

THE HOLY BLOOD AND THE HOLY GRAIL

The Holy Blood and the Holy Grail is a new book written by three men which makes claims about Christ which challenge totally the traditional beliefs surrounding Jesus Christ.

The book was prompted by a priest called Sauniere in the tiny hamlet of Rennes-le-Chateau on top of a mountain, 25 miles south of Carcassonne in Southern France, ninety years ago.

This was a very small parish with only 33 inhabitants so the priest had time to fill. He started to renovate his church and it was whilst removing the altar stone that he stumbled across something that proved to be extremely valuable, if the following events are true.

Inside the altar stone he found 4 parchments in sealed wooden tubes. Two of them were supposed genealogies dating from 1244 and 1644 respectively but they have never been revealed. The other two had been composed in the 1780s by one of the priests fore-runners.

He took the parchments to Paris to be studied by various experts and scholars and it is from this point onwards that the story of the priest in his small parish becomes more and more bizarre. He proceeded to spend, spend, spend. Not only did Sauniere renovate his church but he created a modern road to the village from the town below, he laid on running water to the houses, threw lavish banquets, built a plush country house and a little gothic castle for his library. These are just a few of the items of his expenditure. He repeatedly received money from the Archduke Johann Von Hapsburg of Austria and nobody could understand why and Sauniere even flouted the prying eyes of his Bishop who was understandably puzzled by his apparent wealth.

Sauniere finally died at the age of 65 and after hearing his confession shortly before his death, a neighbouring cure refused to give him absolution. Obviously whatever this priest confessed was too much for the cure to contemplate. With the publication of Sauniere's will, his partitioners were shocked to find that he actually died penniless, yet during his life he had spent millions of pounds.

This strange tale has attracted a great deal of interest and it is this interest which led eventually to the publication of the book.

The authors were not quite sure where to begin but throughout their researches they found many references to the Holy Grail, which has tantalised individuals for centuries. Along the way, the authors unearthed links between many groups and individuals throughout history. These were, the Merovingian Kings whose last ruler Dagobert II was assassinated in the seventh century. These kings were supposed to rule by direct contact with God. They are referred to as the long haired kings and are linked with magic and magical powers. The Cathars were an heretical sect in France whose extermination was ordered by the Pope in the thirteenth century. They were reputed to possess a treasure of fabulous and even sacred value. Their attitude to Jesus was that he was a mortal being, who on behalf of the principle of love, died on the cross. The knights Templars were also drawn into the story. They were warrior monks, who wore white mantles with a red cross and whose early Grand Master came

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from a powerful Cathar family. In 1307, because of their threat to the establishment, the Knights Templars were siezed and the only one to survive were a small group at Bezu adjacent to Rennes-le-Chateau, where a special detachment had been drafted in to guard a treasure of some sort.

Perhaps the most interesting factor is the references to the Holy Grail that cropped up in connection with many of these groups of people and even seemed to be the link between them. The authors traced through many ins and outs the line of this secret to a present day secret society in France called the Priure de Sion whose avowed and declared objective is to restore the Merovingian dynasty and bloodline not only to France but to the thrones of other European nations as well. They claim that the Merovingian blood line was not interrupted as asserted in history but continues through to the present day and can be traced through many groups such as those mentioned above and infact, rests now with the current head of the Priure de Sion itself.

In order to make sense of what they were discovering, the authors had to ask themselves why a blood line should become so important, that throughout its history it had been denied and repeatedly suppress ed, and more relevant to this story, allowed a priest to spend millions of pounds modernising his small village. What was the vital link.

The Holy Grail, as already said, was high on the authors list of intrigue and the only way that they could unravel the mystery was to juggle with the words, which up until now had been taken to mean Holy Grail. The word used for the Holy Grail in the was Sangreal. It could however be split to make either San Grreal (meaning Holy Grail) or Sang Real (royal or real blood). If this latter was so, then the Grail would pertain to blood lines which is the missing link in the authors story. The mystery still remained though - whose blood and whose blood line?

The authors retraced their steps to very early legends which talked of Mary Magdalene journeying from the Holy land to France, landing at Marseilles and carrying with her a cup (the Holy Grail is often depicted as a cup).

Developing this further, the authors hypothesised that Jesus may have been a legitimate claimant to the throne of Israel and that perhaps Mary Magdalene was his wife and perhaps they produced a child (then the cup referred to earlier would be a receptacle for Jesus 's blood line). The authors also suggested that after the crucifixion, with at least one child, Mary Magdalene was smuggled to Gaul (as the legends stated) where Jewish communities already existed. They further suggested that there was, in short, a hereditary blood line descended directly from Jesus and that this was the Sang Real which threatened the established order and it was this blood line which eventually married into the Merovingians so continuing the line throughout history to the present day. It is this secret the authors say, that the Knights Templars, the Cathars and the Merovingians were persecuted for. It is this secret the authors suggest that the pries Sauniere in this small parish stumbled accross and which became a lucrative source of income to him, and it is this secret the Priure de Sion hold evidence of today.

This story completely upsets the established Christian doctrine of the celibacy of Christ and although the authors say they do not subscribe to the divinity of Christ, they say their theories do not necessarily dismiss it (but of course, they would bring into question the whole Christian doctrine if proved true).

The authors conclude then that the Holy Grail would have been two things, on the one hand the blood line of Jesus and on the other, the receptacle or vessel of Jesus' blood ie. the Magdalene herself. From this the cult of the Magdalene would have arisen and been confused with the virgin - who is often portrayed with a child.

So, they suggest, the priest in Rennes-le-Chateau discovered the evidence of their theories. He was given large sums of money by interested parties so that he could prepare his tiny village for the influx of pilgrims who would obviously visit his church once these facts were made public. This secret would have been a heresy to the cure who was present before Sauniere died and therefore absolution would have been denied.

Their theories also explain why so many holders of the Holy Grail as they interpret it, have been killed and persecuted throughout the ages, for not only does it give the holders a direct link with Jesus but also gives them claim to many of the thrones in Europe.

Sant Ush Ji