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A magisterial history of the titanic struggle between the Roman and Jewish worlds that led to the destruction of Jerusalem. Martin Goodman—equally renowned in Jewish and in Roman studies—examines this conflict, its causes, and its consequences with unprecedented authority and thoroughness.

In 70 C.E., after a four-year war, three Roman legions besieged and eventually devastated Jerusalem, destroying Herod’s magnificent temple and the city’s final destruction. Hadrian built the new city of Aelia Capitolina where Jerusalem had once stood.

The cultural and religious identities, lifestyles and especially the intertwining politics of these two important cultures, religions and peoples have given rise to recent conflicts and to this book. For some time Rome had been expanding its authority in Asia, and in 63 B.C. the Roman triumvir Pompey the Great took over the eastern empire. The Romans were served by a policy of brutality against the Jews. Martin Goodman traces the repercussions of that policy in his book.

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