

# The Allied Masonic Degrees

*The Allied Masonic Degrees are a series of detached "side-degrees" which were once conferred separately and are now united into one body. In the United States, each Council of A.M.D. controls ten degrees:*



## I. Royal Ark Mariner

The legend of this degree contains events before, during and after the Biblical Flood. The apron and other emblems of this degree are easily recognizable by the ark and rainbow motif, although the degree itself claims the original apron to have been made of unfinished lambskin.

## II. Order of the Secret Monitor

A degree of Brotherly Love, demonstrated through the example of David and Jonathan. This degree also symbolically demonstrates that the Masonic principles which survived the flood with Noah were still alive among the children of Israel, thereby providing a link between Antediluvian Masonry and the "Solomonic Masonry" with which we are more familiar today.

## III. Masters of Tyre

This most impressive degree commences in the Court of the King of Tyre, who receives a request from Solomon, King of Israel, for assistance in building the Temple. Hiram, King of Tyre, composes a congratulatory letter in return, and sends the requested assistance as well as a highly skilled craftsman named Hiram Abiff, a Tyrian by habitation, but an Israelite by birth (his mother being of the tribe of Naphtali.) This degree is unique in its Tyrian point of view, as Hiram, King of Tyre, presides in the East. The second section of the degree takes place in a quarry near Jerusalem, and bodies of this degree are styled Quarries rather than Lodges.

Events following the death of Hiram Abiff are also depicted, and this degree is so interwoven with the time-line and story of the Master Mason degree, that it is as if we are being permitted to witness that sublime degree from a new and different point of view.

In recognition of the most distinguished character of Hiram Abiff, a new order, the Masters of Tyre, is founded by Hiram, King of Tyre, for the purpose of memorializing our departed Grand Master.

## IV. Grand Tylers of Solomon

The legend of this degree centers around a subterranean vault known as the "Mystic Chamber," and the story of an unwitting intruder's entrance into the vault. It teaches us not to make hasty judgments and emphasizes the importance of being properly Tyled (guarded). Meetings in the vault are composed of 27 members and the number 9 is employed throughout the symbolism of the degree.

## V. Architect

This degree takes place after the death of Hiram Abiff. It is the first in a series of three degrees which tell a continuing story about the advancement of skilled craftsmen as they work towards the ultimate purpose of completing the Temple.

The candidate is required to profess his abhorrence of the crime committed against Hiram before being admitted, and is thereafter appointed to be an Architect so that he may furnish plans for the second elevation of the Temple and participate in the construction of the tomb of his Grand Master Hiram Abiff.

## VI. Grand Architect

While attempting to complete the third elevation of the Temple the work is at a standstill because only a Grand Architect possesses the skill to erect structures in the air.

A Master Architect comes forth claiming to have drafted plans for the third elevation (the like of which are unknown to him.) He presents them, and owing to his skill and ability, they are taken under consideration by the two Overseers and subsequently adopted. This teaches us that man, by his creativity and intelligence, can exceed beyond the level of his instruction. The Overseers also provide an example worthy of emulation in that they, being of a higher seniority, are nonetheless willing to consider the designs of their less experienced brother and adopt them based upon their merit.

## VII. Superintendent (Chief Architect)

The structure of the Temple is completed, and only the sacred utensils, including the table of shewbread, the lampstand, and the incense altar, are left to be completed. Having proven himself capable, as evidenced by the plans presented in the preceding degree, the candidate is now recognized for his achievement by being appointed Chief Architect, thus becoming the successor to Hiram Abiff.

## VIII. Excellent Master

This degree recounts the return from the Babylonian captivity, and includes a historic version of the ceremony of the Passing of the Veils. According to Masonic tradition, a series of curtains were set up at the entrance to the Tabernacle during the rebuilding of the Temple. The first is Blue, representing Universal Friendship and Benevolence. The second is Purple, a symbol of union. The third is Scarlet, representing fervency and zeal. The fourth and final veil is White, a symbol of purity. We read in the sacred writings "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." White is, therefore, the appropriate color to mark a candidate's admission into the place where he shall at last obtain the long sought object of his search.

## IX. Saint Lawrence the Martyr

St. Lawrence, a Spaniard called to Rome by the Pope was martyred by order of the Roman Prefect on August 10, 258 C.E. Fifty years later, Constantine had a Basilica built over St. Lawrence's grave which became one of the seven major churches in Rome. St. Lawrence was tortured to death by being roasted slowly on a grid-iron, but having confidence of his status before God, Lawrence said to his torturers "This side is done, turn me over and have a bite." It is therefore said that he "bested the heat of the flames with the might of his spirit."

This degree requires the candidate to undergo a test of his own courage. If successful, he is duly obligated and instructed in the history and symbols of this degree.

## X. Knight of Constantinople

This chivalric order demonstrates the method by which Emperor Constantine taught a lesson of humility and equality to the arrogant nobles of his time, and reinforces in a very strong manner the great moral lesson taught by the Level, one of the principal Working Tools in the Fellowcraft Degree of the Symbolic Lodge. 🦉