

What attracts so many Brethren to seek further light in Royal Arch Freemasonry?

It is difficult to understand why more brethren do not seek membership in the Royal Arch. No Rite of Freemasonry covers the world, as does Royal Arch Masonry. There are some reading this message who are indeed already a Companion (member) of a Royal Arch Chapter, but there are also many more who are not! The information that follows explains more on the matter.

In your journey through the three degrees of Symbolic Freemasonry and as you have learned the proficiency lecture for each degree, no doubt many questions have arisen concerning the meaning of the ritualistic ceremonies, the historical implications and the “why” of the legends of Freemasonry.

Royal Arch Freemasonry provides an opportunity for Master Masons desirous of further light to explore some of the deeper mysteries of the Craft. The four capitular degrees, in all of which candidates take an active part, are truly some of the most profound and impressive in Freemasonry.

Many believe the Sublime Degree of Master Mason to be the ultimate degree of Freemasonry, and all others to be added and explanatory. Most students of Freemasonry agree that the story of the Craft, as presented in the three degrees, is incomplete and that the degrees of the Royal Arch complete the story and answer many of the questions in the mind of the newly made Master Mason. Royal Arch Freemasonry contains some simple, plain statement of truth, easily understandable and helpful in our relation to life.

Lodge symbolism deals with lessons of the material side of life. The capitular degrees, and particularly the supreme degree of the Holy Royal Arch, deal with the spiritual side of life. Offering the true completion of the ancient Craft, Royal Arch Freemasonry is, therefore, the logical step for every Master Mason to take.

The supreme degree of Holy Royal Arch Mason, as the culmination of the capitular degrees, is the climax of Ancient Craft Freemasonry and Masonic symbolism. It is during this degree ritual that the greatest treasure of a Freemason is brought to light: the long lost Master's Word. The value of Royal Arch Freemasonry will be appreciated by all who are exalted to that most supreme degree, particularly by those who are seeking to complete their Masonic education. It reveals the full light of Ancient Craft Freemasonry, presents it as a complete system in accordance with the original plan, and justly entitles you to truly claim the noble name of Master Mason.

In the Royal Arch degree ritual itself, the Lost Word of a Master Mason is rediscovered in a beautiful ceremony that takes the candidates through the

destruction of King Solomon's Temple, the seventy years of the Babylonian captivity, and the ultimate return to the Holy Land to aid and assist in the rebuilding of the Temple of the Most High. The Holy Royal Arch degree is a natural progression to reveal the "genuine" secrets following the granting of certain substituted ones. No other degrees are so intimately linked with the Blue Lodge or have so ancient and noble a history.

The supreme degree of Holy Royal Arch Mason was considered most important in the early years of Freemasonry, following closely on the heels of the Hiramic legend which probably appeared in England around 1725. The original intent was that every rite, system or additional degree in Freemasonry cannot confer its degree on a Master Mason until he has been exalted as a Holy Royal Arch Mason. Many feel this is as it should be, because for some a man is not truly a Master Mason until he receives the Master's Word and he can only receive it in the Holy Royal Arch. In the United States, this intent has remained in practice within the scheme of orders, rites and bodies collectively known as the "York Rite". For example the additional orders – such as the Allied Masonic Degrees (and many others) – are closed to any Mason who has not been exalted to the degree of the Holy Royal Arch.

The motto of the Royal Arch is - *Kodes La Adonai* and means - "Holiness to the Lord" - ever reminds us of the reverence due the Great and Beneficent Author of our existence, who is a Being without beginning of days or ending of years.

If you are not yet a Royal Arch Freemason and you seek more light in Masonry then just ask a Brother of your lodge who is already a Companion of a Royal Arch Chapter. They will guide you on the path to membership. There are also many Past Masters of Craft Lodges that are not Royal Arch Companions. They are particularly welcome to join the Royal Arch as well as all Master Masons.