

# Masada

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- Located on the western edge of the Judean desert and on the west side of the Dead Sea.
- Masada:
  - 3 miles around its base
  - 1,300 feet from top to bottom (height)
  - 1,900 feet from north to south (length)
  - 650 feet from east to west (width)
  - 8 Roman camps around its base
- Herod the Great developed Masada somewhere between 36 and 30 B.C. Its development came when Mark Antony of Rome was romantically involved with Cleopatra of Egypt. Herod prepared Masada in case Mark Antony decided to turn Judea over to Cleopatra.
- Josephus Flavius, a Jewish historian who turned and sided with the Romans, wrote about Masada.
- In 66 A.D., the Jews revolted against the Romans. In 70 AD. Titus conquered and destroyed Jerusalem, including the temple. At the beginning of the revolt in 66 A.D., a group of Jews destroyed the Roman garrison at Masada and held it throughout the war. After the defeat of the Jews in 70 A.D., some of the survivors fled to Masada. In 72 A.D., Flavius Silva, the Roman governor, resolved to retake Masada for the Romans. He took his 10th legion and thousands of slaves, or prisoners of war, and began the siege. Jews at the top of Masada numbered 960 men, women, and children. They were led by Eleazar ben Yair. The dirt ramp was laid. The end came in the spring of 73 A.D. on the 15th day of Nisan. A mass suicide took place. By casting lots, 10 men were appointed to see which

one would finish the deed. Two women and five children hid rather than submit to death.

■ American say: “Remember the Alamo.” Israelis say: “Masada will never fall again.”

■ The Zealots (Jews) at Masada were:

- Courageous.
- Dedicated to a cause.
- Committed.
- Determined.
- Chose an alternative to being enslaved.
- Willing to pay the price.
- Really believed in who and what they were.
- Willing to defend what they believed and back it up with their lives.
- Held out against great odds.

