

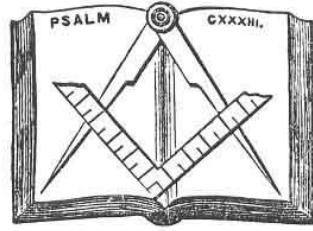
The Symbols of Freemasonry



Freemasonry is a beautiful system of morality, veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols. The design of the Masonic Institution is to make its members wiser, better and consequently happier; and this is accomplished by means of a series of moral instructions taught, according to ancient usage, by types, symbols, allegorical figures and lectures. The forms and ceremonies of this Institution have come down through a succession of ages and are all designed to impress upon the mind wise and serious truths.

The study of Symbolism in Freemasonry can be one of the most rewarding aspects of the Craft. Each symbol can have many layers of meaning, which only careful examination can discover.

We must first understand the scope of our subject. We do not intend to provide a complete description and understanding of all of the symbols of Freemasonry. The purpose of this pamphlet is to provide, in one place, much of what is taught in the various lectures in the Three Degrees of Freemasonry by the Lodges under the Jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Georgia. Sources for this material are Grand Lodge of Georgia publications including “The Masonic Manual” and “The Lodge System of Masonic Education.” The intent is for this to be a starting point in your search for more Light in the symbolism of Freemasonry.



SYMBOLS OF THE FIRST DEGREE

The First Degree, or that of the Entered Apprentice, is intended in its symbolic signification to furnish a representation of youth just entering on the struggles, trials, and duties of an earthly and responsible existence. On his first admission into the Lodge, a candidate is reminded of the weak and helpless state of man upon his entrance into the world - unprepared for the urgencies of the present, ignorant of the uncertainties of the future, and dependent for his safety and very existence on that God in whom alone, in all trials and difficulties, there is a sure and abiding trust.

And as a youth is prepared, by a useful and virtuous education, for his journey through life, so obtains the Apprentice - in this degree those first instructions upon which to erect his future and Masonic edifice. He now receives the elementary details of that universal language in which hereafter he is to converse with his brethren of all nations, so as to understand and be understood by Masons of every tongue and dialect under the sun. He is directed to take, as a staff and script for his journey, a knowledge of all the virtues that expand the heart and dignify the soul. Secrecy, obedience, humility, trust in God, purity of conscience, and economy of time, are all taught by symbolic ceremonies too impressive in their character to ever be forgotten. And lastly, as charity forms the chief cornerstone of all the Masonic virtues, the beauty of this attribute is depicted in emblematic modes which no spoken language can equal. The degree of the Entered Apprentice is, in short, one of probation and preparation for a more advanced position and more exalted privileges and duties

The symbols, emblems and allegorical ceremonies of the First Degree each have a meaning. While we do not here give you complete explanations, we believe it will be profitable to you to have a few suggestions.

The Cable Tow

Is a symbol of all the external restraints by which a man is controlled by forces outside himself. If a man does not keep the law of his own free will, he must be compelled to keep it. The removal of the Cable Tow signifies that when a man becomes master of himself, he will keep the law by his own character.

The Hoodwink

Represents the darkness in which an uninitiated man stands with regard to Masonic life. It is removed at the moment of enlightenment, suggesting that the great things of existence, such as goodness, truth and beauty are not made, but are found. They are always there, but our blindness conceals them from us.

Masonic Shoe

The Masonic Shoe, also called the Blue Slipper, is symbolic of a physical confirmation of a spoken deed. To unloosen one's shoe and give it to another person was the way of confirming a contract in ancient times.

The Ceremony of Entrance

By which is meant all that happens at the West Gate, signifies birth and symbolizes the fact that a candidate is entering the world of Masonry.

The Reception

Typifies the one real penalty for violations of the obligations, the destructive consequences to a man's nature of being faithless to his vows, untrue to his word, disloyal to his obedience.

The Rite of Circumambulation

The ceremony of walking around the Lodge room is an allegorical act rich with many meanings. One of these is that the Masonic life is a progressive journey, from station to station of attainment, and that a Mason will always search for more light.

Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard; that went down to the skirts of his garments; As the dew of Hermon and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life forevermore. [Psalms 133:1.]

The East

Is the source of light. Masons are sons of light, and therefore we face the East. This is an equally significant ceremony in that when approaching the East, we are seeking light or truth. The Altar is a symbol of the worship of God - the center around which all else revolves.

The Obligation

Signifies the nature and place of obligation in human life. An obligation is a contract, a pledge, a duty that is owed. A Mason can be depended upon to fulfill his obligations to the best of his ability.

The Great Lights in Masonry

1. **Holy Bible** - represents the will of God as man understands it.
2. **Square** - an emblem of virtue.
3. **Compasses** - Signify the moral and spiritual life.

If a man acts in obedience to the will of God, according to the dictates of his conscience, he will be living in the illumination of the Great Lights and cannot go astray.

The Lesser Lights represent the Sun, Moon, and Worshipful Master

Together, the Sun and Moon are emblematic of Constancy. Separately, the Sun represents the Action of leadership and the Moon represents the receptiveness of leadership. By combining these three attributes, the Worshipful Master should seek to lead the Lodge.

Words, Grips and Tokens

Are our means of recognition by which, among strangers, we are able to prove others or ourselves to be regular Masons, in order to enter into fraternal relationships.

The Worshipful Master

Is a symbol as well as the executive officer of the Lodge. As the sun rules the day, he rules and governs his Lodge, his title, "Worshipful," means that he is worthy of respect and obedience.

The Apron

Is at once the emblem of purity and the badge of a Mason. By purity is meant blamelessness. The badge of a Mason signifies that Masons are workers and builders, not drones and destructionists.

Lecture: I present you with the Lambskin, or white leather Apron, which is an emblem of innocence and the badge of a Mason; more ancient than the Golden Fleece or Roman Eagle; more honorable than the Star and Garter or any other order that can be conferred upon you, at this or any future period, by king, prince, potentate or any other person, except he be a Mason; and which I trust you will wear with equal pleasure to yourself and honor to the fraternity.

The Lamb has, in all ages, been deemed an emblem of innocence. He therefore, who wears the lambskin as the badge of a Mason, is continually reminded of the purity of life and rectitude of conduct which we should strive to exemplify. It may be that in the coming years upon your head may rest the laurel wreath of victory; pendant from your breast may hang jewels fit to grace the diadem of an Eastern Potentate; nay, more than these, with light added to the coming light your ambitious feet may tread rung after rung of the ladder that leads to fame in our mystic circle, and even the purple of the Fraternity may rest upon your honored shoulders, but never again from mortal hands, never again until your enfranchised spirit shall have passed through the pearly gates shall any honor so distinguished, so emblematical of purity and perfection, be conferred upon you as this which I now bestow. It is yours; yours to wear through an honorable life, and at your death be deposited upon the coffin which shall enclose your lifeless remains and with them laid beneath the clods of the valley.

Let its pure and spotless surface be to you an ever present reminder of purity of life and rectitude of conduct, and when at last, after a life of faithful service your weary feet shall have come to the end of life's toilsome journey and from your nerveless grasp shall have dropped forever the working tools of life, may the record of your life be as pure and spotless as this fair emblem which I place in your hands tonight, and when your trembling soul shall stand, naked and alone, before the Throne of Judgment, there to receive judgment for the deeds done while here in the body, may it be your portion to hear from Him who sitteth as the Judge Supreme the welcome words, "*Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord!*" [Matthew 25:21, 23.]

The Working Tools - the 24-inch Gauge and the Common Gavel

Represent those moral and spiritual virtues, habits and forces by which a man reshapes the crude and often stubborn materials of his nature to adjust himself to the requirements of human society.

To become a Mason, a man who has lived without a plan, carelessly, and without ideal, must learn to systematize his life, as signified by the 24-inch Gauge. If he has traits or defects of character that disturb or injure others and interfere with his taking his proper place in the brotherhood, as "corners of rough stones" interfere with putting them into their allotted places in the building, he must rid himself of them with the Common Gavel. The Entered Apprentice is himself a symbol, one of the noblest in the emblematic system of the Craft. He represents youth, typified by the rising sun; and trained youth, youth willing to submit himself to discipline.

Lecture: The working tools of an Entered Apprentice Mason are the 24-inch Gauge and the Common Gavel. The 24-inch Gauge is an implement made use of by operative masons to measure and lay out their work; but we, as Free and Accepted Masons, are taught to make use of it for the more noble and glorious purpose of dividing our time. The gauge, being divided into twenty-four equal parts, is emblematical of the twenty-four hours of the day, which we are taught to divide into three equal parts; whereby are found eight hours for the service of God and a distressed worthy brother, eight hours for our usual vocations, and eight hours for refreshment and sleep. The Common Gavel is an implement made use of by operative masons to break off the corners of rough stones, the better to fit them for the builders use; but we, as Free and Accepted Masons, are taught to make use of it for the more noble and glorious purpose of divesting our hearts and consciences of all the vices and excesses of life, thereby fitting our minds as living stones for that spiritual building, that house "*not made with hands; eternal in the heavens*". [2 Corinthians 5:1.]

The Northeast Corner:

Halfway between the North, place of darkness, and East, source of light, is traditionally the place where the cornerstone of a building is laid. The Apprentice stands there because he is a cornerstone of the future Craft. What Apprentices are today, Masonry will become in the future.

Lecture: Brother: you now stand in the Northeast corner of the Lodge, as the youngest Entered Apprentice Mason among us. There are two reasons for this; in the first place, all Masonic lodges are fashioned after King Solomon's Temple, and the Lodge in this degree represents the ground floor of that famous structure. It is said to have been situated so far north of the ecliptic that the sun, at its meridian height, cast no ray of light on the north side; therefore, Masonically speaking, we term the North a place of utter darkness, and no symbolic light is allowed to illuminate that part of the lodge. Therefore, your present position is a symbol of initiation incomplete, imperfect, and not fully developed. From the profane world you have just emerged, some of its darkness is still about you, some of its ignorance still clings to you, some of its imperfections are still within you. At the same time some of the light of the Order is beaming upon you.

Therefore, your present position fitly represents this diverging allegiance, this mingling of the departing darkness of the profane world with the approaching light of the initiated. But there is a far more important reason for your presence in this position. Since time immemorial, when requested to do so, Masons have laid the cornerstone of public and charitable institutions, monuments and seats of learning. It is laid with proper and impressive ceremonies and is suitably inscribed. To fulfill its purpose, both in design and effect, that is, the support of the structure, whose erection it precedes, it should be composed of materials that will outlast all other materials in the building. So, that when that eternal ocean, whose waves are years, shall have engulfed all who were present at the laying ceremonies, the cornerstone will remain, to tell the passerby its inscription - that there once existed, upon that perhaps desolate spot, a monument, consecrated to some sacred, moral or benevolent purpose.

My Brother, you stand before us tonight, from all outward appearances, as a perfect upright man and mason. Therefore, you are placed in the Northeast corner of the lodge as a representative of that spiritual cornerstone, upon which you are to erect your future moral and Masonic edifice; for tonight, you have begun the erection of a spiritual temple within your heart. In the erection of this, your spiritual temple, you are to select your own materials. If you weave into its structure envy, vice, hatred and fraud; binding them together with the cement of infidelity, your house will be like the one built upon the sand, and when it falls, as it surely must, it will bury you beneath its ruins and injure this Fraternity which has tonight so honored you.

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The materials used in King Solomon's Temple were gold, cedar, marble and precious stones. If instead, you substitute the virtues of the heart, the pure emotions of the soul, the warm affections gushing forth from the hidden fountains of the spirit; and your materials consist of honor, wisdom, justice and truth and brotherly love unites the whole, your edifice will stand, as an honor to yourself and a pride to the Fraternity, until times last thunder shakes the universe, and the very presence of the Great Jehovah, our Father and our God, shall be enshrined within us as Shekinah was in the Holy of Holies in that material temple at Jerusalem.

The Lodge

Is a symbol of the world of Masonry. In its scope and extent, Freemasonry is as broad as human nature and as wide as mankind; as a spirit and ideal, it permeates the whole life of every true Mason, outside the Lodge as well as in.

A Lodge is an assemblage of Masons duly congregated, having the Holy Bible, Square and Compasses, and a Charter or Warrant of Constitution, authorizing them to work.

Lecture: Our ancient brethren held their lodges on high hills or in low vales, the better to observe the approach of cowans and eavesdroppers.

The Form of a Lodge

The form of a Lodge is an oblong square; in length from east to west; in breadth, from north to south; in height, from the earth to the highest heavens; in depth, from the surface to the center. A Lodge is said to be thus extensive to denote the universality of Freemasonry and to teach us that a Mason's charity should be equally as extensive.

Supports of a Lodge

A Lodge has three principal supports, Wisdom, Strength and Beauty, because there should be wisdom to contrive, strength to support, and beauty to adorn all great and important undertakings. Of these the column Wisdom, in the east part of the Lodge, is represented by the Worshipful Master, who is presumed to have wisdom to open and govern the Lodge, devise labor for the Craft, and superintend them during the hours thereof. The column Strength, in the west part of the Lodge, is represented by the Senior Warden, because it is his duty to assist the Worshipful Master and strengthen and support his authority. The column Beauty, in the south part of the Lodge, is represented by the Junior Warden, because from his position in the south he can best observe the meridian sun, which is the beauty and glory of the day; to call the Craft from labor to refreshment and superintend them during the hours thereof; to see that none convert the hours of refreshment into intemperance or excess; and to call them on again at the order of the Worshipful Master, that he may have honor, and the Craft pleasure and profit thereby.

The Covering of a Lodge

The covering of a Lodge is no less than the clouded canopy or starry-decked heaven, where all good Masons hope at last to arrive, by the aid of that theological ladder which Jacob, in his vision, saw ascending from earth to heaven, the three principal rounds of which are denominated Faith, Hope, and Charity, and which

teach us Faith in God, Hope in immortality, and Charity to all mankind. The greatest of these is Charity; for our Faith may be lost in sight; or our Hope may end in fruition; but Charity extends beyond the grave, through the boundless realms of eternity.

The Furniture of a Lodge

The furniture of a Lodge consists of the Holy Bible, Square and Compasses. The Holy Bible is dedicated to God because it is the inestimable gift of God to man; the Square is dedicated to the Worshipful Master, because it is the proper Masonic emblem of his office; and the Compasses are dedicated to the craft, because by due attention to their use they are taught to circumscribe their desires and keep their passions within due bounds.

As used here, the term furniture means the absolute necessary accessories for a lodge to function, but does not refer to mere objects of mundane value. The Holy Bible is more important than the Square and Compasses. The Holy Bible has direct reference to the spiritual and is the rule and guide for our faith and practice, and is the foundation upon which the other implements rest. The Square and Compasses are material implements whose symbolism provides parameters and other useful models for finite man to attempt to reach closer communication with the Infinite Deity.

The Ornaments of a Lodge

The ornaments of a Lodge are the Mosaic Pavement, the Indented Tessel, and the Blazing Star. The Mosaic Pavement is a representation of the ground floor of King Solomon's Temple; and the Indented Tessel is that beautiful tessellated border or skirting which surrounded it. The Mosaic Pavement is emblematical of human life, checkered with good and evil; whereas the Indented Tessel represents those manifold blessings and comforts which surround us and which we hope to obtain by a faithful reliance on Divine Providence, hieroglyphically represented by the Blazing Star in the center.

The Lights of the Lodge

The Lights of the Lodge are three, situated east, west and south. There is no light in the north, because King Solomon's Temple, of which every Lodge is a representation, was placed so far north of the ecliptic that the sun and moon at their meridian height could send no rays into the northern part of the building. The north, therefore, we Masonically term a place of darkness.

The Jewels of the Lodge

The Jewels of the Lodge are six, three immovable and three movable. The Immovable Jewels are the Square, the Level and the Plumb. The Square teaches morality, the Level equality, and the Plumb rectitude of conduct. They are termed immovable because they belong at fixed stations in the Lodge - the Square in the east, the Level in the west, and the Plumb in the south - and are the jewels of the officers filling these stations.

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The Movable Jewels are the Rough Ashlar, the Perfect Ashlar and the Trestleboard, so termed because they are not confined to any particular part of the Lodge.

The Rough Ashlar is a stone taken from the quarry in its crude, natural state. The Perfect Ashlar is a stone made ready by the hands of the workmen to be prepared by the working tools of the Fellowcraft. Upon the Trestleboard, the master workman draws his designs. By the Rough Ashlar we are reminded of our rude and imperfect natural state; by the Perfect Ashlar, of that state of perfection at which we strive to achieve by a virtuous education, our own endeavors, and especially the grace of God; and by the Trestleboard we are also reminded that as the operative workman erects his temporal buildings agreeably to rules and designs laid down by the master on his Trestleboard, so should we, both operative and speculative, endeavor to erect our spiritual building agreeably to the rules and design laid down by the Supreme Architect of the Universe in His sacred writings which are our moral and Masonic Trestleboard

The Situation of a Lodge

The situation of a Lodge is due east and west, because after Moses crossed the Red Sea, being pursued by Pharaoh and his hosts, he erected by divine command a tabernacle in the wilderness which he placed due east and west to receive the first rays of the rising sun and to commemorate the mighty east wind by which their miraculous deliverance was effected. The tabernacle is a pattern for King Solomon's Temple, of which every Lodge is a representation.

Dedication of Lodges

Our ancient brethren dedicated their Lodges to King Solomon because traditionally he was our first Grand Master, but Masons of the present day dedicate theirs to St. John the Baptist and St. John the Evangelist, who, according to Masonic tradition, were two eminent patrons of Freemasonry. Since their time, there is represented in every regular and well-governed Lodge a certain point within a circle embordered by two perpendicular parallel lines, representing St. John the Baptist and St. John the Evangelist; and upon the top rests the Holy Scriptures. The point represents the individual brother; the circle, the boundary line of his duty beyond which he is never to suffer his passions, interests or prejudices to betray him. In going around the circle we necessarily touch on the two parallel lines, as well as the Holy Scriptures, and while a Mason keeps himself circumscribed within these due bounds, it is impossible that he should materially err.

The Three Great Tenets – Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth

Brotherly Love

By the exercise of brotherly love we are taught to regard the whole human species as one family; the high and the low, the rich and the poor; who, as created by one Almighty Parent and inhabitants of the same planet, are to aid, support and protect each other. On this principle, Masonry unites men of every country, sect and opinion, and conciliates true friendship among those who might otherwise have remained at a perpetual distance.

Relief

To relieve the distressed is a duty incumbent on all men, but particularly on Masons, who are linked together by an indissoluble chain of sincere affection. To sooth the unhappy, to sympathize with their misfortunes, to have compassion for their miseries and to restore peace to their troubled minds, is the great end we have in view. On this basis we form our friendships and establish our connections.

Truth

Truth is a divine attribute, and the foundation of every virtue. To be good and true is the first lesson we are taught in Freemasonry. On this theme we contemplate and, by its dictates, endeavor to regulate our conduct; hence, while influenced by this principle, hypocrisy and deceit are unknown among us, sincerity and plain dealing distinguish us, and the heart and tongue join in promoting each other's welfare and rejoicing in each other's prosperity.

The Cardinal Virtues

Every Mason has ***** which are illustrated by the four cardinal virtues: Temperance, Fortitude, Prudence and Justice.

Temperance

Temperance is that due restraint upon our affections and passions, which renders the body tame and governable and frees the mind from the allurements of vice. This virtue should be the constant practice of every Mason; as he is thereby taught to avoid excess, or contracting any licentious or vicious habit, the indulgence of which might lead him to disclose some of those valuable secrets which he has promised to conceal and never reveal, and which would consequently subject him to the contempt and detestation of all good Masons.

Fortitude

Fortitude is that noble and steady purpose of the mind whereby we are enabled to undergo any pain, terror or danger when prudentially deemed expedient. This virtue is equally distant from rashness and cowardice; and, like the former, should be deeply impressed upon the mind of every Mason as a safeguard or security against any illegal attack which may be made by force, or otherwise, to extort from him any of those valuable secrets with which he has been so solemnly entrusted and which were emblematically represented upon his first admission into the Lodge.

Prudence

Prudence teaches us to regulate our lives and actions agreeably to the dictates of reason, and is that habit by which we wisely judge and prudentially determine on all things relative to our present as well as our future happiness. This virtue should be the peculiar characteristic of every Mason, not only for the government of his conduct while in the Lodge, but also when abroad in the world. It should be particularly attended to in all strange and mixed companies, never to let fall the least sign, token or word, whereby the secrets of Masonry might be unlawfully obtained.

Justice

Justice is that standard or boundary of right, which enables us to render to every man his just due without distinction. This virtue is not only consistent with divine and human law, but is the very cement and support of civil society; and as justice in a great measure constitutes the really good man, so should it be the invariable practice of every good Mason never to deviate from the smallest principles thereof.

How Entered Apprentices Serve

Entered Apprentices should serve their Masters with Freedom, Fervency and Zeal, which are represented by Chalk, Charcoal and Clay.

Chalk - There is nothing freer than Chalk, the slightest touch of which leaves its trace.

Charcoal - There is nothing more fervent than Charcoal, for to it, if properly ignited, the most obdurate metals will yield.

Clay - There is nothing more zealous than Clay.

Our Mother Earth, alone of all the elements, has never proved unfriendly to man. Bodies of water deluge him with rain, oppress him with hail, and drown him with inundation. The air rushes in storms, prepares the tempest, and fire lights up the volcano, but the earth, ever kind and indulgent, is found subservient to his wishes. Though constantly harassed, more to furnish the luxuries than the necessaries of life, she never refuses her accustomed yield, spreading his pathway with flowers and his table with plenty. Though she produces poison, still she supplies the antidote, and returns with interest every good committed to her care. And when at last we are called upon to pass through the Valley of the shadow of Death, she once more receives us and piously covers our remains within her bosom, thus admonishing us that as from her we come, so to her we must shortly return.

Charge at Initiation

Brother: As you are now introduced into the first principles of freemasonry, I congratulate you on being accepted into this ancient and honorable order: ancient, as having subsisted from time immemorial; and honorable, as tending in every particular, so to render all men who will be conformable to its precepts. No institution was ever raised on a better principle, or more solid foundation. Nor were ever more excellent rules and useful maxims laid down than are inculcated in the several Masonic lectures. The greatest and best of men, in all ages, have been encouragers and promoters of the art, and have never deemed it derogatory to their dignity to level themselves with the fraternity, extend their privileges and patronize their assemblies. There are three great duties which, as a mason, you are charged to inculcate: to god, your neighbor and

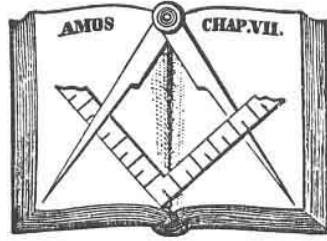
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yourself. To God, in never mentioning His name, but with that reverential awe which is due from a creature to his creator, to implore his aid in all your laudable undertakings, and to esteem him as the chief good. To your neighbor, in acting upon the square, and doing unto him as you wish he should do unto you. And to yourself, in avoiding all irregularity and intemperance, which may impair your faculties or debase the dignity of your profession. A zealous attachment to these duties will insure public and private esteem.

In the state, you are to be a quiet and peaceful subject, true to your government and just to your country; you are not to countenance disloyalty and rebellion, but patiently submit to legal authority and conform with cheerfulness to the government of the country in which you live. In your outer demeanor, be particularly careful to avoid censure or reproach. Although your frequent appearance at our regular meetings is earnestly solicited, yet it is not meant, that masonry should interfere with your necessary vocations, for these are, on no account, to be neglected; neither are you to suffer your zeal for the institution to lead you into argument with those who, through ignorance, may ridicule it.

At your leisure hours, that you may improve in Masonic knowledge, you are to converse with well informed brethren, who will be always as ready to give, as you will be ready to receive, instruction.

Finally, keep sacred and inviolable the mysteries of the order, as these are to distinguish you from the rest of the community and mark your consequence among masons. If, in the circle of your acquaintance, you find a person desirous of being initiated into masonry, be particularly attentive not to recommend him unless you are convinced he will conform to our rules; that the honor, glory and reputation of the institution maybe firmly established and the world at large convinced of its good effects.



SYMBOLS OF THE SECOND DEGREE

"Fellowcraft" is one of a large number of terms which have a technical meaning peculiar to Freemasonry and are seldom found elsewhere. A "Craft" is an organization of skilled workmen in some trade or calling: masons, carpenters, painters, sculptors, barbers, etc. A "Fellow" means one who holds membership in such a craft, obligated to the same duties and allowed the same privileges.

The term Fellowcraft is now used as the name of the Second Degree of the ritualistic ceremonies, of a member of it, and of a Lodge when opened in it.

Freemasonry is too extensive to be exemplified in a ritual or to be presented through initiation in one evening. There is far too much for a man to learn in many evenings. One degree follows another and the members of each stand on a different level of rights and duties; but this does not mean that the Masonry presented in the First, or in the Second Degree, so far as its nature and teachings are concerned, is less important, or less binding, than that presented in the Third Degree. All that is taught in the First and Second degrees belongs as vitally to Freemasonry as that which is taught in the Third; there is a necessary subordination in the grades of membership, but there is no subordination of the Masonry presented in each grade. Do not, therefore, be tempted to look upon the Fellow Craft Degree as a mere stepping stone to the Third. Freemasonry gave to you one part of herself in the First, another portion in the Second, and in the Third she will give you yet another, but it is Freemasonry throughout.

The Middle Chamber, which is so conspicuous in the Second Degree, has many meanings. It is a symbol of wisdom. By the experience of the Five Senses, through the knowledge gained by the Liberal Arts and Sciences, the candidate is called to advance to that balanced wisdom of life in which the senses, emotions, intellect, character, work, deeds, habits and soul of a man are knit together in unity and balance. If the Fellow Craft will thus equip himself, he need not shirk from his toil nor faint beneath the heat and burden of the day.

The Square

The square, as a symbol, is peculiarly appropriate to this degree. It is intended to teach the Fellowcraft that the square of morality and virtue should be the rule and guide of his conduct in his transactions with all mankind, but more especially with a brother Mason.

* * * Square your actions toward all mankind.

Perambulation

“Thus he shewed me: and behold, the Lord stood upon a wall made by a plumb-line, with a plumb-line in His hand. And the Lord said unto me, Amos, what seest thou? And I said, A Plumb-line. Then said the Lord, Behold, I will set a plumb-line in the midst of my people Israel: I will not again pass by them anymore.” [Amos 7:7-8]

The Working Tools

The working tools of a Fellowcraft Mason are the Plumb, the Square, and the Level, and are thus explained: The Plumb is an implement made use of by Operative Masons to raise perpendiculars; the Square, to square their work; and the Level, to lay horizontals. But we as Free and Accepted Masons are taught to make use of them for more noble and glorious purposes. The plumb admonishes us to walk uprightly in our several stations before God and man, squaring our actions by the Square of Virtue, and ever remembering that we are traveling upon the Level of Time to *“that undiscovered country from whose bourne No traveler returns.”* [Shakespeare’s Hamlet, Act Three, Scene One.]

Middle Chamber Lecture: My Brother, the second section of this degree views Masonry under two denominations, Operative and Speculative.

By Operative Masonry we allude to a proper application of the useful rules of architecture, whereby a structure derives figure, strength and beauty, whence will result a due proportion and a just correspondence in all its parts. It furnishes us with dwellings, and with convenient shelter from the weather of the various seasons; and while it displays the effects of human wisdom, as well in the choice as in the arrangement of the materials of which a building is composed, it demonstrates that a fund of science and industry is implanted in man for the most beneficial purposes.

By Speculative Masonry we learn to subdue the passions, act upon the square, keep a tongue of good report, maintain secrecy, and practice charity. It is so far weaved together with religion as to lay us under obligation to pay that rational reverence to the Deity which at one constitutes our duty and our happiness. It leads the thinking Mason to view, with admiration, the glorious works of creation, and inspires him with the highest ideas of the perfectness of his Divine Creator.

We work in Speculative Masonry, but our ancient brethren worked in both Operative and Speculative Masonry. They labored at the construction of King Solomon’s Temple and many other sacred and Masonic structures. They worked six days in the-week and rested upon the seventh day; for in six days God created the heaven and the earth, and he rested upon the seventh day. The seventh day therefore our ancient brethren dedicated as a day of rest from their labors, thereby enjoying many opportunities to think about the glorious works of creation and to adore their great Creator.

There are before you two columns representing the famous columns erected at the outer porch of King Solomon’s Temple; placed there as a reminder of God’s promise to David. They were cast of molten brass in the clay grounds of the region. The name of the column on your left is Boaz and denotes Strength. The name of the column on your right is Jachin and denotes establishment. The columns are symbolically eighteen cubits high, twelve in circumference, and four in diameter. They have two large chapters (ornamental heads), one on each, and these chapters are decorated with

The Symbols of Freemasonry

Network, Lilies, and Pomegranates. They denote unity, peace, and plenty. The Network from its connection denotes union; the Lily, from its whiteness, purity and peace; and the Pomegranate, from its many seeds, denotes plenty.

The Globes are two artificial round bodies, on the outer surface of which are represented the countries, seas, and various parts of the earth, the face of the heavens, the planetary movements, and other particulars.

The sphere with the oceans and landmasses shown on its surface is called the earthly globe; and that, with the stars and planets, the heavenly globe. Their principal use, besides serving as maps to distinguish the outer parts of the earth and the situation of the stars, is to illustrate and explain the scientific event of the annual revolution of the earth around the sun, and the rotation of the earth around its own axis. They are invaluable instruments for improving the mind and giving it the most distinct idea of any problem as well as enabling it to solve the same. Thinking about these bodies, we are inspired with a due reverence for God and His works, and are persuaded to encourage the studies of astronomy, geography, and navigation, and the arts dependent upon them, by which society has been so much benefited.

Before you is a long winding flight of stairs consisting of three, five, and seven steps, the sacred numbers in Masonry. The Holy Scriptures inform us that, the door for the middle chamber was in the right side of the house, and they went up with winding stairs into the middle chamber.

We will now take the first three steps. The three steps allude to the first three Degrees of Freemasonry; the Entered Apprentice, the Fellowcraft, and the Master Mason Degree. These are denoted by the three Working Tools of a Fellowcraft Mason; the plumb, the square, and the level. The Plumb admonishes us to walk uprightly in our several stations before God and man, squaring our actions by the square of virtue, and ever remembering that we are traveling upon the level of time to that undiscovered country from whose bourne no traveler returns. The three steps also allude to the virtues of faith, hope, and charity; and the greatest of these is charity.

We now take the next five steps. The five steps allude to the five orders of architecture. By order in architecture is meant a system of all the members, proportions and ornaments of columns and pilasters; or, it is the regular arrangement of the projecting parts of a building, which, united with those of a column, form a beautiful, perfect and complete whole.

From the first formation of society, order in architecture may be traced. When the rigor of seasons obliged man to contrive shelter from the weather, we learn that they first planted trees on end, and then laid others across, to support a covering. The bands, which connected those trees at top and bottom, are said to have given rise to the idea of base and capital of pillars; and from this simple hint originally proceeded the more improved art of architecture.

The five orders of architecture are thus classed: The Tuscan, Doric, Ionic, Corinthian, and Composite.

The ancient and original orders of architecture most revered by Masons are three: The Doric, Ionic, and Corinthian. To these the Romans have added two: The Tuscan,

The Symbols of Freemasonry

which they made plainer than the Doric; and the Composite, which is the Corinthian enriched with the Ionic. To the Greeks, therefore, and not to the Romans, are we indebted for what is great and distinct in architecture.

The five steps also allude to the five senses of human nature: Hearing, Seeing, Feeling, Smelling, and Tasting. The first of which are most revered by Masons; for by Hearing we hear the word, by seeing we see the sign, and by Feeling we feel the grip by which one brother may know another in darkness as well as in light.

We will now ascend the next seven steps. The seven steps allude to The Seven Liberal Arts and Sciences: Grammar, Rhetoric, Logic, Arithmetic, Geometry, Music and Astronomy.

Passing over most of these subjects which affords a large field for the accomplished scholar and Mason to dilate upon, we are arrested by the fifth science of Geometry. Geometry teaches of the powers and properties of magnitudes in general, where length, width and thickness are considered, from a point to a line, from a line to a surface, and from a surface to a solid.

By this science the architect is enabled to construct his plans and execute his designs; the general, to arrange his soldiers; the geographer, to give us the dimensions of the world and all things therein contained; to delineate the extent of the seas, and specify the divisions of empires, kingdoms, and provinces. By it also, the astronomer is enabled to make his observations and to fix the duration of the time and seasons, years and cycles. In fine, Geometry is the foundation of architecture, and the root of all mathematics.

We also look to Astronomy. Astronomy is that divine art by which we are taught to read the wisdom, strength, and beauty of the Almighty Creator in those sacred pages, the celestial hemispheres. Assisted by Astronomy, we can observe the magnitudes and calculate the periods and eclipses of the heavenly bodies. By it we learn the use of the globes, the system of the world, and the preliminary laws of nature. While we are employed in the study of this science we must perceive unparalleled instances of wisdom and goodness; and through the whole creation, trace the glorious Author by his works.

Masonic tradition informs us that Fellowcraft Masons repairing to the Middle Chamber of the Temple to receive their wages were required to pass through an outer and an inner door. At these doors, they were admitted to pass by giving the password, true grip, and true word of a Fellowcraft Mason as means of recognition. This evening, as a Speculative Fellowcraft, you will pass these doors in token of your worthiness to advance to the Middle Chamber.

My Brother, you have just made a symbolic journey through an outer porch, up a flight of winding stairs, through an outer and an inner door, on your way to this place representing the middle chamber of King Solomon's Temple; here to receive Instruction as to the wages due, the manner of payment, and the precious jewels of a Fellowcraft Mason.

The Five Orders of Architecture

By order in architecture is meant a system of all the members, proportions and ornaments of columns and pilasters; or it is a regular arrangement of the projecting parts of a building, which, united with those of a column, form a beautiful, perfect and complete whole.

Antiquity of Order in Architecture

From the first formation of society, order in architecture may be traced. When the rigor of seasons obliged men to contrive shelter from the inclemency of the weather, we learn that they first planted trees on end, and then laid others across, to support a covering. The bands, which connected those trees at top and bottom, are said to have given rise to the idea of the base and capital of pillars; and from this simple hint originally proceeded to the more improved art of architecture.

The five orders are thus classed: The Tuscan, Doric, Ionic, Corinthian, and Composite.

The Tuscan

The Tuscan is the most simple and solid of the five orders and was invented in Tuscany, whence it derives its name. Its column is seven diameters high: and its capital, base and entablature have but few moldings. The simplicity of the construction of this column renders it eligible where ornament would be excessive.

The Doric

The Doric, which is plain and natural, is the most ancient and was invented by the Greeks. Its column is eight diameters high, and seldom has any ornaments on base or capital, except moldings, though the frieze is distinguished by triglyphs and metopes. Triglyphs compose the ornaments of the frieze. The Doric is the best proportioned of all the orders. The several parts of which it is composed are founded on the natural position of solid bodies. In its first invention it was simpler than in its present state.

In aftertimes when it began to be adorned, it gained the name of Doric; for when it was constructed in its primitive and simple form, the name Tuscan was conferred on it. Hence the Tuscan precedes the Doric in rank, on account of its resemblance to the pillar in its original state.

The Ionic

The Ionic bears a kind of mean proportion between the more solid and delicate orders. Its column is nine diameters high, its capital is adorned with volutes, and its cornice has dentils. There is both delicacy and ingenuity displayed in this pillar, the invention of which is attributed to the Ionians, as the famous temple of Diana at Ephesus was of this order. It is said to have been formed after the model of an agreeable young woman, of an elegant shape, dressed in her hair, as a contrast to the Doric order, which was formed after that of a strong, robust man.

The Corinthian

The Corinthian is the richest of the five orders, and is deemed a masterpiece of art. Its column is ten diameters high, and its capital is adorned with two rows of leaves and eight volutes, which sustain the abacus. The frieze is ornamented with curious devices, the cornice with dentils and modillions. This order is used in stately and superb structures. It was invented at Corinth, by Callimachus, who is said to have taken the hint of the capital of this pillar from the following remarkable circumstance. Accidentally passing by the tomb of a young lady, he perceived a basket of toys covered with tile, placed over an acanthus root, having been left there by her nurse. As the branches grew up, they encompassed the basket till, arriving at the tile, they met with an obstruction and bent downward. Callimachus, struck with the object, set about imitating the figure, the base of the capital he made to represent the basket; the abacus, the tile; and the volutes, the bending leaves.

The Composite

The Composite is compounded of the other orders and was contrived by the Romans. Its capital has the two rows of leaves of the Corinthian and the volutes of the Ionic. Its column has quarter-rounds, as the Tuscan and Doric orders; is ten diameters high; its cornice has dentils, or simple modillions. This pillar is generally found in buildings where strength, elegance, and beauty are displayed.

The Invention of Order in Architecture

The ancient and original Orders of Architecture revered by Masons are no more than three the Ionic, Doric, and Corinthian, which were invented by the Greeks. To these the Romans have added two: the Tuscan, which they made plainer than the Doric; and the Composite, which was more ornamental, if not more beautiful, than the Corinthian. The first three orders alone, however, show invention and articular character, and essentially differ from each other; the two others having nothing but what is borrowed, and differ only accidentally; the Tuscan's the Doric in its earliest state; and the Composite is the Corinthian, enriched with the Ionic. To the Greeks, therefore, and not to the Romans, are we indebted for what is great, judicious and distinct in architecture.

Of these five orders, the Ionic, the Doric, and the Corinthian, as the most ancient, are most esteemed by Masons.

The Ionic, from the skill and ingenuity displayed in its construction, is emblematic of the Column of Wisdom, which is situated in the east part of the Lodge, and is represented by the Worshipful Master.

The Doric, from the massive strength of its structure, is emblematic of the Column of Strength, which is situated in the west part of the Lodge, and is represented by the Senior Warden.

The Corinthian, from the exuberance of its ornaments, is emblematic of the Column of Beauty, which is situated in the south part of the Lodge, and is represented by the Junior Warden.

The Five Senses

The Five Senses of human nature are: Hearing, Seeing, Feeling, Smelling, and Tasting.

Hearing

Hearing is that sense by which we distinguish sounds, and are capable of enjoying all the agreeable charms of music. By it we are enabled to enjoy the pleasures of society, and reciprocally to communicate to each other our thoughts and intentions, our purposes and desires, while thus our reason is capable of exerting its utmost power and energy. The wise and beneficent Author of Nature intended, by the formation of this sense, that we should be social creatures, and receive the greatest and most important part of our knowledge from information given orally by others. For these purposes, we are endowed with hearing that, by a proper exertion of our rational powers, our happiness may be complete.

Seeing

Seeing is that sense by which we distinguish objects, and, in an instant of time, without change of place or situation, view armies in battle array, figures of the stateliest structure, and all the agreeable variety displayed in the landscape of Nature. By this sense we find our way on the pathless ocean, traverse the globe of the earth, determine its figure and dimensions, and delineate any region or quarter of it. By it we measure the planetary orbs and make new discoveries in the sphere of the fixed stars. Nay, more, by it we perceive the tempers and dispositions, the passions and affections, of our fellow-creatures, when they wish most to conceal them; so that, though the tongue may be taught to lie and dissemble, the countenance would display the hypocrisy to the discerning eye. In fine, the rays of light which minister to this sense are the most astonishing part of creation, and render the eye a peculiar object of admiration. Of all the faculties, sight is the noblest. The structure of the eye and its appurtenances evince the admirable contrivance of Nature for performing all its various external and internal motions, while the variety displayed in the eyes of different animals, suited to their several ways of life, clearly demonstrate this organ to be the masterpiece of Nature's work.

Feeling

Feeling is that sense by which we distinguish the different qualities of bodies, such as heat and cold, hardness and softness, roughness and smoothness, figure, solidity, motion, and extension. These three senses have always been deemed peculiarly essential among Masons, because ***.

Smelling

Smelling is that sense by which we distinguish aromas of various kinds, which convey different impressions to the mind. Animal and vegetable bodies, and indeed most other bodies, while exposed to the air, continually send forth effluvia of vast subtlety, as well in the state of life and growth, as in the state of fermentation and putrefaction. These effluvia being drawn into the nostrils along with the air are the means by which all bodies are smelled. Hence, it is evident that there is a manifest appearance of design in the great Creator having planted the organ of smell in the inside of that canal through which the air continuously passes in respiration.

Tasting

Tasting enables us to make a proper distinction in the choice of our food. The organ of this sense guards the entrance of the alimentary canal, as that of smelling guards the entrance of the canal for respiration. From the situation of both these organs, it is plain that they were intended by Nature to distinguish wholesome food from that at which is nauseous. Everything that enters the stomach must undergo the scrutiny of tasting; and by it we are capable of discerning the changes which the same body undergoes in the different compositions of art, cooking, chemistry, pharmacy, etc. Smelling and tasting are inseparably connected; and it is by the unnatural kind of life men commonly lead in society that these senses are rendered less fit to perform their natural offices.

To sum up the whole of this transcendent measure of God's bounty to man, we shall add that memory, imagination, taste, reasoning, moral perception, and all the active powers of the soul, which present a vast and boundless field for philosophical discussion, which far exceeds human inquiry, and which are peculiar mysteries, known only to Nature and to Nature's God, to whom we and all are indebted for creation, preservation, and every blessing we enjoy.

The Seven Liberal Arts and Sciences

The Seven Liberal Arts and Sciences are Grammar, Rhetoric, Logic, Arithmetic, Geometry, Music and Astronomy.

Grammar

Grammar teaches us the proper arrangement of words according to the idiom or dialect of any particular people; and that excellency of pronunciation, which enables us to speak or write a language with accuracy agreeable to reason and correct usage.

Rhetoric

Rhetoric teaches us to speak copiously and fluently on any subject, not merely with propriety alone, but with all the advantages of force and elegance, wisely contriving to captivate the hearer by strength of argument and beauty of expression, whether it be to entreat or to exhort, to admonish or to applaud.

Logic

Logic teaches us to guide our reason discretionally in the general knowledge of things, and directs our inquiries after truth. It consists of a regular train of argument, whence we infer, deduce and conclude, according to certain premises laid down, admitted or

granted; and in it are employed the faculties of conceiving, judging, reasoning and disposing; all of which are naturally led on from one gradation to another, till the point in question is finally determined. This science ought to be cultivated as the foundation, or ground-work, of our inquiries; particularly in the pursuit of those sublime principles which claim our attention as Masons.

Arithmetic

Arithmetic teaches us the power and properties of numbers, which are variously affected by letters, tables, figures and instruments. By this art, reasons and demonstrations are given for finding out any certain number, whose relation or affinity to another is already known or discovered. The greater advancement we make in the mathematical sciences, the more capable we shall be of considering such things as the ordinary objects of our conceptions, and be thereby led to a more comprehensive knowledge of our great Creator and the works of the creation.

Geometry

Geometry teaches of the powers and properties of magnitudes in general, where length, breadth and thickness are considered, from a point to a line, from a line to a surface, and from a surface to a solid. A point is a dimensionless figure, or an indivisible part of space. A line is a point continued, and a figure of one capacity, namely: length. A surface is a figure of two dimensions, namely: length and breadth. A solid is a figure of three dimensions, namely: length, breadth and thickness.

The Advantages of Geometry

By this science the architect is enabled to construct his plans and execute his designs; the general, to arrange his soldiers; the geographer, to give us the dimensions of the world and all things therein contained; to delineate the extent of the seas, and specify the divisions of the empires, kingdoms, and provinces. By it, also, the astronomer is enabled to make his observations and to fix the duration of the time and seasons, years and cycles. In fine, geometry is the foundation of architecture, and the roof of mathematics.

The Moral Advantages of Geometry

Geometry, the first and noblest of sciences, is the basis on which the superstructure of Masonry is erected. By geometry we may curiously trace Nature, through her various windings, to her most concealed recesses; and discover the power, the wisdom, and the goodness of the Grand Artificer of the Universe, and view with delight the proportions which connect this vast machine. By it we may discover how the planets move in their different orbits and demonstrate their various revolutions, and account for the return of the seasons, and the variety of scenes which each season displays to the discerning eye. Numberless worlds, all framed by Deity, roll around us through the vast expanse of the universe, and are conducted by the same unerring law of Nature. A survey of Nature, and the observations of her beautiful proportions, first determined man to imitate the Divine plan and study symmetry and order. This gave rise to societies, and birth to every useful art. The architect began to design, and the plans which he laid down, being improved by experience and time, have produced works which are the admiration of every age.

The Symbols of Freemasonry

The lapse of time, the ruthless hand of ignorance, and the devastation of war, have laid waste and destroyed many valuable monuments of antiquity, on which the utmost exertions of human genius have been employed. Even the Temple of Solomon, so spacious and magnificent, and constructed by so many celebrated artists, escaped not the unsparing ravages of barbarous forces. Freemasonry, notwithstanding, has still survived. The Attentive Ear receives the sound from the Instructive Tongue, and the mysteries of Freemasonry are safely lodged in the repository of the Faithful Breast. Tools and instruments of architecture and symbolic emblems, most expressive, are selected by the fraternity to imprint on the mind wise and serious truths; and thus, through succession of ages, are transmitted, unimpaired, the most excellent tenets of our institution.

Music

Music teaches us the art of forming concords so as to compose delightful harmony by a mathematical and proportional arrangement of acute, grave and mixed sounds. This art, by a series of experiments, is reduced to a demonstrative science, with respect to the tones and intervals of sound. It inquires into the nature of concords and discords and enables us to find out the proportion between them by numbers.

Music is the medium that gives the natural world communion with the spiritual. Who has not felt its charm? Who has not had his soul thrilled with its message? With its caressing tenderness it lulls us to sleep; with its powerful harmony it rouses us to action; it wraps us in melancholy; or elevates us in joy.

The glorious notes of the battle hymn float over the red field of carnage. (Here the organist may play the Marseillaise or some warlike hymn.)

Thrilled by the soul inspiring notes, brave men dash forward to the glorious charge and with a cheer that strikes terror to the heart of the foe, regardless of danger, unmindful of death, across the plain, incarnadined with the blood of patriots, rush on and on, perhaps to death, perhaps to victory. But stop! Yonder the dying soldier raises his head, his life's blood is fast ebbing away and with eyes already dimming with approaching death he takes one last look on life and a smile comes o'er his face as he seems to catch in the distance that plaintive strain Home Sweet Home. (Here the organist may play the notes of Home, Sweet Home) It was our mother's evening hymn and again we kneel at her knee to listen to the evening prayer and again our ears catch her lullaby as she sings to her tired child the soft, low music of our childhood's happy days.

The mellowing tides of old cathedral airs, vibrating through aisles and arches, have stilled the ruffled spirit, and, sweeping aside the discordant passions of men, have borne them along its resistless current until their united voices have joined in sounding aloud the heaven born anthem Peace on earth, good will toward men or with seraphic harmony music pours forth hymns of gratitude to the Creator of the Universe. (The Lodge may here unite in singing Old Hundred.)

And when at last the soul yearns for those unseen vistas beyond the span of the present hour, for that communion with God which is its highest life, music, the handmaid of heaven, bears the spirit up and gives it a taste of immortality.

Astronomy

Astronomy is that art by which we are taught to read the wisdom, strength and beauty of the Almighty Creator in the celestial hemispheres. Assisted by Astronomy, we can observe the magnitudes and calculate the periods and eclipses of the heavenly bodies. By it we learn the use of the globes, the system of the world and the preliminary laws of nature. While we are employed in the study of this science we must perceive unparalleled instances of wisdom and goodness; and through the whole creation, trace the glorious Author by His works.

Plenty

[Here a symbol of Plenty is introduced, and properly explained by answering the following questions:]

What does it denote? How was it represented? Why was it instituted?

The Wages and Precious Jewels of the Fellowcraft and the Letter “G”

My Brother, you are now in a place representing the middle chamber of King Solomon’s Temple. It was there that our ancient brethren had their names recorded as faithful workers. It was there that they received their wages consisting of corn, wine, and oil. The wages being corn, wine, and oil were to signify that our ancient brethren when passed to this degree were entitled to wages, sufficient not only to procure the necessities of life but many of its luxuries. While this was a rich recompense for their arduous labors on King Solomon’s Temple, to us they are a mere symbol of a greater reward — that reward that comes to the speculative craftsman upon the completion of his labors on a more enduring temple.

The three precious jewels of a Fellowcraft Mason are the attentive ear, the instructive tongue, and the faithful breast. The Attentive Ear receives the sound from the Instructive Tongue, and the mysteries of Freemasonry are safely lodged in the repository of a Faithful Breast. The attentive ear is emblematical of the open and inquiring mind seeking the truth; the instructive tongue typifying charity and benevolence; and the faithful breast symbolizing honor and fidelity. These are indeed three precious jewels to be passed by any man, and they are especially significant to us as Masons because it has been by these three means that the secrets and principles of Freemasonry have been handed down through the ages.

You have been admitted to this middle chamber by virtue of the letter “G”, the initial letter of the greatest of sciences - GEOMETRY. It has been by the science that the human race has learned order and symmetry. By it the Greeks and Romans erected their magnificent temples, the great generals of history have marshaled their cohorts, and the modern people have founded one of the most wonderful eras of invention the world has ever known. It has been by this science that we have been enabled to study that order and regularity whereby the Grand Geometrician may use the heavenly bodies through space with an unerring hand, thus leading man to a firm belief in one Supreme Ruler of the Universe, whose laws are irresistible, and whose thoughts are infinite.

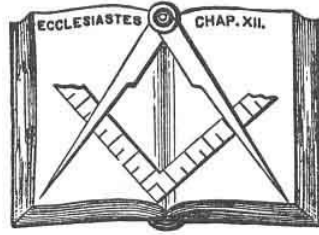
You are now laying the foundation of your Masonic career. Tonight you have been passed to the Degree of skill, cunning, and beauty. This degree will teach you that all

things may be polished and made beautiful. Take the cornerstone of truth and erect a structure whose pillars may be capped with all the graces of a living and general disposition. The walls may be made beautiful with artistic paintings of realized dreams; whose corridors shall echo with kind words, gentle voices, and cheerful acting; whose inner shrine shall be devoted to noble deeds and the betterment of mankind; whose tones shall reflect the pure and spotless life; and whose spires shall point to that eternal city with streets of pure gold. We may teach you certain grips, words, and signs but we cannot pay you the wages due nor confer upon you the precious jewels of a Fellowcraft Mason; that honor can only be conferred by the Great Master, the very mention of whose name shall cause every Mason, from the youngest Entered Apprentice in the Northeast Corner to the oldest Master in the East - to humbly, reverently, and devoutly bow. That great and sacred name is GOD.

Charge at Passing

Brother: being passed to the second degree of Freemasonry, we congratulate you on your preferment. The internal, and not the external, qualifications of a man are what Freemasonry regards. As you increase in knowledge, you will improve in social intercourse. It is unnecessary to recapitulate the duties which, as a Mason, you are bound to discharge, or to enlarge on the necessity of a strict adherence to them, as your own experience must have established their value.

Our laws and regulations you are strenuously to support, and be always ready to assist in seeing them duly executed. You are not to palliate or aggravate the offenses of your brethren; but in the decision of every trespass against our rules, you are to judge with candor, admonish with friendship, and reprehend with justice. The study of the Liberal Arts, which tends so effectually to polish and adorn the mind, is earnestly recommended to your consideration; especially the science of Geometry, which is established as the basis of our art. Geometry, or Masonry, originally synonymous terms, being of a moral nature, is enriched with the most useful knowledge; while it proves the most wonderful properties of nature, it demonstrates the more important truths of morality. Your past behavior and regular deportment have merited the honor which we have now conferred; and in your new character it is expected that you will conform to the principles of the Order, by steadily persevering in the practice of every commendable virtue. Such is the nature of your engagement as a Fellowcraft, and to these duties you are bound by the most sacred ties.



SYMBOLS OF THE THIRD DEGREE

If the first degree is intended as a representation of youth, and the second of manhood, the third, or Master Mason, is emblematic of old age, with its trials, its sufferings, and its final termination in death.

The time for toiling is now over; the opportunity to learn has passed away; the spiritual temple that we all have been striving to erect in our hearts is nearly completed, and the wearied workman awaits only the word of the Grand Master of the Universe, to call him from his labors on earth to the eternal refreshments of heaven. Hence, this is by far the most solemn and impressive of the degrees in Masonry; and it has, in consequence of the profound truths, which it teaches, been distinguished by the craft as the sublime degree.

As an Entered Apprentice, the Mason was taught those elementary instructions which were to fit him for further advancement in his profession, just as the youth is supplied with that rudimentary education which is to prepare him for entering on the active duties of life.

As a Fellowcraft, the Mason is directed to continue his investigations in the sciences of the Institution and to labor diligently in the tasks it prescribes, just as man is required to enlarge his mind by the acquisition of new ideas, and to extend his usefulness to his fellow-creatures. But, as a Master, the Mason is taught the most important and necessary of truths, that having been faithful to his trusts; he is at last to die, and to receive the rewards of his fidelity.

It was the single object of all the ancient rites and mysteries to teach the immortality of the soul. This is still the great design of the third degree of Masonry. This is the scope and aim of its ritual. The Master Mason represents man, when youth, manhood, old age, and life itself have passed away as fleeting shadows, yet raised from the grave of iniquity, and quickened into another and better existence. By its legend and all its ritual, it is implied that we may be saved from the death of sin and the grave of pollution only through our individual religion. The ceremonies and lecture, beautifully illustrate this all-engrossing subject; and the conclusion we arrive at is, that youth, properly directed, leads us to honorable and virtuous maturity, and that the life of man, regulated by morality, faith, and justice, will be rewarded at its closing hour by the prospect of eternal bliss. The important design of this degree is to symbolize the great doctrine of the immortality of the soul.

In the First and Second Degrees you were surrounded by the symbols and emblems of architecture. In the Third Degree you found a different order of symbolism, cast in the language of the soul - its life, its tragedy. To recognize this is the first step in interpretation.

The second step is to recognize that the Third Degree has many meanings. It is not intended to be a lesson, complete, finished, and closed up. Rather it is a pointing out of paths, a new departure, a series of inspirations, and an awakening of all the faculties. It is like a great drama, picture or symphony to which one may evermore return to find new meanings as in an inexhaustible

fountainhead of truth. Most essentially it is a drama of the immortality of the soul, setting forth the truth that while a man withers away and perishes, there is that in him which perishes not. That this is the meaning most generally adopted by the Craft is shown by our habits of language. We say that a man is initiated an Entered Apprentice, passed a Fellowcraft, and raised a Master Mason. By this it appears that it is the raising that most Masons have found at the center of the Master Mason Degree.

In your experience with the Ritual and your meetings with us you have learned that every phrase, event, and other detail in the ceremonies of initiation is full of meaning. No item is merely for effect or ornament. In the Third Degree are the deepest and most profound teachings of our fraternity. You passed through the degree in one night, to understand it will require many nights, and though you may study it for years you will never exhaust it. In a few pages we can give you but a few hints in the hope that they may inspire you to study the degree for yourself. The symbolism of the First and Second Degrees centers around the art of architecture. Their purpose is to teach you, in the First, to be a builder of yourself, and in the Second, a builder of society. In the Third Degree the symbolism takes another form. Although its background continues to be architecture, and its action takes place in and about a Temple, it is a spiritual symbolism of life and death. Its principal teaching is of immortality. If a man permits himself to be buried under the rubbish heap of sins and passions, it is possible, if he has learned the secret of the spiritual life and with the help of God, to rise again into a new life, either here or hereafter. This gives us the key to the whole degree, and in its light, all its symbols, emblems, all allegories must be understood.

The Compasses

Brotherly love, morality and relief, the most important tenets of Freemasonry, are contained between the points of the compasses when properly extended.

Perambulation

“Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them: while the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars, be not darkened, nor the clouds return after the rain: in the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble, and the strong men shall bow themselves, and the grinders cease because they are few, and those that look out of the windows be darkened, and the doors shall be shut in the streets, when the sound of the grinding is low, and he shall rise up at the voice of the bird, and all the daughters of music shall be brought low; also when they shall be afraid of that which is high, and fears shall be in the way, and the almond tree shall flourish, and the grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire shall fail: because man goeth to his long home, and mourners go about the streets: 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. Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.” [Ecclesiastes 12:1-7.]

Working Tools – the Trowel

The working tools of a Master Mason are all the implements of Masonry indiscriminately, but more especially the Trowel. The Trowel is an implement used by Operative Masons to spread the cement which unites a building into one common mass; but we, as Free and Accepted Masons, are taught to use it for the more noble and glorious purpose of spreading the cement of brotherly love and affection; that cement which unites us into one sacred band, or society of friends and brothers, among whom no contention should ever exist, but that noble contention, or, rather, emulation of who can best work and best agree.

But brotherly love itself has its source and seat in the soul. To love a man above his sins, to cherish him in spite of his faults, to forgive him in all sincerity, to bear with him and to forbear is possible only as we live in the spiritual life and have our souls purged of selfishness.

Five-Pointed Star

The five-pointed star has been adopted as a Masonic symbol. Differing, as it does, entirely from the blazing star, which the First Degree refers to as symbolizing Divine Providence, it is consecrated, in the third degree, as a symbol of the Five Points of Fellowship.

Broken Column, Weeping Virgin, Father Time

The Monument of the Third Degree shows a broken column, with a weeping virgin standing next to it, holding a spring of acacia, with Father Time standing behind. As the column was representative of the finished work of noble leaders or pillars of a state to our ancient brethren, so the broken column is, Masonically, the emblem of the death of one of the chief supporters of the Craft prior to the completion of his work. The weeping virgin and acacia are interpreted as symbols of grief for the unfinished state of the Temple. The figure of Father Time is pictured attempting to untangle the ringlets of the weeping virgin's hair, a never-ending task. He is intended to teach us that time, patience and perseverance will enable us to accomplish the great objectives of our labor as Freemasons and, at last, obtain the True Word, which itself is symbolic of Divine Truth.

The Temple of King Solomon occupied seven years in its construction, during which time we are informed that it rained not in the daytime, that the workmen might not be obstructed in their labor. This famous fabric was supported by fourteen hundred and fifty-three columns, and two thousand nine hundred and six pilasters, all hewn from the finest Parian marble.

It was symbolically supported by three principal columns Wisdom, Strength and Beauty which were represented by the three Grand Masters: Solomon, King of Israel; Hiram, King of Tyre; and Hiram Abif, the widow's son.

There were employed in its building three Grand Masters, three thousand three hundred Overseers or Masters of the work, eighty thousand Fellowcrafts, and seventy thousand Entered Apprentices. All these were classed and arranged by King Solomon so that neither envy, discord nor confusion were suffered to interrupt that universal peace and tranquility which pervaded the world at this important period.

There are in this degree two classes of emblems or symbols, the first of which is monitorial, and consists of the Three Steps, the Pot of Incense, the Beehive, the Book of Constitutions guarded by the Tiler's Sword, the Sword pointing to a Naked Heart, the All-seeing Eye, the Anchor and Ark, the Forty-seventh Problem of Euclid, the Hourglass, and the Scythe, and are thus explained:

The Three Steps

The Three Steps usually delineated upon the Masters carpet are emblematical of the three principal stages of human life, viz.: Youth, Manhood and Age. In Youth, as Entered Apprentices, we ought industriously to occupy our minds in the attainment of useful knowledge; in Manhood, as Fellowcrafts, we should apply our knowledge to the discharge of our respective duties to God, our neighbor, and ourselves; so that in Age, as Master Masons, we may enjoy the happy reflections consequent on a well-spent life, and die in the hope of a glorious immortality.

The Pot of Incense

The Pot of Incense is an emblem of a pure heart, which is always an acceptable sacrifice to the Deity; and as this glows with fervent heat, so should our hearts continually glow with gratitude to the great and beneficent Author of our existence for the manifold blessings and comforts we enjoy.

The Beehive

The Beehive is an emblem of industry, and recommends the practice of that virtue to all created beings, from the highest angel in Heaven to the lowest reptile of the dust. It teaches us that as we came into the world rational and intelligent beings, so should we ever be industrious ones, never sitting down contented while our fellow creatures around us are in want when it is in our power to relieve them without injury to ourselves.

The Book of Constitutions, Guarded by the Tyler's Sword

The Book of Constitutions, guarded by the Tyler's Sword, reminds us that we should be ever watchful and guarded in our words and actions, particularly when before the enemies of Freemasonry, ever bearing in mind those truly Masonic virtues of Silence and Caution.

The Sword Pointing to a Naked Heart

The Sword, pointing to a Naked Heart, demonstrates that justice will sooner or later overtake us; and although our thoughts, words and actions may be hidden from the eyes of men, yet that All-Seeing Eye, whom the sun, moon and stars obey, and under whose watchful care even comets perform their stupendous revolutions, penetrates the innermost recesses of the human heart, and will reward us according to our merits.

The Anchor and Ark

The Anchor and Ark are emblems of a well-grounded hope and well-spent life. They are emblematical of that Divine Ark which safely wafts us over the raging sea of troubles, and that Anchor which shall safely moor us in a peaceful harbor, where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary shall find rest.

The Forty-seventh Problem of Euclid

This was an invention of our ancient friend and brother, the great Pythagoras. Tradition holds that in his travels through Asia, Africa and Europe, he was initiated into several orders of priesthood. This wise philosopher enriched his mind abundantly in a general knowledge of things, and more especially in geometry or Masonry. On this subject he drew out many problems and theorems; and among the most distinguished he erected this, when, in the joy of his heart, he exclaimed "Eureka!" in the Grecian language, signifying I have found it, and upon the discovery of which he is said to have sacrificed 100 oxen. It teaches Masons to be general lovers of the arts and sciences.

The Hourglass

The Hourglass is an emblem of human life. Behold, how swiftly the sands run and how rapidly our lives are drawing to a close! We cannot, without astonishment, behold the little particles, which are contained in this machine; how they pass away almost imperceptibly! And yet, to our surprise in the short space of an hour they are all exhausted. Thus wastes man! Today he puts forth the tender leaves of hope; tomorrow blossoms, and bears his blushing honors thick upon him; the next day comes a frost which nips the shoot; and when he thinks his greatness is still aspiring he falls, like autumn leaves, to enrich our mother earth.

The Scythe

The Scythe is an emblem of Time, which cuts the brittle thread of life and launches us into eternity. Behold, what havoc the Scythe of Time makes among the human race! If, by chance, we should escape the numerous evils incident to childhood and youth, and with health and vigor arrive at the years of manhood; yet, withal, we must soon be cut down by the all-devouring Scythe of Time, and be gathered into the land where our fathers have gone before us.

The Grave, Spade, Setting Maul, Coffin Acacia

The second class of symbols is not monitorial, and therefore their true interpretations can only be obtained within the tiled recesses of the Lodge. They consist of the Setting Maul, the Spade, the Coffin, and the Sprig of Acacia. They afford subjects of serious and solemn reflection to the rational and contemplative mind, and thus the degree closes with cheering promises of a blessed immortality beyond the grave.

Charge at Raising

Brother: Your zeal for the institution of Free-masonry, the progress you have made in the mystery, and your conformity to our regulations, have pointed you out as a proper object of our favor and esteem. You are now bound by duty, honor and gratitude, to be faithful to your trust; to support the dignity of your character on every occasion; and to enforce, by precept and example, obedience to the tenets of the Order.

In the character of a Master Mason, you are authorized to correct the errors and irregularities of your uninformed brethren, and to guard them against a breach of fidelity; to preserve the reputation of the fraternity unsullied must be your constant care; and for this purpose it is your duty to recommend to your inferiors, obedience and submission; to your equals, courtesy and affability; to your superiors, kindness and condescension. Universal benevolence you are always to practice, and, by the regularity of your own behavior, afford the best example for the conduct of others less

informed. The ancient landmarks of the Order, entrusted to your care, you are carefully to preserve, and never suffer them to be infringed, or countenance a deviation from the established usages and customs of the fraternity.

Your virtue, honor and reputation are concerned in supporting with dignity the character you now bear. Let no motive, therefore, make you swerve from your duty, violate your vows or betray your trust; but be true and faithful and imitate the example of the celebrated artist whom you have this evening represented. Thus you will render yourself deserving of the honor which we have conferred, and merit the confidence that we have reposed.

Lambskin

The Lambskin, or white leather Apron, is an emblem of innocence and the badge of a Mason; more ancient than the Golden Fleece or Roman Eagle; more honorable than the Star and Garter, when worthily worn.

The White Glove

The White Glove is a symbol of Fidelity, and is emblematical of that Masonic friendship, which bind us to each other.

The Evergreen

The Evergreen, which once marked the temporary resting-place of one illustrious in Masonic tradition, is an emblem of our faith in the immortality of the soul. By this we are reminded that we have an immortal part within us that shall survive the grave and which shall never, never, NEVER die.

The Square

The Square teaches us to regulate our actions by rule and line, and to harmonize our conduct by the principles of morality and virtue.

The Compasses

The Compasses teach us to limit our desires in every station, that, rising to eminence by merit, we may live respected, and die regretted.

The Rule

The Rule directs that we should punctually observe our duty, press forward in the path of virtue and, neither inclining to the right nor to the left, in all our actions have eternity in view.

The Line

The Line teaches us the criterion of moral rectitude, to avoid dissimulation in conversation and action, and to direct our steps to the path which leads to immortality.

The Master's Hat

As King Solomon wore a crown as an emblem of royal dignity, so, as a mark of distinction, and agreeable to an ancient custom, the Worshipful Master is to be covered when presiding over the Lodge.

The Gavel

The Gavel, is an emblem of power, and of the Worshipful Master's authority. It is to be used wisely and justly, never in the cause of injustice or oppression.

The Master's Jewel

The jewel of his office is the Square, an emblem of morality and virtue. It is also displayed upon his apron.

The Senior Warden's Jewel

The emblem of office is the ancient level an emblem of equality and balance. The Level demonstrates that we are descended from the same stock, partake of the same nature, and share the same hope; and though distinctions among men are necessary to preserve subordination; yet, no eminence of station should make us forget that we are brethren, for he who is placed on the lowest spoke of fortunes wheel may be entitled to our regard; because a time will come, and the wisest knows not how soon, when all distinctions but that of goodness shall cease; and death, the grand leveler of human greatness, reduce us to the same state.

The Junior Warden's Jewel

The emblem of office is the ancient plumb, an emblem of uprightness. The Plumb admonishes us to walk uprightly in our several stations; to hold the scale of justice in equal poise; to observe the just medium between intemperance and pleasure, and to make our passions and prejudices coincide with the line of our duty.

The Treasurer's Jewel

The jewel of his office is the Crossed Keys and represents the keys to the safe and signifies the trust placed in him to manage the financial resources of the Lodge.

The Secretary's Jewel

The jewel of his office is the Crossed Quills and is symbolic of the instrument he uses to keep a correct record of the proceedings of the Lodge.

The Chaplain's Jewel

The jewel of his office is an open copy of the Volume of Sacred Law also worn upon his apron.

The Senior Deacon's Jewel

The jewel of his office is a square and compass with the sun in the middle. This jewel represents the fact that The Senior Deacon is there to assist the Master.

The Junior Deacon's Jewel

The symbolic jewel of office for the Junior Deacon is a square and a compass with a moon at the center. The symbolizes that The Junior Deacon is in the West

Stewards' Jewels

The symbolic jewel of office for the Steward is the Cornucopia, or Horn of Plenty.

Tyler's Jewel

Our Brother Tyler guards the Outer Door. His jewel is the drawn or naked sword and his implement of office is the sword.

Staffs

The Senior Deacon, like The Junior Deacon, carries a Staff. This is symbolic of the wand that the Roman god Mercury, also a messenger, carried. The Staffs are topped by the jewels of office.

Both the junior and Senior Stewards carry Staffs topped with the jewels of their offices. The staffs represent England's Lord High Stewards rod in the House of Lords.

“Blue” Lodge

Lodges are referred to as “Blue” or Symbolic Lodges. The color Blue is emblematic of Friendship, a characteristic peculiar to our ancient Craft Lodges as well as our Lodges today.

Masonry is not a religion, nor is it political; therefore, our symbolic teachings are acceptable to all men under the Blue Canopy of Heaven.

The Charter

The Charter of the Lodge is displayed near the Worshipful Master. No Lodge may conduct their work legally without their Charter present in the Lodge room. Just as a Lodge you are visiting has the right to require you to prove yourself a Master Mason, so you have the right to examine their Charter to assure yourself of their regularity. It is important to remember that once the Lodge is opened and at labor, no one is allowed to talk or move about, except with the permission of the Worshipful Master. To do so would be the height of rudeness and disrespect.

“That Which Was Lost”

The Tragedy of Hiram Abif is the climax of the degree. Indeed, the climax of all the ceremonies of Freemasonry of whatever degree. Next in importance, and in many ways equal in interest, is the allegorical "Search For That Which Was Lost." This has an historical background. To the early Jewish people a name was something peculiarly identified with a person and held in reverence. The name of God was held in extreme reverence. This holy name was never pronounced above a whisper. After a while only the priests were permitted to use it, and finally only the High Priest, and then only when alone in the Holy of Holies on the Day of Atonement. During some national calamity, the High Priest was destroyed before he had the opportunity to pass it on to his successor.

The Name might have been preserved in the sacred writings of the Jews except that their written language had this peculiarity - the vowels were understood, not written. The consonants of the Divine Name are known, J H V H, but not the vowels, and therefore not the name. All this appears in our ritual in the form of allegory. A word was possessed. The Word was lost.

Like all symbols this means many things. One of its more profound meanings is that if a man has lost the ideals and standards of his youth, his character, his faith in truth and goodness, the secret of what it is to be a man, he must, if he is to live the Masonic life, go in search of that which was lost and continue searching until he finds it. Without manhood it is useless to be a man.

The Symbols of Freemasonry

You may wonder why the ritual does not explain fully and clearly the meaning of this symbolism, why it leaves the candidate to find the meanings for himself. There are three reasons for this silence. First, lack of sufficient time. To explain them all fully would require not three nights but thirty, perhaps three hundred. Second, the Masonic life grows by what we do for ourselves infinitely more than by what others do for us. Third, the method of the ritual is to bring us into the presence of the greater truths of life knowing that their mere presence will have a deep influence over us. Each man is left to work them out in detail according to his own needs.

Of the emblems of the Third Degree one after another is set before us, apparently in no given order, and each with only a hint of what it signifies. Yet each of them stands for some great idea or ideal, necessary throughout our lives and the purpose is to plant them in our consciousness, to keep them always in our presence.

Each of them is a master truth. In the Three Pillars we have the great ideas of wisdom, strength and beauty. The three steps remind us of how Youth, Manhood, and Old Age is each a unity in itself, each possessing its own duties and problems, each calling for its own philosophy.

More Light

Here we have sought to bring you some light and explanations of the mystic symbols of the Craft; we hope that this will help you to have a better understanding of the Three Degrees of Freemasonry. Our desire is that this will give you a thirst for more knowledge and more light. Here are just a few of the myriad of resources available for further study for a lifetime of learning:

- An Encyclopedia of Freemasonry - Albert G. Mackey
- A Manual of the Lodge - Albert G. Mackey
- Signs and Symbols - George Oliver
- The Masonic Ladder - John Sherer
- Symbolism of Freemasonry - Albert G. Mackey
- Masonic Symbolism - Arthur Edward Waite
- A Dictionary of Symbolic Masonry - George Oliver
- The Craft and Its Symbols - Allen Roberts
- Symbolism in Craft Masonry - Colin Dyer
- Sources of Masonic Symbolism - Alex Horne
- Esoterika - Albert Pike

Sources

1. Masonic Manual. The Grand Lodge of Georgia.
2. The Lodge System of Masonic Education. The Grand Lodge of Georgia.
3. The Master's and Warden's Workshop. The Grand Lodge of Georgia.