

The Master and His Transformation Process

One of Masonry's most profound symbolisms is the transformation of a rough stone into a polished stone. When initiated in Masonry, we see the rough stone close to the Senior Warden's chair, and we are informed that the apprentice's mission is to transform the rough stone into a polished or cubic stone.

Many traditions see the stone as an earthly expression of celestial energy. For instance, some studies show the relationship between the stones and the chakras of the yogis. Stones are used in all constructions. Ancient stonemasons polished them and used them when building temples. Speculative masonry makes an analogy between that building process and the construction of a man's interior temple.

A rough stone symbolizes our interior imperfections in the spiritual, intellectual, psychological or moral domains. Such stone is crude and uneven. It is able to absorb light though it cannot reflect it. An apprentice is still incapable of gathering all the light that masonry offers him. Each neophyte sees the stone according to his own background history, intellectual development, and spiritual evolution. He recognizes his own limitations. Yet, he carries the deep and sincere desire to satisfactorily accomplish the task assigned to him. Each apprentice is in charge of polishing his stone with the gavel of knowledge and the chisel of prayer.

The neophyte, like a good constructor, must plan before he starts building. What kind of stone would he like to become? What kind of temple would he like to build? During this process, the apprentice struggles and needs to keep trying. He may feel tired and desperate, and the feeling of powerlessness may also be present. He looks up and claims for the Great Architect of the Universe for he knows he is loved more than anything. It is also the time when the apprentice realizes that he should love his stone with great intensity for he is the stone himself. He should also love the other stones, which are his brothers who have experienced the same process. They may remember their own initiation tests. They have dealt with them. They have continued with faith and determination. They comprehend that the most beautiful sculptures were once rough stones. They also know that the initiation ritual has a beginning and an end, while the initiation process only has a beginning.

You voluntarily become a Freemason. However, your decision is inspired by the Divine Wisdom. The Great Architect of the Universe by using Celestial Geometry unites the three points of the triangle – God, Masonry, and you.

It is common to say that you have polished the stone when you are raised a Master mason. Yet, if you look at it with the maturity of a real master, you realize that the polished stone will always be in need of refining –shining one side or buffing the other. You conclude that life is a continuous polishing process.

Otavio Vieira, KSA
Cypress Lodge 295 Naples, FL
Scottish Rite, Valley of Fort Myers, Orient of Florida