

Title: An Introduction to Knights Templar  
Time: 45 minutes plus questions  
Audience: A Masonic Lodge



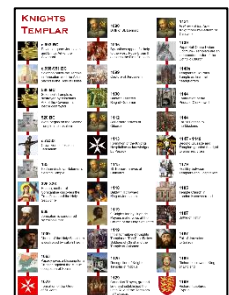
**Notes:**

Invited to speak at a Masonic Lodge as a general talk on the Knights Templar, 44 in attendance, 2 KT members within it. Normal Lodge was completed, then chairs were rearranged so that all were seated together with the speaker standing at the front – an informal gathering, It was in a different Province and the relevant Provincial Vice-Chancellor and Provincial Prior were aware and had given permission. It was not used as a recruiting exercise into a different Province. It was not geared as a full talk on the SJEHG, but rather an **Introduction to the Knights Templar** being a Companion Order of Freemasonry. However, it still provided the opportunity to talk about the SJEHG. There was also a request to cover some background to the religious significance as well as a pointing out various dates relating to the start of the Crusades and key steps of the Knights Templar history in the Holy Land. **ANY STATISTICS USED WERE CORRECT AT THE TIME.**

**Opening:** Thanks for the invitation  
Who you are and why you are giving the talk

**Summary:** 3 short areas to be covered – around 15 minutes for each:  
A) History;  
B) the Order today looking at KT as a Companion Order to Freemasonry;  
C) the SJEHG  
*They had also allowed time for questions afterwards if necessary.*

**A) History:** *To save time and to allow members to follow (in context) a copy of the Key Date Grid was given out for people to look through, to keep and to help them to keep things into perspective.*



3 Religions all converge geographically so it has always been a point of tension

**Muslims:** The point where Muhammed (PBUH) ascended to Heaven

**Christianity:** Christ was crucified; the centre of Christianity for many years, Holy Sepulchre is managed by Greek Orthodox; Franciscan Friars; Roman Catholics; Armenian Patriarchate; Ethiopians, Coptics and Syrians

**Judaism:** World was created and where Abraham prepared to sacrifice Isaac;

Dome of the Rock

Western (Wailing) Wall closest to Holy of Holies

A Pilgrimage to Jerusalem would allow Christians to be absolved of sin  
Crusades – First Crusade 1096

Muslims control areas including Jerusalem – retaken in 1099 from Fatimid  
Caliphate (started proper Christian 'Kingdom of Jerusalem')

Pilgrimages increased and the pilgrims sought and needed protection

1119 Hugh de Payens established:

**Poor Fellow Soldiers of Christ and the Temple of Solomon  
(Knights Templars 9 Knights) – A little like the RAC but in chainmail**

Baldwin II gave The Templars the Al Aqsa Mosque on Temple Mount  
Previously it was a Palace, later filled with rubbish but was the site of King  
Solomon's Temple

The Knights had no personal possessions - chastity, celibacy, prayer  
Money and banking and they become more expert in fighting

Next 200 years they developed into a paramilitary force with a sideline in  
banking and finance (The SAS crossed with Nat West)

HQ remained in Jerusalem for 67 years when it was captured by Saladin  
in 1187

Retreated to fort on the coast - Finally left Acre  
(The Siege started in 1191, and the Fall in 1291)

**Knights Hospitallers** were also a military, chivalric order throughout most  
of this time.

Philip IV of France needed money and the Templars were rich. Large  
concentration in France. Spread Fake News – heresy

1307 Arrest of Templars – Friday 13<sup>th</sup>

Jacques de Molay burned at the stake in 1314

Myths started even in their own lifetime

1200 a version of King Arthur included Knights as guardians of the Holy  
Grail (often used as a Metaphor for Jerusalem)

Acre > Cyprus > Rhodes > Crete > Malta

Malta – Great Siege 1565

Early scripts of the original Star Wars films referred to Jedi Templars  
Used as a base for Night Watch in Game of Thrones

## **B) The Order:**

### **The United, Religious, Military and Masonic Orders of the Temple of St. John of Jerusalem, Palestine, Rhodes and Malta in England and Wales and its Provinces Overseas.**

Brings together Templar and Hospitallers

Earliest minuted records – Portsmouth 1777.

Tensions in Freemasonry were high at the time and the ritual wasn't standardised until c1845.

**Uniform** – Order of the Temple:

Knights Cross; Knights Breast Star; Cross of Malta

*Put on regalia at this point with explanation*

Installation ritual of a Knight today involves an allegorical journey that is based on arriving as a Pilgrim and through to becoming a Knight of the Preceptory.

Join as a Companion from Royal Arch – single ceremony

Pilgrimage > Warfare > Penance and Mortification

Very colourful ceremony – Health and Safety!

Swords

Knight of Malta (Knight of St. Paul) – an appended Order

Positions in Temple

Bodyguard and Provincial / Great Ranks

### **Stats used for talk – Mar 2022:**

Around 14,500 KT in UK

Across 30 Provinces in UK plus many overseas

London: 29 Preceptories – 904 Memberships 725 Knights (Ave 25)

Their Province: 18 Preceptories – 375 Memberships 287 Knights (Ave 16)

### **C) Charity St John Eye Hospital Group**

Single supported charity unlike Craft and Chapter  
KT Over 100 years continuous support  
Largest is the Most Venerable Order of St. John

**The St. John Eye Hospital Group is the only charitable provider of expert eye care in the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem, treating patients regardless of ethnicity, religion or ability to pay.**

Origins 1120 (1,000 to 2,000 patients, male and female wards),  
Silver plates etc.

Malta Hospital 1574, Sacra Infermeria till 1798 (Napoleon)

SJEHG Hospital built 1882 Operating for 139 years – Queen Victoria

Muristan Clinic - site of original hospital

Bodyguard visited Jerusalem and the Eye Hospital on a Pilgrimage to the Holy Land in Jan 2020 – Other visits will continue

#### **Stats used for talk – Mar 2022:**

2021 – 135,000 patients treated inc Gaza 40,000 patients (opened a 2<sup>nd</sup> Operating room); published 10 clinical research papers; Outreach expanded (over 10,000), Muristan Clinic. Anabta Clinic, Hebron Hospital 24 hour emergency services

Only 45% income is from patients or their insurers

Outreach – 5,000 patients received eye care – 70% Women and children  
4.5m Palestinians – West Bank and Gaza (30% under 10)

**Blindness is 10x higher than in Western Societies (15% diabetic)**

*A practical exercise was used to close the talk. The example used was to ask anybody who had an eye condition (one where they would have likely gone blind without treatment e.g. glaucoma, cataracts etc.) to please identify themselves. This produced 3 people who kindly walked to one*

*side of the room. It was explained that a Western European society would continue to work as normal with only 3 from those present being affected. Each member was then asked to be joined by 9 others from the remaining group. They also walked to the side of the room to join the 'affected' side. This left only 14 people with 30 on the 'affected' side. It was explained that these eye conditions are **10 times higher in The Holy Land.***

**Regardless of political views, it is difficult to resolve any conflict when many of the population can't see!**

*It highlighted the impact of the problem. To then show the impact that SJEHG makes, it was mentioned that*

**80% of these conditions are curable with treatment from SJEHG, they just can't get round to everyone!**

*8 out of every 10 people returned to the 'society' side, leaving just 6 on the 'affected' side.*

If you wondered what effect our donations have, there it is.

**THAT IS THE DIFFERENCE THAT THE EYE HOSPITAL MAKES WHEN IT CAN PROVIDE TREATMENT AND CARE.**

Some statistics were revisited.

Thank you for your attention then Q&A