

How the Novel *Unholy Grail* Came To Be Written

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Have you ever wanted to write a novel? Here is how I came to write this one...

I grew up as the son of mom who was a professor of early childhood education at the University of Minnesota. We had many “kitchen-table” discussions about a plethora of subjects, and as a kid I read hundreds of books. She also liked to see me write, but writing was more of a pain than a pleasure at that point in my life, and I didn't take too well to her (constructive?) criticism. So it wasn't until many years later and a career in software development that I began to develop any writing skills, and more importantly, a desire to write.

However, I continued my passion for reading, and also for understanding the nature of things – how things really worked, and why things are the way they are. Gaining any degree of understanding of such a broad subject requires a multi-disciplinary approach – theology, politics, economics, history, psychology, sociology, biology, physics, chemistry, art, music, etc. etc., and my modest goal is to understand everything about everything. I hasten to add that I am light years away from even reaching a reasonable thoroughness about any of the above areas, but press on nevertheless as time permits.

Just as the nuclear physicist attempts to construct a “unified field theory” that explains the basis of physical reality, this novel series is a partial realization of my desire for historical and theological synthesis. However, it didn't exactly start that way. I had written stuff – mostly software documentation, and had a vague desire to write something more significant, at some point in the far distant future.

During the winter of 1997 I was on a ski trip with my kids in Vermont, and happened to bring along with me the book “Holy Blood, Holy Grail,” (HBHG) the same work that later inspired Dan Brown's “DaVinci Code.” HBHG was one of the first books to popularize the notion that the Biblical Mary Magdalene had been the wife or consort of Jesus, and supposedly had a sexual relationship with him, resulting in one or more children. After Jesus' death and resurrection, and during the persecution that subsequently arose, Mary was said to have sailed away from Israel with her daughter and a number of other followers of Jesus. They eventually landed in Marseilles, France (at that time the city was known as Massilia in the land of Gaul) and Mary supposedly became the patron saint of southern Gaul. The story goes on to tell that her daughter Sarah married into the leading family of the Salic Franks, a people that migrated into Gaul and eventually took over the country. The Merovingian dynasty of Frankish kings began in the late 300's AD, and through royal marriage agreements they established relationships with other ruling families in Europe. Their successor dynasties (the Carolingians, the Capetians, the Valois, and the Bourbons) ruled France for the next

1,400 years until the French Revolution of 1789. The conclusion of HBHG is therefore that the royalty of Europe were the progeny of Jesus Christ and Mary Magdalene.

The conclusion of both HBHG and the DaVinci code was that Mary Magdalene was the true Holy Grail, the “chalice” or “vessel” from which the bloodline of Jesus supposedly descended. This conclusion based on a sexual union between Jesus and Mary is, of course, preposterous, with virtually no evidence supporting it, as the Bible and other historical sources, as well as the character of Jesus will attest to. Jesus Christ did not have any descending bloodline, and there is no hint of any such thing in the Gospels or writings from the times of his followers. The Gnostic Gospels (including the Gospel of Judas Iscariot and the Gospel of Mary Magdalene), which some allege to provide “new insight” on Jesus and his life, were written anywhere from 100 to 300 years after his death, by groups with their own religious agenda. Therefore they do not provide any real evidence concerning the life of Christ or his disciples. There are books and resources from many authors that have debunked these ideas, such as the following from Skeptic magazine:

http://www.skeptic.com/reading_room/the-davinci-code-cult/

However, the story of Mary’s voyage to Marseilles and her life with the Franks has a lot of cachet, as well as some degree of historical backing. There are many churches dedicated to her throughout France and England, and what is said to be her skull is kept in the crypt of a church in the town of St. Maximins, some 35 miles north-east of Marseilles. There is also a grotto in the mountains above the town where she was said to have spent much time in prayer. I visited this town on a research trip to France in 2005, and there are brochures in the church which tell the story of her voyage from Israel as if it were fact.

If the Merovingians were Christ's kids, they certainly did not act like him. Their kings were occultists ruling by fear and awe – glass balls and other objects of divination were found in their tombs. Like Sampson in the Bible, they believed that there was power in long hair; they wore their hair very long, and all other men in the kingdom were required to keep their hair short. Furthermore, the ruling families of Europe contained some of the worst and most rapacious scoundrels of history. As I contemplated this, my thought was that these were not the children of Jesus. So whose were they?

It is at this point that I had an inspiration – the Merovingians seemed to have been much more like the children of Satan. But how could that be? Then I remembered the story in the Gospel of John; when Mary Magdalene anointed the feet of Jesus, one of his twelve closest disciples had a serious objection. That man was Judas Iscariot, the same one who was later possessed by Satan, and who betrayed Jesus to his enemies for thirty pieces of silver.

John in his Gospel indicates that the reason for the objection was that Judas was an embezzler – as he was the treasurer of the group, he had access to their funds. But what was the real motive for Judas’ surprising outburst in the middle of a large dinner party, that included all of the other disciples of Christ and many others as well? Perhaps Judas’ real obsession was that he desired Mary Magdalene for himself, and became extremely angry when he saw Mary throwing herself on Jesus and not on him. Many scholars have felt that money alone was not an adequate explanation for Judas' betrayal of Christ. But if Judas’ real motive was to somehow get cash in order to leave the

ministry and elope with Mary Magdalene, then the story makes much more sense – lust is typically much more powerful than greed, especially for the relatively paltry sum of thirty silver shekels.

The more I considered this story, the more sense it made. It also helps to explain the extremely harsh statements that Jesus made about Judas. In Jesus' prayer in the garden of Gethsemane he said, "I guarded them and not one of them perished except the son of perdition, so that the Scripture would be fulfilled," and at the Last Supper he said, "For the Son of Man will go just as it is written of him, but woe to that man by who the Son of Man is betrayed! It would better for him if he had never been born!"

For the first time in the contemporary literature, which has typically gone to the opposite side in attempting to depict Judas as a "good guy," this story unveils the dark and demonic side of Judas' character which the Gospels do not cover, but which are much more in keeping with what we know about Judas. See the following link for details on the character research done for this novel:

<http://www.unholygrail.net/docs/CharacterResearchForUnholyGrail.pdf>

As I considered this, further connections fell into place: Satan, the great enemy, uses two of the people closest to Jesus in order to bring about the latter's betrayal and death, as well as to establish a Satanically-inspired bloodline. In despair and tormented by demons, Judas dies his violent death, but Mary Magdalene, who earlier had had seven demons cast out of her by Jesus, becomes the "Unholy Grail made Holy" – a paradigm of all who follow Christ.

The bloodline of Judas and Mary eventually includes the Merovingian kings and other rulers of Europe. Many of these had the same lust for power as Satan, their "father." In the future, this bloodline would ultimately produce a counterfeit messiah (a pseudo world savior) who would become the anti-Christ of Revelation. This concept effectively unifies history.

After thinking all of this through, I said, "Wow! This is one of the broadest and most compelling themes I have ever heard of! I have to write this!" And so began the effort to write a novel and publish it. I began to research and write, gathering hundreds of sources on a very diverse set of topics – Biblical studies, archaeology, French history, German history, English history, Irish history, the Crusades, the Holy Grail, King Arthur, the Knights Templar, the Shroud of Turin, the Ark of the Covenant, Freemasonry and Rosicrucianism, the Druids, Demonology, Gnosticism, Ancient Goddesses, Islam, Jewish History, Oil history and policies, the European Union, etc. For a partial bibliography, see the following link:

<http://www.unholygrail.net/docs/SelectedBibliographyForUnholyGrail.pdf>

The novels took ten years to research and write, with a lot of other things going on at the same time. Along the way I went down various other related trails, and developed a keen interest in the Shroud of Turin. I wrote and published several papers on the largest shroud-related site on the internet – <http://www.shroud.com/>, including an article summarizing all of the challenges that have ever been made to the authenticity of the Shroud:

<http://www.shroud.com/pdfs/sorensen2.pdf>

Public displays of the Shroud are rare – limited to intervals of 10 to 25 years. But it was available for public viewing in the spring of 2010, and we went to Turin to see it last May. I have also written a piece on what I consider to be the actual grail object – the “True Holy Grail.” This is available as an essay, and can be accessed as follows:

<http://www.unholygrail.net/docs/TheTrueHolyGrail.pdf>

I finally finished Book One of the series – The Story of Judas Iscariot & Mary Magdalene – and published it in 2007. The work now continues on getting Book Two ready for publication.