Zerubbabel presides, with Haggai and Joshua. You now represent the Council Members. You have to imagine that the secret vault, represented by the carpet and its equipment, is still undiscovered under the foundations of the former temple building. Cyrus has issued his decree allowing the exiles to return to Jerusalem. You, as one of the three Sojourners, are about to arrive from your captivity in Babylon, having heard that the Temple is about to be rebuilt, to offer your services in that great and glorious undertaking." He then gives ks of M.M.

NOTE: This passage can also be read to the Companions within the Chapter room at a suitable moment, explaining that this is the context that is being set for the Can.

SN - M.E., there is a report.

H - Comp. Scribe N., see who seeks admission.

SN (opening door) - Whom have you there?

Jan - Three Master Masons from Babylon, having heard that you are about to rebuild the Temple to the honour and glory of the M. H., are anxious to sojourn among you, and offer their assistance in that great and glorious undertaking.

SN - Wait, while I report to their Excellencies.

(Closes door, gives ct. bow and reports to Principals)

SN - Your Excellencies three M. Ms. from B. having heard that you are about to rebuild the T. to the honour and glory of God, are anxious to sojourn among you and to offer their assistance in that great and glorious undertaking

H - Admit them. (Scr. N. goes to door and opens it. The Sojs. and Can. are admitted, clothed as M.M. They stand in the W., 1stAS in the centre, Can. on the left. PS on the right, SN. closes and locks door and resumes seat. Salute as master masons)

H - Strangers, whence come you?

1stAS - From Babylon, Your Excellencies.

H - What is your request?

1stAS - Having heard that you are about to rebuild the Temple to the honour and glory of the MH, we are anxious to sojourn amongst you, and assist in that great and glorious undertaking.

H - As no strangers can be permitted to participate in that most holy work, we demand to know who you are. **(Be demanding)**

1stAS - Brethren of your tribes and families, Your Excellencies.

H - But are you descended from those who fled when the City and Holy Temple were oppressed? Or are you of that tribe left behind by the Babylonian General for the purpose of tilling the land?

1stAS - We would scorn **(Be scornful)** to be descended from those who basely fled when the City and Holy Temple were sorely oppressed; neither are we of that menial tribe left behind by the Babylonish General for the purpose of tilling the land. We are nobly born, and, like yourselves, descended from a race of patriarchs and kings. A., I., and J. were our forefathers. Your Excellencies we are descended from the royal house of David and the princely tribe of Judah, who, for their sins and the sins of the people, were taken into Captivity with Jehoiachim their king by Nebuzaradan captain of the guard to Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, there to remain for seventy years as was foretold by the prophet Jeremiah. The period of our Captivity expired in the first year of the reign of Cyrus, King of Persia, when it pleased the Almighty to inspire that noble prince to issue the following proclamation: "Thus saith Cyrus King of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth hath the Lord God of heaven given me; and He hath charged me to build Him an house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all His people? The Lord his God be with him, and let him go up". We eagerly availed ourselves of this opportunity of returning to our native land, and are come up accordingly to sojourn among you, and to offer our assistance in rebuilding the Temple to the honour and glory of the Most High, who hath promised by the mouth of His holy prophets to establish there His Name for ever, and give peace to the whole earth.

H - We congratulate you on your noble ancestry, and with pleasure admit you brethren of our tribes and families. It only remains to inquire on what part of the work you wish to be employed?

1stAS - Any position to which your Excellencies may appoint us will be deemed an honour conferred.

H - Humility and docility are sure indications of merit, but, from the lateness of your application, the principal offices are already filled. We will, for the present, engage you to go and prepare the ground for the foundation of the Second Temple, on the site where the first formerly stood — for which purpose you will be supplied with the proper working implements; but we lay this strict injunction upon you:, that should you, during the progress of your labours, make any discovery which you deem of importance, you will communicate it to none but the Grand Sanhedrin now sitting.

1stAS - We humbly thank your Excellencies for the trust reposed in us, and pledge ourselves to a faithful performance of the duties thereof.

(The 1stAS receives the crow, the Can. the pick-axe, the PS. the shovel. If there be more than one Candidate, the last receives the shovel.)

H **(Stands, points to the door and with emphasis says:)** - Go, and may the God of your fathers be with you.

(Soj's. & Can. retire and return to the door carrying their I of I.

Whilst outside, SN places small bag of lots ropes in a convenient position near the Arch Stones)

Lighting Cue: 3: All candles bar one are extinguished.

Jan - Again sets the context for the next part of the ceremony by reading to the Can:

"As one of the Sojourners you were given one of the implements of labour as you left the room. Figuratively you will prepare the ground for the foundation of the second temple when you return to the Chapter. The room still represents the Grand Sanhedrim but, the secret vault represented by the carpet and other equipment will now become the focal point of the story. The Sojourners, as members of the princely tribe of Judah, (the elite) were given the heavy and menial task of clearing the ground for the foundations of the 2nd Temple.

Contd

Doing so they make an important discovery, as you will soon see. A lesson that truly humble workmen, though engaged on unskilled and uninteresting work, may nevertheless find in it great reward entitling them to a place among the wisest of men in the Council of Rulers. Traditionally, the Grand Sanhedrin was the Council of Princes and Rulers of the people set up by command of God to assist Moses. The word Sanhedrin means, 'the body of elders', its foundation is recorded in the Bible - Numbers, Chapter 11.

You, as the Candidate, will be rewarded and presented with a staff of office which you will ever have the right to bear it unless 72 of the Elders are present. You might therefore be interested in the details of Royal Arch Regulation 48 which states: 'According to ancient custom a complete Chapter of this Order of Freemasonry consists of Three Principals who, when in Chapter assembled are to be considered conjointly as the Master and each severally as a Master, two Scribes, a Treasurer, A Principal Sojourner, two Assistant Sojourners, and other companions, making up the number 72 as a Council: and no regular chapter can consist of more; but any number may be elected, exalted and received as Companions with all the privileges of membership save they are not to hold the staff of office or to be considered as Councillors when more than 72 are present. You will now hear a detailed dramatic account of how that discovery was made."

(Gives 4 ks)

SN - M.E., there is a report.

Z - Comp. S. N., see who seeks admission.

SN (opens the door and says to Jan) - Whom have you there?

Jan - The three Sojs. who were sent to prepare the ground for the foundation of the Second Temple, having made a discovery they deem of importance, are anxious to communicate it to the Grand Sanhedrin now sitting.

SN - Wait, whilst I report to the M.E. (Closes door.)

SN - M.E., the three Sojs., who were sent to prepare the ground for the foundation of the Second Temple, having made a discovery which they deem of importance, are anxious to communicate the same to your Excellencies.

Z - Admit them.

(They are admitted, 1stAS enters first, PS in the centre. The Can. last. No Salutes [but in Chapters with a long standing custom of saluting as M.M.'s this custom may be continued]. PS and 1stAS clothed in RA regalia. Can. still as M.M.)

Z (to Soj's.) - We understand that you have made a discovery which you deem of importance. You will therefore communicate to us the discovery you have made, and the circumstances which led to the same.

1stAS (1stAS undertakes the first part of the dialogue until lots are drawn) - M. E., on resuming our labours early this morning, we discovered a pair of pillars of exquisite design and workmanship. Proceeding onwards, we found six other pairs of equal symmetry and beauty, which, from their situation, appeared to have supported the roof of a subterranean passage or gallery, leading to the spot where the M. Holy Place formerly stood. Our progress was here impeded by the fragments which had fallen during the conflagration of the former Temple. These we cleared away, and came upon what appeared to solid rock. Accidentally striking it with my crow (**Soj strikes top of the arch with crow**), I heard a hollow sound. I therefore hailed my companions, when the one with the pick loosened the ground (**does so**) which the other cleared away with the shovel (**does so**) when what first appeared to be solid rock proved to be a compact piece of masonry in the form of a dome. Knowing from the character of the architect of the former building that no part thereof had been constructed in vain, we decided to examine it further. We therefore wrenched forth two of the Arch stones (**does so**), when a Vault of considerable extent appeared to view. Being all anxious to descend, we cast lots.

(Impl. of I. are laid on the ground behind them or leaned against the Sojs' chairs. The three, including the Can., draw lots from a small bag that the PS picks up)

PS - The lot ME was mine. (**Ropes are tied at this point**). My Comps. tied this strong cord or lifeline around my body to assist my descent; but being apprehensive of dying from damp, noxious vapours or other unforeseen causes, I took a smaller line in each hand, wherewith to give pre-concerted signals, if I required more liberty, or wished to be drawn up. I was then duly lowered into the vault.

Lighting Cue 4: Vault light is turned on and all other lighting is extinguished as PS steps over the arch stones into the vault.

(PS now steps over the arch whilst the other 1stSoj. feeds out the line of the longer rope which needs to be longer than has been customary until now)

On arriving at the bottom, I thought I felt something (does so) like the base or pedestal of a column with certain characters engraved thereon, but from the want of light I was unable to discover their meaning. I then signalled with my left hand for more liberty, and on exploring the vault (does so) found this scroll of vellum or parchment, but from the same cause I was unable to read its contents. I therefore signalled with my right hand, and my Comps drew me up, bringing the scroll with me. (indicates Scrl in r.h.)

Lighting Cue 5: Lighting is restored as PS comes out of the vault.

On arriving at the light we found (opens Scrl. as if reading from it) from the first words on the scroll that it was part of the long-lost Sacred writings promulgated by Moses at the foot of Mount Horeb in the wilderness of Sinai. This naturally stimulated us to further exertions; we, therefore, enlarged the aperture by removing the keystone (does so), and I descended as before (steps over Arch stones into the vault).

Lighting Cue 6: All lights turned off again apart from the vault light

The sun, by this time, had gained its greatest altitude, and shone with meridian splendour through the opening (Lighting Cue 7: Pedestal light turned on), enabling me clearly to distinguish those objects I had before so imperfectly discovered.

In the centre of the vault stood a block of white marble, a pedestal, wrought in the form of the altar of incense, a double cube, on the front of which were engraved the initials (points to them) of the three Grand Masters who presided at the building of the former temple, namely S. K. of I., H. K. of T., and H. A., together with certain mystic characters, whilst a veil covered the face of the pedestal. I approached it with reverential awe and on raising the veil (does so, then pauses), I there beheld on a plate of gold that which I humbly conceived to be the S. and M. N. of T. T. A. L. G. M. H. I carefully re-veiled it with all respect and reverence (does so), gave the agreed-on signal and was drawn up.

Lighting Cue 8: Full lighting is restored)

PS - Assisted by my Comps., I closed the aperture (**does so with assistance**) and we have hastened hither to communicate to your Excellencies the discovery we have made, and the circumstances which led to the same

Z - Your narrative bears every appearance of truth, but to convince us you must state what you saw engraven on that plate of gold.

PS - That, M. E., (**giving slight bow**) we must humbly beg to decline, for we have heard with our ears, and our fathers have declared unto us that in their days, and in the olden time before them, it was not lawful for anyone to mention that S. and M. name of T. T. A. L. G. M. H., except the High Priest, and even he but once a year, and then only when he entered the H. of H. and stood before the Ark of the Covenant to make propitiation for the sins of the people.

Z - We admire your pious caution, and your conduct considerably increases our esteem. We shall therefore depute two of our Comps., E. and N., to accompany you to the spot, and their report shall determine your reward.

(1stAS. takes charge of Can.)

PS retires with SE and SN to N.W. corner of the room. They stand to order, PS on right of SE.

S. E. says to PS, "State what you saw on that plate of gold." PS begins and the Name is communicated in a whisper. PS returns to his place. SE on north, SN on south, advance by seven steps, no sign, halting and bowing at 3, 5, and 7. They remove veil from pedestal and both report.)

PS, 1stAS and Can. pick-up impl. of I. once more.

Scrs. (SE first, SN after.) - Correct. M. E., in every particular.

Z (to Sojs., after consulting H. and J. - this should be emphasised to that it is obvious that they are consulting one-another) - My Colleagues in office concur with me in opinion that, as a reward for your zeal and fidelity in having discovered the long-lost mysteries of the R.A., you should immediately be called to that exalted rank held by your noble ancestors.

Z - Comps. E. and N., divest those worthy Masons of the implements of labour, clothe them in robes of innocence, and instruct them to advance hither that they may be duly rewarded.

(The Scribes take tools, etc., and replace them on the floor cloth, they then invest Can. and both Sojs., with white surplices, Soj's. resume their R.A. Clothing, SN directs Can. to advance, PS accompanying Can. to see that he does as instructed.)

Lighting Cue 9: All candles are restored.

SN (to Can.) - Advance by 7 steps, halting and bowing (no sign) at the 3rd, 5th, and 7th, follow and copy me.

(This is done and SN. returns to his seat.)

(PS halts Can. in front of the Principals. First Principal rises.)

Z (to Sojs.) - The robes with which you have been invested are emblems of that purity of heart and rectitude of conduct which ought to actuate all those who are exalted into this Supreme Degree. We reward you with this Jewel (puts on the jewel) as a mark of our entire approbation and admit you Companions among us; we decorate you (put on the ribbon and badge) with this ribbon and badge, the insignia of our order. (PS hands staff of Judah to M, E. Z., who continues.) We entrust you (give the staff into the r. . . t h. . . d) with this staff of office, which you will ever have a right to bear, unless 72 of your elders are present; and we hereby constitute you Princes and Rulers of the O; and if you continue in the faithful discharge of your duties, you will by a regular gradation be admitted to an entire participation of our mysteries

Z - It is in this point of the ceremonies that the manner of sharing the sacred Name is communicated. The Sojourners found this Name inscribed on a plate of gold in the vault, and rightly conceived it to be the Sacred and Mysterious Name of T. T. A. L. G. M. H. Because in olden times it was not lawful for anyone save the High Priest to pronounce that Name, it is our custom to divide it into three syllables, each syllable to be spoken by a different Companion, thus forming a token of recognition. E. Comp. H. will you please assist.

(H. leaves his Sept. on his chair and steps down to the r. side of the M.E.Z., facing S. The Can. is in front looking E., and the PS is behind and to the r. of the Can. ready to prompt him.)

Contd

Z - Stand to order thus (like Fellowcraft) with your left hand take hold of the left wrist of the Comp on your right, with your right hand take hold of the right wrist of the Comp on your left. The word is J-H-V and is given syllable by syllable in a consecutive order in an anti-clockwise direction. I will commence, J - H - V. (When completed Z explains Rev or hailing sign as follows)

Z - This is called the Reverential or Hailing Sign, and is to be used when entering or retiring from the Chapter, always to the Name on the Pedestal, as will be further explained in due course.

Z indicates Charter and presents Regulations and By Laws.

(The Principals resume their seats)

(PS takes Can. to the west, gives no sign and addresses the Principals.)

PS (to Principals) - Thus invested, rewarded, decorated, and entrusted by your Excellencies in this August Assembly, it shall ever be our study to merit a continuance of your approbation, by faithfully assiduously and zealously discharging the duties of the exalted position to which you have this day been pleased to call us.

Z - We congratulate you on being exalted into Royal Arch Masonry, at once the foundation and keystone of the whole Masonic structure. A perfect understanding of the secrets and mysteries of the Royal Arch can only be gained by passing through the three Principals' Chairs, and we look forward to the day when you will occupy those high offices and complete your knowledge of this Order. Companions, please be seated.

(The Soj's. and Can, take their seats, Can. in middle, PS on his right, and 1stAS on his left.)

The following Explanation of the Signs must be given at this point whenever the new Mystical Lecture is to be given in preference to the traditional version).

Z (or a PZ) - The Master Mason is taught the F.P.O.F. which point out our duties to each other. In the Holy Royal Arch we also acknowledge five signs which mark the relation we bear to the M.H. as creatures offending against His mighty will and power, yet still the adopted children of His mercy. I will now go through the signs and you, my newly exalted Companion, will please rise and copy me.

(PS and 1stAS rise with Can. and all copy signs)

This is the Penal Sign (**demonstrates**), the only perfect sign in Freemasonry given with the left hand. It signifies that the stiff-necked and disobedient will be cut off from the land of the living by the judgement of God, just as the body was slain by the sword of human justice.

It is to avert this that we are taught by the Reverential or Hailing Sign to bend with humility and resignation before the chastening hand of the Almighty (**shields eyes**) and engraft His laws on our hearts (**places hand on heart**). This Sign is to be used when entering or retiring from the Chapter, always to the Name (**points to pedestal**), and you will note that no step is taken when giving it. It is said that this sign was used by Moses, 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 (**demonstrates**) from the brightness of the Divine Presence, and placed his hand on his heart (**demonstrates**) in token of obedience, It should be discharged (**or dropped**) before speaking.

This sign can thus be considered the parent of the Penitential or Supplicatory Sign, for how should a frail and erring creature present himself to his Creator but on bended knees (**kneels**) and with uplifted hands (**demonstrates**) in token of humility and contrition?

The Monitorial sign, hands girding the loins, thumbs to the front (**demonstrates**), represents the frail and defenceless posture by which we acknowledge that we can do no manner of good or acceptable service but through Him from whom all good counsels and just works do proceed. Lastly, by the Fiducial Sign (**demonstrates**) we show that we would prostrate ourselves with our faces to the dust. Thus must we throw ourselves on the mercy of our Divine Creator and Judge, looking forward with humble but holy confidence to His blessed promises by which means alone we hope to pass through the Ark of our redemption into the mansions of eternal bliss and glory, into the presence of Him who is the Great I AM, the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last.

Companion, please be seated.

