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The Ruins of Jerusalem: Psalm LXXVIII, the Crusades and Church Reform

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Psalm lxxviii is one of the most prominent biblical texts associated with the crusades. Most previous scholarship has focused on the intersection of the violent language of the Psalm with the violence of crusading. This article, however, examines the use of Psalm lxxviii by crusade preachers in the context of the history of its medieval interpretations. It uncovers an established medieval tradition of using this Psalm to preach reform rather than vengeance, which crusade preachers maintained when they employed this text to encourage crusading. This finding emphasises the important role that the Church reform movement played in shaping the emergence and development of crusading.

In his biography of St Vedastis, the early bishop of Arras, the Carolingian scholar Alcuin (735–804) described the miracles through which the saint converted the people of the region to Christianity, but also his discovery of ancient, ruined churches that had been defiled by wild beasts or the worship of demons and idols.[1] Alcuin explained that this region had been Christian in Roman times, but that the sins of the Christians caused God to allow barbarians to invade and devastate the area.[2] Alcuin used the language of Psalm lxxviii to describe these acts of devastation and pollution. The 'heathen' had entered and defiled the temple of the Lord and had slaughtered the Christians. Alcuin insisted,

CCSL = Corpus Christianorum Latina; MGH = Monumenta Germaniae Historia: LdL = Libelli de lite imperatorum et pontificum; SS = Scriptores; *PL* = *Patrologia Latina*; *SC* = *Sources Chrétiennes*

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[1] Alcuin, 'Opera omnia Alcuini', *PL* ci.673A.
[2] Ibid. *PL* ci.672D.

however, that no matter which invaders inflicted these attacks, they were caused by the sins of the Christians. Like his contemporary Walafrid Strabo (805–49), he employed the violent language of Psalm lxxviii not primarily to record the persecution of Christians and call for vengeance, but mainly to describe the divine chastisements merited by the sins of the Christians and to inspire his readers to contrition and amendment.[3]

Psalm lxxviii was one of the scriptural pillars of the crusading movement. Allegedly quoted by Urban II (r. 1088–99) at Clermont, the prominence of this text increased during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Preachers used it to encourage Christians to join the crusades. Communities at home prayed the Psalm in support of these campaigns. Previous scholarship has typically emphasised the militaristic and vengeful language of the text as the chief source of its popularity among the crusaders. In this article, however, it is argued that the prominence of this Psalm stemmed not only from its ability to capture the dire situation in the Holy Land, but also, and primarily, because it had established a pedigree as a prayer for church reform. Scholars have long recognised that crusading campaigns and rhetoric supported broader ecclesiastical efforts to reform Christian discipline.[4] This exposition of the established pre-crusading practice of interpreting Psalm lxxviii to promote reform, and its adoption by crusade preachers, re-emphasises the symbiotic relationship of the crusading and reform movements. The spirituality of the reform movement, reflected in its exegetical traditions, played an important and enduring role in shaping crusading support for this agenda.

By the end of the twelfth century, the reform movement had undergone significant evolution and expansion. Initially, the Gregorian reform, beginning in the mid-eleventh century, attempted to purify the clergy by eliminating clerical concubinage and liberating the Church from clerical appointments tainted by simony and the influence of secular rulers.[5] Later, beginning in the twelfth century, the pastoral reform programme expanded the focus of Church reform to include the laity. These reformers attempted to restore the purity of the apostolic era, among both clergy and laity, by encouraging greater participation in the sacraments and prayers of the Church.[6]

[3] Walafrid Strabo, 'Glossa ordinaria', *PL* cxiii.975B.

[4] Christoph T. Maier, *Preaching the crusades: mendicant friars and the cross in the thirteenth century*, Cambridge 1994, 3, and *Crusade propaganda and ideology: model sermons for the preaching of the cross*, Cambridge 2000, 5.

[5] Lester K. Little, *Religious poverty and the profit economy in medieval Europe*, Ithaca, NY 1983, 73; Kathleen Cushing, *Papacy and law in the Gregorian revolution: the canonistic work of Anselm of Lucca*, Oxford 1998; H. E. J. Cowdrey, *Pope Gregory VII, 1073–1085*, Oxford 1998; John Gilchrist, 'Was there a Gregorian reform movement in the eleventh century?', *Canadian Catholic Historical Association, Study Sessions* xxxvii (1970), 1–10.

[6] Ane Bysted, *The crusade indulgence: spiritual rewards and the theology of the crusades, c. 1095–1216*, Leiden 2014, 131; Paul Pixton, *The German episcopacy and the*

Over the course of this article, sermons and biblical commentaries will be used to chart how the tradition of interpreting Psalm lxxviii to promote reform was established independently of the crusades. It will be demonstrated that crusade preachers adopted and developed this tradition to achieve the nexus of promoting crusading within the context of reform, especially after the fall of Jerusalem in 1187 and concluding with the Fifth Crusade. Muslim victories over Christian forces were seen as divine indictments of the moral constitution of Christian society that demanded renewed penance and reform to regain divine approval and assistance for Christian armies, thereby stimulating, although not instigating, efforts to expand the reform movement.[7]

Crusade preaching certainly did not end in 1220. On the contrary, the increased volume of material produced by preachers in the years afterwards presents the main obstacle to expanding the years covered by this article. By this point, however, the use of Psalm lxxviii to promote popular penitential reform within a crusading context had been successfully achieved, as best displayed by the establishment of intercessory crusading liturgies. While events in the Levant supplied the catalyst for preachers to highlight this text and increase its exposure among the faithful, their efforts to use Psalm lxxviii to promote crusading participation were rooted in a pre-existing tradition of interpreting this Psalm in order to stimulate devotional reform.

Previous scholarship on the role of Psalm lxxviii in the development of crusading piety initially focused on the most explicit themes of the text's opening verses: pollution, persecution and holy revenge. These sentiments were seen as embodying the vengeful and militaristic spirit of the Old Testament.[8] They helped establish a dominant Christian narrative that

implementation of the decrees of the Fourth Lateran Council, 1216–1245: watchmen on the tower, Leiden 1995, 2, 7, 236, 372; Maier, *Crusade propaganda and ideology,* 5; Mary C. Mansfield, *The humiliation of sinners: public penance in thirteenth-century France,* Ithaca, NY 1995, 74, 288; Adam Jeffrey Davis, *The holy bureaucrat: Eudes Rigaud and religious reform in thirteenth-century Normandy,* Ithaca, NY 2006, 76.

[7] Jessalynn Bird, 'Crusade and reform: the sermons of Bibliothèque nationale, Ms nouv. acq. lat. 999', in E. J. Mylod, Guy Perry, Thomas W. Smith and Jan Vandeburie (eds), *The Fifth Crusade in context: the crusading movement in the early thirteenth century,* London 2016, 103; Penny Cole, *The preaching of the crusades to the holy land,* Toronto 1985, 98–176; Maier, *Preaching the crusades,* 2, and *Crusade propaganda,* 5; L. E. Boyle, 'The inter-conciliar period, 1179–1215 and the beginnings of pastoral manuals', in F. Liotta (ed.), *Miscellanea Rolando Bandinelli papa Alessandro III,* Siena 1986, 43–56; F. Morenzoni, *Des Écoles aux paroisses: Thomas de Chobham et la promotion de la predication au début du XIIIe siecle,* Turnhout 1995, 172–87; Bysted, *The crusade indulgence,* 131; James Brundage, *Medieval canon law and the crusader,* Madison, WI 1969, 69–70, 162–3.

[8] Beverly Mayne Kienzle, 'Preaching the cross: liturgy and crusade propaganda', *Medieval Sermon Studies* liii (2009), 11–32 at p. 25; Philippe Buc, 'La Vengeance de dieu: de l'exégèse patristique a la réforme écclesiastique et la première croisade', in

portrayed Muslims as polluting sacred spaces and violating God's people, while emphasising the importance of Jerusalem.[9]

More recent examinations of crusading texts have recognised the importance of analysing the biblical allusions in crusading sources in light of the background of the author, the immediate context in which the allusion was made and the interpretive history of the text itself. This more comprehensive approach has enabled scholars to understand how biblical passages were repurposed or reinterpreted to explain important events and has been reflected in the willingness of scholars to accept that even more militaristic crusading texts such as Psalm lxxviii were used to promote reform.[10] These studies most typically examined the crusaders' use and interpretation of Psalm lxxviii in the intercessory liturgies developed after 1187, acknowledging that these liturgies, and the use of Psalm lxxviii specifically, were intended to connect more closely the themes of crusading and penance.[11] They interpreted the Psalm as expressing the pleas of God's servants, begging God to pardon their sins and exact vengeance upon their enemies.[12]

Dominique Barthelemy, Francois Bougard and Regine Le Jan (eds), *La Vengeance: 400–1200 (les textes recueillis dans cet ouvrage forment le actes du Colloque La Vengeance: 400–1200 reuni a Rome les 18, 19 et 20 setembre 2003),* Rome 2006, 451–86 at pp. 454, 468–9.

[9] Penny J. Cole, '"O God the heathen have come into your inheritance" (Ps. 78.1): the theme of religious pollution in crusade documents, 1095–1188', in Maya Shatzmiller (ed.), *Crusaders and Muslims in twelfth-century Syria,* New York 1993, 85, 95, 106, and *The preaching of the crusades,* 28; Sylvia Schein, *Gateway to the heavenly city: crusader Jerusalem and the Catholic West (1099–1187),* Aldershot 2005, 17, 163, 183; Miriam Rita Tessera, 'The use of the Bible in twelfth-century papal letters to the outremer', in Elizabeth Lapina and Nicholas Morton (eds), *The uses of the Bible in crusader sources,* Boston 2017, 179–206 at p. 203.

[10] Bibliothèque nationale française, nouv. acq. lat. 999, fos 266va–vb; Jessalynn Bird, 'Rogations, litanies, and crusade preaching: the liturgical front in the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries', in Jessalynn Bird (ed.), *Papacy, crusade, and Christian-Muslim relations,* Amsterdam 2018, 155–94, and 'Crusade and reform', 98; Elizabeth Lapina and Nicholas Morton, 'Introduction'; Luigi Russo, 'The sack of Jerusalem in 1099 and crusader violence viewed by contemporary chroniclers'; Kristin Skottki, 'Until the full number of Gentiles has come in: exegesis and prophecy in St Bernard's crusade-related writings'; and Jessalynn Bird, 'Preaching and narrating the Fifth Crusade: Bible, sermons and the history of a campaign', all in Lapina and Morton, *The uses of the Bible,* 1–18 at pp. 10, 14; 63–73 at p. 71; 236–72 at pp. 247, 252; and 316–40 at p. 340; Susanna Throop, *Crusading as an act of vengeance, 1095–1216,* London, 2020, 41.

[11] Christoph T. Maier, 'Liturgy, crisis, and the crusade in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries', this JOURNAL xlviii (1997), 628–57 at p. 633; Schein, *Gateway to the heavenly city,* 176; Penny J. Cole, 'Christian perceptions of the battle of Hattin (583/1187)', *Al-Masāq: Islam and the Medieval Mediterranean* vi/1 (1993), 9–39 at pp. 21–4.

[12] Cecilia Gaposchkin, *Invisible weapons: liturgy and the making of crusade ideology,* Ithaca, NY 2017, 197, 225, 247; Amnon Linder, '"Deus venerunt gentes": Psalm 78 (79) in the liturgical commemoration of the destruction of Jerusalem', in

As well as further exploring the intersection of the crusading and reform movements, this article also helps to develop this more critical approach to investigating the role of the Bible in the crusades. First, it extends the analysis of militaristic texts used to promote reform to one of the most famously martial texts invoked by the crusaders. Second, it expands upon previous cursory acknowledgements that Psalm lxxviii was used to promote penance, by conducting a more detailed examination of the interpretive context in which crusade preachers deployed this Psalm. This analysis reveals the unified tradition of interpreting Psalm lxxviii as a reform text that was developed prior to the crusades, and how crusade preachers curated and maintained this exegesis to promote the crusades.

Psalm lxxviii before Hattin

Psalm lxxviii opens with one of the most visceral images of defeat and disaster found in the rich emotional palette of the Psalms. The first verse captures the terror and sorrow of God's chosen people. Their enemies have conquered them and have defiled and destroyed their holiest places, slaughtering God's faithful servants and leaving their bodies unburied to be dishonoured. Those who survive cower in fear at the triumphant approach of their enemies, who mock their weakness.

The next verses describe the outrages perpetrated during the sack of the city and call on God to take vengeance on his enemies. Yet the fifth verse introduces another theme. The text suggests that this disaster is a sign of divine anger, a punishment that God has inflicted on his people because of their faithlessness. The next lines maintain this theme, claiming that God has permitted the Israelites to suffer this defeat because of their sins and those of their ancestors. The psalmist still begs God to avenge their sorrow and manifest his power by defeating the heathen, but expresses the confidence that this victory would be a sign that God has forgiven the sins of his people and that they have returned to his grace.

The Psalm concludes on a note of triumph, prophesying that God will save his servants, now suffering in anguish, and that their faith in him will be strengthened and renewed by the just vengeance that he will inflict on their enemies.[13] This overview shows that although crusade

B. S. Albert and others (ed.), *Medieval studies in honour of Avrom Saltman*, Ramat-Gan 1995, 145–71 at p. 163; Amnon Linder, 'Individual and community in the liturgy of the liberation of Christian Jerusalem', in A. Haverkamp (ed.), *Information kommunikation und selbstdarstelung in mittelalterlichen gemeinden: Schriften des Historischen Kollegs: Kolloquien 40*, Munich 1998, 25–40 at p. 33.

[13] 'O God the heathen have come into thine inheritance; they have defiled thy holy temple; they have laid Jerusalem in ruins./They have given the bodies of thy servants to the birds of the air for food, the flesh of thy saints to the beasts of the earth./They have

scholars have often characterised Psalm lxxviii by its woeful opening verses and closing predictions of revenge, the main body of the Psalm focuses more heavily on the need for repentance than on fighting enemies. Medieval preachers recognised and embraced this important component of the text. They consistently employed this Psalm to encourage Christians to undertake penance and spiritual conversion.

An examination of medieval commentaries on Psalm lxxviii before or roughly contemporaneous with the battle of Hattin reveals that this text was consistently interrogated using three widely accepted methods of interpreting Scripture: historical, allegorical and tropological. Medieval exegetes presented this Psalm as recounting and foretelling attacks on God's people, both the Israelites and the Church, but also established the practice of interpreting Psalm lxxviii as a call for individual, clerical and universal reform. The formation of this tradition of tropological interpretation meant that the use of Psalm lxxviii to promote the crusades helped to integrate crusading successfully within the reform movement.

Historical readings of this text asserted that Psalm lxxviii narrated either the conquest of Jerusalem by the Babylonians or its occupation and profanation by the Seleucids, as well as the resistance of the Maccabees, or both events.[14] Scholars of late antiquity, such as Jerome and Cassiodorus (485–585), interpreted Psalm lxxviii in a prophetic and allegorical sense, as referring to the early persecutions of the Church as well as the chaos and uncertainty following the fall of Rome, which Jerome explained the Church had made the new Jerusalem.[15] Medieval authors also applied

poured out their blood like water round about Jerusalem, and there was none to bury them./We have become a taunt to our neighbours mocked and derided by those round about us./How long, O Lord? Wilt thou be angry forever? Will thy jealous wrath burn like fire?/Pour out thy anger on the nations that do not know thee, and on the kingdoms that do not call on thy name./For they have devoured Jacob, and laid waste his habitation./Do not remember against us the iniquities of our forefathers; let thy compassion come speedily to meet us, for we are brought very low./Help us O God of our salvation, for the glory of thy name; deliver us and forgive our sins for thy name's sake./Why should the nations say, "Where is their God?" Let the avenging of the outpoured blood of thy servants be known among the nations before our eyes./Let the groans of the prisoners come before thee; according to thy great power preserve those doomed to die./Return sevenfold into the bosom of our neighbours the taunts with which they have taunted thee O Lord./Then we thy people, the flock of thy pasture, will give thanks to thee forever; from generation to generation we will recount thy praise': Douay-Rheims Bible, vv. 1–13.

[14] Arnobius Junior, 'Septuagesimus et octavus Psalmus apicem antecessories sui secutus', *PL* v.439–40; Augustine, *Enarrationes in Psalmos,* ed. E. Dekkers and I. Fraipont, CCSL xxxix, Turnhout 1956, 1097–102; Cassiodorus Senator, *Expositio Psalmorum*, ed. M. Adriaen, CCSL xcviii, Turnhout 1958, 671–2; Hilary of Poitiers, 'Tractatus Psalmi', *PL* ix.778C; Walafrid Strabo, 'Glossa ordinaria', *PL* cxiii.974D; Linder, '"Deus venerunt gentes"', 165–6.

[15] Cassiodorus, 'Expositio Psalmi', *PL* lxx.74A; Jerome, 'Opera omnia S. Hieronymi', *PL* xxii.1089.

this Psalm to the generic persecutions suffered by the Church, as well as to the sufferings of Christian martyrs.[16]

As early as the commentaries of Jerome, however, Psalm lxxviii was also read in a tropological sense as a call to reform. Moral interpretations of this passage typically linked these prescriptions with the historical occupation and profanation of the Seleucids, or with other biblical accounts of the Israelites' conquest of the Holy Land. Jerome, and later Bruno of Würzburg (1005–45), explained that while this Psalm mourned the captivity of the earthly Jerusalem it also lamented the spiritual captivity of individual souls.[17] The Christian soul was itself a temple of God that was profaned and violated whenever the believer succumbed to sin.[18] These writers and other theologians such as Walafrid Strabo and Peter Lombard (1096–1160) saw the later verses of the Psalm, such as verse 11, as describing the pain of the human soul longing to be united with God, but held captive by the sinful desires of the flesh, a more terrible persecutor than any external enemy.[19] These commentaries reveal a consistent practice of interpreting Psalm lxxviii from the perspective of the individual soul as an exhortation to endure temptation and remain faithful to the teachings of the Church.

By the mid-eleventh century, the leaders of the Gregorian movement had directed the focus of the Church toward the purification of the clergy and the elimination of secular influences. In this context, the temple symbolised not only Christ's body, but the ecclesiastical union of all believers, who bore responsibility for safeguarding the temple's purity against the attacks of heretics and simoniacs.[20] The leaders of this movement employed Psalm lxxviii to describe the profanation of the Church, firstly by clerics and eventually by all Christians who opposed their reforms.

Orderic Vitalis (1075–1142) used the imagery of the enemies of God's people in Psalm lxxviii to describe the priests of the diocese of Rouen, who stoned and drove out their new bishop, John of Avranches, when he

[16] Haymo Halberstatensis, 'Commentaria biblica in omnes Psalmos', *PL* cxiii.468C; Peter Lombard, 'Psalterium commentarii', *PL* cxci.751A; Walafrid Strabo, 'Glossa ordinaria', *PL* cxiii.974D; Bruno of Cologne, 'Santi Brunonis carthusianorum patriarchiae praestantissimi ac theologi parisiensis eruditissimi opera', *PL* clii.1059C; Bruno of Asti, 'Sententiae', *PL* clxv.1037B.

[17] Jerome, 'Opera omnia S. Hieronymi', *PL* xxii.1055A; Bruno of Würzburg, 'Expositio Psalmorum', *PL* cxlii.301C–301D.

[18] Jerome, 'Opera omnia S. Hieronymi', *PL* xxii.1055B.

[19] Ibid; Walafrid Strabo, 'Glossa ordinaria', *PL* cxiii.976A; Peter Lombard, 'Psalterium commentarii', *PL* cxci.755C.

[20] Katherine Allen Smith, 'The crusader conquest of Jerusalem and Christ's cleansing of the temple', in Lapina and Moron, *The uses of the Bible*, 19–41 at pp. 24–5; Jennifer A. Harris, 'The body as temple in the high Middle Ages', in Albert I. Baumgarten (ed.), *Sacrifice in religious experience*, Leiden 2002, 233–56.

attempted to enforce clerical celibacy in the diocese.[21] Orderic wrote that these priests had entered the Church, the inheritance of God, but as enemies who sought to destroy it through their lives of vice and the abuse of their divine calling. Gerhoh of Reichersberg (1093–1169), claimed that the devastation of Jerusalem, described by the opening verses of Psalm lxxviii, referred to the damage inflicted on the Church by the spirit of simony among many of the clergy. They had used money to become priests and enter the holy places. Others had polluted themselves and the Church that they had been ordained to serve by keeping concubines.[22] Gerhoh linked this interpretation of Psalm lxxviii with the invocation of a more established typology employed by reform preachers, which compared contemporary simoniacs and schismatics to the merchants whom Jesus expelled from the temple.[23] The combination of these two passages reveals the incorporation of Psalm lxxviii into the reformers' rhetorical arsenal.

Gerhoh again returned to the portrayal of enemies in Psalm lxxviii to describe the campaigns of Henry IV and Henry V against the reforming popes. He wrote that the emperors were like the ancient rulers of Babylon and Rome described by the Psalm, who had sought to overturn the temple of God.[24] These tropological interpretations conform to Gerhoh's own historical commentaries on this text and those of other medieval commentators.[25] Gerhoh explained that this text referred to pollution of the holy city by the Greeks and by an Israelite named Jason, who profaned the Temple by purchasing the office of high priest from Antiochus, an oppressive pagan ruler, and had defiled the holy places with prostitutes.[26] Now, applying this text to the pressing issues of his day, Gerhoh saw Psalm lxxviii as mourning the sacrileges committed by similarly unworthy priests who had profaned their office with concubines

[21] Ordericus of Vitalis, 'Joannes Abrincensis primum episcopus postmodum archiepiscopus Rotomagensis', *PL* cxlvii.0026A.

[22] Gerhoh of Reichersberg, 'De quarta vigilia noctis', MGH, LdL, iii. 521.

[23] Idem, 'De investigatione antichristi', ed. E. Sackur, MGH, LdL, iii. 314–15; Gregory the Great, *Homiliarum in evangelia,* ed. R. Etaix, C. Morel and B. Judic, SC cdlxxxv, Paris 2005, i. 385; Bruno of Segni, *Commentaria in Lucam* 46, *PL* clxv.440; Humbert of Silva Candida, *Adversus simoniacos,* ed. F. Thaner, MGH, LdL, i. 174; Guibert of Nogent, *Autobiographie (monodies),* ed. Edmond-Rene Labande, Paris 1981, 160; Smith, 'The crusader conquest of Jerusalem', 22–5; Louis I. Hamilton, 'Sexual purity, "the faithful", and religious reform in eleventh-century Italy: Donatism revisited', in John Doody, Kevin L. Hughes and Kim Paffenroth (eds), *Augustine and politics,* Lanham, MD 2005, 237–60; Joseph H. Lynch, *Simoniacal entry into the religious life from 1000 to 1260,* Columbus, OH 1976, 66–7.

[24] Gerhoh of Reichersberg, 'De investigatione antichristi', MGH, LdL, iii. 339.

[25] Haymo Halberstatensis, 'Commentaria biblica in omnes Psalmos', *PL* cxiii.468C; Walafrid Strabo, 'Glossa ordinaria', *PL* cxiii.974D; Bruno of Asti, 'Sententiae', *PL* clxv.1037B.

[26] Gerhoh of Reichersberg, 'Libelli', MGH, LdL, iii. 496.

or who had purchased their orders through simony. They had been empowered by the Salian emperors, who themselves aimed to subjugate the papacy and rule the Church. Gerhoh's application of Psalm lxxviii to support the Gregorian agenda illustrates how this text was repositioned to counter contemporary challenges within a consistent paradigm of promoting reform.[27]

Baldric of Bourgeuil recorded that Urban II used this text to preach the First Crusade at the Council of Clermont.[28] Baldric wrote that Urban described this Psalm as a prophecy, now fulfilled by the persecution of Christianity in the Holy Land, but highlighted the visceral imagery of this text as part of an appeal for moral reform. The pope directly associated this persecution with his condemnation of the sins of Christian knights who were attacking each another and oppressing the innocent, commanding them to either put aside their knighthood or employ it to defend Christians in the East.[29] We cannot be certain exactly how Urban used Psalm lxxviii to preach the crusade, or that he employed the text at all. What is significant about this narrative is that Baldric both viewed Psalm lxxviii as an effective scriptural reference through which to encapsulate the reform agenda and considered it credible that the pope, like other medieval commentators, would have used this Psalm not just as a call for vengeance, but as an exhortation to reform.

The context in which Urban preached this sermon supports claims that he invoked Psalm lxxviii in order to promote Church reform. The pope preached this sermon at the conclusion of a council that he had summoned as part of his efforts to preach reform.[30] According to Fulcher of Chartres's narrative, when preaching to the clerics prior to announcing the crusade, Urban recalled Christ's violent expulsion of the money-changers by way of exhorting his listeners to purify the clergy.[31] The association of Psalm lxxviii with this more established reform text, as employed by other reformers like Gerhoh, again highlights the use of the Psalm to promote reform.[32]

The narrative of Psalm lxxviii made this text applicable to the crusade's support for the expansion of the reform movement. The text narrated not only the sacrileges perpetrated by clergy inside the temple, but also by warriors, laity, inside the holy city in a way that was instantly relatable to an audience of soldiers. God would drive the Christians out of the Holy Land if they failed to eradicate these sins, which defiled the Church and

[27] Lapina and Morton, 'Introduction', 10.

[28] *The Historia Ierosolimitana of Baldric of Bourgueil*, ed. Steven Biddlecombe, Woodbridge 2014, 6–7; Linder, '"Deus venerunt gentes"', 168.

[29] *Historia Ierosolimitana*, 8–9.

[30] Fulcher of Chartres, *Historia Hierosolymitana (1095–1127)*, ed. H. Hagenmeyer, Heidelberg 1913, 135.

[31] Ibid. 134.

[32] Gerhoh of Reichersberg, 'De investigatione antichristi', MGH, LdL, iii. 314–15; Smith, 'The crusader conquest of Jerusalem', 22–5.

mirrored the acts of profanation described in the gospel passage. If Urban did employ Psalm lxxviii to preach the crusade at Clermont to promote reform, it would have been entirely consistent with other contemporary exegeses that invoked this Psalm to support the contemporary expansion of the reform movement by condemning sin and reminding Christians of the consequences of sin.

Theological scholars at the University of Paris, the intellectual heart of the medieval reform movement, also interpreted Psalm lxxviii in a tropological sense that supported the expansion of the reform movement. The contributions of Gilbert of Poitiers (1076–1154) and Peter the Chanter, his successor, are especially significant because they helped formulate the most substantial early consensus of medieval biblical exegesis and exercised a wide influence among theologians across Europe.[33] They glossed Psalm lxxviii in a historical sense as referring to the Babylonian, Seleucid and Roman conquests of Jerusalem, but also in the moral sense.[34] Gilbert emphasised that God had permitted these disasters to correct his people and draw them back from sin.[35] Peter's interpretation, composed after the fall of Jerusalem in 1187, followed Urban's practice of using Psalm lxxviii to describe Christian defeats in the Holy Land, but also maintained his broader approach by associating these defeats with Christian sins in an appeal for reform that was closely aligned with those of Orderic and Gerhoh. He associated sinful Christians with the pollution of God's holy places described in the Psalm, explaining that these actions represented the contemporary promotion of heretical theology and offerings tainted with extortion and usury.[36]

The exegeses of these commentators distinguished themselves from earlier medieval interpretations by using this Psalm to promote reform for all Christians, rather than focusing on the clergy.[37] Unlike Orderic and Gerhoh, the faults that Peter identified were no longer exclusively clerical sins. His commentary reflects the important role that the Paris scholars played in amplifying the moral interpretation of Psalm lxxviii through its inclusion in preaching this message of universal reform. These preachers would exercise a formative influence in the biblical theology of

[33] Bird, 'Preaching and narrating the Fifth Crusade', 316–17.

[34] Gilbert of Poitiers, *Commentary on the Psalms,* Bibliothèque nationale, Paris, MS lat. 17210, fos 118v–119v; Peter the Chanter, *Commentary on the Psalms,* Bibliothèque nationale, Paris, MS lat. 14426, fos 62va–63ra; Bird, 'Rogations, litanies, and crusade preaching', 184–5.

[35] Gilbert of Poitiers, *Commentary on the Psalms,* fos 118v–119v.

[36] Peter the Chanter, *Commentary on the Psalms,* fos 62va–63ra.

[37] Theresa Gross-Diaz, *The Psalm commentary of Gilbert of Poitiers: from lectio divina to the lecture room,* Leiden 1996, 81–3, 154–5; Marcia Colish, 'Teaching and learning technology in medieval Paris', in P. Henry (ed.), *Schools of thought in the Christian tradition,* Philadelphia, PA 1984, 109, 115; Bird, 'Rogations, litanies, and crusade preaching', 184–5.

Innocent III (r. 1198–1216), who himself would expand the role of Psalm lxxviii in the crusading movement in order to support the extension of the reform movement to all Christians.

When trying to understand how crusade preachers and their audiences interpreted this Psalm, it is crucial to recognise that by 1187 this tropological approach represented a well-established practice of interpreting Psalm lxxviii. As well as linking the conquest and devastation of Jerusalem described in the Psalm to a variety of different biblical and contemporary events, commentators regularly construed this text from a moral perspective. They used the language of Psalm lxxviii to describe the temptations faced by individual souls, the purgative trials permitted by God to punish and convert Christians from their sins and the sacrileges perpetrated by corrupt clergy, as part of efforts to reform the Church. Crusade preachers adopted this interpretation, choosing Psalm lxxviii to promote the crusades because it helped situate crusading as part of efforts to expand the reform agenda and united the dual goals of the crusading movement, the liberation of the Holy Land and the purification of Christian knights.

After Hattin

After the defeat at Hattin and the fall of Jerusalem, the crusading movement entered a period of sustained crisis. Over the next forty years crusade preachers intensified their use of Psalm lxxviii, but maintained its established tradition of interpretation. They primarily deployed this Psalm to remind their audiences that these defeats were permitted by God to call attention to Christian sinfulness and encourage renewed prayer and penance rather than vengeance. These exhortations linked Psalm lxxviii and recent crusading defeats with biblical accounts of the Israelites' conquests of the Promised Land and encouraged the crusaders that they too would be victorious once they returned to faithful observance of the Church's teachings.

Exposure to this interpretation of Psalm lxxviii was widespread across Europe, especially in France, Germany, Italy and England. While there is less evidence of preaching in Spain generally, extant evidence suggests that the papacy also promoted the dissemination of this exegesis in this region. Every pope during this period used this text either to summon Christendom's warriors to take the cross, to encourage their subordinates to preach the crusade or to call upon Christians to pray for these campaigns.[38] Psalm lxxviii is included in the surviving sermons of all the

[38] Gregory VIII, 'Audita tremendi', *PL* ccii.1539D; Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, ed. W. Stubbs (Rolls Series li, 1868–71), ii. 359; Celestine III, 'Epistolae et privilegia', *PL* ccvi.1107D; Innocent III, 'Gesta Innocentii', *PL* ccxiv.134; 'Quia maior', *PL* ccxvi.817–21; and *Die register Innocenz III,* ed. Othmar Hagender and Anton

leading crusade preachers from this period, which were frequently copied as exemplar texts for other preachers.[39] While these sermons were not typically read directly, but used as foundations for more extemporaneous preaching, the survival of these texts suggests that sermons incorporating this Psalm were among the most popular templates and implies that even if ordinary men and women did not hear the exact text of Psalm lxxviii, many of them would have heard sermons based on this text that incorporated its message.[40]

These preachers used Psalm lxxviii to teach their audiences that recent crusading defeats were a result of Christian sinfulness. While their use of this text was undoubtedly influenced by the horror of crusader defeats and the Muslim capture of the Holy Land, they nevertheless focused more intensely on the sins of the Christians than the crimes of their enemies. In letters he addressed to the German nobles and the cardinal of Santa Prassede, Innocent III used Psalm lxxviii to draw attention to the injuries done to Christ by the blasphemous nations who had polluted the holy places, but assigned responsibility for these disasters to the sins of the Christian people ('peccatis nostris').[41] A contemporary anonymous preacher linked the grim opening verses of Psalm lxxviii with the first verses of Lamentations, bewailing that because no one celebrated the solemn feasts of Zion, her adversaries had become her lords.[42] This

Haidacher, Graz–Koln 1964, i, 21, 430; vi. 221; James M. Powell, *Anatomy of a crusade, 1213–1221,* Philadelphia, PA 1990, 20; Colin Morris, *The sepulchre of Christ and the medieval West: from the beginning to 1600,* New York 2005, 266; Schein, *Gateway to the heavenly city,* 183; Gaposchkin, *Invisible weapons,* 195, 202; Linder, *Raising arms,* 2–6, 11; Maier, 'Crisis, liturgy, and the crusade', 637.

[39] 'Sermo magistri Iohannis de Albavilla ad crucesignatos', Bibliothèque nationale, Paris, nouv. acq. lat. 999, fos 169va–170ra, edited in Cole, *Preaching the crusades,* 151; J. B. Schneyer, *Repertorium der lateinischen sermones des mittelalters fur die zeit von 1150–1350,* Munster 1989, iv. 837; Anonymous, 'Nisi dominus custodierit civitatem', Bibliothèque nationale, Paris, nouv. acq. lat. 999, fos 276vb–276ra; Stephen Langton, *Commentary on Joshua,* Bibliothèque nationale, Paris, MS lat. 1414, fos 49rb–vb; James of Vitry, *Lettres,* ed. R. B. C. Huygens, Leiden 1960, vi. 127; vii. 134–9; Oliver of Paderborn, *Historia Damiatina,* ed. Hermann Hoogeweg, Tubingen 1894, 287–8; Philip the Chancellor, *Dixit dominus ad Iosue, leva clipeum qui in manu tua est,* Bibliothèque municipale, Troyes, MS 1099, fos 15va–17ra; Linder, *Raising arms,* 40–1.

[40] Maier, *Preaching the crusade,* 117–18, and *Crusade propaganda and ideology,* 67, 121; Jussi Hanska, *And the rich man also died and he was buried in hell: the social ethos in mendicant sermons,* Helsinki 1997, 171; David L. D'Avray, *The preaching of the friars: sermons diffused from Paris before 1300,* Oxford 1988, 6, 123; Jessalynn Bird, 'Reform or crusade? Anti-usury and crusade preaching during the pontificate of Innocent III', in John Moore (ed.), *Pope Innocent III and his world,* Aldershot 1999, 166, 176, 179; Augustine Thompson, *Revival preachers and politics in thirteenth century Italy: the great devotion of 1233,* Eugene, OR 2010, 33; Little, *Religious poverty,* 23, 36, 99, 117.

[41] Innocent III, *Die register Innocenz III,* i. 22, 222.

[42] Anonymous, 'Nisi dominus custodierit civitatem', fos 276vb–276ra; Bird, 'Rogations, litanies, and crusade preaching', 183.

sermon used Psalm lxxviii to tie the fall of Jerusalem to failures to observe the Church's rites and teachings.

The news that Gregory VIII (r. 1187) had heard, the subject of *Audita tremendi's* incipit, was not the Muslim capture of the Holy Cross, but the judgement of God upon the land of Jerusalem.[43] The dire events described by the Psalm and seemingly fulfilled at Hattin were the immediate cause of his letter, but the predominant interpretation of Psalm lxxviii, which framed this call to crusade, was that these events should primarily be viewed as divine punishment for sins committed by all Christians.[44] Like other contemporary authors, Gregory did not attribute these defeats to the military prowess of the crusaders' enemies, but emphasised that they had occurred because God was angered by his people's sinfulness and required them to reinvigorate and expand their efforts to reform the Church.[45] He exhorted his audience not only to take note of the sins of the inhabitants of the Holy Land, but to examine and repent of their own sins and those of the whole Christian people.[46] Thomas Smith, in his critical analysis of the different versions of *Audita tremendi,* noted that as the curia revised this text, later versions stressed that God was angered by the sins of his people, emphasising that Christian sinfulness was the bull's primary concern.[47]

Gregory, along with Celestine III (r. 1191–8), and John of Abbeville, explained that God had permitted his inheritance to be defiled by unbelievers because so many Christians had adopted lives of habitual sin in defiance of his normal light disciplines.[48] They taught that God would rather see even the land of his birth, death and resurrection fall into pagan hands than allow Christians to remain uncorrected in sin.[49]

[43] Gregorius VIII, 'Audita tremendi', *PL* ccii.1539D.

[44] Tessera, 'The use of the Bible', 203; Thomas W. Smith, '*Audita tremendi* and the call for the Third Crusade reconsidered, 1187–1188', *Viator* xlix/3 (2018), 63–101 at p. 64; Schein, *Gateway to the heavenly city,* 159–71.

[45] Gregorius VIII, 'Audita tremendi', *PL* ccii.1541–2; 'E continuatione chronici Hugonis a Sancto Victore', ed. L. Weiland, MGH, SS, xxi, Hannover 1869, repr. Leipzig 1925, 475–6; Ralph of Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, ed. J. Stevenson (Rolls Series lxvi, 1875, repr. 1965), 224–6; Henry of Albano, 'De peregrinatione civitate dei', *PL* cciv.355; Cole, 'Christian perceptions', 9, 19, 24–5; Bysted, *The crusading indulgence,* 259; Maier, 'Liturgy, crisis and the crusade', 631; Jonathan Riley-Smith, *The crusades: a short history*, New Haven, CT 1987, 109–19; Schein, *Gateway to the heavenly city*, 180.

[46] Gregorius VIII, 'Audita tremendi', *PL* ccii.1541C.

[47] Ibid. *PL* ccii. 1539–42; Bibliothèque municipale, Rouen, MS 518 (O 17), fo. 202v; Smith, '*Audita tremendi*', 74.

[48] Peter Edbury, 'Celestine III, the crusade and the Latin East', in John Doran and Damian J. Smith (ed.), *Pope Celestine III (1191–1198): diplomat and pastor,* Burlington, VT 2008, 129–44 at p. 134.

[49] Gregorius VIII, 'Audita tremendi', *PL* ccii. 1541–2; Celestine III, 'Epistolae et privilegia', *PL* ccvi. 1107D–1108A; Cole, *Preaching the crusades,* 152.

John reminded his audience that when the Philistines had captured the Ark of the Covenant, the high priest Eli had collapsed from grief and died. Yet, to John's disgust, the Christians of his day showed no such sorrow. He charged those who remained unmoved by the profanation of the holy land with the humiliation and re-crucifixion of Christ. They had become the enemies described in the Psalm.[50] These sermons employed Psalm lxxviii to emphasise the terrible consequences of sin and inspire Christians to repent and renew their observance of Church teachings.[51]

According to these churchmen, repentance and reform were the most important responses to the disasters associated with this text. By using Psalm lxxviii to describe the judgement of God upon Jerusalem, Gregory VIII established a rhetorical framework which emphasised that the defeat at Hattin was an act of divine chastisement to summon Christians to penance more than to vengeance. The pope invoked this Psalm to restructure the entire crusading movement around efforts to restore the spiritual purity of the entire Christian community, calling on all the faithful to take up the cross as an act of commitment to lives of virtue and self-denial.[52] Another contemporary anonymous French preacher employed the opening verses of Psalm lxxviii to exhort his listeners to commiserate with Christ, weeping over the destruction of Jerusalem, by increasing in grace, hope and faith.[53] These appeals for reform reflect a use of Psalm lxxviii that was consistent with the traditional exegesis of this text.[54] The divine judgement, foretold by the Psalm, could only be remedied through widespread conversion and penance.

Celestine and Innocent made this approach more explicit. They explained that while the Church honoured the princes of the world who were willing to fight against the Saracens to restore the Holy Land from the depredations described by Psalm lxxviii, these campaigns had so far been unsuccessful because the Christian armies did not follow the law of the Lord.[55] Their well-intentioned efforts therefore still failed to respond adequately to the disaster which God had permitted in order to prompt his people to repentance. Celestine instructed Hubert of Canterbury (1160–1205) and his suffragans to place their trust in God's saving power, not in the strength of human weapons.[56] They should not only encourage their congregations to take up the sword against the persecutors

[50] Cole, *Preaching the crusades,* 152.

[51] Celestine III, 'Epistolae et privilegia', *PL* ccvi.1107D–1108A.

[52] Gregory VIII, 'Audita tremendi', *PL* ccii.1541; Schein, *Gateway to the heavenly city,* 170; Smith, '*Audita tremendi',* 65.

[53] Anonymous, 'Nisi dominus custodierit civitatem', fos 276vb–277rb.

[54] Bysted, *The crusade indulgence,* 240.

[55] Celestine III, 'Epistolae et privilegia', *PL* ccvi.1109A; Howden, *Chronica,* iii. 200–2; Innocent III, *Die register Innocenz III,* i. 431.

[56] Celestine III, 'Epistolae et privilegia', *PL* ccvi.1109A.

of the Church, but also preach the word of God so that by expanding their devotion the Christian people would turn divine anger into mercy and forgiveness.[57]

Scholars of Celestine have noted that this letter of 1195, as well as a similar letter to the English bishops in 1193, lacked specific details about the situation in the Holy Land or any planned crusading campaigns, but the pope instead focused on exhorting his recipients to promote prayer and repentance.[58] Set in the context of the tradition of interpreting Psalm lxxviii, this lack of specificity is easier to understand. Celestine's inclusion of this Psalm in a letter focused on reform indicates firstly that his letter was intended to lay the groundwork for more specific instructions, either from Celestine or his subordinates; secondly, that Celestine saw widespread reform as the necessary foundation for successful military expeditions; and thirdly that he viewed Psalm lxxviii as a text that was well suited to promoting this reform, an approach consistent with the traditional exegesis of this text.

In 1198 Innocent wrote a letter to Luca of Casamari (1160–1227) in which he too used Psalm lxxviii as part of a call to preach the Fourth Crusade that focused primarily on the importance of spiritual preparation. Luca, bishop of Syracuse and abbot of Sambucina, was regularly employed by Innocent to promote reform and preach the crusade.[59] Despite promising that the apostolic see would raise up armies to avenge those brethren who had been killed or enslaved, here the pope quoted Psalm lxxviii. Innocent framed this call for vengeance within a response that remained focused on the overarching importance of spiritual reform.[60] He likened the defeated crusader armies of previous campaigns to the Israelites, who had rebelled against God and had been forced to wander in the desert for forty years without reaching the Holy Land.[61] Christians would only defeat their enemies and liberate the holy city when they had purified their hearts and minds through self-denial in imitation of Christ.[62]

[57] Ibid. *PL* ccvi.1109A–1110A.

[58] Ibid. *PL* ccvi.1107–10; Howden, *Chronica,* iii. 200–2; Edbury, 'Celestine III, the crusade and the Latin East', 130, 133; Anne J. Duggan, 'Hyacinth Bobone: diplomat and pope', in *Pope Celestine III (1191–1198),* 1–31 at p. 27.

[59] *Statuta capitulorum generalium ordinis cisterciensis ab anno 1116 ad annum 1786,* ed. J. M. Canivez, Louvain, 1933–41, i. 235; Alessandro Pratesi, *Carte latine di abbazie calabrese provenienti dall' archivio Aldobrandini,* Vatican City 1958, 175–8; Antonio Maria Adorisio, *Il "liber usuum ecclesiae Cusentinae" di Luca di Casamari arcivescovo di Cosenza,* Casamari 2000, 7; Igino Vona, *Storia e documenti dell'abbazia di Casamari, 1182–1254: dall'avvento dei Cistercensi al pontificato di Innocenzo IV: nascita del complesso monastic,* Casamari 2007, 88; Brenda Bolton, 'For the see of Simon Peter: the Cistercians at Innocent III's nearest frontier', in her *Innocent III: studies on papal authority and pastoral care,* Aldershot 1995, 1–20.

[60] Innocent III, *Die register Innocenz III,* i. 431.

[61] Ibid. i. 432.

[62] Ibid. i. 222.

The pope therefore encouraged Luca to preach the cross to everyone in Sicily, emphasising the promise of forgiveness of sins and that everyone, even those who could not fight, had a role to play in supporting Christian efforts to defend the Holy Land either through prayer or financial donations.[63] If all Christians embraced this call to penance and united themselves with the hardships of the crusade through self-denial then their sins would be forgiven and Jerusalem would be restored.[64] This letter demonstrates both how Psalm lxxviii was deployed to preach reform, and how crusading was now viewed as an act of reform. The verses of the Psalm were again used to describe the violent oppression carried out by the enemies of the Church, but although Christians were called to avenge the wrongs that had been inflicted on them, God had permitted these defeats in order to inspire them to reform and would not reverse them until this conversion was achieved. For Innocent, taking the cross was an act of repentance, now extended to all Christians who could participate through acts of prayer as well as by acts of war. Psalm lxxviii provided the scriptural foundation that helped establish the crusades as an essential source of support for the church hierarchy's efforts to reform the Church.

In specifying the ways in which God was using this defeat to call for Church reform, Innocent and John of Abbeville both continued to emphasise the importance of clerical reform that was present in earlier exegeses of Psalm lxxviii. The year after he became pope, Innocent instructed the French clergy to pray this Psalm every day as an act of reform in support of the crusades.[65] In a letter preserved in the *Gesta*, the pope paraphrased several gospel passages in which Christ had condemned the corruption and hypocrisy of the Pharisees, the contemporary Jewish religious hierarchy. Innocent asked the French clergy how they were not moved to repentance when they saw that their sins had crucified Christ again and driven him from the land of his birth.[66] If they did not repent, they, like the Pharisees, would be condemned on the final judgement day by comparison with the people of Nineveh, who had neither heard the teachings of the Son of God, nor seen his humiliation, but had repented of their sins after hearing the preaching of Jonah.[67]

John, speaking to a university audience, claimed that God had allowed the captivity of the earthly Jerusalem, described by Psalm lxxviii, in order to underscore how the Church, the spiritual Jerusalem, was held captive by the sins of its unworthy clergy.[68] He especially condemned those

[63] Ibid. i. 431–2.
[64] Ibid. i. 22.
[65] Innocent III, 'Gesta Innocentii', *PL* ccxiv.134; Gaposchkin, *Invisible weapons*, 202; Linder, 'Deus venerunt gentes', 152.
[66] Innocent III, 'Gesta Innocentii', *PL* ccxiv.134.
[67] Ibid.
[68] Bird, 'Crusade and reform', 95.

clerics who used their positions to satisfy their own material greed and led unchaste lives, despoiling the Church and neglecting their pastoral duties.[69] John presented corrupt clerics as the enemies described in the Psalm, who were devastating the spiritual Jerusalem. Only once they had been converted from these sins and the Church purified of their influence could Christians hope to liberate the earthly Jerusalem. The exegeses of John and Innocent show them drawing on previous traditions of using Psalm lxxviii to promote clerical reform by associating evil clerics with the enemies of Jerusalem. They instructed the clergy to incorporate Psalm lxxviii into their devotional lives as the most important way in which they could make repentance for their sins and support the crusades, linking the recovery of the Holy Land with clerical purification and reform.

Prominent crusade preachers again deployed Psalm lxxviii to promote reform by linking this Psalm with accounts of the Israelites' wars against the city of Ai and the tribe of Benjamin, narrated in the Books of Joshua and Judges. Bernard of Clairvaux (1090–1153) was the first to link crusading with the campaign against the Benjaminites, explaining that God had subjected the Second Crusade to defeat in order to inspire the crusaders to greater conversion.[70] Celestine and Innocent maintained this analogy and strengthened it by integrating Psalm lxxviii. Celestine used this text to describe the defeats suffered by the crusaders and reiterate that these defeats were a greater indication of the need for spiritual reform than new military campaigns, reminding the English bishops that the Israelites were initially defeated by their enemies. He and John of Abbeville pointed out that the Israelites were only victorious when they spent a whole day fasting, doing penance and making sacrifices before fighting the Benjaminites.[71] While repeating the same message, Innocent focused on a different aspect of the story, pointing out that God had instructed the Israelites to go up and attack the tribe of Benjamin, knowing that they would be defeated, but that these defeats would inspire them to examine their actions, repent of their sins and trust in God's help rather than their own strength.[72]

Preachers also preached reform by pairing Psalm lxxviii with the biblical account of Joshua's campaign against the city of Ai. Stephen Langton (1150–1228), commenting on this passage after the crusader defeats of 1187, followed the practice of his mentor Peter the Chanter by citing this passage as an example of how the sins of Achan brought down

[69] Cole, *Preaching the crusades,* 153.

[70] Bernard of Clairvaux, 'De consideratione ad Eugenium papam', ed. Gerhard B. Winkler, in *Bernhard von Clairvaux, Samtliche Werke,* I: *Lateinisch/Deutsch,* Innsbruck 1990, ii, II/2; Skottki, 'Until the full number of Gentiles has come in', 263, 269.

[71] Celestine III, 'Epistolae et privilegia', *PL* ccvi.1108D; Cole, *Preaching the crusades,* 155.

[72] Innocent III, *Die register Innocenz III,* i. 431.

divine punishment on the whole Israelite army.[73] Stephen went on to exhort the prelates of the Church to imitate Joshua's example of penitential prostration before the ark by reciting Psalm lxxviii and begging God to liberate Jerusalem from the profanation of the Gentiles.[74]

James of Vitry (1160–1240) and Oliver of Paderborn, who were Stephen's students at this time, wrote similar analyses to describe the decadent behaviour of the soldiers of the Fifth Crusade after the capture of Damietta, blaming this sinfulness for the subsequent defeat of the campaign.[75] One of the recipients of James of Vitry's letter, Philip the Chancellor (1160–1236), found this allegory so compelling that he repeated it and once again linked it to Psalm lxxviii in a series of three sermons that he preached in Paris in the 1220s. Philip wrote that these defeats should be considered a divine summons to reform. Christians should pray Psalm lxxviii as an act of spiritual warfare against their enemies and purify themselves by driving out their carnal vices, just as the Israelites had before Ai. Then, God would again give them victory.[76] These sermons reveal a consistent pattern of interpretation that paired Psalm lxxviii with these two biblical passages and tied crusading success to Christian reform. The incorporation of Psalm lxxviii in these sermons shows that this text was viewed as both embodying and strengthening the message of reform that they promoted.

Just like the text of the Psalm itself, preachers who invoked Psalm lxxviii still promised God's people that despite dire current circumstances they would ultimately be victorious if they responded to these setbacks by repenting of their sins and renewing their trust in God. Although unremarked by most historians, Gregory employed the later verses of hope and expectation when he concluded the first part of *Audita tremendi*. Alongside their invocations of Psalm lxxviii, Gregory, Celestine and Innocent all reassured their audiences that recent reverses should not lead them to despair that God was so angered by the sins of his people that he would never favour them again, but that he scourged his people

[73] Bird, 'Preaching and narrating the Fifth Crusade', 329.

[74] Stephen Langton, *Commentary on Joshua,* Bibliothèque nationale, Paris, MS lat. 1414, fos 49rb–vb; MS lat. 384, fos 85rb–va.

[75] James of Vitry, *Lettres,* vi. 127; vii. 134–9; Oliver of Paderborn, *Historia Damiatina,* 287–8; Bird, 'Preaching and narrating the Fifth Crusade', 331–2: James M. Powell, 'Honorius III and the leadership of the crusade', *Catholic Historical Review* xiii (1977), 521–36.

[76] Philip the Chancellor, *Dixit dominus ad Iosue, leva clipeum qui in manu tua est*, fos 15va–17ra; Bird, 'Preaching and narrating the Fifth Crusade', 333; Maier, 'Crisis, liturgy, and the crusade', 628–57, and 'Mass, the eucharist and the cross: Innocent III and the relocation of the crusade', in J. C. Moore (ed.), *Pope Innocent III and his world,* Aldershot 1999, 351–60; Nicole Beriou, 'La Prédication de croisade de Philippe le Chancelier et d'Eudes de Chateauroux en 1226', in *La Prédication en pays d'Oc (XIIe–debut XVe siècle)*, Toulouse 1997, 85–109.

heavily so that when they returned to him he could heal and raise them up. If Christians repented of their sins and recommitted themselves to God's laws, they could trust that, appeased by their penances and tears, he would again lead them to victory.[77]

Similarly, Gregory closed the bull by encouraging its recipients to take inspiration from the example of the Maccabees, who sacrificed their lives to free their brethren.[78] Gregory would have been aware that the campaigns of the Maccabees were often associated with Psalm lxxviii. They were also a biblical exemplar for those who resisted acts of oppression and sacrilege carried out by impious Gentiles. Yet Gregory clarified this example by explaining that Christians must first alter their lives and atone for their sins and only then imitate the Maccabees by taking up arms to resist their enemies.[79] As Gregory's contemporary Peter of Blois noted, any Christian triumph in the Holy Land would mirror the Christian acquisition of their heavenly inheritance.[80] Crusade preachers employed Psalm lxxviii to emphasise that the eventual defeat of the enemies of Christianity was assured by God's almighty power, but would not occur until the reform, which remained the overarching goal of the crusades, had taken place. This language reflected the text's structure that described a grim defeat, eventually redressed by a final triumph predicated on meaningful spiritual renewal.

Psalm lxxviii was not just employed by the church hierarchy to encourage reform: it became one of the main instruments used to actualise the expansion of the reform movement in collaboration with the crusades. After Hattin, the papacy attempted to reinvigorate and more fully align the crusading and reform movements by instituting and promoting rituals of intercessory prayer and penance in support of the crusaders.[81] Participation in these rituals increased spiritual support for the crusades and expanded lay engagement in the liturgical life of the Church.[82]

Psalm lxxviii was immediately established at the heart of these devotions. In 1188 Gregory's successor, Clement III (r. 1187–91), ordered all churches to pray Psalm lxxviii as the main prayer of a Clamor ritual inserted in the celebration of mass, the earliest extant prescription of these

[77] Gregorius VIII, 'Audita tremendi', *PL* ccii.1540C; Innocent III, *Die register Innocenz III*, i. 431; Howden, *Chronica*, iii. 200–2; Smith, '*Audita tremendi*', 77.

[78] Gregorius VIII, 'Audita tremendi', *PL* ccii.1542C.

[79] Ibid. *PL* ccii.1541C.

[80] John D. Cotts, 'The exegesis of violence in the crusade writings of Ralph Niger and Peter of Blois', in Lapina and Morton, *The uses of the Bible*, 273–96 at p. 288.

[81] Gregory VII, 'Audita tremendi', *PL* ccii.1539.

[82] James of Vitry, 'Sancti Marci. Feria secunda in laetania maiori sive in rogationibus thema de epistola, "confitemini"', in Damianus a Ligno (ed.), *Sermones in epistolas et evangelia dominicalia totius anni*, Antwerp 1575, 507–14 at p. 508; Bird, 'Rogations, litanies, and crusade preaching', 177–8.

intercessory liturgies.[83] During the 1190s monastic communities, especially the Cistercians, began praying this Clamor every day.[84]

While few Spanish crusading sermons have been identified, Innocent III evoked the language of Psalm lxxviii in 1212, calling on Roman Christians to provide spiritual support for the Las Navas de Tolosa crusade through communal penitential devotions so that God would not abandon his inheritance to disgrace.[85] The pope employed this Psalm again in his letter to Alfonso VIII of Castile (r. 1158–1214), rejoicing in the Christian victory that God had won over the people who did not know his name.[86] These letters show that Psalm lxxviii was used to promote reform in support of crusading theatres other than the Holy Land and attribute victories to the piety of Spanish crusaders, who did know God's name, rather than to strength of arms.

Recognising the need to promote greater participation in these liturgies following the failure of the Fourth Crusade, and encouraged by the success of the Las Navas devotions, Innocent promulgated a revised Clamor to the whole Church, still based on the recitation of Psalm lxxviii, in *Quia maior* the following year.[87] This declaration further established the recitation of Psalm lxxviii in support of the crusades as an important vehicle for supporting the expansion of the reform movement and fully incorporating the laity. During the thirteenth century this Clamor was established as the standard intercessory crusading prayer throughout the Latin Church, successfully enshrining Psalm lxxviii as a performative act of reform, as well as a rhetorical buttress for this agenda.[88]

Innocent III did not only use Psalm lxxviii to preach the crusades. He continued to employ the text as an instrument of reform in his pastoral ministry generally. In one of his sermons for feasts of the Apostles,

[83] Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, ii. 359; Schein, *Gateway to the heavenly city*, 183; Gaposchkin, *Invisible weapons*, 195; Linder, *Raising arms*, 2–6, 11; Maier, 'Crisis, liturgy, and the crusade', 637.

[84] *Statuta capitulorum generalium ordinis Cisterciensis*, i. 172; Maier, 'Crisis, liturgy, and the crusade', 634; Linder, 'Individual and community', 28.

[85] Innocent III, 'Opera omnia', *PL* ccxvi.698–9; Gaposchkin, *Invisible weapons,* 200.

[86] Damian J. Smith, 'La guerra contra los musulmanes en Espana <en palabras> de papa Inocencio III', in Carlos de Ayala Martinez, Patrick Henriet and J. Santiago Palacio Ontalva (ed.), *Origenes y desarrollo de la guerra santa en la peninsula Iberica,* Madrid 2016, 207–18.

[87] Innocent III, 'Quia maior', *PL* ccxvi.817–21; Schein, *Gateway to the heavenly city*, 183–5; Linder, *Raising arms,* 35.

[88] Edmond Martene and Ursin Durand (eds), *Thesaurus novus anecdotorum*, Farnborough 1968, iv. 1754; *Bullarium franciscanum romanorum pontificum*, ed. Giovanni Giacinto Sbaralea, Santa Maria degli Angeli 1883–1984, iv. 127–9 at p. 273; Sibert Beka, *Ordinaire de l'ordre du Notre-Dame du Mont-Carmel*, ed. B. Zimmerman, Paris 1910, 86; Michel Andrieu (ed.), 'Le Pontifical romain au moyen-âge', Vatican City 1940, 630; Gaposchkin, *Invisible weapons*, 221; Linder, '"Deus venerunt gentes"', 156, 161, and *Raising arms,* 2, 35.

Innocent quoted Psalm lxxviii to describe how heretics were attacking the Church.[89] Here, Innocent did not call for crusades against these enemies, but encouraged his audiences to resist their teachings and defend the Church by cultivating the cardinal virtues.[90] Innocent's sermon demonstrates that the pre-crusades practice of using the violent imagery of Psalm lxxviii to encourage reform was maintained independently of crusading campaigns. The adoption of the Psalm by crusade preachers facilitated the application of this interpretation to a broader audience than the clergy, who were the focus of initial calls to reform that invoked this text.

The medieval Church established a tradition of interpreting Psalm lxxviii within a tropological framework that promoted repentance and reform. Scripture scholars explained that this text was a warning of divine punishments for sin, the malign influence of corrupt clerics and the sinful desires of individuals. Crusade preachers maintained and expanded this practice. They employed Psalm lxxviii to describe recent crusading defeats, but also to explain that these defeats had occurred as a result of Christian sinfulness and to emphasise that universal pastoral reform must take place before military victories would be achieved. The development of intercessory crusading liturgies, and the establishment of Psalm lxxviii as their main prayer, shows that crusade leaders recognised that this text both conveyed the importance of reform rhetorically, and that its recitation actualised this agenda by providing opportunities for all Christians to participate in the reform movement.

Psalm lxxviii's rise to prominence as part of the expansion of the crusading movement is commonly interpreted as evidence of the sacralisation and dissemination of crusading violence within medieval society. Studying the crusaders' use of this Psalm in the context of its interpretive history, however, reveals that this text was more emphatically employed to encourage conversion and penance in response to crusading defeats. This article therefore suggests that the use of the Psalm by crusade preachers reveals the powerful influence of the reform movement, which used this Psalm to incorporate the crusaders within it. These findings suggest that scholars of medieval devotion should more precisely view the crusades, and specifically the use of this Psalm, as a sign of the dissemination of the reform agenda across medieval Christendom. For medieval Christians, the ruin of Jerusalem described in the Psalm referred not only to the capture of the earthly city by Saladin's armies, but also to the corruption of the spiritual cities of the Church and individual human hearts. With the fall of the earthly city, God summoned Christians to rebuild these spiritual dwellings, so that he might once again aid their armies and liberate the earthly Jerusalem.

[89] Innocent III, 'Opera omnia', *PL* ccxvii.601C–605A.
[90] Ibid. *PL* ccxvii. 603D.