

**BOOK 6**

**FROM THE GREAT  
EXTREMITY TO WHICH THE  
JEWS WERE REDUCED TO  
THE TAKING OF JERUSALEM  
BY TITUS**

**Flavius Josephus**

## Chapter 1

# **The Romans Made an Assault Upon the Tower of Antonia**

1. Thus did the miseries of Jerusalem grow worse and worse every day, and the seditious were still more irritated by the calamities they were under, even while the famine preyed upon themselves, after it had preyed upon the people. And indeed the multitude of carcasses that lay in heaps one upon another was a horrible sight, and produced a pestilential stench, which was a hinderance to those that would make sallies out of the city, and fight the enemy: but as those were to go in battle-array, who had been already used to ten thousand murders, and must tread upon those dead bodies as they marched along, so were not they terrified, nor did they pity men as they marched over them; nor did they deem this affront offered to the deceased to be any ill omen to themselves; but as they had their right hands already polluted with the murders of their own countrymen, and in that condition ran out to fight with foreigners, they seem to me to have cast a reproach upon God himself, as if he were too slow in punishing them; for the war was not now gone on with as if they had any hope of victory; for they gloried after a brutish manner in that despair of deliverance they were already in. And now the Romans, although they were greatly distressed in getting together their materials, raised their banks in one and twenty days, after they had cut down all the trees that were in the country that adjoined to the city, and that for ninety furlongs round about, as I have already related. And truly the very view itself of the country was a melancholy thing; for those places which were before adorned with trees and pleasant gardens were now become a desolate country every way, and its trees were all cut down: nor could any foreigner that had formerly seen Judea and the most beautiful suburbs of the city, and now saw it as a desert, but lament and mourn sadly at so great a change: for the war had laid all the signs of beauty quite waste: nor if any

one that had known the place before, had come on a sudden to it now, would he have known it again; but though he were at the city itself, yet would he have inquired for it notwithstanding.

2. And now the banks were finished, they afforded a foundation for fear both to the Romans and to the Jews; for the Jews expected that the city would be taken, unless they could burn those banks, as did the Romans expect that, if these were once burnt down, they should never be able to take it; for there was a mighty scarcity of materials, and the bodies of the soldiers began to fail with such hard labors, as did their souls faint with so many instances of ill success; nay, the very calamities themselves that were in the city proved a greater discouragement to the Romans than those within the city; for they found the fighting men of the Jews to be not at all mollified among such their sore afflictions, while they had themselves perpetually less and less hopes of success, and their banks were forced to yield to the stratagems of the enemy, their engines to the firmness of their wall, and their closest fights to the boldness of their attack; and, what was their greatest discouragement of all, they found the Jews' courageous souls to be superior to the multitude of the miseries they were under, by their sedition, their famine, and the war itself; insomuch that they were ready to imagine that the violence of their attacks was invincible, and that the alacrity they showed would not be discouraged by their calamities; for what would not those be able to bear if they should be fortunate, who turned their very misfortunes to the improvement of their valor! These considerations made the Romans to keep a stronger guard about their banks than they formerly had done.

3. But now John and his party took care for securing themselves afterward, even in case this wall should be thrown down, and fell to their work before the battering rams were brought against them. Yet did they not compass what they endeavored to do, but as they were gone out with their torches, they came back under great discouragement before they came near to the banks; and the reasons were these: that, in the first place, their conduct

did not seem to be unanimous, but they went out in distinct parties, and at distinct intervals, and after a slow manner, and timorously, and, to say all in a word, without a Jewish courage; for they were now defective in what is peculiar to our nation, that is, in boldness, in violence of assault, and in running upon the enemy all together, and in persevering in what they go about, though they do not at first succeed in it; but they now went out in a more languid manner than usual, and at the same time found the Romans set in array, and more courageous than ordinary, and that they guarded their banks both with their bodies and their entire armor, and this to such a degree on all sides, that they left no room for the fire to get among them, and that every one of their souls was in such good courage, that they would sooner die than desert their ranks; for besides their notion that all their hopes were cut off, in case these their works were once burnt, the soldiers were greatly ashamed that subtlety should quite be too hard for courage, madness for armor, multitude for skill, and Jews for Romans. The Romans had now also another advantage, in that their engines for sieges co-operated with them in throwing darts and stones as far as the Jews, when they were coming out of the city; whereby the man that fell became an impediment to him that was next to him, as did the danger of going farther make them less zealous in their attempts; and for those that had run under the darts, some of them were terrified by the good order and closeness of the enemies' ranks before they came to a close fight, and others were pricked with their spears, and turned back again; at length they reproached one another for their cowardice, and retired without doing any thing. This attack was made upon the first day of the month Panemus [Tamuz.] So when the Jews were retreated, the Romans brought their engines, although they had all the while stones thrown at them from the tower of Antonia, and were assaulted by fire and sword, and by all sorts of darts, which necessity afforded the Jews to make use of; for although these had great dependence on their own wall, and a contempt of the Roman engines, yet did they endeavor to hinder the Romans from bringing them. Now these Romans struggled hard, on the contrary, to bring them, as deeming that this zeal of the Jews was in order to avoid any impression to be

made on the tower of Antonia, because its wall was but weak, and its foundations rotten. However, that tower did not yield to the blows given it from the engines; yet did the Romans bear the impressions made by the enemies' darts which were perpetually cast at them, and did not give way to any of those dangers that came upon them from above, and so they brought their engines to bear. But then, as they were beneath the other, and were sadly wounded by the stones thrown down upon them, some of them threw their shields over their bodies, and partly with their hands, and partly with their bodies, and partly with crows, they undermined its foundations, and with great pains they removed four of its stones. Then night came upon both sides, and put an end to this struggle for the present; however, that night the wall was so shaken by the battering rams in that place where John had used his stratagem before, and had undermined their banks, that the ground then gave way, and the wall fell down suddenly.

4. When this accident had unexpectedly happened, the minds of both parties were variously affected; for though one would expect that the Jews would be discouraged, because this fall of their wall was unexpected by them, and they had made no provision in that case, yet did they pull up their courage, because the tower of Antonia itself was still standing; as was the unexpected joy of the Romans at this fall of the wall soon quenched by the sight they had of another wall, which John and his party had built within it. However, the attack of this second wall appeared to be easier than that of the former, because it seemed a thing of greater facility to get up to it through the parts of the former wall that were now thrown down. This new wall appeared also to be much weaker than the tower of Antonia, and accordingly the Romans imagined that it had been erected so much on the sudden, that they should soon overthrow it: yet did not any body venture now to go up to this wall; for that such as first ventured so to do must certainly be killed.

5. And now Titus, upon consideration that the alacrity of soldiers in war is chiefly excited by hopes and by good words, and that exhortations and

promises do frequently make men to forget the hazards they run, nay, sometimes to despise death itself, got together the most courageous part of his army, and tried what he could do with his men by these methods. "O fellow soldiers," said he, "to make an exhortation to men to do what hath no peril in it, is on that very account inglorious to such to whom that exhortation is made; and indeed so it is in him that makes the exhortation, an argument of his own cowardice also. I therefore think that such exhortations ought then only to be made use of when affairs are in a dangerous condition, and yet are worthy of being attempted by every one themselves; accordingly, I am fully of the same opinion with you, that it is a difficult task to go up this wall; but that it is proper for those that desire reputation for their valor to struggle with difficulties in such cases will then appear, when I have particularly shown that it is a brave thing to die with glory, and that the courage here necessary shall not go unrewarded in those that first begin the attempt. And let my first argument to move you to it be taken from what probably some would think reasonable to dissuade you, I mean the constancy and patience of these Jews, even under their ill successes; for it is unbecoming you, who are Romans and my soldiers, who have in peace been taught how to make wars, and who have also been used to conquer in those wars, to be inferior to Jews, either in action of the hand, or in courage of the soul, and this especially when you are at the conclusion of your victory, and are assisted by God himself; for as to our misfortunes, they have been owing to the madness of the Jews, while their sufferings have been owing to your valor, and to the assistance God hath afforded you; for as to the seditions they have been in, and the famine they are under, and the siege they now endure, and the fall of their walls without our engines, what can they all be but demonstrations of God's anger against them, and of his assistance afforded us? It will not therefore be proper for you, either to show yourselves inferior to those to whom you are really superior, or to betray that Divine assistance which is afforded you. And, indeed, how can it be esteemed otherwise than a base and unworthy thing, that while the Jews, who need not be much ashamed if they be deserted, because they have long learned to be

slaves to others, do yet despise death, that they may be so no longer; and do make sallies into the very midst of us frequently, not in hopes of conquering us, but merely for a demonstration of their courage; we, who have gotten possession of almost all the world that belongs to either land or sea, to whom it will be a great shame if we do not conquer them, do not once undertake any attempt against our enemies wherein there is much danger, but sit still idle, with such brave arms as we have, and only wait till the famine and fortune do our business themselves, and this when we have it in our power, with some small hazard, to gain all that we desire! For if we go up to this tower of Antonia, we gain the city; for if there should be any more occasion for fighting against those within the city, which I do not suppose there will, since we shall then be upon the top of the hill (1) and be upon our enemies before they can have taken breath, these advantages promise us no less than a certain and sudden victory. As for myself, I shall at present wave any commendation of those who die in war, (2) and omit to speak of the immortality of those men who are slain in the midst of their martial bravery; yet cannot I forbear to imprecate upon those who are of a contrary disposition, that they may die in time of peace, by some distemper or other, since their souls are condemned to the grave, together with their bodies. For what man of virtue is there who does not know, that those souls which are severed from their fleshly bodies in battles by the sword are received by the ether, that purest of elements, and joined to that company which are placed among the stars; that they become good demons, and propitious heroes, and show themselves as such to their posterity afterwards? while upon those souls that wear away in and with their distempered bodies comes a subterranean night to dissolve them to nothing, and a deep oblivion to take away all the remembrance of them, and this notwithstanding they be clean from all spots and defilements of this world; so that, in this ease, the soul at the same time comes to the utmost bounds of its life, and of its body, and of its memorial also. But since he hath determined that death is to come of necessity upon all men, a sword is a better instrument for that purpose than any disease whatsoever. Why is it not then a very mean thing for us not to

yield up that to the public benefit which we must yield up to fate? And this discourse have I made, upon the supposition that those who at first attempt to go upon this wall must needs be killed in the attempt, though still men of true courage have a chance to escape even in the most hazardous undertakings. For, in the first place, that part of the former wall that is thrown down is easily to be ascended; and for the new-built wall, it is easily destroyed. Do you, therefore, many of you, pull up your courage, and set about this work, and do you mutually encourage and assist one another; and this your bravery will soon break the hearts of your enemies; and perhaps such a glorious undertaking as yours is may be accomplished without bloodshed. For although it be justly to be supposed that the Jews will try to hinder you at your first beginning to go up to them; yet when you have once concealed yourselves from them, and driven them away by force, they will not be able to sustain your efforts against them any longer, though but a few of you prevent them, and get over the wall. As for that person who first mounts the wall, I should blush for shame if I did not make him to be envied of others, by those rewards I would bestow upon him. If such a one escape with his life, he shall have the command of others that are now but his equals; although it be true also that the greatest rewards will accrue to such as die in the attempt." (3)

6. Upon this speech of Titus, the rest of the multitude were afrighted at so great a danger. But there was one, whose name was Sabinus, a soldier that served among the cohorts, and a Syrian by birth, who appeared to be of very great fortitude, both in the actions he had done, and the courage of his soul he had shown; although any body would have thought, before he came to his work, that he was of such a weak constitution of body, that he was not fit to be a soldier; for his color was black, his flesh was lean and thin, and lay close together; but there was a certain heroic soul that dwelt in this small body, which body was indeed much too narrow for that peculiar courage which was in him. Accordingly he was the first that rose up, when he thus spake: "I readily surrender up myself to thee, O Caesar; I first ascend the



wall, and I heartily wish that my fortune may follow my courage and my resolution And if some ill fortune grudge me the success of my undertaking, take notice that my ill success will not be unexpected, but that I choose death voluntarily for thy sake." When he had said this, and had spread out his sheild over his head with his left hand, and hill, with his right hand, drawn his sword, he marched up to the wall, just about the sixth hour of the day. There followed him eleven others, and no more, that resolved to imitate his bravery; but still this was the principal person of them all, and went first, as excited by a divine fury. Now those that guarded the wall shot at them from thence, and cast innumerable darts upon them from every side; they also rolled very large stones upon them, which overthrew some of those eleven that were with him. But as for Sabinus himself, he met the darts that were cast at him and though he was overwhelmed with them, yet did he not leave off the violence of his attack before he had gotten up on the top of the wall, and had put the enemy to flight. For as the Jews were astonished at his great strength, and the bravery of his soul, and as, withal, they imagined more of them had got upon the wall than really had, they were put to flight. And now one cannot but complain here of fortune, as still envious at virtue, and always hindering the performance of glorious achievements: this was the case of the man before us, when he had just obtained his purpose; for he then stumbled at a certain large stone, and fell down upon it headlong, with a very great noise. Upon which the Jews turned back, and when they saw him to be alone, and fallen down also, they threw darts at him from every side. However. he got upon his knee, and covered himself with his shield, and at the first defended himself against them, and wounded many of those that came near him; but he was soon forced to relax his right hand, by the multitude of the wounds that had been given him, till at length he was quite covered over with darts before he gave up the ghost. He was one who deserved a better fate, by reason of his bravery; but, as might be expected, he fell under so vast an attempt. As for the rest of his partners, the Jews dashed three of them to pieces with stones, and slew them as they were gotten up to the top of the wall; the other eight being wounded, were pulled down, and

carried back to the camp. These things were done upon the third day of the month Panemus [Tamuz].

7. Now two days afterward twelve of those men that were on the forefront, and kept watch upon the banks, got together, and called to them the standard-bearer of the fifth legion, and two others of a troop of horsemen, and one trumpeter; these went without noise, about the ninth hour of the night, through the ruins, to the tower of Antonia; and when they had cut the throats of the first guards of the place, as they were asleep, they got possession of the wall, and ordered the trumpeter to sound his trumpet. Upon which the rest of the guard got up on the sudden, and ran away, before any body could see how many they were that were gotten up; for, partly from the fear they were in, and partly from the sound of the trumpet which they heard, they imagined a great number of the enemy were gotten up. But as soon as Caesar heard the signal, he ordered the army to put on their armor immediately, and came thither with his commanders, and first of all ascended, as did the chosen men that were with him. And as the Jews were flying away to the temple, they fell into that mine which John had dug under the Roman banks. Then did the seditious of both the bodies of the Jewish army, as well that belonging to John as that belonging to Simon, drive them away; and indeed were no way wanting as to the highest degree of force and alacrity; for they esteemed themselves entirely ruined if once the Romans got into the temple, as did the Romans look upon the same thing as the beginning of their entire conquest. So a terrible battle was fought at the entrance of the temple, while the Romans were forcing their way, in order to get possession of that temple, and the Jews were driving them back to the tower of Antonia; in which battle the darts were on both sides useless, as well as the spears, and both sides drew their swords, and fought it out hand to hand. Now during this struggle the positions of the men were undistinguished on both sides, and they fought at random, the men being intermixed one with another, and confounded, by reason of the narrowness of the place; while the noise that was made fell on the ear after an indistinct

manner, because it was so very loud. Great slaughter was now made on both sides, and the combatants trod upon the bodies and the armor of those that were dead, and dashed them to pieces. Accordingly, to which side soever the battle inclined, those that had the advantage exhorted one another to go on, as did those that were beaten make great lamentation. But still there was no room for flight, nor for pursuit, but disorderly revolutions and retreats, while the armies were intermixed one with another; but those that were in the first ranks were under the necessity of killing or being killed, without any way for escaping; for those on both sides that came behind forced those before them to go on, without leaving any space between the armies. At length the Jews' violent zeal was too hard for the Romans' skill, and the battle already inclined entirely that way; for the fight had lasted from the ninth hour of the night till the seventh hour of the day, While the Jews came on in crowds, and had the danger the temple was in for their motive; the Romans having no more here than a part of their army; for those legions, on which the soldiers on that side depended, were not come up to them. So it was at present thought sufficient by the Romans to take possession of the tower of Antonia.

8. But there was one Julian, a centurion, that came from Eithynia, a man he was of great reputation, whom I had formerly seen in that war, and one of the highest fame, both for his skill in war, his strength of body, and the courage of his soul. This man, seeing the Romans giving ground, and ill a sad condition, (for he stood by Titus at the tower of Antonia,) leaped out, and of himself alone put the Jews to flight, when they were already conquerors, and made them retire as far as the corner of the inner court of the temple; from him the multitude fled away in crowds, as supposing that neither his strength nor his violent attacks could be those of a mere man. Accordingly, he rushed through the midst of the Jews, as they were dispersed all abroad, and killed those that he caught. Nor, indeed, was there any sight that appeared more wonderful in the eyes of Caesar, or more terrible to others, than this. However, he was himself pursued by fate, which it all not possible that he, who was but a mortal man, should escape; for as he had shoes all full

of thick and sharp nails (4) as had every one of the other soldiers, so when he ran on the pavement of the temple, he slipped, and fell down upon his back with a very great noise, which was made by his armor. This made those that were running away to turn back; whereupon those Romans that were in the tower of Antonia set up a great shout, as they were in fear for the man. But the Jews got about him in crowds, and struck at him with their spears and with their swords on all sides. Now he received a great many of the strokes of these iron weapons upon his shield, and often attempted to get up again, but was thrown down by those that struck at him; yet did he, as he lay along, stab many of them with his sword. Nor was he soon killed, as being covered with his helmet and his breastplate in all those parts of his body where he might be mortally wounded; he also pulled his neck close to his body, till all his other limbs were shattered, and nobody durst come to defend him, and then he yielded to his fate. Now Caesar was deeply affected on account of this man of so great fortitude, and especially as he was killed in the sight of so many people; he was desirous himself to come to his assistance, but the place would not give him leave, while such as could have done it were too much terrified to attempt it. Thus when Julian had struggled with death a great while, and had let but few of those that had given him his mortal wound go off unhurt, he had at last his throat cut, though not without some difficulty, and left behind him a very great fame, not only among the Romans, and with Caesar himself, but among his enemies also; then did the Jews catch up his dead body, and put the Romans to flight again, and shut them up in the tower of Antonia. Now those that most signalized themselves, and fought most zealously in this battle of the Jewish side, were one Alexas and Gyphtheus, of John's party, and of Simon's party were Malachias, and Judas the son of Merto, and James the son of Sosas, the commander of the Idumeans; and of the zealots, two brethren, Simon and Judas, the sons of Jairus.

## Footnotes:

1. Reland notes here, very pertinently, that the tower of Antonia stood higher than the floor of the temple or court adjoining to it; and that accordingly they descended thence into the temple, as Josephus elsewhere speaks also. See Book VI. ch. 2. sect. 5.
2. In this speech of Titus we may clearly see the notions which the Romans then had of death, and of the happy state of those who died bravely in war, and the contrary estate of those who died ignobly in their beds by sickness. Reland here also produces two parallel passages, the one out of Atonia Janus Marcellinus, concerning the Alani, lib. 31, that "they judged that man happy who laid down his life in battle ;" the other of Valerius Maximus, lib. 11. ch. 6, who says, "that the Cimbri and Celtiberi exulted for joy in the army, as being to go out of the world gloriously and happily."
3. See the note on p. 809.
4. No wonder that this Julian, who had so many nails in his shoes, slipped upon the pavement of the temple, which was smooth, and laid with marble of different colors.

## Chapter 2

### **Titus Persuaded Josephus to Exhort the Jews Again to a Surrender**

1. And now Titus gave orders to his soldiers that were with him to dig up the foundations of the tower of Antonia, and make him a ready passage for his army to come up; while he himself had Josephus brought to him, (for he had been informed that on that very day, which was the seventeenth day (1) of Panemus, [Tamuz,] the sacrifice called "the Daily Sacrifice" had failed, and had not been offered to God, for want of men to offer it, and that the people were grievously troubled at it,) and commanded him to say the same things to John that he had said before, that if he had any malicious inclination for fighting, he might come out with as many of his men as he pleased, in order to fight, without the danger of destroying either his city or temple; but that he desired he would not defile the temple, nor thereby offend against God. That he might, if he pleased, offer the sacrifices which were now discontinued by any of the Jews whom he should pitch upon. Upon this Josephus stood in such a place where he might be heard, not by John only, but by many more, and then declared to them what Caesar had given him in charge, and this in the Hebrew language. (2) So he earnestly prayed them to spare their own city, and to prevent that fire which was just ready to seize upon the temple, and to offer their usual sacrifices to God therein. At these words of his a great sadness and silence were observed among the people. But the tyrant himself cast many reproaches upon Josephus, with imprecations besides; and at last added this withal, that he did never fear the taking of the city, because it was God's own city. In answer to which Josephus said thus with a loud voice: "To be sure thou hast kept this city wonderfully pure for God's sake; the temple also continues entirely unpolluted! Nor hast thou been guilty of ally impiety against him for whose assistance thou hopest! He still receives his accustomed sacrifices! Vile

wretch that thou art! if any one should deprive thee of thy daily food, thou wouldst esteem him to be an enemy to thee; but thou hopest to have that God for thy supporter in this war whom thou hast deprived of his everlasting worship; and thou imputest those sins to the Romans, who to this very time take care to have our laws observed, and almost compel these sacrifices to be still offered to God, which have by thy means been intermitted! Who is there that can avoid groans and lamentations at the amazing change that is made in this city? since very foreigners and enemies do now correct that impiety which thou hast occasioned; while thou, who art a Jew, and wast educated in our laws, art become a greater enemy to them than the others. But still, John, it is never dishonorable to repent, and amend what hath been done amiss, even at the last extremity. Thou hast an instance before thee in Jechoniah, (3) the king of the Jews, if thou hast a mind to save the city, who, when the king of Babylon made war against him, did of his own accord go out of this city before it was taken, and did undergo a voluntary captivity with his family, that the sanctuary might not be delivered up to the enemy, and that he might not see the house of God set on fire; on which account he is celebrated among all the Jews, in their sacred memorials, and his memory is become immortal, and will be conveyed fresh down to our posterity through all ages. This, John, is an excellent example in such a time of danger, and I dare venture to promise that the Romans shall still forgive thee. And take notice that I, who make this exhortation to thee, am one of thine own nation; I, who am a Jew, do make this promise to thee. And it will become thee to consider who I am that give thee this counsel, and whence I am derived; for while I am alive I shall never be in such slavery, as to forego my own kindred, or forget the laws of our forefathers. Thou hast indignation at me again, and makest a clamor at me, and reproachest me; indeed I cannot deny but I am worthy of worse treatment than all this amounts to, because, in opposition to fate, I make this kind invitation to thee, and endeavor to force deliverance upon those whom God hath condemned. And who is there that does not know what the writings of the ancient prophets contain in them, - and particularly that oracle which is just now going to be fulfilled upon this

miserable city? For they foretold that this city should be then taken when somebody shall begin the slaughter of his own countrymen. And are not both the city and the entire temple now full of the dead bodies of your countrymen? It is God, therefore, it is God himself who is bringing on this fire, to purge that city and temple by means of the Romans, (4) and is going to pluck up this city, which is full of your pollutions."

2. As Josephus spoke these words, with groans and tears in his eyes, his voice was intercepted by sobs. However, the Romans could not but pity the affliction he was under, and wonder at his conduct. But for John, and those that were with him, they were but the more exasperated against the Romans on this account, and were desirous to get Josephus also into their power: yet did that discourse influence a great many of the better sort; and truly some of them were so afraid of the guards set by the seditious, that they tarried where they were, but still were satisfied that both they and the city were doomed to destruction. Some also there were who, watching a proper opportunity when they might quietly get away, fled to the Romans, of whom were the high priests Joseph and Jesus, and of the sons of high priests three, whose father was Ishmael, who was beheaded in Cyrene, and four sons of Matthias, as also one son of the other Matthias, who ran away after his father's death, (5) and whose father was slain by Simon the son of Gioras, with three of his sons, as I have already related; many also of the other nobility went over to the Romans, together with the high priests. Now Caesar not only received these men very kindly in other respects, but, knowing they would not willingly live after the customs of other nations, he sent them to Gophna, and desired them to remain there for the present, and told them, that when he was gotten clear of this war, he would restore each of them to their possessions again; so they cheerfully retired to that small city which was allotted them, without fear of any danger. But as they did not appear, the seditious gave out again that these deserters were slain by the Romans, which was done in order to deter the rest from running away, by fear of the like treatment. This trick of theirs succeeded now for a while, as did the like trick before; for the rest



were hereby deterred from deserting, by fear of the like treatment.

3. However, when Titus had recalled those men from Gophna, he gave orders that they should go round the wall, together with Josephus, and show themselves to the people; upon which a great many fled to the Romans. These men also got in a great number together, and stood before the Romans, and besought the seditious, with groans and tears in their eyes, in the first place to receive the Romans entirely into the city, and save that their own place of residence again; but that, if they would not agree to such a proposal, they would at least depart out of the temple, and save the holy house for their own use; for that the Romans would not venture to set the sanctuary on fire but under the most pressing necessity. Yet did the seditious still more and more contradict them; and while they cast loud and bitter reproaches upon these deserters, they also set their engines for throwing of darts, and javelins, and stones upon the sacred gates of the temple, at due distances from one another, insomuch that all the space round about within the temple might be compared to a burying-ground, so great was the number of the dead bodies therein; as might the holy house itself be compared to a citadel. Accordingly, these men rushed upon these holy places in their armor, that were otherwise unapproachable, and that while their hands were yet warm with the blood of their own people which they had shed; nay, they proceeded to such great transgressions, that the very same indignation which Jews would naturally have against Romans, had they been guilty of such abuses against them, the Romans now had against Jews, for their impiety in regard to their own religious customs. Nay, indeed, there were none of the Roman soldiers who did not look with a sacred horror upon the holy house, and adored it, and wished that the robbers would repent before their miseries became incurable.

4. Now Titus was deeply affected with this state of things, and reproached John and his party, and said to them, "Have not you, vile wretches that you are, by our permission, put up this partition-wall before your sanctuary? Have not you been allowed to put up the pillars thereto

belonging, at due distances, and on it to engrave in Greek, and in your own letters, this prohibition, that no foreigner should go beyond that wall. (6) Have not we given you leave to kill such as go beyond it, though he were a Roman? And what do you do now, you pernicious villains? Why do you trample upon dead bodies in this temple? and why do you pollute this holy house with the blood of both foreigners and Jews themselves? I appeal to the gods of my own country, and to every god that ever had any regard to this place; (for I do not suppose it to be now regarded by any of them;) I also appeal to my own army, and to those Jews that are now with me, and even to yourselves, that I do not force you to defile this your sanctuary; and if you will but change the place whereon you will fight, no Roman shall either come near your sanctuary, or offer any affront to it; nay, I will endeavor to preserve you your holy house, whether you will or not." (7)

5. As Josephus explained these things from the mouth of Caesar, both the robbers and the tyrant thought that these exhortations proceeded from Titus's fear, and not from his good-will to them, and grew insolent upon it. But when Titus saw that these men were neither to be moved by commiseration towards themselves, nor had any concern upon them to have the holy house spared, he proceeded unwillingly to go on again with the war against them. He could not indeed bring all his army against them, the place was so narrow; but choosing thirty soldiers of the most valiant out of every hundred, and committing a thousand to each tribune, and making Cerealis their commander-in-chief, he gave orders that they should attack the guards of the temple about the ninth hour of that night. But as he was now in his armor, and preparing to go down with them, his friends would not let him go, by reason of the greatness of the danger, and what the commanders suggested to them; for they said that he would do more by sitting above in the tower of Antonia, as a dispenser of rewards to those soldiers that signalized themselves in the fight, than by coming down and hazarding his own person in the forefront of them; for that they would all fight stoutly while Caesar looked upon them. With this advice Caesar complied, and said

that the only reason he had for such compliance with the soldiers was this, that he might be able to judge of their courageous actions, and that no valiant soldier might lie concealed, and miss of his reward, and no cowardly soldier might go unpunished; but that he might himself be an eye-witness, and able to give evidence of all that was done, who was to be the disposer of punishments and rewards to them. So he sent the soldiers about their work at the hour forementioned, while he went out himself to a higher place in the tower of Antonia, whence he might see what was done, and there waited with impatience to see the event.

6. However, the soldiers that were sent did not find the guards of the temple asleep, as they hoped to have done; but were obliged to fight with them immediately hand to hand, as they rushed with violence upon them with a great shout. Now as soon as the rest within the temple heard that shout of those that were upon the watch, they ran out in troops upon them. Then did the Romans receive the onset of those that came first upon them; but those that followed them fell upon their own troops, and many of them treated their own soldiers as if they had been enemies; for the great confused noise that was made on both sides hindered them from distinguishing one another's voices, as did the darkness of the night hinder them from the like distinction by the sight, besides that blindness which arose otherwise also from the passion and the fear they were in at the same time; for which reason it was all one to the soldiers who it was they struck at. However, this ignorance did less harm to the Romans than to the Jews, because they were joined together under their shields, and made their sallies more regularly than the others did, and each of them remembered their watch-word; while the Jews were perpetually dispersed abroad, and made their attacks and retreats at random, and so did frequently seem to one another to be enemies; for every one of them received those of their own men that came back in the dark as Romans, and made an assault upon them; so that more of them were wounded by their own men than by the enemy, till, upon the coming on of the day, the nature of the right was discerned by the eye afterward. Then did

they stand in battle-array in distinct bodies, and cast their darts regularly, and regularly defended themselves; nor did either side yield or grow weary. The Romans contended with each other who should fight the most strenuously, both single men and entire regiments, as being under the eye of Titus; and every one concluded that this day would begin his promotion if he fought bravely. What were the great encouragements of the Jews to act vigorously were, their fear for themselves and for the temple, and the presence of their tyrant, who exhorted some, and beat and threatened others, to act courageously. Now, it so happened, that this fight was for the most part a stationary one, wherein the soldiers went on and came back in a short time, and suddenly; for there was no long space of ground for either of their flights or pursuits. But still there was a tumultuous noise among the Romans from the tower of Antonia, who loudly cried out upon all occasions to their own men to press on courageously, when they were too hard for the Jews, and to stay when they were retiring backward; so that here was a kind of theater of war; for what was done in this fight could not be concealed either from Titus, or from those that were about him. At length it appeared that this fight, which began at the ninth hour of the night, was not over till past the fifth hour of the day; and that, in the same place where the battle began, neither party could say they had made the other to retire; but both the armies left the victory almost in uncertainty between them; wherein those that signalized themselves on the Roman side were a great many, but on the Jewish side, and of those that were with Simon, Judas the son of Merto, and Simon the son of Josas; of the Idumeans, James and Simon, the latter of whom was the son of Cathlas, and James was the son of Sosas; of those that were with John, Gyphtheus and Alexas; and of the zealots, Simon the son of Jairus.

7. In the mean time, the rest of the Roman army had, in seven days' time, overthrown [some] foundations of the tower of Antonia, and had made a ready and broad way to the temple. Then did the legions come near the first court, (8) and began to raise their banks. The one bank was over against the north-west corner of the inner temple (9) another was at that northern edifice

which was between the two gates; and of the other two, one was at the western cloister of the outer court of the temple; the other against its northern cloister. However, these works were thus far advanced by the Romans, not without great pains and difficulty, and particularly by being obliged to bring their materials from the distance of a hundred furlongs. They had further difficulties also upon them; sometimes by their over-great security they were in that they should overcome the Jewish snares laid for them, and by that boldness of the Jews which their despair of escaping had inspired them withal; for some of their horsemen, when they went out to gather wood or hay, let their horses feed without having their bridles on during the time of foraging; upon which horses the Jews sallied out in whole bodies, and seized them. And when this was continually done, and Caesar believed what the truth was, that the horses were stolen more by the negligence of his own men than by the valor of the Jews, he determined to use greater severity to oblige the rest to take care of their horses; so he commanded that one of those soldiers who had lost their horses should be capitally punished; whereby he so terrified the rest, that they preserved their horses for the time to come; for they did not any longer let them go from them to feed by themselves, but, as if they had grown to them, they went always along with them when they wanted necessities. Thus did the Romans still continue to make war against the temple, and to raise their banks against it.

8. Now after one day had been interposed since the Romans ascended the breach, many of the seditious were so pressed by the famine, upon the present failure of their ravages, that they got together, and made an attack on those Roman guards that were upon the Mount of Olives, and this about the eleventh hour of the day, as supposing, first, that they would not expect such an onset, and, in the next place, that they were then taking care of their bodies, and that therefore they should easily beat them. But the Romans were apprized of their coming to attack them beforehand, and, running together from the neighboring camps on the sudden, prevented them from getting over their fortification, or forcing the wall that was built about them. Upon

this came on a sharp fight, and here many great actions were performed on both sides; while the Romans showed both their courage and their skill in war, as did the Jews come on them with immoderate violence and intolerable passion. The one part were urged on by shame, and the other by necessity; for it seemed a very shameful thing to the Romans to let the Jews go, now they were taken in a kind of net; while the Jews had but one hope of saving themselves, and that was in case they could by violence break through the Roman wall; and one whose name was Pedanius, belonging to a party of horsemen, when the Jews were already beaten and forced down into the valley together, spurred his horse on their flank with great vehemence, and caught up a certain young man belonging to the enemy by his ankle, as he was running away; the man was, however, of a robust body, and in his armor; so low did Pedanius bend himself downward from his horse, even as he was galloping away, and so great was the strength of his right hand, and of the rest of his body, as also such skill had he in horsemanship. So this man seized upon that his prey, as upon a precious treasure, and carried him as his captive to Caesar; whereupon Titus admired the man that had seized the other for his great strength, and ordered the man that was caught to be punished [with death] for his attempt against the Roman wall, but betook himself to the siege of the temple, and to pressing on the raising of the banks.

9. In the mean time, the Jews were so distressed by the fights they had been in, as the war advanced higher and higher, and creeping up to the holy house itself, that they, as it were, cut off those limbs of their body which were infected, in order to prevent the distemper's spreading further; for they set the north-west cloister, which was joined to the tower of Antonia, on fire, and after that brake off about twenty cubits of that cloister, and thereby made a beginning in burning the sanctuary; two days after which, or on the twenty-fourth day of the forenamed month, [Panemus or Tamuz,] the Romans set fire to the cloister that joined to the other, when the fire went fifteen cubits farther. The Jews, in like manner, cut off its roof; nor did they entirely leave off what they were about till the tower of Antonia was parted from the

temple, even when it was in their power to have stopped the fire; nay, they lay still while the temple was first set on fire, and deemed this spreading of the fire to be for their own advantage. However, the armies were still fighting one against another about the temple, and the war was managed by continual sallies of particular parties against one another.

10. Now there was at this time a man among the Jews, low of stature he was, and of a despicable appearance; of no character either as to his family, or in other respects: his name was Jonathan. He went out at the high priest John's monument, and uttered many other insolent things to the Romans, and challenged the best of them all to a single combat. But many of those that stood there in the army huffed him, and many of them (as they might well be) were afraid of him. Some of them also reasoned thus, and that justly enough: that it was not fit to fight with a man that desired to die, because those that utterly despaired of deliverance had, besides other passions, a violence in attacking men that could not be opposed, and had no regard to God himself; and that to hazard oneself with a person, whom, if you overcome, you do no great matter, and by whom it is hazardous that you may be taken prisoner, would be an instance, not of manly courage, but of unmanly rashness. So there being nobody that came out to accept the man's challenge, and the Jew cutting them with a great number of reproaches, as cowards, (for he was a very haughty man in himself, and a great despiser of the Romans,) one whose name was Pudens, of the body of horsemen, out of his abomination of the other's words, and of his impudence withal, and perhaps out of an inconsiderate arrogance, on account of the other's lowness of stature, ran out to him, and was too hard for him in other respects, but was betrayed by his ill fortune; for he fell down, and as he was down, Jonathan came running to him, and cut his throat, and then, standing upon his dead body, he brandished his sword, bloody as it was, and shook his shield with his left hand, and made many acclamations to the Roman army, and exulted over the dead man, and jested upon the Romans; till at length one Priscus, a centurion, shot a dart at him as he was leaping and playing the fool with

himself, and thereby pierced him through; upon which a shout was set up both by the Jews and the Romans, though on different accounts. So Jonathan grew giddy by the pain of his wounds, and fell down upon the body of his adversary, as a plain instance how suddenly vengeance may come upon men that have success in war, without any just deserving the same.

### Footnotes:

1. This was a remarkable day indeed, the seventeenth of Paneruns. [Tamuz,] A.D. 70, when, according to Daniel's prediction, six hundred and six years before, the Romans "in half a week caused the sacrifice and oblation to cease," Daniel 9:27. For from the month of February, A.D. 66, about which time Vespasian entered on this war, to this very time, was just three years and a half. See Bishop Lloyd's Tables of Chronology, published by Mr. Marshall, on this year. Nor is it to be omitted, what year nearly confirms this duration of the war, that four years before the war begun was somewhat above seven years five months before the destruction of Jerusalem, ch. 5. sect. 3.
2. The same that in the New Testament is always so called, and was then the common language of the Jews in Judea, which was the Syriac dialect.
3. Our present copies of the Old Testament want this encomium upon king Jechoniah or Jehoiachim, which it seems was in Josephus's copy.
4. Of this oracle, see the note on B. IV. ch. 6. sect. 3. Josephus, both here and in many places elsewhere, speaks so, that it is most evident he was fully satisfied that God was on the Romans' side, and made use of them now for the destruction of that wicked nation of the Jews; which was for certain the true state of this matter, as the prophet Daniel first, and our Savior himself afterwards, had clearly foretold. See Lit. Accompl. of Proph. p. 64, etc.
5. Josephus had before told us, B. V. ch. 13. sect. 1, that this fourth son of Matthias ran away to the Romans "before" his father's and brethren's



slaughter, and not "after" it, as here. The former account is, in all probability, the truest; for had not that fourth son escaped before the others were caught and put to death, he had been caught and put to death with them. This last account, therefore, looks like an instance of a small inadvertence of Josephus in the place before us.

6. Of this partition-wall separating Jews and Gentiles, with its pillars and inscription, see the description of the temples, ch. 15.
7. That these seditious Jews were the direct occasions of their own destruction, and of the conflagration of their city and temple, and that Titus earnestly and constantly labored to save both, is here and every where most evident in Josephus.
8. Court of the Gentiles.
9. Court of Israel.

## Chapter 3

### **Another Description of the Terrible Famine That Was in the City**

1. But now the seditious that were in the temple did every day openly endeavor to beat off the soldiers that were upon the banks, and on the twenty-seventh day of the forenamed month [Panemus or Tamuz] contrived such a stratagem as this: They filled that part of the western cloister (1) which was between the beams, and the roof under them, with dry materials, as also with bitumen and pitch, and then retired from that place, as though they were tired with the pains they had taken; at which procedure of theirs, many of the most inconsiderate among the Romans, who were carried away with violent passions, followed hard after them as they were retiring, and applied ladders to the cloister, and got up to it suddenly; but the prudent part of them, when they understood this unaccountable retreat of the Jews, stood still where they were before. However, the cloister was full of those that were gone up the ladders; at which time the Jews set it all on fire; and as the flame burst out every where on the sudden, the Romans that were out of the danger were seized with a very great consternation, as were those that were in the midst of the danger in the utmost distress. So when they perceived themselves surrounded with the flames, some of them threw themselves down backwards into the city, and some among their enemies [in the temple]; as did many leap down to their own men, and broke their limbs to pieces; but a great number of those that were going to take these violent methods were prevented by the fire; though some prevented the fire by their own swords. However, the fire was on the sudden carried so far as to surround those who would have otherwise perished. As for Caesar himself, he could not, however, but commiserate those that thus perished, although they got up thither without any order for so doing, since there was no way of giving the many relief. Yet was this some comfort to those that were

destroyed, that every body might see that person grieve, for whose sake they came to their end; for he cried out openly to them, and leaped up, and exhorted those that were about him to do their utmost to relieve them; So every one of them died cheerfully, as carrying along with him these words and this intention of Caesar as a sepulchral monument. Some there were indeed who retired into the wall of the cloister, which was broad, and were preserved out of the fire, but were then surrounded by the Jews; and although they made resistance against the Jews for a long time, yet were they wounded by them, and at length they all fell down dead.

2. At the last a young man among them, whose name was Longus, became a decoration to this sad affair, and while every one of them that perished were worthy of a memorial, this man appeared to deserve it beyond all the rest. Now the Jews admired this man for his courage, and were further desirous of having him slain; so they persuaded him to come down to them, upon security given him for his life. But Cornelius his brother persuaded him on the contrary, not to tarnish his own glory, nor that of the Roman army. He complied with this last advice, and lifting up his sword before both armies, he slew himself. Yet there was one Artorius among those surrounded by the fire who escaped by his subtlety; for when he had with a loud voice called to him Lucius, one of his fellow soldiers that lay with him in the same tent, and said to him, "I do leave thee heir of all I have, if thou wilt come and receive me." Upon this he came running to receive him readily; Artorius then threw himself down upon him, and saved his own life, while he that received him was dashed so vehemently against the stone pavement by the other's weight, that he died immediately. This melancholy accident made the Romans sad for a while, but still it made them more upon their guard for the future, and was of advantage to them against the delusions of the Jews, by which they were greatly damaged through their unacquaintedness with the places, and with the nature of the inhabitants. Now this cloister was burnt down as far as John's tower, which he built in the war he made against Simon over the gates that led to the Xystus. The Jews also cut off the rest of that cloister from the

temple, after they had destroyed those that got up to it. But the next day the Romans burnt down the northern cloister entirely, as far as the east cloister, whose common angle joined to the valley that was called Cedron, and was built over it; on which account the depth was frightful. And this was the state of the temple at that time.

3. Now of those that perished by famine in the city, the number was prodigious, and the miseries they underwent were unspeakable; for if so much as the shadow of any kind of food did any where appear, a war was commenced presently, and the dearest friends fell a fighting one with another about it, snatching from each other the most miserable supports of life. Nor would men believe that those who were dying had no food, but the robbers would search them when they were expiring, lest any one should have concealed food in their bosoms, and counterfeited dying; nay, these robbers gaped for want, and ran about stumbling and staggering along like mad dogs, and reeling against the doors of the houses like drunken men; they would also, in the great distress they were in, rush into the very same houses two or three times in one and the same day. Moreover, their hunger was so intolerable, that it obliged them to chew every thing, while they gathered such things as the most sordid animals would not touch, and endured to eat them; nor did they at length abstain from girdles and shoes; and the very leather which belonged to their shields they pulled off and gnawed: the very wisps of old hay became food to some; and some gathered up fibres, and sold a very small weight of them for four Attic [drachmae]. But why do I describe the shameless impudence that the famine brought on men in their eating inanimate things, while I am going to relate a matter of fact, the like to which no history relates, (2) either among the Greeks or Barbarians? It is horrible to speak of it, and incredible when heard. I had indeed willingly omitted this calamity of ours, that I might not seem to deliver what is so portentous to posterity, but that I have innumerable witnesses to it in my own age; and besides, my country would have had little reason to thank me for suppressing the miseries that she underwent at this time.

4. There was a certain woman that dwelt beyond Jordan, her name was Mary; her father was Eleazar, of the village Bethhezob, which signifies the house of Hyssop. She was eminent for her family and her wealth, and had fled away to Jerusalem with the rest of the multitude, and was with them besieged therein at this time. The other effects of this woman had been already seized upon, such I mean as she had brought with her out of Perea, and removed to the city. What she had treasured up besides, as also what food she had contrived to save, had been also carried off by the rapacious guards, who came every day running into her house for that purpose. This put the poor woman into a very great passion, and by the frequent reproaches and imprecations she cast at these rapacious villains, she had provoked them to anger against her; but none of them, either out of the indignation she had raised against herself, or out of commiseration of her case, would take away her life; and if she found any food, she perceived her labors were for others, and not for herself; and it was now become impossible for her any way to find any more food, while the famine pierced through her very bowels and marrow, when also her passion was fired to a degree beyond the famine itself; nor did she consult with any thing but with her passion and the necessity she was in. She then attempted a most unnatural thing; and snatching up her son, who was a child sucking at her breast, she said, "O thou miserable infant! for whom shall I preserve thee in this war, this famine, and this sedition? As to the war with the Romans, if they preserve our lives, we must be slaves. This famine also will destroy us, even before that slavery comes upon us. Yet are these seditious rogues more terrible than both the other. Come on; be thou my food, and be thou a fury to these seditious varlets, and a by-word to the world, which is all that is now wanting to complete the calamities of us Jews." As soon as she had said this, she slew her son, and then roasted him, and eat the one half of him, and kept the other half by her concealed. Upon this the seditious came in presently, and smelling the horrid scent of this food, they threatened her that they would cut her throat immediately if she did not show them what food she had gotten

ready. She replied that she had saved a very fine portion of it for them, and withal uncovered what was left of her son. Hereupon they were seized with a horror and amazement of mind, and stood astonished at the sight, when she said to them, "This is mine own son, and what hath been done was mine own doing! Come, eat of this food; for I have eaten of it myself! Do not you pretend to be either more tender than a woman, or more compassionate than a mother; but if you be so scrupulous, and do abominate this my sacrifice, as I have eaten the one half, let the rest be reserved for me also." After which those men went out trembling, being never so much afrighted at any thing as they were at this, and with some difficulty they left the rest of that meat to the mother. Upon which the whole city was full of this horrid action immediately; and while every body laid this miserable case before their own eyes, they trembled, as if this unheard of action had been done by themselves. So those that were thus distressed by the famine were very desirous to die, and those already dead were esteemed happy, because they had not lived long enough either to hear or to see such miseries.

5. This sad instance was quickly told to the Romans, some of whom could not believe it, and others pitied the distress which the Jews were under; but there were many of them who were hereby induced to a more bitter hatred than ordinary against our nation. But for Caesar, he excused himself before God as to this matter, and said that he had proposed peace and liberty to the Jews, as well as an oblivion of all their former insolent practices; but that they, instead of concord, had chosen sedition; instead of peace, war; and before satiety and abundance, a famine. That they had begun with their own hands to burn down that temple which we have preserved hitherto; and that therefore they deserved to eat such food as this was. That, however, this horrid action of eating an own child ought to be covered with the overthrow of their very country itself, and men ought not to leave such a city upon the habitable earth to be seen by the sun, wherein mothers are thus fed, although such food be fitter for the fathers than for the mothers to eat of, since it is they that continue still in a state of war against us, after they have undergone

such miseries as these. And at the same time that he said this, he reflected on the desperate condition these men must be in; nor could he expect that such men could be recovered to sobriety of mind, after they had endured those very sufferings, for the avoiding whereof it only was probable they might have repented.

### **Footnotes:**

1. Of the court of the Gentiles.
2. What Josephus observes here, that no parallel examples had been recorded before this time of such sieges, wherein mothers were forced by extremity of famine to eat their own children, as had been threatened to the Jews in the law of Moses, upon obstinate disobedience, and more than once fulfilled, (see my Boyle's Lectures, p. 210-214,) is by Dr. Hudson supposed to have had two or three parallel examples in later ages. He might have had more examples, I suppose, of persons on ship-board, or in a desert island, casting lots for each others' bodies; but all this was only in cases where they knew of no possible way to avoid death themselves but by killing and eating others. Whether such examples come up to the present case may be doubted. The Romans were not only willing, but very desirous, to grant those Jews in Jerusalem both their lives and their liberties, and to save both their city and their temple. But the zealots, the rubbers, and the seditious would hearken to no terms of submission. They voluntarily chose to reduce the citizens to that extremity, as to force mothers to this unnatural barbarity, which, in all its circumstances, has not, I still suppose, been hitherto paralleled among the rest of mankind.

## Chapter 4

### **The Holy House Was Burnt Down**

1. And now two of the legions had completed their banks on the eighth day of the month Lous [Ab]. Whereupon Titus gave orders that the battering rams should be brought, and set over against the western edifice of the inner temple; for before these were brought, the firmest of all the other engines had battered the wall for six days together without ceasing, without making any impression upon it; but the vast largeness and strong connexion of the stones were superior to that engine, and to the other battering rams also. Other Romans did indeed undermine the foundations of the northern gate, and after a world of pains removed the outermost stones, yet was the gate still upheld by the inner stones, and stood still unhurt; till the workmen, despairing of all such attempts by engines and crows, brought their ladders to the cloisters. Now the Jews did not interrupt them in so doing; but when they were gotten up, they fell upon them, and fought with them; some of them they thrust down, and threw them backwards headlong; others of them they met and slew; they also beat many of those that went down the ladders again, and slew them with their swords before they could bring their shields to protect them; nay, some of the ladders they threw down from above when they were full of armed men; a great slaughter was made of the Jews also at the same time, while those that bare the ensigns fought hard for them, as deeming it a terrible thing, and what would tend to their great shame, if they permitted them to be stolen away. Yet did the Jews at length get possession of these engines, and destroyed those that had gone up the ladders, while the rest were so intimidated by what those suffered who were slain, that they retired; although none of the Romans died without having done good service before his death. Of the seditious, those that had fought bravely in the former battles did the like now, as besides them did Eleazar, the brother's son of Simon the tyrant. But when Titus perceived that his endeavors to spare a foreign temple



turned to the damage of his soldiers, and then be killed, he gave order to set the gates on fire.

2. In the mean time, there deserted to him Ananus, who came from Emmaus, the most bloody of all Simon's guards, and Archelaus, the son of Magadatus, they hoping to be still forgiven, because they left the Jews at a time when they were the conquerors. Titus objected this to these men, as a cunning trick of theirs; and as he had been informed of their other barbarities towards the Jews, he was going in all haste to have them both slain. He told them that they were only driven to this desertion because of the utmost distress they were in, and did not come away of their own good disposition; and that those did not deserve to be preserved, by whom their own city was already set on fire, out of which fire they now hurried themselves away. However, the security he had promised deserters overcame his resentments, and he dismissed them accordingly, though he did not give them the same privileges that he had afforded to others. And now the soldiers had already put fire to the gates, and the silver that was over them quickly carried the flames to the wood that was within it, whence it spread itself all on the sudden, and caught hold on the cloisters. Upon the Jews seeing this fire all about them, their spirits sunk together with their bodies, and they were under such astonishment, that not one of them made any haste, either to defend himself or to quench the fire, but they stood as mute spectators of it only. However, they did not so grieve at the loss of what was now burning, as to grow wiser thereby for the time to come; but as though the holy house itself had been on fire already, they whetted their passions against the Romans. This fire prevailed during that day and the next also; for the soldiers were not able to burn all the cloisters that were round about together at one time, but only by pieces.

3. But then, on the next day, Titus commanded part of his army to quench the fire, and to make a road for the more easy marching up of the legions, while he himself gathered the commanders together. Of those there

were assembled the six principal persons: Tiberius Alexander, the commander [under the general] of the whole army; with Sextus Cerealis, the commander of the fifth legion; and Larcius Lepidus, the commander of the tenth legion; and Titus Frigius, the commander of the fifteenth legion: there was also with them Eternius, the leader of the two legions that came from Alexandria; and Marcus Antonius Julianus, procurator of Judea: after these came together all the rest of the procurators and tribunes. Titus proposed to these that they should give him their advice what should be done about the holy house. Now some of these thought it would be the best way to act according to the rules of war, [and demolish it,] because the Jews would never leave off rebelling while that house was standing; at which house it was that they used to get all together. Others of them were of opinion, that in case the Jews would leave it, and none of them would lay their arms up in it, he might save it; but that in case they got upon it, and fought any more, he might burn it; because it must then be looked upon not as a holy house, but as a citadel; and that the impiety of burning it would then belong to those that forced this to be done, and not to them. But Titus said, that "although the Jews should get upon that holy house, and fight us thence, yet ought we not to revenge ourselves on things that are inanimate, instead of the men themselves;" and that he was not in any case for burning down so vast a work as that was, because this would be a mischief to the Romans themselves, as it would be an ornament to their government while it continued. So Fronto, and Alexander, and Cerealis grew bold upon that declaration, and agreed to the opinion of Titus. Then was this assembly dissolved, when Titus had given orders to the commanders that the rest of their forces should lie still; but that they should make use of such as were most courageous in this attack. So he commanded that the chosen men that were taken out of the cohorts should make their way through the ruins, and quench the fire.

4. Now it is true that on this day the Jews were so weary, and under such consternation, that they refrained from any attacks. But on the next day they

gathered their whole force together, and ran upon those that guarded the outward court of the temple very boldly, through the east gate, and this about the second hour of the day. These guards received that their attack with great bravery, and by covering themselves with their shields before, as if it were with a wall, they drew their squadron close together; yet was it evident that they could not abide there very long, but would be overborne by the multitude of those that sallied out upon them, and by the heat of their passion. However, Caesar seeing, from the tower of Antonia, that this squadron was likely to give way, he sent some chosen horsemen to support them. Hereupon the Jews found themselves not able to sustain their onset, and upon the slaughter of those in the forefront, many of the rest were put to flight. But as the Romans were going off, the Jews turned upon them, and fought them; and as those Romans came back upon them, they retreated again, until about the fifth hour of the day they were overborne, and shut themselves up in the inner [court of the] temple.

5. So Titus retired into the tower of Antonia, and resolved to storm the temple the next day, early in the morning, with his whole army, and to encamp round about the holy house. But as for that house, God had, for certain, long ago doomed it to the fire; and now that fatal day was come, according to the revolution of ages; it was the tenth day of the month Lous, [Ab,] upon which it was formerly burnt by the king of Babylon; although these flames took their rise from the Jews themselves, and were occasioned by them; for upon Titus's retiring, the seditious lay still for a little while, and then attacked the Romans again, when those that guarded the holy house fought with those that quenched the fire that was burning the inner [court of the] temple; but these Romans put the Jews to flight, and proceeded as far as the holy house itself. At which time one of the soldiers, without staying for any orders, and without any concern or dread upon him at so great an undertaking, and being hurried on by a certain divine fury, snatched somewhat out of the materials that were on fire, and being lifted up by another soldier, he set fire to a golden window, through which there was a

passage to the rooms that were round about the holy house, on the north side of it. As the flames went upward, the Jews made a great clamor, such as so mighty an affliction required, and ran together to prevent it; and now they spared not their lives any longer, nor suffered any thing to restrain their force, since that holy house was perishing, for whose sake it was that they kept such a guard about it.

6. And now a certain person came running to Titus, and told him of this fire, as he was resting himself in his tent after the last battle; whereupon he rose up in great haste, and, as he was, ran to the holy house, in order to have a stop put to the fire; after him followed all his commanders, and after them followed the several legions, in great astonishment; so there was a great clamor and tumult raised, as was natural upon the disorderly motion of so great an army. Then did Caesar, both by calling to the soldiers that were fighting, with a loud voice, and by giving a signal to them with his right hand, order them to quench the fire. But they did not hear what he said, though he spake so loud, having their ears already dimmed by a greater noise another way; nor did they attend to the signal he made with his hand neither, as still some of them were distracted with fighting, and others with passion. But as for the legions that came running thither, neither any persuasions nor any threatenings could restrain their violence, but each one's own passion was his commander at this time; and as they were crowding into the temple together, many of them were trampled on by one another, while a great number fell among the ruins of the cloisters, which were still hot and smoking, and were destroyed in the same miserable way with those whom they had conquered; and when they were come near the holy house, they made as if they did not so much as hear Caesar's orders to the contrary; but they encouraged those that were before them to set it on fire. As for the seditious, they were in too great distress already to afford their assistance [towards quenching the fire]; they were every where slain, and every where beaten; and as for a great part of the people, they were weak and without arms, and had their throats cut wherever they were caught. Now round about

the altar lay dead bodies heaped one upon another, as at the steps (1) going up to it ran a great quantity of their blood, whither also the dead bodies that were slain above [on the altar] fell down.

7. And now, since Caesar was no way able to restrain the enthusiastic fury of the soldiers, and the fire proceeded on more and more, he went into the holy place of the temple, with his commanders, and saw it, with what was in it, which he found to be far superior to what the relations of foreigners contained, and not inferior to what we ourselves boasted of and believed about it. But as the flame had not as yet reached to its inward parts, but was still consuming the rooms that were about the holy house, and Titus supposing what the fact was, that the house itself might yet he saved, he came in haste and endeavored to persuade the soldiers to quench the fire, and gave order to Liberalius the centurion, and one of those spearmen that were about him, to beat the soldiers that were refractory with their staves, and to restrain them; yet were their passions too hard for the regards they had for Caesar, and the dread they had of him who forbade them, as was their hatred of the Jews, and a certain vehement inclination to fight them, too hard for them also. Moreover, the hope of plunder induced many to go on, as having this opinion, that all the places within were full of money, and as seeing that all round about it was made of gold. And besides, one of those that went into the place prevented Caesar, when he ran so hastily out to restrain the soldiers, and threw the fire upon the hinges of the gate, in the dark; whereby the flame burst out from within the holy house itself immediately, when the commanders retired, and Caesar with them, and when nobody any longer forbade those that were without to set fire to it. And thus was the holy house burnt down, without Caesar's approbation.

8. Now although any one would justly lament the destruction of such a work as this was, since it was the most admirable of all the works that we have seen or heard of, both for its curious structure and its magnitude, and also for the vast wealth bestowed upon it, as well as for the glorious

reputation it had for its holiness; yet might such a one comfort himself with this thought, that it was fate that decreed it so to be, which is inevitable, both as to living creatures, and as to works and places also. However, one cannot but wonder at the accuracy of this period thereto relating; for the same month and day were now observed, as I said before, wherein the holy house was burnt formerly by the Babylonians. Now the number of years that passed from its first foundation, which was laid by king Solomon, till this its destruction, which happened in the second year of the reign of Vespasian, are collected to be one thousand one hundred and thirty, besides seven months and fifteen days; and from the second building of it, which was done by Haggai, in the second year of Cyrus the king, till its destruction under Vespasian, there were six hundred and thirty-nine years and forty-five days.

**Footnote:**

1. These steps to the altar of burnt-offering seem here either an improper and inaccurate expression of Josephus, since it was unlawful to make ladder steps; (see description of the temples, ch. 13., and note on Antiq. B. IV. ch. 8. sect. 5;) or else those steps or stairs we now use were invented before the days of Herod the Great, and had been here built by him; though the later Jews always deny it, and say that even Herod's altar was ascended to by an acclivity only.

## Chapter 5

### **The Great Distress the Jews Were**

1. While the holy house was on fire, every thing was plundered that came to hand, and ten thousand of those that were caught were slain; nor was there a commiseration of any age, or any reverence of gravity, but children, and old men, and profane persons, and priests were all slain in the same manner; so that this war went round all sorts of men, and brought them to destruction, and as well those that made supplication for their lives, as those that defended themselves by fighting. The flame was also carried a long way, and made an echo, together with the groans of those that were slain; and because this hill was high, and the works at the temple were very great, one would have thought the whole city had been on fire. Nor can one imagine any thing either greater or more terrible than this noise; for there was at once a shout of the Roman legions, who were marching all together, and a sad clamor of the seditious, who were now surrounded with fire and sword. The people also that were left above were beaten back upon the enemy, and under a great consternation, and made sad moans at the calamity they were under; the multitude also that was in the city joined in this outcry with those that were upon the hill. And besides, many of those that were worn away by the famine, and their mouths almost closed, when they saw the fire of the holy house, they exerted their utmost strength, and brake out into groans and outcries again: Pera (1) did also return the echo, as well as the mountains round about [the city,] and augmented the force of the entire noise. Yet was the misery itself more terrible than this disorder; for one would have thought that the hill itself, on which the temple stood, was seething hot, as full of fire on every part of it, that the blood was larger in quantity than the fire, and those that were slain more in number than those that slew them; for the ground did no where appear visible, for the dead bodies that lay on it; but the soldiers went over heaps of those bodies, as they ran upon such as fled from

them. And now it was that the multitude of the robbers were thrust out [of the inner court of the temple by the Romans,] and had much ado to get into the outward court, and from thence into the city, while the remainder of the populace fled into the cloister of that outer court. As for the priests, some of them plucked up from the holy house the spikes (2) that were upon it, with their bases, which were made of lead, and shot them at the Romans instead of darts. But then as they gained nothing by so doing, and as the fire burst out upon them, they retired to the wall that was eight cubits broad, and there they tarried; yet did two of these of eminence among them, who might have saved themselves by going over to the Romans, or have borne up with courage, and taken their fortune with the others, throw themselves into the fire, and were burnt together with the holy house; their names were Meirus the son of Belgas, and Joseph the son of Daleus.

2. And now the Romans, judging that it was in vain to spare what was round about the holy house, burnt all those places, as also the remains of the cloisters and the gates, two excepted; the one on the east side, and the other on the south; both which, however, they burnt afterward. They also burnt down the treasury chambers, in which was an immense quantity of money, and an immense number of garments, and other precious goods there repositied; and, to speak all in a few words, there it was that the entire riches of the Jews were heaped up together, while the rich people had there built themselves chambers [to contain such furniture]. The soldiers also came to the rest of the cloisters that were in the outer [court of the] temple, whither the women and children, and a great mixed multitude of the people, fled, in number about six thousand. But before Caesar had determined any thing about these people, or given the commanders any orders relating to them, the soldiers were in such a rage, that they set that cloister on fire; by which means it came to pass that some of these were destroyed by throwing themselves down headlong, and some were burnt in the cloisters themselves. Nor did any one of them escape with his life. A false prophet (3) was the occasion of these people's destruction, who had made a public proclamation



in the city that very day, that God commanded them to get upon the temple, and that there they should receive miraculous signs of their deliverance. Now there was then a great number of false prophets suborned by the tyrants to impose on the people, who denounced this to them, that they should wait for deliverance from God; and this was in order to keep them from deserting, and that they might be buoyed up above fear and care by such hopes. Now a man that is in adversity does easily comply with such promises; for when such a seducer makes him believe that he shall be delivered from those miseries which oppress him, then it is that the patient is full of hopes of such his deliverance.

3. Thus were the miserable people persuaded by these deceivers, and such as belied God himself; while they did not attend nor give credit to the signs that were so evident, and did so plainly foretell their future desolation, but, like men infatuated, without either eyes to see or minds to consider, did not regard the denunciations that God made to them. Thus there was a star (4) resembling a sword, which stood over the city, and a comet, that continued a whole year. Thus also before the Jews' rebellion, and before those commotions which preceded the war, when the people were come in great crowds to the feast of unleavened bread, on the eighth day of the month Xanthicus, (5) [Nisan,] and at the ninth hour of the night, so great a light shone round the altar and the holy house, that it appeared to be bright day time; which lasted for half an hour. This light seemed to be a good sign to the unskillful, but was so interpreted by the sacred scribes, as to portend those events that followed immediately upon it. At the same festival also, a heifer, as she was led by the high priest to be sacrificed, brought forth a lamb in the midst of the temple. Moreover, the eastern gate of the inner (6) [court of the] temple, which was of brass, and vastly heavy, and had been with difficulty shut by twenty men, and rested upon a basis armed with iron, and had bolts fastened very deep into the firm floor, which was there made of one entire stone, was seen to be opened of its own accord about the sixth hour of the night. Now those that kept watch in the temple came hereupon

running to the captain of the temple, and told him of it; who then came up thither, and not without great difficulty was able to shut the gate again. This also appeared to the vulgar to be a very happy prodigy, as if God did thereby open them the gate of happiness. But the men of learning understood it, that the security of their holy house was dissolved of its own accord, and that the gate was opened for the advantage of their enemies. So these publicly declared that the signal foreshowed the desolation that was coming upon them. Besides these, a few days after that feast, on the one and twentieth day of the month Artemisius, [Jyar,] a certain prodigious and incredible phenomenon appeared: I suppose the account of it would seem to be a fable, were it not related by those that saw it, and were not the events that followed it of so considerable a nature as to deserve such signals; for, before sun-setting, chariots and troops of soldiers in their armor were seen running about among the clouds, and surrounding of cities. Moreover, at that feast which we call Pentecost, as the priests were going by night into the inner [court of the temple,] as their custom was, to perform their sacred ministrations, they said that, in the first place, they felt a quaking, and heard a great noise, and after that they heard a sound as of a great multitude, saying, "Let us remove hence." But, what is still more terrible, there was one Jesus, the son of Ananus, a plebeian and a husbandman, who, four years before the war began, and at a time when the city was in very great peace and prosperity, came to that feast whereon it is our custom for every one to make tabernacles to God in the temple, (7) began on a sudden to cry aloud, "A voice from the east, a voice from the west, a voice from the four winds, a voice against Jerusalem and the holy house, a voice against the bridegrooms and the brides, and a voice against this whole people!" This was his cry, as he went about by day and by night, in all the lanes of the city. However, certain of the most eminent among the populace had great indignation at this dire cry of his, and took up the man, and gave him a great number of severe stripes; yet did not he either say any thing for himself, or any thing peculiar to those that chastised him, but still went on with the same words which he cried before. Hereupon our rulers, supposing, as the case proved to be, that

this was a sort of divine fury in the man, brought him to the Roman procurator, where he was whipped till his bones were laid bare; yet he did not make any supplication for himself, nor shed any tears, but turning his voice to the most lamentable tone possible, at every stroke of the whip his answer was, "Woe, woe to Jerusalem!" And when Albinus (for he was then our procurator) asked him, Who he was? and whence he came? and why he uttered such words? he made no manner of reply to what he said, but still did not leave off his melancholy ditty, till Albinus took him to be a madman, and dismissed him. Now, during all the time that passed before the war began, this man did not go near any of the citizens, nor was seen by them while he said so; but he every day uttered these lamentable words, as if it were his premeditated vow, "Woe, woe to Jerusalem!" Nor did he give ill words to any of those that beat him every day, nor good words to those that gave him food; but this was his reply to all men, and indeed no other than a melancholy presage of what was to come. This cry of his was the loudest at the festivals; and he continued this ditty for seven years and five months, without growing hoarse, or being tired therewith, until the very time that he saw his presage in earnest fulfilled in our siege, when it ceased; for as he was going round upon the wall, he cried out with his utmost force, "Woe, woe to the city again, and to the people, and to the holy house!" And just as he added at the last, "Woe, woe to myself also!" there came a stone out of one of the engines, and smote him, and killed him immediately; and as he was uttering the very same presages he gave up the ghost.

4. Now if any one consider these things, he will find that God takes care of mankind, and by all ways possible foreshows to our race what is for their preservation; but that men perish by those miseries which they madly and voluntarily bring upon themselves; for the Jews, by demolishing the tower of Antonia, had made their temple four-square, while at the same time they had it written in their sacred oracles, "That then should their city be taken, as well as their holy house, when once their temple should become four-square." But now, what did the most elevate them in undertaking this war, was an

ambiguous oracle that was also found in their sacred writings, how," about that time, one from their country should become governor of the habitable earth." The Jews took this prediction to belong to themselves in particular, and many of the wise men were thereby deceived in their determination. Now this oracle certainly denoted the government of Vespasian, who was appointed emperor in Judea. However, it is not possible for men to avoid fate, although they see it beforehand. But these men interpreted some of these signals according to their own pleasure, and some of them they utterly despised, until their madness was demonstrated, both by the taking of their city and their own destruction.

### **Footnotes:**

1. This Perea, if the word be not mistaken in the copies, cannot well be that Perea which was beyond Jordan, whose mountains were at a considerable distance from Jordan, and much too remote from Jerusalem to join in this echo at the conflagration of the temple; but Perea must be rather some mountains beyond the brook Cedron, as was the Mount of Olives, or some others about such a distance from Jerusalem; which observation is so obvious, that it is a wonder our commentators here take no notice of it.
2. Reland I think here judges well, when he interprets these spikes (of those that stood on the top of the holy house) with sharp points; they were fixed into lead, to prevent the birds from sitting there, and defiling the holy house; for such spikes there were now upon it, as Josephus himself hath already assured us, B. V. ch. 5. sect. 6.
3. Reland here takes notice, that these Jews, who had despised the true Prophet, were deservedly abused and deluded by these false ones.
4. Whether Josephus means that this star was different from that comet which lasted a whole year, I cannot certainly determine. His words most favor their being different one from another.
5. Since Josephus still uses the Syro-Macedonian month Xanthicus for the

Jewish month Nisan, this eighth, or, as Nicephorus reads it, this ninth of Xanthicus or Nisan was almost a week before the passover, on the fourteenth; about which time we learn from St. John that many used to go "out of the country to Jerusalem to purify themselves," John 11:55, with 12:1; in agreement with Josephus also, B. V. ch. 3. sect. 1. And it might well be, that in the sight of these this extraordinary light might appear.

6. This here seems to be the court of the priests.
7. Both Reland and Havercamp in this place alter the natural punctuation and sense of Josephus, and this contrary to the opinion of Valesilus and Dr. Hudson, lest Josephus should say that the Jews built booths or tents within the temple at the feast of tabernacles; which the later Rabbins will not allow to have been the ancient practice: but then, since it is expressly told us in Nehemiah, ch. 8:16, that in still elder times "the Jews made booths in the courts of the house of God" at that festival, Josephus may well be permitted to say the same. And indeed the modern Rabbins are of very small authority in all such matters of remote antiquity.

## Chapter 6

### **The Romans Carried Their Ensigns to the Temple**

1. And now the Romans, upon the flight of the seditious into the city, and upon the burning of the holy house itself, and of all the buildings round about it, brought their ensigns to the temple (1) and set them over against its eastern gate; and there did they offer sacrifices to them, and there did they make Titus emperor (2) with the greatest acclamations of joy. And now all the soldiers had such vast quantities of the spoils which they had gotten by plunder, that in Syria a pound weight of gold was sold for half its former value. But as for those priests that kept themselves still upon the wall of the holy house,(3) there was a boy that, out of the thirst he was in, desired some of the Roman guards to give him their right hands as a security for his life, and confessed he was very thirsty. These guards commiserated his age, and the distress he was in, and gave him their right hands accordingly. So he came down himself, and drank some water, and filled the vessel he had with him when he came to them with water, and then went off, and fled away to his own friends; nor could any of those guards overtake him; but still they reproached him for his perfidiousness. To which he made this answer: "I have not broken the agreement; for the security I had given me was not in order to my staying with you, but only in order to my coming down safely, and taking up some water; both which things I have performed, and thereupon think myself to have been faithful to my engagement." Hereupon those whom the child had imposed upon admired at his cunning, and that on account of his age. On the fifth day afterward, the priests that were pined with the famine came down, and when they were brought to Titus by the guards, they begged for their lives; but he replied, that the time of pardon was over as to them, and that this very holy house, on whose account only they could justly hope to be preserved, was destroyed; and that it was agreeable to their office that priests should perish with the house itself to

which they belonged. So he ordered them to be put to death.

2. But as for the tyrants themselves, and those that were with them, when they found that they were encompassed on every side, and, as it were, walled round, without any method of escaping, they desired to treat with Titus by word of mouth. Accordingly, such was the kindness of his nature, and his desire of preserving the city from destruction, joined to the advice of his friends, who now thought the robbers were come to a temper, that he placed himself on the western side of the outer [court of the] temple; for there were gates on that side above the Xystus, and a bridge that connected the upper city to the temple. This bridge it was that lay between the tyrants and Caesar, and parted them; while the multitude stood on each side; those of the Jewish nation about Sinran and John, with great hopes of pardon; and the Romans about Caesar, in great expectation how Titus would receive their supplication. So Titus charged his soldiers to restrain their rage, and to let their darts alone, and appointed an interpreter between them, which was a sign that he was the conqueror, and first began the discourse, and said, "I hope you, sirs, are now satiated with the miseries of your country, who have not bad any just notions, either of our great power, or of your own great weakness, but have, like madmen, after a violent and inconsiderate manner, made such attempts, as have brought your people, your city, and your holy house to destruction. You have been the men that have never left off rebelling since Pompey first conquered you, and have, since that time, made open war with the Romans. Have you depended on your multitude, while a very small part of the Roman soldiery have been strong enough for you? Have you relied on the fidelity of your confederates? And what nations are there, out of the limits of our dominion, that would choose to assist the Jews before the Romans? Are your bodies stronger than ours? nay, you know that the [strong] Germans themselves are our servants. Have you stronger walls than we have? Pray, what greater obstacle is there than the wall of the ocean, with which the Britons are encompassed, and yet do adore the arms of the Romans. Do you exceed us in courage of soul, and in the sagacity of your

commanders? Nay, indeed, you cannot but know that the very Carthaginians have been conquered by us. It can therefore be nothing certainly but the kindness of us Romans which hath excited you against us; who, in the first place, have given you this land to possess; and, in the next place, have set over you kings of your own nation; and, in the third place, have preserved the laws of your forefathers to you, and have withal permitted you to live, either by yourselves, or among others, as it should please you: and, what is our chief favor of all we have given you leave to gather up that tribute which is paid to God (4) with such other gifts that are dedicated to him; nor have we called those that carried these donations to account, nor prohibited them; till at length you became richer than we ourselves, even when you were our enemies; and you made preparations for war against us with our own money; nay, after all, when you were in the enjoyment of all these advantages, you turned your too great plenty against those that gave it you, and, like merciless serpents, have thrown out your poison against those that treated you kindly. I suppose, therefore, that you might despise the slothfulness of Nero, and, like limbs of the body that are broken or dislocated, you did then lie quiet, waiting for some other time, though still with a malicious intention, and have now showed your distemper to be greater than ever, and have extended your desires as far as your impudent and immense hopes would enable you to do it. At this time my father came into this country, not with a design to punish you for what you had done under Cestius, but to admonish you; for had he come to overthrow your nation, he had run directly to your fountain-head, and had immediately laid this city waste; whereas he went and burnt Galilee and the neighboring parts, and thereby gave you time for repentance; which instance of humanity you took for an argument of his weakness, and nourished up your impudence by our mildness. When Nero was gone out of the world, you did as the wickedest wretches would have done, and encouraged yourselves to act against us by our civil dissensions, and abused that time, when both I and my father were gone away to Egypt, to make preparations for this war. Nor were you ashamed to raise disturbances against us when we were made emperors, and this while you



had experienced how mild we had been, when we were no more than generals of the army. But when the government was devolved upon us, and all other people did thereupon lie quiet, and even foreign nations sent embassies, and congratulated our access to the government, then did you Jews show yourselves to be our enemies. You sent embassies to those of your nation that are beyond Euphrates to assist you in your raising disturbances; new walls were built by you round your city, seditions arose, and one tyrant contended against another, and a civil war broke out among you; such indeed as became none but so wicked a people as you are. I then came to this city, as unwillingly sent by my father, and received melancholy injunctions from him. When I heard that the people were disposed to peace, I rejoiced at it; I exhorted you to leave off these proceedings before I began this war; I spared you even when you had fought against me a great while; I gave my right hand as security to the deserters; I observed what I had promised faithfully. When they fled to me, I had compassion on many of those that I had taken captive; I tortured those that were eager for war, in order to restrain them. It was unwillingly that I brought my engines of war against your walls; I always prohibited my soldiers, when they were set upon your slaughter, from their severity against you. After every victory I persuaded you to peace, as though I had been myself conquered. When I came near your temple, I again departed from the laws of war, and exhorted you to spare your own sanctuary, and to preserve your holy house to yourselves. I allowed you a quiet exit out of it, and security for your preservation; nay, if you had a mind, I gave you leave to fight in another place. Yet have you still despised every one of my proposals, and have set fire to your holy house with your own hands. And now, vile wretches, do you desire to treat with me by word of mouth? To what purpose is it that you would save such a holy house as this was, which is now destroyed? What preservation can you now desire after the destruction of your temple? Yet do you stand still at this very time in your armor; nor can you bring yourselves so much as to pretend to be supplicants even in this your utmost extremity. O miserable creatures! what is it you depend on? Are not your people dead? is

not your holy house gone? is not your city in my power? and are not your own very lives in my hands? And do you still deem it a part of valor to die? However, I will not imitate your madness. If you throw down your arms, and deliver up your bodies to me, I grant you your lives; and I will act like a mild master of a family; what cannot be healed shall be punished, and the rest I will preserve for my own use."

3. To that offer of Titus they made this reply: That they could not accept of it, because they had sworn never to do so; but they desired they might have leave to go through the wall that had been made about them, with their wives and children; for that they would go into the desert, and leave the city to him. At this Titus had great indignation, that when they were in the case of men already taken captives, they should pretend to make their own terms with him, as if they had been conquerors. So he ordered this proclamation to be made to them, That they should no more come out to him as deserters, nor hope for any further security; for that he would henceforth spare nobody, but fight them with his whole army; and that they must save themselves as well as they could; for that he would from henceforth treat them according to the laws of war. So he gave orders to the soldiers both to burn and to plunder the city; who did nothing indeed that day; but on the next day they set fire to the repository of the archives, to Acra, to the council-house, and to the place called Ophlas; at which time the fire proceeded as far as the palace of queen Helena, which was in the middle of Acra; the lanes also were burnt down, as were also those houses that were full of the dead bodies of such as were destroyed by famine.

4. On the same day it was that the sons and brethren of Izates the king, together with many others of the eminent men of the populace, got together there, and besought Caesar to give them his right hand for their security; upon which, though he was very angry at all that were now remaining, yet did he not lay aside his old moderation, but received these men. At that time, indeed, he kept them all in custody, but still bound the king's sons and

kinsmen, and led them with him to Rome, in order to make them hostages for their country's fidelity to the Romans.

### **Footnotes:**

1. Take Havercamp's note here: "This (says he) is a remarkable place; and Tertullian truly says in his Apologetic, ch. 16. p. 162, that the entire religion of the Roman camp almost consisted in worshipping the ensigns, in swearing by the ensigns, and in preferring the ensigns before all the [other] gods." See what Havercamp says upon that place of Tertullian.
2. This declaring Titus imperator by the soldiers, upon such signal success, and the slaughter of such a vast number of enemies, was according to the usual practice of the Romans in like cases, as Reland assures us on this place.
3. The Jews of later times agree with Josephus, that there were hiding-places or secret chambers about the holy house, as Reland here informs us, where he thinks he has found these very walls described by them.
4. Spanheim notes here, that the Romans used to permit the Jews to collect their sacred tribute, and send it to Jerusalem; of which we have had abundant evidence in Josephus already on other occasions.

## Chapter 7

### **Caesar Became Master of the Upper City**

1. And now the seditious rushed into the royal palace, into which many had put their effects, because it was so strong, and drove the Romans away from it. They also slew all the people that had crowded into it, who were in number about eight thousand four hundred, and plundered them of what they had. They also took two of the Romans alive; the one was a horseman, and the other a footman. They then cut the throat of the footman, and immediately had him drawn through the whole city, as revenging themselves upon the whole body of the Romans by this one instance. But the horseman said he had somewhat to suggest to them in order to their preservation; whereupon he was brought before Simon; but he having nothing to say when he was there, he was delivered to Ardalas, one of his commanders, to be punished, who bound his hands behind him, and put a riband over his eyes, and then brought him out over against the Romans, as intending to cut off his head. But the man prevented that execution, and ran away to the Romans, and this while the Jewish executioner was drawing out his sword. Now when he was gotten away from the enemy, Titus could not think of putting him to death; but because he deemed him unworthy of being a Roman soldier any longer, on account that he had been taken alive by the enemy, he took away his arms, and ejected him out of the legion whereto he had belonged; which, to one that had a sense of shame, was a penalty severer than death itself.

2. On the next day the Romans drove the robbers out of the lower city, and set all on fire as far as Siloam. These soldiers were indeed glad to see the city destroyed. But they missed the plunder, because the seditious had carried off all their effects, and were retired into the upper city; for they did not yet at all repent of the mischiefs they had done, but were insolent, as if they had done well; for, as they saw the city on fire, they appeared cheerful,

and put on joyful countenances, in expectation, as they said, of death to end their miseries. Accordingly, as the people were now slain, the holy house was burnt down, and the city was on fire, there was nothing further left for the enemy to do. Yet did not Josephus grow weary, even in this utmost extremity, to beg of them to spare what was left of the city; he spake largely to them about their barbarity and impiety, and gave them his advice in order to their escape; though he gained nothing thereby more than to be laughed at by them; and as they could not think of surrendering themselves up, because of the oath they had taken, nor were strong enough to fight with the Romans any longer upon the square, as being surrounded on all sides, and a kind of prisoners already, yet were they so accustomed to kill people, that they could not restrain their right hands from acting accordingly. So they dispersed themselves before the city, and laid themselves in ambush among its ruins, to catch those that attempted to desert to the Romans; accordingly many such deserters were caught by them, and were all slain; for these were too weak, by reason of their want of food, to fly away from them; so their dead bodies were thrown to the dogs. Now every other sort of death was thought more tolerable than the famine, insomuch that, though the Jews despaired now of mercy, yet would they fly to the Romans, and would themselves, even of their own accord, fall among the murderous rebels also. Nor was there any place in the city that had no dead bodies in it, but what was entirely covered with those that were killed either by the famine or the rebellion; and all was full of the dead bodies of such as had perished, either by that sedition or by that famine.

3. So now the last hope which supported the tyrants, and that crew of robbers who were with them, was in the caves and caverns under ground; whither, if they could once fly, they did not expect to be searched for; but endeavored, that after the whole city should be destroyed, and the Romans gone away, they might come out again, and escape from them. This was no better than a dream of theirs; for they were not able to lie hid either from God or from the Romans. However, they depended on these under-ground

subterfuges, and set more places on fire than did the Romans themselves; and those that fled out of their houses thus set on fire into the ditches, they killed without mercy, and pillaged them also; and if they discovered food belonging to any one, they seized upon it and swallowed it down, together with their blood also; nay, they were now come to fight one with another about their plunder; and I cannot but think that, had not their destruction prevented it, their barbarity would have made them taste of even the dead bodies themselves.

## Chapter 8

### **Caesar Raised Banks Round About the Upper City**

1. Now when Caesar perceived that the upper city was so steep that it could not possibly be taken without raising banks against it, he distributed the several parts of that work among his army, and this on the twentieth day of the month Lous [Ab]. Now the carriage of the materials was a difficult task, since all the trees, as I have already told you, that were about the city, within the distance of a hundred furlongs, had their branches cut off already, in order to make the former banks. The works that belonged to the four legions were erected on the west side of the city, over against the royal palace; but the whole body of the auxiliary troops, with the rest of the multitude that were with them, [erected their banks] at the Xystus, whence they reached to the bridge, and that tower of Simon which he had built as a citadel for himself against John, when they were at war one with another.

2. It was at this time that the commanders of the Idumeans got together privately, and took counsel about surrendering up themselves to the Romans. Accordingly, they sent five men to Titus, and entreated him to give them his right hand for their security. So Titus thinking that the tyrants would yield, if the Idumeans, upon whom a great part of the war depended, were once withdrawn from them, after some reluctancy and delay, complied with them, and gave them security for their lives, and sent the five men back. But as these Idumeans were preparing to march out, Simon perceived it, and immediately slew the five men that had gone to Titus, and took their commanders, and put them in prison, of whom the most eminent was Jacob, the son of Sosas; but as for the multitude of the Idumeans, who did not at all know what to do, now their commanders were taken from them, he had them watched, and secured the walls by a more numerous garrison, Yet could not that garrison resist those that were deserting; for although a great number of

them were slain, yet were the deserters many more in number. They were all received by the Romans, because Titus himself grew negligent as to his former orders for killing them, and because the very soldiers grew weary of killing them, and because they hoped to get some money by sparing them; for they left only the populace, and sold the rest of the multitude, (1) with their wives and children, and every one of them at a very low price, and that because such as were sold were very many, and the buyers were few: and although Titus had made proclamation beforehand, that no deserter should come alone by himself, that so they might bring out their families with them, yet did he receive such as these also. However, he set over them such as were to distinguish some from others, in order to see if any of them deserved to be punished. And indeed the number of those that were sold was immense; but of the populace above forty thousand were saved, whom Caesar let go whither every one of them pleased.

3. But now at this time it was that one of the priests, the son of Thebuthus, whose name was Jesus, upon his having security given him, by the oath of Caesar, that he should be preserved, upon condition that he should deliver to him certain of the precious things that had been repositied in the temple (2) came out of it, and delivered him from the wall of the holy house two candlesticks, like to those that lay in the holy house, with tables, and cisterns, and vials, all made of solid gold, and very heavy. He also delivered to him the veils and the garments, with the precious stones, and a great number of other precious vessels that belonged to their sacred worship. The treasurer of the temple also, whose name was Phineas, was seized on, and showed Titus the coats and girdles of the priests, with a great quantity of purple and scarlet, which were there repositied for the uses of the veil, as also a great deal of cinnamon and cassia, with a large quantity of other sweet spices, (3) which used to be mixed together, and offered as incense to God every day. A great many other treasures were also delivered to him, with sacred ornaments of the temple not a few; which things thus delivered to Titus obtained of him for this man the same pardon that he had allowed to



such as deserted of their own accord.

4. And now were the banks finished on the seventh day of the month Gorpheus, [Elul,] in eighteen days' time, when the Romans brought their machines against the wall. But for the seditious, some of them, as despairing of saving the city, retired from the wall to the citadel; others of them went down into the subterranean vaults, though still a great many of them defended themselves against those that brought the engines for the battery; yet did the Romans overcome them by their number and by their strength; and, what was the principal thing of all, by going cheerfully about their work, while the Jews were quite dejected, and become weak. Now as soon as a part of the wall was battered down, and certain of the towers yielded to the impression of the battering rams, those that opposed themselves fled away, and such a terror fell upon the tyrants, as was much greater than the occasion required; for before the enemy got over the breach they were quite stunned, and were immediately for flying away. And now one might see these men, who had hitherto been so insolent and arrogant in their wicked practices, to be cast down and to tremble, insomuch that it would pity one's heart to observe the change that was made in those vile persons. Accordingly, they ran with great violence upon the Roman wall that encompassed them, in order to force away those that guarded it, and to break through it, and get away. But when they saw that those who had formerly been faithful to them had gone away, (as indeed they were fled whithersoever the great distress they were in persuaded them to flee,) as also when those that came running before the rest told them that the western wall was entirely overthrown, while others said the Romans were gotten in, and others that they were near, and looking out for them, which were only the dictates of their fear, which imposed upon their sight, they fell upon their face, and greatly lamented their own mad conduct; and their nerves were so terribly loosed, that they could not flee away. And here one may chiefly reflect on the power of God exercised upon these wicked wretches, and on the good fortune of the Romans; for these tyrants did now wholly deprive themselves of the security

they had in their own power, and came down from those very towers of their own accord, wherein they could have never been taken by force, nor indeed by any other way than by famine. And thus did the Romans, when they had taken such great pains about weaker walls, get by good fortune what they could never have gotten by their engines; for three of these towers were too strong for all mechanical engines whatsoever, concerning which we have treated above.

5. So they now left these towers of themselves, or rather they were ejected out of them by God himself, and fled immediately to that valley which was under Siloam, where they again recovered themselves out of the dread they were in for a while, and ran violently against that part of the Roman wall which lay on that side; but as their courage was too much depressed to make their attacks with sufficient force, and their power was now broken with fear and affliction, they were repulsed by the guards, and dispersing themselves at distances from each other, went down into the subterranean caverns. So the Romans being now become masters of the walls, they both placed their ensigns upon the towers, and made joyful acclamations for the victory they had gained, as having found the end of this war much lighter than its beginning; for when they had gotten upon the last wall, without any bloodshed, they could hardly believe what they found to be true; but seeing nobody to oppose them, they stood in doubt what such an unusual solitude could mean. But when they went in numbers into the lanes of the city with their swords drawn, they slew those whom they overtook without and set fire to the houses whither the Jews were fled, and burnt every soul in them, and laid waste a great many of the rest; and when they were come to the houses to plunder them, they found in them entire families of dead men, and the upper rooms full of dead corpses, that is, of such as died by the famine; they then stood in a horror at this sight, and went out without touching any thing. But although they had this commiseration for such as were destroyed in that manner, yet had they not the same for those that were still alive, but they ran every one through whom they met with, and

obstructed the very lanes with their dead bodies, and made the whole city run down with blood, to such a degree indeed that the fire of many of the houses was quenched with these men's blood. And truly so it happened, that though the slayers left off at the evening, yet did the fire greatly prevail in the night; and as all was burning, came that eighth day of the month Gorpieus [Elul] upon Jerusalem, a city that had been liable to so many miseries during this siege, that, had it always enjoyed as much happiness from its first foundation, it would certainly have been the envy of the world. Nor did it on any other account so much deserve these sore misfortunes, as by producing such a generation of men as were the occasions of this its overthrow.

### **Footnotes:**

1. This innumerable multitude of Jews that were "sold" by the Romans was an eminent completion of God's ancient threatening by Moses, that if they apostatized from the obedience to his laws, they should be "sold unto their enemies for bond-men and bond-women," Deuteronomy 28:68. See more especially the note on ch. 9. sect. 2. But one thing is here peculiarly remarkable, that Moses adds, Though they should be "sold" for slaves, yet "no man should buy them;" i.e. either they should have none to redeem them from this sale into slavery; or rather, that the slaves to be sold should be more than were the purchasers for them, and so they should be sold for little or nothing; which is what Josephus here affirms to have been the case at this time.
2. What became of these spoils of the temple that escaped the fire, see Josephus himself hereafter, B. VII. ch. 5. sect. 5, and *Reland de Spoliis Templi*, p. 129-138.
3. These various sorts of spices, even more than those four which Moses prescribed, Exodus 31:34, we see were used in their public worship under Herod's temple, particularly cinnamon and cassia; which Reland takes particular notice of, as agreeing with the latter testimony of the Talmudists.

## Chapter 9

### **The Injunctions Caesar Gave When He Was Come Within the City**

1. Now when Titus was come into this [upper] city, he admired not only some other places of strength in it, but particularly those strong towers which the tyrants in their mad conduct had relinquished; for when he saw their solid altitude, and the largeness of their several stones, and the exactness of their joints, as also how great was their breadth, and how extensive their length, he expressed himself after the manner following: "We have certainly had God for our assistant in this war, and it was no other than God who ejected the Jews out of these fortifications; for what could the hands of men or any machines do towards overthrowing these towers?" At which time he had many such discourses to his friends; he also let such go free as had been bound by the tyrants, and were left in the prisons. To conclude, when he entirely demolished the rest of the city, and overthrew its walls, he left these towers as a monument of his good fortune, which had proved his auxiliaries, and enabled him to take what could not otherwise have been taken by him.

2. And now, since his soldiers were already quite tired with killing men, and yet there appeared to be a vast multitude still remaining alive, Caesar gave orders that they should kill none but those that were in arms, and opposed them, but should take the rest alive. But, together with those whom they had orders to slay, they slew the aged and the infirm; but for those that were in their flourishing age, and who might be useful to them, they drove them together into the temple, and shut them up within the walls of the court of the women; over which Caesar set one of his freed-men, as also Fronto, one of his own friends; which last was to determine every one's fate, according to his merits. So this Fronto slew all those that had been seditious and robbers, who were impeached one by another; but of the young men he

chose out the tallest and most beautiful, and reserved them for the triumph; and as for the rest of the multitude that were above seventeen years old, he put them into bonds, and sent them to the Egyptian mines (1) Titus also sent a great number into the provinces, as a present to them, that they might be destroyed upon their theatres, by the sword and by the wild beasts; but those that were under seventeen years of age were sold for slaves. Now during the days wherein Fronto was distinguishing these men, there perished, for want of food, eleven thousand; some of whom did not taste any food, through the hatred their guards bore to them; and others would not take in any when it was given them. The multitude also was so very great, that they were in want even of corn for their sustenance.

3. Now the number (2) of those that were carried captive during this whole war was collected to be ninety-seven thousand; as was the number of those that perished during the whole siege eleven hundred thousand, the greater part of whom were indeed of the same nation [with the citizens of Jerusalem], but not belonging to the city itself; for they were come up from all the country to the feast of unleavened bread, and were on a sudden shut up by an army, which, at the very first, occasioned so great a straitness among them, that there came a pestilential destruction upon them, and soon afterward such a famine, as destroyed them more suddenly. And that this city could contain so many people in it, is manifest by that number of them which was taken under Cestius, who being desirous of informing Nero of the power of the city, who otherwise was disposed to condemn that nation, entreated the high priests, if the thing were possible, to take the number of their whole multitude. So these high priests, upon the coming of that feast which is called the Passover, when they slay their sacrifices, from the ninth hour till the eleventh, but so that a company not less than ten (3) belong to every sacrifice, (for it is not lawful for them to feast singly by themselves,) and many of us are twenty in a company, found the number of sacrifices was two hundred and fifty-six thousand five hundred; which, upon the allowance of no more than ten that feast together, amounts to two millions seven hundred

thousand and two hundred persons that were pure and holy; for as to those that have the leprosy, or the gonorrhea, or women that have their monthly courses, or such as are otherwise polluted, it is not lawful for them to be partakers of this sacrifice; nor indeed for any foreigners neither, who come hither to worship.

4. Now this vast multitude is indeed collected out of remote places, but the entire nation was now shut up by fate as in prison, and the Roman army encompassed the city when it was crowded with inhabitants. Accordingly, the multitude of those that therein perished exceeded all the destructions that either men or God ever brought upon the world; for, to speak only of what was publicly known, the Romans slew some of them, some they carried captives, and others they made a search for under ground, and when they found where they were, they broke up the ground and slew all they met with. There were also found slain there above two thousand persons, partly by their own hands, and partly by one another, but chiefly destroyed by the famine; but then the ill savor of the dead bodies was most offensive to those that lighted upon them, insomuch that some were obliged to get away immediately, while others were so greedy of gain, that they would go in among the dead bodies that lay on heaps, and tread upon them; for a great deal of treasure was found in these caverns, and the hope of gain made every way of getting it to be esteemed lawful. Many also of those that had been put in prison by the tyrants were now brought out; for they did not leave off their barbarous cruelty at the very last: yet did God avenge himself upon them both, in a manner agreeable to justice. As for John, he wanted food, together with his brethren, in these caverns, and begged that the Romans would now give him their right hand for his security, which he had often proudly rejected before; but for Simon, he struggled hard with the distress he was in, till he was forced to surrender himself, as we shall relate hereafter; so he was reserved for the triumph, and to be then slain; as was John condemned to perpetual imprisonment. And now the Romans set fire to the extreme parts of the city, and burnt them down, and entirely demolished its walls.

## Footnotes:

1. See the several predictions that the Jews, if they became obstinate in their idolatry and wickedness, should be sent again or sold into Egypt for their punishment, Deuteronomy 28:68; Jeremiah 44:7; Hosea 8:13; 9:3; 9:4, 5; 2 Samuel 15:10-13; with Authentic Records, Part I. p. 49, 121; and Reland Paine's And, tom. II. p. 715.
2. The whole multitude of the Jews that were destroyed during the entire seven years before this time, in all the countries of and bordering on Judea, is summed up by Archbishop Usher, from Lipsius, out of Josephus, at the year of Christ 70, and amounts to 1,337,490. Nor could there have been that number of Jews in Jerusalem to be destroyed in this siege, as will be presently set down by Josephus, but that both Jews and proselytes of justice were just then come up out of the other countries of Galilee, Samaria, Judea, and Perea and other remoter regions, to the passover, in vast numbers, and therein cooped up, as in a prison, by the Roman army, as Josephus himself well observes in this and the next section, and as is exactly related elsewhere, B. V. ch. 3. sect. 1 and ch. 13. sect. 7.
3. This number of a company for one paschal lamb, between ten and twenty, agrees exactly with the number thirteen, at our Savior's last passover. As to the whole number of the Jews that used to come up to the passover, and eat of it at Jerusalem, see the note on B. II. ch. 14. sect. 3. This number ought to be here indeed just ten times the number of the lambs, or just 2,565, by Josephus's own reasoning; whereas it is, in his present copies, no less than 2,700, which last number is, however, nearest the other number in the place now cited, which is 3,000,000. But what is here chiefly remarkable is this, that no foreign nation ever came thus to destroy the Jews at any of their solemn festivals, from the days of Moses till this time, but came now upon their apostasy from God, and from obedience to him. Nor is it possible, in the

nature of things, that in any other nation such vast numbers should be gotten together, and perish in the siege of any one city whatsoever, as now happened in Jerusalem.



## Chapter 10

### The History of the City of Jerusalem

1. And thus was Jerusalem taken, in the second year of the reign of Vespasian, on the eighth day of the month Gorpeius [Elul]. It had been taken five (1) times before, though this was the second time of its desolation; for Shishak, the king of Egypt, and after him Antiochus, and after him Pompey, and after them Sosius and Herod, took the city, but still preserved it; but before all these, the king of Babylon conquered it, and made it desolate, one thousand four hundred and sixty-eight years and six months after it was built. But he who first built it. Was a potent man among the Canaanites, and is in our own tongue called [Melchisedek], the Righteous King, for such he really was; on which account he was [there] the first priest of God, and first built a temple [there], and called the city Jerusalem, which was formerly called Salem. However, David, the king of the Jews, ejected the Canaanites, and set-tied his own people therein. It was demolished entirely by the Babylonians, four hundred and seventy-seven years and six months after him. And from king David, who was the first of the Jews who reigned therein, to this destruction under Titus, were one thousand one hundred and seventy-nine years; but from its first building, till this last destruction, were two thousand one hundred and seventy-seven years; yet hath not its great antiquity, nor its vast riches, nor the diffusion of its nation over all the habitable earth, nor the greatness of the veneration paid to it on a religious account, been sufficient to preserve it from being destroyed. And thus ended the siege of Jerusalem.

#### Footnote:

1. This is the proper place for such as have closely attended to these latter books of the War to peruse, and that with equal attention, those distinct

and plain predictions of Jesus of Nazareth, in the Gospels thereto relating, as compared with their exact completions in Josephus's history; upon which completions, as Dr: Whitby well observes, Annot. on Matthew 24:2, no small part of the evidence for the truth of the Christian religion does depend; and as I have step by step compared them together in my *Literal Accomplishment of Scripture Prophecies*. The reader is to observe further, that the true reason why I have so seldom taken notice of those completions in the course of these notes, notwithstanding their being so very remarkable, and frequently so very obvious, is this, that I had entirely prevented myself in that treatise beforehand; to which therefore I must here, once for all, seriously refer every inquisitive reader. Besides these five here enumerated, who had taken Jerusalem of old, Josephus, upon further recollection, reckons a sixth, *Antiq. B. XII. ch. 1. sect. 1*, who should have been here inserted in the second place; I mean Ptolemy, the son of Lagus.