

## **Quest Book No. 1**

### **An Introductory Message on Behalf of the Master of Your Lodge**

I am happy to inform you of your unanimous election to receive the Masonic degrees at a meeting of our Lodge. You may have wondered at the length of time, which has elapsed since you filed your petition seeking this membership. There has been a reason for this, and I think you will find it rather gratifying.

Let us review briefly the steps thus far taken with respect to your petition: First of all, you asked two of your friends, members of this Lodge to sponsor your petition, to recommend you as worthy of admission to Masonry. Second, you were called upon by three members of an Investigating Committee, and they asked you searching questions, some of which you may have thought came close to being impertinent. Third, each member of that committee presented to the Lodge a written report of his interview, including such information about you as he may have gleaned from other sources. Had any member of the lodge raised an objection to your admission (orally or in writing to the Master or to the Lodge) your petition would have been rejected.

You were unanimously elected, so you have already passed more tests than you perhaps realized. This was not merely something achieved in the interval between the submission of your petition and its final acceptance. Your whole life, your reputation, the manner in which you have conducted yourself in your daily vocation, in your community and civic life, and in the intimacy of your family circle, your relationship with your church – all these have played a part in influencing the decision made by the men who are soon to be your brethren. See to it that your future conduct affirms the wisdom of our decision.

This information has been prepared by a committee of the Grand Lodge of Minnesota, known as the Committee on Masonic Research and Education, and I am happy to send it to you. It is designed to help you approach the so-called "mysteries of the fraternity" in the proper frame of mind, so you may get the utmost from the experience soon to be yours, and so that you may better understand the honor which is about to be conferred on you. I hope you will read it with deep sincerity and earnestness. I think, too, that it might be well if you ask your wife to read it; after all, if she is to share you with your Masonic Lodge, she should be permitted this perspective point of view. There is nothing secret in this information.

One of the definitions of the word, "Light" is "mental or spiritual illumination or enlightenment." You will hear much of this word. I anticipate for you real inspiration in your quest!

It will be the duty of your Counselor, a member from your Lodge, to be helpful to you in every possible way as you go through the degrees.

## **Your Quest for Masonic Light**

"How shall I prepare myself for Masonry?"

Probably every man who has been elected to be made a Mason has asked this same question. It is a proper one for you to ask.

The path you will follow in your initiatory degrees will be identical with that trod by every other Mason. You will be asked the same questions. You will be required to take the same vows. Likewise, you will be accorded the same honors. Whatever you do experience, be assured that every Master Mason has experienced it before you.

Freemasonry traces the derivation of many of its basic teachings and traditions back to an age where they are lost in impenetrable antiquity. Parts of your obligations may seem strange to you, because of their ancient origin.

As an organization of good men and true, there is a well-defined line directly connecting Masonry with the Operative Masons or Guilds, who built the great churches of England, the antecedents of whom were the Cathedral Builders of the middle ages.

Speculative Masonry, as we now know it, had its revival in England in the early part of the 18th Century. From this time dates Freemasonry in its present form.

We tell you these things so that you may better understand the reason for that which is soon to be unfolded to you. For Masonry is a great philosophic system of morality, or ethics, interpreted through allegory and by the use of ancient symbols.

Better defined, Masonry is a fellowship of men of like minds in their search for Truth, each working to aid the other in his efforts to attain finite perfection within himself and in every phase of his personal environment.

Your first step toward becoming a member of this Fraternity was to ask a friend for a petition, and he vouched for you as being a person not prompted in this action by mercenary motives or by the improper influence of others.

You asked this friend to whom you turned, to carry your petition to his Lodge. In other words, you requested him to introduce you into the intimacy of what has been to him a happy and cherished fellowship. In so doing, you implied that you hoped to be admitted into this circle and similarly enjoy the brotherhood of such association.

You promised to conform to the established usages and conventions of the Fraternity.

You stated your desire for knowledge.

You indicated your interest in better serving those you touch in your every walk of life.

But most important of all, you expressed your steadfast belief in God, for no atheist can be made a Mason.

Masonry defines God as the Supreme Architect of the Universe, the Supreme Being, Creator and Governor of all. The reason for such an impersonal term is that Masonry encircles the world, drawing no line between religions but uniting men of all faiths, so long as they believe in a Supreme Being. In this and many other countries men worship God, and the Holy Bible is regarded as the Book of the Law, being found on every Masonic altar at every meeting. But in many parts of the world, allegiance is to a Being called by some other name, such as Allah, or Brahma; and the Book of the Law may be the Koran or the Vedas. Thus Masonry, while not itself a religion, and though it demands a belief in a Supreme Being, recognizes the universal right of men to their own spiritual beliefs.

All this – the confidence you reposed in your friend, the fact that a firm belief in God is the very foundation upon which Masonry rests, the solemnity of this especial relationship between respected and reputable men whom you know in your daily life – all must have suggested to you that Freemasonry is not just another club of good fellows, an organization to be joined for the purpose of obtaining special privileges.

To a Mason, his Lodge is his Masonic home.

You will find that Masonry is dignified and inspirational in its manifestation to you who will soon knock at the inner door of the Lodge. It should, and will, play a vital part in all your future life, if you will but open your heart and mind, and let it.

Well-meaning, but thoughtless, friends may have suggested that there is contained within your initiatory work some phase which you will find embarrassing. You may have been regaled with stories of "riding the goat," and similar practical joking at the expense of the candidate.

Have no fear! There is nothing in a Master Mason's Lodge which does not have a direct bearing upon the lessons to be unfolded for your instruction. There is no mental or physical anguish awaiting you; no levity; no horseplay; and no embarrassment.

Put all thought of this from your mind. Be alert to all that happens as you progress upon your way. Remember that you have entrusted yourself to friends – friends in whom you can place the utmost trust and confidence.

Bear in mind that the role you portray as an aspirant is the identical role every Mason has played since time immemorial. Your experiences have been theirs, and theirs will be yours.

Lustration, or the washing with water, was a rite practiced by our ancient Brethren, before any act of devotion. It symbolized the dissolution of past error and transgression, in preparation for the beginning of a new life phase.

As you bathe, cleansing your body before you come to your initiation, think of the laving water as a symbol of such purification. Put on your freshest linen. Come as a suppliant.

But come also with supreme confidence of intention. Before you take one further step, you should know that Masonry has no place for the irresolute, the timid, or the craven. Be certain that you have determination to attain your quest for light, and more light as you progress.

Search your heart before you go to your investiture. Is there aught of hate, envy, meanness of spirit there? If so, do all that lies within your power to be rid of it. If you have any misunderstanding with any man, which can be corrected, do what you can to set this aright before you enter the Lodge.

If you are guilty of transgression or misdeed, make a sincere effort to amend it before you knock at the door of the Lodge.

Do not be ashamed to have a quiet period in the privacy of your own room, before you leave home. In your own way, ask God's blessing on this undertaking into which you are about to enter. Thank Him for this privilege, which is Yours – a free man in a free land. Ask that He may grant you understanding and perception, that in your new association you may experience a true rebirth of all those high ideals, which mark a good man and a useful citizen.

If you will so approach Freemasonry, you will find it everything that you have anticipated – and more.

We welcome you, Brother-soon-to-be, as you begin your Masonic journey, and promise that you will recall this step in years to come with ever increasing gratitude and satisfaction.