

## A BRIEF HISTORY OF EVENTS LEADING UP TO THE FIRST CRUSADE (Part One of Two) By Pastor Pete Bertolero

Much of what is fed to us from the media and liberal, Politically Correct Public Education System would lead us to believe that Islam, an allegedly peace loving religion and people, have been mistreated throughout history by the west, and namely western Christians. It is we, we are told, not them, who are barbaric and Imperialistic in our treatment of Moslem peoples everywhere. The virtues of Islam are extolled to our children in school, while the horrors of the bloody Christian Crusaders is usually the perspective our kids are given of Christianity. I would like to give a bit of history leading up to the first crusade, that might give the reader a different lens by which to filter the anti-Christian propaganda coming at us from all sides these days. I'm doing this because I believe the past provides for us a "teaching moment" by which to understand what has come upon in these post-9-11 days.

According to writer and columnist Richard C. Csapiar, Jr., east and west had been fighting against one another for 1500 years before the first crusade ever happened. As far back as the 5th century B.C., Persians invaded Europe with the purpose of conquering the Greeks. Alexander the Great, attempted to conquer all of Asia as far as India in return, in the 4th century B.C. Colonial empires established by both the Persians of the east and the Greeks of the west were founded upon military conquest and bloodshed against each other. The Romans also established colonies in Mesopotamia, n/w Arabia, and Assyria in the 2nd century. So aggression between future Muslim peoples (Persians of the east) and the west did not begin during the crusades but had been going on for hundreds and hundreds of years before.

Now by the 6th century (624 A.D.) Mohammed led a bloody raid for booty and plunder against a Meccan caravan, killing 70 Meccans merely for material gain. Between 630 A.D., and the death of Mohammed in 632 A.D., Muslims, led by Mohammed on at least one occasion, had conquered the bulk of western Arabia and southern Palestine. This happened through about a dozen separate invasions and bloody conquests. The Muslims had accomplished these bloody invasions through the concept of "holy war" (Jihad) which exposes as a lie the many news paper articles that suggest that the crusades were the "first Holy Wars", as if the concept had been a Christian creation. After the death of Mohammed, his successor, a caliph by the name of Abu Bakir, launched Islam into almost 1500 years of continual bloody conquest, subjugating non-Muslims everywhere, to Islamic colonizing and Islamic Law, something Islam is seen doing even up to this very day. So it is important to note here, that the Muslim holy wars of imperialistic conquest and bloody colonizing had been going on for almost 1500 years against hundreds of nations, over millions of square miles (significantly larger than the British Empire at its peak). And if not for the military prowess of a Frenchman, Islamic imperialism might have continued unabated, with the likelihood that most of us today would be named Mohammed, or Achmed, or

Azim. In fact, historian Will Durant speculated that Martel's defeat of the Muslims at the Battle of Tours was the determining factor in European countries remaining Christian rather than being forced to become Islamic cultures, as so many nations before them.

So we mustn't forget that by the time of the first crusade, Islam had made alarming gains throughout the Middle East, North Africa, and even into Europe itself. Moslems had occupied the once Christian owned Holy Lands by the end of the 7th century, and had built the Dome of the Rock in 700 A.D. on top of one of the most sacred sites in Judaism, the Temple Mount. In the 8th century, Muslims attacked the very center of Eastern Christianity, Constantinople, and also took over Spain. Muslim armies had gotten as far into the heart of Europe as Tours, France, when they hit an unmovable force. In 732 A.D. (October the 10th) Islamic Imperialism was finally checked by the French General, Charles Martel "the Hammer", in the battle of Tours. This battle was arguably one of the most decisive battles in all of history. Martel gathered his forces directly in the path of the oncoming Muslim army and defended themselves using a phalanx style of combat. It was one of the rare times in the Middle Ages when infantry held its ground against a mounted attack. The battle ended when the French captured and killed the Muslim leader, Abd-ur Rahman. The battle was discontinued for the night, but when morning came the next day, Martel's spies reported that the "Saracens" (as the French called them) had silently returned to their homeland, leaving all their possessions behind. The spoil was great. All in all, Martel's army had slaughtered 300,000 Muslims in the Battle of Tours. From then on, Charles was called "Martel" the French version of the Hebrew hero family known as the "Maccabaeus", which means "Hammer." He was named this because it was said that he fought as if he were himself a hammer of iron or steel, and that he never stopped swinging his battle hammer from the time he enjoined the enemy until the battle stopped. It was said that every one of Charles' blows brought death to his foes. The greatest marvel of all is that Charles "the hammer" lost only 1500 men in the battle.

Now it is hard, from a Christian standpoint, to come up with the tactics so necessary to defeat Islamic warriors (incorrectly called "terrorists" today). This is because the only methods they respect and fear are methods that are more ruthless and barbaric than their own. This is the lesson learned from the Battle of Tours. In this battle the Franks taught a lesson to the Arab Muslims that they, the Muslims had, up till then, taught others. The Muslims for the first time in their bloody march across the continent of Europe, had been outmatched in terms of cruelty and savagery. The lesson of the battle of Tours then is that the terror of the Arab Muslims can only be neutralized by a greater counter-terror. This counter-terror has to be a mega-terror or a super-terror that is able to strike fear in the hearts of Muslims that is able to make them give up their campaign under pain of death. Under the general Frankish population, there were no values like compassion or chivalry towards an adversary. Hence, it was never on their minds to ever give the Arabs a chance to negotiate for peace. They also never allowed the Arabs to retreat in order to fight another day. They chased down all the Arab

Muslims who fled during the night, and slaughtered them all, taking the treasure troves they were trying to escape with as booty and spoil. They never allowed surrender, but slaughtered all of them without mercy so they could never fight against Europe again. Their perception of an enemy as a legitimate object of destruction was present in each and every Frank. They had no "dead weight" of public opinion polls that decried war and demonstrated against their military leaders like we have today in our country. Both the Frankish people and their leadership all were in unity in that they all believed that their enemy was a legitimate object of destruction. Period. Regretfully, this commonality of Objective is no longer held in France or any other part of the western world.

The Franks were never under any illusion that they could reach out to the Muslims and have any kind of peaceful coexistence with them. For the Franks, the battle of Tours was a "do or die" situation. There was no such thing as a belief reflecting such sentimental ideas that suggest there are moderate Muslims and that we need to be careful to isolate the Jihadists from the general, peace-loving Muslim population. There was no such belief that "Islam is a religion of peace, that has been hijacked by the Jihadists." The view had by the Franks was perhaps by far the more accurate understanding of Islam. Islam is a religion of war and the term Jihad is meant only to create a deception that there is such a thing or entity as a moderate Muslim apart from the notion of Jihad. If you believe in Islam, you are a Muslim. A Muslim is a warmonger who believes in the Instruction Manual for terrorism called the Koran that calls upon all Muslims to convert all non-Muslims to Islam under pain of death. The Franks under Charles Martel understood this, as did the Mongols after them. We do not. When, during the first Crusade, Christian knights behaved themselves in such a way that they treated their Muslim enemy with the same ruthless, bloodthirsty barbarity that governed the behavior of Muslims for 1500 years beforehand, Muslims throughout the years ever afterward have decried the way the west defends itself as "foul!" They say this even though the number of Christians they killed in their reign of terror leading up to the crusades was three times the number of people killed by the crusader armies of all the crusades combined, not to mention the 160,000 Christians they have been currently putting to death for their faith yearly since 1997.

Should Christians ever behave themselves in such a way as to inflict terror on the part of their Muslim enemies. No. We must never imitate evil (Romans 3:8). And that is why our president, George Bush, has commanded that our fighting men and women, sons and daughters, behave themselves under a Christian code of chivalry and fight under the principles of a "Just War." and for the most part, our warriors have indeed honorably conducted themselves. It is a shame that whenever a lone soldier of two may step outside these lines and act shamefully (not barbaric or cruel, or ruthless, like the Islamic be-headers of soldiers, and civilians and women do) our entire press corps runs rampant with outcries and continuous press coverage of how barbaric we are. And the Muslims know this and count on it as part of their own warfare strategy. Alas!

## Part Two: The Results of the First Crusade