



During the 600s and 700s AD large parts of the Holy Land, including the city of Jerusalem, had been conquered by Muslim armies from Arabia. In general, Muslim rulers treated Christians living in and visiting the region with tolerance. However, during the early 1000s AD another group of Muslims, the Turks, seized the Holy Land. The Turks were less tolerant than previous rulers with many Christian pilgrims claiming to have been attacked on their journeys.

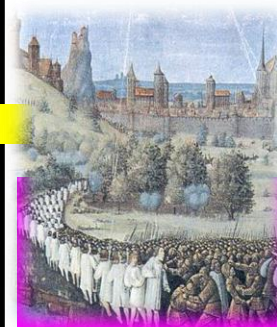
The Turks also began capturing large areas of the Byzantine Empire, even threatening the capital city of Constantinople. In 1071 AD a huge Turkish force almost wiped out the Byzantine army at the Battle of Manzikert leaving the empire almost defenseless. In 1095 the Byzantine emperor, Alexios I, wrote a letter to Pope Urban II – leader of the Catholic church – asking for help to defeat the Turks.



Although Alexios only wanted the pope to send a few hundred professional knights, Urban saw this as his opportunity to increase his power and influence into the Holy Land. The pope organized a huge meeting at a place called Clermont in France. There he called for all of Europe's Christians to help retake the Holy Land from the Turks. He promised that anyone who made the journey (called a Crusade) would have all their sins forgiven.

Urban's message spread throughout Europe. People began flocking to France, often abandoning their homes, jobs, and families. Many were attracted by the promise that their souls would be saved from the fires of hell. Others believed that they would be able to gain wealth by taking the property of any Turks they killed. There was also the opportunity for adventure and excitement at a time when many

people never travelled more than a few miles from the homes in their entire lives.



Many of the first Crusaders to travel to the Holy Land weren't soldiers but simply ordinary peasants led by a wild preacher called Peter the Hermit. As they travelled through Europe, members of the Peasant's Crusade attacked towns and villages looking for food or valuables. They also targeted Jewish communities whom they blamed for the death of Christ. When the peasant's reached Constantinople, Alexios refused to allow them to enter the city. Instead he had them shipped across the Bosphorus (a narrow stretch of water dividing Europe from Asia) as soon as possible. Once in Asia Minor the Peasant's Crusade was quickly defeated by the Turkish army.

In 1099 the professional soldiers and knights of the 1st Crusade began to arrive in the Holy Land. At this time the Muslims were fighting amongst themselves – leaving them weak and disorganized. After only a month of fighting, in July of 1099, the Crusaders captured Jerusalem. Over the next few days they massacred almost the entire Muslim population of the city along with thousands of Jews and even other Christians. The leaders of the 1st Crusade then divided up the Holy Land between them – creating four small kingdoms. They also introduced the Feudal and manor systems that they had used in Europe. To make up for their small numbers, they built large stone castles which they could use to control the land and trade routes.



The Crusader Kingdoms only lasted for around 50 years before they came under serious attack from Muslim forces. After losing large areas of land, the Europeans launched the 2nd Crusade in 1147. However this crusade was a huge failure due to poor planning. Many of the crusaders ships sank before ever reaching the Holy Land while the survivors were quickly defeated in battle.



In 1189 a Muslim army, under the leadership of Saladin, recaptured the city of Jerusalem. In response, the rulers of England, France, and the Holy Roman Empire launched the 3rd Crusade. Very quickly, however, the three kings began to argue amongst themselves with the kings of France and the Holy Roman Empire returning home. The king of England, Richard I, managed to capture a few cities but in the end he could not capture Jerusalem. Eventually, Richard and Saladin signed a peace treaty in which the Muslims stayed in control of the city while Christian pilgrims were given protection.

In 1201 another group of knights arrived in the city of Venice, Italy, to begin the 4th Crusade. The leader of the crusade had made an agreement with the leader of Venice, the Doge, to pay them for ships to sail them to the Holy Land. However not enough knights arrived in Venice to pay the bill. The Doge then made a proposal to the knights that they could pay off their debt if they attacked the city of Zara – one of Venice's main trade rivals. The Crusaders did this even though Zara was a Christian city.



The 4th Crusade then took an even stranger turn when, in 1204, its members attacked and sacked the city of Constantinople – also a major trade rival of Venice. The city that had originally asked for help to defend against Muslims had been attacked by Christians.

More crusades followed over the next 100 years but none were really successful. By 1300 the last of the Crusader Kingdoms had been conquered. In 1453 a Turkish army managed to capture the city of Constantinople, bringing the Byzantine Empire to an end.

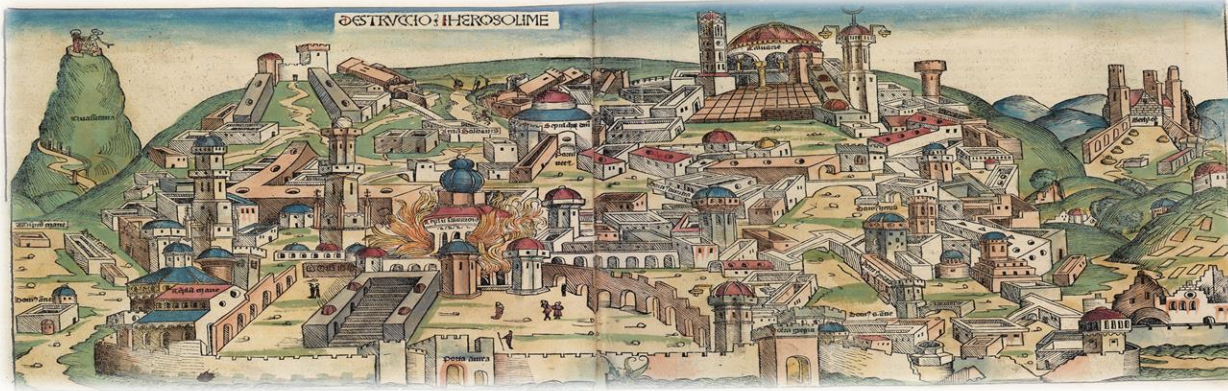


Although the crusades had failed in their goal to recapture the Holy Land, they did have several important effects. Trade grew between Europe and Asia as Europeans learned about new products from the East such as exotic fruits, silks, cotton, and spices. Europeans also gained knowledge about mathematics, medicine, gunpowder, architecture, and astronomy from Muslims. The crusades also had a big impact on governments. Many kings increased their wealth and power as they were able to take over the lands of lords and knights who had died on crusade. The last major impact of the crusades was in relations between Christians, Jews, and Muslims. Hostile feelings were created during the Crusades which have lasted into the present day.

INSTRUCTIONS

In the boxes summarize and show:

- 1 – What the Turks did in the 1000s AD
- 2 – What the Emperor of Constantinople did in 1095
- 3 – Why people went on Crusade.
- 4 – What happened to the Peasants Crusade
- 5 – What the knights of the 1st Crusade did in 1099.
- 6 – What the knights of the 1st Crusade set up in the Holy Land.
- 7 – Why the 2nd Crusade was launched and what happened to it.
- 8 – What happened during the 3rd Crusade.
- 9 – What happened during the 4th Crusade.
- 10 – What Europeans learned because of the Crusades.
- 11 – How and why kings gained power during the Crusades.
- 12 – What effect the Crusades had on relations between Christians, Muslims, and Jews.



Jerusalem



Turkish Warrior on Horseback



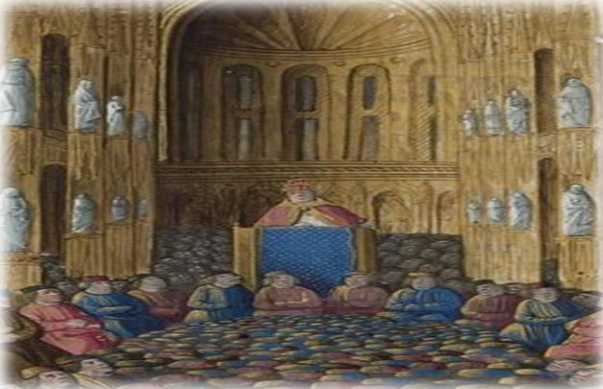
Battle of Manzikert



Alexios I



Pope Urban II



Urban Addressing the Crowd at Clermont



Medieval Idea of Hell



Peter the Hermit Preaching Crusade



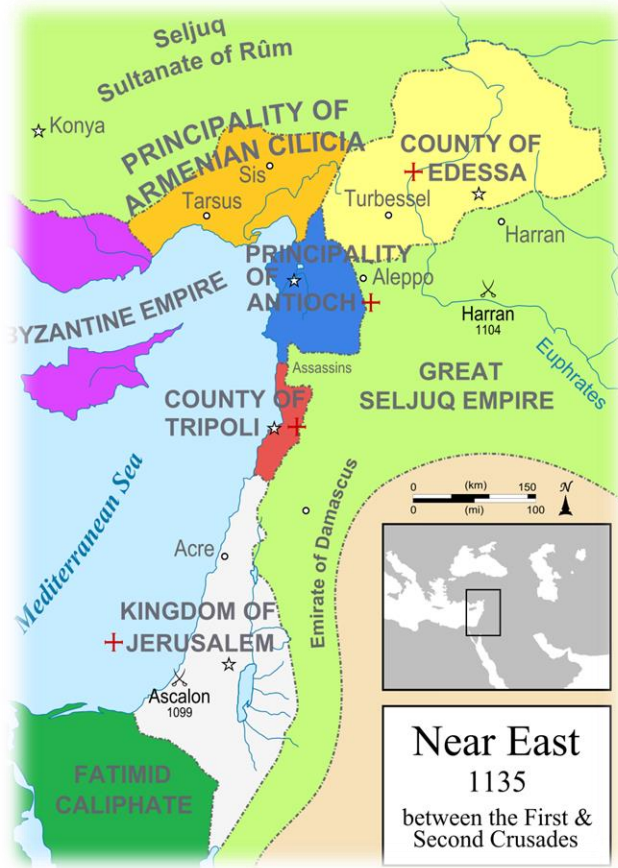
Jewish Massacre



Destruction of the Peasants Crusade



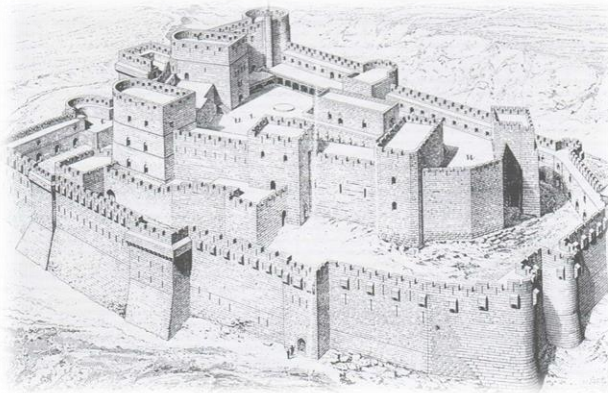
Leaders of the 1st Crusade



Crusader Kingdoms



Crusader Capture of Jerusalem



Crusader Castle



Remains of the 2nd Crusade



Destruction of the Army of Jerusalem



Siege of Jerusalem - 1189



Surrender of Jerusalem to Saladin



Richard I & Saladin



The Doge of Venice



City of Venice



Crusaders Attacking Zara



Crusaders Besiege Constantinople



Crusaders Enter Constantinople



Muslims Attack the City of Acre



Shrinking Crusader Kingdoms



Fall of Constantinople to the Turks



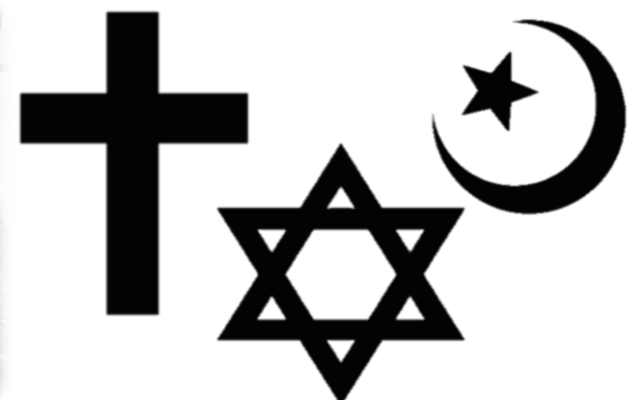
Medieval Merchants



Spices



Knight's Tomb



Christian, Jewish, & Islamic Symbols



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