The Templars, Sionists, and the Freemasons

Book One - Episode 13

Saint Bernard

This work is a translation of a book written and published originally in Turkish.
The book in whole consists of 23 episodes.



Previous Episode: Demolished Temples

The historian Guillaume de Tyre have written that the fame of the nine knights that were led by Hugues de Payen swept across the European continent in 1128, about ten years after they became settled in Jerusalem.

Isn't that interesting?.... In the meantime, the historiographer Fulk de Chartres, who was right next to them in Jerusalem, never wrote anything in this issue, never mentioned them at all, but ten years later, which is actually a very short period of time, they suddenly became "famous".

OK, not in Jerusalem, but in Europe; what difference does it make?

At that time, a monk named **Saint Bernard de Clairvaux**, whose name was well known in the Christian world, who gained the love and respect of almost everyone, and who was later referred to by some as "the chief spokesperson of the Catholic Church", talked about these knights with exaggerated praise, as if he was glorifying them even before they arrived in Europe.

Then, when they arrived in Europe, they were greeted with great respect and affection almost everywhere.

This information is given not only in the historical information given by Guillaume de Tyre, but also in the documents in the archives of the Vatican.

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What justification can be given for Saint Bernard's showing such affinity to this society, which would later be known as the Knights Templar?

There is no definite answer to this question. Mentioning the influence of family ties, a comment is made as follows: *"Saint Bernard attached great importance to family ties since his youth. As a matter of fact, he brought many of his relatives to the monastery. André de Montbard, one of the nine knights of Jerusalem, was Saint-Bernard's uncle, although he was younger."*

Was this kinship alone enough for Saint-Bernard to adopt such an extraordinary behaviour?

It may have been, but it was not the only reason. Moreover, this kinship only applies to one of the nine knights. Therefore, the justification in this explanation does not even fit into logic so that it can be true.

The Discovery of the Knights

Most scholars who have studied the Knights Templar cannot make sense concerning the fact that the knights, who at that time still called themselves the "Poor Soldiers of Christ", were greeted with great respect and affection on their return to Europe after nine years in Jerusalem.

There is no doubt that welcome ceremonies were organised. This is mentioned in many independent historical sources.

When asked as «Why?... What did they do to deserve such a splendid welcome?», an answer to this question cannot be given.

It cannot be said that they had done anything worthwhile by the time they returned to Europe. In fact, it would be more accurate to say, "It is not known what they did during their stay in Jerusalem."

Or did they find something important there?

Maybe they did.

Let's say so.... What could it be?

It is not certain whether they found anything, but if they did, it is not known what it was. Maybe someone knows but is hiding it.

Could the "thing" they found - if indeed they found it - be the "Treasure of Solomon" that has been rumoured for centuries, or the treasures mentioned in the Qumran scrolls?

This is a very slim possibility, but there are those who say it could be so.

If so, was this treasure rich enough to warrant such a warm interest on the part of the Europeans?

It might have been.

How could these knights have succeeded in finding the treasure, when so many people who had searched through the ruins of Jerusalem had failed to find it? Did they discover the right place, while their predecessors had always dug in the wrong ones?

This is also an unanswerable question... If it is accepted that they must have found a treasure, there is no choice but to say, «Maybe.»

Well, if they found a treasure and became rich despite the fact that they had previously said that they would not acquire personal property and possessions, should they be welcomed with such splendour when they arrived in Europe?

Yes... “Showing off!” is effective always and everywhere.

It is stated that after Titus destroyed the Temple of Herod in 70, he carried the treasures he had captured there to Rome. There is also a proof of this. The man-size **seven-brached golden candelabrum** in Herod’s Temple, which is considered one of the holy relics of the Jews, was carried to Rome. One of the sides of the famous ancient remains called “Arch of Titus” in Rome is engraved with Roman soldiers carrying this candlestick.





It is also said that about two centuries before that, when Antiochus IV of Syria, also known in history as Epiphanes, entered Jerusalem, he burned everything down, persecuted the people, and then took all the treasures there.

The Egyptians had also sacked Jerusalem several times before.

In 586 B.C., the Babylonians destroyed and burned Jerusalem and took away even the Israelites.

Thus, by the beginning of the 12th Century, Jerusalem should no longer have any treasure from earlier times.

Of course, if previously it existed.

However, judging from the Qumran scrolls, the treasure may not have been in Jerusalem, but somewhere else, outside the city.

That is, again of course, if it really existed.

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There are those who think otherwise, and say that these nine knights were not looking for a treasure in Jerusalem, but for something else entirely, that this was much different from what was found and taken away by those who were only after material values.

If they did indeed find something, could that "something" have been an object of great sentimental importance?

Perhaps the **"Ark of the Covenant"**, which the Israelites are said to have protected with great care for centuries, but which is not well known because it is not mentioned in later narratives... Could it be?

Maybe the **"Holy Grail**", which has nothing to do with the Israelites, but Jesus...

Not even a tangible and visible object, but something much more important; a terrible "knowledge", a great "secret"!

There is also this scepticism:

Did they actually find nothing at all, but pretended to have found something very important or valuable and deceived the masses?

If so, these nine knights were clearly a bunch of charlatans.

But to suggest such a thing without any evidence will be injustice.

Because these knights did not say that they had found anything in Jerusalem. Saint-Bernard, who had spoken highly of them, had not mentioned such a thing. It was others who thought about it and said they had found something. Moreover, it was an afterthought and remained as a rumour.

The reason for the splendid ceremonial welcome and applause was not understood at the time, but no one asked why. They had been told to take part in the welcoming ceremony, and they had done so, applauding wildly the knights from Jerusalem; it was as simple as that!

It was intended that these knights would be held in high esteem.

But later on, whoever started the rumour that they had found something of great value there was successful. Because this was not just a rumour, it was taken as "fact". It impressed the Europeans very much. It also justified the splendid welcoming ceremonies.

Thus, not only when they first arrived in Europe from Jerusalem, but also afterwards, these knights and their successors were honoured with an extraordinary level of respect.

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According to some, it is very wrong to say that the knights led by Hugues de Payen found nothing in Jerusalem. Although it is not known exactly what they found, there are some evidences that they found something. One of these is shown as follows:

"As soon as they arrived in Europe, they came into contact with an esoteric organisation founded many years earlier in Troyes by a man named Solomon ben Isaac, who was engaged in detailed studies, especially on Kabbalah. Soon afterwards, members of this organisation set about translating into French a book containing information connected with ***sacred geometry****. This book is said to date from the time of King Solomon.*

The knowledge thus gained was later used by Suger, abbot of the Church of Saint-Denis in Paris, to create the Gothic style of architecture."

If this is true, the knights may have obtained such information from another source, not necessarily during their research in Jerusalem.

However, there is another connection in this claim: Through the Knights Templar, a link is established between the medieval cathedral builders, who are alleged to be at the origin of Freemasonry, and the Temple of Solomon in Jerusalem. Thus, as we will see later on, the importance and value attached to the Knights Templar in Freemasonry gains meaning from another aspect.

What else the first Knights Templar found or discovered in Jerusalem remains a mystery today.

As we have already mentioned, among the many speculations on this subject, it is emphasised that they have obtained an important secret or information rather than finding a treasure there.

However, it is a well-known fact that throughout history, people have prioritised material values over secrets or knowledge.

This is still the case today.

If it had been rumoured that these nine knights had obtained a very important secret or knowledge in Jerusalem and had brought it to Europe only that, they would probably not have been even looked at, let alone welcomed with splendid ceremonies.

The Cistercians

Let us return for a moment to the beginning of 6th Century in order to make an introduction to the subject we will now move on to.

The feudal organisation of society, which had settled all over Europe after the disintegration of the Western Roman Empire, had divided the population strictly into two basic classes:

1. The serfs, who were the main mass, but were considered as "slaves";

2. Free people, i.e. nobles, knights and clergy.

Every precaution was taken to ensure that the people were not organised in any way and in any form.

The various professional and craft organisations established during the Roman Empire and generally known as **"collegia"** (colleges) were abolished. This was because, according to the feudal lords, these organisations had abused the autonomy historically granted to them, and had become a problem for the state over time. The feudal lords carefully avoided making such a mistake again.

However, there was also a need for people, - especially artisans - to carry out the mundane and worldly work outside of religion and military service. For this purpose, **monasteries** were founded directly connected to the Church.

If you look at a dictionary, you can think of a monastery as a gloomy building filled with monks who keep to themselves and spend all their days in prayer. Indeed, one of the synonyms to the word monastery can be given as "monk house".

However, the work performed in a monastery in medieval Europe was not only of a religious nature. Monasteries were also places where almost all kinds of professions and arts were taught and practised.

In other words, a monastery was a place of education and a craft centre as well as being both a religious institution. Monasteries maintained this characteristic for centuries and became one of the important institutions of European society.

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In 529, an Italian monk, who would later take the name **Saint-Benedictus**, founded the first Catholic order in history in a monastery in the city of Naples. The monks who were members of this order, which spread over time by establishing monasteries in other countries of Europe, were called **Benedictines**. They were also known as "black monks" because each of them wore a black robe from head to toe.



In periods that followed, other orders were founded, such as the Dominicans, Franciscans, Hermits, Carmelites, Augustinians, and Premontrians.

Some of these were branches of the Benedictines, that can be considered the main order. Others, on the contrary, were born in opposition to the Benedictines.

The main reason for the opposition was the deviation from the basic rules of the order, the emergence of corruption, and the development of events that could even be regarded as scandalous.

In terms of the scope of the subjects of this book, the Carmelites are also important. In 1070 they left Sicily and founded the Orval Abbey in Ardennes in northern France. Pierre l'Ermite initiated Godfrey de Bouillon into the order, which subsequently became the Order of Sion.

There was another branch of the Benedictine Order called **"Clunians"**. When Godfrey de Bouillon was on his way to Jerusalem with his crusading army, some monks in the monastery of the Clunians in a town called Molesme in the Burgundian region of France abandoned the monastery. They followed Robert de Champagne to the town of Citeaux. There they founded a new monastery.



Thus, another order indirectly born from the Benedictines was formed. The members of this order took the name "Cistercians" (Cisterciens in French), which is the theme of this subtitle. The reason for this name is as follows: The place where the new monastery was named as "Cistercium" in the Latin language used by the Catholic Church.

In apparent contradiction to the Benedictines, the Cistercian monks wore white robes. For this reason they were also called **"white monks"**.

Those that remained in the Molesme Monastery were deeply offended by this occurrence. They appealed to the Pope, stating that they were in a difficult situation and asked for help.

Pope Urbanus II asked Robert de Champagne to leave the Cistercians alone and return to his former monastery. Robert did not show resistance against the Church; he obeyed this request and returned.

This time, however, the Cistercians suffered. Because a monastery was self-supporting, but in the first years after its foundation it needed both a good leader and financial support.

The Cistercians began to recover after Stephen Harding, an Englishman, who took over the management of the monastery in 1109.

In 1113, the fate of the order changed when **Bernard de Fontaines**, often referred to in history as Saint Bernard de Clairvaux, joined the monastery. He was the son of a middle-class aristocratic family. The title "saint" was added to his name later by the Catholic Church, for purposes of recognising his successful work.

Saint-Bernard led about 30 people, mostly his own family members and relatives, to join the monastery. In 1115, with the support by Count of Champagne, he founded the most famous and largest monastery of the order at the place known as "Clairvaux" near the city of Troyes in France. This is where Saint Bernard's nickname comes from. (Below is a restored version of this monastery today).



Source: http://www.aube-champagne.com/en/abbaye-cistercienne-de-clairvaux.html

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In the north-west of Italy, near San Remo, in a somewhat remote area, there is a middle size village called **"Seborga".**

In the recent past, a number of manuscripts were discovered in the church of this village, apparently dating back to mediavel times. In one of them, among other information, there is the following account:

"In the year 1117 Saint-Bernard freed two monks, Gondamar and Rosal from the monastery of Clairvaux, from their Cistercian vows and enrolled them with Hugues de Payen, henceforth as soldiers."

In the same document, it is also written that Hugues de Payen came to this village that year together with eight men, including Rosal and Gondamar, and that Edouard, the village priest, baptised Hugues de Payen at Saint Bernard's request, and not only that, but also gave him the title of **"Grand Master of Knights Templar"**.



Source: http://capta-images.com/project/kingdom-in-the-clouds/

Thus it becomes clear that Saint Bernard had a prior connection with the nine knights who had presented themselves in Jerusalem as the "Poor Soldiers of Christ", that he may have been involved from the beginning, and that the term "Knights Templar" was actually created but not pronounced yet.

However, it is not clear why this baptism was performed by the priest of a small village in a very remote area.

Perhaps so that no one would hear or know about it before the time comes...

By the way, a note: The eight knights who travelled to Jerusalem with Hugues de Payen, whom we mentioned earlier as "two people whose detailed identities are unknown", were hence Gondamar and Rosal.

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A few years after the arrival of the Knights Templar in Europe, Saint Bernard began to exert an extraordinary influence on the Catholic Church.

This was not because of his success in founding many new monasteries after Clairvaux, but because he had actualised a system that no one had thought of before.

Saint-Bernard bound the Cistercian Order to a constitution known as the **"Charta Caritatis"** (Charter of Love), which was approved by the Pope. As had been customary for centuries, a monastery worked on its own, without any connection with others. This traditional practice was established, perhaps especially because it was considered necessary or useful. It allowed the Catholic Church to keep each monastery under its direct control. However, because of this centralised administration, it was very difficult to monitor what was going on in the monasteries due to difficulties in transportation.

One of the important factors that enabled the rapid development of the Cistercian Order was the fact that the monasteries were not left disconnected from each other, but were connected both to each other and to a central administration. The Abbey of Clairvaux assumed collective responsibility on behalf of all the monasteries of this order towards the Pope.

The constitution of the Order required each monk to visit at least one other monastery each year. Thus, contrary to the long-established practice, the era of monks remaining confined to their own monasteries was over.

As a natural consequence of this practice, a kind of "international network of monasteries" was formed, covering many countries in Europe.

They were all headed by Saint Bernard de Clairvaux.

It was through such an organisation in Europe that the nine knights from Jerusalem were welcomed "like kings" with magnificent ceremonies wherever they went.

The historian Guillaume de Tyre wrote that these nine knights travelled to Europe together.

He was slightly mistaken in this statement, but it would be wrong to regard the historian as faulty for this, because he probably did not have the supplementary information in this context. In fact, André de Montbard and Gondamar arrived a year in advance, had a long discussion with Saint-Bernard, made the necessary preparations, and then waited for the arrival of the other knights on a certain date.

Everything was planned, everything was duly organised.

In a way, subsequent success of the Knights Templar was also based on the fact that everything was carefully planned, programmed and organised.

Ode to the Knights

About a year after the arrival of the nine knights in Europe, Saint Bernard organised a meeting of the Council of the Catholic Church in Troyes, France.

The agenda of this meeting, held at the residence of the Count of Champagne, consisted of the settlement of disputes between the bishops in Paris and a general discussion on other matters of concern to the Church.

Judging by its agenda, it was a pointless meeting. It might as well not have been held.

However, the issues discussed by the Catholic Council at this meeting were not limited to the set agenda. Explicitly;

After the issues on the agenda were discussed and finalised, it was time to close the meeting.

Pope Honorius II was about to call everyone to the closing prayer when Saint-Bernard asked for the floor on behalf of the host.

It was not a correct stage, as it was closing time, but it would have been inappropriate not to give the floor on behalf of the host.

So, the floor was given.

Saint-Bernard had written what appeared to be a letter to Hugues de Payen. It was entitled as **"De Laude Novae Militae"** (Praise to the New Knights). In this article, he praised the Knights, who called themselves the "Poor Soldiers of Christ", as the title suggests. He also described the kind of organisation that should be established to ensure the future security of Jerusalem.

At the meeting of the Council of the Church, Saint-Bernard, when the floor was given to him, presented a speech on behalf of his host, Count Hugues of Champagne, in which he largely verbalised what he had described in that article. Regarding the context of this rather lengthy speech, in connection with the as yet unnamed Knights Templar, he emphasised the following in particular:

«God Himself has directly appointed such men, commissioning them to fight in His name. These warrior monks have undertaken a double war against the devil, both spiritual and physical. They have the right to kill the barbarians. Thus their place in heaven will be reserved.»

The Pope did not expect Saint Bernard to make such a speech. Had he known its content in advance, he would not have agreed to bring it to the Church Council meeting. Saint-Bernard also knew that this would be so. That is why he had the Pope invited by the Count of Champagne for the meeting. If the Pope prevented or interrupted Saint-Bernard's speech, he would have humiliated his host, who had single-handedly built the Abbey of Clairvaux and made a great financial contribution to Christianity.

Saint-Bernard therefore spoke at considerable length in comfort and confidence.

Now you may ask what good this speech at a Church Council meeting will do.

We will see what good it does. Furthermore. it was certainly very effective.

This is because this speech was listened to by all the cardinals present at the meeting. The fact that they heard it meant that the whole Christian World heard it.

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Saint-Bernard had come to this meeting of the Church Council with another preparation: "A proposal for the adaptation of the rules and procedures of the constitution of the Cistercian Order to an institution of chivalry."

At the end of his speech, he placed it before the Pope.

Accordingly, a religious and military order was to be established under the name of **"The Order of the Knights Templar"**. This order would be under the control of the Church, just like the monasteries. In this way, of course, the dignitaries of all countries would give their best support to keep Jerusalem and the pilgrimage routes under constant protection. As long as the Church was willing to do so, found it appropriate and officially approved the establishment of this order by a decision of the Church Council.

The King of Jerusalem, Baudouin I, could not understand how the nine knights could pull this off and laughed up his sleeve, however he did not show it to them. Of course he could not have imagined this dimension of diplomacy.

The Pope did not like to be confronted with such a "package deal", but in truth he did not find the proposal bad at all. Having an organisation of knights, such as the Cistercians, and an army to be established under their command, if necessary, under the Pope's authority would greatly increase the power of the Catholic Church. As a matter of fact, was it not for this reason that Pope Paschalis II granted certain rights to the Knights of St John in 1113? Why should the same right not be granted to these knights?

The Knights of St John, in spite of the lack of clear religious rules for the order, even military activity was relegated to the background, and they devoted themselves more and more to hospital work, with little or no benefit to the Church. They even became a burden, because they received constant financial support from the Church. Saint-Bernard's project, on the contrary, also envisaged a direct financial benefit to the Church.

Conclusion: At the meeting of the Council of the Church in Troyes, it was approved to establish a new order, the Order of the Knights Templar, and to organise and operate it according to the rules drawn up by Saint-Bernard.

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After the Church Council had approved the establishment of the new order, the following decisions were taken at Saint-Bernard's suggestion:

- Hugues de Payen, the leader of the Order at that time, will be referred to as "Magister Grandis" (Grand Master). The leaders that follow him would also carry the same title.

- The Order would be able to establish headquarters in various parts of Europe.

[The units that Knights Templar later established in various places were called "précéptoire" in French and "preceptory" in English. This means "a place where religious education is given".]

- Each of the administrators of these headquarters was to be known as a "Magister" and was to represent the Order with full authority.

- Although the Order's primary function was considered as the protection of Jerusalem and the safety of Christian pilgrims on their way to the Holy Land and back, the Order of Knights Templar would henceforth be regarded as the army of Christianity and would fight for the protection of the Christian faith, and the interests of the Church.

Pope Honorius II announced the decisions of the Council to the whole Christian World. He urged everyone to give the new order all the support they could.

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When Pope Honorius II died in 1130, Saint Bernard made an extraordinary effort to ensure that Gregorio Papareschi, a Cistercian monk in Italy, was elected pope and named Innocent II. Historians write that Saint Bernard travelled from city to city, town to town, and walked thousands of kilometres on foot for this purpose.

Saint Bernard became one of the most important and famous figures of Christianity. Some even labelled him as a "pope-maker".

Both Celestine II, who became pope in 1143, and Lucius II, who succeeded him, were very old cardinals, and both of them remained in office for only a few months. Saint-Bernard had obtained a decree from both of these popes concerning the Knights Templar, but he considered them as incapable. He began to look for a younger papal candidate. Thus he arranged for Bernardo Pignatelli, a Roman Cistercian monk, to be elected to the papacy in 1145 and given the name **Eugenius III**.

Both Eugenius III and Saint Bernard died in 1153.

During the period between 1145 and 1153, most important organisational development of the Knights Templar Order has been actualised.

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Taking all this into consideration, some have argued that the real founder of the Order of the Knights Templar was Saint-Bernard de Clairvaux, not Theocletes or Hugues de Payen.

This is not entirely wrong.

Whoever the founder was, this fact remains: The Knights Templar were now in full armour, mounted on their horses and galloping forward at full speed.

Now no one could stop them; no one could impede this progress.

Not even the Pope!

Next Episode: Characteristics of the Knights