

Knight Templar

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**Address changes or corrections
and all membership activity
including deaths should be re-
ported to the Recorder of the
local Commandery. Please do
not report them to the editor.**

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Online magazine archives and index: <http://www.knightstemplar.org/KnightTemplar/knighttemplar>

Grand Master's Message

Pet Rocks

Remember the pet rock craze? The term lives on to describe a useless product driven entirely by marketing. This pet was just what you imagine, a small lump that offered all the companionship and enjoyment one might expect from an igneous or sedimentary fragment of hardened earth. It came in a small box with some clever faux instructions for tricks and care.

One can go to almost any meeting and hear the endless and often unproductive discussion of selling membership as if the sales pitch was the only element lacking. Our fraternity certainly has a lot to offer, but is it enough? In a former century, members might demit. Today they may simply stop paying the dues. Either represents a case where the member wasn't getting enough of what he wanted to justify remaining. Our local Commanderies are where our product, Templary, is produced. No marketing (membership development) can entirely compensate for a weak product.

Is the product of your Commandery, stale, outdated, slipshod, second rate, or shabby? There is nothing wrong with our concept, but too often our execution is poor. What are you offering in your Commandery? You might want social activities, or education, philosophy, drill, ritual, or a host of other parts of our product line, but what you do should be done well. After all, you are customers, too.

Let's sharpen up our product, and we will find that it isn't hard to find words to market it. Templary should be a gem not a common rock.

⚔️ Duane Lee Vangston



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IN MEMORIAM



Billy J. Boyer

Missouri

Grand Commander 1995

Born: February 18, 1936

Died: April 5, 2017

South Central Department Commander 2000 - 2003

Prelate's Chapel

by

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

Today in America we are living in a time when many are feeling one universal emotion: fear. Some people are fearful about the economy, while others are fearful of life changes. Many fear sickness, with long, painful suffering, while others are fearful of crime in their neighborhood. Fear is everywhere and gets into everything.



It is no mere coincidence that our worldly fears have increased in proportion to the decrease in faith of so many people. Many Americans today are people without a faith, much less the Christian faith. More and more people are basing key decisions in their lives upon secular motives, on the profit motive, on "what's good for me," or "what can I get out of it," or "what can I get away with." Our coins say, "In God We Trust," but that motto for most people is as phony as a three-dollar bill. We are a fearful people living in a fearful age, and we are headed for "God knows what."

The *Bible* tell us that "Perfect love casts out fear." God is Love, and when you are full of God's love, you are full of God, and you will have no fear. God promises it, so we can count on it. What a practical message that is for this fearful age. The *Bible* tells us that we are fearful because we are not full of God, that we are not full of love. The *Bible* says that love is the most powerful, the most helpful, the most healthful emotion alive today. Jesus Christ wants you to know that you have been and are loved so much by God, and Jesus died to prove it. God gives you perfect, unconditional, complete love, so that you will not fear anyone or anything, anymore, anytime. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have everlasting life." (John 3:16).

A Brief History and Symbolism of the Knightly Spur

by

Sir Knight George L. Marshall, Jr., PGC

Near the end of the Order of the Temple ceremony in the Commandery, the newly created Knight is invested with the spur and reminded of the zeal and activity which should characterize his knightly duties and is admonished that if he is negligent or unfaithful, he could be ignominiously degraded from the order, but what is the history of the spur, why is it part of a ceremony of knighthood, and what symbolism attaches itself to this appurtenance?

To begin with, this very old word derives from Anglo-Saxon *spura*, *spora*, related to “to kick or spurn;” compare Medieval High German *Sporn*, Frisian *spoar*. The generalized sense of “anything that urges on, a stimulus” is recorded in English from circa 1390 A.D. Thus, it was a metal implement worn on the heel of the rider to goad a horse.

The spur was apparently used by the Celts during the late Iron Age (from about 500 B.C. to the Roman conquest in the 1st century B.C.) and is also mentioned by Xenophon (c. 430 - 354 B.C.). Iron or bronze spurs were also used throughout the Roman Empire and existed in the medieval Arab world.

The spur was typically of two main types: the prick and the rowel. Early spurs had a neck that ended in a point called a prick which was riveted to the heel band. Prick spurs had straight necks in the 11th century A.D. and bent ones



(known as “swan’s neck”) in the 12th. The earliest form of the horseman’s spur armed the heel with a single prick. In England, the rowel spur is shown upon the first seal of Henry III (1207-1272) and on monuments of the 13th century, but it does not come into general use until the 14th century. The

earliest rowels probably did not revolve but were fixed.

Both types are shown below:



Prick spurs were the standard form until the 14th century when the rowel began to become more common. The prick design never died out entirely, but instead became a thicker, shorter neck with a dulled end, such as the modern “Prince

of Wales” design commonly seen in English riding.

Though often decorated throughout history, in the 15th century, spurs became an art form in both decoration and design, often having elaborate engraving, very long shanks, and large rowels. It is likely



that the elaborate designs reflected the increased abundance of precious metals, particularly silver, that followed the European exploration of the Americas beginning in 1492. Spur designs in Spain and colonial Mexico were particularly elaborate. For example, the spurs of the Spanish Conquistadors were sometimes called *Espuela Grande*, the “Grand Spur,” and could have rowels as large as six inches in circumference.

The spurs of medieval secular knights were gilt, and those of squires were silvered. “To win his spurs” meant to gain knighthood, as gilded spurs were reckoned the badge of knighthood. In the rare cases of ceremonious degradation of recreant or undeserving knights, the spurs were hacked from the disgraced knight’s heels with the cook’s chopper, and his shield was hung upside down as a sign of dishonor. After the battle of the Golden Spurs in 1302, where the French chivalry suffered a humbling defeat, the victors hung up bushels of knights’ gilt spurs in the churches of Kortrijk as trophies. The English named the French rout from Théroutanne as the Battle of the Spurs, due to the rapidity of the French cavalry’s flight.

The question arises as to whether the spurs of the crusading orders and those of the Templars in particular were gilt. As we know, the knights were of noble

lineage and thus were certainly familiar with golden spurs. Moreover, the Templars became very wealthy and could certainly have procured such spurs for their knights, particularly in the late 12th and 13th centuries. On the other

hand, we know that the knights took a vow of poverty, chastity, and obedience which would mitigate against the display of ostentatious items.

In the preface to the *Latin Rule* for the Templars, a document with seventy-two clauses attributed to Bernard de Clairvaux (1090–1153), he states, (concerning the secular knights)

“Therefore what error, knights, so immense, what frenzy so unbearable draws you to military actions at such expense and effort, all for nothing but death or crime? You cover your horses in silks and drape your armor with swatches of flowing cloths; you paint your lances, shields, and saddles; you bling up your bridles and spurs with gold, silver, and jewels; and with this pomp you rush only towards death, in shameful fury and shameless madness. Are these military insinias, or the trappings of women?”

Further on, we read: (Clause) 52.

“We utterly forbid any brother to have gold or silver on his bridle, nor on his stirrups, nor on his spurs. That is, if he buys them; but if it happens that a harness

is given to him in charity which is so old that the gold or silver is tarnished, that the resplendent beauty is not seen by others nor pride taken in them, then he may have them, but if he is given new equipment, let the Master deal with it as he sees fit.”



Thus, the pictures we see of Knights Templar wearing gilt spurs, such as the one above, drawn by artists after the dissolution of the order, are in error, since their rule expressly forbade the Templars to wear gilt spurs, obviously

to show that the emphasis was on one’s humility and lack of individual pride.

Information on the symbolism of the spur is sparse. The secular knight wore golden spurs about his heels, near the ground, to remind him to put wealth and honor beneath him in favor of the elevated code of chivalry. In heraldry, the spur is symbolic of preparedness for active service, pressing onward. Cirlot informs us that the spur is a symbol of active force. It is attached at the heel like the wings of Mercury, and protects the legendary Achilles’ heel. The spur of gold, together with the belt, in the Middle Ages symbolized the “defensive” (or moral) virtues of the knight. From House, we learn that the symbolism of the spurs is to the effect that, as they are the means of guiding the obedient horse, so the knight himself should submit obediently to the guidance of God. Further, they are a reminder that fear of Hell and hope of Heaven should spur the knight to virtuous activity.

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 several articles in that magazine as well as in the *Royal Arch Mason* magazine. He can be reached at geomarsh@yahoo.com.

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Grand Encampment Membership Awards



1105 Floyd Glen Day
McKinney Commandery 34
McKinney, Texas, Apr 5, 2017
1st Bronze

1106 Malin Gene Terrell
McKinney Commandery 34
McKinney, Texas, Apr 5, 2017
3rd Bronze



“Religion consists in a set of things which the average man thinks he believes and wishes he was certain.”

Mark Twain 1879

Members & Families Need to Inform Lodges of Their Burial Intentions in Advance

By
Sir Knight James A. Marples

I was greatly impressed by the article by Sir Knight John L. Palmer “preparing for the Masonic Lifestyle” in the April 2017 issue of *The Knight Templar* magazine. It was well-written and emphasized that we may be tempted to fudge on rules, regulations, and protocol, in deference to “kindness.” I see Sir Knight Palmer’s point. Integrity is something that shouldn’t be trifled with. A Masonic promise is a binding promise.

However, I’d like to share some of my own personal observations in the hope of illustrating that members, their families, and Lodges need to sit down and communicate burial intentions in advance so that everyone is straight on Masonic procedure and protocol. Back in the days of Sir Knight Albert G. Mackey, M.D., he wrote that a member needs to communicate his “request for burial to the Master of the Lodge of which he is a member, foreigners and sojourners excepted.” In the early days, special dispensations had to be granted by the Grand Master for members to wear regalia at functions such as funerals, but Mackey astutely states, “In the United States, Freemasons have generally been permitted to bury their dead without the necessity of such Dispensation.” Mackey does state that Apprentices and Fellow Craft Masons were at one time prevented from receiving Masonic funeral rites, but I believe this has changed and can vary from Jurisdiction to Jurisdiction.

In my own family, my father had a second cousin who was a Master Mason, Knight Templar, and Shriner for probably the bulk of half a century. When that relative died a few years ago, I, being a Mason, wanted to help-out the immediate family (none of the decedent’s three sons were Masons, so they were unfamiliar with what to do) by informing them that Masonic graveside rites were not “automatic.” The Lodge cannot just “show-up” unless requested. My family’s case was fortunate, they had me as an adviser to contact the Lodge of which my cousin was a member (which they did) and inform them of their request that my late cousin’s wish was to receive Masonic funeral rites, which was granted. He was in good-standing, and that made it go smoothly. In turn, I generically explained to my cousin’s immediate family “the apron ceremony,” since the Lodge didn’t give any briefing to them. My cousin had full Masonic and military rites after a church ceremony. Everything went as smoothly as silk, like clockwork, but it took communicating on all sides.

This is one aspect that I believe is sorely needed in today’s world, advance planning about Masonic burial rites. Americans are generally reluctant to talk about death, and Masonic nuances often get pushed to the back-burner. Some families purchase an elaborate funeral ceremony with all the trappings, and

then some families have been aggrieved by the Masonic Lodge failing to magically appear. The family feels “slighted,” and I know cases where some sons of Masons refused to join Masonry by holding an erroneous grudge against a Lodge.

I liked Sir Knight Palmer’s example of a hypothetical Mason who had lapsed on his dues, but the inverse occurred in the hypothetical case. The family felt a Masonic funeral was due them. They were relying on the deceased’s past reputation as a prominent member and wanted to (erroneously) ride on those past laurels. I fully see Sir Knight Palmer’s thinking. Rules are rules: If the man had willingly dropped-out of Masonry, he obviously wouldn’t be entitled to Masonic honors at death.

I normally don’t like to play devil’s advocate, but suppose the hypothetical man involved had a massive stroke and was unable to walk, talk, or eat and was moved to a nursing-facility in another state to be near his family? What came to my mind was the old expression by Senior DeMolay and the late radio commentator Paul Harvey who would inform radio-listeners of “the rest of the story.” If there were extenuating circumstances, then I think kindness might be in order if done through appropriate channels. If the incident was, for example, a man who accidentally lapsed in his dues three years due to being in a coma, if I were the master of the local Lodge, I’d consult my state’s grand master for a possible dispensation. That way, I’d be following Sir Knight Palmer’s theme of “rules and orders are meant to be followed,” yet the grand master of a Grand Lodge is more than a figurehead. A grand master is there to give ultimate guidance in tricky situations within his Jurisdiction.

Conversely, if the deceased man had been lapsed in his dues for twenty years, had been seen on the golf-course a week prior to his death, laughing and joking and of lucid mind, it would be a slam-dunk that no Masonic funeral should be given. In that respect, Sir Knight Palmer’s phrase of “cheating the Lodge out of dues and unworthy to be a Mason” would be accurate. However, if a man had a stroke and was in a coma for only three years and his family had no inkling of Masonic customs and procedures, or were financially and emotionally strapped or drained by being caregivers to an invalid who couldn’t speak, I think there is a distinction there.

I make this analogy to show that there must be room for kindness in Masonry, without compromising our vows. There is room for leeway, if certain circumstances are made known. Some members won’t talk to their families. They may discuss the fun aspects of Masonry while they are living, but some members are still hung-up that talking about protocol is taboo. Some families mistakenly feel that Lodge secretaries examine the local town’s daily newspaper and will see an obituary and immediately scour the old-time “Rolodex” or in today’s world the computer roster of members and show-up at a funeral without any further action. We must dispel that erroneous notion when we induct new Entered Apprentices. The ritualistic “secret work” is private and confidential, but also inform them of basic categories of Masonry that they can and should discuss with their families and friends. It could save a lot of misunderstandings, especially at the time of death.

Finally, when men are dropped from the rolls for non Payment of Dues (N.P.D.),

I have seen some Lodges, rites, shrine centers, etc. do it as a matter of routine without investigating the current status or welfare (or should I say, well-being) of the member who is about to be suspended for lack of paying dues. Some members are too proud to say they are hurting. Some may be in physical pain. Others may be in fiscal pain. Some may be enduring both and not want it revealed. Lodges, in my view, must be attentive and courteous and also learn to read unseen signs of a Brother in distress or need. Just reading a list of soon-to-be N.P.D.'s names is not sufficient. Every attempt should be made to contact them. No investigating committee should be a busybody or rumor monger. However, it doesn't take much genius to learn how to read the tea leaves if a family is in genuine dire straits. We can respond in an equally dignified way without hurting a man's pride.

Generally, men who voluntarily wish to drop-out will be eager to state their intention. Others may say that they feel the need to demit, but say so in a slow-voice or with head-low-ered. A good Mason is taught to be observant. As a Brother Mason who is also a former FBI special agent jokingly told me "That's what we in the FBI called a clue." We, as Masons, need not gossip about another's misfortunes. We need to be a caring Brother in deed to those Brothers in their times of need. That is what my late father, a fifty-two year member of Templary taught me.

knight templar

Again, I applaud Sir Knight Palmer's article. It is a clarion call that times are changing in Masonry. I agree that officers should hold firm to their duties and discharge them even if emotion or expediency might sway them to do otherwise. By the same token, I believe there are a few cases where merit exists, and that we have recognized channels of remedy, seeking dispensations where oversights have been made and taking corrective-action to satisfy both the Fraternity's integrity and the family's wishes. In short, I don't think we should be such sticklers that we fail to vigilantly seek, as Paul Harvey said, "the rest of the story."

Sir Knight James Marples is a life member of Mt. Olivet Commandery 12 in Wichita, Kansas, and currently resides in Texas. He can be contacted at rosehillks@yahoo.com or P. O. Box 1542, Longview, TX 75606.

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Thanks!

(Still need a few more)

I wish to thank publicly the following Sir Knights who contributed copies of the *Knight Templar* magazine from their private collections or who volunteered to do so in order to help us make every issue of the magazine available on-line for our posterity. These knights were willing to sacrifice their personal collections for the good of us all and the Templar legacy - Truly chivalrous!

Sir Knight Matthew John Echevarria
 Sir Knight Tim Miller
 Sir Knight Warren D. Perrine
 Sir Knight Warren Stenback
 Sir Knight Michael Kastle
 Sir Knight Gerald Nowotny
 Sir Knight Thomas G. Heimiller
 Sir Knight Fred Hickein

Sir Knight Brian J. Wagner
 Sir Knight Tim Riley
 Sir Knight Kent Lyon
 Sir Knight Gary Littlefield
 Sir Knight Ron Aughenbaugh
 Sir Knight Ricky Cox
 the Maryland Masonic Museum
 Sir Knight Warren Stenback

We are now, at the time we go to press, missing only the following issues. If you have any of these and would be willing to contribute them so that we may digitize them and save them for posterity, please contact me at ktmagazine@comcast.net.

Issues needed:

1955 Nov/Dec	1958 Feb/Mar	1960 Feb/Mar	1962 Mar	1963 Jan
1956 Feb-Mar	1958 May/Jun	1960 May/Jun	1962 Apr	1966 Jul
1956 Aug/Sept	1958 Aug/Sept	1960 Aug/Sept	1962 May	
1956 Nov/Dec	1958 Nov/Dec	1960 Nov/Dec	1962 Jun	
1957 Feb/Mar	1959 Feb/Mar	1961 Feb/Mar	1962 Jul	
1957 May/Jun	1959 May/Jun	1961 July/Aug	1962 Aug	
1957 Aug/Sept	1959 Aug/Sept	1961 Sept/Oct	1962 Sept	
1957 Nov/Dec	1959 Nov/Dec		1962 Oct	
			1962 Nov	
			1962 Dec	

If someone contributes these issues to the cause, and if we can find them at all, their contribution will save the magazine around \$2,400.

Knights Templar Eye Foundation, Inc.

March 24-25, 2017, marked the first biennial meeting for the “Advances in Pediatric Retina” (APR) held at the Duke Eye Center in Durham, North Carolina.



The goals of APR are to provide education through biannual meetings that address pediatric retinal diseases, which are individually rare but comprise an area of ophthalmology that is evolving rapidly, given advances in imaging, technology, and basic understanding of pathophysiologic mechanisms of diseases.

Attending the meeting was Duane L. Vaught, president of the Foundation and grand master of the Grand Encampment, along with 150 others from around the country, of which many in attendance were former grant recipients of the Knights Templar Eye Foundation. Michael T. Trese, MD gave the Knights Templar Keynote Lecture sponsored by the Foundation for this event. His topic was on Management of Pediatric Retinal Vascular Diseases.



Pictured above are (from left to right) Lejla Vajzovic, MD, course director; Duane L Vaught, president of the Knights Templar Eye Foundation and grand master of the Grand Encampment; Michael T. Trese, MD, clinical professor of ophthalmology and keynote speaker for the event; Mary Elizabeth Hartnett, MD, course co-director; and Cynthia Toth, MD, course co-director.

Note: Dr Vajzovic, is a past grant recipient of the Knights Templar Eye Foundation, and Dr. Hartnett is a member of the Knights Templar Eye Foundation Scientific Advisory Committee.

Scientific Advisory Committee Meeting

PEDIATRIC OPHTHALMOLOGY GRANT REVIEW 2017

At an annual meeting held every March, officers and trustees of the Knights Templar Eye Foundation come together with ten doctors, specializing in pediatric ophthalmology from many leading hospitals and research institutions throughout the country, to review applications and recommend which applications, based on the merits of the proposal, should be funded with a grant.



We are pleased to report that this year we received forty-three career-starter research grant applications and nine competitive renewal grant applications. Nineteen career starter grants and six competitive renewal grants were recommended for funding by the committee, and all twenty-five were approved by the officers and trustees serving on the Scientific Advisory Committee. The officers of the Foundation and committee consist of Duane L. Vaught, president and trustee of the Foundation; Jeffrey N. Nelson, chairman of the Committee and vice president and trustee of the Foundation; Michael B. Johnson, member of the Committee, vice president, and trustee of the Foundation; Lawrence E. Tucker, member of the Committee, secretary, and trustee of the Foundation; David J. Kussman, member of the Committee and trustee of the Foundation; and William Jackson Jones, member of the Committee, past president of the Foundation, and current trustee.



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, e-mail Manager@ktef.us.

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.



Website <http://www.knightstemplar.org/ktef/>

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 Templar site of Saint Jean d'Alcasin France were taken by the editor.

Help!

(Again)

Sir Knights,

In the past few years, I consider myself to have been very fortunate in having received a good number of quality articles from our readers. One of the most difficult things about editing your magazine is obtaining articles which you will consider either entertaining, educational, or inspirational. I am on the constant lookout for such articles and frequently come across them. This leads me to believe that there are literally thousands of good articles out there that I have not come across. I need your help with this.

Have you written a paper for your Lodge of Research, AMD Council, or Rosicrucian College that was particularly well received by your Brethren? Are you the secretary or archivist of one of these bodies with access to quality and interesting papers which have been presented to your group? Have you heard a speech lately that you thought was particularly educational or inspiring?

It seems to me to be a pure waste not to share them with the expanded readership of our eighty to ninety thousand readers of the *Knight Templar* magazine. I am going through one of those times when I have a shortage of material. I feel that I am running only inches in front of the alligator. I need your help to obtain materials for the magazine.

If you come across such material, here's what to do. If you are the author, just send me a Word document or text file of your paper, speech, or article to ktmagazine@comcast.net. We publish articles about the history, philosophy, and symbolism of Templary, Freemasonry, and Christianity. We do not publish fiction or poetry.

If you are not the author but have a copy of the material, you can send me the material and contact information for the author, and I will take it from there.

If it is not purely an opinion piece, we need you to send us any references of material you may have used in researching your article. Color illustrations are always nice, and they need to have a resolution of at least 300 dpi.

I hope you will take the time to think this over and send me some material to share. Thanks!

The Ed.

Templar Resonances

Second and final in a series

By

Charles Upton

and

Dr. John Andrew Morrow

Editor's Note

Islam, because of current events, has become a hot topic as of late. Most of you know that one of the charges leveled against the ancient Templars was that of complicity with the infidel Saracens. The relationship between the Ancient Templars and the enemy during the crusades was apparently very complex and ambiguous. This article addresses that subject from a historical and philosophical sense. I have omitted the portions of the article which were written in the original languages and printed only the English translations in the interest of space. Even so, the article has been serialized because of its length.

This article is continued from the June issue of the *Knight Templar* magazine.

Bernard Falque de Bezaure theorizes that the covenants of the prophet Muḥammad all found their way to the *Bayt al-Hikmah* where multiple copies were made by scribes. These were sent to a series of Caliphs who, in turn, included them in their own library collections. Other copies were certainly provided to other Muslim authorities, administrators, and judges. Copies of the covenants of the prophet were probably provided to libraries throughout the Muslim world. The *Bayt al-Hikmah* of Baghdād and Damascus would have been focal points in the geographic dissemination of the Muḥammadan covenants. With the destruction of the House of Wisdom following the Mongol Siege of Baghdād in 1258 AD, many if not most of the original

knight templar

copies of the letters, covenants, and treaties of the prophet Muḥammad were destroyed, leaving only copies in circulation. It was, after all, in the *Bayt al-Hikmah* or one of its branches that the original copy of the covenant of the prophet Muḥammad with the Christians of Najrān was brought to light in 878 AD. This lends credence to the claim that the House of Wisdom was the repository of many original writings of Muḥammad ibn 'Abd Allāh, the man known to the world as the messenger of Allāh.

As if this were not enough of an accomplishment, Bernard Falque de Bezaure advances another astonishing and audacious theory; namely, that the secrets jealously guarded, protected, and transmitted by the Knights Templar and other secretive Christian societ-

ies, consisted of the covenants of the prophet Muḥammad. Since the Dome of the Rock contains some of the most ancient examples of early Arabic and Islamic writing, it is also likely that the complex also contained precious documents from the dawn of Islām, including apparently, copies of the Muḥammadan covenants. Many have theorized that the Knights Templar were actually converts to Shī'ite Islām. Their veneration of a holy woman, who was supposedly not the Virgin Mary, allegedly alludes to Fātimah al-Zahrā'. The symbolism of fourteen pillars, two of which are identical, is found in their architecture and is said to symbolize the fourteen infallibles, Muḥammad, Fātimah, and the twelve imāms from the progeny of the prophet.

If this theory is correct, and not some New Age nonsense founded in fantasy as opposed to fact, some Crusaders may have come to the Holy Land as Christian conquerors and, after coming across the covenants of the prophet at the Dome of the Rock, were so moved by the protections that the prophet granted Christians that they embraced Islām, wishing to imitate such a just and righteous man. The Knights Templar would thus have become the keepers of the covenants of the prophet, committed to protecting the true teachings of the messenger of Allāh until the end of ages. Seeing how far Muslims had departed from the path of the prophet and how certain rulers had systematically attempted to suppress and corrupt the *sunnah*, they assumed the responsibility of protecting the covenants of the prophet from Muslims themselves. When word of their initiation ceremonies reached King Philip IV of France (1268-1314 AD), he set out to eradicate the Templars on the

grounds that they were worshippers of Baphomet, a corruption of Mahomet or Muḥammad. Whether or not one accepts any or all of this interpretation has no bearing on the question of the validity of the covenant of the prophet Muḥammad with the Armenian Christians of Jerusalem. It simply opens an entirely novel line of enquiry.

[Comment by Charles Upton]

The Arabic root TRQ, upon which the Arabic word *Ṭarīqah* is based, refracts itself into various words meaning path, road, spiritual way, one who knocks (as a metaphor for night visitor), and path or orbit for the passage of stars or other heavenly bodies who are also night visitors. Jesus, speaking in Aramaic, closely allied to Arabic, called himself "the Way" and said, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock," and in Luke, Chapter 11, He tells the parable of the man, a night visitor, who knocks on his friend's door at midnight asking for bread to feed his guest, and says "knock and it shall be opened unto you."

Also highly interesting is the fact that stars are commonly associated with angels, even with angelic armies. Luke 2:13 refers to the angels as "the host (army) of Heaven." Did the Templars think of themselves as earthly reflections or representatives of this angelic army, charged by God with the secret governance of the world?

[From Findings: in Metaphysic, Path and Lore]

One day, as I was reading the *Surah of the Cave* in the Rodwell translation of the noble *Qur'an*, the answer to the

riddle posed therein, i.e., the exact number of the youths known as the companions of the cave came to me, and after a short internet search, I was fortunately able, to my great relief, to confirm to my own satisfaction what at first had been no more than an intuition. Here is the pertinent passage according to Rodwell, Q.18:8-26 [Pickthall, 18:9-28; Muhammad Asad and Yusuf Ali, 18: 9-27]:

“Hast thou reflected that the inmates of the cave and of al-Rakim were one of our wondrous signs?

When the youths betook them to the cave they said, ‘O our Lord! grant us mercy from before Thee, and order for us our affair aright.’

Then struck we upon their ears with deafness in the cave for many a year:

Then we awaked them that we might know which of the two parties could best reckon the space of their abiding.

We will relate to thee their tale with truth. They were youths who had believed in their Lord, and in guidance had we increased them;

And we had made them stout of heart, when they stood up and said, ‘Our Lord is Lord of the Heavens and of the Earth: we will call on no other god than Him; for in that case we had said a thing outrageous.

These our people have taken other gods beside Him, though they bring no clear proof for them; but, who more iniquitous than he who forgets a lie

of God?

So when you shall have separated you from them and from that which they worship beside God, then betake you to the Cave: Your Lord will unfold His mercy to you, and will order your affairs for you for the best.’

And thou mightest have seen the sun when it arose, pass on the right of their cave, and when it set, leave them on the left, while they were in its spacious chamber. This is one of the signs of God. Guided indeed is he whom God guideth; but for him whom He misleadeth, thou shalt by no means find a patron, director.

And thou wouldst have deemed them awake, though they were sleeping; and we turned them to the right and to the left. And in the entry lay their dog with paws outstretched. Hadst thou come suddenly upon them, thou wouldst surely have turned thy back on them in flight, and have been filled with fear at them.

So we awaked them that they might question one another. Said one of them, ‘How long have you tarried here?’ They said, ‘we have tarried a day or part of a day.’ They said, ‘Your Lord knoweth best how long you have tarried: Send now one of you with this your coin into the city, and let him mark who therein hath purest food, and from him let him bring you a supply: and let him be courteous, and not discover

you to anyone.

For they, if they find you out, will stone you or turn you back to their faith, and in that case it will fare ill with you forever.’

And thus made we their adventure known to their fellow citizens, that they might learn that the promise of God is true, and that as to ‘the hour’ there is no doubt of its coming. When they disputed among themselves concerning what had befallen them, some said, ‘Build a building over them; their Lord knoweth best about them.’ Those who prevailed in the matter said, ‘A place of worship will we surely raise over them.’

Some say, ‘They were three; their dog the fourth.’ others say, ‘Five; their dog the sixth,’ guessing at the secret: others say ‘Seven; and their dog the eighth.’ Say: My Lord best knoweth the number: none, save a few, shall know them.

Therefore be clear in thy discussions about them, and ask not any Christian concerning them.

Say not thou of a thing, ‘I will surely do it tomorrow;’ without, ‘If God will.’ And when thou has forgotten, call thy Lord to mind; and say, ‘Haply my Lord will guide me, that I may come near to the truth of this story with correctness.’

And they tarried in their cave 300 years, and nine years over.

Say: God best knoweth how long they tarried: With Him are the secrets of the heavens and

of the Earth: Look thou and hearken unto Him alone. Man hath no guardian but Him, and none may bear part in His judgments:—

And publish what hath been revealed to thee of the book of thy Lord—none may change His words,—and thou shalt find no refuge beside Him.”

Rodwell’s translation of part of his verse 22, “and ask not any Christian concerning them,” appears to be an extrapolation based on the fact that the legend of the seven sleepers of Ephesus, with whom the companions of the cave are often identified, was current in the Christian world, and remains so today, where they are identified as Christian martyrs. They are part of the Roman martyrology; there is even an Eastern Orthodox icon depicting them. Other translators, however, either leave those whom Muslims are not to question about the number of the companions unidentified, or identify them with the pagans, or never define such a group at all. Following Rodwell’s translation, however, (or his extrapolation) we can further conjecture that the number of the companions was not seven, since any Muslim who asked the Christians their number would likely have been answered “seven,” in line with the seven sleepers story. The *Qur’an* even more explicitly denies that the number is either three or five, since these are defined as mere “guesses.”

According to the inner voice I heard, their number is nine, presumably with their dog, being the tenth. What evidence might be brought forward in support of this intuition? Assuming that nine is the right answer and that I was

not subject to deception, what might the nine companions and their dog symbolize in terms of the more arcane levels of meaning enfolded by the noble *Qur'an*? The book itself tells us to "be clear in your discussions of them (Rodwell), or to contend not concerning them except with an outward contending (Pickthall), or to not argue about them other than by way of an obvious argument (Muhammad Asad), or to enter not, therefore, into controversies concerning them, except on a matter that is clear" (Yusuf Ali). We are being told, in other words, that the answer to this riddle is something clear and explicit, not a vague ethical sentiment or mystical reverie, and this, if the truth be known, is the way with all good riddles. They carefully avoid abstraction. Their answers are always clear and concrete. Likewise, in performing exegesis of sacred scripture, the best practice is always to first clarify the literal meaning as much as possible. Only then will the concrete symbols appear that can support a more *batini ta'wil*, a more esoteric hermeneutic.

In quest of such clarity, I did a short internet search, and found a Wikipedia article on the legend of the seven sleepers, where it was asserted, incorrectly, that the *Qur'an* explains the 300 plus nine years that the sleepers occupied their cave as representing the nine year discrepancy between 300 solar years and the same length of time computed in lunar years, since during their long sleep, the calendar had been changed from solar to lunar. The unnamed writer of the article undoubtedly drew upon a second writer, also unnamed, who saw in the number 300 plus nine in *the Surah of the Cave* the discrepancy between solar and lunar calendars. It is to this second

writer that I am absolutely indebted for the confirmation of my original intuition. Calculating as clearly, explicitly, and outwardly as I could, since I was unwilling to leave an assertion by an unknown source uncorroborated, I can now confidently state, given that a solar year is approx. 365.24 days and a lunar year, approx. 354.38 days, that over 300 solar years, the discrepancy between lunar and solar time amounts to approximately nine (lunar) years. The youths in the cave symbolize these nine years, with their dog, the tenth, representing the remainder of .0077886 years in the decimal system, that is, based on the number ten. The dog waiting quietly at the mouth of the cave over the long centuries, with his two paws outstretched, also immediately suggests the posture of the Sphinx, patroness of riddles and the Egyptian solar calendar, or the calendar they used to keep a time closest to solar time, with a discrepancy of only twelve minutes per year from true solar time, which was calculated based on the rising of Sirius, the dog star.

[Charles Upton]

Since the same period of time calculated in days and hours amounts to both 300 solar years and 309.0077886 lunar years, the number nine (plus .0077886) represents the union of Sun and Moon. In Islamic symbolism, this indicates the end of the present world or cycle-of-manifestation. In the science of alchemy, it symbolizes the union of soul and spirit, which in esoteric terms comes to the same thing, since the soul, perfectly conformed to the spirit, has transcended the cycles of time. Nine is also the traditional number of the origi-

nal brotherhood of the Knights Templar, which as I once speculated, might have been intended to suggest the nine choirs of angels in the system of St. Dionysius the Areopagite. Dionysian angelology was adopted in a slightly altered form by St. Bernard of Clairvaux,⁶ who sponsored the Templars and gave them their rule. Nine is also the symbolic number of Beatrice in Dante's *La Vita Nuova*. He met her when she was nine years old, "courted" her for nine years, etc. A number of scholars; René Guénon, Julius Evola, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Luigi Valli, Eugene Aroux, Mircea Eliade, Alfonso Ricolfi, Arthur Schult, Henry Corbin, and William Anderson, have asserted that Dante was an initiate of an esoteric spiritual order known as the *Fede Santa* ("Holy Faith") the *Fedeli d'Amore*, the "Faithful of Love," who have been described as a third (lay) order of the Templars, and he, as the Templars were supposed to have done, venerated "a holy woman who was not the Virgin Mary," Beatrice herself.

Furthermore, Miguel Asín y Palacios in his 1919 book, *La Escatología Musulmana en la Divina Comedia*, demonstrated that Dante derived much of his lore from popular Islamic accounts of Muhammad's *miraj* or ascension to Heaven, as well as from the works of the Shaykh al-Akbar, the "greatest (Sufi) Shaykh," Ibn al-'Arabi. Therefore we are justified in speculating that the story of the nine original Templars might have been a symbolic fable patterned upon the companions of the cave from the *Qur'an*, particularly since thirty-one as the actual number of the first Templars (according to Michael the Syrian) has more historical evidence backing it up, and also that Dante's veneration of

Beatrice could have been derived from a Christian, courtly love imitation as practiced by the Fedeli d'Amore, of the Shi'ite veneration of Fātimah.

[From *Vectors of the Counter-Initiation*, with deletions and additions]

Some scholars speculate that Freemasonry has its origin in various esoteric contacts made by the Templars in the Holy Land. Craft guilds such as masonry tended to take on some of the characteristics of esoteric secret societies in both Islam and Christianity, as they indeed did in classical antiquity. They were considered to have been founded by a certain saint or prophet with a legendary association with the craft in question, and they possessed "trade secrets" that were often given a symbolic or esoteric interpretation. Outside of masonry, the craft where such tendencies are most clearly evident is that of alchemy, and it is often asserted that some Templars, after the suppression of the order, took refuge with the Freemasons. It stands to reason that the Dome of the Rock and the al-Aqsa Masjid on the Temple Mount would have been repaired and maintained by such a guild of masons, seeing that the maintenance of a holy site, the third holiest in Islam, was unlikely to have been simply "outsourced" to the lowest bidder. The gothic arch, which appeared in France in the 12th century, could well have been based upon the pointed arch used in Islamic architecture, the first appearance of which was as part of the al-Aqsa Masjid.⁷ The Knights Templar also constructed octagonal churches reminiscent of the Dome of the Rock, and given that the Templars occupied

al-Aqsa, they certainly could have had dealings with a guild of sacred masons charged with the maintenance of the site whose techniques would most likely have been interpreted symbolically and thus quasi-esoterically. They did in fact make renovations to this building,⁸ as well as retaining as slaves all captured Muslim craftsmen whom they employed in many capacities.⁹ Such a guild might have presented itself to the Templars as one group of “spirituals” to another who shared with them a veneration for the same sacred site and may have been eminently capable of fascinating them with tales of the history and symbolism of the Dome of the Rock and the Temple Mount, possibly in hopes of mitigating their hatred of Islam and moderating their depredations in the Holy Land. The Knights Templar, in turn, could have established and maintained an alliance with such an order of esoteric stonemasons, some of whom might have accompanied them to the west. The Knights, who built castles in Palestine and churches in Europe, employed many stonemasons, and since they apparently incorporated certain design features that were taken from Islamic architecture, the construction techniques if not the technicians themselves would have entered the west through their patronage. Such techniques would likely have been given symbolic interpretations by the Muslim craft guilds who used them, and this lore could certainly have passed to the Templars. As Peter Levenda points out, “if the architectural innovations came from the Middle East, then it stands to reason that someone had to train the local European craftsmen in these techniques and designs. These would have been men who served in some capacity

in the Crusades, either as masons and carpenters hired by the military orders to build fortifications or as members of the orders themselves” [*The Secret Temple*, p. 66]. Who would the Templars have been more likely to hire to repair the al-Aqsa Masjid than the local craftsmen charged with maintaining it? It is possible that Freemasonry grew out of something like a Sufi *tariqah*, perhaps, as some have speculated, *al-Banna*, “the Builders,” reputedly founded by the great Sufi Dhu’l Nun Misri, who is said to have incorporated ancient Egyptian lore into the Sufi tradition. This or some similar initiatory order would have been entirely orthodox within the context of Islam but would have inevitably deviated into heterodoxy if it attempted to become, under the Templar influence, a kind of “esoteric Christianity.” This would explain the highly ambiguous nature of western Freemasonry, its uneasy blend of quasi-esoteric universalism with a subversive, anti-clerical hatred of the Catholic Church, [Sic] at least in certain jurisdictions and at certain historical periods. This enmity was certainly reciprocated, especially under Popes like Pius X. A derivation of Freemasonry from Islamic esoterism may never be provable. It is nonetheless highly interesting, in view of some of our speculations above, that Ibn al-‘Arabi’s book on Dhu’l Nun is entitled *Al-Kawkab al-durrī: fī manāqib Dhī-l Nūn al-Misrī*—in English, *The Brilliant Star: On the Spiritual Virtues of Dhu-l-Nūn the Egyptian*.

At one point the Templars entered into a military alliance with the Hashishim, who, as Shi’a, were also opposed to Saladin, a Sunni, and it is entirely possible that the Shi’a saw the conquest of the Holy Land by the “Franks” as a

chance to throw off the Sunni yoke. The Hashishim, like the Templars, were a brotherhood of “sacred warriors” with grades of initiation. This could have led certain Shi’a scholars or theosophers in Jerusalem to make overtures to the Templars, especially after their hunger for spiritual and esoteric lore became better known now that they had reached the archetypal Holy City of Jerusalem.

Jerusalem, specifically the Temple Mount, was the first *qibla* or direction-of-prayer in Islam before the qibla was transferred to the Kaaba; this fact could have led Muslims to read the Apocalypse, with its prophesy of the descent of a cube-shaped Heavenly Jerusalem (cf. Apocalypse 21:16), as predicting the later pre-eminence of Islam and esoteric Muslims to see the Kaaba itself as a kind of three-dimensional hermeneutic of Temple lore in terms of sacred geometry (see Henry Corbin, *Temple and Contemplation*). The Templars might well have been open to this kind of esoteric or symbolic lore. Medieval Christians generally saw Muslims either as pagans or as an heretical Jewish sect. The high regard in which Muslims held Jesus could have come to the Templars as an intriguing shock and led them

to enquire further.

[Charles Upton]

Regarding Falque de Bezaure’s theory that the Templars converted to Shi’a Islam, I think it more probable that they would simply have adopted certain doctrines and symbols from the Shi’a as well as from other groups they could have made contact with in Palestine, such as the Sufis and the “Johannite Christians” rather than converting in toto. Instead of seeing Islam as an alternative to Christianity, the notion that the Saracens, in line with the holy *Qur’an*, venerated Jesus and the Virgin Mary, would more likely have expanded their conception of Judeo-Christianity to include Islam as an integral part of the larger “Abrahamic Tradition.” If this was in fact the case, they would have faced the dilemma that all who accept the transcendent unity of religions will inevitably encounter, the need to determine exactly where to draw the line between a heterodox, exoteric syncretism and a truly esoteric universalism whose fundamental doctrine is: “The Truth is One because God is One.”

Charles Upton is a resident of Lexington, Kentucky and can be contacted at cupton@qx.net.

Notes

6. *Bernard of Clairvaux, Selected Works*; Paulist Press, 1984, pp. 153-154
7. <http://www.muslimheritage.com/article/pointed-arch>
8. <http://erenow.com/postclassical/the-real-history-behind-the-templars/13.html>
9. See John J. Robinson, *Dungeon, Fire and Sword: The Knights Templar in the Crusades*, 1991, pp. 347-348



Photo of mysterious engravings in the tower of Chinon, thought to have been made by Templars while they were jailed there in 1308 during the Templar trial. The photo comes from the archives of Charbonneau-Lassay.

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Beauceant News

IN MEMORIAM

It is with sorrow that we share the news of the loss of Past Supreme Worthy President (Mrs. Charles E.) Mary E. Harris on February 27, 2017, in Eastbrook, Maine. Mrs. Harris was installed supreme worthy president on September 26, 2003, in Norfolk, Virginia. She presided over the 84th Annual Supreme Assembly in Little Rock, Arkansas.

Her motto was "For Everything Under the Sun there is a Reason." Her symbols were blueberries, the rising sun, and a lighthouse. Mary lived in the low bush blueberry country of Maine. The rising sun reminded her of another day before us, and rays of a lighthouse guide us through troubled waters. During her visits to 114 Assemblies she reminded us to be humble, gentle, and patient with each other, for life's greatest blessing is our friends.

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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>.

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.



Beauceant News



Pictured above are members of Columbus 79 of Ohio on occasion of the official visit of (Mrs. Joseph L.) Barbara Bongiovi. The worthy president is (Mrs. Kevin) Julie Gilbride. Also present was Ms. Kimberly Burnet, supreme worthy 2nd vice president.



Above are Pawtucket 217 members on occasion of the official visit of (Mrs. Joseph L.) Barbara Bongiovi. Their worthy president is (Mrs. Robert) Jean Allen.



Knights



at the Bookshelf

By
Sir Knight W. Bruce Pruitt, P.G.C.

The Road to Jerusalem: Book One of the Crusades Trilogy by Jan Guillou, paperback, Harper Perennia, 2010, 448 pages, ISBN-10: 0061688541.

This book and the two following it would be fascinating reading for anyone interested in the Knights Templar during the days of the Crusades. It is the first of a trilogy by a talented Swedish author whose biography says that his books have been translated into more than twenty languages.

This book is about Arn Magnusson, the second son of Swedish nobleman, Magnus Folkesson, and mother Fru Sigfrid. The political environment in the southern part of Sweden is complex, with maneuvers rampant by the various minor “Kings” of the areas of West Gotaland, East Gotaland, and Smaland. The Folkesson clan must walk softly and carefully to keep from being drawn too deeply into the conflicts. Lady Sigfrid is a wise advisor to her husband, since she has a certain personal position from her own family. The stories of all these political shifts are interesting but not the most significant part of the story. They do set the stage in order to understand Arn’s eventual entry into the Knights Templar.

As a second son, as it was often the custom, after an early upbringing, Arn is sent to a Cistercian monastery for schooling and training. The French monks who are found in this conclave are strong, fundamentally religious brothers who offer a peaceful and beneficial foundation for him and other young men. Arn becomes a serious Christian and a bright student with a beautiful singing voice. (The monastery choir is a significant part of the life of the monks and students.) Fortunately, Arn also comes under the tutelage of Brother Guilbert de Breton, a lay brother and the arms maker. He is then taught the finer points of swordsmanship, archery, riding, and so forth. It becomes obvious that Gilbert has experience far afield of the monastery, and admits to good reason why he is not a full-fledged Monk. When Arn is given a later opportunity to travel outside the walls of the cloister, it becomes obvious that much is lacking in his knowledge of the real world.

When Arn returns to the monastery, he is tutored further by Guilbert to equip him to return to his family permanently. However, there is a major turn of events promulgated by no less than Arn’s viewing a beautiful girl! Not only is she every-

thing a young man would desire, but her lovely voice is like a symphony, especially when joined by Arn's. Giving too much detail at this point in a review would be inadvisable, but suffice it to say that Arn eventually finds himself applying more of his martial skills than the musical and is a novice in the monastic and military order of the Knights of the Temple. Finishing this book leaves the reader asking for more, and looking forward to the rest of the story.

Correction

In the May issue of the *Knight Templar* magazine we ran an article written by Sir Knight George Marshall entitled "An Investigation of the Libations." I inadvertently left out the references for this article, and they are listed below for those of you who wish to consult them.

SOURCES USED

- (1) *Random House Kernerman Webster's College Dictionary*, © 2010 K Dictionaries Ltd. Copyright 2005, 1997, 1991 by Random House, Inc. All rights reserved.
 - (2) <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Libation>
 - (3) <http://www.hellenicgods.org/libation-in-hellenismos---sponde>
 - (4) [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Toast_\(honor\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Toast_(honor))
 - (5) <http://www.rosarychurch.net/answers/qa062001a.html>
 - (6) <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/15564a.htm>
 - (7) <http://mysticalnumbers.com/number-5/>
 - (8) <http://www.biblestudy.org/bibleref/meaning-of-numbers-in-bible/5.html>
 - (9) <http://www.bibletools.org/index.cfm/fuseaction/Topical.show/RTD/CGG/ID/3831/Wine-Symbolism-of-.htm>
 - (10) <http://www.patheos.com/blogs/christiancrier/2015/06/13/what-does-the-right-hand-symbolize-or-mean-in-the-bible/>
- Image 1: Wine cup at <http://liturgy.co.nz/a-good-quality-wine>
- Image 2: <http://vinepair.com/wine-blog/libations-and-the-ancient-history-of-pouring-one-out/>
- Image 3: Three Grand Masters from MM Lecture slides
- Image 4: <http://www.stedna.org/worship/stationsOfTheCross/station05>
- Image 5: <http://www.whitehorseblog.com/2016/09/05/the-mingled-cup-part-5/>
- Image 6: <http://www.terrasanctaguild.com/product/M-200-R.html?gclid=CISVx6u11tACFQwYgQodmF0OvQ>
- Image 7: <http://yahwehishisname.blogspot.com/2012/08/a-fascinating-study-on-gods-right-hand.html>

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“Except the Lord build the
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Psalm 127:1

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