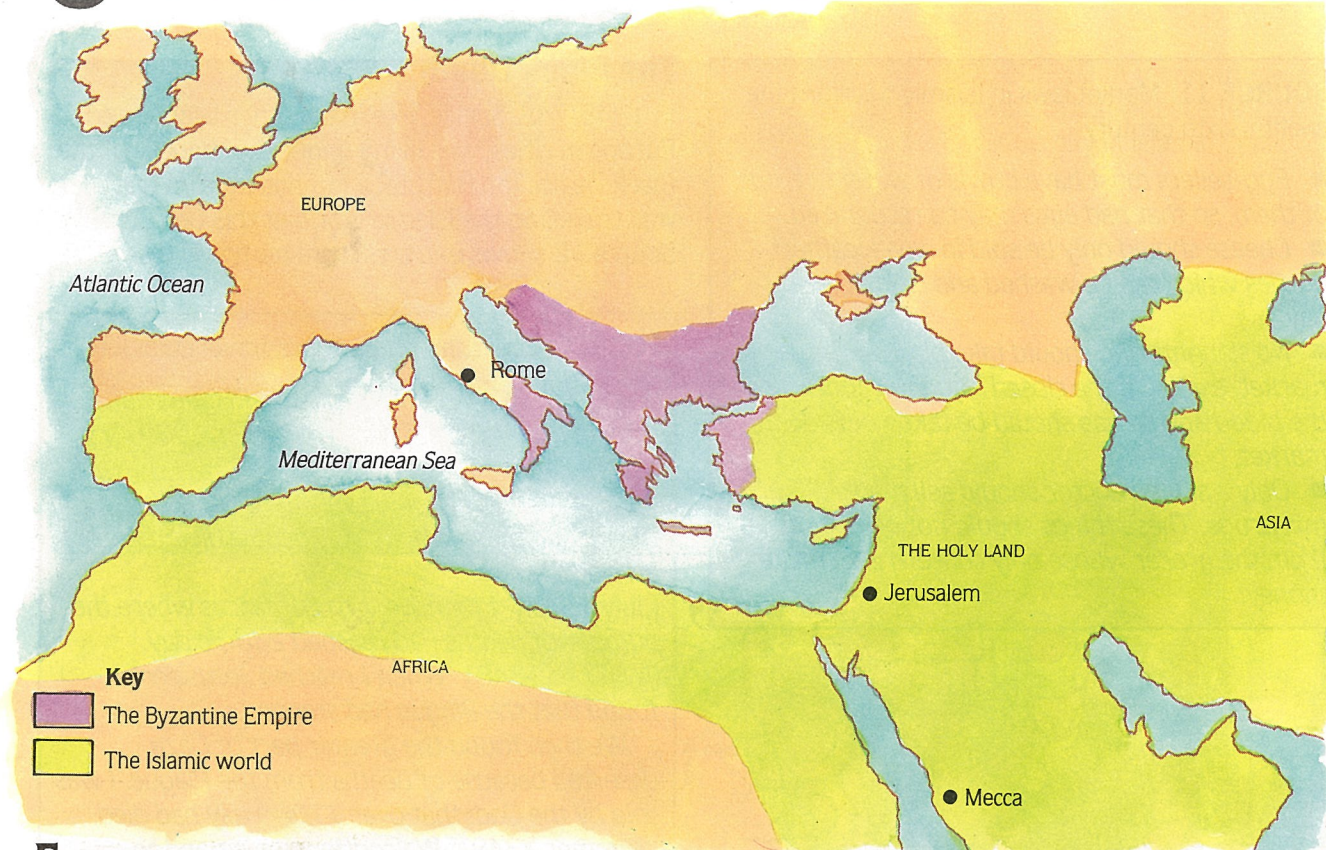


Crusades or invasions?



FOR a period of nearly 200 years, from 1100/492, Christians and Muslims fought for control of the HOLY LAND. The two sides saw this struggle very differently. For the Christians it was a holy CRUSADE in the name of God, but the Muslims saw it as a FRANKISH invasion.

The Crusade to rescue the Holy Land

The Pope was head of the Christian Church in the West, but in the East there was the great BYZANTINE Empire, which was also Christian. This Empire was threatened by the advance of a new Muslim nation, the Seljuk Turks. In the eleventh/fifth century, the Turks conquered the Arab Muslim Empire, including the Holy Land and the city of Jerusalem. The Arab Muslims had allowed Christian pilgrims to visit Jerusalem, but in 1076/468 the Turks captured the city. They made it much more difficult for the pilgrims.

In 1095/487 the Byzantine Emperor asked the Pope for help. Five months later, at Clermont in France, Pope Urban II preached a sermon asking people to go on a Crusade. Other preachers travelled around Europe persuading people to join. The response was amazing. People from all walks of life and countries flocked to join.

Why did people volunteer so readily?

▲ SOURCE 1 Map of Europe, the Holy Land and the Byzantine Empire



SOURCE 2 A thirteenth-century Christian map of the world with Jerusalem at the centre



SOURCE 3 A medieval Christian view of Muslims

SOURCE 4 Extracts from Pope Urban's speech in 1095/487

You must run as quickly as you can to help your brothers living on the eastern shores. The Turks have overrun them, slaughtering and capturing many and destroying churches. They cut open their navels, and tear out their most vital organs. They tie them to a stake, or drag them around and flog them.

Jerusalem is the navel of the world. This royal city is now held captive by her enemies and is enslaved by a people which does not acknowledge God. She asks you to rescue her.

All men going there who die, whether on the journey or while fighting the pagans [non-Christians], will immediately be forgiven their sins.

Until now, you have fought and killed one another. Stop these hatreds among yourselves, silence the quarrels. Instead, rescue the Holy Land from that dreadful race.

1. What were the Pope's three aims for the Crusade?

SOURCE 5 Part of a sermon preached by Abbot Martin of Paris in 1201/597 to persuade people to go on Crusade

The land for which you are making is richer by far than this one and more fertile; and it could easily come to pass that many of you will find a more prosperous way of life there.

SOURCE 6 From a letter written by St Bernard of Clairvaux in 1146/540

O mighty soldier, you now have a cause for which you can fight without endangering your soul; a cause in which to win is glorious, and for which to die is gain. Or are you a shrewd businessman, a man quick to see the profits of this world? If you are, I can offer you a splendid bargain. Do not miss this opportunity. Take the sign of the cross. At once you will have forgiveness for all your sins.

SOURCE 7 Written by William of Malmesbury, a monk

In 1096, Robert, Duke of Normandy, decided to go to Jerusalem at the prompting of Pope Urban II. To pay for this he had to pawn his duchy to his brother.

SOURCE 8 A description by Fulcher of Chartres, a French priest, of people going off to the Crusade in 1096/488

Oh what pain! What sighs! What weeping! When a husband left his dearly beloved wife, his children, whatever possessions he had.

2. Why do you think Jerusalem was such an important place for Christians? Source 8 on page 115 will give you some clues.

3. How were people persuaded to go on the Crusades?

4. Imagine you are Robert, Duke of Normandy, trying to decide whether you should go on the Crusade. Write an entry in your diary which tries to consider the reasons for going and those against going.

CRUSADES OR INVASIONS?

In 1098/491, the first crusaders began to make their way from Europe to Jerusalem.

SOURCE 9 A German monk describes the actions of some crusaders as they passed through Germany on their way to Jerusalem

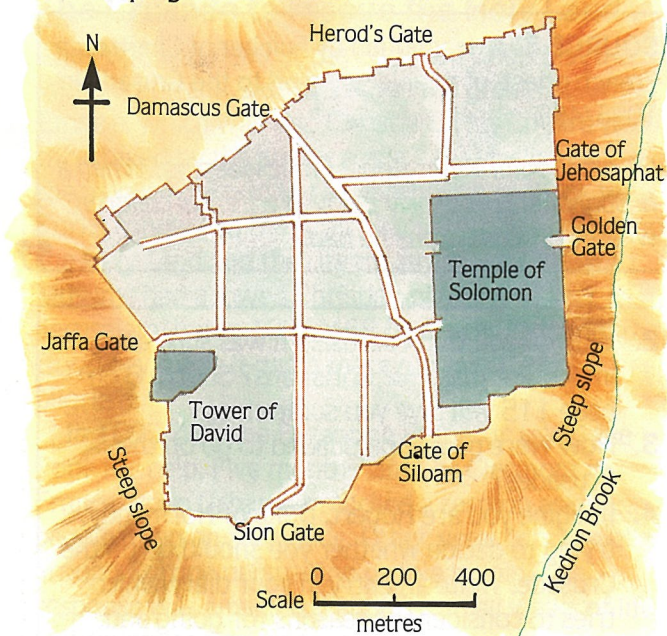
“They suddenly attacked the Jews. They decapitated many and inflicted serious wounds, they destroyed their homes and synagogues, and divided a very great sum of looted money among themselves.”

SOURCE 10 Written by Anna Comnena, daughter of the Byzantine Emperor, about the crusaders

“Their whole race is very fond of money. They will sell even their dearest possessions for a little money.”

The capture of Jerusalem

On 7 June 1099/492, the First Crusade reached Jerusalem. The city had strong defences, but the crusaders were short of food and water in the baking heat. They could not manage a long siege. Also, there was rivalry between the two crusader leaders, Raymond of Toulouse and Godfrey of Bouillon. They attacked opposite sides of the city, both hoping to succeed before the other.



SOURCE 11 A plan of Jerusalem

SOURCE 12 An eye-witness account of the First Crusade

“We were in daily distress, for the Saracens [Turks] used to lie in wait around the springs and would ambush our men, kill them, and cut them to pieces. They would also lead off our animals.”

Then our commanders made arrangements for Jerusalem to be captured with siege engines. They made two siege towers and many other machines. Godfrey made his own siege tower with engines in it on the northern side and so did Raymond on the southern side. The Saracens made remarkable improvements to the city's fortifications. When our leaders saw which part of the city was the weakest, they brought a wooden siege tower and a machine up to the northern side.

We attacked just east of Herod's gate but could make no headway. We were all very frightened. Then one of Godfrey's knights, Lethold by name, climbed up on to the walls of the city. All the defenders fled and our men, following Lethold, chased after them. Because of this the Egyptians defending the south side surrendered.”

SOURCE 13 Extract from a letter from the crusader leaders to the Pope

“Since the army was suffering greatly in this siege from lack of water, the bishops preached that we walk round the city with bare feet. The Lord was pleased with this act of humility, for he handed over to us the city, together with his enemies.”

SOURCE 14 Written by Ibn al-Athir, an Arab historian of the time

“While the Franks [Christians] were conquering and settling in our territories, the rulers and armies of Islam were fighting among themselves and weakening their power to combat the enemy.”

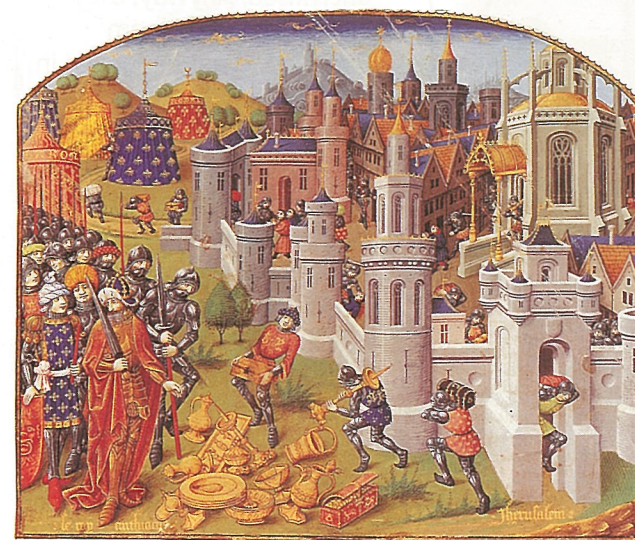
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SOURCE 15 An eye-witness account

“Our pilgrims entered the city, and chased the Saracens, killing as they went, as far as the Temple of Solomon. There the enemy fought a furious battle, so that their blood flowed all over the temple. Our men captured many men and women and killed whomsoever they wished. Soon our army overran the whole city, seizing gold and silver, horses and mules, and houses full of riches of all kinds.”



SOURCE 16 The attack on Jerusalem, painted in the fifteenth/ninth century



SOURCE 17 The ransacking of Jerusalem by the crusaders, painted in the fifteenth/ninth century

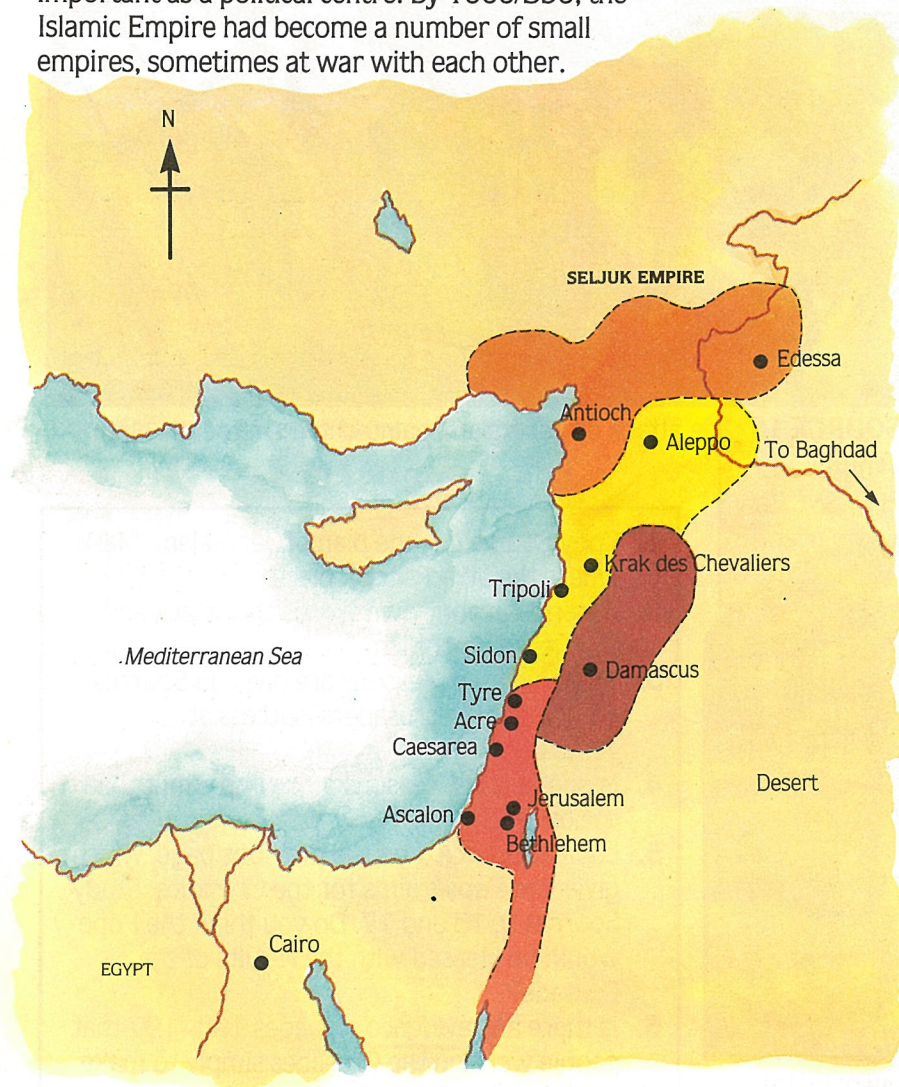
1. Copy Source 11, the plan of Jerusalem. Mark where the attacks took place.
2. Describe in your own words the attack and capture of Jerusalem.
3. What different reasons are given in Sources 11–17 for the crusaders' success at Jerusalem?
4. Is one of these reasons more important than the others?
5. Look at Source 4 on the previous page, which gives the Pope's aims for the Crusades. Study Sources 9, 15 and 17. Do you think the Pope would be pleased with the results of the Crusade?
6. Is there any evidence on pages 194–197 that people went on the Crusades simply to make their fortunes?

CRUSADES OR INVASIONS?

Defence against the Franks

What Christians call the Crusades, the Muslims call the FRANKISH Invasions. The invaders captured Jerusalem in 1099/492, but it was almost 50 years before the Muslims really began to resist the Invasions. By this time, the Franks had carved out four Christian states, occupying most of the Holy Land (see Source 18). Why did it take Islam so long to respond? To answer this question, we must first look at what had been happening in the Islamic Empire in the years before the invasions.

By 850/235, the Islamic Empire stretched from Spain to the borders of China. But over the next 200 years the caliphs in Baghdad became less powerful. The religion of Islam united the various Muslim countries, but Baghdad was no longer really important as a political centre. By 1000/390, the Islamic Empire had become a number of small empires, sometimes at war with each other.



In 1055/446, the Turks, a fierce warrior people from central Asia, who had only recently converted to Islam, took control of Baghdad. For the first time in two centuries the Muslim Middle East was united under a single ruler. The Turks were determined to bring back the past glory of Islam. As we have seen, they also brought with them a new, tougher attitude to Christianity, and prevented Christian pilgrims from worshipping in Jerusalem. It was this which provoked a large army of FRANKS (or Franj) from all over Europe to march on the Holy Land and capture Jerusalem.

In view of this unity, it is particularly surprising that the Muslims took so long to respond to the Frankish Invasions.

1. Why did it take the Muslims so long to react? Look at the following explanations. Then study Sources 19–27. Which explanations are supported best by the sources?

- 'They were afraid of the Franks who were stronger and superior.'
- 'The Franks were not a threat. They worshipped the same God. What's more, they were backward and uncivilised. Anyway, they were a long way from Baghdad. What happened in Jerusalem was not important.'
- 'In the past, the Muslims had been prepared to fight *Jihad* (holy war) against any enemy. But the days of *Jihad* had long gone. The Muslims were more concerned with their own power struggles.'

◀ **SOURCE 18** The four states set up by the Christians

SOURCE 19 Written by a Muslim in the twelfth/sixth century

‘Jerusalem is as holy to us as it is to you; it is even more important to us, because it was there that our Prophet made his miraculous journey, and it is there that our people will be reunited on Judgement Day. It is, therefore, out of the question for us to abandon it.’

SOURCE 20 An extract from the Quran (Sura 29.46)

‘Be polite when you argue with Christians, except those who do evil. Say ‘We believe in that which is revealed to us and that which is revealed to you. Our God and your God is one.’

SOURCE 21 Written by a modern Arab historian

‘The Franj’s main strength lay in the heavy armour with which their knights covered their entire bodies, and sometimes their horses as well. They were magnificently protected against arrows.’



SOURCE 22 Frankish knights attack Muslims. This painting was done by a Christian artist

SOURCE 23 From a recent history book

‘The idea of the holy war had become a distant memory to the Muslims. They did not even see the Crusade as a Christian holy war but as just an attempt to conquer territory. Anyway, they were busily engaged in fighting one another. They were also not very good soldiers at this time.’

SOURCE 24 Written by Usamah ibn Munqidh, a Muslim doctor, in the twelfth/sixth century

‘They took me to see a woman with consumption. I gave her a cleaning and refreshing diet. Then there appeared a Frankish doctor who said, ‘This man has no idea how to cure people.’ He examined the woman and said, ‘She has a devil in her head. The devil has got into her brain.’ He took a razor and cut a cross on her head, and removed the brain. The woman died instantly. At this moment I came away, having learnt things about medical methods that I never knew before.’

SOURCE 25 Written by a Muslim who fought against the Franks

‘All those who were well informed about the Franj saw them as beasts, superior in courage but in nothing else, just as animals are superior in strength and aggression.’

SOURCE 26 Written by a modern Arab historian

‘The sack of Jerusalem, although it was the starting point of 1000 years of hostility between Islam and the West, aroused no immediate sensation in Baghdad. Few Arabs were clear-sighted in weighing the scope of the threat from the West.’

SOURCE 27 Written by Abul-Muzaffar al-Abiwardi, an eleventh/fifth-century poet

‘Sons of Islam, behind you are battles in which heads rolled at your feet. Dare you slumber in the blessed shade of safety, where life is as soft as an orchard flower?’

Two interpretations

Here are two timelines. One is from a British book and the other from an Arab book. As you read the timelines, you may need to look back at Source 18 on the previous page to remind yourself where the places are.

SOURCE 28 From an Arab history book

Invasion 1097–99

1097 First great Frankish expedition
1099 Fall of Jerusalem – followed by massacres and plunder

Occupation 1100–1125

1104 Muslim victory stops Frankish eastward advance
1124 The Franj take Tyre. They now occupy the entire coast except for Ascalon

Riposte 1126–1146

1144 Zangi (the ruler of Aleppo in Syria) takes Edessa, destroying one of the four Frankish states

Victory 1147–1187

1148 Debacle at Damascus for a new Frankish expedition
1187 Saladin (the ruler of Egypt) reconquers Jerusalem

Reprive 1188–1229

1190–92 Setback for Saladin. Intervention of King Richard the Lionheart of England enables the Franj to recover several cities

1204 The Franj take Constantinople. Sack of the city

1218–21 Invasion of Egypt by the Franj. They head for Cairo, but the Sultan finally repels them

1229 Al Kamil gives up Jerusalem to the Franj, causing a storm of indignation in the Arab world

Expulsion 1230–1291

1244 Franj lose Jerusalem for the last time

1291 The Sultan Khalil takes Acre, putting an end to two centuries of Frankish presence in the Orient

SOURCE 29 From a British history book

1099 First Crusade. Christians recapture Jerusalem

1144 Turks recapture Edessa

1146 Second Crusade

1148 Crusaders are defeated at Damascus

1187 Saladin recaptures Jerusalem and most of the Holy Land

1189 Third Crusade

1192 King Richard of England makes peace with Saladin after failing to recapture Jerusalem

1204 Fourth Crusade, French knights plunder and burn Constantinople

1212 Children's Crusade. 30,000 children set off from France and Germany for Jerusalem. They fail to reach the Holy Land and thousands are sold into slavery

1217 Fifth Crusade. Three-year campaign fails to recapture Egypt

1228 Sixth Crusade. Emperor Frederick II regains Jerusalem by diplomacy

1243 Muslims recapture Jerusalem

1248 Seventh Crusade. Most of the French army is eventually captured

Opinions about events can be expressed in many ways, e.g. by what a writer decides to include or to leave out, or by the words used.

1. Find events which are included in one timeline and left out of the other. Why did one author leave these out? Why did the other author include them?
2. Find two words in each timeline which express an opinion. Explain why you have chosen those words.
3. Each timeline is divided into stages. The first is divided by headings, such as Occupation. The second is divided into numbered Crusades. Why are they divided in these different ways?

Living together

The Frankish Invasions covered a long period. In that time the Holy Land was not usually at war. In fact there were only a handful of major battles and sieges over the 200 years. In the long periods of peace, the Christians and Muslims learned to live and work together.

SOURCE 30 Written by Fulcher of Chartres in 1127/520

“We who were Westerners have become Easterners. The man who was a Frank has here become a Palestinian. We have already forgotten the places where we were born. Some have married a wife who is a Syrian, or even a Saracen who has become a Christian. He who was once a stranger here is now a native.”

SOURCE 31 Written by Usamah Ibn Munqidh, a Muslim living in Syria during the Frankish Invasions

“I used to enter the al-Aqsa Mosque, when it was occupied by the Christians, who were my friends. The Christians would leave the little adjoining mosque so that I could pray in it.

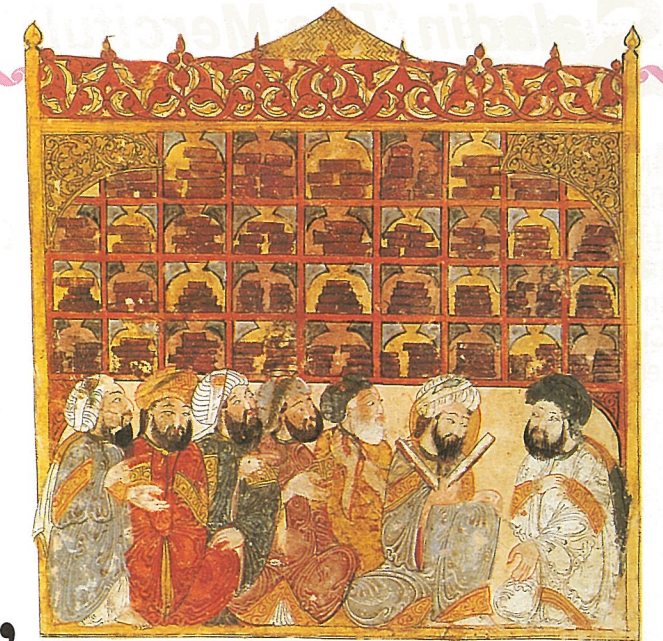
One day, however, a Frank rushed on me, got hold of me and turned my face eastwards, saying, ‘This is the way you should pray.’ The Templars returned and threw the man out and apologised, saying, ‘This is a stranger who has only recently arrived from France, and he has only ever seen people praying eastward.’”

SOURCE 32 Written by Ibn Jubayr, a Muslim historian, when he visited the Holy Land in 1184/579

“The Christians make the Muslims pay a tax, which is applied fairly. The Christian merchants in turn pay a duty on their goods when they pass through the territory of the Muslims. There is complete understanding between the two sides.”



SOURCE 33 An engraving of a Christian and a Muslim playing chess, from the 1250s/640s



SOURCE 34 A place of learning – the Baghdad library

If the Frankish settlers had travelled beyond the narrow coastal strip, what would they have seen? Look at Sources 34 and 35.



SOURCE 35 A place of culture – a music recital, with a working man in the background

Activity

You are a crusader who has settled in the Holy Land. Write a letter back to your family in Europe describing the good and bad things about living in the Holy Land. Use Sources 11–35 to say what has and has not impressed you.