



## Nugget

### Darkness visible

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An explanation of the term 'Darkness Visible'.

**Summary**

An explanation of the term 'Darkness Visible' through an exploration of the relevant passage within the Third-Degree ritual.

**Keywords**

Third-Degree, Darkness, Gloom, Morning-Star

## Darkness visible

In the first degree you entered the Lodge in the North, symbolising darkness. You emerged from that into the light of Freemasonry. You followed the light of day as it took you from East to South, following the morning sun, as you did your morning's work, improving your character by reference to the virtues. After refreshment you toiled again, arriving in the West, where the Senior Warden ensured that you received your due reward. As the sun faded, so the moon began to govern the night, reflecting the light of the sun. Using it you learned of the ways of nature and began your studies to refine your mind and understand the works of the Grand Geometrician of the Universe. But, as your studies led you to greater understanding, you found that natural light was inadequate to show you your path.

In the third degree you discover that the Light of a Master Mason is 'darkness visible', *'serving only to express that gloom which rests on the prospect of futurity; it is that mysterious veil which the eye of human reason cannot penetrate, unless assisted by that light which is from above; yet, even by this glimmering ray, you may perceive that you stand on the very brink of the grave, into which you have just figuratively descended, and which, when this transitory life shall have passed away, will again receive you into its cold bosom'*.

This passage is worthy of study. First, you learn there was no lack of light, and you were guided by the light that comes from above, 'the bright morning star' seen by the eye of your soul at the dawning of the first day of our renewed life. The light expresses the gloom; in as much as is it pushes away the gloom that hides the prospects that will await us. It is something that you cannot learn about, but which requires faith. You are then reminded of the limited time remaining to you.

At one time our former Brethren used an hour glass to represent the lack of time remaining to us, during which we are admonished we should reflect on that most interesting of all human studies, the knowledge of yourself. In particular the vital and immortal principle, which dwells within each one of us.

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##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>**

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