

THE LEGEND OF HIRAM ABIFF

by Jerry Marsengill
Presented October 29, 1988

Hiram Abiff, the widow's son, is the principal character in the second section of the Master Mason's degree. He has become the central figure in most rites and in most countries. Yet compared to much of the Masonic ritual and Masonic tradition, Hiram is a newcomer.

Regardless of Dr. Mackey, who was quite proficient in formulating and interpreting landmarks, the legend of Hiram is not a landmark of the craft. Mackey states that landmark 2 is the division of symbolic Masonry into three degrees and that landmark 3 is the Legend of the third degree.

Unfortunately we know the date when the third degree was first conferred. It was in 1726 in London in the Society for Music and Architecture. Some four years later in 1730, we find the first reference to the Hiramic legend.

In 1726, according to the Graham manuscript, the craft was still using the legend of Noah and his three sons. According to Coil and I will use his writing, since he has translated the manuscript into modern words: "We have it by tradition and still some reference to scripture that Shem, Ham and Japeth went to their father Noah's grave to try to find something about him to lead them to the veritable secret which this famous preacher had, for all things needful for the new world were in the Ark with Noah. Now these 3 men had agreed that, if they did not find the very thing itself, that the first thing they did find was to be to them as a secret thing not doubting but did most firmly believe that God was able and would cause what they did find to prove as veritable to them as if they had received the secret at first from God himself. So they came to the grave finding nothing but the dead body almost consumed. Taking a grip at a finger, it came away; so from Joint to Joint; so to the wrist; so to the elbow; so they reared up the dead body and supported it; setting foot to foot, knee to knee, breast to breast, cheek to cheek and hand to back, and cried out: 'Help, O, father,' as if they had said; 'O, Father of Heaven, help us now for our earthly father cannot.'" So they laid down the dead body again and not knowing what to do, one, said: 'Here is yet marrow in the bone;' and the second said: 'But a dry bone,' and the third said; 'It stinketh.' So they agreed to give it a name as is known to Freemasonry to this day."

The first record we have of the Hiramic legend being introduced into Masonry occurs in 1730 when Prichard published Masonry Dissected. He refers to Hiram as Grand Master Hiram. Prichard also tells both the story of Noah and the story of Hiram in this expose. The Hiramic legend, wherever it came from, and we have no way of knowing was still changing until the year 1738. In his Constitutions of 1738 Dr. James Anderson said that after the Temple was completed "their joy was soon interrupted by the death of their dear Master, Hiram Abiff, whom they decently interred in the Lodge near the Temple according to ancient usage."

Now the Hiramic legend is just that, a legend. Some of the proposed explanations for the legend are:

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THE LEGEND OF HIRAM ABIFF, by Jerry Marsengill, Presented October 29, 1988
Page 1 of 3

The Hiram Legend

Charles H. Vail



The Hiram Legend:

The Story and Legend of Hiram Abiff: Foundations of Freemasonry Series Manly P. Hall, William Harvey, Albert G. Mackey, 2019-12-13 Prominent masonic scholars explore the history myth and symbolism behind Freemasonry's most prominent character the one our rituals are quite literally built around Presented here are the essays [The Story of Hiram Abiff](#) by William Harvey [The Legend of Hiram Abiff](#) by Manly P Hall and [The Hiramic Legend](#) by Albert G Mackey [The Legends of the Jews](#) Louis Ginzberg, 1998-05-13 The first books of the Bible describe powerfully but briefly the creation the first generations of humanity and the early history of the Jews In addition to their power to inspire thought and worship they inspired imagination Much of the richness of Jewish belief and wisdom comes from the many legends that answered questions raised by the silences of the Bible From the second to the fourteenth centuries the Talmud Midrash and their Targums incorporated apocryphal views of Biblical persons and events to help explain scripture Other legends found their way into the Kabbalah into Biblical commentaries and into Christian literature **The Hiram Myth and Master Mason's Initiation** GERARD. DE NERVAL, 2025-04-12 Gerard de Nerval one of the greatest French writers was passionate about initiation and Freemasonry At the heart of his masterful work *A Journey to the Orient* he presents the legend of Master Hiram Solomon and the Queen of Sheba which he claimed to have heard from a storyteller in Constantinople Hiram sent by the king of the same name Hiram I King of Tyre to Solomon son of David and King of Judea was tasked with building a temple on Mount Moriah to house the Ark of the Covenant which contained the Tablets of the Law Hiram oversaw the decoration of the Temple fashioning and erecting the Jachin and Boaz Pillars as well as the Brazen Sea The legend of Hiram is the initiation leading to the mastery of Freemasonry Over the years and depending on the nation the Legend of Hiram has undergone transformations while preserving certain fundamental elements Solomon's Temple as the backdrop to the legend Hiram as an architect and the idea that he possessed two secrets that of know how and that of the password reserved for masters Gerard de Nerval has here brought together the essential elements of the Masonic myth revealed by the rank of Master as it is still lived today **The Legend of Hiram Abiff** Albert Gallatin Mackey, William R. Singleton, 2005-12 This scarce antiquarian book is a facsimile reprint of the original Due to its age it may contain imperfections such as marks notations marginalia and flawed pages Because we believe this work is culturally important we have made it available as part of our commitment for protecting preserving and promoting the world's literature in affordable high quality modern editions that are true to the original work **The History of Freemasonry** Albert Gallatin Mackey, 1898 [Secrets of the Widow's Son](#) David A. Shugarts, 2009-11 *Secrets of the Widow's Son* is a revealing look at the themes that will be explored in *The Solomon Key* Dan Brown's upcoming sequel to the cultural phenomenon known as *The Da Vinci Code* David A Shugarts provides what Brown's widespread admirers crave most an enlightening glimpse into the secrets behind Brown's eagerly anticipated new book *Secrets of the Widow's Son* is not a plot spoiler rather it is an engaging piece of work that will pique readers interest in *The*

Solomon Key while laying the groundwork for the theories to be explored in Brown's can't miss sequel **Ancient Mysteries And Modern Masonry** Charles H. Vail, The purpose of these lectures is to consider the origin and nature of the Ancient Mysteries and Modern Masonry and to show the relation which they bear one to the other Freemasonry deals largely with the morals and symbols of the Mysteries of Antiquity and originally was one of the channels of Ancient Wisdom There were a few among the founders of Modern Masonry who possessed the Royal Secret or at least had a knowledge of its existence and if the key has been lost the Mason as Heir apparent of the Old Wisdom should be foremost in the search for its recovery All agree that the Masonic symbols and traditions are of the greatest antiquity and can be traced to the far East to the earliest civilization from which time and place they have spoken in nature's language to all peoples of the earth We are more and more convinced that this picture language of our ritual contains a most complete philosophy a knowledge embracing the eternal verities of the universe and that these symbols were designed by the Initiates of old to preserve and convey that Ancient Wisdom to the present and future generations Though empires and dynastic continents have appeared and passed away these ancient symbols hewn in rock cut temples and monuments have served to convey the Great Secret from ages past and will continue its record as long as this part of the universe remains Bacon Masonry George V. Tudhope, 1996-09 Contents the Lost Word Hiram Abif the Name of the Lost Word Bacon's Fraternities in Learning the Original Meeting Place of Freemasons the Acceptation Masons Symbols of Freemasonry Emblems Regarding Bacon's Life Anderson's Constitution of t Speculative freemasonry. A historical lecture upon the origin of craft and high grade freemasonry [&c.]. John Yarker, 1883 *The Traditions, Origin and Early History of Freemasonry* Azariah T. C. Pierson, 1882 An Illustrated Guide to The Lost Symbol John Weber, 2009-12-08 Rich in world history and political power veiled in secrecy and rife with rituals and arcane symbols from art and architecture to the images that adorn our currency the Freemasons arose from ambiguous origins centuries ago to play a major role in drafting the initial documents of the United States and even in constructing the intricate landscape of Washington D C itself a virtual mystery by design These puzzles lay the foundation for Dan Brown's serpentine thriller *The Lost Symbol* and also raise provocative questions Why do some Masonic symbols remain obscured while others are hidden in plain sight Which presidents were the embodiments of Masonic ideals What is the significance of the construction of the Library of Congress Washington National Cathedral the Washington Monument the Capitol and the physical layout of Washington D C's roadways and cul de sacs And to what secretive end do they all lead Now millions of curious fans can follow Robert Langdon step by step and discover for themselves the answers to the absorbing conundrums posed by *The Lost Symbol* in this comprehensive fully illustrated and intricately detailed tour of the arcana of Washington D C It takes readers through the enigmatic codes captivating trivia unfathomable riddles intriguing records historic maps ciphers and conspiracies of the phenomenal bestseller What's more it reveals the fascinating details of a world of unknown locales mysticism intrigue and secret societies all of which lie in the shadow of *The Lost Symbol* The

Masonic Review ,1880 *The Lost Keys of Masonry* Manly Palmer Hall,1924 The Early History and Antiquities of Freemasonry George Franklin Fort,1881 **The history of freemasonry** Robert Freke Gould,1882 **High Magic II** Frater U.:D.,2008 Europe s best known mage and contemporary occult author Frater U D shares his extensive magical expertise in the companion volume to his highly acclaimed High Magic Previously unavailable in English High Magic II has been eagerly awaited by ceremonial magicians mages and Hermetic practitioners This comprehensive guide explores a variety of magical topics mirror magic sigil magic shamanism magical orders mudras folk magic and divination in a modern non dogmatic way The integrated progressive approach of this book on high magic is designed to help the reader develop a holistic understanding of the underlying magical theories and a true mastery of the magical techniques Themes in the text recur focusing on different aspects of core topics but taking the reader further along each time using the format proven effective in High Magic High Magic II also delves into magic and yoga magic in the Bible the Kabbalah forms of initiation and the magic of ancient Egypt and the late Hellenistic period Many provocative practices are addressed including demonic magic and combat magic Some of the techniques have never before appeared in an English language book *The Freemason's Chronicle* ,1883 **The Legends of the Jews: Notes to volumes III and IV, from Moses in the wilderness to Esther** Louis Ginzberg,1928 Legends of the Jews is a most remarkable and comprehensive compilation of stories connected to the Hebrew Bible It is an indispensable reference on that body of literature known as Midrash the imaginative retelling and elaboration on Bible stories in which mythological tales about demons and magic co exist with moralistic stories about the piety of the patriarchs **The History of Freemasonry** Gould,1886 History of the ancient and honorable fraternity of Free and accepted masons, and concordant orders, written by a board of editors. H.L. Stillson, ed.-in-chief Henry Leonard Stillson,1890

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Table of Contents The Hiram Legend

1. Understanding the eBook The Hiram Legend
 - The Rise of Digital Reading The Hiram Legend
 - Advantages of eBooks Over Traditional Books
2. Identifying The Hiram Legend
 - Exploring Different Genres
 - Considering Fiction vs. Non-Fiction
 - Determining Your Reading Goals
3. Choosing the Right eBook Platform
 - Popular eBook Platforms
 - Features to Look for in an The Hiram Legend
 - User-Friendly Interface
4. Exploring eBook Recommendations from The Hiram Legend
 - Personalized Recommendations
 - The Hiram Legend User Reviews and Ratings
 - The Hiram Legend and Bestseller Lists
5. Accessing The Hiram Legend Free and Paid eBooks
 - The Hiram Legend Public Domain eBooks
 - The Hiram Legend eBook Subscription Services
 - The Hiram Legend Budget-Friendly Options

6. Navigating The Hiram Legend eBook Formats
 - ePub, PDF, MOBI, and More
 - The Hiram Legend Compatibility with Devices
 - The Hiram Legend Enhanced eBook Features
7. Enhancing Your Reading Experience
 - Adjustable Fonts and Text Sizes of The Hiram Legend
 - Highlighting and Note-Taking The Hiram Legend
 - Interactive Elements The Hiram Legend
8. Staying Engaged with The Hiram Legend
 - Joining Online Reading Communities
 - Participating in Virtual Book Clubs
 - Following Authors and Publishers The Hiram Legend
9. Balancing eBooks and Physical Books The Hiram Legend
 - Benefits of a Digital Library
 - Creating a Diverse Reading Collection The Hiram Legend
10. Overcoming Reading Challenges
 - Dealing with Digital Eye Strain
 - Minimizing Distractions
 - Managing Screen Time
11. Cultivating a Reading Routine The Hiram Legend
 - Setting Reading Goals The Hiram Legend
 - Carving Out Dedicated Reading Time
12. Sourcing Reliable Information of The Hiram Legend
 - Fact-Checking eBook Content of The Hiram Legend
 - Distinguishing Credible Sources
13. Promoting Lifelong Learning
 - Utilizing eBooks for Skill Development
 - Exploring Educational eBooks
14. Embracing eBook Trends
 - Integration of Multimedia Elements

- Interactive and Gamified eBooks

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