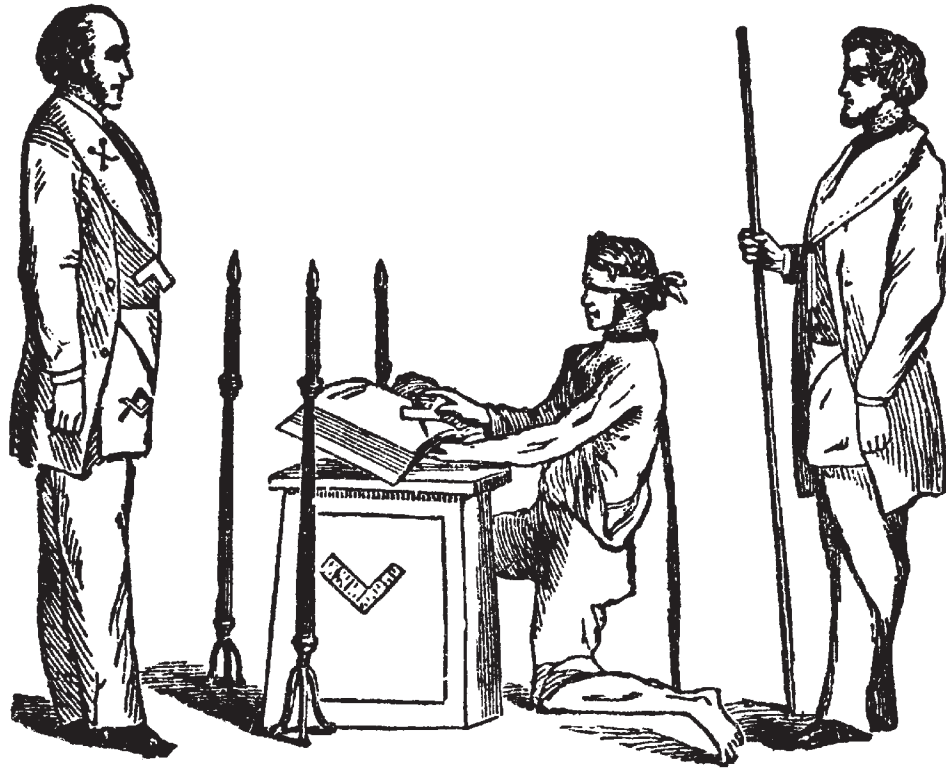


Behind Closed Doors: The Religion Of The Masonic Lodge



“I contend, without any sort of hesitation, that Masonry is, in every sense of the word, except one, and that its least philosophical, an eminently religious institution—that it is indebted solely to the religious element which it contains for its origin and for its continued existence, that without this religious element it would scarcely be worthy of cultivation by the wise and good”
(Albert Mackey, *Encyclopedia of Freemasonry*)

Behind Closed Doors:

The Religion Of The Masonic Lodge

Introduction

- I. In this lesson we are going to investigate a seldom discussed religion: the Masonic Lodge and its auxiliary organizations.
 - A. I have no animosity toward individual Masons; most are good fathers and honest, law abiding citizens.
 - B. This body of nearly six million men has done a lot of good, such as the Shriner's Hospitals for burned and crippled children.
 - C. Many great men in American history have been members of the Lodge: Benjamin Franklin, Henry Ford, General Douglas MacArthur, George Washington and 12 other U.S. Presidents.
 - D. Doctors, lawyers and judges are often members of the Masonic Lodge.
 1. Unfortunately, many Christians have joined their number.
 2. "Can two walk together, unless they are agreed?" (Amos 3:3)
 3. "He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters abroad" (Matthew 12:30).
- II. My respect for friends and relatives who are Masons does not diminish my abhorrence for their Lodge.
 - A. It is evil because it duplicates the sin of Absalom when he "stole the hearts of the men of Israel" (2 Samuel 15:6).
 - B. Masonry will turn a Christian's heart away from God.
 - C. The Masonic Temple is the Temple of Baal, and at it's altar many unsuspecting men vow their lives to a pagan god!
- III. Have you been told that a non-Mason cannot understand the Lodge?
 - A. Does a doctor have to have a baby to help a pregnant woman?
 - B. Some have claimed their "secret work" has never been written down.
 - C. Though their books are sometimes hard to find, you can obtain them.
 1. I have purchased from Macoy and the Ezra Cook Publishing Company.
 2. I have every issue of "The Northern Light" (for northern Shriners).
 3. I have more Masonic books in my library than most Masons.
- IV. I am going to be quoting from many books published by Masons.
 - A. It would be unfair to quote from anti-Masonic sources.
 - B. I sent letters to the Grand Lodges of several states and asked them to tell me what books would fairly and accurately represent them.
 - C. In this lesson, I will only quote from books recommended by Masons.
 - D. The Grand Lodge of Indiana recommended: *Goodly Heritage*, *Coil's Encyclopedia of Freemasonry*, and *Freemasonry Through Six Centuries*.
 - E. The Grand Lodge of Ohio recommended seventeen books, including: *The Religion of Masonry*, *Mackey's Revised Encyclopedia of Freemasonry*, *The Little Masonic Library*, and *The Builders*.
 - F. I will also be quoting from books published by the Grand Lodges of several states and books produced for the Supreme Council of the Thirty-third Degree of the Scottish Rite.

I. What Is The Masonic Lodge?

- A. "Freemasonry refers to the principles, institutions, and practices of the fraternal order of Free and Accepted Masons. The largest worldwide society, Freemasonry is an organization of men based on the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, using builders tools as symbols to teach basic moral truths generally accepted by persons of good will. It is religious in that a belief in God is the prime requirement for membership, but it is nonsectarian in that no religious test is used." (*American Academic Encyclopedia*).
- B. You must believe in a god, but you get to choose what it is!
- C. "There have been many definitions of Freemasonry. Perhaps one of the simplest and most direct is that employed by our English brethren: 'Freemasonry is a system of morality, veiled in allegory, and illustrated by symbols.'" (*On The Threshold*, p. 5, Grand Lodge of Indiana).
- D. The "Working Tools Of A Master Mason":
 - 1. The 24 Inch Gauge—to divide their day.
 - 2. The Common Gavel—to break off the rough corners of life.
 - 3. The Plumb—admonishes us to walk uprightly.
 - 4. The Square—to "square our actions" by virtue.
 - 5. The Level—to "travel upon the level of time."
 - 6. The Trowel—"spreading the cement of brotherly love."
- E. The Blue Lodge (the first three degrees) is the foundation for many other Masonic organizations:
 - 1. The York Rite (12 degrees).
 - 2. The Scottish Rite (30 degrees).
 - a) You earn the first 32 degrees; the 33° is bestowed upon you.
 - b) My grandfather was a 32° Mason, and thus wore the title of "A Sublime Prince of the Royal Secret."
 - 3. The Shriners (a social and charitable organization for 32° Masons).
 - 4. Order of the Eastern Star (for Master Masons and their wives).
 - 5. Order of DeMolay (for boys).
 - 6. Order of Job's Daughters (for girls).
- F. While it might be interesting to discuss these advanced degrees and auxiliary organizations, time will not permit.
 - 1. We will look at the foundation of Masonry: the Blue Lodge.
 - 2. Most Masons stop at the Blue Lodge.
 - 3. This is much like studying Roman Catholicism: if you destroy the foundation of the Papacy, you have destroyed the entire institution.

II. Is Masonry A Religion?

- A. Webster's Dictionary defines "religion" as "a) belief in a divine or superhuman power of powers to be obeyed and worshipped as the creator(s) and ruler(s) of the universe b) expression of such a belief in conduct and ritual."
- B. The answer to our question about Masonry being a religion depends upon who is asking and who answers.

- C. To the world, Masonry claims it is not a religion:
 - 1. "Though religious in character, Masonry is not a religion, not a substitute for one." (*Freemasonry, A Way Of Life*, Grand Lodge of Indiana).
 - 2. "Freemasonry is not a religion. It has a philosophy of its own, which is in harmony with the church, the school, and all other worthy organizations" (*On The Threshold*, Grand Lodge of Indiana).
- D. To the Master Mason, Masonry claims it is a religion:
 - 1. "Freemasonry is a charitable, benevolent, educational and religious society." (*Indiana Monitor*, p. 35).
 - 2. "Masonry, like all the Religions, all the Mysteries, Hereticism and Alchemy, conceals its secrets from all except the Adepts and Sages, or the Elect, and uses false explanations and misinterpretations of its symbols to mislead those who deserve only to be misled; to conceal the Truth, which it calls Light, from them, and to draw them away from it ... So Masonry jealously conceals its secrets, and intentionally leads conceited interpreters away." (*Morals and Dogma*, Albert Pike, p. 105).
 - a) This book was published under the auspices of the Supreme Council of the Thirty-third Degree of the Scottish Rite.
 - 3. "...as Masons we are taught that no man should ever enter upon any great or important undertaking without first invoking the blessing of Deity. This is because Masonry is a religious institution..." (*Kentucky Monitor*, p. 28).
 - 4. "Every Masonic Lodge is a temple of religion; and its teachings are instruction in religion." (*Morals and Dogma*, pg. 213).
 - 5. Masonry is the "universal, eternal, immutable religion, such as God planted in the heart of universal humanity ... The ministers of this religion are all Masons who comprehend." (*Morals and Dogma*, p. 219).
 - 6. "Masonry propagates no creed except its own most simple and Sublime One; that universal religion, taught by Nature and by Reason. Its Lodges are neither Jewish, Moslem, nor Christian Temples ... it extracts the good and not the evil, the truth and not the error, from all creeds." (*Morals and Dogma*, p. 718).
 - 7. "I contend, without any sort of hesitation, that Masonry is, in every sense of the word, except one, and that its least philosophical, an eminently religious institution—that it is indebted solely to the religious element which it contains for its origin and for its continued existence, that without this religious element it would scarcely be worthy of cultivation by the wise and good." (Albert Mackey, *Encyclopedia of Freemasonry*, p. 727).
 - 8. "Freemasonry is a charitable, benevolent, educational, and religious society." (*The Master Mason*, Grand Lodge of Indiana).

- E. In 1985 The Faith and Order Committee of the Methodist church issued a report on the Masonic Lodge.
 - 1. The report urged men not to join the Masonic Lodge since it is a "competitor of Christianity."
 - 2. The report also states, "There is a great danger that the Christian who becomes a Freemason will find himself compromising his Christian beliefs or his allegiance to Christ, perhaps without realizing what he is doing." (*Evansville Courier*, June 13, 1985).
- F. In the spirit of "ecumenism" the Roman Catholic Church rescinded its Papal ban on Lodge membership in 1983.
- G. We must "come out from among them" (2 Corinthians 6:14–18).

III. The Religious Element

- A. They have their own **Savior**—Hiram Abiff.
 - 1. "Now King Solomon sent and brought Hiram from Tyre. He was the son of a widow from the tribe of Naphtali, and his father was a man of Tyre, a bronze worker; he was filled with wisdom and understanding and skill in working with all kinds of bronze work. So he came to King Solomon and did all his work." (1 Kings 7:13–14).
 - 2. "All believed in a future life, to be attained by purification and trials; in a Mediator or Redeemer by whom the Evil Principle was to be overcome and Supreme Deity reconciled to His creatures. The belief was general that He was to be born of a virgin and have a painful death. The Hindus called him Krishna; the Chinese, Kiontse; the Persians, Sosiosch; the Chaldeans, Dhouvanai; the Egyptians, Horus; Plato, love; the Scandinavians, Balder; the Christians, Jesus; Masons, Hiram." (*Kentucky Monitor*, pp. 14, 15).
- B. They have their own **Baptism**.
 - 1. "**Qu:** What are the symbols of purification necessary to make us perfect Masons? **Ans:** Lavation with pure water, or baptism; because to cleanse the body is emblematical of purifying the soul." (*Morals and Dogma*, p. 538).
 - 2. The Bible tells us there is "one baptism" (Ephesians 4:5).
- C. They have their own **Fraternal Supper**.
 - 1. "**Qu:** What is to us the chief symbol of man's ultimate redemption and regeneration? **Ans:** The fraternal supper, of bread which nourishes, and of wine which refreshes and exhilarates, symbolical of the time which is to come ... And thus, in the bread we eat, and in the wine we drink tonight may enter into and form part of us identical particles of matter that once formed parts of the material bodies called Moses, Confucius, Plato, Socrates, or Jesus of Nazareth." (*Morals and Dogma*, p. 539).
- D. **Prayers** in the Lodge.
 - 1. "Freemasonry is a religious institution, and hence its regulations inculcate the use of prayer..." (*Encyclopedia of Freemasonry*, pg. 577).
 - 2. "Masonry, around whose altars the Christian, the Hebrew, the Moslem, the Brahmin, the followers of Confucius and Zoroaster, can assemble as brethren and unite in prayer to one God." (*Morals and Dogma*, p. 226).
 - 3. In the Blue Lodge, the name of Christ is not used. Their prayers simply end with "Amen. Amen. So mote it be!".

E. **Eternal Life** is in the Lodge.

1. The Entered Apprentice is told that the common gavel has the purpose of “divesting our minds and consciences of all the vices and superfluities of life, thereby fitting our bodies, as living stones, for that spiritual building, that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.” (*King Solomon’s Temple*, Indiana Edition).
 - a) “Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious, you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.” (1 Peter 2:4–5).
 - b) “For we know that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.” (2 Corinthians 5:1).
2. “Let him who toils complain not, nor feel humiliated. Let him look up, and see his fellow-workman there, in God’s Eternity; they alone surviving there.” (*Morals and Dogma*, p. 343).

F. Masonry’s view of the **Bible**.

1. There is a sacred volume on every altar in every Lodge.
2. “The Volume of the Sacred Law is an indispensable part of the furniture of a Lodge. In our jurisdiction it is usually the Bible, but any candidate not a Christian may have substituted for it any other volume which he considers sacred: e.g., the Old Testament, Koran, Vedas, or Laws of Confucius. In one lodge in China, there are three Sacred Books open on the altar at the same time, and the candidate elects one of the three on which he is obligated.” (*Indiana Monitor*).
3. “The explanation of the presence of the Holy Bible on the altar could not tell the whole story, although true in itself. It represents the Sacred Book of the Law, but has not exclusive rights as such on the altar of Freemasonry, for the supremely sane reason that no one religion has exclusive rights within the Fraternity. The Vedas of the Brahman, the Zend-Avesta of the Parsee, the Koran of the Mohammedan, have, among Masons of these faiths, as rightful a place upon our altar as the Holy Bible. In any faith, however, its Sacred Book of Law is the symbol of man’s acknowledgment of and his relation to Deity. And in this universality of Masonry we find one of our greatest lessons: Toleration.” (*The Entered Apprentice*, Grand Lodge of Indiana, p. 14).
4. Proselytizing is not allowed in the Lodge—this explains why Christians who are Masons cannot convert their Lodge brothers.

IV. **The Masonic Ritual**

A. The Entered Apprentice (*The First Degree*).

1. In the ante-room, the candidate is divested of all metal, hoodwinked, his left shoe removed, his clothing is arranged so that his left knee and left breast are exposed, and a cabletow is placed around his neck.
 - a) He is now “duly and truly prepared.”
 - b) He must knock three times at the door of the Lodge with his own hand.
2. After entering the Lodge, the Senior Deacon pierces his left breast with the point of a compass.
3. He kneels before an altar to take his first oath.

4. "I furthermore promise and swear that I will not write, print, stamp, stain, cut, carve, hew, mark or engrave them on anything moveable or immovable, capable of receiving the least impression of a sign, word, syllable, letter or character, whereby they may become legible or intelligible to any person under the canopy of heaven, and the secrets of Masonry be thereby unlawfully obtained by my unworthiness. All this I most solemnly and sincerely promise and swear, with a firm and steadfast resolution to keep the same, without the least equivocation, mental reservation or secret evasion whatsoever, binding myself under no less penalty than that of having my throat cut from ear to ear, my tongue torn out by its roots and buried in the sands of the sea at low water mark, where the tide ebbs and flows twice in twenty-four hours, should I in the least, knowingly or wittingly, violate or transgress this my Entered Apprentice Obligation. So help me God and keep me steadfast." (*King Solomon's Temple*, pp. 24–25).
 - a) "Again you have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform your oaths to the Lord.' But I say to you, do not swear at all: neither by heaven, for it is God's throne; nor by the earth, for it is His footstool; nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. Nor shall you swear by your head, because you cannot make one hair white or black. But let your 'Yes' be 'Yes,' and your 'No,' 'No.' For whatever is more than these is from the evil one." (Matthew 5:33–37).
 - b) "But above all, my brethren, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath. But let your 'Yes,' be 'Yes,' and your 'No,' 'No,' lest you fall into judgment." (James 5:12).
- B. The Fellow Craft Degree (*The Second Degree*).
 1. His body is prepared in similar fashion to the first degree, but the right side of his body is exposed.
 2. The Senior Deacon presses the angle of the Square against his breast.
 3. The candidate is here to "receive more light."
 4. Part of his obligation reads: "I furthermore promise and swear that I will not cheat, wrong or defraud a Lodge of Fellow Crafts, of a brother of this degree, knowingly or wittingly ... binding myself under no less penalty than that of having my left breast town open, my heart plucked from thence and given to the beasts of the field and the birds of the air as a prey, should I, in the least, knowingly or wittingly, violate or transgress this my Fellow Craft obligation. So help me God and keep me steadfast." (*King Solomon's Temple*, Ind. edition).
 5. In the third degree he promises not to commit adultery with another Mason's wife, daughter, mother or sister.
 6. He also swears he will always defend another Mason in all cases except murder and treason, these being left to his own conscience.
 7. Would you trust a judge or police officer who took this oath?
- C. The Raising of a Master Mason (*The Third Degree*).
 1. He is prepared by having his pants leg rolled up above the knees, his arms taken out of his shirt and his breast left bare.
 2. He is hoodwinked and a cabletow is wrapped around his neck.
 3. He is now ready to "ride the goat" (don't take this literally).
 4. He is going to relive the legend of the Grand Master Hiram Abiff.

5. According to their story, fifteen Fellow Craft Masons desired the "secrets of a Master Mason" that Hiram held.
 - a) Twelve later changed their minds. Three ruffians (Jubela, Jubelo and Jubelum) try to gain the secrets by force.
 - b) Hiram is finally hit by a setting maul and dies.
 - c) They bury him and plant an acacia at the head to conceal the burial.
 - d) King Solomon orders a search.
 - e) After 15 days, the body is found.
 - f) The Fellow Crafts were ordered to exhume the body.
 - g) When the smell arose from the body, they placed their hands over the nostrils in the form of the dueguard of a Master Mason.
 - h) They try to raise the body with the grip of an Entered Apprentice, but the flesh leaves the bone.
 - i) They tried to raise Hiram with the grip of a Fellow Craft, it failed also.
 - j) After prayer, King Solomon took the body by the strong grip of a Master Mason (the lions paw) and brings Hiram back to life.
6. "The idea that lies behind the Hiram Legend is as old as religious thinking among men. The same elements existed in the story of Osiris, which was celebrated by the Egyptians in their ancient temples; the Persians told it concerning Mithras, their hero God. In Syria, the Dionysian Mysteries had the very same elements in the story of Dionysius; the Romans, Bacchus was the god who died and lived again. There is also the story of Tammuz, older than any of these. These are collectively referred to as 'the Ancient Mysteries.'" (*The Master Mason*, Grand Lodge of Indiana, p. 9).
7. As the candidate is raised from the dead by the strong grip of the lions paw, he is brought into the "five points of fellowship" (foot to foot, knee to knee, breast to breast, hand to back and mouth to ear) and given the grand omnific word: MAH-HAH-BONE!
 - a) "MAH" from a Hebrew word meaning "What"
 - b) "HAH" a Hebrew word meaning "the"
 - c) "BONE" another Hebrew word meaning "builder."
8. All of this is similar to the secret rituals in the Mormon Church.

V. Captain William Morgan

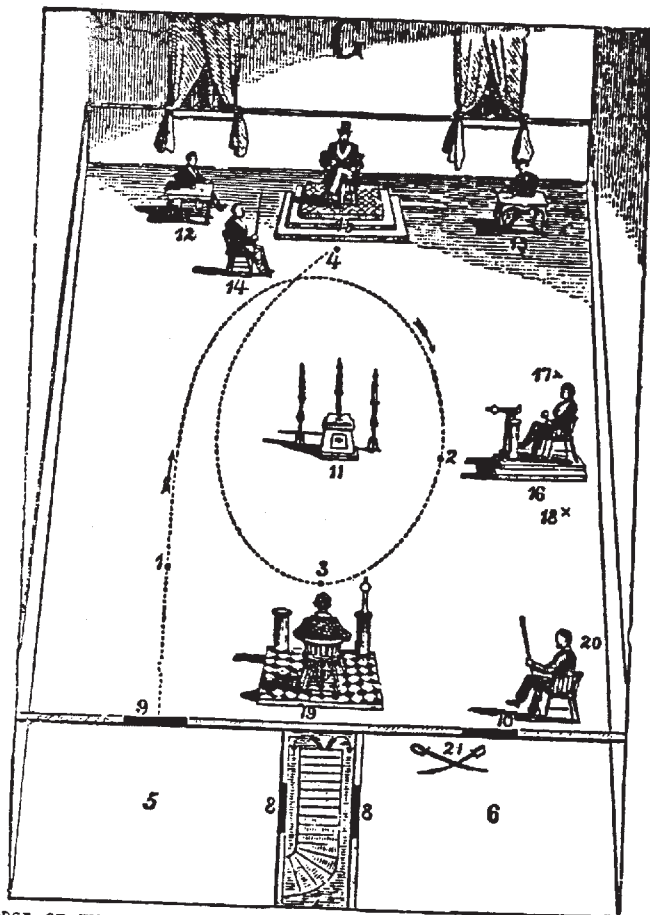
- A. In 1826, William Morgan of Batavia, New York, wrote and printed a book titled: *"Illustrations of Freemasonry, by one of the fraternity who has devoted thirty years to the subject."*
 1. "Morgan, it appears, was a Royal Arch Mason; and when the fact became known that he was preparing a work to reveal the secrets of Masonry, many of the Masonic fraternity became much excited, and appeared determined to put an end to his disclosures ... a Royal Arch Chapter was installed at Lewiston ... 20 or 30 persons came to the fort from Lewiston. About midnight, 7 persons, stated to be Royal Arch Masons, held a consultation on the plain near the graveyard, as to the manner in which Morgan should be disposed of. The prevailing opinion among them appeared to be, that Morgan had forfeited his life for a breach of his Masonic obligations, and that they ought to see the penalty executed by drowning him in the river." (*Historical Collections of the State of New York*, John W. Baker, 1842).

2. On October 7, 1827, a body was found on the beach of Lake Ontario.
 - a) A coroner's inquest was held on October 17, 1827.
 - b) The report states that "beyond any shadow of a doubt" the body was that of Capt. William Morgan.
 - c) It further states that "he came to his death by suffocation by drowning."
- B. In 1882 a large monument to Morgan was placed in the Batavia City Cemetery. It reads: "Sacred to the memory of Wm. Morgan, a native of Virginia, a Capt. in the war of 1812, a respectable citizen of Batavia, and a martyr to the freedom of writing, printing and speaking the truth. He was abducted from near this spot in the year 1826, by Freemasons and murdered for revealing the secrets of their order. The court records of Genesee County, and the files of the Batavia Advocate, kept in the Records office contain the history of the events that caused the erection of this monument."

Conclusion

- I. What can a Christian learn from a study of the Lodge?
 - A. We are complete in Christ (Colossians 2:10).
 - B. We have no need of Hiram Abiff as our Savior.
- II. God has revealed Himself through the Scriptures, and has given us "all things that pertain the life and godliness" (2 Peter 1:3-4).
- III. When one becomes a Mason, he is given a lambskin apron, and told that no greater honor can ever be given to him.
 - A. I submit that being a Christian is the greatest honor.
 - B. "Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this matter" (1 Peter 4:16).

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LODGE OF ENTERED APPRENTICES, FELLOW CRAFTS, OR MASTER MASONS
 1. Candidate prays. 2. First stop. 3. Second stop. 4. Third stop. 5. Room where candidates are prepared. 6. Ante-room where members enter the lodge. 7. Hall. 8. Doors. 9. Door through which candidates are admitted into the lodge. 10. Door through which members enter. 11. Altar. 12. Treasurer. 13. Secretary. 14. Senior Deacon. 15. Worshipful Master. 16. Junior Warden. 17 and 18. Stewards. 19. Senior Warden. 20. Junior Deacon. 21. Tyler.

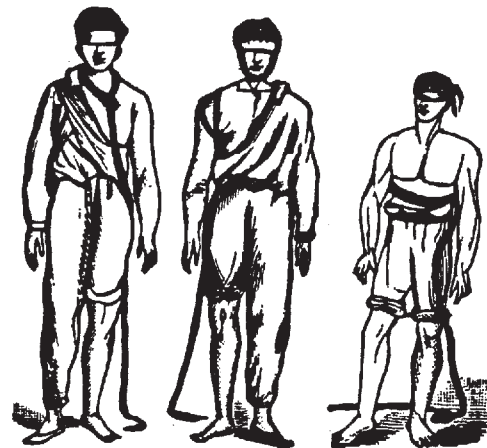
The Lodge Room



The Worshipful Master



The Strong Grip of a Master Mason or Lion's Paw



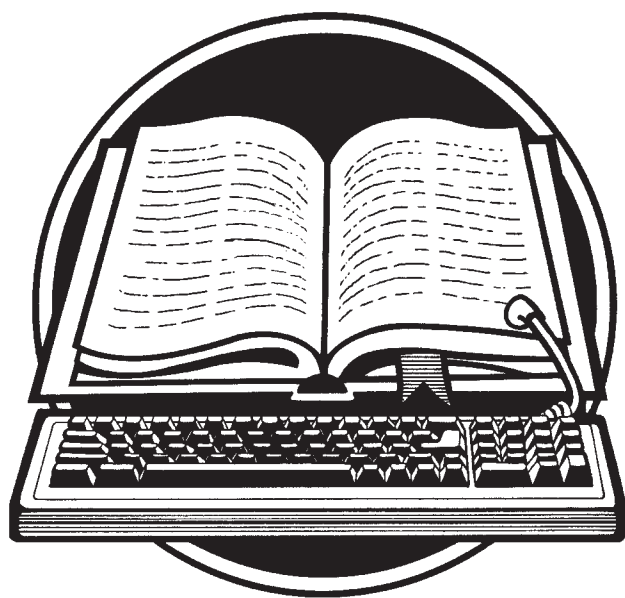
Duly and Truly Prepared (above)



A candidate taking the Entered Apprentice obligation



Candidate as Hiram Abiff falling into the canvas, having been struck on the forehead by the setting maul



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