

*“Know thyself, know thy enemy. A thousand battles, a thousand victories.”
(Sun Tzu, The Art of War)*

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Background Guide

The First Crusade



Defenders

The Muslim world has recently been conquered by the Seljuk Turks and their allied sultanates. There has been an "invasion" if it can even be called that, from European peasants. They were slaughtered before their crusade could even truly begin. However, we have received word that the true wave of the first Crusade has begun sweeping the lands south of the Byzantine Empire. They mercilessly slaughtered many innocents on their path to the Holy City of Jerusalem, a city we must defend with our lives. The Seljuk Turks have abandoned us, preferring to ride back to their homeland and leave us to face the marauding armies alone. Many cities have fallen on their approach, and with the turmoil in our own governments, we will expect to have no reinforcements coming. The Crusaders are approaching the outside of our walls, and we have begun preparations to poison our wells and burn the fields outside of Jerusalem.



These were the thoughts of the commanders and politicians in the Holy City of Jerusalem before the beginning of its siege. After Pope Urban II declared a Crusade to capture their city, They were dismissive at first, especially after the disaster that was the Peasants Crusade. However, as the actual Crusaders captured cities and pillaged them, the citizens became more and more nervous about the approaching threat. They requested help, but after only fighting a few battles, the armies of the Seljuk Turks left them alone. It was the job of the remaining members of the city to defend themselves against the approaching invaders, and many defensive measures were devised in order to ensure the city was never captured. Their fears were confirmed when the Crusaders captured them, and they slaughtered many citizens of Jerusalem. A large portion of the population was Jewish so when the real Crusaders invaded and eventually captured the city, they killed many Jews instead of the Muslims they were crusading against. The Crusaders slaughtered almost 80% of the city. So many were killed that the streets were covered in blood, and in some cases horses had to wade through several inches of blood. The people they killed were primarily Jewish, a group which they had not declared a crusade against but which had been heavily persecuted and killed during the Peasants Crusade in Europe.

Crusaders

Europe is in a dire state, sickness and poverty run rampant in 99% of its population. For these people, religion is the only source of hope they have, willing them to go blindly into battle in order to “rescue” the holy land. The residing pope, Urban The Second had exploited this hope and dedication to create the crusades so he may gain personal power.



Additionally, Alexios I Komnenos used the Crusaders to help him retake occupied lands, helping him to restore his old empire. The pope arranged for the crusaders to begin in the summer of 1096CE but some just couldn't wait. One of these, some being Peter the Hermit. He gathered a group of peasants and led the people's crusade. The only thing worth noting about this event is it's utter failure: the people's crusade was a massacre, as on October 21 1096CE 17,000 of the 20,000 people's Crusaders were slain by the Seljuk Turks. In 1096 the actual crusade

began. It was led by five sub armies, their leaders being Godfrey de Bullion, Hugh of Vermandois, Bohemond of Turanto, Raymonde of Tulose, and Robert of Flanders. (It is worth mentioning that the bishop Adhemar was also an influential figure present with the crusading armies.) By 1097CE the Crusaders had made it to Constantinople and captured Nicaea, through all this the five armies had been anything but peaceful. On their journey, they pillaged almost every villain they entered, which were ironically mostly the homes of the people who were supposed to be the crusader's allies. Later in March 1098CE Baldwin of Boulogne took control of the Edessa, this took place during the siege of Antioch, which had been going on since September of the previous year, and by June,



the Crusaders had taken Antioch and finally the Crusaders arrived at Jerusalem's gates.

However, bringing down the mighty walls of Jerusalem would prove to be a daunting task for the bedraggled Crusaders. They laid siege to Jerusalem but quickly realized that a siege would not be

possible as the defenders had stripped the surrounding land of all its resources, even going so far as to poison the wells. They needed to attack but were unable to build the siege towers needed to get over the wall. They were also under constant fire as the guards on duty attempted to dissuade the failing siege. Eventually they received aid from Genoese in the form of boats which they converted into siege towers. Once they mounted the wall, they massacred Jerusalem killing almost everybody inside whether they were Muslim, Christian, or Jewish.



Characters

Defenders

Iftikhar al-Dawla: Governor of Jerusalem

The Fatimid Governor of Jerusalem during the Crusader Siege. He surrendered on the 15th of July to Raymond, and after the city fell was escorted outside the city with his bodyguard. He cared about the people in the city, but did hold his life above all the others. He did his best to hold the city, but ultimately failed. It is not known for certain, but it is believed that he was the governor of the entirety of Palestine. His garrison consisted of Arab and Sudanese troops.

Al-Afdal Shahanshah: Vizier of the Fatimid Caliphate

Al-Malik Al-Afdal, (The Excellent King) was the surname given to Shahanshah, vizier of the Fatimid Khalifa based in Cairo, Egypt. When the Crusaders began to catch the attention of the Islamic World, Al-Afdal thought they were mercenaries from The Byzantine Empire. He sought an alliance with them in order to implore them for aid against the Seljuk Turks, the crusaders capitalized on this disunity amongst the Muslims and advanced towards Jerusalem. Upon realizing his mistake the vizier set out from Cairo with his forces to defend The Holy Land, but he was too late, Jerusalem fell from Fatimid control.

Gazi Gümüshtigin

Gümüshtigin Gazi , was the second ruler of the Danishmends, the land his father (Danishmend Gazi) had founded in central-eastern Anatolia after the Battle of Manzikert. He became ruler when his father died in 1084. During the First Crusade, Danishmends was one of the unlucky kingdoms in the path of the Crusaders Rampage. On the losing side at the Battle of Dorylaeum in 1097, he scored a success in capturing Bohemond I of Antioch in 1100. He continued campaigning, extending southwards and capturing Malatya in 1103 after the Battle of Melitene(died 1104)

Kilij Arslan I

He was Seljuq Sultan of rum from 1092-1107

He ruled during the crusaders and subsequently had to defend Jerusalem from the crusaders. It was he and his army who massacred 30,000 of the people's crusaders, however lost against the actual crusaders. His Achilles heel in the crusades was that he underestimated the crusaders due to his easy victory against the people's crusaders.

Kerbogha Duqaq

It was not quite clear when he was born, however, he died on June 8, 1104. His father was Seljuq the ruler of Syria. When his father died in 1095, his brother Radwan claimed Syria, and Duqaq originally inherited territory in the Jazirah and lived with his brother in Aleppo.

Fakhr al-Mulk Radwan

Seljuq ruler of Aleppo from 1096 to 1113

Crusaders

Godfrey of Bouillon Godfrey of Bullion was born on september 18th 1060, making him 36 when the first crusade began. He had been chosen as his uncle's successor, he was to inherit lower lorraine, but when his uncle was assassinated in 1076 Henry IV took Lorraine. Godfrey only regained Lorraine after fighting with Henry IV in the war of investitures in 1089. The only problem was that lower Lorraine held much less power, due to the feudal powers that had popped up in Lorraine. Upset with this lack of land and power, Godfrey decided that going crusading sounded like a good way to gain some. He was one of the first to pledge to join the crusade, even going so far as to sell some of his estates to raise funds. He departed for the crusade with over 10,000 knights and 30,000 foot soldiers. He was a good leader, and fought hard throughout the crusades. When the crusaders made it to Jerusalem, they offered the crown to Raymond of Toulouse, however they gave it to Godfrey after Raymond declined. Godfrey accepted but refused the title of king, instead he was addressed as Advocatus Sancti Sepulchri (Defender of the Holy Sepulchre). He only ruled for 1 year, but managed to make peace with neighboring Muslim cities, and defend Jerusalem from an Egyptian attack. He died in 1100ce

Elvira of Castile

Elvira was Raymond's wife and she came with him on the crusade. She was the illegitimate daughter of Alfonso VI of León and Castile, by his mistress Jimena Muñoz, and full sister of Theresa, Countess of Portugal. She married, firstly, Raymond IV, Count of Toulouse in 1094, being mother of count Alfonso Jordan. Elvira accompanied Raymond on the First Crusade in 1096, and was present at the siege of Tripoli, where she gave birth to their son. It appears that the couple separated before the death of Raymond. Elvira returned to Castile. Her son became the monarch of Tripoli upon the death of Raymond in 1105, but Elvira is not mentioned as present in Tripoli. In Castile, before 1117, she married Count Fernando Fernández de Carrión, having three additional children: Diego, García and Teresa Fernández, who was a wife of Count Osorio Martínez. Elvira was known for being stubborn but quick to back off. Though she was not as devoted to being a christian as Raymond, she did have faith in her religion. While she was brought along by Raymond during the First Crusade, she does not at all approve of the harming of others. Though Because of the times she was not allowed to disobey her husband, but either way she was very fond of her husband way After losing her newborn son, her opinions on non-violence only got stronger.

Raymond IV

Raymond IV, also known as Raymond of Saint Gillies. He was from western France. He was a powerful noble and one of the leaders of the first crusade. He was a very religious man who would do anything for god. He wished to die in the Holy Land, so when he first found out about the first crusade there was no question in his mind, he was the first one to take the cross. He brought his wife Elvira and his baby son (who sadly died on the journey) with him.

Bohemond (Rhapsody) of Antioch

Bohemond was the son of Robert Guiscard, Count of Apulia and Calabria, and his first wife, Alberada of Buonalbergo. He fought in his father's army during the Byzantine wars, which meant he was fighting against the Byzantine Empire. He was in the first Crusade mainly because he saw it as a way to increase

his power instead of anything born out of religion. During the first Crusade he fulfilled this mission by making a deal with the city guard captain of Antioch that he would be let in and take control of the city. Antioch then became an independent city-state, and remained so until it was made a vassal state of the Byzantine Empire. Bohemond married the daughter of the King of France.

Baldwin of Boulogne

Baldwin was the first count of Edessa from 1098 to 1100 after that he was the very first king of Jerusalem from 1100 to his death in 1118. Being the youngest son he was destined for a church career, but he abandoned it and married a Norman noblewoman. While the main crusader army was marching across Asia Minor Baldwin and the Norman Tancred launched a separate expedition against Cilicia. Tancred tried to capture Tarsus in September, but Baldwin forced him to leave it, which gave rise to an enduring conflict between them.

Warner of Grez

Warner was a French nobleman from a place named Grez-Doiceau. He was one of the participants in the army of Godfrey of Bouillon. According to some sources, he was a distant relative of Godfrey of Bouillon, and accompanied him on many of his exploits and adventures.

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