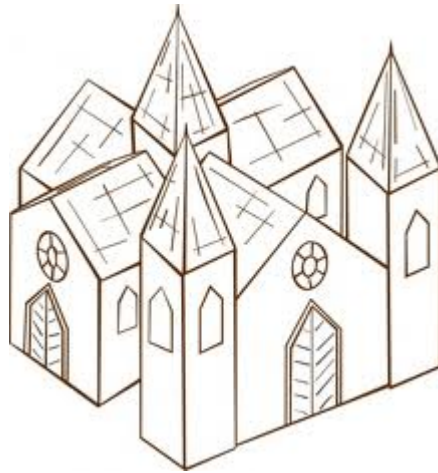


The Three Stone Masons -- Part 1

by
Ailyn Breck



The Lord of the Land calls in his high steward, and commands:

"High Steward, build me three-towers for a cathedral in two years.

I give you 500 gold pieces to complete this task."



How does the High Steward start?

First, he meets the master stonemason that always wears the color red.

"Master Mason Who Always Wears Red, can you build me a tower in one year?"

The **Master Mason Who Always Wears Red** answers,

"Yes I can, High Steward, and this is my plan. To build such a tower, I will require from each of my serfs 100 rocks per day:

- For each of my serfs that give me 100 rocks a day, I will give him each one loaf of bread*
- For each of my serfs that bring more than 100 rocks of day, I will give him an extra piece of bread*
- For those serfs who bring me less than 100 rocks a day, I will give them one less piece of bread from their loaf*

I will need 100 pieces of gold to be able to make my plan work."

So, the High Steward gives the **Master Mason Who Always Wears Red** a hundred pieces of gold, and goes on his way.

Next, The High Steward meets with a second master stonemason who always wears the color green.

"Master Mason Who Always Wears Green, can you build me a tower in one year?"

The **Master Mason Who Always Wears Green** answers,

"High Steward, the only way that I can build a tower in one year is if I can have one hundred pieces of gold to hire another master stone mason, so together we can combine our crews of workers."

The High Steward agrees, gives the **Master Mason Who Always Wears Green** a hundred pieces of gold, and goes on his way.



Finally, the High Steward meets with a third master stonemason who always wears the color blue.

“Master Mason Who Always Wears Blue, can you build me a tower in one year?”

The **Master Mason Who Always Wears Blue** answers,

“High Steward, there is only one way that myself and my team of apprentices know how to build a tower in one year. To do so, we must create a new machine that will allow us to meet your schedule; but High Steward, there are two things that I require for my team of apprentices so we can build you the tower in one year.

These two things are 100 pieces of gold, and your assurance that the Lord of the Land will not cut off our heads during the first three months of the year when we are building the machine that will erect the tower.

As the Lord of the Land rides around, he will see that we have not laid a single stone in those first three months. We MUST have your assurance that he will NOT cut our heads off in the first three months, so we can build the tower in the remaining nine months.”

The High Steward is surprised by the plan, but agrees, and provides the **Master Mason Who Always Wears Blue** with a hundred pieces of gold.



After a year, what does the High Steward see?



He sees the **Master Mason Who Always Wears Red** standing on a tower that is a quarter of the way built.

In the master's red pocket, there are fifty pieces of gold.

The serfs are nowhere in sight.



He sees two **Master Masons Who Always Wear Green** standing on a tower that is half way built.

In the green pocket of one master mason is thirty pieces of gold, and in the other mason's green pocket is ten pieces of gold.

The two crews of workers are below, looking at their feet.



He sees the **Master Mason Who Always Wears Blue** on top of a tower that is fully completed and beautifully crafted.

In the master's blue pocket is five pieces of gold. In the team of his apprentices' blue pockets, there are twenty-five pieces of gold -- in total.

The team of apprentices is standing on the tower with the master.



What does the High Steward do?

The **Master Mason Who Always Wears Blue** and his team of apprentices created the tower in only one year.

The high steward knows his lord wants the towers for the cathedral completed in two years.

 The High Steward gives the **Master Mason Who Always Wears Blue** 25 pieces of gold as a reward for completing the task on budget in the required time.

 The High Steward then speaks to the **Master Mason Who Always Wears Blue**,

“Master Mason Who Always Wears Blue, can you finish these other two towers -- one that is only 1/4 completed and the other that is only 1/2 completed -- in the one year remaining that I have left to meet my lord’s requirements?”

For this , I will give you 125 gold pieces to complete the task.”

 The **Master Mason Who Always Wears Blue** consults his team, and they agree with him,

They can complete the other two towers in one year, and at the cost of no more than 125 pieces of gold.



“The Three Masons” Questions

 Why did the **Master Mason Who Always Wear Red** fail?

 Why did his plan not work?


 Why did the **Master Mason Who Always Wears Green** fail?

 Even though he doubled the size of his worker team, and added another master stonemason?

 Why did the **Master Mason Who Always Wears Blue** -- and his team of apprentices-- succeed?

 Why did they win the prize of completing the entire cathedral?

 How did the **Master Mason Who Always Wears Blue** distribute the 25 gold pieces amongst the team of apprentices?

 And lastly, since the High Steward paid:

- 100 gold pieces to the Master Mason Who Always Wears Red,
- 100 gold pieces to the Master Mason Who Always Wears Green,
- 100 gold pieces to the Master Mason Who Always Wears Blue;
- 25 gold pieces, extra, to the Master Mason Who Always Wears Blue for completing his task successfully;
- 125 gold pieces in addition, to the Master Mason Who Always Wears Blue, to complete the other two unfinished towers;
- 450 gold pieces in total, when the Lord of the Land gave him 500 --

What does the High Steward do with the remaining fifty pieces of gold?

To be continued...