Chapter-II

RISE OF THE AYYUBIDS TO POWER
Origins of the Ayyūbid dynasty

During the long drawn conflicts between Europe and Asia, for possession of the holy land of Jerusalem in the twelfth century, Salāhuddīn Ayyūbi a man of rare power and character arose in the East, and built up his power. He not only reconquered Jerusalem from the Christians who had occupied it about ninety years ago, but also became the founder of an efficient ruling dynasty, which remained in power for a long period of time. A brief history of the origins and rise of this dynasty is attempted below:

Salāhuddīn Ayyūbid's grandfather Ayyūb bin Shādhi belonged to a Kurdish tribe, whose forefathers had settled in northern Armenia. They became thoroughly Turkicised because of the services rendered by them among Turkish soldiers. Ayyūb, the father of Salāhuddīn was born at Dawin near Karkh in eastern Azarbaijan where his father Shādhi served a Shaddādi family of Kurdish descent, to whom the Seljuq Sultan Alp Arsalān had entrusted governship of that territory.1 After sometime he left Dawin for Iraq as circumstances became unfavourable for him there. In Iraq he was welcomed by his friend Bihrūz, who was the military governor of Iraq under the Seljūq Sultan Masud bin Ghiyāthuddin. Bihrūz appointed Shādhi as his governor of the town of Takrit situated on the bank of the Tigris which was granted to him as a fief.2

1. Bahauddin, Al Nawadir al Sultaniya wal Mahasin al Yusufiya (Sirah Salahuddin), Cairo, 1934, p. 4-5.
After the death of Shādhi, his elder son Najmūdīn Ayyūb became the governor of Takrit. His younger brother Asadūdīn Shirkuh also assisted him in the administration of the town. They managed the affairs of the city with such dedication, love and wisdom that they soon became very popular among the local people. In the meantime Imādūdīn Zangī, the ruler of Mosul was defeated by the army of the Abbasid Caliph al Mustarshid in a battle, in which Bihrūz had also fought on the side of the Caliph.\textsuperscript{3} Now sandwiched between the enemy behind and the river ahead, Zangī was almost despaired of his life. He had only one option to escape to Mosul via Takrit. So he took shelter with Najmūdīn and sought his assistance in this task. Ayyūb provided him some boats by which he and his army crossed the Tiqris and safely reached Mosul. But Ayyūb was put to task by the authorities of Baghdad for having assisted the enemy. Simultaneously, there took place another serious incident in which Shirkuh killed a close confidant of Bihrūz settled at Tikrit on the charge of sexually assaulting a helpless woman. The matter was reported to the court of Baghdad in an exaggerated manner, as a consequence of which warrants were issued to arrest both Ayyūb and Shirkuh. But before they could be arrested, both left Takrit for Mosul in 1138.\textsuperscript{4} Salāhuddīn was born in Takrit in the same night, in which they fled it, along with their families.\textsuperscript{5}

\textsuperscript{3} Ibid., p. 28.
\textsuperscript{5} Ibid., p. 28.
When they reached Mosul, they were welcomed by Imāduddīn Zangī with open heart. He provided them with all the facilities needed by them and recruited Ayyūb into his service on the post of commander of Ba'labakk. His brother Asaduddīn Shirkuh entered into the service of Zangī's son Nūrūddīn. When Nūrūddīn attacked Damascus, Ayyūb was in command of the city, while Shirkuh led the besiegers. There was however a peaceful reunion between the two brothers.6

By that time the Fatimid dynasty became very weak, Caliph Adid sacked his wazir Shāwar and appointed Zargam on his post. Infuriated on his dismissal, Shāwar sought the help of Nūrūddīn and promised to give him onethird of Egypt. Nūrūddīn gave him a strong force of Turkamans led by his famous generals Shirkuh and Salahuddīn.7 While Zargam sought the help of Amalric, king of Jerusalem. But Zargam was defeated before he could get any assistance from Amalric, following which Shāwar again became the Wazir in 1164 A.D.8 When Shāwar restored his power and broke all his promises. Nūrūddīn ordered Shirkuh and Salahuddīn to occupy Bilbeys and the Eastern provinces. Now Shāwar sought the help of Amalric.9

The Franks shut up Shirkuh in Bilbeys, but after sometime they granted him freedom when they were threatened by Nūrūddīn in the north,

7. Sheikh Ahmad, Muslim Architecture from Advent of Islam to Mamluk, Lahore, 1941, p. 124.
who had already besieged and reduced the Harim fortress. The Franks were defeated and most of their chieftains such as Bohemond, Prince of Antioch, Raymond of Tripoli, Joscelin III and greek general Duke of Calamar were taken prisoners. After that Nūrūddīn captured Hārim, Paneas, al Monetara, etc.¹⁰

In 1167 A.D. Shirkūh again entered Egypt with a force of two thousand horsemen. This time again Shawar called the Franks to his assistance. Shirkūh reached the Nile at Atfīh, 40 miles south of Cairo, and crossed to the West bank while Amalric arrived from Palestine on the Eastern bank. Now the two armies followed the opposite banks to Cairo. Amalric pitched his camp at Fustat, while Shirkūh occupied Giza.¹¹

Amalric now sought a treaty with the Fatimid caliph that 200,000 dinars should be paid to him forthwith and the additional 200,000 dinars when the enemy had been driven out of the country. Due to this agreement Amalric suddenly crossed the Nile and Shirkūh marched south of Minya with surprise.¹² There a pitched battle took place on 18 April 1167, called the Battle of Babain.¹³ Shirkūh became victorious, but his army was exhausted so they did not march toward Cairo. Instead, they took the desert route in the northern direction and entered Alexandria without opposition. Salāḥuddīn was made the governor of Alexandria with one half of the army

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¹². Ibid., p. 2.
put under his command. Shirkuh himself left for the upper Nile at the head of the remaining half of the army.\textsuperscript{14}

In the meantime the Franks laid siege to Alexandria which Salâhuddîn bravely defended. But when his provisions ran short, his soldiers wanted to surrender. Nevertheless in spite of seventy-five days of hunger, Sâlahuddîn exhorted his men to action. At this very time Amalric heard that Shirkuh was laying siege to Cairo. This disheartened him so much that he arranged for peace.\textsuperscript{15} Shirkuh withdrew from Alexandria on payment of 50,000 pieces of gold and returned to Syria.\textsuperscript{16} The Franks obtained the right of keeping a resident at Cairo through a secret pact with Shâwar. They also occupied some territories and received an annual subsidy of 100,000 pieces of gold. This was in direct breach of the terms of peace with Shirkuh.\textsuperscript{17}

Amalric once more invaded the country in November 1168 and massacred the whole population of Bilbeys. At the behest of Shâwar the Franks set the densely populated city of Fustat on fire.\textsuperscript{18}

On 17th December 1168, Nüruddîn on the appeal of Khalifa Al-Adid and the people of Egypt sent an expedition of 8000 men to Egypt

\begin{itemize}
\item[14.] *The Muslim Architecture in Egypt*, p. 2.
\item[15.] *Daira Marifatul Islam*, vol. XII, p. 168; *Muslim Architecture from Advent of Islam to Mamluk*, p. 125.
\item[16.] *A short history of Saracens*, p. 347.
\item[17.] Ibid., p. 347.
\item[18.] Lane Poole, *Saladin and the fall of the Kingdom of Jerusalem*, London, 1926, p. 93.
\end{itemize}
under the leadership of Shirkūh and Salāhuddīn. Needy and greedy, Amalric was now waiting before Cairo for more of Shāwar's gold. To his great surprise, he was attacked by Shirkūh and was forced to retire to Palestine. But instead of becoming grateful to Nūruddīn on his deliverance, Shāwar turned disloyal and treacherous and planned to arrest Shirkūh at a friendly banquet. But he was attacked and arrested by Salāhuddīn who later on the order of the Caliph beheaded him. After that Shirkūh received the vizirate in 1169 under Caliph al-'Adid. But Shirkūh died shortly after his appointment as wazir and was succeeded by his nephew Salāhuddīn who was given the title al Malik an Nāsir. Although Salāhuddīn held the vizirate of the Fatimid Caliph, in reality he regarded himself as the lieutenant of Nūruddīn. Salāhuddīn was not content with his position as a wazir. In a very short period of time he managed to bring the whole country under his complete control, following which the authority of the caliph became negligible. Due to Salāhuddīn's popularity many officials became openly hostile to him and had recourse to destroy the new wazir. They sought help from the Franks. The Franks decided to proceed by launching an attack upon Dimyat, as the master of that place


20. *Saladin and the fall of the Kingdom of Jerusalem*, p. 95; *Muslim Architecture from Advent of Islam to Mamluk*, p. 127.


22. *Islamic dynasties of the Arab East*, p. 28.

would command both land and sea, and if they succeeded in occupying this city, it would serve as a depot and place to retreat.\textsuperscript{24} At that time, on Salāhuddīn's request, Nūruddīn dispatched Najmuddīn Ayyūb, Salāhuddīn's father, with auxiliary troops.\textsuperscript{25} The Franks, having encamped against Dimyat, made a vigorous assault on that place. But while engaged in fighting against the garrison on one side, they faced the counter attack of the cavalry which the Sultan set against them on the other.\textsuperscript{26} The measures taken by the Sultan for the reinforcement of the garrison gave victory to the Muslims.

In 1170, a great earthquake ruined many cities of Northern Syria such as Antioch, Tripoli and Tyre as well as Hamah, Edessa and Aleppo.\textsuperscript{27} Taking advantage of the prevalent weakness in the opposite camp, Salāhuddīn attacked and besieged Darum in 1170, the southern outpost of Christianity which had been recently fortified and held by the Templars. Amalric rushed there to save the citadel. Salāhuddīn did not wait for a pitched battle. Instead he occupied it at the dead of night, and when its inhabitants awoke, they found their town taken. The citadel of the town which was a strong fortress built by Baldwin III, held out and its warden

\footnotesize{24. \textit{Al Nawadir al Sultaniya}, p. 33.}


\footnotesize{27. Archer, \textit{The Crusades}, London, 1919, p. 244; \textit{Al Kāmil fi Tārīkh}, vol. XI, p. 354.}
Mito de Planci, strictly refused to admit the fugitive citizens, who were thus forced to stand outside the gates and fight to death.\textsuperscript{28} Salāhuddīn had no mind for a long siege and returned to Egypt.

In 1171, Nūruddīn wrote to Salāhuddīn ordering him to cease to recite the Friday prayer in the name of the Fatimid caliph and to substitute that of al Mustadī, the Abbasid Caliph of Baghdad. He had the Abbasid Caliph named in the Friday prayers instead of the Fatimid in 1172. After that Caliph 'Adid soon died. Although Salāhuddīn did not suppress the Shi‘ite sect by force, it lost its natural support with the decline of the Fatimid dynasty due to which the Sunni Muslims got the upper hand in Egypt.\textsuperscript{29}

Salāhuddīn's growing power aroused Nūruddīn's mistrust of his loyalty as vassal. As soon as the Franks withdrew, Salāhuddīn made the conquest of Palestine as his next political goal.\textsuperscript{30} In 1172, he sieged the harbour of Aylah on the Red sea as a basis of operations to realise his objective. But when Nūruddīn wanted to gain a foot-hold in southern Palestine and requested Salāhuddīn to lend him military aid for the conquest of the Crusaders fortresses Kerak and Shawbak, east of Jordan, the latter evaded this obligation on the grounds that the conditions in Egypt were still unsettled which did not permit him to turn his attention away

\textsuperscript{28} \textit{Saladin and the fall of the Kingdom of Jerusalem}, p. 106.
\textsuperscript{29} \textit{History of the Islamic peoples}, p. 226.
\textsuperscript{30} Ibid., p. 226.
from it. Nuruddin got greatly annoyed by the non-cooperative attitude of his vassal, and started gathering troops to punish him for his disobedience. But Salahuddin succeeded in placating him by sending him a very humble letter. He also sent his brother Turan shah to assist him. Turan Shah attacked Yamen's king Abdun-Nabi al Shayi got victory over him and became a deputy of the Caliph. When in 1172 Salahuddin had another rebellion to suppress in Egypt, Nuruddin decided to attack him, but he died in Damascus on 15 May. After Nuruddin's death Salahuddin became the most powerful and independent ruler.

When the Franks heard about the change of government in Egypt, they conceived the hope of conquering the country and despatched a fully equipped army by sea. Sultan Salahuddin sent a body of troops to relieve the place and was so active in his opposition that the enemy became terror-struck and were unable to resist him.

Early Education and Training of Salahuddin Ayyubi

Ibn Shaddad and Imaddudin Isfahani are the main sources of information about Salahuddin. They both were close friends and campanions of Salahuddin and gave eyewitness accounts of his life. But the early life of Salahuddin is not found. Salahuddin Ayyubi was born in 1138

34. Al Nawadir al Sultaniya, p. 38.
in Tikrit. His father Najmuddin Ayyub was governor of Baalbek in the period of Imaduddin Zangi and his uncle, Shirkuh was also in the service of Nuruddin. Salahuddin spent his childhood in Baalbek and other castles where his father Ayyub was the their governor. He received the usual education of a Muslim boy and was educated in the company of princes and children of high officials. While still a boy, he was carried across the desert to be trained in the company of armed horsemen. From there he was taken to his permanent house in Damascus, which was a great centre of arts and learning. He grew up a studious and thoughtful child. He soon showed signs of good fortune and gave all the evidences of a spirit that he was born to command. It is said that he succeeded his elder brother, Turan Shah, as his uncle's deputy in the military governorship of Damascus in 1156. After sometime he gave up the post in protest against the fraudulence of the chief accountant. He then rejoined Nuruddin at Aleppo and became one of his close associates. Later, he again held the office of the deputy commandant at Damascus for an unspecified period. He lived a pleasant life in Damascus and shared the life of court. His taste was very simple. He enjoyed hunting with falcons and leopards. He was also very fond of riding horses. He had a great liking for horses and took delight in them. He also found himself very comfortable on the horse's back. He enjoyed the

35. *Saladin and the fall of the Kingdom of Jerusalem*, p. 66.
company of learned men. He took keen interest in polo and chess also. He was a highly educated man and took part in discussion with learned men on almost every subject. He was well informed and curious, and had great interest in the practical application of his ideas. He married the widow of Nūruddīn, Ismātāddīn, daughter of Anār, the celebrated wazir of Damascus. This was an act of courtesy often performed by a ruler. She was much older than he.

Salāhuddīn as Sultan of Egypt

Salāhuddīn Ayyūbi was one of the greatest and most chivalrous monarchs the world has produced. The achievements of Salāhuddīn Ayyūbi are very important and remarkable in the history of Islam. Perhaps his most astonishing achievement was that he recovered Jerusalem from the Crusaders after a gap of about ninety years.

Salāhuddīn was a devout Muslim. He observed the prescribed prayers and fast regularly. He was very particular about the five daily prayers and the weekly attendance at the mosque. So much so that when he became ill, he sent for an Imam and forced himself to stand and pray with him. And whenever he awoke during the night, he engaged in prayers and remembrance of Allah. If the time of prayer came while he was travelling, he dismounted from his horse and offered his prayer. He was very fond of

39. Ibid., p. 70.
hearing the Qurʿān recited by the Imam who had to be the master of all knowledge connected with the text of the Qurʿān. When he listened to the Qurʿān, his heart melted and tears generally flowed down his cheeks. He recited the Qurʿān even on the back of his horse. He was also very fond of listening to the recital of traditions of the Prophet.

Salāhuddīn was just, merciful, compassionate and ready to aid the weak against the strong. He sat in the hall of justice, two days in the week to hear the complaints and dispensed justice to his subjects.

The Sultan was of sociable disposition, affable manners and generous to all those who came into contact with him. He never treated his servants harshly even when they were guilty of serious dishonesty. It is said that once two purses of Egyptian gold were taken from his treasury, but he punished the treasurers only with the loss of their jobs. As narrated by Bahauddin, when they were riding together in Jerusalem on a rainy day, his mule splashed the Sultan with mud, but the Sultan only laughed and would not let the abashed secretary ride behind. Bahauddin was also full of praise for the tolerance of the Sultan. Once he was on duty and the mule upon which he was riding was so terrified on seeing some camels that he started off, as a consequence of which he collided with the Sultan and hurt

42. *Saladin what Befall Sultan Yusuf*, p. 15.
43. *Saladin and the fall of the Kingdom of Jerusalem*, p. 187.
44. *Arab historians of the Crusades*, p. 111.
him. But far from showing any anger, the latter only smiled. Abdul Latif al-Baghdadi expressed his appreciation of him, saying that he was a great king, whose very appearance inspired respect and love, and that he was approachable, deeply intellectual, and noble in thought.

The Sultan's audiences used to be very familiar with him. It was for this reason that they expressed themselves freely in his presence. Petitioners crowded around him so that they sometimes trod upon the cushion on which he sat. Yet he only smiled and listened patiently. It is said that whosoever went to him with a request, was never turned away dissatisfied.

Salāhuddīn showed himself worthy of victory. He treated his prisoners generously, set them free and sent many of them away with gifts. Although the Crusaders had slaughtered a large number of Muslims at the time of conquering Jerusalem, yet Salāhuddīn did not take revenge. Salāhuddīn too had captured thousands of Christians when Jerusalem fell to Muslims. He ordered that the crusade soldiers could safely go out of Jerusalem within 40 days by paying the ransom amount which was fixed as ten Syrian dinars for each man, five for each woman and one for each child. But many of the Christian prisoners were poor and could not find

45. Al Navadir al Sultaniya, p. 22; Saladin what Befall Sultan Yusuf, p. 35.
46. Saladin and the fall of the Kingdom of Jerusalem, p. 369.
47. Saladin, p. 67.
48. Saladin and the fall of the Kingdom of Jerusalem, p. 144.
49. A short history of Saracens, p. 357.
the money. Salahuddin's brother al 'Adil requested him to set one thousand of these poor Christians free to which Salahuddin agreed.\textsuperscript{50} Western historians are full of praise for Salahuddin Ayyubi for his merciful treatment of the Crusaders. Not even a single Christian was harassed. When Jerusalem was conquered no damage was done to the properties and churches of the enemy.\textsuperscript{51} The clergy and the people carried away all their treasures and valuables without the smallest molestation. Several Christians were seen carrying their feeble and aged parents on their shoulders. Touched by the spectacle, the Sultan distributed a good sum of money to them in charity and even provided them with mules to carry their belongings.\textsuperscript{52} The Syrian Christians received permission to reside in the Sultan's dominions with full enjoyment of their civil rights. At the fall of Acre he released all the prisoners who numbered more than 40 thousand.\textsuperscript{53}

Salahuddin had personal military virtues of a high order and his victories were due to his possession of moral qualities. He was a man inspired by an intense and unwavering ideal, the achievement of which involved him necessarily in a long series of military activities. He united the political force of Western Asia 'in one purpose'.\textsuperscript{54}

\textsuperscript{52} \textit{A short history of Saracens}, p. 357.
\textsuperscript{53} \textit{Al Nawadir al Sultaniya}, p. 64.
\textsuperscript{54} \textit{The life of Saladin}, p. 57.
At the time of war the Sultan himself looked after all the affairs without taking any note of rainy or windy days. He personally supervised the work and he even carried stones on his own shoulders. Although he had a delicate physique, he proved himself a sturdy warrior capable of amazing endurance. He was a magnetic leader who drew men unto him. He was also brave and action-oriented. He did not hesitate in killing a man in case the latter deserved it. Under his leadership the army consisting of different types of army personnel remained united. He himself selected the officers to fill the numerous posts. He rewarded his officers with titles and fiefs for distinguished services rendered by them. The achievements made by the troops were regularly reviewed and ceremoniously celebrated. One such instance is described by Lane Poole as follows:

"The Sultan himself (at the time of Béybars [Baybars] at least) rode in the midst of the procession, dressed in a plain black silk tunic with large sleeves, a turban over his steel cap, a hauberker beneath his tunic, and a long Arab sword at his side. In front some great noble displayed the royal saddle cloth, covered with precious stones and gold brocade; and the Sultan's head was shaded by the state parasol of yellow silk with gold embroidery, crowned with a golden eagle, and carried by a prince of the blood, whilst another noble bore the imperial standard. The royal horse was housed in yellow silk and red atlas satin, and the regimental colours of the escort were also of yellow Cairo silk, embroidered with their colonel's badge."
Salāhuddīn was unappreciative and indifferent to the importance of money. Ibn Shaddād quoted "I once heard him say, in the course of conversation about one of the traditions: 'It may be that there is someone in the world who looks at money as if he looked at the dust of the earth'. He was apparently alluding to himself".\textsuperscript{57}

The Sultan was very particular about \textit{jihad} (the holy war), which he considered as the chief and supreme duty of Muslims.\textsuperscript{58} He animated his people with the spirit of holy war. His chief attention was directed to the construction of the citadel and the great wall of Cairo which he had begun in 1171 as a precaution against future Frankish invasions, together with the reorganisation of the fleet. He spoke of nothing else, all his thoughts were of instruments of war, his soldiers monopolised every idea. His desire to fight in God's cause forced him to leave his family, his children, his native land and all that he had in his hand.\textsuperscript{59}

The Sultan loved horses and knew their pedigrees as he knew the traditions of the Prophet. Because of his delight in fine horses, they were his favourite gifts to others. At the time of siege of Akka he distributed twelve thousand horses. It was said that he never rode a horse that was not already given away.\textsuperscript{60}


\textsuperscript{58} \textit{Saladin and the fall of the Kingdom of Jerusalem}, p. 374.

\textsuperscript{59} \textit{Al Nawadir al Sultaniya}, p. 16; \textit{Saladin, What be fall sult. n Yusuf}, p. 24.

\textsuperscript{60} \textit{Saladin}, p. 68.
Whenever an orphan was brought before him, he always sympathised with him and prayed to Allah for showering His mercy upon him and his parents. Then he would lavish comfort upon him and allow him the same emoluments that his father had enjoyed. If the orphan had an experienced and trustworthy person amongst his relations he would charge him with the care of the child. In case there was no such person, he would deduct from the father's emoluments sufficient amount of money needed for the orphan's maintenance, and then place him at the disposal of a suitable person who would look after his education and upbringing.  

In dealing with the princes, whether friends or enemies, his first principle was sincerity and absolute loyalty to his word. Even with the Crusaders a truce was a truce. He never broke promises made with them, and to those who broke faith with him he was implacable, as Reginald of Chatillon and the Templars were to learn.

The Sultan was a zealous patron of science and educational activities. When he was in Alexandria, he often visited Hafiz al Ispahani and learnt from him a great number of traditions. He was a strict Hanafi. He had a firm faith in Shariat of Islam, and accepted its doctrines with an open heart. He disliked philosophers, materialists and all adversaries of

61. Al Nawadir al Sultaniya, p. 28; Saladin, What be fall sultan Yusuf, p. 44.
63. Al Nawadir al Sultaniya, p. 7; Saladin, What be fall sultan Yusuf, p. 10.
64. A short history of Saracens, p. 348.
orthodox religion.\textsuperscript{65} It was his custom to gather men around him in the evening for conversation, games of chess and recitation of poetry. He always took part in discussions upon almost every subject.\textsuperscript{66} He was well acquainted with the pedigrees of the old Arabs and with the details of their battles. He knew all their adventures. He was master of all curious and strange lore. Thus his conversation used to be a source of knowledge and information to all those who participated in discussions with him.\textsuperscript{67} He was well informed and curious and his greatest interest was always in the practical application of ideas.\textsuperscript{68} There were many learned men in his court. He was also a patron of Sunni theologians and built many madrasah-type schools in Jerusalem and Egypt. He was not only a successful Sultan and commander but also a true Muslim. He died in 1193 and was buried near the Umayyad mosque in Damascus. His grave is still visited by admirers. Even Western writers are full of praise for his acts of clemency, his generous treatment of the defeated, his sympathy for the suffering, his protection of the weak, his love for poets, scholars and holy men, his tenderness towards children and his faithful observance of treaties. He is one of the most respectful personalities of the East.

\textbf{Salāhuddīn as a liberator of Syria and Palestine}

Nūruddīn died on 15 May 1174 and left an eleven year old son, Ismail al-Malik al Saleh. At the time of Nūruddīn's death, Salāhuddīn sent

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{65} \textit{Al Nawadir al Sultaniya}, p. 8.
  \item \textsuperscript{66} \textit{Saladin}, p. 69.
  \item \textsuperscript{67} \textit{Al Nawadir al Sultaniya}, p. 27.
  \item \textsuperscript{68} \textit{Saladin}, p. 69.
\end{itemize}
his condolence to Malik Saleh with the customary presents offering his services and expressing his devotion.\textsuperscript{69}

The castle of Aleppo was occupied by Gumushtagin. Al-Malik al-Saleh set out on his first expedition to Aleppo and arrested Gumushtagin. Knowing that Al-Malik al-Saleh was young enough Salahuddin hurried to Damascus. He took possession of the city and drove away the Franks who had seiged it in the meantime.\textsuperscript{70} He appointed his brother, Tughtagin, as its governor. He himself marched northward of Aleppo in December with a small force to occupy Hims, Hamah and Edessa and demanded Aleppo to surrender itself to its rightful guardian, Al-Saleh. Displeased with the autonomous attitude of Salâhuddîn, Al-Saleh appealed to the people of Aleppo to save him from the clutches of Salâhuddîn.\textsuperscript{71} The Aleppians stood against Salâhuddîn but were forced to give way to Saleh. Gumushtagin who was the then governor of Aleppo appealed to the Crusaders and Saifûddîn Ghazi Atabek of Mosul for help. The whole troop of Gumushtagin and the Crusaders did succeed in seizing Edessa but retreated. Salâhuddîn once again sought for the friendship of Saleh. Salâhuddîn agreed to reinstate Hamah, Edessa and Ba'labakk to Salah on condition of appointing the former as lieutenant of Damascus and Egypt. But this arrangement was turned down. And the result was the tussle in which the troops of Mosul

\textsuperscript{69} A short history of Saracens, p. 350; Al Kāmil fi Tārīḳh, vol. XI, p. 405.

\textsuperscript{70} Al Nawadir al Suttania, p. 38-39.

\textsuperscript{71} Al Kāmil fi Tārīḳh, vol. XI, p. 416.
were routed badly. Many of them were taken as prisoners who were later freed by Salāhuddīn. Now Salāhuddīn encamped in front of Aleppo again and forced the cession of el-Maarra and Kefr Tab as the prince of peace. Gumushtagin and Saifūddīn Ghazi tried to solve the problem through a sister of al-Saleh Ismail and sent her to the camp of Salāhuddīn to obtain favourable terms. Salāhuddīn received her with the greatest kindness, showered her with presents and at her request returned all the cities he had taken in the principality of Aleppo. By the treaty Damascus was definitely given over to Salāhuddīn. But Malik Saleh's name was removed from the Khutba in Syria, Hijaz and Egypt. He also took the fortress of Barin towards the end of this year.

The borders of Salāhuddīn's sphere of power in Syria were continuously being disturbed by the Crusaders. Franks leader Reginald de Chattillon attacked Aleppo, knowing that Saleh's affairs had fallen into disorder. Gumushtagin, who was the real governor of the whole country was arrested and asked to surrender the castle of Harim. On his refusal, Reginald put him to death. As a result of this, the Franks laid seige to Harim. The garrison was attacked on the one hand by the Franks and threatened on the other by Saleh's army. In this battle Saleh was victorious and annexed the castle in the month of Ramadhan 1178 A.D. In 1178

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73. Ibid., p. 352; *Al Nawadir al Sultaniya*, p. 40.
Saifuddin Ghazi, prince of Mosul, died and was succeeded by his brother, Izzuddin Masud.\textsuperscript{74}

In 1181, Ismail, prince of Aleppo, died and was succeeded by his cousin, Izzuddin Mas'ud of Mosul. But he prepared to leave Aleppo to his brother, Imaduddin in exchange for Sinjar mountain bordering his ancestral lands. Before the new ruler could establish himself in Aleppo, Salâhuddin occupied his territory and in the following years, he also attacked Mesopotamia and forced Izzuddin to come under his tutelage.\textsuperscript{75}

Guy of Lusignan who succeeded Baldwin V as king of Jerusalem was anxious to preserve the peace but it was broken by his vassals. Reginald of Chattillon, the lord of Kerak fortress, dominated the caravan highway from Damascus to Hijaz as well as to Egypt. He and his troops kept on disturbing the traffic of the pilgrimage and commerce as well, through their repeated raiding forays. It was difficult for Salâhuddin to keep himself away from these political disturbances in the beginning of 1187. He therefore decided on a great stroke.\textsuperscript{76} He dispatched pleading and argumentative letters to Baghdad justifying his own actions, and thereby proving his loyalty to the Caliphate and Shariah and also asking for the Caliph's support against his adversaries.\textsuperscript{77} He himself advanced into the

\textsuperscript{74} Al Nawadir al Sultaniya, p. 43.

\textsuperscript{75} History of the Islamic Peoples, p. 228.

\textsuperscript{76} Ibid., p. 228.

\textsuperscript{77} Studies on the civilization of Islam, p. 100.
Kerak region and sent Malik al Afzāl (Salāhuddīn's eldest son) towards Galilee to keep an eye on the Franks.⁷⁸ Thereupon the King of Jerusalem also gathered a great army of knights in Saffuriyah. Salāhuddīn drew them into an enclosed valley among the mountains in the neighbourhood of Tiberias, near the hill of Hittin. Hittin is a place of great importance because Prophet Shoeb had been buried there. The Franks came down the hills with their faces towards the lake of Tiberias, whilst the Sultan's force was posted in front of the lake, thereby cutting off the Crusaders from the source of water. It was the evening of Thursday, the 2nd July as the two armies stood face to face. The Sultan kept himself awake the whole night finalising his plan for the decisive battle the next day. The battle of Hittin began on Friday, 3rd July, the day of prayer and a good omen for Salāhuddīn for fighting whereas the reverse was the truth for the Frankish army. The upholders of Islam surrounded the Crusaders. The enemy took to flight, but they were pursued by the Muslim warriors and in that case not a single fugitive could escape.⁷⁹ Soon men and horses alike suffered bitterly from thirst. The Christians passed the night in misery, listening to the prayers and songs that came from the Muslim tents. To make their matters worse, the Muslim forces set fire to the scrub that covered the hill and its smoke poured in over the camp. When the dawn broke on Saturday 4th July, the Muslims attacked Christians who began to throw away their

armour while screaming for water.\textsuperscript{80} Their leaders were taken captives and the rest were killed. Among the leaders who surrounded were king Geoffrey (Guy of Lusignan), Reginald de Chattillon, lord of Kerak. Salāhuddīn had sworn to put prince Arnāt (Reginald de Chattillon) to death if he ever fell into his hand. Perhaps he was one of the most ruthless and least scrupulous of the Latin leaders. Once a caravan coming from Egypt took advantage of the truce and went quite close to al-Shobek, where the prince then happened to be. Thinking there was nothing to fear from, they halted in the neighbourhood of the place, but the prince set upon them. The travellers in vain besought him for mercy in the name of God; telling him that there was a treaty of peace between him and the Muslims. He only answered by insulting the holy Prophet Muhammad. Salāhuddīn heard this and being compelled by the faith and with his strong determination to protect his people, he swore to take Reginald's life.\textsuperscript{81} And the opportunity came for Salāhuddīn when Reginald was his captive and the time came for the fulfilment of his oath. Guy of Lusignan and Reginald of Chattillon were brought into his tent. According to their custom, a cup of sherbat was given to the King Guy of Lusignan who after refreshing himself passed the cup to Reginald. Salāhuddīn objected to this for the cup was not meant for Reginald, for the drink was meant only for the one who was granted his life.\textsuperscript{82} Then the Sultan called for a sword and with his own hand cut off

\textsuperscript{80}. Arab historians of the Crusades, p. 122; Al Ḷāmil fi Tārikh, Vol. XI, p. 535.
\textsuperscript{81}. Al Nawadīr al Sultanīya, p. 63; Saladin what Befall Sultan Yusuf, p. 114.
\textsuperscript{82}. Saladin, p. 136.
Reginald's head, thereby completing his oath and avenging the plunder of his caravan. When the king Guy of Lusignan saw the way in which his fellow-captive had been treated, he thought that he would be the second victim but the Sultan calmed his fear by telling him that a king would not want to kill a king but that Reginald had transgressed all bounds and thus met his end in that way.\textsuperscript{83} The captives were allowed to return after the payment of ransom. The rest were sold in the slave markets.

The Sultan did not give the time to his enemy to recover from the defeat and rapidly followed up the victory of Hittin. He captured the castle of Tiberias. The wife of Raymond of Tripoli was made captive by soldiers but Salāhuddīn sent her to her husband with courtesy and respect.\textsuperscript{84}

Four days after the battle of Hittin Salāhuddīn conquered Acre. Acre was seiged on 9th July and Salāhuddīn encamped on the hills, in front of the town. All the Franks of the coast had gathered in Tyre. The Sultan therefore thought it better to march against Ascalon, a city which he thought was easier to beseige. On 2nd September he encamped before the city, having taken on his way a number of places as Beirut, Jaffa, Sidon & Jubail. By the end of September he conquered Ascalon.

Tyre, Tripoli and Antioch were the only remaining sea ports in Christian hands. After taking Ascalon, the Sultan devoted all his energies

\textsuperscript{83} Saladin and the fall of the Kingdom of Jerusalem, p. 215;
\textsuperscript{84} A short history of Saracens, p. 355.
for preparation of an expedition against the city of Jerusalem. After a siege of twelve days, the holy city was surrendered on 2nd October and the greatest aim of Salāhuddīn's life was accomplished. At least after a lapse of 100 years, the Muazzin's call came from the Aqsa Mosque and the famous mosque of Umar and the golden cross which surmounted the Dome of Rock was torn down by Salāhuddīn's men. Salāhuddīn protected the Holy Sepulchre from incendiaries and declared that only unarmed Christians could enter that place.

From Jerusalem Salāhuddīn marched upon Tyre, where the Crusaders whom his humanity had liberated had been allowed to betake themselves. The garrison of Tyre which was enforced from every direction, prepared for an obstinate defence. It was comanded by Conard, Marquis of Montferrat, a man of ability and great cunning. He refused to obey the Sultan's summons for surrendering the city and attacked the Muslims from behind their trenches. The battle raged until sunset from the early afternoon. This sort of situation continued for several days. When Salāhuddīn realized that it was going to be a long protracted war to conquer Tyre, he withdrew. Then he turned his attention to the fortresses which

88. *Crusades, Commerce and culture*, p. 80.
90. *Arab historians of the Crusades*, p. 181.
still remained in the hands of the Franks and thought that it would be best
to get possession of these in order to discharge the garrison of Tyre. He
captured Sahyūn, Bekās, Burzia and Derbesāk, Baghrās and Kaukab.

The Third Crusade -

The loss of Jerusalem resuscitated the idea of Crusades. The Pope
compelled Hohenstangen Fredrick I, Philip of France and Richard, the lion-
hearted, of England to reconcile to each other. The courageous defence of
Tyre by Marquis of Montferrat set in motion the third Crusade.

The Franks came from all directions by land and by sea with all
their forces. Even women equipped themselves for war. They marched
upon Acre and laid siege to it. Salāhuddīn attacked the Crusaders on the
14th Sept. 1189 A.D. Taqiuddīn, nephew of Salāhuddīn delivered a terrific
charge on the Franks and drove them from their position and restored
communication with Acre. Muslims continued the fighting till the night.
They nearly attained their object, but after gaining half the position of the
Franks, they took rest and resumed the battle the next day. On the next
day, the battle was started by Franks who came from behind their
entrenchment and vigorously attacked the Muslim's right wing, which was
under the command of Taqiūddīn. They were repulsed with frightful
slaughter and were compelled to retreat.

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At this time, Salāhuddin's force dispersed all over the country. One army watched Bohemond, Prince of Antioch, while another was stationed at Edessa in front of Tripoli for the defence of that frontier. When Salāhuddin saw that Taqiuddin's force was less than that of the Franks, he sent a reinforcement from his own troops, for the men from Diyarbakr and other Eastern Contingents were drawn up to one side of the central block of troops. When the Franks realised that the centre was poorly guarded and many of its men had gone to reinforce the right wing, they turned towards the centre. The Muslim army fled and only a few soldiers stood firm, of whom many were killed like the Amir Miyalla Bin Marwan, Zahiruddin, governor of Jerusalem.  

The army of Salāhuddin's troops were mistaken about their own defeat, because of which they laid hands on all they could find and carried off great stores of money, clothes and arms. This was a much greater disaster than defeat. As soon as the Sultan returned to the camp and saw the consequences of the panic and the pillage, he took prompt measures to remedy this. He first of all wrote letters and sent men out to bring back the fugitives. The messengers overtook them and succeeded to bring them back. The Franks returned to the camp, having lost their bravest men and left their most valiant chief on the field. The number of Crusaders killed in this battle was almost 10,000 men. In spite of Salāhuddin's endeavours

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93. Ibid., p. 36-37.
to keep the place clean and to throw the dead bodies into the sea, the exhalations from the numerous unburied corpses poisoned the atmosphere. The Sultan himself was affected and under the advice of the doctors and generals the camp was broken up and Salāhuddīn with his army moved to the neighbourhood of al-Kharruba. After the Muslims' departure, the Franks again laid siege to Acre and in order to protect themselves against Salāhuddīn's attack, they made a deep ditch round their camp.95

Salāhuddīn spent the writer at al-Kharruba. In the spring of 1190 he descended again into the plains of Acre and took up his former position. During the siege of Acre, the Franks built there lofty wooden towers, each one sixty cubit tall. The Franks divided their forces into two parts. One part was sent to attack Salāhuddīn while the other part attacked the city. And thus the pressure on Acre was relieved. The fighting lasted for eight days which rendered the troops completely exhausted. The Muslims were now convinced that the Franks would take the city, as the defenders were not in a position to ward off the attack from their besieged towers.96

The Muslims were greatly upset by the news that Frederick Barbarossa, the Emperor of Germany, was marching upon Palestine. Salāhuddīn sent his armies into the direct bordering on the enemy's line of march and himself remained with the rest of the army to oppose the enemy

encamped at Acre. An epidemic broke out in the army which greatly affected the Crusaders.\textsuperscript{97}

On the 20th of Jamadi II 586/25th July 1190 A.D. after a temporary relief, the Franks again started their campaign. But they suffered a heavy defeat. Two days later count Henry of Champagne arrived with a huge army and landed his troops without difficulty in the neighbourhood of Acre and joined the Crusaders who had already encamped there. This time Salāhuddīn moved with his troops to al-Kharruba so as to have more space for deployment of his army and avoid the terrible stench before Acre. Due to the withdrawal of the Sultan's troops, the Crusaders pressed the siege with vigour but the Muslims remained within the city, and faced the horrors of this fierce attack with heroic constancy. The ameers Karakuh and Husām ud-din animated the courage of the soldiers. They burnt the machines of the besiegers. Count Henry thereupon turned the siege into a blockade. But the Sultan relieved the garrison by sending provision by sea from Bayrut.\textsuperscript{98}

On 9th April 1191 A.D., fresh help arrived for the Franks, and Richard and Philip came with overwhelming forces. Salāhuddīn was by now tired by war, pestilence and famine began to feel the weight of the Crusaders. He asked Philip Augustus for the same condition which the Muslims had accorded to the Christians during the capture of Jerusalem. But the ungrateful king of England did not show any mercy to the Muslims and killed them.\textsuperscript{99}

\textsuperscript{97} Al Nawadir al Sultaniya, p. 110; Saladin what Befall Sultan Yusuf, p. 191.
\textsuperscript{98} A short history of Saracens, p. 364.
\textsuperscript{99} A study of Islamic history, p. 278.
After the capture of Acre, the Crusaders marched towards Ascalon under the leadership of Richard. Salāhuddīn came to Ascalon and removed the inhabitants and ruined the fort completely. When Richard arrived, he saw the uninhabitable ruins of a great fortress and city. Impressed with the personality of Salāhuddīn and being tired of prolonged warfare and long absence from his kingdom, Richard became anxious for peace. The Sultan after a lot of discussion and negotiation with the Christians agreed to the proposal for peace.\(^{100}\) At last peace was established between the Muslims and the Christians, declaring that the territories of both should equally enjoy repose and security and that persons of either nation could go into the territory of the other and return again without molestation or fear. Thus the third Crusade ended, and the Muslims lost the small city of Acre.\(^{101}\)

On the departure of Richard, Salāhuddīn rested a while at Jerusalem and after that he proceeded towards the sea coast to examine the state of the maritime fortresses and to put them in repair. He then returned to Damascus where he remained with his family until his death on Wednesday, the 27th of Safar 589 (4th March, 1193 A.D.).\(^{102}\) As described by Bahauddīn, the day of his death was a great loss for Muslims and Islam. The palace of the Emperor was overwhelmed with grief. The whole city was plunged in sorrow.\(^{103}\)


\(^{101}\) *A study of Islamic history*, p. 278.

\(^{102}\) *Al Nawadir al Sultaniya*, p. 308; *Saladin what Befall Sultan Yusuf*, p. 405.

\(^{103}\) *A short history of Saracens*, p. 372.
Western writers have highly lauded his acts of clemency, his generous treatment of the defeated, his sympathy for the suffering, his protection of the weak, his love for poets, scholars and holy men, his tenderness toward children and his faithful observance of the treaties signed with different parties.

Later Ayyubid rulers -

Salāḥuddīn himself divided his whole empire among his sons before his death. His eldest son al Malik al Afzāl inherited the sultanate together with Damascus and southern Syria, Al Malik al Azīz got Egypt and al-Malik al Zāhir Aleppo with northern Syria. Al Malik al Ādil Saifuddīn Abu Bakr (the just king, the sword of religion), the brother of Salāḥuddīn who earlier had been a lieutenant in Egypt, proceeded to Syria, where he was given the possession in Mesopotamia.104 He was during Salāḥuddīn's reign his chief counsellor and next to him the strongest and most able personality in the family. He not only enjoyed great prestige, as against the youth and inexperience of Salāḥuddīn's sons, but also he was familiar with the internal conditions of Egypt, Aleppo and Kerak, as he had at different times governed all these principalities.105

Due to the weakness of Al-Afzāl and his misgovernance at Damascus, his troops rebelled against him, following which al Aziz of Egypt led an expedition against Damascus in 1194. Al Ādil joined the coalition of Syrian princes against al Azīz and, on his withdrawal,

104. *History of the Islamic People*, p. 231
remained with al Afzāl in Damascus. Again in 1195 al-Azīz made second attempt in league with al-Zāhir of Aleppo. Al-Ādil broke up the coalition by intrigue, and followed al-Azīz to Egypt and stayed with him for some time. Later, they succeeded in driving al-Afzāl out of Damascus (June 1, 1196).  

In spite of these disturbances the Ayyūbids held their territories against the Crusaders as well as against their neighbours in Asia Minor. In 1197 a large force of Crusaders landed on the Phoenician coast and seized Beruit. Al-Ādil resisted the Franks. He carried Jaffa by storm while the Crusaders were besieging Tibnin. The siege ended in disastrous failure and they were compelled to sue for peace.

Al-Ādil was a powerful monarch, displaying great foresight and information. He was very experienced, virtuous in his conducts, always animated with the best intention and gifted with perfect prudence. He was very attentive to fulfil the duty of prayer at the regular hours. He divided his state between his sons Al Malik al Muazzām received Syria, Al Malik al Kāmil received Egypt while al Malik al Ashraf got Mesopotamia.

106. Ibid., p. 695.
111. History of the Islamic People, p. 231.
In 1218 Innocent III proclaimed the fifth Crusade and set out for Dimyat and anchored at al Jiza. The Nile stood between them and Dimyat. At this point a tall and well-fortified tower had been built by the Egyptians, with massive iron chains slung across the river to the wall of Dimyat to prevent ships arriving from the sea from travelling upto the Nile into Egypt. The Franks disembarked at al Jiza and built a wall on their side and dug out a trench to defend themselves from attack. Then they began to assault Dimyat. Al Malik al Kāmil had camped in a place called 'Adiliyya' near Dimyat and sent continuous supplies of troops to Dimyat.\footnote{Al Kāmil fi Tārikh, Vol. XII, p.323; Arab historians of the Crusades, p.256.} After the death of Malik al Ādil, an Egyptian amir Ibn al Mashtūb hatched a plot with other amirs to depose al Malik al Kāmil in favour of his brother al Malik al Fā'iz ibn al Ādil with a view to controlling through him the whole country. When al Malik al Kāmil heard the news, he abandoned his position and went to Ashmun Tannah. The army in the absence of its Sultan was left to look after itself. Since the Franks did not see a single Muslim on the river bank, they crossed the Nile and marched into Dimyat in 1219.\footnote{Al Kāmil fi Tārikh, Vol. XII, p. 324-325.}

When Malik al Muazzam Isa, the son of al Ādil arrived two days after this, he found that everything was in turmoil there. His arrival cheered and strengthened his brother. In the meantime Ibn Mashrūb who had been driven out into Syria came to an understanding with al-Malik al-Ashrāf and joined his army.
In the year 1219, Malik al Muazzām returned to Syria and destroyed the wall of Jerusalem because of the general fear of the Crusaders. The rest of Egypt and Syria was on the point of collapse and everyone was afraid of the invaders and went in anticipation of disastrous night and day. Al-Malik al Kāmil sent a number of letters to his brothers al Malik al Muazzām of Damascus and al-Malik al Ashrāf who ruled the Jazira and Armenia for their help."

Malik al Mu'azzam himself went to al-Ashrāf. But he found him unable to send help to their brother because many of his vassals were in a state of rebellion. After sometime the rebellions in al Malik al Ashrāf's kingdom were put down.

At that time the Franks came out of Dimyat to confront al Malik al Kāmil. Al Ashrāf and al Muazzām came for the help of al Kāmil. The Muslim galleys came down the Nile, attacked the Frankish fleet and took three ships with all their crew, cargo and arms. This delighted and encouraged the Muslims, who saw it as a good omen and drew from it the strength they needed to overcome the enemy.

Meanwhile ambassadors passed between the two sides to discuss the terms and conditions of peace. The Muslims offered the Franks Ascalon, Tiberias, Sidon, Jabala, Laodicea and all Salāhuddin's conquests except al Kerak, in return for Dimyat, but the Franks refused and asked for

114. Ibid., p. 326.
300,000 dinars as indemnity for the destruction of the walls of Jerusalem, to be used to rebuild them. In such a situation, the Muslims had no alternative but to continue the fight.\textsuperscript{115}

The Franks were confident of their own strength and brought with them provision for only a few days thinking that the Muslim army would offer no resistance. A detachment of Muslims crossed the river to the Frankish side and opened the flood gates. The river flooded most of the area and left the Franks with only one way out, along a narrow causeway. Al Kāmil threw a bridge over the Nile at Ashmun and his troops crossed it and held the road along which the Franks would have to pass to reach Dimyat. The Franks became very nervous and the situation became so serious for them that they burnt their tents, ballistas and luggage and decided to attack the Muslims in the hope of breaking through and getting back to Dimyat. But the object of their longings was far off and their way to it restricted by the mud and water, surrounding them to a single path, along which they would have to fight their way through the Muslims who held it.\textsuperscript{116} When they realized that they were completely surrounded, they sent messengers to Malik al Kāmil and al Ashrāf asking for their lives in exchange for Dimyat with no indemnity.\textsuperscript{117} An agreement was reached to that effect, and it was signed in August 1221. The king of Acre, the Papal

\textsuperscript{115} Ibid., p. 329.
\textsuperscript{116} Ibid., p. 329; Arab historians of the Crusades, p.263.
\textsuperscript{117} Ibid., p. 330.
Legate, Louis and others sent their priests and monks to Dimyat to negotiate the surrender. The inhabitants handed the city over on the 9th Rajab a memorable day for Islam.\textsuperscript{118}

Al Malik al Muazzām died in 1227 leaving the principality of Damascus to his son al Malik an Nasir Daud. Kāmil and Ashrāf then combined to seize Damascus and to give to Nasir in return Harran, Ruha (Edessa) and Rakka.\textsuperscript{119}

In 1229 Frederick arrived in Syria. There were many communications between al Kāmil and Frederick. Frederick refused to return home except on the conditions laid down which included the surrender of Jerusalem and of part of the area conquered by Salāhuddīn whereas al Malik al Kāmil was by no means prepared to yield him these territories.\textsuperscript{120} Finally a treaty was concluded between the two for ten years six months and ten days.\textsuperscript{121} It was finally agreed that the Franks should have Jerusalem on condition that they did not attempt to rebuild the walls, that nothing outside it should be held by the Franks and that all the other villages within its province should be Muslim, with a Muslim governor resident at al-Bira, actually in the province of Jerusalem. The sacred precincts of the city, with the Dome of Rock and the Masjid al Aqsa were

\textsuperscript{118} Ibid., p. 330.
\textsuperscript{119} A short history of Saracens, p. 381.
\textsuperscript{120} Arab historians of the Crusades, p. 269.
\textsuperscript{121} A short history of Saracens, p. 381.
to remain in Muslim hands and the Franks were simply to have the right to visit them, while their administration remained in the hands of those already employed in it, and Muslims would be allowed to continue worshiping there.\textsuperscript{122} Frederick obtained the peaceful retrocession of Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Nazareth and all the cities situated between the route from Jaffa to Acre.\textsuperscript{123} The Sultan Malik al Kāmil maintained that if he broke with the Emperor and failed to give him full satisfaction, this would cause an unavoidable war with the Franks, in which the Muslims would suffer an irreparable loss and everything for which they were working would slip from their grasp. So he was in favour of satisfying the Franks with a disarmed Jerusalem and making a temporary truce with them.\textsuperscript{124} The only privilege reserved for the Muslims was the free exercise of their religion in the ceded town. This treaty was approved neither by Muslims nor by Christians.\textsuperscript{125}

When the news of the loss of Jerusalem reached Damascus, al Malik al Nāsir began to criticise and abuse his uncle al Malik al Kāmil for alienating the people's sympathies. He also proposed to alienate the people from al Malik al Kāmil with a view to ensuring their loyalty to himself in his contest with his uncle.\textsuperscript{126}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{122} Arab historians of the Crusades, p. 269.
\item \textsuperscript{123} A short history of Saracens, p. 381.
\item \textsuperscript{124} Arab historians of the Crusades, p. 270.
\item \textsuperscript{125} A short history of Saracens, p. 381.
\item \textsuperscript{126} Arab historians of the Crusades, p. 272.
\end{itemize}
Kāmil died on the 8th March 1238. He was a powerful monarch and left an honourable reputation. He loved the men of learning and patronised them. He was a strict observer of the doctrines of the sunnah, and adhered with great zeal to the orthodox belief. He liked the company of talented men. It was a practice with him that on every Thursday he used to assemble with some learned persons who held discussions on different subjects of literary and religious importance. He also participated in the discussions and asked questions on the obscure points of different sources and he mixed up with them on equal terms.127

After the death of al Kāmil the amirs thereafter raised to the throne his son Abu Bakr al Malik al Ādil, a young man of weak character and given to pursuits of pleasure. He was deposed by his brother Ayyub al Malik al Saleh Najmuddin Ayyūb who was better fitted to deal with the unruly military mamluks who now formed the aristocracy of Egypt. In 1239-40 Abu Malik an Nasir Daūd, the lord of Harran retook Jerusalem from the Christians and demolished its walls.128

Malik al Sālih Najmuddin Ayyūb made himself master of Egypt and extended his power over Syria and compelled the princes of the Ayyūbid dynasty, who held sway in that country, to acknowledge his suzerainty. While he was endeavouring to introduce peace and order in his dominions, the troops of Khawarizm Shah, fleeing before the Mongols,

entered Syria and plunged it into disorder. They took service first under one chief and then another. They finally threw off allegiance to the princes of Syria and gave themselves up to slaughter and rapine. After a series of battles they were finally destroyed. 129

While Malik al Saleh was engaged in Syria, the Franks launched the eighth Crusade in the leadership of Louis IX of France. Louis landed at Dimyat. The people of Dimyat feared for their lives if they were besieged. There was of course a garrison of brave soldiers in the city but God struck terror into their hearts and they left Dimyat. The behaviour of the people and of Fakhruddin Yusuf, head of the Egyptian troops, was shameful. If Fakhruddin Yusuf had prevented their flight and stood firm, Dimyat would have been able to defend itself. If the soldiers and people of Dimyat had shut the gate and entrenched themselves within that, after the army had gone to Ashmun Tannah, the Franks could not have overcome them. The army would have been behind them and could have defended them. They had provisions, munitions and arms in such great quantity that they could defend the city for at least two years. When the Franks appeared before Dimyat they found it deserted and occupied it. 130

Large numbers of the Crusaders assembled at the port of Marseille. They started their journey in 1800 ships, and reached Cyprus in September 1248 where they spent the winter, during which the King tried

129. Ibid., p. 387.
130. Arab historians of the Crusades, p. 285.
to enlist the support of the Mongols in order to make a co-ordinated attack on Egypt. But when that could not materialize, the Crusaders sailed towards Dimyat. And as soon as they landed on it, the Muslims fled it in terror. When al Malik al Saleh heard of it, he immediately rushed back home from Syria. He avoided Dimyat and reached Mansurah where he organized his army. He also raised a commando force, which greatly harassed the Crusaders.\textsuperscript{131} A number of Beoduin Arabs also came and began to make raids and attacks on the Franks. They for their part, fortified the wall of Dimyat and filled the city with soldiers.\textsuperscript{132}

Al Malik al Saleh died in 1249 after a reign of nearly ten years, whilst the Franks were still at Dimyat. Al Malik al Saleh was just and upright in his conduct, faithful in his words. He never took any action without consulting his generals and counsellors. He organised the military corps of Bahrite Mamluks. He left one son named Turanshah al Malik al Muazzam who was at that time absent on the border of Syria. Shajarat-ul-Durr, the wife of Malik al Saleh, a woman of great capacity and courage, concealed the sultan's death until the principal officers had taken the oath of allegiance to Turan Shah.\textsuperscript{133} The death of Malik al Saleh caused great grief. Meanwhile the Franks occupying Dimyat realized that if the Muslim army encamped at Mansurah, they could be induced to withdraw even a short distance, the whole Egypt would soon be brought under their

\textsuperscript{131}. *Islamic dynasties of the Arab East*, p. 35
\textsuperscript{132}. *Arab historians of the Crusades*, p. 287.
\textsuperscript{133}. *A short history of Saracens*, p. 388.
 control. Now al Saleh's wife Shajarat-ul-Durr played an important role in that dark hour in the history of Egypt. She called a meeting of all the war generals and made them swear to fight to the last for the sake of the country. Simultaneously the Sultan ordered them to abide by her orders in all matters. The enemy reached the end of the Dimyat peninsula and so found themselves face to face with the Muslim forces. The Frankish king penetrated Mansurah and reached the Sultan's palace. The Franks spread through the narrow streets of the town. It was lucky for the Muslims that the Franks dispersed through the streets. At the moment of supreme danger, the Turkish battalion of the Mamluks of al Malik al Saleh rode like one man upon the enemy in a charge that broke them and drove them back. King Louis and his companions were arrested who were later set free on payment of four lakh dinars as ransom money.

Turan Shah's favouritism towards the rival military corps (the Burjites) led to his assassination by the Bahrite Mamluks. They then raised to the throne Shajarat-ul-Durr. The Khutba was recited in her name and coins were inscribed with her title al-Musta'simiyah (the servant of caliph al Mustaasim, who then ruled at Baghdad), al-Salihah (the wife of al-Saleh Ayyub) Malikat al Muslimin (Queen of the Moslems).

134. Arab historians of the Crusades, p. 288.
135. Islamic dynasties of the Arab East, p. 36.
136. Arab historians of the Crusades, p. 290.
137. Islamic dynasties of the Arab East, p. 36.