

The Crusades Student Worksheet

Introduction:

After the death of Charlemagne in 814, Christian Europe felt itself to be under attack from the forces of Islam. Pope Urban II, in a speech at Clermont in France in November, 1095, called for a great Christian expedition or crusade to free Jerusalem from the Seljuk Turks, a new Muslim power that had recently begun harassing Christian pilgrims traveling to Jerusalem. The first Crusade by Western European Christians to recapture the Holy Land from the Muslims was undertaken in 1096 and the last in the late 13th century. The Crusades are an important early part of the story of European expansion and colonialism, as feudal states were established in the Near East. For the first time Western Christianity commenced a military initiative far from home, and for the first time significant numbers of people left to carry their culture and religion abroad.

Evolution of Crusader Privileges, 1095-1270

Go to <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/cde-privs.html> and answer the following questions:

1. What privileges did Pope Urban grant to crusaders at the Council of Clermont in 1095?
2. In 1146, what privileges did Pope Eugenius add to those given by Pope Urban?
3. Phillip II Augustus added greatly to the financial benefits granted to a crusader. What authority did he have to grant these privileges and how did his position as *Augustus* (Holy Roman Emperor) play a part in his decree?
4. As you scroll through the various privileges granted from 1095–1248, why do you think as time progressed that Popes and monarchs increased the number of incentives offered to crusading pilgrims?

Ekkehard of Aurach: On the Opening of the First Crusade

Go to <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/ekkehard-aur1.html> and answer the following questions:

5. Why is the “especial purpose” for which Ekkehard says he is writing this work?
6. Ekkehard states that although the crusaders “...were all under one king, Christ, the several peoples nevertheless were led by their several leaders.” What did the Pope do regarding this situation? Why do you think he did this?
7. According to Ekkehard, why did the Franks want to travel on the crusade?
8. According to Ekkehard, why were the Germans hesitant at first to join the Crusades?

9. Give examples of some of the “signs in the sun and the wonders” that impelled individuals to join the Crusades.

Annales Herbipolenses, s.a. 1147: A Hostile View of the Crusade

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/1147critic.html>

10. What does this author accuse the “pseudo prophets” of doing?

11. According to the author, what were some of the reasons people joined the Crusades? List at least three of these reasons.

12. At the end of this piece, the author claims that “a few could, with difficulty, be found who had not bowed their knees to Baal, who were directed by a holy and wholesome purpose, and who were kindled by love of the divine majesty to fight earnestly and even to shed their blood for the holy of holies.” Restate this sentence in your own words, and briefly explain the point you think the author is trying to make here.

13. Based on what you’ve read in the three primary source documents in this lesson, do you think most people joined the Crusades out of a sincere desire to “liberate” the Holy Land, or were most motivated by other desires? Support your conclusion.