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Episode #123

Genghis Khan

12th Jan, 2021

[00:00:00] Hello, hello hello, and welcome to English Learning for Curious Minds, by Leonardo English.

[00:00:12] The show where you can listen to fascinating stories, and learn weird and wonderful things about the world at the same time as improving your English.

[00:00:23] I'm Alastair Budge and today we are going to be talking about Genghis Khan, the **ruler**¹ of the Mongol empire, the largest empire in the history of the world.

[00:00:34] Now, the story of Genghis Khan is fascinating, and it is a lot more complicated and **nuanced**² than it is often presented in the west.

[00:00:46] Genghis Khan may well have been a **ruthless**³ conqueror, responsible for the deaths of millions of people all over the world.

¹ the leader of a country

² with subtle differences

³ cruel



Genghis Khan

[00:00:54] But he was also a skilled leader, an excellent politician, and appears to have had a deep understanding of humanity.

[00:01:05] The story of Genghis Khan, apart from anything else, is unlikely.

[00:01:11] He grew up [dirt poor](#)⁴, [scrounging](#)⁵ for food, and before his fiftieth birthday he was the most powerful man in the entire world.

[00:01:21] So, let's jump right in, and learn about the life and times of Genghis Khan.

[00:01:29] We are going to start off with two administrative points. Firstly, Genghis Khan wasn't actually his name, it was his title.

[00:01:38] His name was Temuchin.

[00:01:40] He is thought to have been born in the year 1162, on the Mongolian [grasslands](#)⁶.

[00:01:47] A [recurrent](#)⁷ theme in this episode, and a problem for historians, is that there aren't a huge amount of records about his life, and [only a handful](#)⁸ exist from the Mongol perspective.

⁴ very poor

⁵ asking for money or food

⁶ a large area covered by grass

⁷ happening frequently

⁸ only a small amount (of)



Genghis Khan

[00:02:02] A large part of our understanding about Genghis Khan and the Mongols comes from the writings of the people that he conquered.

[00:02:10] And, naturally, if you are conquered by a foreign invading army you are not very likely to have positive memories of them.

[00:02:19] The other practical point, before we get into the heart of the story, is the pronunciation of Genghis Khan.

[00:02:28] You might have heard it pronounced as Jenghiz Khan, or even Chinghis Khan. We'll [stick to](#)⁹ the English pronunciation, Genghis, but in Mongolian it is pronounced more like Chinghiss.

[00:02:41] So, with those administrative points out of the way, let's get into the more exciting stuff.

[00:02:48] Temuchin was born to a [nomadic](#)¹⁰ family on the Mongolian [steppe](#)¹¹, the [expansive](#)¹², [harsh](#)¹³ [grassland](#)¹⁴ of modern Mongolia.

⁹ keep to

¹⁰ relating to a group that moves frequently from one place to another

¹¹ a large area of land without trees

¹² very large

¹³ difficult (to live in)

¹⁴ a large area covered by grass



Genghis Khan

[00:02:59] The people that lived on the [steppe](#) were [nomadic](#) tribespeople, they migrated over huge [swathes](#)¹⁵ of [grassland](#) with their animals to make sure that they had fresh grass.

[00:03:13] These [nomadic](#) peoples would normally fight amongst themselves, between [tribes](#)¹⁶, and there would be [rivalries](#)¹⁷ that would continue for years.

[00:03:23] Someone would be killed, or animals would be stolen then [revenge](#)¹⁸ would be taken.

[00:03:30] [Revenge](#) would be taken for the [revenge](#), and this would go on and on.

[00:03:36] The young Temuchin's life was dominated by this [warring](#)¹⁹ of [tribes](#), and when Temuchin was only nine years old it affected him personally - his father, a [tribe](#)²⁰ leader, was poisoned by the Tatars, a rival [tribe](#), and died.

[00:03:57] The young Temuchin tried to claim his father's position as leader of the [tribe](#), but the other powerful men in the [tribe](#) took this opportunity to throw

¹⁵ large pieces of land

¹⁶ groups of people who live together

¹⁷ ongoing competitions between two or more groups

¹⁸ something that is done as a punishment for something that was done to you

¹⁹ fighting

²⁰ a group of people who live together



Temuchin, his mother and his brothers out of the [tribe](#), leaving them on their own and having to [forage](#)²¹ and hunt for food.

[00:04:18] This was a huge embarrassment for a [nomad](#)²², as they were used to having a pretty good diet, with their large [herds](#)²³ producing more than enough meat, cheese and milk products for them to not go hungry.

[00:04:34] So, at the age of nine Temuchin was without a father, and [cast out](#)²⁴ of the [tribe](#).

[00:04:41] He was a nobody.

[00:04:43] No [reputation](#)²⁵, no name, no father, and he was living in poverty.

[00:04:50] There isn't a huge amount of additional information about Temuchin's early life after his father was murdered, but it was very clear that from an early age that he was [resourceful](#)²⁶, [charismatic](#)²⁷, with natural leadership skills and a sense of bravery.

²¹ to search for (food)

²² someone who is a member of a group that moves around frequently

²³ large groups of animals

²⁴ thrown out

²⁵ the opinion held about someone

²⁶ skilled at solving problems

²⁷ able to attract others with their personality



[00:05:10] He started to attract a following - people were naturally drawn to him, and he seemed to understand how to [persuade](#)²⁸ and attract others.

[00:05:22] He was also very [calculating](#)²⁹, not someone to [rush](#)³⁰ into a decision without considering his options.

[00:05:31] There's a story that demonstrates this very well from when one of his wives was captured.

[00:05:38] Now, in [nomadic tribe](#) culture it was often the case that a marriage between two people would be arranged when they were very young.

[00:05:48] In Temuchin's case, when he was just 9 years old, before his father was murdered, his marriage was arranged to a young girl from another [tribe](#).

[00:05:58] He didn't marry her until years later, but after they were married she was stolen and taken away by a rival [tribe](#).

[00:06:08] Temuchin's natural instinct was to attack the other tribe and [retrieve](#)³¹ his wife, but he realised that this was going to be impossible, it would be [a fool's errand](#)³².

²⁸ to make someone do something (without force)

²⁹ controlling situations for your own advantage

³⁰ hurry, move fast

³¹ find and bring back

³² a trip for no good reason, or a bad reason



[00:06:21] The other **tribe** had superior forces, and Temuchin would almost certainly have been killed.

[00:06:28] So what did he do?

[00:06:31] Nothing.

[00:06:32] He waited, and waited, for 8 months until he was able to **forge**³³ an **alliance**³⁴ with another **tribe** and get his wife back.

[00:06:41] When he finally was able to get her back, she was pregnant.

[00:06:46] It's not clear whether this child was Temuchin's or not, but he treated it as his own, and the boy was later to become a commander in Temuchin's army.

[00:06:58] Of course, not all men at the time would have behaved in the same way, and the fact that Temuchin **kept his cool**³⁵ when she was kidnapped, then treated the son

³³ make

³⁴ an arrangement where two or more groups agree to work together

³⁵ if you keep your cool, you remain calm



Genghis Khan

as his own gives you an early [indication](#)³⁶ of the fact that he wasn't [merely](#)³⁷ a [cold-blooded](#)³⁸, [barbarian](#)³⁹ murderer.

[00:07:19] These [calculating](#) qualities, and evident intelligence continued to draw more and more people to Temuchin.

[00:07:27] He seemed to have a sort of [magnetic](#)⁴⁰ quality, and he treated those that followed him well.

[00:07:35] He formed powerful [allegiances](#)⁴¹ with other tribes, and was [ruthless](#) with his enemies.

[00:07:43] [Slowly but surely](#)⁴², he [eliminated](#)⁴³ rival [tribes](#)⁴⁴, often killing all of the elder leaders, leaving only the children, who wouldn't remember what had happened, and thus not [seek revenge](#).

³⁶ sign

³⁷ only

³⁸ not showing emotions or compassion

³⁹ someone who does not behave properly OR someone from a different land

⁴⁰ able to attract others

⁴¹ loyalties

⁴² in a slow but consistent way

⁴³ got rid of

⁴⁴ look for



Genghis Khan

[00:07:57] His power grew and grew, and in 1206 he was **proclaimed**⁴⁵ Genghis Khan, the Ultimate Khan, the leader of all of the **nomadic** Mongol **tribes**.

[00:08:10] Before Genghis Khan, there was no ultimate leader, the **tribes** had never been successfully united.

[00:08:18] Now was the opportunity to take things to the next level, and coming together as a united people, of course, meant that they were a lot stronger than as a collection of smaller **tribes** that spent their lives fighting among one another.

[00:08:36] These different **tribes** weren't just different groups of people, they had different cultures, different languages, and belief systems.

[00:08:46] Genghis Khan recognised this, and had some unique strategies for bringing these tribes together, for uniting them.

[00:08:55] One of the things he did was that, in his army, he mixed up all the different **tribes**.

[00:09:02] His army was a **slick**⁴⁶ military operation, and each unit was formed of people from different **tribes**.

[00:09:10] There was no way of **swapping**⁴⁷, you were assigned a unit and that was it.

⁴⁵ announced publicly

⁴⁶ operating in a skillful and efficient way

⁴⁷ changing



Genghis Khan

[00:09:16] While you might think that this was a quick way for [conflict](#)⁴⁸ to [arise](#)⁴⁹ between the different people within the unit, it actually worked extremely well.

[00:09:27] With the different [tribes](#) forced together, their identities and rivalries were reduced, and they presumably saw that the other [tribes](#) that they had been fighting against for years weren't actually that bad at all.

[00:09:43] The other thing that he did was to not try to [enforce](#)⁵⁰ any particular belief system on the [tribes](#).

[00:09:50] He recognised that they were unique, and didn't try to [impose](#)⁵¹ his own set of rules or cultural [norms](#)⁵² on them.

[00:10:01] He was also, reportedly, incredibly loyal to those that were loyal to him, and [ruthless](#) to those that weren't.

[00:10:10] He [rewarded](#)⁵³ loyalty and performance with gifts and high positions in the army.

⁴⁸ fight, disagreement

⁴⁹ happen

⁵⁰ make people obey

⁵¹ officially force a rule or custom

⁵² accepted normal way of behaving

⁵³ given in exchange for good behaviour or performance



Genghis Khan

[00:10:16] His army was [meritocratic](#)⁵⁴ - it didn't matter whether you were born at the top or bottom of your [tribe](#) - in Genghis Khan's army your [rank](#)⁵⁵, your position, was determined by your loyalty and your performance.

[00:10:32] When he became Genghis Khan, in 1206, he may have been the most powerful of the [nomads](#)⁵⁶, but he was far from the world's most powerful military commander.

[00:10:43] Indeed, initially he didn't show a huge amount of interest in world [conquest](#)⁵⁷, and he didn't set out right away on huge military [campaigns](#)⁵⁸.

[00:10:56] He had an immediate advantage though, in that life on the Mongolian [grasslands](#) was very helpful for training future soldiers, and preparing them for the battles that they would fight.

[00:11:09] Firstly, the method by which Mongolian riders hunted prepared them very well for military [encounters](#)⁵⁹.

⁵⁴ a meritocratic system is one where the people given the most power are the most skilled

⁵⁵ position in an organisation

⁵⁶ people who are members of a group that moves around frequently

⁵⁷ taking control of a country by fighting

⁵⁸ a series of battles intended to achieve a particular aim

⁵⁹ meetings



[00:11:18] They would often form huge circles across the [grasslands](#), tens of kilometres in [circumference](#)⁶⁰.

[00:11:25] All the men would be on [horseback](#)⁶¹.

[00:11:29] They would then come together, towards the centre of the circle, driving the animals into the middle.

[00:11:37] This required huge amounts of [coordination](#)⁶², which is evidently difficult when you are on the windy, Mongolian [grassland](#), and the radio wasn't going to be invented for another 700 years.

[00:11:51] A [tactic](#)⁶³ they developed was to use particular types of [arrows](#)⁶⁴ that would make different noises as they travelled through the air, and this would direct the horsemen to move in certain directions.

[00:12:07] This meant that the commanders could give orders to their men just by firing an [arrow](#)⁶⁵, and this was a huge advantage when it came to fighting a more dangerous enemy than wolves or deer.

⁶⁰ the distance around a circle

⁶¹ on a horse

⁶² the organisation of a group of people

⁶³ a planned way to do something

⁶⁴ weapons made of a thin piece of wood with a sharp point at one end, launched into the air with a bow

⁶⁵ a weapon made of a thin piece of wood with a sharp point at one end, launched into the air with a bow



Genghis Khan

[00:12:22] Secondly, the entire Mongol army was on [horseback](#), there was no [infantry](#)⁶⁶, no [foot soldiers](#)⁶⁷, and of course this meant that they were able to travel incredibly fast, and launch [lightning](#)⁶⁸ attacks on their enemy.

[00:12:39] As Genghis Khan's forces moved off the [steppe](#), away from the [grassland](#) and towards settled populations, towards non-nomadic people, it found great riches.

[00:12:52] One of the problems about being a nomad is that it was hard to build up wealth.

[00:12:58] Your wealth was in your sheep and goats, it didn't really last - sheep and goats don't live for very long, and you have to keep replacing them.

[00:13:09] When Genghis Khan's forces reached places like modern-day China and Persia they found [abundant](#)⁶⁹ riches - spices, silk, gold, and other precious goods.

[00:13:22] Naturally, this was very [enticing](#)⁷⁰ to the well-trained Mongolian army.

⁶⁶ the part of the army that fights on foot

⁶⁷ the part of the army that fights on foot

⁶⁸ very fast

⁶⁹ more than enough, in large quantities

⁷⁰ attractive



[00:13:29] The deal that the Mongol forces usually proposed to cities that they were attacking was simple: if you [surrender⁷¹](#), we will [spare⁷²](#) your lives. Fight and we will kill every last one of you.

[00:13:44] And the Mongols had a [reputation](#) for keeping their word.

[00:13:48] If they said they'd kill you, they weren't [messing around⁷³](#).

[00:13:52] It was simple, but incredibly effective, and although they did [slaughter⁷⁴](#) entire populations, there isn't much evidence that they did this because of some [perverse⁷⁵](#) enjoyment, but rather because if they developed a reputation for [slaughtering⁷⁶](#) entire towns and cities if they didn't [surrender](#), then [the word would get out⁷⁷](#) and cities were more likely to [surrender](#) in advance, meaning that the Mongols didn't need to fight them.

[00:14:23] Indeed, the Mongol army was effective, but it wasn't actually as large as you might think it was.

⁷¹ to stop fighting and give up

⁷² save

⁷³ joking

⁷⁴ kill in large numbers

⁷⁵ strange and unusual

⁷⁶ killing

⁷⁷ people would tell others



Genghis Khan

[00:14:30] The entire Mongol army was around 2 million strong, but it was split over multiple different [fronts](#)⁷⁸, over multiple different areas.

[00:14:42] There wasn't one, individual Mongol [horde](#)⁷⁹ that [rampaged](#)⁸⁰ all over Asia, but a collection of [diverse](#)⁸¹ ones, all ultimately controlled by Genghis Khan, but each being controlled by a regional commander.

[00:14:58] These armies had traveled very far from home, and wanted to avoid losing any men if at all possible, so they would almost always offer the opportunity for their enemies to [surrender](#), so that they didn't actually have to fight.

[00:15:14] But, you might still be wondering, what were they actually doing by going on these huge [conquests](#)⁸²?

[00:15:21] Why were they invading?

[00:15:23] Why did they leave their grassy [homelands](#)⁸³ and conquer a third of Asia?

⁷⁸ (a military) front is the line where one group of soldiers meet another

⁷⁹ a large group of people

⁸⁰ go through causing lots of damage

⁸¹ different

⁸² gaining control of other lands by fighting

⁸³ the country you were born in



Genghis Khan

[00:15:29] There are some popular [misconceptions](#)⁸⁴ about this, and the main one is that they ran out of [grassland](#) in Mongolia, which meant they came off the [plains](#)⁸⁵ in order to survive.

[00:15:41] There's very little evidence that this is actually true.

[00:15:46] Most historians now believe that the real reason that the Mongols continued their global [quest](#)⁸⁶ was because they had started it, the soldiers had tasted the [spoils](#)⁸⁷ of war, the goods they had managed to [seize](#)⁸⁸ from these towns and cities, and to keep the soldiers united and happy, Genghis Khan needed to continue to [ransack](#)⁸⁹ new towns and cities.

[00:16:11] Remember, the Mongols were a [nomadic](#) population, they moved their animals around, and they didn't really have any other way to produce wealth other than taking it. When they arrived in places like China and Persia, they found huge treasures, silk, spices, precious metals, things that can only really be created by [static](#)⁹⁰ societies.

⁸⁴ things that most people believe but aren't true

⁸⁵ large areas of flat land

⁸⁶ long search for something

⁸⁷ things taken in battle

⁸⁸ take something quickly (and often by force)

⁸⁹ to go through, causing damage and stealing things

⁹⁰ staying in one place



Genghis Khan

[00:16:38] Although Genghis Khan may have been a [fearsome⁹¹ conqueror⁹²](#) to those that he conquered, he was a loyal, generous leader to those that followed him.

[00:16:48] He would [reward⁹³](#) his soldiers with the [spoils](#) of war, and when these [spoils](#) were [exhausted⁹⁴](#), they needed to go out and look for more.

[00:16:58] Another factor that motivated Genghis Khan's armies to head south, to what is now Iran, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Kyrgyzstan, was related to loyalty to his men.

[00:17:12] This area was at the time part of the Khwarezmid Empire, and was ruled by a man called Shah Ala ad-Din Muhammad.

[00:17:21] Genghis Khan had tried to make a trade agreement with him, but when Khan sent a Mongol trade mission to meet with the Shah, they were all killed and their goods were stolen.

⁹¹ frightening

⁹² someone who invades other countries

⁹³ given in exchange for good behaviour or performance

⁹⁴ finished, used up



Genghis Khan

[00:17:35] To try to resolve the situation peacefully, Genghis Khan sent three [diplomats](#)⁹⁵ to negotiate with the Shah, but they were [decapitated](#)⁹⁶, their heads were chopped off.

[00:17:49] The Shah was [trying his luck](#)⁹⁷.

[00:17:53] But if there was one person that you really didn't want to get on the wrong side of, it was Genghis Khan.

[00:18:01] The cutting off of his [diplomats](#)' heads was a [gross](#)⁹⁸ insult, and within two years Genghis Khan had destroyed the entire Khwarezmid Empire, killed the Shah, and chased his son all the way down to India.

[00:18:19] So, the primary reason for [venturing](#)⁹⁹ all the way south to that part of Asia was, really, out of loyalty to his murdered men.

[00:18:29] What is often misunderstood about the Mongol empire is that its [peak](#)¹⁰⁰ was actually after Genghis Khan's death, in 1227.

⁹⁵ officials whose job it is to represent a country

⁹⁶ cut off their heads

⁹⁷ to try to achieve something by taking a risk

⁹⁸ very large

⁹⁹ traveling

¹⁰⁰ highest point



Genghis Khan

[00:18:38] The [Khanate](#)¹⁰¹ was passed to his son, and the systems that Genghis Khan had put in place were strong enough for the empire to continue expanding.

[00:18:50] At its largest point it covered everything from modern day Hungary right through to the Pacific Ocean, an area the size of Africa.

[00:19:01] The empire wasn't to last though, or at least it wasn't to last in its original form.

[00:19:09] The Mongols essentially became emperors of China, and formed the Yuan dynasty, which went on from 1271 to 1368.

[00:19:20] In terms of the [legacy](#)¹⁰² that Genghis Khan left, he is by far the most famous person to have ever come out of Mongolia, and Mongolians today are fiercely proud of him.

[00:19:33] He is on the banknotes, the airport of Mongolia's capital city, Ulan Bator is called Genghis Khan International, and there's even a Genghis Khan vodka.

[00:19:44] Far from being considered a [brutal](#)¹⁰³ dictator, he is a national hero, a sign of Mongolian strength and power in the world, even if that strength and power ended almost 800 years ago.

¹⁰¹ the position of 'Khan'

¹⁰² something that exists as a result of actions in the past

¹⁰³ cruel and violent



Genghis Khan

[00:19:59] In the West, historians have a complicated time figuring out Genghis Khan.

[00:20:06] There are some who [blame](#)¹⁰⁴ him even for things like the treatment of the Aztecs and the Incas by the Spanish, saying that Genghis Khan was [ruthlessly](#)¹⁰⁵ [brutal](#) towards muslims in central Asia and the middle east, who were in turn [ruthless](#) towards the [crusaders](#)¹⁰⁶, who brought this back to Spain and they therefore were [ruthless](#) when they went to the new world.

[00:20:30] It seems like a little [bit of a stretch](#)¹⁰⁷ and there seems to not be that much evidence that Genghis Khan was any more or less [ruthless](#) than any other great military ruler, and by considering his actions with our 21st century [lens](#)¹⁰⁸ we're really failing to understand the [norms](#) at the time.

[00:20:54] No, of course we shouldn't [condone](#)¹⁰⁹ the murder of entire populations, but if we are going to say that Genghis Khan was a terrible [barbarian](#), the theory goes, we should judge people like Alexander the Great, and Julius Ceasar with the same standards.

¹⁰⁴ say that someone is responsible

¹⁰⁵ in a cruel or violent way

¹⁰⁶ Christian soldiers who fought in the Middle East in the Middle Ages

¹⁰⁷ if something is a bit of a stretch, it is unlikely

¹⁰⁸ if you see something through a particular lens, you view it from that perspective

¹⁰⁹ to accept behaviour that most people believe is wrong



Genghis Khan

[00:21:13] One of the main differences, really, was that the Mongols were different, they came from the East on [lightning](#) fast horses, they didn't leave a great written culture or history behind, and they left great destruction [in their midst](#)¹¹⁰.

[00:21:31] Perhaps if they had left behind great poems, songs, or books, then we would think about the [legacy](#) of Genghis Khan in a slightly different way.

[00:21:43] OK then, that is it for today's episode on Genghis Khan.

[00:21:48] I hope it's been an interesting one, and that you've learnt something new.

[00:21:52] As always, I would love to know what you thought of this episode.

[00:21:56] We do actually have quite a few listeners from Mongolia, so if you are from Mongolia, I would absolutely love to hear your perspective on this.

[00:22:05] You can head to our community forum which is at community.leonardoenglish.com and get chatting away to other curious minds.

[00:22:14] You've been listening to English Learning for Curious Minds, by Leonardo English.

[00:22:19] I'm Alastair Budge, you stay safe, and I'll catch you in the next episode.

[END OF EPISODE]

¹¹⁰ around them



Key vocabulary

Word	Definition
Ruler	the leader of a country
Nuanced	with subtle differences
Ruthless	cruel
Dirt poor	very poor
Scrounging	asking for money or food
Grasslands	a large area covered by grass
Recurrent	happening frequently
Only a handful	only a small amount (of)
Stick to	keep to
Nomadic	relating to a group that moves frequently from one place to another
Steppe	a large area of land without trees
Expansive	very large



Harsh	difficult (to live in)
Grassland	a large area covered by grass
Swathes	large pieces of land
Tribes	groups of people who live together
Rivalries	ongoing competitions between two or more groups
Revenge	something that is done as a punishment for something that was done to you
Warring	fighting
Tribe	a group of people who live together
Forage	to search for (food)
Nomad	someone who is a member of a group that moves around frequently
Herds	large groups of animals
Cast out	thrown out
Reputation	the opinion held about someone
Resourceful	skilled at solving problems
Charismatic	able to attract others with their personality



Persuade	to make someone do something (without force)
Calculating	controlling situations for your own advantage
Rush	hurry, move fast
Retrieve	find and bring back
A fool's errand	a trip for no good reason, or a bad reason
Forge	make
Alliance	an arrangement where two or more groups agree to work together
Kept his cool	if you keep your cool, you remain calm
Indication	sign
Merely	only
Cold-blooded	not showing emotions or compassion
Barbarian	someone who does not behave properly OR someone from a different land
Magnetic	able to attract others
Allegiances	loyalties
Slowly but surely	in a slow but consistent way



Eliminated	got rid of
Seek	look for
Proclaimed	announced publicly
Slick	operating in a skillful and efficient way
Swapping	changing
Conflict	fight, disagreement
Arise	happen
Enforce	make people obey
Impose	officially force a rule or custom
Norms	accepted normal way of behaving
Rewarded	given in exchange for good behaviour or performance
Meritocratic	a meritocratic system is one where the people given the most power are the most skilled
Rank	position in an organisation
Nomads	people who are members of a group that moves around frequently
Conquest	taking control of a country by fighting



Campaigns	a series of battles intended to achieve a particular aim
Encounters	meetings
Circumference	the distance around a circle
Horseback	on a horse
Coordination	the organisation of a group of people
Tactic	a planned way to do something
Arrows	weapons made of a thin piece of wood with a sharp point at one end, launched into the air with a bow
Arrow	a weapon made of a thin piece of wood with a sharp point at one end, launched into the air with a bow
Infantry	the part of the army that fights on foot
Foot soldiers	the part of the army that fights on foot
Lightning	very fast
Abundant	more than enough, in large quantities
Enticing	attractive
Surrender	to stop fighting and give up



Genghis Khan

Spare	save
Messing around	joking
Slaughter	kill in large numbers
Perverse	strange and unusual
Slaughtering	killing
The word would get out	people would tell others
Fronts	(a military) front is the line where one group of soldiers meet another
Horde	a large group of people
Rampaged	go through causing lots of damage
Diverse	different
Conquests	gaining control of other lands by fighting
Homelands	the country you were born in
Misconceptions	things that most people believe but aren't true
Plains	large areas of flat land
Quest	long search for something



Genghis Khan

Spoils	things taken in battle
Seize	take something quickly (and often by force)
Ransack	to go through, causing damage and stealing things
Static	staying in one place
Fearsome	frightening
Conqueror	someone who invades other countries
Reward	given in exchange for good behaviour or performance
Exhausted	finished, used up
Diplomats	officials whose job it is to represent a country
Decapitated	cut off their heads
Trying his luck	to try to achieve something by taking a risk
Gross	very large
Venturing	traveling
Peak	highest point
Khanate	the position of 'Khan'



Legacy	something that exists as a result of actions in the past
Brutal	cruel and violent
Blame	say that someone is responsible
Ruthlessly	in a cruel or violent way
Crusaders	Christian soldiers who fought in the Middle East in the Middle Ages
Bit of a stretch	if something is a bit of a stretch, it is unlikely
Lens	if you see something through a particular lens, you view it from that perspective
Condone	to accept behaviour that most people believe is wrong
In their midst	around them

We'd love to get your feedback on this podcast.

What did you like? What could we do better?

What did you struggle to understand?

Let us know in the forum community.leonardoenglish.com

