

UNION AND VOICE

BUILDING JANUS

*Uncommon Catechism
For Uncommon
Masonic Education*

Volume 4

UNION AND VOICE

Building Janus - Uncommon Catechism for Uncommon Masonic Education - Volume 4
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MASONIC WARNING

ALTHOUGH ALL THAT IS WRITTEN AND REFERENCED WITHIN THESE PAGES IS OPENLY AVAILABLE, EASILY ACCESSIBLE AND QUICKLY OBTAINABLE THROUGH MASONIC BOOKS AND ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS, IF YOU ARE ON A MASONIC PATH, IT IS WISE THAT YOU SAVE READING THIS DOCUMENT UNTIL AFTER YOU ARE RAISED AS A MASTER MASON, BUT NOT *TOO* LONG AFTERWARD.

**The tale thus told
of men of old
warns those of ruff
forsaken,
To keep the path
as aftermath
and not a way not
taken.**



**Quest not for name
but manners high
this goal is for the makin'.
Your end is tied
it doesn't lie
in falsehood and mere fakin'.**

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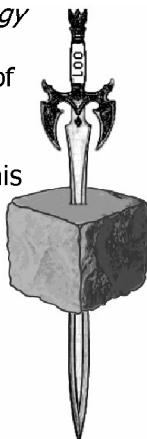
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Introduction

Step forth Sharp Sharpener, gain your Title well
and further your Light study.

– *Dr. John S. Nagy*

As my investigation into the Work of the first two degrees of the Blue Lodge concluded, I was once again left with many more questions than answers. This was not unusual for me. The more research that I did, the more questions arose, which is not a “bad” thing when I consider the format of these books. With a heavy tail wind at my back, it appeared that my investigation into the Third Degree Legend was already underway before I realized it.



While I was asking myself what I wanted to cover in the introduction to this volume, there were a few thoughts that eagerly presented themselves. The first thought was framed, as is typical in my thinking, in the form of a question. “What did you just go through!?” Framed from the perspective of just Raised Masons, it appeared to be a great catalyst for Perpending the various aspects of what this Legend was intended to do.

Within the Legend is a plethora of opportunities to “test” those Masons claiming to have done the Work of the previous Degrees and who have shown “proficiency” in that Work. Any Mason Properly Prepared for his “Third Degree experience” would immediately recognize the Legend for what it was.

This line of thought made another question come forth. "If Masons didn't do the Work that Ritual points to and asks them to complete, what might they miss?"

After many discussions with other Master Masons, I found a firm consensus that far too many Masons don't see what is plainly before them. Some of the Brothers coming away from this Legend experience actually believe it to be a historical event. Other Brothers take the metaphorical aspects of this Allegory and assume that the elements are truly pointing toward other historical events. Still others, Brothers and non-masons alike, take the entirety of this Legend and assume that it conveys a veiled religious doctrine.

Their separate directions echoed at me like the voices I imagined from those souls still chained upon the cave wall mentioned in Plato's Republic. I ponder another question, "Were those echoes indications that the Legend's intended purpose was served and beyond all expectation?"

You might ask yourself where the Coach is going with all this. "Coach! What might that purpose and intent be? What was it that the Crafters of this Legend wanted to veil with such Mastery that only those who did the Work would actually see it? How is it that some Masons can't see it? Is this what the Crafters of this Legend intended?"

Before I respond to any of them, I openly confess that I imagined things too. At one point, I thought that the Legend might actually be a historic event. I thought too that it might in fact point to other historical events. I even thought that it might possibly convey some "secret" religious doctrine.

All these and more did I take into consideration before I did the Work referred to by Ritual. Moreover, I too would have at one time shown all the signs of being chained to that very wall from which I now imagined echoes.

What shifted for me? What was it that occurred for me when I took the time to look at the whole of Ritual? What changed when I examined what it conveyed? What was revealed when I looked toward what Work it pointed?

I sought deeper understanding as to what occurs for men when such Work is completed. In so doing, I saw the process that Ritual puts men through to Raise them to Mastery. I also saw a clearly designed plot to purposefully sabotage and subtly mock efforts of those men who sought the title of Master without earning it.

Could the Craft Legend weavers be so clever? Could they be so cunning and yet playful in their aims as to contrive such a well-woven tale with interjected elements that could only be seen by other Masters? The questions continued to flow unhindered.

So far I've concluded that the Crafters of Masonic Ritual created a skeletal support. It encourages Masons to Properly Prepare themselves for learning. It has no obvious quality control to assure that such Proper Preparation occurs. It relies solely upon those men engaged in this process to be both honest and forthright in their efforts to Properly Prepare themselves. As a result, it also allows Masons to progress through this preparatory stage with little to no resistance if they don't do all the Work.

That next stage Ritual directs Masons toward is one of "*learning how to learn.*" Although it is in itself learning, what occurs at this stage is designed to assist Masons in *future learning.* It Properly Prepares Masons for what learning is to come.

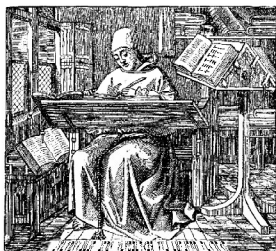
Learning how to learn is not what many Brothers see at this stage. They don't recognize that such preparation Transforms ordinary thinking into extraordinary thinking. It also assists them in recognizing things that most ordinary thinkers would not. In this respect, it facilitates extraordinary vision.

When all this preparation is completed, men are prepared to see things that unprepared men cannot. This is the point of the Third Degree Legend. Those who have *prepared to learn* and *learned how to learn* have transformed their vision, their very ability to sense things that are beyond the senses of those who have not done so. For those who have not done the Work? They will not see how the Crafters of the Legend celebrate through Allegory a man's extraordinary ability to enjoy the fruits of his Labor.

They will also not comprehend how bluntly Ritual writers put forth a clear understanding that the Word that is sought will only be provided as a mere Substitute *until such time that their Work is truly completed.*

Enjoy!

Dr. John S. Nagy

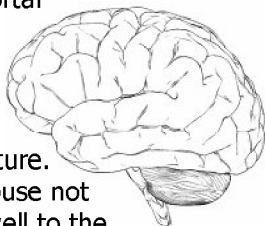


III. The Master's Working Tools

*The Masonic Mind is the ultimate Working Tool
a Mason will ever wrought and wield.*

– Dr. John S. Nagy

Summary: Comprehension is a House not made by hands. Metaphor is its Mortar and its Ashlars are life experiences. Masons Build their Houses, Stone by Stone, using aptly applied metaphor to unify each structure. When done soundly, each House not made by hands contributes well to the worldwide community of Home Builders.



The Working Tool that is my favorite is the one that exists within a truly Raised Mason^d. That Working Tool is his Ordered brain. This Working Tool was transformed purposefully and constructively from Chaos to Order and, as a result, it became the most versatile and important Working Tool any Mason could ever wield.

With this Working Tool, Masons create every other Working Tool they would ever need, want or imagine. With it, Masons try other Working Tools. With it, Masons know how to apply other Working Tools and even create new Working Tools when necessary. With it, Masons contemplate things that

^d Masons who have completed their Entered Apprentice and Fellow Craft Work as specified by Masonic Ritual.

would baffle and astound others who do not have this important Working Tool. With it, Masons see things that others cannot and reveal what is concealed. With it, Masons' Buildings have influence over others and their environment. With it, not even death may challenge a Masons' influence.

What many Masons might assume about the Master Mason's Working Tool offered up to Masons in the American Rite is that the Trowel is used solely to spread the Cement of Brotherly Love. Masons should know that its metaphorical use in Building is far more diverse and encompassing.

What is offered in this next Catechism is an expansion on this Working Tool's application. It emphasizes that a Master's use of the Trowel provides him eyes with insights that no surface reflection can ever convey.

וְלֵךְ לְךָ אֵלֶיךָ מִן הַמַּעֲרָב וְלֵךְ לְךָ מִן הַמַּעֲרָב וְלֵךְ לְךָ מִן הַמַּעֲרָב
 וְלֵךְ לְךָ מִן הַמַּעֲרָב וְלֵךְ לְךָ מִן הַמַּעֲרָב וְלֵךְ לְךָ מִן הַמַּעֲרָב
 וְלֵךְ לְךָ מִן הַמַּעֲרָב וְלֵךְ לְךָ מִן הַמַּעֲרָב וְלֵךְ לְךָ מִן הַמַּעֲרָב

The Master's Working Tools Catechism

I: Are you a Master?

R: I am so.

R: What makes Masters?

R: Their skillful integration of what was obtained through Work in previous Degrees.

I: How do Masters refer to this?

R: They refer to it as "Proficiency."

I: Is Proficiency enough to achieve Mastery?

R: This depends upon the level of Proficiency.

Proficiency

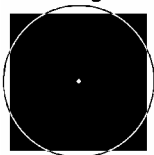
- I:** What Proficiency is required in most USA Jurisdictions?
- R:** Minimum Proficiency in some Jurisdictions is the demonstrated ability to recite back the Obligations of each Degree.
- I:** What is it in some other Jurisdictions?
- R:** Minimum Proficiency in other Jurisdictions is the demonstrated ability to recite back the Obligations of each Degree, including what preceded and followed them.
- I:** What usually proceeds and follows Obligations?
- R:** A series of **I**nquiries and **R**esponses that describe in detail each Degree.

Catechisms

- I:** What are these called?
- R:** Catechisms.
- I:** What are such Catechisms intended to do?
- R:** They are intended to impress upon Catechumens specific information related to each Degree.
- I:** Why is this important to Masons?
- R:** It assures that each Mason can recall any section of each Degree if necessary.
- I:** What's more?
- R:** It assures that each Mason, with minimal additional effort, can support the Lodge Degree Work should there be a need.
- I:** Does such memorization conclude Proficiency?
- R:** No. To become Proficient in a Degree of Masonry, Masons must become Proficient in the Work specified in each Degree.

Master Working Tool

- I:** What Working Tool is created by and used by Masons who become Proficient and Master such Work?
- R:** A well-Ordered Brain.
- I:** Do all Master Masons have this Working Tool.
- R:** No. Such a Working Tool is only obtained by doing the Work specified in previous Degrees.
- I:** What occurs for those who do the Work specified?
- R:** They obtain an in-depth understanding of our worlds and the Words used to describe them.
- I:** What primary Working Tool understandings assist them most in this?
- R:** Figures of Speech.



Figures of Speech

- I:** What is a Figure of Speech?
- R:** It is a use of a word that diverges from its normal meaning and typical use.
- I:** What's more?
- R:** It is a phrase with a specialized meaning not based upon the literal meaning of the words within that phrase, such as in a metaphor, simile, or personification.
- I:** What use are Figures of Speech?
- R:** They often provide emphasis, freshness of expression, or clarity.
- I:** What might occur through their use?
- R:** Figures of Speech introduce ambiguities between literal and figurative interpretation and hence may cause problems in meaning clarity.
- I:** What more are Figures of Speech?

- R:** They are tools used to both reveal and conceal Information.
- I:** What are other words for a Figure of Speech?
- R:** A "Rhetoric" or a "Locution."

Locution^e

- I:** What are Locution's four classical operations used to transform a sentence or a larger portion of any text?
- R:** They are Expansion, Abridgement, Switching, and Transferring.
- I:** How are they referred?
- R:** They are referred to as Addition (adietio), Omission (detreactio), Transposition (transmutatio) and Permutation (immutatio).
- I:** To what is Addition also referred?
- R:** Repetition, Expansion or Superabundance.
- I:** To what is Omission also referred?
- R:** Subtraction, Abridgement and Lack.
- I:** To what is Transposition also referred?
- R:** Transferring.
- I:** To what is Permutation also referred?
- R:** Switching, Interchange, Substitution and Transmutation
- I:** What were they collectively called?
- R:** Originally, these were called, in Latin, the four Operations of Quadripartita Ratio.

וְהָיוּ אֵלֶּיךָ כְּאֶחָד מִן הַיָּמִין וְעָלְתָה אֵלֶיךָ וְעָלְתָה אֵלֶיךָ וְעָלְתָה אֵלֶיךָ וְעָלְתָה אֵלֶיךָ

^e **I:** What is the root of the word "locution?"

R: Locution comes from Latin "Locutus," which comes from the Latin word "loqui" meaning, "to speak."

Transferability

- I:** What is noteworthy about these Quadripartita Ratio Operations?
- R:** They are to Words as mathematical operations are to Numbers.
- I:** What does this Allude to for Masons?
- R:** It indicates to Masons that operations learned in the Quadrivium, the study of Symbols as Numbers, are portable to the Trivium, the study of Symbols as Words.
- I:** Into what two main categories have scholars of classical Western Rhetoric divided Figures of Speech?
- R:** Locutions are divided into Schemes and Tropes.
- I:** What is the primary difference between the two?
- R:** Schemes^f are Figures of Speech that change the ordinary or expected Pattern of Words. Tropes^g change the general meaning of Words.
- I:** What is the root of the word "Scheme?"
- R:** It comes from the Greek word "schēma" which means, "form or shape."
- I:** What is the root of the word "Trope?"
- R:** It comes from the Greek word, "tropein" which means, "to turn."
- I:** Concerning Locution, what did scholars do during the Renaissance?

^f **I:** What are examples of Schemes?

R: They are Consonance, Asyndeton, Apposition, Climax, Ellipsis and Alliteration.

^g **I:** What are examples of Tropes?

R: They are Metonymy, Synecdoche, Hyperbole, Oxymoron, Metaphor, Irony, Litotes and Antithesis.

R: They meticulously enumerated and classified Figures of Speech.

I: Who enumerated 184 different Figures of Speech and when?

R: Henry Peacham enumerated 184 different Figures of Speech in his "The Garden of Eloquence" published in 1577.

Metaphor

I: What is a Metaphor? ⁴

R: It is a Figure of Speech and a Working Tool.

I: From where does the word, "metaphor" derive?

R: It comes from the Greek "metaphero" which means, "to carry over", "to transfer" and originally from "meta" meaning "between" and "phero" meaning, "to bear", "to carry."

I: What do these Working Tools do?

R: They construct verbal correspondences or relationships between two people, ideas, places, things or situations.

I: What's more?

R: Metaphors are Working Tools or devices used to convey or portray a concept or an understanding of one person, idea, place, thing or situation in terms of another.

I: What's further?

R: Metaphors also denote Figures of Speech that achieve their effects via association, comparison or resemblance.

I: What are common examples of these Figures of Speech types?

R: Common examples of Metaphor are Analogy, Simile, Metonymy, Hyperbole and Antithesis.

Analogy

I: What are Analogies?

R: They are Working Tools that use a metaphorical word or phrase, sometimes in place of some other word or phrase, to convey or imply a relationship associated with something already known.

I: When are Masons introduced to Analogy?

R: They are introduced to Analogy during their study of the Seven Liberal Arts and Sciences.

I: Please review these introductions in relation to the Trivium.

R: Grammar is the Analogous use of Symbols in the form of Words and Numbers within a structured rule base to convey meaning, thought and ideas.

I: What of Logic?

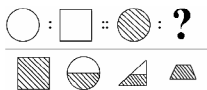
R: Logic is the Analogous use of Symbols in the form of Words and Numbers within a structured rule base to convey or determine relationship, Truth and fallacy.

I: What of Rhetoric?

R: Rhetoric is the Analogous use of Symbols in the form of Words and Numbers within a structured rule base intended to influence.

I: What of the Quadrivium?

R: The Quadrivium is the Analogous use of Symbols in the form of Words and Numbers within a structured rule base to do all that the Trivium does with the additions of conveying and evaluating time and space proportionally. This allows for future predictions and historical assessments.



I: Explain the additions.

R: Since the Quadrivium deals with time and space analogies, such addition must be noted.

I: Give an example of a proportional analogy.

R: One is to two and two is to four.

Allegory

I: What is Allegory?

R: It is a device or Working Tool used to present an idea, principal or meaning in written form, such as a fictional story, a poem or a novel, or in visual form, such as in paintings, sculptures, plays or motion pictures.⁵



I: What are its roots?

R: The word "allegory" was first coined in English around 1382. It comes from Latin "allegoria", a Latinization of the Greek word "allegoria" which means, "veiled language, figurative."

I: What's more?

R: The Greek word "allegoria" comes from the word "allos" which means, "another, different" and "agoreuo" which means "to harangue, to speak in the assembly" and that from "agora" "assembly."

Impact

I: How does Allegory communicate its message?

R: Allegory communicates its message by means of Symbolic figures, actions or other Symbolic representation.

I: How is Allegory generally treated?

R: It is generally treated as a Figure of Rhetoric.

I: Is this always the case?

R: No. An Allegory does not have to be expressed by language.

I: How so?

R: It may be expressed to the eye, and is often found in realistic paintings, sculptures or some other form of mimetic or representative art.

I: What mode of representation does it use?

R: It uses the figurative mode of representation; conveying meaning other than what is conveyed using literal modes.

I: How does Allegory differ from Analogy?

R: Analogy is used to show how two items, issues or situations are similar or related. Allegory is used to convey an elaborate idea, concept or philosophy through a fabricated story that is figurative not literal in its expression.

I: What's more?

R: Analogy compares on the premise that quality and quantity can be cross-related when two or more normally unassociated items, issues, situation or people are placed side by side for examination. Allegory conveys levels of information, usually morally or truth based, when taken both literally and figuratively.

I: Simplify all this.

R: Analogy is used to compare; Allegory is used to convey. Both sometimes use word pictures.

Classics

I: What Classic literature uses Allegory Alluded to within Masonic Ritual?

R: The "Allegory of the Cave" found within Plato's

"Republic" (Book VII).

I: What's more?

R: In Late Antiquity Martianus Capella organized all the information a fifth-century upper-class male needed to know into an Allegory of a wedding between Mercury and Philologia, with the Seven Liberal Arts as guests.^h

I: What's further?

R: Other early Allegories are found throughout the Scriptures.ⁱ

I: Are Allegories true in their literal reality?

R: No, they are merely created stories intended to convey truths that may be literal and figurative in nature.



Tool

I: What should Master Masons know about Allegory?

R: It is one of many Working Tools used by Master Masons to do their Work and its use should be Mastered by proper study and experience.

I: What's more?

R: As a literary device or Working Tool, Allegories in their most general sense are extended Metaphors.

I: What's further?

R: As an Artistic device or Working Tool, Allegories are visual Symbolic representations.

I: What else?

^h Capella's allegory was widely read and used for study through the Middle Ages.

ⁱ An example of an extended metaphor of Israel as a "Vine" can be found in Psalm 80, and another Allegory in Ezekiel 16 (Israel) and 17 (Eagle).

- R:** Master Masons should become familiar with all their Forms. They should Work with them sufficiently enough to be Proficient in their proper use and knowledgeable enough to identify, when necessary, their improper use.
- I:** What physical Working Tool best represents Metaphor and more specifically "Allegory."
- R:** The Working Tool called "The Trowel."
- I:** How so?
- R:** The Trowel applies and shapes bonding cement upon Properly Prepared and Raised Ashlars.
- I:** How does this relate to Allegory?
- R:** Just as cement is Masterfully applied and shaped upon Properly Prepared Ashlars to form bonds that interconnect them into one solid mass, so is Allegory Masterfully applied and shaped to connect seemingly unrelated elements into a Unified Comprehension.
- I:** What are those Properly Prepared Ashlars?
- R:** They are life's experiences, divested of Vice and Superfluities, Strengthened by Virtue.
- I:** What Raises them?
- R:** Refining each of them to their essential essences and truths.
- I:** What is another term used to denote a Unified Comprehension?
- R:** A House not made by hands.

The House

- I:** What is "that House not made by hands?"⁶
- R:** It is a metaphor.
- I:** To what does it Allude?

- R:** It Alludes to concepts of which three stand out as important to Masons.
- I:** What is the first concept?
- R:** It Alludes to that Spiritual Temple created and provided by the Almighty to replace the earthly tent of those who have passed from this world.
- I:** What is the second concept?
- R:** It Alludes to a vast inter-connection of Masonic Brothers, all Working as a single unified mass that functions as a welcoming and harmonious home.
- I:** What is the third concept?
- R:** It Alludes to that Unified Comprehension Master Masons obtain by applying skills developed during their Entered Apprentice and Fellow Craft Work.
- I:** How do Masons go about obtaining this Unified Comprehension?
- R:** By studying Philosophy and Theology.
- I:** Why so?
- R:** Philosophy and Theology are based upon Symbolism and Figures of Speech, the very things Masonic Training is designed to assist Masons in understanding.
- I:** What more can Masons do to obtain this Unified Comprehension?
- R:** By liberally applying to this study what was obtained and developed by Work performed in the previous Degrees.
- I:** What was obtained and developed by this Work?
- R:** The ability to see beyond the veil and to bridge Bournes caused by perceived darkness.
- I:** Are these metaphors?
- R:** Yes.
- I:** To what do they Allude?

IX. The Mettle of Man

*Metal's medal meddles not with man's mettle.
– Dr. John S. Nagy*

Summary: Masters cultivate others who are of like mind and spirit, even when these others are unaware that refining occurs. Mastery attracts such candidates toward shapes that adorn and contain the richness that Masonry has to offer. Especially for those whom do the required Work.



As with many other times, my twelfth year of life offered me numerous opportunities to participate in learning experiences. That specific year required enrollment in 7th grade "print shop." As fate would have it, assorted "class clowns" and other "less desirable" characters, which enticed me out of my usual "reserved" behavior, surrounded me in force.

Things did not go well for me. My shop teacher took notice of my "outstanding actions."²¹ "As you might have guessed, I spent many a late night after school cleaning printing presses and shop floors.

It was during that time that I watched my teacher attend to the massive machines that inked and applied a variety of fonts and assorted characters upon the pulp once stored upon the surrounding shelves. Within a very short time, he involved me in some

print jobs that required a second set of hands, of which I had two to lend. Although I thought at the time that I was getting out of the imposed cleaning activities, I was very unaware of what was actually occurring for me.

It was years later that I overheard an interesting conversation that related back to the moments I spent under the direction of that shop teacher. Two teachers were discussing how they handled "difficult" kids. As they related their methods, I recognized my story unfolding through the eyes of people who were the recipient of my "challenging" behavior. I learned in that moment that burdening people like me with responsibility cultivated necessary maturity. I saw how this "burden" changed my behavior²² toward the better, despite my efforts to "stay stuck." I learned that while I was tending to the needs of the shop by cleaning floors and printing presses, my teacher was tending *to me*. I had no idea at that time how nurturing he was for me, but now I'm grateful for his guidance. I'm a better "me" because he cared enough to hassle and burden me.

Masons may not know it at the time, but Entered Apprentice and Fellow Craft Masons are being refined and cultivated prior to any Mastery Work. The Work they do is extremely important and should be understood at the level to which each tends. The Work that Masters do with and for them is equally important and should be understood at a Master's level.

What follows is a Catechism reflecting a different view of what Masons cultivate as Masters by their Work

upon the Craft. It points out how richly multi-leveled its meanings are and how each gives opportunity to understand Ritual with increasing fullness and clarity.

רַב־מַטְרֵן הָיָה לְפָנֶיךָ <וְעַתָּה אֵלֶיךָ
 אֵלֶיךָ <בְּיָדֶיךָ אֵלֶיךָ > לָבֵן

The Mettle of Man Catechism

I: Are you a Master Mason?

R: I am indeed.

I: What makes a Mason a Master?

R: He has Sharpened his Metal to a fine edge.

I: Is this a metaphor?

R: Yes.

I: To what does it Allude?

R: It Alludes to the Sharpening of his abilities and skills being likened to that of Sharpening an edge of a blade.

I: What process did he engage in to bring about this eventuality?

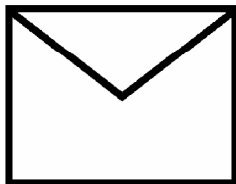
R: A process contrived by Artisans of the Craft.

I: What process is that?

R: It is that process which brings the Stone from the quarry, refines it, shapes it and bonds it into that House not made by hands.

I: How do Masons know they have honed their metal well enough to be worthy of the title "Sharpener?"

R: They are Properly Prepared by Brothers who themselves have honed their Metal, who are



artificers and instructors to others who desire the same.

Inspiration

- I:** Which of the Seven Liberal Arts and Sciences directs the attention of Masons to Metals?
- R:** Astronomy directs their attention to Metals.
- I:** How does Astronomy classify Metals?
- R:** Astronomy considers all elements to be Metals except Hydrogen and Helium.
- I:** Based upon this specific consideration, what percentage of the human body is made of atoms that are considered Metal?
- R:** The percentage is thirty-seven.
- I:** Based upon this same Astronomical consideration, what percentage of Metal by weight is the human body?
- R:** The human body is seventy percent or over two-thirds Metal by weight.
- I:** What does this say to Masons?
- R:** The definition of Metal used by Astronomy reveals the human body to has significant amounts of Metal as an intricate aspect of its makeup.

Classes

- I:** Do all disciplines view Metals in this manner?
- R:** No. Each discipline classifies Metals differently.
- I:** How do they do this?
- R:** They classify them by their Physical, Chemical, Electrical, Optical and Mechanical attributes.
- I:** What traditional Metal classifications are there?
- R:** They are four in number: base, ferrous, noble and precious.²³

I: What are base Metals?

R: Base Metals are common and inexpensive Metals that oxidize or erode relatively easily when exposed to moist air.

I: What are examples of base Metals?

R: Examples include iron, nickel, lead, zinc and copper.

I: What are ferrous Metals?

R: Ferrous Metals contain "iron."

I: What is the root of their classification name?

R: Its root "ferrous" derives from a Latin word meaning, "containing iron."

I: How are ferrous Metals defined?

R: Ferrous Metals are known as pure iron, such as wrought iron, or are alloys such as steel or stainless steel. They are often magnetic in nature, but not always.

I: What are noble Metals?

R: Noble metals are metals that resist corrosion or oxidation, as opposed to base metals. Many noble Metals are also considered precious Metals due mostly to perceived rarity.

I: What are examples of noble Metals?

R: Examples include osmium, ruthenium, silver, gold, platinum, tantalum, iridium and rhodium.

Precious

I: What are precious Metals?

R: Precious metals are uncommon or rare, less reactive than most elements, have high luster and high electrical and heat conductivity. They are also considered high in economic value.

I: What are examples of precious Metals?

I: What was their reasoning?

R: Precious Metals were rare and of great value while base metals were quite common and of little to no value.

I: What's more?

R: Processes that transmute common and inexpensive material into material that was uncommon and expensive would be of great value.

Qualities

I: What qualities differentiate base Metals from precious Metals?

R: The qualities that differentiate base from precious Metals relate to luster, commonality and resistance to corrosion and erosion.

I: When applying these distinguishing qualities metaphorically toward Masonry, what insights can Masons gather?

R: The metaphor of Metal transmutation applies to the Masonic process that Masons employ in the first Three Degrees which transforms those who engage in it fully.

I: How so?

R: The process that Masonry offers men takes what is considered base and transforms it into something precious.

I: What's more?

R: Masons who apply what Masonry Alludes to and do the Work required of them are bright, uncommon and maintain their integrity in the face of conditions that corrupt others.

Process

- I:** What process do Masons undergo to bring about such a noteworthy transformation?
- R:** They progress by Degrees.
- I:** What Degrees are these?
- R:** The Three Degrees as they are immortalized in Blue Lodge Rituals.
- I:** To what is such Degree Work likened?
- R:** It is analogous to what is found in Metal Craft.
- I:** What is Metal Craft?
- R:** It is the smelting, refining and shaping of Metals.

Smelting

- I:** What is Smelting?
- R:** Smelting is the process of applying ample and appropriate heat to Metal ore while concurrently applying specific reducing agents.
- I:** What does this do to the Metal ore?
- R:** The heat excites the oxidized Metal while the reducing agent introduces carbon as carbon monoxide to the oxide.
- I:** What does this cause?
- R:** This causes the oxide to give up its oxygen atoms, which then combine with the carbon monoxide to form carbon dioxide, thus reducing the metal oxide to its base element.
- I:** How does this process apply metaphorically to the Entered Apprentice Work?



- R:** While Entered Apprentices view their Work as chipping away at their Rough Ashlar, thinking that they are divesting themselves of the Vices and Superfluities of life, Master Masons who assist them in this process must apply sufficient heat and a suitable atmosphere to help draw out the sword materials from the Ashlars.
- I:** What materials are required to assist in this process?
- R:** Ashlar, Chalk, Charcoal and Clay are needed.
- I:** How so?
- R:** These are the essential materials required to extract Metal from suitable ores.

Charcoal and Chalk



- I:** Why is this?
- R:** Charcoal is a source of carbon and heat used in creating the appropriate atmosphere for which even the hardest of metals will come forth and yield.
- I:** What use is Ashlar?
- R:** Ashlar provides the raw ore of which Metal is eventually extracted.
- I:** How does Chalk assist in this process?
- R:** Chalk is a limestone. At appropriate heat, limestone is mixed into Metals that have been reduced in an atmosphere of carbon dioxide.
- I:** Why is Chalk mixed with Metals in this way?
- R:** Mixing Chalk with Metals in this way further refines these Metals by combining with impurities still within the base Metals.
- I:** What occurs when these impurities combine with the Chalk?

R: They float to the surface as dross or slag.

Separation

I: What is dross?

R: Dross is a solid byproduct of the refining process. It is skimmed or poured from the surface of Metal, as it is refined.

I: What is slag?

R: Slag is a vitreous or "glass-like" byproduct of the refining process. Some small portion of it is usually kept floating upon the surface of liquid metal during its refining to prevent re-oxidation of the metal while being processed.

I: What more is slag?

R: Slag was sometimes used in jewelry in the past since it can have a glass-like appearance when in its room temperature state.

I: How does this relate metaphorically to the Work and Entered Apprentice Masons?

R: Removal of slag and dross from Metal is equivalent to removal of Vices and Superfluities from a man.

I: Is this also equivalent to the Threshing and Winnowing of wheat?

R: Yes. Each process is intended to separate out what is important from what is not, and echoes the original use of Ornan's Threshing-floor, now symbolized by the checkered pavement.

Clay

I: How is Clay involved in this process?

R: Historically, Clay was used to make receptacles to hold Metal ore during smelting and refining.



I: Why is this?

R: The nature of Clay is such that it maintains its shape even when subjected to the high heats used in the smelting and refining process.

I: How does one refer to such clay receptacles?

R: One refers to them as crucibles.

I: What alchemical Symbol denotes a crucible?

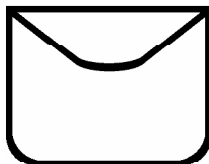
R: The Symbol used to denote a crucible is a rectangle with its base slightly longer than its height with a triangle overlaid upon it whose point is turned downward and its base is proportionally sized and properly aligned with the upper most part of the rectangle's edge.

I: Is this the only manner in which such a Symbol is portrayed?

R: No. A similar configuration denotes the same only the lowest parts of the rectangle and triangle may be portrayed as rounded.

I: What Masonic emblem perfectly reflects the Symbol of a Crucible?

R: The Masonic Apron with its flap turned down perfectly portrays the alchemical Symbol for a Crucible.



I: How does this apply to the Work of an Entered Apprentice?

R: Master Masons who assist Entered Apprentices should be aware that the Work they do requires knowledge of how Chalk, Charcoal and Clay each are used to bring forth and refine the Metal of the men in which they Work.

I: How is this explained metaphorically?

- R:** Entered Apprentices are “adamah”, which is Hebrew for “earth.” Adamah is a mixture of Clay and Metal ore. Masters must assist Entered Apprentices in shaping their Clay to contain the Metal ore in preparation for both smelting and refining using appropriate mixtures of Charcoal and Chalk.
- I:** How else does this apply to the Work of the Entered Apprentice?
- R:** While Symbols are ever present in Ritual, the level of understanding determines the focus for each participant.
- I:** Give me an example of this varying understanding.
- R:** Entered Apprentice Masons view the Apron as a badge of a Mason. Master Masons also understand the Apron to represent a crucible.
- I:** Why is this?
- R:** Masonic progression brings forth refined Metal from Stone when specific conditions and processes are adhered to with that intent.

More Refinement

- I:** Once Metal has been reduced and refined from the Ashlar that once held it, what next is done?
- R:** It is cast and shaped further.
- I:** Where is the casting and shaping process Alluded to within Ritual?
- R:** It is Alluded to directly within Ritual twice: once briefly in the first Degree Lecture and once again during the second Degree Lecture.
- I:** What is this process?

- R:** It is called, "study" and more specifically "the study of the Seven Liberal Arts and Sciences."
- I:** How does such study cast and shape the Metal of Masons?
- R:** It brings Form to the unformed.
- I:** What is another way of saying this?
- R:** It brings Order to Chaos.
- I:** How so?
- R:** By recasting the manner in which the Brain takes in, processes and puts forth information.

Evidence

- I:** What Masonic evidence that casting and shaping of Metal is indeed done.
- R:** It is Alluded to in Scripture and by Ritual.
- I:** Where is it Alluded to in Scripture?
- R:** It is Alluded to in 1st Kings and 2nd Chronicles.
- I:** Who was responsible for such casting and shaping?
- R:** Hiram Abiff was both responsible for these tasks and held to account for their success.
- I:** What were two objects cast by Hiram Abiff?
- R:** Two objects that were cast were two hollow Brazen Pillars.²⁴
- R:** What was their purpose?
- R:** Their purpose was many fold but two purposes stand out from all others.
- I:** What was the first of these two purposes?
- R:** The first was to adorn both the North and South sides of the Porch of King Solomon's Temple.
- I:** What was the second purpose?
- R:** The second was to serve as a safe repository for Masonic information.

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