



Good day Worthy Knights,

In this part 26, represented on the RCC Certificate:

(Wikipedia)

**Apollo** is one of the Olympian deities in classical Greek and Roman mythology. He has been recognized as a god of archery, music and dance, truth and prophecy, healing and diseases, the Sun and light, poetry, protection of herds and many more. One of the most important and complex of the Greek gods, he is the son of Zeus and Leto, and the twin brother of Artemis, goddess of the hunt.

As the patron deity of Delphi, Apollo is an oracular god, the prophetic deity of the Delphic Oracle. He is the god who affords help and wards off evil. Delphic Apollo is the patron of seafarers, foreigners and the protector of fugitives and refugees.

Medicine and healing are associated with Apollo, whether through the god himself or mediated through his son Asclepius. He delivered people from epidemics, yet he is also a god who could bring ill-health and deadly plague with his arrows. The invention of archery itself is credited to Apollo and his sister Artemis. Apollo is usually described as carrying a golden bow and a quiver of silver arrows.

Apollo's capacity to make youths grow is one of the best attested facets of his panhellenic cult persona. As the protector of young (kourotrophos), Apollo is concerned with the health and education of children. He presided over their passage into adulthood. Long hair, which was the prerogative of boys, was cut at the coming of age (ephebeia) and dedicated to Apollo.

In Hellenistic times, especially during the 5th century BCE, as Apollo Helios he became identified among Greeks with Helios, Titan god of the Sun. In Latin texts, however, there was no conflation of Apollo with Sol among the classical Latin poets until 1st century CE. Apollo and Helios/Sol remained separate beings in literary and mythological texts until the 5th century CE.

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“At this stage, Constantine believed it was a manifestation of Apollo, whom he had identified as the Sun god. We have several coins from these years, which show Constantine with the Sun god's chariot on his shield, and Apollo next to him. After Constantine had captured Rome, he rededicated the Colossus of the Sun, next to the Colosseum; that this monument was dear to him, is suggested by the fact that his triumphal arch was almost next to it.

Apart from his political motives to support the growing army of priests, Constantine may have had a secret. What is more interesting is that it seems that the bishop of Rome knew about it and supported him in this hidden aspect of his life. The truth was that Constantine outwardly supported the new religion but still worshiped the Sun and pagan symbols.

Constantine grew up in the court of the Emperor Constantine Chlorus, who was a devotee of the Unconquered Sun. His mother, Empress Helena, was a Christian who travelled through the Middle East searching for key sites connected to Jesus.

According to ancient texts, she identified important places mentioned in the Bible. But young Constantine didn't appear to follow his mother's religious interests. He worshiped the Sun, or was devoted to Mithraism.

After his official conversion to Christianity in 312, Constantine built his triumphal arch in Rome. It is interesting that it wasn't dedicated to the symbols of Christianity, but to the Unconquered Sun. During his reign, he changed many aspects connected with pagan cults, but that doesn't mean that he stopped the cultivation of old traditions.

He often named them differently, but still allowed for pagan practices in many ways. For example, in 321 Constantine legislated that the celebration of the Day of the Sun should be a state holiday – a day off for everyone."

### **The Mysterious Column of Emperor Constantine**

In 330, Constantine set up a statue in Constantinople which is a key to understanding his private beliefs. After decades of supporting Christianity, he appeared as a statue of the Sun god. The column became the centre of the Forum of Constantine, nowadays known as Cemberlitas Square in Istanbul.

The column is 35 meters tall, but in ancient times it was 15 meters taller and ended with an impressive statue of the Emperor. The column was decorated with pagan symbolism supported by some Christian decoration.

The statue on the top of the monument presented Constantine in the likeness of Apollo with a sun crown, a symbol of the kings from the times of Alexander the Great. It is said that he carried an orb in his hand containing a fragment of the True Cross.

