


Knight Templar

The logo is a stylized emblem. It features a crown at the top, with two crossed swords or spears positioned behind it. The entire logo is rendered in a dark blue color with yellow outlines and highlights.

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MAY 2018

NUMBER 5



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Duane L. Vaught
Grand Master

David J. Kussman
Grand Captain General and Publisher
1781 N. Pheasant Street
Anaheim, CA 92806-1007

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Grand Recorder

Grand Encampment Office
5909 West Loop South, Suite 495
Bellaire, TX 77401-2402
Phone: (713) 349-8700
Fax: (713) 349-8710
E-mail: larry@gektusa.org

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John L. Palmer
Managing Editor
Post Office Box 566
Nolensville, TN 37135-0566
Phone: (615) 283-8477
Fax: (615) 283-8476
E-mail: ktmagazine@comcast.net

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Grand Master's Message

The Thing

What is THE purpose of our organization? Some say THE thing is the ritual. Others say THE thing is our charities, or THE thing is our faith, or fellowship, or uniforms, or philosophy, or history. Some members become so committed to their corner of the Fraternity — THE thing — that they lack appreciation for those who prefer something else.

Our Fraternity is like a painting. We might especially like one part of the painting but the overall presentation will likely suffer if the only color used is orange. Freemasonry and Templary blend many aspects. Might this be the reason why we are still here while so many other Fraternities are gone? Some of those became much bigger than us before drifting from the scene.

The success and longevity of our order depends on a recognition that all of our parts, that all of our members and their interests matter. We need to foster that level of brotherhood that cares for all of our members regardless of trivial differences in our individual priorities.

Freemasonry and our corner of it (Templary) is a vast mosaic that has survived for centuries, because it is diverse enough to provide all good men something of interest. It provides that good man with enough alternatives that he can change interests and activities without ever leaving the fraternity and its shared core experiences.

Each of us might even try an area we didn't think interesting and might find out differently.



⚔️ *Dwaine Lee Vaughn*

IN MEMORIAM



Donald Gifford Warner
District of Columbia
Grand Commander 1976
Born: May 8, 1927
Died: February 12, 2018

William Barton Oshman
Virginia
Grand Commander 1986
Born: May 14, 1944
Died: February 15, 2018

Earl Roy Little, Jr.
Louisiana
Grand Commander 1980
Born: March 14, 1925
Died: March 11, 2018
Department Commander – 1988-1991

John F. Dale
Nebraska
Grand Commander 2006
Born: July 26, 1932
Died: March 6, 2018

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Prelate's Chapel

by

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

This month we celebrate the ascension of our Lord back to Heaven. I share with you Sir Knight Daryl Price's Chaplain's Corner from the Newsletter of St. Joseph High 12 Club 49 of St. Joseph, Missouri. I want to thank Sir Knight Price for his permission to share it.

Christ's ascension back to Heaven was the culmination of God's divine plan for us. Jesus came from glory and majesty. He humbled himself, took the form of a servant, and became obedient unto death. He suffered, died, and was buried. He



arose on the third day, proclaiming God's forgiveness for our sins. At Bethany, on the Mount of Olives, Jesus lifted up his hands in the presence of his disciples, blessed them, and parted from them. He then returned skyward to the Father. As St. Paul said, "We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again. Death no longer has dominion over him." Jesus' ascension back into the heavens, which we now celebrate, is the grand finale of all his words and works done for us and for our salvation.

While it is a culmination, it is not the finale. This is not the end of the story. It is not the completion of our Lord's involvement with us. The ascension represents the action of Jesus which he promised to his disciples on the night that he was betrayed. "I go to prepare a place for you and I will come again and take you to myself, that where I am you may be also." Men and women down through the ages have taken that literally and expect some day, as St. Paul said, "To be caught up in the air to always be with the Lord."

The ascension of Jesus into heaven from the Mount of Olives is our surety that he will come again and take us to himself. The Good Shepherd, the spotless Lamb of God, will take us by the hand and walk with us "through the valley of the shadow of death" to our Father's house in Heaven. Because Jesus ascended into heaven, the day will come when all who have loved his appearing will follow him into the realms of glory!

Lesser-Known Medieval Orders of Knighthood

Founded in the Holy Land

Part 4 of 6: Order of the Knights of Montjoie

By

Sir Knight George L. Marshall, Jr., PGC

As we know, the period of the Crusades witnessed the rise of several religious orders and Christian military orders. The order of Montjoie (also known as Knights of our Lady of Montjoie) is mentioned in the thirteenth century as having been founded initially for protecting Christian pilgrims in the Iberian Peninsula. The order was founded by the Leonese Count Rodrigo Álvarez de Sarria (died c. 1187), a former Knight of Santiago, in the kingdom of Aragon, specifically in the castle of Alfambra in 1174 and then was afterward established in the Holy Land c. 1178, again for protecting Christian pilgrims.

Count Rodrigo originated from a wealthy and powerful family who had established themselves as advisors to



the court of León. Originally vowing to join the Templars, he instead became a member of the Order of St. James, but he left this order for the purpose of following a stricter form of religious life and to found a military order which followed the Cistercian rule. This came about in Aragon, when King Alfonso II endowed Rodrigo and his brethren with the castle of Alfambra in return for military aid against the Muslims, as noted above. This was a recently reconquered area where the Templars did not yet hold many possessions, and the king evidently felt the need to allow a second military institution there, perhaps having closer ties to the royal house.¹⁵ A photo of the ruins of the castle is shown below.

The order's existence was brief, and it



knight templar

was united with the Order of Calatrava in 1221. It is also sometimes known as the Order of Trufac. The rule of the order was adapted from the Cistercian rule, and it was almost entirely a Spanish order. The emblem of the order was a red and white cross. The brethren swore an oath to fight the Saracens and dedicated about a quarter of their funds to this end. Unlike the Templars, the Brethren of Montjoie were permitted to take ransom.⁴

The Crusaders besieged Jerusalem in 1099. The soldiers traveled along the path leading up the highland known as the Neve Samuel, which is west of Jerusalem. Neve Samuel is allegedly where the prophet Samuel was buried, but it is not at all clear that he was buried there, since according to the *Bible*, he was buried in his hometown of Ramah. The tradition that he was buried there probably arose in Byzantine times, since the Christians were keen on linking the Holy Land to stories in the *Bible*. Upon reaching the apex of this mountain, they were so overjoyed at obtaining their first glimpse of Jerusalem from here that they called the hill Montjoie. (French for “mountain of joy”), also known as Mons Gaudii. It subsequently became part of a network of way stations for Christian pilgrims travelling to Jerusalem. In 1177 Alvarez, totally devoted to the struggle

against the Muslims, moved to Palestine.

What might have been the motives of Alvarez to move his newly established order from the Iberian Peninsula to the Holy Land? It is known that his paternal grandfather had already visited the holy places in 1121, and his maternal grandfather had even visited Palestine twice. He may thus have been continuing a family tradition. Neither should we underestimate his fervent zeal for fighting the Saracens wherever they were.¹⁵

Here he and his new order received donations from high-ranking ecclesiastical and lay donors. A church and monastery were initially built on Montjoie, and later a fortress was erected by the order. The order then changed its name, calling itself Militia sanctae Mariae Montis Gaudii de Ierusalem.¹⁵ Ruins of the Crusader fortress can still be seen. Moslem conquerors subsequently built a mosque here, although the present mosque which is built on Crusader ruins dates from the 18th century.¹⁰ The photos below show the mosque atop the ruins and the view of Jerusalem from the mountain.

The fortress or castle was cut into the bedrock on the west, north, and east sides, thus creating a defensive moat. Hewn rocks were used for the building material of the fortress on the



top of the hill. The quarry also served as stables for the horses, water reservoirs, and other structures. The Crusaders were driven out of Jerusalem in 1187 by the Muslim forces headed by Saladin, and their military forces retreated from the site. Upon their establishment in the Holy Land, the king of Jerusalem gave the order several towers to garrison in Ascalon, but the order's headquarters was the fortress on Montjoie. The order was recognized by Pope Alexander III on May 15, 1180. It was intended to be an international order but had difficulty attracting recruits and so remained almost entirely Spanish.⁵ In fact, many Spaniards preferred to join their long established great national orders, such as Calatrava and Santiago.⁶



Several Knights from the order fought at the Battle of Hattin in 1187, but like the Templars and Hospitallers who also fought there, none of them survived. Discontentment with the leadership of the master Fralmo in 1196 led to the establishment of a new Order of Montjoie in Castile, while the Aragonese element of the order was merged with the Templars. An illustration of a Knight of Montjoie of this period is shown above. How-

ever, this decision did not meet with the approval of all the Castilian brethren, who founded a new order, that of Montfrague, which in 1221, Ferdinand III of Castile joined to the Order of Calatrava.¹⁵ The Order of Montesa, territorially limited to the old Crown of Aragon, was

named after the castle of Montesa, its headquarters. This order was inspired partly by the suggestion to re-establish Montjoie after the suppression of the Templars.²

As for Rodrigo, founder of the order, in 1186 an attempted merger was made with the Knights Templar, and it is possible that Rodrigo was already dying at that stage. He had almost certainly died by the autumn of 1187. He was buried in the convent of Alfambra.¹⁷

The fortified church on Montjoie in the Holy Land was destroyed in 1244 by the Arabs in order to prevent its recapture.¹²

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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Ascension in Jesus Christ's B S A

By

Sir Knight J. B. Morris

od's plan for his son, Jesus Christ, involved the B S A. The letter "B" stands for Jesus' birth, while the letter "S" reveals Jesus Christ's substance, sovereignty, surrender, subordination, submission, sacrifice, and substitution. The letter "A" stands for Jesus' ascension or being taken back to his father in heaven.

We learn of the birth of Jesus Christ, in Matthew 1:18-25, through Mary's holy conception of the Spirit. Jesus' birth is the greatest miracle revealed to mankind, and no one can fully comprehend it. Mary was confronted by Gabriel, the angel, at the well in Nazareth to be chosen the mother of Jesus Christ. She was to marry Joseph, but he had second thoughts when she was found with child through the Holy Spirit. Joseph listened to the angel of the Lord and took Mary to be his wife.

The letter "S" is explained when Paul is telling Christians to pattern their lives on Christ's humility, to be humble and selfless and to surrender completely to serving God. Paul reveals the seven "S" attitudes and character traits of Jesus in Philippians 2:5-11. The substance of Jesus was "in the form of God" as revealed in verse 6. The word form speaks of Jesus' pre-existence as deity in Heaven before His incarnation on Earth as a human being. Christ surrendered his position and "made Himself of no reputation," in verse 7. The phrase literally means "to empty" or "to make empty" and refers to Jesus emptying himself of the powers

He possessed in His pre-existent state with God the Father. The incarnation did not strip Jesus of his essence, nature, or power as God. It simply added humanity to Him as the divine Son of God. Christ's subordination was when he took "the form of a bond-servant, when coming in the likeness of men" as indicated in verse 7. Christ's submission is indicated "Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled himself," in verse 8. The word appearance is how men saw Him, without perceiving His inner nature and essence. Christ's sacrifice "became obedient to point of death," in verse 8. His death was not accidental, nor were the circumstances related to it out of His control. Christ's substitution was for everyone. Christ's death, "even the death on the cross" was a substitution sacrifice for us, as indicated in verse 8.

Christ's resurrection and ascension was to allow Jesus Christ to finish his mission for His Father before leaving Earth to be with His Father. Christ was allowed to continue his work for forty more days before his ascension. Why was the ascension of Christ important? We may answer this question in the following way. First, Christ's ascension was to a large extent for his followers. They could no longer expect His physical presence. They must now wait for the promised Holy Spirit through whom the work of Jesus would continue. Christ's earthly ministry ceased with His ascension into heaven as revealed in Acts 1:9-11. Second, Christ's ascension marked the time

when Jesus once again enjoyed His heavenly glory. During His time on earth, with the exception of the transfiguration on the mountain in Matthew 17:1-9, Christ limited any expression of the heavenly glory that He enjoyed prior to his earthly birth. Christ is in Heaven with his Father, waiting for us. Christ encourages us to be His eyes, mouth, ears, and hands in

witnessing to his gift of salvation. Christ will return!

The Reverend Sir Knight Dr. J. B. Morris is a member of Ascension Commandery 25, Tyler, Texas and East Texas Commandery 104, Carthage, Texas. His address is P. O. Box 216, Joinerville, TX 75658, and he can be contacted at jbwmorris@gmail.com.



THE HORSES OF THE CRUSADES, MORE DIFFERENT THAN YOU THINK

by
Sir Knight James A. Marples, K.T.

When people think of horses during the time of the Crusades, they just assume a horse, is a horse, is a horse. Not so during the Crusades. Horses weren't really classified by breed but by the functions they performed. Chargers or destriers were the war horses that the Knights mostly used in combat situations with Saracens and others.

Palfreys were riding horses. These were horses that were used for short distance patrols and guarding encampments and were available for dignitaries, including clerics and kings. They were generally tame enough that an unaccustomed rider could ride with ease and with dignity.

Cart horses, draft horses, pack horses, or sumpters were the horses that the ancient Knights used to ferry supplies and sometimes take on a passenger, especially if the pilgrim was old or lame. They were also used to carry a Knight's bedroll, his meager supply of cooking utensils, and the armor for the other horses when it was not being worn. They were essentially the step-children among the Knights' equestrian livestock. A work horse wasn't appreciated fully, even though those horses' efforts enabled the other categories of horses to shine in glory. I give a pack horse just credit for its vital role. Like their human counterparts, work horses enable others to succeed.

One of the most beautiful Masonic knight templar

calling cards I ever saw was that used by Sir Knight Carlton A. Gates, an early member of Mt. Olivet Commandery 12 in Wichita, Kansas. Masonically, Brother Carlton A. Gates was admitted as a member of Wichita Lodge 99 A.F. & A. M. on January 7, 1878, and became Master of that Lodge in 1890. He joined Wichita Chapter 33 of Royal Arch Masons and Mt. Olivet Commandery 12 in Wichita. Sir Knight Gates was also an early officer of the Wichita Scottish Rite bodies, having received the degrees in the year 1888. His occupation was real estate. His Masonic calling card showed a Knight atop a beautiful horse, fully bedecked as a Christian Knight. If you look really close at the illustration, the horse depicted on his Masonic calling card was not fully outlaid with total armor. Instead, the horse did have partial armor plating loosely hanging around its neck to ward off foes and to help prevent a fatal cut to the jugular vein. (see illustration)

Generally war horses had suits of armor, comparable to the knights themselves, to help prevent a fatal blow from a lance or spear. However, contrary to customary tales, the size of a war horse



didn't automatically mean sheer superiority. The physical size of the horse didn't have as much bearing as the weight of the Knight, the dexterity in which the horse could change its direction suddenly, and its galloping speed.

Mares were preferred by Moors, Mongols, and Muslims. Stallions were mainly used in Europe as war horses and prized due to their aggression against each other. Those male horses were known to bite against each other in rage.

Analysis of horse armor in The Royal Armories in England seems to indicate that armor was worn by horses fifteen to sixteen hands high, which roughly translates to approximately sixty to sixty-four inches. High saddles were sometimes employed. Some scholars believe that the war horses must have been draught horses or draft horses to be able to carry forty to seventy pounds of armor, plus the knight and his armor. However, back in the days of the Crusades, the average weight of a Knight was around a mere seventy pounds. It wasn't the Kentucky Derby, yet the philosophy of having light-weight riders has spanned the centuries.

Knights tended to vault upon their horses without even touching the stirrups. This was not done for vanity, but out of necessity. When an opposing enemy approached, every second mattered. I didn't realize until recently that a Knight's hood or helmet was sometimes lined with padded-linen, similar to a modern bicycle helmet. This was not much protection, but some.

Mule trains were also often used to ferry pilgrims and their few belongings to and from the Holy Land. Barges were used to cross canals or mid-sized streams. Usually, changes of horses were made as regularly as could be

done in a practical way. Yet, it is claimed that King Richard II, (Richard of Bordeaux), the King of England between 1377 until his ouster in 1399, once managed the seventy miles between Daven-try and Westminster in a night. However, you can bet he was riding a well-rested horse. He died at Pontefract Castle, in Yorkshire, at the age of thirty-three.

Destriers typically had strong haunches that could absorb the shock of frontal collisions with enemy cavalry. They were very responsive to a Knight's commands and had amazing dexterity and speed. The old line from Shakespeare's Henry V is quite apt, "When I bestride him, I soar, I am a hawk; he trots on air; the earth sings when he touches it,...It is a beast for Perseus: he is pure air and fire..."

Again, during times of relative peace, when Knights were simply traveling from one place to another, the palfrey was the chosen horse for long distance transport, to oversee estates. They were known for long-term endurance and strength, whereas a Destrier or war horse was chosen for short-term warfare, strength and fierceness. They were almost akin to an athletic sprinter. Palfrey horses were more similar to a marathon-runner.

The Sultan of Egypt and Syria, Saladin, was said to have ridden both a camel and a horse. However, for combat, he preferred horses. Horses were vitally important during the times of the Crusades. Too often, we think that any type of horse was used. In times of necessity, that might be true. However, it is hoped that this article demonstrates that there was a carefully chosen horse to perform a carefully chosen task. In any case, horses were the cavalry that the Knights relied on to wage war and also which rescued them from imminent death. Horses

were also a pivotal means of transport for pilgrims and clerics. Without those valiant horses, the entire outcome of the various Crusades could have turned out far differently. So, as we pay gratitude to the Knights, we should also pay gratitude to the steeds they rode on.

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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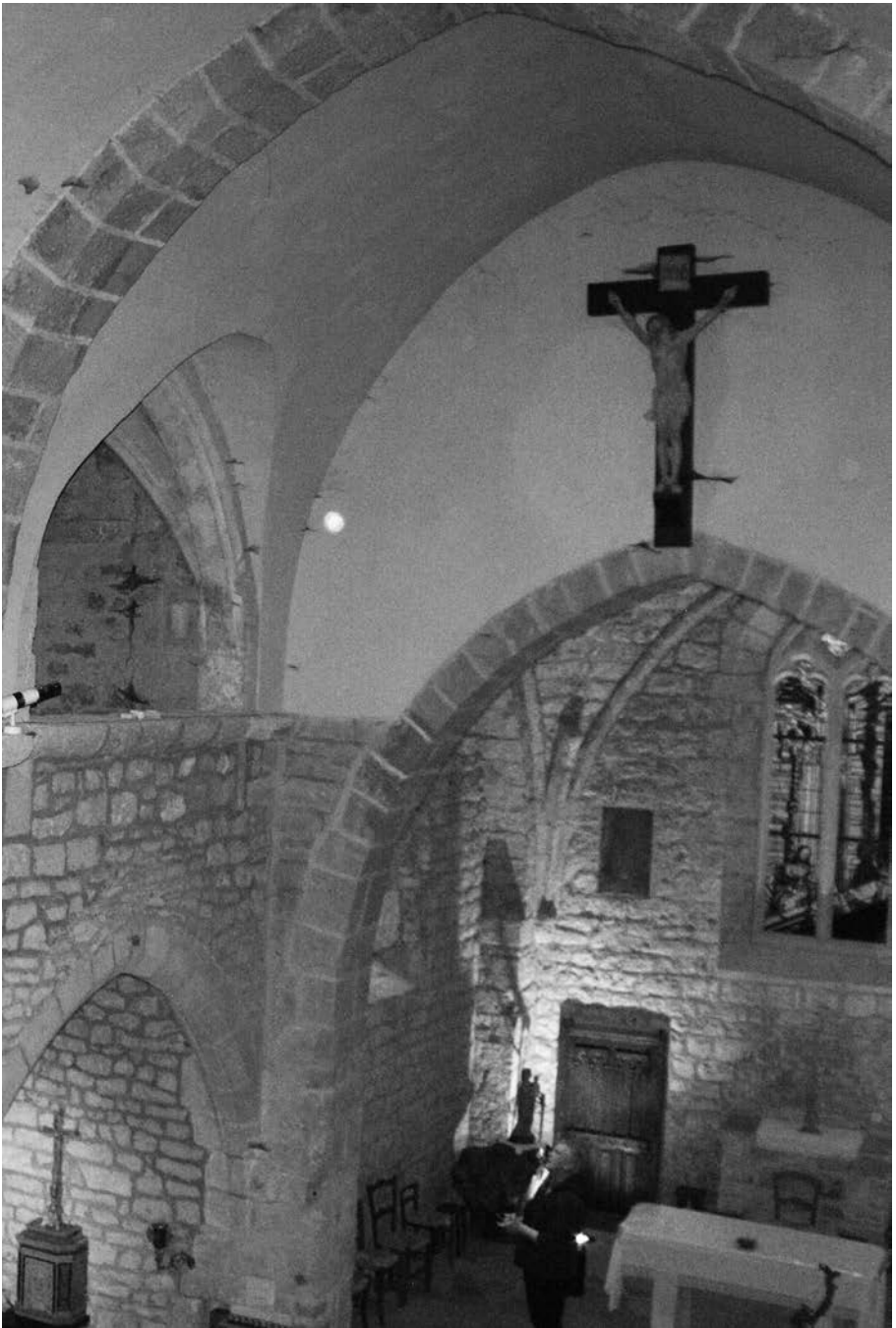
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General Supplement

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These photos are of the Templar city of Saint Jean d'Alcas in France and were taken by the editor.

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The Lord's Prayer

By
Sir Knight Richard R. Losch

The Lord's Prayer is one of the most universal prayers in Christianity in that it is used in almost every worship service in almost every Christian denomination.¹ It is, of course, the prayer that Jesus gave us when the Apostles asked him to teach them to pray. Although in one sense it is universal, in fact its history and use are very complicated and varied.

The *Bible* has two versions of the Lord's Prayer, Matthew 6:9-13 and Luke 11:2-4. Luke's version omits several phrases that are found in Matthew's, which is by far the more familiar. I do not know of any denomination that uses Luke's form in worship, although there may be some. Most biblical scholars agree that the doxology, "For thine is the kingdom... etc.," is a later addition to Matthew's gospel. This is why the Roman Catholic Church, although it uses it, separates it from the main prayer with an additional intercession.²

In the English-speaking Christian world including the Roman Catholic Church, regardless of the translation used for the lessons, the most common translation of the Lord's Prayer is that of the 1611 King James Version. This was taken from the 1549 *Book of Common Prayer*, which in turn took it (with minor variations) from the 1532 *Coverdale Bible*.³

There is only one non-pronominal adjective in the prayer—"daily"—but it gives us significant trouble. The Greek is *epiousion* (ἐπιουσιον). This is a word that is found only twice in all known

Classic or Koine Greek literature, and that is in Matthew's and Luke's versions of the Lord's Prayer. We do not know what Aramaic word Jesus used, because there is no Aramaic equivalent to *epiousion*. *Epi-* is a prefix that means upon or above, and *ousion* means being, essence, or (philosophically) substance. When Saint Jerome translated the Greek into Latin in the late 4th century, he translated *epiousion* literally as *supersubstantialem*, supersubstantial, in translating Matthew. For some reason he translated the same word as *quotidianum*, daily, in Luke. The word supersubstantial is a clear reference to Christ's presence in the Holy Eucharist through transubstantiation. Why he used daily in Luke is unknown. When Jerome's translation was revised in 1592 the word was changed to *quotidianum*, daily, in both Matthew and Luke. With very few exceptions that is the translation used today, even though it is very likely not what *epiousion* originally was intended to mean.

The translation of another word is also a matter of controversy today, and that is whether "trespasses" or "debts" should be used. Among the mainstream Protestant denominations, most Presbyterian and Reform groups use "debts," while the majority of English-speaking Christians use "trespasses." The confusion goes back 2000 years, because Jesus would have taught the prayer in Aramaic, not Greek. The Aramaic word he undoubtedly used is *choba* (ܫܘܒܐ). This can mean either financial debts, failed

obligations, or actual sins. The Greek is *opheilemata* (ὀφειλήματα), which means the same as *choba*. Jesus was obviously not referring to financial debts, but rather to shortfalls in our duties to God and to one another—i.e., sins. Jerome translated this *debita*, which in Latin also means the same as *choba*. When John Wycliffe translated the *Bible* from Latin into English in about 1380 he translated *debita* as “debts” (the word he used was *dettis*). When William Tyndale translated from the Greek in 1524 he used “trespasses.” By his time, the word debts meant primarily financial obligations, and he undoubtedly wanted to avoid that implication. During the Reformation, Calvin preferred “debts” because Wycliffe had used it, and so the Calvinist traditions (Presbyterian and Reform) still use that.

A phrase that troubles many people is “lead us not into temptation.” A loving God would not lead us into temptation—that is Satan’s work. This has been a matter of discussion among theologians for centuries. The New Revised Standard Version translates it, “Do not bring us to the time of trial.” That is not a precisely accurate translation, but it is the consensus that it is the intent of the phrase. The Greek (*eisenenkes*, εἰσενεγκης) clearly means “lead” or “bring out;” the word we translate “temptation” (*peirasmon*, πειρασμον) means “trial” or “ordeal.” The King James Version is so embedded in western tradition that almost all Protestants and even the Roman Catholic Church use the KJV (Matthew

translation, “lead us not into temptation,” even though they are aware that while it is an accurate translation literally, that is clearly not its intended meaning. God does not lead us to temptation, but he does allow us to be faced with it—at least he took his own medicine in that Christ faced temptation at the beginning of his ministry and frequently thereafter. In *The Last Temptation of Christ* Kazantzakis deals with Jesus’ temptation to use his divine power to come down from the cross. Pope Francis recently suggested that we should change the translation to “Do not let us enter into temptation.” While this is not a literal translation of the Greek, it is almost certainly closer to the intent of what Jesus said in Aramaic.

The King James translation of the Lord’s Prayer is universally loved, and few have any desire or intention to move away from it. Pope Francis’ suggestion is nevertheless well worth considering, even though it is highly unlikely that most Protestant churches will accept it. It would be good from time to time, however, to read a more contemporary translation. This will jar us from the comfortable routine of what we are used to, remind us of its real meaning, and give us excellent food for meditation.

Sir Knight Richard R. Losch is a past commander and current treasurer of Tuscaloosa Commandery 13 in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. He can be contacted at rlosch33@gmail.com, and his web page is <http://rlosch.com>.

We publish 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.

Notes

1. I do not know of any Christian group that does not use it, but with 43,000 Protestant denominations it is likely that there are at least some.
2. Most Anglican and some Lutheran bodies omit the doxology in some services, such as Noonday Prayer and the Burial Office. Also, while the Roman Church uses the traditional English translation of the Lord's Prayer, it uses a contemporary translation of the Doxology: "For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours, now and forever."
3. The King James Version was not an entirely new translation from the Greek and Hebrew. Most of it was taken from earlier translations, from which they updated the English and corrected errors. While it did not produce a new text, it was a brilliant piece of scholarship for its time.
4. In philosophy and theology, substance does not mean something tangible, but just the opposite. It is the indescribable essence of something. The describable aspects of something are called its accidents.
5. In Ecclesiastical ("Church") Latin the *qu* becomes a *c* and the word becomes *cotidianum*. This is what is used in most Latin prayer books today.
6. Latin and no longer Greek, was the *lingua franca* of the late 4th century western world. That is why Jerome translated the *Bible* into Latin. However, Greek was still widely spoken, so even though "epiousion" is not found today in any other known Greek literature, the word may well have been familiar to philosophers and theologians in Jerome's time.

CORRECTION

In the March issue of the *Knight Templar* magazine we listed the schedule of the Grand Commandery annual conclaves for 2018. The Date for the Grand Commandery of Illinois was listed erroneously as Jyly 18. The corrected entry should read:

The Grand Commandery of Illinois, Normal, July 13, 2018, Sir Knight Michael B. Johnson, right eminent grand generalissimo.

You will never reach your destination if you stop and throw stones at every dog that barks.

Winston Churchill



Beauceant News



Supreme Worthy President (Mrs. Dean) Edie Rein enjoyed her Official Visit to Minneapolis Assembly 46. Worthy President (Mrs. Jerrold) Marilyn Nyborg and other officers welcomed her.



Oshkosh Assembly 267 held a warm welcome for Supreme Worthy President (Mrs. Dean) Edie Rein on her Official Visit. Worthy President Ms. Marie Desens presided during the meeting.

The Legacy of the Ancient Mysteries in Freemasonry

by
Sir Knight Jason Crowe

Masonry is often described as a system of morality, veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols. As aspiring philosophers and students of the craft, it behooves us to pull back the veil and take an honest look at the origins of our peculiar method of communicating these mysteries to our members—the ritual. It is through the ritual that the instructive tongue communicates to the attentive ear the mysteries of Masonry which are safely lodged in the repositories of faithful breasts. It is through the ritual that the legend of Hiram Abiff and the speculative meaning of our symbols are most impressively communicated to our new members. The success of this method is evident in the remarkable consistency of the degrees in ancient craft Masonry around the world which has endured for centuries.

Where did the ritual originate? The speculation of the origins of Masonic ritual vary widely, ranging from literal descent from the workmen of King Solomon's Temple to the stonemason guilds or the Crusades of the Middle Ages to a more modern affectation adopted during the age of enlightenment. Personally, I have vacillated between these various theories with each "discovery" I've stumbled upon throughout the course of my

knight templar



(MacNulty, 2006)

twenty-six year affiliation with the fraternity. The beauty and mystery of Masonic history is that it is intricately comprised of equal parts modern history, ancient legends, and optimistic interpretations.

Hints of the inspiration, if not the literal origin, of our ritual are sprinkled throughout the lore of the craft. The obvious references include our mention of Pythagoras as one of our ancient Brothers and how we adorn our temples and lodges with classic Greek architecture. Other references are more subtle but no less informative. In my own journey of discovery, I have often pored through books written more than a century ago, particularly those of Albert Mackey. Albert Mackey was a noted 19th Century Masonic scholar whose works I've come to appreciate as intellectually honest and mostly devoid of fanciful interpretation.

Rather, he endeavored to compare and contrast different theories and apply logic and reason to provide a supportable position on any given topic. In his tome, *The History of Freemasonry*, he addresses the twelve most common theories on the origins of the ritual:

1. The Patriarchal Religion
2. The Ancient Pagan Mysteries
3. Temple of King Solomon
4. The Crusaders
5. The Knights Templar
6. The Roman College of Artificers
7. The Operative Masons of the Middle Ages
8. The Rosicrucians of the 16th Century
9. To Oliver Cromwell in Pursuit of Political Ambitions
10. The Pretender and Restoration of the House of Stuart
11. Sir Christopher Wren at Building of St. Paul's Cathedral
12. Dr. Desaguliers and Associates in 1717

It is the theory of the ancient mysteries to which I would like to draw your attention. This particular theory excites my imagination based on the nexus of three primary points of intersection with Masonry. The esoteric nature of the ritual itself, the remnants of classic Greek mythology in Masonic imagery, and the more obvious acknowledgments in various Masonic books and lectures. Taken collectively, it would seem that ancient craft Masonry owes much of its ritualistic heritage to the ancient mysteries.

The ancient mysteries in this context refer to the various initiation rituals which were practiced across the ancient world. They were religious in nature and

included both an exoteric and esoteric aspect. The exoteric aspect was that with which the general public was familiar and understood. The esoteric aspect was that which was hidden and reserved only for the initiated. These initiations were ritualistic and followed a remarkably consistent pattern, regardless of the specifics of the mythology to which they were attached. The inference suggests that the rituals originated from a common source, believed to be ancient Egypt, and migrated to other regions where they were adapted to suit local beliefs. The formulaic pattern dramatized in the ancient mysteries is as follows:

The Loss

Typically, this emulates the loss of a cherished mythological god, goddess or hero. Most often through a death or near death experience under surreptitious circumstances. In symbolic terms, this represents shedding the ignorance and restraints of the material world and the initiate's former life.

The Search

The search describes the earnest efforts to determine the fate of that character which was lost. In symbolic terms, this represents the journey of the initiate to seek truth and enlightenment.

The Restoration

This is the event whereby the cherished character of the drama is restored to life, most notably through a miraculous resurrection. Symbolically, this communicates to the initiate the promise of eternal life in dramatic form.

Another striking similarity between the various ancient mysteries is the progression of the initiate from the profane to the enlightened in steps or degrees.

The first step is the preparation, whereby the initiate is ritually cleansed. The next step is the initiation, whereby the candidate is introduced to the basic foundation of the doctrine. The final step is the perfection, whereby the grand secret of the dogma is revealed. Finally, the initiate is then sworn to secrecy upon pain of death.

This pattern and progression of initiation in the mysteries is common across the ancient world. In each variation, the basic formula is the same, with the cast of the drama varied depending on the specific pantheon. Of these, the Mysteries of Osiris, Mithras, and Demeter are demonstrative of this methodology, and each have aspects that are easily recognizable and familiar to the Master Mason.

The Mysteries of Osiris

The Egyptian Mysteries are considered the most elaborate of the ancient cults and date back to around 2,000 B.C. They are based on the Egyptian myth of Osiris and the associated legend which formed the basis of the ancient Egyptian religion. In researching this myth, I drew primarily from Albert Mackey's *Encyclopedia of Freemasonry* and also from Joshua Mark's excellent online article "Osiris." The myth describes the origins of Osiris as a benevolent ruler who was married to his queen, Isis. At one point, Osiris went on a three-year journey to survey his kingdom.

In his absence, his brother, Typhon, conspired to supplant him as king and ruler and developed a clever ruse to dis-

pose of him. Upon Osiris' return, Typhon announced a grand contest featuring a wooden chest encrusted with gems and plated in gold. Typhon announced that whoever could best fit within it would win the chest. Osiris accepted the challenge and crawled into the chest, only to have his brother quickly slam it shut and lock it. Typhon then tossed the chest into the Nile River where it washed out to sea and ultimately onto the shore of Byblos in Phoenicia. Isis, in her grief, searched far and wide for her husband. She and her son, Horus, eventually found his body at the foot of a tamarisk tree. Isis returned with his body to Egypt where it was received with grand celebration, and he was resurrected as a god. Osiris then became the judge of the dead. The dramatization of this myth forms the basis of the Mysteries of Osiris. In the image below, Osiris is tended by Isis and Nephthys as he oversees the judgement of Hunefer.



(Andrews & Faulkner, 1985)

The mysteries of Osiris were only administered by the hierophants drawn from the priest cast known as the Sacerdotal. These ceremonies relied heavily on symbolism, were divided into the lesser and greater mysteries, and were communicated in three steps or degrees. The lesser mysteries consisted of the first degree or the "Mysteries of Isis." The aspirant was prepared through adherence to a special diet, abstention from unchaste acts, and proof of having

lived a blameless life. The aspirant was then clothed in a new linen garment and taken to the inner sanctuary of the temple where he was initiated into the lesser mysteries. He was introduced to the laws of the natural world and the cycle of life and death. The greater mysteries consisted of the “Mysteries of Serapis” and then the third and final “Mysteries of Osiris.” While little is known about the Mysteries of Serapis, it is assumed that they communicated the experience of Osiris in the land of the dead prior to his resurrection.

It is in the Mysteries of Osiris that the aspirant achieves perfection and learns the dogma of life after death from Osiris’ resurrection in dramatic form.

The Egyptians were known to have initiated the sages of other nations into the Mysteries of Osiris to include Herodotus, Plutarch, and Pythagoras. Albert Mackey asserts that this was the seed that later spread to Greece and Rome and which led to the adoption of similar methods and practices adapted to local pantheons.

The Mithraic Mysteries

The eponymous Mithraic Mysteries are based on the Indo-Persian god Mithra. Mithra is associated with the Zoroastrian pantheon and was later adopted by the Romans as the patron of the Cult of Mithras or the Mithraic Mysteries in 100 A.D. Mithra is represented as a sun god and is often

featured as a young man kneeling on a bull. In one hand he holds a horn and with the other he plunges a dagger into the neck of the bull. Meanwhile, a dog laps at the blood. The symbolism is often described as Mithra’s rays penetrating the earth as the dagger penetrates the bull and provides nourishment to all life represented by the dog.

Albert Mackey describes the test of initiation into the Mithraic Mysteries as perhaps the most fearsome and challenging of the ancient world. An aspirant had to progress through seven stages or degrees with as many as eighty tests of courage and stamina to prove his worth. The mysteries were always communicated in secret caves, hidden from the profane. Prior to initiation, the aspirant was purified by fasting, water, and fire. The first degree placed him in a cave inscribed with celestial signs, where he was presented with a crown balanced on the tip of a sword.

The aspirant was instructed to refuse, stating “Mithra alone is my crown.” The priests then further prepared the aspirant by anointing him with oil, crowning him with olive branches, and equipping him with a “magic armor” for the ordeals that lay ahead. The aspirant then experienced a sequence of ever intensifying trials designed to inspire terror and test his fortitude, to include a symbolic death and resurrection. At the conclusion of the trials, he was brought to the seventh cave



(Thome', 2015)

where he met the arch-magus and was thereby invested with the sacred words, the oath, and the dogma of the Mithraic Mysteries, comprising the perfection. The initiation into the Mithraic Mysteries continued until approximately 378 A.D. when they were dissolved.

The Eleusinian Mysteries

The Eleusinian Mysteries are grounded in the Greek myth of Persephone and Demeter (also known as Proserpina and Ceres in the Roman adaptation). This myth is readily available in a multitude of sources online or in print. I primarily referenced *Bullfinch's Mythology* as well as *Gods, Heroes, and Men of Ancient Greece*. In brief, the myth relates

to the abduction of Persephone, daughter of Demeter, by Hades, who took her as his wife. Demeter, goddess of the harvest, was so distraught by her loss that she cast the world into a state of winter while she searched for her daughter. Eventually, clues led her to the underworld where she discovered the truth of what happened. Demeter implored Zeus to intervene on her behalf, and

Persephone was returned to Demeter on the surface. However, since she had partaken of the pomegranate fruit in the Underworld, Zeus ruled that she must spend a portion of each year with Hades in his kingdom. In essence, this myth provides an explanation for the chang-

ing of the seasons and was deeply tied to the harvest.

The Eleusinian Mysteries celebrate this myth, date back to at least 1800 BC, and were divided into the Lesser Mysteries and the Greater Mysteries. In the Lesser Mysteries, aspirants were first purified on the banks of the Illusis River. They next participated in various rituals, culminating with their placing their left foot on the skins of sacrificed victims. Then the aspirants took an oath of secrecy. The Lesser Mysteries represent the preparation of the aspirant for initiation. An aspirant who completed the Lesser Mysteries was given the title of Mystes, or "he who doesn't (yet) see." The following year, if deemed worthy, aspirants went on a grand procession from the Thriassian Plains to the Temple of Demeter

in Eleusis where they completed their initiation into the Greater Mysteries. At the entrance to the temple, aspirants were challenged by the herald on their fidelity and adherence to conditions set forth in the Lesser Mysteries. If deemed worthy, they entered the temple where they were indoctrinated into the drama of the mysteries of the descent (loss), the search, and the ascent (restoration).

The Greater Mysteries represent the initiation and perfection of the Eleusinian rites.

A candidate who completed initiation in the Greater Mysteries was given the new title, Epopt, or "he who beholds." The Ninnion Tablet (above), dating to 370 B.C., is one of the few surviving images graphically



(Raddato, 2015)

depicting the Eleusinian Mysteries. It presents aspirants being greeted and initiated by Demeter above and Persephone below.

Points of Commonality with Freemasonry

The astute Master Mason will immediately see the obvious parallels between the ancient mysteries and the ritual in ancient craft Masonry. Brother Albert Mackey summarizes these points of commonality in *The History of Freemasonry* as follows:

- The preparation, analogous to the Entered Apprentice Degree.
- The initiation, analogous to the Fellow Craft Degree.
- The perfection, analogous to the Master Mason Degree.
- The secret character and oaths of secrecy.
- The use of symbols to inculcate values.
- The dramatic form of initiation.
- The division of progression into degrees or steps.
- The secret methods of recognition.

Perhaps the most striking visual imagery of the ancient mysteries, in my mind, are the twin pillars at the inner door of a Masonic Lodge. They are adorned with lily work, network, and pomegranate, representing peace, unity, and plenty. My own speculation is that these majestic columns emulate the descent in the Eleusinian Mysteries as they guard the entrance to the mysteries of Freemasonry. Freemasonry historically equates the lily with the lotus bloom which the ancient Egyptians associated with the sun god, creation, and rebirth.



(Crowe, 2017)

The pomegranate, when taken in the context of the myth of Persephone and Demeter, has the obvious allusions to the underworld.

Other vestiges of the ancient mysteries abound in the imagery of Masonry. The deacon's rod is directly attributed to the rod of Hermes who was the messenger of the gods, an obvious allusion to the duties of the senior and junior deacons. In addition, the jewel and rod of the stewards is the cornucopia, emblematic of the goat's horn that sustained the infant Zeus in Greek mythology and similarly represents the steward's duties.

Even the symbol of the point within a circle is reminiscent of the imagery from the Cult of Osiris which denoted the creator encircled by his creation and bound by the upright serpents, symbolizing the limits of his wisdom and power.

Conclusion

Albert Mackey postulates that the Ancient Mysteries were distinguished

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not only by their exclusive nature of selecting candidates for initiation but also by the need to protect the sanctity of the dogma of a singular deity from the profane who practiced polytheism. Alternatively, he suggests that some of these similarities are merely coincidental to the logical summation of contemplating mortal life and the immortality of the soul. Perhaps this was an attempt to reconcile aspects of the ritual of ancient craft Masonry from what one could arguably consider polytheistic pagan roots.

My own conclusion is that the progression of collective human wisdom is often evolutionary rather than revolutionary. How much of the ancient mysteries cross pollinated to the building of King Solomon's Temple or not will never

be known.

Whether we inherited a ritual directly descended from antiquity or merely imitated, may also never be known. In my mind, the lineage of the ritual from the ancient mysteries is clear and undeniable.

However, that does not denigrate the ritual of ancient craft Masonry but rather validates it as a successor of the intellectual and spiritual capital developed over eons of collective human wisdom.

Sir Knight Jason Crowe is junior warden of Huntsville Commandery 7 in Huntsville, Alabama and resides in Decatur, Alabama. He can be contacted at solomon89@hotmail.com.

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Myths and Legends of Masonry

By

Sir Knight Robert W. Bruneau

I believe that we can truthfully relate the tenants of our institution to the 1st century Gnostics. Whether we can claim them as our progenitors or not is unimportant, as it is the teachings and goals with which we should concern ourselves.

We profess attempts to make good men better. We attempt to do that by rituals and lessons handed down to us and through us to posterity. The purpose is to comprehend spiritual truths by which we may become aware of the "divine spark" within each of us.

Gnosis, as the Greeks used the word, was not intellectual discovery but rather personal experience or association. Not to confuse Gnostic with agnostic since agnostic is the absence of the knowledge of God and the Gnostic not only admits His existence but also claims special knowledge of Him and spiritual matters. Gnostics have come to understand who we were, what we have become, where we were, and whither we are hastening.

This claim of special knowledge of God puts Gnosticism in the category of a mystery religion.

As to the similarities in our Fraternity, we identify the points in common. Actually, these same points can be identified with most major religions.

First, a ritual bath, cleansing or baptism is part of the initiation ceremony.

We divest ourselves of all minerals and metals and wear a white apron signifying purity.

We take part in a ritual meal on a regular basis. What is the knife and fork de-

gree if not to partake in a ritual meal; it does not have to be part of the esoteric ritual to qualify.

The Birth and Death of the Individual

Even the teaching of Jesus as related in the *Gospels of Thomas*, of *Philip*, and of *Truth* seem to have expressed that Jesus taught His disciples in more depth than He taught the masses, which is in keeping with the Gnostic levels of awareness.

Secret doctrines were open only to the initiated and only then after the outer mysteries or broadly acknowledged teachings had been mastered.

The *Gospel of Thomas* attributes to Jesus, "Let him who seeks continue to seek until he finds. When he finds, he will become troubled. When he becomes troubled, he will be astonished, and he will rule over all.

The kingdom is inside of you, and it is outside of you. When you come to know yourself, then you will become known, and you will realize that it is you who are the sons of the living Father, but if you will not know yourselves, you dwell in poverty, and it is you who are that poverty."

These various gospels have been suppressed by the Roman church fathers as "infidelity in men who having professed the faith of Christ, corrupted its dogma."

Fortunately these same gospels simply went underground and their teachings and rituals were retained in organizations such as the Knights Templar and the Cathars. Where there is lack of

understanding there is persecution, evidence the massacre of the Cathars and persecution of the Templars.

The symbolism of such belief has produced the rich imagery that is with us today. The qualities taught are to impart to the human entity understanding of the workings of the human mind in the present day.

In our ritual we stress light or wisdom. We identify the Great Architect of the Universe. These teachings were in existence before the Christian era.

Hermes Tresmagistros (Thrice Great Hermes) claims that the Egyptian god Thoth says, "He who knows himself, knows the all." He also stated himself, "Let spiritual man know himself, then he will know that he is immortal, and he will know the all."

To quote Brother Bossuet, the theologian, author, and researcher, "The figure of the redeemer as such did not wait for Christianity to force its way into religion, but was already present under various forms."

The Pythagorising Platonist, the Greco-Roman academics, the Platonist, before Christ was born (i.e. Fugulus, Eudorus of Alexandria, and Thrasyllus) held that knowledge can be perfected when it communes with the divine.

The people who were taught to pray according to a certain formula and a specific dogma were those whose spiritual aspirations were satisfied by blind public worship. We speak of people who could turn to the contemplation of higher mysteries, who had a sense of belonging to a group of like minded people, being singled out for special knowledge, knowledge still to be revealed and the promise of life beyond the mundane.

Like Masonry, the roots of Gnosticism are so buried in antiquity that it is difficult

to know when it first began to develop and how it became what it is. We can draw comparisons with the religions and mysteries that have existed and hazard a guess as to where it started or if there was cross-fertilization of ideas.

Zoroastrianism (circa. 1200 B.C.) is considered by some to be the earliest monotheistic view to have evolved. Its god was Ahura Mazda, the god of light. This was the dominant religion during the time of the Persian Empire (559 B.C.-A.D.650). It is still practiced in India and Iran.

When the Persian Empire fell, Greek culture began to take over. The magi of Persia used the "magic" that impressed the Persian faithful and adapted it to their Greco-Roman audiences. In doing so, they attracted small groups of disciples. These disciples, influenced by their Greek culture, founded various mysteries and ultimately even Christianity.

We then have Dionysus who was said to be a Thracian god who lusted for liquor, invented wine, and substituted mental for physical intoxication.

Orphism became acceptable, first to Pythagoras then to Plato, and subsequently into philosophy. Its ideas also entered later into Christian theology. Orpheus was the father of the pan-Hellenic faith and the man who brought Greece the sacred rites of secret worship and taught the mysteries of nature and of God.

So we have a theology, mystically and symbolically promulgated by Orpheus, disseminated enigmatically by Pythagoras, and scientifically unfolded by Plato. The thought was that inside each of us is a spark of divinity. This divinity can be awakened and discovered only through contemplation and self knowledge, a

process of internal enlightenment.

So we pass from Mithras, the Hindu gods, a deity in the pantheon of gods, to a worship that took place in a temple which was an oblong square, and each grade required a certain level of knowledge and conduct.

Through Jewish Gnostics of the second century B.C. we have developed Christianity. Paul of Tarsus speaks of the Christ in him, having received knowledge by divine revelation rather than apostolic instruction.

Valentinus would likely have directed Christian thought in a different direction had he been elected Pope. He had been educated in Alexandria, a great center of learning and Gnostic belief. His search included the *Apocryphon of James*, containing revelations of the risen Jesus to his brother, the gospel of the truth, the *Epistle of Rheginos*, Paul's views on the resurrection, and the *Tripartite Treatise* on how the spirit evolves.

It seems obvious that in all this antiquity we see a thread in the search for knowledge and wisdom.

Different schools, different views, and different times always had the same apparent goal, the identification of that divine spark, the pathway to self improvement, the signpost to bliss and eternal life.

From where does Masonry form, where does it branch, does it matter? The search remains, and each of us must continue if we truly wish to gain further light. No one can do it for us. Each of us has different desires, attitudes, energies, and capabilities, but hopefully the same goal.

May you all have a safe and successful journey.

Sir Knight Robert W. Bruneau is a past commander of Commandery 38 in Gulfport, Mississippi. He can be contacted at rwbruneau@yahoo.com.



Photo of stone carvings on Chartres Cathedral in France were taken by Sir Knight

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Knight Templar
5909 West Loop South, Suite 495
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“Blessed be the Lord
God, the God of Israel,
who only doeth won-
drous things.”
Psalms 72:18

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