

AN INTRODUCTION TO ISLAM FOR JEWS

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Session 4: Crisis and Renewal

1. STATUS OF NON-MUSLIMS UNDER MUSLIM RULE

Qur'an 2: 256

There is no compulsion in religion. The right direction is henceforth distinct from error. And he who rejects false deities and believes in God has grasped a firm handhold which will never break. God is Hearer, Knower.

Qur'an 9: 29

Fight those who believe not in God nor the Last Day, and do not forbid what God and His Messenger have forbidden—such men as do not practise the religion of truth, being of those who have been given the Book—until they pay the *jizya* with willing submission, and are *saghirun*.

The Pact of Umar, in al-Tabari (838-923), *History of the Prophets and Kings*

In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

This is the guarantee granted the inhabitants of Aelia by the servant of God Umar, Commander of the Faithful.

He grants them the surety of their persons, their goods, their churches, their crosses—whether these are in a good or bad condition—and the cult in general.

Their churches will not be expropriated for residences nor destroyed; they and their annexes will suffer no harm and the same will be true of their crosses and their goods.

No constraint will be imposed upon them in the matter of religion and no one of them will be annoyed.

No Jew will be authorized to live in Jerusalem with them.

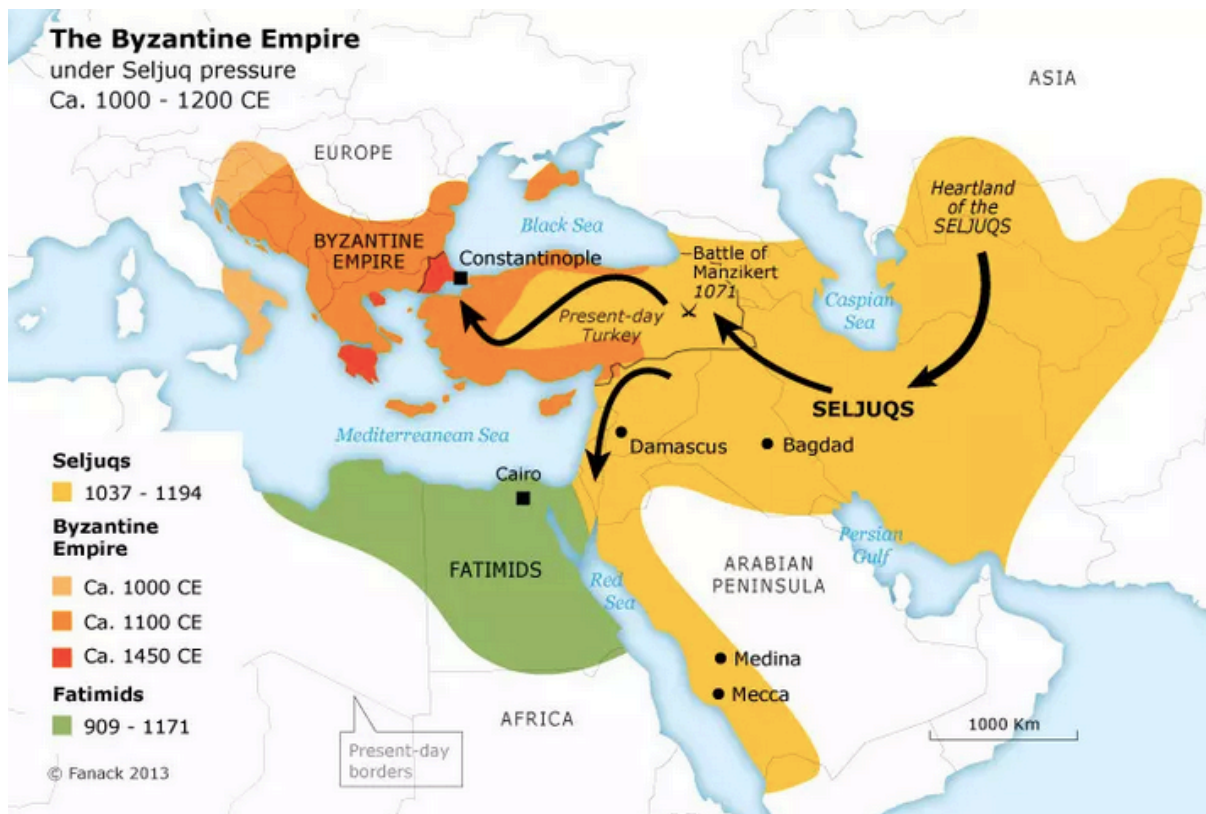
The inhabitants of Jerusalem will pay the poll-tax in the same manner as those in other cities.

It will be left to them to expel from their city the Byzantines [*Rum*] and the brigands. Those of the latter who leave will have safe-conduct. Those who wish to stay will be authorized to do so, on condition of paying the same poll-tax as the residents of Aelia....

The peasants who are presently in the city ... can remain and pay the poll-tax on the same basis as the inhabitants of Aelia, or, if they prefer, can leave with the Byzantines and return to their families. They will not be taxed until they have gathered their harvest.

This writing is placed under the guarantee of God and the protection [*dhimma*] of the Prophet, of the caliphs, and the Believers, on condition that the inhabitants of Aelia pay the poll-tax that is incumbent upon them.

2. SLAVES AND RULERS: THE ARRIVAL OF THE TURKS



Major Turkish dynasties

Name	Dates	Ethnic origin	Territory
Tulunid	868-905	Turkish (slave)	Egypt
Ghaznavid	975-1187	Turkish (slave)	Aghanistan, eastern Iran
Seljuks	1037-1194	Turkish (free)	From Turkey to Central Asia, from Arabia to the Caspian Sea
Slave dynasty	1206-1290	Turkish (slave)	Northern India
Mamluk	1250-1517	Turkish (slave)	Egypt

Ibn Khaldun (1332-1406), *Kitab al-'Ibad [Book of Evidence]*

It was by the grace of God, glory be to Him, that He came to the rescue of the true faith, by reviving its last breath and restoring in Egypt the unity of the Muslims, guarding His order and defending His ramparts. This He did by sending to them, of this Turkish people and out of its mighty and numerous tribes, guardian amirs and devoted defenders who are imported as slaves from the lands of heathendom to the lands of Islam. This status of slavery is indeed a blessing ... from divine providence.

3. THE THREAT FROM THE WEST: THE CRUSADES

The Crusader States

Name	Dates	Territory
Kingdom of Jerusalem	1099-1291	Most of modern Israel plus a chunk of Jordan
Principality of Antioch	1098-1268	Area around Antioch (in modern Syria)
County of Tripoli	1109-1289	Northern Lebanon
County of Edessa	1098-1159	Northern Syria/Iraq



Usama ibn Munqidh (1095-1188), *Kitab al-I'tbar [The Book of Learning by Example]*

When one comes to recount cases regarding the Franks, he cannot but glorify God (exalted is He!) and sanctify Him, for he sees them as animals possessing the virtues of courage and fighting, but nothing else; just as animals have only the virtues of strength and carrying loads. I shall now give some instances of their doings and their curious mentality.

In the army of King Fulk, son of Fulk, was a Frankish reverend knight who had just arrived from their land in order to make the holy pilgrimage and then return home. He was of my intimate fellowship and kept such constant company with me that he began to call me 'my brother'. Between us were mutual bonds of amity and friendship. When he resolved to return by sea to his homeland, he said to me: 'My brother, I am leaving for my country and I want you to send with me thy son (my son, who was then fourteen years old, was at that time in my company) to our country, where he can see the knights and learn wisdom and chivalry. When

he returns, he will be like a wise man.’ Thus there fell upon my ears words which would never come out of the head of a sensible man; for even if my son were to be taken captive, his captivity could not bring him a worse misfortune than carrying him into the lands of the Franks. However, I said to the man, ‘By thy life, this has exactly been my idea. But the only thing that prevented me from carrying it out was the fact that his grandmother, my mother, is so fond of him and did not this time let him come out with me until she exacted an oath from me to the effect that I would return him to her.’ Thereupon he asked, ‘Is thy mother still alive?’ ‘Yes.’ I replied. ‘Well’, said he, ‘do not disobey her.’

... Everyone who is a fresh emigrant from the Frankish lands is ruder in character than those who have become acclimatized and have held long associations with the Muslims.

Daniel Brown, *A New Introduction to Islam*, 2004

The memories of the Crusades were like a time bomb, however, which was destined to go off in the future. At the time, they were a minor irritation, not a real threat at all.

4. THE THREAT FROM THE EAST: THE MONGOL INVASIONS

Ata al-Mulk Juvayni (1226 – 1283), *History of the World Conqueror*

The Mongols ordered that, apart from 400 artisans whom they specified and selected from among the men and some children, girls and boys, whom they bore off into captivity, the whole population, including the women and children, should be killed, and no-one, whether woman or man, be spared. The people of Merv were then distributed among the soldiers and levies, and, in short, to each man was allotted the execution of three or four hundred persons. ... They came, they sapped, they burnt, they slew, they plundered and they departed.

5. THE THREE ‘GUNPOWDER EMPIRES’ OF THE 16TH CENTURY: OTTOMAN, SAFAVID, MUGHAL

