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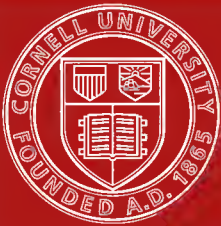
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OFFICES OF A LODGE OF SORROW

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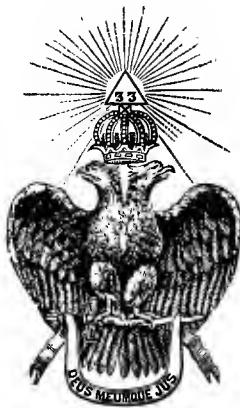
RING SERVICE

OF THE

Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite

OF

FREEMASONRY



Supreme Council for the United States of America, their Territories
and Dependencies



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Lodge of Sorrow.

[These services are performed in the fifth degree. All the furniture, the jewels, and the Altar, are draped with black cloth; the walls of the room are hung with black garlands, and so also are the columns. The three candlesticks of the Altar are covered with black crape, and the candles are of black wax. In the center of the room is a coffin, its head to the West. It is covered with black cloth, and on it lie an apron of the fifth degree, a pair of black gloves, the cordon and jewel of the highest degree possessed by the deceased, and a sword with a black scabbard and belt. If the brother was an Inspector General, Master of the Royal Secret, or Knight Kadosh, the standard of the body to which he belonged will be in the East, drooping.

If the ceremonies are performed in a church, the Altar-lights will be placed on the East, West, and South of the coffin.

The three lights are burning when the ceremonies begin.

There should, if possible, be an organ.

The escutcheon of each brother in whose memory the services are held will be suspended in the East. The escutcheon is in the shape of a shield with the name of the deceased brother in black letters on a white ground.

The services will commence, if practicable, with a voluntary on the organ, followed by the chant "DE PROFUNDIS," or the following]

HYMN.

Come, ye sighing sons of sorrow,
View with me your brother's tomb;
Learn from it your fate, to-morrow
Death perhaps may seal your doom.

Sad and silent flow our numbers,
 While disconsolate we mourn
 Loss of him who sweetly slumbers,
 Mould'ring 'neath the silent urn.

Once, when full of life, he never
 Proved unfaithful to our laws ;
 We'll, like him, be zealous ever
 To promote the glorious cause.

[After which the Master raps * * *, calling up all the brethren ; and says :]

M.—What man is he that liveth and shall not see death ? Shall he deliver his soul from the hands of the grave ?

S. W.—Man walketh in a vain shadow ; he heapeth up riches, and cannot tell who shall gather them.

M.—We go whence we shall not return, even to the land of Darkness and of the Shadow of Death.

S. W.—A land of Darkness, as Darkness itself ; and of the Shadow of Death, wherein the very Light is as Darkness.

M.—There the wicked cease from troubling, and there the weary be at rest. There the prisoners rest together ; they hear not the voice of the oppressor. The small and the great are there ; and the slave is freed of his burden.

J. W.—That land is unknown ; God regards it not from above, neither doth the light enter into it.

M.—Horror and Dread are its inhabitants ; mystery reigns over it ; and its silence terrifies it.

S. W.—It is desolation, and a great desert on which Terror broods, and no joyful voice comes therein.

M.—Therein is no glad Dawn of Day ; the Stars of the twilight thereof are dark. It longs for light and has none ; it sees no dawning of the day.

J. W.—There we lie still and are quiet ; there we sleep ; there we are at rest. With Kings and Counsellors of the earth, which built for themselves palaces now desolate ; with Princes that had gold, and filled their houses with silver.

M.—We dwell in houses of clay, whose foundation is on the sands ; which crumble before the worm.

S. W.—We are destroyed from morning to evening. We perish forever, without any regarding it. Our days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle, and are spent without hope. Our life is but a breath ; as the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away, so he that goeth down to the grave shall come up no more.

[The Altar-light in the South is extinguished by the Junior Deacon, during which there is slow plaintive music on the organ.]

M.—What profit hath a man of all his labor which he taketh under the sun ? One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh ; but the Earth abideth always.

S. W.—Man dieth and wasteth away ; yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he ?

M.—Every man shall be brought to the grave, and find a home in the tomb.

J. W.—The clods of the valley shall be heaped upon him, and every man shall follow after him, as there were men innumerable before him.

M.—God accepteth not the persons of Princes, nor regardeth the rich more than the poor ; for they all are the work of His hands.

S. W.—In a moment they die, and the people are troubled at midnight, and pass away ; and the mighty are taken away without hand.

[The Altar-light in the West is extinguished by the Senior Deacon, during which there is slow plaintive music on the organ.]

M.—Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him ; for He knoweth how weak we are to resist temptation.

J. W.—Man's days are as grass ; as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth, for the wind passeth over it, and it is gone ; and the place thereof shall know it no more.

M.—Daily we draw nearer unto the gates of death ; we go like the shadow when it declineth ; all our days are sorrows, and our travail, grief ; yea, our hearts take not rest in the night.

S. W.—There is no man that hath power over the spirit, to retain the spirit ; neither power in the day of death ; and there is no discharge in that war.

M.—The day goeth swiftly away ; the evening shadows lengthen. When we would comfort ourselves against sorrow, our hearts are faint in us for a new calamity. The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved.

S. W.—Death is come up into our windows, and is entered into our palaces, to cut off the young with the aged whom we love. They fall alike, as the ripe and the unripe ears of wheat after the harvester, and there is none to gather them up.

M.—The Lord God of Hosts is he that toucheth the land, and it shudders ; and all that dwell therein

mourn ; when the children of the land pass away as the dew of the morning, as the drops of the showers that linger upon the grass.

S. W.—Our songs are turned into funeral dirges, and our feasts into mourning. Sackcloth is upon all loins, and ashes on every head ; it is as the mourning for an only son, and the end thereof is as a bitter day to those in a lonely house.

M.—The Lord our God causeth darkness ; and our feet stumble upon the dark mountains ; and while we look for light, He turns it into the shadow of death, and makes it thick darkness.

J. W.—He puts us out ; He covers our heavens with a pall, and darkens all its stars ; He covers our sun with a cloud ; and our moon no longer gives her light. All the bright lights of Heaven He maketh dark over us, and sets darkness upon our land.

[The Altar-light in the East is extinguished by the Master of Ceremonies.]

M.—The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord ! Amen !

ALL.—Amen ! So mote it be.

M.—Behold, O Lord, we are in distress ! Our hearts are turned within us ; there is none to comfort us, mourning and lamentation are heard among us.

Thou hast cut off the lives of our brethren, and the waters of affliction flow over our heads. The joy of our heart has ceased, and our gladness is turned into mourning. Our life is but a span in length, and yet tedious because of the calamities that enclose us on every side. The days of our pilgrimage are few and evil ; our bodies frail, our passions violent, and

distempered, our understanding weak, our wills perverse. We adore Thy majesty, and trust like little children to Thy tender mercies. Give us patience to live well, and firmness to resist evil. Bless us, O God. Bless our beloved fraternity throughout the world.

May we live and emulate the examples of our departed brethren; and, finally, may we in this world attain a knowledge of Thy truth, and in the world to come, life everlasting. Amen!

ALL.—Amen! So mote it be!

[Now will be sung the “MISERERE” or the following]

HYMN.

Among the dead our brother sleeps,
 His life was rounded true and well;
 And Love in bitter sorrow weeps
 Over his dark and silent cell.

His name is graven on the stone
 That Friendship's tears will often wet;
 But each true Brother's heart upon,
 That name is stamped more deeply yet.

As slept the Widow's Martyred Son,
 So doth our brother take his rest;
 Life's battle fought, life's duties done,
 His faults forgot, his worth confessed.

So let him sleep that dreamless sleep,
 Our sorrows clustering round his head;
 Be comforted, dear friends, who weep!
 He lives with God; he is not dead.

M.—My Brethren, we live only to see those we love go way into the silent land before us. The arrows of the insatiate and relentless Archer pass us by, only to smite the bosoms of our friends and Brethren until the aged are weary of the loneliness of life, and welcome death as a friend. The Past is thickly peopled for us with the well-remembered faces of the Dead.

Death is that harbor whither God hath designed every one, that there he may find rest from the troubles of the world. Let us either be willing to die, when God calls, or let us never more complain of the calamities of our life, which we feel to be so sharp and numerous. And when God sends His angel to us with the scroll of Death, let us look on it as an act of mercy, to prevent many sins, and many calamities of a longer life; and lay our heads down softly, and go to sleep, without wrangling like froward children.

For this, at least, man gets by death—that his calamities are not immortal.

To bear grief honorably and temperately, and to die willingly and nobly, is the duty of a good and valiant man. Moreover, it is reasonable, and a duty of religion, to comply with the Divine Providence which governs all the world, and to bear contentedly and cheerfully the burdens of the world and the enmities of sad chances.

Death has invaded our Rite. For against him no bolts or bars prevail, nor can the Tiler, though never so vigilant and resolute, prevent or stay his entrance. He hath lately called from labor to rest our Brethren _____, who have gone before us, yet only a little while before, into the foreign and unknown

country beyond the dark river; there, if each hath the True Word, to receive the wages of faithful service.

We, following our ancient Masonic custom, and obeying the demands of duty, do now pay these last honors to their memory. Them, they cannot profit. They are beyond the reach of praise and of censure alike. These to us, may and should be profitable; gratifying those whom they loved; showing our appreciation of their virtues; encouraging others to labor, and showing to the world that the ties and sympathies and obligations of Masonry cannot be severed by the hand of Death.

[Now will be sung the Magnificat, or instead there will be *bold sonorous music on the organ.*]

M.—Thus saith the Lord: Stand ye in the ways, and look and inquire for the old paths, where is the good way; and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. It is the faith of all true Masons, that prayer, like the will, is one of the forces of the universe. Let us pray!

[All kneel and the Chaplain reads the following]

PRAYER.

Our Father, Who art here present among us, and dost graciously permit us to cry unto Thee in distress and sorrow, it hath pleased Thee to take back the Breath of Life which Thou didst breathe into the bodies of the Brethren whom we mourn, and to call their spirits away from the miseries of this sinful world. Let Time, as it heals the wounds thus in-

flicted on the hearts of those who loved them, not erase or make illegible the salutary lessons engraven there ; but let those lessons, always continuing distinct and legible, make each one wiser and better, who now sorrows for the dead.

In whatever trouble or distress may hereafter come upon us, may we be consoled by the reflection that Thy Wisdom and Power are no more infinite than Thy Love ; and that our sorrows are not visitations of Thy Anger, but results of the great Laws of Harmony by which everything is being conducted to a good and perfect issue in the fulness of Thy time.

Cause the loss of these friends and Brethren whom we lament, to increase our affection for each other, and make us more lenient, indulgent and charitable, and more punctual in the performance of all the duties which Friendship, Loving-kindness, Brotherhood and Honor demand. And when it comes to us in our turn to die, may an abiding trust in Thy Mercy dispel the dread of dissolution. And may we not be disappointed in our Hope, nor find our Faith to be a delusion, that we shall meet our Brethren again hereafter, in another and a more excellent life. Amen !

ALL.—Amen ! So mote it be !

M.—Enlighten, O Lord, those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death !

ALL.—The Lord is our God forever ; He will be our guide, even unto Death.

M.—We are but sojourners on the earth ; let us not stray from Thy commandments !

ALL.—Lord, make us to know our end, and the measure of our days, what it is !

M.—That we may apply our hearts unto wisdom, and may finish the work Thou hast given us to do.

ALL.—Let us die the death of the righteous, and let our last end be like theirs!

M.—We commit ourselves to Thy Loving-kindness and tender mercies.

ALL.—Strengthen Thou our hands and purify our hearts!

M.—Confirm and make effectual, and multiply our good resolves! Lead us away from temptation, and deliver us out of the power of evil.

ALL.—For Thine is the Kingdom, and the Power and the Glory, forever. Amen!

M.—The will of God is accomplished. So mote it be! Amen!

[Now will be sung the “*Benedicite Omnia Opera*,” or instead there will be played *bold triumphant music on the organ*.

The Master raps * and all are seated except the M., S. W., and J. W.]

M.—My Brethren, in a little while, as it hath happened to our Brethren to whose memory we now do honor, so it will happen unto each of us; and we, like them, shall be gathered unto our fathers. But our Brethren are not wholly gone from us, nor ever will be, nor from this material world. Their influences and the effects of their example survive them; the thoughts they uttered are not subject to decay; and the consequences of their action and exertion can never cease while the universe continues to exist. Many that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting

contempt. And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever.

S. W.—The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and His ears are open unto their cry.

J. W.—The face of the Lord is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.

S. W.—The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles.

J. W.—The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.

S. W.—Many are the afflictions of the righteous; but the Lord delivereth him out of them all.

J. W.—The Lord redeemeth the Soul of his Servants; and none of them that trust in Him shall be desolate.

[A strain of *minor music on the organ.*]

M.—Come with me, my Brethren, around this coffin, which represents those wherein the bodies of our Brethren repose; and aid me in paying the last Hours of Masonry to their memory.

[A procession of twenty-seven members of the Rite, selected for the purpose, is formed, and marches three times in a circuit, as large as practicable, around the coffin, their hands crossed on their breasts, bearing lighted torches in their right hands. During each circuit there is slow and solemn music, which ceases when the procession has halted. When the Master reaches the head of the coffin, at the end of the first circuit, all face inward, continuing under the same sign; and he says:]

M.—May all the influences of our Brethren, for good, that do survive them, be continually expanded and increased, to benefit their fellow-men; and may our Father who is in Heaven, in His Wisdom, counteract and annul all those that tend to evil!

ALL.—Amen! So mote it be!

[All now give, together, the Funeral Honors. These are to cross the arms on the breast, the right over the left; raise both hands, the torch between, at the same time looking upward; bring down the arms until extended horizontally in front of the body, then rest the heel of the torch on the floor. Do this three times, and at the end of each time say, “Farewell!” Another circuit is now made and when the Master again reaches the head of the coffin, all again face inward, and he says:]

M.—May we not forget the lessons taught us by the death of our Brethren! But, remembering the uncertainty of life, and the little value of those things for which men most strive, may we more earnestly endeavor to obey the laws of God, avoid dissensions, hatreds, and revenges, and labor to do good to our fellow-men! May we be true and faithful, and live and die loving our Brethren!

ALL.—Amen! So mote it be!

[All again give the Honors as before; and the third circuit is made. When the Master is again at the head of the coffin, all face inward, and he says:]

M.—May the relatives of our Brethren be consoled in their great affliction, and sustained in all the trials and hardships which they may have to encounter in this world.

ALL.—Amen! So mote it be!

[All again give the Honors as before. Then the Brethren all return to their places.]

M.—Let us pray!

[All kneel and the Master reads the following]

PRAVER.

O, Merciful and Loving Father, encourage to perseverance all who labor in the cause of Truth and Virtue and the rights of men, and keep them from becoming weary and faint-hearted, assuring them that none so labor without result, nor at the last are unrewarded. Protect and perpetuate, we pray Thee, civil and religious liberty in this land, and prevent tyranny, subversion of constitutional government, oppression, injustice and usurpation; and defeat all mad or wicked schemes that with plausible pretexts lead to ruin. Teach all men the great truth, that peace, good government, political freedom and pure religion walk hand in hand; and as Thou hast united these, let none put them asunder.

Make the Order of Freemasonry worthy of its high pretensions. Persuade its initiates everywhere to illustrate its holy principles of Truth, brotherly Love, Virtue and Toleration. And when our labors in this earthly Lodge and Workshop in which we serve our apprenticeship, are finished, admit us to the companionship of those who have worthily worked and gone away before us, in that Temple of the Heavens wherein Thy Throne of Love is established forever. Amen!

ALL.—Amen! So mote it be!

[A strain of *solemn music on the organ.*]

M.—The dead men shall live; with my dead body shall they arise. Awake, and sing, ye dwellers in the dust! For Thy dew is as the dew on the grass; and earth shall send forth its dead.

S. W.—The seed dies; and out of its death springs the young shoot of the new wheat, to produce an hundred-fold.

J. W.—The worm dies in its narrow prison-house, woven by itself; and out of its death springs the brilliant moth, emblem of Immortality.

S. W.—The Serpent, symbol of Eternity, renews its youth; and out of the night-death of sleep comes the renewed life of the morning.

J. W.—All Death is new Life. The Creator, Preserver and Destroyer is ONE Deity. All evil and affliction are but the modes of this great and continuous Genesis, that shall not be eternal. Death is the day of recompense, after the toils of life. It is the dawn of the day of Eternity. Through the dark veil, the soul, freed from the body, passes into the light beyond, redeemed and delivered from the evils and dangers of mortality.

[The Junior Deacon relights the Altar-light in the South, and there is a strain of *triumphant music on the organ.*]

S. W.—Thy Brethren shall live again. The seed that is sown is not quickened unless it die. Then that which is sown in corruption and dishonor shall be raised in glory. The grave enfolds in its embrace the bodies of those who were once our Brethren; but they are not there. They are not dead, but live and have returned to God their Father.

[The Senior Deacon relights the Altar-light in the West, and there is a strain of *triumphant music on the organ.*]

M.—Behold ! I show you a mystery. We shall not all sleep ; but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written : “ Death is swallowed up in victory. Oh, Death, where is thy sting ? Oh, Grave, where is thy victory ? ”

[The Master of Ceremonies relights the Altar-light in the East. Immediately is sung the “ TE DEUM LAUDAMUS,” or a selected Anthem similar in character to the Te Deum.]

M.—The will of God is accomplished.

ALL.—Blessed be the name of the Lord !

M.—In Egypt, among our old masters, where Masonry was more cultivated than Vanity, no one could gain admittance to the Sacred Asylum of the tomb until he had passed under the most solemn judgment. A grave Tribunal sat in judgment upon all, even the kings. They said to the Dead—“ Whoever thou art, give account to thy country of thine actions ! What hast thou done with thy time and life ? The law interrogates thee ; thy country hears thee ; Truth sits in judgment on thee.” Princes came there to be judged, escorted only by their virtues and their vices.

A public accuser recounted the history of the dead man’s life, and threw the blaze of the torch of Truth on all his actions. If it were adjudged that he had

led an evil life, his memory was condemned in the presence of the nation, and his body was denied the honors of sepulture.

Masonry has no such tribunal to sit upon *her* dead and judge them. With her, the *good* that they have done lives after them, and the *evil* is interred with their bones. But she requires that whatever is said in her behalf concerning them shall be the simple truth ; and should it ever so happen that of any one of her sons who dies, nothing of good can truthfully be said, she will mournfully and pityingly bury him out of her sight in silence.

Let Masonry, through the lips of our Orators, speak to us of our Brethren —————, who have gone away from us, to be seen among us in this world no more forever. Tell us the story of their lives, and recount their virtues, and their good deeds, that we may remember and endeavor to imitate them ; but let the faults and errors of each be forgiven and forgotten ; for to say that each had them is but to say that he was human.

Brother —————, let us hear what may properly and profitably be said of our Brother —————.

[The Orator, or a Brother selected for the occasion, delivers an oration on the life and character of each deceased Brother, respectively. If desirable, a different Brother may be selected in each case, in which event the foregoing clause will be repeated for each.]

M.—My Brethren, the duty we owed to the dead is performed. It remains, that we who are alive should so live, and by our actions attend the coming of the day of Fate, that we neither be surprised, nor leave

our duties imperfect, nor our sins uncanceled, nor our persons unreconciled, nor God unappeased ; but that, when our bodies in their turn go down to their graves, our souls may ascend to the regions of Eternal light, wherein is the Holy House of the Heavenly Temple of the Lord. Amen !

[The Chaplain, or a Clergyman selected for the occasion, pronounces the following Benediction :]

May the blessings of our Father who is in Heaven rest upon us all, now and forevermore ! May Brotherly Love increase among us, and the remembrance of our Brethren who have gone away from us, make more dear unto us those who remain ! And may all those virtues which Masonry inculcates be continually and faithfully practiced by all of us, and unite us and all good Masons closely together ! And may content, and peace, and resignation, with faith and hope, abide with us forever ! Amen !

ALL.—Amen ! So mote it be !

[The Service is concluded with triumphant music, preferably by singing the GLORIA IN EXCELSIS—either in Latin or English.]

Ring Service.

[This service of bestowing the ring of a deceased Brother upon his widow, should follow the Church Funeral Service. The ring should be in possession of the Master, having previously been secured by the Undertaker.]

DEATH! DEATH!! DEATH!!!
MORTALITY! MORTALITY!! MORTALITY!!!

DEAR BRETHREN: Once more our harps are tuned to mourning, and our organs unto the voice of those who weep; again the ponderous gates of our Areopagus have swung upon their massive hinges, and the chill wind that comes through the opening admonishes us of the presence of the last dread enemy—Death! Hark! The solemn tolling of the funeral bell, and the chanting of the dread “Miserere” comes stealing on our ears, and tells us of the sad fact, that another soul has departed from among us; that another one of our members, a loved brother, has crossed over the dark river, to that brighter, happier home beyond the grave.

By this sad visitation we are again reminded of the uncertainty of life, and of the inevitable fate that awaits us all—Death! Many of the solemn ceremonies of our Rite, within the sacred walls of our Areopagus, are funereal in their character, and are intended to impress upon our memories, in a solemn and real manner, that we are mortal; that this world is not our abiding-place.

To-day these ceremonies become a solemn reality. It is no manikin that fills the casket before us ; the remains of one of our members now occupies that receptacle, and we are called upon to bear his earthly temple to its final resting-place.

The solemn service in which our voices join at this time, is a reality. God wills it, and we humbly submit to His decree. He whose death we mourn, was an esteemed and cherished friend and brother, and we deeply deplore our loss. We trust that he realized in his life and actions, the grand motto of a Master of the Royal Secret :—" SPES MEA IN DEO EST "—His trust being in God, his faith was well founded.

How often, you, who are familiar with the solemn ceremonies of our Rite, have heard the welcome call from the visored guard :—Next! Upon this mournful occasion, what a significant import has that word to us all! Soon, how soon we know not, the inexorable guard, Death, will call "Next!" Who will it be? May each of us be ready!

On the —— day of ——, 189 , our dear brother, whose remains now lie before us, within this casket, in the cold grasp of death, united himself with this branch of Masonry. As a part of the solemn and impressive ceremonies upon that occasion, while he was kneeling at the sacred altar, the Holy Bible open before him, and surrounded by the brethren of the Rite, he was presented with a gold ring, which was placed upon the wedding finger of his left hand, as a symbol of the alliance he had that evening contracted with Virtue and the Virtuous. This ring had inscribed within it the legend—"Whom virtue unites, death cannot separate."

The ring, being endless, is an emblem of eternity, and with its motto symbolizes the eternal nature of Virtue and Truth. He was charged never to part with it, during his life, and at death only to his wife, his eldest son, or his dearest friend. And now, in accordance with that covenant, and the solemn usages of our Order, it becomes my duty to perform the last sad ceremony connected with this ring.

MY DEAR SISTER: In the name of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry, and in the name of your dear departed husband, who was an honored and loved member of our Order, I present to you this memento, and with it the sorrowing sympathy and condolence of his brethren, with whom, in life, he was united. I trust that when you look upon this ring, you will always be reminded of the great truth contained in the legend: "*Whom Virtue unites, death cannot separate.*"

[As these last words are being said the Master takes the Widow's left hand and places the ring upon her third or wedding finger.]

And now, dear citizen, friend, neighbor, and brother, Farewell, a long, a last Farewell! Brothers, bear him forth tenderly, bear his precious remains to the tomb. "Blessed be his rest and fragrant the Acacia upon the hallowed sod that covers him."

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