

apostolic blessing. He instituted a sign well suited to so honorable a profession by making the figure of the cross, the stigma of the Lord's passion, the emblem of the soldiery, or rather, of what was to be the soldiery of God. This, made of any kind of cloth, he ordered to be sewed upon the shirts, cloaks, and *byrna* [that is, a type of cloak] of those who were about to go. He commanded that if anyone, after receiving this emblem, or after taking openly this vow, should shrink from his good intent through base change of heart, or any affection for his parents, he should be regarded an outlaw forever, unless he repented and again undertook whatever of his pledge he had omitted. Furthermore, the pope condemned with a fearful anathema all those who dared to molest the wives, children, and possessions of these who were going on this journey for God.

Questions: What reasons does the pope give for calling on Europeans to go to the East? What do these accounts tell us of the aims and ambitions of the papacy and the church at this time? What rewards, both material and spiritual, does the pope offer to those who go on crusade? How does the papal view of warfare compare with that of Augustine (doc. 2)? How and why do the four accounts differ from each other? Of the four accounts of Urban's speech, which do you believe to be the most accurate? Why?

13. ALBERT OF AACHEN ON THE PEASANTS' CRUSADE

While the army of the First Crusade was assembling, there arose a number of popular crusading movements led by a variety of charismatic preachers. Unorganized and often violent, these groups exhibited a fanatical belief in the justness of their cause—a belief that resulted in the slaughter of Jewish communities in Europe and hostile encounters with fellow Christians in both eastern Europe and Byzantium as the “armies” made their way toward Jerusalem during 1096. Most medieval accounts of these popular crusaders are critical of their actions and motives, and it is certainly true that politics and personal gain were as much a part of the movement as religious feeling. Although not accepted by higher church authorities, leaders such as Peter the Hermit gained a great following, demonstrating the intensity of popular piety within Europe at this time. Despite the criticism, every major medieval crusade would be accompanied by pogroms against the Jews of Europe, and hostility between western and eastern Christians would continue to be a prominent feature of the crusading movement. Albert of Aachen, a twelfth-century historian, was not a crusader, but his account of the Peasants’ Crusade is believed to be based on the reports of an eyewitness or participant.

Source: trans. A.C. Krey, *The First Crusade: The Accounts of Eye-witnesses and Participants* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1921), pp. 48–52, 54–56, revised.

There was a priest, Peter by name, formerly a hermit. He was born in the city of Amiens, which is in the western part of the kingdom of the Franks, and he was appointed preacher in Berri in the aforesaid kingdom. In every admonition and sermon, with all the persuasion of which he was capable, he urged setting out on the journey as soon as possible. In response to his constant admonition and call, bishops, abbots, clerics, and monks set out; next, most noble laymen, and princes of the different kingdoms; then, all the common people, the chaste as well as the sinful, adulterers, homicides, thieves, perjurers, and robbers; indeed, every class of the Christian profession, nay, also, women and those influenced by the spirit of penance—all joyfully entered upon this expedition. . . .

In the year of the incarnation of the Lord 1096, . . . in the reign of Pope Urban II, formerly Odoard, on the eighth day of March, Walter, surnamed the Penniless, a well-known soldier, set out, as a result of the preaching of Peter the Hermit, with a great company of Frankish foot soldiers and only about eight knights. On the beginning of the journey to Jerusalem he entered into the kingdom of Hungary. When his intention and the reason for his taking this journey became known to Lord Coloman, most Christian king of Hungary, he was kindly received and was given peaceful transit across the entire realm, with permission to trade. And so without giving offense, and without being attacked, he set out even to Belgrade, a Bulgarian city, passing over to Malevilla, where the realm of the king of Hungary ends. Thence he peacefully crossed the Morava river.

But sixteen of Walter's company remained in Malevilla, that they might purchase arms. Of this Walter was ignorant, for he had crossed long before. Then some of the Hungarians of perverse mind, seeing the absence of Walter and his army, laid hands upon those sixteen and robbed them of arms, garments, gold, and silver, and so let them depart, naked and empty-handed. Then these distressed pilgrims, deprived of arms and other things, hastened on their way to Belgrade, which has been mentioned before, where Walter with all his band had pitched tents for camp. They reported to him the misfortune which had befallen them, but Walter heard this with equanimity, because it would take too long to return for vengeance.

On the very night when those comrades, naked and empty-handed, were received, Walter sought to buy the necessities of life from a chief of the Bulgarians and the magistrate of the city; but these men, thinking it a pretense, and regarding them as spies, forbade the sale of anything to them. Wherefore, Walter and his companions, greatly angered, began forcibly to seize and lead away the herds of cattle and sheep, which were wandering here and there through the fields in search of pasture. As a result, serious strife arose between the Bulgarians and the pilgrims who were driving away the flocks, and they

came to blows. However, while the strength of the Bulgarians was growing even to 140, some of the pilgrim army, cut off from the multitude of their companions, arrived in flight at a chapel. But the Bulgarians, their army growing in number, while the band of Walter was weakening and his entire company scattered, besieged the chapel and burned sixty who were within; on most of the others, who escaped from the enemy and the chapel in defense of their lives, the Bulgarians inflicted grave wounds.

After this calamity and the loss of his people, and after he had passed eight days as a fugitive in the forests of Bulgaria, Walter, leaving his men scattered everywhere, withdrew to Nish, a very wealthy city in the midst of the Bulgarian realm. There he found the duke and prince of the land and reported to him the injury and damage which had been done him. From the duke he obtained justice for all; nay, more, for in reconciliation the duke bestowed upon him arms and money, and the same lord of the land gave him peaceful conduct through the cities of Bulgaria, Sofia, Philippopolis, and Adrianople, and also license to trade.

[Walter] went down with all his band, even to the imperial city, Constantinople, which is the capital of the entire Greek empire. And when he arrived there, with all possible earnestness and most humble petition he implored from the lord emperor himself permission to delay peacefully in his kingdom, with license to buy the necessities of life, until he should have as his companion Peter the Hermit, upon whose admonition and persuasion he had begun this journey. And he also begged that, when the troops were united, they might cross in ships over the arm of the sea called the Strait of St. George, and thus they would be able to resist more safely the squadrons of the Turks and the gentiles [that is, non-Christians]. The outcome was that the requests made of the lord emperor, Alexius by name, were granted.

Not long after these events, Peter and his large army, innumerable as the sands of the sea—an army which he had brought together from the various realms of the nations of the Franks, Swabians, Bavarians, and Lotharingians—were making their way to Jerusalem. Descending on that march into the kingdom of Hungary, he and his army pitched their tents before the gate of Oedenburg. . . .

Peter heard [of the events at Malevilla] and, because the Hungarians and Bulgarians were fellow Christians, absolutely refused to believe so great a crime of them, until his men, coming to Malevilla, saw hanging from the walls the arms and spoils of the sixteen companions of Walter who had stayed behind a short time before, and whom the Hungarians had treacherously presumed to rob. But when Peter recognized the injury to his brethren, at the sight of their arms and spoils, he urged his companions to avenge their wrongs.

These sounded the trumpet loudly, and with upraised banners they rushed to the walls and attacked the enemy with a hail of arrows. In such quick succession and in such incredible numbers did they hurl them in the face of those standing on the walls that the Hungarians, in no wise able to resist the force of the besieging Franks, left the walls, hoping that within the city they might be able to withstand the strength of the Gauls. Godfrey, surnamed Burel—a native of the city of Etampes, master and standard-bearer of 200 footsoldiers, himself a footsoldier, and a man of great strength—seeing the flight of the Hungarians away from the walls, then quickly crossed over the walls by means of a ladder he chanced to find there. Reinold of Broyes, a distinguished knight, clad in helmet and coat of mail, ascended just after Godfrey; soon all the knights, as well as the footsoldiers, hastened to enter the city. The Hungarians, seeing their own imminent peril, gathered 7,000 strong for defense; and, having passed out through another gate which looked toward the east, they stationed themselves on the summit of a lofty crag, beyond which flowed the Danube, where they were invincibly fortified. A very large part of these were unable to escape quickly through the narrow passage, and they fell before the gate. Some who hoped to find refuge on the top of the mountain were cut down by the pursuing pilgrims; still others, thrown headlong from the summit of the mountain, were buried in the waves of the Danube, but many escaped by boat. About 4,000 Hungarians fell there, but only a hundred pilgrims, not counting the wounded, were killed at that same place.

This victory won, Peter remained with all his followers in the same citadel five days, for he found there an abundance of grain, flocks of sheep, herds of cattle, a plentiful supply of wine, and an infinite number of horses. . . .

When Peter learned of the wrath of the king [of Hungary] and his very formidable gathering of troops, he deserted Malevilla with all his followers and planned to cross the Morava with all spoils and flocks and herds of horses. But on the whole bank he found very few boats, only 150, in which the great multitude must pass quickly over and escape, lest the king should overtake them with a great force. Hence many who were unable to cross in boats tried to cross on rafts made by fastening poles together with twigs. But driven hither and thither in these rafts without rudders, and at times separated from their companions, many perished, pierced with arrows from the bows of the Patzinaks, who inhabited Bulgaria. As Peter saw the drowning and destruction which was befalling his men, he commanded the Bavarians, the Alemanni, and the other Teutons, by their promise of obedience, to come to the aid of their Frankish brethren. They were carried to that place by seven rafts; then they sank seven small boats of the Patzinaks with their occupants, but took only seven men captive. They led these seven captives into the presence of Peter and killed them by his order.

When he had thus avenged his men, Peter crossed the Morava river and entered the large and spacious forests of the Bulgarians with supplies of food, with every necessity, and with the spoils from Belgrade. And after a delay of eight days in those vast woods and pastures, he and his followers approached Nish, a city very strongly fortified with walls. After crossing the river before the city by a stone bridge, they occupied the field, pleasing in its verdure and extent, and pitched their tents on the banks of the river. . . .

Peter, obedient to the mandate of the emperor, advanced from the city of Sofia and withdrew with all his people to the city Philippopolis. When he had related the entire story of his misfortune in the hearing of all the Greek citizens, he received, in the name of Jesus and in fear of God, very many gifts for him. Next, the third day after, he withdrew to Adrianople, cheerful and joyful in the abundance of all necessary things. There he tarried in camp outside the walls of the city only two days, and then withdrew after sunrise on the third day. A second message of the emperor was urging him to hasten his march to Constantinople, for, on account of the reports about him, the emperor was burning with desire to see this same Peter. When they had come to Constantinople, the army of Peter was ordered to encamp at a distance from the city, and license to trade was fully granted. . . .

At the beginning of summer in the same year in which Peter and Gottschalk, after collecting an army, had set out, there assembled in like fashion a large and innumerable host of Christians from diverse kingdoms and lands; namely, from the realms of France, England, Flanders, and Lorraine. . . . I know not whether by a judgment of the Lord, or by some error of mind, they rose in a spirit of cruelty against the Jewish people scattered throughout these cities and slaughtered them without mercy, especially in the kingdom of Lorraine, asserting it to be the beginning of their expedition and their duty against the enemies of the Christian faith. This slaughter of Jews was done first by citizens of Cologne. These suddenly fell upon a small band of Jews and severely wounded and killed many; they destroyed the houses and synagogues of the Jews and divided among themselves a very large amount of money. When the Jews saw this cruelty, about 200 in the silence of the night began flight by boat to Neuss. The pilgrims and crusaders discovered them, and after taking away all their possessions, inflicted on them similar slaughter, leaving not even one alive.

Not long after this, they started upon their journey, as they had vowed, and arrived in a great multitude at the city of Mainz. There Count Emico, a nobleman, a very mighty man in this region, was awaiting, with a large band of Teutons, the arrival of the pilgrims who were coming thither from diverse lands by the king's highway.

The Jews of this city, knowing of the slaughter of their brethren, and that they themselves could not escape the hands of so many, fled in hope of safety to Bishop Rothard. They put an infinite treasure in his guard and trust, having much faith in his protection, because he was bishop of the city. Then that excellent bishop of the city cautiously set aside the incredible amount of money received from them. He placed the Jews in the very spacious hall of his own house, away from the sight of Count Emico and his followers, that they might remain safe and sound in a very secure and strong place.

But Emico and the rest of his band held a council and, after sunrise, attacked the Jews in the hall with arrows and lances. Breaking the bolts and doors, they killed the Jews, about 700 in number, who in vain resisted the force and attack of so many thousands. They killed the women, also, and with their swords pierced tender children of whatever age and sex. The Jews, seeing that their Christian enemies were attacking them and their children, and that they were sparing no age, likewise fell upon one another, brother, children, wives, and sisters, and thus they perished at each other's hands. Horrible to say, mothers cut the throats of nursing children with knives and stabbed others, preferring them to perish thus by their own hands rather than to be killed by the weapons of the uncircumcised.

From this cruel slaughter of the Jews a few escaped; and a few because of fear, rather than because of love of the Christian faith, were baptized. With very great spoils taken from these people, Count Emico, Clarebold, Thomas, and all that intolerable company of men and women then continued on their way to Jerusalem, directing their course towards the kingdom of Hungary, where passage along the royal highway was usually not denied the pilgrims. But on arriving at Wieselburg, the fortress of the king, which the rivers Danube and Leytha protect with marshes, the bridge and gate of the fortress were found closed by command of the king of Hungary, for great fear had entered all the Hungarians because of the slaughter which had happened to their brethren. . . .

But while almost everything had turned out favorably for the Christians, and while they had penetrated the walls with great openings, by some chance or misfortune, I know not what, such great fear entered the whole army that they turned in flight, just as sheep are scattered and alarmed when wolves rush upon them. And seeking a refuge here and there, they forgot their companions. . . .

Emico and some of his followers continued their flight along the way by which they had come. Thomas, Clarebold, and several of their men escaped in flight towards Carinthia and Italy. So the hand of the Lord is believed to have been against the pilgrim who had sinned by excessive impurity and fornication, and who had slaughtered the exiled Jews through greed of money, rather than for the sake of God's justice, although the Jews were opposed to Christ. The

Lord is a just judge and orders no one unwillingly, or under compulsion, to come under the yoke of the Catholic faith.

There was another detestable crime in this assemblage of wayfaring people, who were foolish and insanely fickle. That the crime was hateful to the Lord and incredible to the faithful is not to be doubted. They asserted that a certain goose was inspired by the Holy Spirit, and that a she goat was not less filled by the same Spirit. These they made their guides on this holy journey to Jerusalem: these they worshipped excessively; and most of the people following them, like beasts, believed with their whole minds that this was the true course. May the hearts of the faithful be free from the thought that the Lord Jesus wished the sepulcher of his most sacred body to be visited by brutish and insensate animals, or that he wished these to become the guides of Christian souls, which by the price of his own blood he deigned to redeem from the filth of idols!

Questions: How did the leaders and members of the Peasants' Crusade view their role with regard to Urban II's call? How did they justify their actions? What do these documents say about the church's influence and authority over the European population at the time of the First Crusade? What were the motivations behind the attacks on European Jewish communities? Were Christian attitudes toward the Jews uniform? What is Albert's opinion of the murderers of the Jews?

14. SOLOMON BAR SAMSON ON THE MASSACRES OF JEWS

Jewish writers also recorded the terrible events of 1096. In the following account, written in Hebrew in the mid-twelfth century, the historian Solomon bar Samson provides a different perspective on the massacres at Mainz described by Albert of Aachen in the previous document.

Source: trans. J.R. Marcus, *The Jew in the Medieval World* (New York: Harper and Row, 1938), pp. 115–18; revised.

It was on the third of Siwan . . . at noon [on May 2], that Emico the wicked, the enemy of the Jews, came with his whole army against the city gate [of Mainz], and the citizens opened it up for him. Then the enemies of the Lord said to each other: "Look! They have opened up the gate for us. Now let us avenge the blood of 'the hanged one' [that is, Jesus]."

The children of the holy covenant [that is, the Jews] who were there, martyrs who feared the most high, although they saw the great multitude, an army numerous as the sand on the shore of the sea, still clung to their creator. Then

young and old donned their armor and girded on their weapons, and at their head was Rabbi Kalonymus ben Meshullam, the chief of the community. Yet because of the many troubles and the fasts which they had observed they had no strength to stand up against the enemy. Then came gangs and bands, sweeping through like a flood, until Mainz was filled from end to end.

The foe Emico proclaimed in the hearing of the community that the enemy be driven from the city and be put to flight. Panic was great in the town. Each Jew in the inner court of the bishop girded on his weapons, and all moved towards the palace gate to fight the crusaders and the citizens. They fought each other up to the very gate, but the sins of the Jews brought it about that the enemy overcame them and took the gate.

The hand of the Lord was heavy against his people. All the gentiles [that is, non-Jews] were gathered together against the Jews in the courtyard to blot out their name, and the strength of our people weakened when they saw the wicked Edomites [that is, in this case, Christians] overpowering them. The bishop's men, who had promised to help them, were the very first to flee, thus delivering the Jews into the hands of the enemy. They were indeed a poor support; even the bishop himself fled from his church, for it was thought to kill him also because he had spoken good things of the Jews. . . .

When the children of the holy covenant saw that the heavenly decree of death had been issued and that the enemy had conquered them and had entered the courtyard, then all of them—old men and young, virgins and children, servants and maids—cried out together to their Father in heaven and, weeping for themselves and for their lives, accepted as just the sentence of God. One to another they said: "Let us be strong and let us bear the yoke of the holy religion, for only in this world can the enemy kill us—and the easiest of the four [means of] death is by the sword. But we, our souls in paradise, shall continue to live eternally, in the great shining reflection."

With a whole heart and with a willing soul they then spoke: "After all it is not right to criticize the acts of God—blessed be he and blessed be his name—who has given to us his Torah and a command to put ourselves to death, to kill ourselves for the unity of his holy name. Happy are we if we do his will. Happy is anyone who is killed or slaughtered, who dies for the unity of [God's] name, so that he is ready to enter the world to come, to dwell in the heavenly camp with the righteous—with Rabbi Akiba [that is, a second-century Jewish martyr] and his companions, the pillars of the universe, who were killed for his name's sake. Not only this; but he exchanges the world of darkness for the world of light, the world of trouble for the world of joy, and the world that passes away for the world that lasts for all eternity." Then all of them, to a man, cried out with a loud voice: "Now we must delay no longer, for the enemy are already upon us. Let us hasten and offer ourselves as a sacrifice to