

The Gavel of Freemasonry

In reality, there are two gavels in Masonry. The one used by the Master as the symbol of his authority, which will assist him in maintaining harmony within the Lodge And the other is the Working Tool in the Entered Apprentice degree. The symbolism of both of these gavels is ancient in its origin and honourable in its practice.

The Gavel, as a sign of authority, has been used to ruled and conduct all types of assemblies. From small social groups in a town to important legislatures, supreme courts, Prime Ministers, and Kings and Queens, the Gavel demands order, and respect. Passing the Gavel to another person also passes, for the time being, the authority once held by the previous person. The absolute ruler in the Lodge is the Master who holds his Gavel. Even the Grand Master cannot rule over a Lodge until the Master of the Lodge gives him the Gavel.

The other Gavel; the one in the First degree, is the one the workmen use in their Craft. Its is believed to be just as important as the other Gavel for no Master can open his Lodge unless other Masons are present in the room. He cannot employ and instruct his Brethren unless his Brethren are at labour. His Lodge will not perform the work in a just and proper manner until the workers of the Lodge are willing to do so. The Master, even with the powers offered to him by his Gavel, cannot forcefully make the Brethren of his Lodge do the work, even if they have answered to his summon and are now present in the Lodge.

For the Master, the honour, reputation and usefulness of his Lodge, will all crumble unless the workmen of the Lodge are interested in their work. Unless they are proud of the work they perform in the lodge. Unless each worker is proud to present to others his Master's Piece as part of the degree being offered in the Lodge room. It is then, my Brethren that the Gavel of the Working Tools, which represents labour, becomes one of the main instruments for the Brethren of the Lodge to teach to the new apprentice some of the principal tenets of our Order. He will learn that it is by working together that we maintain the greatness of our Fraternity. Each of the workmen needs to be able to form a mental picture of the whole degree, and is proud to use his own Gavel to bring about that polished part which he is responsible for, only then, he will be able to transform the Rough Ashlar into a Perfect Ashlar which will become part of the whole building or Temple of our Masonic network and fabric.

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