

Disasters in Jerusalem

Explanation

Times were hard in the ancient world. Weather and other natural disasters disrupted society and dislodged rulers. Although incomplete, historical records provide considerable data about various disasters that befell Jerusalem in the years around the time of Jesus. Catastrophes included war, famine, drought, wind, earthquakes, and epidemics. When Jesus prophesied of impending cataclysms that hung over the city of Jerusalem, and when he warned people to build their house upon a rock and not upon the sand, his audiences would have understood immediately the terrible reality of such disasters.

Reference

Based on data in Joachim Jeremias, *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1969), 140–44.

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Disaster	Year
Besieged, Famine	163 B.C.
Drought	Before 65 B.C.
Hurricane	64 B.C.
Siege	37 B.C.
Earthquake	31 B.C.
Epidemic	29 B.C.
Famine, drought, sickness, no wool	25–24 B.C.
Famine	A.D. 46–48
Drought	Before A.D. 66
Drought	A.D. 69
Destruction by Roman army	A.D. 70