

# Reading Essentials and Study Guide



## Crusades and Culture in the Middle Ages, 1000–1500

### Lesson 2 The Crusades

#### ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

*How did the Church influence political and cultural changes in medieval Europe? How did both innovations and disruptive forces affect people during the Middle Ages?*

#### Reading HELPDESK

##### Academic Vocabulary

**proceed** to advance or move along a course

**libel** a written or an oral defamatory statement or representation that conveys an unjustly unfavorable impression

##### Content Vocabulary

**Crusades** military expeditions carried out by European Christians in the Middle Ages to regain the Holy Land from the Muslims

**infidel** an unbeliever; a term applied to the Muslims during the Crusades

#### TAKING NOTES: *Categorizing*

**ACTIVITY** As you read, use a table like the one below to identify each of the Crusades and the result of each.

Crusade	Result

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## Crusades and Culture in the Middle Ages, 1000–1500

### Lesson 2 The Crusades, *continued*

#### IT MATTERS BECAUSE

European Christians organized a number of military expeditions from the eleventh to the thirteenth centuries. Their goal was to regain the Holy Land from the Muslims. These expeditions are known as the Crusades.

#### The Early Crusades

**Guiding Question** *What were the religious, political, and economic motivations behind the Crusades?*

The **Crusades** started when the Byzantine emperor Alexius I Comnenus asked for help to defend his empire against the Seljuk Turks. The Seljuk Turks were Muslims who had taken control of Asia Minor. Pope Urban II responded to the request. He saw an opportunity to provide leadership for a great cause. He wanted Europe's warriors to free Jerusalem and the Holy Land from the Muslims. Christians viewed the Muslims as **infidels**, or unbelievers.

The Council of Clermont took place in southern France near the end of 1095. Urban II asked Christians to take up their weapons and join in a holy war. The pope promised that those who died in the war would have all of their sins forgiven. The excited crowd of people responded that the war was God's will.

Warriors of western Europe, particularly France, formed the first crusading armies. These knights were mostly motivated by religion, but some wanted adventure and welcomed the chance to fight. Others saw an opportunity to gain wealth and a possible title. Italian merchants also wanted new trade in Byzantine and Muslim lands.

The Byzantines became worried after asking for help. Alexius I's daughter was Anna Comnena, the Byzantine Empire's only female historian. The western crusading armies would have to go through Byzantine lands to get to the Holy Land. Alexius and Anna feared that might be harmful to the Byzantine Empire.

The First Crusade began as three organized groups, mostly made up of French warriors who made their way to the East. The crusading army included thousands of men in cavalry and infantry. They captured Antioch in 1098 and **proceeded** down the Palestinian coast. They avoided the well-defended coastal cities and reached Jerusalem in June 1099. The Holy City was taken with a horrible massacre of its people.

The crusaders organized four Latin crusader states in the East after more conquests. One of these was the kingdom of Jerusalem under Godfrey de Bouillon. He was one of the Frankish leaders of the First Crusade. Godfrey rejected the title of king because he felt that it belonged only to God. Muslim areas surrounded these crusader kingdoms. As a result, the kingdoms depended on Italian cities for supplies. Some Italian port cities, such as Genoa, Pisa, and especially Venice, grew rich and powerful because of this activity.

It was not easy for the crusader kingdoms to support themselves in the East. The Muslims had begun to fight back by the 1140s. One of the Latin kingdoms was defeated by the Muslims. The monastic leader Bernard of Clairvaux called for another crusade. He said that the enemies of Christianity were attacking because of Christians' sins. He wanted Christians to fight to keep Christianity alive in the Holy Land. Bernard managed to get support from two powerful rulers in a Second Crusade. King Louis VII of France and Emperor Conrad III of Germany agreed to help, but this campaign was a total failure.

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**networks**

## Crusades and Culture in the Middle Ages, 1000–1500

### Lesson 2 The Crusades, *continued*

In 1187 Jerusalem was taken by Muslim forces under Saladin. Saladin had made himself sultan of Egypt in 1169. He led the Muslim attack against the Christian kingdom of Jerusalem. Three European rulers then agreed to lead a Third Crusade after Saladin's success: German emperor Frederick Barbarossa, English king Richard I (Richard the Lionhearted), and French king Philip II Augustus.

Some members of the Third Crusade arrived in the East by 1189, but they had problems. Frederick drowned in a local river. The English and French arrived by sea and captured the coastal cities, but they were unable to move inland. Richard negotiated a settlement, or agreement, with Saladin after Philip returned home. It allowed Christian pilgrims free access to Jerusalem.



#### Reading Progress Check

**Summarizing** How many early Crusades were there? What was the common factor?

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## The Later Crusades

**Guiding Question** *How did the Crusades affect Europe and Southwest Asia?*

Pope Innocent III started the Fourth Crusade about six years after Saladin's death in 1193. The crusading army entered a fight over the Byzantine throne as the army headed east. The Byzantine Empire was Venice's greatest commercial competitor. Venice's leaders used the situation to weaken the empire. The Crusaders attacked the capital of the Byzantine Empire, Constantinople, in 1204. This added to the division between the Eastern Orthodox Church and the Catholic Church. Western forces also set up a new Latin empire of Constantinople.

A Byzantine army recaptured Constantinople in 1261. However, the Byzantine Empire was no longer a great Mediterranean power. It was now made up of the city of Constantinople and its surrounding lands, and it also included part of Asia Minor. The empire existed for another 190 years, but it was weak. Its weakness helped the Ottoman Turks conquer it in 1453.

The crusading beliefs continued after the failures. In Germany in 1212, a young man known as Nicholas of Cologne said that God had told him to lead a "children's crusade" to the Holy Land. Thousands of young people joined Nicholas. They made their way down the Rhine River and across Italy, where the pope told them to go home. Most tried to go home. At about the same time, about 20,000 French children headed to Marseille. There, two shipowners agreed to take them to the Holy Land. Seven ships carrying young people left Marseille. Two of the ships went down in a storm. The other five sailed to North Africa where the children were sold into slavery.

The next Crusades of adult warriors were also not very successful. King Louis IX of France organized the last two major Crusades. Louis was defeated by Baybars, the sultan of Egypt. Louis tried again, but he was unsuccessful. He died of the plague without any conquests.

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## Crusades and Culture in the Middle Ages, 1000–1500

### Lesson 2 The Crusades, *continued*

Historians disagree about the effect the Crusades had on European civilization. The Crusades did help the Italian port cities. However, Italian merchants would probably have increased trade with the Eastern world even without the Crusades.

The Crusades had some negative effects on European society. The first widespread attacks on the Jews were related to the Crusades. Some Christians blamed the Jews for the death of Jesus. They argued that it was not right to fight the Muslims while Jews at home were free. The Jews of medieval Europe faced periodic **libels**, attacks, and removals.

Perhaps the greatest impact of the Crusades was political. The Crusades eventually helped to break down feudalism. Nobles who joined the Crusades sometimes sold their lands and freed their serfs. At the same time, kings imposed taxes and raised armies. As a result, the kings were creating stronger central governments as nobles were losing power. Taxes on trade with the East also provided kings with new sources of wealth. This helped the development of true nation-states. Three strong nation-states had developed in Europe by the mid-1400s. These were Spain, England, and France.



#### Reading Progress Check

**Monitoring** Was the Fourth Crusade successful? Explain your answer.

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