

## IX CABALA AND ESOTERIC TRADITIONS

Few subjects have caused more spilling of ink than the Knights Templar. With their "pre-Templar" symbols and esoteric imagery of Jerusalem and the world to come, the Tucson Artifacts provide ample grounds for suspecting a link between their makers and the Christian order of "fighting monks" that arose in France three centuries later. The Knights Templar share similarities with our Jewish soldiers in acting as guardians of the Sacred Sites in Jerusalem, in knowing of Merkabah mysticism, in having a military organization, in engaging in international commerce and banking, in pursuing the arts (including notably the building arts), and in dabbling in Eastern philosophies.

Let us content ourselves in speculating about just one "pre-Templar" connection, the nine-petaled white rose carved on Signal Hill along with the monogram R and a soldier standing guard. As it happens, the very same symbol is emblazoned on the banner held by a Roman or Byzantine Toltec soldier depicted on a Mimbres bowl (see p. 232).

There were nine branches, or worlds, in the cabalistic tree. Nine was the number of the dragon. A nine-petaled flower in Rosicrucian doctrine combined the four arms of the cross with the five petals of the rose. In some esoteric societies, nine flaming petals, or wheels, of a lotus, represented the cosmic fire within the body. In Pythagoras' scheme, which owes much to Vedic and Brahmanic lore, there were nine degrees of wisdom.

In Judaism with its elaborate system of gematria, the number nine corresponds to Tet, the ninth letter of the Hebrew alphabet, where it represents hidden good (TOV). The Talmud teaches, for instance, if one has a dream in which one sees the letter Tet, it is a good sign because the word *tov* represents that letter's first appearance in the Bible, where that word "good" is spoken by God of the light, separated by him from the darkness (Gen. 1:4; Baba Kama 55a). Nine was associated with Adam, the first man, with perfection, completion, grace, the life to come and the Seal of Truth. The number eighteen, composed of the two letters spelling the word *chai*, meaning life, which reduce numerologically to nine, also had enormous consequence in Jewish life. Multiples of 18 are still considered good luck and often used in gift

giving. The word *tob* appears more than once on the Tucson Artifacts, each time in connection with the Temple in Jerusalem.

It is worth recalling that the first texts of the Cabala were in the hands of Jews of Gaul from contacts with those of Babylon in the early ninth century. This fact was reported by Hai b. Sherira, gaon of Pumbedita (939-1038), and attributed to Natronai II b. Hillel, gaon of Sura (ca. 795-865). Could this be linked with Jews discovering Hebrew writings near Jericho around 795 (see V.1. "Homily on the Temple at Jerusalem and the Mourners for Zion.")?

The symbolism of nine is underlined by Jewish attitudes toward the Ninth of Av. This is the traditional date when the Temple was destroyed for the first time "on a Saturday evening, at the end of a sabbatical year, when a watch of the family of Jehoiarib was on duty, and the Levites standing at their posts were singing a psalm" (*The Book of Legends*, p. 143). It is also the date of the destruction of the Second Temple by the Romans in 70 CE. Tradition turned what was to outsiders the worst day in Jewish history into a good day (Yom Tov), a harbinger for the rebuilding of the Temple by the devout and a better life to come for all Jews.

Why a rose? Soldiers throughout the centuries and in many cultures (notably medieval Arab generals) have marched to banners displaying the rose. By the time of our Romans, the Biblical "lily of the valley" had become a rose in general conception. This was the case in most rabbinical writings and certainly was true of the Zohar, a fundamental text of the Cabala. A rich and abundant symbolism had gathered around the mystic rose very unlike its latter Christian associations. In one tradition, the rose stood for the sweet-smelling garden of flowers and spice trees planted between the Temple and the Wailing Wall for the pleasure of the Lord, which would be rebuilt along with the Temple in the Messianic Age.

But the real overlooked secrets in the Tucson Artifacts are probably of a more prosaic nature. To ancient and medieval people, writing was a sacred craft. Only the elite could read and only the learned could write. Charlemagne could no neither. In his day, scribes and engravers were part of a tiny ancient caste trained in esoteric matters. They took pride in their work, often leaving their names in colophons or sigla and boasting of their wisdom and sophistication. Letters and words were considered first principals of the universe, or *elements*. The Latin alphabet was named for the middle three letters of L, M and N. The letters of the ogam alphabet were named for trees, each with magical properties.

Letters also functioned as numbers. For instance, A in the Latin alphabet, alpha in the Greek and aleph in the Hebrew, stood for the numeral one. Words and names could be resolved by *gematria* or numerology into a single value (IACOBUS = 53, i.e., 9 + 1 + 3 + 2 + 20 + 18). Words, letters and numbers were studied mystically as codes reflecting the intervals or ratios between sounds that produced harmony. In order to reflect the highest standards of the composer's craft and speak to the ages, an inscription had to be perfect not only in points of grammar and orthography but design. It had to resound with the principals of science and prove that the author was well schooled in the knowledge of the *trivium* (grammar, rhetoric and logic) and *quadrivium* (arithmetic, astronomy, music and geometry). To prove to other experts examining it that it was genuine, the scribe often put in self-verifying or self-certifying

acrostics, telestics, word-plays, mathematical puzzles and codes. The science of recognizing the signs of this concealed proof of authenticity is called cryptology or cryptanalysis.

The British, Welsh and Irish were very fond of word-plays and numerical coincidences, which they wove into inscriptions, verses and riddles. Even the most garden-variety sepulchral inscriptions often contained mind-bending secret correspondences. David Howlett, an editor of the Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources at the Bodleian Library at Oxford University, has carefully explained the rules of the game in his study based on thousands of Romano-British samples. His study contains chapters on inscriptions in Greek, Aramaic, Hebrew, Arabic, Welsh, Irish, Old and Middle English, Old Norse and Anglo-Norman Old French.

A good example of these conventions applicable to the Calalus Crosses is an ordinary graveyard stone that came to light in the excavation of Roman York in the foundations of the York Minster in 1969. It is a typical Roman epitaph consecrating the spirits of the departed in the underworld (Dis Manibus) and memorializing Antonius Gargilianus, a prefect of the Sixth Legion. In usual fashion, it names not the date of his death (which was probably in the first or second century C.E.) but the number of years and months he lived. Some epitaphs mention the number of days the person was alive, showing how deeply ancient, pagan people cherished earthly life. As in other inscriptions, this one gives prominent place to the one who commissioned the grave marker, Gargilianus' son-in-law, Claudius Florentinus, a decurion (cavalry officer). The entire Latin text contains 20 words, 55 syllables, 118 letters and is translated by Howlett as follows:

D M  
[A]NT GARGILIANI EQV  
PVBL E[X PR]E[F] GEGVIV AN LVI  
M VI CLA FLORENTINVS  
DE GENER EIVS

To the spirits of the departed

Of Antonius Gargilianus, of the equestrian order,  
Formerly public prefect of the sixth legion.  
He lived fifty-six years, six months.

Claudius Florentinus, a decurion, his son-in-law [erected the monument].

Howlett lays bare the beauty and perfection of this terse epitaph with the following brief commentary:

There are six words from [VI to VI], of which the latter is the sixth word from the end of

the inscription. The number of syllables, 55, is one less than the number of full years Antonius Gargilianus lived, 56. The number of letters from | ANTONII to VIXIT | is 57, one-half more than 56.5 years he lived. From | VIXIT ANNOS LVI to the end of the inscription there are fifty-six letters. In the twenty-two-letter alphabet the value of the name GARGILIANVS is  $7+1+16+7+9+10+9+1+12+19+17$  or 108, which coincides with the number of letters from | ANTONII CARGILIANI to the end of the inscription. The value of the name CLAUDIVS is  $3+10+1+19+4+9++19+17$  or 82. From | ANTONII to CLAUDIVS | there are eighty-one letters.

Coincidence or design? We suggest the makers of the Calalus Crosses possessed some of the same age-old craft and training. The Great Cross (1AB) exhibits a considerable degree of planning and secret symbolism. Certain names and words in its text are emphasized in a way only possible with the fluid syntax and diction of aristocratic Classical Latin.

The crosses' length compared to width is 45:30 cm or 3:2, a proportion known as *hemiolus* or *sesquialter*. As prescribed in medieval tracts by Martianus Capella, Boethius, Isidore and other authors, the *hemiolus* is one of the highest orders of music and arithmetic, if not *the* highest. The three top squares represent the *duplus* ratio (1:1), measuring 10x10 cm. The bottom prong works out to the mean ratio of the golden section, a proportion prized since Pythagoras.

On 1A there are 68 words (22 plus 46). The middle word (34<sup>th</sup>) is Theodorus, the most noble person commemorated on it, whose name also appears in the center of the crossarms. In the top panel naming Jacob of Brittany and Albion, Theodorus of the Romans and Israel of the Seine Province of Gaul (22 words), the midpoint of the text occurs between the name ISRAEL and CONSVLES "consuls," the title they share. ISRAEL also happens to be the final word of 1A. Five numbers or dates add up to 2220. The total words as well as sum of letters on panel 1 written across the top and panel 2 written transversely on the foot of the cross represent the proportion of *hemiolus*, whose numerological significance is 5, the same as that of the total words (68) and the five sections of the Latin cross.

In the lower vertically inscribed panel, the center of attention is occupied by the words *Nullus | auro*, emphasizing the victors' boast that they held all their captives to the requirement of providing a tribute of gold. This seems to have been an important point, one mistranslated or overlooked by previous commentators, some of whom have claimed the line was nonsense. In the next panel (1B) the emphasis falls on *manu | forti*, referring to Jacob's "strong hand," another virtue that seems a natural point of honor for a military colony. Other calculations could surely be made. These are only the most obvious ones.

Artifact 3AB, also a Latin cross, shows a similar regard for mystic proportions. The length-to-width ratio is  $1\frac{1}{3}:1$  or 4:3, *sesquitercian*, also known as *epitritus*, while the sections of the head and crossarms, instead of *duplus*, reflect the extreme ratio of the golden section (.38197). There are 95 words (69 + 26) with sections in a mean ratio, and the 47<sup>th</sup> or middle word is COEPIT "began," which consorts very well with the theme of Ab Ovo, "from the beginning."

Crosses 4 and 5 are the same size and proportion (.72). Much could be said about them, too. For instance, the top panel of 5A contains 44 words, of which the middle or focal point is *uirium | Beniaminus* ("Of enormous strength was Benjamin"). Benjamin is named at the beginning of the inscription. The kernel of his mini-bio is his strength in building the walls of Rome, a feat that deserves being remembered five hundred years after his death.

There are only six words on the Albion Cross, but its symmetry also seems significant if we expand the first line as *L[euitae]* or Levites. Only by assigning 22 letters to the top half and 23 to the bottom, 45 altogether, can we explain the line dividing the two and connecting Theodorus and Iacobus as heir and successor. Otherwise, with the words *Romani provehimur* below, the inscription would be lopsided. So this resolution seems to prove that the abbreviation L. was a sign understood by "those in the know" as standing for Levites, or the keepers of the temple, an important division of Jews.

Another symmetry is observed in Cross 6A. Here there are six words or names in the first section, several of them not spelled out but understood (*Sacrum. Leuitae. Israelitae. Iudas. Beniaminus. Isaacus*), followed by six words in the corresponding section (in English, "In memoriam, Discipline Conquers All, Oliver").

Far from being gibberish, the Tucson Crosses represent impressive pieces of design. They reveal a profound knowledge of Latin composition, number symbolism and arithmetic.

### 1. Decree of King Pepin Mentioning the Romani in Aquitaine

*Pepin, Charlemagne's father, was careful to reward with special grants and privileges the Jews and other Romani who helped him add back Aquitaine to the Frankish kingdom. He gave them express protection against rival claimants to fiefs awarded to them, as well as allowing them the unusual concession to keep spoils of war whether these were lands, titles, slaves, people or booty. Article 10 in this capitulary applies the doctrine of "personality of the law," whereby Romani (most of the Occitan people as well as the Bretons and Jews living in the cities) fell under the Roman law code, Franks under the so-called Salic law, and so forth. Since the lands of Aquitaine were being reconquered from the Muslims these campaigns took on the character of a crusade with the Latin cross carried as the army's standard and adopted by conscripted garrisons. As the former duke and his supporters had been in rebellion against the Franks, Pepin transferred most of their titles and properties to the Romani from Orleans, Lyon, Arles, Narbonne, Toulouse, Brittany and elsewhere. Charlemagne abolished the office of Duke of Aquitaine. The largescale remaking of Aquitaine, Septimania, the Auvergne, Provence and Toulouse over several generations affected numerous ecclesiastical properties and tithes, as well as all tolls and taxes. For over a century, churches and monasteries had been in ruin or decline. Many bishoprics were to remain vacant. The whole feudal system of the South of France, where most of the kingdom's cities were located since Roman days, went through an upheaval. (Translated from the Latin of Capitularia regum francorum [768], ed. Boretius, MGH. LL. Vol. II, Hanover, 1897, no. 18, pp. 42-43; cf. Zuckermann, p. 83-85.)*

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Decree of Pepin for Aquitaine. 768

Here begin the decrees (*capitula*) which our sire Pepin of good memory instituted through council and which we wish to be preserved by men.

1. That those churches of God which have been deserted be restored to the bishops or abbots as well as those laymen who hold a grant (*beneficium*) therefrom.
2. That those bishops, abbots, abbesses lead a life under holy orders.
3. That whatever needs the bishops, abbots or abbesses or other priests may have from the properties of the churches they may retain in undisturbed right, just as was instituted by our council; and if anyone appropriate anything afterwards let it be returned in its entirety.
4. That as for those who are paupers they not take away more than they ought to render by law.
5. Whoever holds a benefice (land grant) from us let him toil and cultivate there; and whoever does not wish to do this let him give up the benefice and retain his own belongings.
6. Whoever is traveling on a journey either for military purposes or to a court hearing may take possession of nothing above their due, unless he can pay or pledge for it, except pasturage, water and firewood; but if there be opportunity for such let no one deny a stay.
7. If any man appropriate or coerce anything over and above his due, at least as far as we are concerned, let him give compensation three times over according to his own law code.
8. If any man appeal to us let him have the freedom to come before us, and let no one detain him by force.
9. Concerning those benefices which were our intention we desire that the same possess them as we gave them to before.
10. That all men should have their own several codes of law (*lex*), whether they be Romans (Romani) or Salic Franks, and that if anyone should come from another province they live according to the law of their own country (*patria*).
11. That all lay and secular persons who hold property of the church in precarial possession accept it in that way.
12. That whatever legal outcome our officials (*missi*) along with the seigneurs of the land should decide to our benefit, or better, to that of the holy church, let no one presume to dispute it.

## 2. Military Manual from the Ninth Century

*Some people have dismissed the lead swords of the Tucson Artifacts as ineffectual weapons because of the softness of the metal with which they were made. Others, noting nicks in the blades, regard them as relics of a last, lost battle fought against an overwhelming host of indigenous savages. The truth lies completely elsewhere. Lead has a hardness of 1.5 on the Mohs scale, iron or steel 4-5, or three times more. Lead has a weight of about 4000 kg./cu.m versus iron's specific gravity of 2100, or about twice as heavy. Willow and straw has a hardness on the Janka scale of 560 (compare acacia*

1750) and is one of the softest woods.

Medieval military training employed swords heavier in training than those issued for battle. This ensured that recruits would be able to handle the thrusting and slashing operations called for in engagements with ease, as shown in this contemporary military manual. The leaden swords from the Silverbell find do not show normal wear because trainees used them against soft straw and wood targets, as prescribed. Contact of a practice sword with a straw man as described by Rhabanus Maurus or Vegetius, would not leave marks, especially as thrusting rather than slashing was the object. The swords discovered in the Silverbell Road find were not used in battle. They were practice swords of the typical Roman army issue shape and size (*gladius*) whose heaviness would have accustomed boys to wield a real steel sword with greater precision. The same principal applied to spears and has been known to athletic trainers since time immemorial. The swords, many marked with the insignia of Calalus, were evidently used in training and carried in military ceremonies.

The author Vegetius wrote a compendium in late antiquity that is the only surviving work on Roman military practices. The Anglo-Saxon Bede was the first to draw on it. This classic text was then revived during the Carolingian renaissance, when various clerics like Alcuin ostentatiously wove references to it in their correspondence with the high and mighty, and noblemen exchanged copies. A Vegetian concept of leadership developed among the Carolingians, and it was one that joined the miter and the sword. Military theory emphasized skill and training more than sheer numbers of men. Louis the Pious, Louis the German, Charles the Bald, Odo of the West Franks, Eberhard of Friuli and Eccard of Macon all had copies of Vegetius. The emphasis was clearly on infantry in war; notions of knights and chivalry were one to two centuries in the future. Bishops and other men of the church rode at the head of companies of foot soldiers—just as the king-priests Theodore, Jacob and Israel led their men.

Around 840, Rhabanus Maurus, a learned Carolingian ecclesiastic, promised a work on military matters to the king Lothair II, the second son of Emperor Lothair I and Ermengarde of Tours. Rhabanus died February 4, 856. About 855, he delivered the incomplete treatise translated below as part of a larger religious work *De anima* to Lothair. It consisted of an abridgement of Books I and II of Vegetius' *Epitoma rei militaris* under the title "*Flavii Vegetii Renati opusculum de procinctu militiae romanae*." About the same time, Freculph of Lisieux, another Carolingian bishop, addressed a complete edition of Vegetius to the West Frankish emperor Charles the Bald. Sedulius Scottus excerpted the work. Taking all this into account, it is not surprising that the Calalus regiments' motto VOE came from a fashionable military manual of the times stressing training and discipline. Oliver, as the campidoctor, drilled his soldiers according to ancient Roman practices. It was as esoteric an approach as Zen might be today at West Point. As in Rhabanus Maurus, soldiers were guards of the people and served the king. This theme is repeatedly sounded in the Tucson Artifacts. Expeditionary forces from Brittany, Francia and Gaul were justly proud to be called Romans. Echoes of the same ethos of service to the king may be found in Dhuoda's *Manual* (843) addressed to her ill-fated son, William of Septimania (826-850). He was the grandson of William of Orange, the cousin of Charlemagne and hero of an entire cycle of *chansons de geste* (I.10) as "St. William," though his accomplishments were more of a military than spiritual nature. The classic

*Vegetian (or Carolingian, to credit Rhabanus Maurus) definition of a Roman soldier underlay much of the development of chivalry, which flowered in the twelfth century and afterwards.*

*Translated from the Latin of Rhabanus Maurus, De Procinctu Romanae Militiae, ed. E. Dümmler in Zeitschrift für deutsches Altertum, 15 (1872), pp. 443-51. See Manitius I, 293-95, 667-68; Josette A. Wisman, Vegetius art. in Catalogus Translationum et Commentariorum, vol. I, pp. 175-180 (with Addenda by Michael Idomir Allen, vol. VIII, 2003, pp. 336-340).*

### On the Battle Readiness of the Roman Military

Inasmuch, as I said at the beginning, it behooves no one more than the king to be knowing and knowledgeable of things, a few writings are offered after this, if not very handsomely, at least in language that is faithful. I am adding, then, certain chapters excerpted from a little work of Flavius Vegetius Renatus on the battle readiness (*procinctus*) of the Roman military and on how their recruits were trained, showing it is evident that victory was won not by the great number of the people in their armies but by the genius and discipline of their forces and (God helping them) the men they selected to serve in them.

**I. That the Romans in the exercise of arms overcame those more numerous and stronger than they.** The Romans subdued almost the entire world and were victorious not because of the multitude of people they had or numbers in their armies but mostly because of the ingenuity and discipline they exercised every day in battle. For compared to the multitudinous Gauls they must appear very few and scanty in number, and compared to the great height of the Germans they are thought to be small in size and ordinary, and the Spaniards have always stood out more in their powerfulness both for their numerous ranks and the enormosity of their bodies. And what about the craftiness and power of wealth of the Africans? Have they not always been inferior? What must we say also about the Greeks' sagacity in the arts, to which the Romans have always been unequal? Yet all these considerations are vanquished by the assiduous use of discipline by expert soldiers, instilled by daily practice. What is better learned or more successfully and easily carried through? A few disciplined soldiers in a battle carry off victory while the untrained multitudes fall helplessly to their deaths. For that reason, proven and trained men were sent into battle. To turn their back to the enemy was a disgrace. Victory was something laudable to be got.

**II. On the regions of the world whence soldiers are drawn.** Since origin and nature determines a people, and sagacity comes before all in consideration, it must be declared next where the best soldiers are selected. People of neighboring climes because of their intelligence (*sapientia*) burn with less ardor and have less blood and are therefore more timid. On the other hand, those who inhabit the northern climes have less intelligence though they are stronger in spirit. For this reason, the best soldiers are picked from temperate regions, for they will avoid danger with prudence and attack the enemy with boldness.

III. At what age recruits ought to be enlisted. (At the start of puberty....)

IV. That many ought to be chosen because of their looks and body shape. (Just as in horses, hounds and hawks, there are different types....)

V. How they are to be trained to march and run.

VI. How they are to be trained to know how to swim.

VII. How they are to be trained with wicker shields and clubs. Individual soldiers used to stick different targets (*palos*) in the ground so they wouldn't lean and would be a threat measuring six feet, or the height of a man. The trainee would come against such a target as against an enemy with a shell in the shape of a round shield made out of wicker which had a double weight of that of a poplar shield, holding in his right hand a wooden club similar but greater in weight to a true sword (*gladius*). Thus, he would attack against the target as against an enemy wounding the head or face and stabbing the stomach and sides and cutting into the hams, knees or legs. And thus assaulting, he would spring upon, spring again and spring down upon it. In this exercise let it be especially observed that a soldier inflicting a wound by springing upon or springing again not be exposed to a wound from another direction. For that reason, the club or stick was of such a greater weight that in heavy and practice weapons the boys became accustomed to handling real, light arms with less injury.

VIII. How they are to be taught how to strike by stabbing, not slashing.

IX. How they are to be trained to throw spears. Spears of greater weight than those in the future ought to be used as those thrown against the said straw targets by recruits. In this respect, the drill sergeant (*campidoctor*) ought to take great care that the spear be directed with force, with a swing of the shaft, because the sign of its strength is whether it hits the target or next to it. With such a drill both the strength of the muscles increases and skillfulness of using a spear improves.

X. How recruits are to be drilled in the shooting of arrows.

XI. How they ought to be drilled in slinging.

XII. How they are to be drilled in lead bullets.

XIII. How they ought to be schooled with their peers and betters. Let them be educated to the level of their rising peers thus. In the winter under a roof and in the summer in the open

field... [maneuvers] of agility which are cultivated especially in the peoples of the Franks.

**XIV. Recapitulation.** Having presented this digest, let us recapitulate the individual points briefly. The younger and fresh recruits, that is new soldiers, were drilled morning and afternoon with all manner of arms. The veterans, on the other hand, and those who are already skilled were exercised only one time a day in arms. And this was for no other reason than that the art of war tend not to be forgotten, so that by the very practice of it both speed be acquired and strength of muscle be given and the knowledge of striking the enemy and protecting oneself be preserved. For anything done by frequent practice is carried out in a better way and more easily. This is why the Romans drilled everyday in the different exercises, especially so they would know how to keep rank and guard their standards (*vexilla*) in the confusion of war. They practiced also against the straw men (*palos*), as has already been told, so they learned thoroughly how to attack and stab the flanks or feet or head. Similarly, they accustomed themselves to inflict a blow at a bound and daringly surging forward against a shield to know how to withdraw again....

**XV. Conclusion on the military arts, applied to others.** All arts grow by practice. For the athlete or fighter exerts himself repeatedly even if to capture the favor of the crowd....



*Rhadanite or Toltec soldier with mystic rose. After a Style III Mimbres Bowl from the Swarts Ruin site in the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology.*

### 3. On Refining Lead

*Esoteric traditions are by definition secret. Yet a secret is not secret when published. Once set down in writing for the benefits of others, it may again become handed down by oral or written tradition within a select society, becoming blended with foregoing knowledge and beliefs. It may be collected and published anew as "esoteric." But the study of any tradition ultimately relies upon texts. These writings are either extant or available at one time to an intended audience. Most of the esoteric knowledge apparent in the Tucson Artifacts can be traced to texts, though Hebrew and Old French oral traditions also seem to have played a role. How did our Romani know about metallurgy and mining? Here are two extracts from a popular medieval Latin recipe book. It is called, somewhat misleadingly, "The Key to the Art of Painting." These two items have been translated for the first time into English. They derive from a Latin manuscript now owned by the Corning Museum in Ithaca, New York. More than two hundred "secrets" are contained in it. Its sources go back to Byzantine artisan manuals translated in Italy and more remotely to late antique technical treatises from Alexandria in Egypt. In addition to techniques about making mosaics and glass objets d'art, dyeing silks and hides, compounding paints, making glues and fixatives, writing in gold, and gilding and silvering different surfaces, the Mappae Clavicula also contains the earliest known alchemical and chemical lore about minerals and elements. It abounds in practical hints regarding "secret" crafts, ranging from jewelry and painting to church decoration and casting metals. Thomas Phillipps, "Mappae Clavicula," Archeologia 32 (1847), 187-244.*

#### On the Ore of Lead

The ore of lead is from dark-colored rock. This is generated in all locales, but more in hot zones, and the mineral that is generated in it is greenish, but not pale green, the ore heavy. The test for lead is this: Take and throw it into a fire and after it bubbles and breaks down it will emit sparks. Grass generated in the same earth always shrivels up before the heating point of lead. And you collect it thus because of the boiling sun, you hollow out the earth down to a depth of three cubits, for there is the earth weak. As long as it is buried it dries out. Then heat it in a furnace, for instance even an iron one. The lead will burn more.

#### Another Way of Refining Lead from the Same Ore

If the same ore does not dry but continues to be as it was when removed, it is placed in an iron furnace with charcoal and a slow fire. It will not catch flame before nightfall. In the middle of the night, however, it will catch flame by the fourth hour. Then it is reheated until it becomes pure. Place it in the furnace again, with charcoal made from pine or fir, heat it for three hours and what is needed from it will be effected.

### 4. Gerbert's Letter about Soldiers of Christ in the Holy Land

*Known as the Magician Pope, Gerbert of Aurillac came from Aquitaine, the southern half of France*

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and was reputedly the most learned man of his day. He considered himself a Roman (*Romanus*), not a Frenchman. Legend recounts that when he was born a cock crowed three times and it was heard all the way to Rome. He lived from about 945 to 1003 (Pierre Riché, *Gerbert d'Aurillac, Le pape de l'an mil*, Fayard, 1987). Unusual for his time, he pursued studies in Spain, where he learned Arabic and Jewish mathematics and philosophy. He served as pope under the name Sylvester II from 999 to his death.

After Charlemagne established a hostel for pilgrims in the Holy Land, his son and successor Louis the Pious supported the Frankish presence with taxes for "the relief of Christians dwelling in the land of promise." We know there was a continuing Frankish presence around the Holy Sepulcher, the most sacred site in Christendom. That is where the Patriarch of Jerusalem resided. But we hear little about Jerusalem until the later ninth century, when Pope John VIII wrote to Patriarch Theodosius about the "great oppression of the pagans." In 966, rioters murdered the patriarch and burned the basilica and rotunda of the Anastasis to the ground. Shortly thereafter, Gerbert circulated a call for help from the court of the emperor, addressed to "soldiers of Christ" who might combat the deplorable loss with their "aid and counsel." Around 1000 the Holy Sepulcher along with all other Christian sites in Jerusalem was completely destroyed by Caliph al-Hakim. Not until the First Crusade in 1096 were relief organizations effectively mobilized for the Holy Land. Gerbert's letter of 984 (others date it around 993) with its concept of "soldier of Christ" shines a rare pencil of light on the pre-Templar history of Jerusalem. Notably, his appeal has military overtones and is couched in terms of the "aid and counsel" pledged by a vassal to his lord in an oath of fealty. Once constituted in the early twelfth century, the Knights Templar would be directly subordinated to the pope on conditions of homage and allegiance. Another abortive attempt to revive the idea of Western guardians can be glimpsed in Pope Gregory VII's call for a crusade nearly a century later in 1074. It is interesting in this regard that Pope Gregory VII came from the Roman Jewish Leoni banking family. The last outpost of Franks or Frenchmen guarding Jerusalem before the Crusades seems to have vanished with the new policies of Al-Hakim after 1009, if not with the murder of the patriarch in 966. Fritz Weigle, ed., *Die Briefsammlung Gerberts von Reims*, in: *MGH. Ep. ii.2* (Weimar: Böhlau, 1966) letter 28.)

To the Universal Church in the name of the devastated Church of Jerusalem.

From that church in Jerusalem to the universal one that commands the scepters of kingdoms (i.e. Judah's heritage, cf. Gen. 49:10).

Since you flourish so well, Immaculate Spouse of God, a member of which I confess to be, through you I have the greatest hope of lifting my head (capital city, i.e. Jerusalem), till now almost beaten down. Or should I despair of help from thee, mistress of the world, if you recognize me as your own? Should any in your ranks regard the infamous disaster inflicted on me as not affecting him too, as something to be abhorred, this the lowest of blows?

Behold, though I am now cast down, the whole earth still considers me its best and prime part. With me are the oracles of the prophets, the glories of the patriarchs, hence issued those

shining luminaries of the world, the apostles, here the earth discovered the faith of Christ, in my house found its redeemer. For though he may be everywhere in his divine nature, yet in his human nature he was born here, here did he suffer, here was he buried and from here was he raised to the heavens. And the prophet has said: "His sepulcher shall be a glorious one" (Is. 11:10), but now that the pagans have overthrown the holy places, the devil strives to render it an inglorious one. Courage, soldier of Christ (II Tim. 2:3-4), be his standard bearer and comrade in battle, and what you cannot accomplish with arms come to our assistance with aid and counsel. What is it you give and to whom? To be sure, it is little from much, and it is to One who has given you all you have freely and who receives it gratefully. Indeed, he multiplies it and rewards you in the future, through he blesses you so you may increase by giving, and forgives your sins so that you may live by reigning with him.

### 5. Moses Sets Apart the Levites to Be a Holy Tribe

*On many of the artifacts one notices the letter L., which may be taken to stand for LEVITA or LEVITAE "Levite, Levites, priest(s)." Often it is paired with the letter I., which seems to correspond to ISRAELITA, "Israelite." (Cyclone Covey, on the other hand, understands Laudatur Israel and translates the two together as a phrase meaning "Praised is Israel"—unconvincingly, in my opinion.) Since Jewish life traditionally distinguishes between Levites and Cohens, or priests, and Israelites (all the rest), especially at seders, bar mitzahs, weddings, funerals and in genealogies, I think the former reading is justified. L. also marks the 3-rowed tiara or miter depicted on the artifact, rather obviously standing for a priest's headdress. In other words, some of the figures commemorated were Levites, some Israelites. Josephus, The Antiquities of the Jews, ed. William Whiston (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1976), book III, ch. XI, 1, p. 80.*

a.

Moses took out the tribe of Levi from communicating with the rest of the people, and set them apart to be a holy tribe; and purified them by water taken from perpetual springs, and with such sacrifices as were usually offered to God on the like occasions. He delivered them also the tabernacle, and the sacred vessels, and the other curtains, which were made covering the tabernacle, that they might minister under the conduct of the priests (Kohanim), who had been already consecrated to God.

b.

*"Testament of Levi," in: The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, ed. James H. Charlesworth, vol. 1 (New York: Doubleday, 1983), pp. 788-93.*

Testament of Levi, the third son of Jacob and Leah.

I, Levi, was born in Haran and came with my father to Shechem....

At this moment the angel opened for me the gates of heaven and I saw the Holy Most High sitting on the throne. And he said to me, "Levi, to you I have given the blessing of the priesthood until I shall come and dwell in the midst of Israel. . . . Arise, put on the vestments of the priesthood . . . the miter for the head. . . ."

## 6. Caution against Studying Cabala

*The Cabala ("secret" tradition) grew out of the Hebrew Bible, Mishnah and Talmud, later embroidered by the Tosafists. Central to this vein of Jewish mysticism was the sacred mystery of the Merkabah, literally the "chariot" of God, interpreted as the Throne of the Almighty. Key texts were Ezekiel 1 and 10 and Isaiah 6. Ma'aseh Merkabah is the Hebrew term for esoteric literature on the Chariot/Throne, the main corpus of which was composed in Israel before 800. It was the basis for the Cabala, which flourished, mostly in Christian countries, after the fourteenth century. In Christian tradition, Neoplatonic, Pythagorean and Stoic influences flowed together with Persian and Egyptian. In Jewish tradition, the rule against profaning the Cabala was always: "The Ma'aseh Merkabah should not be taught to anyone except he be wise and able to deduce knowledge through wisdom ('gnosis') of his own." The fact that the symbol for the Merkabah appears in the rock art record of the Romani shows they claimed to be among the chosen and elite of their communities. They were rabbis, leaders and wealthy traders. Following are some stories of the early rabbis. (Kaufmann Kohler, "Merkabah," in 1906 Jewish Encyclopedia).*

R. Eleazar ben 'Arak was riding on a mule behind R. Johanan b. Zakkai, when he asked for the privilege of being initiated into the secrets of the Merkabah. The great master demanded proof of his initiation into the gnosis, and when Eleazar began to tell what he had learned thereof, R. Johanan immediately descended from the mule and sat upon the rock. 'Why, O master, dost thou descend from the mule?' asked the disciple. 'Can I remain mounted upon the mule when the telling of the secrets of the Merkabah causes the Shekinah to dwell with us and the angels to accompany us?' was the answer. Eleazar continued, and, behold, fire descended from heaven and lit up the trees of the field, causing them to sing anthems, and an angel cried out, 'Truly these are the secrets of the Merkabah.' Whereupon R. Johanan kissed Eleazar upon the forehead, saying, 'Blessed be thou, O father Abraham, that hast a descendant like Eleazar b. 'Arak!'

Subsequently two other disciples of R. Johanan b. Zakkai walking together said to each other: 'Let us also talk together about the Ma'aseh Merkabah'; and no sooner did R. Joshua begin speaking than a rainbow-like appearance [Ezek. 1:28] was seen upon the thick clouds which covered the sky, and angels came to listen as men do to hear wedding-music. On hearing the things related by R. Jose, R. Johanan b. Zakkai blessed his disciples and said: 'Blessed the eyes that beheld these things! Indeed I saw myself in a dream together with you, seated like the select ones [comp. Ex. 24: 11] upon Mount Sinai; and I heard a heavenly voice saying: "Enter the banquet-hall and take your seats with your disciples and disciples' disciples, among the

elect, the highest ('third') class."

## 7. Ezekiel's Vision of the Chariot

*Created in the sixth century BCE, the Book of Ezekiel contains, and indeed starts with, a vision of the Hebrew God Yahweh riding on a chariot of wind and fire surrounded by angels. The divine chariot-throne became the centerpiece in the mystical traditions and meditations of the Cabala culminating about 700. Ezekiel's wheel had nine spokes, like the mystical rose of the Rhadanites. These corresponded to the nine degrees of wisdom, nine branches of the cabalistic tree of life, nine stages of perfection in Brahmic and Pythagorean thought and nine degrees of blessedness. Nine was the number of the dragon and the Rosicrucian cross, a nine-petaled flower composed of the numbers four (cross) and five (rose). Jewish Publication Society.*

1:1 Now it came to pass in the thirtieth year, in the fourth month, in the fifth day of the month, as I was among the captives by the river Chebar that the heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God.

1:2 In the fifth day of the month, which was the fifth year of king Jehoiachin's captivity,

1:3 the word of the Lord came expressly unto Ezekiel the priest, the son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the river Chebar; and the hand of the Lord was there upon him.

1:4 And I looked, and, behold, a stormy wind came out of the north, a great cloud, with a fire flashing up, so that a brightness was roundabout it; and out of the midst thereof as the color of electrum, out of the midst of the fire.

1:5 And out of the midst thereof came the likeness of four living creatures. And this was their appearance: they had the likeness of a man.

1:6 And every one had four faces, and every one of them had four wings.

1:7 And their feet were straight feet; and the sole of their feet was like the sole of a calf's foot; and they sparkled like the color of burnished brass.

1:8 And they had the hands of a man under their wings on their four sides; and as for the faces and wings of them four,

1:9 their wings were joined one to another; they turned not when they went; they went every one straight forward.

1:10 As for the likeness of their faces, they had the face of a man; and they four had the face of a lion on the right side; and they four had the face of an ox on the left side; they four had also the face of an eagle.

1:11 Thus were their faces; and their wings were stretched upward; two wings of every one were joined one to another, and two covered their bodies.

1:12 And they went every one straight forward; whither the spirit was to go, they went; they turned not when they went.

1:13 As for the likeness of the living creatures, their appearance was like coals of fire, burning

MERCHANT ADVENTURER KINGS OF RHODA

like the appearance of torches; it flashed up and down among the living creatures; and there was brightness to the fire, and out of the fire went forth lightning.

1:14 And the living creatures ran and returned as the appearance of a flash of lightning.

1:15 Now as I beheld the living creatures, behold one wheel at the bottom hard by the living creatures, at the four faces thereof.

1:16 The appearance of the wheels and their work was like unto the color of a beryl; and they four had one likeness; and their appearance and their work was as it were a wheel within a wheel.

1:17 When they went, they went toward their four sides; they turned not when they went.

1:18 As for their rings, they were high and they were dreadful; and they four had their rings full of eyes roundabout.

1:19 And when the living creatures went, the wheels went hard by them; and when the living creatures were lifted up from the bottom, the wheels were lifted up.

1:20 Whithersoever the spirit was to go, as the spirit was to go thither, so they went; and the wheels were lifted up beside them; for the spirit of the living creature was in the wheels.

1:21 When those went, these went, and when those stood, these stood; and when those were lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up beside them; for the spirit of the living creature was in the wheels.

1:22 And over the heads of the living creatures there was the likeness of a firmament, like the color of the terrible ice, stretched forth over their heads above.

1:23 And under the firmament were their wings conformable the one to the other; this one of them had two which covered, and that one of them had two which covered, their bodies.

1:24 And when they went, I heard the noise of their wings like the noise of great waters, like the voice of the Almighty, a noise of tumult like the noise of a host; when they stood, they let down their wings.

1:25 For, when there was a voice above the firmament that was over their heads, as they stood, they let down their wings.

1:26 And above the firmament that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone; and upon the likeness of the throne was a likeness as the appearance of a man upon it above.

1:27 And I saw as the color of electrum, as the appearance of fire roundabout enclosing it, from the appearance of his loins and upward; and from the appearance of his loins and downward I saw as it were the appearance of fire, and there was brightness roundabout him.

1:28 As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness roundabout. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord. And when I saw it, I fell upon my face, and I heard a voice of one that spoke.

10:1 Then I looked, and, behold, upon the firmament that was over the head of the cherubim, there appeared above them as it were a sapphire stone, as the appearance of the likeness of a throne.

10:2 And He spoke unto the man clothed in linen, and said: 'Go in between the wheelwork,

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and dash them

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and the house  
glory.

10:5 And  
voice of God

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a wheel.

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even under the cherub, and fill both thy hands with coals of fire from between the cherubim, and dash them against the city.' And he went in in my sight.

10:3 Now the cherubim stood on the right side of the house, when the man went in; and the cloud filled the inner court.

10:4 And the glory of the Lord mounted up from the cherub to the threshold of the house; and the house was filled with the cloud, and the court was full of the brightness of the Lord's glory.

10:5 And the sound of the wings of the cherubim was heard even to the outer court, as the voice of God Almighty when He speaketh.

10:6 And it came to pass, when He commanded the man clothed in linen, saying: 'Take fire from between the wheelwork, from between the cherubim', that he went in, and stood beside a wheel.

10:7 And the cherub stretched forth his hand from between the cherubim unto the fire that was between the cherubim, and took thereof, and put it into the hands of him that was clothed in linen, who took it and went out.

10:8 And there appeared in the cherubim the form of a man's hand under their wings.

10:9 And I looked, and behold four wheels beside the cherubim, one wheel beside one cherub, and another wheel beside another cherub; and the appearance of the wheels was as the colour of a beryl stone.

10:10 And as for their appearance, they four had one likeness, as if a wheel had been within a wheel.

10:11 When they went, they went toward their four sides; they turned not as they went, but to the place whither the head looked they followed it; they turned not as they went.

10:12 And their whole body, and their backs, and their hands, and their wings, and the wheels were full of eyes roundabout, even the wheels that they four had.

10:13 As for the wheels, they were called in my hearing The Wheelwork.

10:14 And every one had four faces: the first face was the face of the cherub, and the second face was the face of a man, and the third the face of a lion, and the fourth the face of an eagle.

10:15 And the cherubim mounted up--this is the living creature that I saw by the river Chebar.

10:16 And when the cherubim went, the wheels went beside them; and when the cherubim lifted up their wings to mount up from the earth, the same wheels also turned not from beside them.

10:17 When they stood, these stood, and when they mounted up, these mounted up with them; for the spirit of the living creature was in them.

10:18 And the glory of the Lord went forth from off the threshold of the house, and stood over the cherubim.

10:19 And the cherubim lifted up their wings, and mounted up from the earth in my sight when they went forth, and the wheels beside them; and they stood at the door of the east gate of the Lord's house; and the glory of the God of Israel was over them above.

## MERCHANT ADVENTURER KINGS OF RHODA

10:20 This is the living creature that I saw under the God of Israel by the river Chebar; and I knew that they were cherubim.

10:21 Every one had four faces apiece, and every one four wings; and the likeness of the hands of a man was under their wings.

10:22 And as for the likeness of their faces, they were the faces which I saw by the river Chebar, their appearances and themselves; they went every one straight forward.

### 8. Isaiah's Vision of the Throne

*Isaiah 6 is the classical text upon which many of the Cabala's teachings about the Throne of God and the various approaches to it known as Hekhalot were based. New Jewish Publication Society Translation.*

6:1 In the year that king Uzziah died I beheld my Lord sitting on a high and lofty throne, and the skirts of his robe filled the temple.

6:2 Seraphs stood in attendance on Him. Each of them had six wings; with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he would fly.

6:3 And one would call to the other,

"Holy, holy, holy!

The Lord of Hosts!

His presence fills all the earth!

6:4 And the doorposts would shake at the sound of the one who called, and the House kept filling with smoke.

6:5 I cried,

"Woe is me; I am lost!

For I am a man of unclean lips,

And I live among a people

Of unclean lips;

Yet my own eyes have beheld

The King Lord of Hosts."

6:6 Then one of the seraphs flew over to me with a live coal, which he had taken from the altar with a pair of tongs.

6:7 He touched it to my lips and declared,

"Now that this has touched your lips

Your guilt shall depart

And your sin be purged away."

## 9. Book of Creation

*The Sefer Yetzirah (Book of Creation, or Foundation) is one of the essential texts of the Cabala. It grew out of merkabah (chariot, throne) mysticism by the seventh century and provided the basis for later elaborations of the Tree of Life, names of God and practical magic built on numerology and Hebrew letters. Most of its elaboration is Christian and not Judaic. Here is a sample from the Short Version of this rich, cryptic and influential book. Aryeh Kaplan, Sefer Yetzirah: The Book of Creation in Theory and Practice (New York: Weiser, 1998), pp. 261-62.*

1:1 With 32 wondrous paths of Wisdom engrave Yah, the Lord of Hosts, [God of Israel, the Living God, King of the Universe, Almighty God, merciful and gracious, High and Exalted, dwelling in eternity, whose name is Holy, and create His universe] with three books, with text (Sepher), with number (Sephar), and with communication (Sippur).

1:2 Ten Sefirot of Nothingness plus twenty-two [foundations] letters: Three Mothers, Seven Doubles, and Twelve Elementals.

1:3 Ten Sefirot of Nothingness: The number of the ten fingers, five opposite five, with a single covenant precisely in the middle, like the circumcision of the tongue and the circumcision of the membrum.

1:4 Ten Sefirot of Nothingness: Ten and not nine; ten and not eleven. Understand with Wisdom, and be wise with Understanding. Examine with them and probe them, make a thing stand on its essence, and make the Creator sit on his base.

1:5 Ten Sefirot of Nothingness: Their measure is ten which have no end. A depth of beginning, a depth of end; a depth of good, a depth of evil; a depth of above, a depth below; a depth east, a depth west; a depth north, a depth south. The singular Master, God faithful King, dominates them all from His holy dwelling until eternity of eternities.

1:6 Ten Sefirot of Nothingness: Their vision is like the "appearance of lightening", their limit has no end. His Word in them is "running and returning." They rush to his saying like a whirlwind, and before His throne they prostrate themselves.

1:7 Ten Sefirot of Nothingness: Their end is embedded in their beginning, and their beginning in their end, like a flame in a burning coal. For the Master is singular, He has no second. And before One, what do you count?

1:8 Ten Sefirot of Nothingness: Bridle your mouth from speaking and your heart from thinking. And if your heart runs, return to the place, as it is written, "The Chayot running and returning" (Ezekiel 1:14). Regarding this covenant was made.

1:9 Ten Sefirot of Nothingness: One is the Breath of the Living God, blessed and benedicted be the Name of the Life of worlds. Voice, Breath and Speech. This is the Holy Breath (Ruach HaKodesh).

1:10 Two: Breath from Breath. With it engrave and carve twenty-two foundation letters - three, Mothers, seven Doubles, and twelve Elementals - and one Breath is from them.

1:11 Three: Water and Breath. With it engrave and carve chaos and void, mire and clay.

Engrave them like a garden plot, carve them like a wall, cover them like a ceiling.

1:12 Four: Fire from water. With it engrave and carve the Throne of Glory, Seraphim, Ophanim, holy Chayot, and Ministering Angels. From the three establish His dwelling, as it is written, "He makes His angels of breaths, His ministers from flaming fire" (Psalms 104:4).

1:13 Five: With three of the simple letters seal "above". Choose three and place them in His great Name: YHV. With them seal the six extremities. Face upward and seal it with YHV. • Six: Seal "below". Face downward and seal it with YHV. • Seven: Seal "east". Face straight ahead and seal it with HYV. • Eight: Seal "west". Face backward and seal it with HVY. • Nine: Seal "south". Face to the right and seal it with VYH. • Ten: Seal "north". Face to the left and seal it with VHY.

1:14 These are the Ten Sefirot of Nothingness. One is the Breath of the Living God. Breath [from Breath], Fire [from water, and the extremities], up, down, east, west, north and south.

## 10. On Jewish Soldiers

*Although Josephus' respect for his fellow Judeans is implicit in his works The Antiquities of the Jews and The Jewish Wars, he was a Roman officer and naturally sympathized with the victor Rome, that paragon of military might. But when the author of the eleventh century Yosippon comes to speak of the relations between Rome and the Jews in chapter 40, specifically the embassy of Hyrcanus to Julius Caesar, he inserts a surprising interpolation about Jewish heroism and military valor. Stereotypes and conventional thinking today do not normally associate good soldiering with Jewish values. But we can well imagine that the makers of the Tucson Artifacts may have done so. These values were at the core of the Romani's mission in Eretz Israel. That they later informed the ethnics and charter of the Crusaders was due to Jewish influence, not Christian innovations. Piety and patriotism were combined in age-old Judaic fashion. Dagmar Börner and Beat Zuber, Josippon: Jüdische Geschichte vom Anfang der Welt bis zum Ende des ersten Aufstands gegen Rom (Wiesbaden: Marix, 2010), pp. 364-66.*

Here we hold it meet to record the love demonstrated by the leaders of Rome for our fathers in respect to their valor, their heroism and their loyalty. Our fathers were warriors and trusted allies. For that reason all the kings on earth liked to make treaties with them, even for their valor and heroism. The kings of Medea and Persia, moreover, sent them presents and many letters, yea, unto Jerusalem. Joseph son of Gurion, however, writes little about their dispatches as he did not want to write much about letters that came to them in Jerusalem. Only of the communications from Rome did he write, all, to be sure, just as they had been written. I've been too lazy to transcribe them all. I've only written down a few as I found them recorded in the book of Joseph son of Gurion.

This, therefore, is the content of the letter that Julius Caesar sent to the Roman command holding forth in Tyre and Sidon to secure the countryside: "Julius Caesar, King of Kings, to the Roman command in Tyre and Sidon: Peace. Know you that I have received the letters of

Hyrchanus son of Alexander, King of Judah, and have taken pleasure both in his letters and his friendship. I have sent you all the words written by Hyrcanus, literally. I have sent them to you so that you may write them in Latin or Greek on a bronze tablet and deposit them in the temple of Jupiter that sits on a high place in Sidon, so that one may read them at any time, that his words in his letters shall not be forgotten and all men may know of the love of the Roman people and the people of Judah.

I, Julius Caesar, have ordered to be restored to Hyrcanus in Jerusalem all the land unto the Euphrates that the Hasmonaeans took in warfare and that Pompey gave back to their former possessors, for their fathers seized it with sword. For that reason should all belong to them that they took in war.

## 11. On Levites

*Levi was the third son of Jacob and Leah, the father of the tribe named for him (Levites). The Aaronides (Kohanim, priests, male descendants of Aaron, brother of Moses) were members of this tribe, dedicated to the service of the tabernacle or temple. The name was prophetic: Levi's tribe would lead (laveh "escort, accompany") the Israelites to their Father in heaven and act as harbingers to the Messianic Age. In medieval Christianity, the term levita came to be synonymous with "priest." Angels armed with weapons are represented in Genesis 19:1f. and Daniel 8:15f. among other places in scripture and were much commented upon in mystical literature (Merkabah writings), along with various traditions of the "testament of Levi" (cf. 2:6-5:3). In rabbinical tradition, the Greeks were equated with the Levites. For Jubilees, Enoch and the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, see James H. Charlesworth, ed., The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, vols. 1-2 (Garden City: Doubleday, 1985).*

a.

### Levi Is Chosen for Priesthood

*Jubilees 30:18—21. A New Translation and Introduction, by O.S. Wintermute (from the Hebrew, Greek and Ethiopic)*

And the seed of Levi was chosen for the priesthood and levitical (orders) to minister before the Lord always just as we do. And Levi and his sons will be blessed forever because he was zealous to do righteousness and judgment and vengeance against all who rose up against Israel. And thus a blessing and righteousness will be written (on high) as a testimony for him in the heavenly tablets before the God of all. And we will remember for a thousand generations the righteousness which a man did during his life in all of the (appointed) times of the year. And (it) will be written (on high) and it will come to him and his descendants after him. And he will be written down as a friend and righteous one in the heavenly tablets.

b.

**Levi's Blessing**

*Jubilees 31:11-17*

And they (Levi and Judah) drew near to him (Isaac) and he turned and kissed them and embraced the both of them together. And a spirit of prophecy came down upon his mouth. And he took Levi in his right hand and Judah in his left hand. And he turned to Levi first and he began to bless him first, and he said to him, "May the God of all, i.e. the Lord of all ages, bless you and your sons in all ages. May the Lord give you and your seed very great honor. May he draw you and your seed near to him from all flesh to serve in his sanctuary as the angels of the presence and the holy ones. May your sons' seed be like them with respect to honor and greatness and sanctification. And may he make them great in every age. And they will become judges and rulers and leaders for all of the seed of the sons of Jacob.

The word of the Lord they will speak righteously,  
And all of his judgments they will execute righteously.  
And they will tell my ways to Jacob,  
and my paths to Israel.  
The blessing of the Lord shall be placed in their mouth,  
so that they might bless all of the seed of the beloved.  
(As for) you, your mother has named you 'Levi,'  
and truly she has named you.  
You will be joined to the Lord  
and be the companion of all the sons of Jacob.  
His table will belong to you,  
and you and your sons will eat (from) it,  
and in all generations your table will be full,  
and your food will not be lacking in any age.  
And all who hate you will fall before you,  
and all your enemies will be uprooted and perish,  
and whoever blesses you will be blessed,  
and any nation which curses you will be cursed."

c.

**Testament of Levi, the Third Son of Jacob and Leah**

*Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs 4:2-5:7*

The Most High has given heed to your prayer that you be delivered from wrongdoing, that

you should become a son to him, as minister and priest in his presence. The light of knowledge you shall kindle in Jacob, and you shall be as the sun for all the posterity of Israel. Blessing shall be given to you and to all your posterity until through his son's compassion the Lord shall visit all the nations forever . . . Therefore counsel and understanding have been given to you so that you might give understanding to your sons concerning this. Because those who bless him shall be blessed, and those who curse him shall be destroyed.

At this moment the angel opened for me the gates of heaven and I saw the Holy Most High sitting on the throne. And he said to me, "Levi, to you I have given the blessing of the priesthood until I shall come and dwell in the midst of Israel. Then the angel led me back to the earth, and gave me a shield and a sword, and said to me, "Perform vengeance on Shechem for the sake of Dinah, your sister, and I shall be with you, for the Lord sent me. . . ."

d.

### Greeks Are Levites

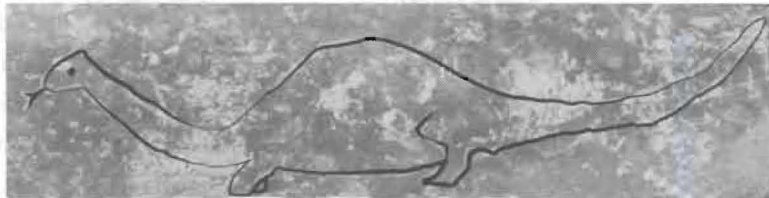
*Legends of the Jews* (p. 169)

At whose hand will the kingdom of Greece fall? At the hands of the Hasmoneans (Greeks), who are of the tribe of Levi.

Levi (*Lvy*) is rightly matched with Greece (*Yvn*), the former being the third tribe, the latter the third kingdom (Egypt, Babylon, then Greece). The name of the former consists of three letters, and the name of the latter of three letters. The former blow horns, the latter trumpets (so Gen. R. TA, p. 1274). The former wear turbans, the latter wear helmets. The former wear breeches, and the latter femorals (knee breeches for military use). Now the former are few, while the latter are many; yet the many came and fell by the hands of the few (Gen. R. 99:2).

## 12. On Leviathan

God created the monster of the deep, or leviathan, on the fifth day of creation (Gen. 1:21). Rabbinic commentary took leviathan as a synonym for the sea (cf. Ps. 104:26). In Jewish tradition, Leviathan had a tongue: Jonah told him after being swallowed by the whale, "I am destined to put a rope around your tongue." Just so does the leviathan on the Tucson Artifacts have a forked tongue (no dinosaur had a forked tongue). In mystical tradition, the Leviathan came to represent the ample food for the righteous in the apocalypse. In Hebrew, the word was very close to that for "long-distance merchants." Just as men had their pets so too did the Almighty, and it was Leviathan. Hayim Nahman Bialik and Yehoshua Hana Ravnitzky, eds., *The Book of Legends: Sefer Ha-Aggadah* (New York: Schocken, 1992), pp. 400-1, 510. See also VI.5. *The Tannin*.



*Tannin from the Serpent Sword (artifact 12).*

a.

And God created the great sea monsters (Gen. 1:21)—Leviathan the bolt-straight serpent and Leviathan the coiled serpent, so said R. Yohanan.

R. Judah said in the name of Rav: All that the Holy One created in His world, He created male and female. So, too, Leviathan the bold-straight serpent and Leviathan the coiled serpent He created male and female, and if they had mated with each other, [their numerous progeny] would have destroyed the entire world, all of it. What did the Holy One do? He castrated the male and killed the female, preserving her in salt for the righteous in the world-to-come.

R. Dimi said in the name of R. Jonathan: Gabriel will stage a hunt of Leviathan, and but for the holy One's helping him, he would be unable to prevail against it.

R. Dimi said in the name of R. Yohanan: When Leviathan is hungry, it emits a fiery breath from its mouth and brings all the waters of the deep to a boil, and but for Leviathan's sticking its head into the Garden of Eden, no creature could endure the stench of its breath. When Leviathan is thirsty, it makes many furrows in the sea.

Rabbah said in the name of R. Yohanan: The Holy One will make a feast for the righteous out of the flesh of Leviathan, and what is left will be portioned out and made available as merchandise in the marketplaces of Jerusalem.

Rabbah also said in the name of R. Yohanan: The Holy One will make a sukkah for the righteous out of Leviathan's skin. The Holy One will spread the rest of the skin over the walls of Jerusalem, and its radiance will shine bright from one end of the world to the other, as is said, "Nations shall walk by thy light, and kings by thy shining radiance" (Isa. 60:3).

b.

R. Judah said in the name of Rav: The day consists of twelve hours: the first three, the Holy One, blessed be He, sits and occupies Himself with Torah; the next three, He sits and issue judgments for the entire world, all of it—when He sees that the world is so guilty as to deserve extermination, He rises from the throne of judgment and sits down on the throne of compassion; the next three hours, He sits and feeds the entire world, from the horned wild ox to lice; the final three hours, He sits and disports with the Leviathan, as is said, "There is Leviathan, whom Thou has formed to sport therewith" (Ps. 104:26; B. AZ 3b).