

GOAT RIDER 1

**A few thoughts about the
step you have taken**



This compilation of information is an unofficial publication.

It **does not** represent the views of **any** Masonic body.

It is designed to offer one Mason's plausible explanations of issues and matters that are not freely available for discussion and which clearly ought to be understood.

Simply put we are guilty of acting without knowing and we ought to know.

These thoughts are not the definitive explanation of the subject matter but simply serve to arouse the interest and to provide food for thought.

In life and Freemasonry the learned brother knows:-

- What has to be done,
- Where to do it
- When to do it
- How to do it
- Who to do it to

BUT

- Does he know WHY he is doing it?

The Goat Rider Series of mini books seeks to give the reader something to think about, if nothing else.

If you can accept this booklet as it is intended, as just one Mason's perspective, if you can accept it as that, then read on, if not, put it down, it is not for you....

YOUR FIRST STEPS IN MASONIC KNOWLEDGE

The Entered Apprentice Degree is far removed from all that is trivial, selfish and ungodly.

Its structure is built upon the everlasting foundation of the Brotherhood of man, and that foundation is the GAOTU

I have searched for Masonic light. Light in many, many places that have been veiled in allegory, and illustrated by symbols.

By “Light” I simply mean...”Education” – “Knowledge”

After years of studying the allegories and symbols of the many degrees I have found that I received the light I was looking for in the 1st degree, but the question always remains...is it the right light?

Let us start with the Volume of the Sacred Law which is given us as the rule and guide for our faith and practice. Maybe there?

In the VSL are found those simple teachings of the universality of brotherhood, the love of the GAOTU for his children, and the hope of immortality of the soul. These are the teachings of masonry in every tongue, in every land, for those of every faith.

The Square to square our actions, and the Compasses to circumscribe our desires and to keep our passions in due bounds with all mankind, especially the brethren.

The Working Tools of Entered Apprentice are the Twenty-four-inch Gauge and the Common Gavel, and are thus explained:

The **Twenty-four-inch Gauge** is an instrument used by operative masons to measure and lay out their work; but we, as 1st degree masons, are taught to use it for the more noble and glorious purpose of dividing our time.

It, being divided into twenty-four equal parts, is emblematical of the twenty-four hours of the day, which we are taught to divide into three equal parts, whereby are found eight hours for the service of the GAOTU and a distressed worthy brother, (and I stress the importance of the word worthy) eight for our usual vocations, and eight for refreshment and sleep.

The **Common Gavel** is an instrument used by operative masons to break off the corners of rough stones, the better to fit them for the builder's use; but we, as 1st degree masons, are taught to use it for the more noble and glorious purpose of divesting our hearts and consciences of all the vices and superfluities of life, thereby fitting our minds, as living stones, for that spiritual building-that house not made with hands-eternal in the heavens.

You will have noticed that our Master does not use the common gavel to rule and direct his Lodge. He uses the maul. Not a heavy setting maul, that is a different thing altogether.

You were taught **Caution**, which is to teach you to be cautious over all your words and actions, especially on the subject of Freemasonry when in the presence of its enemies.

The Supports of a Lodge, **Wisdom, Strength and Beauty**.

Wisdom, because there should be wisdom to contrive, Strength to support, and Beauty to adorn all great and important undertakings.

TRACING BOARD

While we do have a First Degree Tracing Board we did not present it to you on your Initiation for that is not our custom.

We do want you to read that particular charge and to ascertain and determine for yourself the lessons it contains. To aid you please consider...

The Covering of a Lodge is no less than the clouded canopy, or starry-decked heaven, where all good Masons hope at last to arrive by aid of that ladder which Jacob in his vision saw extended from earth to heaven, the principal rounds of which are denominated Faith, Hope and Charity, which admonish us to have Faith in GAOTU, Hope In immortality, and Charity to all mankind. The greatest of these is Charity; for our Faith may be lost in sight, Hope ends in fruit ion, but Charity extends beyond the grave, through the boundless realms of eternity.

Faith is the foundation of justice, the bond of amity, and the chief support of society. We live by Faith; we walk by Faith; by Faith we have a continual hope in the acknowledgment of a Supreme Being; by Faith we are justified, accepted and finally saved.

Hope is the anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and enters into that within the veil: let a firm reliance on the Almighty's faithfulness animate our endeavours, and teach us to fix our Hopes within the limits of his promises.

Charity is the brightest gem that can adorn our Masonic profession. Happy is the man who has sowed in his breast the seeds of benevolence; the produce thereof is love and peace.

The objects of true charity among Masons are merit and virtue in distress; persons who are incapable of extricating themselves from misfortunes in their journey through life; industrious men who, from unavoidable accidents, have fallen into ruin; Widows left destitute by lack of husbands' support; orphans in tender years, needing a father's care; and the aged, whose strength is exhausted, and who are thereby rendered unable to procure for themselves that substance necessary to nourish their declining years. This is Charity the keystone of our mystic institution.

*The **Furniture of a Lodge**, the Holy Bible, the Square, and the Compasses. As a more definite guide for a Freemason, the Lodge furnishes him with unerring rules whereby he should form his conduct.*

The Holy Bible is laid before him that he may not say through ignorance he erred. Whatever the Great Architect of the world hath dictated to mankind, as to the path in which to tread, and as to the mode in which He would be served, is upright and just, and will obtain His approbation; whatever precepts He hath administered, and with whatever laws He hath inspired the sages of old, the same are faithfully comprised in the Book of the Law of Freemasonry.

The Rule, the Square, and the Compasses are emblematical of the conduct we should pursue in society; to observe punctuality in all our engagements; faithfully and religiously to discharge those important obligations which we owe to GAOTU and to our neighbour; to be upright in all our dealings; to keep within bounds those unruly passions which often oftentimes interfere with the enjoyment of society and degrade both the man and the Freemason.

The Movable Jewels are the Rough Ashlar, the Perfect Ashlar and the Trestle board. By the Rough Ashlar we are reminded of our rude and imperfect state by nature; by the Perfect Ashier, of that state of perfection at which we hope to arrive by a virtuous education, our own endeavours and the blessing of Deity; and as the operative workman erects his temporal building in accordance with the designs

laid down upon the Trestle-board by the master workman, so should we, both operative and speculative, endeavour to erect our spiritual building in accordance with the designs laid down by the Supreme Architect of the Universe in the Great Book of Nature and Revelation, which is our spiritual, moral and Masonic Trestle board.

The principal tenets of our profession are threefold, including the inculcation and practice of those truly commendable virtues, Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth.

By the exercise of Brotherly Love we are taught to regard the whole human race as one family--the high, the low, the rich, the poor--who, being created by one Almighty Parent, and inhabitants of the same planet, ought to aid, support and protect each other. On this principle Masonry unites men of every country, sect and opinion, and conciliates true friendship among those who might otherwise have remained at a perpetual distance.

To Relieve the Distressed is a duty incumbent on all men, but particularly on Masons, who are linked together by an indissoluble chain of sincere affection. To soothe the unhappy, to sympathize with them in their misfortunes, to compassionate their miseries, and to restore peace to their troubled minds is the great aim we have in view. On this basis we form our friendships and establish our connections.

Truth is a divine attribute and the foundation of every virtue. To be good men and true is the first lesson we are taught in Freemasonry. On this theme we contemplate, and by its dictates endeavour to regulate our conduct. Hence, while influenced by this principle, hypocrisy and deceit are unknown among us, sincerity and plain-dealing distinguish us, and the heart and the tongue join in promoting each other's welfare and rejoicing in each other's prosperity.

The four cardinal virtues- Fortitude, Prudence, Temperance, and Justice.

Fortitude is that noble and steady purpose of the mind whereby we are enabled to undergo any pain, peril or danger, when prudently deemed expedient. This virtue is equally distant from rashness and cowardice, and should be deeply impressed upon your mind as a safeguard or security against any attempt that may be made, by force or otherwise, to extort from you any of those valuable secrets with which you have been so solemnly entrusted, and which was emblematically represented upon your first admission into the Lodge.

Prudence teaches us to regulate our lives and actions agreeably to the dictates of Reason, and is that habit by which we wisely judge and prudently determine on all things relative to our present as well as to our future happiness. This virtue should be your peculiar characteristic, not only for the government of your conduct while in the Lodge, but also when abroad in the world. You should be particularly cautious in all strange or mixed companies never to let the least sign, token or word whereby the secrets of Freemasonry might be obtained.

Temperance is that due restraint upon our affections and passions which renders the body tame and governable, and frees the mind from the allurements of vice. This virtue should be your constant practice, as you are thereby taught to avoid excess or contracting any licentious or vicious habits, the indulgence of which might lead you to disclose some of those valuable secrets which you have promised to conceal and never reveal, and which would consequently subject you to the contempt and detestation of all good Masons.

Justice is that standard or boundary of right which enables us to render to every man his just due without distinction. This virtue is not only consistent With divine and human laws, but it is the very cement and support of civil society; and as justice in a great measure constitutes the really good man, so should it be Your Invariable practice never to deviate from the minutest principles thereof.

THREE PRECIOUS JEWELS

The Three Precious Jewels of an Entered Apprentice, a listening ear, a silent tongue, and a faithful heart.

A listening ear teaches us to listen to the instructions of the Worshipful Master, but more especially to the cries of a worthy distressed brother.

A silent tongue teaches us to be silent in the Lodge, that the peace and harmony thereof may not be disturbed, but more especially before the enemies of Masonry.

A faithful heart, that I should be faithful and keep and conceal the secrets of Masonry and those of a brother when delivered to me in charge as such, that they may remain as secure and inviolable In my breast as in his own, before being communicated to me.

CHALK, CHARCOAL AND CLAY.

Entered Apprentices should serve their masters with freedom, fervency and zeal, which are resented by Chalk, Charcoal and Clay.

There is nothing freer than **Chalk**, the slightest touch of which leaves a trace;

There is nothing more fervent than Charcoal, for to it, when properly ignited, the most obdurate metals will yield;

There is nothing more zealous than Clay, our Mother- Earth, for it alone of all the elements has never proved unfriendly to man.

Bodies of Water deluge him with rain, oppress him with hail and drown him with inundation; the Air rushes in storms and prepares the tempest; and Fire lights up the volcano; but the Earth, ever kind and indulgent, is found subservient to his wishes.

Though constantly harassed, more to furnish the luxuries than the necessaries of life, she never refuses her accustomed yield, spreading his pathway with flowers and his table with plenty.

Though she produces poison, still she supplies the antidote, and returns with interest every good committed to her care; and when at last we are called upon to pass through the "dark Valley of the shadow of death" she once more receives us, and piously covers our remains within her bosom, thus admonishing us that as from it we came, so to it we must shortly return.

As from earth we came, so to the earth we must return.

A FINAL WORD

As from the Entered Apprentice Degree I started my search for light, so to the Entered Apprentice Degree I returned to find light.

All the secrets of Masonry are contained in the first three degrees, and it is those degrees we need to study to become well informed masons of any degree.

All this light can be found in the Duncan's Ritual and Standard Monitor in the Entered Apprentice Degree.

There are short cuts to degrees, but the only road to education is to read and learn all you can.

REMEMBER THIS

Do not believe everything you read, or everything you are told, even if I have told you unless, that is, you want to make what you hear a reality in your life. It's important to believe what's really true, rather than believing something someone told you. Rational thinking is the keystone to happiness and mental health. Rational thinking helps us overcome social anxiety. Rational thinking makes us better Masons.

NOW IT IS YOUR TURN

We have given you Light. Remember? That means Education..Knowledge.

It may be that during the weeks and months ahead you will be asked a question about Freemasonry that your Initiation did not cover (although we think your initial exposure was fairly comprehensive) and you may well remember the information this little booklet has provided and you might seek your answer there...

Considering all that you now know there is one thing that you must do before all else...you must ensure that the man that questions you is entitled to know the answers that you now have.

Make sure that his claims are genuine.

Make sure that he is a Freemason.

If there is the slightest doubt...the slightest doubt...tell him nothing.