

QUOTE SHEET: WHAT JOSEPHUS SAID ABOUT THE TEMPLE'S FALL

The first century Jewish historian Flavius Josephus was an eyewitness to the First Jewish-Roman War, which led to the destruction of the second temple. His writings provide a dramatic and detailed account of the siege of Jerusalem. In 'The Jewish War,' Josephus paints a vivid picture of the utter devastation that befell Jerusalem in 70 AD. Below are quotes and excerpts that describe the collapse of the city and the destruction of the temple. If you are interested, please research this more on your own as his writings are public domain.

The Siege Starvation and Cannibalism (War 6.3.4)

There was a certain woman that dwelt beyond Jordan... She had been plundered by the rebels, and her food taken. Driven by famine and despair, she killed her infant son, roasted him, and ate half of the body, saving the rest. When the rebels returned and found what she had done, they were horrified. News of this act spread through the city, filling the people with dread, and even the hardened rebels were struck with fear.

Titus Tries to Save the Temple (War 6.4.5)

Titus gave orders to preserve the Temple, declaring that its destruction was not his intent. But in the chaos of the battle, a soldier, against orders, threw a flaming torch through a golden window. The flames quickly spread. Titus ran to the site, calling to his men to put out the fire, but the noise and confusion were too great. The soldiers were filled with fury and ignored his orders. Titus raised his hands to heaven and called God to witness that he was not to blame.

Total Destruction of the City (War 6.9.1)

Jerusalem was so thoroughly laid even with the ground by those that dug it up to the foundation, that there was left nothing to make those that came thither believe it had ever been inhabited. The Temple mount and upper city were leveled, and fire consumed everything within. The city's glory and its history were erased in a matter of days.

Death Toll and Devastation (War 6.9.3)

The number of those that perished during the whole siege was eleven hundred thousand, most of whom were not Jerusalem residents, but pilgrims who had come to the city for the Passover and were trapped. Ninety-seven thousand were taken captive and sold as slaves. The rest died by starvation, fire, or the sword.

God's Judgment on Jerusalem (War 6.2.1)

I suppose that had the Romans made any longer delay in attacking these villains, the city would either have been swallowed up by the ground opening under them, or destroyed by fire from heaven, as was Sodom. For it had brought forth a generation of men much more atheistical than those who suffered such

punishments. These men were unrestrained in their violence and sacrilege, and they defiled even the sacred courts of the Temple.

Factions and Internal Civil War (War 5.1.2)

The city was torn by civil war as much as by Roman attack. Different factions of zealots and rebels fought one another within the walls, burning each other's grain supplies, even while the Romans were outside. The people suffered from both famine and slaughter. It was as if the city were destroying itself from the inside out.

Temple Desecrated by the Jews Themselves (War 4.3.10)

The Temple was profaned by those who should have protected it. Zealots used the Temple courts as battlegrounds and storage for weapons. The sanctuary, once revered, became a scene of bloodshed and corruption. The very people charged with its care had turned it into a fortress of rebellion.

The Roman View of the Temple (War 6.6.1)

Even the Romans were struck by the grandeur of the Temple before its destruction. Its stones gleamed in the sunlight, and its architecture impressed even hardened soldiers. Many soldiers reportedly regretted its destruction, acknowledging it as one of the most magnificent structures ever seen.

The Fire Consumes the Inner Sanctuary (War 6.4.7)

The flames reached the inner sanctuary and consumed everything. The golden vines, the curtains, and the sacred furnishings were destroyed. Priests threw themselves into the flames or were cut down as they tried to flee. The inner glory of the Temple, once hidden behind the veil, was exposed only to be consumed by fire. The house of God was no more.

The Aftermath (War 7.1.1)

After the war, the Romans demolished the remaining walls of Jerusalem except for the western wall. The rest of the city was left in ruins. Titus paraded Jewish captives in Rome and commemorated his victory with the Arch of Titus. The fall of Jerusalem marked not only a military victory but the symbolic end of the Jewish nation as it had been known.