



ST. MARY THE VIRGIN

Sovereign Military Order of the Temple of Jerusalem

Friday the 13th

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Prepared by



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Table of Contents

Introduction 1
Origins 2
October 13, 1307 3



INTRODUCTION



Friday the 13th

Triskaidekaphobia (from Ancient Greek *τρεισκαίδεκα* (*treiskaideka*), meaning 'thirteen', and *φόβος* (*phóbos*), meaning 'fear') is fear or avoidance of the number 13. **Paraskevidekatriaphobia** (or Friggatriskaidekaphobia) is the fear or avoidance of Friday the 13th. The term was used as early as in 1910 by Isador Coriat in *Abnormal Psychology*.

While the number 13 was considered unlucky, Friday the 13th was not considered unlucky at the time of the arrest of the Templars on Friday, October 13, 1307. The incorrect idea that their arrest was related to the phobias surrounding Friday the 13th was invented early in the 21st century and popularized by the novel *The Da Vinci Code*. Nonetheless, the date proved significant to the Templar Order.



The Code of Hammurabi

is a well-preserved Babylonian code of law of ancient Mesopotamia, dated to about 1754 BC. It is one of the oldest deciphered writings of significant length in the world. The sixth Babylonian king, Hammurabi, enacted the code. Hammurabi ruled from 1792 to 1750 BC. Nearly half of the code deals with matters of contract, establishing the wages to be paid to an ox driver or a surgeon for example. Other provisions set the terms of a transaction, the liability of a builder for a house that collapses, or property that is damaged while left in the care of another. A third of the code addresses issues concerning household and family relationships such as inheritance, divorce, paternity, and reproductive behavior. The code was discovered by modern archaeologists in 1901, and its translation published in 1902. This nearly complete example of the code is carved into a diorite stele in the shape of a huge index finger, 7.4 feet tall. The code is inscribed in the Akkadian language, using cuneiform script carved into the stele. It is currently on display in the Louvre.

Origins

Fear of 13 predates Christianity. The number 13 has been considered unlucky for millennia, and by many different cultures around the world. The ancient Romans believed that 13 was a bad omen, foretelling ill-fortune and death.

The oldest known reference to the fear of the number 13 can be found in the Mesopotamian Code of Hammurabi, a Babylonian code of law that dates to approximately 1760 BC. The laws are numbered, but number 13 is omitted (along with numbers 66 through 99). Therefore, it is possible that triskaidekaphobia was widespread even among the ancient peoples.

According to folklore historian Donald Dossey, the unlucky nature of the number "13" originated with a Norse myth about 12 gods having a dinner party in Valhalla. The trickster god Loki, who was not invited, arrived as the 13th guest, and arranged for Höðr to shoot Balder with a mistletoe-tipped arrow. This major event in Norse mythology caused the number 13 to be considered unlucky – it was certainly unlucky for Balder.

From the 1890s, a number of English language sources relate the "unlucky" thirteen to an idea that at the Last Supper, Judas, the disciple who betrayed Jesus, was the 13th to sit at the table. The Bible says nothing about the order in which the Apostles sat, but there were thirteen people at the table. This may be the origin of the superstition that states that when 13 dine; one will die within the year. However, the number 13 is also presented positively in the Bible. For example, the book of Exodus speaks of the 13 attributes of God.

The thirteen attributes are alluded to a number of other times in the Bible. Verses where God is described using all or some of the attributes include Numbers 14:18, Joel 2:13, Jonah 4:2, Micah 7:18, Nahum 1:3, Psalms 86:15, 103:8, 145:8, and Nehemiah 9:17.

Thirteen is a significant number in Judaism. It is the age when a boy becomes Bar Mitzvah and assumes the obligation to keep the laws of the Torah. It also corresponds to the 13 tribes of Israel (when including Joseph's two sons, Ephraim and Menashe). There are also "the 13 principles of hermeneutic methodology by which Torah law is extrapolated." These rules, compiled by the talmudic sage Rabbi Ishmael, outline the methods by which the Torah is elucidated and halachic decisions are deduced. The 13 Attributes of Mercy are perhaps the most significant of the 13s that appear in Judaism. The notion of mercy is especially relevant and necessary when dealing with penitence. It is for this reason that the Attributes of Mercy are recited numerous times during the Hebrew month of Elul, and especially on the Day of Atonement.

In some regions, 13 is or has been considered a lucky number. For example, prior to the First World War, 13 was considered to be a lucky number in France, even being featured on postcards and charms. In more modern times, 13 is lucky in Italy except in some contexts, such as sitting at the dinner table. In Cantonese-speaking areas, including Hong Kong and Macau, the number 13 is considered lucky because it sounds similar to the Cantonese words meaning "sure to live" (as opposed to the unlucky number 14 which in Cantonese sounds like the words meaning "sure to



Superstition

is any belief or behavior based upon one's trust in luck or other irrational, unscientific, or supernatural forces. The word *superstition* was first used in English in the 15th century, borrowed from French *superstition* which continues Latin *superstitio*. The earliest known use as an English noun is found in *Friar Dan's Reply* (ca. 1420). In 1948, behavioral psychologist B.F. Skinner published an article in the *Journal of Experimental Psychology*, in which he described his pigeons exhibiting what appeared to be superstitious behavior. One pigeon was making turns in its cage, another would swing its head in a pendulum motion, while others also displayed a variety of other behaviors. Because these behaviors were all done ritualistically in an attempt to receive food from a dispenser, even though the dispenser had already been programmed to release food at set time intervals regardless of the pigeons' actions, Skinner believed that the pigeons were trying to influence their feeding schedule by performing these actions. He then extended this as a proposition regarding the nature of superstitious behavior in humans.

die"). Colgate University was started by 13 men with \$13 and 13 prayers, so 13 is considered a lucky number.

In Spanish-speaking countries, instead of Friday, Tuesday the 13th (*martes trece*) is considered a day of bad luck. The Greeks also consider Tuesday (and especially the 13th) an unlucky day. Tuesday is considered dominated by the influence of Ares, the god of war (*Mars* in Roman mythology). The fall of Constantinople to the Fourth Crusade occurred on Tuesday, April 13, 1204, and the Fall of Constantinople to the Ottomans happened on Tuesday, May 29, 1453, events that strengthen the superstition about Tuesday. In addition, in Greek the name of the day is **Triti** (*Τρίτη*) meaning the third (day of the week), adding weight to the superstition, since bad luck is said to "come in threes"

An early documented reference in English of Friday and the number 13 occurs in Henry Sutherland Edwards' 1869 biography of composer Gioachino Rossini, who died on a Friday 13th:

He [Rossini] was surrounded to the last by admiring friends; and if it be true that, like so many Italians, he regarded Fridays as an unlucky day and thirteen as an unlucky number, it is remarkable that on Friday 13th of November he passed away.

It is possible that the publication in 1907 of Thomas W. Lawson's popular novel *Friday, the Thirteenth*, contributed to disseminating the superstition. In the novel, an unscrupulous broker takes advantage of the superstition to create a Wall Street panic on a Friday the 13th.

October 13, 1307

Founded around 1118 as a monastic military order devoted to the protection of pilgrims traveling to the Holy Land following the Christian capture of Jerusalem during the First Crusade, the Knights Templar quickly became one of the richest and most influential groups of the Middle Ages, thanks to lavish donations from the crowned heads of Europe, eager to curry favor with the fierce Knights. By the turn of the 14th century, the Templars had established a system of castles, churches and banks throughout Western Europe. And it was this astonishing wealth that would lead to their downfall.

Prior to the Friday 13th arrests, King Phillip of France's ministers had spent more than a year interviewing disgruntled former Templars and compiling a small, questionable, dossier of supposed misdeeds, including allegations that Templars had spat on the cross, denied Christ, kissed one another in homoerotic induction rituals and worshiped false idols.

Friday the 13th occurs in any month that begins on a Sunday

Giovanni Villani, an Italian chronicler of the time, wrote about a certain rogue Templar, a ‘man of evil life and a heretic’, who’d ‘evilly and maliciously’ spread stories about the order ‘in hope of gain, and of being set free from prison by aid of the king.’ Meanwhile, Templar historian Charles Greenstreet Addison pinpoints a criminal named Squin de Florian as the source of ‘dark rumors and odious reports concerning the Templars’.

Whatever the origin of the rumors, Philip seized on them to justify a merciless assault on the entire order. On Thursday the 12th of October 1307, Templar Grand Master Jacques de Molay had the honor of being the pallbearer at the funeral of the king’s sister-in-law. The very next morning, he was arrested on the orders of that same king, along with over 600 Templars throughout France. While some tried to escape (one knight, Pierre de Boucle, discarded his Templar clothes and shaved his beard in a futile attempt to blend in with civilians), the men were largely taken by surprise and instantly submitted to the authorities.

And, while some of the highest-ranking members were caught up in Philip’s net, so too were hundreds of non-warriors; middle-aged men who managed the day-to-day banking and farming activities that kept the organization humming. The men were charged with a wide array of offenses including heresy, devil worship and spitting on the cross, homosexuality, fraud and financial corruption.

The Templars were immediately subjected to torture. Weights were hung from their genitals; some had their arms tethered behind them and suspended from the ceiling until their shoulders were dislocated. One luckless knight, Bernarde de Vado, had his feet slathered in fat and held over open flames so they literally cooked. As he later reported to an agent of the church, ‘they held me so long before a fierce fire that the flesh was burnt off my heels. Two pieces of bone came away, which I present to you.’ Given the extreme conditions, it’s not surprising that within weeks, hundreds of Templars confessed to false charges, including Jacques de Molay.

Many Templars died during the interrogations. Interestingly, one medieval source suggests that ‘those whom the investigators have killed in torture they secretly bury... out of fear that such horrible and savage deeds should reach royal ears’. This suggests Philip IV believe the Templars were guilty and confessed to heresy freely, rather than because they were subjected to unendurable agony.

Pope Clement V was horrified. Despite the fact that he’d been elected almost solely because of Philip’s influence, he feared crossing the extremely popular Templars. The Knight’s coerced “confessions,” however, forced his hands. Philip, who had anticipated Clement’s reaction, made sure the allegations against the Templars included detailed descriptions of their supposed heresy, counting on the gossipy, salacious accounts to carry much weight with the Church. Clement issued a papal bull ordering the Western kings to arrest Templars living in their lands. Few followed the papal request, but the fate of the French Templars had already been sealed. Their lands and money were confiscated and officially dispersed to another religious order, the Hospitallers.

Within weeks of their confessions, many of Templars recanted, and Clement shut down the inquisition trials in early 1308. The Templars lingered in their cells for two years before Philip had more than 50 of them burned at the stake as relapsed heretics in 1310. In March 1312, Clement issued a Papal bull formally dissolved the Order (though he did so without saying they’d been guilty as charged) with their assets to be given over to the Knights Hospitaller. In the wake of that dissolution, some Templars again confessed to gain their freedom, while others died in captivity.

Outside of France, the Templars were generally not tortured and were in some cases protected by faithful monarchs. In England, they had a powerful supporter in Edward II, who described the accusations of heresy as being ‘more than it is possible to believe’. That said, a number of English Templars were subjected to fierce questioning and extradited to be imprisoned in France, while over in Germany some Templars were burnt at the stake. In Portugal, the king protected the Templars and the order was eventually reconstituted as the Military Order of Christ.



Jacques de Molay

(c. 1240-1250 – 11 or 18 March 1314), also spelled was the 23rd and last Grand Master of the Knights Templar, leading the Order from 20 April 1292 until it was dissolved by order of Pope Clement V in 1312. Though little is known of his actual life and deeds except for his last years as Grand Master, he is one of the best known Templars. Jacques de Molay's goal as Grand Master was to reform the Order, and adjust it to the situation in the Holy Land during the waning days of the Crusades. As European support for the Crusades had dwindled, other forces were at work which sought to disband the Order and claim the wealth of the Templars as their own. Both the sudden end of the centuries-old order of Templars and the dramatic execution of its last leader turned Molay into a legendary figure.

Jacques de Molay was burnt alive in 1314 after languishing in prison for years as the convoluted trials of the Templars unfolded. Molay was sentenced to death together with Geoffroi de Charney (Preceptor of Normandy for the Knights Templar) as a direct result of cardinal legates' decisions and actions rather than being ordered by King Philip.

They burnt at the stake on the Ile des Javiaux in the Seine. The most probable date of the execution was March 11, 1314 although it is also quoted as March 18, 1314.

Of Molay's death, American historian Henry Charles Lea gives this account:

"The cardinals dallied with their duty until 18 March 1314, when, on a scaffold in front of Notre Dame, Jacques de Molay, Templar Grand Master, Geoffroi de Charney, Master of Normandy, Hugues de Peraud, Visitor of France, and Godefroi de Gonneville, Master of Aquitaine, were brought forth from the jail in which for nearly seven years they had lain, to receive the sentence agreed upon by the cardinals, in conjunction with the Archbishop of Sens and some other prelates whom they had called in. Considering the offences which the culprits had confessed and confirmed, the penance imposed was in accordance with rule — that of perpetual imprisonment. The affair was supposed to be concluded when, to the dismay of the prelates and wonderment of the assembled crowd, Jacques de Molay and Geoffroi de Charney arose. They had been guilty, they said, not of the crimes imputed to them, but of basely betraying their Order to save their own lives. It was pure and holy; the charges were fictitious and the confessions false.



Hastily the cardinals delivered them to the Prevot of Paris, and retired to deliberate on this unexpected contingency, but they were saved all trouble. When the news was carried to Philippe he was furious. A short consultation with his council only was required. The canons pronounced that a relapsed heretic was to be burned without a hearing; the facts were notorious and no formal judgment by the papal commission need be waited for. That same day, by sunset, a pyre was erected on a small island in the Seine, the Ile des Juifs, near the palace garden. There de Molay, de Charney, de Gonneville, and de Peraud were slowly burned to death, refusing all offers of pardon for retraction, and bearing their torment with a composure which won for them the reputation of martyrs among the people, who reverently collected their ashes as relics." (Note: the account varies by one day, not unusual for chronicles of the middle ages)

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