

Kingdom of Heaven – King Baldwin IV to Balian of Ibelin – Saladin



King Baldwin IV:

Come forward. I am glad to meet Godfrey's son.

He was one of my greatest teachers.

He was there when, playing with the other boys, my arm was cut.

And it was he, not my father's physicians, who noticed I felt no pain.

He wept when he gave my father the news that I am a leper.

The Saracens say that this disease is God's vengeance against the vanity of our kingdom.

As wretched as I am, these Arabs believe that the chastisement that awaits me in hell is far more severe and lasting.

If that's true, I call it unfair.

Come. Sit.

Do you play?

Balian of Ibelin:

No.

King Baldwin IV:

The whole world is in chess.

Any move can be the death of you.

Do anything except remain where you started, and you can't be sure of your end.

Were you sure of your end once?

Balian of Ibelin:

I was.

King Baldwin IV:

What was it?

Balian of Ibelin:

To be buried 100 yards from where I was born.

King Baldwin IV:

And now?

Balian of Ibelin:

Now I sit in Jerusalem, and look upon a king.

King Baldwin IV:

H'm...

When I was 16, I won a great victory.

I felt in that moment I would live to be 100. Now I know I shall not see 30.

None of us know our end, really.

Or what hand will guide us there.

A king may move a man.

A father may claim a son.

That man can also move himself, and only then does that man truly begin his own game.

Remember, howsoever you are played, or by whom, your soul is in your keeping alone.

Even though those who presume to play you be kings or men of power.



When you stand before God, you cannot say, "But I was told by others to do thus", or that virtue "was not convenient at the time".

This will not suffice.

Remember that.

Balian of Ibelin:

I will.

King Baldwin IV:

Do you know what this is?

Balian of Ibelin:

The fortification.

King Baldwin IV:

What do you think of it?

You disapprove.

How would you improve it?

Balian of Ibelin:

A cross. Or better, a star. Like this. That way, no part may be approached without being exposed to fire from another part.

King Baldwin IV:

Yes, I like this.

Your walls are more difficult to address.

Very good. You will go to your father's house at Ibelin, your house now, and from there you will protect the pilgrim road.

Safeguard, in particular, the Jews and the Muslims.

All are welcome in Jerusalem, not only because it's expedient, but because it is right.

Protect the helpless, and then maybe one day when I am helpless you will come and protect me.

/Kingdom of Heaven' Director's Cut 01:01:24 to 01:04:45/



Saladin:

How many battles did God win for the Muslims before I came?

That is, before God determined that I should come.

/Kingdom of Heaven' Director's Cut 01:38:03 to 01:38:13/

Ghassan Massoud (Arabic: **مسعود غسان**) (born September 20, 1958) is a Syrian actor and filmmaker. He is known in the West for playing the role of Saladin in Ridley Scott's 2005 film *Kingdom of Heaven*.

/Ghassan Massoud - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia/



TRIVIA

Graduated from the High Institution of Theatrical Arts in Syria. He has been a Professor of Theatrical Arts in this institution for ten years. Co-Founder of the Arab-African Center for Theatrical Research based in Tunisia. Is a drama professor at the Damascus Music and Drama School. Shuns most big-budget productions before he cares more about the quality of the film and acting. He and his wife have two children: a boy, 13, and a girl, 10 (2005). Both of them are dancers. He studied in Finland and Germany before returning to his hometown of Damascus, where he lives now.

/Ghassan Massoud on IMDb: Movies, TV, Celebs, and more.../

WHEN WORLDS COLLIDE

I wanted people to see events from the Muslims' point of view as well, and the way to do that was to develop strong, multidimensional characters on that side. Especially Saladin, as played by Ghassan Massoud, a wonderful Syrian actor. I felt it was important to use Muslim actors to play Muslim characters. You see Saladin in private moments; you see his leadership, how he tries to keep the peace. He was under pressure from his people, and on the other side there was the radical faction of the Templars and other knights – what we might call the right wing or Christian fundamentalists of their day. He is a man with a strong sense of his destiny.

/Interview: Ridley Scott The Guardian(<http://www.guardian.co.uk/theguardian>), Friday April 29 2005/

IN ARABIC WITH (GAZELLE KHOURY)

Ghassan Massoud: ... Edward Norton is a genius actor and I am very impressed by him, and no one can underestimate his importance even if he was wearing a mask...

Gazelle Khoury: His voice was very important...

Ghassan Massoud: His voice and his body movement as when he hit (Renald) ... such a great performance.

/Ghassan Massoud Official Website - <http://ghassanmassoud.com/en/index.php/>

A MODERN SALADIN SPEAKS HIS MIND

Actor Ghassan Massoud has appeared in numerous films in his native Syria, including "The Chant of Rain." He sat down with Rhonda Roumani, Beliefnet's former Islam editor now based in Damascus, to discuss his "Kingdom of Heaven" role as Saladin--a revered 12th-century Muslim leader who fought Christian crusaders.

How did you prepare for the role of Saladin?

I read hundreds and hundred of pages on Saladin to prepare for the role. And I read many historians' viewpoints. This all helped me to get a very clear image in my mind of what Saladin was about – his positive and negative attributes. Then, to get into the Saladin mood, I forgot about everything that I read, because in acting, everything that you read has to live in your mind. [Saladin] had to cleanse his mind for battles and had to decide how to make terms with the enemy, how to discuss matters with them, how to control his troops around the Arab world. I think he must have been cool, not nervous. And a good thinker. That's how I portrayed him. Everything in Saladin's own life is also my philosophy. My culture is that of Saladin. He has been a role model for us since our youth. Saladin was an example of the Muslim hero who returned to Arabs and Muslims their pride and their dignity. He is an example for our people, our leaders, our society. The sensitive point here is about Jerusalem. He was able to return Jerusalem to Arab Muslims and Christians because Jerusalem has [holy sites] for Muslims and Christians. If we are to benefit from Saladin's example, we have to create a dialogue between these civilizations. He used to respect his enemy, and I think many of the crusader leaders respected Saladin. Hundreds of European knights, soldiers, troops, and cavalries respected him as a noble enemy.

Who is today's Saladin?

You cannot compare this time to the time of Saladin. In the time of Saladin, the majority of the region [was] under Saladin. There were not countries. Now, who is the great Arab leader thinks or leads the ummah [community]? We don't have one. America is formulating its politics to divide the divided and weaken the weak. I want America to understand that the formula for democracy does not work for Syria and the Arabs. If reform is necessary for the people, it is different from the American reform. We as a society are waiting for a program for Syrian reforms, but we want it to happen on Syrian terms, by Syrian means, not American means.

Are you a believer?

I think I am a believer. I am a believer – why not? I am on a path, but I cannot explain it.

/Interview with Kingdom of Heaven actor Ghassan Massoud who plays Saladin - Beliefnet.com/

“KINGDOM OF HEAVEN”, THE CONS AND PROS

... This issue does not need to be debated, but since the film unraveled the fake reality of the crusaders, who came under the name of the Cross and the Christ to plunder the resources of the country and conquer it, so they did not come to defend the churches nor the Christian pilgrims or the tomb of Christ. When this criticism comes from the Western writer and director it then has a stronger impact than if the film's director were Arabic. The glorious picture of the Crusaders was shaken in the movie, despite the exaggeration in the film in showing (Orlando's) good intentions in dealing with Muslims. According to my point of view, the movie did not satisfy all parties and it was specific in recording history, as it neglected the Arab Christians who have suffered from the Crusaders and fought side by side with (Saladin) against crusaders. The film technically succeeded and the battling were exciting, but it went far in describing the courage of the besieged Crusaders in the city of Jerusalem, even though when they left the city after surrendering and migrated northward ... such as (Acre the city), they got (Salahuddin's) pledge not to get harmed, and once again the film did not demonstrate that most of Arab Christians stayed in Jerusalem with (Salahuddin). The movie does not serve the American policy of seeking excuses for the shipment of the American people against Arabs and Muslims to justify its aggressive policy towards them. The film ultimately calls for tolerance and refrain from fighting under the name of religion. The highlight of the film is not the victory of (Salahuddin) in the his war against the Crusaders, but picking up the Cross from the ground in the church and returning it to its position on the table... He pointed out that Muslims are not against Christians, or against the Christian religion...

/Ghassan Massoud Official Website - <http://ghassanmassoud.com/en/index.php/>

I CAME OUT OF "KINGDOM OF HEAVEN" AS A STAR

Q: After seeing the movie for the first time, what did you feel? Did you feel that you performed the role in a good and convincing manner?

I know well before showing the movie to people the size of the personality that I'm performing, and I know quite how many aspects of this character will be highlighted, and what's the required steps in each moment. So, I've worked closely on these moments, which you have seen in the movie, and I discovered after actually seeing the movie that the montage and the director's effort has helped me more than I ever expected. He used my face well, and this is very comforting. I am pleased to say I was so satisfied with the movie for the first time in the history of global cinema. We provided views of the world cinema which deals with Muslims or Muslim personality as a global personality and this is the first time that ever happened in the history of Hollywood. Therefore, I feel that this is not a victory for me an actor. It is a victory for a very large population in the world that constitutes of billion and 200 thousand people (Muslims) around the world.

Q: There is a huge criticism in the West against the movie... Did you feel that as you followed your movie across a number of European countries this?

I felt it in Netherlands and Spain and in a number of Western countries, there are many closed-minded who do

not want to open up to the other, and who does not believe in the opinion of others. There are also fundamentalist groups that reject the others. It wants to say that Islam is a group of brass and retarded people, and they are not worthy to own a civil civilization. I wasn't shocked by this fact, for I expected it.

Q: You have said that you presented (Salahuddin) as a statesman and not a man of war in one of your interviews, what did you mean by that?

We as Muslims and Arabs are accused of terrorism, barbarism and backwardness, and by presenting (Salahuddin) as a statesman, I drop such charges. The movie used alternatives to violence and war, such as the policy of dialogue and tolerance, and we have worked on the civil image of (Salahuddin).

Q: You are one of the Syrian theater's members, is there a chance you present theatrical works in the future?

I am first and foremost a theatrical actor, whether in acting, teaching or directing. Thus, I shall stay within the theater no matter what temptations I face. I present a play every two years, for me it is not a job or a duty, but it has something to do with my dreams.

/Ghassan Massoud Official Website - <http://ghassanmasoud.com/en/index.php/>

HIS POLICIES HAVE BEEN STEADFAST AND STUBBORN JUST LIKE (SALADIN AYYUBI)

... When I saw him (Ghassan Massoud), I saw the resemblance between the man and (Saladin) with his whitish beard and his big expressive hands which were moving around his head angrily at the destruction of Iraq. (Massoud) was an honest expression, just like what it was in the movie, the same deep anger and the same human spirit... In the same scattered English language. (Massoud) is also an actor who has a great popularity in the Syrian films. The Damascene cafes people show deep respect towards him wherever he went, not only because of his reputation but also to his onrushing political trends similar to those of (Saladin) himself, which his remains were lying on less than half a mile from where we were sitting, near the amazing edifice of (Omayyad mosque).

/Ghassan Massoud Official Website - <http://ghassanmasoud.com/en/index.php/>