



God's Battalions: The Case for the Crusades

By Rodney Stark

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The truth about the Christian Crusades and Muslim Jihad.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

It always seems counterintuitive to moderns that warfare and religion can be consistent. Ideally, followers of the prince of peace are to avoid the sword and shield. Clearly, this has not always been the case. Frequently in the crosshairs of critics are the Christian wars against Muslims known as the Crusades, commonly viewed as the birth of European imperialism and the forced spread of Christianity. But what if we've had it all wrong? What if the Crusades were a justifiable response to a strong and determined foe? Stark, a prominent sociologist and author of 27 books on history and religion, has penned a compelling argument that these bloody encounters had less to do with spreading Christianity than with responding to an ever more dangerous enemy—the emerging Islamic empire. There is much to be learned here. Filled with fascinating historical glimpses of monks and Templars, priests and pilgrims, kings and contemplatives, Stark pulls it all together and challenges us to reconsider our view of the Crusades. (*Oct.*)

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Review

“GOD’S BATTALIONS launches a frontal assault on the comfortable myths that scholars have popularized about the crusades. The results are startling. His greatest achievement is to make us see the crusaders on their own terms.” (Philip Jenkins, author of *The Lost History of Christianity*)

“At last, a convincing, balanced book on the Crusades, far from the recent unsophisticated and ideological diatribes against them as “A Bad Thing.” Rodney Stark demonstrates that the Crusades were neither unprovoked nor colonialist. Here is yet another rich and readable book from this thoughtful and distinguished author.” (Jeffrey Burton Russell, author of *A History of Heaven and Paradise Mislaid*)

“An excitingly readable distillation of the new, revisionist Crusades historiography.” (Booklist (starred review))

“There is much to be learned here. Filled with fascinating historical glimpses of monks and Templars, priests and pilgrims, kings and contemplatives, Stark pulls it all together and challenges us to reconsider our view of the Crusades.” (Publishers Weekly)

“[Stark’s] new book, *God’s Battalions: The Case for the Crusades*, gives historic and sociological evidence for a fresh assessment of the Crusades.” (United Methodist Reporter)

“[Stark] wants to challenge the prevailing television pundit-level misunderstanding of the Crusades, and in this, his accessible, enjoyably argued book succeeds.” (Christianity Today)

“Award-winning author and sociologist Rodney Stark humbly goes to war against the many politically correct myths surrounding the history of the Crusades in this well-researched and easy-to-read academic masterpiece. Stark proves himself once again as a historical myth-buster.” (CBN.com, A+ rating)

“[Stark] makes the case [for the crusades] with admirable frankness and flair.” (The Catholic Thing)

“Rodney Stark turns what we ‘know’ about history on its head.” (Relevant Magazine)

“Stark’s style is clear and direct. He sets the pace of narrative masterfully...The result is a good

read...Christian readers should welcome Stark's affirmation of the best in scholarship, both old and new, and his willingness to argue a controversial position." (Christian Scholar's Review)

"Stark's wonderfully readable prose and politically incorrect conclusions... point us to the question—Will 21st-century infiltration lead to surrender or revival?—on which Europe's future hinges." (The World Magazine)

"[God's Battalions] rewards a careful reading, and not only because the story itself is gripping, with tales of courage and desperation, outsized characters, and fate of cultures hanging in the balance. ...Masterful... sets the record straight." (National Catholic Register)

"[God's Battalions] avoid[s] the black-and-white nonsense of current secular thinkers, who condemn the Crusades as part of their condemnation of the Catholic Church and of much later Western imperialism. ...Stark demonstrate[s] a more sophisticated view of history, religion and culture." (Catholic San Francisco)

"Stark's clear, factual narrative offers larger-than-life characters.... [his] works are an encouraging corrective to the anti-Western history routinely taught in our schools." (New Oxford Review)

"In God's Battalions, Stark provides an account of the Crusades perfectly fitted for the Fox News audience. Clearly this is not the politically correct version of the Crusades, and that is fine: there is little that was politically correct about the Crusades in the first place." (Christian Century)

"In *God's Battalions* Princeton sociologist of religion Rodney Stark seeks to dispel myths about the medieval Crusades and replace them with a more factual account...The historiographic arguments made by Stark regarding the antecedents and consequences of the Crusades are very convincing." (**Jack Kilcrease**, Historical Society of the Episcopal Church)

From the Back Cover

In *God's Battalions*, award-winning author Rodney Stark takes on the long-held view that the Crusades were the first round of European colonialism, conducted for land, loot, and converts by barbarian Christians who victimized the cultivated Muslims. To the contrary, Stark argues that the Crusades were the first military response to unwarranted Muslim terrorist aggression.

Stark reviews the history of the seven major Crusades from 1095 to 1291, demonstrating that the Crusades were precipitated by Islamic provocations, centuries of bloody attempts to colonize the West, and sudden attacks on Christian pilgrims and holy places. Although the Crusades were initiated by a plea from the pope, Stark argues that this had nothing to do with any elaborate design of the Christian world to convert all Muslims to Christianity by force of arms. Given current tensions in the Middle East and terrorist attacks around the world, Stark's views are a thought-provoking contribution to our understanding and are sure to spark debate.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Carol Rodgers:

Book is to be different per grade. Book for children until eventually adult are different content. To be sure that book is very important for all of us. The book God's Battalions: The Case for the Crusades has been

making you to know about other know-how and of course you can take more information. It is rather advantages for you. The reserve God's Battalions: The Case for the Crusades is not only giving you considerably more new information but also to become your friend when you experience bored. You can spend your current spend time to read your guide. Try to make relationship while using book God's Battalions: The Case for the Crusades. You never truly feel lose out for everything should you read some books.

Michael Pabon:

Now a day individuals who Living in the era exactly where everything reachable by interact with the internet and the resources inside can be true or not need people to be aware of each info they get. How a lot more to be smart in acquiring any information nowadays? Of course the correct answer is reading a book. Reading through a book can help men and women out of this uncertainty Information specially this God's Battalions: The Case for the Crusades book since this book offers you rich data and knowledge. Of course the details in this book hundred pct guarantees there is no doubt in it everybody knows.

Calvin Lee:

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Trisha McClain:

Are you kind of busy person, only have 10 as well as 15 minute in your time to upgrading your mind talent or thinking skill actually analytical thinking? Then you are experiencing problem with the book than can satisfy your short space of time to read it because all this time you only find guide that need more time to be study. God's Battalions: The Case for the Crusades can be your answer mainly because it can be read by anyone who have those short free time problems.

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