

*“And God said “Let there be Light”
and there was Light”--Gen. 1:8.*

An Invitation to Master Masons From The Order of the Holy Royal Arch

DECLARATION: 1—By the solemn act of union between the two Grand Lodges of Freemasons of England in December 1813, it was declared and pronounced that pure Ancient Masonry consists of three Degrees and no more, viz., those of the Entered Apprentice, the Fellow Craft, and the Master Mason, including the Supreme Order of the Holy Royal Arch.

This pamphlet has received the approval of the Grand First Principal of the Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of British Columbia & Yukon

THE REASONS A MASTER MASON SHOULD RECEIVE THE SUPREME DEGREE OF THE HOLY ROYAL ARCH

The following is designed to guide the steps of the Master Mason into that channel that will lead him to the apex of Craft Masonry, the Holy Royal Arch.

It is intended to dispel any idea that it is nonessential, and to show that the knowledge and education of a Master Mason remains in an incomplete state until the Great Discovery is made in the Degree of the Holy Royal Arch.

THE MARK DEGREE

*“The stone which the builders refused is become
The headstone of the corner”---Psalms 118: 22*

It was customary for Operative Masons to select for themselves a Mark, to be placed upon every piece of work wrought by them. Each Mark was distinctive. These Marks may be seen today on the stones in Old Cathedrals of Europe. A report made to the Grand Mark Lodge of England states “There is probably no Degree in Freemasonry that can lay claim to greater antiquity than this one.” The Degree is controlled in England by the Grand Mark Lodge. In Scotland, United States and Canada, it is vested in the Grand Royal Arch Chapters.

The lessons of the Degree are intensely practical, emphasizing the great requirements in Life, namely, Qualification and Service.

THE DEGREE OF PAST MASTER

“I will commit the government into his hands”—Isaiah 22: 21

The introduction of this Degree into Royal Arch Masonry rests in the fact that originally, the Royal Arch Degree was conferred only on those who had been elected as Worshipful Masters of Craft Lodges, and had presided six months as Worshipful Master of some regular warranted Lodge. This limitation or restriction was

removed in the late Twentieth Century by permitting others than Actual Past Masters to receive the Holy Royal Arch Degree.

In the Grand Chapter of British Columbia & Yukon this Degree is NOT required in the advancement to the Royal Arch Mason Degree, however, for historical reasons, “The Past Master Degree” (Scottish Ritual) is still conferred by Columbia No 1 Chapter Victoria BC.

This Degree is conferred once annually and open to all Companions. Details are available from the Scribe Ezra (Secretary) of that Chapter.

The lessons taught are that Obedience to Authority is proof against Anarchy, and he who would teach must first learn to obey.

THE MOST EXCELLENT MASTER’S DEGREE

“The King and all the people dedicated the House of God”—2 Chron. 7: 4.

This Degree is associated with the completion and dedication of King Solomon’s Temple. It is one of the most impressive Degrees in the series. Its Ceremonies are sublimely spiritual, and its symbolism is a fitting prelude to that of the Holy Royal Arch.

Its lessons are Worship, Adoration, and Self-abnegation.

THE DEGREE OF THE HOLY ROYAL ARCH

“The Lord gave the Word, Great was the company of those that published it”—Psalms 68: 11.

This Degree takes its origin from circumstances surrounding the building of the Second Temple, 500 years after the dedication of King Solomon’s Temple, which had been destroyed by the Babylonians, and the people carried away captive to Babylon. Zerrubabel, a Prince of the House of Judah, was born in captivity, and in his upbringing he became a great friend of the youthful Prince Cyrus, who when he became King, liberated the Jews and assisted Zerrubabel in the rebuilding of the Second Temple. He is one of the finest characters depicted in Freemasonry, whose loyalty to his God and to his people are outstanding characteristics. Under his direction, the Second Temple was built, assisted by Haggai the Prophet and Joshua the High Priest. These titles are given to the three presiding officers of our Chapter—Zerrubabel, Haggai, and Joshua. In some other jurisdictions the titles vary.

The whole of the ceremonies, founded on Biblical and Traditional history as they are, are most impressive and elevating. The Ancient Robes of the officers, the Banners of the twelve tribes, the elaborate symbolism, all lend a dignity and interest which no other Degree in Freemasonry can approach, and every Master Mason when he reaches the climax in Freemasonry in this Supreme Degree, feels a satisfaction and joy such as he has not before experienced in any of the preceding Degrees.

The late distinguished Companion, Lord Amptill, Pro First Grand Principal of the Grand Chapter of England said this:

“I call the Royal Arch Degree the “Keystone of Freemasonry” Pure Antient Freemasonry, it is Declared, consists of three degrees and no more, Entered Apprentice, Fellow Craft and Master Mason, including the Supreme Order of the Holy

**Royal Arch. Its adoption is a vital part of our
System**

The great lessons of the Degree are Humility, Loyalty, Service without Hope of Reward, Brotherly Love or Companionship.

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CONCLUSION

It is the duty of every Royal Arch Mason to assist in placing the feet of the Master Mason on the path that leads him onward and upward to that destiny that has awaited him ever since he was invested with the Substituted Secrets of a Master Mason, and to tell him of something of what he is to expect in his further search for Masonic Truth.

This is the mission of this short informative article. When you as a Master Mason become interested and are prepared to move upward and onward you will find all Royal Arch Masons ready and glad to lend the helping hand.

***“Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding”—Prov. 3: 13.
“Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter; Fear God and keep His commandments for this is the whole DUTY of man”—Eccl. 12: 13***
