Sharing the Work: The Revised Mystical Lecture

If considered necessary, the Lecture may be given by a competent Companion below the rank of First Principal. If the Lecture is given by more than one Companion, suitable breakpoints occur at the end of each section as indicated below, and may be adopted as convenient.

Comp 1: Companions, tradition informs us that at the building of King Solomon’s Temple an immense number of masons were employed, and that their names or marks were found engraved on some part or other of the building; but the names of the three Grand Masters who presided were nowhere found until, as was graphically illustrated in the earlier part of the ceremony, they were discovered by the three sojourners who, returning from the captivity in Babylon, had been instructed to prepare the ground for the foundation of the Second Temple.

The Sojourners discovered a vault and, knowing that no part of the former structure had been designed in vain, decided to explore it further. In its centre was a pedestal, but they could not examine this until the darkness was dispersed - so should we not expect to understand immediately all that we encounter, but try to comprehend its meaning by continued study and enquiry.

When the glorious light of the sun revealed the contents of the vault, the pedestal was seen as a block of white marble, wrought in the form of an Altar of Incense, a double cube. It is represented here by the pedestal which you see before you. On the top of the pedestal was a plate of gold. White, as I am sure you are well aware, is an emblem of innocence, as gold is of purity. Engraved on the front of the pedestal were found the initials of the three Grand Masters who had presided at the building of the former temple, namely (State names in full) S., K of I; H., K. of T; and H.A.B., placed there to perpetuate their names as well as to commemorate the circumstances and proceedings attending the erection of that structure. There was likewise the triple tau (points to it). The tau, by reason of its having been used to distinguish the innocent, and those who escaped unhurt in battle, has ever been considered a mark or sign of life. The triple tau alludes symbolically to the Deity, by whom the gloomy, horrific and unshapen chaos was changed into regular form and peaceful existence.

(Sojourners and Candidate take up positions on the South side of the Pedestal).
Comp 2: On this plate of gold are a triangle and circle. These mathematical figures have ever been selected as referring to the Deity or some Divine attribute. The triangle has long been considered a sacred symbol. In times of antiquity names of God and symbols of Divinity were often enclosed in triangular figures.

The circle is an emblem of eternity, for as it has neither beginning nor end, it may justly be deemed emblematic of God, who is without beginning of days or end of years, and it continually reminds us of that great hereafter when we hope to enjoy eternal life. On the circle (or plate) of gold is that great, awful, tremendous and incomprehensible Name of the Most High. It signifies I AM THAT I AM - the Alpha and Omega - the Beginning and the End - the First and the Last - who WAS, and IS, and IS TO COME - the Almighty. It is the Sacred and Mysterious Name of the actual, future, eternal, unchangeable and all-sufficient God who alone has His being in and from Himself and gives to all others their being; so that HE IS what HE WAS, WAS what HE IS, and will remain both WHAT HE WAS and WHAT HE IS from everlasting to everlasting, all creatures being dependent on His mighty will and power.

Companions, I charge you, should you ever be about to mention that Sacred and Mysterious Name lightly or irreverently, pause, place your finger on your lips, and remember your Obligation.

Comp 3: On being restored to light you beheld the three Principals holding aloft their sceptres so that they formed a triangle.

The sceptre of the Third Principal, J., denotes the priestly function; that of the Second Principal, H., represents the prophetical role; these two sceptres define the limits of earthly power which the sceptre of the First Principal, Z., represents, thus illustrating that on earth power must be exercised under and subject to the laws of our Divine Creator.

By this vision therefore you are led to see the Royal Arch as indeed the climax of pure, ancient Freemasonry, having virtue for its aim and the glory of God for its object, while the eternal welfare of man is considered in its every part, point and letter. Suffice it to say that it sees the teaching of the Craft in the light of eternity, being founded on the Sacred Name of God Who was from all beginning, is now, and will remain, One and the Same for ever.

This Supreme Degree inspires its members with the most exalted ideas of God, and leads to the exercise of the purest and most devout piety; a reverence for the incomprehensible True and Living God Most High, the Eternal Ruler of the Universe, the elemental life and primordial source of all its principles, the very spring and fount of all its virtues.