

HOW MANY HIRAMS WERE THERE?

Dear Brother Editor: - Bro. A. S. MacBride's remarks on the "Four Hiram of Tyre" in the April Builder make one despair of ever getting to the bottom of the question as to how many Hiram were at the building of Solomon's Temple, anyhow. He discovers four instead of two.

Why the historical accuracy as to numbers should concern students of our allegorical mysteries I confess is difficult for me to see. The personage mentioned in Masonic ritual as Hiram or C'Hiram is clearly not the historical Hiram of Chronicles nor of Kings, though enough of those accounts has been interwoven with the legend of the Master's degree to give it a touch of realism sufficiently to serve the purpose of all Masonic allegory, that of concealing from the profane what is illustrated by symbol.

I would suggest to Bro. MacBride a careful reading of all the old Operative scrolls and legends he can lay hands upon and comparing them with the names of the principal personages of the ancient mysteries of Egypt, Phoenicia and other peoples with whom the Hebrews as a nation came in contact. He will probably then come to the conclusion that Albert Pike was correct in asserting that the "Hiram" of Masonry is no other than the ancient mystic personification of LIGHT.

Is not Pythagoras claimed as our "ancient friend and brother"? Is he not represented as having been a student under Hor-Ammon or Hur-Amen, a priest of Egypt? Is he not told of in legend as one of the discoverers of the antediluvian pillars whereon were engraved all the ancient arts and sciences?

The old operative Masons have left us enough manuscript tales of Masonry and its origin to confuse more than the profane, unless we understand them as they clearly did.

Reference may be had to Gould or Findel or the York Rolls or the British Museum or the Quatuor Coronati proceedings to illustrate my point.

The name of the chief artificer sent Solomon by Hiram King of Tyre is given variously as Aymon, Adon, Ammon and he is even represented, I recall in one legend, as being the son of the King himself.

In Hebrew Scriptures we are told of C'Hiram (translated at Hiram) and whether there were one or two or a dozen men or the name concerned in the building of the physical Temple of Solomon, the term "C'Hiram Abiv" alone should clear our minds of

the idea that merely an historical personage is meant so far as Freemasonry's adoption of the name goes.

For while the original Hebrew "C'Huram Abiv" may refer to the architect's father, in Freemasonry it may be correctly uses as Father Hiram or Father LIGHT indicating that all Freemasons are sons of LIGHT in a spiritual sense.

We are informed by the Jewish historian Josephus that there was indeed a physical temple built by Solomon with the assistance of the same architects and after the same pattern as used for the building of the great sun Temple at Tyre.

But a little research among writers on the mysteries of those Mediterranean countries alone, soon uncovers the curious coincidence that these Tyrian architects, under the tutelage and special favor of the Dyonysian Priesthood no doubt (since they were known as the Dyonysian Architects) were specially addicted to celebrating their mysteries at certain times of the year in Byblos, known to the Hebrews as Gebal whose inhabitants are called Giblymites or "stone squarers."

These mysteries were the mysteries of "Adon" (meaning "Lord" or "The Master"), the chief personage of other mysteries in which he appeared as Adonis, Attys, etc.

Scriptural allusion to these mysteries shows they were known to the Hebrew people as those of "Thammuz," from the name of the river on which the body of the Master was set afloat to be found later.

So that among the Tyrians themselves it is probable that the Master Architect as spoken of in some of the old "histories" or legends of the operatives, was indeed called Adon, corrupted into Aymon or Ammon, not necessarily through ignorance, but as demonstrating a connection of the Dyonysian rites with the original Egyptian parent stem as concluded by some investigators.

For Byblos in mythology, turns out to be the identical spot where Egyptian allegories represent Isis coming to find the body of her Lord Asar or Osiris.

The most common name for Deity among the Egyptians was Ammon or Amun, frequently combined with Ra the sun, symbolic of LIGHT. The son of Isis and Osiris was Hor or Horus - again the name of LIGHT. These three personages of the Egyptian mysteries, As, Asar and Hor (Isis, Osiris and Horus) are familiar enough to every student of the mysteries as the Egyptian trinity equivalent to the present Master and wardens of a lodge, Horus being typical of the candidate himself.

In Horus and the priest Hor-Ammon of Pythagoras, in the Hebrew C'Huram, in the mythical thrice great Hermes of ancient Egypt, founder of the "Hermetic" sciences of whom, in the Urim and Thummim of the Jewish High Priest, and the Hiram of the Masons, we may see but synonyms for the name of LIGHT.

Albert Pike and other writers have referred to the hieroglyphic representation on Egyptian monuments, showing the "raising of a candidate" by the hierophant clothed in a Lion's skin. The Egyptian name of the Lion was Aor - LIGHT. Compare Hebrew - LIGHT.

There is abundance of proof in mythology connecting the almost universal name for LIGHT with the Lion, the God, and the mysteries.

If we are to interpret literally and historically all the writings and legends of antiquity without suspecting the existence of symbolic keys to their spiritual significance, it will take us no long while to utterly destroy interest in Freemasonry.

The literal minded might well say, the Lion derived its name of Aor from its roar, by way of onomatopoea. The name of Deity or the Sun among Egyptians and Chaldeans, "Ra," is merely a curious coincidence. And so with the Babylonian "moon worship" of Ur and as to the Egyptian Amun and the Phoenician Ammon they were probably separate "gods" and the combination of the two names due to the confusion of those old priests trying to discover what they were talking about.

But the careful and impartial student will scarcely dismiss the matter in that nonchalant manner, if he spend the time and patience necessary to wade through the vast literature concerning the mysteries of all times. He may have to dig into Wilkinson and Petrie as well as Churchward, Cumont and others, but it is all there.

The Masonic Hiram, Master Architect of the Temple, is the modern survival of the two words for LIGHT and Lord or Master - Hur-Amen.

I greatly regret that I have neither the time nor inclination to hunt up all my "authorities," as my library is scattered now in many places and what notes I have preserved by the way, stored here and there and covered with dust. Personally I am no longer greatly interested in such studies, having covered the ground to my own satisfaction years ago, and perhaps selfishly, neglected to prepare myself with proper references to what somebody else has said and discovered for the benefit of "future generations."

But this I do know, so far as history, legend, mythology, archaeology, comparative religion and similar studies can be considered "proof," it is all there for those who are willing to dig in this "rubbish from the temple."

J.W. Norwood, Kentucky.