Texte 1

**Comment s'engagea la bataille de Bouvines**

*La bataille de Bouvines est entrée dans l'histoire comme une grande victoire de la France qui marque ainsi sa suprématie sur les autres nations d’Europe à cette époque. Elle opposa le roi de France Philippe II à une coalition formée par le roi d'Angleterre Jean sans Terre, qui a succédé à Richard Cœur de Lion : l'empereur d'Allemagne Otton IV et les comtes de Flandres et de Boulogne. Guillaume le Breton historiographe et chapelain du roi Philippe, qui durant la bataille de Bouvines était resté tout près de son maître, nous a rapporté cet événement. Voici ce qu'en retient l'historien Georges Duby dans son histoire du Moyen Âge.*

Philippe ne voulait pas livrer bataille : un chrétien ne tente pas son Dieu : le 27 juillet 1214 était un dimanche : le jour du seigneur, un chrétien ne manie pas les armes. Il fut forcé de le faire par la malice de ses ennemis.

Toute bataille est une cérémonie quasi religieuse. Le roi de France y tint très convenablement son rôle ; deux clercs étaient à ses côtés, chantant sans cesse les Psaumes de David au plus fort de la mêlée. Dans le silence précédant le coup d'envoi, il s'était tourné vers le Seigneur, implorant sa grâce, puis, étendant ses mains sur son peuple à genoux, il l'avait béni.

Ensuite, respectant fidèlement le rituel, il avait parlé. Ceux d'en face, avait-il dit, sont les suppôts du Malin ; l'empereur est frappé d**'anathème** pour avoir voulu détruire la Sainte Église ; les guerriers qui l'accompagnent, ajoute Guillaume le Breton, étaient des soldats, des soudoyers, ils avaient vendu leur service pour de l'argent, et cet argent provenait du pillage des pauvres et des prêtres - ces pauvres et ces prêtres dont Philippe, lui, était le protecteur efficace.

En outre, on employa dans l'autre camp de ces armes dont le bon chevalier répugne à se servir, les longs couteaux qui pénètrent par les fissures de la cuirasse. Les adversaires étaient venus, c'est évident, pour tuer. Sans foi ni loi.

Georges Duby, « Philippe Auguste. Les germes de la nation et de l'état»,

in Le Moyen Âge, Histoire de France. Hachette. 1987.

**Anathème**: exclusion de la communauté chrétienne.

🕮 **Cherche** les mots que tu ne connais pas dans le dictionnaire.

1 / Qui sont les adversaires de Philippe Auguste lors de la bataille de Bouvines ?

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2 / Qui est Guillaume le Breton, que lui doit-on ?

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3 / Pourquoi le roi Philippe ne souhaite-t-il pas engager la bataille ce 27 juillet ?

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4 / Que fait-il avant d’envoyer son armée au combat?

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5 / Comment Philippe justifie-t-il son bon droit ?

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