

At page 20 After the Exalteer retires for the first time and before he re-enters the following should be read to him :-

“Before you entered the Chapter Room you were told that a story was about to unfold. In the first part of the Exaltation ceremony through which you have just passed, you will not have been aware what the story was. The remainder of the ceremony tells you the story and you will recognise some of the things you did earlier as fitting into the story.

When you enter the Chapter Room you will be one of three sojourners or journeymen builders who have just arrived in Jerusalem from Babylon. Although the layout of the Chapter Room has not changed since you retired, it is now intended to represent the Grand Sanhedrin in Jerusalem where Zerubbabel presides with Haggai and Joshua over the Council of Elders which regulated the affairs of the Temple and the religious life of the Jews. Zerubbabel, Haggai and Joshua are represented by the three Companions sitting in the East of the Chapter Room. The rest of the Companions represent members of the Council of Elders. Your colleague, the Principal Sojourner, will explain the story in more detail”

At page 24 After the Exalteer retires for the second time and before he re-enters, The following is read to him:-

“You and your two colleagues have just been told to go and clear ground on a building site and given the tools to do so. When you return into the Chapter Room you are back in the Grand Sanhedrin again and one of your colleagues begins to explain what you have discovered on the building site. The area in the centre of the Chapter Room with the white pedestal now represents the interior of a secret vault and is the focal point of the story. Throughout the story, the actual layout of the room never changes.”

At page 31 line 2 after the words “at once the foundation...” the following should be added “...and keystone...”. It will then read “....at once the foundation and keystone of the whole Masonic structure.”

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V1 - 05/2017

Provincial Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of Worcestershire



Amendments to the Worcestershire Royal Arch Ritual Book Issued 2005

2017

Amendments to the Province of Worcestershire Royal Arch ritual (The Worcestershire Working as detailed in the ritual book issue 2005)

Immediately after the Chapter has been opened and after the MEZ has said "Be seated, Comps" as per **page 4** of the Ritual book:

The Chapter is opened in the normal way, but without the candles lit. MEZ asks the DC to illuminate the Pedestal. If the DC and ADC are carrying out the work they will move to the West together. If others are doing the work the Companions involved will move to the West where the DC or P Soj will light the tapers and retire.

The Companions give a court bow and via the North and South move to the East keeping in step. When parallel with the Pedestal stop - pause - then turn inwards and pause. The Companions should now be facing each other. They bring the tapers in front of their faces and then before proceeding

MEZ - "The origin of this ceremony is found in the Chaldean (*Kal-di-en*) Rite of Light and paraphrasing the lengthy Rite it says 'And the Priests commanded the people to gather and turn to the East'. The 2 small candles in the North and South are lit representing the gathering of the people". (*The 2 Companions do so.*)

MEZ - " 'Then did the light come over the Eastern horizon and stretched its rays afar even unto the Western horizon'. The large candle in the East and small candle in the West are now lit to represent the spread of the rays". (*The 2 Companions do so.*)

MEZ - "And the light shone all around" (*The 2 Companions light the 2 remaining candles.*)

The 2 Companions now take one pace back - blow the tapers out together- turn to the West - pause - then in unison return to the West of the Columns- stop - turn to the East and make a court bow to the Principals and then return to their places.

At **page 7** immediately after the P Soj says "And it is closed accordingly" and the three Principals knock:

M.E.Z. - "Companion Sojourners, you will return our Secrets to the safety of darkness."

The three Sojourners step forward. Then, having received the snuffers from the P. Soj. if needed, the 1st Asst. Soj. and the 2nd Asst. Soj. walk respectively along the South and North sides of the Ensigns, at an equal pace, halting when they are level with the Pedestal.

They then turn inwards, facing each other across the Pedestal, close enough to the candles to conduct the following ceremony, whilst obviously ensuring their surplices are not in danger from the candles!

P.Soj.- " 'And the lives of the People were enlightened by the Secrets they had learned'. The 2 Large Candles in the West are then extinguished to represent the Light now shining within the People". (*The 2 Companions do so.*)

P Soj " 'And the People pledged to maintain these Secrets in their hearts by day and by night.' The Large Candle in the East and the Small Candle in the West are extinguished to represent the Light of the Secrets seen throughout the lives of the People". (*The 2 Companions do so.*)

P Soj " 'Then the Priests commanded the People to disperse and return to their homes.' The 2 Small Candles in the North and South are extinguished representing the Light now reposing in the Peoples' hearts beyond the veils of the Temple". (*The 2 Companions do so.*)

The Asst. Sojs. take one pace back, pause, turn together to the West, pause, then in unison return to the West of the Ensigns to line up with the P. Soj. All three Sojourners court bow to the Principals and then return to their places.

In our Chapters, most M.E.Z.s read the Illuminating of the Pedestal. This is perfectly acceptable, but of course they may recite it if they have the confidence to do so accurately. Similarly the Principal Sojourner may recite or read the above words.

The importance is in retaining the dignity of the ceremony.

In complementing the Illuminating of the Pedestal, the Ceremony of Returning our Secrets to the Safety of Darkness should remind the departing Companions that what they have learned in the Chapter should guide their lives beyond.

At **page 9** immediately after the heading "IN THE ANTE ROOM" and immediately before "P.Soj. "Brother A.B., advance to me....." the following should be read to the Candidate:-

"The story about to unfold, on entering the Chapter, 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 the Candidate for Exaltation, you represent one of those exiles returning to Jerusalem as a Sojourner or Journeyman builder. You 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".
