

The Arch of Titus Yields its Mysteries

1. 17 Tammuz—Prelude to tragedy
2. Destruction of 2nd Temple weighs more heavily upon us
3. Rome=Villainous, wicked government.
4. Arch of Titus (82ce): Sack of Jerusalem=victory of the century for Rome.
5. (This concept explains the midrash of Yosef Meshita.)
6. The civic centre of Rome was remodelled to reflect the victory over the Jews and their G-d.
7. Sack of Jerusalem: Roman gods, and in particular Jupiter, had defeated the G-d of Israel.
8. After *hurban*, dues paid to *Beit ha-Mikdash* now paid to Temple of Jupiter.
9. A generation later, Hadrian would even establish a shrine to Jupiter on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem.
10. A closer look at the Arch: Titus at the apex of the passageway rising to Heaven on the back of an eagle above the spoils panel and Victories hovering in the spandrels. Becoming a god himself.
11. Spoils from Judea pay for the Colosseum as well as the “Temple of Peace”, where treasures from the Temple were displayed.
12. Yet, the victory lap proved premature. Judaism continued to exist even in the absence of the *korbanot*. Torah and mitzvot.
13. Irony: Jews sometimes accused of being atheists and persecuted accordingly, because they did not worship the gods.
14. Menorah most prominent symbol on the Arch. Specifically chosen as emblem of the State of Israel.
15. Problem of the Pedestal
 - a. Should be a tripod
 - b. Dragons, yet Talmud says one who finds a vessel with a carving or picture of a dragon, should throw it into the Dead Sea
16. Chief Rabbi Yitzchok Herzog: Tripod must have been detached in transit, and a Roman artisan replaced it with the decorative pedestal.
17. Prof. Daniel Sperber: Herod added the dragons—ingratiate himself with Rome
18. Rabbi Herzog distressed at the choice of this menorah as emblem of the State of Israel.
19. Evidence for Torah Scroll as the climactic feature of the triumphal procession.
20. Margolis and Marx: “One thing the fury of legions was powerless to destroy, the invincible Torah of the Jew.”

