



### **What can you tell me about Freemasonry?**

Some historians trace Freemasonry to the Tenth Century, B.C., during the building of King Solomon's Temple. Records reveal that Freemasonry was introduced into England in 926 A.D.

Many other historians believe that Freemasonry is directly descended from the association of operative masons, the cathedral builders of the Middle Ages, who traveled through Europe employing the secrets and skills of their crafts.

In the 17th Century, when cathedral building was on the decline, many guilds of stone-masons, known as "Operative Masons" or "Free Masons," started to accept as members those who were not members of the masons' craft, calling them "speculative Masons" or "Accepted Masons."

### **Why are you called Freemasons? (or Masons for short)**

The name definitely dates back to the days when Masonry was almost wholly operative in character and masons worked in free stone (which could be carved), and hence were called "free-stone masons", later shortened to "freemasons"

### **Is Freemasonry a charitable organization?**

It is not a charitable organization as such, but it engages in many acts of charity.

### **Is Masonry a religion ?**

Freemasonry is not a religion even though it is religious in character. It does not pretend to take the place of religion nor serve as a substitute for the religious beliefs of its members.

Freemasonry accepts men, found to be worthy, regardless of religious convictions. An essential requirement is a belief in the existence of a Supreme Being.

It teaches the Golden Rule. It seeks to make good men better through its firm belief in the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man.

### **Is Masonry a secret organization ?**

Contrary to what many believe, Freemasonry is not a secret society. It does not hide its existence or its membership.

There has been no attempt to conceal the purpose, aims and principles of Freemasonry. It is an organization formed and existing on the broad basis of Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth. Its constitutions are published for the world to behold. Its rules and regulations are open for inspection.

Today, there are more than 160 Grand Lodges in free countries of the world with a membership of more than 3.6 million. In the United States there are

51 Grand Lodges. There are approximately 1,600,000 Freemasons in the 51 Jurisdictions of the United States.

**What was the origin of the expression "Blue Lodges?"**

The strongest theory is where some believe that operative Masons felt that blue, the color of the sky both by day and by night, was associated in their minds with the purity of Deity, which Masons attempt to emulate.

**I've heard about penalties. What Masonic penalties are actually enforced?**

Censure, suspension and expulsion. Other penalties mentioned in the Ritual are only symbolic.

**Who may join ?**

Membership is limited to adult males who can meet the recognized qualifications and standards of character and reputation.

A man becomes a Freemason through his own volition. No one is asked to join its ranks. When a man seeks admission to a Symbolic Lodge, it is of his own free will and accord. The choice is his.

One of the customs of Freemasonry is not to solicit members. One seeking admission must have a desire and must request a petition form from one whom he believes to be a Mason.

The petitioner must be recommended by two Master Masons and pass a unanimous ballot. The petitioner must be 18 years of age, mentally competent, of good moral character and believe in the existence of

a Supreme Being.

**What Freemasonry Is Not**

Freemasonry is not an insurance or beneficial society. It is not organized for profit. However, the charity and services rendered are beyond measure.

**Is there a short answer for what Masonry is all about ?**

Freemasonry is kindness in the home, honesty in business, courtesy in society, fairness in work, pity and concern for the unfortunate, resistance toward evil, help for the weak, forgiveness for the penitent, love for one another, and above all reverence and love for God.

**Where can additional information concerning Freemasonry be obtained?**

Contact any local Lodge listed on the web at [www.nhgrandlodge.org](http://www.nhgrandlodge.org) or "ask any Mason".