

JERUSALEM THROUGH THE AGES

70 [5*10 (SUN/MON 5/6 AUG)] Jewish Temple burned.

[FALL] For all intents & purposes, Jerusalem was erased.

At the encouragement of Rabbi Johanan Ben Zakkai, the Jewish Sanhedrin took up residence in Jamnia (located about 30 miles west of Jerusalem, near the Mediterranean coast). Rabbi Zakkai further encouraged the religious Jews to accept Hosea 6:6 – “For I delight in loyalty rather than sacrifice, and in the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings.” (NASB) – as evidence that God would accept certain acts of loyalty by Jews (e.g., prayer, study, good works, etc.) as substitutes for the animal sacrifices no longer possible after the loss of their Temple. This radically changed the face of Judaism.

71 [SPRING] Titus departed for Rome, leaving Legate Bassus in charge of “mopping up” what remained of the rebels, scattered in a few holdouts like the Herodian fortresses of Herodium, Macherus & Masada. With Jerusalem gone & so many Jews dead, things radically changed for the Jewish people.

“About the same time it was that Caesar sent a letter to Bassus, and to Liberius Maximus, who was the procurator [of Judea], and gave order that all Judea should be exposed to sale; for he did not found any city there, but reserved the country for himself.

“However, he assigned a place for eight hundred men only, whom he had dismissed from his army, which he gave them for their habitation; it is called Emmaus, and is distant from Jerusalem threescore furlongs.

“He also laid a tribute upon the Jews wheresoever they were and enjoined every one of them to bring two drachmae every year into the Capitol, as they used to pay the same to the Temple at Jerusalem. And this was the state of the Jewish affairs at this time.”¹

73 [1*15 (MON/TUE 12/13 APR)] The 960 Jewish *Sicarii* within the Herodian fortress of Masada were the final pocket of rebels within Judea. At the prompting of their leader, Eleazar, they entered into an execution/suicide pact rather than surrender to the Roman general Silva, who was on the verge of breaking through their final defenses after a couple months siege. Two survivors, who had hid from their own people, lived to tell the tale.²

Modern Israeli soldiers are sworn into service here, vowing, “Masada will never fall again.”

130 Emperor Hadrian (reigned 117-138) decided to rebuild Jerusalem.

“At Jerusalem he founded a city in place of the one which had been razed to the ground, naming it Aelia Capitolina, and on the site of the temple of the god he raised a new temple to Jupiter.”³

¹ Wars 7.6.6.

² Wars 7.9.

³ Cassius Dio's Roman History 69.12

132-136 Hadrian's rebuilding of Jerusalem as a Roman colony full of pagan temples provoked a second Jewish rebellion. The leader of this rebellion was Simon Bar Kosiba, to whom was given the nickname "Bar Kokhba" – "The Star" – a blatant reference to the Messianic prophecy of Numbers 24:17.

"This brought on a war of no slight importance nor of brief duration, for the Jews deemed it intolerable that foreign races should be settled in their city and foreign religious rites planted there. So long, indeed, as Hadrian was close by in Egypt and again in Syria, they remained quiet, save in so far as they purposely made of poor quality such weapons as they were called upon to furnish, in order that the Romans might reject them and they themselves might thus have the use of them; but when he went farther away, they openly revolted. To be sure, they did not dare try conclusions with the Romans in the open field, but they occupied the advantageous positions in the country and strengthened them with mines and walls, in order that they might have places of refuge whenever they should be hard pressed, and might meet together unobserved under ground; and they pierced these subterranean passages from above at intervals to let in air and light.

"At first the Romans took no account of them. Soon, however, all Judaea had been stirred up, and the Jews everywhere were showing signs of disturbance, were gathering together, and giving evidence of great hostility to the Romans, partly by secret and partly by overt acts; many outside nations, too, were joining them through eagerness for gain, and the whole earth, one might almost say, was being stirred up over the matter.

"Then, indeed, Hadrian sent against them his best generals. First of these was Julius Severus, who was dispatched from Britain, where he was governor, against the Jews. Severus did not venture to attack his opponents in the open at any one point, in view of their numbers and their desperation, but by intercepting small groups, thanks to the number of his soldiers and his under-officers, and by depriving them of food and shutting them up, he was able, rather slowly, to be sure, but with comparatively little danger, to crush, exhaust and exterminate them. Very few of them in fact survived.

"Fifty of their most important outposts and nine hundred and eighty-five of their most famous villages were razed to the ground. Five hundred and eighty thousand men were slain in the various raids and battles, and the number of those that perished by famine, disease and fire was past finding out. Thus nearly the whole of Judaea was made desolate, a result of which the people had had forewarning before the war. For the tomb of Solomon, which the Jews regard as an object of veneration, fell to pieces of itself and collapsed, and many wolves and hyenas rushed howling into their cities.

"Many Romans, moreover, perished in this war. Therefore Hadrian in writing to the senate did not employ the opening phrase commonly affected by the emperors, 'If you and our children are in health, it is well; I and the legions are in health.'"⁴

After this war, Jews were barred from living in or even walking near Jerusalem. It would appear that Hadrian effectively outlawed the core practices of Judaism because he saw it as the root cause for the rebellion. Many of these anti-Judaism laws were reversed after Hadrian's death in 138, but not the prohibition for Jews living in or near Jerusalem.

c. 150 After several shifts in location, the Sanhedrin ended up at Tiberius, Galilee.

c. 220 Rabbi Judah, the *nasi* ("prince") of the Sanhedrin (a.k.a., the Palestinian Patriarch), edited & published for the very first time the "oral law" long held by the Pharisees, thereafter called the Mishnah.

313 Emperor Constantine (reigned 306-337) issued his Edict of Milan, specifically granting Christians the right to worship openly.

326-328 Helena, the mother of Emperor Constantine, made a trip to the Holy Land where she became responsible for the foundation of the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem, and the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem (this ancient, Biblical name now replacing Hadrian's Roman name of Aelia Capitolina).

330 Constantinople was founded as the "New Rome" of the Empire.

⁴ Cassius Dio's Roman History 69.12-13

330's While Constantine permitted Jews to visit Jerusalem on the anniversary of the burning of the Temple (traditionally, the 9th of Ab) in order to mourn, they were not permitted to live there. Jerusalem was now considered a "Christian" city.

415 [17 OCT] Gamaliel VI was removed as the final *nasi* of the Sanhedrin by the Emperors Honorius (Western) & Theodosius II (Eastern) for defying their order against building unauthorized synagogues & acting as the unauthorized arbiter in Jew vs. Christian disputes within the "Holy Land."

476 The Western Roman Empire ended, breaking up into various kingdoms, with the papacy gaining great influence & temporal power in the process.

c. 500 The Talmud of the Land of Israel [consisting of the Mishnah & the Gemara (Israeli commentary on the Mishnah)] was completed.

620 Muhammad initially instructed his Islamic followers to face Jerusalem during their prayers.

622 After fleeing to Medina & after being rejected as a prophet by Jews, Muhammad instructed his Islamic followers to face Mecca during their prayers instead of Jerusalem.

632 Muhammad died at Mecca.

638 Jerusalem was captured by the 2nd Caliph of the Rashidun Caliphate, becoming a "Muslim" city. The building of Islamic holy sites began. As *dhimmi* (non-Islamic citizens) Christians were permitted to administer their own worship sites, provided their actions did not interfere with their Muslim neighbors. The 500-year ban on Jews living in the city was lifted and they were permitted to pursue their Judaism as *dhimmi*.

691 Islam's famous Dome of the Rock was completed in Jerusalem.

c. 700 The Talmud of Babylon [consisting of the Mishnah & the Gemara (Babylonian-Jewish commentary on the Mishnah)] was completed. It became the standard for modern Rabbinic Judaism.

705 The Al-Aqsa Mosque was completed in Jerusalem.

1054 The Great East-West Schism between the Orthodox & Roman Catholic Churches occurred.

1095 The Byzantine (Eastern) Emperor requested assistance from Pope Urban II in resisting an Islamic takeover of Constantinople. Urban, who was also concerned with recent harassment of Christian pilgrims to the Holy Land, responded by organizing the First Crusade with the intention of recapturing Jerusalem & the "Holy Land" from the Muslims.

1099 Jerusalem was captured by the European Crusaders. Many Jews & Muslims living in the city were killed. The Dome of the Rock was converted into a church & the Al-Aqsa Mosque was converted, first, into a palace & later into the HQ for the Templars.

1187 Jerusalem was recaptured by the Muslims. Christians living in the city were ransomed or sold into slavery. Christian religious leaders were allowed to retain control of most of their holy sites & peaceful pilgrimages were permitted to resume. The Dome of the Rock & the Al-Aqsa Mosque were reinstated to their former Islamic uses.

Mid-1400's Instability between various Muslim groups led to the deaths of Christians and the expulsion of Jews from Jerusalem.

1453 The Ottoman Turks captured Constantinople, declaring it the capital of their empire. Christians were permitted freedom of religion if they willingly accepted Turkish rule.

1517 The Ottoman Turks took control of Jerusalem. While the Muslim Turks controlled the government, Christians & Jews were permitted to gather in their traditional places of worship.

1845 Jerusalem's total population: 15,510 (less than .05 % of "Palestine"'s population)
7,120 Jews (46 %) 5,000 Muslims (32 %) 3,390 Christians (22 %)

1850 Population of "Palestine" (roughly equal to the O.T. "Promised Land"): 350,000 persons
4 % Jew 85 % Muslim 11 % Christian

Around this time, a wealthy American Jew provided for Jewish resettlement in "Palestine" within his will. This seems to have sparked the beginnings of the American "Zionist" movement. Emigrating Jews purchased land there.

1876 Jerusalem's total population: 25,030
12,000 Jews (48 %) 7,560 Muslims (30 %) 5,470 Christians (22 %)

1880's Anti-Semitic laws in Russia led to more Jewish emigration to Israel, where more land was bought.

1896 Theodor Hertzl, a European Jew, proposed the establishment of a Jewish state as the best solution to the widespread anti-Semitism within Europe.

Jerusalem's total population: 45,420
28,112 Jews (62 %) 8,560 Muslims (19 %) 8,748 Christians (19 %)

1914-1918 **World War I** – The Muslim Ottoman Empire was part of the Central Powers which lost the war.

1917 **[2 NOV]** Balfour Declaration issued by the British government.

"His Majesty's government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country."

[11 DEC] General Allenby took control of Jerusalem on behalf of the British government.

1922 The League of Nations adopted a Mandate which gave control of "Palestine" to Britain. Among other things, it affirmed the Balfour Declaration.

"The Mandatory (...) will secure the establishment of the Jewish national home, as laid down in the preamble, and the development of self-governing institutions, and also for safeguarding the civil and religious rights of all the inhabitants of Palestine, irrespective of race and religion."

Jerusalem's population: 52,081
33,971 Jews (65 %) 13,411 Muslims (26 %) 4,699 Christians (9 %)

1931 Jerusalem's population: 90,451
51,222 Jews (57 %) 19,894 Muslims (22 %) 19,335 Christians (21 %)

1939-1947 **World War II** – The Islamic Grand Mufti of Jerusalem was very pro-Nazi & very anti-Jew.

1947 [29 NOV] The United Nations adopted a partition plan for establishing independent Jewish & Arab States whenever the British Mandate ended on 14 May 1948. The borders were adopted based on existing Israeli settlements. Jerusalem was to be under U.N. administration, guaranteeing security of the religious sites located there.



[Beginning on 1 DEC] The Grand Mufti of Jerusalem and his Arab Islamic supporters initiated a general strike in protest to the partition plan & carried out terror attacks on Israeli targets in order to intimidate them into abandoning their homes & properties. A civil war broke out between Jewish & Muslim residents of “Palestine.”

1948 Jerusalem’s population: 165,000
 100,000 Jews (61 %) 40,000 Muslims (24 %) 25,000 Christians (15 %)

[By SPRING] At the insistence of their leaders, the Israeli civilians (particularly those living in and around Jerusalem) held their ground. The Mufti’s plan backfired. The chaos brought on by Muslim Arab actions collapsed their own economy & resulted in 250,000 “Palestinians” abandoning their homes & properties instead.

[14 MAY] On schedule with the partition plan, Israel announced its independence.

[15 MAY] The Muslim countries surrounding Israel declared war on the new nation. This Arab-Israeli War (1948-1949) ended with Israel in control of slightly more than what the original partition mandated. Another 700,000 “Palestinians” had fled from the war zone, which concerned the U.N.



[11 DEC] The U.N. issued Resolution 142 to deal with the displaced “Palestinians.”

“Resolves that the refugees wishing to return to their homes and live at peace with their neighbours should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date, and that compensation should be paid for the property of those choosing not to return and for loss of or damage to property which, under principles of international law or in equity, should be made good by the Governments or authorities responsible.”

East Jerusalem (The “Old City”) ended up as part of the “West Bank” of Jordan. While Christians were generally permitted access to their holy sites, the Jordanians completely barred the Jews from that part of the city. Synagogues were demolished or repurposed. The Israelis, who controlled West Jerusalem, reciprocated in similar fashion.

1949 [5 DEC] Israel declared that Jerusalem was its capital city. The U.S. officially rejected this claim, sticking with the U.N. Partition Plan which denoted Jerusalem as an international city.

1964 From its creation, the Palestinian Liberation Organization has rejected Israel’s right to exist as an independent nation of Jews, as indicated by its own founding document.

“**Article 19:** The partition of Palestine in 1947 and the establishment of the state of Israel are entirely illegal, regardless of the passage of time, because they were contrary to the will of the Palestinian people and to their natural right in their homeland, and inconsistent with the principles embodied in the Charter of the United Nations; particularly the right to self-determination.

“**Article 20:** The Balfour Declaration, the Mandate for Palestine, and everything that has been based upon them, are deemed null and void. Claims of historical or religious ties of Jews with Palestine are incompatible with the facts of history and the true conception of what constitutes statehood. Judaism, being a religion, is not an independent nationality. Nor do Jews constitute a single nation with an identity of its own; they are citizens of the states to which they belong.

“**Article 21:** The Arab Palestinian people, expressing themselves by the armed Palestinian revolution, reject all solutions which are substitutes for the total liberation of Palestine and reject all proposals aiming at the liquidation of the Palestinian problem, or its internationalization.”

1967 [5-7 JUN] “**The Six Day War**” After several years of terror attacks by the PLO in the West Bank & in response to a military build-up on its NE & SW borders, Israel struck out against the amassed aggressors & seized the threatening territories. Another 300,000 Arab “Palestinians” were displaced from the West Bank, Gaza & Golan.



As part of military operations, Israel captured East Jerusalem. Although they had military control of the Temple Mount, they permitted the Islamic religious authorities to continue administration of it, minus the Western (“Wailing”) Wall, at its base.

Jerusalem’s population: 263,309
 195,700 Jews (74 %) 54,963 Muslims (21 %) 12,646 Christians (5 %)

1973 [6-25 OCT] “**The Yom Kippur War**” After years of unsuccessful skirmishes attempting to recapture the territory lost in 1967, Egypt & Syria carry out a joint surprise attack during an Israeli holiday. The operation failed.

1979-1982 Israel withdrew their presence from the Sinai, in stages, in exchange for peace with Egypt.

1980 Israel officially annexed East Jerusalem, declaring Jerusalem to be the “complete & united” capital of Israel. In protest, all nations with embassies in West Jerusalem moved them to Tel Aviv.

1993 Via the Oslo Accords, Israel agreed that the West Bank & Gaza Strip should be administered by the Palestinian Authority, chaired by Arafat of the PLO. In exchange, the PLO agreed to recognize Israel’s right to exist.

1995 Congress passed the Jerusalem Embassy Act in which they declared that Jerusalem was the capital of Israel and that the U.S. Embassy should be relocated there. However, it acknowledged that the President could temporarily waive this move due to security concerns; which is exactly what every sitting President has done.

2002-Present Israel has been constructing a security wall along its border with the West Bank/”State of Palestine.”

2007 Via elections, Hamas took over control of the Gaza Strip. It now serves as a base for the harassment of Israel with rocket attacks & attempts at terrorist infiltration.

2009 Jerusalem’s population: 773,800
 479,756 Jews (62 %) 278,568 Muslims (36 %) 15,476 Christians (2 %)