



# **An Ungodly War: The Sack of Constantinople & the Fourth Crusade**

*W. B. Bartlett*

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The Fourth Crusade was perhaps the darkest hour of the Catholic Church and of religion in the West. In 1204 thousands of men, dispatched by Pope Innocent IV to recover the Holy Places in Palestine, were diverted by the Venetians to the territory of the Christian Byzantine empire. The army sacked Constantinople, then the greatest city of Christendom. Thousands of people lost their lives, buildings were destroyed and treasures looted. The Byzantine government was ousted and a short-lived 'Latin empire' established.

W. B. Bartlett's book tells the whole story of the crusade of 1204. It recounts the apocalyptic events of that year and attempts to explain how and why they happened, and to examine the context in which they occurred. How could an expedition designed with the protection of the 'true faith' and the protection of the souls of those who took part have been so easily diverted to destroy the world's greatest Christian city and so many of its inhabitants? This is the story of how an army that went forth in the name of God lost sight of its fundamental motivations - an object lesson in how a misguided idealism can lead to disaster.

An Ungodly War chronicles the nadir of the Crusading movement in detail. It will be a must-have book for anyone shocked by the depths to which the Crusades - one of history's most controversial enterprises - could sink.

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