

**MASTER MASON'S APRON**  
**(Song of Heart)**

by

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(The opinions expressed in this paper are those of the Author and do not necessarily reflect those of the Victoria Lodge of Education and Research.)

The origin of the apron dates a long way back. Adam was the first man to wear the apron. (Fig leaf,) Knowledge of the apron is portrayed in Yucatan, Mexico as far back as 11,000 B.C. (Pictorial drawings)

The monitorial section in Lodge on the apron, contains no scripture quotations but is reminiscent of John, Chapter 10 -verses 1 to 6, "A parable of the shepherd" and Revelations Chapter 5 complete. A few prominent Masons were:- Noah, Abraham, Pythagorus, Euclid, Archimedes, Plato and more familiarly - Moses, King Solomon, Hiram, King of Tyre and Hiram Abif.  
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Jesus and John the Baptist were of the order of the Essenes an order of Jewish people entertaining no heterodox opinions, simply carrying out their faith with an unusual strictness of observance. The difference between Freemasonry and Essenism lies in the spirit of universal tolerance, prominent in Freemasonry and absent in Essenism.

All aprons seen in Lodges are not properly made, some are slightly oblong. The correct shape would call for a perfect square of 14 inches, surmounted by a triangle whose base is the exact length of one side of the apron and whose apex forms a ninety degree angle. The material which comprises the apron should be lambskin, always considered an emblem of innocence. Modern aprons are more likely to be made of goatskin or synthetics. Eumolpus (one time ruler of Thrace who initiated Pythagorus) instituted the lambskin as a symbol of peace and good will in 1350 B.C.

The lamb is a symbol of Jesus Christ. The introduction of this Christian symbolism comes from the expression of John the Baptist, who exclaimed on seeing Jesus, "Behold, b-he Lamb of God".

The use of leathers, much less lambskin, is a curious contradiction with the customs of the Egyptians, who regarded hides as unclean. Linen was used in place of lambskin by the Egyptians. Operative masons wore aprons for a purely utilitarian purpose and these were made of hide which was more durable than woven material. Tough material was essential for the handling of rough stone. No material may be substituted without destroying the symbolism of investment. As a sign of purity and peace, it exhibits a promise of the hope of life after death.

Blue is the colour of Masonry. It is the appropriate tincture of the ancient Craft degrees. It is to the Mason a symbol of universal friendship and benevolence. It is the colour of the vault of heaven which embraces and covers the whole globe. It is the colour of the sky when all the clouds have cleared.

Blue also symbolizes constancy, perfection and eternal truth as

illustrated in the Ten Commandments. Dark blue on an apron symbolizes these Lodges were formed before 1871 A.D. when the Grand Lodge of B.C. was constituted. e.g. Ashlar Lodge #3, Nanaimo, B.C. Dark blue is also a symbol of the 100th anniversary of a Lodge.

Scottish aprons are varied colours on the borders, These aprons are authorized by the Grand Lodge of Scotland. e.g. Clan plaids on borders. Dark blue is worn on the apron of a member of the armed forces. Light blue symbolizes the feminine side of man, dark blue the masculine. White, like sunlight, is searching and revealing. It dispels all shadows and symbolizes purity and perfection. The search for light is a search for knowledge, which is enlightenment. Light is essential for growth.

There are two tassels, one on each side of the apron, with seven chains. The tassels represent the loosened silver cord. Ecclesiastes, chapter 1, verse 6 -"Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern.", the seven liberal arts and sciences (left side) and seven virtues (right side).

In seven days Noah constructed the Ark. Earth was created in six days and on the seventh day God rested. Early astronomy illustrates seven planets each represented by a different colour. There are seven steps in the ages of man. (Shakespeare). There are seven working tools (including "setting maul"). Solomon's Temple was completed in seven years. The tassels and chains also represent Jacob's Ladder whose principal rungs are - Faith, Hope and Charity. Tassels represent casket handles.

Ancient aprons were fastened around the body by a string at the ends of which were attached tassels the same as are many of the aprons worn to-day. When the belt replaced the string, these tassels were placed on the front of the aprons eventually becoming merely strips of ribbon, to ends of which were attached seven chains. The number seven was chosen deliberately. Three represent the Spirit and four  
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represent matter, together they represent God and Man. It is probable that the strips of ribbon allude to the two pillars which stood at the front of Solomon's Temple, also the pillars of Hercules and were depicted on the aprons of the ancient brethren.

The ancient symbol of the Deity is an equilateral triangle with the apex point downward toward his creation. The perfect man is symbolized by an equilateral triangle pointed toward his Creator. (The three rosettes form this triangle.) Thus the apron symbolizes man in the image and likeness of the Creator.

The square and compass form a well known variant of Vesica Piscis, a female symbol denoting the feminine and preservative side of God without which we could not exist or hope to be preserved from the powers of darkness.

In the First Degree the triangle points upwards, illustrating that the Spiritual has not entered matter or has gained no control. In the Second Degree the triangle points downward and the left hand corner is folded up illustrating the entrance and gaining of some control by the Spiritual. In the Third Degree the downward pointing triangle illustrates the gaining of control by the Spiritual.

The three rosettes on the apron have many meanings, including the completion of the work in the three degrees -

Youth	Manhood	Old age
Jr. Warden	Sr. Warden	W.M.
Hiram Abif	Hiram of Tyre	Solomon
Beauty	Strength	Wisdom
Gomez Oz	Dabar	
G.	O.	D.

The three villains Jubela, Jebelo and Jubelum who are comparable to King Herod, Caiaphaa and Pontius Pilate who were responsible for Jesus death. They also represent lust of the flesh, lust of the mind and pride. Sins of the flesh, sins of the soul and spiritual pride (the most fatal). The three rosettes also symbolize the number of times Hiram Abif was buried.

1. In the rubbish of the temple (Solomons).
2. Near the brow of a small hill near Mt. Moriah.
3. In (sic) the Sanctum Sanctorium or the Holy of Holies.

Thus, we have before us Hiram Abif lying in his grave. The rosettes represent his head and the left and right breast, the vital parts of man. The tassels are the handles of his casket. Few candidates may be aware that Hiram Abif whom they represented, is precisely the same as Jesus Christ, yet such is undoubtedly the case. The manner of approaching the altar in the Third Degree (Ancient work) illustrates this. Through the Advent of Christianity a Christian element has been infused into the Masonic system as is rightly so.

The serpent is used to fasten the apron. It must be realized that there are two kinds of symbolism attached to snakes. First, as the enemy of man it symbolizes the power of evil. The other sybolizes the simakes' subtlety and wisdom.

Thus, my brethren, you should wear your apron with pride and dignity, for it not only points out your rank to other Brethren but it is a visible reminder of the oath you have sworn to maintain.

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