THE EPISTLE OF BARNABAS AND THE FINAL REBUILDING OF THE TEMPLE

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Throughout the reigns of Trajan and Hadrian Jewish Messianic-apocalyptic hopes burned brightly 1). The empire would be overthrown (4 Ezra 12:3-30; 2 Baruch 39:3-40:4) and the Temple with its sacrifices restored (2 Bar. 68:5-7; cf. 32:2-4; 44). Solomon Zeitlin 2) believes that apocalypticists fomented the Messianic revolt in 115-17. There was immense cruelty and loss of life in Cyrene, Egypt and Cyprus 3). Stewart Perowne 4) writes:

Under Loukuas, or Andreas, the Jews of Cyrene saw themselves as the spearhead of a “Return”: they would leave Cyrene forever, and march back to Palestine, at the head of a victorious legion of their co-religionists in Egypt. The Jews from... Mesopotamia would join them. A new Zion would arise from the ruins of the old.

During Trajan’s Parthian campaign Mesopotamian Jews rebelled, but Quietus ruthlessly suppressed them and those in Palestine who


had cooperated 5). But its inhabitants remained restive and peace did not return to the land. Hugo MANTEL 6) has assembled archeological evidence that war was raging in Palestine before 127. Years of secret preparation were required for the full-scale Bar Kochba revolt, which led to the establishment of his kingdom in 132. R. Akiba may have travelled widely in the Diaspora to seek support for the Messiah 7). As the guerilla warfare intensified, military governors issued decrees prohibiting observance of many religious laws; some martial law appeared in the third decade of the century. These findings of MANTEL suggest, we think, a continuity of open and underground resistance to Rome from 115 to the collapse of Bar Kochba’s kingdom in 135. It was motivated by Zionism, Messianism 8) and eschatological expectations.

Although in 70 during the siege Titus tried to have the raging fire in the Temple extinguished, “the holy house burnt down, without Caesar's approbation” (Josephus, War vi, 4.6-7). After the army finished its plundering, “Caesar gave orders that they should now demolish the entire city and temple, but should leave” the three great towers of Herod’s palace and the city’s west wall (vii, 1.1). According to a wide variety of Jewish, Christian and pagan sources 9) it was Hadrian who later destroyed, pulled down or levelled Jerusalem and its Temple. Only Appian (Syriacus liber 50) indicated that destruction resulted from the Roman attack itself, though Eusebius (Demonstr. Evang. vi, 18.10) mentions a successful siege, and Dio Cassius refers to Roman destruction of other Judean fortresses and towns (Roman History lxix, 14-15). Traces remain of a poorly constructed wall in Jerusalem, which may be the result of a hasty fortification

7) Ibid., pp. 289-91; Derenbourg, op. cit., p. 418. But ALEKSANDROV (art. cit., pp. 67-73) shows the uncertainty of such visits.