



## **JERUSALEM IN CLASSICAL AGES: A CRITICAL REVIEW**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study is a review and in several cases it sheds light upon the history of Jerusalem City during the Roman and Byzantine epochs through focusing on a) the demography of the city, b) the names which had been mentioned in historical sources, c) ancient inscriptions and d) its urban design.

The review goes through Jewish sources, particularly those which deal with the reign of the Roman leader, Pompey (Pompey the Great) and the Maccabees (Machabees); the reign of the Roman Emperor, Titus, during which the Jews were tortured; the reign of the Roman king of Jews, Herod (or Herod the Great); the reign of the Roman Emperor, Hadrian; and the converting of the City from paganism to Christianity.

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**KEYWORDS:** Jerusalem, Roman epoch, Byzantine epoch, Hasmonean dynasty, historical sources, inscriptions.

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## 1. DEMOGRAPHY OF THE CITY

Jerusalem is a city fenced with valleys, situated above a mountains range in Central Palestine. This range extends between the Palestinian coast to the west and the Negev desert to both the east and south. Building Jerusalem city was initially begun from the upper part of *Kidron* valley to its west side. *Tyropoeon valley* passes through the city from the north to the south. *Tyropoeon valley* has a historical background as it's known since Canaanites epoch. This valley had been renowned for its gulches through which fast streams are flowing from two mountains: Mount Scopus (or Jabal al-Masarif), Mount El-Tor (Jabal El-Zaytoon (Olive)). One of the most famous springs in the city is *Silwan* which is sculptured by historical inscriptions/reliefs. This spring had been also known by other names like: "*Virgin Mary Spring*" and "*Um el-Darj*". Because of the city extensions and increase of urbanization, Herod was forced to build tens of wells in the courts of old Jerusalem and in the area of Al-Aqsa Masjid for satisfying the needs for water as a result of scarcity of the water. Over its eras, Jerusalem was always a city suffering from water scarcity, as its valleys are not deep. Valleys of Jerusalem do not constitute natural shields which can protect the city, the matter which forced the successive empires and kingdoms to fortify the city by building walls/fences upon the shoulders of hills or by building towers. Herod, the Idumaeen ruler, built three towers in the west corner of location of the fortress: The Hippicus Borj, The Phasael Borj, The Mariamme Borj (Al-Fanny, 2007).

The Herodeans changed major landmarks in the topography of the city. Some of the hills were pulled down for the purposes of setting up buildings within the ancient town, particularly in the territory of Al-Aqsa Masjid which has a large rocky area that can be architecturally used. Herod assumed building the Roman Basilica from the rock quarries, surrounded by a fence called City Fence. He also built Tower of Antonia in addition to other defensive towers and formations.

The Jewish historian, Josephus, said that Herod built in the City a sports stadium and a horse-racing hippodrome (Al-Fanny, 2007, p.15).

Jerusalem, as the other big cities of Palestine and Syria, uses the Latin language as an official language in addition to the Aramaic language which was the language of trade, market and daily life. Al-Dabbagh indicates that the City's population is a mixture of Arabs, Canaanites and Romans. However, the popular costume in the city during the both Roman and Byzantine epochs was the Greek one. At that time, any one was touring Jerusalem, was feeling as if s/he was in Rome. Furthermore, it's believed that the costume of that epoch was oriental upscale one, particularly among the upper class and ruling class of Arab, Jews and Roman societies. A number of scientists and saints emerged in Jerusalem. Josephus (37 - 100 A.D.) was one of the most famous of them. One of them, also, was Julius Sextus Africanus who set up the Roman Library in the reign of emperor Septimius who died in *Emmaus* in 240 A.D. (Al-Dabbagh, 1965).

In many of its stages, the Roman regime in the Orient was characterized by granting citizens freedom of property ownership, freedom of language, freedom of customs and traditions, and freedom of religion. In addition, the Roman State, in both the first and second centuries A.D. did not overburden the citizens with taxes. Nevertheless, Rome did not unleash the Religious Toleration. It did not allow that the religion may be closely related to a nation's history and custom to the extent that it may lead to the rise or the inflammation of potential nationalist sentiments, which may, in turn, lead to the ignition of revolutions. Moreover, Rome was not allowing rituals which were inconsistent with moralities or human feelings (Worth, 2003).

Consequently, in 70 A. D. Rome strived for eradicating the Jewish religion by setting fire to and entirely destroying the Temple of Jerusalem and also by a bloody repression against the Jewish revolution which broke out during the period between 132 and 135 A.D. (Worth, 2003, p.77).

Despite the devastation which struck the Temple in Jerusalem, half of the "Shekel" which had to be paid by every one of pious Jews to the treasury of the Temple, remained payable, but, this time, to Jupiter, the Roman god (Worth, 2003,p.175).

The Romans were not really caring about conditions of the Jews and administering their affairs. Therefore, the Jewish historian, Tacitus, made a mistake when he talked about Judaism on the basis that anyone established the Christianity was considered a rebel who must be sentenced to death and his followers were considered a sect who their growth portended danger. In 120 A.D., recognition of or converting to Christianity was considered a Capital Crime (Worth, 2003,176-177).

Jerusalem did convert to Christianity only in the reign of Constantine the Great (or Constantine I) who made the Roman State convert from paganism to Christianity. As a result, the City gained a new character, as churches were built and became a place of pilgrimage for Christians from all over the empire. Jewish aged women wearing shabby clothes, howling and crying were seen gathered around the churches. During the reign of Sassanians who ruled Jerusalem in 614 - 628 A.D., the Jews, after a long break in residence in the City, came into existence and had a supporting role. In the meantime, Jews came into conflicts with Christians in Jerusalem (Schick, 2007, 169-179).

During the reign of Byzantines, some of influential senior Statesmen appeared in the social life of the City: Theodotus, in forties of the sixth century, 540 A.D.; Leontius, at the end of the sixth century A.D. and Empress Eudocia in the period between 442 and 460 A.D. (Schick, 2007,p.173).

In the reign of the Byzantine Emperor Constantine I and his successors, there was diversity in the City's population that was estimated to be approximately 50,000 people living in an area of 1000 Donum (or Dunam) within the city walls. That diversity was due to the visits of Jewish and Christian pilgrims to this holy City. Many of those pilgrims were desirous of residing and settling in the City. That diversity included Armenians,

Georgians and Nestorians. Although monotheism was predominant, there were some pockets of paganism which, however, did not last long. As a result of demographic diversity, there was more than one common spoken language in the city. The dominant languages were both the Latin and Greek languages. However, the majority of pilgrims and citizens were speaking one common language and the minority of them was speaking both languages. That is why translations spread and became one of the affluent livelihood sources (Schick, 2007,pp.176 - 179).

## 2. HISTORICAL NAMES OF JERUSALEM

The Arab geographers (Al-Hamawi, 1965; Ibn Abdulhaq, 1992) were not right to consider the name "Yerushalayim" a Hebrew name, as they skipped centuries-time-gap preceding the existence of Hebrews. Abd Allah Al-Hilo observed the different forms for writing the name in different geographers' books. Such name forms include: "Yerushalem", "Yerushalayim", "Urusalim", "Ursalim", "Ursalimmu". (Al-Hilo, 1999, p. 88).

For both the name forms *Ursalimmu* and *Ursalim/Urusalim*, they were mentioned for the first time in the Egyptian Execration Texts among foreign names of places related to the Middle Bronze Age, in reign of the Egyptian 12<sup>th</sup> dynasty in the 19<sup>th</sup> century B.C. This form was *3wš3mm* which was revised to become *rwšlmm* and read *Urušalimum*. Therefore, such this latter form, *Urušalimum*, may be associated with the word *Urusalim* which remained the name used over the last four centuries of the Akkadian (or Acadian) epoch.

In the Amarna letters - which were written in the Acadian Language - the name form *u-ru-sa-lim* was mentioned, which was generally similar to *Urusalim*. This was at the end of the reign of Pharaoh "Ikhnaton" in approximately 1360 B.C. This means that the name "Ursalim" or "Yerushalem" was known many centuries before the Biblical Codes (or Torah Code). These Royal messages which mentioned Jerusalem are im-

portant documents as they maintained the antiquity of the name. Some of these letters were sent by the ruler of Jerusalem, Yehiba'al (or Abd-Yehiba) to the Egyptian Pharaoh, Amenophis III, whereas the name of the City was, at that time, *Urusalim*. In these letters, Yehiba'al called for help to protect the City against invasions of Habiru (Habiri or Chabiru) Tribes (Zaza, 1970, p.8).

In the Iron Age, the name, *ur-sa-li-im-mu*, emerged in 691 B.C., in the reign of the Assyrian King, Sennacherib (*sîn-ahhî-erîba*). *alja-a-hu-du* was another name of the City (Judas or Judah city) which appeared in the *Babylonian Annals* in the reign of Nebuchadnezzar (*Nabû-kudurri-uṣur* or *Naboukhodonôšôr*) [597 - 598 B.C.].

Jerusalem was mentioned in three inscriptions belonging to the Canaanite Northwest Semitic Language which is a division of the Semitic Language Family, the Hebrew branch. In two of these inscriptions the letters *yršlm* appeared, from which the name *Yerušalem* was coined (almost in 700 B.C.). The first inscription was found in a grave among the ruins of Beit Layy to the east of Lachish. The second inscription was an Ostrakon on which the letters *šlm* were inscribed. For the third inscription, it was a set of seals inscribed on jars being used for storing, which dates back to the epoch of Persian Achaemenid Empire. On some of these jars, the letters *yhd* or *yhwđ* were written in Aramaic calligraphy. *yršlm* was a word appeared among similar inscription, which indicated the word *Yerušalem*. This word was pointed around a star, with five diacritic points in the old Hebrew calligraphy and with the Aramaic dictation. Another one of Jerusalem historical names is *Zion* (it's the name by which Jebus mountain was later called). The form in which the name *Zion* was written is *Ṣywn* which means [Protect - Build - Fix] and, therefore, holds a topographical significance. This name appeared in the Septuagint in the forms *Sion* or *Seion* and remained the name used in the Hellenistic, Roman and Byzantine periods (Kooij, 1699, pp. 24 - 25; Fohrer, 1964, pp. 292 - 297).

One of the secondary names which referred to Jerusalem is *Jebus* which was a name of a part not the whole of Jerusalem City. *Jebus* was derived from *Yebusites* which was known as the name referred to any tribe resided in *Yerushalem* before Israelites came to the City. However, this name was rarely mentioned in the sources. It was mentioned only two times in the Torah written in the Aramaic language. It was reported that *Yərōšālam* is the same *Yəbōs* and was stated in the Septuagint in the form *Ιεβους* and in the Latin version of the Bible in the form *Iebus* (Abo Taleb, 2006; Al-Ghool and Zeyadah, 2006, pp. 197, 200). Some researchers believe that this name originated from Assyrian origins (Mendenhall, 1973, p. 145; Abo Taleb, p. 201). Thus, the name of the City was mentioned in Semitic Languages other than Arabic in different forms: it's *Yerushalem/Yerushalayim* in Torah; *Yerušalem* or *Yerushalayim* in other Aramaic languages; *Urusalim* in Nabataean writings; *Urusalim* in Syriac language (Al-Hilo, 1999, p.88).

In respect of the etymological matter, the author of the book titled: *Historical and Etymological Investigations*, discusses the etymological difference in the forms of *Urusalim* as this name consists of two syllables, the second one, *salim*, means "Peace". However, the first syllable of this name, *Ur* or *Uru*, is a problematic matter. It may mean "City" on the basis of the phonetic alteration of both the glottal and pharyngeal sounds which are, in Arabic, the "ء" and "ع" sounds, respectively. This problematic syllable may also mean "Light" for the whole word to be a compound noun meaning "Light and Peace" (Al-Hilo, 1999, p.88).

To the Arabs, one of the names of Jerusalem is *Aelia* (Al-Hamawy, p.423; Abd Al-Haq, p.108). *Aelia* is a Latin word which is cognate with the Semitic word "*El*" which means "God". This name is attributed to *Aelius Capitolina*, a Roman leader in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century A.D., who entered the City after resistance, and named it *Aelia Capitolina* (Al-Hilo, p.91).

The name *Al-Quds* is Arabized. In both Aramaic and Canaanite branches of the

Northwest Semitic dialects the following names appeared in Syriac Language: Bayt Mackdcha, Kedsha, Kreetha Kedsha; and the names: Bayt Hamekdash, Ir Hakedsh were stated In the Biblical Tongue (Ibid, p. 442).

Another name of Jerusalem city is Yapithi / Jebithi which appeared in the ancient Egyptian records. It's attributed to *Yebusites* and *Jebus*. In the same records, the name *Urusalim* appeared on the same etymological pattern of the Canaanites. This name reechoed in the Arabic sources, as El-Firuz Abadi or (Al-Firuzabadi), used the name *Shlim*; and – as stated by Al-Hamawy – the name *Ursalimmu* appeared in one of the poems of a pre-Islamic poet. In both sources, those two names referred to Jerusalem City. The names *Hierosolyma*, *Solymos*, *Solma* remained heard in the Roman epoch over the period from 70 to 175 A.D. (Al-Anany, 2009, p. 31).

### 3. INDICATIONS CONFIRM RELIGIOUS AND CIVILIZATIONAL/CULTURAL PRESENCE

In his Encyclopedia "*Jews, Judaism and Zionism*", the late Dr. Abdulwahab El-Messiri said: "Al-Quds/Jerusalem" is a synonym of "Yerushalayim" in Hebrew. The name "Yerushalayim" appeared in this form more than 680 times in the Old Testament. This word is etymologically derived (since the 19<sup>th</sup> century B.C.) from the Canaanite Yebusite word, *Yerushalem* (the syllable "Yeru" which means "establish" or the syllable "Ur" which means "location" or "city"; and the syllable "sholmano", "shalem" or "shlim" which means "The Semitic God of Peace". In the Egyptian writings known as the "Egyptian Execration Texts", which date back to both the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries B.C., the word appeared in the form "*Rušhalimum*". Among The Amarna Letters (the 14<sup>th</sup> B.C.), there were six letters written by *Abdi Khipa*, the king of "Urusalim". In the Assyrian writings which date back to the 8<sup>th</sup> century B.C. this name was repeated but in the form "Urslimmu". In the Greek writings of the 4<sup>th</sup> century B.C. the City was named "Hi-

erosolyma". It's clear that the Latin name "Jerusalem" was derived from the Canaanite name of the City. Yaqoot called the City "Orshlin", "Orslim/Urusalim" or "Orslim/Urslim". It was also referred to as "Jebus" which is attributed to its population, the *Yebusites*. The *Yebusite* people came from phratries of the early Arabs who emigrated from the Arabian Peninsula in about 2500 B.C. and occupied the hills overlooking the old City. The Canaanite name, "Jebus" (or "Yabus") appeared in the hieroglyphic Egyptian writings but in the modified form, "Yapthi" or "Bapti". The *Yebusites* built a fortress on the southeastern mound of Jebus, called "Jebus Fortress" and it was later called "Zion Fortress". The mountain on which this fortress was built was called Ophel Hill or sometimes Mount Zion (or Zion Mountain). In the location of Jebus Fortress, the Seleucids constructed a fortress called "Acra Citadel" (or Akra Citadel). Jerusalem was also called Zion. In Torah, the City, in addition to "Yerushalayim", is also called: "Shalem", "City of God", "City of Justice", "City of Peace", "City of Right", "The Holy City", "City of The Holy People", and "Ariel" (Lion of God). In the 5<sup>th</sup> century B.C., the Greek historian, Herodotus, referred to a big city in Syria (the Levant) which he called "Cadytis" (which was likely a modification of the Aramaic pronunciation of the name "Kedosh", or Quds). When David ("Daud", "Dawood", "Dāwīd", "Dāwūd", "Daveed") captured the city in almost 1000 B.C., he named it "The City of David". However, the city, later, returned to its old name. In the Roman era, the Emperor Aelius Hadrianus destroyed the city (in 135 A.D.) and changed its name to »*Aelia Capitolina*«. *Aelia* is the name of this emperor and *Capitolina* is attributed to the »*Capitol*« which was the Temple of Jupiter. Jupiter (or Jove) is the king of the Roman gods or the chief deity of Roman state religion. However, the Emperor Constantine, who converted to Christianity in the 4<sup>th</sup> century B.C., returned to the city its old name "*Yerushalem* or *Yerushalayim*". It seems that the name *Aelia* remained common even in the era of the Caliph *Umar ibn Al-Khattāb*, which was

known as the era of safety that the Caliph Umar granted to the City population in 638 A.D. In the next eras, the City was named "*Bayt al-Maqdis*" (or *Bayt al-Muqaddas*) and also named "*al-Quds aš-Šhareef*". One of the Muslim scholars in the 5<sup>th</sup> century A.H. (Hijri) used the names "*Bayt al-Maqdis*" and "*Aelia*" (El-Messiri, 1999, vol.4).

Thus, what is known now as The Old City of Jerusalem, was called, over the different periods of history, by two key names: "*Yerushalayim*" and its subsequent derivations; and "*Aelia Capitolina*". In addition, there were further local names. For the name "*Yerushalayim*" or "*Ursalim*", it is composed of two parts: "*Yeru*" or "*Ur*" which means "town or city"; "*Slm*" or "*Salim*" as it was read, which was a name of a deity known in The Ugaritic Texts found in the late Bronze Age as well as in some of Iron Age texts. The name "*Yerushalayim*" or "*Ursalim*" holds the meaning and significance of "City of the Lord/God". There is a consensus of opinion on that this name is of Canaanite origin (Kooij, 1999, p.25).

The second name of the City was *Šalem* (the Psalms, 76:3) which represents Yerušalem (Kooij, 1999, p.25). The third name was *ari-el* [meaning "providing a terrace"] (Jesaja 29: 1; Kooij, p.25), while the fourth name was *Oholiba* which is a symbolic name of the City, indicating the lack of faith and purity of Jews and Israel (Ezechiel 23). For the fifth name, it was *Opel* [meaning: "hillock"], which refers to the high part of the town. In addition, there were the names: *ir dawid* (city of Dawood) and *ir haqqodeš* (the Holy City) which remained the common name used over the Hellenistic, Roman and Byzantine eras. There also was the name *ir yehuda* (city of the Jews) which was used during the period in which the Jews were existent in the City (Kooij, 1999, p.25).

Jerusalem was also known by further number of names. Over the Hellenistic period, the name "*Jerusalm*" was printed on the coins. In both the Byzantine and the late Roman eras, the name *yrwslm* remained the commonly used. In the Jewish heritage, the name *bayt 'olamim* (Home of Eternity) was mentioned as a name of the City. *Hieroso-*

*luma* was a Greek form emerged as an expression of the same holy place. This form was taken from the Latin heritage form *Hierosolyma*. In the Old Testament, there were certain forms of the City name like: *Ierusalem* and *Ierosolyma*. *Hierusalem* and *Hierosolyma* were different forms found in the New Testament.

In The New Testament and on the Madaba Map in the 6<sup>th</sup> century A.D., the name *hagia polis*, which means "The Real City / The Old City", appeared as the name of Jerusalem. Two other names referred to the City as a pilgrimage destination were: *hieropolis* and *hiera polis*. Further symbolic name of the City was *metropolis* which means "The Mother City" and indicates the high status of the City in its population's view (Ibid, p.26).

During the period between 132 and 135 A.D., shortly before the second Jewish revolt known as the Bar Kochba Revolt which broke out in the reign of the Roman Emperor, Aelius Hadrianus, a radical change in the appearance of the City occurred, as it was reestablished under the name *Colonia Aelia Capitolina* (Kafafi & Schick, 2007, p.134). This name was derived from both the name of the Emperor, Aelius, and name of the Roman deity called *Jupiter Capitolinus*. However, the name *Colonia Aelia Capitolina* was reduced to *Aelia* and *Ailia* in the Greek and Latin forms. In Arabic, the name was reduced to the form, *Iliya'* which was printed on the coins in the Arabic Islamic Caliphate era (Kooij, 1999, p.25).

#### 4. URBAN DESIGN OF JERUSALEM

The presence of the Roman Tenth Legion in Jerusalem had a real effect appeared on the urban design of the City. The City was divided into four quarters, the same as the Roman cities. Architects preferred to make houses separate from each other and not contiguous, or so it seemed in the 4<sup>th</sup> century A.D. during the Byzantine period. Conversely, the remaining houses of the old Jerusalem City now appear contiguous, affected by the Ottoman construction pattern in the 16<sup>th</sup> century A.D.

As a result of the events which marked milestones in the history of Jerusalem, the City underwent demographic changes. The Seleucid invasion and the resulted number of fortifications built on the southern hill of the City, made this territory the center of the City, during the Hellenistic period in which the Seleucids ruled. The king Herod who ruled for more than thirty three years (37 - 4 B.C.), made extensive internal changes to the City, as the extension of the Herodian City was demographically of considerable importance. The population was consistent with the temple area and the number of the many houses and gardens inside the city wall. The population remained arguable in terms of determining whether or not the population in the Herodian City was larger than the Hasmonean one that was about fifteen thousand (15000) (Lipiński, 2007, pp. 9 - 10).

The area of Jerusalem was doubled. The expansion headed toward the north and west of the traditional City. At that time, Jerusalem occupied an area of about 450 acres and had a population of nearly 80,000 (eighty thousand).

Among the most prominent Roman leaders was Pontius Pilate (or *Pontius Pilatus*) whose reign ended after the year 36 A.D. Pontius Pilate settled in the palace of Herod and caused commotion among Jews particularly in respect of their beliefs. It was suggested that torture and pain suffered by Jesus - peace be upon him - occurred in the reign of Pontius Pilate. Also, during his reign, Rome lost its administrative presence in Jerusalem (Graf, 2007, pp. 106 - 107; Schich, 2007, p.112; Patrich, 1982, pp. 25-39).

Herod Agrippa (41 - 44 A.D.) built a new wall in the north of the City and as a result, contributed to protecting refugees coming from the rural regions. That is why it was difficult for the apparent increase in population to give any significant demographical indication; the wall may had been built for protecting the pilgrims who were visiting Jerusalem at the time of the Jewish religious ceremonies. However, it is not certain that the exact number of pilgrims who settled in

the City had been determined (Lipiński, p. 9).

The City experienced a demographic imbalance due to destruction and killing the City's population by the Romans. People in the City died either by killing or from starvation. People who survived were sold to slavers or worked in involuntary servitude.

Soldiers of The Roman Tenth Legion (Legio X Fretensis) and their families settled in the City. The eldest people and women of the City's population were forced to stay with the Roman people. Also, a small group of collaborators with the Romans settled in the City. For the Jewish pilgrims who came to Jerusalem, it seems that they did not settle in the City, but in adjacent villages such as *Bethphage* on Mount of Olives. Consequently, Rabbis who emigrated from *Babylon* to Palestine during the Aramaic period in both the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> centuries A.D., went to the centers where Judaism could be learned learn such as *Tiberias*, but they did not go to *Yerushalem* for learning. Further Jews emigrated to *Jaffa*, *Lydda* and *Caesarea* that were centers of textile and tanning industries in Palestine (Lipiński, p. 11; Graf, pp. 23-24; Isaac, 1984, pp. 44-50; Matthew, 1:21).

According to historical sources, one sign of demographic change was that Christians left the City for *Pella* during the siege, but they returned to the City after the events of the year 70 A.D. (Lipiński, p. 9; Eusebius, pp. 5-6).

During the reign of Constantine, Jerusalem became a politically and religiously prosperous capital. It attracted clergymen to reside in it and became a religious place of pilgrimage for all the state's Christians. In the 4<sup>th</sup> century A.D., the Emperor Constantine deferred to his mother's desire to build a church; the church was known as *Helena Church* or "Church of the Holy Sepulchre" (also called: "Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre", or "Church of the Resurrection") and it was the place of The Last Supper.

During the 5<sup>th</sup> century A.D., the Empress Eudocia, the wife of the Emperor Theodosius II (*Flavius Theodosius*) (408 - 450 A.D) settled in the City. Upon her orders, the City

was expanded toward the south and many churches were built such as St. Stephanos Church. A Bishop was appointed to be the Bishop of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, along with both Constantinople and Alexandria. The Empress Eudocia was interested in and cared for providing services needed for people, as she founded hospitals, infirmaries and care homes for the elderly and disabled people. During her reign, the Southern Wall of Jerusalem was built.

Thus, the City population in the period in which the City was named *Aelia Capitolina* consisted of: the soldiers of the Legio X (the Tenth Legion) and their families; the ancient Roman soldiers; Phoenicians and Hellenistic artists from Syria and a number of traders. Preventing the Jews from entering the City continued until the end of the 2nd century A.D. However, there was an exception during the reign of Julian (363 A.D.), the apostate Emperor, who allowed Jewish pilgrims to enter the City for religious purposes. It came to a point where the Christian group changed their bishop who was of a Jewish origin to another Christian (Lipiński, p. 10). In the 6<sup>th</sup> century A.D., the main Street called *Cardo* was expanded starting from Damascus Gate headed towards the south. At the southern end of this street, the Emperor Justinian I (527 - 565 A.D.) built a new Church in honor of the Virgin Mary.

## 5. JUDAIC SOURCES

Both religious and historical sources investigating the history of Jerusalem in classical periods had not been impartial. Such sources include The Old Testament and writings of the Jewish historian, Flavius Josephus, the author of the two books titled *The Jewish Wars* and *Antiquities of the Jews* which he wrote in the 1<sup>st</sup> century A.D. Josephus was one of the Hasmoneans who revolted against Rome in Galilee region. He surrendered himself to the Romans after the suicide of his group (Perowne, 1957). Because Josephus lived under the aegis of the Roman state, his novels were tainted with

bias toward the Romans to appease them and the Jewish.

## 6. HELLENISM AND HASMONEANISM

The Roman state seized all the lands, territories and countries bordering the Mediterranean Sea, combining a sprawling empire ruled by a single regime and governed by a single law, where prosperity and peace were prevailed (Woarth, 2003, p.7) Despite diversity of people, languages and traditions, the Romans managed to force the Greeks to consider them as equals after they were regarding them as barbarians. Population of the eastern empire called themselves "Rhomaioi", which means the Romans (Woarth, p.8). The Eastern Empire was founded by Romulus who was descendant of *Mars*, the Roman deity. According to the legend, Romulus and his brother were breastfed by a she-wolf, then the Romans were procreated from those deities (Woarth, 2003, p.9). The second Roman king, Numa, was a prudent man who, at early time, pushed the Romans to observe the law; to toil, and to be strong and strict people (Woarth, 2003, p.9). The Roman citizen in the Roman Empire was a distinguished person. For the non-Roman citizens, they were divided into people of the Orient and people of the West. People of the Orient were more civilized, hard working and active; and they believed in their profound cultural heritage. The Orient included the peoples of Egypt, Palestine, Syria, Asia Minor and Original Greece (Ancient Greece) which are of diverse origins and languages (Woarth, p.64).

Historical sources indicate that Jerusalem and the other cities of Palestine became, in the Hellenistic Period, included within the kingdom of Alexander the Great, in 332 B.C. After the death of Alexander the Great, the Ptolemaic dynasty that was ruling Egypt seized control of Palestine for nearly a century (301 - 198 B.C.). Ptolemy I managed to tighten his grip on Jerusalem without engaging in a war. However, Antiochus III (201 - 198 B.C.) conquered the army of Ptolemy V. During the period in which it was



under the protection of the Seleucids, the City was gradually recovering. Such recovery and prosperity aroused sense of unease among Jews, particularly, the upper class and clergymen who coexisted with the Hellenistic culture. Seizing control of the City by the Seleucids continued. In 168 B.C., Antiochus IV initiated attack on the Jewish antagonists and desecrating the temple through establishing the *Altar of Zeus* and demolishing the City wall. This policy had echoes of violence, as a "violent revolution" was fomented by the Jewish priest, Mattathias and his five sons against Seleucids. As a result of this revolution, occupying the City gradually started since 164 B.C. However, the Jews did not manage to completely seize control of the whole City. The center of governing was administered from Michmash town, located to the north of Jerusalem. However, in 142 B.C., Mattathias's sons managed to establish a separate state called "*The Hasmonean State*", continued in existence almost until 63 B.C. and its capital was *Yerushalem*.

Nevertheless, the history of this City is mysterious. Archaeological excavations could not reveal the truth regarding the existence of many buildings in the City in this epoch; such buildings which history books talked about (Graf, pp.106-107).

## 7. POMPEY AND THE MACCABEES

Roman documents state that Pompey occupied the land of the Caananites in 63 B.C. (Aldabbagh, 1965, p. 620), because of Aristopolos the Maccabee who took the crown by force from his brother Hyrcanus II in 70 B.C. (Al-Aref, 1994, p. 29), refused the mediation of Pompey, and returned to Jerusalem "Al-Quds" to prepare for rebellion (Khan, 1973, p. 84). Pompey stripped him from his powers and took him to Rome, and inducted the chief priest of Jerusalem Hyrcanus II in his place. Documents claim that in the time of Herod the Killer the Temple was reconstructed. When Christianity emerged, the Jews ignited wars and riots. So, the Roman Commander Titus marched with his army in 70 A.D. to the Temple. He de-

stroyed it and eliminated Jewish existence in Jerusalem (Al-Shureiqi, 1985, p. 12). Historians refer to this event as the second destruction of Jerusalem. The first destruction was done by Nebuchadnezzar in 587 B.C. Stories say that only the high-class deserted the city, leaving the commons behind (Beiberstein, 2007, p. 134).

Stories told by Josephus the Jew state that Pompey destroyed the bridge connecting Zion's Lane with the Temple after opening holes in the City's walls using catapults. He opened Yeroslema, which took the name Yerosalema afterwards, and appointed Escorus as a governor. He managed to quell chaos in the city. At first, the Jews welcomed him, but then, they revolted against him. So, he punished them severely as did all other rulers who lived with the Jews (Al-Aref, p. 29).

### 7.1 Titus and Severe Punishment of Jews

Jews revolted twice against the Romans. The first time was from 66 to 70 A.D., and the other was from 132 to 135 A.D. The two times witnessed dispersal and disunion of the Jews (Worth, p. 68). The Jews could have asked help from Persian kings against the Romans who tortured them, destroyed their temples, and attempted to eradicate their religion. Hatred and hostility against the Romans emerged in Western writings named the Sibylline Jewish Oracles. They were prophecies which spread widely in the eastern provinces of the empire signaling the approach of salvation. The Romans prohibited their spread fearing rise of awareness and organized rebellion (Woarth, p. 78). These prophecies were well-composed, six-stanza poems. The truth is that a third source of hostility for the Romans, beside the Egyptian and the Jewish ones, was Christianity in the 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries A.D. (Woarth, p. 69).

In *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, El-Messiri says that the phrase 'Temple Destruction' usually refers to "destroying the Temple by Titus in 70 A.D., although it is known that Nebuchadnezzar destroyed it before in 586 B.C., and Herod did the same thing in 20 -

19 B.C. to reconstruct it again. According to doctrinal Jewish writings, the Temple was destroyed on August 9<sup>th</sup>. That's why Jews fast on that day. Some argue that destruction occurred on August 7<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup>. To end this conflict, those writings say that destruction started on August 9<sup>th</sup> and was finished on August 10<sup>th</sup>. Jewish writings, and other writings that are influenced by them, argue that destruction of the Temple by the Romans caused dispersal of the Jews in exile as minorities; although the Jews started spreading all over the world long before that and without compulsion. In fact, the number of the Jews outside Palestine was much higher than those inside before the Temple was destroyed." (El-Messiri, 1999, p.101).

Sources state that Jerusalem was a city with fortresses and walls. Titus laid siege to it with three camps on Scopus Mountain (Northernmost peak on Mount of Olives, site of Hebrew University and Hadassah Hospital), and on the Olives Mountain, for about four months and a half – from spring to fall, 70 A.D. The city surrendered after its defenses had been destroyed. The northern road was razed. Titus camped opposite to the Psephinus Tower (NW corner of the third wall. The Psephinus Tower stood 115 feet high according to Josephus and from the top one could see both the Mediterranean Sea and the Mountains of Arabia) in the northwest corner of the city. The third wall was destroyed in May 25<sup>th</sup>. The second wall fell five days later. Titus slaughtered numerous Jews, and took 80 thousands as slaves to Rome in the Triumph parade. Yet, he sent part of them as slaves to the mines in Egypt. It is said that Titus went too far in erasing the Jewish traces in the city. He ploughed the city and threw its stone outside the walls. Above the gate of the city, there was a sign in Greek, Latin, and Aramaic says: "The Jewish race rejected by history is banned from residing in the city, September 14<sup>th</sup>, year 70, Titus." (Alshreki, 1985, pp 164-165; Bieberstein, 2007, p134).

In Rome, golden, silver, and bronze coins were minted to mark the victory achieved by Titus. One side of the coin has the name,

title, and image of Emperor Vespasian and the image of Titus as Caesar, then he appeared as an Emperor on coins. The back of the coins had the inscription *lud(aea) cap(ta)*. It rarely had the words (captive Judah) *ludaea devicta, ludaea, and ludaeis*. Moreover, there was a painting of Judah as a woman wailing under a palm tree or beside a *trophaeum* (A monument erected in ancient Greece or, esp., Rome to commemorate a military or naval victory). Sometimes the painting showed Judah with captive Jews (Bieberstein, 2007, p 135).

It is worth noting that Jerusalem was relatively unknown in literary and historic resources from the time of destruction in 70 A.D., to the time of Bar Kokhba's rebellion in 132 A.D. It came back to appear in literary resources at the beginning of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century (Graf, 2007, pp. 113-114). Titus came to Jerusalem aided by Nabataean Arabs and the Aramaic. He camped in (Tal elfool) north of Jerusalem, and conquered the City after a long siege. Stories say that occupation of Jerusalem occurred as a result of conflicts and religious differences between the Jews themselves (Aldabbagh, 1965, pp. 658-659).

## 8. HEROD AND THE PAGAN CITY

Herod cared about Jerusalem, and renewed it to resemble major Roman cities. He made a great urban renaissance there, building military buildings such as forts, citadels, and walls; as well as sport, entertainment, and cultural buildings. He built playgrounds, theaters, stadiums, baths, religious buildings, palaces, and schools for education.

About the Temple, Abdulwahab El-Messiri wrote in the Jewish Encyclopedia: "Herod's Temple is the temple built by King Herod (27 B.C. – 4 A.D.) who was appointed as king by the Romans; a Roman ruler with a king's title. This temple is referred to as the "second temple". Sometimes this term is used to refer to the temple built by Zerubabel. Thus, the Herod's temple is the "third temple" (although this latter term usually refers to the temple that will be constructed

in the last days at the start of the Skekhinah's age). When Herod ascended the throne, he found the Zerubbabel's temple in a shameful state. So, he decided to build another temple to satisfy the Jews. In the meantime he decided to build a temple for the gods of Rome to satisfy the Emperor Augustus and prove his loyalty to him. It seems that this pagan Roman temple wasn't quite architecturally different from the Jewish temple. Herod started building in 20-19 B.C. He destroyed the old temple. Work lasted until he died without finishing the temple. Construction continued to the time of Agrippa II (64 A.D.). It was lacking final touch when it was destroyed by Titus in 70 A.D. As the aims of the temple were quite secular (to boost the prestige of the state), concentration was turned to the symbols of the state. So, the temple was built according to the prevailing Greco-Roman style. Herod extended the Temple to be spacious. He built walls composed of two rows of columns, with an area of 915 x 1520 x 1595 x 1025 ft. The Temple can be accessed by many gates and four bridges. Adjacent to the wall was Antonia Tower built by Simon the Hasmonean. Herod repaired and extended the tower, and named it after the Roman Caesar Marc Anthony. The tower was occupied by a Roman garrison. The wall contained galleries. The largest gallery was the Royal Gallery which was a Basilica (a rectangular Roman building with a semi-circular protruding section at one of its ends) in which merchants selling carcasses, and money exchangers who exchanged coins to the Holy Shekel which Jews had to pay to the Temple, gathered. Inside these walls was the so-called "Plaza of the Others", as non-Jews were allowed to be there. Then, other plazas cascaded as terraces. There was a meshing stone wall separating the "Plaza of the Others" from the Temple. The Temple could be accessed by a gate called "The Beautiful Gate", followed by the front plaza which was for women; surrounded by four rooms for timber, lepers, the vowed, and oils. A 12-step stairs led to gate called "the Nicanor Gate", or the "Corinthian Gate" according to Josephus. The

priests (the Levites) stood on these steps singing songs to be watched by women. Next, there was the Israelites/ men's plaza. To the far inner left, there was a room made of carved stone; where Sanhedrim met. Then, to the left too, was the altar where sacrifices were made. To the right was the slaughtering place opposite to the priests' plaza with a stairs in the middle leading to the Temple itself; to the right was a bathing place for priests. Some sacrificing ceremonies were done in the Priests' plaza. The Temple was built of white marble. It was decorated by a gallery in the façade. When the temple's gate was opened people could see the sanctuary. Herod's Temple, like the First Temple, was divided into the Holy Hall and the Holy of the Holies. The Holy Hall included the Menorah lamp stands, the face bread table, and the incense altar. The ceiling of the Hall was made of cedar grafted with gold. Contrary to the Holy of the Holies, which was dark and empty, the Holy Hall had windows. The Western/Wailing Wall was never part of the Temple itself, but part of the outer wall. The previous description of Herod's Temple was cited by Josephus. It is different from the descriptions of Midrash books. Titus destroyed the second temple in 70 A.D." ( El-Messiri,1999, p.102).

The Romans dominated Syria and Palestine as from 63 B.C. Herod the Great ruled Palestine, having Caesarea as a capital; with Jerusalem as an important city in his province. Some references indicate that he built the Herodian Basilica in Sebastia; having no relation to the alleged Temple. The same references state that his work in Jerusalem was mere architectural leftovers in the Eastern basement of Al-Aqsa Mosque, known today as the Marwani Prayer Hall. Later it was used as a stable by the crusaders; they called it Solomon's Stables (Alfany,2007, p. 98).

Thus, Herod did not build a Temple - among historians, only Josephus, the Jewish historian said he did. It is a fallacy and counterfeiting; Herod is an Idumaeen married to a Nabataean (Alfany,2007, p. 99), and he was an opponent of the Jewish Maccabees; agreeing with the Romans in this re-

gard. In vexation of the Jews and their teachings, he built a theater for acting, singing and dancing; and stadium for boys and girls in violation to the Jewish doctrine (Alshreki,1985, p. 160). It should be mentioned here that the constructions and archeological ruins in the western hill which reflect the Hellenistic style and the remnants of purification ceremonies and the carved statues do not reflect Jewish monotheism at all. That is why there are doubts about the Jewish origin of the region (Lipinski,2007, p. 9). Some stories say that another Roman ruler, Hyrcanus the Jewish, was ruling Jerusalem before Herod. His Idumaeen chancellor, Antipater, who was forced to become Jewish, dominated Palestine and appointed his first son Phasaël a ruler of Jerusalem; and appointed Herod on Jalil. After the assassination of Julius Caesar, Octavius' opponent, and brother, Antony entered Jerusalem in 37 B.C., and appointed Herod son of Antipater the Idumaeen as king of the Jews. Herod, son of an Arab Nabataean woman, managed to destroy the Maccabees state in 37 B.C., after a reign of 125 years (Aldabagh,1965, p. 622). Stories say that Jerusalem and all parts of Palestine were prosperous under Herod's reign. He used the Hellenistic method of management. The Upper City was highly advanced, as shown by the ancient remains. The area of the city during Herod's reign (37-4 B.C.) was about 230 acres (920,000 m<sup>2</sup>), with about 40,000 inhabitants. His palace was described as being extremely beautiful. Excavations of all Jerusalem indicate that this era was architecturally advanced, and had a well-developed irrigation system (Graf,2007, p. 178).

Stories tell that Herod was supported by Rome, for being their ally against Jewish nationalism (Khan,1973, p. 87). After Antipater, his son Phasaël was appointed to rule Jerusalem in 46 B.C. His father selected Hyrcanus the Hasmonean to head the Jews. Both men fought; leaving many victims (Al-Aref,1994, p. 622). Herod was a close ally of the Romans, who helped spreading their power and adoption of their religion and culture in the region. When he turned to Judaism for political reasons, it was said

that he reconstructed the Temple better than it was by Solomon son of David (Aldabagh,1965, p. 628). In fact, what Herod built in Jerusalem was not a Temple but a mere basilica. It was not built over the ruins of a previous building to indicate reconstruction. The Solomon's Temple is a fantasy. Neither the Torah's story nor those of Josephus could convince architects and archaeologists of the match between their theoretical descriptions and the discoveries of several excavations, on which the Torah's school spent millions to find clear signs of a Temple in old Jerusalem where the Holy Al-Aqsa Mosque is. Herod overturned on the Maccabees to avenge them for killing his father. The Romans sent Antony to help him. He annihilated them and killed their last king Antigonus son of Aristobulus II. Since then, Jerusalem was ruled in the name of Rome (Al-Aref,1994, p. 30). He helped people to withstand the years of famine and drought, and laid water canals for them, connecting Solomon's pools to the city in 30 B.C. (Al-Aref,1994, p. 30).

After Herod's death (6 A.D.), his sons divided the kingdom between them. Archelaus inherited Judaea and ruled Jerusalem. Violent acts of Archelaus led to a rebellion, so the Roman local ruler Sabinus had to take control the city. The Romans killed many Jews as punishment for their rebellion. After the bloody events in the same year (6 A.D.), Archelaus son of Herod was isolated; Jerusalem and all parts of Palestine returned to Rome's reign. Archelaus was weak and could not control the country. He settled in Jericho. He sought help, more than once, from Syrian rulers and Al-Harith IV king of Nabataean Arabs. Yet, he and his people were defeated and humiliated by the Romans once again. (Al-Aref, p. 31).

## 9. BELATUS THE NABATAEAN

After Archelaus, Belatus the Nabataean ruled Jerusalem between 26 and 36 A.D. During his reign, The Christ (PBUH) was tortured and oppressed (Aldabagh,1965, pp. 630-632). After the fall of Antinogus the Maccabee in 50 B.C., The Jewish dominance

over the Holy City was over. Even their state, after their return from Babylon, was weak and subordinate to other states of Persia and Greece (Khan, 1973, p. 88). They had dominance on a part of Palestine between 201 and 198 B.C. (Graf, 2007, p. 106).

During the Roman era and their conflict with the Jewish Maccabees and Hasmoneans, Jerusalem's streets were unpaved and some streets were narrow and randomly paved. Water resources of the city were scarce, with primitive canals. Jews were wreaking havoc and raising intrigues and tribulations – as described by Belatus in his letters. Plagues spread due to the bad conditions of the City (Al-Aref, 1994, p. 31). Despite his weakness, Belatus paved two roads: one between Herosalema and north, and the other was between Jordan Valley and Jericho, which was the center of his reign (Al-Aref, 1994, p. 32).

During the reign of the Roman ruler Marchelus (37 A.D.), the city expanded. Yet, safety and security as before, were absent. Riots, poverty, and hunger prevailed. They had many conflicts with their Idumaeans and Nabataean neighbors. Every time, their riots ended with disappointment (Ibid, p. 32).

## 10. HADRIAN THE BUILDER OF AELIA CAPITOLINA

Under Hadrian's reign, a Jewish movement was led by Bar Kokhba for saving the Jews in 132 A.D. The Romans fought and killed them, and turned Jerusalem into a Roman command center. The name (Jerusalem) was turned into Colonia Aelia-Capitolina. Hadrian issued an ordinance, dated August 9<sup>th</sup> 135 A.D., prohibiting Jews from residing in Palestine (Alshreki, 1985, p. 166). The new Hadrian City was totally different from before. It was impinged with the Roman style in terms of its main streets which are still in the Old Town to present days, its forum in the city center, its public buildings, its temples such as the temple of the Roman Goddess of Love and Beauty (Aphrodite). Moreover, there was the 10<sup>th</sup> Roman Legion which camped in the west part of the City near the fort. Jerusalem was

no longer the main political city, nor it was an important economic center. It no longer had the Jewish religious existence, and, as Christianity was not a legal religion yet, the City was marked by the Roman pagan style.

## 11. BEFORE CONVERTING TO CHRISTIANITY

Let's have a close look at the time when the city was converting to paganism and then to Christianity. In 70 B.C., Jerusalem was burned to the ground by the Romans. They destroyed religious places, houses, and public utilities; and they burned forests around the City to facilitate siege. In his book *The Jewish War*, Josephus stated that Roman soldiers plundered the City and its gold (Josephus, 1998). Titus carried prisoners of war and acquisitions of the Temple to Rome and displayed them in the Parade of Triumph that toured Rome. This was inscribed on Titus Arch in Rome; with scenes of the Jewish Mesada site fall, which took place a few years after the fall of Jerusalem.

At that time Jerusalem was inhabited by soldiers of the 10<sup>th</sup> Roman Legion, their families, and Hellenistic residents from the Levant. The Romans appointed the army commander Vespasian as emperor. A coin was minted in his name carrying the phrase "Judah is Captive" celebrating the victory and oppressing the Jews. Nevertheless, the Jews sneaked to the Roman leadership; Titus fell for Periness the Hasmonean Jewish, daughter of Herod's grandson, who lived with him in the 10<sup>th</sup> legion's camp in Jerusalem. He brought her to Rome to marry her, but his father refused. So, Periness left Rome before the Caesarean regime reached her lover Titus.

Jerusalem was totally destroyed, except for ruins of walls that remained witness to destruction and humiliation practiced by Rome (Josephus, 1998). The Romans expelled all circumcised people from Jerusalem, turned others to paganism and kept them in Zion's Mount with the Roman garrison. The Roman existence in Jerusalem turned the City to paganism, as the role of the high priest vanished when the Temple

was destroyed. During the reign of Hadrian, Jupiter Capitolina was worshipped.

The Jews attempted to return to the City and rebelled many times. Thus, the Emperor Trajan had to intervene to stop rebellion in the City. Emperor Hadrian rebuilt Jerusalem and named it Aelia Capitolina in honor of his family. He crushed the revolutions of the Jews, and declared practicing Judaism as a capital offense. So, religious ceremonies in the city were rare or pagan. Jerusalem was no longer the capital of Roman Palestine; rather it was subordinate to Caesarea. Other names of Jerusalem, in the Byzantine period, include Aelia Constantinople in the peak of its turning from paganism. (Alfany, p. 23).

The Roman historian Dio Cassius stated that losses of the Jews, in their battles with Hadrian, were 85 thousand; many of whom starved to death and others were enslaved with cheap prices. Jews were banished to ten miles outside the periphery of Jerusalem.

Thus, Aelia Capitolina became a Roman military city built according to the Roman style, and its name was inscribed on coins. The city was square in shape with four gates. Today, these gates are named: Damascus gate, Jaffa gate, Zion gate, and Al-Aswad gate. The Damascus gate is in the form of a triumph arch showing the power and stature of Rome. Cardo street and Decamanus street split the City. The Cardo was lined with 5-meter-high columns on both sides, which is manifested by the Mosaic Madaba Map, dating back to the second half of the 6<sup>th</sup> century A.D.

The Romans built two temples: the temple of Jupiter and the temple of Aphrodite which were both built by Hadrian. The latter was destroyed during the Byzantine period; a church was built instead. Dionysus and Taiki are among other gods, for which temples were built during the Roman Period, beside Jupiter and Aphrodite.

## THE RISE OF BYZANTINE EMPIRE

There are several historic, religious, and travel books about the different aspects of

life in the Holy City. Authors include: Amianus Marcellinus and Sozomen in the 4<sup>th</sup> century, Theodoret of Cyrrihus from the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> century to the middle of the 5<sup>th</sup> century A.D., Evagorius the Scholastic in the 6<sup>th</sup> century A.D., John Malalas from the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> century to the second quarter of the 5<sup>th</sup> century A.D., Malchus the Philadelphian in the 5<sup>th</sup> century A.D., Procopius the Caesarean in the 6<sup>th</sup> century A.D., Theophanus in the 8<sup>th</sup> century A.D., and others (Al-Nasarat & Al-Nu'imat, 2009, pp. 1-38).

Byzantium is an old Greek city. Constantine established his new capital Constantinople over its ruins. The city merged the civilizations of Greece, Rome, and the Old East to receive the new religion coming from Palestine, that is, Christianity. All that formed the Byzantine world as an empire of unique harmony (Abdulhamid, p. 6). The epoch of Diocletian in the early 4<sup>th</sup> century A.D. was an era of suppression of Christianity. He issued the four famous edicts stating the destruction of Christian scriptures and places of worship across the Empire, arresting Christian clergy and forcing them to offer sacrifices to pagan gods of Rome (Ibid, p. 6). Early in the second decade of the 4<sup>th</sup> century, the grief of Christian persecution started to vanish. Writers, poets, and philosophers of Byzantium started to document such persecution and raise anger against the pagans of Rome. Among famous historians, who documented that, was Eusebius archbishop of Caesarea in Palestine. He was a famous historian in the 4<sup>th</sup> century, contemporary to Lactantius. In his book *Ecclesiastical History*, he wrote a chapter titled "Martyrs of Palestine", in which he wrote about the relationship between the church and the state; as well as the emperors' hatred toward the church. He spoke of the Greater Persecution detailing all sorts of torture and mutual hatred between the state and the church, which lasted for two and a half centuries (Abdulhamid, 2000, p. 15). This persecution did not stop until after the Tolerance Edict issued by the Emperor Gallienus in 261 A.D. He acknowledged the right of Christians to practice their ceremonies,

build churches, and regain their confiscated properties (Abdulhamid, 2000, p 2).

Christianity started as an official religion in 324 A.D. Jerusalem embraced Christians persecuted before, and gave them high positions in the Constantinus Administration; whereas Jews were banned from entering the Holy City. Under the reign of Constantine, discussions began about the nature of Christ (PBUH). He also appointed an archbishop in Jerusalem; identified the location of crucifixion and burial; and built the Church of Salvation in that location.

### THE CHURCH OF JERUSALEM

Stoicism is a mental concept undertaken by philosophers in the time of Trajan and Marcus Aurelius in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century A.D., the same period Christianity was established. Jerusalem could not embrace it compared to Alexandria and Antioch. The theological school in Alexandria embraced the Platonic thought in interpreting the Holy Book. The godfather of this interpretation was the Alexandrian philosopher Origenes. Antioch embraced Aristotle's methodology by a mental interpretation of the Holy Book by the philosopher Lucianus (Abdulhamid, 2000, p. 59). "Jerusalem the city and the church started to hide; abandoning its pioneering role in preaching for Christianity, as Jewish Christianity was not appropriate for other nations' thought" (Abdulhamid, 2000, p. 60). In the first and second centuries A.D., Jerusalem suffered sharp devastating blows by the Romans; starting with Titus who destroyed the Temple and slaughtered plenty of the Jews in 70 A.D. Then Vespasian imposed taxes on Jews in 79 A.D., to be paid to the Pantheon Romans; and the suppression practiced by Hadrian between 115 and 116, when he destroyed the city and built Aelia Capitolina over its ruins. "Although the blows were directed to Jews in the first place, their direct effects impacted Chris-

tians, too. Because of destruction, the Christians abandoned the city to the Greek city of Pella." This had great impact on the Church of Jerusalem (Abdulhamid, 2000, p. 60). The Church of Jerusalem was lagging behind those of Alexandria and Antioch, in terms of theology and ecclesiastic organization, until the beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup> century A.D. (Abdulhamid, 2000, p. 60).

There were two church councils in Jerusalem. The first was held by the Christ's apostles after his death. They clashed with the gentiles regarding circumcision. The second council was more than two centuries later, in 325 A.D. The 198 A.D. council was a local one for agreeing on determining the day of Easter; as there was a dispute between Anatolia churches and the Christian world regarding this issue (Ibid, p. 62)). The church of Jerusalem remained subordinate to those of Rome, Alexandria, and Antioch until the 5<sup>th</sup> century A.D., when debate about the Christ's nature started (Abdulhamid, 2000, pp. 62-63).

It is a fact that the Christian Emperor Constantine (306-337) cared much about Jerusalem. He declared Christianity as legitimate religion (Religio Licila), not an official one. Destroyed churches were restored and others, with the Church of the Resurrection on top, were built. Christianity in Jerusalem flourished when the mother of the Emperor Constantine arrived there. She was called Saint Helen (Abdulhamid, 2000, p. 62). She contributed to establishing the basics of Christian pilgrimage, which placed Jerusalem on top of the holy places (Abdulhamid, 2000, p. 63). Nevertheless, in the beginning of the 7<sup>th</sup> century the city was destroyed by the Persians; churches were plundered and burned. Hercules attempted to restore the City's stature in the third decade of the 7<sup>th</sup> century. He managed to do so after defeating the Persians (Abdulhamid, 2000, p.100).

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