



PROVINCIAL GRAND LODGE OF DEVONSHIRE

Explanation of the Third Degree

The Raising of a Master Mason

Introduction

It is important that you understand the symbolism of your Raising, and this is explained in general terms below. Your ceremony of Raising may appear to be different to those in other Devonshire Lodges and wider afield, however we all operate under a warrant of the United Grand Lodge of England (UGLE). As such, all ceremonies are based upon the same basic story and symbolism although their words may differ, and the sequence of the various parts may change, the fundamental message is always the same.

However, in coming to understand the meaning of our Ceremonies, we have a problem, for different Brethren will interpret them in different ways.

What is more, none of them will be wrong. After all, if we were all able to understand the Ceremonies in a uniform manner, there would be little point in coming to our Lodges to witness them time after time, as their significance could perhaps be explained in a single visit.



Over a period of time, the ritual you see, hear and learn, will prompt you to think about it more widely and more deeply.

This will lead you to consider the one constant that should be in our minds – How can we improve ourselves as building blocks for the Temple we are contemplating?

The Third Degree Ceremony (Ceremony of Raising)

The Third Degree Ceremony is the most dramatic of the three. The ceremony teaches us to die with honour and dignity and expresses our hope for life after death. Death is inevitable and we learn to meet it face on with dignity.

Your Preparation

The Lodge was opened in the First Degree; Minutes were read and the Lodge opened in the Second Degree. You were then taken to the West and you were asked the Questions you were required to answer. These reminded you of the way you were prepared to be passed to the second degree and to impress on you the importance of developing your intellectual ability by studying the hidden mysteries of nature and science. In other words, be open to learning throughout your life. You agreed to persevere through the Third Degree Ceremony. The Worshipful Master then entrusted you with the **Pass Grip** and **Pass Word** leading from the Second Degree to the Third Degree. You then retired from the Lodge Room to be prepared for the ceremony.

Once again you were prepared to enter the Lodge in a special manner, entering the Lodge Room (without the now unnecessary hoodwink). This time you wore an apron of a Fellow Craft, signifying your advancement in Masonic knowledge.

Your entry into the Lodge

1. This time you were admitted into the Lodge by the Inner Guard the points of the compasses to your naked breasts and teaches and instruct us in the duty we owe to ourselves by circumscribing (controlling) our passions and desires and keep us within bounds with all mankind. The Lodge Room was almost in complete darkness when you re-entered and the Senior Deacon escorted you to the Point of Address where you saluted the Worshipful Master as a Fellow Craft Freemason and a prayer was made for the forthcoming proceedings.
2. During the first perambulation you were examined as an Entered Apprentice at the Junior Warden's pedestal. In the second perambulation you were required to provide the **Pass Grip** and **Pass Word** at the Junior Wardens Pedestal leading from the First to the Second degree, progressing onward you were then examined as a Fellow Craft at the Senior Wardens Pedestal and you returned to the North West Corner. The Worshipful Master then announced to the Brethren that you would pass in view before them, as a Candidate properly prepared to be Raised to the Third Degree.
3. On arriving at the Senior Warden, you gave him the **Pass Grip** and **Pass Word** leading to the Second Degree.
4. You will recall that you were instructed to approach the pedestal in a particular way. At the pedestal you took the **Obligation** of a Master Mason and agreed forever, to conceal the Secrets of the Degree.
5. As Freemasons we believe in a **Supreme Being**, in the third degree the Supreme Being is referred to as **The Most High** and it was in his presence that you took your Obligation.
6. The **Exhortation (Retrospect)** and **Traditional History**: In the Exhortation you were encouraged to reflect on the previous degrees in order to prepare yourself for the teachings of this degree. You are told that its peculiar objects are to reflect on death. This is so, and no doubt forms an appropriate conclusion to the study of yourself that is encouraged in the Charge. The ceremony teaches us to die with honour and dignity and expresses our hope for life after death. Death is inevitable and we learn to meet it face on, with dignity. However, there is so much more to it and reflection over time will lead you to consider many points.
7. You are introduced to the legend of King Solomon, King Hiram and Hiram Abif. Clearly there is a genuine secret that they possess, but that is lost following the death of Hiram Abif. A highly dramatic and poignant moment occurs when you represent him, following which you are Raised on the **Five Points of Fellowship**.
8. The Five Points of Fellowship, as they are not only a key part of this degree, but also of the whole Masonic structure. These were explained in detail in the Obligation.
9. After being raised the first three signs of a Master Mason were explained (**Horror, Sympathy** and **Penal**) and the '**Substituted Secrets of a Master Mason**' were then partly explained, after which in possession of the **Signs, Tokens and Word** of the degree. you retired from the Lodge Room.
10. Having restored yourself to your personal comfort, you returned to the Lodge Room, advanced and saluted the Worshipful Master in the 3rd degree and you were then invested with the **Badge** and Gloves by the SW.
11. The second half of the **Traditional History** was then related to you, with some explanation of how certain Secrets came into being. After which the remaining two signs of a Master Mason were explained to you (the sign of grief or distress and the sign of joy and exaltation called the **Grand or Royal sign**).

12. The substituted secrets are

- The sign of Horror
- The sign of Sympathy
- The grips (five points of fellowship)
- The two words

11. The **Working Tools** and their symbolism were presented to you in detail.

- The Skirret points out that straight and undeviating line of conduct laid down for our pursuit in the V. of the S.L.
- The Pencil. reminds us that our thoughts, words, and actions are observed and recorded by the Divine Creator to whom we must one day give an undisguised account of our conduct through life.
- The Compasses remind us of His unerring and impartial justice, Who having defined for our instruction the limits of good and evil, will reward or punish, as we have obeyed or disregarded His Divine commands.

13. Thus, the Working tools of a MM. teach us to bear in mind and act according to the Laws of our Divine Creator, so that when we shall be summoned from this sublunary abode, we may ascend to the Grand Lodge above where the worlds Great Architect lives and reigns for ever.

14. You will recall at your Initiation a **Charge** was recited to you: recommending how you should behave in your life and actions. Some but by no means all Lodge recite a **Charge after Raising**. This Charge warns the Candidate that he has a limited time on this earth in which he must complete everything he wishes or needs to do. He should uphold and defend the principles of Freemasonry in the knowledge that he may at the end of life Rest in Peace.

15. You then were moved to the East presented with a Ritual Book, you saluted the Worshipful Master as a Master Mason, and took your seat in the Lodge.

Conclusion

Through your preparation in the earlier two degrees, you are now capable of being raised to a new sublime level of speculative thinking. We are taught that death is inevitable, and we learn to meet it face on, with dignity. However, there is so much more to it and reflection over time will lead you to consider many points. **This will lead you to consider why you need to improve yourself. The purpose of improvement lies in a personal need to search for that Supreme Being (The Most High) for whom you have been, and continue to, build the Temple.** Through our work and especially through the Light received from the Volume of the Sacred Law, we are now able, on the centre, to contemplate this most important of matters.

At the end of the ceremony, you were told that the '**Secrets of a Master Mason**' were lost. What secrets? These secrets are not handed to you on a plate; therefore you must search further. Freemasonry is all about searching and researching. Your Personal mentor may help you or you could consult **Solomon** – see below

As a new Master Mason it is hoped that you will wish, in a short while, to embark on an exciting ladder of progression within your Lodge, culminating in years to come with your Installation as Worshipful Master. To be installed as Worshipful Master of his Lodge is the pinnacle of a man's Masonic Career.

However, for the moment the key words are, Watch, Learn, and Listen. Acquire and read a Book of Ritual and look at Solomon and browse through the Book of Constitutions. Constantly question your Mentor, he will be pleased to talk with you.

The Royal Arch

In the fullness of time you will be encouraged to complement your Master Masons Degree by joining a Royal Arch Chapter. Your Mentor will be able to give you all the information which you

require on this degree. This degree is the next step on the path of Pure Ancient Masonry (and can be considered as the completion of your 3rd degree. It reveals how the genuine secrets of a Master Mason came to be rediscovered and again there are important moral lessons to be learnt.

In your previous degrees you were given **Questions and Answers** leading between the degrees. The **Questions and Answers** in the 3rd degree are not generally given in Devonshire. However in some Provinces these **Questions and Answers** are required to gain access to a **Royal Arch** Chapter.

Solomon: Gaining Access

Solomon is the UGLE platform for your journey of Masonic Learning and Development which is accessed through the internet at <https://solomon.ugle.org.uk> or using the QR code at the bottom left of the page. If you require help, there is a special section (for which you do not need to register) entitled "Getting Started with Solomon" and is accessed from the above link or the QR code on the bottom right which includes help and instructional videos.

Solomon Home
Page



Getting started
with Solomon



Solomon: Do not spoil your future enjoyment!

Solomon is split into many different areas (*modules*) to aid your learning and development in masonry. Each are clearly labelled, hence as Master Mason only access those for the ceremonies you have undertaken. Dedicate to the Third Degree are [The Third Degree \(ugle.org.uk\)](https://solomon.ugle.org.uk/course/view.php?id=129) and [Welcome Master Mason \(ugle.org.uk\)](https://solomon.ugle.org.uk/course/view.php?id=129). If you access other areas you will discover information on your future ceremonies that will lessen the impact (and potential enjoyment) of the future ceremonies through which you may pass.

The module [Lodge Matters \(ugle.org.uk\)](https://solomon.ugle.org.uk/course/view.php?id=129) has a great deal of material, on such things as Masonic Etiquette, Offices, artefacts and the like. There is also another complimentary module [on Masonic History \(ugle.org.uk\)](https://solomon.ugle.org.uk/course/view.php?id=129) both should be looked at conjointly with this module.

Solomon: Welcome Modules

The module **Welcome Master Mason** (<https://solomon.ugle.org.uk/course/view.php?id=129>) is in ten parts, which you can complete at your own pace, or explore individually as they take your interest. Badges can be earned for 100% successful completion.

Some of the activities may need to be undertaken a few times before they can be successfully completed. That is why we provide practice quizzes for you. It is intended to be a bit of fun, and not to catch you out. An important part of learning is experimentation, and we hope you will go back and repeat the quiz to earn your badge.