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Thank you for your participation! The jewels of a Fellowcraft: attentive ear, instructive tongue, and faithful breast. In learning and education, we must listen if the work is to be properly transmitted from generation to generation. The life of Freemasonry depends on ears that are attentive. An instructive tongue is necessary in order that knowledge be conveyed accurately. But the tongue teaches more than ritual. It informs Masons of the great truths and symbolism in Masonry. That makes good men better men. The faithful breast is the repository for those few secrets entrusted to you as you progress through the three degrees in Masonry. It is also the repository of those ideals you should display in life and pass on to your Brethren, that they may learn and grow to be better men. As a Fellowcraft, you are symbolically and Masonically a builder. You have been given the tools to build your square, level and plumb. You were taught the value of work. You know the importance of acquiring knowledge. It is in sharing this knowledge that will make you richer and a builder in the sight of God. You are now the perfect ashlar that the Supreme Architect of the Universe is using to build your spiritual temple - that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. May you truly earn your Fellowcraft wages. MEANING AND ORIGIN OF THE TERM FELLOWCRAFT "Fellowcraft - is one of a large number of terms that have a technical meaning peculiar to Freemasonry and are Seldom found elsewhere. In the period of operative Masonry, a "craft" was an organization of skilled workmen in some trade or calling; a "fellow" meant one who held membership in such a craft obligated to the same duties and allowed the same privileges as all other members. In Freemasonry "craft" possesses two separate meanings, one of which we may call the operative meaning, the other the Speculative. In their operative period Freemasons were skilled workmen engaged as architects and builders. Like other skilled workmen, they had an organized craft of their own, the general form of which was called a "guild." A Lodge was a local, and usually temporary, organization within the guild. This guild had officers, laws, rules, regulations, and customs of its own rigorously binding on all members. It divided its membership into two grades, the lower of which, composed of Apprentices, was explained to you in an earlier degree. At the end of a member's apprenticeship he was examined in a Lodge; and if his record was good, if he could prove his proficiency test, and if the members voted in his favor, he was released from his apprenticeship and made a full member, or "Fellow," of the craft. According to the Ancient Charges, the term "Master" was applied to the head, or ruler, of a Lodge, as we use the term, "Worshipful Master," today. Such was the Operative meaning of Fellowcraft. Now that the Craft is no longer Operative, the term possesses a very different meaning, yet is still used in its original sense in certain Darts of the Ritual. Operative Freemasonry began to decline about the time of the Reformation, when Lodges became few in number and small in membership. A few of them in England began to admit men, with no intention of practicing Operative Masonry, who were attracted by the Craft's antiquity, good reputation, and for social reasons. They were called "Speculative Masons." At the beginning of the eighteenth century these Speculative so increased in numbers that they gained control, and during the first quarter of that century completely transformed the Craft into the Speculative Fraternity as we now have it. Although they adhered as closely as possible to the old customs, they made some radical changes to fit the Society for its new purposes. One of the most important changes was to abandon the old rule of dividing the members into two grades, or degrees, and to adopt a new rule of dividing it into three. The second was called the Fellowcraft Degree and the third was the Master Mason Degree. The term Fellowcraft is now used as the name of the Second Degree; of the ritualistic ceremonies and other contents of that degree; of a member of it; and to a Lodge when opened on it. You are a Fellowcraft; you passed through its ceremonies, assumed its obligations, are registered as such in the books of the Lodge, and can sit in either a Lodge of Apprentices or of Fellowcrafts but not of Master Masons. Your duties are to do and be all that is required of Fellowcrafts. Freemasonry is too extensive to be exemplified in a ritual or to be presented through initiation in one day or evening. There is far too much for a man to learn in many meetings. 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. 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 Fellowcraft Degree as a mere stepping stone to the Third. Freemasonry gave to you one part of itself in the First, another portion in the Second, and in the Third it will give you yet another, but it is always Freemasonry throughout. We urge on you, therefore, the same studious attention while you are a Fellowcraft that you doubtless expect to give when you are a Master Mason. SYMBOLISM OF THE DEGREE In the Degree of Fellowcraft, we emphasize the dignity and worth of the individual. Man should be an instrument of the Supreme Architect, of the Universe. As such, he is a workman whose duty is to invent, create, and achieve, and by doing so, express his own genius and individuality. All Lodges are designed to encourage the development of the individual and to allow a man to become as great as he wants to be. The Degree of Fellowcraft symbolizes man in the prime years of his life. He is portrayed as an adult who is ready to accept the responsibilities of life, not only for himself, but also for his family and all of society. When a Mason assumes the duties and privileges of a Fellowcraft, he is taught that he is responsible for his own destiny and that of the State. The themes of this Degree are education and achievement. The more a man learns through pursuit of knowledge, the more he achieves. As an Entered Apprentice, you began your travels as a candidate. But as a Fellowcraft, you continued as a Brother. Because of this, your cable tow was not a restraining force, but a strengthening force. Your Fellowcraft obligation was broader than that of Entered Apprentice. In the Entered Apprentice Degree, the need for secrecy was stressed. Now as a Fellowcraft, the needs of your fellow man are stressed. The promises contained in your obligation encompass the duties a man owes to God. Darkness has always symbolized ignorance. The hoodwink is a symbol of ignorance. Without darkness, you could not appreciate light. For your heart to receive truth, the eye was hoodwinked from distractions. The appreciation of Masonic light was made more meaningful. It came from the Scriptures: "And God said: Let there be light and there was light." (Genesis 1:3) As mentioned, the Fellowcraft degree symbolizes the years of manhood. During these years he obtains knowledge and applies this knowledge to the building of his character, and improving the society in which he lives. The compilers of our Masonic ritual conceived Masonry to be used to educate man in the liberal arts and sciences. In the Ritual of the Degree, a Fellowcraft is urged to advance his education in these fields. By using the process of Initiation, the symbolic importance of the liberal arts and science is stressed. THE CABLE-TOW The length of the Cable-Tow is frequently referred to in the language of Freemasonry, but many of the new Brothers do not understand its meaning. Formerly, a Cable-Tow was deemed to be the distance one could travel in an hour, which was assumed to be about three miles. In Prince Hall Masonry, it is any reasonable distance from which a summons may be answered, health and business permitting. Each Mason is bound to all other Masons by a tie as long and as strong as he himself determines his ability will permit. ENLIGHTENMENT As in the Entered Apprentice Degree, the Fellowcraft undergoes what is called enlightenment. The appearance of light after darkness symbolizes the quest after truth, knowledge, and wisdom, and symbolizes birth or initiation. Darkness is the symbol of ignorance and evil, and as such, is something that needs to be overcome by the light of education and the promotion of what is morally good. THE RECEPTION In this degree the instrument changes from the sharp point of caution and secrecy to the square, a symbol of morality, honesty, fair dealings and truthfulness. You were received into the Lodge on the square to remind you that the square should be the rule and guide in your future actions with mankind. THE OBLIGATION The Obligation is the heart of every Degree and its solemnity must be impressed upon every candidate. In addition to the vow of secrecy in the First Degree, the Obligation has other important points, which bind each Brother. They are: Obedience Assistance The protection of one another The obligation is a pledge by each Mason to all others, binding them by a tie, which should last their lifetime. That bond, referred to as "the Mystic Tie" by Scottish poet Robert Burns, is one that develops lasting and endearing friendships, which are far beyond those made in ordinary life. The penalties have the same significance as those invoked in the First Degree, and are symbolic rather than physical. The penalties were once similar to those imposed by civil law hundreds of years ago, and relate to the idea that if a body is dismembered it cannot be restored to life. While the penalty of the Entered Apprentice Degree symbolizes the loss of the power of speech, that of the Fellowcraft symbolizes the loss of emotions and caring. THE WORKING TOOLS Once again the candidate is presented with the Working Tools, the tools he needs in order to continue to improve and shape his own life and those of others. THE SQUARE The square, as a working tool, proves right angles. On receiving light, you found the Square to hold another meaning - virtue. Virtue should guide you in all your transactions with your fellow man. Virtue dwells in a man's heart. He may hide his actions from man, but he cannot hide them from God. When you "act upon the Square" with a man, you are giving him "an honest deal," a square deal. THE PLUMB The plumb, as a working tool, tests perpendiculars. If a wall isn't vertical, it will not stand long. If a Mason doesn't lead an upright life, he will not enhance the fraternity in his community. Such a man will be of no use to his fellow man. The plumb stands for righteousness - an upright life before God and man. It is the standard in which we test morality. By understanding this symbol, a Mason can put it into use, the meaning of all of the Working Tools. THE LEVEL As a working tool, the level proves horizontals. As speculative Masons, we use it to symbolize equality. Equality of all men in the sight of God was practiced by Freemasons long before it was noted elsewhere. All Masons meet upon the level of equality - they are Brother and all have the same Parent. Equality has never, meant equality of skills or abilities. Freemasons are all individuals. Individuality has built nations, communities, and businesses. Individuality is dependent on the teachings we absorb in our youth. Freemasonry, from its formative beginnings onward, created the level of universal brotherhood. Brotherhood embraces mutual respect, understanding, peace, and harmony. We have kept out of the Lodge discussions of sectarian religion, politics and national credos. Such discussions tend to divide men rather than unite them. Symbolically, you are building a spiritual temple and it requires hard labor. Your horizontal platform and foundation is the same stage where you realize an understanding that all men are equal in the sight of God. The Supreme Architect of the Universe will approve your temple if it is level, plumb and square. THE PILLARS ON THE PORCH There are two pillars, symbolizing those, which are said to have been placed before the entrance to King Solomon's Temple, which are symbolically represented within every Lodge of Fellowcraft Masonry. No one can determine the origin of this practice, but it has been said that they are derived from the allusion to the pillars of Fire and Clouds in the Bible. (Exodus 13:21). These pillars are symbols of strength and establishment, and by implication, power, and control. One must remember that power and control are placed before you so you might realize that power without control is anarchy, and that control without power is futility. Man must have both if his life is to be successful. Even in those rituals found prior to the formation there were of the Grand Lodge of England in 1717 references to our two great pillars. Even then their symbolism was the same as today &c" strength and establishment. God promised David that he would establish his kingdom in strength. You passed between the pillars of your own free will. This signified you were no longer a youth. If you realize power without control is dangerous, you have learned the lesson taught by the symbolism of the pillars, and you were ready to journey up the winding stairs. THE WINDING STAIRS This represents the progress of an inquiring mind, toiling and laboring toward intellectual cultivation and study. This is the road to Divine Truth. The Winding Stairs, by their very shape, are also symbols of courage and faith. The Winding Stairs lead us to an unknown life. For some, there will be a Middle Chamber filled with the reward to fame and fortune. For others it will be filled with frustration, pain, and discouragement. The "Angel of Death" could stand on the next step of any traveler. Yet, we climb because we have faith, and because we are filled with courage. We believe that the winding stairs of life lead to our destiny, and that the wages to be earned by the Fellowcraft are worth the risk. The Three Stairs - you began your symbolic journey to the Middle Chamber by climbing three steps. They represent the three principle officers of the Lodge - the Worshipful Master, Senior Warden and Junior Warden, and the three Degrees of Masonry - assuring you that you are not alone on your journey. Also, since three is a symbol for Deity, you were reminded God was with you. You were spiritually tied to the fraternity. The Five Stairs - as it takes five officers to open a Lodge of Fellowcrafts, the five steps are the symbol of the Fellowcraft Degree. There are five architecture, and geometry is the fifth science. There are five human senses. ADMISSION TO THE MIDDLE CHAMBER The passage from the outer porch to the Middle Chamber represents man's journey from ignorance to enlightenment. His wages as a Fellowcraft are received in the Middle Chamber. These wages are a symbol of the Divine Truth. The candidate must also find the doors to knowledge, the outer and inner entrances. To enter one of these he needs a pass. To go through the other he must have a word. Help is given him in each instance, but such assistance is limited. This signifies that man must acquire knowledge and spiritual satisfaction largely through his own effort, and he is often dependent upon others for help. Emphasis should be placed upon the amount of effort put forth by the candidate for without effort he cannot read the reward, which he seeks. THE MIDDLE CHAMBER Fellowcrafts assembled on the evening of the sixth day of the week, and those who were entitled to the wages of a Fellowcraft were invested with certain signs, tokens, and a word, which enabled them to pass the inner and outer guards, and to enter the Middle Chamber. If they did not have proper identification, they did not get into the Middle Chamber to receive wages. In modern Freemasonry, the Middle Chamber is the symbolic place of reward. In Masonic mythology this was thought of as the place where the Fellowcraft met to receive wages for their labors on the Temple of Solomon. THE WAGES OF A FELLOWCRAFT A Fellowcraft's wages are Corn, Wine, and Oil. While climbing the winding stairs, the Fellowcraft learns a beautiful lesson and one of the great doctrines of the science of Masonic symbolism; that he is ever to be in search of truth. For the wise, there is also the lesson that the knowledge of the nature of God, and man's relations to Him, is Divine Truth and can never be fully acquired in this life. Corn represents nourishment and the sustenance of life. It is also a symbol of plenty, and refers to the opportunity for doing good, to work for the community, and the performance of service of mankind. Wine is symbolic of refreshment, health, spirituality, and peace. Oil represents joy, gladness, and happiness. Taken together, Corn, Wine, and Oil represent the rewards of living a good life. The Letter G It should -one as no surprise to-you to -earn that in English speaking Lodges the letter "G" hanging in the East stands not only for geometry, but is also the initial of the sacred name of Deity. And because Masonry teaches through symbolism, God is frequently called the Supreme Architect of the Universe. Masons believe in God so strongly and deeply that they do not pronounce his name carelessly. They don't want to lose the awe of God. Masons walk in His presence constantly, but it is impossible not to feel a little closer to Him in the Lodge with the letter "G" ever shining in the East.



