# Two Sides in a Crusade

In 1095, Pope Urban II decided that Europe's kingdoms should help the Byzantine emperor. The Byzantine Empire had faced many invasions. Now the Seljuk Turks were a strong force on the Byzantine borders. Speaking to a group of nobles, Pope Urban II called for all Christians to take up arms and take control of Jerusalem and the Holy Land. The Pope's speech was witnessed and recorded by a nobleman named Fulcher of Chartres.

Many European men, women, and children joined the Crusades and fought in the Middle East. In 1099 they took Jerusalem. Wars continued in the region for many years. In 1187, the Muslim leader Saladin prepared to try to take Jerusalem back from the Christians.

> **Read the following excerpt from a report of Pope Urban's speech. Then read Saladin's feelings about Jerusalem. Use the information in the speeches to help you answer the questions on a separate sheet of paper. Be sure to write a well developed paragraph to address the sub-questions in each (#1-4).**

**A Report of Pope Urban's speech:**
*"Although, O sons of God, you have promised more firmly than ever to keep the peace among yourselves and to preserve the rights of the church, there remains still an important work for you to do. . . . For your brethren who live in the east are in urgent need of your help, and you must hasten to give them the aid which has often been promised them. For, as the most of you have heard, the Turks and Arabs have attacked them and have conquered the territory of Romania [the Byzantine Empire]. . . . They have occupied more and more of the lands of those Christians, and have overcome them in seven battles. They have killed and captured many, and have destroyed the churches and devastated the empire. If you permit them to continue thus for awhile with impurity, the faithful of God will be much more widely attacked by them. On this account I, or rather the Lord, beseech you as Christ's heralds to publish this everywhere and to persuade all people of whatever rank, foot-soldiers and knights, poor and rich, to carry aid promptly to those Christians and to destroy that . . . race from the lands of our friends. I say this to those who are present, it is meant also for those who are absent. Moreover, Christ commands it. All who die by the way, whether by land or by sea, or in battle against the [Muslims}, shall have immediate remission of sins. This I grant them through the power of God with which I am invested. . . . "*

**The Words of Saladin:**
*"If God blesses us by enabling us to drive His enemies out of Jerusalem, how fortunate and happy we would be! For Jerusalem has been controlled by the enemy for ninety-one years, during which time God has received nothing from us here in the way of adoration. At the same time, the zeal of the Muslim rulers to deliver it languished. Time passed, and so did many [in different] generations, while the Franks succeeded in rooting themselves strongly there. Now God has reserved the merit of its recovery for one house, the house of the sons of Ayyub [Saladin's family], in order to unite all hearts in appreciation of its members."*

**1.** What reasons does the Pope give for fighting for Jerusalem? What arguments does he use to persuade his listeners to go on a Crusade?

**2.** What reasons does Saladin give for retaking Jerusalem? What arguments does he use to inspire his listeners?

**3.** What are the similarities and differences between the arguments the Pope and Saladin use to persuade their listeners?

**4.** What impressions do these speeches give you about the Crusades? What ideas do the speeches give you about the purposes of the people who fought during the Crusades?

## The Crusades Warm up Activity

<u>Directions</u>: Read the passage in the left hand column of the page to answer the questions on the right hand side of the page. Place your answers on a separate sheet of paper.

### The Crusades 1095-1291
The Crusades were a series of wars fought by the Christian armies of Europe in order to reclaim the "*Holy Land*" from Muslims during the Middle Ages. Since the time of Constantine and the Roman Empire, European Christians had gone on pilgrimages to the Holy Land (modern day Israel). Even though Muslims had ruled Jerusalem since 638, Christians were still allowed to visit the city. By the 11th century, however, the situation had changed. Just as the number and frequency of pilgrimages to Jerusalem was at new peaks, the Seljuk Turks took over control of Jerusalem and prevented pilgrimages.



For thousands of years, Jews, Christians, and Muslims have been fighting over the "Holy Land". Even today "Israelis (Jews) and Palestinians (Muslims) still fight for control of this sacred land

### The First Crusade
Pope Urban II was responsible for launching the First Crusade. He made one of the most influential speeches in the Middle Ages, calling on Christian princes in all of Europe to join forces and go on a crusade to rescue the Holy Land from the Seljuk Turks who were Muslim. In the speech given at the Council of Clermont in France, on November 27, 1095, he combined the ideas of making a pilgrimage to the Holy Land with that of waging a holy war against the Seljuk Turks.

"Deus vult! (God wills it) became the battle cry of the Crusader. The Christian armies of Europe adopted a red cross (a crusade) as their symbol. Knights from across Europe went to the Holy Land to wage war for over 200 years. Although militarily the Crusaders were unsuccessful, the results of these wars on the people of Europe during the Middle Ages would be dramatic! The Crusades ended the Middle Ages and allowed Europeans to begin learning, traveling, and trading again!

### Questions to Answer:

1. What were the "Crusades"?

2. What sacred city did the Seljuk Turks prevent European Christians from visiting on pilgrimages?

3. Over the years, what three major world religions have fought over the Holy Land? Who is still fighting today?

4. How did Pope Urban II convince Christian princes in Europe during the Middle Ages to join the Crusades?

5. If the Crusades failed militarily, why were they an important event in European History?