



Nugget

Ornaments of the Lodge

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The symbolism attached to the Ornaments of the Lodge.

Summary

A short discourse on the symbolism associated with The Ornaments of the Lodge, the Mosaic Pavement, the Blazing Star and the Indented or Tessellated Border.

Keywords

Ornaments, Ceiling, Carpet, Tracing-Board

The ornaments of the Lodge

The three ornaments of a Lodge are often overlooked. They are the Mosaic Pavement, the Blazing Star and the Indented or Tesselated Border.

Let us start with the Blazing Star, or the Glory in the Centre. It is shown at the top of Jacob's ladder, which is the destination we seek as part of our journey into the Masonic light. The Blazing Star can also be seen in some officers' jewels, including the Grand Master's where it surrounds the All-Seeing Eye; and it forms the background to the Chaplain's jewel. *[Hold up Chaplain's jewel]* In early masonic Lodges the Blazing Star was generally positioned in the centre, either on the floor, or on the ceiling. Its ancient purpose was to represent the nearness of God, of the divine presence. Biblical references include the story of Moses and the burning bush. It is often shown as an irradiated star with the letter G in the centre.

[The Presenter stands on the squares of the carpet in front of the Secretary's table, facing across the Lodge]

The Mosaic Pavement is represented by our chequered carpet. It represents contrasts. Typically, these might be happiness and sorrow; prosperity and hardship; life and death. *[The Presenter moves slowly to North-east corner, keeping on the squares]* You might think of a pace as representing the passage of time, a month or a year. During that year you might celebrate a birth, but that might be followed by bereavement in the family. You might gain promotion, or suffer redundancy at work. The carpet reminds us of these joys and sorrows. By travelling across it, just as you travel through life, you are reminded that the high points and low points do not last forever. It should prompt us to act rationally, practise charity, maintain harmony and try to live in brotherly love.

The Indented or Tesselated Border can be seen surrounding the lodge on the tracing board. The lecture explains that it refers us to the planets, which, in their various revolutions form a beautiful border or skirtwork round the sun. The tessellated border likewise surrounds the Lodge, and is often depicted at the edge of the carpet. The meaning derives from astrological concepts, which were a respectable part of science at the time when speculative masonry was developing. The planets were thought to influence behaviour, so the relevance of the tessellated border is the external influences on a Freemason's lodge, which may be good or evil (light or dark).

##END##

Recommended use of Nuggets

Nuggets offer a short, simple and readily absorbed means of progressing Masonic knowledge and an easy way to introduce learning to Lodges and Chapters. It is hoped that they will become a regular feature of Lodge and Chapter meetings as well as a source for private-study.

Nuggets can be included as an item in the summons and read at most Lodge/Chapter meetings. They can be:

- Read by either a new or an experienced Mason with the minimum of preparation and practice; *though ideally, they need to be read a few times beforehand.*
- Themed with the meeting or activity.
- Used to initiate a discussion within a Lodge/Chapter, LOI/COI, or group.
- Read at home and shared as a topic for a future discussion.
- Used as a focus for an unplanned, informal discussion.

For further nuggets and other learning materials visit 'Solomon' at <http://solomon.ugle.org.uk>

Acknowledgement:

UGLE gratefully acknowledges Dickon Sandbach as the author of this document, which is an extract from 'Interval Talks', and for his permission to publish it in this form.

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