

JEWISH HISTORY FROM 175BCE to 70CE

(FROM BEGINNING OF THE MACCABEES TO DESTRUCTION OF THE TEMPLE, MAINLY BASED ON JOSEPHUS)

This book, entitled "Josephus, History of the Jews", was written by the Jewish historian **Josephus**. He started his career as a commander in the Israeli army 2000 years ago, and then changed sides and became a military adviser in the Roman army. In his retirement, he wrote a book covering world history up to his own time. About ¼ of his book covers the history of the Maccabees, which is described as follows.

Our story starts in the year 175 BC. Israel and its neighbors were ruled by the Syrian section of the Greek empire. The evil madman **Antiochus** had just become the Syrian Greek king. He acted as though he was a god, nicknaming himself "Epiphanes" meaning "god revealed" (which happens to be "Galya" in Hebrew). He periodically confiscating gold and silver from the Temple treasury. **Antiochus** fired the real high priest and appointed new ones, based on whoever offered him the greatest bribe. The bribe was paid for by the newly appointed high priest who would obtain the money for the bribe by embezzling treasures from the holy Temple and by taxing the Jews to give to Antiochus. In fact, in the year 169BCE, the high priest Menelaus escorted Antiochus into the Temple for him to take away whatever he wanted.

In the year 167 BCE, Antiochus left Jerusalem to fight the Egypt. Jerusalemites, upon hearing a false rumor that Antiochus died, claimed independence and chased the bad high priest Menelaus out of the city.

Antiochus returned to Jerusalem on Shabbat. The Jerusalemites would not fight on Shabbat, so Antiochus pillaged Jerusalem, killed 40K inhabitants and sold another 40K of its inhabitants into slavery.

Antiochus then converted the holy Temple in Jerusalem to a pagan temple to the Greek god Jupiter. He erected a statue of the Greek god Jupiter in front of the holy altar and sacrificed pigs on the holy altar to Jupiter.

Antiochus decreed that the practice of Judaism be punishable by death, and 10s of thousands of Jews, men, women and children, were killed in gruesome ways for such things as circumcising their children and keeping the Shabbat. Large groups of Jews hid in large caves so they would be left alone to keep Shabbat in peace. But they were found by Greek soldiers and were all murdered.

The Jews were split in their attitudes toward all this. The Hellenist Jews apparently applauded it. The religious Jews condemned it or disobeyed it.

Antiochus instituted Greek sporting events made in honor of pagan gods. Each month, Pagan ceremonies were conducted in towns around the country, and Jews were forced to eat from the pagan sacrifice.

Things got progressively worse until they came to head, and came to an end, when one day a Greek soldier entered a Jewish village called Modi'in (northwest of Jerusalem) to arrange the monthly pagan ceremony. He

asked for a Jewish volunteer to start the pagan sacrifice. A resident of the city, a cohen named **Matityahu**, was so incensed that he killed both the Greek soldier and the Jew who volunteered to perform the sacrifice. **Matityahu** proclaimed a revolt against the Greeks with the famous phrase "Whoever is for Gd follow me", and he and his 5 sons fled to the mountains, along with their followers, and started a revolt. They decided to fight even on Shabbat if attacked. 10s of thousands of Jews from all over the country flocked to the mountains to join them. And so started the revolt against the Greeks.

At first, the rebellion was lead by **Matityahu**. After a year or so, he died and his eldest son **Judah** took over. The Maccabees won a string of battles even though they were outnumbered.

In one battle, 110,000 Greek soldiers split into divisions -- under Ptolemy, Nicanor and Gorgias. Judah defeated Nicanor's division. Then, expecting imminent attack by Gorgias, set Nicanor's camp ablaze, but Gorgia's men saw the blaze and fled.

Finally, Jerusalem was liberated from the Greeks. The Maccabees removed the idols from Jerusalem and refurbished the Temple, and rededicated it on the 25th day of the month of Chislev in the year 165, 3 years after its desecration. The Jews executed the evil high priest **Menelaus** and appointed a good one, **Alkimos**, in his place.

The country of Parthia (in northeastern Iran), seeing that Antiochus was preoccupied by the rebellion with the Jews, rebelled themselves. Antiochus left his commander Lysius with a smaller part of the Seleucid army to fight the Jews, while Antiochus himself took a majority of the Seleucid army to put down Parthian rebellion. Antiochus never returned; he died in Parthia. His commander Lysius in Israel sued for peace with the Jews, because the Jewish rebellion was costing the Greeks too many losses and the Greek soldiers were needed elsewhere to put down rebellions in other countries. The Greeks signed a peace treaty with the Jews and left the country.

The country of Israel was small and weak. With the Greeks gone, gentile states surrounding Israel were no longer in check. They sent raiding parties to attack Jewish villages, pillage and kill, and carry the Jewish survivors away as slaves. **Judah** and his brothers lead the small Jewish army against those gentile states, defeated them, and freed the Jewish slaves. **Judah** then agreed to let the defeated gentile states live in peace if they pay an annual tribute (tax) to the Israeli government.

The Maccabees were so successful in defeating states that were menacing them, that they started a campaign of conquering states that weren't menacing them. This was in

order to increase tax revenues by exacting tribute from the defeated states and to pay for Israel's expenses for defense. In this way, the borders of Israel were greatly expanded, and the Maccabees eventually ruled gentile states far beyond Israel's borders.

Ant died in 164, and succeeded by **Demetrius I**. But Lysias restarted war against Judah, and almost won, but abandoned it to fight rival general in some other country who was trying to take over. Then quiet. But later, Nicanor attacked again but was defeated. Judah signed peace treaty with **Rome** which was starting to be an empire and was starting to call the shots to the Greeks. But Demetrius I attacked Judah anyway in 160 and won battle and **killed Judah**. Alcimus high priest assigned by Lycius approved by most Jews because he was at least a real kohen. But nationalists rallied around Judah's youngest brother **Jonatan**. Brother **Yochanan** was killed by Arabs. Yonatan and Shimon defeated **Bachides'** army. Bachides made peace treaty w/Maccabees.

Alexander Balas claimed to be Ant's son and fought w/Demetrius. They each made concessions to Judah, including Demetrius removing Greek soldiers from Israel and Alexander Balas appointing Yonatan high priest. Yonatan chose Alexander who ended up winner and even married Egyptian king Ptolemy's daughter and Yonatan became sincere ally of both. They even gave cities in Israel. **Alexander** was killed in battle, but his son **Ant VI** became king in 145, and Demetrius I's son Dem II who was kinged by Tryphon and both befriended Yonatan and Shimon. Tryphon then killed Dem II to obtain kingship himself. New treaty w/Rome.

Yonatan killed in battle. Shimon took over high priest, kingship and army general. Dem II made complete peace w/Jews by even canceling all tribute and Greek soldiers in 142 which because new calendar era for Jews. New treaty w/Rome proclaiming Israel independence.

The Jews' success in defeating both the Greeks and the surrounding states greatly increased the prestige of Israel and Jews living all over the world. For example, Rome, which was a growing world power but had no interests in the Middle East, sent emissaries to Israel every few years to sign a peace treaty with the Maccabees. In Egypt, Jews were recruited into the Egyptian army and were promoted to the highest military positions. The military success of

the Maccabees was due to 3 factors, Gd's help, their great bravery in never shrinking from battle no matter how outnumbered they were, and their shrewdness. The shrewdness included attacking the enemy where they least expected it, and by playing one country against another.

Judah died in battle and his youngest brother **Yonatan** took over. **Yonatan** died in battle and his oldest brother **Shimon** took over. (There were 2 other brothers, Elazar and Yochanan, who fought valiantly, but they died in battle without assuming leadership.) **Shimon** was the first Maccabee leader that was not just considered leader of a rebellion but actually a king of a free country. Besides being king, Shimon served as high priest in the Temple.

Shimon and most of his family (his wife, daughter and 2 sons) were assassinated by his own (Jewish?) son-in-law Talmi. **Shimon's** surviving son **Yochanan Hurkenus** became king.

Shimon and 2 sons were **assassinated** by Shimon's **brother-in-law Ptolemy** in 135. Shimon's surviving son, **Yochanan**, renamed himself **Hurkenus** after his dead brother and became king and high priest. Ptolemy first held the mom hostage to avoid reprisal and then killed her and fled the country.

Fighting between the Greek factions kept Greeks away from Israel. Hurkenus greatly increased the size of the country, conquering many nations and forcing them to accept Judaism and circumcise.

Hurkenus died and was succeeded by his sons **Antignus and Aristabulus**. Antignus had Aristablos assassinated and imprisoned his mom and brothers and reigned for 1 yr. He continued expanding and Judaizing the country.

The Maccabean kings had 2 characteristics. 1) They held 3 positions: king, high priest (starting with Shimon) in the Temple army, and general leading the Jews in battle and putting his life on the line alongside the other soldiers; and 2) They pursued a constant campaign of military empire expansion.

When **Yochanan Hurkenus** died, his son **Aristabulus** grabbed the throne. To avoid possible competition, Aristabulus imprisoned his mother and his brother **Alexander Yanai**, and killed his other brother **Antignus**. He married a woman named **Salome Alexandra**.

When **Aristabulus** died, **Alexandra** freed her brother-in-law **Alexander Yanai** from prison, married him and appointed him king. **Alexander Yanai** and **Alexandra** had 2 children, **Hurkenus** and **Aristabulus**. **Alexander Yanai** was a very successful in conquering states neighboring Israel. However, he had a falling out with the **Perushim** (Pharisees) and killed 10s of thousands of them.

His widow, **Salome Alexandra**, befriended Perushim and released in-laws from prison. She married Aristablos' brother **Alexander Yanai (Yonatan)**, who reigned for 27 yrs (103-76). Attacked by **Latiro, Cleopatra III's son**, but she sent a large Egyptian army under Jewish commanders **Hanania and Hilkia** which killed him, and she was convinced by her Jewish commanders to leave Israel alone. He liked Perushim, until one day when appeared at party in high priest attire and a Perushi asked him isn't it enough that you are king? And from then on he killed Perushim. Then one threw an etrog at him and he had 6K of them killed. A civil war ensued with deaths of 10,1000s. He once had 800 elders crucified and their families killed. He died of disease and advised his wife to befriend the Perushim.

Solomai ruled 9 years (76-67), sister of Shimon ben Shetach, chief leader of the Perushim.

After her death, her 2 sons weaker **Hurkenus** and stronger **Aristobulus** lead armies against each other for the throne. Each won and lost battles based on soldiers changing sides and tried to get the upper hand in Jm. But Roman genl **Pompey** took interest in Israel. Each brother and the Jews sent delegations to Pompey begging him to take their side (The Jews asking to reinstate kohen rule w/neither brother in control). **Pompey** sided with **Hurkenus**, besieged Jm (which was in hands of **Aristabulus**), conquered it, killed 12K Jews and murdered priests in middle of Yom Kipur service, appointed **Hurkenus** as new high priest and exiled **Aristabulus** and 1000s of Jews to Rome. **Pompey** and **Cesar** partnership further plundered the Temple in 54. But **Cesar** broke with **Pompey** and was helped by **Hurknus** who provided soldiers and influenced Egyptian Jews to side w/**Caesar**, so **Caesar** gave back territory he took from **Hurknus**, but placed Arab **Antipater** (Herod's father) over region.

During **Alexander Yanai's** time, **Cleopatra III** had a son, **Latiro**, who rebelled against her and tried to set himself up as a king by conquering states of his own. When **Latiro** came to conquer Israel, **Alexander Yanai** sent a message to **Cleopatra III** for help. She sent an army under her 2 Jewish generals, **Chananiah** and **Chilkiah** (I find it interesting that while the kings/high priests/generals of the Jewish nation felt compelled to have fashionable Greek names, **Cleopatra** had no qualms about appointing men with nice Jewish names as generals.) to Israel. They defeated **Latiro's** army, killed **Latiro**, and returned to Egypt. **Cleopatra III** was considering asking them to

conquer Israel while they were at it, but they counseled her against it.

When **Alexander Yanai** died of fever, **Alexandra** became queen. She broke with tradition in 3 ways: 1) She stopped the campaign of territorial expansion; 2) She used an effective nonviolent method of keeping subjugated states in line by having their kings send their children to live in Jerusalem as collateral to dissuade them from rebelling. 3) She did not wear 3 hats, but instead appointed herself queen, her son **Hurkenus** high priest, and her son **Aristabulus** general of the army. As a result of her approach in ruling, her reign was a peaceful one. She was very friendly with the Perushing (Pharisees) and her brother, **Shimon ben Shetach**, was a famous rabbinical Pharisee leader.

During her lifetime, her high priest son, **Hurkenus**, lived in Jerusalem, while her general son **Aristabulus** mainly lived outside Jerusalem with his army. **Hurkenus** told his mother that his brother **Aristabulus** was planning to forcibly take over the high priesthood. She solved it by putting **Aristabulus'** children under house arrest in Jerusalem, for **Hurkenus** to use as collateral in against **Aristabulus** taking action.

After **Alexandra** died, each brother lead an army in a 20 year civil war over who would be both king and high priest, which cost 10s of thousands of Jewish lives. At some point in the civil war, the brothers realized they were deadlocked. Instead of compromising to resolve the issue, each brother sent a delegation to appeal to a Roman delegation visiting Damascus. Each brother offered "if you, Rome, depose my brother so I can become king, I will be subordinate to you." The Jewish citizenry themselves sent a third delegation appealing to the Romans to remove both brothers to end the bloodshed.

Eventually, Rome sent an army under **Pompey** (husband of **Julius Caesar's** sister) to take over the Israel. **Pompey's** army broke through the fortified walls of Jerusalem, destroyed much of the city, pillaged and murdered, and took all remaining treasures of the Temple. **Pompey** appointed **Hurkenus** as king and took **Aristabulus** and his son **Alexander** in chains to Rome. But both escaped, returned to Israel, gathered 10s of thousands of Jewish freedom fighters, and conducted a rebellion against Rome so valiantly that it almost succeeded. **Aristabulus** and his son **Alexander** eventually died fighting the Romans. **Aristabulus'** surviving son **Antignos** gathered an army of freedom fighters and continued the fight against the Romans, but he too died in battle.

Between the brothers, **Hurkenus** had the weaker personality. During the civil war, he was able to stay in power only due to the military support of the Romans and the shrewdness of his gentile advisor, **Antipater**. **Antipater** started off his career as a governor over his

native country of **Edom** (on Israel's southern border), appointed by **Hurkenus**. But **Antipater** was promoted to become **Hurkenus'** advisor. As time progressed, **Antipater's** power grew, and **Hurkenus'** dependence on him increased to the point that **Hurkenus** became a figurehead. **Antipater** died, and his son Herod (Hurdus) took over as advisor.

Herod distinguished himself by brutally putting down a Jewish rebellion in Galilee. After **Caesar's assassination** in 44, Antony ruled all of Asia and married **Cleopatra IV**. Herod convinced **Antony** to make him King of the Jews in 39BC, and supplanted the Hasmonean dynasty. Although he was always under attack from Antigonus who was helped by foreign forces. **Herod** married **Myriam**, daughter of Alexander son of Aristobulus II and of Alexandra daughter of **Hurkenus II**. Antigonus held out in Jm, which Herod besieged w/Roman troops and had Antigonus beheaded.

Herod ruled from 37-4 (33yrs) executed 45 members of the aristocracy, assassinated the high priest (who was his wife's brother), his uncle (and also his brother-in-law) Yosef, the prev high priest/king Hurkenus, his wife, his mother-in-law. Switched allegiance to **Octavian** who defeated Antony.

Late in the civil war, **Hurkenus'** enemies briefly captured him and invalidating him for the high priesthood by cutting a notch in his ear. **Hurkenus** fled to **Babylonia** (in today's Iraq), leaving **Herod** to run the show. **Herod** impressed the Romans (particularly **Antony** and **Augustus**) with his brutality in putting down insurgents, and by hosting **Antony** and **Cleopatra VII** at his homes in Israel. While **Herod** was visiting **Antony** and Augustus in Rome, they proclaimed **Herod** king of the Jews. **Herod** then returned to Israel. After **Aristobulus** and his sons were killed, **Hurkenus** felt it was safe for him to return to Israel. Upon **Hurkenus'** return to Israel, **Herod** trumped up charges against him and had him killed to avoid competition for the throne.

Although **Herod** was appointed king by the Romans, he wanted to be accepted as king by the Jews themselves. But the Jews wouldn't accept him, because he was not Jewish and not of royal blood. Remember that every Jewish monarch (not to mention every army commander and every high priest) for the previous 130 years was from the Hasmonean (Maccabean) family. So he married **Hurkenus'** granddaughter, **Miriam**, who was of royal lineage from both her mother and her father. At her request, he fired the high priest and replaced him with **Miriam's** brother. So now, **Herod** had the prestige he

needed to be accepted by the Jews as their king. He was the husband of probably the most royal-blooded woman in the kingdom and the brother-in-law of the high priest.

Herod then killed anyone who might contest his eligibility to rule and anyone who might become a competitor for the throne. Accordingly, he killed all of the descendants of the Maccabees, including his wife **Miriam**, his mother-in-law **Alexandra**, his brother-in-law the high priest, and even his 2 children from his wife **Miriam** (probably because they had more royal blood than **Herod** himself did). **Herod** also killed either all of the rabbis (according to the Talmud) or almost all of the rabbis (according to Tosfos). He even killed his own uncle who had married Herod's.

And so the Hasmonean dynasty came to an end. A dynasty that was born by a single incident 130 years earlier, when an old outraged Jew (Matityahu) in a small Jewish town happened to kill a Greek soldier, which ignited a Jewish rebellion against the Greek empire and started a dynasty lasting 7 generations and 130 years, in which every king, high priest, and military commander was from this Hasmonean family, until they were all killed by Herod.

Herod had 8-10 wives, not all at the same time. He was the greatest builder of all Jewish kings. He built **Caesarea**. He tore down and rebuilt the Temple. He built a second wall around Jerusalem encompassing the suburb that had grown beyond the wall built that was built by **King Solomon (Shlomo)** 1000 years earlier.

Herod died in 4 BC, and left a triumvirate of 3 of his sons, **Archaleus**, **Phillip** and **Antipas** in charge. But this triumvirate had limited power, since they were subordinate to a succession of governors appointed by Rome, headquartered in Damascus. In 29AD, **Antipas** killed a man named **Yochanan (John the Baptist)** in English) who gathered a following by preaching the beauty of ritual purity and immersion in a mikvah and who criticized **Antipas** for marrying his brother's former(?) wife. A year later, the Roman governor **Pontius Pilate** killed one of John the Baptist's followers, **Jesus**, who was starting to attract a following of his own.

When **Octavius (Augustus) Caesar** died, **Caligula (Gaius)** became emperor. **Caligula** reduced the power of the Jewish king to a mere figurehead, and gave his governor (stationed in Damascus) more direct power over the people. The governor's Roman soldier's killed anyone who might disrupt the status quo or rally the people. **Caligula** levied heavy taxes on the Jews and plundered treasures from the Temple.

Caligula instructed his Roman governor to turn the Temple into a pagan temple. But the governor did not comply, so **Caligula** sent a messenger to the governor with

instructions for the governor commit suicide for his insubordination. But the governor ended up not having to commit suicide, because **Caligula** died soon afterward, and the messenger informing the governor of **Caligula's** death arrived before the arrival of the messenger instructing the governor to kill himself.

After the deaths of the triumvirate (**Archaleus**, **Phillip and Antipas**), **Antipas'** son **Agripas I** became the figurehead king. He was a very good king and was loved by the Jews. He converted to Judaism. He built a 3rd wall around Jerusalem to enclose the northern Jerusalem suburb that had sprung up after **Herod** had built his 2nd wall. But **Agripas** had to cease work on the 3rd wall prematurely upon receiving orders from **Nero** to desist. **Agripas** made an official visit to the Jews in Egypt, of which there were 1 million, and was well received.

The Romans oppressed the Jews with high taxes, embezzling from the Temple, and murdering of civilians who annoyed them. The oppression got so bad that in the year 66, Jews started a rebellion against Rome. The rebel leader was **Elazar** in the Galilee, grandson of a Galilean rebel leader **Chizkiya** whom **Herod** had executed decades earlier. Most Jews, including king **Agripas**, were against the revolt, figuring it would fail and only bring greater oppression. But after a succession of military successes against the Romans, many Jews joined the rebels, including the cohen **Yosef ben Gurion**, aka Josephus the historian, who was appointed commander of a Jewish brigade in the Galilee.

The rebellion eventually drove the Roman soldiers from Israel, including from Jerusalem. So **Nero** sent an army under general **Vaspasian (Aspanianus)** to subdue to the rebels. **Vaspasian** re-conquered all of Israel, one city at a time. When **Vaspasian** besieged the walled city that **Josephus'** brigade was defending, the Jewish soldiers all committed suicide, except for **Josephus** who was taken prisoner. With great difficulty, **Vaspasian** eventually succeeded in re-conquering the entire country except for Jerusalem. A multitude of Jews fled the Romans from all over Israel to seek refuge in the last city not in Roman hands, Jerusalem. The refugees included Jewish rebels, including those of the rebel army under the rebel leader **Yochanan Gish Chalav** who acted like a brutal warlord.

Vaspasian then laid siege to Jerusalem. But during the siege, **Vaspasian** received word that **Nero** had died and that he, **Vaspasian**, was appointed to become the new emperor. So **Vaspasian** lifted the siege and took his entire army back toward Rome. He carried with him many Jewish captives including king **Agripas I**, **Agripas'** son **Agripas II**, and **Josephus**. On his way to Rome, **Vaspasian** stopped in Alexandria Egypt. He left half his army under the command of his son, **Titus**, and continued

on to Rome with everyone else including the Jewish captives.

In Rome, in the year 69, **Vaspasian** was crowned caesar. He killed both **Agripas I** and **Agripas II** after hearing rumors that they were badmouthing him. He released **Josephus** from jail and appointed him advisor to his son **Titus**. Under **Vaspasian's** orders, **Josephus** traveled to Alexandria to join **Titus**. From there, **Josephus**, **Titus**, the Roman army and foreign mercenaries traveled to Jerusalem to restart siege.

During the Roman army's absence, the rebel army of the warlord **Yochanan Gish Chalav** had taken over most of Jerusalem. The high priest's son, **Elazar**, assembled his own army and took over the area of the Temple. Both armies were lawless and cruel and killed and robbed the citizens (Remember that these facts are all according to the biased account of Josephus, Titus' advisor).

To protect themselves against the rebel armies, the citizens of Jerusalem appealed to a stronger and more fearsome bandit leader, **Shimon ben Giora** who lead a 22,000-man bandit army near Jericho, to enter Jerusalem and evict the two rebel armies. **Shimon ben Giora** and his army were smuggled into Jerusalem. But **Shimon's** army could not dislodge the other 2 armies, and were able only to take over the northern suburb (I think the area bounded by **Herod's** 2nd wall and **Agripas'** 3rd wall).

The 3 armies fought among themselves, even shooting arrows into each other's compounds and burning down food warehouses in each others' neighborhoods, along with robbing and killing the citizens.

Titus kept Jerusalem under siege. But he held off attacking, figuring the Jewish rebels were doing his work for him. But what finally prompted him to attack was the following incident that he was told of:

A rich Jewish woman from across the Jordan River was among the many Jews who had taken refuge in Jerusalem. She brought along her lavish belongings, her servants and her son. But while living in Jerusalem, the gangs had stolen everything she had, leaving her and her son without even food to eat. When her son was near death from starvation, she killed him, cut his body into pieces, fried the pieces and ate the fried body parts. The gang members in the neighborhood smelled meat frying. They entered her home and accused her of hoarding food and not sharing it with them. She told them to wait a minute while she fries them up some food for them. While she was in the kitchen, they sat down around her table. She came out and placed the fried body parts in front of them to eat. They were horrified. She told them "These body parts are the fried food I was eating. You bandits stole everything I had, leaving me nothing but my son. And now when I am driven by desperation to eat my own son, you want to take

even that from me? Fine, go ahead and eat him and take even that from me, too."

Word spread around the city about this incident. It touched the hearts of the bandits to the point that they considered calling a truce. But it was too late, because **Titus** also heard about the incident, and that prompted **Titus** to decided that conditions were so bad in the city that it was time to end it all with a final attack.

At the north of the city, **Titus'** battering rams broke through **Agripas'** 3rd wall. 20,000 Roman soldiers swarmed into the city and were lured by Jews into a large building complex that the Jews had previously flooded with flammable oil. The Jews ignited the building complex, and prevented the Roman soldiers from escaping. Some Roman soldiers escaped the flames by jumping to their death from the roof. The remainder of the 20,000 Roman soldiers died in the flames. But other Roman soldiers continued attacking, and eventually broke through the 2nd wall, built by **Herod**, and even entered the Temple. **Titus** entered the Temple and was so impressed with it that he posted a group of Roman guards around the Temple to protect it and prevent anyone from entering. But Jewish fighters killed those Roman guards. And the foreign mercenaries working with the Romans set fire to the Temple, and it was totally destroyed.

After securing Jerusalem, **Titus** had one more group of rebels to hunt down before returning to Rome. The rebel leader **Elazar** (I am not sure if this was rebel leader Elazar grandson of rebel leader Chizkiya that initiated the rebellion or rebel leader Elazar son of the high priest) had escaped with his men from Jerusalem to **Masada**. **Titus** besieged Masada, forced Jewish slaves to build a tremendous earthen ramp up to Masada's walls. In the year 73, **Titus** brought battering rams up the ramp. The Talmud reports that when all seemed lost, the rebels killed their families and then themselves. But **Josephus'** account is that the rebels killed their families and then launched a last-stand attack against the Romans and all died fighting the Romans.

After defeating the last rebel stronghold, Masada, **Titus** returned with his army to Rome. He took with him 700 rebels that he captured during his campaign against the Jews. At each city **Titus** passed on his way to Rome, he paraded the prisoners and fed some of them to the lions. When he arrived in Rome, he made a final parade and fed the last of the prisoners to the lions. **Josephus** was allowed to retire in peace in Rome. He wrote his famous book on world history, including his experiences with the Roman army.

JEWISH HISTORY FROM 175BCE to 70CE

(FROM BEGINNING OF THE MACCABEES TO DESTRUCTION OF THE TEMPLE, MAINLY BASED ON JOSEPHUS)

