



Knight Templar

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Duane L. Vaught
Grand Master

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Grand Master's Message

Half Time

In February we reached the triennium mid-point, a good time to look back on the original goals. These appeared in the goals powerpoint used in the 2015-16 Department meetings (still available on our website).

The first goal was the one and only chance for a bicentennial celebration. This was conducted throughout 2016, and the highlight was a celebration in New York City, our place of origin.

The York Rite Information System (YRIS) continues to improve. We have purchased the complete IP rights and re-organized the system into Masonic Membership Solutions (MMS).

Internationally, we spoke of South America and particularly Mexico. The new Southern Americas department will be having its first Department meeting this summer, and in early March, the 2012 suspension of the Grand Commandery of Mexico was lifted. (Welcome back.)

An Asian initiative is planned for this year.

The Educational Foundation rules have been rewritten to reinvigorate this 1920s program. (March issue of this magazine.)

The Eye Foundation programs continue, and there are a number of exciting new developments. (More next month.)

We are working on an expansion of the Holy Land Pilgrimage program to include Europe.

Our fiscal status is good.

Coordinator reports reflect expanded activity in our Grand Commanderies, and we have continued the operation of our existing programs such as leadership development, service to our Grand Commanderies, and awards.

This represents progress on or completion of most of the original plans as well as execution of several other programs. How are your plans going?



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Prelate's Chapel

by

Rev. William D. Hartman, right eminent grand prelate
of the Grand Encampment



It's the month of May, and as Christians, we are walking and talking with our Lord. His triumph over death and sin for us gives us hope for everlasting life in "our Father's House." He had told his disciples that He was going to return to His Father and prepare a place for all of us, but he spent forty days after the resurrection walking and talking and visiting, so that no one could deny that He was alive.

I've always enjoyed the hymn that was written centuries ago by St. John of Damascus, especially the 2nd and 3rd stanzas, which are:

"Tis the spring of souls today; Christ hath burst his prison,
And from three days' sleep in death as a sun hath risen;
All the winter of our sins, long and dark, is flying
From his light, to whom we give laud and praise undying.
Now the queen of seasons, bright with the day of splendor,
And the royal feast of feasts, comes its joy to render;
Comes to glad Jerusalem, who with true affection
Welcomes in unwearied strains Jesus' resurrection."

Yes, all nature joins the mighty angelic chorus celebrating Jesus' resurrection, but we know from Scripture that the Jewish priests paid the Roman guards of Jesus' tomb to tell anyone who said that Jesus was alive that it was not true, that they had fallen asleep, and that his disciples had stolen the body. How could that be true! Because Jesus was seen where he had been throughout his ministry, so that the truth of his resurrection from the dead would be known by all. Remember, Thomas had not believed that Jesus was alive. "Unless I can see the print of the nails in his hands and the wound in his side, I cannot believe that Jesus is alive." That night, Thomas was with the other disciples in the upper room when Jesus appeared with them again and immediately called for Thomas to come and see his hands and his side, and Thomas fell on his knees proclaiming, "My Lord and my God."

We know that the promises of God are true as revealed to us by His Son. No matter what the world says or does to us, it cannot overcome us who believe in Jesus the Christ as our Lord and our God. "Thanks be to God who gives us the victory [over life and death] through our Lord Jesus Christ."

An Investigation of the Libations

By

Sir Knight George L. Marshall, Jr., PGC

One of the most perplexing, yet significant, aspects of Masonic Templary are the libations taken during the course of the Order of the Temple ritual. Some puzzling questions which this article will attempt to answer are: What is a libation, and are what we do really libations in the traditional and historic sense? Why is the fourth libation significant? Why five libations? What symbolism or interpretation can be attached to each libation?

To begin with, the English word "libation" derives from the Latin *libatio*, an act of pouring, from the verb *libare*, "to taste, sip, pour out, make a libation."² The three most commonly given definitions are: (1) a pouring out of wine or other liquid in honor of a deity; (2) the liquid poured out; (3) an act or instance of drinking such a beverage.¹ Another definition would be a ritual pouring of a liquid as an offering to a god or spirit or in memory of those who have "passed on." So we might define the libations (or at least the first four) as we use them in the Order of the Temple as an act or instance of drinking a beverage in memory of those who have "passed on."

Historically, however, most libations were commonly of the poured type. They were common in many religions of antiquity and continue to be offered in various cultures today. The libation could be poured onto something of religious significance, such as an altar, or upon



the earth. Libation was part of ancient Egyptian society where it was a drink offering to honor and please the various divinities, sacred ancestors, and persons present and not present. Libations were part of ancient Judaism and are mentioned in the *Bible*:

"And Jacob set up a pillar in the place where he had spoken with him, a pillar of stone; and he poured out a drink offering on it and poured oil on it." (Genesis 35:14)

Isaiah uses libation as a metaphor when describing the end of the suffering servant figure who

"poured out his life unto death."
(Isaiah 53:12)²

Libation was a central and vital aspect of ancient Greek religion and one of the simplest and most common forms of religious practice. It is one of the basic religious acts that define piety in ancient Greece, dating back to the Bronze Age and even prehistoric Greece. Libations were a part of daily life, and the pious might perform them every day in the



morning and evening, as well as to begin meals. A libation most often consisted of mixed wine and water but could also be unmixed wine, honey, oil, water, or milk. The most common ritual was to pour the liquid from a wine jug into a *phiale*, a shallow bowl designed for the pur-

pose. After wine was poured from the *phiale*, the remainder of the contents was drunk by the celebrant,² but a libation could be poured out ceremoniously on the ground or to a receptacle on an altar or cautiously into a fire.³

In ancient Roman religion, the libation was an act of worship in the form of a liquid offering, most often unmixed wine and perfumed oil. The libation was often performed at an altar, *mensa* (sacrificial meal table), or tripod. It was the simplest form of sacrifice and could be a sufficient offering by itself. The libation was part of Roman funeral rites and may have been the only sacrificial offering at humble funerals.²

From the discussion above, we would seem to be fully justified in using the word libation to describe what is done in the Order of the Temple, but would not the word “toast” apply equally as well? Yes, recognizing the difference lies in the context of the occasion. A libation, as we have already noted, is a liquid poured out or drunk during an occasion of religious or funeral solemnity, whereas a toast consists of raising one’s glass towards someone or something and then drinking, the message being one of goodwill toward the person or thing indicated, especially in a celebratory sense. So we could, strictly speaking, apply the term “toast” to the first four libations, but certainly not the fifth.

The first three libations commemorate our connection with Freemasonry and constitute a salutation to the three principal personages around which its structure and ritual are crafted, but the fourth libation subject is somewhat of a mystery. There were many people connected with Christ dur-

ing his lifetime and at the time of his crucifixion. Why would this particular person be chosen as a subject for memorializing and not one of the others? I would suggest the following: The person in question was “compelled” to do what he did; he certainly did not do it of his own volition. Could this libation therefore be a reminder to us that there are often occasions in our lives when we also are compelled to do things contrary to our will or desire, when taking a stand for Christian teachings or the practice of Christian virtues is unpopular or even dangerous? Is it a prompt to us to recall the words of our Master in Matthew 16:24,

“Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.”?

Thus, in the fourth libation, we are celebrating the act of an exemplar who illustrates symbolically the difficult path we must follow if we would be faithful followers of Christ.

We also note that the first four libations are of wine mixed with water. What is the significance of this? Historically, the wines of the Mediterranean area tend to be strong and heavy, even to the point of being thick and syrupy. Such wines are more easily drunk when diluted with a moderate amount of water, and we know that such was the custom at the time of Christ. (On the other hand, the wines of northern Eu-

rope tend to be weak and thin, requiring no dilution.) Though not mentioned explicitly in the biblical account, it is very likely that our Lord mixed the wine of the Last Supper with some water.⁵

The first written account



we have of the ceremonies of the Mass in the early Catholic Church is that of Saint Justin the Martyr. Twice in his *First Apology*, Justin speaks of the elements of the Eucharist being “bread and wine and water.” The same insistence on the “mixed chalice” was maintained by other early Christian writers including Saints Irenaeus of Lyons and Cyprian of Carthage. In fact, virtually all modern rites of Mass prescribe the mixture of water and wine.⁵ We may note also that it has long been the practice of the Greek Orthodox Church to pour a little hot water into the chalice immediately before the Communion, and though there seems no reliable evidence for any such custom in the early centuries, the absence of this usage among the Latins is regarded by the Greeks as serious grounds for reproach.⁶

The mixture of wine and water reminds us of the adoption of our human nature by our divine Lord. It invokes the symbolism of mixed water and wine to remind us of the union of the divine and human natures in Jesus Christ and of our elevation from the state of original sin to the state of grace.⁵

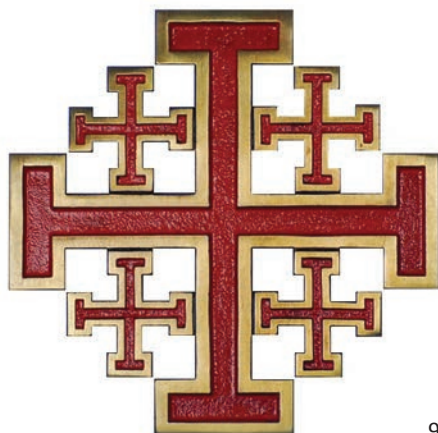
The fifth libation symbolism is an entirely different matter. However, before we consider it, let’s attempt to see the symbolism or purpose in adopting five libations, rather than some other number. First, among ancient societies, five was the number of the human being. The number five symbolizes the four limbs and the head that controls the limbs. There are five senses: sight, hearing, taste, smell, and touch.⁷ Biblically speaking, the number five symbolizes God’s grace, goodness, and favor toward humans and is men-



tioned 318 times in Scripture. The Ten Commandments contains two sets of five commandments. The first five commandments are related to our treatment of and relationship with God, and the last five concern our relationship with each other. There are five books of God’s Law; Gen-

esis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy; commonly referred to as the Pentateuch (“Penta” means five). The four Gospels plus Acts equals five books which, as a set, can be designated as “the New Testament Pentateuch.”⁸ Recall also that Christ received five wounds in his body while on the cross: one in each hand, one in each foot, and one in his lance-pierced side. The Jerusalem Cross, pictured below, is a symbolic representation of these wounds.

Historical and symbolic references to the form of the fifth libation are readily found by a search of internet topics on the subject. Thus, I will leave it to the interested reader to discover these for himself. What I will attempt to do here is explain, hopefully in a plausible manner, what this libation means to me. Other than what is contained in our ritual, it



first symbolizes to me the final and binding sealing of the obligation of a Knight Templar. In most other degrees and orders of Masonry, once the obligation is voluntarily assumed by the candidate, he becomes a Mason of that degree or order regardless of what additionally follows, but it is different in the Order of the Temple. The fifth libation places a solemn charge on the candidate to be a true and loyal soldier of Christ, and he invokes a solemn penalty upon himself at the day of judgment should he be faithless or false to his Fraters or his Master. Unfortunately, the form of the libation has sometimes proved an impediment to understanding this very important issue. The author has been present on a few occasions where the candidate has flatly refused to partake of this libation because of its form. Does this mean they should be excused from further progress and refused Knighthood because they have not sealed their obligation? I will leave that question for wiser minds than mine to determine.

Recall that this libation is taken of pure wine, unlike the first four. In the ancient Near East, with its scarcity of water, wine was a necessity rather than a luxury, so it came to symbolize sustenance and life. Wine is also representative of the covenant blessings God promised to Israel for obedience and which He would withhold for disobedience. Finally, wine also represents joy, celebration, and festivity, expressing the abundant blessings of God.⁹ Thus, given the cup of the libation, combined with the idea of wine as a symbol of life, we are strikingly reminded of the phrase *Media vita in morte sumus*, the title and first line of a Latin antiphon, which translates

as “In the midst of life we are in death.” It also symbolizes to us the words of our Lord in John 9:4,

“As long as it is day, we must do the works of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work.”

Hence, can we not consider another aspect of this libation as an admonition to enjoy life while we have it but to spend it in a worthwhile and productive fashion, particularly in witnessing to others about Christ in our everyday words and actions?

Finally, we take this libation with the right hand. The hand can represent the whole person, symbolizing the achievement of what is promised with the mouth (1 Kings 8:15 1 Kings 8:24). God inspired Isaiah to write

“For I, the Lord your God, hold your right hand; it is I who say to you, ‘Fear not, I am the one who helps you.’” (Isaiah 41:13)



The right hand signifies strength, perhaps because most people are right-handed, and that is the hand that normally has their greatest strength. Being at the right hand is symbolic of having authority and power. This is seen throughout the Scriptures as in Paul writing about God that He

“raised Him from the dead and seated Him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come.”

(Ephesians 1:20-21).¹⁰

Thus, using the right hand further signifies to us that with our whole person we intend to seal our obligation as Templars with strength, trusting in the right hand of God to give us that strength and power to serve Him and His Son as we have most solemnly pledged ourselves to do.

Such are some of my interpretations of the symbolic aspects of the five libations. I do not claim these to be exhaustive, but hopefully they will stimulate the reader to likewise ponder what these libations mean to him and encourage him to draw his own conclusions about their deeper significance and meaning.

Right Eminent Sir Knight Marshall, KYGCH(3), KCT, 33°, is a past grand commander of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of Alabama. He is a member of the Editorial Review Board of the *Knight Templar* magazine and has published many articles in that magazine as well as in the *Royal Arch Mason* magazine. He can be reached at geo-marsh@yahoo.com.

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IN MEMORIAM



In the March issue of the *Knight Templar* magazine, I made a typographical error in the obituary for Terry Lee Hudik. He was not only a past Grand Commander of Iowa, but a long time editor of the Iowa supplement for the *Knight Templar* magazine. The corrected obituary is below.

The Ed.

Terry Lee Hudik

Iowa

Grand Commander 2013

Born: October 6, 1942

Died: December 11, 2016

Peter T. Zivanovitch

Indiana

Grand Commander 1993

Born: July 10, 1929

Died: January 24, 2017

Carl J. Wisner

Maryland

Grand Commander 1984

Born: June 19, 1927

Died: January 12, 2017

Subscriptions to the *Knight Templar* magazine are available from the Grand Encampment office at a rate of \$15.00 per year. Individual issues in quantities of less than ten can be obtained for \$1.50 each from the office of the managing editor if available. Inquire via e-mail to the managing editor for quantities in excess of ten. Some past issues are archived on our web site. <http://www.knightstemplar.org>.



Beauceant News

Fredericksburg Celebrates Tenth Anniversary



On Saturday, January 7, 2017, Fredericksburg Assembly 266, Virginia, held their Installation of officers despite a very cold and snowy day. After the Installation, they held a catered dinner to celebrate their 10th birthday. They were constituted on January 20, 2007, also a cold snowy day,

at the George Washington Memorial in Alexandria, Virginia. (Mrs. Mrs. David E.) Sonja Alcon was the supreme worthy president at that time, and (Mrs. Howard L.) Clara McClure, past supreme worthy president, was the supreme organizer. It has been a fantastic ten years, and they are looking forward to at least ten more. The Fredericksburg members were pleased to have many Sir Knights in attendance.



Worshipful Mike Moses, master of Fredericksburg 4, is pictured with (Mrs. Leslie J.) Sandra Loomis, past supreme worthy president; (Mrs. Charles) Barbara Doyal, newly installed president of Fredericksburg Assembly 266; and (Mrs. Joseph L.) Barbara Bongiovi, supreme worthy president.

The commander of Fredericksburg Commandery 1, William Searce is pictured with (Mrs. Joseph L.) Barbara Bongiovi, supreme worthy president.



Why Are We Losing the Membership Battle?

By

Sir Knight Harold Peterson, past grand commander of Wisconsin

My personal experiences only involve two grand jurisdictions, but I believe they are very ordinary in most of the important descriptors. One of those descriptors is gain or loss of members, and both grand jurisdictions registered losses in their latest recapitulation reports. The reported corresponding information on a national level is no more encouraging. We will fail to resolve this issue until we can put a face on the problem. I hope to help you put a face on the problem by presenting some suggestions of things that are more than likely not the cause of voluntary losses of members.

It has been suggested that joining fees are a hindrance to sustaining membership. I discovered just how ridiculously low our joining fees are during my early years as recorder for Sheboygan Commandery 32 of Wisconsin. The joining fees at the time the Commandery was constituted amounted to nearly six months wages of a day laborer. The man that joined the Commandery had found sufficient value in the organization to make a significant financial sacrifice. The local annual dues were fixed at about two days wages for a day laborer. The commander had to convene special conclaves to meet the needs for work to bring candidates through the orders. You may think that was then and this is now. Sheboygan Lodge meets in the shelter of a truly magnificent Masonic center that was built with great care in the late 1920s. Operating the building

threatened to consume all the financial reserves and leave expenses unfunded. The lodge embarked on what some feared was fiscal suicide by raising the joining fees from less than a hundred dollars to five hundred dollars. Petitions kept coming in, and for the first three years of the joining fees at this schedule, were several times more numerous than they had been in previous years. The local dues were raised and incremented by the consumer price index, and no members withdrew because the annual dues were excessive. Men will seek us out at any cost deemed reasonable for the value received. Those Sheboygan bodies made certain that a good and easily recognized value was received for the investment. It started with interesting and productive meetings. It continued with continuing member involvement. We cannot afford to recruit them, raise them, and forget them any longer. We must continually meet the needs of all our members.

It has also been suggested that it takes too long to arrive at the goal. What is the goal? How many know that they have really attained their goal? There is a time when the immediate goal is to achieve the rights, privileges, and benefits of a Master Mason. Why are these so important, and how fast is fast enough? Some grand jurisdictions believe that Entered Apprentices and Fellow Crafts should not be permitted access to the routine business of the Lodge. I only agree that the dispatch of business is so awkward

in some Lodges that members of the first two degrees should be spared our suffering as long as possible, but there is really nothing in most routine business that all Masons cannot witness, even if some are not eligible to vote. I believe they should, however, be permitted to express opinions. The Master Masons present could receive enlightenment from the fresh minds often not rigidly bound to what cannot be done. I tried an experiment in Sheboygan Lodge. I followed the prescribed procedure of opening in the Master Masons degree and conducted the necessary business in that degree and then called down to lower degrees for degree appropriate education. The year was equally divided into Entered Apprentice, Fellow Craft, and Master Mason education. We had terrific response and achieved better retention. Sheboygan Lodge had found another way to deliver value. The success of this effort causes me to believe that other approaches are worth the effort and that there is hope that we can provide the value that will attract and hold men.

Is the time it takes to become a Master Mason a critical factor in member retention? My experiences suggest that this is not as much a hindrance to retention as what happens after the completion of the third degree. The scenario in the paragraph above is repeated far too often, and the impact is virtually the same regardless of whether the Master Mason is a product of a one day class or if it took five years to achieve the third degree. The one trait that we are most likely to ignore is that every man needs to feel wanted and appreciated. It is upon that fundamental need that member retention is founded.

I have found that there are at least three words that are meticulously avoided in nearly all Masonic conversations and especially in sealed meetings. Those words are duty, responsibility, and expectation. The men that confer the degrees fulfill their duties to the craft without ever mentioning these words. They discharge their responsibilities also with like disregard for mentioning them. We also pay little notice to how much excitement and expectation is generated in the candidate by a quality exemplification of the work. The duty and responsibility of the degree conferral to produce expectation in the candidate just doesn't seem important enough to be mentioned anywhere. What do we think will keep the candidate progressing and what will keep him coming back after the degrees and orders are exhausted? We plan to lose our newer members (and some of the older ones also) when we neglect to sow the seeds of expectation. The fraternity is like a garden. It grows better with feeding and nurturing. It may well be time to put expectation into our Masonic vernacular.

Right Eminent Sir Knight Peterson resides in Mantua, Ohio and can be reached at haroldpeterson76@gmail.com.

We publish letters and articles from a variety of sources and points of view. The opinions expressed in these articles do not necessarily reflect the opinions or policy of the Grand Encampment, the *Knight Templar* magazine, or the Editorial Review Board.

A Regrettable Observation

By

Sir Knight Jim Hodge, general grand king of Royal Arch Masons, International

Editor's Note

I recently read this article in the *Royal Arch Mason's International Newsletter* which I receive on-line. I believe that sometimes we learn from bad examples set by others, so I asked Sir Knight Hodge if he would allow me to share his observations with my readers. I appreciate his allowing me to do so.

Recently while attending a Masonic gathering and staying overnight, I noticed a number of things about the Fraternity that rather shocked me. I guess I really should not be surprised as I find that our current society is much like what I observed. It seems that much of what happens today is rooted in a philosophy that is foreign to the manner in which I grew up and what I was taught as well as the obligations I took at the altar of Freemasonry.

Somehow I was exposed to respect for authority and also encouraged to be a gentleman at all times. Yes, as a kid I liked to see what was happening, and the fact that I wasn't as tall as many adults in a crowd forced me to elbow my way or worm and squirm my way to the front so I was on the front row and could see everything. Many a time I was pulled back by the ear by either Mom or Dad and given a lecture along the way. Perhaps that was just being a "kid," but it made a lasting impression on me. It was, I suppose, what I witnessed as an attitude of "after me, you are first" syndrome. Putting others first was never considered.

Whenever a large group of people are attempting to check out of a hotel at the end of conference or meeting and there

are a limited number of luggage carts, you can always bet on someone getting them either the night before or very early in the morning and holding them in their room until they decide that it is time for them to check out. What really got me recently was when two Masonic ladies were politely waiting for the return of a cart so that they could individually use it and then return it as quickly as possible so as to not inconvenience the next person. Simple, until some brother who wouldn't wait any longer or was in a greater hurry than the rest followed a person out to the car and then took possession of the cart for his own use. Somehow I guess I expected more of a Brother of the Fraternity, but it didn't happen that way.

Have our standards slipped that low, or have we allowed society to influence our behavior towards one another to such a low level? I can only hope that I have not been involved in such behavior and insulted a Brother, a Companion, or his lady by such an action. When attending regional conferences, I have always delighted in attempting to arrive early to welcome some of the host state past grands and grand officers and help them with their luggage or registration. Yes, it is silly to welcome them to their home

state, but then again, it is nice to be subservient to those who have assisted me and been my mentors on so many occasions. I do it out of respect and appreciation in the hope that while I am physically able to assist at this time, there will come a day when that may no longer be true, and I will need assistance. What happened to charity? What happened to being subservient to others? What happened to plain old respect? Companions, I can only hope and pray that

your behavior is not anything like what I described above. We, as Royal Arch Masons, need to set the example.

I wonder if I can get insurance to cover any damages inflicted by those who may as well run you over because you are in their way? Old age is wonderful, and thanks for listening.

Sir Knight Jim Hodge resides in Richmond, Indiana and can be contacted at jhhsnow@aol.com



Another Bad Example

One of my lady's friends recently shared with her an experience she and her husband had while attending his father's Masonic funeral in another state. Her husband is not a Freemason like his father.

It seems that the poor fellow who was attempting to do the Masonic memorial hadn't bothered to memorize it nor possibly even to read it beforehand. Apparently he stumbled and stuttered through the entire ceremony, and the experience was an embarrassment to all present. At the end of the service, apparently, in that jurisdiction, each Brother in attendance is supposed to walk by, place his hand on the coffin, and say, "Alas, my Brother!" It appeared that the Brethren in attendance had little idea of what they were supposed to do, as most of them exclaimed instead, "At last, my Brother!"

Now these particular folks are good Christians and did not allow themselves to be offended by what was said; instead, they afterward had a good laugh — at our expense, of course.

Brethren, what are we coming to? The funeral is one of the few opportunities we have to share the Masonic experience with non-Masons, and we wonder why the leaders in our community are not all Freemasons as they once were.

All actions have consequences, and we control our own destiny.

The Ed.

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Knights Templar Eye Foundation

How to join the Grand Commander's or the Grand Master's Clubs

Any individual may send a check in the amount of \$100 or more specified for the purpose of beginning a Grand Commander's Club membership and made payable to the Knights Templar Eye Foundation. This initial contribution will begin your Grand Commander's Club membership. In addition, members of the Grand Commander's Club pledge to make annual contributions of \$100 or more. Once contributions total \$1,000, the individual is enrolled in the Grand Master's Club. Membership is open to individuals only, and Commandery credit is given for participation. Information is available from: Knights Templar Eye Foundation, Inc., 1033 Long Prairie Road, Suite 5, Flower Mound, TX 75022-4230, Phone (214) 888-0220, Fax (214) 888-0230.

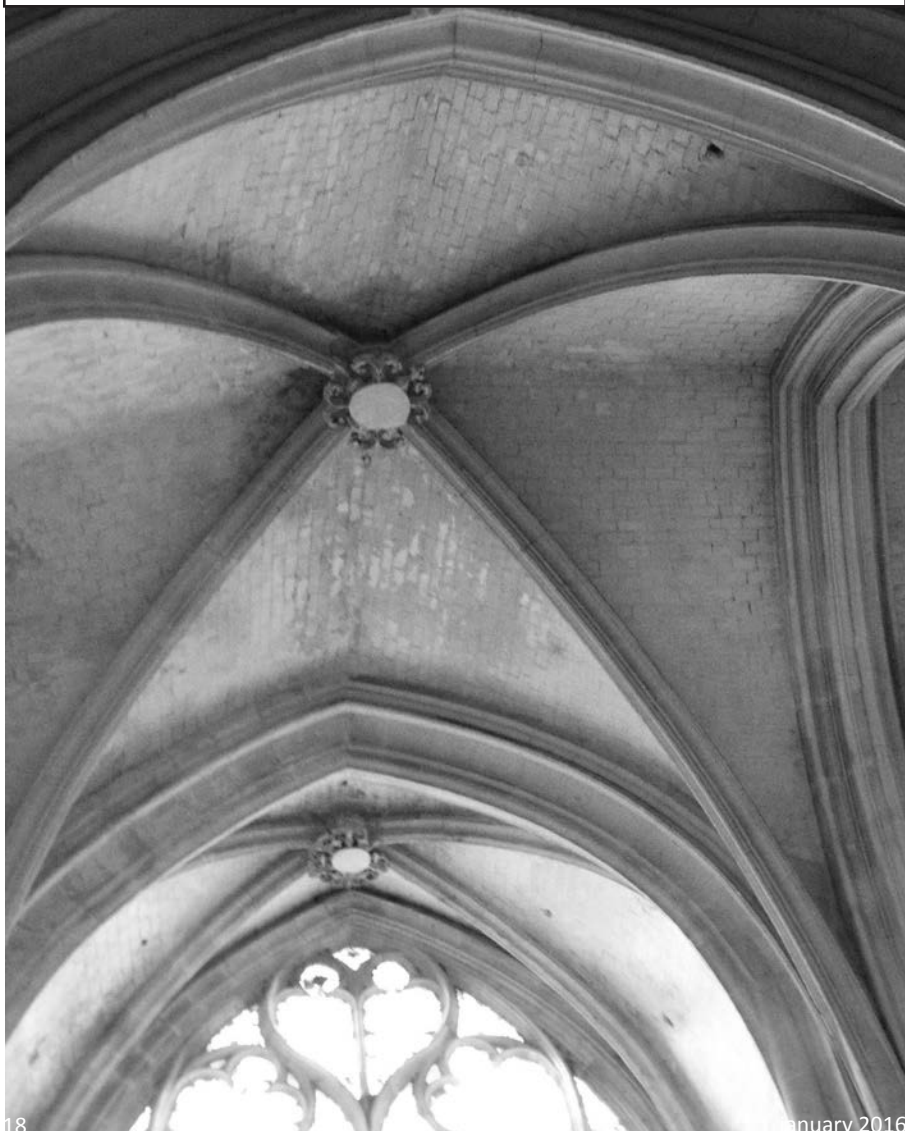
As of 2/1/2015 once 25 Grand Master's Clubs are reached, a Sword of Merit will be awarded.

Qualified Charitable Distributions Can Yield Big Tax Savings

Congress has now made the qualified charitable distribution (QCD) option permanent for those who wish to make direct contributions from their IRA to charity. The tax law allows individuals age 70 ½ or older to transfer up to \$100,000 a year from their IRA to a qualified charity. This distribution counts toward their required minimum distribution but isn't added to their adjusted gross income the way a normal IRA distribution is. This can provide a tax savings of up to 40% depending upon an individual's tax situation.

General Supplement

The space on these two pages is provided by the *Knight Templar* magazine to be used by the Grand Commanderies to communicate with the individual Sir Knights in their jurisdictions on a monthly basis. From time to time and for various reasons, we fail to receive any material from the editor of the state supplement for a given month. When this happens, we take the opportunity to offer you the information below. – The Ed.



Photos of the Cathedral of Troyes,
France were taken by the editor.



knight templar



The Star of Bethlehem

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The Joy of the Apocrypha

by
Sir Knight Jeffrey L. Kuntz

The sixty-six books of the *Holy Bible* are only part of the sacred writings that were considered for inclusion in what ultimately became the canonical scriptures. If all the other writings that were considered had been accepted, the *Bible* would be about twice its size. Almost all those writings are called “apocrypha.” They are of various categories, although most are considered of either Jewish or Christian origin and come from the intertestamental and early Christian periods. Apocrypha is usually defined as writings of dubious authenticity, but it is actually a Greek word meaning “hidden things.” A number of them are of a rather apocalyptic and even eschatological nature, very often quite esoteric.

There is one group of apocryphal books or writings that are included in some versions of the *Bible*, mainly Roman Catholic editions. They make up the appendix to the *Authorized Version of the Old Testament*. At the Council of Trent in 1543, the Roman Church declared them to be canon, and they became known as “Deuterocanonicals.” Protestants consider them apocryphal, although Martin Luther included them in his German translation. In fact, they are included in Amish editions of Luther’s German *Bible*, printed and published in the United States. Luther’s view was that they are good for instruction, but not truly inspired scripture. These apocryphal writings are also included

in some newer versions of the *Bible*, such as *The New Revised Standard Version*, used by some Protestants. A few of the more familiar of these books are *Tobit*, *Wisdom of Solomon*, *Sirach*, and *First and Second Maccabees*. At certain times of the liturgical church year, some passages from some of these books are offered as alternative readings, even in some Protestant churches.

In more recent decades, especially since the discovery of the *Dead Sea Scrolls* in the 1940’s and 50’s, various apocryphal writings that were repudiated by the early church fathers have been compiled and published in book form. There are perhaps several reasons why serious readers of scripture should study these apocryphal writings, but let us first examine why the early church fathers rejected them.

It can be said there are basically three reasons for their non-acceptance:

- 1.) Some were considered to be specious or of spurious authenticity or authorship.
- 2.) Some contain passages that appear to be rather bizarre or too abstruse for the average person.
- 3.) There was a certain amount of politics involved in the choice of writings for the final official canon, such as rivalry between sects or religious leaders.

Surely, none of these necessarily sug-

gest that apocryphal writings lack important messages.

It is also important to point out that several of the *New Testament* books almost did not make it into the *Bible* for one or a combination of the above reasons. Some biblical scholars have assumed that the *Epistle to the Hebrews* was written by Apostle Paul, but others have said that is rather unlikely, since there is no indication in the letter that he wrote it, and the writing style and subject matter are rather atypical of Paul. Apparently, the early compilers compromised and placed that epistle between Paul's letter to Philemon and the general letter of James.

The epistles of *James*, *Second and Third John*, and *Second Peter* were believed by some biblical scholars to have been written by Christian writers other than those to whom they are ascribed. These attributions were made mainly to give authority to their messages. At least partly because of their questionable authorship, these books were nearly rejected for inclusion in the *Bible*. The book of *Revelation* nearly lost its bid for the final book of the *Bible*. It has many similarities to other apocalyptic writings that did not make the *Bible*, such as strange visions, some of which include hideous beasts, etc. *Revelation* is also of disputed authorship, it being questionable as to whether it was written by the same John of the fourth gospel.

The letter of *Jude*, one of the smallest books of the *Bible*, was also nearly rejected, partly due to dubious authorship. It is of special interest to our study of the apocrypha, however, because it contains a quote from one of the more important apocryphal works, the *Book of Enoch*. "Now Enoch, the seventh from

Adam, prophesied about these men also, saying, 'Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousand of the saints. To execute judgment on all, to convict all who are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds...' (Jude vss. 14, 15a).

This *Book of Enoch* is one of the writings known as Jewish *Pseudepigrapha*. *Pseudepigrapha* means "things falsely ascribed." Enoch, which means "dedicated," was the first patriarch mentioned in the *Bible* to reach such a high level of spiritual consciousness that he was taken up into heaven while still alive on earth, because he "walked with God" (Gen. 5:22).

That is the only passage in the *Old Testament* in which Enoch is mentioned, but in addition to Jude, he is mentioned in the letter to the *Hebrews*, where the writer described him as being "translated that he should not see death" (Heb. 11:5). Small wonder then that such a sacred writing would be named after him or accredited to him.

Let us now enumerate reasons why we, as Christian Masons and *Bible* students, should include apocrypha in our scripture reading. We could list four basic reasons:

- 1.) Some of the apocryphal writings, in some way, have some connection with canonical ones, as we have seen with the *Book of Enoch* and the epistles of Jude and Hebrews, giving us some perspective and insight into how certain apocryphal writings and certain Scriptures are related. Some, in fact to a great extent, are elaborations of biblical books.
- 2.) Some give good practical every-

day advice in a style similar to that of Proverbs, such as the books of *Sirach* and the *Wisdom of Solomon*.

- 3.) Some seem to prophesy rather strikingly some of our present-day troubles, such as the *Second Book of Esdras*, which we will later examine more closely.
- 4.) A number of the apocryphal books are either from the Gnostics, the Essenes, the Kabbalists, or some other Jewish or Christian spiritual or mystic group.

Freemasonry is a fraternity of strong mystical and esoteric leanings. In his *Morals and Dogma*, the great nineteenth century Masonic scholar, Albert Pike, mentioned both the Essenes and the Gnostics over twenty times, and the Kabbalists well over fifty times, indicating the importance he placed in the sacred writings of these ancient sects.

We have a way of classifying things in our various fields of study in order to make learning easier and more interesting. Apocryphal sacred writings can be categorized as to genre, as are the books of the *Bible*, or they can be classified according to origin, i.e., the religious sect or spiritual group from which they came. The two methods sometimes overlap and the various genres at times intermingle. Some genres can be further broken down into sub-genres.

The following is an abbreviated listing of nine genres of apocryphal writings:

1). CREATION MYTHS

The Book of the Secrets of Enoch
(Jewish Pseudepigrapha)

The Book of Jubilees (Jew-

ish Pseudepigrapha)
Haggadah (Various Jewish sources)

The Origin of the World (Gnostic)

The Apocalypse of Adam (Gnostic)

Creation of the World and the Alien Man (Mandaean Gnostic)

Kabbalah (Jewish Mysticism)

2). NARRATIVES / HISTORIES

First and Second Books of Adam and Eve (Christian Apocrypha)

Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs (Jewish-Christian Apocrypha)

The Story of Ahikar (Jewish Pseudepigrapha)

The Manual of Discipline
(Dead Sea Scrolls)

The Genesis Apocryphon
(Dead Sea Scrolls)

3). POETRY

The Psalms of Solomon (Jewish Pseudepigrapha)

The Thanksgiving Psalms
(Dead Sea Scrolls)

The Odes of Solomon (Jewish-Christian Pseudepigrapha)

4). WISDOM LITERATURE

The Wisdom of Solomon
(Christian Deuterocanonical/Apocrypha)

Sirach (Christian Deuterocanonical/Apocrypha)

The Gospel of Thomas (Gnostic)

5). GOSPELS

The Gospel of the Hebrews
(Jewish-Christian)
The Secret Gospel of Mark
(Christian Apocrypha)
The Gospel of Nicodemus
(Christian Apocrypha)

6). INFANCY GOSPELS

The Protevangelion (Christian Apocrypha---Historical account of the Birth of Christ and the Virgin Mary attributed to James the Lesser)
Thomas's Gospel of the Infancy of Jesus Christ
(Christian Apocrypha)

7). ACTS

The Acts of John (Christian Apocrypha)
The Acts of Peter (Christian Apocrypha)
The Acts of Paul (Christian Apocrypha)
The Acts of Andrew (Christian Apocrypha)
The Acts of Thomas (Christian-Gnostic Apocrypha)

8). EPISTLES (Non-biblical)

Paul's Epistle to the Laodiceans
First and Second Epistles of Clement to the Corinthians
General Epistle of Barnabas
Epistles of Ignatius of Antioch to the Ephesians, Magnesians, Trallians, Romans, Philadelphians, Smyrnaeans, and Polycarp
Polycarp to the Philippians

9). APOCALYPSES

The Book of the Secrets of Enoch
(Jewish Pseudepigrapha)
Enoch's Life and Dream
Ascension into the Heavens
The Sibylline Oracles (Jewish Pseudepigrapha)
The Apocalypse of Baruch
(Jewish Pseudepigrapha)
The Apocalypse of Ezra (Second Esdras---Jewish-Christian Pseudepigrapha)
The Ascension of Isaiah (Christian Apocryphal)
Apocalypse of Peter (Christian Apocrypha)
Christian Sibyllines (Christian Apocrypha)

Classifying the non-biblical sacred writings by source is a bit simpler than by genre. Most are considered to have come from fairly orthodox sects, whether Jewish or Christian. A good number of them can be called Jewish *Pseudepigrapha*. In addition to the *Book of the Secrets of Enoch*, another example would be the *Book of Jubilees*, which also deals with the creation story.

The *Kabbalah* is a system of Jewish esoteric mysticism that was practiced in medieval Europe, mainly during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, but undoubtedly had roots going back to the time of Christ and even much earlier. Kabbalah means "Oral Tradition," being handed down by word of mouth. Such instruction was given to prevent the esoteric teachings from getting into profane hands. The *Haggadah* is a sacred writing partly based on the early *Kabbalah*, as well as Talmudic traditions, including *pseudepigraphic* narratives. It is a ver-

sion of the creation of the world and of man and his fall.

The *Book of Zohar*, which is really made up of a group of books, is the basic foundation of the Kabbalah. Zohar means “splendor” or “radiance.” Its writings include a commentary on the mystical aspects of the *Torah*, the first five books of the *Bible*. The *Sefer Yetzirah*, also known as the “*Book of Formation*” or “*Book of Creation*,” is considered the earliest extant book on Jewish esotericism, although its true origin is unknown.

The Essenes were a staunch reclusive Jewish sect, believed to have lived as a communal society near the Dead Sea at Qumran. It is a common belief among biblical and religious scholars that they were the possessors of the *Dead Sea Scrolls*, which were largely comprised of fragments of every book of the *Old Testament*, except *Esther*. These scrolls also included such writings as *The Manual of Discipline* and *The Damascus Document*, which contain rules and instruction regarding behavior and initiatory rites.

Also, among the *Dead Sea Scrolls* was the *Genesis Apocryphon*, which includes elaborations on the lives of such early patriarchal personages as Noah and Abraham. An *apocryphon* is a secret sacred writing to be read only to initiates. Also included in the *Dead Sea Scrolls* were the *Thanksgiving Psalms*, which were possibly sung by initiates entering the Essene brotherhood.

It is interesting to note that, in some versions of the canonical *Holy Bible*, Psalms 120 through 134 are each superscribed with the phrase “A song of degrees.”

The Essenes should be of particular interest to Freemasons. They are, in fact, mentioned in a couple of degrees. Some scholars have little doubt that John the knight templar

Baptist was a member of that highly secretive apocalyptic cult, while some even believe that Jesus might well have been a member. This is mainly due to the fact that some of their sayings and teachings were very similar to those in passages from the *Dead Sea Scrolls*. If one would consider this for a moment, the argument could be made that this is the reason for Jesus’ absence from the age of twelve to thirty, and that a very strict vow of secrecy was the reason for His never even having mentioned the Essenes during His ministry.

The Gnostics were a sect or group of sects of a certain mystical nature, some of which thought of all matter as being evil. The movement basically developed out of Christianity during the first couple of centuries or so but was considered heretical by the established orthodox church leaders. Their name is derived from the Greek word “gnosis,” meaning knowledge. These Gnostics had a rather impressive and varied output of their own apocryphal documents. Quite curiously, a number of these scrolls were discovered near Nag Hammadi in Egypt about the same time the *Dead Sea Scrolls* were found.

Several of the Gnostic writings could be categorized as creation myths, such as the *Apocalypse of Adam* and the *Secret Book of John*, which are kind of extensions of the creation story. One of the best known of the Gnostic texts is the *Gospel of Thomas*. It cannot really be placed in the genre of gospels but rather in that of wisdom literature. It is largely a collection of parables and other sayings of Jesus.

The *Gospel of Judas* is another Gnostic book that has been of particular interest in more recent years. In fact, a book

about that document came out in 2006 written by Marvin Meyer, who translated and edited that writing, which primarily consists of a conversation between Jesus and Judas Iscariot. Naturally, this so-called gospel is rather controversial, seemingly turning the tables on the canonical gospels and making Judas the disciple that perhaps knew Jesus best.

There are several possible takes on this shocking account. Is there some strange esoteric meaning to the writing? Is it a complete hoax? There are some Christians who happen to believe that Judas was not denied eternal salvation because if it were not for Judas' betrayal, Jesus would not have been crucified for the redemption of our sins.

A number of the Gnostic works employ a certain nomenclature, mainly due to that sect's characteristic belief system that includes a sort of hierarchical theism. The Father of Light is what the Gnostics considered to be the supreme deity. *The Gospel of Truth* is a Gnostic writing that some scholars believe makes allusions to some of Paul's epistles and the gospels of Matthew and John, and that it is less in dispute with the more traditional Judaic and Christian teachings than many other Gnostic books. However, its text does mention such things as *Aeons* and the *Pleroma*. The *Pleroma* is a series of attributes of the Gnostic supreme being. *Aeons* are separate units of these attributes or emanations of the *Pleroma*.

Another term commonly used in Gnostic writings is *Demiurge*, which basically means creator God but is considered subordinate to the highest God. *Ialdabaoth* is one that is likely derived from a Hebrew name for God, Yahweh Sabaoth, and means, to the Gnostics, roughly the same as *Demiurge*. A more

familiar Gnostic term is *Sophia*, which is a Greek word for "wisdom," and is defined as the first female principle emanating a succession of *Aeons*.

There are two Gnostic sects, closely related, that are worth discussing because of their contributions of sacred texts, although they were not as prolific as the mainstream Gnostics.

The Manichaeans were founded by Mani (215 - 276 A.D.) in Persia. He was considered to be one of a series of important prophets, which included Buddha and Christ. The Manichaeans were influenced by Buddhism as well as Gnosticism, and the sect spread over much of the Roman Empire and lasted in various adulterated forms into the medieval period.

The Mandeans were a similar sect, but they favored fertility, whereas the Manichaeans favored asceticism, according to some scholars. Both were rather esoteric. Interestingly, there are vestiges of Mandeans still living in southern parts of Iran and Iraq.

One of the more important set of documents of the Mandeans are the writings of the *Creation of the World* and the *Alien Man*. The one text of the set, *The Creation of Man*, explains how beings of the theistic hierarchy created Adam. A rather unique term that is used in these writings is *uthras*, which is defined as good beings of light that function like angels. Another is *Ruha*, an evil female spirit, mother of the seven planets. As some other Gnostic and apocryphal works, these seem rather bizarre but are, in all likelihood, strictly metaphorical.

Perhaps the Gnostic word of the greatest interest involving our study here is *nous*, another Greek word meaning "mind" or "intelligence." It has different shades of meaning with different systems of thought, but one thing we as

Freemasons must consider here is what Dan Brown wrote concerning *nous* in his novel, *The Lost Symbol*, which is centered around Freemasonry.

Actually, the word *nous* is mentioned more in pagan Gnostic works, such as the *Poimandres of Hermes Trismegistus*. However, in *Morals and Dogma*, Albert Pike indicated that it is synonymous with *Logos*, which according to Christian theologians, is in turn synonymous with the Word, the second person of the Holy Trinity, the Son, the Christ. Even some Christian theologians add other shades of meaning, using words like “thought” and “reason” to define Logos.

Dan Brown took the study of *nous* a big step further for our modern times. Although *The Lost Symbol* is fiction, we must keep in mind that Brown did very extensive research on Freemasonry, especially the metaphysical aspects of it. His novel discloses more about Masonic mystical teachings than many non-fiction books about Masonry. In it, he writes about the Institute of Noetic Sciences, an actual nonprofit research organization founded in 1973. The word “noetic” is derived from *nous*. That research society’s definition includes such phrases as “inner knowing” and “intuitive consciousness” and examines the power of human consciousness to focus it for a specific purpose. Brown further explains by quoting one of his characters: “This is the missing link between modern science and ancient mysticism.” We must ask ourselves could this have been before? Could these faculties have been mastered by ancient peoples? More importantly, what could this mean for us today?

Let us conclude our study by examining a couple of the more traditionally knight templar

leaning apocryphal books. An apocryphal gospel that is perhaps worth some special consideration for our purposes is that of the *Secret Gospel of Mark*, even though all that is known about it is taken from a letter of Clement of Alexandria, a theologian in the late second century. Clement’s document suggests that the gospel may be an extension of the canonical *Gospel of Mark*. There are also scholars who believe the reverse is the case—that Mark’s Gospel is a condensation of the *Secret Gospel*. It is a commonly accepted belief that Mark went through various stages of writing and rewriting. *The Secret Gospel* shows evidence of an esoteric tradition among the early followers of Jesus. Clement believed it or parts of it were to be read only to initiates.

Finally, let us take an even closer examination of one of the Apocalypses, the *Apocalypse of Ezra*. It is one of the intertestamental books included with the Deuterocanonicals, but even Roman Catholics consider it apocryphal. The book is also known as *2 Esdras* or the *Fourth Book of Ezra*, depending on which Bible version you are using. (*Esdras* is Greek for *Ezra*.)

It is a Jewish *Pseudepigrapha* writing comprised mainly of seven visions and is rather eschatological, that is, it deals with the last things, judgment, the Lord’s coming, etc.

What is most intriguing but somewhat frightful about *2 Esdras* are passages in some of the visions that seem to describe adverse conditions and events that are prevalent today. In chapter five, the writer mentions things that are to be signs of the end. “Fish will be washed up on the shores of the Dead Sea” (vs. 6); “Wild animals will leave the fields and forests.” (vs.8); “Friends everywhere will

attack one another" (vs.9); "Everywhere on earth wickedness and violence will increase" (vs.10). In chapter nine, verse 3, it is written: "There will be earthquakes, national rebellions, international intrigues, unstable leaders, and confused rulers." Does any of this seem familiar?

These depictions are not much different nor any scarier than the things Jesus presaged in chapter 24 of the *Gospel of Matthew* as He begins His discourse by telling of wars and rumors of wars and all the other formidable things that are signs of the end times. Jesus' real bomb-shell is in chapter 24 when He states there, "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be, and except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened." (vss. 21, 22) Jesus does then give hope as does 2 *Esdras*, "but it is for the righteous who do the will of God, whereas the unrighteous shall suffer punishment."

Occasionally, while attempting to answer certain questions, especially in the studies of the more controversial fields of thought; whether of a philosophical, religious, or even scientific nature, more questions arise than answers. This is a good thing, of course. A cardinal question likely to come to mind with the examination of ancient sacred apocryphal writings is the worthiness of their messages. If such a patristic writing is not considered canon or divinely inspired by churchmen, does it impart truth? Perhaps one of the best answers for faithful readers would be to encourage them to read some of these works and to let them decide for themselves.

Before closing, perhaps another

intriguing question that should be broached is, since some of these ancient manuscripts have been discovered as recently as sixty and seventy years ago in such places as Khirbet Qumran and Nag Hammadi, could there be others yet to be found, and if so, could there be new ones that are entirely unknown? Only time will tell, of course.

Apostle Paul wrote in the third chapter of his second epistle to neophyte Timothy, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (vss. 16, 17).

Other than the books of the *Old Testament*, we cannot be sure what all exactly Paul had in mind when he wrote that letter, since it was written at least a couple hundred years before the compilation of the *Bible* was even nearly completed. We do know the process was a complicated one and that it was done over a considerable period of time.

The authenticity and merit of non-canonical sacred writings will be debated for decades and even centuries yet to come. To sum it up simply, it can be said that what studying such works is really about is what studying *Bible* scriptures is about — the search for truth. As Jesus Christ, our Lord, promised, we shall know the truth, and the truth shall make us free.

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Announcing the Crusader's Cross

The Knight Templar Eye Foundation, Inc. has a number of donation programs, most with associated recognition programs. One of our primary contribution programs is the Grand Master's Club. These are contributions of \$1,000 which can be accumulated over time. These accumulations are known as the Grand Commander's Club (\$100 each until \$1,000 is reached). Currently Grand Master's Club donors receive a plaque and a lapel pin.

Many Masons like and collect lapel pins, but most of us have more than we can wear. However, except for a few state programs, there has been no way to recognize this generosity when in uniform. Now there is.

We are introducing a new award, the Crusader's Cross, to thank our donors. The Jewel comes in five levels, \$1,000, \$2,000, \$3,000, \$4,000 and \$5,000 or above. The award can be worn on a uniform or sport coat or can be displayed in your home. The award jewels are displayed on this page. The \$1,000 level has the single, larger cross in the center. Each additional \$1,000 is identified with an additional small cross in a quadrant until at \$5,000 or above, all four quadrants are occupied to complete the emblem known as the Crusader's Cross and also known as the Cross of Jerusalem.

Only a Grand Master's club donation will count toward this award, but we will also present these jewels to those who have already reached these donor levels in the past. In coming months, we will be sending jewels to these past donors as a well-deserved "thank you."



Turner Ashby Commandery 35

By

Sir Knights Donald L. McAndrews and Jeffrey Hedges

Turner Ashby Commandery 35, stationed at Warrenton, Virginia, is the newest Commandery in the Grand Commandery of Virginia. This new Commandery was organized through the efforts of Sir Knight Barry Constant, eminent commander of Piedmont Commandery 26, and Sir Knight Barry Bartley, recorder of both Commanderies. So, who is Turner Ashby and why did we choose that name for our new Commandery? One of our founders and our grand musician, Sir Knight Jeff Hedges, researched and wrote a paper for us about General Turner Ashby who grew up in Warrenton, Virginia. The following is extracted from his paper.

America has fought two revolutions. The first established that we were a nation, the second defined what kind of nation we would be. It seems appropriate then that Turner Ashby's grandfather, Captain Jack, fought under Washington in that first rebellion and Colonel Turner Ashby, Sr., our Turner Ashby, fought in the second and final rebellion, the War of 1812. The Ashby's came full circle.

Turner Ashby was a dramatic and somewhat controversial, yet oh so brief player in that second revolution. This is but a humble and brief sketch of his chivalric story. All you need to know to understand Commandery 35's namesake was his holding strict

adherence to a code of chivalry.

At a party given by Ashby, a young male guest was insulted and goaded into a dual with a rejected rival for a young lady's attention. Unskilled in firearms, the youth accepted, and the dual was set immediately in a nearby grove. When word reached Ashby in the next room, he barged through the door and in a low, gentle voice asked, "What time is our meeting?" The duelist responded, "I am to fight him immediately." Ashby replied, "I beg your pardon, he has nothing to do with this affair. He came to my house tonight as my guest. When I invited him to come, the invitation was Turner Ashby's word of honor that he should be treated as a gentleman. I am sorry to have to explain the points of good breeding to you, but you have shown your ignorance of them by insulting my guest. The insult is mine, not his, to resent. He is here under my protection. If you are not prepared to make a proper and satisfactory apology at once, both to me and my guest, you must fight Turner Ashby and the time and place agreed upon will answer as well as any other. What do you say, sir?" The challenger signed a pair of written apologies.

Ashby, an accomplished horseman at an early age in his 20's, organized a cavalry company of friends known as the Mountain Rangers. The Rang-

ers were absorbed into the Virginia Militia in 1859 following John Brown's raid at Harpers Ferry.

Together with the Black Horse Cavalry, the Mountain Rangers guarded Brown at Charles Town during his trial and execution. The 3rd worshipful master of Mt. Carmel's Lodge, who served in the East in 1833, Samuel Chilton, was one of several defense attorneys working on Brown's behalf. At the hanging in December of 1859 were Ashby and his Mountain Rangers, the Black Horse Cavalry, and students from Virginia Military Institute with their instructor, Thomas Jackson. In the back of the crowd was a newly minted private in the Richmond Grays, an aspiring young actor named John Wilkes Booth. He was at the alpha and the omega of the Civil War.

In early '62, Ashby became colonel of the 7th Virginia Cavalry, composed of twenty-six loosely combined companies charismatically drawn to service with Ashby. During the first year of the war, Ashby operated independently, but by '62 his units were added to Jackson's Army of the Valley.

For Ashby, whose command was a precursor to Mosby, it was all about Harpers Ferry. He believed that the attack on the arsenal was the match for the flame, and when his brother was killed near there in June of '61, during a Union ambush, even Ashby's most ardent admirers believed that for him, the war was nothing more than an opportunity for personal revenge, bordering on bloodlust. Calling Ashby, the Knight of the Shenandoah Valley, as many did, obscures the sheer brutality of partisan warfare on the Maryland border.

Despite Jackson thinking that Ashby was untrained, not a disciplinarian, and unskilled at administration as a general officer, Ashby mostly served Jackson well in his set piece classic deception of McClelland, resulting in the protection of Richmond. Jackson sought to have Ashby removed from command so his troopers could be properly trained. Ashby threatened to resign and even spoke loosely of challenging Jackson to a duel. Ashby's cavalry would follow no other. Jackson, backing down, restored him to command. Perhaps Jackson remembered wrong intelligence from Ashby about the size of enemy forces at First Kernstown, Jackson's singular defeat; and had Ashby's men not been plundering Union supply wagons, Nathaniel Bank's force could have been captured. Nevertheless, a month later at the Taylor Hotel in Winchester, over Jackson's strongest objections, Ashby was promoted to brigadier general. However, the Confederate Senate had not yet confirmed the appointment, and two weeks later, Ashby went to Harrisonburg.

In a skirmish at the end of the Valley campaign, Ashby's horse was wounded and rider thrown to the ground from which he sprang up, saber drawn, continuing to lead his men as dismounted cavalry. Yet, within seconds, a musket ball found his chest, and he instantly fell dead. His last words were, "forward my brave men." A proper charge for our new Commandery in these uncertain times.

Whatever Jackson really thought of Ashby, here is the epitaph he issued after visiting the general's body: "As a partisan officer, I never knew his superior; his daring was proverbial, his powers of endurance almost incred-

ible, his tone of character heroic, and his sagacity almost intuitive in divining the purposes and movements of the enemy.”

Ashby’s remains were reinterred after the war in the Stonewall Section of the Confederate portion of the Mount Hebron Cemetery in Winchester where he lies today, in the same grave with his brother, Richard, who rumors said was bayoneted in a northern valley action while trying to surrender. The headstone at their site says simply, “The Brothers Ashby.” The date was June 6, 1862, one hundred fifty four years from the date we received the dispensation to form our Commandery.

He would only ride a black or a white horse, emblematical of the way he saw the world. He wore a broad brimmed felt hat with a long black feather, high-topped cavalry boots, gilt lace on his sleeves, his hair and beard black as ravens. Thomas Ashby,

a civilian of no relation, upon meeting him said, “He resembled the pictures I have seen of early Crusaders, a type unusual among the many men in the army, a type so distinctive that, once observed, it cannot soon be forgotten.

Now, over a century and a half later, Turner Ashby again provides service as he reminds all of us here, “forward my brave men.”

This article was researched and co-written by Jeffrey Hedges, grand musician of the Grand Commandery of Virginia, and Donald McAndrews, eminent commander of Turner Ashby Commandery 35 (U.D.) and past commander of Piedmont Commandery 26 of Virginia. Sir Knight McAndrews resides in Manassas, Virginia, and can be contacted at don@extravalue.net. Both are founding members of Turner Ashby Commandery 35 (U.D.).

Grand Encampment

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Knights



at the Bookshelf

By

Right Eminent Sir Knight George Marshall, Jr., PGC

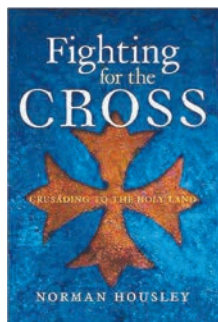
Norman Housley, *Fighting for the Cross: Crusading to the Holy Land*, 2008, Yale University Press, ISBN: 978-0300118889, Hardcover, 376 pages.

When I saw the title of the book, I immediately thought “Ho-hum. Just another book about the Crusades.” However, as I read it, I must admit my opinion changed, and I realized that this book was different. It is a book about the Crusades of course, but it goes deeper than the usual account of battles and leaders and knightly orders. It actually gives us a broad insight into the logistics, attitudes, motivations, living conditions, tactics, and infrastructure employed during the Crusades, from both the Crusaders’ and their adversaries’ viewpoints.

Chapter one is a summary of crusading efforts from 1095-1291. Chapter two concerns itself with how the Catholic Church and clergy motivated and exhorted the nobility, knights, and general populace to take up the cross. Chapter three describes the methods of financing that were employed and the rites of departure for the Holy Land. In Chapter four we learn about the logistics and other problems associated with both overland routes and sea voyaging to the Levant. Chapter five deals with crusading warfare, including Turkish tactics, non-combatant roles in the armies, knightly and infantry roles, and siege warfare. Chapter six discusses how the needs of the flesh such as food and drink, famines, disease, medical treatment, plunder, spoils, and payment were dealt with. Chapter seven discusses the concept of crusading as a penitential pilgrimage and the role of clerics as crusaders. In Chapter eight we learn how the Saracens viewed the Crusades and their reaction to the battles and events of the Crusades. Chapters nine and ten present the aftermath of the Crusades, including the problems encountered upon returning home, how the Byzantine Empire was affected, how lives were changed, and the chroniclers of the Crusades.

The book is written in an easy to read manner and is illustrated with maps, photos, and drawings throughout. Footnotes are provided in each chapter where needed. The author has utilized both modern and original sources to explain and illustrate his narrative.

In summary, the book provides a refreshing and interesting “behind the scenes” account of the trials and tribulations of the Crusading era, something not normally covered in most books on the subject.





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*“He cometh forth like
a flower and is cut
down...”
Job 14:2*

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