



“The Lodge”

Lodge Presentation:

The following short article is written with the intention to be read within an open Lodge, or in fellowship, to all the Masons in attendance. This article is appropriate to be presented to all Masons. Entered Apprentice, Fellowcraft and Master Masons should be invited to participate when this topic is presented. Following this article is a list of discussion questions which should be presented immediately following the presentation of the article.

The Lodge

In Freemasonry the word Lodge has two meanings. It is both a place where Masons meet and it is the group of Masons that meet there. With our connections and esteem for architecture it is not hard to understand why the lodge building is an important place to us and how important maintaining and preserving these edifices is to each of us, whether we rent or own our meeting places.

The group of Masons that constitute the Lodge are arranged in a symbolic Lodge according to the details explained in the Entered Apprentice degree. The Entered Apprentice degree explains the form, supports, covering, ornaments, lights and jewels of the Lodge in detail. Because our physical lodges are traditionally built and decorated to represent the descriptions provided in our ritual, the line between our buildings and the symbolic Lodge sometimes gets blurred.

It is important to keep the distinction between the symbolic and physical Lodge in mind. Not that either one is any more significant than the other but that each represents a different aspect of who we are as Masons. In a large way our Lodges symbolically represent the good work that we as Masons do within and our core beliefs and tenets while our buildings give us a place to practice those tenets and introduce the next generation of Masons to our mysteries.

The symbolic Lodge is modeled after King Solomon’s temple at Jerusalem. The temple helped to consolidate and unify the many clans of Israel which helped King Solomon establish peace and stability among the Israelites. Because of this and many other reasons, the temple is an appropriate model for our Lodges.

The Rev Dr. George Oliver in his work “Revelation of the Square” wrote: “The Society adopted the Temple of Solomon for its symbol, because it was the most stable and the most magnificent structure that ever existed, whether we consider its foundation or superstructure; so that of all the societies men have invented, no one was ever more firmly united, or better planned, than the Masons. The edifices which Freemasons build are nothing more than virtues or vices to be



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erected or destroyed; and in this case heaven only occupies their minds, which soar above the corrupted world. The Temple of Solomon denotes reason and intelligence.”

Making this even more meaningful to us, we are also told that Solomon’s temple was modeled after Moses’ Tabernacle which he erected after he crossed the red sea. As the temple at Jerusalem provided a sense of peace and stability to the Israelites, so too did Moses’ Tabernacle provide the same during the time of the Exodus.

Our symbolic Lodges are erected with these two structures in mind because of what they signified to their times. While there are many reasons that our Masonic forefathers used these two prominent and magnificent structures as models for our physical and symbolic Lodges, I think the result is similar to what Solomon’s temple and Moses’ Tabernacle provided to the people of their times: strength, stability, peace and harmony.

As our organization was certainly founded on the tenets of brotherly love, relief and truth, modeling our Lodges, both the symbolic and physical Lodge, in such a manner does more than providing us with shelter and a place to do our good works. Our Lodges unite us and give us a common cause, a place where we can meet in harmony when the rest of our world is not. It is where we meet as equals to discuss those topics that may divide men of lesser principals and where we leave our quarrels with one another and emerge from its doors united.

In essence, our Lodges provide that sense of unity, peace, stability and inspiration that the temple at Jerusalem, and Moses’ Tabernacle before that, provided during their times and it is our responsibility as Masons to carry that forward and impress that upon our Brothers.

So remember the next time you attend your Lodge that not only are our physical meeting places modeled after these two timeless and magnificent structures, so too are our symbolic Lodges to provide us with the unity and consistency needed that we may all meet as equals on the level in peace and harmony.

Written by W. : Brother Patrick Cholka for the Grand Lodge of Wisconsin Education Committee
Grand Lodge Free and Accepted Masons of Wisconsin



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Discussion Questions

The following discussion questions are written to be presented immediately following the presentation of the topic above. They are designed to promote thought and engage all the members that are present in conversation. Take care that the presentation of the topic and the discussion questions does not exceed 30 minutes. The presenter can present any part of the questions below, or any additional questions, he feels is appropriate.

- Besides those elements listed in the Entered Apprentice lectures, what are some of the other commonalities between Lodge rooms and meeting places?
- How does the arrangement of the Lodge room encourage not only respect for the officer positions of the Lodge but also the equality of the Brethren in attendance?
- What are some of the other ideals that are represented by the arrangement of the Lodge room?
- If you recall the symbolic dimensions of the symbolic Lodge and explained in the ritual, how far does Masonry extend?
- Do the dimensions of the symbolic Lodge describe who is impacted by Freemasonry and the business we conduct at a Lodge?
- How is equality, an ideal that is strongly encouraged in Freemasonry, reinforced by the arrangement of the physical and symbolic Lodge?
- What other Masonic principals and ideals are encouraged by the formation of our symbolic Lodge?