

FOREWORD

This booklet has been prepared as one of a series of four to provide the new Mason with a greater insight into the degrees and to encourage him to seek additional Masonic Light. It is intended for a general non-technical explanation of the Fellowcraft Degree.

This series has been prepared by the Grand Lodge of Alabama through the Committee on Masonic Education for the use of the Subordinate Lodges and their members.

THE FELLOWCRAFT DEGREE

Amos VII

"Thus he showed me: and, behold, the Lord stood upon a wall made by a plumb-line with a plumb-line in His hand".

There is a tendency on the part of some candidates to take the Fellowcraft Degree lightly-as something of a stepping-stone which spans the gap between the Entered Apprentice and the Master Mason Degrees. Indeed, many experienced Masons make this same grievous mistake.

Possibly this is because the degree is relatively short and because it brings in what may have seemed to you to be pointless references to the Orders of Architecture, the five human senses, and the liberal arts and sciences.

In Masonry nothing is pointless or done without purpose. Every degree is fully capable of standing by itself as part of the Masonic system. Thus Masonry gave a part of itself to you in the Entered Apprentice Degree, it gave still another part in the Fellowcraft Degree, and will give yet another in the Master Mason Degree. Each is separate, distinct, and complete-yet each would be lacking without the others.

In the Fellowcraft Degree the teachings are there, but you must search for them. It is the purpose of this booklet to assist you in that search, and to provide a nucleus of information about the degree to which you should refer from time to time in the years to come.

The Mason who has just received his Fellowcraft Degree finds himself a bit puzzled at the emphasis on the globes, the five human senses, and the seven liberal arts and sciences. In our modern ritual they are symbols, as will be explained a bit later. Originally they served another purpose.

One of Masonry's principal duties was to bring light to a candidate by actually educating him. To the modern Mason, however, the formal teachings in the lecture are elementary-so much so, in fact, that when we first hear them we wonder why they were brought in at all.

As mentioned earlier, they are symbols. You, of course, noted that the Entered Apprentice Degree is directed to the heart. The Fellowcraft Degree, on the other hand, continues your Masonic instruction by being directed to the intellect.

The Entered Apprentice represents a youth standing on the threshold of life, full of all the eager impetuosity and confidence of his age-sure of himself and his ability to cope with problems as yet unknown to him.

The Fellowcraft represents man in his adulthood, in his prime, strong, tried, and experienced by the hardships of life. He is the person on whom falls the responsibility of providing for his family, of carrying the burdens of business and government. Day by day he is confronted with demanding tasks which he must accomplish as a matter of course.

He must be fitted properly for all that faces him, and the Fellowcraft Degree tells us that he can be so prepared in several ways:

First, he must learn through actual experience with life; in other words, by what he hears, sees, feels, tastes, and smells-by direct contact with life through the five senses. To the knowledge so gained today he adds that of yesterday and the days which have gone before.

But none of us can have sufficient direct experience of this nature to acquire the well-rounded knowledge we must possess as adults or Fellowcrafts. To the learning which we obtain through the five senses we must add that of formal education. Thus it is that the seven liberal arts and sciences are introduced into the lecture as symbols of the knowledge we gain through the teachings of others.

That which is imparted to us through the five senses we call experience. That which we receive by formal training we call education. The sum of the two, and immeasurably greater than either, is wisdom, which is symbolized in the Fellowcraft Degree by the Middle Chamber.

You will recall that you did not reach the Middle Chamber by direct means. Your approach to it-even as your approach to Wisdom-was by a flight of winding stairs. You never did know what lay ahead. So it is with the Fellowcraft, the man in the prime of life who daily makes more progress toward the Middle Chamber of wisdom but never sees clearly before him his ultimate destination, and never knows whether or not he will be permitted to attain it.

When your attention was called to the two pillars which greeted you as you began the second section of the degree it was an act of much significance. For we are told that the two pillars, apart from the way in which their globes illustrate something of the greatness of God and the magnificence of His works, also represent God's promise that

He would establish His house forever. And when you passed between these pillars, symbolically you acknowledged your faith in this promise and accepted your part in this covenant between God and man.

You were informed that as a Fellowcraft you were entitled to a Fellowcraft's wages. Corn, wine, and oil are mentioned many times in the Holy Bible-as offerings, as a means of payment of a debt, or a measure of prosperity. As a Fellowcraft bearing the responsibilities and doing the work of a man you are entitled to a just reward, both physically and spiritually.

You were also told that you were now considered worthy of the jewels of a Fellowcraft. Here, too, the symbolism refers chiefly to knowledge, for by the ear you receive information and instruction, and by the tongue you pass along your hard-earned wisdom to the attentive ear of a Brother. And the faithful breast alludes not only to the safekeeping of Masonic secrets but symbolizes once again the fact that the Fellowcraft is fully capable of bearing the duties of life and can be trusted to do so.

Your attention was drawn most forcefully to the letter of our Order related by Masons to Geometry, which symbolizes all the great laws of the universe; secondly, and to the Deity by Whose omnipotent intelligence and will the universe functions. Once again the emphasis is on wisdom-this time that great and Infinite Wisdom before which all Masons bow with humble reverence.

As a Fellowcraft you again have certain privileges and are subject to certain restrictions:

- You may not take part in a public procession while a Fellowcraft.
- You may sit in either an Entered Apprentice or a Fellowcraft Lodge, but not in a Master Mason Lodge, and accordingly you cannot have a voice in the affairs of the Lodge, display the Masonic emblem, or hold office.
- You have the right to a just and impartial trial in a Fellowcraft Lodge should you violate the laws of Masonry.
- You have the right to be instructed in the Fellowcraft Degree. In order for you to become proficient you will again need a well informed instructor, this will set the stage for your advancement to the Master Mason Degree, but will include the same provisions as was outlined in the information furnished you in the Entered Apprentice Degree.

While it is impossible in this limited space to go into complete detail relative to the Fellowcraft Degree, your instructor will discuss it with you thoroughly. Read again your charge at Passing to the Degree of Fellowcraft.

"Being passed to the second degree of Masonry, we congratulate you on your preferment. The internal, and not the external, qualifications of a man are what Masonry 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, that valuable branch of education 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 divine and moral nature, is enriched with the most useful knowledge; while it proves the 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."

Remember that in spirit you will continue to be a Fellowcraft for the rest of your life. The Fellowcraft stands as a living symbol of enlightenment and wisdom. As these became his possessions only after long and arduous work, he should revere and treasure them accordingly.

ATTEND YOUR LODGE

SCRIPTURE VERSES OF INTEREST

Amos	7:7-9
Nehemiah	1:6
Psalms	19:1-14
Leviticus	23:3

2 Chronicles	2:1-2
1 Kings	5:16
2 Chronicles	2:1-18
1Kings	<i>6:1-10</i>
1 Kings	1:13-22
2 Chronicles	4:1-22
Judges	12:1-7
Romans	14:11-12