

## **The Mentor's Address to a new initiate**

**(it is considered permissible for this to be read out)**

Welcome to our Lodge!

You have just completed the first of three ceremonies and you are now an Entered Apprentice Freemason. I imagine that you are feeling a little confused and puzzled about the ceremony. Well if it's any consolation, I was too when I was initiated. I found it a bit of a surprise when I was asked to hand over my possessions, get half-undressed and wait quietly in that small room. I know it's an unusual way to welcome anyone, but we've done it that way for hundreds of years.

We took all your valuables from you before we let you in, because we wanted to make clear that we're welcoming you because of your character, not because of what you own. We're interested in who you are, not what you've got. Freemasonry takes good men and makes them better men. And we've got a good track record for doing this.

What did you make of that blindfold? I bet you thought we were paranoid about you seeing who we were, before we'd made you promise to keep our secrets? Well that wasn't why we did it. Freemasonry loves acting out dramatic stories and we blindfolded you so that you couldn't see where you were going. Then, to make sure you didn't get lost in the darkness, we got the Junior Deacon to guide you through that darkness towards the light. In fact, he told you to take three steps of

different lengths and then to kneel in a rather uncomfortable position to repeat a promise.

Once you'd promised to keep the secret of how we help each other build better characters for ourselves, the Deacon took your blindfold off, so moving you from the darkness to light.

Once the blindfold was removed, and your eyes had recovered from that bright light, you saw three very important symbols on the Master's pedestal in front of you. You saw the Volume of the Sacred Law, the Square and the Compasses. These are what we call the Three Great Lights in Freemasonry. Think of the theatre and the main actors. They are the leading lights. You were looking at our leading lights then.

You will meet many more symbols in Freemasonry, we use them to help us understand what it's all about. Watch out for them, they will all have a meaning.

It's well known that Masons have secrets, and because you had already said that you could keep secrets, the Master showed you how to recognise brother Masons with passwords and handshakes. The secrets of the Entered Apprentice!

To make sure that you had been paying attention, the Deacon took you to see the two Wardens, who each asked you to show the Sign, give them the Token and to tell them the Word. The Deacon stopped you doing this, but then helped you do it very cautiously.

When the Wardens were satisfied, they told the Master, so he was able to tell the Senior Warden to put an Entered Apprentice Apron on you.

Next, we put you in the North-East corner of the Lodge, over there, embarrassed you by asking you for money when we knew you had none, and made you take the place of a stone! We asked for money when we knew you had none, to make you realise what it's like to have nothing and to need help. But we used the analogy of a stone for quite a different reason. Some working stonemasons, long ago, realised the massive task of constructing a great building is just like the lifelong job of building a man's character.

Whenever we tell you stories about building King Solomon's Temple we are really talking about building your character. Tonight, you acted out the role of the foundation stone of this better personality. That's why we called you a cornerstone.

Freemasonry helps you learn about yourself, and discover your purpose in life and in society. It teaches the value of knowledge and where to find it. If you hadn't been curious about Freemasonry you wouldn't have bothered joining.

You've now set out on a journey towards the light of knowledge and I sincerely hope you'll learn, benefit from and enjoy our ancient traditions. Your Proposer, your Secunder, I as your Lodge Mentor and all of the Brethren of the Lodge will be only too willing to help you on this exciting journey.