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# The Second Messiah

Christopher Knight & Robert Lomas

# Contents

*About the Authors*

*Dedication*

*Title Page*

*Acknowledgements*

*Photo Credits - Picture Section*

*Epigraph*

*Introduction*

## **1. The Death of a Nation**

A New Light on Old Beliefs

The Missing Years

Conclusion

## **2. The Secrets of Rosslyn**

The Nine Knights

A Templar Shrine

The Line of Knowledge

The Knights of the Red Cross of the Babylonish Pass

The Secret of the Stones

Conclusion

## **3. The Missing History of Freemasonry**

The Secrets of Freemasonry

The Power and the Glory

The Early Years

The First Grand Master Mason of Scotland

The Hidden Degrees

Conclusion

#### **4. The Return of the Kings of God**

A Thousand Years of Darkness

The Motive Uncovered

The Rex Deus Hypothesis

The Tarot and the Templars

Conclusion

#### **5. The Holy Grail of the Templars**

The Origins of King Arthur

The Hidden Meaning

The Rise of the Holy Grail

Conclusion

#### **6. The Birth of 'The Second Messiah'**

The Last Crusades

The Troubles of Philip IV

The Battle of the Church's Finances

A French Pope

The Last Grand Master of the Templars

Conclusion

#### **7. The Linen Enigma**

Faith is Blind

The History of the Shroud

What is the Shroud?

Some Origin Theories

The Strangeness of the Image

Reproducing the Face

The Evidence in Blood

Conclusion

## **8. The Blood and the Flames**

The Holy Inquisition

The Interrogation in the Temple

The Confession of Jacques de Molay

The Final Denial

Conclusion

## **9. The Cult of the Second Messiah**

A Time for Prophecy

Christendom in Need

The Battle of the Holy Image

The Templars Live On

Conclusion

## **10. The Great Secret of Freemasonry**

A Rex Deus Religion

The Missing Rituals

The Great Secret Reconstructed

Our Questions Answered

The End of the Shroud Enigma

The Topology of the Past

## **Appendix 1: The Time Line**

## **Appendix 2: The Charter of Transmission of J. M. Larmenius**

## **Appendix 3: The Chemical Process That Created the Image on the Shroud of Turin**

Bibliography

Picture Section

Index

Copyright

## About the Authors

Christopher Knight was born in 1950 and in 1971 completed his education with a degree in advertising and graphic design. He has always had a strong interest in social behaviour and belief systems and for many years he has been a consumer psychologist involved in the planning of new products and their marketing. In 1976 he became a Freemason and is now the chairman of a marketing and advertising agency.

Dr Robert Lomas was born in 1947 and gained a first class honours degree in electrical engineering before taking up research into solid state physics. He later worked on guidance systems for Cruise missiles and was involved in the early development of personal computers and has always had a keen interest in the history of science. He currently lectures at Bradford University Management Centre. In 1986 he became a Freemason and quickly became a popular lecturer on Masonic history in lodges in West Yorkshire.

Their first book was the bestselling *The Hiram Key*, published in 1996 by Century. It is also available in Arrow paperback. Their third book, *Uriel's Machine*, is now available in Arrow.

To my wife and our three children.

R.L.

To my wife Susan and our daughters Kathryn, Lucy and  
Sophie.

C.K.

# **THE SECOND MESSIAH**

Templars, the Turin Shroud  
and the Great Secret  
of Freemasonry

Christopher Knight and  
Robert Lomas



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**Wine is strong,  
a king is stronger,  
women are even stronger.  
But truth will conquer all.**  
THE BOOK OF ESDRAS

## Introduction

IN OUR PREVIOUS book, *The Hiram Key*, we uncovered the early origins of Freemasonry which showed how modern Masonic rituals have developed from those once used by the Jerusalem Church and later adopted by the famous crusader order of the Knights Templar. These warrior monks had a very strange history that started with a nine-year-long excavation of the ruins of Herod's Temple following the First Crusade and ended, nearly two hundred years later, with them being arrested as heretics.

Our findings were controversial, but they were warmly received by many biblical, Templar and Masonic scholars, as well as several Catholic priests.

Over the months following publication we met hundreds of Freemasons of every rank, all over England, Scotland and Wales, and we received nothing but support and congratulations from them.

The notable exception to this reception was that of the United Grand Lodge of England, which did not even acknowledge the pre-publication copy of the book we sent. It appeared to consider that, as Freemasons, we had committed the sin of conducting independent research past the golden year of 1717. We had not contravened any rule of the Order, but we soon became aware of a letter sent out from Grand Lodge to the provincial grand lodges of

England and Wales, giving a short and extremely disingenuous account of our findings.

Shortly afterwards the worshipful master of a famous Masonic lodge attended one of our bookshop talks with the intention of gathering evidence against us, but at the end he congratulated us, bought a copy of our book and asked us to sign it for him. A constant stream of letters continued to arrive from people all over the world, many providing us with yet more supportive evidence. Some very senior Freemasons were extremely complimentary: for instance, David Sinclair Bouschor, Past Grand Master of Minnesota, was kind enough to say:

*The Hiram Key could spark the beginning of a reformation in Christian thinking and a reconsideration of 'the facts' which we have so blindly accepted and perpetuated for generations. This book is a must for freethinkers.*

Another American, a Doctor of Divinity, who we perhaps should not name, wrote to us saying:

*I am a 32 degree Scottish Rite Mason, Master of my lodge 3 times, Past Wise Master of Rose Croix, a member of The Order of Amaranth and a Shiner, in addition I am an ordained minister in the Reformed Baptist Church. All this experience and education did not prepare me for the material contained in your book. If I had not been searching for our ancient origins and had the courage to look outside the dogmas of the establishments, perhaps I would not have finished reading The Hiram Key, however, I was, I did and I too find your data totally acceptable to what I have found. This has led me to believe that perhaps there is some truth to the accusations*

*levelled against Masonry that 'only the top (HIGH) degrees know the truth'.*

This last comment was particularly fascinating because, as far as we know, there is only one degree higher than the 32 degree to which this gentleman belongs. Could there be a secret so great that only a handful of Freemasons know it? Perhaps, we thought, this great secret has been lost and now needs to be rediscovered.

The situation was far too intriguing to ignore. We knew for certain that Freemasonry had developed the rituals used by the Jerusalem Church and the Knights Templar and it seemed likely that the United Grand Lodge of England had either lost contact with its own origins or it was deliberately concealing something very big indeed - even from its own officers. Its determination to prevent discussion about anything outside of its official doctrine was very different from every other grand lodge that we know of, and we decided that our researches must continue.

When we set out on our quest, six key questions lay before us:

1. Have some Masonic rituals been deliberately changed or suppressed?
2. Is there a great secret of Freemasonry that has become lost, or has been deliberately hidden?
3. Who was behind the formation of the Knights Templar?
4. Why did the Templars decide to excavate beneath the ruins of Herod's Temple?
5. What were the beliefs which led to the destruction of the Templars as heretics?
6. Can the deeper rituals of Freemasonry shed further new light on the origins of Christianity?

We knew that the answers would not be easy to find, but as our researches progressed we found the answer to one very important question that we had not posed ourselves: what is the definitive origin of the Shroud of Turin?

We had previously speculated that there could have been a Templar connection with this unique relic, but we were not prepared for the magnitude of its role in history and the importance of the man whose image it bears.

## Chapter One

# The Death of a Nation

*Who controls the past controls the future. Who controls the present controls the past.*

George Orwell: *1984*

### **A new light on old beliefs**

IT IS SAID that more information has been produced in the last thirty years than over all the previous five thousand. Thanks to modern techniques of investigation and the advent of powerful data storage and retrieval systems, we all can have rapid access to huge amounts of information. We can now understand more about the world we live in, its past and its potential future, than was ever dreamed possible, even just a generation ago.

Ordinary people have had to acclimatise themselves to the idea of a never-ending innovation avalanche; everything, from toothpaste to motorcars, gets smarter year on year. Most of us now believe that newer means better, but whilst new things may change outlooks, old ideas still die hard and the 'truths' that were placed in our minds as children remain unchallenged. How do we know that Columbus discovered America? Why do we think that Jesus turned water into wine? We believe we know the answers to both questions because someone told us that it

was so and we have never had occasion to challenge these, culturally accepted, assertions.

History it seems is not so much a record of past events, more a catalogue of preferred beliefs expounded by people who have a vested interest. As George Orwell observed in his novel *1984*, history is always written by the victors and whoever controls the writing of history books controls the past. Without doubt, the most consistently powerful force in the western world over the last two thousand years has been the Roman Catholic Church and consequently history has often been what it wanted it to be.

The Church has always been the provider of western cultural 'truths', but, as more and more hard evidence emerges, it has had to concede that the papacy is not as infallible as it once claimed. For instance, Galileo was sentenced to life imprisonment and his work burned when he argued that the Earth moved through space, and it was not until 1992 that a papal commission acknowledged the Vatican's error in opposing him. In the nineteenth century, Charles Darwin's theory of evolution was viciously attacked by the Church, but in 1996 the Vatican once again had to admit that it had been wrong.

In times past the Church provided answers to life's puzzles when no one had a better solution, but as science has advanced, the need for myths has receded. However, whilst the Vatican moves slowly and cautiously when it comes to rethinking mankind's role in creation, it hardly moves at all concerning its interpretation of events described in the New Testament, despite considerable amounts of new historical evidence.

A good illustration of this history-power occurred in November 1996 when Pope John Paul II met the Archbishop of Canterbury, the head of the Church of England. At this meeting between the two Church leaders, the pope felt it necessary to remind the Englishman of his absolute superiority by reaffirming his historical status as the direct



successor to St Peter, to whom, it is said, Christ had entrusted his Church.<sup>fn1</sup>

This claim of power based on a direct inheritance from Jesus Christ himself, known as 'Apostolic Succession', is based on a Roman Catholic version of history that has become widely discredited as modern scholars re-examine the circumstances of the Jerusalem Church. The weight of evidence now strongly indicates that Jesus led an entirely Jewish sect and that he was succeeded not by Peter but by his younger brother James, the first Bishop of Jerusalem.

The role of James, the brother of Jesus, has always been seen as a threat by the Roman Catholic Church, and from its earliest times the Church has controlled history by removing information about this highly important figure. As recently as 1996, Pope John Paul II issued a statement declaring that Jesus was Mary's only child and that therefore James was not his brother after all.<sup>fn2</sup> The Pontiff made this strange and completely unsubstantiated statement despite biblical evidence and much scholarly opinion to the contrary.

The weight of evidence that now exists shows that whilst Peter may well have been leader of the Christian movement in Rome from AD 42 to 67, he was certainly not the leader of the Church. The supreme leader of the entire Church in those days was James, the brother of Jesus, the Bishop of Jerusalem. We know of no serious biblical scholar who doubts this fact and S.G.F. Brandon put it most clearly when he said:

*. . . the fact of the supremacy of the Jerusalem Church and its essentially Jewish outlook emerges clear of serious doubt, and so also does the unique leadership of James, the brother of the Lord.*<sup>fn3</sup>

James was a fine successor to his crucified brother and provided strong leadership for the community that we call

the Jerusalem Church, and the Jews of the Diaspora (the dispersion into the Greco-Roman world) such as the communities in Ephesus in Turkey, Alexandria and Rome itself.

Some three years after the death of Jesus, Paul, a Diaspora Jew from the southern Turkish city of Tarsus, arrived in Israel. Due to the false 'history' given out today, many people believe that this man was called 'Saul' when he persecuted the Christians and changed it to 'Paul' when he suddenly became a Christian after being struck blind on the road to Damascus.

The reality is quite different. For a start there were no Christians at that time; the Jerusalem Church was Jewish and the cult called Christianity did not begin until many years later as an entirely Roman idea. The man who gave rise to this new religion had changed his name from the Hebrew 'Saul' to the Roman 'Paul' when he became a Roman citizen as a young man, as he wanted a name that sounded similar to his original one.

We are told that Paul had a zeal for the Jewish Law and this led him to persecute the Jerusalem Church, holding it to be a Jewish sect that was untrue to the Law, and therefore should be destroyed. He is even said to have been involved in the stoning of St Stephen, the first Christian martyr. This, however, can only be viewed as a Jewish sectarian issue when the Jerusalem Church led by James was entirely Jewish and there was no suggestion at this time that Jesus was anything other than a Jewish martyr who had died in an attempt to establish home rule for his people.

At some point Paul became fascinated by the idea of the sacrificial nature of Jesus's death and he opposed James for not accepting that his brother was a god. In his Galatian Epistle he is at great pains to point out that, during the period of his conversion, he was completely independent of the Jerusalem Church or any other human agency and he

puts his colourful ideas down to the direct intervention of God. Paul says:

*It was the good pleasure of God . . . to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach it to the gentiles.*<sup>fn4</sup>

The ideas that Paul generated, and that subsequent gospel writers built upon, came largely out of his imagination. Christian scholar S. G. F. Brandon wrote:

*The phrase 'to reveal his Son in me' is admittedly a curious one, but it clearly has a high significance for our understanding of Paul's own interpretation of God's purpose for him . . . When carefully considered as a statement of fact, the words really constitute a tremendous, indeed a preposterous, claim for any man to make, and more especially a man of Paul's antecedents. They mean literally that in the person of Paul God had revealed his Son to the end that Paul might 'evangelise' him among the Gentiles . . . What Paul's statement implied, was a new unveiling of His Son, so that there was afforded an apprehension of Jesus which was hitherto unknown in the Church . . . The position which we reach then is that Paul is the exponent of an interpretation of the Christian faith which he himself regards as differing essentially from the interpretation which may be best described as the traditional or historical one.*<sup>fn5</sup>

If the account given by Paul and his followers is a distortion of the true beliefs of the Jerusalem Church, the question remains: what were its original ideas?

In our last book we made a complex but, we hope, well-reasoned argument that the Jerusalem Church used 'living resurrection' ceremonies to initiate people into its higher level of membership. In these ceremonies the candidate

underwent a symbolic death and was wrapped in a shroud before being resurrected, just as Freemasons are today. It is known from contemporary documents, including the Dead Sea Scrolls, that it was normal practice at that time for Jews to call people inside their sect 'the living' and those outside it 'the dead'.

After studying the terminology used by the people of first-century Jerusalem, we came to the conclusion that there is absolutely no requirement to apply supernatural meaning to the actions of Jesus Christ. His supposed miracles, including 'raising the dead', can be seen to be simple misunderstandings of much more mundane events, by later individuals who had a very different mindset from the Jews. Other misunderstood phrases include terms such as 'turning water into wine' which simply meant elevating ordinary people to a higher station in life. Today, Freemasons still use a stylised resurrection ritual to raise a candidate from his 'grave' in order to make him a fully fledged Master Mason. This is done in darkness, in front of Boaz and Jachin, the two eastward-facing pillars that stood at the entrance to the Jerusalem Temple.

After Paul became convinced that he had a new interpretation of the death of Jesus (based on his misunderstanding of the terminology of Jerusalem), he knew that he would have problems with James, the head of the Jerusalem Church. His embarrassment when explaining his new gospel to James is apparent in the second chapter of his Epistle to the Galatians, where he says:

*And I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the gentiles .*

..

*But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the gospel of the uncircumcision was unto Peter.*

*(For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles:)*

*And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship: that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision.*

Some Christian observers have tried to claim that Paul's 'gospel of the uncircumcision' was merely a geographical agreement where Paul took responsibility for preaching to the gentiles outside the Jewish homeland, but this is a hollow argument. In his Second Epistle to the Corinthians, Paul clearly warns about others who are preaching of 'another Jesus' and 'another spirit', whilst warning his audience not to heed any explanation but his own.<sup>fn6</sup> Whilst we are sure that James did not approve of the gospel preached by Paul, New Testament scholars have shown evidence that some rabbis in Palestine did accept that it was necessary to present Judaism in a different form which could be appreciated by those nurtured in the traditions of Greco-Roman culture.<sup>fn7</sup>

Not many people take the trouble to read the findings of biblical scholars and they therefore remain open to standard Catholic Church dogma which holds Paul's vision to be real, despite the fact that it has no basis in the original Jerusalem Church. One such scholar summed up the situation as follows:

*The value that can be attached to the Christian evidence turns on the reasons why this literature came into being and the circumstances which gave it birth. Initially, however, it is suspect because it sets out to prove as facts assertions which are now known*

*to be impossible. The Gospels demonstrate a belief or assert a claim that Jesus was a semi-divine being who was born contrary to the laws of nature and who conquered death. This was not the belief of the original followers of Jesus, nor did he himself make such claims.*

*The letters of Paul are the earliest documents, Christian or otherwise, relating to the origins of Christianity that have survived; yet they are the least useful in establishing facts about Jesus . . . It is significant that they show a marked lack of interest in both Jesus the historical man and the proverbial founder of the faith.<sup>fn8</sup>*

Paul invented an heretical creed that is essentially un-Jewish and flies in the face of a theological structure that has always placed an absolute gulf between God and man, and Paul's strange gospel, designed for gentiles, is completely without parallel in all extant records of Jewish thought.<sup>fn9</sup> If we are right that the Jesus of Paul's teachings was completely at odds with those of James and the Church at Jerusalem, the question we need to answer is: why did this heretical form survive and the real Church die out?

To pursue this question it is necessary to try and understand the outlook of James, the brother of Jesus, who was known as 'the Just'. It is clear from surviving accounts that the Jews of the Jerusalem Church had a considerable mistrust of the Jews of the Diaspora and that they had little or no interest in the conversion of gentiles.

James the Just was Bishop of Jerusalem and had been established as an official high priest by the Zealots in direct opposition to the pro-Roman Boethusean and Sadducean high priests.<sup>fn10</sup>

We are told in an account given in chapters 66 to 70 of the *Clementine Recognitions*<sup>fn11</sup> that James undertook a

public lecture in the Temple regarding the true doctrine of his brother Jesus, with the famous rabbis Gamaliel and Caiaphas putting questions to him. The eloquence and logic of James were gaining the full support of the invited audience when an enemy (believed by many scholars to be Paul)<sup>fn12</sup> caused a major disturbance which resulted in James being thrown down a flight of stairs and injured.

Eusebius, the third-century Church historian, gives an account of the death of James which provides a much more comprehensive version than the brief account recorded by Josephus.<sup>fn13</sup> James is depicted as an ascetic of huge popularity who possesses some curious religious practices and is detained in the Temple by Ananus, who convenes a Sanhedrin and has James charged with breaking the Law. Here he is asked a strange question which no scholar has ever understood:

*Oh Just One, whom we all are obliged to trust  
announce unto us what is the gate of salvation.  
(Sha'ar ha-yeshu 'ah)<sup>fn14</sup>*

This makes perfect sense if Ananus had heard rumours of the twin pillar paradigm that was so important to the Nasoreans, who were the senior members of the Jerusalem Church, and was asking James to explain it. The twin pillars of Boaz and Jachin were the ones that stood either side of the entrance to the 'holy of holies' - the inner sanctum of Yahweh's Temple - and they were represented by the kingly and priestly messiahs of Israel. Salvation for the Jewish people could only be achieved when both pillars were in place - and that would require the removal of Roman rule and their puppets, the Sadducees.

James was not about to explain his beliefs to these inferior Jews and he answered with a statement that appeared to his inquisitors to make no sense. They then threw James down from the Temple walls, stoned him and

finally dispatched him with a blow to the temple from a fuller's club.

The leadership of the Jerusalem Church was monarchical, rather than ecclesiastical, for following the murder of James, in AD 62, a first cousin of Jesus, Simeon son of Cleophas, became the new leader of the Church.<sup>fn15</sup> He too was later murdered; executed by the Romans as a pretender to the throne of David.<sup>fn16</sup> The fact that Jesus assumed the role of full leadership after the killing of his cousin John the Baptist, was followed by his brother James and then the next male member of the family, has led many commentators to observe that the Jerusalem Church was structured as an hereditary monarchy.<sup>fn17</sup> Just as one would expect of the royal bloodline of David.

It is believed that James and Paul both died violent deaths and some scholars have suggested that Paul may have been executed by Zealots for some part he played in the killing of James. The question remains as to why Paul's religion prospered while that of James died out.

Why has no documentary evidence of the Jerusalem Church survived?

We believe that it has survived right up to today, but, like the Dead Sea Scrolls found at Qumran, the scrolls of the Jerusalem Church have been hidden away to protect them from the contamination of the gentiles. To understand what happened to these important documents we must turn to a terrible period of Jewish history.

## **The Missing Years**

Christians today read their Bible to find inspiration from the teaching of Jesus and his followers; who sought to establish the kingdom of heaven upon earth almost two thousand years ago. According to the King James Bible, the stories told in the four Gospels all conclude with the crucifixion and resurrection in the year AD 33, although AD



36 is also accepted as a probable date. The New Testament then picks up the story in the Book of Acts from that point to go on as far as AD 62. Other books such as Timothy and the Epistles of Peter refer to years up to AD 66, but from then onwards nothing is mentioned until the First Epistle of John, which is dated at AD 90.

Although the four gospels of the New Testament deal exclusively with the period of the life of Jesus, the earliest of them, that of Mark, is widely accepted as being compiled by an otherwise unknown early Christian, who drew on a variety of traditions, during the period AD 70 to 80.<sup>[fn18](#)</sup> Although no one knows for sure, Paul is believed to have been executed in Rome in AD 65.

Most Christians will almost certainly have never bothered about this little gap in Christian chronology of some ten to fifteen years between the contemporary writings of Paul and the retrospective ones of Mark and the other gospel writers, yet these missing years are of unparalleled importance.

The kingdom of heaven did not arrive as the Jerusalem Church expected - but the kingdom of hell certainly did.

By AD 65, much was wrong with the country. Taxation from Rome was heavy, officials were increasingly corrupt, and in Jerusalem eighteen thousand men were thrown out of work as the Temple was finally completed. Malcontents - some patriots, some no more than brigands - levied their own toll on the local population in what amounted to 'protection racketeering'. Unrest grew almost daily and the historian Josephus tells us that although he has little sympathy with the politico-religious fanaticism of the Zealots and their willingness to draw their nation into a hopeless war with Rome, he believes that the Romans were totally insensitive to Jewish culture. One of the most inflammatory examples of this insensitivity was carried out by the homicidal emperor Caligula who had a statue of himself erected inside the Temple at Jerusalem. Naturally,

this caused huge offence to Jews everywhere and might have been a contributory factor in Caligula's assassination soon after.

Not only did the Romans make life difficult; the chief sacerdotal families of Jerusalem also instigated violence against anyone who did not please them.<sup>fn19</sup> According to Josephus, the beginning of the end occurred at Caesarea when the procurator Gessius Florus deliberately goaded the Jewish population into insurrection in the hope that his own, recent misdeeds would go unnoticed in Rome due to the ensuing mayhem.<sup>fn20</sup> The news of large-scale rioting in Caesarea spread rapidly across the whole country and the Zealots of Jerusalem descended upon the Jewish leaders of the city and the Roman garrison, slaughtering everyone that they could lay their hands on. Even the Samaritans, who were never close friends of the Jews, sided with the Zealots as the revolt gained pace.

The news of the destruction of the Roman garrison at Jerusalem had disastrous consequences for the Jews of Caesarea, which was the headquarters of the procurator. Enraged by the loss of friends and family in Jerusalem, the Roman soldiers commenced the systematic massacre of the entire population. As is the nature of war, this in turn outraged the Jews who immediately attacked the gentile cities of Philadelphia, Sebonitis, Gerasa, Pella, Scythopolis, Gadara, Hippos, Kedesa, Ptolemais and Gaba, where huge numbers of gentiles perished as victims of Jewish fanaticism.<sup>fn21</sup>

The Jews felt that their day had finally arrived, and whilst there seems to have been little central organisation at this time, the intensity of their hatred for the Romans and all gentiles was such that the entire nation appears to have been irresistibly drawn into a frenzy of religious exultation. Josephus records that the battle fever spread outside Palestine, with pogroms breaking out in Tyre, Alexandria and in several Syrian cities including Damascus.

As leaders emerged they must have known that their cause was hopeless, since it was only a matter of time before Rome would send its full might to crush the tiny province. However, the Zealots had not taken up arms because they thought that they were stronger than the Romans; their motivation was the belief that God would provide a miracle to save his chosen people, as he had done before when the Israelites triumphed over the might of the Egyptians.<sup>fn22</sup> Such was their faith in God's favour that new coins were issued bearing the inscription: *'The first year of the redemption of Israel'*.

The Zealots were uncompromising, killing any members of the priesthood they viewed as being in opposition to them. They dispossessed and imprisoned those who did not show strong enough support for the cause.

The expected attack by the Romans was a long time coming, but when it arrived it was powerfully delivered. Cestius Gallus entered Palestine with a strong force of legionary and auxiliary troops who experienced little resistance from the disorganised Jews as they marched straight for Jerusalem. The legate succeeded in pushing his attack to the very point of breaching the Temple walls, then, for no obvious reason, he ordered his troops to withdraw from the final assault and to retreat northwards from the city. The Jews, who had expected the Romans to be upon them within hours, were astonished to see their enemies so strangely turn upon their heels in the face of imminent victory. At first they thought it was some trick within the Roman battle strategy, but as they realised that they had simply marched away the Jews were overcome with joy.

At this key point it is necessary to recall a document that must have been in the mind of every Jew who had just defended the Temple of Yahweh.

Called *The Assumption of Moses*, this strange document has an apocalyptic theme and describes imaginary events

such as the occasion when the archangel Michael was digging a grave for Moses and the devil appeared to claim the body but was quietly refused. It is believed that the document was started prior to the crucifixion, but it seems to cover a period up to and including the Jewish war. It also refers to a mysterious figure by the name of 'Taxo' who exhorts his sons to die rather than be disloyal to their faith, and from their death we pass to the expected intervention of God in the battle to establish His kingdom. Many scholars have identified the figure of Taxo with the Teacher of Righteousness<sup>fn23</sup> described in the Dead Sea Scrolls, who we identify as James, the Bishop of Jerusalem.

*The Assumption of Moses* states that the reign of God will be established through great destruction of men, and nations, but the final triumph will bring an end to the reign of Satan. One passage reads:

*And then His kingdom shall appear throughout all His creation*

*And then Satan shall be no more*

*And sorrow shall depart with him . . .*

*For the Heavenly One will arise from His royal throne,*

*And He will go forth from His Holy habitation*

Yahweh's 'Holy habitation' can only refer to the inner sanctum of the Temple that the Jews had been fighting to defend. The passage continues:

*With indignation and wrath on account of His sons . . .*

*For the Most High will arise, the Eternal God alone,*

*And He will appear to punish the Gentiles,*

*And He will destroy all idols*



*measurements, and an inventory of each thing, and other things.*<sup>fn24</sup>

John Allegro, who carefully analysed the scroll, said of its purpose:

*The Copper scroll and its copy (or copies) were intended to tell the Jewish survivors of the war then raging where this sacred material lay buried, so that if any should be found, it would never be desecrated by profane use. It would also act as a guide to the recovery of the treasure, should it be needed to carry on the war.*<sup>fn25</sup>

The Jerusalem Church had decided to hide its documents, and consign its treasures to God's keeping, in the spring of AD 68, but by June of that year Qumran was destroyed by the Romans. The Jews had just enough time before they arrived to cut up most of their scrolls to prevent the gentiles from reading them. It was this action that made the reconstruction of the Dead Sea Scrolls so difficult for modern scholars. The most holy scrolls escaped such treatment because they were placed beneath the Temple to be defended to the last.

The jubilant defenders of Jerusalem believed, when the Romans had earlier retreated, that the miracle of the escape from the Egyptians had been repeated and Yahweh in some mysterious way had saved His holy sanctuary from the enemy of His people. Filled with the conviction that divine intervention had won the day, the Jews pursued the Romans and Josephus records that they managed to kill no fewer than six thousand soldiers in the retreating columns before the legion escaped beyond the boundaries of Palestine.

This defeat, when viewed alongside similar losses in Britain and Armenia, seriously undermined imperial