

Jerusalem AD History

George Burnside

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Jerusalem, Sieges of. The following is a complete list of the sieges [of Jerusalem]:

1. By the tribe of Judah against the Jebusites, about 1443 BC. This was some 700 years before Rome was founded. It was only partial, for in David's reign we still find the Jebusites occupying the citadel (the future Zion). The solemn words in Judges 1:8, describing this first siege, vividly portray the after history of the city.
2. By David against the Jebusites (2 Samuel 5: 6-10; 1 Chronicles 11: 4-7), about 960 BC.
3. By Shishak king of Egypt, against Rehoboam (1 Kings 14:25, 26; 2 Chronicles 12:2-12), about 875 BC. To this there was only a feeble resistance; and the temple was plundered.
4. By the Philistines, Arabians, and Ethiopians, against Jehoram (2 Chronicles 21:16, 17), about 794 BC. In this siege the royal palace was sacked, and the temple again plundered.
5. By Jehoash king of Israel, against Amaziah king of Judah (2 Kings 14:13, 14), about 739 BC. The wall was partially broken down, and the city and temple pillaged.
6. By Rezin king of Syria, and Pekah king of Israel, against Ahaz (2 Chronicles 28), about 630 BC. The city held out, but Ahaz sought the aid of Tiglath-Pileser king of Assyria, for whom he stripped the temple.
7. By Sennacherib king of Assyria, against Hezekiah (2 Kings 18:13-16), about 603 BC. In this case the siege was raised by a divine interposition, as foretold by Isaiah the prophet.
8. By Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, against Jehoiakim (2 Chronicles 36:6, 7), about 596 BC, when the temple was partly pillaged.
9. By Nebuchadnezzar again, against Jehoiachin (2 Chronicles 36:10), about 589 BC, when the pillage of the temple was carried further, and 10,000 people carried away.
10. By Nebuchadnezzar, against Zedekiah (2 Chronicles 36:17-20), 587-586 BC. In this case the temple was burnt with fire, and the city and temple lay desolate for fifty years.
11. By Ptolemy Soter king of Egypt, against the Jews, 320 BC. More than 100,000 captives were taken to Egypt.
12. By Antiochus the Great, about 203 BC.
13. By Scopas, a general of Alexander, about 199 BC, who left a garrison.
14. By Antiochus IV, surnamed Epiphanes, 168 BC. This was the worst siege since the tenth. The whole city was pillaged, 10,000 captives taken, the walls destroyed, the altar defiled, ancient manuscripts perished, the finest buildings were burned, and the Jews were forbidden to worship there. Foretold Daniel 11.
15. By Antiochus V, surnamed Eupator, against Judas Maccabaeus, about 162 BC. This time honorable terms were made, and certain privileges were secured.
16. By Antiochus VII, surnamed Sidetes, king of Syria, against John Hyrcanus, about 135 BC.

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17. By Hyrcanus (son of Alexander Jannaeus) and the priest Aristobulus. The siege was raised by Scaurus, one of Pompey's lieutenants, about 65 BC.

18. By Pompey against Aristobulus, about 63 BC. The machines were moved on the Sabbath, when the Jews made no resistance. Only thus was it then reduced; 12,000 Jews were slain. [Antigonus, son of Aristobulus, with a Parthian army, took the city in 40 BC; but there was no siege, the city was taken by a sudden surprise.]

19. Herod with a Roman army besieged the city in 39 BC for five months.

20. By Titus, AD 69. The second temple (Herod's) was burnt, and for fifty years the city disappeared from history, as after the tenth siege. Jeremiah 20:5.

21. The Romans had again to besiege the city in AD 135 against the false Messiah, Bar-Cochebas, who had acquired possession of the ruins. The city was obliterated, and renamed Ellia Capitolina, and a temple was erected to Jupiter. For 200 years the city passed out of history, no Jews-being permitted to approach it. This siege was foretold in Luke 19:43, 44: 21:20-24.

22. After 400 years of so-called Christian colonization, Chosroes the Persian (about AD 559) swept through the country; thousands were massacred and the Church of the Holy Sepulcher was destroyed. The emperor Heraclius afterward defeated him, and restored the city and the church.

23. The caliph Omar, in AD 636-637, besieged the city against Heraclius. It was followed by capitulation on favorable terms, and the day. Jerusalem was captured by the British forces in 1917.- EDS.]

24. Afdal, the vizier of the caliph of Egypt, besieged the two rival factions of Moslems, and pillaged the city in 1098.

25. In 1099 it was besieged by the army of the first Crusade.

26. In 1187 it was besieged by Saladin for seven weeks.

27. The wild Kharezinian Tartar hordes, in 1244, captured and plundered the city, slaughtering the monks and priests. "The Companion-Bible," Part II, "Joshua to Job," Appendix, pages 76-77. London: Oxford University Press.

NOTE. The system of chronology from which quite a number of these dates are derived, varies in some cases about one hundred years from the chronology usually accepted. - EDS.

Jerusalem, CESTIUS'S WITHDRAWAL FROM. It was during the Feast of Tabernacles, in the Year 66 AD that Cestius Gallus came up to assault Jerusalem. (The dates are so precise that we can exactly assign the several transactions to their proper days in the Julian calendar.); On the 22nd of Hyperberetaeus, or Tisri, the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles, AD. 66, the Jews having notice of Cestius's approach, desisted from the solemnities of that great day of the feast, rushed to arms; poured out tumultuously from the city, and attacked the-Roman legions at Gabao or Gibeon. The assault was successful. Cestius, almost panic stricken, remained on the spot three days, and after this, three days more at Scopus. On the 30th of Hyperberetaeus = 8 October, he came up to the city, and wasted five days in unsuccessful attempts. After the last assault, when he was on the very point of success, when a strong party within the walls was just about to open the gates to him and in all human probability an end would have been put to the war, under the influence of some unaccountable panic he precipitately drew off his forces and made a tumultuous retreat to Scopus.

"Had he only a little longer persisted in the assault he would have taken the city immediately. But, methinks, God, who now on account of the wicked had turned himself away even from his holy place, hindered the war from coming that day to an end." (B. J., it, 19, 6.) This, it appears, occurred on the 6th Dius, 13th October. From Scopus, Cestius continued his retreat to Gabao, and thence on the third day, seeing the numbers of the enemy increasing, he determined to retreat still farther northward, and accordingly, with the sacrifice of most of the incumbrances, engines, and heavy armor, rapidly retraced his steps through the defiles, and with immense difficulty and great loss gained Bethhoron at nightfall, 8 Dius = 16th October. That same night he stole a march upon the enemy, and escaped undiscovered until the morning. The Jews pursued him as far as Antipatria without overtaking him, and thence returned in triumph to Jerusalem. "These things were done on the 8th Dius, in the 12th year of the reign of Nero."

Unquestionably this is the crisis of the rebellion, the fatal epoch of the last times of Jerusalem. "Immediately after this catastrophe, many of the Jews of rank forsook the city, as men swim away from a drowning ship." "Then they which had pursued Cestius returned to Jerusalem, and being assembled in the temple, elected them generals for the war."

It was in the year 70, and at the Passover (13th April), when multitudes of Jews from all parts of the world were gathered into Jerusalem for the feast, and precisely three and one half Jewish years from the Feast of Tabernacles at which Cestius came up, that Titus and the Roman armies arrived before Jerusalem." "Chronology of the Holy Scriptures," Henry Browne, M. A., pages 337, 388. London: John W. Parker. 1844.

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