In Building the Temple of Solomon Before, During and Afterwards… (Third Episode)



Morah Salem

Traces That Were Not Erased

King Solomon first appointed Adoniram to temporarily replace Hiram Abif, then referred to him as "the organizer of all works" in the construction of the Temple and gave him the title of "great architect". In order to keep Hiram Abif's memory alive and to ensure that those who worked on the building of the Temple would not easily lose their anger against those who had murdered him, he ordered that the traces of blood in the Inner Courtyard should remain as they were, and that no cleaning should be done for the time being.

Earlier, during our secret mission in the Sanctuary, I hadn't noticed that there was a blood trail anywhere in the Inner Courtyard. Adoniram hadn't mentioned it either. Maybe I hadn't seen them because they were on the sides, not in the centre... We had all gone straight to the Sanctuary through the Inner Gate, entered the Middle Chamber from there, used one of the wells for a short time, but didn't wander around, and came back out through the same way. When I learned that there were still traces of blood there, even though days had passed, I realized that Hiram Abif must have been severely beaten by those who had killed him.

So I began to feel more resentment towards those murderers, not less, but more and more. At one point, my blood even ran to my brain. I was a bricklayer, not a fighter, never had been, but in that moment of rage, I promised myself that if I would get my hands on one of them, I would beat the life out of him, even at the cost of my own.

On the third of the days following the night King Solomon hosted us six masters in his palace, a magnificent funeral was held.

A burial place had been prepared in the Outer Courtyard, northwest of the Temple. The tomb in the Inner Chamber was brought there, opened and the body of Architect Master Hiram wrapped in a shroud, was buried there. What a burial!.. Several layers of thick stone slabs were laid over it. Even Adoniram was surprised by this procedure.

Later, in a conversation between two us on this issue, Adoniram said, *«I don't know why it was done that way, I didn't ask, it's none of my business. It is not that important. But I think many people think that the medallion that Master Hiram carried when he was alive was put in the grave with him. It may have been done that way to mislead those who might want to steal it, even if there was nothing to steal.»*

The ceremony started just after noon. It was glorious; it was also international in character. Many people came from neighbouring countries. So voluminous that, like other craftsmen who had worked on the building of the Temple, I stayed in the background, far away, and could not watch the procession properly. I only at a time saw Hiram, the King of Tyre, making an excited speech.

When the ceremony was over, everyone returned to their work; some of the important guests from other countries went back to the palace with King Solomon, and we quietly followed them to the guest room that had been reserved for us for the time being...

We had just arrived when a messenger told us that we had been summoned to the reception hall. Moreover, we were not to go in ordinary clothes, but in the garb of our qualifications.

We, the six masters, quickly putting on our aprons and sashes, went to the reception hall.

That outer guard, whom we recognized previously, was in his usual place near the door. We thought we would see Adoniram there; he was not around. Maybe he was inside.

We didn't know who had sent for us. What were we going to do? Should we go in? If so, how?

We told the Outer Guard that we had been summoned and asked if it would be appropriate to knock on the door. When he told us to just to wait, we signalled each other to be quiet and stood silently.

At some moment, the Inner Guard opened the door and called for the Outer Guard. After a while, the Outer Guard came back and said that only one of us would be taken in and that we should wait.

We waited... It was obvious that something important was going to happen, but it was incomprehensible why all six of us were brought here if only one of us was to be taken in.

However, such procedures could not be questioned.

Moreover, in our opinion, if it there wouldn’t be something important, we wouldn't have been kept waiting... For those inside, it might not have been like that at all. *"Let them wait... What the hell, what are they doing anyway?"*

A little while later, Master Achizar, being the Master of Ceremonies here, appeared. Turning to me, he said, *«Joapert, I will let only you in for now.»* He told the other masters to wait. His face was not smiling as usual; it was serious. It probably was an indication that I was again going to be assigned to an important mission.

All right, fine, but why me?... Why me again?... I wonder if Master Achizar had specifically chosen me for whatever the important assignment was, given our long-standing affinity. If so, why me and not Selek?

Suddenly I realized that I was delusional. What made me think that I would be given a mission? Why would Achizar choose the person to carry out that important task? Perhaps I had done something wrong and going to be scolded; but if so, why would they have summoned all six of us, and all garbed up!

There was no need to make assumptions. I was going to see it anyway.

Later, when I was alone with Master Achizar, I asked him why he had chosen me. He said, *«What makes you think so?... Is such a thing possible?... Do you think I can make such a decision on my own?»* He explained the reason as: *«It was preferred that the person to be given the assignment should be a Phoenician; it was stated that this was a requirement of respect and love for Hiram Abif. Selek could have been considered, but they chose you... Everyone already knows that you are a master of good morals, open-heartedness and good intentions.»*

When I took a profit for myself out of this and asked, *«Do you mean because I have improved enough and am now on the road to perfection?»* Achizar said, *«You are a good master at your job. You have many outstanding qualities, but I wish you could be a little more humble.... Look, maybe then you will have the opportunity to really improve and be able to take the path of perfection. When I praise you, you didn't object to taking my words as your own, saying that other masters are like that too. But you should have done so.»* He added his advice, which was like a positive criticism.

In order not to be outdone, I said to my Master Achizar, *«I need to grow up a little more. I'm still very young.»*

When I teased him like this, he took my words seriously and said, *«That's true! How old are you yet?... Four times four is too little, five times five is too much. So you have many years ahead of you.»*

In fact, he intentionally had underestimated my age, but it didn't matter; it was obvious that there was another meaning behind his words. What did he mean? That was the important thing.

Man's supreme goal must be the formation of a universal unity and cohesion for all communities and all people that make up humanity.

But no one alone and purely individually can be an element of this universal whole and unity.

Everyone is first and foremost a member of his own family. He must first realize that he is a member of this small society and fulfil his duties towards it. After that, the sequence is moving on to a larger society, and gradually to his nation.

No one who does not feel the consciousness of nationality in his heart can reach the ideal of universal integrity and unity. A competent person who engages in universal endeavours preserves the consciousness of nationality in his heart.

A virtuous person sees nature and society not from a single point of view as one-way and one-dimensional, but in two-way and two-dimensional.

A person who has acquired knowledge as well as being virtuous, adds a third dimension to this and looks at every issue from multiple perspectives.

The person who aspires to such competence must first of all know how to be humble. This does not mean pretending that one does not know what he knows, nor does it mean putting oneself down, but it means knowing what one knows and what does not know, what one is and what is not, and acting accordingly.

Despite thinking about all these, I could not put nationality in its proper place, looking at it through my own point of view. Where was I from, which nation did I belong to? Was I really Phoenician, as Achizar said?

I wasn't sure about that. I had been an expatriate for so many years, I began to think of myself as a citizen of Jerusalem.

Hiram's Representative

Achizar took me to his side. He knocked on the door. When the Inner Guard opened the door, this time Achizar took the lead. When I followed him inside, I was again subjected to surprise.

This place was as if not the reception hall we had been to before.

No, the place was the same place, but appearance was different, the interior decoration had been changed. The black curtains that had covered the walls three days ago had been removed and replaced with green ones.

Vase?

It wasn't there. Who knows, maybe it had been put somewhere else that I couldn't see.

Seven branched candlestick?

It also was absent.

Four columns were placed in the centre of the hall, each forming the corner points of a square. As far as could be seen through the doorway, they could not be said to have any special feature. Above them were large candlesticks, each holding a single oil lamp.

King Solomon was sitting on his throne. With him were many guests who had come to attend the funeral. I knew some of them, some I didn’t.

Achizar led me to the front of Solomon, and waited over there, standing a little to the side

Solomon called me, *«Johaben!»* He paused for a moment. *«That is your name; am I right?»* he asked in a soft voice.

I kept silent. I confirmed just by bowing my head down.

King Solomon continued by saying, *«We have gathered here to start a special practice that will become a tradition, so that the memory of this day will always be kept alive.»* He added that I would be playing an important role in this. Then he said:

"We wish to organize a memorial ceremony for Architect Master Hiram every year from now on. However, even if there is no such ceremony, our architect will always be remembered and his presence among us will be foreseen. For this purpose, we have decided that a young master will represent him. His task will be to be present at the execution of the works of our Temple and other buildings that will follow it, and to portray Master Hiram as if he were there directly. Of course, since this will be a tradition, and will be carried on forever, the task will have to be passed from hand to hand. After a year Johaben will pass it on to another master, younger than himself, and so on… This is what we thought, what we found as appropriate and we decided to put it into practice immediately.»

He paused for a moment. *«But this mission will require you to depart from your brethren and work on your own from now on. This is a privilege. Nevertheless, you may not want it in your humility. If you wouldn't want it, then it is only a sacrifice. Here, you can make up your mind clear»* Then he asked, *«Are you willing to take on this mission?»*

How should I answer now?... *«Yes!»* if I want to, *«No!»* if I don't want to...? Whereas *«Yes!»* whether I want to or not?

I gave an indirect answer that anyone could understand: *«A master who knows how to keep a secret has a sense of duty. He is told what to do. He takes this as his duty, and carries it out.»*

Solomon had a slight smile on his face. I think he liked my answer. *«We wish you success in all the tasks you will take on throughout your life»* he said, and suddenly stood up.

When the King stood up, so did everyone else of course.

«Remove your apron and sash.» he said.

Achizar came to me and assisted. He took my apron and sash away.

For a moment I felt as if I was naked. Most of all, I was sad that my ivory key was gone. I became a little sad.

But that wouldn't last long. Apparently I was going to receive a new sash.

Solomon said to me, *«Johaben, from now on everyone will refer to you as "**Morah Salem**" until you hand over this mission to someone else.»*

He called Adoniram. He told him that in spite of the fact that I had been appointed to represent Hiram Abif when necessary, I would continue to work with him as a master builder, so he should be the one to invest me with my new apron.

Coming to my side, Adoniram had a new apron in hand. As he tied it around my waist, our eyes met for a moment, as if he was saying to me, *«Now, you've advanced a step further. Appreciate it and try to progress even further as soon as possible.»*



The apron was framed by a light green band; the lid was also light green and had no embroidery, but a **cubical ashlar** motif was visible in the centre of the white body. On this were engraved two letters of the Phoenician alphabet to represent Hiram Abif.

Then King Solomon came aside and placed a sort of chain necklace on me.



I don't know how accurate it is to call it a “necklace”.

It was consisting of a thick, ring-shaped chain with a huge compass attached to it and the lower end, having been joined by a bow...

For a moment my neck felt like it was going to collapse because it was quite heavy, obviously made of solid gold... I wonder how Hiram Abif was able to carry that jewel in his lifetime, which undoubtedly should have been much heavier than this.

Solomon told Adoniram that although I had been appointed to represent Master Hiram, it would only be for ceremonial purposes, and that he could make use of me as he wishes, but that the fellows and apprentices who had been working for me up to that point should be transferred to another master of masonry.

I had never been so glorified in my entire life. I can't tell what a flood of emotion I felt. I had tears in my eyes. If I believed there was no shame or wrongdoing, I could have shrunken on the floor and cried with joy.

I don't know if I was deserving such an honour. I don't think so. I had no doubt that there were masters far more worthy than myself. I was only chosen because I was young. Furthermore, it was a temporary title, not meant to be permanent. Nevertheless, I had to be fitting in it.

King Solomon raised both hands in the air and looked upward, as if in prayer. Consequently, everyone I could see in the hall did like him.

I couldn't yet got used to the practices here. It was a ritual I didn't know... Maybe a form of silent well-wishing. Since everyone was doing it, I just imitated them.

We all stood there for a while, no one moving, no one saying anything, no one making a sound.

Then Solomon said in a low voice, *«Morah Salem, unless you give us a sign, we will stay like this forever.»*

Whoever was Morah Salem?

Suddenly a lightning bolt flashed in my head. Who could be! Me, of course.

I realized that I had to do something.

No one had warned me in this respect, not even a hint. Since I was the symbolic "star of the day" here today, it seemed that whatever I do would be accepted and obeyed.

I remembered that when Adoniram took us to the Secret Chamber, he did what he wanted to symbolize with his body language, first in a certain order and then completely in reverse.

I crossed both of my outstretched hands over my chest, lowered them downwards and made a gesture as if looking at the ground.

After me, everyone did the same.

«Now we can celebrate Morah Salem» said Solomon, and carried out an applause. All officers and the guests in the hall followed. I didn't join in because I was the one being applauded; I think that was right.

I expecting that King Solomon would order a place to be given to me in accordance with my new title, and also state that everyone else can be seated. On the contrary, he said that I could leave while others were in standing status.

This also seemed strange to me, but I did as told. I bowed to the King, turned and walked to the door. Everyone saw me off on foot. This would mean that I was being respected. Frankly, that was quite heavy for me; heavier than the necklace hanging down from my neck. I wondered how I was going to carry it; would I be able to do?

Although I thought so for a moment, then I was relieved by remembering that I was no longer representing myself as Master Joapert, but Master Hiram the Architect from now on, bearing the title "Morah Salem".

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In life, some people are exalted by a task they have undertaken or a title they have received. In this context, there are those who attain a greatness they have never deserved. If such a person realizes that he does not deserve the task or the title he has received, being in this state will not harm either himself or his surroundings. In fact, perhaps from now on he will strive to be eligible for the position he has taken or the title that he obtained.

But if a person thinks that he has reached a superior level with the position he has assumed or the title he has received, and if he tries to boast about it, this will harm first himself and then his environment. When he is respected for his position or title, he counts it as his own.

Some people consciously realize that a position or title is permanent, whereas the one who holds or receives it assumes it as temporary. Such a person, on the other hand, glorifies the task or title he has already undertaken or the title he received because he deserves it. He is also aware that the respect he receives is not for himself, but for the task he has undertaken and the title he bears.

When his term of office expires, or when it is no longer necessary or useful for him to continue to carry, he gladly hands it over to his successor with peace of mind. He is also honoured by this process.

When I came out of the Reception Hall, the Outer Guard handed me something like a bundle, and told me that Achizar had given it.

When I opened it, I saw that it contained my previous apron and the sash with an ivory key hanging from the end.

I was glad.

Later, when I met Achizar, he told me that these were already mine, that he had given them to me to keep, and in a year's time, as King Solomon had stated, my new position would come to an end, someone else would took the title of "Morah Salem", and I would return to my previous position, considering that I might need to wear them again, so it was better to keep.

Outside, the other masters surrounded me. They wished to know what was going on inside, why I was dressed like this. Don't find this strange; it is natural. The kind of curiosity you should find strange will come at a later stage in my life.

I briefly told them what had happened. *«This is a temporary assignment given to me in addition. In fact, I continue to be like you.»* I said, then asked, *«What's the time?»*

It was evening. The work we had to do today was finished.

While departing, I turned to glance at the Outer Guard, whose name I now knew was Zerbal. He saluted me with a bow and a sincere smile.

The Headstone of the Grave

Later that day, after I received the title "Morah Salem", I was separated from the other brethren and placed in a special room in the palace.

That night I couldn't sleep properly. I tossed and turned from one side to the other. I had nightmares as well. I wonder why... I should have been happy and relaxed. Maybe it was the subconscious effect of being separated from the other masters... As soon as it was getting alight in the morning, I got up.

«As now that I am representing Architect Master Hiram, my first duty should be visiting him.» I thought. I liked this thought very much. My hangover was gone in an instant. I went to the Outer Courtyard, where Hiram Abif's tomb is located, before other curious people crowd in.

The grave was not as beautiful as the tomb where the body had been preserved. It was just ostentatious. Many symbols were used and it was difficult to assume what they might mean.

However, it is worth to describe the headstone.

The bottom was made of smooth white marble. Over it was a large black marble triangular stone standing on four pillars. It was hollow in the centre, a jug was placed there. An **acacia branch**, the letters M, B and N in the Phoenician alphabet were engraved side by side on the jug, and a miniature sword was stuck into it.



It was alleged that Hiram Abif's heart had been taken out, specially medicated and placed in the jug in his headstone. I don't know if it was just a rumour or if it was really done so. If I was very curious, there were authorities I could ask and find out whether it was true. I could have at least asked Adoniram who would know, but I was already having been labelled "nosy", so I didn't ask, at least in this context, so as not to appear as inquisitive.

Moreover, if you I someone, wouldn't he say, *"Aren't you Morah Salem? If you don't know that, who does?"*

On the other hand was it so important? I wouldn't have minded if it had been sent to Phoenicia.

Has this thinking now become too "exclusively in favour of one's own nation"?

There was no one around. I took off the heavy necklace hanging around my neck and placed it on Master Hiram's grave. I had a chat with him for a while. Or rather, I spoke and he listened.

Master Hiram,

Do you know one of the most important differences that distinguish human beings from other living things?

Of course you do; you know much better and more accurately than myself, but let me give you my opinion anyway:

Mind…

That mind... As long as it is used for something beneficial to the community and humanity, it is positive. Sometimes, because we never see it in society, we think that people have lost their minds or that they always misuse them.

Master Hiram, societies and all humanity collapse from time to time. Not only the use of reason, but even the production of free thought is interrupted. Scientific knowledge seems to be forgotten, lost, disappearing.

In such a situation, the society and humanity are saved by intelligent individuals who keep scientific knowledge alive in their own beings, who maintain their free thinking despite every negative influence. This takes a long time. Human life is not enough to see this. Just as your lifespan is not enough to see the end of the construction of this Temple that you have worked so hard for... Ignorance, ambitions, evil passions, especially bigotry, always hinder and delay evolution, even if they cannot stop it.

Master Hiram,

Haven't you always said that in order to develop and progress in the direction of evolution, every human being must first be equipped with scientific knowledge in all his thoughts, attitudes and behaviours and take the data of reason as a leader?

Didn't you once tell us that ignorance, bigotry and negative passions can join hands and drag the human mind into captivity because of a small lack of precaution, and that great care and security must be taken?... Didn't you advise us that wisdom must be practiced with a combination of strength and beauty?

Why, Master Hiram, why? Why did you tell us so, led us in that direction, but why didn't you, yourself, take the necessary precautions on your part?

Master Hiram, I don't think wisdom, strength and beauty are sufficient to be worthy of the benefits of intellect. Am I wrong?

In addition to these, ***truthfulness, honesty and goodwill*** *are also necessary. Isn't it right, Master Hiram? Tell me.*

In order to progress towards maturity and perfection, it is necessary to have ***"knowledge of nature"****. The basis of this knowledge is* ***"science".***

I think so... What do you think, Master Hiram?

Now they have given me the title of "Morah Salem".... It's just a title; it's not a real qualification.

Those who want to progress towards maturity and competence are also obliged to continuously improve their knowledge. It is the ***"scientific method"*** *that will ensure this.*

As far as I'm concerned, it is so. Don't you agree, Master Hiram?

However, every person who is determined to advance on the path of perfection must protect, preserve and defend the knowledge he has acquired. The person who knows a lot, but fails to take precautions in doing so, feels the pain of it deep in his heart, as if the sharp point of a sword had pierced him. There is no end to his thirst for knowledge.

I know that despite in pain, your heart is at peace because you have kept your dignity, even though you have abandoned caution.

It was all very well and good to wear that heavy necklace to represent Master Hiram, but I was much more attached to the first sash I was given here, especially that little ivory key attached to the end.

Therefore, I took the key off the end of the sash, tied it to a sturdy piece of twine and hung it around my neck. I promised myself that I would never take it off again unless I had to.

The Secretary

Since a long time ago, I had been wandering all around King Solomon's palace without doing anything.

There was only one reason for my existence here - the possibility that the king might feel it necessary to give me a special assignment.

Work had resumed at the Temple. Everyone was working. Whereas I was just waiting, without any performance.

It was comfortable here. Everything was abundant and free. But to tell you the truth, I was getting bored because I had never known idleness in my life. It was hard to get used to it.

What a conflict!... Some people instead, find it hard to work.

In fact, it was going to the construction site from time to time, but those trips were actually a nuisance for me... Because I didn't had neither a duty nor responsibility. When I came carrying that heavy necklace around my neck (I had to carry it when I went out), the apprentices and fellows, even some of the masters would stop what they were involved in, and stare at me. Even Adoniram had no such problem. They were used to him walking around; when he came to them, they would continue with their work, until he would say something or ask.

I know, I was a bit delusional. When I went to the construction site, I thought that the workers were wondering how I had acquired such a privilege in connection with me, and they thought that I had been brought to a position I didn't deserve just through favouritism. I was upset and uneasy because of this, but at the time I didn't realize that I actually had created this for myself.

I was exaggerating. Maybe they didn't think so at all. Is that what I would think?... Wouldn't I say, "Of course there's a reason"?

Because of this, I had virtually imprisoned myself in the palace and started to go to the jobsites less frequently. I was getting rusted, and it was hard for me to be used to it.

Curiosity That Can Kill

On one of such days, having been thoroughly bored with doing nothing, I thought, *"I wonder if I can't do something for myself.... At least if there was something broken, something spilled, and I could get permission to repair it."* So I set out to walk around the palace with this in mind.

When I arrived in the front of the reception hall, I saw that **Zerbal**, the Outer Guard, was not there.

That would be an evidence that no one was inside. If there was, Zerbal wouldn't have left his station. I thought, *"Who knows... Maybe King Solomon has gone somewhere else and Zerbal is accompanying him."*

That being the case, I was tempted to go into the reception hall when no one was around and take a good look, but I refrained to do so. I would be incorrect. I had been told I could go wherever I want in the palace, but there had to be limit.

The only space where there is no limit to freedom and authority is the universe of one's own thought and conscience. No limits or restrictions can be placed on individual thought and conscience. Some people attempt to limit the thoughts and conscience of others and direct them as they wish. The reason for this is to fulfil their own passions and protect their own interests.

The individual must be aware of this tendency and protect self-freedom by resisting such behaviour, even from those whom he really loves and respects

However, the individual must realize that others in and around the community in which he lives have freedoms of the same scope and value as and to the same extent similar to his own, that the freedom of others must also be protected, and that he is responsible in this context. For this purpose, he must know how to limit his own freedom with the freedom of others.

I eliminated the idea of entering the reception hall out of my mind, and turned into the adjoining corridor.

There was no one around, but I was hearing somewhat voices of conversation in the deep.

I proceeded along the corridor in the direction of the voices.

The voices stopped for a moment; when they continued, this time I heard them from behind.

I returned, and when I located it and fondled the wall, I determined a faint vertical protrusion.

I discovered that there was secret door made of stone, very slightly ajar.

I shoved a nail in the edge, and gave it a little tug. It opened outwards.

Now, I could clearly hear the talk.

I stealthily slipped inside on the tips of my toes.

There was a heavy black curtain in front of me. I drew it aside slightly and peeked inside.

The decoration of King Solomon's Reception Hall was nothing like I had ever seen before. But from where I was, I could not see the whole of it through gap in the curtain, nor was it the time to do so.

There were three people inside. Two of them were arguing: King Solomon and King Hiram of Tyre. I could not see exactly who the third one was because he was on the other side.

Hiram was charging at Solomon.

Solomon gestured for him to stop and said, «Zerbal, you can leave. I will call you if necessary.»

So, the third person was Zerbal. According to what he told me later, the subject matter of their disagreement was as follows:



Corresponding the contribution by King Hiram in building the Temple, Solomon had promised him 20 villages in Galilee, north of Jerusalem, closer to Tyre, in addition to the commercial agreement between them. Hiram, being quite a stickler in such things, on his way back to his country after the funeral, stopped in Galilee to examine the place.

He saw that the neighbourhood that Solomon had been talking about was a barren and infertile place; nothing could grow there, it was useless... He thought that Solomon was trying to throw the area on him in order to getting rid of it, as if pretending to give it as a gift...

He got very angry. He went right back. He brushed off the guards at the palace gate. When he found out that Solomon was in the reception hall, he barged straight in.

Zerbal followed him in amazement, with his sword in hand, to defend his king if it would turn out to be necessary.

This is what that was all about!...

When Zerbal went out, Hiram continued his unfinished sentence: *«Are you mocking me.... Or do you have something against me? Let me tell you this clearly: I absolutely will not accept.»*

Whereas Solomon was calm. *«You are wrong... What are you shouting about? If you would just stop and listen to me once, you would realize that you are wrong.»*

Hiram was not interested. *«No way!... I don't accept.»*

«Why is that so?... You don't understand. You don't try to understand. You don't give me a chance to explain?»

Hiram wasn't even listening to him.

«Would this be the return for the support I provided to you?... Shame, shame! And you are said to be fair, to be honest with everyone. Is this your justice?... Is this your honesty?»

I think that the patience of Solomon was finally over. *«Listen to me, man!»* he yelled.

Hiram didn't mind. He continued by saying, *«You clearly tried to deceive me. Shame on you. This is unbecoming even of a king who is utterly devoid of justice, whose every action is an injustice, who is always looking out for his own interests.»*

He paused for a moment and took a breath. Having caught an opportunity, Solomon asked sternly, *«Did I pay you in wheat, wine and olive oil for the material that you sent to build our Temple or did I not?»*

When Hiram objected in the same tone as *«All right. You have paid. I don't have anything more to ask, but that's not the problem.»,* Solomon raised his voice even louder: *«I listened to you and now you will listen to me, whether you want to or not. Remember where you are.»*

Hiram became silent. So, the problem was a matter of credit and debit. Well, one wouldn't expect from Hiram, King of Tyre any other way. He was saying that he received all that he had to. Then, what else?

Solomon said, *«I told you that beyond our exchange, I also considered myself morally indebted to you, and you told me that the debt had been paid in full so that you had nothing else left to claim. Is that true or not?»*

Hiram replied briefly, *«It is true! I said so, and I stand by my word. But that is not the point.»*

«So what's the point?» said Solomon, *«I offered to give you those 20 villages west of Galilee, even if you didn't want them, even though I had paid you back. You didn't want them. You said it was not necessary. That was my offer, an extra. Is that right or wrong?»*

When Hiram was about to continue by saying, «All right, that's true, but...» Solomon interrupted him.

«Now just wait over there. It's my turn to speak... So, on your way back to Tyre, you stopped there and saw that the place was barren, useless, in ruins and rubble. You think that the land is going to be a trouble for you. That's why you keep crying out, isn't it?»

«Yes!... Is it wrong?» said Hiram.

«It's not wrong, but it's unfair» Solomon replied, *«If you hadn't gone there so quickly, you wouldn't have thought that. You wouldn't have come and made such accusations. Of course I know that the villages there are in bad status. First, I was going to have them all repaired, the fields planted, and the surroundings greened, but you came to me without giving me a chance to do that, without knowing what I had in mind, without knowing my designs. Now tell me: Isn't this unfair?»*

Hiram didn't say a word.

«Is it befitting a king to act on such an opinion, which he has heard from someone or formed in his own mind, and to be unjustly enraged?»

Hiram didn't answer. He obviously had regretted it. Now he had to apologize, but how?

There was a silence.

King Hiram's annoyance had not diminished. He kept turning in the hall to this way and that. At one point, he was out of my sight.



I slightly pulled the heavy curtain in front of me a little to the side, and tried to see to which way he was going, what he was doing.

I was unable to see him, but he saw me.

«What?... A spy!» he exclaimed, lunging at me. He yanked me out from behind the curtain and dragged me to the centre of the hall. He knocked me down and pounced on me.

I couldn't counterattack. What could I do? He was a king. I couldn't even resist.

Suddenly I saw the glowing dagger in King Hiram's hand. I was facing death.

He was about to plunge the dagger into my chest or throat when Solomon reached.

«Hiram stop! That is Johaben.» he cried out, and tried to pull Hiram's arm back.

King Hiram paused. He looked at me without lowering his dagger. He recognized me. *«What are you doing here?»* he snarled as he got off me.

Solomon grasped King Hiram's arm and pulled him behind by saying, *«Calm down! I will take care of that.»*

Just at that moment the door of the hall was opened and Zerbal burst in, with his sword in hand. As far as I'm concerned, he was too late.

As King Hiram shook his head from side to side and sheathed his dagger, Solomon, as if nothing had happened, said to Zerbal, *«Our brother King Hiram is about to leave for his country. Let it be done as appropriate»*, and he escorted him to the door of the hall. There he hugged Hiram, and saw him off.

According to what I learned later, although he should have gone up to the palace gate to see him off, however, he might have preferred not to do so upon the unpleasant situation that had arisen here because of me. It is also possible that he had already seen him off with due ceremony; a second it might have been unnecessary.

As for me... I didn't know what to do; I couldn't even decide whether to stand up or not, let alone walk out the way I came in.

For the time being, the best course of action was to kneel on the ground and not move. So I kept my head down and just waited.

While waiting, I thought.

Curiosity can turn into a harmful passion when it is not well-intentioned. Excessive or exposed curiosity can be misinterpreted by those who do not know its source or purpose; finally, it can produce more harm than benefit.

No one should make a judgment on any thought, opinion, argument, attitude or behaviour without examining it in detail and in all its aspects, and should not prejudicially refer to it as wrong, bad, harmful, contemptible or unfair.

Any action that is started with prejudice is likely to be wrong. Once one gets into the habit of jumping to conclusions with prejudice and without trying to thoroughly understand an attitude or behaviour that is "presumed to be the opposite", irreparable mistakes and unavoidable damage may result. One may regret it later, but by then it will be too late.

King Solomon closed the door of the hall himself, returned, then without saying a word, he just walked past me, and went straight to his throne.

Now, Solomon was on his throne and I was in the middle of the hall, by having knelt in silence. I couldn't lift my head. I didn't have the courage of looking at him in the eye.

Crime and Punishment

While Solomon was setting off King Hiram of Tyre, I obtained the opportunity of examining the reception hall from where I was.

The walls were covered with black curtains, just as they were previously on the day of receiving our new status.

Three of the four pillars I had seen earlier had a candlestick with nine candles each. The other had been removed.

I didn't even care why this was so. Now my mind was focused on something completely different. I had committed a serious crime and I was going to be punished.

King Solomon got up from his throne. He went and drew in the secret door that I had left ajar. Then he took a turn around me. I think he was taking a good look at me, but I couldn't see the manner of his look.

He returned and sat on his throne again.

A while more passed, which, in my view, was as if a very long time. Then, in a very stern tone, he ordered me to get up and come in front of him.

I did what he said in a crestfallen manner, but I was so embarrassed that I couldn't lift my head.

He told me to look at him in the face.

I raised my head.

I encountered the furrowed brow of King Solomon.

He asked me if I was aware of the serious crime that I had committed.

Of course I was aware of it. I said that I knew that, had no possibility of saying anything in my defence, knew that apologizing would be useless, and was ready to suffer whatever punishment might be imposed.

«How did you know that there was a door over there?» he asked.

I decently said, *«I didn't know. It was a little ajar. I saw it by chance.»*

I think King Solomon did not like the fact that the secret door remained ajar, but he could not say that it was my fault. I later learned that only he used that door. The fault must have been his. But he was the king; he could not take the blame.

«What were you doing there?» he asked.

«I was out of working, and got bored. I was wandering around.» I replied.

«Why didn't you go to the construction site!... That's your job, that's your duty; to appear there as required on behalf of our deceased Master Hiram Abif; not to be here spying on things.»

«I do in fact, but the people there get a little uncomfortable when I show up with a Morah Salem necklace and they interrupt their work. So I prefer to go less often.» I didn't say anything about the peeping charge.

«Oh, is that so!» said Solomon. *«On the other hand, when you see a door left ajar, do you have to rush in? Don't you know that is impolite? Why did you come in?»*

I replied in difficulty: *«I heard a fierce argument. It seemed to me that someone was attacking our King. Even if I had no weapon, perhaps I could have tried to protect him.»*

«Is that so!» said Solomon once more. Again he went and sat on his throne.

Sometime more passed. Then, in a rather stern tone, he said, *«Get up!»*

I did.

He told me that he will ask me three questions in succession, and if I answer them well using my intellect, he would forgive me, otherwise he would call Zerbal and hand me over to him.

He asked me whether I understood or not. I nodded indicating that I understood.

He immediately asked: ***«Where are you coming from?»***

How was I supposed to reply?... What did he mean?... Would it be acceptable if I said I came from Phoenicia? No, no, no, no! Because I had been in Jerusalem for almost seven years now, and he already knew that. If I brought it up to date and said that I had come from the room in the palace where I had been shown to stay, that would have made no sense either.

I thought lightning fast.

He told me not to give a "right answer" but a "good answer using my intellect".

Not a right but a good answer.

One word could have been the end of me. So I had to not only use my mind, but I had to have courage as well.

I took the risk.

«From everywhere» I replied.

He didn’t make a sound. He didn’t say whether this answer was plausible or not, whether he liked it or disliked. He asked another question:

«When do you work?»

This time, I replied without hesitation: ***«Always.»***

When it was the turn of the third question, I was in a good mood.

When he asked, ***«Where will you go?»*** I immediately said, ***«To everywhere.»***

The most correct way to reach the truth is scientific knowledge. However, sometimes people may not find the opportunity to benefit from that knowledge. The accumulation of scientific knowledge may be insufficient for him to reach the truths he seeks. Then he must engage in research and work on the development of knowledge.

The only possibility for this to be successful is to apply the scientific method. This requires going through the stages of observation, experiment, hypothesis and testing, respectively. The assumption is based on the repetitions obtained through observation. If it is not sufficiently verified by testing, i.e. if the same results are not obtained under the same conditions, it is necessary to go back to the beginning and repeat all the stages, and then re-establish the hypothesis from the beginning. If a sufficient level of verification is obtained, the hypothesis can be transformed into a theory and the relevant laws can then be determined.

It should not be assumed that the absolute truth is reached once the laws are determined. The truth reached will be relative. Both the established theory and the laws may have shortcomings, errors, and conditions under which they are not valid. It is necessary to keep working, always and everywhere.

Sometimes it is not possible to follow these steps or even to start observation. It may be difficult to determine where and how it would be appropriate to start. Waiting and doing nothing because of such uncertainty can lead to the negative situation of never being able to start. It is necessary to use mind and determine the most appropriate of the options.

In determining the most appropriate option, reasoning may be insufficient, but the risk has to be taken. It is necessary to take risk, to make a decision, and put that into practice.

A person who cannot take risk in making a decision, who is afraid of whether the decision he will make will be right or not, who foresees to avoid being mistaken in his first attempt, cannot make any attempt. Indecision prevents people from engaging in the search for the truth.

King Solomon paused for a while. Then he said, *«All right, Johaben. Go now and come back here tomorrow at this time. Don't be late.»*

I greeted the King as usual and retreated backwards towards the door.

He stopped me. *«No! Since you didn't enter from there, you can't leave from there. Exit from the same place and in the same way as you entered»* he said. I turned in the direction of the secret door and was about to leave when Solomon called out from behind me. *«Close it tightly. Close it so tightly that even you won't be able to find it again.»*

I went behind the thick black curtain where I came in. There was only straight wall in front of me. I knew there was a door there; I had left it ajar when I entered, so someone else - Zerbal, perhaps - had come in from outside, seen it ajar and closed it tightly.

What was going to happen now? Wouldn’t I be able to get out? I couldn't return either.

Although I was worried for a moment, I quickly relieved myself. By feeling the stone panels that made up the wall in front of me, I located the door. Or rather, by pushing and shoving, I discovered which one opens. Once outside and closed it, I let out a deep *«Oh!»*

My curiosity almost got me into trouble. Apparently, from now on, I had to be more careful when walking around the palace. Who knows what intricacies and secret passages there were here, similar to that door. I shouldn't have snooped, and shouldn't have attempted to do anything unreasonable and unnecessary.

Actions that arise from a sense of duty and are based on a thought of commitment and goodness can initially be misjudged.

Any behaviour that is done out of a sense of duty and righteousness can be tolerated, even if it is considered as a flaw, even if it is against custom. However, excessive curiosity, which may even be stemming from a sense of duty, can lead a person into danger.

For this reason, a person who is curious should be aware of this characteristic and take precautions by thinking in advance about the dangers he may encounter. This will ensure both his personal security and his ability to fulfil his duty in wellbeing.

On my way out of the corridor and towards my room, I passed by the door to the Reception Hall.

Zerbal was there, in charge. When our eyes met, it seemed to me that he had a peculiar smile on his face.

New Duty

Next day, just a little earlier than the time King Solomon had said, I made my way to the Reception Hall, careful not to be seen by anyone, took the familiar route that I know, and turned into the corridor on the other side.

I located the secret door and pushed it to open.

It didn’t.

I pusher with a little more force. It again didn’t open.

I gave all my strength with the shoulder.

No way!

Had I come to the wrong place? Wasn't this the panel that opened? I knew it was this one, but in the excitement of the previous day, I thought I might be wrong, so I checked the neighbouring ones. None of them were moving.

What was I supposed to do now? King Solomon had commanded me to come on time. Here I was, but I wouldn’t be accepted to have come. How was I going to explain this situation?

I knew I had to find a way in. Could there be another secret door on the other side? Maybe... But I couldn't waste time searching, the only way out seemed to be the main door of the hall.

Zerbal was standing in front of the door with his sword in his hand. This indicated that King Solomon was inside.

I couldn't think of anything else to do, so I went to him.

«Let me ask you something.» I said.

«Go ahead!»

He said this in such a tone that it was like, *«It's better if you don't ask.»*

I was desperate. I asked: *«Can I go in?»*

This time he asked me, ***«Who are you?»***

I was amazed. Didn't he know me?... Of course he did. I thought, *"I guess he was joking."* However, I didn't let it go, I said, ***«Johaben.»*** Not Joapert, Johaben on purpose.

He said, ***«Zerbal»*** as if we just met, and introducing ourselves to each other.

Good!... If that's what he wanted, then we now have got acquainted.

I repeated my question: *«Can I go in?»*

«Why?»

I told him that the King had ordered me to come here on this time

He said, *«That may be so, but you can't go in like this.»*

What the hell was that supposed to mean?

Suddenly it dawned on me... I'd never thought of that. So there were other people in there. Then, of course, I should have been dressed appropriately to enter, but I had just turned up, wearing nothing at all.

Would it ever be acceptable?... What thoughtlessness!

Without saying anything to Zerbal, I ran straight to where I was residing.

I put on my necklace for "Morah Salem", even though I wasn't going outdoors.

In King Solomon's palace, as everywhere else, there were certain rules to be followed. Those who stayed here knew and obeyed them. Order required so. Of course, every rule had to have a rational justification.

One of the rules here was not to run in the corridors of the palace.

If there were rules that I did not like or even opposed or found unreasonable, I would try to change them to the best of my ability, but I would continue to obey them until they were altered.

Whereas today, for the first time and on purpose, I was breaking a rule... I ran to the Reception Hall, because I had adopted the principle of being on time, and I had never been late for anything. I was breaking another principle in order to protect a principle I had adopted on my own, without anyone forcing me to do so.

Later, when I thought about it calmly, I came to the conclusion that what I had done was wrong. It was the right behaviour to go somewhere on time, not to be late. As long as it was not due to recklessness, as long as it did not become a habit, as long as it was due to an unavoidable reason, it could be tolerated. But deliberately breaking a general rule in order to fulfil an individual principle could not be tolerated. I couldn't tolerate it either, and after all, what was the difference in time between walking fast and running?

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By the time I reached the door of the Reception Hall again, I was out of breath. The time it took me to collect myself and catch my breath before going inside was actually longer than the time I had saved by running instead of walking fast.

Zerbal seemed as not being aware that I have come, or he was just acting stubbornly like that.

When I told him again that I had come because I was expected, with the Morah Salem jewellery around my neck, he simply said, "Fine!" and stepped aside and gestured to the door.

When I told him again that I had come because I was expected, with the Morah Salem jewel around my neck, he simply said, *«Fine!»* and stepped aside gesturing towards the door.

I felt it as strange. I expected him to knock on the door, to open it when he was allowed, to announce my arrival, to ask if I would be admitted. He seemed to be not interested.

Looking at his face but without saying anything, I made a sign with my hand like *"So, can I go straight in now?"*

He responded to me with the same kind of hand gesture, as *"Suit yourself."*

All right, fine!

When I outstretched my hand out to open the door, I saw that there was no handle or knob. I had never noticed this previously. I thought, *"So it's opened by pushing",* and pushed the door.

It didn’t move. It was like a wall.

Apparently, as in many other places, this door had to be pushed or pulled in a certain way to open it.

While I was poking around the door to discover this, Zerbal must have realised what I was trying to do, because he came up behind me and said in a low voice, *«Use your intellect!»*

It was then that I realised Zerbal's function here much better. He was not an ordinary guard, just standing at the door. I had not realised before that wherever King Solomon was, Zerbal was there. He was an important official who did and carried out many of the King's affairs.

What did he mean?

I turned to look at his face to understand. He wasn’t giving any clue.

I thought, *"Should I ask him what he meant?"*

It would be useless… He had already said something he didn't have to say, maybe even something he shouldn't have said: *«Use your intellect.»*

There could be no better hint. Even if there was, he wouldn't give it.

Since the door had no handle or knob on the outside, it could only be opened from the inside. Therefore, the person outside had to make it clear that he wanted to enter. For that, he had to knock on the door. Logic demanded this. It was a mystery how Zerbal opens it when necessary!

All right, but how would it be appropriate to knock? Just haphazardly or in a certain way?

There was an order in everything here; nothing was haphazard.

I knocked on the door with a method I had encountered previously, the method I knew.

Neither was a sound nor anyone opening the door.

"I wonder if Zerbal will say anything this time?" I looked back at him.

He simply pointed to his temporal with the index finger of his left hand, i.e. he repeated the same phrase without using words: *"Use your intellect."*

I thought: *"What was in this hall yesterday when I entered?... Three candlesticks, each with nine arms."*

Could it be that? Maybe… I decided to try.

I made three consecutive nine knocks on the door.



The door was immediately ajar. This time I was successful.

At that moment, I discovered that there were always some symbols used here, but they were changed frequently or according to the occasion. Just like the change in masters' password.

Ben Dekar, the Inner Guard I recognised from previous applications in ceremonial meetings, looked out and closed the door.

I waited. A while later, the door opened again.

This time Master Achizar, the Master of Ceremonies, appeared. He signalled me to come. I followed him inside, and in succession we walked down the length of the hall until the throne.

Achizar whispered in my ear as he stepped aside to leave me facing King Solomon: *“Don't forget first to greet our King."*

Oh, dear!... How am I going greet him?... Bowing?... Kneeling?

I always had to find out on my own what to do and how to do it. Even though it was difficult for me, there was nothing I could do about it. Moreover, I was successful up to this point. What was the method?... Using my intellect.

I neither bowed nor knelt. I made a mischievous gesture as if I was pulling the curtain slightly to a side where the secret door was, without looking in that direction.

I don't know whether I had done right or wrong, but I was sure that King Solomon would understand what I meant.

Suddenly I thought, *"What if he gets angry!"* but it was too late to think about it.

Solomon was not angry; *«Johaben, how old are you?»* he asked.

I guess he wasn't asking how many years had passed since I was born. By now, I was used to this kind of questions that he asks. This one had to have a meaning, and the answer had to be given accordingly.

So what should have to be done about it?

Again the same thing: *"Use your intellect."*

What I had previously experienced regarding the subject of "age" went through my head with lightning speed.

When we the six masters gathered in front of the Sanctuary before we learnt the greatest secret of all, Adoniram stated that our ages in groups of three as "eighty-one" each.

On the day I was given the title of "Morah Salem", my Master Achizar said that my age was "four times more than four but less than five times five", indicating that I was not mature enough.

I had discovered the type of the knock necessary to open the door of the Reception Hall today, by recalling the number of candlesticks I had seen before.

Now, would it be correct if I say *"Three times nine"*, by considering those candlesticks? At least, it wouldn't be a lie.

I said so.

There was no reaction.

I probably hit it well again.

Solomon turned to his companions and said, *«You know that we have many discussions on various subjects here. Every now and then I say to someone, "You said something like this in our last meeting." He says, "I didn't say that, I said something else. Although we have a clerk here on duty, I think it is not enough. Especially a "**secretary**" needs to be assigned next to myself. This is how we will do it from now on.»*

Nobody said a word. What could they say?

He addressed me: *«Tell me, Johaben... Can you read and write?»*

Was that another tricky question again?

No, it wasn't. Most of the craftsmen who worked here were masters of their trade, but they couldn't read or write. They knew numbers, they recognised them, but when it came to reading a text, most of them could only spell. Furthermore, what about writing? It was as if it didn't exist among them at all.

With that in mind, I resorted to a show off in humility: *«I can spell.»*

Solomon laughed... *«No, I know you can do much better than that»* he said.

In fact, he knew everything, but he was always putting me to the test.

This was not so always, but I couldn't understand when it was righteous or test.

«You were complaining that you didn't have anything to do and bored; isn't it so?» said King Solomon in continuity, *«No one should be out of work. Everyone should have a job to do. Joblessness, that is, not doing any work, leads to some wrongs and even troubles. Here is a job for you: It is a permanent job, a job that you will not be able to take your head away... From now on, you will not leave my side. You will be my scribe, my private secretary. Whatever I say, you will write it down immediately.»*

He pronounced some words that made me feel a little flattered: *«Oh, now you may be thinking why me... Because the person I will give this task must be honest, sincere, courageous, reliable, have a sense of duty, respect and loyalty.»* He shook his head from side to side as if to say, *"You, the naughty one!"* and smiled a little, *«Even if he occasionally does some odd things.»*

One may fall into some errors in his life. He may have deficiencies and make mistakes. Although the shortcomings in the life of a virtuous person are strange, they can be met with tolerance.

However, tolerance does not mean refraining from criticism. For a virtuous person, receiving criticism is considered as a gift. Because every criticism is a valuable opportunity to eliminate a deficiency, a fault, a mistake. This means the development of knowledge

The virtuous person who has the opportunity to improve his knowledge proceeds towards perfection.

While I was thinking these, King Solomon continued: *«When you come to me, Zerbal will ask you who you are. And you will tell him. If he answers by telling you his name, that means you can come in. If he says otherwise, something is wrong and it is not appropriate for you to come in at that time. In that case you must wait.»*

Then Solomon turned to an elderly man sitting at his right, whose name I learned was Achijah, and said in a very loud voice, *«Johaben will sit next to me from now on. Help him until he learns how to do his job well.»*

Achijah stood up, after greeting Solomon, came to me, took me to the place where he had just sitting a while before, and made me sit down. He himself moved to another seat. Later, I learned that Achijah had been Solomon's scribe for a long time, but now he was old and his health was failing, he could not see or hear well, so he could not perform his duties properly. That was why Solomon called out to him so loudly.

By this means, while I was awaiting punishment due to my crime, I had the honour of often being at King Solomon's side from then on. It was no doubt a great honour, but it was also a very important and substantial responsibility.

I had done a lot of things up to that point successfully. I could do this as well. But it occurred to me to ask when and where I would carry out this mission.

Anyhow, was that necessary? Didn't I say Any time and everywhere?

After I started this job, my active involvement in the masonry profession on the construction site certainly came to an end. But the Temple was not yet finished, and I think they would have needed my experience in a lot of the work to be done.

By coincidence, I found out that day why I had not been able to open the secret door in the corridor next to the Reception Hall. This door was equipped in such a way that it could only be opened from the side which it was closed. So, when King Solomon came into the Reception Hall that day, he entered through the secret door and closed it from the inside. Therefore, I could not open it from the outside; it was as simple as that.

We may think that we know an object in nature very well, but it may have other properties that we have never seen, encountered or even realized.

One should not think that he knows and recognizes anything completely and thoroughly in all aspects. Scientific knowledge is relative and has characteristics that are not integrated in line with its totality.

Studies using the scientific method resolves those unintegrated aspects one by one.

However, scientific knowledge still remains relative and incomplete.

I started working as a secretary to King Solomon.

Look at me! There were no more stones or walls in my work...

Court of Justice

One day, when I was still on duty as King Solomon's secretary, a messenger came. He said that they were waiting for me in the Judgment Tent.

«What's going on? Is there a trial?» I asked, casually.

The messenger said that he doesn't know.

«Well, who is calling me? Why am I being called?»

The messenger didn't know that either. They just had told me to come right away, that's all.

There were many halls in the palace used for various purposes. However, when a trial was to be held in connection with a problem at the construction site, a special tent was set up for it.

It was referred to as a tent because of its temporary nature, but in use, it was not much different from a one-story, high-ceilinged building.

I had been locked up in the palace for days, not knowing much about what was going on outside. But when the Judgment Tent was set up, it meant that something important had happened.

Should I go?...

I couldn't. First I had to inform King Solomon, get his permission, and only then could I go… If I would go to a construction site, he might not mind. He might not give permission for the Judgment Tent.

Moreover, it could have been a job that he might ask me to do.

I dismissed the messenger, and went to the King's study room. I didn't see Zerbal; so Solomon was somewhere else. I looked in all the other places where he could be; he was not around. I went to the main gate of the palace and asked. I learned that he got on his horse and left.

In that case, since I had nothing else to do, I could go to the Judgment Tent. So, I did.

Zerbal was in front of the door of Judgment Tent. This indicated that King Solomon was here too. He told me that I have to get in. This would mean that I was expected. Then it turned out that directly King Solomon had sent for me.

Zerbal opened the door slightly. There I faintly saw Ben Dekar, the Inner Guard. Zerbal whispered to him. A moment later Ben Dekar reached out and gestured for me to come; he let me in quietly.

Red curtains were hung all around the tent, either joined together in the centre of the ceiling or suspended from it on all four sides. There were candelabra on the pillars at each of the four corners. Another candlestick was placed in the centre, slightly higher than others.

Immediately opposite the door sat **Tito, Prince of Harodim**. It was rumoured that he came from far away, from a country called Ireland. I don't know which was his real and correct name, but in Jerusalem they called him **"Achitov"**.

It was also said that Tito was an experienced master builder, but I never saw him on the job site. That must have been because he ran Harodim. So he was also the head of the judges. King Solomon was on his right hand side.

In front of Tito was a table or platform on which a red cloth was spread. On top of it was a scale of the kind usually used for weighing precious metals. As far as I could see from where I was standing, both scales were empty and perfectly balanced.



King Solomon was dressed very plainly. So much so that anyone who didn't know him, who didn't recognise him, who saw him here for the first time, would never have guessed that he was the King of Jerusalem, and even if he had, he would hardly have believed it. Tito, on the other hand, was dressed in a black robe with a collar and a sceptre in his hand.

At the left of Tito, there were four men dressed in plainer black robes. It was clear that they formed the council of judges. They were all familiar: one was **Adoniram**, one was Adoniram's father **Abda**, one was **Achizar**, and the last was **Zadok**, Solomon's high priest in religious matters.

Achizar got up from his seat and came to me. He took me by the arm and led me to the scales.

Tito said, *«Welcome, Joapert.»*

I was really fond of him. He occurred to be one of the few people in this country who could say my name exactly right.

Words

There were many more people sitting on both sides of the judgment tent. Among them, I saw familiar faces: Some were senior government officials, some were master builders.

Tito addressed me: *«Joapert, we meet here only when it is necessary, to examine and judge the alleged crime. For this, all the officials present here are judges. At the end of the trial, we five judges make the verdict, but prior to that, anyone present may speak and give their opinion on the matter. In reaching a judicial decision, we first consult our reason, then our conscience, and consider to act in accordance with justice.»*

He paused for a moment. *«You have been recommended to join us. But it is not compulsory. You can refuse.»* He continued, *«What do you think? In addition to all your other duties, do you want to undertake the task of being a judge in the trial here?»*

I stated that I accept.

Tito said, *«Joapert, even though you were summoned here today and were immediately admitted, from now on, there are words you must know when you come.»* He gestured to someone behind me, whom I could not see, and asked: *«What do you say if our guard asks you the word of passage when you come in?»*

The person who was asked replied, ***«Achitov»***.

Upon this, Tito said, *«That is the name given to me here. What is the meaning of this answer if I am not inside?»*,

The same person replied, *«Then there is no need to come here anyway.»*

Tito asked the judges next to him, *«Would anyone like to make a suggestions or remind to the young judge who has just joined us?»*

Achizar raised his hand and asked for the floor. From his seat, he said, *«Those who are on this board must always be ready to work. For us, there is no time or duration of working. Judges do work **"all the time"**. You must know, understand and practice this.»*

When no one else wanted to speak, Tito indicated where I was to sit. After I had taken my seat, there were some conversations among the judges, which I need not describe at length here. I learned then that everyone in this board makes his speech, which is not of any particular character, in the place where he sits after taking the floor.

«Before we proceed to today's hearing» said Tito, *«I would like to ask the opinion of those present here on some issues. Although I have been in this country for many years and have held an important position, there are some words or terms that have a meaning I still have not fully understood. These are of great concern to all judges, because from time to time we encounter these words or terms in this environment. I think this is especially a problem for those like me who have come from another country. For example, what does **"Jahweh"** mean.?... What exactly does it mean in terms of its dictionary equivalent in the local language.... Could one of you please explain this briefly?»*

Zadok raised his hand. *«This word literally means "one whose wisdom is infinite" or 'one who is infinitely wise"»* he said.

Tito said, *«But sometimes a term as **"Jakinai"** is used instead. Is that synonymous or identical with it?»*

Zadok replied, *«No, it is neither identical nor synonymous. The uses of both words are different. Jakinai means something like "producer", "maker", "builder", or "one who accomplishes something".»*

Tito concluded by saying, *«It seems that we should not only hear such words, but we should also know what they mean, so as not to do anything wrong thing.»*

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During these conversations I thought, *"How can Tito not know these things?"*

Then I realized that he didn't ask these in order to learn them himself, but he brought them into agenda so that if there were anyone here who doesn't know, they could learn.

Tito also mentioned these: *«The board of judges here has two permanent members. They can change, but they must be replaced by people who are similar in nature: Zadok and Abda. Zadok is here to impart his religious and philosophical knowledge, and Abda is here to impart his civic or community management knowledge and experience. In connection with the subject matter of the trial, we are also joined by two people who are highly specialized in that subject. Since the issue today is related to a problem in construction, we are joined by Achizar, the master of masters, who has trained many masters over the years, and Master Adoniram, the architect of the Temple, whom everyone knows very well. We have also added the young master and Morah Salem Joapert just for this hearing.»*

He paused for a moment and continued: *«All the others who are here today in the audience, all the judges, can be called to be in the board if necessary. Today we come across with a very interesting problem and we have to give the right to the one who deserves. I therefore expect all of you to follow today's proceedings carefully, bearing in mind that you may have a duty to carry out in the future.»*

It is not enough to tell a person how to do a job. In order for that job to be done as it should be done, the person should first watch how that job is done, and should not attempt to do it on his own with information based solely on description.

Theoretical knowledge is insufficient in practice. It is necessary to make enough observations and gain visual experience of how the work is done before attempting to put it in practice.

Visual experience is also insufficient for a good and correct practice. How to do a job is learned by getting directly involved in it. As one goes through these stages, he uses his intellect to generate options for the same work or differences in methods to make it more convenient. These ensure that the same work produced previously is not just repeated, and that a more competent, more functional one is realized.

Complaint

Tito asked Achizar to give information concerning the subject matter of today's hearing.

According to what Achizar described, there were two ashlar chiselling and carving craftsmen who were close friends, had worked together in stages of apprenticeship and fellowship since for years in the construction of the Temple. Both were waiting to be promoted to mastership. One of them lost the stone he was carving for a certain place in the Temple just when he was about to finish it. While looking for it, he saw it in the hands of his fellow brother. He wanted to take it, but the other one said that he had carved it himself, that he had not seen the stone that he claims, and even accused him of trying to seize his own stone. So the fellow who had lost his stone went and complained to their master. But the master could not solve the problem on his own, so he appealed to the Board of Judges.

When Tito asked *«Who is this master? Is he here?»*, Achizar replied that his name is Jersever and that he was waiting outside.

Jersever, who was taken in upon Tito's instruction, made the following statement: *«If you will receive in here, you will see that I have two fellows who are different in the way they work and finish, in their skill and competence in the craft. One of them is more skilful than the other and deserves to be a master, even though they both started stone carving at the same time and were working together. The other one needs a little more practice. I think that's actually where the problem is. But I can't settle the dispute between my two fellows. I don't have enough evidence to show which one is right. If I did, I wouldn't have brought this matter here, to this board. Forgive me, I must stop here so as not to be biased. I don't wish to influence our judges. From now on, please carry out an interrogation yourselves to attain a judgement.»*

Tito stated that the matter was understood and that it will be necessary to hear both fellows. Upon his instruction, Jersever was led out, and the two fellows, who had been kept waiting, were brought in wearing the aprons of their rank and greeted the Board of Judges.

Tito asked each of them separately his name and background.

We learned that the name of the craftsman who had lost his stone was **Amoz** and the other was named **Jereboam**. Amoz was a Gebalite who specialized in cutting and chiselling stone, and Jereboam was born in Jerusalem and learned the craft here, both had been working here since the building of the Temple. In terms of family status, Amoz was single; Jereboam had been married for a long time and had two young children.

Tito asked each of them in turn to describe the incident and their disagreement, as if he did not know what it was about.

Both described the incident as Achizar did.

Tito, again pretending the uninformed, asked Amoz the following question: *«So what if you have lost your stone.... Is there no other stone?.... Maybe you would have lost some time, but you could have done it again. Is it right to keep this board busy with such a useless lawsuit?»*

Amoz defended himself as, *«Everyone must finish the job he has undertaken on time. Job that is not finished on time can cause a delay in the construction of a part of the Temple. Moreover, our job is not just cutting a stone from the quarry and shaping it. It is to process the shaped ashlars according to the details requested. This requires a great deal of labor and time.»*

He paused for a moment and took a breath. When Tito didn't say anything, he continued: *«As far as we know, the finishing works in the Temple has begun and no more time should be lost. If one person is late for any reason, someone else will be late too. I don't pity that my labor has been wasted. But because I couldn't finish my job on time, I will be blamed for causing the work to be disrupted by wandering around without working properly. Our work has already been disrupted and delayed enough for the reason you know. Now, if I am the cause of the disruption, I will not be paid my daily wages, and on top of that, I will be scolded though I don't deserve.»*

Tito pretended not to care. He pressed Amoz by sayıng, *«What's the harm? I understand that you are a good craftsman. You could work a little harder, and even if you didn't finish one job on time, you could finish the next ones faster and catch up. Couldn't you do that?»*

Amoz was just saying, «That's what I was thinking to do when I lost my stone and couldn't find it, but I realized that Jeroboam had the stone that I had processed» when Jeroboam jumped up and shouted, *«No! He is lying!»*

Tito rebuked Jereboam as, *«You shut up! I didn't ask you. Wait your turn. Whenever I ask you, then you will speak.»* Turning to Amoz again, he said, *«All right, understood. Do you have anything else to say? What do you want?»*

Amoz said that he wants the stone that he processed to be taken from Jeroboam and given back to him, in that case he would have no more complaints, and he would bear the time he had lost in the meantime.

When Tito turned to the other and asked him to tell his view of the happening, Jereboam argued that he had carved the stone himself, that Amoz might have broken it in the process and wasted time, that he should have taken care of himself in that case, but that he was trying to claim his own stone, and that he could not understand why his brother craftsman with whom he had worked together for years, was doing all this.

When Tito asked, *«Where is this stone now?»* Jereboam replied that he had left it outside and could bring it back if ordered.

Tito told Jereboam to bring in the stone.

Jereboam went out. Soon he came back, cradling a stone in the shape of a rectangular prism. He placed it on the floor in the centre of the hall. As far as I could see, the stone was finely carved on three sides and plain on the others.

Tito was about to say to the fellows, *«All right, you can leave for now»* when Adoniram leaned into Tito's ear and said something I couldn't hear. Then Tito said to Adoniram, *«Fine! You ask them. Let's see and understand what they are saying.»*

Adoniram asked, *«You're both given a drawing for the stones you are to process, aren't you?»*

Then, as Amoz put his hand into his bosom and started to pull out a drawing, Jereboam jumped in and said, *«I don't wish to accuse Amoz of theft, as he has done to me, but the drawing of this stone has been missing for some time. But because I already knew the details of the drawing so well, I was able to continue the rest of my job by heart.»*

Tito said to Amoz, *«You seem to have a drawing, but such stones are very similar. As Jereboam said, you say you lost your stone and he lost his drawing. Isn't it possible?»*

Amoz replied, *«I carved this stone according to this drawing I have. The fact that I have the drawing proves that the stone is mine.»*

Tito said, *«No! This is not a sufficient proof.»,* and turned to Jereboam, *«See if the drawing Amoz has is the drawing with the engraving of this stone that you brought in.»*

When Jereboam reached out to take it, this time Amoz refused to hand it over. Tito warned Amoz, then he desperately handed it to Jereboam.

Jereboam, after giving a glance at the drawing, said, *«Yes, this is it.»*

Tito said, *«No! This is not a sufficient proof either»*, and asked one of the judges who, besides his temporary post here, was supervising the workers in the stone cutting and processing business, to compare the stone and the drawing.

The judge got up from his seat and after comparing the stone with the drawing, he said it looked very similar, but there were some differences or deviations in detail.

When Tito asked Amoz how he would explain this, Amoz said, *«My work was not finished yet. There were details to be worked out. If Jereboam made those things up in his own head!... If he made things in his own way!... I don't know... Maybe it's deviated... It could be wrong.»* he stammered.

When Tito said, *«So this stone may not be the one in the drawing you have. Is that what you mean?»* Amoz became tearful. He just was stay put.

Tito insisted: *«Yes, what do you say? Explain.»*

«I don't know. It could be so» Amoz said.

Tito then said*, «All right, understood. That's enough»*, and told Ben Dekar to take the fellows outside.

Jereboam made a move to take the stone, but Tito stopped him: *«No! Both the stone and the drawing shall stay here.»*

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After the fellows left, Tito turned to us and asked if any of us had anything to say.

The previous judge who supervises the stone cutters and processors took the floor again. He said that he had known both fellows for a long time, that Amoz had always produced well, that perhaps Jereboam was jealous of him, and wanted to show that he was also skilled like him.

Tito said, *«It may be, but it is only an opinion. To accuse someone, to make a definitive judgment about someone, evidence is needed.»*

When Adoniram said, *«There have been other similar cases before. The proof of who is right can be found if asked for»*, Tito sort of silenced him by stating, *«I know, but first I want to get the opinion of the judges here.»*

No one else wanted to take the floor. Tito asked Adoniram, *«Now tell us. What do you suggest we do?"*

Adoniram said, *«We rarely do this, only in cases of necessity, but I think this time the* ***"Ebony Box"*** *should be opened to find out who is telling the truth.»*

When Tito said, *«Well, if you say so, let's open it and find out the truth»*, Adoniram stood up, and went to the back corner of the hall.

He brought a big black wooden box, almost the size of a crate, and carried it in his arms. He placed it in the centre of the hall in front of the scales. He said, *«I thought it might come to this point, so I brought it as a precaution.»*



Upon Tito addressing to Adoniram as *«Well done. Then open it»,* Adoniram said, *«No. I am a member of the Board of Judges; it would be better for someone else to open it. If you regard it as appropriate, let the youngest judge open it.»*

Tito agreed.

The youngest judge myself... All right, I'd open it, so what!

What was in this box that it was considered so important to open?

I got up and went near to Adoniram. I tried to lift the lid of the box. It didn't open.

I was astonished. Then I noticed the keyhole at the bottom side of the lid. Obviously, it was locked. Of course!.... If this box was so important, apparently it couldn't be left as open.

However, where was the key?

I looked at Adoniram, with a question mark on my face. He was also looking at me without saying anything.

There came a moment when I became aware that Adoniram was actually not looking at my face, but my chest.

That's when I discovered what I had to do. He also knew that I always carried my ivory key on a thin chain. So it was not only a symbol, but also an object to be used when necessary. I had never thought of that previously.

After removing it from my neck, I inserted the key into the hole of the box and turned it slightly. The lock "clicked" open. The lid of the box rose slightly.

As I lifted the lid, my eyes were again fixed on Adoniram, but he remained pale. I peeked inside the box and saw that there were numerous scrolls and rolls. I looked at Adoniram again. With his eyes and the tilt of his head he said, *"Take it out. Look. See."*

I did so. As I looked at each parchment and roll that I took out of the box, my eyes widened and widened, perpetually more and more.

Finally, I couldn't keep myself in astonishment, and fell down to my knees.

In this box were plans and projects, work programs etc. for the construction of the Temple.

In a knelt down status, I looked at Adoniram and Tito, but I was too stunned to say anything.

I don't know how long this lasted, but when Tito told me to stand up, I came to my senses.

Adoniram came to my rescue. He rummaged through the scrolls. He picked one of them up. By sayıng, «Now let's look at this drawing» he told me to read the number of the sketch Amoz had brought in.

I did what he said: *«5-8-2-7.»*

Adoniram said, *«Well, then take a look at this work schedule. Whose job was is to carry it out?»*

I scanned the scroll Adoniram handed me from top to bottom. I found it: *«Amoz.»*

«Now let’s look at it in the other way round» said Adoniram. *«What was the job given to Jeroboam at the same time?»*

I searched. I couldn't find it. Finally, I said, *«There's an assignment for Jereboam over there: Job number 5-8-0-1.»* I said, *«But it's not at the same time, it's an earlier date.»*

Adoniram said, *«Each of them must also have a sign.»*

I looked and found them. The signs were very similar, but the signs for the tasks of the different people were not the same.

When Adoniram said, «Now compare it with the mark on the stone» I examined the lower corners of the stone that Jeroboam had brought. Although it was not visible from a distance, I saw that in one corner the mark for Amoz was engraved exactly as it was in the work program for Mission 5-8-2-7.

Each stone processor would indistinctly carve his assigned mark in a corner of the stone. Most did this after they had finished their work. Even though this stone was not yet finished, Amoz had apparently carved his mark into it. He didn't mention it during the interrogation. Who knows, maybe he had forgotten that in haste.



There: The truth was revealed. It was clear that the stone that Jereboam had brought here, claiming it was his, was in fact being processed by Amoz.

What was going to happen now?

It was obvious what was going to happen, but how?

Verdict

The five judges deliberated briefly among themselves in whispers.

They found Jeroboam guilty of stealing the stone of Amoz, leaving someone else in a difficult situation, and lying.

I put the work programs in place, closed and locked the Ebony Box. Then I wanted to put it away, but Adoniram warned me with an eyebrow gesture to take my seat. He carried the box himself as I passed back to my seat.

Tito ordered for both fellows to be taken inside again.

When they came in, he made it clear to Jeroboam how his guilt has been understood.

Jereboam started to cry in tears.

Upon this, Tito asked him why he attempted such a bad action.

Jereboam said that he supports his wife and children with the income he earned here, but that he could not deliver the job he was assigned on time because he had not learned the craft well enough, and had not developed his skills properly, many times he had to redo the job because the piece he had produced was not appreciated, and that his income was insufficient because he worked on a lump-sum basis instead of on a daily, whereas Amoz had always done very well, therefore he had stolen the stone that Amoz was about to finish so that he could show himself off at least for once.

Tito listened patiently. When he finished, he reminded him that this was a great crime.

Jereboam stated that he is deeply regretful and requested forgiveness.

Tito said, *«Regret saves you only from your responsibility to yourself, so that you can make your self-criticism. Justice will be accomplished.»*

Just then something unexpected happened. Amoz asked for the floor.

When he was given the floor, he said, *«I forgive Jeroboam. My complaint was to get my stone back. If the stone I worked on is given to me, I will correct the mistakes that have been done over it. I didn't want my brother Jereboam to be punished, and I won't. I am single; he has a family. If I would be punished, then I would suffer it on my own. But if you punish him, you are not only punishing him alone, you are punishing his family as well. They are already struggling hard. If Jereboam cannot work, they will even be in a worse situation. Consult your conscience. I also ask for his forgiveness, as if this event has never been happened.»*

Tito told Amoz, *«Of course your generosity is admirable. But the Board of Judges decides whether a criminal should be punished, and if so, how. If every criminal is forgiven because he regrets and apologizes, then the door is open for everyone to commit crimes.»* Then he said, *«We will discuss and decide. You may leave now. Amoz, you take your drawing and your stone, get back to your work as soon as possible. Jereboam, you wait outside.»*

The fellows went out. With Tito's permission, Amoz took his stone and his drawing with him.

The judges discussed the matter among themselves for a while, and agreed that this experience was already a punishment for the criminal.

However they also took into consideration that leaving a deliberate evil unpunished would be a bad example for others.

Therefore, they agreed that Jereboam should work for two months without wages at stone-hewing, and that Amoz should be compensated for the loss he had suffered because he had not been able to work during the time he had spent looking for his stone.

Tito said to Jereboam, who was taken inside alone one more and for the last time:

«Upon the request by Amoz, I will do one thing for you. No one will ever know that you are on trial here and that you have been given such a sentence. In fact, the decisions of the Board of Judges are publicized, but this time we will make an exception and keep it secret. I am thus giving you an opportunity to regain your honour, but we will closely monitor your actions from now on, and see how you're progressing. If you don't behave as you should in the time allotted to you, we will humiliate you in front of everyone. Now get back to work.»

When Jereboam attempted to express his thanks, Tito said, *«You don't need to thank us. We have done nothing for you. You should thank Amoz if you have to. And you should be happy that you have such a good and sincere friend. Either you should try to carry out this job better, or if you don't think you can do it, you should get another job»,* and he sent Jereboam away.

In order to acquire knowledge, one must first really want to acquire it, and be prepared to work diligently. Knowledge is necessarily obtained as a side product of this work. However, mere "knowledge" is not enough for universal unity; justice in accordance with the law of nature is also necessary.

Those who are assigned to ensure, realize and protect justice carry a great authority together with a great responsibility. It is contrary to the requirements of justice to refrain from punishing the guilty when there is authority and opportunity to do so. But it cannot be "true justice" to overdo the punishment, to cause suffering not only to the guilty but also to others, or to punish the wrong person unnecessarily.

Not to use one's power in a way contrary to justice, not to consider one's personal opinions and tendencies as a requirement of justice, to prevent the cunning and dashing from being right even if they are wrong, not to discriminate between the humble poor and the arrogant rich, not to oppress the weak against the strong, not to look at an event from a one-sided or narrow point of view, but to evaluate it by examining the real reasons behind the event, are some of the inevitable conditions of correct judgment and the way to ensure "true justice".

Those who will provide justice by judging others must first of all judge their own weaknesses and fallacies. Those who ignore this, who consider themselves superior to others, and attempt to judge only the weaknesses and fallacies of adversaries, can merely satisfy their individual passions and temporary pleasures, cannot deliver "true justice".

True justice can only be the product of real virtue, which includes knowledge of a scientific nature, reason and conscientious behavior. This product is used for the general benefit of society. A judicial decision that is useless for the general good of society does not mean that "true justice" has been achieved.

Honour Issue

The judges' sentence on Jereboam was put in practice. There was nothing more he could do. He should have been happy by getting off with such a light punishment.

I could not overcome my curiosity about this incident. I knew many people among the stone cutters. Later I asked them about Amoz and Jeroboam, and I didn't let them know why.

The people I spoke to did not know that Jereboam was punished. They only said that the two of them were inseparable, that although they were both fellows, Amoz was teaching Jereboam how to work, as if he were a master and had an apprentice working for him, and that for some reason he was now working day and night, much more than before. Someone even said, *«What the hell is he going to do with all this earning? Is he getting ready to get married, and therefore is trying to make savings?»*

I thought by myself: *"It is understood that Amoz is very fond of money... If so, even if he didn't lie during the trial, he was dishonest."*

As a result of the research I carried out through a completely different source, I found out an interesting piece of information: Amoz had been helping Jereboam's family financially without revealing it.

I really wondered why he was doing so.

One day I spotted him and asked.

He was surprised. At first he tried to blurt out that there was no such thing, but when he realised that I had discorded the truth, concerning this matter, he couldn't escape. *«Even Jereboam doesn't know this. How did you find out?»* he asked.

I said, *«It doesn't matter how I learnt it. You think about this: If Jereboam finds out, won't it be dishonourable for him?»*

Amoz replied, *«You are right, but there is also my honour. If, instead of complaining about him, if I would discuss this matter with him clearly, if I had thought ahead and given him the professional help I later gave him on the job, this would not have happened. I think I am also responsible for him receiving such a punishment.»*

I told him that if he would have done so, he would then be in a position of allowing an offence to be unpunished, that such behaviour could easily lead others to commit offences, and that he had therefore done the right thing.

Even though he agreed, he said, *«Now he has learnt to do his job properly. From now on, I'll let him take care of himself.»*

This made me learn the following:

Even if a person, let alone an apprentice or fellow, has received the title of "master" and has been so for years, he may not actually be a master of his job. He may need the mastery of others. Such a need can only be fulfilled by solidarity between virtuous people without expecting anything in return.

So I have decided to make it my principle from now on to tell everything I know to be true to others who need it and who can be trusted. I have learnt a lesson by being involved in this event by chance.

Architecture

One day, when King Solomon was dictating to me in private information concerning building of the Temple, *«These things must be written down, Johaben»* he said, *«so that when I am gone, my descendants will know how it was done, and will understand that this Temple, which we built for people of all faiths without distinction, is not only a place of worship, but also serves the realization of a human ideal.»*

While dictating the information about the construction of the Inner Chamber, also called the "Holy of Holies", he paused for a moment, and said, *«Let's stay here for a while. I know that it has not been touched for quite a period. Adoniram told me recently that it was now time to get to work on finishing that chamber too. Now you leave what you're having in your hand, go and find Adoniram, bring him here. Let's discuss this issue.»*

Actually, Adoniram was coming to see Solomon every day and explaining what was going on at the construction site. Moreover, if Solomon wishes to summon him, he already had another officer he could use for the job. So, why did he want me to go and get him directly?

This was what I thought, but I didn't ask. I couldn't. He was the King. His orders were just obeyed. However, as to why he sent me, I thought, *"He probably wants to emphasize that the matter is important."* Maybe he wanted me to be involved in whatever had come to his mind and to resolve it as soon as possible, myself being involved in as well.

I saluted the King duly and left him. I went back to where I was staying, and changed my clothes, putting on my old apron of the masters. I thought it would be more appropriate to go to the construction site for this job like this, not all dressed up. I had only one concern: If I returned without finding Adoniram, it would be difficult to get into the palace.

I was lucky. I shortly found Adoniram.

He was also surprised that Solomon had sent me to summon him. He left his work. We went to the palace; the guards kept quiet because I was together with Adoniram. Even though I had been in the palace for a long time, not all of them knew me yet.

As soon as we entered the King's study room, Solomon broached the subject: «*Adoniram, I have sent for you to discuss the finishing works of the Inner Chamber of the Sanctuary»* he said, *«How should this be done?»*

Adoniram said that it might be inconvenient for anyone to go in there, he himself and the four master craftsmen could finish the work, even if it will take a little longer and will be somewhat more laborious.

When Solomon asked, *«Who would do you think to take?»,* he said, *«We have a small stone processing business. Let's take **Selek** for that. For our woodworking, **Stolkin** is the only reliable one.»* He glanced at me and said, *«Joapert will handle our metal processing. Isn't that right?»*

«Of course, but you know I'm not skilled in that branch of the craft, I might not be able to do it properly» I replied. *«I know, I'm joking"* said Adoniram with a laugh, *«You do the painting and plating. If we get **Gareb**, the master of metallic ornamentation, the team will be complete.»*

When Solomon teased, *«I see you have chosen them all from among those who know the greatest secret»,* Adoniram said, *«Isn't it better that way? We can change in accordance with your wish. Especially since Joapert is needed here, he can stay and we can replace him by someone else.»*

Solomon said, *«No, it is not necessary. That job is much more important than what Johaben is doing here. Those here can wait. I will call him if necessary. Besides, Johaben is talented; he can do both his work here and that in the Sanctuary simultaneously.»* Solomon looked at me and said, *«Isn't that so?»*

I gave a reply as, «Whatever you order.»

By this means, how the works in the Inner Chamber would be finished has been determined.

As soon we were out, Adoniram grasped my arm, *«I know. Shut up. Don't say anything»* he said, and he dragged me into a secluded corner where no one could hear us. There he whispered: *«I have thoughts about the finishing works of that Inner Chamber. Just forget what I said inside... Fortunately, when I mentioned Selek, you didn't say anything out of the blue. He actually has been working and getting prepared for a long time.»* Then he laughed; *«Better yet, since you are used to being a messenger today, go out and find the others. All of you be ready in the Sanctuary at the beginning of the day tomorrow. We will discuss what we will do there.»*

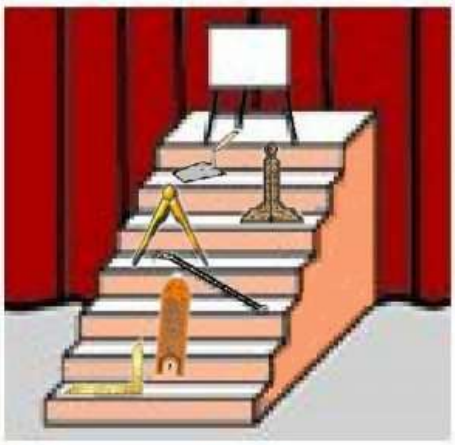
I didn't say anything. I didn't ask what Adoniram had in mind. He would tell it anyway.

Consequently, when we met the next day, Adoniram asked us to hold our meeting in the Inner Chamber. So we passed over there.

Before carrying on to explain what he wanted to do, Adoniram described the rationale for the job he envisioned: *«All masters, fellows and apprentices in all crafts contributed to the construction of the Temple. I want their memory to be symbolically reflected in this Inner Chamber, the most important part of the Sanctuary. I wish to know if you agree.»*

When no one said anything, he presented his plan.

«Now look, we're going to build a seven-step staircase at the back, in the corner. Actually, it will not be a staircase leading to somewhere, it will be just a symbol... Selek, you know those ashlars you've been preparing; you will bring them here. In this respect, the heaviest work falls on you. The porters can only carry the stones as far as the door of the inner courtyard; the rest is yours. We'll help you. Joapert shall build the staircase. Gareb and Stolkin will do their part. Over the steps of our staircase, we will place examples of our tools of the craft. A square, plumb line, lever, compasses, level and trowel. Gareb will prepare these. At the top will be a drawing board that Stolkin will make and bring. Few people see it here; most of them don't even notice it, but whoever notices will understand what we mean by placing that symbol here.»



Selek said, *«That's a very good idea, but in terms of my own branch, I would say that we should have placed a hammer and a chisel as well.»*

Adoniram said to him, *«That's a good remark, but then we shall have to make the staircase higher, but we don't prefer to do so. I understand your point. However, in that case, we shall have to remove one of the others. That won't work either. We have to establish a priority. Just think: Stolkin might wish to put in his tools that he uses in his works, his saw, his planer… Whereas Gareb... We don't have the opportunity of using any of his tools.»*

«The most important process in our business is weighing of the metals» Gareb said, *«I can just hang a small hand scale in a corner to represent it. Don't worry.»*

Inner Chamber

We started working.

Stolkin finished his work earlier than the rest of us. He sat down at a side.

Seeing him as idle, Adoniram said, *«Why don't you cut some long thin slats? Then make three equilateral triangles out of them. How about if you put them symmetrically through each other, and you would provide a beautiful symbol?»*

«Fine, I'll do it, but what's the use?»

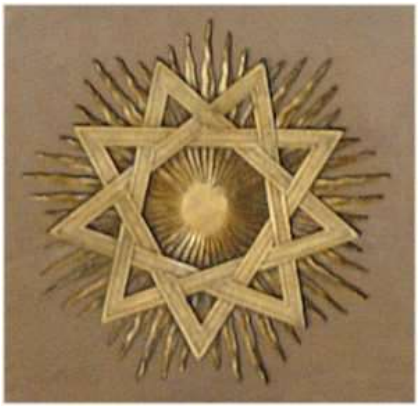
«We'll hang it on the back wall. It will make a nice decoration.»

«What will it mean?»

«Everything doesn't need to have a predetermined and agreed meaning. The one who sees makes a sense of it in his own way.»

«But wasn't King David's Shield made of two interlaced triangles?»

«Yes, but we are not going to put there what you say, the icon with two evenly placed triangles. I'm talking about an icon with three triangles, you understand the difference, don't you?»



Source: www.phoenixmasonry.org/masonicmuseum

«Then, if I may, I have a suggestion» said Gareb, *«You know those terms that our Master Hiram used for the two pillars at the entrance, "Boaz" and "Yakin". Maybe there was a reason for selecting these terms. Maybe he wanted to say something else, but he found it inconvenient to state it clearly and thought it would be more appropriate to be contented with two letters. Now I will make one letter for each of them, "beth" and "jod". Let us place these in an appropriate place. Some people will think that these will attribute to Benjamin and Judah, but for us it is the memory of our Master Hiram Abif. What do you think?»*

Adoniram thought for a while. Then he said, *«Yes and no.»*

«I understand that it can be. What's the can't be?"

«If we do it so, it seems to me that we are missing something.»

I interposed: *«In order to complete it, how about placing on top of them, in the centre, a prominent letter "aleph" to reflect the beginning of everything?»*



«Joapert, you know, you can be a very good architect» said Adoniram, *«That's a marvellous idea! I don't know how you came up with it out of the blue, but it's brilliant. Let's do what Gareb says and what you say.»*

During these conversations, Selek and Stolkin did not interfere at all, they were just listening.

I think Adoniram thought they might be a little hurt, maybe even offended by what he had said about me. Even if they weren't, he thought they might be, so he tried to make amends. *«Let there be no misunderstanding» he said, «you have all worked extraordinarily hard to build this Temple, and you have accomplished things that others could not have done so easily. You can all be good architects.»*

Stolkin twisted his lips.

This did not go unnoticed by Adoniram. *«Why did you do so?»*

"I don't think what you say can only be realised by working and producing» Stolkin replied, *«It also requires special training.»*

«You're right in that respect» said Adoniram, *«but I didn't say that you were qualified, I said you can. That's why I'm going to organize a special training program for the four of you. I've been looking forward to do something like this for a long time, but I didn't tell you. Now that it's come up today, let's take it from thought to action. As soon as we finish our job here, let's allocate time for it, and get started.»*

Principles of Architecture

That day, Adoniram gave us basic information concerning the art of architecture. We followed this education for hours. Later, Zadok, who had monitored the lecture together with Master Achizar, said that it had been very useful for him too, since he was not a builder.

The part of this training that particularly caught my attention was the **"Five Basic Principles of Architecture"**. Adoniram named them as **"effectiveness"**, **"comfort"**, **"sufficiency"**, **"solidity"** and **"aesthetics"**. After thinking on this issue, I derived a conclusion as follows:

What does effectiveness depend on? How is it achieved?... This requires making use of science and the scientific method.

Comfort is a relative concept, but what is the measure.... It has to be "reason".

How can sufficiency be provided?... This means moderation. So, this is determined by the combination of knowledge and virtue, i.e. wisdom.

Solidity is the resistance of the structure against external effects. It is then the correct use of power that will make this occur.

Aesthetics is also relative. But from whatever point of view, it reflects beauty.

When I thought these, I realized that an important problem can be encountered:

*If a building is unnecessarily strong through excessive use of power, it cannot be given an aesthetic quality; it cannot be beautiful. On the other hand, if aesthetics is prioritized in order to make it very beautiful, it becomes difficult for it to be strong enough. In other words, a **balance** must be established between these two factors, which contradict, even if not oppose each other.*

On the other hand, this should not apply only to the structure, the building. Here, the building should be taken as a symbol. This principle should be put in practice in all areas of life. One should always know how to balance power and beauty in his life, to be moderate.

After a full day of theoretical work with Adoniram, we were furnished with a great deal of knowledge about the work we were to carry out in the Inner Chamber of the Sanctuary. I now understood much better why detailed and subtle work had not been carried out there, and why it had been sufficient to leave only three bare walls until now.

Skill is not enough to carry out a good work, to equip it with effective, comfortable, sufficient, strong and aesthetic qualities. It also requires knowledge.

In order to build a superior social order on a solid foundation, all the principles at its core must be thoroughly examined and understood.

*The right to individual acquisition and the **labour** consumed in securing this right must be kept alive by reconciling them with freedom. Evolutionary development of social civilization may be achieved through the conscious cooperation and participation of labour of the individuals according to their abilities, can only by this means, within this environment.*

If a superior or even "ideal" social order is to be pursued, a good and highly qualified leader is required for its realisation.

The absence of such a leader does not mean that the intended order cannot be realised. One should not be pessimistic. A harmonious solidarity and unity of power among individuals, a functional coordination in which powers and responsibilities are consciously shared, can ensure the realisation of the expected goal to be achieved in presence of the leader in question.

Therefore, instead of waiting for a hypothetical leader who will glorify him, man should endeavour to develop his individual qualities, and by nurturing and reconciling these developed qualities with the individual qualities of other people, to ensure collective progress in the evolutionary direction. If necessary, further if those around him trust and show their confidence in him, he can also get prepared to become a leader.

The leader of society must come from within the society. Thus is because a leader who comes from another society loses time to get to know that society concerned, and to grasp its unique qualities. He may not even be able to reach them completely. For this reason, he will have difficulty in making himself accepted as a leader in that society.

The importance of knowledge and the need to develop it are obvious. For this, the individual must be absolutely free in thought and belief.

However, it is not enough for the individual to be free in thought and belief. In addition to these, he also wants to be free in his objective liberty, i.e. in his attitude and behaviour concerning action. Undoubtedly, these will be limited to the same of others, and the individual will grant others the same rights as himself.

The individual does not stop there. He also wants to have the right of acquisition. Society must not deny this to him. For if the individual does not have objective liberty and the right to acquire objects that are his own property, he will not be able to devote himself as much as he should to work for the benefit of society because of these desires, which will remain in his being like a nagging desire.

Man must be happy individually so that he can work for the happiness of others as well.

However, great care must also be taken with regard to the extent of acquisition and the exercise of objective liberty.

Wealth is not bad and should not be regarded as such, but no one should be excessively richer than others. No one should exercise his objective liberty unrestrictedly. Anyone who has a position of honour or privilege in society must first deserve it, must not only think of himself and his relatives, but must also look out for the poor and those in need of support to the best of his ability. If he does not do so, he will not only lose his dignity, but he will cause an inevitable explosion in society.

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At the end of the day, Adoniram said we could stop working and get to rest.

Zadok and Achizar lift us.

According to what Adoniram instructed, the four of us were to meet the next day in the Inner Chamber of the Sanctuary to determine those needed to be done, but to plan and programme things in an orderly fashion.

We did so. We finished the Inner Chamber with a good collaboration and organised work.

After all these things were completed, my mind was stuck on the Secret Chamber; what if people who should not be entitled to reach there would find a way to access... I was not at ease. In order to get there, it was necessary to know how to move the huge marble in the Inner Chamber. Only those who had been assigned to keep the secret with Adoniram knew that. Maybe others did too, but I didn't know who else knew about it. Nevertheless, I was regarding the security of the Secret Chamber as insufficient.

The discretion of my acquaintances could not be doubted. Just like Architect Master Hiram, they would sacrifice the head but won't expose the secret. But what if others knew!... Now we were going to leave this place and maybe will never come back. As I said, if there were others, how much could they be trusted? Couldn't we take more strict precautions? Shouldn't we?

When I expressed this concern to Adoniram, he said, *«You may be right, but tell me, what else can we do? Can you come up with a concrete, practical suggestion?»*

A concrete suggestion to provide a higher level of security... Something that can be put into practice...

It wasn't something that could be found all of a sudden. But I decided to think about it in detail, to consider it over. Maybe we could do something.

If we can…

We should.

To be continued in the **Fourth Episode**