

The Crusades



In the year 610 Abu al-Qasim Muhammad claimed to have received revelations from the angel Gabriel. He called these revelations the *Quran*. He began preaching his message of salvation and in the year 630 after seven years of jihad, or holy war, Muhammad and his followers conquered parts of Saudi Arabia and entered Mecca in triumph.

After his death in 632 his successors continued to spread his message and in the year 638 they captured Jerusalem. In 688 the Muslims constructed a place of public prayer known as the Dome on the Rock built on the tip of Mount Moriah, the traditional site of the Jewish Temple, where Jews and Christians believe

Abraham was to sacrifice his son Isaac. For Muslims the Dome on the Rock affirmed the belief that Islam was superior to Judaism and Christianity. By the eleventh century the Muslims had captured two-thirds of what had once been Christian lands.



Inside the Dome is the rock where it is believed by Jews, Muslims and Christians that Abraham built an altar to sacrifice his son.

Muslims believe that the Jews corrupted the Holy Scriptures and that the son God told Abraham to sacrifice was their descendant Ishmael and not Isaac as Scripture records.

This rock is also the site where Muslims believe that Muhammad ascended into heaven.

Read more [here](#) from Muslim Voices. org

Pope Urban II



After 400 years of Muslim aggression and a request from the Byzantine Christians in Constantinople, Pope Urban II called for a Crusade to liberate Jerusalem from Muslim control. These military expeditions became known as the Crusades, a word derived from the Latin word *cruciatus* or *cruce signatus*-one signed with the cross.

An Indulgence, remission from temporal punishment for sins already forgiven, was granted by the Pope to the Crusaders.

At the Council of Clermont in 1095 Pope Urban II made his appeal for a Crusade to liberate the Holy Land:

“Men of God, men chosen and blessed among all, combine your forces. Take the cross to the Holy Sepulcher assured of the imperishable glory that awaits you in God’s kingdom. Let each one of you deny himself and take up his cross.”

The crowd responded, “God wills it!”



August 15, 1096 was the departure date for the official crusader armies throughout Europe to begin the trip to Constantinople. In June of 1097, after ten grueling months, the armies of around 60,000 including 7,000 knights gathered just outside Constantinople in Nicaea where they captured Nicaea from the Muslims. Fighting the Muslim armies along the way, the crusaders arrived in Antioch Syria in October of 1097. They captured the city in June of 1098 and now the path to Jerusalem was clear.

After almost three years from their departure date the Crusaders finally arrived outside Jerusalem on June 7, 1099 and began building ladders, siege towers and catapults for the assault on the city of Jerusalem.

On July 8 the Crusaders processed around Jerusalem like Joshua did around the walls of Jericho. The assault began July 13 and on July 22, 1099 the Crusaders celebrated their triumph by entering the burial place of Jesus, the Church of the Holy Sepulcher.

After the victory in Jerusalem the majority of the Crusaders returned home and in less than a hundred years Jerusalem was back in the hands of the Muslims never again to be controlled by Christians.

In 1202 Pope Innocent III called for another crusade to free the Holy Land but instead of going directly to Jerusalem the crusaders ignored the Pope and attacked the city of Zara. Upon hearing of this the crusaders were excommunicated by Pope Innocent. In April of 1204 the Crusaders attacked and destroyed the city of Constantinople the home of the Byzantine Christians further dividing the Catholic Church from the Orthodox. As is the case of any war, atrocities were committed by the Crusaders as well as the Muslims and many innocent people were killed.

The Crusades were spread out over hundreds of years with many victories and many defeats. One thing is for certain; if not for the Crusades the world would be a different place. All of Europe and the entire Holy Land would be Muslim. There would be no trace of the sites Christians hold sacred and Christianity itself would have been an underground religion. Freedom as we know it today would not exist.

Saint James the Muslim Slayer



Before the Crusades were called for, Christians were at war with Muslims. On the 23rd of May 844 in the Rioja region of Spain, legend recalls that a miracle occurred during a battle with Muslims.

José Gonzalez de Tejada, a Spanish historian, wrote: "It was at that time that Saint James appeared, mounted on a strong and beautiful white horse. The sight of him enlivened the Christians and so terrified the infidels who then cowardly turned their backs and retreated, leaving the field covered with Moorish corpses and running with rivers of their blood that, it is said, flowed to the Ebro River some two leagues away from that place."

The bones of the Apostle James are found in the cathedral at Santiago de Compostela, which has been a place of Christian pilgrimage rivaled only by Rome and the Holy Land for more than 1000 years

Some Historians list eight crusades beginning in 1095 and ending in the thirteenth century. Other historians include other conflicts with heretical sects and Muslims for the next 300 years ending with the **Battle of Lepanto** in 1571 the battle that saved the Christian West from defeat at the hands of the Muslims and may well be the most important naval victory in human history that is virtually unknown.



Knowing that the Christian forces were at a distinct material disadvantage, Saint Pope Pius V called for all of Europe to pray the Rosary for victory against the Muslim naval forces. The date of the Christian victory was October 7th and is celebrated as the feast day of Our Lady of the Holy Rosary.

To read the story of the Battle of Lepanto go [HERE](#)



Read about the Barbary pirates [HERE](#)

The Catholic Church wasn't the only institution to go to war with the Muslims. In 1805 the United States Marines attacked Tripoli Lebanon in response to Muslims known as the Barbary pirates who had attacked American merchant ships and demanded ransom.

The line, "To the shores of Tripoli" in the Marine Hymn as well as the Mamaluke sword worn by Marine Corp officers commemorates the victory over the Muslims in 1805.

The term "Leatherneck" used by Marines also dates back to the Muslim wars. Because Muslims were known to cut off heads in battle, the Marines attached leather to their necks in preparation for hand to hand combat thus the nickname, "Leathernecks."

The Inquisition

You will often hear from anti-Catholics and even from historical sources that from one million to fifty million people were killed by the Catholic Church during the Inquisitions. This is factually untrue. During this time heresy was considered by the state to be equal to treason and the state was responsible to protect its citizens from heretical teachings that destroyed the soul.

Reliable scholars put the actual number of those put to death by the State at 4,000 over a 350 year period.

To read the truth about the Inquisitions go [HERE](#)

Recommended book: *The Spanish Inquisition: A Historical Revision* by Henry Kamen

To read the historical truth and debunk the myths about the Crusades read this article by Professor Thomas Madden. Go [HERE](#)

Recommended books: *The Crusades* by Thomas Madden

God's Battalions by Rodney Stark

DVD: *Fire and Sword: The Crusades* by Matthew Arnold purchase [HERE](#)

Next topic: The Bad Popes and the Great Schism