

# THE CRUSADES



*The cross that appears on the shield was common during the Crusades as it represented God and the righteous beliefs with which the Crusaders fought their campaign. Note however that in the centre of the shield there appears a crest or insignia. This was to identify the knight to his allies in battle.*

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**Richard I** (Richard the Lionhearted) -- In 1198, his great seal bore a single rampant lion, but his shield was "Gules three lions passant guardant," the three lions reportedly representing England, Normandy, and Aquitaine. The same arms continued for **John, Henry III, Edward I, and Edward II.**

In this section of work you will learn the following things:

- What a crusade was;
- About Muhammad and the Muslims;
- About the First Crusade.

## **What was a crusade?**

Crusade comes from the Latin word crux, meaning a 'cross'. It referred to the cross on which Jesus Christ was crucified and to go on a crusade meant going to fight for Christ. In 1100, it meant going to fight the **Muslims** in the **Holy Land**, around Jerusalem, where Christ had lived.

## **Muhammad and Muslims**

Muhammad was born in the city of Mecca in AD 570. He founded a great religion and his followers were called Muslims. Some of his followers were warlike and over the next few hundred years they captured land around the Mediterranean Sea.

In AD 637, the Muslims captured the city of Jerusalem, which was a holy city to **Christians** because Christ had lived and died in that area.

**Q1.** How does the word crusade get its name?

**Q2.** What was a crusade?

**Q3.** What were Muhammad's followers called?

**Q4.** What happened in 1071?

## **Jerusalem**

For a long time, the Muslims allowed Christian to visit Jerusalem as pilgrims, and many thousands made the journey from Europe. Then, in 1071, a group of fanatical Turkish Muslims captured Jerusalem. They would not tolerate Christians and began to ill-treat them.

## **Pope Urban II calls for a crusade – See Source 1**

Pope Urban II heard of this and in 1095 called a mass meeting in France of all the knights of Christendom. He made a passionate speech to them, calling on them to fight against the evil enemy to regain Jerusalem. At the end of his speech, thousands surged forward, shouting that they were ready to fight and die for Christ.

- **Urban** appealed to the knight's religious convictions.
- **Urban** said Muslim Turks were robbing and torturing Christian pilgrims journeying to the holy land.
- The war offered knights a chance for glory and wealth.

## **The First Crusade 1096**

The next year they set off on the First Crusade. There were about 30,000 foot soldiers and 10,000 knights on horseback, among them Robert, the eldest son of William the Conqueror. They made their way through Europe and into Turkey, finally reaching Jerusalem three years after they set off. They took Jerusalem in 1099, and held the city and the land around it for the next 87 years.

## Richard and Saladin

The crusaders built strong castles, and seemed safe from attack. However, in the 1180's the Arabs found a new, strong leader, **Saladin**, who wiped out the crusaders main army at the Battle of Hattin 1187. Soon the crusaders had almost been pushed into the sea. A call for a new crusade went out from the Pope, and the Kings of Europe answered his plea. **Richard the Lion heart** led an English army, but he and his fellow kings failed to drive Arabs from Jerusalem. Other crusades followed, including the children's crusade of 1212, which involved peasants and children from the Rhineland and Southern France.

### Key words

**Christendom** – all the land in Europe where Christians lived

**Christian** – a follower of Christ

**Holy Land** – the land where Jesus Christ lived

**Muslim** – a follower of Muhammad

### SUMMARY

- A crusade was an expedition to fight for Christ.
- Muhammad founded a great religion that dominated many lands around the Mediterranean.
- Muhammad's followers are called Muslims.
- Fanatical Muslims captured Jerusalem in 1071.
- In 1095 Pope Urban II called for a crusade to drive the Muslims from Jerusalem.

### SUMMARY ACTIVITY

Why did the knights go on the First Crusade?

Draw a spider diagram (include a picture in the middle) showing any other reasons you can think of that some of the soldiers might have had for going on the First Crusade.





**SOURCE 1** - Pope calls for the First Crusade, Council of Clermont, France, 27 November 1095

**There are actually 5 different accounts of Pope Urban II's speech. Although there are some similarities, there are enough differences to make determining what was actually said by Urban virtually impossible. We must therefore understand that this "speech" is really a "best guess" or "general outline" of what was actually said.**

“Beloved brothers, I speak as a messenger to reveal to you God’s will. We cannot refuse at once to give the help we have promised to our brothers in the East. They now need it desperately. The Turks and Arabs have attacked them and advanced into Romania ... They have beaten the Christians seven times in battle, have killed and captured a large number of them, have wrecked their churches and laid waste to their land. If we do not go to help, the true servants of God in the East will not be able to survive.

I therefore urge and beg you who are the voices of Christ, both rich and poor, to drive the foul vermin from the lands where your Christian brothers live and to bring speedy help to the worshippers of Christ ... Promise your support without delay. Let the warriors get ready and find what they need to pay for the journey. When the spring comes let them leave in good spirit under the banner of the Lord.”

## GOING ON A CRUSADE

Think of what you have to do when you go on holiday. What would it be like to go on a crusade in an age when you would have to travel on foot or horseback and by sailing boat, and when there were no modern roads, radio, phone or tv?

1. Read the message from the Pope (**Source 1**). (**Now look at Source 2**) (a) Is the sermon a genuine one? (b) You decide to go on a crusade after hearing the Pope’s sermon. List your reasons for going. (c) What thoughts and feelings does the Pope have about the Turks and Arabs?

Why might he think this way?

2. **Using Source 3**. Do you think the Muslim people were more advanced in learning than the English? Give reasons for your answer.
3. Design your own crusader banner or shield.



## **SOURCE 2** – Pope Urban II's possible motives (reasons) for calling the 1st Crusade

- Assert the supremacy of the Pope over the Byzantine Emperor as the leader of all Christians.
- Bring an end to the constant feudal warfare between Christians in Europe by redirecting their violence toward the Muslims in the Holy Land.
- Rescue and protect the "Holy Land" - land associated with the life of Jesus Christ, the major prophet of Christianity.
- Increase the power and prestige of the Roman Catholic Church and the power of the Pope.
- Re-establish safe and unhindered access to the holy city of Jerusalem for the thousands of Christian pilgrims who travel there each year.

## **SOURCE 3** – What did Europe gain from contact with the Muslim East?

### New farming ideas and animals

windmills  
mules  
donkeys  
Arab horses

### New goods from the East

cotton  
muslin  
damask  
figs, plums, apricots, melons, dates  
oils  
spices  
perfume

### Knowledge

arabic numbers  
decimals  
geometry  
algebra  
medicine  
military science  
biology  
astronomy