
The Crusades: Motivations, Administration, and Cultural Influence

What were the Crusades?

The Crusades were a series of military campaigns during the time of Medieval Europe against the Muslims of the Middle East. It was an attack on the Catholic Christians on the Muslims, to regain the Holy Land as in 1070 more and more Turkish nomads settled in the Christian Byzantine Empire and the stopped Christians pilgrims from entering. The Muslims were ahead of the Christian countries scientifically and culturally.

Why was Jerusalem so important?

Jerusalem was important to 3 religions! They each have an important place each the Muslims, The Dome of the Rock, Jews have the Western Wall and the Christians have The Church of the Holy Sepulcher.

The Dome of Rock is important to Muslims as Islamic tradition says that the Prophet Mohammad ascended to heaven on a winged horse from this spot.

The Western Wall is important to the Jews as it is the last remnant of the Second Temple compound and one of the holiest sites in Judaism.

Finally, the Church of the Holy Sepulcher is important to Christians as it marks the sites where Jesus was crucified and buried.

Why did people take part?

There are many reasons why people joined the Crusades, however, I will go into depth on four of the main ones. One, people went on Crusades because they wanted to take back Jerusalem as they thought it was where Jesus was buried and crucified it was rightfully theirs. Second, some people did it for honor, revenge or love. Third, the people wanted their sins forgiven, to go to heaven or take back goods from the Holy Lands or they had committed a crime and were forced to go by the Church. However, some people went on the crusades for fun!

Taking back Jerusalem was the main reason why the Crusades occurred. The church thought that since Jesus had lived and died there that it was theirs. So the church had to make up a new rule saying that all the people that God told the Pope that it is alright to kill or even better, rewarded to kill anyone that does not believe in God (this is the Muslims). This was actually not true, God never actually told the Pope this. The Pope just made it up so that the Christians could take over Jerusalem again.

The second reason was for honor, revenge and love. Christians that went on Crusades for honour probably wanted to be known more by their village, to be more famous or maybe they went fighting for someone else. The people that went on the Crusades for revenge went probably because a Muslim may have killed a relative or friend. The people who went for love

probably went because their wife was killed by a Muslim or a Christian and a Muslim could be fighting for a woman.

Some Christians went on Crusades because they wanted to go to heaven and shorten their time in Purgatory. They also went to be forgiven. Some also went because if they killed a Muslim they would be allowed all of their possessions.

- To obey the Pope's call.
- To be forgiven for past sins. This was important for knights who had killed many people in battle.
- To steal and kill. Kings encouraged violent knights to go on Crusade because it got them out of the country.
- To see the world, have an adventure and prove their bravery.
- To get land overseas. This was tempting for a younger son who would not inherit his father's lands.
- Serfs, peasants who belonged to their lord, joined the Crusades because the Pope promised them their freedom if they went.

Why were there multiple crusades?

On November 27, 1095, in Clermont, France, Pope Urban II called for a crusade to help the Byzantines and to free the city of Jerusalem

The Second Crusade (1147–1149) was the second major crusade launched from Europe as a Catholic ('Latin') holy war against Islam. The Second Crusade was started in response to the fall of the County of Edessa in 1144 to the forces of Zengi.

The Egyptian and Syrian forces were ultimately unified under Saladin, who employed them to reduce the Christian states and recapture Jerusalem in 1187. Spurred by religious zeal, King Henry II of England and King Philip II of France (known as Philip Augustus) ended their conflict with each other to lead a new crusade. The Third Crusade was caused by the capture of Jerusalem in 1187 by Saladin, the sultan of Egypt. Having made himself sultan of Egypt, Saladin united the Moslems of Syria under his sway and then advanced against the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem. The Christians met him in a great battle near the lake of Galilee.

The Fourth Crusade (1202–04) was a Western European armed expedition called by Pope Innocent III, originally intended to reconquering Muslim-controlled Jerusalem by means of an invasion through Egypt. The Fourth Crusade (1202–1204) was originally intended to conquer Muslim-controlled Jerusalem by means of an invasion through Egypt. Instead, in April 1204, the Crusaders of Western Europe invaded and sacked the Christian (Eastern Orthodox) city of Constantinople, capital of the Eastern Roman Empire (Byzantine Empire).

The Fifth Crusade (1217–1221) was an attempt by Western Europeans to reacquire Jerusalem and the rest of the Holy Land by first conquering the powerful Ayyubid state in Egypt.

Many historians disagree about what to include as “the Crusades”, but a sensible list would include

The First Crusade was 1096 – 1099. It was the first army of peasants led by Peter the Hermit (a

French priest and key leader of the Crusades) set off for the Holy Land. They were massacred by the Turks. An army of knights followed, led by Godfrey of Bouillon (Frankish knight and another leader of the first crusades), which massacred Muslims and captured Jerusalem in 1099. The Crusaders massacred the Muslims until, it was said, the streets ran red with blood.

The Second Crusade was from 1145 to 1149 and an army led by King Louis VII of France invaded the Holy Land, but was defeated at Damascus.

The Third Crusade was from 1189 to 1192, this crusade was because the Muslim ruler Saladin had recaptured Jerusalem. The Crusaders (who included King Richard I of England) captured the port of Acre. But they quarreled, and failed to capture Jerusalem. On the way home, Richard was kidnapped and held ransom until February 1194 when the English paid for his release.

The Fourth was from 1202 to 1204 and it was because the Pope wanted to unite western and eastern Christians under his authority. He diverted this Crusade, with the help of Venice, and captured Constantinople in 1204. Christians fought Christians.

The Children's Crusade was a bit of a horrible one in 1212 when an army of young people set off on Crusade. They were kidnapped and sold as slaves.

The Fifth, Sixth and Seventh crusades lasted from 1217 to 1250 and they all failed.

The Battle of Nicopolis sometimes known as the "Last Crusade" was in the year 1396 and it was an army of French and Hungarian knights that were massacred.