**Richard The Lionheart’s massacre of Muslim prisoners at Acre**

Taken from Beha ad-Din's *Life of Saladin*. (Palestine Pilgrims Text Society, 1897), 272-274.

When the King of England saw that the Sultan was making some delay in the fulfillment of the above-mentioned conditions, he acted treacherously with regard to the Moslem prisoners. He had promised to spare their lives if they surrendered the city, adding that if the Sultan sent him what had been agreed upon, he would give them their liberty, with permission to take their wives and children with them and to carry away all their movable property; if the Sultan did not fulfill the conditions, they were to become slaves. The king broke the solemn promises he had made them, openly showed the intentions he had hitherto concealed, and carried out what he had purposed to do as soon as he had received the money and the Frank prisoners. That is what the people of his nation said afterwards.

About four o’clock in the afternoon of Tuesday, the 27th of Rejeb, he rode out with the whole of the Frankish army- infantry, cavalry, and Turcopoles (that is, light-armed soldiers) – and advanced as far as the wells at the foot of Tell el-‘A’yadiya, to which place he had already sent forward his tents. As soon as the Franks reached the middle of the plain between this tell and that of Kisan, which was occupied by the Sultan’s advanced guard, they brought out the Moslem prisoners, whom God had pre-ordained to martyrdom that day, to the number of more than three thousand, all tied together with ropes. The Franks rushed upon them all at once and slaughtered them in cold blood with sword and lance. The advanced guard had previously informed the Sultan that the enemy had got to horse, and he sent them some reinforcements, but they did not arrive until the massacre had been accomplished.

As soon as the Moslems saw what they were doing to the prisoners, they rushed down on the Franks, and a certain number were killed and wounded on both sides in the action that took place, and lasted until night separated the combatants. The following morning our people went out to see what had happened, and found all the Moslems who had been martyred for their faith stretched on the ground; they were able to recognize some of them. This was a terrible grief to them. The enemy had only spared the prisoners of note and such as were strong enough to labour. Various motives have been assigned for this massacre. According to some, the prisoners were killed to avenge the deaths of those slain previously by the Moslems; others say that the king of England, having made up his mind to try and take Ascalon, did not think it prudent to leave so many prisoners behind in Acre. God knows what his reason really was.

What battle did this result from?

What ex-king began the siege of this town?

What viewpoint is this written from? Explain why you believe this.

How many Muslims died at the hands of the Franks? Did they kill them fairly?

Did the Franks spare prisoners? If so, why?

Why were the Muslims killed?

Who ordered the death of the Muslims?