


## THE MEM DEGREE - PART 2

This degree is intimately connected to the Master Mason's Degree as is the degree of Mark Master with that of the Fellow craft Degree. The MM<sup>o</sup>., is intended to teach the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead and the immortality of the soul. But as this mortal can only put on immortality by passing through the portals of the grave, the M.E.M.<sup>'</sup>., comes forward with its symbolism to represent a man prepared to enter upon that eventful passage. In the previous degree the duties of life have been defined. The virtuous craftsman has been constantly labouring to build within himself, a spiritual Temple of holiness. Fit for the habitation of Him who is the Holy One. 

This degree is centered around the completion and dedication of King Solomon's Temple. Four years after the death of his father David, Solomon began the erection of the Temple.

This was 470 years after the children of Israel had escaped from Egypt. During these years the Tabernacle had served as a house of worship, now it was to be replaced by a permanent structure. The time to complete the Temple was seven years and about six months. It was finished in the month of 'Bul' in the year of the world 3,000, corresponding to October, 1004 BC The following year it was dedicated with solemn ceremonies, which are alluded to, in our M.E.M.'s'. The dedication ceremonies lasted fourteen days, seven days being devoted exclusively to the dedication, the remaining seven to the Feast of the Tabernacles which followed.

The Hebrews had three titles of honour, each differing from the other in degree, which they bestowed on their teachers and eminent men, similar to modern collegiate designations of Bachelor, Master and Doctor. These were designated RAB, signifying great one, a chief a Master; RABBI, which literally denotes "My Master"; RABBONI, "My Great Master," translated "Most Excellent Master." This was the greatest of all titles which was used by Mary in addressing the Savior, as recorded in John 20:16: "she turned herself and said to him, 'Rabboni.'"

The twenty-fourth Psalm, which is used in the opening of this Degree, is well suited, as the most important event was the bringing forth of the Ark of the Covenant, with shouting and praises, and depositing it in the Holy of Hollies.

The ceremony of placing the cope-stone signifies the completion of the building. A day was set apart to celebrate the occasion, to be devoted to rejoicing and thanks giving for the completion of the undertaking. King Solomon received and acknowledged the most expert of the craftsmen as MMM's.

The M.E.M.'s'., is the first one where there are no working tools, signifying that labour is over. In the opening of this degree, the forming of a circle around the Altar as an act of worship and reverence for the Almighty, is further shown by those participating. Kneeling on the left knee, considered the weaker side of man. It also represents the material side of mans nature.

The presence of God within the Temple is seen when the Ark of the Covenant is placed within the Holy of Hollies. The Ark contained the Word of God, that is the Ten Commandments. Divine approbation is shown by the fire coming down from Heaven during the ceremony of dedication, consuming the burnt offerings which were material in nature. With man, the material has to be subordinated to the spiritual, when this process is completed, the great aim of all creation has been realized.

Every man is daily building the Temple of his own spiritual life. Every act and every thought, is an element to that structure. Spiritual buildings can be built only out of spiritual building material. Similarly our spiritual life must be built out of such materials as faith, hope, love, righteousness and fidelity to our highest ideals. When we put into the structure anything else, we are building faulty work into the Temple. It is stark tragedy for a man to waste his life in frills and trifles, leaving the completion of his spiritual Temple, to a more convenient season.