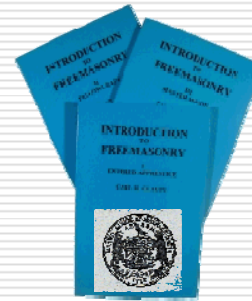


Instructor Notes for Master Mason Class



Lodges of Instruction of the
Grand Lodge of Masons in Massachusetts

August 2011



**Instructor use only;
Not a Class Handout**

Copyright © 2011 Grand Lodge of Masons in Massachusetts

8-1

Structure of a 40-Minute MM Class

- ❑ Instructor introduces himself and encourages students to do so (1-2 min.)
- ❑ Claudy's introduction on the importance of the Sublime Degree (3-4 min.)
- ❑ Brief recap what happened in the degree and the lectures (4 min.)
- ❑ Together, review the outline of MM topics in the Claudy book (2 min.)
 - Review for those who read it;
Overview for those who did not yet.
- ❑ 1st Discussion Question (12-15 min.)
- ❑ 2nd Discussion Question (12-15 min.)
- ❑ Closing points [even if 2nd DQ not complete] (2 min.)

8-2

Remember: Focus on Discussion

- ❑ When posing a Discussion Question, please give them time to think about it
 - Silence is a Working Tool for the Instructor!
 - Let the Candidates together explore the question
 - You are there to GUIDE and FACILITATE, not to jump in with an (“only this is correct”) answer
 - If you listen carefully, you can learn from the Candidates while they learn from you

8-3

Please Keep in Mind our Objectives

- ❑ Instill in our New Brothers a feeling for the richness of the Masonic Lodge and the value of Masonic education
- ❑ Familiarize them with the topics covered in the Claudy book for the degree they just received
- ❑ Encourage them to read each Claudy book
- ❑ Provide an opportunity for them to discuss what they experienced in the degree

8-4

Sublime Degree, to be read aloud

THE SUBLIME DEGREE OF MASTER MASON

Similarities exist in all the degrees of Ancient Craft Masonry. Each has an entry, a reception, a circumambulation, an obligation, a bringing to light. Each discovers certain symbols to the initiate and, in demonstration and in lecture, gives him the key by which he may unlock the door behind which he will find their meaning.

In its Second Section the Sublime Degree departs utterly from the familiar. Instead of being concerned with moral principles and exhortations, as is the first degree, or with architecture and learning, as is the second, it answers the cry of Job, "If a man die, shall he live again?"

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

As a whole the degree is symbolical of that old age by the wisdom of which "we may enjoy the happy reflection consequent on a well-spent life, and die in the hope of a glorious immortality."

But it is much more than that. It is at once the universal and yearning question of man throughout all ages and its answer. It teaches no creed, no dogma, no religion; only that there *is* a hope of immortality; there *is* a Great Architect by whose mercy we may live again; leaving to each brother his choice of interpretations by which he may read the Great Beyond.

It teaches of the power - and the powerlessness - of evil. For those who are happy in a belief in the resurrection of the physical body, the Sublime Degree has comfort. For those whose hope is in the

raising only of that spiritual body of which Paul taught, the degree assures of all the longing heart can wish.

When the lesson of the greatest hope and the dearest wish of all mankind is made manifest, the Sublime Degree turns to *this* life and *this* brotherhood, and in the symbolism of the Lion, the exposition of the Five Points of Fellowship, the means by which a Mason may claim all that a man may from his brother, and the Word, ties together the Hiram Legend and daily living in a manner which no thoughtful man may see and hear without a thrill; a way at once awe-inspiring and heartening, terrible but beautiful, sternly uncompromising yet strangely comforting.

It is because the degree is all this - and more, much more, which cannot be put into words - that it means so much to those of whom it becomes a part. The ceremony is not of the earth, earthy, but of that land of the inner life, that home of the spirit where each man thinks the secret thoughts he tells never - never.

Pull the flower to pieces; remain the petals, a perfume, but no rose. Play the symphony, isolated note by note; sound is heard, but no music. Every word Milton wrote is in the dictionary but great poems may not there be found.

So of any written account of this degree; we may write of its symbols, analyze its legend, tell of its meaning, but we pronounce but words without a rhyme, make a flower of wax, a song muted. The best we may do is to point out a path up the high mountain of spiritual experience which is the Sublime Degree, that he who climbs may see it with a new view - and clearer eyes.

pages
125 to
top 127

LARGE PRINT COPY
PROVIDED
Ask your Lead Instr

8-5

What Happened in the Degree?

- ☐ Suitable Proficiency
- ☐ Knocking on the door and being admitted
- ☐ Another journey in darkness, examination
- ☐ Third step, Obligation
- ☐ Further discovery
- ☐ A further journey in Light
- ☐ Working Tools
- ☐ Grand Master Hiram Abif, Junior Warden
- ☐ Charge from the Master

8-6

Claudy's topics for the MM

- ☐ The Sublime Degree of Master Mason
- ☐ "Remember Now Thy Creator..."
- ☐ The Hiram Legend
- ☐ The Sanctum Sanctorum
- ☐ The Lion
- ☐ Five Points of Fellowship
- ☐ Three Grand Pillars
- ☐ The Book of Constitutions, Guarded by the Tiler's Sword
- ☐ The All-Seeing Eye
- ☐ The 47th Problem of Euclid
- ☐ Sprig of Acacia
- ☐ The Laws of Freemasonry
- ☐ Landmarks
- ☐ Grand Lodge
- ☐ Power of the Ballot
- ☐ Vouching
- ☐ The Character of a Master Mason
- ☐ A Master's Wages
- ☐ Freemasonry Comes to the New World

8-7

MM Discussion Question 1

- ❑ What symbol from any of the degrees is the most meaningful to you?

What makes it meaningful?

(HANDOUT)

- [Thanks to Grand Lodge of Maine for the original version of this handout.]



8-8

MM Discussion Question 2

- Claudy points out the progression in the degrees represented by Columns
 - The EA learns of Wisdom, Strength, Beauty
 - The FC learns of Doric, Ionic, Corinthian
 - The MM learns of 3 Great Pillars, represented by our 3 ancient Grand Masters

Thinking of the first of those Great Pillars, could it have instead been named "Knowledge" or "Understanding" ?

What are the differences between Knowledge, Understanding, and Wisdom?
How do they relate to each other?

8-9

After DQ 2 Discussion, to be read aloud

Let's see what Claudy says about Knowledge, Understanding, and Wisdom
(page 140 bottom to 141)

For Masons, however, perhaps the most illuminating passages regarding wisdom come from Proverbs (ii 2; iii 14, 15; viii 8). Solomon said:

Incline thine ear unto wisdom and apply thine heart to understanding. Happy is the man that findeth wisdom and the man that getteth understanding. For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver and the gain thereof than fine gold. For wisdom is better than rubies and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it.

Knowledge is cognizance of facts. Wisdom is the strength of mind to apply its knowledge. A Mason may know every word of our ritual from the beginning of the Entered Apprentice's Degree to the final words of the Sublime Degree of Master Mason and still have no wisdom, Masonic or otherwise. Many a great leader of the Craft has been a stumbling, halting ritualist, yet possessed in abundance a Masonic wisdom which made him a power for good among the brethren.

Knowledge comes from study; wisdom from experience. Knowledge may be the possession of the criminal, the wastrel, the "irreligious libertine," and the atheist. Wisdom comes only to the wise, and the wise are ever good.

The first of the Three Grand Pillars which support our Institution should be to every Mason a symbol of the real need to become wise with the goodness of Masonry, skilled in the arts of brotherhood, learned in the way to the hearts of his brethren. If he know not and ask, "How may I gain Masonic wisdom?" let him find the answer not in the ritual, important though it is; not in form and ceremony, beautiful though they are with the strength of repetition and age - let him look to the Five Points of Fellowship, for there is the key to all real wisdom concerning the brotherhood of man.

LARGE PRINT COPY
PROVIDED
Ask your Lead Instr

Closing the MM Class

- ☐ Tell the MM Brothers about the on-line resources available to them for further learning (**HANDOUT**)
 - ☐ Special web address: **MassMasons.org/MM/**
 - ☐ Enter with:
your name, Lodge, and "trowel" (working tool)
- ☐ Masonic Education does NOT END HERE
 - This is the beginning of a life-long journey

8-11