



Knight Templar

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Knight Templar

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Grand Master's Message

Preserving the history of the Grand Encampment Knights Templar should be a top priority for the leadership of Grand Encampment. As we enter into the 69th triennium, it has been brought to my attention that our history has not been updated since 1979 when James Morris Ward became most eminent grand master. At the end of the 69th triennium, that will be twenty-seven years of Templar history that will need to be researched and published.

History of the Grand Encampment Knights Templar of the United States of America was first authored by Chairman Francis J. Scully, MD and his committee. Book one of *Templar History* starts from the days of the ancient Templars to the 44th conclave of the modern Templars, the second book was authored by Chairman Lieutenant Colonel Jacob C. Baird and his committee and is the continuation of Templar history from 1949 until 1997. It is now time to write the 3rd volume of Templar history which will end with the 69th triennium.

I would like a volunteer to undertake the writing of the third volume of the *Grand Encampment Knights Templar of the United States of America* book three. He must have knowledge of Templar history and be a proven author. When this new author is found he will be the chairman and, at his own discretion, can select the other members of his committee. Sir Knights, please consider this most important undertaking.

While doing some research on the Knights Templar Eye Foundation, I found this impressive short report by Grand Master William C. Gordon 1952-1955. "The order of Christian Knighthood is distinctive in purpose and procedure among strictly Masonic organizations. It is committed to enlistment under the banner of Jesus Christ, the Great Captain of our Salvation. It gives positive and militant allegiance to Him and His teachings. It makes public appearances proudly and unashamedly, in uniforms, with the insignia and banners testifying to its belief and its allegiance. By such appearances and through its avowed objectives, it obeys one of the final injunctions of the Master, 'Ye shall be my witness.' It is contended by some that parades or public appearances may soon become relics of the past since they are frowned upon or actually prohibited by the authorities in some communities." These impressive words touched my heart as they should touch the hearts of all Knights Templar. In the 1955 triennium, while Grand Master Gordon presided, the Knights Templar Eye Foundation was born.

Sincerely and Fraternally,

Michael B. Johnson, grand master



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Prelate's Apartment

by

Reverend Terry L. Plemons
right eminent grand prelate of the Grand Encampment

Hebrews 9:22 - "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of Jesus Christ my Lord."

Who is Jesus Christ? People have been asking this question for 2,000 years. People hate Him or love Him, ignore Him or follow Him even to their death. There is something about Him; we cannot escape Him. Jewish, Greek, and Roman historians record there was a man Jesus, but who is He?

This is best answered in the cross. It is the cross that directly confronts men and women today. An entire generation is being raised to no longer believe in absolutes, sadly including the cross. We are in need of a great spiritual awakening today. There is only one message that can change the hearts and minds of men and women, the cross. It is the cross that expresses the great love of God toward man. Dr. Billy Graham stated, "The cross is offensive, because it directly confronts the evil that dominates so much of this world," but who is Christ?

Simeon holding the baby Jesus declared to God, "For mine eyes have seen thy salvation,...A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel."

John the Baptist declared of Jesus, "Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world."

A voice from heaven declared, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

Peter said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God."

Pilate asked, "What shall I do then with Jesus, who is called Christ?"

Who is Christ to you? How is He reflected in your daily walk, in your conversations, in your love for others, and in your willingness to forgive old grudges? It is in the cross that we come closest to understanding who Jesus is. Suffering, in immeasurable agony, He prayed for God to forgive His executioners. He granted mercy to a thief. He paid a debt He did not owe. He died and rose again. Jesus said of Himself, "I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last." Sir Knights, let us walk worthy of our calling.



In Christ Love,
Sir Knight Terry L. Plemons, REPDC, KGT
grand prelate

King Solomon's Temple

By

Sir Knight J. Jeffrey McClelland, KCT, REGC

In researching the two great men and kings, David and Solomon, I found that much of the available information shows them to have been similar in many ways. Written records of this period in history are very sparse and come to us mainly through the following religious books: The *Holy Bible* (numerous versions), the *Torah*, the *Talmud*, and the *Qur'an*. This article will examine their lives in the following three categories: First, how each ascended to the throne, their method of governing, and their relationship with God; second, the building of the Holy Temple in Jerusalem or, as recorded in history, Solomon's Temple; and third, the similarities of King David and King Solomon.

David's Ascension to the Throne

David was born in Bethlehem in the territory of the Tribe of Judah. His father was named Jesse. His mother is not named in the *Bible*, but the *Talmud* identifies her as Nitzevet, daughter of Adael.¹ David was the son of a man who died sinless (Shab. 55b). Notwithstanding his piety, Jesse's marital life was not untroubled. He intended even to liberate his favorite female slave and marry her, but his wife frustrated this design by disguising herself as the slave, and Jesse unwittingly married her the second time. The result of this union was David, who was passed off as the son of the slave in or-

der to leave Jesse believing that he had married the slave (Yalk., Makiri, ed. Buber, ii. 214; compare also Samuel Laniado's "Kele Ya'qar" to I Sam. xvii.). David had seven brothers, and he was the youngest. The supposed son of a slave, David was not educated with Jesse's other sons but passed his days in the wilderness, pasturing sheep (Yalk., Makiri, l.c.).

God withdrew his favor from Saul, king of Israel, and sent the prophet Samuel to seek a new king for his people from the sons of Jesse of Bethlehem. Seven of Jesse's sons passed before Samuel, but Samuel said, "The Lord has not chosen these." He then asked "Are these all the sons you have?" and Jesse answered, "There is still the youngest, but he is tending the sheep." David was brought to Samuel, and the Lord said, "Rise and anoint him; he is the one."²

God sent an evil spirit (head aches) to torment Israel's first king, King Saul. His attendants suggested that he send for David, the son of Jesse, "considered a brave man, a warrior who speaks well and is a fine looking man, and God is with him." So Saul sent for David, and David remained in the service of Saul, and whenever the evil spirit from God came upon Saul, David would take his harp and play. Then relief would come to Saul, he would feel better, and the evil spirit would leave him. Saul became so fond of the young man that he selected him as his armor bearer.

During the wars with the Philistines, which occupied most of Saul's reign, David distinguished himself so highly that he attracted the attention of all Israel.

Saul recognized that David was intended for a higher mission. This change in David was due to the "holy oil" with which he was anointed, hence Saul became jealous of him, and David refused for this reason to go to battle in the king's armor (Tan., ed. Buber, iii. 84).

When David faced Goliath, he had "Five stones [which] came of themselves to David" (Midr. Sam. xxi.), and when he touched them, they changed into one stone (Zohar, Deut. 272). With them he intended to slay Goliath, for they symbolized God, the "three fathers" of Israel, and Aaron whose descendants, Hophni and Phineas, had been killed shortly before by Goliath (Midr. Sam. i.c.; the *Midrash* quoted by Kimḥi to I Sam. xvii. 40 are somewhat different). Goliath was dressed like a serpent with his scale armor, and he died like a serpent, with a head wound, just as the Philistine god Dagon had his head crushed. As the Psalm says, "all those who worship idols will be like them (Ps. 155:1-8)."³ An earlier passage, 1 Samuel 5:2-7, relates how the ark of Yahweh (God) was captured by the Philistines and taken to Dagon's temple in Ashdod. The following morning they found the image of Dagon lying prostrate before the ark. They set the image upright, but again on the morning of the following day, they found it prostrate before the ark.

David called out to Goliath, "I shall give your flesh to the birds of heaven." Goliath looked up at the word "birds," the movement displacing his head-dress, and, at the same moment, the stone flung by David from his sling struck the

giant's exposed forehead (*Midrash* quoted by Kimḥi ad loc). David was victorious.

The Philistines fled in terror, and the Israelites won a great victory. David cut off the giant's head and took it to Jerusalem as a warning to the Jebusites who still ruled there.⁴

Saul asked who the young hero was, and David replied, "I am the son of your servant Jesse of Bethlehem." (1 Samuel 17:58) Significantly perhaps, Saul is often seen holding a spear, Goliath's weapon of choice, throughout the rest of I Samuel.⁵

Saul made David a commander over his armies and gave him his daughter Michal for a wife,¹⁰ and the king's eldest son, Jonathan, became his intimate friend. David and Jonathan formed a covenant that eventually led to David offering the "kindness of God"^{4,5} to Jonathan's son Mephibosheth, a cripple, by seating him at David's own table instead of eradicating Saul's line.^{6,7}

David was successful in many battles, and the women said, "Saul has slain his thousands and David his tens of thousands." His popularity heightened Saul's fears. He questioned, "What more can he have but the kingdom?" By various stratagems, the jealous king sought David's death. Warned by Jonathan, David fled into the wilderness in peril of his life.

The priests of Nob, who had innocently aided the fugitive David, had to bear the brunt of the king's anger, and all but one who escaped to David were executed as traitors. David then placed himself at the head of a band of daring and desperate men. Eager to help his countrymen, he relieved the siege of the city of Keilah, which was threatened by the Philistines, but when Saul, regarding him as a rebel, advanced against him,

David could make a stand only for a very short time.

The facts of David's early history are in the second *Book of Samuel* and show a more favorable picture. In the wilderness, David gathered a band of followers and became the champion of the oppressed while evading the pursuit of Saul.

After various adventures, during which he magnanimously spared the life of the king, David fled into the land of the Philistines and became a vassal of King Achish of Gath, who assigned to him the city of Ziklag for his home. He accepted Ziklag from the Philistine king Achish of Gath and became its chief but continued secretly to support the Israelites. He ruled there for one year and four months. Achish then marched against Saul, but David was excused from the war on the accusation of the Philistine nobles that his loyalty to their cause could not be trusted. The disastrous battle near the mountains of Gilboa ended the lives of Jonathon and Saul, thus ending the reign of Saul. David mourned their death and then went to Hebron, where he was anointed king over Judah. In the north, Saul's son Ish-Bosheth attempted to rule the tribes of Israel. War ensued between Ish-Bosheth and David, until Ish-Bosheth was assassinated. The assassins brought forward the head of Ish-Bosheth to David, hoping for reward, but David executed them for their crime against the Lord's anointed. With the death of the son of Saul, the elders of Israel came to Hebron, and David, thirty years old, was anointed King over Israel and Judah.⁸

David conquered Jebus, the Jebusite fortress now called Jerusalem, and made it his capital. "Hiram king of Tyre sent messengers to David along with ce-

dar trees, carpenters, and masons who built David a house."

David brought the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem, intending to build a temple. God, speaking to the prophet Nathan, forbade it, saying that the temple must wait for a future generation, but God made a covenant with David, promising that he would establish the house of David eternally, saying "Your throne shall be established forever."

David's piety was so great that his prayers were able to bring things from heaven down to earth (Hag. 12b). It was one of his dearest wishes to build the Temple. God said, however, that the Temple would be indestructible if built by David, but that it was His (God's) design that it should be destroyed as punishment for Israel's sins, hence David could not build it (Pesq. R. 2; ed. Friedmann, p. 7). David's thoughts were so entirely directed to good that he was among the few pious ones over whom evil inclinations ("yezer ha-ra") had no power (B. B. 17a), and his sin with Bath-sheba happened only as an example to show the power of repentance ('Ab. Zarah 4b, 5a). Some Talmudic authorities even assert that David did not commit adultery for, at that time, all women obtained letters of divorce from their husbands who went to war, to use in case the latter should die on the field. Similarly, David must not be blamed for Uriah's death, since the latter had committed a capital offense in refusing to obey the king's command (II Sam. xl. 8, 9; Shab. 56a; Kid. 43a).

Another basis for David's innocence of the charge of violating the sixth commandment is that there are multiple translations of the sixth commandment. The Hebrew words חצרת אל are variously translated as "thou shalt not kill" or

“thou shalt not murder.” Older Protestant translations of the *Bible*, those based on the *Vulgate* and Roman Catholic translations, usually render it as “Thou shalt not kill,” whereas Jewish and newer Protestant versions tend to use “You shall not murder.” There is controversy as to which translation is more faithful, and both forms are quoted in support of many opposing ethical standpoints.

The *Vulgate* (Latin) translation has *Non occides*, i.e. “Thou shalt not kill.” English translations using “kill” include the King James (Authorized) (1611) [although note Matthew 19:18 “do no murder,” following the *Vulgate non homicidium facies*], the American Standard (1901) and Revised Standard (American Protestant, 1952) Versions. Almost all Roman Catholic translations, including the *Douay-Rheims Bible* (1609/1752), the *New American Bible* (1970), the *New Jerusalem Bible* (1985), and the *Christian Community Bible* (1986) have “kill.” Martin Luther (German, 1534) also uses *töten* (kill).

Protestant translations using “murder” include the New International Version (American, 1978), *New American Standard Bible* (American, 1971), *New English Bible* (British Protestant, 1970), and the New King James (American, 1982), New Revised Standard (American, 1989) and English Standard (American Protestant, 2001) Versions. Jewish translations almost all use “murder,” including the Jewish Publication Society of America Version (1917), the Judaica Press tanach (1963) and the *Living Torah* (1981). A Jewish exception to this pattern is the Artscroll or Stone Edition tanach (1996).

The Old Testament’s examples of killings sanctioned by God are often cited in defense of the view that “murder” is

a more accurate translation. Additionally, the Hebrew word for “kill” is (*harog*), הרג, while the Hebrew word for “murder” is (*retzach*) הוצר, which is found in the Ten Commandments הוצר אל (*lo tirtzach*). In the fullness of the Old Testament, Exodus 20:13 is abundantly evidenced as prohibiting unjust killing rather than a universal injunction against all killing, as *retzach* is never used in reference to the slaying of animals nor the taking of life in war, while its most frequent use is in reference to involuntary manslaughter and, secondarily, for murderers.

In various biblical passages, David is referred to as “the favorite of the songs of Israel,”¹¹ the one who soothed Saul with music,¹² and the founder of Temple singing.^{13,14} A Psalms scroll from the *Dead Sea Scrolls* (11QPsa) attributes 3600 *tehilim* (songs of praise) plus other compositions to David.¹⁴ Seventy-three of the 150 Psalms in the *Bible* are attributed to David.¹⁵

Solomon’s Ascension to the Throne

Solomon (Hebrew: שְׁלֹמֹה, Modern *Šalomo* or *Šlomo* Tiberian *Šālōmōh*, Arabic: سليمان *Sulaymān*) was, according to the Hebrew *Bible*, a king of Israel. In the *Qur’an* he is described as a prophet. The biblical accounts identify Solomon as the son of David.¹ He is also called Jedidiah in 2 Samuel 12:25.

The name Solomon means “peaceful” or “complete” from the Hebrew *Shelomoh* (Arabic *Sulaiman*). The name given by God to Solomon in the *Bible* is Jedidiah, meaning “loved by God” (2 Samuel 12:25), and some scholars have conjectured that Solomon is a “king name” taken either when he assumed the throne or upon his death. Solomon’s

case is one of the few in the *Bible* where the name given by God does not stay with the person.

Solomon's father was David, king of the United Kingdom of Israel. Bathsheba was his mother. Solomon had many siblings including Amnon, who was killed on the order of their half-brother, Absalom, for raping Absalom's sister, Tamar. (2 Samuel 13:1-29) Absalom was killed in the Battle of Ephraim Wood, and Adonijah, who had tried to usurp the throne, was put to death. (1 Kings 2:13-25).

Solomon became king after the death of his father, David. According to the biblical book of 1 Kings, when David was "old and advanced in years...he could not get warm."⁹ "So they sought for a beautiful young woman throughout all the territory of Israel and found Abishag the Shunammite and brought her to the king."⁹

While David was in this state, Adonijah, his fourth son, acted to have himself declared king, since he was heir-apparent to the throne after the death of his elder brothers, Amnon and Absalom. Bathsheba, a wife of David and Solomon's mother, along with the prophet Nathan induced David to proclaim Solomon king. Adonijah fled and took refuge at the altar, and received pardon for his conduct from Solomon on the condition that he show himself "a worthy man" (1 Kings 1:5-53).

Adonijah asked to marry Abishag the Shunammite, but Solomon denied authorization for such an engagement, although Bathsheba now pleaded on Adonijah's behalf. He was then seized and put to death (1 Kings 2:13-25). As made clear in the earlier story of Absalom's rebellion, to have sex with the King's wife or concubine was in this society tantamount to claiming the throne.

knight templar

Evidently, this applied even to a woman who had shared the bed of an old king.

David's general, Joab, was killed in accord with David's deathbed request to Solomon, because he had killed generals Abner and Amasa (2 Samuel 20:8-13; 1 Kings 2:5). David's priest, Abiathar, was exiled by Solomon, because he had sided with rival Adonijah. Abiathar was a descendent of Eli, which had important prophetic significance. (1 Kings 2:27)¹⁰ Shimei who was also to be killed according to David's deathbed request, was not but rather was confined to Jerusalem and killed three years later when he went to Gath to retrieve some runaway servants, in part because he had cursed David when Absalom, David's son, rebelled against David. (1 Kings 2:1-46)

During Solomon's long reign of forty years, the Hebrew monarchy gained its highest splendor. This period has been called the "Augustan Age" of the Jewish annals. In a single year, he collected tribute amounting to 666 talents of gold, according to 1 Kings 10:13.

The first half of his reign was by far the best and more prosperous; the latter half was darkened by his idolatries. According to the scribes, this was caused by his intermarriages. According to 1 Kings 11:3, he had 700 wives and 300 concubines. As soon as he had settled himself in his kingdom and arranged the affairs of his extensive empire, he entered into an alliance with Egypt by a marriage with the daughter of the Pharaoh.

That Solomon's wisdom was God-given is very important to various Judeo-Christian beliefs. The biblical *Book of Proverbs*, written by Solomon, is a dogmatic guideline for morality and manners in many Jewish and Christian denominations. It is widely believed that

Solomon also wrote the biblical book of *Ecclesiastes* in which there is an established sense of absurdity of man's feeble accomplishments. Here Solomon attacks the vanity of human actions and the importance of a relationship with God that many religions embrace.

The *Book of Proverbs* is a book of the *Tanakh* or Old Testament. It is a collection of moral and philosophical maxims on a wide range of subjects presented in a poetic form. This book sets forth a philosophy of practical life and is a compilation and adaptation of common sayings. It is clear that the author of the book gathered and recast many proverbs which sprang from human experience in preceding ages and had come to him through time. He also elaborated many new ones from the material of his own experience. There is strong evidence that some of the proverbs were adapted from earlier Egyptian wisdom literature. It is also possible that the *Book of Proverbs* developed somewhat over time, with future editors adding more as they went along.

King Solomon's ideas are also essential to Christian Anarchism and Christian Pacifism. King Solomon surrounded himself with all the luxuries and the external grandeur of a monarch of that day. His government prospered. He entered into an alliance with Hiram I, King of Tyre, who in many ways assisted him as he had his father, King David, in numerous undertakings.

In 1 Kings 3:5-14, there is written an account of an encounter between the newly crowned Solomon and the God of the Kingdom of Israel in which he offered Solomon anything he wanted. Solomon asked for "an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who

is able to judge this thy so great a people?" Pleased with his non-materialistic wish, God told him that not only would he receive a foundation in epistemology greater than any other man but also great wealth, power, and prosperity.

According to the Rabbinical literature, on account of his modest request for wisdom only, Solomon was rewarded with riches and an unprecedentedly glorious realm, which extended over the upper world inhabited by the angels and over the whole of the terrestrial globe with all its inhabitants, including all the beasts, fowl, and reptiles, as well as the demons and spirits. His control over the demons, spirits, and animals augmented his splendor, the demons bringing him precious stones and water from distant countries to irrigate his exotic plants. The beasts and fowl, of their own accord, entered the kitchen of Solomon's palace so that they might be used as food for him, and extravagant meals for him were prepared daily by each of his 700 wives and 300 concubines, with the thought that perhaps the king would feast that day in her house.

A magic ring called the "Seal of Solomon" was supposedly given to Solomon, and gave him power over demons. The magical symbol is said to have been the Seal of Solomon which made it work. It is now better known as the Star of David. Asmodeus, king of demons, according to the classical Rabbis, was captured by using the ring and was forced to remain in Solomon's service.

The Temple

Before his death, King David amassed materials in great abundance for the building of the temple on the summit

of Mount Moriah (1 Chronicles 22:14; 29:4; 2 Chronicles 3:1), where he had purchased a threshing floor from Araunah the Jebusite (2 Sam. 24:21 et seq.), on which he offered sacrifice.

David amassed large amounts of gold and silver with which to build the temple. The biblical account reports that this amounted to 100,000 talents (3,000 tons) of gold (an amount exceeding the current annual global production) and 1,000,000 talents (30,000 tons) of silver.

The Moabites paid tribute to David that was held for use in the Temple's construction. David took gold shields from Hadadezer and bronze from his cities after defeating him. Toi of Hamath heard of David's conquest of Hadadezer and sent tribute to David for delivering his nation from Hadadezer. The bronze taken from the conquest was used in the building of Solomon's Temple, particularly in casting the sea of bronze, which sat on the back of twelve bulls, which represented the sea of nations born by the twelve tribes of Israel.¹⁶

The *Bible* states that, in the beginning of his reign, King Solomon set about implementing his father's plans and prepared additional materials for the building.

From subterranean quarries at Jerusalem, he obtained huge blocks of stone for the foundations and walls of the temple. These stones were prepared for their places in the building under the eye of Tyrian master-builders. According to this account, Solomon also entered into a compact with Hiram I, king of Tyre, for the supply of whatever else was needed for the work, particularly timber from the forests of Lebanon, which was brought in great rafts by the sea to Joppa and then was dragged to Jerusalem (1 Kings 5). This arrangement was in knight templar

the form of a business transaction as the cost was that of giving control of the Galilean district, which consisted of twenty Hebrew villages, to King Hiram I.

According to tradition, Solomon also provided a sufficient water supply for the temple by hewing in the rocky hill vast cisterns, into which water was conveyed by channels from the "pools" near Bethlehem. One of these cisterns, the "great sea," was capable of containing three million gallons. The overflow was led off by a conduit to the Kidron.

These accounts in the *Bible* are also the basis for much of the history of Freemasonry, which uses the construction of the Temple as a backdrop and metaphor for moral instruction.

According to tradition, in all these preparatory undertakings, a space of about three years was occupied. Now the process of the erection of the great building began, under the direction of skilled Tyrian builders and workmen, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign. The building followed the Phoenician model, which makes the *Bible's* description an important source for historians regarding the lay-out of Phoenician temples, and vice versa.

According to biblical tradition, many thousands of laborers and skilled artisans were employed in the work. Stones of huge dimension, prepared in the quarries underneath the city (1 Kings 5:17, 18) were gradually placed on the massive walls and closely fitted together without any mortar between, until the whole structure was completed. The building was sixty cubits (twenty-seven meters) long, twenty cubits (nine meters) wide, and twenty-five (in the Greek text) or thirty (in the Hebrew) cubits (fourteen meters) high.

At length, in the autumn of the

eleventh year of his reign, seven and a half years after it had been begun, the temple was completed. For thirteen years it stood on the summit of Moriah, silent and unused. The reasons for this strange delay in its consecration are unknown. At the close of these thirteen years, preparations for the dedication of the temple were made. Thus the temple was dedicated at the autumnal new year festival or in the month of *Tishai*.

According to biblical tradition, the Ark of the Covenant was solemnly brought from the tent in which David had deposited it to the place prepared for it in the temple. Then Solomon ascended a platform which had been erected for him, in the sight of all the people and lifting up his hands to heaven, poured out his heart to God in prayer (1 Kings 8; 2 Chr. 6, 7). The feast of dedication, which lasted seven days, followed by the feast of tabernacles, marked a new era in the history of Israel. On the eighth day of the feast of tabernacles, Solomon dismissed the vast assemblage of the people.

King David's greatest dream had become his son's greatest accomplishment. King David had consolidated the kingdoms, vanquished any immediate threats to it from without and within, made alliances to protect it, and amassed materials for the construction of The Holy Temple. These accomplishments made it possible for King Solomon to devote his energies to the construction of The Holy Temple.

King David's planned legacy had indeed become King Solomon's heritage and legacy.

Similarities

Solomon appears in the *Qur'an* and

is called *Sulayman*. The *Qur'an* refers to Solomon as the son of David, as a prophet, and as a great ruler, imparted by God with tremendous wisdom, favor, and mystical powers. Solomon was said to have under his rule, not only people but also hosts of invisible beings (i.e., Jinn), and like his father, David, Solomon is said to have understood the language of the animals and seen some of the hidden glory in the world that was not accessible to common human beings.

Surah 27:15 "And, indeed, We (Deity) granted [true] knowledge unto David and Solomon [as well]; and both were wont to say: 'All praise is due to God, who has [thus] favored us above many of His believing servants!' [In this insight] Solomon was [truly] David's heir; and he would say: 'O you people! We have been taught the speech of the birds, and have been given [in abundance] of all [good] things: this, behold, is indeed a manifest favor [from God]!'"

Surah 34:12 "And unto Solomon [We made subservient] the wind, its morning course [covered the distance of] a month's journey and its evening course, a month's journey, and We caused a mountain of molten copper to flow at his behest; and [even] among the invisible beings there were some that had [been constrained] to labor for him by his Sustainer's leave and whichever of them deviated from our command, him would we let taste suffering through a blazing flame. They made for him whatever he wished of sanctuaries, and statues, and basins as [large as] great watering-troughs, and cauldrons firmly anchored."

David and Solomon shared a close one-on-one relationship with God. Both were, upon repentance, always forgiven for their sins and transgres-

sions. Both were poets, authors, cunning diplomats, and talented musicians. David authored the book of *Psalms* and Solomon the *Song of Songs* and the book of *Ecclesiastes*.

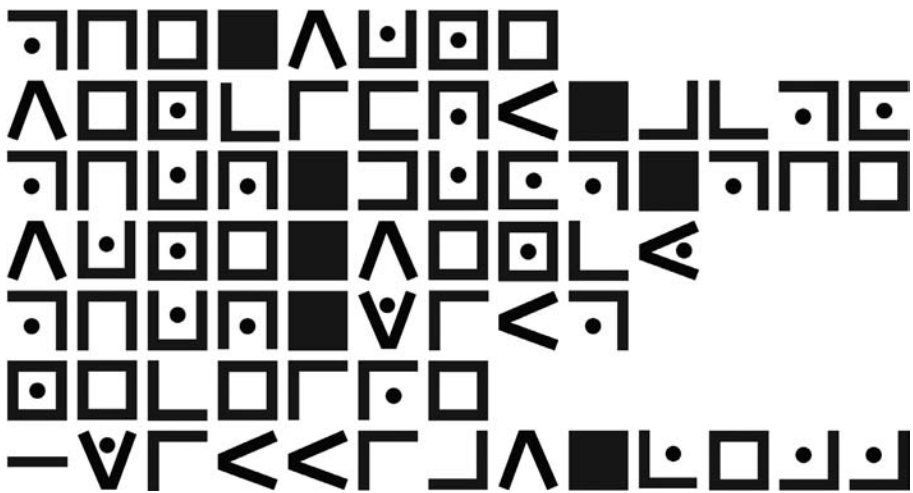
Sir Knight Jeffrey McClelland is past grand commander of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of Virginia and can be contacted at Jeff.of.Jamaica@outlook.com.

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Departure of a Crusader Had Emotion, Although a “Limited Display of Affection”

by
James A. Marples

Most ordinary people in the 21st Century regard Crusaders as many men who clamored for the attention of the wives and children they left behind. In truth, the earliest Crusaders were celibate warrior monks without wives or children. However, they left behind, mothers, sisters, nieces, nephews, and young cousins. Furthermore, *The Templar Rule* (rule of conduct) was largely based on the *Cistercian Rule* among monks within the Catholic Church when originally sanctioned by the pope.

The *Templar Rule* was very strict. The ancient Knights were required to live austere lives. They could have meat only three times per week with the exception of special holidays, since eating meat was then associated with corruption of the body. Fur and fancy clothes were forbidden. Pointy-toed shoes were forbidden, because they were associated with pagans. At the top of the priority-list was chastity. A Knight Templar was sworn to never kiss or press his lips to the lips or skin of any female, not even his own sister or his mother. That prohibition also extended to not kissing widows. That wasn't intended to be cruel or indifferent. It was to remind the Knight that his service was to live up to his vows of celibacy and to focus his warrior spirit toward preserving the Christian way of life without worldly distraction. The

Templars were literally on a mission, and self-discipline was a key component toward victory against a sometimes overwhelming enemy force. Thus, displays of emotion were not just unseemly but thought to sway a Knight's pinpoint focus on protecting pilgrims and defeating enemies with overwhelming force.

The Templar Rule was intended to mandate that the Knights were not to concern themselves with the faces of virgins, female friends, or relatives so as to steer clear of female temptation. As a side product, since the Knights had many difficult days of fighting Saracens, it was also to instill that while combat in the name of preserving Christianity was acceptable, it was forbidden to pilage, plunder, or rape any female, even if a foe.

It is almost unbelievable to think that *The Templar Rule* was expanded from the original seventy-two rules, drawn-up at the Council of Troyes to over 700 rules or codes covering almost every imaginable mode of acceptable conduct. All monies from tithes and properties, all gold or possessions of any sort belonged to the order as a whole. Everything was held communally without any wealth held in the hands of an individual. If a Templar was given a gift as reward for some service, he had to turn it over to the grand master. If some small gift of remembrance was given to a Knight by



his family, he had to have the grand master's permission to keep it. He couldn't even trade something to another Knight without getting permission beforehand. If a Knight was given money to spend to buy something for the community, he had to account for every penny spent and not have any money on his person when he died, or he was refused burial in consecrated-ground. To say that the rules were strictly observed would be an understatement. Thus, this rigid regimen helped propel the Knights Templar to the power and prestige they held for several centuries.

Initially, there were four ranks of the order; the Knights who were equipped like the heavy cavalry of the Middle Ages, the sergeants who formed as the light cavalry, and two ranks of non-fighting

men; the farmers who were entrusted with the administration of temporals, and the chaplains who alone were invested with sacerdotal orders to minister to the spiritual needs of the members.

Anyone who is even remotely familiar with Templar history knows that the Knights remained steadfast until death. Even when Jacques deMolay was burned at the stake, he exhibited almost no emotion until the very end. When beatings wouldn't initially elicit a false confession of alleged sins, the beatings got worse until he said practically anything his oppressors wanted, feeling it would spare his life. He was wrong. It was the French King Philip IV, the so-called Philip the Fair, who was the main instigator of DeMolay being burnt at the stake. If a person reads history

recently released within the last dozen years from The Vatican, it is now acknowledged that the then Pope Clement V merely went along with King Philip's ideas. Furthermore, his successor, Pope John XII, was a much more fair-minded man and actually absolved DeMolay of any supposed offenses. Pope John XII was related to the counts of Tusculum, and he was also a member of the powerful Roman family of Theophlact. He was stern and condemned for worldly ways. He nevertheless began the transition of bestowing many of the possessions of the disbanded Knights Templar to their parallel chivalric Order of the Knights of St. John, also known as the Knights of Malta, whose aim was also to protect pilgrims traveling to and from The Holy Land and also to care for the poor, sick, and infirm. The Templars may have been somewhat emotional, but theirs was not a lot different from the regimental train-

ing of modern military forces including the Special Forces of the United States, such as Navy SEALs and members of the Green Berets. It takes ultra-discipline to be part of an elite fighting force.

This evolution of history is why the Masonic Order of Malta and the Masonic Order of the Temple are effectively merged to reflect that vital part of history. Modern Knights are free to show emotion. However, remembering our solemn vows, promises, pledges, and obligations is still a good thing to do with a serious and committed heart, mind, and attitude.

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 rosehills@yahoo.com or 1300 Greenbriar Drive, Longview, TX 75604.

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IN MEMORIAM



Walter Ronald McKenzie, Sr.
 Kansas
 Grand Commander 2012
 Born: August 12, 1938
 Died July 18, 2021

Knights Templar Eye Foundation, Inc.

54th Voluntary Campaign

News Release

Greetings Sir Knights of the Grand Encampment
May Christ's grace, mercy and peace be with you all.



It is indeed an honor to address each of you today as chairman for the 54th annual Knights Templar Eye Foundation Voluntary Campaign.

Before we kick off this 54th Campaign, we owe Sir Knight R. Thomas Starr, KCT a big thank you for his work on a successful 53rd Annual Campaign. Sir Knight Starr worked diligently through one of the toughest times in United States history, and the results show that. Remember that he did not do it alone; it was done with your support.

As we emerge from the COVID pandemic and begin to put normality back into our lives, let us not forget the Knights Templar Eye Foundation. For over fifty years, the Sir Knights of the Grand Encampment have supported this noble cause through their generous donations.

The Knights Templar Eye Foundation was incorporated in 1956 and is a charity sponsored by the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar. At the end of 2010, the Foundation shifted its focus and adopted a new mission statement, "To improve vision through research, education, and supporting access to care."

Those who have attended the department conferences have been treated to presentations showing the many latest accomplishments made possible through the grants provided from the Foundation. If you have not been able to in the past, please make it a priority to take in one of those presentations at a department conference this year, you will not regret going.

During the year, I will bring updates about the Campaign to you through articles in the *Knight Templar* magazine. Look for them.

The gift of sight is so precious; marching together, we can make a difference, helping not only the world to see but also very possibly one of our own.

Onward Christian Soldiers
In His Service,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Lon W. Kvasager".

Lon W. Kvasager, KCT
R.E.P.D.C – North Central Department
chairman, 54th Annual Voluntary Campaign

Knights Templar Eye Foundation, Inc.

LIMITED TIME OFFER

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In support of the Knights Templar Eye Foundation, Inc. and its mission "to improve vision through research, education, and supporting access to care" a collectible YETI Tumbler specially made for and with the Foundations etched logo on the front is now available to all Sir Knights.

The YETI Rambler 20oz Tumbler will keep your drinks as cold (or hot) as you would like. With stainless steel construction, double-wall vacuum insulation, and no sweat design, they're perfect for an on-the-move person. Plus they're dishwasher safe.

The special Tumbler is available for a limited time for a donation of \$100 or more to the Knights Templar Eye Foundation, Inc. but please note this is a Tumbler promotion and is *entirely separate from any other programs the Foundation offers.*



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Knights Templar Eye Foundation, Inc.

Sword of Merit Presentation

A Sword of Merit was presented to Sir Knight James Bussey, member of Palm Beach Commandery 18 at the 4th Annual Charity Ball of the Grand Commandery of Alabama in Montgomery, Alabama, on July 17th. This sword was in recognition of Sir Knight Bussey donating a total of \$25,000 over the past two years to receive twenty-five Grand Master Clubs. The Knights Templar Eye Foundation automatically recognizes this great accomplishment by awarding a Sword of Merit.

Presentation was made by Sir Knight James C. McGee, right eminent southeast department commander and grand recorder of Alabama. Assisting in the presentation was Sir Knight Winston Each, right eminent grand commander of Alabama, and Sir Knight Tommy Bassett, Alabama chairman of the Knights Templar Eye Foundation.



The Knights Templar Eye Foundation, Inc.

Presentation of Two Golden Chalicees

Milford Commandery 11 from the Grand Commandery of Mass/RI
Continues Annual Support

June 22, 2021 – Members of Milford Commandery 11 located in Milford, Massachusetts, concluded the Templar year with the presentation of two Golden Chalicees to Sir Knights Richard G. Bernheart and Michael E. Hampton, each a right eminent past grand commander, in a ceremony open to family and guests.

Milford Commandery 11 procures Golden Chalicees through the Knights Templar Eye Foundation in the name of its members who served as grand commanders. Sir Knight Bernheart was made an honorary grand commander of Knights Templar of Massachusetts and Rhode Island in 2018. Sir Knight Hampton affiliated with Milford Commandery 11 in 2015 after serving as grand commander of Knights Templar of Oklahoma, since which time he has been an invaluable member of Milford Commandery 11 and its uniform store.

These two Golden Chalicees were in addition to five memberships to the Grand Master's Club procured by the Milford Commandery Uniform Store on behalf of five members of Milford Commandery 11. The volunteers staffing the Milford Commandery Uniform Store assemble and ship summer uniforms and related clothing throughout the United States and abroad. Available profits are donated to the Knights Templar Eye Foundation annually.

Since 2016, the Milford Commandery Uniform Store has donated approximately \$60,000 to the Knights Templar Eye Foundation from these efforts and over \$160,000 since its inception.



(From left to right) Sir Knight Richard Bernheart, past grand commander of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of Massachusetts and Rhode Island; Sir Knight William Eltzroth, past grand commander of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of Massachusetts and Rhode Island; Sir Knight Jon Edward Hollister, past commander of Milford Commandery 11, and Sir Knight Michael Hampton, past grand commander of the Grand Commandery of Oklahoma.

Leadership Notes

Leadership and Group Dynamics

The term “group dynamics” was coined in the early 1940s by Kurt Lewin, a social psychologist. It refers to the roles and behaviors that people take on when they work in a group. As leaders, it is our role to realize how the group is operating and to make sure that we have the correct people working together.

When we have positive group activity, projects get done effectively. The group begins to build on itself, and each participant enhances the other team members. When the group is not working well together, it is up to us, as leaders, to analyze the group dynamics and fix the problem. There can be several reasons that teams go awry. If you find that one person is overly critical of another’s ideas, it will cause other group members to be less willing to share their thoughts. This will disrupt the workings of the team, and projects will become stagnant and unaccomplished.

So, what traits can lead to poor group dynamics?

1. **Weak leadership**

If the appointed leader is not properly equipped to lead, the result may be a lack of direction in the group with the team not focusing on the right priorities. This can also lead to infighting between team members.

2. **Disruptions from team members**

We have all seen this too many times, where no matter what idea is brought up, there is someone on the team that will disagree with everything or be extremely critical of others in the group, so that no consensus is ever achieved.

3. **Apprehension**

If team members feel that they are being judged harshly by others in the group, the result will be a lack of communications within the team. They hold back and will not share their opinions.

So how do we combat these issues? As leaders, it is our job to “know our team,” their plusses and minuses. We need to guide them and help develop them without micromanaging them. We need to tackle problems as soon as we see them. We need to act quickly to curb a behavior we are seeing that is negatively impacting the team and, at the same time, provide feedback to the person impacting the team.

The use of team-building exercises will also help to develop the team and give everyone a chance to get to know one another. Share the lessons that you have learned. This will show that you care about the team and want them to be successful.

Also help the team understand the roles and responsibilities of each team mem-

ber. Help them work to their strengths, so that each member will be successful and want to share his thoughts and ideas.

Finally, focus on the communications. Open communication is central to a good team dynamic. Be as clear as possible with the message. Paint the picture and get the group's buy in. Once everyone is on the same page, the group can move forward. Communicate any changes to the project or status so that the team can move in the right direction.

This is part of the York Rite Leadership 201 curriculum. In the course, we also investigate effective ways to get our organizations active. We look at what our members value and why they join. Many new members have predisposed ideas of what they believe Masonry is and what it has to offer. It is our job as leaders to learn what their values are and what their idea of the fraternity is. By fulfilling their values and beliefs we can make them active members who will participate in our labors. If we do not fulfill their values, they will just become dues paying members and will not participate in our activities. An example of this would be esoteric masonry. If that is what a new brother is expecting, then we as leaders have to offer those types of lessons to keep them engaged. As leaders we must have varying programs that appeal to the values of all our members to keep them all engaged and active.

If you want to learn more about leadership principles, join the York Rite Leadership Training Program. Visit the website at YorkRiteLeadership.org for more information and to register for the program.

Sir Knight Charles D. O'Neill
York Rite Leadership Faculty



Thoughts on Psalm 133

By

Sir Knight John Simmons

Tennessee Freemasonry uses Psalm 133 as one of the opening charges. Some states use it as the circumambulation scripture for the Entered Apprentice degree. We hear it so often that we may not think about its imagery and meaning.

King James Version

A Song of Degrees of David.

Behold, how good and how pleasant it is
for brethren to dwell together in unity!
It is like the precious ointment upon
the head, that ran down upon the
beard, even Aaron's beard: that went
down to the skirts of his garments;
as the dew of Hermon, and as the dew
that descended upon the mountains
of Zion:
for there the LORD commanded the
blessing, even life for evermore.

English Standard Version

A Song of Ascents. Of David.

Behold, how good and pleasant it is
when brothers dwell in unity!
It is like the precious oil on the head,
running down on the beard, on the
beard of Aaron, running down on the
collar of his robes!
It is like the dew of Hermon, which falls
on the mountains of Zion!
For there the LORD has commanded
the blessing, life forevermore.

This psalm is based on a practical idea: a family living together in unity. Such unity was important in a culture where extended families lived and worked together, and strife in the family was a serious threat. It was so important that Abram was willing to separate from his nephew Lot, giving him the choice of the best land, to keep peace in the family (Genesis 13:8-9). Jesus gave a stern warning about family strife, saying that we are not even to speak badly about our brothers (Matthew 5:21-26). Brotherly love is one of the virtues that Peter commanded the early Christians to add to their faith (2 Peter 1:7).

This psalm is called a song of "ascents." This means that it was sung by pilgrims

as they went up to Jerusalem to worship. This would certainly include the three great pilgrim feasts of Passover, the Feast of Weeks (Pentecost), and the Feast of Booths (Deuteronomy 16:16). The psalmist extends the idea of family unity to the unity of the worshiping community, the family formed by God. Again, peace and harmony among the worshipers was a practical necessity. Certainly the worship that the pilgrims were going up to offer would be enhanced by unity and marred by disunity and strife. As Masons, we apply the psalm to our own unity as Masonic brothers, both within the Lodge and without.

The psalmist uses two different but related images to illustrate the blessing

of unity, one ritual and one natural: the anointing oil and the dew of Hermon. God commanded Moses to prepare a special anointing oil, mixed with spices, and to use it to anoint Aaron and his sons, as well as the tabernacle and the holy vessels (Exodus 30:22-33). It was to be used for no other purpose. It must have smelled wonderful. The oil was poured on the head of the high priest and was sprinkled on all the priests along with the sacrificial blood (Leviticus 8:12, 30). In secular use, the oil was a sign of welcome to a traveler. A host would pour oil on the head of a visitor to honor him and refresh him after his trip (Luke 7:46). This again would be a sign of unity and brotherly love.

The psalmist's comparison of brotherly unity with the anointing of the high priest suggests that there is a sacred aspect to our unity as brothers. Masonry is about fellowship and brotherly love but is about more. Brotherly love is related to holiness, even to our relationship to God. Saint John the Evangelist wrote:

If anyone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen. (1 John 4:20)

The psalmist uses another metaphor: the dew of Hermon. Mount Hermon was in the far north of Israel, and its dew was heavy. In a land where rain came only a few times in the year, dew was an important, welcome, and refreshing source of moisture. Brotherly love and unity is as refreshing as the dew. Even though Mount Hermon was far from Jerusalem, the psalmist regarded its dew as falling knight templar

there symbolically to refresh the worshipers who had come there from afar and who worshiped in unity.

The two metaphors both speak of God's abundant blessing. It is interesting that this song of "ascents" mentions "descents" three times. The oil flowed down from Aaron's head to his beard. It was so abundant that it even ran down onto his collar. The Hebrew says it ran down onto the "mouth" of his garments, suggesting the collar. The dew of Hermon was so abundant that it could be regarded as extending even to Zion. Perhaps this suggests that the worshipers had come from afar, bringing their unity with them. The idea seems to be that as we ascend to worship God, he sends down his abundant blessings on us.

There is even a surprising culmination to this poem on brotherly unity. In Zion, God commands the ultimate blessing. We are amazed that what started as an encouragement to brotherly love and unity ends up speaking of eternal life. Perhaps Zion here can represent any place of brotherly unity. The mention of everlasting life shows that Masonry is a pointer to something beyond itself, something beyond mere fellowship. It can be a training ground for the brotherly love that is part of a right relationship with God, a relationship that leads to eternal life.

Sir Knight John Simmons is past commander of Park Avenue Commandery 31 in Memphis, Tennessee and of Bloomington Commandery 63 in Bloomington, Indiana. He currently resides in Tennessee and can be contacted at drjwsimmons@yahoo.com.



Beauceant News

Homecoming



(Mrs. Charles M.) Susan Thames **Supreme Worthy President** **Social Order of the Beauceant** **2021 – 2022**

(Mrs. Charles M.) Susan Thames was installed as supreme worthy president at the Centennial Session of the Supreme Assembly in Kingsport, Tennessee, on October 1, 2021. She has the honor to visit each chartered Assembly during her tenure and will preside at the 102nd Annual Supreme Assembly in Atlanta, Georgia on September 26-30, 2022.

Mrs. Thames (pronounced Thāmz) resides in the small town of Rogersville, Tennessee. She is an eighteen-year member of Kingsport Assembly, 244, Social Order of the Beauceant in Kingsport, Tennessee, where she advanced through the line before serving as president in 2007 and again in 2017. While her father, Reverend Billy C. Carroll, was a Master Mason and mother, Marie B. Carroll, an active member in the Order of the Eastern Star, Mrs.



Thames did not have an interest in the Masonic organizations until she married her Sir Knight, Charles M. Thames, in 2001. Since then, she has traveled extensively with him as he has served in many capacities, but some of their favorite times were during his service as right eminent grand commander of Knights Templar of the Grand Commandery of Tennessee in 2013.

Aside from serving Supreme Assembly as supreme outer guard in 2011 and supreme marshal in 2016, Mrs. Thames has served The Grand Chapter of Tennessee Order of the Eastern Star as grand representative to Puerto Rico (2012-14) and grand organist (2019-2021). She was elected as supreme worthy preceptress in Minneapolis, Minnesota, in September of 2017 and has progressed through the Supreme line accordingly.

Mrs. Thames was born in the tiny town of Bean Station, Tennessee, and acquired her Bachelor of Science Degree in Elementary Education and ten years later a Master's Degree in curriculum and instruction—both from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. Her blood proudly flows Volunteer Orange! She was a teacher in grades K-5 for thirty-three years at Rogersville City School. However, her greatest achievement, other than accepting Jesus as her Savior, has been that of “Mom” to her daughter, Emily Sauceman. She and Chuck share three daughters, two sons-in-law, a granddaughter, and foster grandchildren.

Mrs. Thames begins as president in a new century of faith, loyalty, and love and is looking forward to celebrating her “Sisters in all Seasons” across the country, while encouraging continued support for the Knights Templar Eye Foundation.

Knights Templar Eye Foundation, Inc.

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.

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 required to make minimum distributions due to age 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. Please discuss with your tax professional whether this option could benefit you in your charitable and retirement planning.

Planned Giving – Create a Charitable Legacy

Your Foundation now has a full web site dedicated to Planned Giving which you can access from our web site, shown at the bottom of this page. So if you're thinking of ways to make a lasting legacy for yourself please check out the tab on the home page that says "Planned Giving". Leaving your mark on the future is so simple with a gift in your will. To leave a gift in your Will or Trust it is as easy as asking your attorney to include a sentence that says:

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