

**The Master's Word**

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## The Master's Word

### What is the Master's Word?

The first explanation I was given was simply that “Man Has Bones.” I was told that one just after I had finished my degrees in the Blue Lodge. It was not very satisfying as far as an answer. It was just too simple. And then I found out that it was not the Master's Word but only an explanation of the substitute for that word. So I started reading.

In the book MASONS OF THE KABBALAH by Dr. Avram Possman I found a different explanation for the substitute word. They use two words. The first is similar to the one we use and is a challenge. The hebrew explanation or translation of the word is “Here is the builder , or Here is your builder. It is also translated as Behold the Builder – also meaning something like Behold the Lord as God is the Great Architect (architect = Master builder). The response to the challenge is Mechbineck (Machbinak) which loosely translated is “The builder is dead”. This was written by Messianic Jews who were followers of the Kabbalah. Is this explanation correct? I know there has to be a hidden meaning with some substance in it somewhere and this is one of the explanations I found that has a semblance of something more substantial when considering the story as one of man's mortality and the immortality of the soul. It seemed to have a little more than a hint of the meaning of the Master's Word. But, I did not stop there as that explanation was also only of the substitute for the Master's Word.

The Master's Word has to be more important than the substitute therefor. In addition to the universally taught lesson of immortality, we find in the lodge a continued admonition to seek for the Master's Word. But even after we have completed the several degrees, we do not find the Master's Word. In the last degree in the Blue Lodge, we are given a substitute and told that it will have to do until man again finds the right. All through the degrees of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite, we find further indications of the continued seeking. At last, when a brother is made a Sublime Prince of the Royal Secret (32°), he is given an admonition to advance, to progress and to seek. “He is to advance and conquer in his heart those old enemies, Ignorance, Doubt and Prejudice, and to seek the Master's Word.” The Royal Secret is that one continues to progress and learn until reaching the Grand Lodge.

In the degree of the Royal Arch (York Rite), we are told that in a book there is a key to the Master's Word. We are also told that it is the ineffable name of God.

The holy name was , in the earlier years and up to the middle of the eighteenth century, attached to the third degree and was called the Master's Word. On some early tracing boards of the 3<sup>rd</sup> degree, there is a coffin displayed as one of the emblems of mortality. On the coffin in capital letters is inscribed the word JEHOVAH. Brother Oliver tells us that it was the Master's Word until it was taken out of the Blue Lodge and transferred to the Royal Arch. In an early version of the Royal Arch we are told that Solomon placed a medal on the the tomb of Hiram “on which was engraved Jehovah, the old Master's

**Word, and which signifies the Supreme Being.” (The Builder Magazine December 1915 )**

**The Master's Word is not a few meaningless syllables whispered in the ear, neither is it a few arbitrary characters. Neither is it the name of the Great Jehovah, unless it is considered in a symbolical sense, as representing Truth and Perfection. The key to the Master's Word is in the book, which to us is the Holy Bible, the Great Light in Masonry. There we will find the key to the Master's Word, but not the Master's Word itself...**

**We, as Mason's, are taught that The Master's Word is the ineffable name of God. We are also taught that we are to search for the Word and that search should be the goal and focus of all Masonic endeavors.**

**What is this Word that we continually seek? In one of the Masonic Funeral Services that I have a copy of (Connecticut 1923) there is an allusion to a certain 'pass'. The pass will permit us to gain entrance into the Grand Lodge above. What higher concept of the Master's Word is there than it is a pass by which we will gain immortality and entrance into the Celestial Lodge on High. The symbolism is this :”The Pass of a pure and blameless life will gain us entrance into the Celestial Lodge up above.”**

**In the first degree we are told that the apron is to remind us of that purity of life and rectitude of conduct. “Let its pure and spotless surface be to you an ever-present reminder of an unblemished purity of life and rectitude of conduct” and again ...you were presented with a lambskin apron ...He therefor, who wears the lambskin as a badge of a Mason is continually reminded of that purity of life and rectitude of conduct so essentially necessary to his gaining admission into the Celestial Lodge above”. So the apron placed upon the body or coffin at your death is the symbol of that pass.**

**We know that we can never attain a pure and blameless life. Why then do we seek it? Why are we continually admonished to seek for that which we can't find? Why do we keep searching for perfection and truth, only to receive a substitute therefor? In my opinion, we seek for it because in the struggle for perfection, we come closer to perfection. We can't hope to gain that perfection until we arrive at the Grand Celestial Lodge above. But we must never give up and surrender to the hopelessness of the mortal life.**

**We read in the Old Testament that Moses had the Pass and did not die but was translated (transported whole) directly to heaven after having been shown the promised land. He had the Master's Word directly from God in the symbolism of the burning bush and he followed the Word faithfully, leading the Israelites out of Egypt and bondage.**

**Solomon had the Master's Word, until he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord. Then he lost the Master's Word and it was symbolically buried among the rubbish of his physical temple.**

**The seeking of the Master's Word is the real purpose of Freemasonry. With the thought of the unity of God, the hope of immortality and the *seeking* after the perfect life, we will**

**build a temple that will be eternal. That spiritual building, that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.**

**Manly P. Hall in The Secret Teachings of all Ages had this to say:**

**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 an archetype of the Cosmic Martyr.**

**From here Manly goes into a esoteric discourse where he equates the ruffians to a triad of stars in the constellation of Libra and also calls attention to the fact that the Chaldean God Bal (who was metamorphosed into a demon by the Jews) appears in the name of each of the Murderers, Jubala , Jubalo and Jubalum. He goes on to say that to interpret the legend of Hiram requires familiarity with both the Pythagorean and Khabbalistic systems. So Manly P. Hall winds up his multi page discourse with the following observation: The Master's word is the avatar of the Cosmic Martyr of which Chiram Abiff is just one manifestation.**

**Albert Pike in Morals and Dogma stated :**

**“The two columns, Jachin and Boaz, are the symbols of that profound faith and implicit trust in God and the Redeemer that are the Christian's strength; and of those good works by which alone that faith can be established and made operative and effectual to salvation.**

**The three pillars that support the lodge are symbols of a Christian's HOPE in a future state of happiness: FAITH in the promises and the divine character and mission of the Redeemer; and CHARITABLE JUDGEMENT of other men.**

**The three murderers of Hiram (Khir-Om) symbolize Pontius Pilate, Caiaphas the High-Priest, and Judas Iscariot: and the three blows given him are the betrayal by Judas, the refusal of Roman protection by Pilate, and the condemnation by the High-Priest. They also symbolize the blow on the ear, the scourging and the crown of thorns. The twelve Fellow Crafts sent in search of the body are the twelve disciples, in doubt whether to believe the Redeemer would rise from the dead.**

**The Master's Word, supposed to have been lost, symbolizes the Christian faith and religion, supposed to have been crushed and destroyed when the Saviour was crucified, after Iscariot had betrayed Him, and Peter deserted Him, and when the other disciples doubted whether He would arise from the dead; but which rose from His tomb and flowed rapidly over the civilized world; and so that which was supposed to be lost, was found. It symbolizes also the Saviour Himself; the WORD that was in the beginning – that was with God, and that was God; the Word of life, that was made flesh and dwelt among us, and was supposed to be lost, while He lay in the tomb for three days, and His disciples “As yet knew not the scripture that He must rise again from the dead” and**

**doubted when they heard of it, and were amazed and frightened and still doubted when He appeared among them.**

**The bush of Acacia placed at the head of the grave of Hiram is an emblem of resurrection and immortality. Such are the explanations of our Christian Brethren, entitled, like those of other Masons, to a respectful consideration.”**

**The Master's Word will not be obtained by casual Masons, those who are just interested in the fellowship of the Lodge. It has never been conferred in the ritualistic degrees of the Lodge and never will nor can be. It is the establishment of understanding in the Soul of man between that higher self in him, and the MORE and Beyond Self from which he draws his life, and from which his intuitions spring. This is the Real Initiation” (Mystic Masonry by J. Buck)**

**After reading the Kabbalistic explanation, Manly P Halls esoterica and Albert Pikes treatise on the Christian understanding of the Master's Word, I have come to the conclusion that the Master's Word is the reward of study and devotion, and can't be obtained by any other means.**

**After all of my reading and studying, I find that there is not a definitive answer to the question, What is the Master's Word? I don't know the answer but I do know that I will continue to try to progress and learn as the admonition in the 32° teaches us. If I am granted entry into the Grand Lodge above, maybe then I will learn the answer.**