

Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge Jurisdiction of Arkansas, F.&A.M.

Biblical Parallels: Joshua, Zerubbabel & Haggai¹

Three (3) is one of the mystical numbers of Freemasonry, sharing honors with the number (7): three officers in a Masonic Lodge; three degrees in Symbolic Masonry; three steps in our lives (youth, manhood, and old age); three members of the Royal Arch Council.

After the building of King Solomon's Temple, the kingdom of Judah started a slide toward degradation, mainly because of its leaders, starting with the wisest, King Solomon himself. God had given him many things, including wealth and wisdom, but Solomon blew it all on too many women, and died at the ripe old age of sixty, but looked one hundred probably. The temple itself was destroyed some 500 years later by the very remnants of Abraham's people, the Chaldeans, under Nebuchadnezzar, and some 70,000 captives, young people were taken to Babylon for a period of 70 years. It was in Babylon, under three administrations and three different countries (Babylonian Empire, Persian Empire, and the Mede Empire). Under Cyrus, the decree was issued to rebuild Solomon's Temple. Enter our three principals: Joshua, Zerubbabel, and Haggai.

In Genesis 49:10, a prophecy was given in the form of a blessing by Jacob (Israel) to his son Judah, a prophecy that would have as one of its signs, a scarlet line. We have seen in previous articles how this line was started in Canaan, went to Egypt and then back to Canaan. Now we find it in Babylon, taken captive by its fore parents but is now on the threshold of liberty again through Zerubbabel, the Prince of Judah, and friend Cyrus. As the scenes of reality are displayed before our spiritual viewing, we see Genesis 49:10 again, living in Zerubbabel (scepter), Joshua (lawgiver), and Haggai (prophet). Because of these three, meeting in peace and love and unity, the line is continued.

Of the 70,000 captives taken to Babylon, only 42,360 people returned to Jerusalem to assist in the rebuilding of the Temple. This number was besides the servants or

¹ <http://arkphagrandlodge.com/parallels.htm>

slaves, which numbered 7,337, or a little less than 50,000 people. The way was rough as well as dangerous, and they faced attacks from warring tribes as well as the serpents and other dangers of the desert. Of the original tribes of Israel, only two (Levi is not counted) remained, Judah and Benjamin. Truly, it was not the awesome gathering that crossed the Red Sea in Moses' time, nor the army that crossed the Jordan River in Joshua's time. Yet, this was a work of the Lord's and the journey was blessed, and in the seventh month of the first year Cyrus's reign over Babylon, the Hebrews were once again, in Jerusalem.

Today, in the Royal Arch Chapter of Masons, the three representatives of Joshua, Zerubbabel, and Haggai, sit in council. The colors are scarlet and white, and are intermixed with blue and purple to give the Chapter the same colors as the tabernacle in the wilderness. The Chapter room is set up to correspond with the council chambers set up outside the ruins of the Temple, with the above mentioned officers waiting to receive the "three weary travelers" whose names have come down through the legendary channels of time as: Shadrach, Mechach, and Abednego.

That which was lost is now found. That which was lost work, is now lifted aloft as the brotherhood that should be among men. That which we have been seeing, lo these many years, is now established in the **least one of these**. It would take Joshua to perpetuate the system of the priesthood until Shiloh comes! It would take Zerubbabel to be the caretaker of the Scarlet Line until Shiloh comes. It would take Haggai, the prophet and scribe, to prophecy and write of He that is Shiloh, until He comes. That Joshua is not the Joshua that followed Moses in the leader's role with the Children of Israel, but the Joshua from the Tribe of Levi, the priestly line of Aaron, one to give and interpret the law of Moses.