



SESSION 23: CRUSADES TO THE FALL OF CONSTANTINOPLE – CONTENT

1. Pope Urban's vision of a unified Church quickly turned into an effort to Latinize the East through the Crusades. Although Pope Innocent III had instructed crusaders to not go to Constantinople (4th, 1204), they took mules into the sanctuary of Hagia Sophia to carry away plunder. And Innocent then said that the crusade was a "just judgement of God". He began the rebaptizing and reordination of Eastern clergy who converted, and inconsiderately installed a Venetian nobleman as the Latin Patriarch of Constantinople. Later, the West began blaming the East for the crusades' failures. The following years were devastation in both East and West. The East was under constant Turkish attack as the Byzantine Empire diminished. In the West nationalism gave rise to independent countries and kings, who sought to control Rome. Two events brought great devastation to all of Europe – the Hundred Years' War between England and France, and the Bubonic Plague. The historian S.E. Ozmont said, "As never before, not even during the century of the Roman Empire's collapse, Western people walked through the valley of the shadow of death". And A. Papadakis said, "The whole medieval theory of supreme papal authority failed and foundered on new nationalist realities".
2. During the Crusades and immediately following, monothelite Lebanese Maronites unified with Rome under the Latin Patriarch of Antioch, becoming the first Uniates; occupied Egyptians gave up their Coptic language in favor of Arabic; Nestorianism fell into decay; Albania, Armenia and Azerbaijan became Muslim; Georgia remained a Christian stronghold and established the great monastery of Iveron on Mount Athos.
3. In 1208 the Eastern patriarchate moved from Constantinople to Nicea, while in 1215 the pope's 4th Lateran Council said that, "Once absolved of sin, the priest imposes penance, which if not completed in this life, will be completed in **purgatory**.", a Western innovation.
4. In 1244 Thomas Aquinas became a Dominican monk, preaching that "truth is beyond the reach of reason", and turning Graeco-Roman philosophy that many considered a threat to Christianity into an instrument in the hands of the church. He said that the merits of saints can be transferred to needy sinners by the authority of the church through the pope, as **indulgences**. He said that the church is one, that when one suffers all suffer, and that people should thus pray to saints for those in purgatory. Clergy used indulgences to address the church's poor financial condition.
5. In 1248 an independent Patriarchate of Kiev (Russia) was established, while Anselm of Canterbury and Abelard formed a new theological synthesis called **Scholasticism**. This meant obtaining knowledge from defensible truth, giving rise to the dialectic method of learning – 1) pose a question, 2) present pro and con arguments, and 3) state a conclusion. Scholasticism said that no part of Christian faith is beyond rational demonstration, that faith and reason flow together to form Christian wisdom, and that one can question the church's teaching and yet remain true to church tradition.
6. In 1261, on July 25, Nicean (Eastern) forces took Constantinople from the Latins, beginning the last Eastern dynasty (Paleologan).

7. In 1265 Pope Clement IV asserted the right to appoint any ecclesiastical office anywhere in Christendom. Later, the antipopes of Avignon made unlimited use of this.
8. On July 6 of 1274, and the Council of Lyons, representatives of Eastern Emperor Michael Paleologus acknowledged purgatory, papal supremacy and the filioque in an effort to bring Western help against Muslim foes of the East. But Patriarch Joseph I refused to negotiate these issues and unity without the involvement of the Eastern churches. So in 1281 Pope Martin IV declared that Byzantium must be brought into unity by force.
9. In 1291 Palestine passed out of Christian hands for the last time.
10. In 1302 Pope Boniface VIII (1294-1303) edicted that kings could not tax clergy without his approval. He said, "We declare, state, define and pronounce that it is thoroughly necessary for salvation of every human creature be subject to the Roman pontiff.", and that, "All princes rule as subject to the pope, who can remove them at pleasure, whereas the pope himself can be judged by none, since the decision and court of God and pope are one". This brought him into conflict with King Philip IV of France, whom he tried to depose. Philip captured Boniface, sacked his home, and led him through the streets of Rome sitting backward on a horse. He soon died and Philip appointed Pope Clement V.
11. In appointing Clement V as pope, Philip IV also replaced 23 of the 24 cardinals with Frenchmen. He also arrested the Templars, who had accumulated great fortune by pillaging in the Crusades, along with their leader, Jacques DeMolay. Forced confessions resulted in their executions; the church took their fortune, and Philip then took it from the church. In 1305 the puppet Clement then moved the papacy to Avignon where it stayed until 1378, growing into a great bureaucracy of systematized simony.
12. 1337 marked the beginning of the Hundred Years' War between England and France. As the papacy was controlled by the French, England came to see the papacy as an enemy. During this long and devastating war, the French saint Joan of Arc was burned. Ten years later (1347) the bubonic plague appeared. Within three years one third of the population of Europe died. Fear of the plague precipitated increased fear of hell and the killing of Jews.
13. In 1330 the Italian philosopher Barlaam appeared in Constantinople, teaching that God is inaccessible and beyond reason, and can only be known indirectly. He became a vocal opponent of mysticism and the hesychasts. Regarding their practice of constant, contemplative prayer he said, "The body assisting in pure prayer is navel watching". In contrast, the great 14th century theologian of the East, **Saint Gregory Palamas** (1296-1359) came to the defense of hesychasts. Gregory had spent 20 years at the Great Lavra on Mount Athos, and then was abbot of the monastery Esphigmanou there. He said, "Enlightenment is achieved by bringing the mind into the heart", writing much of the divine essence and energy of God, and of the divine light thereof that can be observed through constant, silent prayer. Barlaam's doctrines were condemned at a council in Constantinople in 1341, and Palamite theology became an integral part of Orthodox Christianity. Hesychasm was canonized in 1351, leading to the rise of monastic influence on the Eastern church as the Byzantine Empire grew weak and smaller. Saint Gregory was canonized in 1368.
14. In 1355 Eastern Emperor John Paleologus V wrote Pope Innocent IV, offering the conversion of all of his subjects to Western Christianity. He then went to Rome and submitted himself to the pope,

an act of despair and hope for help as Byzantium crumbled before the Turks. The Eastern church, of course, did not accept this.

15. In 1378 Pope Gregory XI returned the papacy to Rome; he was quickly succeeded by Urban VI who quickly established himself as a tyrant and insane. In response Clement VI was elected as a second pope in Avignon, establishing a line of 'antipopes' and a schism between Rome and Western churches that lasted until 1418 (40 years). Italy, Germany, Bohemia, Poland, Hungary, Scandinavia and England sided with popes of Rome. France, Spain, Scotland, Naples and Sicily sided with the antipopes at Avignon. European kings saw this schism as an opportunity to undermine papal authority.
16. As a result of the schism, in 1412 Pope John XXIII of Rome promised indulgences to all who would join a crusade against the king of Naples. **John Hus**, a rector at the University of Prague, wanted to restore the Western church to high ideals, saying that the Bible is the final authority and that a pope who does not obey the Bible should not be obeyed. He said that Pope John had no right to call this crusade, and that payments to the church have no effect on forgiveness. His followers, the Unity of Bohemian Brothers, would later give rise to the Moravians, some of whom came to Pennsylvania and established the communities of Bethlehem and Nazareth. [Although the beginning of Protestantism is generally associated with Martin Luther, one could consider John Hus the first Protestant.]
17. In 1409 the Western Council of Pisa decreed that conciliar assembly of the church was superior to the pope. They deposed the pope in Rome and the antipope in Avignon, and elected Pope Alexander V. Both the popes in Rome and Avignon refused to step down, so there were three popes for 8 years.
18. King Sigismund presided at the Council of Constance in Rome in 1418. John Hus was asked to present himself with safety "guaranteed by the king". Imprisoned upon arrival, Hus was condemned and burned. Sigismund then deposed the Roman pope, the Avignon antipope and Alexander V. The antipope refused to step down and was forced to do so by representatives from Spain and Scotland. They then elected Pope Martin V.
19. In 1439 kings, emperors, hierarchs, monastics from East and West met for the Council of Florence. They discussed four topics: 1) procession of the Holy Spirit, that is, the filioque, 2) the doctrine of purgatory, 3) the use of unleavened bread in the Divine Liturgy, and 4) the supremacy of the pope. With the exception of Bishop Mark of Ephesus, the Eastern emperor and representatives from East and West signed a concordat of unification, agreeing to the theology of the West. Upon their return to Constantinople, the Emperor and his representatives found the Patriarch and the churches unwilling to accept the concordat (and example of conciliarity).
20. By 1450 the Byzantine Empire consisted of Constantinople only. On April 7 of 1453 Mohammad II attacked the city. On the night of May 28 Western and Eastern clergy and laity held a combined Divine Liturgy in Hagia Sophia. The next morning, May 29, Constantinople fell; Emperor Constantine XI was killed in battle, and Hagia Sophia became a mosque (which it is today). The Orthodox churches of Georgia and Russia alone remained outside the Muslim occupation.
21. In 1479 Spain became a significant European power through the uniting of the houses of Castille and Aragon by the marriage of Ferdinand and Isabella. They soon sent Christopher Columbus in

search of the New World, and obtained a papal bull from Pope Sixtus IV establishing the Inquisition, entirely under their control.