

This information may be freely given to Masons, however the following recognition is requested. The information contained in this educational paper was taken from the following books
Beyond the Pillars;
>From the many papers put forth by Quatuor Coronati Lodge;
The Old Testament; and Mackeys Encyclopedia of Freemasonry
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#1129. 15 min

SECOND DEGREE

The First degree is representative of birth and youth while the Second degree is that of passing into maturity. The Second degree is also known as the Fellowcraft degree. The word Fellowcraft can be broken into two parts and explained as follows. ³Fellow² refers to one who belongs within a group or has attained a certain level of efficiency or knowledge. Craft is simply an abbreviation for craftsmen. In the first degree the candidate is received on the pt of a S.I. pressing his N.L.B., that being nearest the heart, the symbol of the source of life. In this degree he is received on the A. of a S. pressing his N.R.B. The R.B. is nearest the right hand, which is the hand necessary for the craftsman to carry out his work of building. The words of warning given in the former degree are now changed to words of moral instruction. You will notice that there is repeated reference to the square throughout this degree...square your actions...by square conduct, etc. In this degree we learn about the building of King Solomon's temple. It was built on the summit of Mount Moriah in present day Jerusalem. This was also the site where Abraham prepared to offer his son Isaac as a sacrifice but God intervened and provided an animal instead. Today the spot is marked by a beautiful Mohammedan mosque known as ³Dome of the Rock². King Solomon employed some 153,600 workmen; they were divided into groups: 70,000 burden bearers, 80,000 stone hewers and 3,600 overseers. The laborers and apprentices were paid their wages in corn, wine and oil. Corn refers to any grain commonly used as part of their staple diet. Wine is to refresh and uplift the spirit. Oil played a very important part in the lives of the Israelites. It was used with food, in lamps to provide light, as a cosmetic and as a medium of exchange. So you see corn, wine and oil covered man's basic needs. Fellowcraft having advanced in wisdom and knowledge were paid in specie which translated means ³in coin.² The working tools in this degree are the S., L., and the P.R. They are movable jewels worn by the Master and his Wardens and are transferable to their successors. The S. is to test the work that has been finished. The level is to make sure that every stone is laid correctly in line and that the wall is perfectly horizontal. The P.R. is to enable the wall to be erected vertically true. The tools of the operative mason become moral guides for the speculative mason. The square reminds us to practice virtue and morality. The L. symbolizes that all men are essentially equal. The P.R. requires that every mason walk upright among his fellows, be temperate, dependable, considerate of others and just. The password in this degree is S... which is a Hebrew word that has two meanings (1) a flood of water (2) an ear of corn. Thus we hear in this degree ³ an ear of corn near a stream of water. At one time the Fellowcraft degree was the highest of the degrees. The Entered Apprentice presented his Master's Piece and became a Master or Fellow of the Craft. There was a time when the

Premiere Grand Lodge of England only required the rank of second degree to become a Warden and then Master of a lodge or even hold a position in Grand Lodge. This may explain why the three principal officers of a Lodge wear, as Jewels of their office, the Working Tools of the Fellowcraft degree, the Square, Level and Plumb Rule. In 1813 the formation of the United Grand Lodge of England the constitution required the rank of Master Mason. Today, under the English Jurisdiction, installations are carried out in the Fellowcraft degree. In the Senior Wardens lecture we learn about the architecture of the temple starting with the two pillars at the entrance of the temple. They were free standing and did not support a ceiling or roof. They were made of bronze and not brass as stated in the lecture. You see brass was not yet invented. Brass made its appearance in Egypt around 30 B.C. On top of each chapter was a bowl for oil. The reason for these pillars goes back to ancient religious practices. They served as holders for incense or materials such as wood or oil for illumination. In pagan worship in the land of Canaan the twin pillars were dedicated to Astarte and Baal who were the female and male gods of that time period. Our Masonic ritual tells us that the pillars of K.S. temple were dedicated to Boaz and Jachin. Boaz in Hebrew is made up of two parts (B) means ³in² and (oaz) means ³strength² and when compounded it signifies ³in strength it shall be established.² Boaz lived in Bethlehem; he married Ruth and they had a son who was the grandfather of David, King of Israel. King David in turn had a son who became Solomon King of Israel. The pillar on the right, named Jachin received its name from two Hebrew words as well. (Jah) means Jehovah and (achin) which means ³to establish.² when combined it means, ³God will establish his house of Israel.² Our ritual tells us that the pillar was named after J., the assistant to the high priest. It seems strange that it would be named after an assistant and not the high priest. The bible states that while the priests and guests were present, that only King Solomon officiated at the dedication of the temple. Many people ask how the left pillar is established. It was a usual Hebrew convention to take the cardinal orientation from the rising sun. Thus the east was called the "front," the west the "rear" the north the "left" and the south the "right." If this convention is followed, the pillar B. was to the north of the porch, that is, to the left as one looked out from the Temple. As you well know we have reversed these pillars and take their position by looking into the temple. This is again apparent by the position of the Deacon in relationship to the candidate while giving instructions during the floor work in the first and second degrees. While facing the candidate from the east in the first degree the Deacon is to the left representing the pillar of B. In the second degree the instructions are given by the Deacon on the right side of the candidate. I personally feel that it doesn't matter which pillar is which and that we should continue to follow the position as laid out in the ritual.

The Senior Warden tells us that the lily work from its whiteness denotes purity. In ancient religions the lily was the symbol of life, especially immortality. We still see this symbolism today in the Easter lily. The lily used on the column was the lotus or what we would call the ³water lily.² Passing by the pillars you entered a porch or vestibule. K.S.T. was a long, narrow building approached by 10 broad steps. They led through a tall doorway into a small porchway, with the main sanctuary beyond it. Back of this was the ³inner sanctuary² or Holy of Hollies. Here was kept the Ten Commandments

engraved on two stone tablets within the Ark of the Covenant. This Ark of the Covenant was carried by Moses through the desert when they fled Egypt and went to Israel. The main reason for building the temple was to house these sacred stones. King David spent his life fighting wars so the task of building the temple was left to his son Solomon. In the fourth year of his reign K.S. began the building which took seven and a half years to complete. Before we start with the winding staircase. I wish to establish the fact that there was no W.S. inside King Solomon's Temple. There was, however, a series of chambers attached to the outside temple walls on the north, west, and south sides. Each chamber was three stories high and connected by a winding staircase. These chambers were used by the priests for preparation, changing their robes, and to store the vessels and instruments used in the ritualistic services. In Masonry we are instilling and reinforcing a system of morals and ethics and the S.Warden's lecture forms part of the overall lessons. With this in mind we will continue with the W. S. The W.S. led to the middle chamber. Because of the sanctity of the chamber no ordinary worker or apprentice was allowed to enter. Only those craftsmen able to give the P.W. of a F.C. were admitted. The W.S. signifies an advance in knowledge and wisdom. The lecture states that the number of steps consisted of 3, 5, 7 or more. These numbers are strictly symbolic, the most common number being three. Most religions hold a triad deity, in the Babylonian religion it was Anu, Enlil, and Ea which represented the heaven, the earth, and the abyss. In Egypt it was the goddess Isis, her husband Osiris and their son Horus. We also have the Christian Trinity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The number five was an ancient symbol of life. It is found in many of the temple furnishings. There were five candlesticks and tables made of gold on the south side of the temple and five on the north side. To the F.C. five is the number who hold the lodge. It alludes to the five orders of architecture. Seven is the symbol of perfection and completion. God created the earth in seven days. Candlesticks in the temple were seven branched. Seven would be the number of animals sacrificed in the temple and also the number of priests involved to act on particular occasions. In the S.W.'s lecture we learn of the letter G found in all our lodges and should always hang from the centre of the room. It is also found on one of the tracing boards inside a triangle containing the Hebrew name for God. This was not always the case. In the beginning it stood for Geometry. How far back the letter G was used to represent geometry can only be guessed at. It did show up in 1525, printed in a book. It was shown on the base of a pillar enclosed by the square and compasses. In a Masonic catechism printed in 1730 we see the following:

Q: Why were you made a Fellow Craft?

A: For the sake of the letter G.

Q: What does it signify?

A: Geometry.

Q: Why Geometry?

A: Because it is the root and foundation of all Arts and Sciences. In 1766 we see it expanded upon:

Q: What does the G denote?

A: Glory, Grandeur and Geometry or the fifth science. Glory for God, Grandeur for the Master of the lodge and Geometry for the Brothers. The lectures in this degree are fairly clear and easily understood, the candidate is allowed to research into the hidden mysteries of nature and science and to prepare himself for the Master Mason's degree.