

The Crusades



**BEFORE
YOU
READ**

Think of other reasons why people go to war. Do you accept these reasons? Why or why not?

Questions to Explore

1. Why did the Crusades take place?
2. How did the Crusades cause lasting changes in Europe?

Key Term

Crusades

Key People and Places

Pope Urban II

Peter the Hermit

Saladin

Holy Land

Jerusalem

Reach Into Your Background

In this section, you are going to read about wars fought over religion and resources.

On November 18, 1095, a crowd gathered in the French town of Clermont to hear an urgent message from Pope Urban II:

“You common people who have been miserable sinners, become soldiers of Christ! You nobles, do not [quarrel] with one another. Use your arms in a just war! Labor for everlasting reward.”

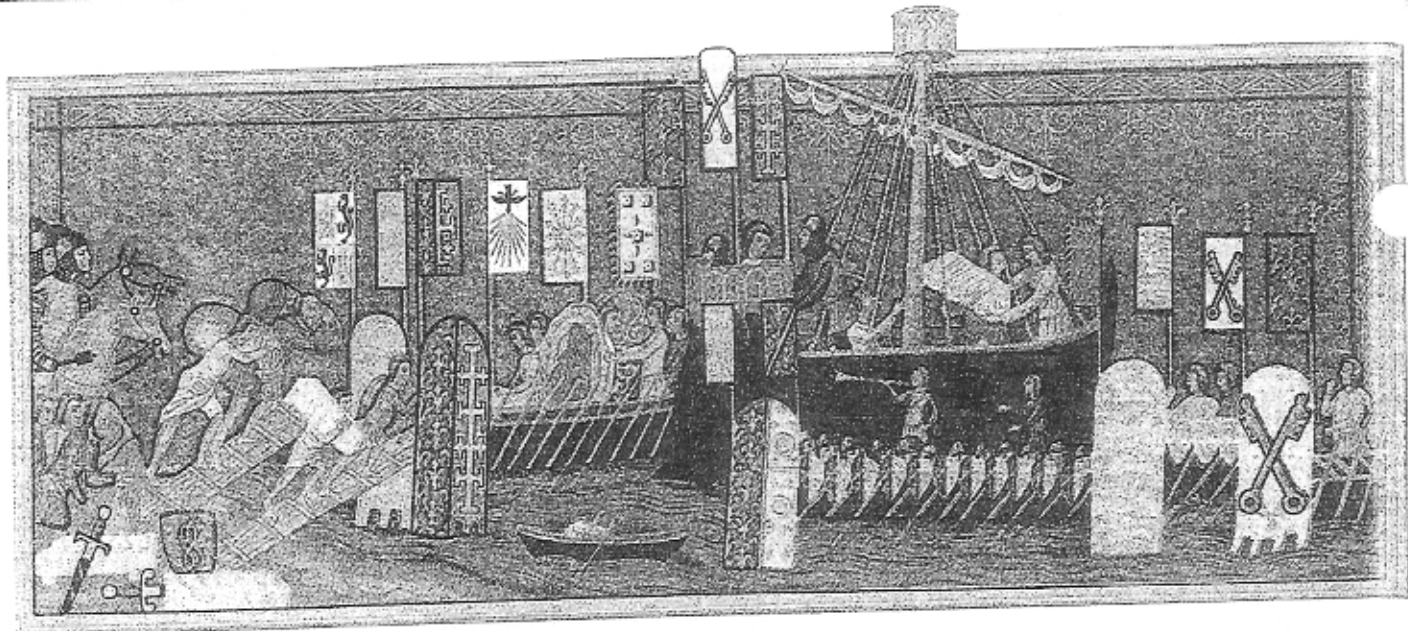
▼ This picture shows Pope Urban II calling for a crusade to the Holy Land.

The war to which Pope Urban II called the people of Europe was in Palestine, a small region on the eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea. Jews, Christians, and Muslims called this place the “Holy Land.” To all three religions it was sacred. Now, said the Pope, the Holy Land had fallen to an enemy. Christians must win it back.

Causes of the Crusades

Over the next 200 years, the Church launched eight bloody wars to capture Palestine. These wars are called the *Crusades*. The word comes from *crux*, the Latin word for “cross.” Crusaders, from knights to peasants, carried the Christian cross into battle against the enemy, the Fatimid dynasty and later, the Seljuk (SEL jook) Turks. Under the





▲ Huge armies of crusader knights sailed to Palestine hoping to drive the Muslim Turks from the Holy Land.

▼ This container, called "The Right Arm of Saint Louis," held the remains of Louis IX of France. He led a crusade to the Holy Land in 1248.



Fatimid caliph al-Hakim, the Christians and Jews were treated harshly and many churches were destroyed. The Fatimids had many enemies, among whom were the Seljuks, who eventually gained control of the Holy Land.

The Rise of the Turks The Seljuks, a Turkish ethnic group, came from Central Asia. They moved into Southwest Asia, where they became Muslims. By 1071, the Turks had invaded and captured much of the Byzantine empire. Then they took the sacred city of Jerusalem from the Byzantines.

The Byzantine emperor in Constantinople asked Pope Urban II to send knights to fight the invaders. The pope agreed.

Attacks on Pilgrims Since about A.D. 300, European Christians had been traveling to Jerusalem. These people were pilgrims—people who journey to a sacred place. When the Turks took over Palestine, they turned the pilgrims away. Some were attacked and murdered. The violence occurred even though Islamic teaching states that Jews and Christians are fellow believers in God. The Turks' attacks gave the pope a religious reason to call Christians to action.

Land, Trade, and Wealth The Church had other reasons for launching the Crusades. Europeans wanted not only Palestine's holy sites, but control of its key trade routes between Africa, Asia, and Europe as well. The map on the next page shows Palestine's ideal location lying close to three continents.

The Church also had its eye on the rich empire of the Byzantines. Although Pope Urban II had agreed to help the Byzantine emperor, the two were rivals. The pope hoped to weaken the Byzantine empire and control its wealthy trade routes. This possibility encouraged European merchants to join the crusaders.

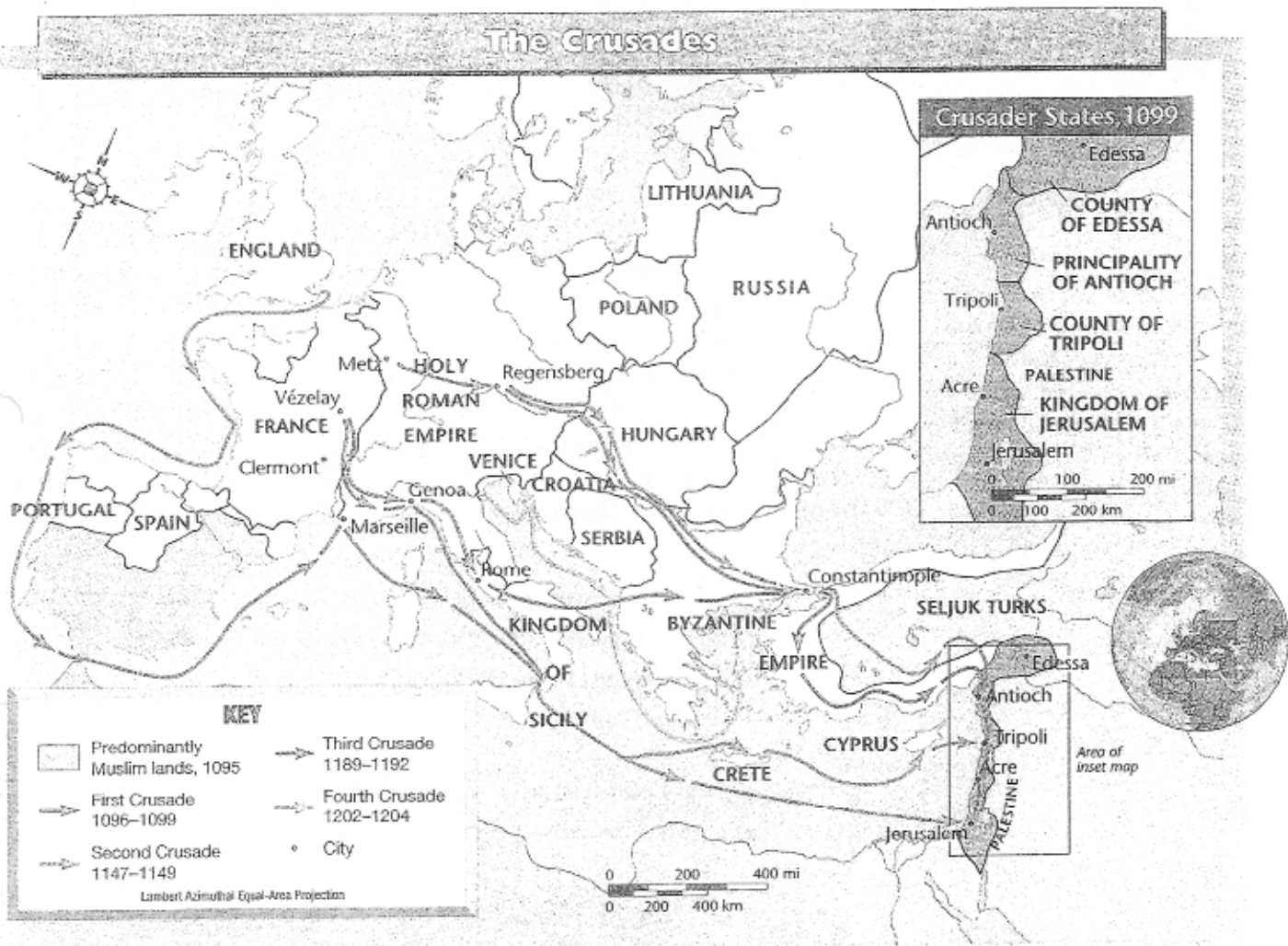
A Series of Crusades

Urban II's best hope for reopening the Holy Land rested with the lords and their trained, experienced knights. But before the lords could assemble armies, a band of common people set out to fight the Muslims.

Peter the Hermit and the People's Crusade In 1096, before the First Crusade, Peter the Hermit, a small, ordinary-looking man who wore monk's robes, gathered an army of common people. In some cases, whole villages packed up and followed him.

Peter, however, had no experience in organizing such a large group. As more people joined, food became scarce. Crusaders broke away to loot towns. Many died when local troops fought back. Others were taken prisoner.

Visualize Visualize a day's march as you follow Peter.



Map Study In 1099, after the First Crusade, the crusaders set up four separate states in the Holy Land. These states are shown in detail on the inset map. Later crusades—including several not shown on the map—were launched to protect the crusader states. Even so,

by the late 1200s, Muslim forces had retaken all of the Holy Land. **Movement** In which crusade did crusaders travel to the Holy Land mostly by sea? Which crusade did not reach the Holy Land? Where did it end?



▲ The city of Jerusalem was very important to Christians. In fact, many considered Jerusalem to be the center of the world. This world map, taken from an English prayer book made in the 1200s, shows Jerusalem in the center.

Peter and the rest of his army went on to Constantinople. The Byzantine emperor advised him to wait for help from an army of knights. Peter agreed, but his army rebelled. His soldiers attacked the Turks, who easily defeated them. Only a small part of his army survived.

At last, armies of knights arrived in Constantinople. They treated the Byzantines badly, killing and looting. The Byzantines regretted asking for their help.

Joined by the last of Peter's army, the knights captured Jerusalem in 1099. While taking control of the city, the crusaders killed 10,000 of its Muslim, Christian, and Jewish inhabitants. This was the First Crusade.

Later Crusades After the First Crusade, Christians set up four kingdoms in Palestine. They are shown on the map on the previous page. The Muslims made repeated attacks to try to destroy these kingdoms. This forced the Christians to launch three more Crusades to keep control of the region.

Then a strong Muslim leader rose to power. He was known to Europeans as Saladin (SAL uh din). By 1187, Saladin had retaken Jerusalem. King Richard I of England tried to persuade Saladin to return the holy city to the Christians. Saladin refused, saying:

“To us Jerusalem is as precious . . . as it is to you, because it is the place from where our Prophet [Muhammad] made his journey by night to heaven. . . . Do not dream that we will give it up to you.”

Even so, Saladin had great respect for King Richard. So he agreed to reopen the city to Christian pilgrims.

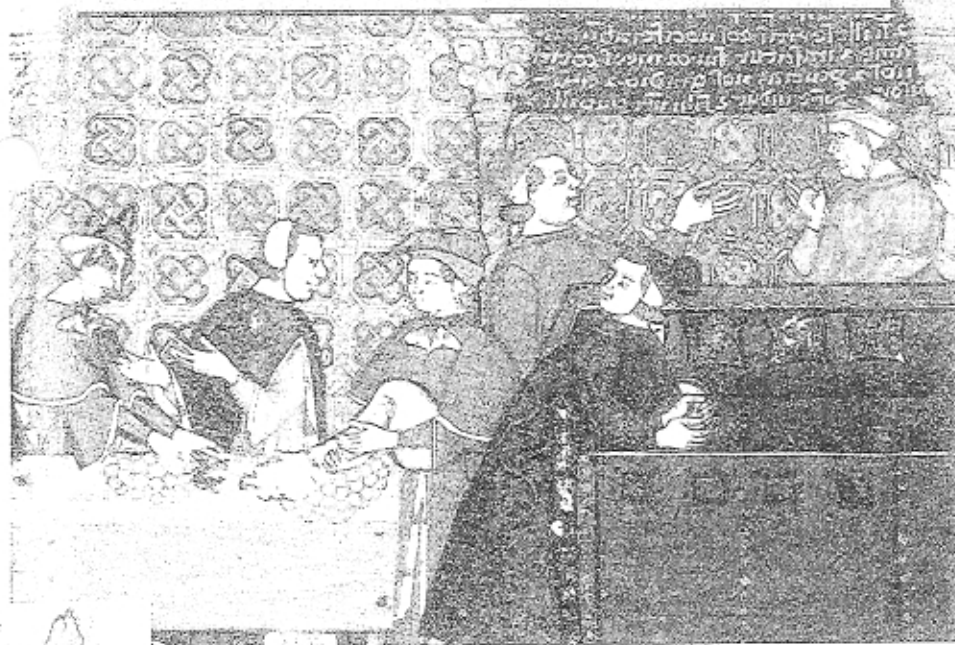
Results of the Crusades

Though Christians never recaptured the Holy Land, the Crusades changed Europe in important and lasting ways. In particular, they increased trade and made the use of money more common.

For much of the Middle Ages, most people tended not to use money. Instead they exchanged services for land or protection. But crusading nobles needed to buy armor and supplies. They raised money by letting individuals, and also whole towns that were built on their lands, l

READ ACTIVELY

Think: What changes do you think the Crusades made in European life?



As the use of money grew, so did the banking industry. The earliest European banks were set up in the great Italian trade cities, such as Florence, Siena, and Venice. This picture shows Italian bankers taking deposits and issuing loans. **Critical Thinking** How did the Crusades contribute to the growth of banking?

their freedom. In this way, feudalism grew weaker, towns became more important, and money came into widespread use.

During the Crusades, European ships carried armies and supplies across the Mediterranean Sea. These ships returned from the Holy Land with rugs, jewelry, glass, and spices. Soon, these goods were in great demand. Thus, the Crusades helped trade grow during the later Middle Ages.

SECTION 3 REVIEW

1. Define Crusades.
2. Identify (a) Pope Urban II, (b) Peter the Hermit, (c) Saladin, (d) Holy Land, (e) Jerusalem.

3. (a) Why did Pope Urban II launch the Crusades? (b) What were some other reasons for the Crusades?
4. How did the Crusades lead to economic changes in Europe?

Critical Thinking

5. Recognizing Cause and Effect What problems led the crusaders to fail?

ACROSS THE WORLD

By Francesco Pegolotta

During the Crusades, European Christians learned much about the world outside Europe. They came into contact with new people, places, and ideas. They came to understand that millions of people lived in regions they had not even known existed. Some Europeans traveled to far-off places. Most of these travelers were either traders or priests hoping to convert people to Christianity. Francesco Pegolotta (frahn CHAY scoh pay goh LAWTEE uh), a merchant from Florence, Italy, was one of these travelers. His book, *Merchant's Handbook*, was a valuable manual about trading with Asia.

Activity

6. Writing to Learn Were Peter the Hermit and his peasant crusaders determined and brave, or just foolish? Write a newspaper editorial on this question. Give reasons for your opinion.