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*Note to the reader: This is an abridged, explanatory version of the rules to "The Mission: Early Christianity from the Crucifixion to the Crusades" by R. Ben Madison (White Dog Games, 2020).*

**This is not a complete rulebook.** It is provided free of charge to show potential players what sorts of features the rules describe, and to give a general sense of how the game works. The rules contain a number of historical explanations, most of which are omitted here.

## [1.0] The Setting

"We see that the voice of the Apostles of Jesus has gone forth into all the earth, and their words to the end of the world."  
 - Origen of Alexandria (3<sup>rd</sup> century)

[1.1] **Introduction:** **The Mission** is a **solitaire** game that starts after the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ around AD 30. The player represents the Christian church as it spreads across the Near East, Asia, Africa, and Europe. The player also plays the role of the Roman (later Byzantine) Empire, which served, at first unwittingly, as the incubator of this radically un-pagan new faith.

As you expand the Church across the map, you convert Lands to the Gospel, uniting them with your social network (the "Oecumene", as the Greeks called it, whence the word "ecumenical"). To a

wargamer, it may feel like conquest; the process was really the spread of ideas from friend to neighbor, often spurred by some fiery missionary orator. Later in the game, of course, governments will 'help' the heathens see things your way.

The story will carry you through many separate ages, as the Empire itself takes Christianity as its cause, only to fight off barbarian hordes and the Islamic Jihad in a struggle that culminates in the First Crusade. When the game ends, 1,300 years after Jesus' birth, will you have left the Church in a strong position to carry his message into the modern world... or did you leave it in a dire state of decay? Jesus asks: "*When the Son of Man comes again, will he find on this earth anyone with faith in him?*" (Luke 18:8)

Be aware that this is a game where you will want to be familiar with the rules before you play, and pay close attention to the many "turning points" in the game. You may need to prepare in advance for new Eras (5.2) and Events on the Acts Track such as *Charlemagne* and *Turkish Decision*. This need for long-term planning may interfere with the short-term fun you're having!

[1.2] **The Map and its Paths:** The map shows the world known to Jesus and the Romans. Jerusalem is its hub, from which **The Mission** proceeds on six "Paths" carrying you to West Europe (A), Asia Minor/East Europe (B), Armenia and the Caucasus (C), Persia and Central Asia (D), the Nile Valley, Egypt and East Africa (E), and Roman North Africa (F). Each Path also has its own die symbol (e.g. Path A has "⊠") used to put random Tiles on that Path.

*You may have heard that God does not play dice, but that's not in the Bible. Albert Einstein said it.*

[1.2.1] **The Gaul-Milan Shortcut:** On Path A, you'll notice a dotted line from Gaul to Milan. *Ignore this line!* You only use it if Spain is Arab (6.9.1 ④).

[1.3] **Communion:** A crucial aspect of the game is the *diversity* of Christianity from its early days. The Church may

split into as many as six rival branches, but for game purposes (we make no theological claims here) your "home base" is the **Catholic Church in Rome**. Other branches are on your side if they're "**in communion**" with Rome.

In the game, a Land is "Christian" if it has a green 'church' Field Tile on it (but see 6.5.1). All Christian Lands on a given Path are always in communion with you, unless a "Schism" Tile is on the Path, showing a spilled eucharistic chalice. The Christians on that Path have gone a different way and it's more difficult for you to influence and protect them.

Theology, politics and war have all been simplified in order to turn a complex period of history into a playable tower defense-style game. Trust me: it was done in good faith. *And it was fun!*

## [2.0] Game Equipment

"Our one Father, God, lives. And so does our mother, the Church."  
 - Tertullian (3<sup>rd</sup> century)

A complete game set of **The Mission** should contain:




- ✓ 11x17" color Game Map
- ✓ 8 1/2x11" 2-sided sheet of 176 "Tiles"
- ✓ 8 1/2x11" 1-sided color Acts Track
- ✓ 8 1/2x11" 1-sided black/white Counter Tray
- ✓ 8 1/2x11" 2-sided color Sequence of Play
- ✓ 8 1/2x11" 2-sided black/white Setup Sheet
- ✓ 16-page Rulebook (you're reading it)
- ✓ Two six-sided dice ("d6") - **not included**

[2.1] **Map Details:** Each Path on the Map is made of square "Lands". Most Lands begin the game empty. As time goes on, every Land will be filled with a Field Tile showing its Conversion value. The box furthest from Jerusalem is a round "Horde Homeland" named for its associated Barbarian Horde (6.8). Hordes may retreat into a Homeland, but the player can't move his own Tiles (e.g. the Roman Army) into a Homeland. *Those areas are too remote.*



**Exception:** A player may move a **Bishop**

or an **Apostle** into a Homeland, to create the useful **Archbishop** (7.1.1, 7.1.3).

**[2.1.1] “Random Setup”:** Several rules call for the “Random Setup” of a Tile. In such instances, select the Tile to be used and roll *two dice*: the first one for the Path, and the second one for the Land.

The **Path** roll is indicated with a die icon: A roll of  means Path A;  means Path B;  means Path C; etc.

The **Land** roll counts, box by box, out from **Jerusalem** (toward the circular Horde areas far from Jerusalem).

**Example:** You draw a random Heresy (6.5) that needs to be Randomly Setup. Roll 2 dice, the first is a  for the Path (so it's Path C) and the second a  for the Land. On Path C, count five Lands out from Jerusalem to arrive at Georgia, so you place the Heresy Tile in Georgia.

Unless the rule specifically says so, it is fine if more than one Randomly Setup Tiles (e.g. two Heresies) end up in the same square Land box. (In this case, it just means that Land is a wretched snakepit of Heresy.)

No Tile can ever be Randomly Setup in **Ireland**, since it's impossible to roll a 7. And even if Spain is bypassed under rule 6.9.1 ④, you still do count Spain when Random Setups occur on Path A.

**[2.2] Tiles:** Before playing the game, all 176 playing pieces or “Tiles” should be sorted by type and placed as shown on the “Counter Tray” card. *Having every Tile in its easy-to-find place will greatly shorten the amount of time it takes to set up and play the game.*

**[2.3] Wafer Tiles:** 32 tan Tiles, with big gold/silver “coin” circles on the back, are called “Wafers”. They regulate game activity, provide history and list which Paths see action this Turn (6.1).

**[2.4] Acts Track:** The “Acts Track” card divides the gameplay into 27 discrete Turns. Each Turn represents a given block of “real time”. Various historical events occur on each Turn; these are facts of history that the player will just need to deal with. Events marked with symbols have some game function; all

other events are historical trivia.

**[2.5] Cups:** You need **four** Dunnigan Ceramaceous Randomizers (i.e. opaque coffee cups) to draw random Wafers (from the first cup), Fields (second), Heresies (third) and Faiths (fourth).

**[2.6] *solidus*** (plural *solidi*, or *s* for short; the Byzantine currency) is “cash” in the game. Keep track of them on the track at the bottom of the map. They can be earned and spent to pay for various game functions (6.2 and 7.0).



**[2.7] Field Tiles:** The game includes 38 “Field” Tiles, showing a blazing sun on the tan “Plain” side and a church on the green “Christian” side. *These represent the populations of the various Lands shown on the map as square boxes, as they convert to Christianity during the game (or relapse to paganism)!*

When a Field Tile is placed on the map, it goes tan side up. The tan side always shows it is not Christian. If it is “converted” (7.2), it flips to its green side with an icon of a Christian Church.

**[2.8] Political Control of Lands:** *This rule is placed here for reference purposes. It links to several other rules in the game.*

Each Path may contain one or more political Tiles to indicate who owns the different Lands on that Path.

**[2.8.1] Jerusalem:** This is the heart of the world; it does not belong to any one Path. Jerusalem is always controlled by the Romans, until Turn 21 when it becomes Arab-controlled (5.2.5). No unit may move into Jerusalem, either by advancing or retreating (Hordes that reach Jerusalem just stop moving; other units forced to enter it are eliminated). **Exception:** Arab (Jihad, Abbasid, and Seljuk) units may retreat into Arab-occupied Jerusalem (and may then resume their advance from it).

**[2.8.2] Roman Empire:** The Empire’s geographic reach is shown by the five

“Roman Control Tiles” on the map. These read “Pagan Rome”, and then “Christian Rome” once Constantine takes over (Turn 10).

**Roman control** includes any Land that contains a Roman Control Tile, and also any Land between that Tile and Jerusalem (unless controlled by Arabs; 2.8.3). Roman Control Tiles also have a military role and are able to advance and retreat (4.2.1). See 4.2.5.3 for Rome’s special ability to fight Arabs “in the rear.”

**Example:** On Path A (Europe) the Pagan Rome Tile is located in the Britain box. This means that Britain, Belgium, Gaul, Spain, Milan and Rome are all part of the Roman Empire on that Path. Lands beyond the Pagan Rome Tile (in this case, only Ireland) are **outside** the Roman Empire.



**[2.8.3] Arabs:** Starting on Turn 21 (5.2.5), the **Islamic Caliphate** seizes Jerusalem and then grows by attacking you *from behind*. As its “Jihads” advance from Jerusalem on the six Paths, you lose control of Lands occupied by a Jihad Tile or



Lands found between such a Tile and the Jerusalem box. This section of the rules describes that procedure and its implications.



**[2.8.4] Hordes:** A Horde Tile indicates that the Horde controls the Land the Tile is in, and all other Lands between the Tile and the Horde’s own Homeland Box (2.1). *Hordes own the “outside” of the map; Romans and Arabs own the “inside”.*

**[2.8.5] Rulers:** A King or Tyrant controls only the Land his Tile is in. He has no effect on adjacent Lands (6.4).

**[2.8.6] Persian Empire:** Three Lands (Ctesiphon, Persia and Merv; Path D) form the Persian Empire and are marked with Tiles that defend themselves from Hordes and Arabs. They may also affect conversion in those Lands (7.2.3),

**[2.8.7] Nubia:** If Nubia is set up (5.2.4 ④), the Nubian Tile resembles a Roman Control Tile. Nubia controls the Land

the Tile is in, plus all other Lands in the direction of Jerusalem except for Lands occupied by Romans or Arabs. The Nubians can attack “forward” versus the Shewa or Himyar Clans; like Romans they also have “intrinsic defense” against Arabs (4.2.5.2) and attack “backward” against Arabs (4.2.5.3). Nubia is always a Christian empire.

[2.8.8] **Uncontrolled** Lands exist where Romans, Persians, Hordes, Arabs, or Rulers have no political or military presence. Missionaries *can* explore and convert Uncontrolled Lands (7.1, 7.2).



[2.9] **Pope Tiles:** The “Big City” (5.2.2) on each Path will eventually contain a Pope Tile, showing the leadership of Christianity on that Path. Each Pope Tile depicts a Catholic Papal mitre (hat).

## [3.0] Game Setup

“[God] has granted us His precious and magnificent promises, through which you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust.”

– Apostle Peter (1<sup>st</sup> century)

*Go to the Setup Sheet, choose a scenario to play, and follow those directions each time you set up the game to play.*

## [4.0] General Rules

“Unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain that build it.” This is not said to persuade us against building.”

– Origen (3<sup>rd</sup> century)

[4.1] **Sequence of Play:** Each turn consists of Phases that must be conducted **in order**. See the separate **Sequence of Play Card** for a full rundown of the steps to follow each Turn. Follow each step, using the linked rules when necessary.

[4.2] **Army Combat:** *This rule is placed here for convenient reference purposes. It is linked to by several other rules in the game. This same procedure is used for all*

*Combats in the game.*

The rules describe how **Army** units work. An Army is a Tile with a white **hexagon** (◻) on it.

[4.2.1] **Three Army Types:** An **Advance Force (AF)** has a white hexagon with a **number** in it; this number is its Combat Strength. An Advance Force can move 1 space at a time to invade a hostile Land, and it also defends itself if attacked.

A **Self Defense Force (SD)** has an empty white hexagon symbol (◻). SD units cannot move or attack; they defend themselves if attacked.

A **Vulnerable Force (VF)** has a white hexagon with a “V”. A VF unit defends itself if attacked, but is eliminated if defeated (4.2.3).

[4.2.2] **Invasions:** Hordes and Arabs can attack the player. This rule describes the procedure for such a conflict, and explains how some Hordes or Arabs will have multiple attacks against the player.

[4.2.3] **Combat Procedure:** Combat occurs when one Army invades a Land containing an Army hostile to it. Each **defending** Army in the Land (*there may be more than one!*) gets **one shot** to **repel** the invading Army. The defending Army rolls one die; **if the roll is higher than the Combat Strength of the invading Army, the invasion is repelled** and the invading Army returns to the Land it just came from. If that Army has any remaining attacks (this may be the case with Arabs and Hordes), it will spend its next attack to re-enter the defending Land; the defender rolls again to repel it.

If the failed attack was by a player’s own Army, the player may launch another attack, but at the normal cost of 1 \$ for each such attack (7.9).

If the attack is successful, the **defending** Army is **defeated**. The procedure for inflicting damage on a defeated unit varies depending on whether the unit was an Advance Force, a Self Defense unit, or a Vulnerable Force. In addition, retreating Roman units (and ones like

the Nubians that function like Romans in the game) have special rules for when they are forced to retreat, or when they conduct attacks.



## [5.0] History Phase

“My inclination is to avoid all assemblies of bishops, because I have never seen any Synod end well, or solve any evils. Instead, it usually makes them worse!”  
– St. Gregory of Nazianzus, Bishop of Constantinople (4<sup>th</sup> century)

[5.1] **A New Turn Begins:** The “Game Turn” Tile is in the current Turn box. A new generation of history has begun.

[5.2] **A New Era?** On the Acts Track, the seven Eras have distinctive colors:

- The Apostolic Age (5.2.1)
- The Pax Romana (5.2.2)
- The Age of Constantine (5.2.3)
- The Fall of Rome (5.2.4)
- The Rise of Islam (5.2.5)
- The Early Middle Ages (5.2.6)
- The Crusades (5.2.7)

When a new Era **begins** (i.e. when the Turn Tile enters the **first** Turn box of the new Era’s color), special rules apply. For the purpose of an example, here is how one of those Eras works:

[5.2.2] ■ **The Pax Romana:** On Turn 3, flip all red Apostle Tiles to their “Relics” sides. On each Relic, place the **Bishop** unit that pertains to that Path.

*This shows that Jesus’ Apostles have died, and their place in the church hierarchy has been taken by bishops, a process called Apostolic Succession. Each Church in the game thus traces its line of authority back, via the Apostles, to Jesus Christ himself. This ‘guarantee’ of legal authority was only called into question 1,500 years later during the Reformation.*

Now deploy all six **Pope Tiles**, each in the Big City of the Pope's printed Path (Path A Pope in Rome, Path B Patriarch in Constantinople, etc.). If the Land where the Pope is placed has no Field Tile in it (at all), also pick a Heresy Tile out of the Heresy Cup and put it on top of the new Pope. *This is to punish you for not exploring the Land. If the Heresy drawn is an Ebionite, he goes into the Land even if there are no Jews in that Land, ignoring rule 6.5.2.*

*Deploying a Pope does not convert the Field Tile in a Big City to Christianity; it only means some sort of church group is set up there, a small flock whose local bishop has a bright future. It is no accident that the great bishops were in the big cities (Rome, Alexandria, etc.); the Council of Chalcedon made this official, to Rome's annoyance, in 451. One game fudge is the Armenian Catholicos: his seat, the town of Vagharshapat, was only a Big City in a religious sense. The patriarchate on Path C should be Antioch, but after 431 it broke into bickering, irreconcilable factions.*

**Various other rules, similar to those above, are applied when each new Era begins.**



**[5.3] Hide a Heresy:** If any Heresies (with the "☼" symbol) are in the current Turn box, drop them into the Heresy Cup now.



**[5.4] Great Theologian:** If the "☼" sign occurs in the current Turn Box, place the Great Theologian Tile in his box on the Great Theologians Display. You'll use him later this Turn (7.7).

**[5.5] Ecumenical Council:** A "✚" in the current Turn Box means a Church-wide bishops' council argues over doctrine.

This rule semi-randomly determines the religious trajectory of each Path on the map, and then determines what the official church of the Empire does in reaction to that Path.



**Example:** It is Turn 12. A "✚" symbol

shows that the "First Council of Constantinople" is occurring. Roll a die to select a random Path. You roll a "3" for Path F, but that Path was already marked with the "Donatist" Faith Tile. Roll again: it's a "2", which is Path E. This Path has no Faith Tile, so you draw a random Faith Tile from the cup: the "Orthodox" Tile with a "✚" is drawn and put on the "Egyptian Faith" label (west of "Alodia") on Path E. Path E's Christians are now officially Orthodox.

Once a Path is marked with its Faith, a second die must be rolled to determine the wider Church's attitude toward the Christians of that Path. This is also handled with a die roll. It will either keep the Path "in communion" with the player, or else the Path will go off into "schism". If a Path is in Schism, its Christians are harder to protect from Apostasy (8.3), and the local Pope won't share his income with you (6.2).

**[5.5.1] Ecumenical Council with All Paths Filled:** If an Ecumenical Council occurs on a Turn when Faith Tiles have already been placed on all six Paths, the player has the option to do nothing (*the bishops voice support for love and peace*).

Or, if the Emperor is Christian (not Heretical), the player can choose to try to **reconcile** a Path in Schism (5.5). This is a long-term project, based on a die roll and *the number of Melkites on green Christian Field Tiles free from Heresy on that Path*.

The attempt can either succeed or fail.

**[5.6] Justinian:** On Turn 17 (511-554 AD) the Byzantine Emperor Justinian revives the Roman Empire. This has two effects:

① This Turn (only), all Hordes stop at the Roman border. Ignore any Horde move that would move a Horde Tile into a Roman Controlled Land.

② Place a Roman Control Marker in Rome (Path A; a Horde in Rome retreats to Milan; a Ruler there is eliminated). *Rome is back in the Roman Empire!*

**[5.7] Charlemagne:** On Turn 25, check the Saxon Horde (7.6). If the Saxons are Christian, the **Holy Roman Empire** sets up. But if the Saxons are still Arian, replace them with the **Unholy Arian**

Empire Tile instead.



**You really, really want to be able to set up the Holy Roman Empire.** It makes your life a lot easier in Western Europe.



**If the Unholy Arian Empire is set up instead, it operates as an ordinary Horde, just stronger and more of a pain for you.**

*Word of advice: Convert the Saxons.*

**[5.8] Shewa Sultanate:** On Turn 26, the "Himyar Clans" Tile on Path E flips over to its Muslim "Shewa" side, which is intolerant (no ●●●) and harder to repel.

**[5.9] Turkish Decision:** The Turks begin the game Pagan. On Turn 26 the player *must* roll for Turkish Conversion. Roll 2 dice and pick the **lower** roll. On Path D, count that many Lands from Jerusalem. If the resulting Land is Islam-ruled, the Turks convert to Islam. If the Land is *not Islam-ruled, and is Christian*, the Turks convert to Christianity. And if the Land is *not Islam-ruled and not Christian*, the Turks become Manichees. **Find the new "Turk" Tile and put it on the map (replace or flip the old Turk).**

## [6.0] Secular Phase

"Religion must be defended not by putting to death, but by dying."  
– Lactantius (4<sup>th</sup> century)

**[6.1] Draw a Wafer:** The player draws one random Wafer from the Wafer Cup. Place it "coin" side up in the Active Wafer box on the map.

**[6.2] Earn solidi:** "\$" points are the 'cash' you use in the game to judge the value of actions and moves. The current Turn's Wafer has a 'coin' with a number that indicates how many \$ points that you earn immediately.

In addition, you earn **one** additional \$ each Turn for each Path containing **both three Christian (green side up) Lands**

and a Pope in communion with you.

**Example:** It is Turn 20. The Wafer has a gold coin with a “3” on it, which earns you 3 \$olidi. You survey all your Lands: there are 3 Paths (A, C, and E) which have both 3 Christian Lands and Popes in communion with you. Your income for this Turn is thus 6 \$ (3+1+1+1). Move the \$ marker up 6.

The \$olidus Tile at the bottom of the map keeps track of your available \$. Move it to the right by the number of \$ just earned. *Ignore any \$ earned that would put your total treasury above 10.*

**[6.3] Roman Policy:** If the active Wafer has a red ● on its “coin” side, flip the Roman Policy Tile to “Lex Romana” (if Rome is Pagan) or “Heretical Emperor” (if Rome is Christian). Whatever the Roman Policy is, follow it *now*:

**[6.3.1] Pax Romana:** For 1 \$, you may return any one Plain Field Tile under Roman rule to the Field Cup, and then randomly draw a Field Tile to replace it on the map. You’re stuck with the new Tile even if it’s ‘worse’.

**[6.3.2] Lex Romana:** *Caesar orders Christians to the lions!* This allows you to conduct a free Conversion attempt (7.2), depending on the location.

**[6.3.3] Christian Emperor:** You have the option of removing Heresy Tiles in any Roman-controlled Land(s), by increasing the Dark Ages level by +1 for each Heresy Tile so removed. **Beware if it goes over 7 (8.1)!**

**[6.3.4] Heretical Emperor:** For the rest of the Turn, you may **only** move or use Bishops or Archbishops who are **outside of Roman Empire control**.

**[6.4] “Rulers”:** If the current Wafer has a “☞” symbol, a powerful Ruler may set himself up on the map. Roll two dice to Randomly Setup (2.1.1) that Ruler. A new Ruler **removes** any old Ruler on his Path. If he appears in a Land controlled by a Horde, place the Ruler and then retreat the Horde to the next Land “out”.

**Example:** On Path F, the Vandal is in Sufetula. A Ruler appears in Numidia; the Vandal is relocated to Tingitana.

If the attempt succeeds, place the Path’s King/Tyrant Tile in the selected Land, which becomes the ‘Seat’ of the Ruler.

(There are some additional rules that will modify the preceding paragraph.)

**[6.4.1] Ruler Religion:** Now determine whether the new Ruler is a Christian “King” or a pagan “Tyrant”. This is done by a die roll, using the religious identity of the Ruler’s Seat and adjacent **square** Land boxes. A Land with no Field Tile is always considered Pagan, as is a Land with a tan “sun” Field Tile. A Land with a green Christian Field Tile is Christian (unless Heresy is present).

Consult the Ruler Religion Table on the Counter Tray sheet. The religious posture of his Seat, and of surrounding Lands, plus a die roll, determines whether the Ruler is a Christian “King” or a pagan “Tyrant.”

**[6.5] Heresy Tile Draw:** If the active Wafer has a “☠” Heresy symbol, there is an outbreak of Heresy that can foil or obstruct the expansion of Christianity.

In this case, draw one random Heresy Tile from the Heresy cup, and Randomly Setup that Tile on the map (2.1.1).

**[6.5.1] Effect of Heresy:** A Land with a Heresy Tile **never counts as Christian for any game purpose** even if it contains a green Christian Field Tile; and it will force that Christian Tile into Apostasy at the end of the Turn if not cured (8.3)!

**[6.5.2] Ebionite Exception:** If the Heresy drawn is an “Ebionite”, it is **not randomly placed**. The player selects one “Jews” Field Tile on the map (Christian if possible; otherwise Plain) and places the Ebionite on that Tile. It is a normal Heresy for all other purposes.

*The Ebionites were a sect of early Jewish Christians who kept kosher while also worshiping Jesus as the Jewish Messiah. Moderate ones were called Nazarenes, and their stance was close to that of the Apostles; but Rabbinic Jews and Gentile Christians both considered them heretics.*

**[6.6] Resolve Epidemic:** If the active Wafer has an “EP” sign, then an Epidemic (smallpox or measles) breaks out. The player may choose either to build a Hospital at no cost in a green Christian Land that has no Infrastructure on its Path (7.3); or to make one Conversion attempt (7.2) on any Path, free of charge.

**[6.7] Sudden Jihads:** When a Wafer with a C sign is drawn, **all** Jihad Tiles, **all** Abbasid Tiles, and (if in the game – 5.9) the **Seljuks**, move forward one space (do Combat if needed, 4.2.3). *Don’t move an Abbasid Tile in Thebes with a Baqt on it (6.9.2).* This only affects Paths where there are such Tiles to move.



**[6.8] Move Hordes:** A Wafer with cryptic alphanumeric instructions on it (e.g. “A2, D2, E2”) is instructing you to move three Horde armies against the civilized world. The instructions are to be read in the same order every time: Top Right, Bottom Left, Bottom Right.

The instruction indicates a Path (A, B, C, D, E, or F) and a number of “moves” for the Horde on that Path between 1 and 3.

**Example:** The code “A2” means the Horde on Path A (the Saxons) makes two moves.

When a Horde “moves”, it moves away from its Homeland into the next Land on the road to Jerusalem. (*Hordes may not enter Jerusalem itself.*) If there are no Armies in the Land moved into, the Horde occupies that Land. If there **are** Armies there, Combat occurs (4.2.3).

If a Horde has more than one move, it keeps moving until it has no moves left. If forced by Combat to retreat, a Horde uses its next remaining move (if any) to re-enter the Land it was beaten in, and tries again to conquer that Land.

**[6.8.1] Allied Hordes:** If a Horde’s colored banner has a ☩ or ☆ symbol on it, then the Horde is “Allied” to the player. **The player may “countermand” any Wafer’s order to any Allied Horde.**

**Example:** On Path C, the Khazars in Alania are on their “Jewish” side, so they’re Allied. A Christian King is in Sarir,

and the Roman Empire controls Antioch. A Wafer is drawn, ordering the Horde on Path C to move 2 Lands. Georgia is 'neutral' territory and it is to the player's advantage to put Georgia under a pro-Christian government. So the player lets the Khazars advance into Georgia, expending 1 move. Now, what about Sarir? Since Sarir is already Christian, the player chooses to stop the Khazars in Georgia. The Khazars' move into Sarir is countermanded. If the player has some strategic reason to destroy the Kingdom of Sarir, for instance if Sarir is Pagan, he is of course free to let the Khazars sack Sarir.

**[6.9] Move Jihads:** On four specific Turns – 21, 22, 23 and 24 – the Muslim Caliphate attacks you from the rear, by sending Jihad Tiles out from Arab Occupied Jerusalem (5.2.5). Each Jihad Tile has its Path letter. During the Muslim Jihad Steps of the Secular Phase, you conduct **three** identical Jihad Steps.

Each one involves die rolls to determine (a) which Path the Jihad attacks during this Step, and (b) how strong the Jihad's attack on that Path is.

**[6.9.1] Special Muslim Conquests:** Five Lands are marked with a pair of boxes (■ ■) to indicate that a "Special Muslim Conquest" occurs when an Arab Tile **conquers** (not enters) that Land. (An Abbasid moving as a result of Rule 6.7 counts as an Arab for this rule.) The rules explain each instance of this special effect.

**[6.9.2] Baqt:** This rule explains a special peace treaty between the Arabs and Nubia which affects Path E.

**[6.10] Move Seljuks:** If the Seljuks are in the game, they now attack on Path B according to a procedure described in the rules.

## [7.0] Religious Phase

"We are philosophers – not in words, but in deeds! We do not speak great things; we live them!"  
– Cyprian (3<sup>rd</sup> century)

**Dear Christendom:**  
The forces of heresy, fate, barbarism, and Islam have assailed you on all sides. But now it is your chance to direct

**the Church, alongside its often seedy imperial and royal allies, to heal the world!**  
*Sincerely, Your Bishop*

Initiative now passes back to you. Here you will conduct Actions by spending \$ (like spending cash). You can do **as many** Rule 7 Actions as you want, as often as you want, and **in any order** that you want, **as long as you can afford them.** *The Italians haven't invented banking yet, so you can't deficit spend.*



**[7.1] Missionary Moves:** Each Path has **one** individual "Missionary". When the game starts, these are the **Apostles**, who all start in Jerusalem. Soon, the Apostles will be succeeded by **Bishops**; finally, Bishops get promoted to **Archbishops**.

In the early game, Missionaries are sent out mostly to Discover (see 7.1.4), but they can also convert the Lands they have Discovered (7.2), or you can use them to end Heresies on their Path (7.5).

**[7.1.1] Apostles** begin in Jerusalem and can move "out", one Land at a time, on their Path from Jerusalem to the Horde Homeland. (Peter is marked "A", so he moves only on Path A.) Apostles can only move "out". **To move an Apostle one Land, it costs 1 \$.**

You can move an Apostle **for free**, but this risks **martyrdom** on each move. The rule describes this procedure.

**[7.1.2] Bishops:** It costs 1 \$ to move a Bishop one Land; like an Apostle, he can only move forward on his mission of discovery. If a Bishop enters a Horde Homeland, he is 'promoted': Flip him to his "Archbishop" side (and see 7.1.3). *See 7.1.2.1 if a Bishop "Discovers" Women.*

**[7.1.2.1] Bishops and Women:** When a Bishop "Discovers" (places) a Field Tile with "Women" (♥) on it, the Bishop gets **flustered** and retreats to the Land he entered from. *He can pay to re-enter the Women Land; he only gets flustered by*

*Women he wasn't expecting to find.* In Big Cities (7.1.4.1), you **choose** the Tile, so ignore this penalty there.

**[7.1.3] Archbishops:** It costs 1 \$ to "fly" an Archbishop to **any** Land on his Path. He can help with Conversion (7.2) and ending Heresy (7.5).

**[7.1.4] Discovery:** A square Land with no Field Tile (2.7) is "undiscovered". **The moment** a Missionary enters an Undiscovered Land, it gets "discovered": Draw one random Field Tile from the Field Cup, and place it, **Plain side up**, in the newly-discovered Land. *Once a Field Tile is placed in a Land, it can never be removed. (Exception: Pax Romana, 6.3.1.) But its status can flip back and forth between Plain and Christian based on a variety of events and actions.*

**[7.1.4.1] Big City Discovery:** If the Land being discovered contains a Big City icon (e.g. Carthage), a special procedure is followed.

**[7.2] Conversion:** At the end of the day, this is what the game is all about!

*"Conversion" in the game is a relative thing. It means setting up a viable Christian community in an area. In real life, "converting" Merv meant planting successful parishes in an area dominated by other faiths; while "converting" (say) Britain meant that in a few centuries 100% of the population was Christian, under a Christian king. These are clearly two different things, but for game purposes they are the same.*

Each Field Tile has a "Value" number on it (in a white oval). The higher the Value the harder it is to convert (but the more it's worth at the end of the game when you're calculating your level of victory).

To convert a Field, look at its Value, pay 1 \$, and then roll one die. If the die roll is higher than the Field's Value, the Field is converted to Christianity: flip it to its green "Church" side.

**Example:** You're making an effort to bring the Gospel to far-off Mongolia at the end of Path D. The locals are a "2" Value ascetic population. So you pay 1 \$ and roll a [2]. Since

that's higher than the 2, you succeed. Flip the Field Tile in Mongolia from its Plain side to its green Christian side.

Various modifications to the die roll are made depending on friendly units lending assistance to the Conversion attempt.

[7.2.1] **“Free” Conversions:** Special Conversion attempts can be undertaken ‘free of charge’ (at no \$ cost).

[7.2.1.1] **Bible:** If a given Path has a Bible (in the Bible Translations box) in its language (7.4), you can flip that Bible each Turn to its “Used” side to make **one** Conversion try on its Path, at no charge.



You can use the Greek Bible on Path B (only) to make one ‘free’ attempt at Conversion on that Path. With the Latin Bible, you have a choice to use it on Path A or on Path F, since both Paths speak Latin; but only on one Path per Turn.

[7.2.1.2] **Cult of Isis:** If a discovered Field contains a “Cult of Isis” Tile, you can make one free Conversion attempt in that Land at any time in the Religious Phase. Discard the Isis Tile when used.

[7.2.1.3] **James the Just** is the Apostle that can't leave Jerusalem. But James may, free of charge, make as many Conversion (7.2) and End Heresy (7.5) rolls as you wish, but only for **tan “Jews” Tiles next to Jerusalem**. Keep rolling these as often as you want, until he **fails**. When he fails, flip him to his “Relics” side. *He has been martyred.*



*The Brother of Jesus, James was one of the most fascinating figures in the early Church and was far more important than subsequent tradition gives him credit for. Acts 15 and Galatians 1-2 witness to his almost ‘papal’ leadership. His “Vulcan” hand is actually a Jewish blessing, which (Jewish) Leonard Nimoy snuck into Star Trek! Painter’s book in the bibliography is now the definitive source on James.*

[7.2.2] **Heresy Block:** Conversion to Christianity is blocked (not allowed) in a Land containing a Heresy Tile (marked

with a blue sun ☀). All Heresy Tiles in a Land must be eliminated (7.5) before the Field in that Land can be converted.

[7.2.3] **Persian Conversion:** Persian Empire Tiles modify Conversion rolls in their Lands. The “+1” Tile adds +1 to the Conversion roll, while the “-1” Tile subtracts -1 from the Conversion roll.



[7.3] **Build Infrastructure:** You can spend \$ to build “Infrastructure” that improves the lives of both converts and pagans, and so strengthens the Church. These are **Hospitals, Monasteries and Universities**. Each one has 2 identical Tiles. *Only one Infrastructure can ever be built on a single Path, so a given Path can only ever have one Infrastructure on it!*

- **Hospitals** have a **military** role, fixing up soldiers and civilians to help defend Lands under attack. They function as SD units (4.2.1).

- **Monasteries** allow you to “**bank**” \$ for future Turns (8.6).

- **Universities** are bastions of Christian learning that promote religious freedom and prevent **Apostasy** (8.3).

It costs 6 \$ to build one Infrastructure. However, the cost is cut in half (3 \$) if the Infrastructure is built in a location where it has local support, as marked by small letters on certain **Christian** Field Tiles explained in the rules.

**Example:** On Path E, there is a green Scholars Tile in Ethiopia. So it costs 3 \$ to build the University of Ethiopia.

[7.4] **The Bible:** Each Path has its own “language” listed next to its “Faith”. (On Path A, the Faith Name is “ROMAN FAITH” and the language is “LATIN”). The language can be Latin, Greek, Armenian, Syriac, or Coptic. **Paths A and F both speak Latin.**

[7.4.1] **Translation:** This allows you to publish the Bible in a new language, as a way of witnessing to the public. To do this costs 6 \$, but every pair of Christian (green) Field Tiles speaking that language earns you a -1 \$ discount on the

Translation effort.

**Example:** It's Turn 4 and you want to make a big push up Path E. You've already converted Alexandria and Thebes, so you have two Christian Lands on Path E. This earns you a 1 \$ discount on a Coptic Bible, so you pay 5 \$ (not 6 \$) and place the new Coptic Bible in the Bible Translations Box.

Place the new Bible in the brown “BIBLE TRANSLATIONS” box on the map.

**Note: You must first publish the Bible in Greek. Only then can you publish it in other languages.**

*At game start, the New Testament is a bunch of letters and books circulating in Christian circles. These documents were all in Greek, which is why your first act of “translation” is Greek – what this really does is assemble those documents into a single collection or “Canon”. (Although this is a truly criminal oversimplification of what took place in the early Church.) But once you have the Greek Bible, you can translate it into other languages.*

[7.4.2] **Using the Bible:** Bibles give you a “free” shot at Conversion (7.2.1.1), or a “free” try at curing Heresy (7.5). Or you can place a face-up Bible Tile on any Land of its Path, and protect that Land from Apostasy later in the Turn (8.3).

[7.5] **End a Heresy:** You can try to “end” (remove) a Heresy (☀) Tile in a Land. You do this with a die roll, along with the expenditure of \$. The roll can be modified by various units and the political situation.

You can make the same die roll at no cost if you flip a Bible to do it (7.4.2).

Put an “ended” Heresy Tile on the Counter Tray on its “Melkite” side (7.15).

[7.6] **Convert ● Hordes:** Saxon, Bulgar and Khazar Hordes are marked with a ● as a reminder that the player can try to convert them to Allied status. *(Other Hordes may change their identity based on random events instead.)*

If the Saxon Horde is “Arian”, or the Bulgar or Khazar Horde is “Pagan”, the player can try to convert that Horde. Use

the same rule for all these Hordes; try this as often as you can afford it.

A procedure is followed which depends on the size of the Horde's 'empire', and the number of Christian Lands ruled by that Horde. If the attempt succeeds; flip the Horde to its "Allied" side, which has a ✚ or ✠ symbol on its banner (6.8.1).

**Example:** The Bulgars are bearing down on Constantinople, and control both Kiev and Danube Valley. Danube Valley is Christian, but Kiev is Pagan. Since the Bulgars control three Lands, it costs 3\$ to make the Conversion attempt; but since there is only one Christian Land under Bulgar control, you only have a 1/6 chance to convert the Bulgars. You need to roll a . Roll the die: You miraculously roll a , and the Bulgars flip to their Christian side and become your ally!

[7.7] **Use the Theologian:** If the current Turn placed a Great Theologian (5.4), his biography box tells some interesting facts about him: but for game purposes just note the boxed letters, e.g. **A|B**. These are the two Paths this Theologian may work on. A Theologian can work on **one** of his two Paths, **but not both**.

You can use the Theologian on **one** of three distinct types of Mission. **If the Dark Ages Tile is in the 7 box or higher, you may only use the Theologian on a mission of Reconciliation (7.7.3).**

[7.7.1] **Evangelism:** Pick a Path for the Theologian. He may then, free of charge, make as many Conversion (7.2) and End Heresy (7.5) rolls as you wish on that Path. Keep rolling these as often as you want, until he **fails**. If he fails, put him in the Counter Tray and move the Dark Ages Tile one space to the right.

[7.7.2] **Revivalism:** You may place the Theologian on one Land on his chosen Path. This Land is protected, for the rest of the Turn, from any Apostasy (8.3), no matter what its cause (**except Heresy**).

[7.7.3] **Reconciliation:** You can send a Theologian straight back to the Counter Tray to reduce the Dark Ages level by -1.

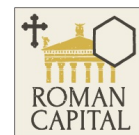
[7.8] **Persecute!** A Christian ruler can 'heal divisions within the Church' by sending the army to torture Christians with unorthodox opinions. This is a

player choice, involving \$, but it is always successful (no die roll).

[7.9] **Roman Offensives:** Now you can launch Offensives using Romans, Nubia, and the HRE. The rule here explains the procedure and various exceptions to the rules.

[7.10] **Convert Tyrants:** If a Tyrant's Seat is Christian, or is adjacent to any Christian Land, the player can try to convert that Tyrant to Christianity. The rule explains the procedure.

[7.11] **Deal in Relics:** If a Relics Tile (5.2.2) is in Jerusalem, or in a green Christian Land, you **control** that Relic. If so, you can cash it in for 1 \$ (on Turns 10-24) or for 2 \$ (on Turn 25 or later, *once medieval piety drives up the price*). Discard the Relics and boost your \$ total by that much.



[7.12] **Move the Roman Capital:** If the "Christian Emperor" unit is on the map, the player can move the Roman Capital Tile **to** any Big City under Roman rule at this time. It costs 1 \$ to move the Capital **from** a friendly-controlled Land, and 2 \$ to move it **from** a hostile Land. *Its value is as an SD unit.*



[7.13] **Knights/Peace Move:** There are 3 "Knight" Tiles. On the back, they have a "Pray for Peace" icon. These units all function as "V" Armies (4.2.1). They can never be used to attack, only to defend.

The rules explain how these units are moved, deployed, and used.

[7.14] **Spanish Reconquista:** On Turn 25, 26, or 27 (*only once per game*) you can attempt the "Reconquista" of Spain if the **Arab-Occupied** Tile is there and the Field Tile in Spain is Christian (with no Heresy present).

Count the number of **Arian, Abbasid, and Tyrant** controlled Lands (including

the Horde Homeland) on Path A and pay that number in \$. Roll 2 dice; if the total is equal to or less than the number of Christian (green) Tiles on Path A, you have succeeded: Flip the Arab-Occupied Tile to its "Reconquista!" side. Spain is now Christian-controlled (and you can ignore the Gaul-Milan Shortcut).



[7.15] **Build Melkites:** You can spend 1 \$ to place a **Melkite** on any Christian (green) Land on a Path whose Pope is in Schism (5.5; see 5.5.1 for Melkites' role in later Ecumenical Councils).

*Through bribery, calls to ethnic pride or Roman patriotism, and cogent religious argument, the great Orthodox/Catholic Church built loyal Christian communities to undermine schismatic Popes. The Syriac word **malkoyo** ("Royal") described such groups; in Greek it became "Melkite". (The word "Uniate" was later used in the Latin West.)*

## [8.0] End of Turn Phase

"Whoever he may be, and whatever he may be, he who is not in the Church of Christ is not a Christian."  
- Cyprian (3<sup>rd</sup> century)

[8.1] **Dark Ages Collapse:** If the "Dark Ages" Tile is in the "7" box (or higher), the game ends at once and you lose.

[8.2] **Persian Religion:** The heartland of the Zoroastrian faith (7.2.3) is marked with flame icons around Persia. If all three Lands are now under **Abbasid** rule, flip the "Persia Zoroastrian" Tile to its Muslim side, unless you pay 5 \$ to stop this. If it flips, you lose Religious Freedom in those three Lands (8.3.1).

[8.3] **Christian Apostasy:** Check **every** green Christian Field Tile on the map. If it is (1) controlled by a non-Christian Horde, (2) controlled by the Abbasid Caliphate, (3) controlled by a Tyrant, or (4) occupied by a Heresy (☼) Tile, then the Field is in danger of **Apostasy!**

An endangered Field Tile must go into



Apostasy (flip to its Plain side) at this point in the Turn unless its Apostasy is **prevented** (8.3.1, 8.3.2).

**[8.3.1] Religious Freedom:** A Tile with three purple bezants (●●●) grants Religious Freedom to the Land it's in, no matter who controls it. A Horde with bezants grants Religious Freedom to all its controlled Lands. If the Persians are Zoroastrian, Religious Freedom also applies to all three "flame" Lands (8.2). **No Field Tile in such a Land is in danger of Apostasy, unless Heresy (☼) is there; Heresy always tops Religious Freedom.**

In addition, a Bible (7.4.2) or Theologian (7.7.2) in a Land also prevents Apostasy in that Land, unless Heresy (☼) is there.

**[8.3.2] Prevent Apostasy:** In each Land with no Heresy Tile, Apostasy can be prevented by paying \$ to sustain the Christians. The cost **per Land** depends on the Path the Field is on; a decision must be made on each Land separately:

- 1 \$ if its Path is in communion.
- 2 \$ if its Path has a **Schism** Tile.
- 3 \$ if its Path has a **Submit** Tile.

**[8.4] Turn 27 – The Crusades! If it is not the end of Turn 27, skip this and move on to Rule 8.5.**

But if it **is** the end of Turn 27, then the Pope of Rome has called a general Crusade to rid the Holy Land of Muslim invaders! Move the Game Turn marker to the "Age of the Crusades" box. The game now ends in a general war of Christian versus Muslim; its outcome depends on the overall strength of Christian civilization that you have built.

**YOU CALCULATE YOUR VICTORY POINTS TOTAL, AND ARRIVE AT A LEVEL OF VICTORY (OR DEFEAT) WHICH IS DESCRIBED IN THE RULES AT THIS POINT. IF IT WAS NOT TURN 27, THE GAME CONTINUES:**

**[8.5] Resets:** The Turn draws to a close:  
✘ Flip the "Lex Romana" Tile to "Pax", or flip "Heretical Emperor" to "Christian".  
✘ Return the Theologian to the Counter Tray.  
✘ Flip all Bibles face up and return them

to the Bible Translations box.

**[8.6] Lose or Bank Money:** All unspent 'money' (\$) on the solidus Track is now lost; reduce the \$ total to zero. However, if there are Monastery Tiles on the map (7.3), you can save 1 \$ on the \$ Track for each Monastery Tile on the map (maximum: 2 \$).

**[8.7] The Turn is Over:** Go back to 5.1 and start the next Turn by moving the "Game Turn" Tile to the next Turn box!



## [9.0] Notes & Credits

"It is no hindrance to the knowledge of God to be educated. Rather, it is a help."  
– Origen (3<sup>rd</sup> century)

### [9.1] DESIGNER'S NOTES

The rulebook contains at this point a brief essay about the designer's approach to Christian history and how that informed the game itself.

### [9.2] GAME CREDITS

**Design:** R. Ben Madison, M.A.

**Artwork and "Mission" Font:** Jonathan Carnehl

**Playtesting and Development:** Samuel Argento, Steve Carey, Fr. Adam Carnehl, Wes Erni, Mark Giordano, Fr. Barry Kendall, Eric Overkamp. Special thanks to Stefan Nellen and Charles Dudgeon for their development work.

**Proofreading:** The indispensable Ian Wakeham

**Theological Consultant:** Deacon Dave Luhrssen

**Photography:** R. Ben Madison and Amy Durnford

### [9.3] BIBLIOGRAPHY

*A list of several historical books follows, all of which influenced the design of the game.*

Saints be praised! Advice and support for this game are available on our Board Game Geek page:

<https://boardgamegeek.com/boardgame/269489/mission-early-christianity-crucifixion-crusades>