

SPEECH ON JEWISH HISTORY DURING YEARS 70-135 Page 1 of 2

My speech today continues where my last speech left off. My last speech recounted the events leading up to the destruction of the 2nd Temple in the year 70.

As I described in my last speech, **Vespasian** (Asparyanus) conquered the country of Israel, one city at a time, until he reached Jerusalem. Then he laid siege to Jerusalem. In the middle of the siege, Vespasian returned to Rome to become the next Roman emperor, and left the siege in the hands of his son, **Titus**.

Under the command of **Titus**, the Roman army broke through the city walls, and spent the next 3 weeks killing, burning and looting its way through the city until it reached the Temple. The Roman army plundered everything of value from the Temple, and then burned it down. Then the Roman army demolished almost all of the city walls, so that the destruction of Jerusalem would be complete.

That is where my last speech left off.

Now I will recount what happened over the following 60 years. A list of Roman emperors that ruled over those 60 years following the destruction of the Temple are listed in accompanying poster, along with their images and the dates they ruled.

A common theme over the 60 year period following the destruction of the Temple was the persistent hope, by Jews, that Rome would allow the Jews to rebuild the Jewish Temple. After all, Rome had allowed other nations it conquered to rebuild their temples.

Another common theme during that period is the minting of what historians call "**Judea Capta coins**". Judea Capta coins were issued by Rome, over the course of 25 years, commemorating Rome's defeat of the Jews. This is an example of front and back sides of a Judea Capta coin. One side of the coin is inscribed with the words Judea Capta (Judea captured), with an image of a weeping woman representing the Jewish nation. The opposite side has an image of Emperor Vespasian, with his name surrounding his image. Judea Capta coins were minted at locations throughout the Roman Empire. Judea Capta coins were issued in 3 metals: bronze, silver and gold. Judea Capta coins were issued in every denomination, and in at least 48 different designs over a 25 year period after the destruction of the Temple. The exceptional diversity and prevalence of these Judea Capta coins demonstrated how proud Rome was for destroying Jerusalem and the Temple.



After defeating Judea, Emperor **Vespasian** imposed what historians call a "**Jewish tax**". The Jewish tax was an annual tax levied on every Jew living in the Roman Empire, to pay for building and maintenance of a temple to Jupiter in Rome. This Jewish tax was a financial burden for the Jews. It was also an emotional burden, since the Jews' anguish of losing their Jewish Temple was reinforced by having to pay for their conqueror's pagan temple.

Jews hoped Vespasian would allow them to rebuild the Temple. However, Vespasian glorified himself so much on how he had destroyed the Temple, that there was no way he would allow it to be rebuilt. In year 79, Emperor Vespasian died.

Vespasian's successor was his oldest son **Titus**, who had completed the destruction of Jerusalem. During Titus' 2 year rule, he built the famous **Colosseum** in Rome, and the famous volcanic eruption of **Mt. Vesuvius** occurred.

Titus' successor was his younger brother **Domitian**. Jews were initially optimistic about Domitian. Domitian was not a warrior and was not involved in destroying the Temple, so Jews hoped Domitian would rescind the demeaning Jewish tax and allow rebuilding of the Temple. But that did not occur. Throughout his reign, Domitian took pride on how his father and brother defeated the Jews and destroyed the Temple. Domitian built the **Arch of Titus**, honoring his older brother's (Titus') defeat of the Jews. **Domitian** continued enforcing the Jewish tax and minting the demeaning Judea Capta coins. **Domitian** became a paranoid dictator. He executed at least 12 senior ministers (consuls). One of senior minister he executed was his own cousin (Flavius Clemens), for the crime of "drifting into Jewish ways". **Domitian** was assassinated in 96.

The next emperor was **Nerva**. He was an enlightened reformer. He stopped minting of Judea Capta coins and rescinded the Jewish tax. Nerva might have allowed the Jews to rebuild the Temple, had he not died just 15 months after becoming emperor.

The next emperor was **Trajan**. **Trajan** was the consummate conqueror. Trajan conquered many countries for his personal glory. He led the greatest

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military expansion in Roman history. In the year 115 (2 years before his death), Trajan was attacking 2 countries in northern Iran -- Parthia & Adiabene. Both of these countries had significant Jewish populations and respected Jews. In fact, some members of Adiabene's royal family converted to Judaism, and some of them even made aliyah to Israel. When Trajan was attacking these 2 nations in northern Iran, Jews in northern Africa (more specifically along in Libya, Egypt & Cyprus) rose up in rebellion. Jews in Mesopotamia (Iraq) joined the rebellion. Emperor Trajan was bogged down in Parthia, so to quell the rebellions, Trajan sent general Turbo to massacre the Jews in northern Africa and sent general Quietus to massacre the Jews in Mesopotamia. These rebellions were called the War of Quietus (or Kito's War). Trajan died in 117.

Trajan's successor was his cousin, **Hadrian**. At first, Hadrian seemed good. Hadrian executed the evil general Quietus (who had massacred Jews). Hadrian relinquished some countries that his predecessor had conquered (Mesopotamia & Armenia & Parthia).

Hadrian was enlightened, cultured, loved literature, learned different languages, and built pagan temples, and built the 80-mile-long wall in England called Hadrian's Wall. Hadrian went on a goodwill tour throughout the Roman Empire. His last stop on the goodwill tour was Judea. When visiting the ruins of Jerusalem, **Hadrian** revealed his grand plan to build a new Roman city over the ruins of Jerusalem. His new city would be spectacular. It would be home to a Roman legion. It would be home to different pagan temples, including a pagan temple to Jupiter on the spot where the Jewish Temple previously stood. The temple to Jupiter would be paid for by the Jewish tax. It would be off limits to Jews. It would be called

Aelia Capitolina (Aelia was Hadrian's nickname, and Capitolina was Jupiter's nickname). Hadrian changed the name of the country, from the name Judea, to **Philistine (or Palestine)** which was the name of the ancient enemy of Jews. Hadrian's city was eventually built. It was spectacular. You can see photos of archeological remnants of it ruins on the Internet.

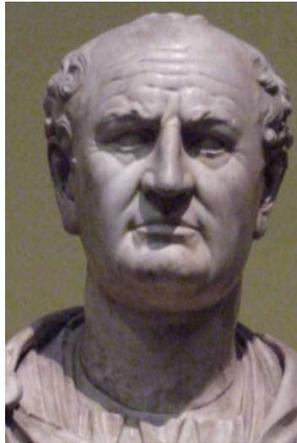
Hadrian also outlawed the practice of Judaism under pain of death. Religious Jews kept practicing Judaism in hiding. Many of them were discovered and tortured to death by Roman authorities. The authorities were often tipped off by informants. Some informants were antisemitic Jews. Antisemitic Jews also maligned religious Jews to the Roman authorities. The Sanhedrin added a 19th paragraph to the Shmoneh Esrai prayer asking Gd to thwart the efforts of the antisemitic Jewish.

For the previous 60 years, as long as Jerusalem remained desolate, the Jews could hope that Jerusalem would one day be rebuilt. However, those hopes were impossible now with Jerusalem replaced by a pagan city, with a pagan name (Aelia Capitolina), pagan temples, a totally pagan populace, in a country whose name was changed to a pagan one (Palestine), and with practicing Judaism outlawed.

In the year 132, the Jews rebelled against Rome, under the leadership of **Shimon Bar Kochba**. After the Jews won some initial battles, the Romans called in massive army. The Roman army crushed the revolt and massacred many hundreds of thousands of Jews.

Jewish historians point out that nowadays, 1900 years later, the Roman Empire is gone, while the Jewish state survives.

VESPASIAN
69-79



NERVA
96-98



TRAJAN
98-117



TITUS
79-81



HADRIAN
117-138



DOMITIAN
81-96

