

### *The winding staircase.*

Once the Fellow Crafts had given the correct password they were allowed to ascend the winding staircase, which consisted of three, five or seven or more steps. These numbers represent the three who rule a Lodge - the WM and his Wardens; the five who hold a Lodge - the WM, his Wardens and two Fellow Crafts; and the seven who make it perfect - two Entered Apprentices added to the former five.

Three rule a Lodge because there were three Grand Masters at the building of the first Temple at Jerusalem; five hold a Lodge in allusion to the five noble orders of architecture, namely Tuscan, Doric, Ionic, Corinthian and Composite; and seven or more make it perfect because King Solomon was seven years and upwards in building, completing and dedicating the Temple at Jerusalem. They have likewise a further allusion to the seven liberal Arts and Sciences, namely Grammar, Rhetoric, Logic, Arithmetic, Geometry, Music and Astronomy.

### *The middle chamber.*

Having ascended the winding staircase the Fellow Crafts arrived at the door of the middle chamber which, although open, was guarded by the Senior Warden. He demanded of them the sign, token and word of a Fellow Craft, and when these were correctly given the Fellow Crafts were permitted to enter the middle chamber. Here they received their wages without scruple or diffidence. Without scruple well knowing they were justly entitled to them, and without diffidence from the great reliance they placed on the integrity of their employers in those days.

Whilst they were in the middle chamber their attention was drawn to certain Hebrew characters, represented on the Tracing Board by the letter G. This denoted God, the Grand Geometrician of the Universe, to whom we must all submit and whom we ought humbly to adore.



## District of Cyprus Mentoring Programme

### A series of Fact Sheets for a Fellow Craft



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## *The Second Degree Tracing Board*

In most Lodges during the ceremony of Passing an explanation of the Second Degree Tracing Board is given. The Tracing Board is full of symbolism and depicts part of King Solomon's Temple. In this fact sheet we explore some of these symbols and how they form an important part of the Second Degree ceremony.

### *The two great pillars.*

Much emphasis is placed on the two great pillars that were placed at the porchway or entrance to King Solomon's Temple. That on the left was called Boaz, which denotes 'in strength', and that on the right was called Jachin, which denotes 'to establish', and when conjoined 'stability'. The pillars were seventeen and a half cubits high, and four cubits in diameter. They were made of molten brass and were made hollow in order to serve as archives to Masonry. They were adorned with two chapiters each five cubits high and adorned with network denoting unity, lily-work denoting peace and pomegranates denoting plenty. The pillars were further adorned with celestial and terrestrial globes to point out Masonry universal.

The pillars represented the fire that gave light to the Israelites during their escape from their Egyptian bondage and also the cloud that brought darkness to prevent the Egyptians overtaking them. King Solomon ordered them to be placed at the entrance to the Temple so that the children of Israel could be forever reminded that they were delivered from Egyptian captivity.

### *The wages of the masons*

A large number of masons were employed on the building of the Temple. Entered Apprentices received a weekly allowance of corn, wine and oil, and the Fellow Crafts received their wages in the middle chamber of the Temple. To get to the middle chamber they had to pass the Junior Warden who was stationed at the foot of a winding staircase. In order to pass they had to provide the Junior Warden with the pass grip and password leading from the First to the Second Degree. The password is depicted on the

Tracing Board by an ear of corn near to a fall of water. The Password originated from the time that an army of Ephramites battled against Jephtha, who was a Gileaditish general. The Ephramites lost the battle and sought to flee across the River Jordon, but Jephtha had stationed some of his men there with orders to check all who tried to cross by giving them a test



word to pronounce. The Ephramites could not pronounce this word due to a speech defect and were thus slain. King Solomon therefore decreed that this word would be used by all Fellow Crafts as a guard to their privileges.