

The Hiramic Legend

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When Solomon--the beloved of God, builder of the Everlasting House, and Grand Master of the Lodge of Jerusalem--ascended the throne of his father David he consecrated his life to the erection of a temple to God and a palace for the kings of Israel. David's faithful friend, Hiram, King of Tyre, hearing that a son of David sat upon the throne of Israel, sent messages of congratulation and offers of assistance to the new ruler. In his *History of the Jews*, Josephus mentions that copies of the letters passing between the two kings were then to be seen both at Jerusalem and at Tyre. Despite Hiram's lack of appreciation for the twenty cities of Galilee which Solomon presented to him upon the completion of the temple, the two monarchs remained the best of friends. Both were famous for their wit and wisdom, and when they exchanged letters each devised puzzling questions to test the mental ingenuity of the other. Solomon made an agreement with Hiram of Tyre promising vast amounts of barley, wheat, corn, wine, and oil as wages for the masons and carpenters from Tyre who were to assist the Jews in the erection of the temple. Hiram also supplied cedars and other fine trees, which were made into rafts and floated down the sea to Joppa, whence they were taken inland by Solomon's workmen to the temple site.

Because of his great love for Solomon, Hiram of Tyre sent also the Grand Master of the Dionysiac Architects, CHiram Abiff, a Widow's Son, who had no equal among the craftsmen of the earth. CHiram is described as being "a Tyrian by birth, but of Israelitish descent," and "a second Bezaleel, honored by his king with the title of Father." *The Freemason's Pocket Companion* (published in 1771) describes CHiram as "the most cunning, skilful and curious workman that ever lived, whose abilities were not confined to building alone, but extended to all kinds of work, whether in gold, silver, brass or iron; whether in linen, tapestry, or embroidery; whether considered as an architect, statuary [*sic*]; founder or designer, separately or together, he equally excelled. From his designs, and under his direction, all the rich and splendid furniture of the Temple and its several appendages were begun, carried on, and finished. Solomon appointed him, in his absence, to fill the chair, as Deputy Grand-Master; and in his presence, Senior Grand-Warden, Master of work, and general overseer of all artists, as well those whom David had formerly procured from Tyre and Sidon, as those Hiram should now send." (Modern Masonic writers differ as to the accuracy of the last sentence.)

Although an immense amount of labor was involved in its construction, Solomon's Temple--in the words of George Oliver--"was only a small building and very inferior in point of size to some of our churches." The number of buildings contiguous to it and the vast treasure of gold and precious stones used in its construction concentrated a great amount of wealth within the temple area. In the midst of the temple stood the Holy of Holies, sometimes called the Oracle. It was an exact cube, each dimension being twenty cubits, and exemplified the influence of Egyptian symbolism. The buildings of the temple group were ornamented with 1,453 columns of Parian marble, magnificently sculptured, and 2,906 pilasters decorated with capitals. There was a broad porch facing the east, and the *sanctum sanctorum* was upon the west. According to tradition, the various buildings and courtyards could hold in all 300,000 persons. Both the Sanctuary and the Holy of Holies were entirely lined with solid gold plates encrusted with jewels.

King Solomon began the building of the temple in the fourth year of his reign on what would be, according to modern calculation, the 21st day of April, and finished it in the eleventh year of his reign on the 23rd day of October. The temple was begun in the 480th year after the children of Israel had passed the Red Sea. Part of the labor of construction included the building of an artificial foundation on the brow of Mount Moriah. The stones for the temple were hoisted from quarries directly beneath Mount Moriah and were trued before being brought to the surface. The brass and golden ornaments for the temple were cast in molds in the clay ground between Succoth and Zeredatha, and the wooden parts were all finished before they reached the temple site. The building was put together, consequently, without

sound and without instruments, all its parts fitting exactly "without the hammer of contention, the axe of division, or any tool of mischief."

Anderson's much-discussed *Constitutions of the Free-Masons*, published in London in 1723, and reprinted by Benjamin Franklin in Philadelphia in 1734, thus describes the division of the laborers engaged in the building of the Everlasting House:

"But Dagon's Temple, and the finest structures of Tyre and Sidon, could not be compared with the Eternal God's Temple at Jerusalem, * * * there were employed about it no less than 3,600 Princes, or Master-Masons, to conduct the work according to Solomon's directions, with 80,000 hewers of stone in the mountain, or Fellow Craftsmen, and 70,000 labourers, in all 153,600 besides the levy under Adoniram to work in the mountains of Lebanon by turns with the Sidonians, viz., 30,000, being in all 183,600." Daniel Sickels gives 3,300 overseers, instead of 3,600, and lists the three Grand Masters separately. The same author estimates the cost of the temple at nearly four thousand millions of dollars.

The Masonic legend of the building of Solomon's Temple does not in every particular parallel the Scriptural version, especially in those portions relating to CHiram Abiff. According to the Biblical account, this Master workman returned to his own country; in the Masonic allegory he is foully murdered. On this point A. E. Waite, in his *New Encyclopædia of Freemasonry*, makes the following explanatory comment:

"The legend of the Master-Builder is the great allegory of Masonry. It happens that his figurative story is grounded on the fact of a personality mentioned in Holy Scripture, but this historical background is of the accidents and not the essence; the significance is in the allegory and not in any point of history which may lie behind it."



From an early hand-painted Masonic apron.

While the mystic symbolism of Freemasonry decrees that the apron shall be a simple square of white lambskin with appropriate flap, Masonic aprons are frequently decorated with curious and impressive figures. "When silk cotton, or linen is worn," writes Albert Pike, "the symbolism is lost. Nor is one clothed who blots, defaces, and desecrates the white surface with ornamentation, figuring, or colors of any kind." (See *Symbolism*.) To Mars, the ancient plane of cosmic energy, the Atlantean and Chaldean "star gazers" assigned Aries as a diurnal throne and Scorpio as a nocturnal throne. Those not raised to spiritual life by initiation are described as "dead from the sting of a scorpion," for they wander in the night side of divine power. Through the mystery of the Paschal Lamb, or the attainment of the Golden Fleece, these soul are raised into the constructive day Power of Mars in Aries--the symbol of the Creator. When

worn over the area related to the animal passions, the pure lambskin signifies the regeneration of the procreative forces and their consecration to the service of the Deity. The size of the apron, exclusive of the flap, makes it the symbol of salvation, for the Mysteries declare that it must consist of 144 square inches.

The apron shown above contains a wealth of symbolism: the beehive, emblematic of the Masonic lodge itself, the trowel, the mallet, and the trestleboard; the rough and trued ashlar; the pyramids and hills of Lebanon; the pillars, the Temple, and checkerboard floor; and the blazing star and tools of the Craft. The center of the apron is occupied by the compass and square, representative of the Macrocosm and the microcosm, and the alternately black and white serpent of astral light. Below is an acacia branch with seven sprigs, signifying the life Centers of the superior and the inferior man. The skull and cross bones are a continual reminder that the spiritual nature attains liberation only after the philosophical death of man's sensuous personality.

CHiram, as Master of the Builders, divided his workmen into three groups, which were termed *Entered Apprentices*, *Fellow-Craftsmen*, and *Master Masons*. To each division he gave certain passwords and signs by which their respective excellence could be quickly determined. While all were classified according to their merits some were dissatisfied, for they desired a more exalted position than they were capable of filling. At last three Fellow-Craftsmen, more daring than their companions, determined to force CHiram to reveal to them the password of the Master's degree. Knowing that CHiram always went into the unfinished *sanctum sanctorum* at high noon to pray, these *ruffians*--whose names were Jubela, Jubelo, and Jubelum--lay in wait for him, one at each of the main gates of the temple. CHiram, about to leave the temple by the south gate, was suddenly confronted by Jubela armed with a twenty-four-inch gauge. Upon CHiram's refusal to reveal the Master's *Word*, the ruffian struck him on the throat with the rule, and the wounded Master then hastened to the west gate, where Jubelo, armed with a square, awaited him and made a similar demand. Again CHiram was silent, and the second assassin struck him on the breast with the square. CHiram thereupon staggered to the east gate, only to be met there by Jubelum armed with a maul. When CHiram, refused him the Master's *Word*, Jubelum struck the Master between the eyes with the mallet and CHiram fell dead.

The body of CHiram was buried by the murderers over the brow of Mount Moriah and a sprig of acacia placed upon the grave. The murderers then sought to escape punishment for their crime by embarking for Ethiopia, but the port was closed. All three were finally captured, and after admitting their guilt were duly executed. Parties of three were then sent out by King Solomon, and one of these groups discovered the newly made grave marked by the evergreen sprig. After the Entered Apprentices and the Fellow-Craftsmen had failed to resurrect their Master from the dead he was finally *raised* by the Master Mason with the "strong grip of a Lion's Paw."

To the initiated Builder the name *CHiram Abiff* signifies "My Father, the Universal Spirit, one in essence, three in aspect." Thus the murdered Master is a type of the Cosmic Martyr--the crucified Spirit of Good, the *dying god*--whose Mystery is celebrated throughout the world. Among the manuscripts of Dr. Sigismund Bastrom, the initiated Rosicrucian, appears the following extract from von Welling concerning the true philosophic nature of the Masonic CHiram:

"The original word חירם, CHiram, is a radical word consisting of three consonants ח, מ and ר i. e. *Cheth*, *Resh* and *Mem*. (1) ח, *Cheth*, signifies *Chamah*, the Sun's light, i. e. the *Universal, invisible, cold fire of Nature* attracted by the Sun, manifested into *light* and sent down to us and to every planetary body belonging to the solar system. (2) ר, *Resh*, signifies רוח *Ruach*, i. e. *Spirit, air, wind*, as being the Vehicle which conveys and collects the light into numberless Foci, wherein the solar rays of light are agitated by a circular motion and manifested in *Heat and burning Fire*. (3) מ, or נ *Mem*, signifies *majim, water, humidity*, but rather the *mother of water*, i. e. Radical Humidity or a particular kind of condensed air. These three constitute the Universal Agent or fire of Nature in one word, חירם, *CHiram*, not Hiram."

Albert Pike mentions several forms of the name *CHiram*: *Khirm*, *Khurm*, and *Khur-Om*, the latter ending in the sacred Hindu monosyllable *OM*, which may also be extracted from the names of the three murderers. Pike further relates the three ruffians to a triad of stars in the constellation of Libra and also calls attention to the fact that the Chaldean god Bal--metamorphosed into a demon by the Jews--appears in the name of each of the murderers, *Jubela*, *Jubelo*, and *Jubelum*. To interpret the Hiramic legend requires familiarity with both the Pythagorean and Qabbalistic systems of numbers and letters, and also the philosophic and astronomic cycles of the Egyptians, Chaldeans, and Brahmins. For example, consider the number 33. The first temple of Solomon stood for thirty-three years in its pristine splendor. At the end of that time it was pillaged by the Egyptian King Shishak, and finally (588 B.C.) it was completely destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar and the people of Jerusalem were led into captivity to Babylon. (See *General History of Freemasonry*, by Robert Macoy.) Also King David ruled for thirty-three years in Jerusalem; the Masonic Order is divided into thirty-three symbolic degrees; there are thirty-three segments in the human spinal column; and Jesus was crucified in the thirty-third year of His life.

The efforts made to discover the origin of the Hiramic legend show that, while the legend in its present form is comparatively modern, its underlying principles run back to remotest antiquity. It is generally admitted by modern Masonic scholars that the story of the martyred *CHiram* is based upon the Egyptian rites of Osiris, whose death and resurrection figuratively portrayed the spiritual death of man and his regeneration through initiation into the Mysteries. *CHiram* is also identified with *Hermes* through the inscription on the Emerald Table. From these associations it is evident that *CHiram* is to be considered as a prototype of humanity; in fact he is Plato's *Idea* (archetype) of man. As Adam after the Fall symbolizes the Idea of human degeneration, so *CHiram* through his resurrection symbolizes the Idea of human regeneration.

On the 19th day of March, 1314, Jacques de Molay, the last Grand Master of the Knights Templars, was burned on a pyre erected upon that point of the islet of the Seine, at Paris, where afterwards was erected the statue of King Henry IV. (See *The Indian Religions*, by Hargrave Jennings.) "It is mentioned as a tradition in some of the accounts of the burning," writes Jennings, "that Molay, ere he expired, summoned Clement, the Pope who had pronounced the bull of abolition against the Order and had condemned the Grand Master to the flames, to appear, within forty days, before the Supreme Eternal judge, and Philip [the king] to the same awful tribunal within the space of a year. Both predictions were fulfilled." The close relationship between Freemasonry and the original Knights Templars has caused the story of *CHiram* to be linked with the martyrdom of Jacques de Molay. According to this interpretation, the three *ruffians* who cruelly slew their Master at the gates of the temple because he refused to reveal the secrets of his Order represent the Pope, the king, and the executioners. De Molay died maintaining his innocence and refusing to disclose the philosophical and magical arcana of the Templars.

Those who have sought to identify *CHiram* with the murdered King Charles the First conceive the Hiramic legend to have been invented for that purpose by Elias Ashmole, a mystical philosopher, who was probably a member of the Rosicrucian Fraternity. Charles was dethroned in 1647 and died on the block in 1649, leaving the Royalist party leaderless. An attempt has been made to relate the term "the Sons of the Widow" (an appellation frequently applied to members of the Masonic Order) to this incident in English history, for by the murder of her king England became a *Widow* and all Englishmen *Widow's Sons*.

To the mystic Christian Mason, *CHiram* represents the Christ who in three days (degrees) *raised* the temple of His body from its earthly sepulcher. His three murderers were *Cæsar's* agent (the state), the Sanhedrin (the church), and the incited populace (the mob). Thus considered, *CHiram* becomes the higher nature of man and the murderers are ignorance, superstition, and fear. The indwelling Christ can give expression to Himself in this world only through man's thoughts, feelings, and actions. Right thinking, right feeling, and right action--these are three gates through which the Christ power passes into the material world, there to labor in the erection of the Temple of Universal Brotherhood. Ignorance, superstition, and fear are three ruffians through whose agencies the Spirit of Good is murdered and a false kingdom,

controlled by wrong thinking, wrong feeling, and wrong action, established in its stead. In the material universe evil appears ever victorious.

"In this sense," writes Daniel Sickels, "the myth of the Tyrian is perpetually repeated in the history of human affairs. Orpheus was murdered, and his body thrown into the Hebrus; Socrates was made to drink the hemlock; and, in all ages, we have seen Evil temporarily triumphant, and Virtue and Truth calumniated, persecuted, crucified, and slain. But Eternal justice marches surely and swiftly through the world: the Typhons, the children of darkness, the plotters of crime, all the infinitely varied forms of evil, are swept into oblivion; and Truth and Virtue--for a time laid low--come forth, clothed with diviner majesty, and crowned with everlasting glory!" (See *General Ahiman Rezon*.)

If, as there is ample reason to suspect, the modern Freemasonic Order was profoundly influenced by, if it is not an actual outgrowth of, Francis Bacon's secret society, its symbolism is undoubtedly permeated with Bacon's two great ideals: universal education and universal democracy. The deadly enemies of universal education are ignorance, superstition, and fear, by which the human soul is held in bondage to the lowest part of its own constitution. The arrant enemies of universal democracy have ever been the crown, the tiara, and the torch. Thus CHiram symbolizes that ideal state of spiritual, intellectual, and physical emancipation which has ever been sacrificed upon the altar of human selfishness. CHiram is the Beautifier of the Eternal House. Modern utilitarianism, however, sacrifices the beautiful for the practical, in the same breath declaring the obvious lie that selfishness, hatred, and discord are practical.



From Montfaucon's *Antiquities*.
THE EMBLEMATIC HAND OF THE
MYSTERIES.

A hand covered with numerous symbols was extended to the neophytes when they entered into the Temple of Wisdom. An understanding of the embossed upon the surface of the hand brought with it Divine power and regeneration. Therefore, by means of these symbolic hands the candidate was said to be raised from the dead.

Dr. Orville Ward Owen found a considerable part of the first thirty-two degrees of Freemasonic ritualism hidden in the text of the First Shakespeare Folio. Masonic emblems are to be observed also upon the title pages of nearly every book published by Bacon. Sir Francis Bacon considered himself as a living sacrifice upon the altar of human need; he was obviously *cut down* in the midst of his labors, and no student of his *New Atlantis* can fail to recognize the Masonic symbolism contained therein. According to the observations of Joseph Fort Newton, the Temple of Solomon described by Bacon in that utopian romance was not a house at all but the name of an ideal state. Is it not true that the Temple of Freemasonry is also emblematic of a condition of society? While, as before stated, the principles of the Hiram legend are of the greatest antiquity, it is not impossible that its present form may be based upon incidents in the life of Lord Bacon, who passed through the philosophic death and was *raised* in Germany.

In an old manuscript appears the statement that the Freemasonic Order was formed by alchemists and Hermetic philosophers who had banded themselves together to protect their secrets against the infamous methods used by avaricious persons to wring from them the secret of gold-making. The fact that the Hiram legend contains an alchemical formula gives credence to this story. Thus the building of Solomon's Temple represents the consummation of the *magnum opus*, which cannot be realized without the assistance of CHiram, the Universal Agent. The Masonic Mysteries teach the initiate how to prepare within his own soul a miraculous *powder of projection* by which it is possible for him to transmute the base lump of human ignorance, perversion, and discord into an ingot of spiritual and philosophic gold.

Sufficient similarity exists between the Masonic CHiram and the *Kundalini* of Hindu mysticism to warrant the assumption that CHiram may be considered a symbol also of the Spirit Fire moving through the sixth ventricle of the spinal column. The exact science of human regeneration is the Lost Key of Masonry, for when the Spirit Fire is *lifted up* through the thirty-three degrees, or segments of the spinal column, and enters into the domed chamber of the human skull, it finally passes into the pituitary body (Isis), where it invokes Ra (the pineal gland) and demands the Sacred Name. Operative Masonry, in the fullest meaning of that term, signifies the process by which the Eye of Horus is opened. E. A. Wallis Budge has noted that in some of the papyri illustrating the entrance of the souls of the dead into the judgment hall of Osiris the deceased person has a pine cone attached to the crown of his head. The Greek mystics also carried a symbolic staff, the upper end being in the form of a pine cone, which was called the *thyrsus* of Bacchus. In the human brain there is a tiny gland called the pineal body, which is the sacred eye of the ancients, and corresponds to the third eye of the Cyclops. Little is known concerning the function of the pineal body, which Descartes suggested (more wisely than he knew) might be the abode of the spirit of man. As its name signifies, the pineal gland is the sacred pine cone in man--the *eye single*, which cannot be opened until CHiram (the Spirit Fire) is *raised* through the sacred seals which are called the Seven Churches in Asia.

There is an Oriental painting which shows three sunbursts. One sunburst covers the head, in the midst of which sits Brahma with four heads, his body a mysterious dark color. The second sunburst--which covers the heart, solar plexus, and upper abdominal region--shows Vishnu sitting in the blossom of the lotus on a couch formed of the coils of the serpent of cosmic motion, its seven-hooded head forming a canopy over the god. The third sunburst is over the generative system, in the midst of which sits Shiva, his body a grayish white and the Ganges River flowing out of the crown of his head. This painting was the work of a Hindu mystic who spent many years subtly concealing great philosophical principles within these figures. The Christian legends could be related also to the human body by the same method as the Oriental, for the arcane meanings hidden in the teachings of both schools are identical.

As applied to Masonry, the three sunbursts represent the gates of the temple at which CHiram was struck, there being no gate in the north because the sun never shines from the northern angle of the heavens. The north is the symbol of the physical because of its relation to ice (crystallized water) and to the body (crystallized spirit). In man the light shines toward the north but never from it, because the body has no light of its own but shines with the reflected glory of the divine life-particles concealed within physical substance. For this reason the moon is accepted as the symbol of man's physical nature. CHiram is the mysterious fiery, airy water which must be raised through the three grand centers symbolized by the ladder with three rungs and the sunburst flowers mentioned in the description of the Hindu painting. It must also pass upward by means of the ladder of seven rungs--the seven plexuses proximate to the spine. The nine segments of the sacrum and coccyx are pierced by ten foramina, through which pass the roots of the Tree of Life. Nine is the sacred number of man, and in the symbolism of the sacrum and coccyx a great mystery is concealed. That part of the body from the kidneys downward was termed by the early Qabbalists the *Land of Egypt* into which the children of Israel were taken during the captivity. Out of Egypt, Moses (the illuminated mind, as his name implies) led the tribes of Israel (the twelve faculties) by *raising* the brazen serpent in the wilderness upon the symbol of the Tau cross. Not only CHiram but the god-men of nearly every pagan Mystery ritual are personifications of the Spirit Fire in the human spinal cord.

The astronomical aspect of the Hiram legend must not be overlooked. The tragedy of CHiram is enacted annually by the sun during its passage through the signs of the zodiac.

"From the journey of the Sun through the twelve signs," writes Albert Pike, "come the legend of the twelve labors of Hercules, and the incarnations of Vishnu and Buddha. Hence came the legend of the murder of Khurum, representative of the Sun, by the three Fellow-Crafts, symbols of the Winter signs, Capricornus, Aquarius, and Pisces, who assailed him at the three gates of Heaven and slew him at the Winter Solstice. Hence the search for him by the nine Fellow-Crafts, the other nine signs, his finding, burial, and resurrection." (See *Morals and Dogma*.)

Other authors consider Libra, Scorpio, and Sagittarius as the three murderers of the sun, inasmuch as Osiris was murdered by Typhon, to whom were assigned the thirty degrees of the constellation of Scorpio. In the Christian Mysteries also Judas signifies the Scorpion, and the thirty pieces of silver for which he betrayed His Lord represent the number of degrees in that sign. Having been struck by Libra (the state), Scorpio (the church), and Sagittarius (the mob), the sun (CHiram) is secretly home through the darkness by the signs of Capricorn, Aquarius, and Pisces and buried over the brow of a hill (the vernal equinox). Capricorn has for its symbol an old man with a scythe in his hand. This is Father Time--a wayfarer--who is symbolized in Masonry as straightening out the ringlets of a young girl's hair. If the Weeping Virgin be considered a symbol of Virgo, and Father Time with his scythe a symbol of Capricorn, then the interval of ninety degrees between these two signs will be found to correspond to that occupied by the three murderers. Esoterically, the urn containing the ashes of CHiram represents the human heart. Saturn, the old man who lives at the north pole, and brings with him to the children of men a sprig of evergreen (the Christmas tree), is familiar to the little folks under the name of *Santa Claus*, for he brings each winter the gift of a new year.

The martyred sun is discovered by Aries, a Fellow-Craftsman, and at the vernal equinox the process of raising him begins. This is finally accomplished by the Lion of Judah, who in ancient times occupied the position of the keystone of the Royal Arch of Heaven. The precession of the equinoxes causes various signs to play the rôle of the murderers of the sun during the different ages of the world, but the principle involved remains unchanged. Such is the cosmic story of CHiram, the Universal Benefactor, the Fiery Architect: of the Divine House, who carries with him to the grave that Lost Word which, when spoken, *raises* all life to power and glory. According to Christian mysticism, when the Lost Word is found it is discovered in a stable, surrounded by beasts and marked by a star. "After the sun leaves Leo," writes Robert Hewitt Brown, "the days begin to grow unequivocally shorter as the sun declines toward the autumnal equinox, to be again slain by the *three* autumnal months, lie dead through the *three* winter ones, and be raised again by the *three* vernal ones. Each year the great tragedy is repeated, and the glorious resurrection takes place." (See *Stellar Theology and Masonic Astronomy*.)

CHiram is termed *dead* because in the average individual the cosmic creative forces are limited in their manifestation to purely physical--and correspondingly materialistic--expression. Obsessed by his belief in the reality and permanence of physical existence, man does not correlate the material universe with the blank north wall of the temple. As the solar light symbolically is said to die as it approaches the winter solstice, so the physical world may be termed the winter solstice of the spirit. Reaching the winter solstice, the sun apparently stands still for three days and then, rolling away the stone of winter, begins its triumphal march north towards the summer solstice. The condition of ignorance may be likened to the winter solstice of philosophy; spiritual understanding to the summer solstice. From this point of view, initiation into the Mysteries becomes the vernal equinox of the spirit, at which time the CHiram in man crosses from the realm of mortality into that of eternal life. The autumnal equinox is analogous to the mythological *fall* of man, at which time the human spirit descended into the realms of Hades by being immersed in the illusion of terrestrial existence.



From Montfaucon's *Antiquities*.

Crowned with a triple tower-like tiara and her form adorned with symbolic creatures representative of her spiritual powers, Diana stood for the source of that imperishable doctrine which, flowing from the bosom of the Great Multimamma, is the spiritual food of those aspiring men and women who have consecrated their lives to the contemplation of reality. As the physical body of man receives its nutriment from the Great Earth Mother, so the spiritual nature of man is fed from the never failing fountains of Truth pouring outward from the invisible worlds.

In *An Essay on the Beautiful*, Plotinus describes the refining effect of beauty upon the unfolding consciousness of man. Commissioned to decorate the Everlasting House, Chiram Abiff is the embodiment of the beautifying principle. Beauty is essential to the natural unfoldment of the human soul. The Mysteries held that man, in part at least, was the product of his environment. Therefore they considered it imperative that every person be surrounded by objects which would evoke the highest and noblest sentiments. They proved that it was possible to produce beauty in life by surrounding life with beauty. They discovered that symmetrical bodies were built by souls continuously in the presence of symmetrical bodies; that noble thoughts were produced by minds surrounded by examples of mental nobility. Conversely, if a man were forced to look upon an ignoble or asymmetrical structure it would arouse within him a sense of ignobility which would provoke him to commit ignoble deeds. If an ill-proportioned building were erected in the midst of a city there would be ill-proportioned children born in that community; and men and women, gazing upon the asymmetrical structure, would live inharmonious lives. Thoughtful men of antiquity realized that their great philosophers were the natural products of the æsthetic ideals of architecture, music, and art established as the standards of the cultural systems of the time.

The substitution of the discord of the fantastic for the harmony of the beautiful constitutes one of the great tragedies of every civilization. Not only were the Savior-Gods of the ancient world beautiful, but each performed a ministry of beauty, seeking to effect man's regeneration by arousing within him the love of the beautiful. A renaissance of the golden age of fable can be made possible only by the elevation of beauty to its rightful dignity as the all-pervading, idealizing quality in the religious, ethical, sociological, scientific, and political departments of life. The Dionysiac Architects were consecrated to the *raising* of their Master Spirit--Cosmic Beauty--from the sepulcher of material ignorance and selfishness by erecting buildings which

were such perfect exemplars of symmetry and majesty that they were actually magical formulæ by which was evoked the spirit of the martyred Beautifier entombed within a materialistic world.

In the Masonic Mysteries the triune spirit of man (the light Delta) is symbolized by the three Grand Masters of the Lodge of Jerusalem. As God is the pervading principle of three worlds, in each of which He manifests as an active principle, so the spirit of man, partaking of the nature of Divinity, dwells upon three planes of being: the Supreme, the Superior, and the Inferior spheres of the Pythagoreans. At the gate of the Inferior sphere (the underworld, or dwelling place of mortal creatures) stands the guardian of Hades--the three-headed dog Cerberus, who is analogous to the three murderers of the Hiram legend. According to this symbolic interpretation of the triune spirit, CHiram is the third, or incarnating, part--the Master Builder who through all ages erects living temples of flesh and blood as shrines of the Most High. CHiram comes forth as a flower and is cut down; he *dies* at the gates of matter; he is *buried* in the elements of creation, but--like Thor--he swings his mighty hammer in the fields of space, sets the primordial atoms in motion, and establishes order out of Chaos. As the potentiality of cosmic power within each human soul, CHiram lies waiting for man by the elaborate ritualism of life to transmute potentiality into divine potency. As the sense perceptions of the individual increase, however, man gains ever greater control over his various parts, and the spirit of life within gradually attains freedom. The three murderers represent the laws of the Inferior world--birth, growth, and decay--which ever frustrate the plan of the Builder. To the average individual, physical birth actually signifies the death of CHiram, and physical death the resurrection of CHiram. To the initiate, however, the resurrection of the spiritual nature is accomplished without the intervention of physical death.

The curious symbols found in the base of Cleopatra's Needle now standing in Central Park, New York, were interpreted as being of first Masonic significance by S. A. Zola, 33° Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Egypt. Masons' marks and symbols are to be found on the stones of numerous public buildings not only in England and on the Continent but also in Asia. In his *Indian Masons' Marks of the Moghul Dynasty*, A. Gorham describes scores of markings appearing on the walls of buildings such as the *Taj Mahal*, the *Jama Masjid*, and that famous Masonic structure, the *Kutab Minar*. According to those who regard Masonry as an outgrowth of the secret society of architects and builders which for thousands of years formed a caste of master craftsmen, CHiram Abiff was the Tyrian Grand Master of a world-wide organization of artisans, with headquarters in Tyre. Their philosophy consisted of incorporating into the measurements and ornamentation of temples, palaces, mausoleums, fortresses, and other public buildings their knowledge of the laws controlling the universe. Every initiated workman was given a hieroglyphic with which he marked the stones he tried to show to all posterity that he thus dedicated to the Supreme Architect of the Universe each perfected product of his labor. Concerning Masons' marks, Robert Freke Gould writes:

"It is very remarkable that these marks are to be found in all countries--in the chambers of the Great Pyramid at Gizeh, on the underground walls of Jerusalem, in Herculaneum and Pompeii, on Roman walls and Grecian temples, in Hindustan, Mexico, Peru, Asia Minor--as well as on the great ruins of England, France, Germany, Scotland, Italy, Portugal and Spain." (See *A Concise History of Freemasonry*.)

From this viewpoint the story of CHiram may well represent the incorporation of the divine secrets of architecture into the actual parts and dimensions of earthly buildings. The three degrees of the Craft bury the Grand Master (the Great Arcanum) in the actual structure they erect, after first having *killed* him with the builders' tools, by reducing the dimensionless Spirit of Cosmic Beauty to the limitations of concrete form. These abstract ideals of architecture can be resurrected, however, by the Master Mason who, by meditating upon the structure, releases therefrom the divine principles of architectonic philosophy incorporated or *buried* within it. Thus the physical building is actually the tomb or embodiment of the Creative Ideal of which its material dimensions are but the shadow.

Moreover, the Hiram legend may be considered to embody the vicissitudes of philosophy itself. As institutions for the dissemination of ethical culture, the pagan Mysteries were the

architects of civilization. Their power and dignity were personified in CHiram Abiff--the Master Builder--but they eventually fell a victim to the onslaughts of that recurrent trio of state, church, and mob. They were desecrated by the state, jealous of their wealth and power; by the early church, fearful of their wisdom; and by the rabble or soldiery incited by both state and church. As CHiram when *raised* from his grave whispers the Master Mason's Word which was lost through his untimely death, so according to the tenets of philosophy the reestablishment or resurrection of the ancient Mysteries will result in the rediscovery of that secret teaching without which civilization must continue in a state of spiritual confusion and uncertainty.

When the mob governs, man is ruled by ignorance; when the church governs, he is ruled by superstition; and when the state governs, he is ruled by fear. Before men can live together in harmony and understanding, ignorance must be transmuted into wisdom, superstition into an illumined faith, and fear into love. Despite statements to the contrary, Masonry is a religion seeking to unite God and man by elevating its initiates to that level of consciousness whereon they can behold with clarified vision the workings of the Great Architect of the Universe. From age to age the vision of a perfect civilization is preserved as the ideal for mankind. In the midst of that civilization shall stand a mighty university wherein both the sacred and secular sciences concerning the mysteries of life will be freely taught to all who will assume the philosophic life. Here creed and dogma will have no place; the superficial will be removed and only the essential be preserved. The world will be ruled by its most illumined minds, and each will occupy the position for which he is most admirably fitted.

The great university will be divided into grades, admission to which will be through preliminary tests or initiations. Here mankind will be instructed in the most sacred, the most secret, and the most enduring of all Mysteries--*Symbolism*. Here the initiate will be taught that every visible object, every abstract thought, every emotional reaction is but the symbol of an eternal principle. Here mankind will learn that CHiram (Truth) lies buried in every atom of Kosmos; that every form is a symbol and every symbol the tomb of an eternal verity. Through education--spiritual, mental, moral, and physical--man will learn to release living truths from their lifeless coverings. The perfect government of the earth must be patterned eventually after that divine government by which the universe is ordered. In that day when perfect order is reestablished, with peace universal and good triumphant, men will no longer seek for happiness, for they shall find it welling up within themselves. Dead hopes, dead aspirations, dead virtues shall rise from their graves, and the Spirit of Beauty and Goodness repeatedly slain by ignorant men shall again be the Master of Work. Then shall sages sit upon the seats of the mighty and the gods walk with men.