



World History Studies Weekly®

See Primary-Source
Related Media...SCAN IMAGE WITH SMARTPHONE, OR VISIT:
s-w.co/WH6-22

Changing Times

As we have learned in a previous issue, the Catholic Church was very important and powerful in the Middle Ages. The head of the Catholic Church was, and still is, the pope. He originally had vast power. The church could tax the people, approve or disapprove a business and remove a king from power. All were expected to practice the Catholic faith. Those

who did not were often forced to move to another place or were even killed.

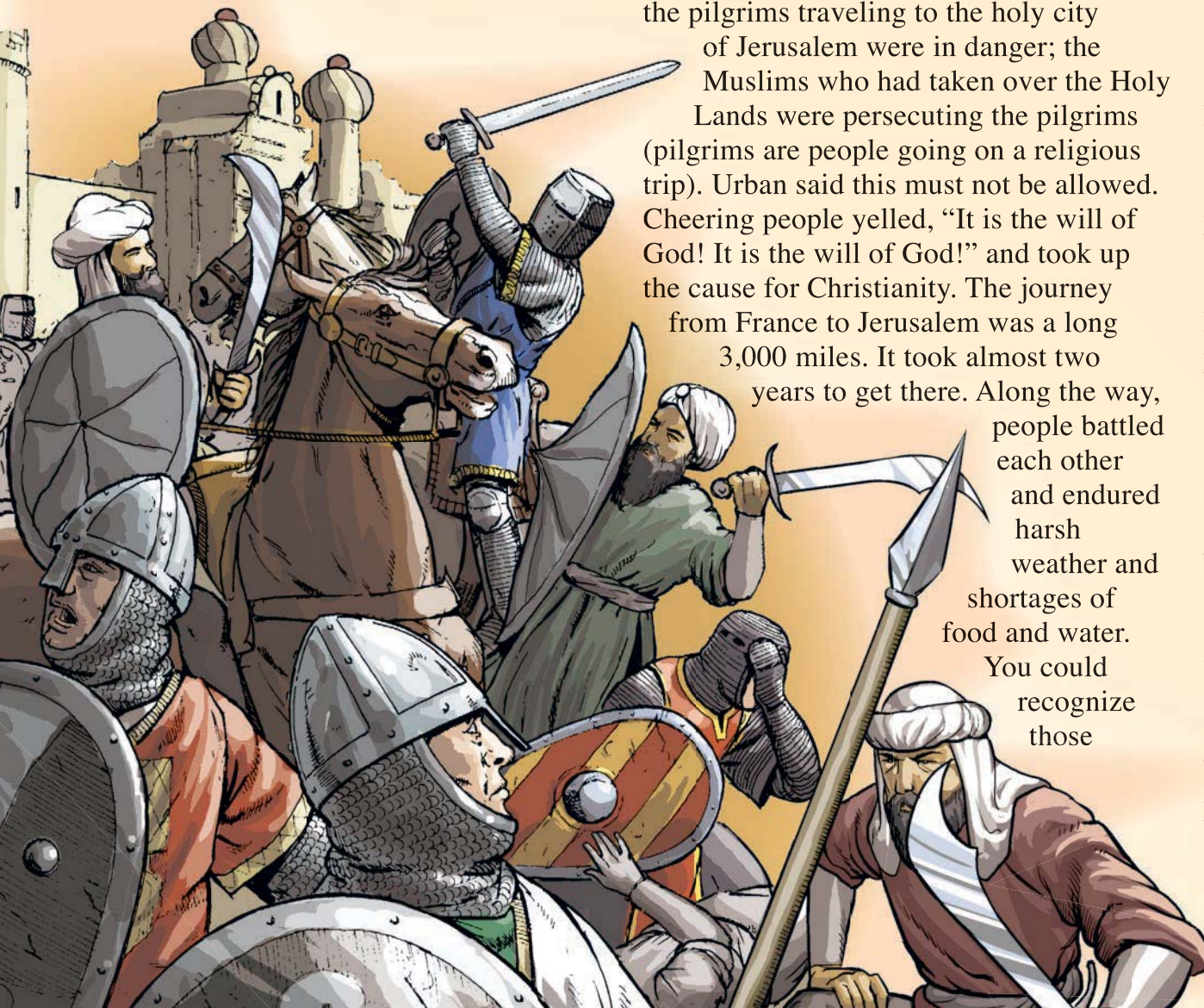
In 1095, Pope Urban II received a call for help from the Byzantine Emperor Alexius I. Muslims were taking over the empire and the Holy Lands, and Alexius needed the pope's help to reclaim these areas. Later that year, Urban gave a speech to the people of France. He said the pilgrims traveling to the holy city of Jerusalem were in danger; the Muslims who had taken over the Holy Lands were persecuting the pilgrims (pilgrims are people going on a religious trip). Urban said this must not be allowed. Cheering people yelled, "It is the will of God! It is the will of God!" and took up the cause for Christianity. The journey from France to Jerusalem was a long 3,000 miles. It took almost two years to get there. Along the way,

people battled each other and endured harsh weather and shortages of food and water. You could recognize those

Christian warriors called crusaders among the many fighters. The crusaders wore tunics with a large red cross sewn on the front. They were able to take Jerusalem while the Muslims bickered among themselves for power. However, the Muslims regrouped and retook Jerusalem less than 100 years later.

There were a total of eight Crusades. Kings themselves went off into battle, too. Some kings who fought in the crusades included Richard the Lion-Hearted (King Richard I of England), King Philip II of France and Emperor Frederick of the Holy Roman Empire. All of these kings participated in the Third Crusade. After about 200 years, the Crusades ended, but the Christians did not recapture the Holy Lands. The Crusades are a very important part of history because they brought many changes to the European world.

People returning from the Crusades shared stories of what they had seen. They told of interesting clothing and hairstyles, architecture and literature. They brought back paper, the compass, glass mirrors and silk. They also brought back different ideas in medicine and for ship construction. They shared food that Europeans had never seen before such as sugar, oranges, lemons, melons, peaches and apricots. They brought back spices such as cinnamon, ginger, pepper and cloves. Europeans used these spices to help preserve food. The crusaders shared many of the ancient Greek and Roman ideas when they returned home from fighting the holy wars.



Connections

Keeping the Magna Carta

King John of England signed the original Magna Carta in 1215. This historic document states the basic human rights of people and became a basis of our U.S. Constitution. Today, there are four remaining copies of this document that were made in 1297. One of these copies has been in the National Archives in Washington, D.C., for 20 years.

When the owner of the copy of the Magna Carta in Washington, D.C. decided to sell the document, the National Archives was concerned. The Magna Carta was there on loan, and although the National Archives wished to purchase the important document, it didn't have enough money. That's when David Rubenstein, co-founder of the Carlyle Group, stepped in. He purchased the copy of the Magna Carta and said it would remain at the U.S. National Archives as a permanent gift. The selling

price for this very rare document was more than \$21 million dollars. The previous owner had paid \$1.8 million for the document in 1984. His name is Ross Perot, and he is a billionaire oilman who was a presidential candidate in 1992.

When he knew the copy of the Magna Carta was for sale, Rubenstein said he was concerned. He said it would be terrible if someone outside the United States purchased such an important document to Western civilization. Mr. Rubenstein also said the document should remain in the U.S. National Archives so Americans could come to view it. The West Rotunda Gallery of the National Archives Building houses this copy of the Magna Carta. It is a very fragile piece of paper and is protected in a sealed display container.



Crusades Bring Change

The People's Crusade

As we have learned in previous issues, the holy city of Jerusalem has long been important to three major religions. Those of Jewish faith built Solomon's temple in Jerusalem. Christians believe Jerusalem was where Jesus lived, died and ascended into heaven. Muslims believe Jerusalem was where Muhammad ascended into heaven. For many years, all groups were able to travel to Jerusalem in peace. Things changed when Muslims took control of the holy city. In 1095, the head of the Catholic Church, Pope Urban, announced, "The Muslims have conquered Jerusalem." He rallied the people to go and fight for the Holy Lands. The People's Crusade was led not by soldiers but by people such as Walter the Penniless and Peter the Hermit. Those that followed these men set off to fight. However, they had no weapons, no supplies or any idea just where Jerusalem was. The People's Crusade didn't last very long. The actual First Crusade began

later that year. The word "crusade" means to carry the cross; crusaders sewed red crosses on their tunics. The crusaders actually reached Jerusalem and won the city back for the Christians in 1099. Unfortunately for them, their victory was short lived. The Muslims regrouped and retook the city in 1187. Muslims controlled Jerusalem until the 20th century. Christians never retook control of the city of Jerusalem.

The Children's Crusade

Would your parents let you go off to fight a war at the age of 12? The year 1212 was the time of what some call the Children's Crusade. Since adults hadn't been successful in regaining the Holy Lands for the Christians, some thought God would protect a child's effort.

A young man named Stephen, of Vendome, France, managed to assemble 30,000 children to march to Jerusalem. He claimed that God had told him to gather the children to go and fight for Jerusalem. Most of the children were not more than 12 years old. With no weapons, no money and no maps, they began to walk. When the Mediterranean Sea didn't part (as Stephen said it would), several ship captains agreed to take the children to Jerusalem. At least that's what the shipmen said. Instead, they sold the children into slavery.

Another young man named Nicholas led a group of children from Germany to fight for Jerusalem. He had gathered 20,000 children. A large number were girls. Only 2,000 came home. The families of the children hanged Nicholas' father in anger. Some historians think the Pied Piper story dates back to the Children's Crusade and references the young men who convinced the children to follow them to Jerusalem.

Return of Towns

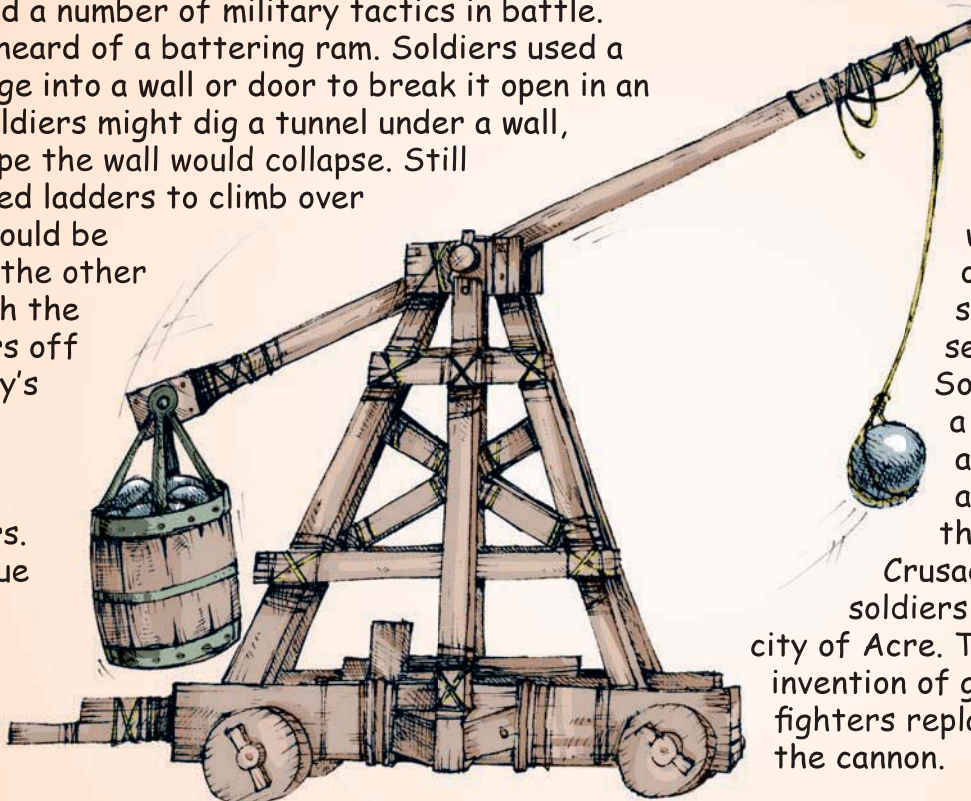
Although many of the first crusaders fought for their religion, there were many other reasons people traveled to the Holy Lands during this time. Many went for the adventure. Others went out of curiosity or to get rich by bringing goods back to sell in Europe. Still other peasants left their manors and feudalism behind for a newfound independence. More and more people settled in towns. Feudalism was disappearing after about 1,000 years.

People realized that they no longer needed the protection provided by the feudal system. Towns began to flourish. The crusades had also sparked an interest in trade. More and more



The Trebuchet

Crusaders used a number of military tactics in battle. You've probably heard of a battering ram. Soldiers used a large log to charge into a wall or door to break it open in an attack. Other soldiers might dig a tunnel under a wall, set a fire and hope the wall would collapse. Still other knights used ladders to climb over city walls. This could be very difficult as the other side tried to push the attacking soldiers off the ladder. A city's defenders might also drop boiling water onto the attacking soldiers. Another technique soldiers used was to surround a city's walls and prevent all essential



Trades & Technology

supplies from being delivered inside. They continued this until those inside the city surrendered.

A very popular weapon soldiers used, especially in the 12th century, was a device called the trebuchet. It was a very powerful weapon crusaders used to launch things over a walled city. It resembled a huge slingshot on a frame. The trebuchet could send 300-pound rocks more than 300 yards. Sometimes, knights launched other items into a city, such as diseased dead horses. The attacking army thought the smell of dead animals would make the people sick and force them to surrender. In 1191 during the Third

Crusade, Richard the Lion-Hearted ordered his soldiers to fling 100 beehives over the walls of the city of Acre. The people quickly surrendered. With the invention of gunpowder, which could blow up stone walls, fighters replaced the trebuchet with a newer invention—the cannon.





people wanted new things like oranges, sugar, spices, etc., to either keep or sell for profit. Think of reasons why you might like living in a bustling city. Many are the same reasons for which Europeans in the past chose to live in towns. It was more exciting! There were lots of people to meet and many stories to hear from the traders who traveled to town with their wares. Towns also provided something else very important—freedom. People didn’t have true freedom while working at a manor. As towns grew, people who had skills were valued, so another custom was changing. It wasn’t who you were, but what you could do that made a person important.

Medicine in the Middle Ages

People in the Middle Ages believed that the body was made of four elements: fire, earth, water and air. The position of the Earth and of the moon especially could affect one’s health. If your four elements were not in harmony, you got sick. People also believed those who angered God got sick. However, the cures for sickness in the Middle Ages were often worse than the illness.

A common cure was bloodletting. Caregivers would cut you and allow your “bad blood” to collect in a bowl. People back then believed your blood was bad if you became sick. Sometimes, people placed blood-sucking leeches from a nearby pond onto the body to help get rid of a person’s bad blood.

People also believed that using plant leaves that looked like ailing body parts could cure you. People also used animal parts for cures. They might eat a fox’s lung to cure a breathing illness. People reasoned that the fox could run long distances so it must have great lungs. Some also believed that holding precious stones or being touched by the king would heal you. Caregivers would clean cuts with vinegar, and because there weren’t band-aids back then, they might stuff the wound with lint and cover it with a flour paste to dry. Some people ate worms to cure fevers or hung people upside down to get rid of headaches. If you had a wart, you might get rid of it by applying a spider’s web to it. Still other cures included pounding an onion open and placing it under an infected eye or wearing a magpie’s beak around your neck to cure a toothache.

History Black Death

The year was 1347 when a fleet of ships sailed into the port of Messina, Sicily. Much of the crew was either sick or dead from a terrible disease. Soon, this strange illness spread throughout Italy and into France and Spain. The symptoms were the same—the skin swelled and black patches developed behind the knees and under the armpits. People would sweat from high fever and cough blood. Within a day or so, the victim would die. Townsfolk called the illness the Black Death, but its proper name was the bubonic plague. People didn’t know what was causing this awful disease, but we now know that it came from infected fleas that lived on rats that roamed the cities. With trash in the streets attracting the infected rats and unsanitary practices, such as people coughing without covering their mouths, the disease spread quickly in Europe. People were scared. Would they get it next? Some locked themselves in their homes. Others carried flowers in their pockets to help mask the smell of death. Although some historians say it isn’t true, the nursery rhyme, “Ring Around the Rosy” is said to be about the Black Death. Read the words of the nursery rhyme. What do you think?



Houses with dead bodies were burned to the ground, but the disease continued to spread. Nearly one third of all the people in Europe died within the next 10 years—about 25 million people. With so few people working, those that lived wanted higher wages to farm the land. Landowners refused and changed to raising sheep, which required fewer workers. Less food was produced, and people went hungry. Like the Crusades, the Black Death also helped to end feudalism. This was because some peasants got landowners to pay them instead of owing labor to the landowner. Those without jobs now moved into the city to find work, but there wasn’t any after the plague. Rebellions broke out from frustrated people needing work and food. What would you have done if you’d lived during the Black Death?

King Arthur

Many stories and legends from Britain and France focus on a king named Arthur. Stories about Arthur began in Wales around the eighth century and flourished in France in the 12th and 13th centuries.

Some versions of the Arthur stories tell about how he became king of Britain. One version said that when he was a young man, Arthur went to London and saw a large stone in the yard of St. Paul’s Cathedral. Sticking from the stone was a beautiful sword. Lots of people had tried to remove the sword, but none were successful. Arthur had forgotten his sword, so he walked up and easily pulled the sword from the stone. People circled him and cheered. Arthur didn’t understand the fuss that he had caused. Arthur hadn’t read the message on the stone that said whoever removed the sword from the stone would become king! King Arthur called

World Biography

his sword Excalibur.

Many stories tell about Arthur’s knights. Some stories tell about the round table, which Arthur had built so the knights would stop arguing over who got to sit at the head of the table. Many stories stress the value of chivalry, or knightly, courteous behavior. Chivalry included being loyal to one’s lord and polite to women.

One story says that when Arthur believed he was about to die, he asked one of his knights to throw Excalibur into a magical lake. The Lady of the Lake reached out her hands, caught the sword and took it down beneath the surface of the lake. King Arthur is said to have been taken to the Isle of Avalon.

Are any of these stories true? While some historians think there may have been a historical Arthur, many think these stories are only legends.



