

Templar Masons in Jerusalem

By
Sir Knight Sanford Holst



Arches in front of the Templar main hall, and stairs going down into the Mount.
Photo by Galyn Wiemers.

As Knights Templar we bear the name of Solomon's Temple in Jerusalem. On that sacred site, the original Templar order was formed in 1119. The hands of their masons then raised a grand headquarters building that can still be seen today.

During the hours visitors are allowed to enter Temple Mount, you walk up an incline at the southwest corner of those grounds and enter the large green door built into the western wall. As you step forward onto the Mount, the buildings

knight templar

on your right were built by Templar masons. Archaeologists found mason's marks and tooling on the stones that confirmed their origin. Today a museum is housed where the Templars once lived and dined.

The king's palace in those days occupied all of Al Aqsa Mosque, but he eventually gave this to the Templars for their use. The knights made it into their own building by adding several massive stone arches in front to serve as an impressive entry to the Grand Master's hall. Those



Templar buildings on the Mount, which are now a museum. Photo by Eric Huntsman on April 2, 2012.

central arches still stand today, flanked by small arches added later.

In front of that grand entrance are stairs that lead down to a double gated entryway far below in the southern wall.

Solomon's Stables

The men who walked down those stairs and emerged through the double gate could turn left and walk a short distance to a triple gate. Inside that entryway was what has come to be called Solomon's Stables. The courtyard outside these gates at the foot of this towering south wall was a convenient staging ground for Knights to mount up and ride to battle in the Holy Land with their Beauceant banner waving overhead.

Exploring Under the Mount

Another underground passageway led

up from the stables to the plaza around Al Aqsa and the Dome of the Rock. This is among the tangle of corridors, cisterns, and crypts beneath the Mount that have still not been completely explored. These mysterious places figure into intriguing stories about what the Templars may have discovered there. Following in their footsteps, I found further evidence leading to the location of Solomon's Temple. Who knows what you will find?

Castles

From this headquarters in Jerusalem the Knights ruled many castles across the Holy Land. You can still see several of these in Lebanon, such as the Sea Castle and Fortress of St. Louis in Sidon, the citadel in Tripoli, and the Castle of Beaufort about twenty miles west of Tyre.

To Get There

International flights to Israel arrive in Tel Aviv, with buses and taxis frequently

making the thirty mile trip to Jerusalem.



Sidon Castle, photo by the author.

Flights to Lebanon arrive in Beirut. To see the castles and the ancient Phoenician cities from the time of King Solomon, hire a car and guide or book a seat on one of the local tour buses.

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Fortifications of the Knights of Malta in Valletta, Malta. Photo by the editor.

