

THE CRYPTIC RITE AND THE RELATION TO THE CHAPTER DEGREES

The Cryptic Rite, or Council Degrees, enhance the lessons taught in the degrees you have previously taken in the Chapter. They highlight the preservation, loss, and recovery of the Masonic mysteries. This journey represents man's search for life's purpose and the nature of GOD. Symbolic Lodge Degrees teaches of the loss of the word and the hope of its recovery. The Chapter Degrees teaches the recovery, and the Council or Cryptic Degrees complete the story by teaching of the word's initial preservation.

There are three degrees that compose the Council; the Royal Master, the Select Master, and the Super Excellent Master Degrees. In Kentucky, the Royal and Select Master degrees are required to be conferred before advancing to receive the Knights Templar Orders. In the two degrees, you learn of the secrets of its preservation and discovery of the hidden mysteries of life's purpose and the nature of GOD. These degrees cover the period of time that is between the Most Excellent Master degree and the Royal Arch degree in the Chapter.

The Royal Master Degree explains the decision of our three Ancient Grand Masters, King Solomon; King Hiram of Tyre; and Hiram Abiff on how to communicate the mysteries of a Master Mason after the completion of the Temple. It also reveals, through Hiram Abiff's own words the fate that awaits him and how he left clues with Adoniram, his personal Secretary, to find the mysteries in the event of his death.

The Select Master Degree is conferred in a place representing the secret vault; or crypt that was being built by King Solomon to contain the sacred treasures of God's chosen people. It also shows us how Grand Master Hiram Abiff zealously guarded the mysteries of Freemasonry which was known only to the three Grand Masters. This allegory completes the "Circle of Perfection" in Ancient Craft Masonry. Here we see the special bond between the three Grand Masters and the decision of the two remaining Grand Masters to preserve the mysteries, which you learned in the Royal Arch Degree.

The Super Excellent Master Degree is one of the most dramatic and impressive of all of the degrees of Freemasonry. The degree tells the story of the period of time following the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple containing the treasures of the Jewish people and its contents, and the captivity of the Jewish nation by King Nebuchadnezzar. It teaches that great lesson of right living and character of a man as he builds his spiritual temple here below, as well as the lesson of fidelity and the consequences when it is disobeyed. Due to the large cast of this degree, it is only conferred occasionally in various areas of the Commonwealth. Notice will be given to its conferral in an adequate amount of time, and you are encouraged to attend and receive this degree, with no fee required.