

**A Basic Masonic Education Course**  
**FELLOWCRAFT**  
**With the Questions & Answers**



**A COPY OF "A READING AND FILM GUIDE FOR FREEMASONS"  
SHOULD ACCOMPANY THE EA COURSE**

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**A Basic Masonic Education Course**  
**THE FELLOWCRAFT**

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Grand Lodge F. & A.M. of California 1111 California Street San Francisco,  
CA 94108-2284 (415) 776-7000  
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These manuals, with questions and answers, may be given to a candidate BEFORE or AFTER the respective degree.

For further reading and research into Freemasonry and related subjects please visit [www.bowriverlodge.ab.ca](http://www.bowriverlodge.ab.ca) - 'A Reading Guide For Freemasons'.

## *THE FELLOWCRAFT DEGREE*

### **BASIC TEACHINGS OF THE SECOND DEGREE**

In one sense the Fellowcraft Degree symbolizes the stage of adulthood and responsibility during a man's life on earth. In this stage, his task is to acquire knowledge and apply it to the building of his character and improving the society in which he lives.

Early Masonry was viewed as a means to educate men in the liberal arts and sciences. A Fellowcraft Mason is urged to advance his education in these fields during the ritual of this Degree.

Some view the three grade system of Craft Lodge Masonry as representing a progressive teaching directed toward perfecting human nature. It is a simple and straightforward view of human nature divided into three parts: body, mind and soul. Each Degree addresses and instructs one part. The First Degree encompasses the body and our faculties of action in the world. The four cardinal virtues are extolled as the proper guides to our action in the world that we may perfect our relation to it. The Second Degree addresses the mind and its faculties. We are instructed in the Seven Liberal Arts and Sciences which were formulated hundreds of years ago in order to develop and perfect the mental nature. The intention was to prepare the mind for spiritual truths. The Third Degree confers the central Mystery of Freemasonry; that is, how the soul may be brought to its perfection.

If we accept the view of Masonry's purpose given above, then it is obvious that the Fellowcraft Degree encompasses much more than just gaining a broad-based education. The teachings of this Degree are extremely profound and surprisingly exact.

### **SYMBOLISM OF THE DEGREE**

The symbolism of the Entered Apprentice Degree emphasized beginnings, spiritual birth, the first steps and youth, orientation to the Light, which are all consistent with a rite of induction into the Fraternity. The Second Degree of Fellowcraft symbolizes the methods of developing and progressing in the Craft; and, in a sense, the emergence into spiritual manhood. Therefore we find symbols of advancement, passage, instruction and elevation throughout this Degree. We find symbolism of taking the next step and a new way of approaching the East. What was considered in the last Degree to be our weaker nature has now been squared and elevated. While keeping our fidelity to the Three Great Lights, we deepen our connection with the Fraternity and take on new commitments.

Our Working Tools are now testing instruments. With them we try, square and prove. With them we learn to develop the faculty of judgment: what is valuable, what is true, what is real.

The central motif of this Degree being one of advancement, we are presented with the symbol of the Winding Staircase consisting of so many steps and leading to the Middle Chamber of the Temple. Staircases, ladders, extended vertical ropes, and mountains are all symbols of ascending to new heights.

Gaining entrance to a new place symbolizes a distinct advancement in our work as Freemasons. Attaining this level gives us access to certain benefits that we were not entitled to before. These benefits are symbolized by Corn, Wine, and Oil. There are other things granted here as well. We become invested with the ability to hear the teachings of our Fraternity and keep them close to our heart. Finally, we are reminded of our central focus in the symbolism of the letter "G" and the humility it should inspire.

### **DULY AND TRULY PREPARED**

At the outset of this Degree, it should be clear to the candidate that although much of it seems familiar, it is also very different, and some aspects even seem to be in opposition to the previous Degree. There are certain avenues of further exploration that should be brought out here. We are usually given an explanation for most parts of the ritual in the various lectures. Some seem to allude to deeper interpretations. As we prepare to enter the Mysteries of Freemasonry certain things should be kept in mind. For example, the number three keeps emerging in the rituals in one way or another. Geometrically, three is the triangle. And in fact, there are three kinds of triangles: the equilateral triangle (all three sides equal), the isosceles triangle (two sides equal), and the scalene triangle (no sides equal). Scalene in one sense means unequal and used in another sense means limping. The most celebrated scalene triangle is, of course, the 3-4-5 right triangle, which is of special concern to Freemasons. We will cover this more fully in our discussion of the Master Mason Degree.

### **RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF A FELLOWCRAFT**

In addition to the rights you acquired as an Entered Apprentice Mason, you have the right to sit in a Lodge when opened in the Fellowcraft Degree, when accompanied by a Master Mason who has sat in Lodge with you. You may visit another Lodge opened in the Fellowcraft Degree. You have the right to be instructed and examined. If found proficient, you may request advancement to the next degree.

The responsibilities are found in part in the Obligation, and you should review these along with the Obligation of the Entered Apprentice. Finally, you are reminded that you are to acquire the special knowledge introduced in this Degree and seek to apply that knowledge to your duties in life so you can occupy your place in society with satisfaction and honor.

## ***THE WORKING TOOLS***

### **THE SQUARE**

The Square is the symbol of morality, truthfulness and honesty. The direction of the two sides of the Square form an angle of 90°, or a right angle, so-called because this is the angle which stones must have if they are to be used to build a stable and upright wall. It symbolizes accuracy, not even varying by a single degree. When we part upon the Square, we go in different directions, but in full knowledge that our courses in life will be going according to the angle of the Square (which means in the right direction), until we meet again

### **THE LEVEL**

The Level is a symbol of equality. We do not mean equality in wealth, social distinction, civic office, or service to mankind; but, rather, we refer to the internal, and not the external, qualifications. Each person is endowed with a worth and dignity which is spiritual, and should not be subject to man-made distinctions. Masonry recognizes that one man may have greater potential in life, service, or reward, than another; but, we also believe that any man can aspire to new heights. Thus, the Level dignifies labor and the man who performs it. It also acknowledges that all men are equal without regard to station. The Level also symbolizes the passage of time.

### **THE PLUMB**

The Plumb is a symbol of uprightness of conduct. In Freemasonry, it is associated with the plumb line which the Lord promised Amos he would set in the midst of His people, Israel, symbolizing God's standard of divine righteousness. The plumb line in the midst of a people should mean that they will be judged by their own sense of right and wrong, and not by the standards of others. By understanding the Plumb, a Mason is to judge his Brothers by their own standards and not those of someone else. When the plumb line is thought of in this way, it becomes a symbol of an upright life and of the conscience by which each person must live. This idea is closely tied to the concept of Justice. For, in truth, Justice is giving another man his due.

## **OTHER IMPORTANT SYMBOLS**

### **THE PILLARS ON THE PORCH**

Two pillars were placed at the entrance to King Solomon's Temple, which are symbolically represented within every Masonic Lodge. 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, or that control without power is futility. Man must have both if his life is to be successful.

The construction of dual pillars, obelisks, sphinxes and so on was not uncommon in the ancient Near East. It is not known what their exact symbolism was. Speculation ranges from their signifying duality (that duality or polarity are twin forces throughout Creation), guardianship of the temple, symbolic gateways, to the idea of being a connection between heaven and earth.

Some researchers have thought that the two pillars before Solomon's Temple represented the Pillar of Cloud and the Pillar of Fire which led the Israelites through the desert to the Promised Land. It was their guide in the light as well as in the dark.

The globes on the columns are said to be the celestial and terrestrial spheres representing heaven and earth.

The two pillars also correspond to the Three Great Supports of Masonry. The columns of Wisdom and Strength are emblematically represented by the pillars in the West. The candidate, as he is brought into the Lodge, comes to represent the third column of Beauty or Balance.

### **THE WINDING STAIRCASE**

As we mentioned before, the Winding Staircase is a symbol of ascension. It is described as consisting of three, five, and seven steps.

Much of the symbolism of the Winding Staircase is explained in the ritual itself. There are some points to bring out that may lead one to further research and insight.

The significance of the number three has already been mentioned. We have the three Degrees, the Three Great Lights, the three Officers, and the three Principle Tenets of Freemasonry. What we want to emphasize here is the Three spiritual Virtues: Faith, Hope, and Charity. These virtues were considered a ladder to heaven, another symbol of ascent. The Four Cardinal Virtues presented in the First Degree compliment these in the sense that the Four are symbolically horizontal (basically dealing with our actions here on earth) while the Three are symbolically vertical (referring to our method of ascent to further light). Our Aprons are composite examples of the Three and the Four making Seven.

The Five Steps are also explained in some detail. A few points for further consideration concern the symbolism of the number five. The geometrical symbol of

five is, of course, the pentagram. The emblem of Pythagoras' fraternity was the five-pointed star. At each point of the star was a Greek letter which all together spelled a Greek word meaning "health" (*ugitha*). The pentagram is a symbol of the Microcosm, that is, Man.

Another avenue to explore is the ratio of the column height to diameter. They are approximately: Tuscan 11/7; Doric 1/8; Ionic 1/9; Corinthian and Composite 1/10. It is also worth studying which order of architecture was used to build a particular type of temple. The Parthenon on the Acropolis, dedicated to Athena, is Doric, as is her temple at Delphi. The Ephesian temple of Diana, a moon goddess, is Ionic. The importance of the compass to the Ionic Order is also worthy of study.

The Seven Steps symbolize the Seven Liberal Arts and Sciences – Grammar, Rhetoric, Logic, Arithmetic, Geometry, Music and Astronomy. These were formulated as early as 330 CE. The Christian scholars adopted them soon afterwards and we find their full flowering at the Neo-platonic Cathedral School of Chartres in 12th Century France. The interesting work that came together here was the union of the philosophies of Neo-platonism and Christianity. The study of the Seven Liberal Arts was considered a means to the knowledge of God. This principle was actually expressed in the construction of the Gothic Cathedral of Chartres. We even find for the first time sculpted representations of the Seven Liberal Arts on the West Door of the Cathedral.

The Masters of Chartres taught that the proper study of the Seven Liberal Arts guided the intellect to approach the hidden light behind the world. The invisible underlying structure of Reality, the Truth, could be apprehended in this way. As another matter of interest, it was in the mid-thirteenth century that the humble mason who had mastered the Seven Liberal Arts was entitled to the designation of architect.

## **ADMISSION TO THE MIDDLE CHAMBER**

The passage from the Outer Porch to the Middle Chamber represents a definite step in the journey to enlightenment. The wages received in the Middle Chamber come as a result of achieving this distinction. Remember that the candidate had to first ascend the Winding Staircase in order to gain admission. The Fellowcraft must become proficient in the Seven Liberal Arts. A regular study of the subjects is demanded to gain admission to the outer doors leading to this Middle Chamber. It is **when the initiate begins to perceive the synthetic vision of this Masonic education and a special intuition begins to dawn within his mind and conscience that he knows the inner doors are opening to that Chamber within**. Outside, the candidate was shown a symbol of plenty, but here it has been established in fact.

## **THE WAGES OF A FELLOWCRAFT**

Corn, Wine, and Oil are symbolic wages earned by the Fellowcraft Mason who arrives at the Middle Chamber. These symbolize wealth in mental and spiritual worlds. 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 to the performance of service to mankind. The Corn referred to in this Degree is actually what we call wheat.

An ear of grain is an ancient symbol in reference to both the renewal of life and spiritual rebirth.

Wine is symbolic of refreshment, health, spirituality, and peace. Oil represents joy, gladness and happiness. Taken together, Corn, Wine, and Oil represent the temporal rewards of living a good life.

The actual "wages" are the intangible but no less real compensation for a faithful and intelligent use of the Working Tools, fidelity to your obligations, and unflagging interest in and study of the structure, purpose and possibilities of the Fraternity. Such wages may be defined in terms of a deeper understanding of brotherhood, a clearer conception of ethical living, a broader toleration, and a more resolute will to think justly, independently, and honestly.

Corn or grain has also represented the concept of resurrection. Wine has symbolized mystical attainments, divine intoxication and ecstasy. Oil is one of the elements of consecration and represents joy and happiness. Perfumed oil was used to anoint.

## THE MASONIC LETTER "G"

Why the letter "G" is so prominently displayed in Masonic lodges is an enigma to Masonic historians. Like the sphinx before the pyramids, it stands before us in silence and mystery. It is not consistently displayed throughout the Masonic world and there are Masonic scholars who feel it should be removed. The reason that it is so displayed is plainly given to the candidate in this Degree. We are told that it is the initial of Geometry as well as the initial of the name of the Supreme Being. From the time of the "Old Charges" and manuscripts up to the present, the synonymous nature of Geometry and Masonry is clearly stated. It is also obvious that "G" is the initial of God. This alone may be sufficient reason for its presence.

There are other considerations that the Masonic student might want to take into account. The immediate question for some may be why is Geometry given such exalted status? One might also observe that the word "God" is not a name per se, but is a category of being -like "human being". The name of the Supreme Being depends on what tradition a person follows, and it would not be incorrect to say that the True Name of the Supreme Being cannot be known. Obviously, then, the letter "G" does not refer to the common usage of that term.

These two issues have given rise to much speculation regarding the focus given to this one letter of the alphabet. We will offer a few of these speculations for your benefit.

The ancient languages of Phoenician, Hebrew and Greek all placed the "G" in the third place. In Hebrew, the order is *aleph, beth, gimel*. In Greek, the order is *alpha, beta, gamma* and so on. The Phoenician/Hebrew letter *gimel* means camel. There is an interesting passage in the *Gospel of St. Matthew* regarding our patron John the Baptist: "And the same John had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins." (Matt 3:4) In both Hebrew and Greek, each letter is assigned a numerical value as well as a phonetic one, so that "G" is equivalent to the number "3" in both languages. The Greek letter *gamma* looks like an upside down "L". It is two perpendicular lines forming the angle of a square. *Gamma* is also associated with Dionysus and resurrection.

## GEOMETRY

The importance of Geometry to a full understanding of Freemasonry becomes apparent to the candidate as he progresses through the degrees. He is unequivocally informed that Geometry is the basis or foundation of Masonry. A full explanation for this importance is not forthcoming, just that it is very important to undertake the study. We would suggest that the Masonic student might follow some of the following lines of research that he may come to his own conclusions.

It is thought that the Egyptians became skilled at surveying because the annual flooding of the Nile obliterated boundary markers in their fields. They had to set out and calculate new boundaries each year. The Greeks named this skill Geometry, or "earth measurement." Empirical generalizations were derived, presumably, from their experience in field measurement. The Greeks, it is thought, made the advancement of using deductive logic to expand the knowledge into a theoretical science, and Pythagoras is credited with this achievement. This actually set the groundwork for the development of the sciences. So we may consider Geometry the first science.

Mathematics and geometry were regarded by the ancient sages as sacred sciences that reveal the workings of the Mind of God. Pythagoras called numbers 'immortal gods'. We have such statements from Plato as: "Geometry rightly treated is the knowledge of the eternal." And also: "Geometry must ever tend to draw the soul towards the truth." Over his Academy were the words: "Let no man who knows no mathematics enter here". Later, Euclid systemically presented all the knowledge of Geometry in his work *Elements of Geometry*, beginning with five unproved principles about lines, angles, and figures, which he called postulates. Euclid uses only the compass and straight edge for all the drawings, proofs, and solutions.

There are some Masonic researchers who think that the letter "G" represents a little known method of Biblical interpretation known as *gematria*. One of the earliest known references to this method is found about 200 CE in the *Bariatha of R. Eliezer ben R. Jose, the Galilean*, which is a collection of 32 rabbinical rules. *Gematria* is listed within this treatise as a rabbinical method of biblical exegesis. As already mentioned, the Hebrew and Greek alphabets were also used as numbers. Therefore, every Hebrew word and every Greek word is the sum of the value of the individual letters. Exploring this technique of letter-number substitution, one looks for words, names, and phrases that add up to like values. Like values are thought to have meaningful relationships. For example, the Hebrew word for "heaven" (ha-shamayim) has the same *gematria* value as the word for "soul" (neshamah); that is, 395, derived by adding up each letter to arrive at a total. The Qabalist would say this means that the soul is identical with heaven.

Another example of *gematria* can be found by comparing the Hebrew words for "love" (ahabah) and "unity" (echad), both of which add to 13. Combining the values of these two words gives us 26, the number of the Hebrew word rendered in English as Jehovah, the principal Name of God. This is a clear intimation that the nature of God can be understood as Love and Unity. This exegetical technique can be used with both the Hebrew scriptures and the Greek Christian scriptures. There are other texts that have been found to contain hidden *gematria* in Latin and Arabic, as well. From the practice of *gematria* have arisen extremely interesting techniques, which reveal a type of spiritual Geometry hidden within the Scriptures.

### **NUMBER, ORDER, SYMMETRY AND PROPORTION**

The great teachings of this Degree revolve around the importance of the Masonic study of number, order, symmetry and proportion. The Masonic use of the term Geometry includes all of these. Nature is the true temple of the Deity. If this is so, then cosmic and natural laws are like the Trestleboard. These laws are discovered in the practice of the Seven Arts (they were called liberal arts because their practice liberated the mind). The ancient philosophers considered Geometry to have the power to lead the mind from the world of appearances to the contemplation of the divine order. Further study would most certainly include a detailed study of Pythagorean number philosophy, the Golden Mean, Plato's work, the Neoplatonists, and Qabalistic *gematria*

## Questions and Answers for the Fellowcraft Mason

### 1. WHAT ARE WE TRYING TO EMPHASIZE IN THE FELLOW CRAFT DEGREE?

In the degree of Fellow Craft, we try to emphasize the dignity and worth of the individual.

### 2. THE FELLOW CRAFT DEGREE SYMBOLIZES MAN IN WHAT PERIOD OF HIS LIFE?

The Fellow Craft Degree symbolizes man in the prime years of his life.

### 3. APPROXIMATELY WHEN DID WE START TO BECOME SPECULATIVE RATHER THAN OPERATIVE MASONS?

It began in the early 1600's.

### 4. WHEN AND WHERE WAS THE FIRST GRAND LODGE FORMED?

A Grand Lodge of England was formed in London at a meeting held in the Goose and Gridiron Tavern in the year 1717 A.D.

### 5. WHAT DOES THE LEVEL SYMBOLIZE?

The Level is a symbol of equality.

### 6. WHAT DOES THE PLUMB SYMBOLIZE?

The plumb is a symbol of uprightness of conduct.

### 7. WHAT ARE THE JEWELS OF THE FELLOW CRAFT AND WHAT DO THEY SIGNIFY?

They are the attentive ear, the instructive tongue and the faithful breast. They signify the necessity to learn to utilize good Masonic instruction and to develop a devotion to the teachings of our Craft.

### 8. WHAT DOES CORN, WINE AND OIL REPRESENT?

Corn represents nourishment and the sustenance of life. It also is a symbol of the renewal of life and plenty. Wine is a symbol of refreshment, health, spirituality and peace. Oil represents joy, gladness and happiness.

### 9. WHAT ARE THE GREAT VALUES OF LIFE? WHAT DO THEY SIGNIFY?

They are spirituality, which is man's quest *for* God; Brotherhood, which is life grounded in good will towards our fellow man (and Nature) since men, and all things, are of the divine; Art, by which we enjoy the beautiful aspects of Nature; Citizenship, by which we enjoy communal life; Science, by which we learn the nature of the world we live in; and Literature, by which we enter into communion with the life of all mankind.

### 10. WHAT DO THE WINDING STAIRS AS A WHOLE REPRESENT?

The Winding Stairs represent the progress of an inquiring mind, toiling and laboring toward intellectual cultivation and study. It reminds us that each man must seek knowledge of God on his own. Masonry teaches a need *for* this relationship and suggests that knowledge and truth may bring us closer to the Divine.

11. WHAT DO THE FIRST THREE STEPS REPRESENT?

The first three steps teach us that we are dependent upon God, and that we must harmonize our will with His, building our own spiritual temple according to the Divine Plan.

12. WHAT DO THE NEXT FIVE STEPS REPRESENT?

The five steps teaches the use of Order in Architecture, and that this order must be applied to our own spiritual building.

13. WHAT DO THE FINAL SEVEN STEPS REPRESENT?

The seven steps symbolize the crowning glory of man, and the development of both the mind and the spirit, and the acquisition of the courage and faith which cause each person who possess these virtues to climb to the summit and attain the rewards that await those who faint not.

14. WHAT ARE WE TRYING TO TEACH ON THE JOURNEY TO THE MIDDLE CHAMBER?

It was once said that the only real sin is ignorance. The symbolic journey to the middle chamber represents man's transition from ignorance to enlightenment. It signifies that man must acquire knowledge chiefly through his own effort, though 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 reap the reward he seeks.

15. WHAT IS THE MIDDLE CHAMBER?

It is the symbolic place of reward for your labors. Fellow Craft received their wages on the evening of the sixth day.

16. WHY DO WE USE THE LETTER "G"?

The letter "G" is a symbol of Geometry and, also of Deity. In the time of Pythagoras, geometry was science, and it was science that would lead to an understanding of Nature which was created by God. By the letter "G", we are reminded that our every act is done in the sight of God, and that Divine Providence is over all of our lives.

17. WHAT MUST A FELLOWCRAFT MASON DO TO UNDERSTAND THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE EMBLEMS OF THE DEGREE?

A Fellow Craft Mason must study them until the lesson learned is engraved upon his heart.

18. WHAT ARE THE FOUR RIGHTS OF A FELLOW CRAFT MASON?

To attend Lodge when opened in the Fellow Craft Degree. To visit another Lodge opened in the Fellow Craft Degree. To be instructed and examined in the Fellow Craft Degree. To be advanced when proficient in the Fellow Craft Degree.

19. WHAT ARE THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF A FELLOW CRAFT MASON?

In addition to his responsibilities as an Entered Apprentice, he is to acquire knowledge and apply that knowledge to his duties in life.

**FURTHER READING: Please see "A Reading and Film Guide For Freemasons" available at [www.bowriverlodge.ab.ca](http://www.bowriverlodge.ab.ca).**