



Internet Lodge 9659
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Paper 20/2007

Title **Secrecy in Freemasonry**
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Until recently, secrecy in Freemasonry was very strictly adhered to by the brethren, to the extent that a brother could not show by word or dress that he was a FM. The only way a brother recognized another was by the grip and the word. Without going into the reasons for this secrecy, it was realized that that it did more harm than good to the organization and that it was better to remove all secrecy. You can now openly show or say that you are a Freemason. You can even take a lay person into the temple to show him. The only thing that the lay cannot see or be told is the working and the grip, the word and the sign. These are like the secrets in a family which one does not want to talk about outside. If one wants to know what these are also, all that he has to do is join the organization, when he can see and learn everything.

But this is not the secrecy in Freemasonry that I want to talk about. It is the principles and philosophy of Freemasonry which are hidden behind allegories and symbols which are to be interpreted by each brother. It is even said that each brother must interpret these symbols for himself. There is a reason for this according to me. Freemasonry teaches many things that may appear contrary to the people outside, and, if these principles and philosophies are put openly into words, may lead to misunderstanding among the brethren. This does not mean that there is something different between the philosophies of FM and the various religions. On the contrary FM tries to show the basic union of all religious philosophies and tries to bring men of all religions together like one big family, unlike religions which tends to emphasise the sectarian differences rather than the basic philosophies common to all religions.

With the help of allegories and symbols Freemasonry makes each brother think and interpret these for himself. When you think for yourself, you see things more clearly and understand better, and along the way you may find other things that bring out the basic philosophy of Freemasonry and make you appreciate and understand FM better. As Newton in his book "The Builders" says, **"Those who seek find, not because the truth is far off, but the discipline of the quest makes them ready for the truth and worthy to receive it. The Highest truth is not a gift to be bestowed on us but a Trophy to be won."**

With the help of these allegories and symbols and the rituals, which are plays enacted for the benefit of the candidate, FM tries to teach the candidate about FM and help him to decipher the beautiful philosophy and principles embedded in it.

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