

The Infamous Procurators of Rome in 6-66 CE

written by Jan Lilleby | 6. April 2023



THE INFAMOUS PROCURATORS OF ROME 6 - 66 CE EDITED BY JAN LILLEBY

Selected writings from diverse sources, such as Encyclopedia Britannica, Jewish Encyclopedia, Wikipedia, and others.

The photo of ruins in my heading, is of Caesarea. The headquarters of rule, housing the Roman Garrison in those years.

PROCURATOR, was a title of the governors (first over Judea, later over most of Palestine) appointed by Rome during the years 6–41 and 44–66 C.E. From a recently discovered inscription in which *Pontius Pilate is mentioned, it appears that the title of the governors of Judea was also *praefectus*.

Procuratorial rule came into force with the banishment of *Herod's son *Archelaus in the year 6 and was interrupted for three years during the reign of *Agrippa I (41–44).

The Judean-Palestinian procurator held the power of jurisdiction with regard to capital punishment (*jus gladii*).

*Roman citizens had the privilege of provocatio, i.e., the right to transfer the trial from the provincial governor to the emperor (cf. the case of *Paul , Acts 25:10–12; cf. 22:25ff.).*

The procurator was subject to the Roman legate in Syria, an illustration of this being the deportation of Pontius Pilate (26–36 C.E.) by Vitellius.

Josephus also states (Wars, 2:280–1) that formal charges would have been preferred by the Jews against the last procurator Gessius *Florus (64–66 C.E.; see below) but that they refrained from taking their case to *Gallus in Syria from fear of reprisals.□□

The□□ Sanhedrin□□ was allowed to exercise jurisdiction in civil matters, although the procurators could exercise control in this sphere as well. As a rule, the procurators maintained supervision over the country from their official □ residence at Caesarea.□□ On Jewish festivals, their seat was temporarily transferred to□□ Jerusalem□□ in order to control the thousands who flocked to the□□ Temple□□ and on these occasions they sometimes gave physical expression to their hatred of Rome.

It is fair to assert that the procurators were either openly hostile or, at best, indifferent to the needs of the Jewish populace. They were notorious for their rapacity. Their relatively short tenure, coupled with hostility toward Jews as a whole, may have impelled them to amass quick profits. Whatever the case, the last two procurators before the Jewish War (66 C.E.), *Albinus and Gessius Florus, as a consequence of their monetary extortions and generally provocative acts, were indubitably instrumental in hastening the outbreak of hostilities.□□

The only exception appears to have been Porcius *Festus (60–62 C.E.) who made vain attempts to improve conditions.□□

The procuratorial administration made an unfortunate beginning when the very first procurator, *Coponius, was dispatched to govern Judea, while the Syrian legate *Quirinius carried out a census (Jos., Ant., 18:1). The political consequences of this act were not delayed, as it led to the establishment of the Fourth Philosophy (*Sicarii) by *Judah the Galilean and the Pharisee Zadok.□□

*Valerius Gratus (15–26) went so far as to depose high priests at will, an outrage on popular feeling hitherto perpetrated only by Herod. The outraged feelings of the populace were not calmed with the appointment of Gratus' successor, Pontius Pilate, during whose term of office Jesus was crucified. Pilate's decision to introduce into the city military standards bearing the emperor's likeness may have been inspired by Rome. Incontrovertible, however, are his own acts of cruelty and his miscarriages of justice, such as the execution of Galilean patriots without trial and his violence toward the Samaritans (35 C.E.). The latter act caused his recall to Rome and deposition by Vitellius in the spring of 36. So serious were the possible consequences of his misrule in the eyes of Rome that Vitellius was specially charged with the task of regaining Jewish favor by granting minor concessions.

While the "second series" of procurators, after the interlude of semi-independence under Herod Agrippa I, were

deprived of the power of appointing the high priest, the very first of them, Cuspius *Fadus, gained custody of the priestly vestments. Although appointed by Claudius to counteract the Syrian legate's antipathy toward the Jews, Fadus adopted violent means in suppressing the followers of the pseudo-Messiah *Theudas. Tiberius *Alexander ordered the execution of Jacob and Simeon, sons of Judah the Galilean.

Ventidius *Cumanus, next in office, not only let his troops cause a panic in the overcrowded Temple area on Passover, resulting in the death of 20,000 Jews (Jos., Ant., 20:105–12) but in addition armed the Samaritans against them. Whether the measure was actually considered necessary in order to maintain order is unclear. Cumanus was, however, subsequently removed by the Syrian legate.

The last of the Judean procurators, Gessius Florus (see above), is reported by Josephus to have sparked off the Jewish War with his demand for 17 talents from the Temple funds, which caused rioting leading up to the outbreak of hostilities on a large scale. After 70 C.E. the office of procurator sometimes alternated with that of legate and was subordinate to the governor of the region, eventually being disbanded altogether.

Regarding the list of procurators – we find that there were 14 in total, within 60 years rule. In those 60 years (from 6 to 66 CE) they were serving under 5 emperors: Augustus, Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius and Nero. It was under Tiberius that Jesus was crucified, and under Nero Paul the apostle was executed. It is noted that a discovery of an inscription in the ruins of Caesarea in 1961, tells of Pontius Pilate titled as 'Praefectus' – but since Claudius became emperor, he had their title changed to 'Procurator'.

Coponius 6–9 C.E.

Marcus Ambibulus 9–12 C.E.

Annius Rufus 12–15 C.E.

Valerius Gratus 15–26 C.E.

Pontius Pilate 26–36 C.E.

Marcellus 36–37 C.E.

Marullus 37–41 C.E.

Cuspius Fadus 44–46 C.E.

Tiberius Julius Alexander 46–48 C.E.

Ventidius Cumanus 48–52 C.E.

Antonius Felix 52–60 C.E.

Porcius Festus 60–62 C.E.

Albinus 62–64 C.E.

Gessius Florus 64–66 C.E.

We shall take a more detailed look on each one of them, as follows below. Giving the main attention to Pilate, since he was in office when Jesus was taken.

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COPONIUS:

First procurator of Judea, from 6 to 9 c.e.□□

Of equestrian rank, he was sent to Judea by Augustus after the banishment of□□ [*Archelaus](#). He was accompanied by the Syrian governor, Quirinus, who was sent to take charge of Archelaus' property and to take a census in order to determine taxation. This census was customary in every land which became a Roman province, but the Jews, incited by□ [*Zadok the Pharisee](#)□□ and□□ [*Judah the Galilean](#), regarded it as a sign of servitude and protested against it. Josephus mentions Judah as the founder of a new sect which has been identified variously with the□□ [*Zealots](#)□□ and the□ [*Sicarii](#). As a result of the intervention of□□ [*Joezer b. Boethus](#), the□□ [high priest](#), the people were pacified and the census taken. During Coponius' period of office some Samaritans penetrated into the Temple and scattered human bones through its chambers, which led to an intensification of the vigil at the Temple (Eduy. 8:5; Tosef. Eduy. 3:3). No specific complaints were raised against Coponius as was the case with his successors, and he is believed to have maintained a satisfactory relationship with the Jews. One of the gateways to the Temple Mount, "the door of Coponius," was apparently named after him (Mid. 1:3).

MARCUS AMBIBULUS

Originally a□□ [cavalry](#)□□ [officer](#), he succeeded□□ [Coponius](#)□ in 9 and ruled the area until 12, when he was succeeded by □ [Annius Rufus](#).□□ [Josephus](#)□□ noted his tenure in the□ [Antiquities of the Jews](#)□□ 18.31.

ANNIUS RUFUS

He had no incidents□□ mentioned, when in office□□ of Procurator. Not much to find on him regarding history...there haven't been found any biography on him.

VALERIUS GRATUS

Roman□□ [*procurator](#)□□ of Judea, 15–26 c.e., appointed by the emperor Tiberius. Little is known of his administration, but his frequent replacement of the□□ [high priest](#)□□ is indicative of his attitude toward the Jews. After deposing Anan b. Seth,□□

PONTIUS PILATE

Pontius Pilate, Latin in full□□ **Marcus Pontius Pilatus**, (died after 36□□ ce), Roman□□ [prefect](#)□□ (governor) of□ [Judaea](#)□□ (26–36□□ ce) under the emperor□□ [Tiberius](#)□□ who presided at the trial of□□ [Jesus](#)□□ and gave the order for his□□ [crucifixion](#).

Historical and traditional accounts of the life of Pontius Pilate

According to the traditional account of his life, Pilate was a Roman equestrian (knight) of the [Samnite](#) clan of the Pontii (hence his name Pontius). He was appointed prefect of Judaea through the intervention of [Sejanus](#), a favourite of the Roman emperor Tiberius. (That his title was *prefect* is confirmed by an inscription from [Caesarea](#) in ancient [Palestine](#).)

Protected by Sejanus, Pilate incurred the [enmity](#) of [Jews](#) in Roman-occupied Palestine by insulting their religious sensibilities, as when he hung worship images of the emperor throughout [Jerusalem](#) and had [coins](#) bearing pagan religious symbols minted. After Sejanus's fall (31 ce), Pilate was exposed to sharper [criticism](#) from certain Jews, who may have capitalized on his vulnerability to obtain a legal death sentence on Jesus (John 19:12). The [Samaritans](#) reported Pilate to Vitellius, [legate](#) of Syria, after he attacked them on [Mount Gerizim](#) (36 ce). He was then ordered back to Rome to stand trial for cruelty and oppression, particularly on the charge that he had executed men without proper [trial](#). According to [Eusebius of Caesarea's](#) *Ecclesiastical History*, Pilate killed himself on orders from the emperor [Caligula](#).

Pilate in the New Testament



Judgments of the man himself must be made inferentially, almost entirely on the basis of later Jewish and Christian writings, chiefly those of [Josephus](#) and the [New Testament](#). Josephus's references appear to be consistent. They seem to picture a headstrong strict [authoritarian](#) Roman leader who, although both rational and practical, never knew how far he should go in a given case. He provoked both Jews and Samaritans to riot. Josephus tells us that "in order to abolish Jewish laws," and with the intent of diminishing privileges Jews had hitherto enjoyed, Pilate ordered his troops to encamp in Jerusalem and sent them into the city with images of the emperor attached to their ensigns. When Jewish representatives demonstrated in [Caesarea](#), Pilate's city of residence, he threatened them with death unless they desisted, but, when they showed their readiness to die, he ordered the images removed. Josephus states his inferential judgment that Pilate "was deeply affected with their firm resolution," suggesting his own strength of character.



Jesus before Pilate

The New Testament suggests that Pilate had a weak, vacillating personality. Would the mob be just as happy if he released [Barabbas](#) instead of Jesus on the feast day ([Mark](#) 15:6 ff.)? Pilate weakly [capitulates](#). His wife sends him word of a revelatory dream she has had about Jesus and urges him to "have nothing to do with that innocent man" ([Matthew](#) 27:19), and Pilate [abdicates](#) his responsibility to the emperor. In [John](#) (19:7–11), Pilate is depicted as having accepted the Christian interpretation of the meaning of Jesus, and he rejects Jewish leaders' reminder that Jesus has merely [said](#) that he is "the king of the Jews" (19:21). On the other hand, John's picture of Pilate delivering judgment from a tribunal in front of the prefect's mansion fits typical Roman procedure. Clearly, as an index to the character and personality of Pilate, the New Testament is devastating, but it is preoccupied with concerns of the [nascent](#) Christian [communities](#), increasingly making their way among the Gentiles and eager to avoid giving offense to Roman authorities.

An [early church](#) tradition that had taken a favourable opinion of Pilate persisted in some churches into the early 21st century. He and his wife are venerated in the [Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church](#); their feast day is June 25.

He appointed in turn Ishmael b. Phabi i, Eleazar b. Ananias, and Joseph Caiaphas. That his motive was bribery is hinted in the Talmud: "Because money was paid for the purpose of obtaining the position of [high priest](#), [they] were changed every 12 months," and "Since they used to hire it [the office of high priest] out for money, their days were shortened" (Sif. Num. 131).

MARCELLUS

He was a friend of [Lucius Vitellius](#), who appointed him after sending [Pontius Pilate](#) to [Rome](#) (in 36 or 37) to render account. It may be assumed, however, that Marcellus was not really a governor of Judea, but only a subordinate official of Vitellius. Indeed, this is the only instance where [Josephus](#), in designating the office of Marcellus, uses the Greek expression [epimeletes](#) (ἐπιμελητής), "overseer", which is uncommon, and we are not certain whether Marcellus really had the powers of a prefect or was merely a caretaker. No official act of Marcellus is reported. In 37, he was replaced by [Marullus](#).

However, some insight into the changed situation in Jerusalem after the departure of Pilate is seen in the contrast between the trial and execution of [Jesus](#) and that of the first Christian [martyr](#) [Saint Stephen](#) ([Acts 7](#)). In the former, the Sanhedrin (Jewish Council) passed the death sentence but dared not carry it out without the

prefect's endorsement, and the execution was carried out by the Roman state ([Luke 23.24](#)). In the case of Stephen, the Romans were ignored and the hurried execution was by the old Jewish method of [stoning](#). It would appear that a temporary overseer may have preferred to stay in [Caesarea](#) and turn a blind eye to the growing confidence and aggression of the Jewish leaders. [[clarification needed](#)]

MARULLUS

He was appointed by the emperor following the recall of [Pontius Pilate](#) and the temporary oversight of [Marcellus](#). The period of his prefecture was a stirring and dangerous time due to Caligula's determination to turn the [Second Temple](#) into an imperial shrine with an enormous statue of himself in the guise of [Jupiter](#), and the Jews' equal determination to accept no such thing. Nothing is recorded of Marullus's part in the dispute, because the important decisions and negotiations were necessarily taken over by the [Syrian Governor](#) ([Legate](#)) [Publius Petronius](#).

With the statue being constructed in [Sidon](#) and two [legions of Roman troops](#) waiting on the border of [Galilee](#) to enforce the imperial order, war was eventually avoided by the intervention of [Herod Agrippa](#) who dissuaded his friend from such provocation. Soon afterwards Caligula was assassinated and [Herod Agrippa](#) was appointed to take Marullus' place, but with the appellation of "king" as Agrippa I.

CUSPIUS FADUS

Procurator of Judea after the death of Agrippa I. Appointed by Emperor Claudius in 44 C.E., he went to Palestine in the same year, and found the inhabitants of Peræa engaged in open hostilities against those of Philadelphia on account of boundary disputes. Fadus soon restored order, but he then incensed the Jews by the unreasonable demand that the sacred vestments of the high priest, which had been in the hands of the Romans from the year 6 to 36 C.E., but had been restored to the Jews by Vitellius, should again be given into the keeping of the Romans. With the consent of Fadus and the Syrian governor Cassius Longinus, the Jews sent an embassy to Rome, which obtained from Emperor Claudius the revocation of the procurator's demand. Fadus was also instrumental in checking the advance of the pseudoprophet Theudas.

TIBERIUS ALEXANDER

Tiberius Julius Alexander (fl. 1st century) was an [equestrian](#) governor and general in the [Roman Empire](#). Born into a wealthy Jewish family of [Alexandria](#) but abandoning or neglecting the Jewish religion, he rose to

become the 2nd [procurator](#) of [Judea](#) (c. 46 – 48) under [Claudius](#). While [Prefect](#) of [Egypt](#) (66–69), he employed his [legions](#) against the [Alexandrian Jews](#) in a brutal response to ethnic violence, and was instrumental in the [Emperor](#) [Vespasian](#)'s rise to power. In 70, he participated in the [Siege of Jerusalem](#) as [Titus](#)' second-in-command.^[1] He became the most powerful Jew of his age, and is ranked as one of the most prominent Jews in military history.^[2]

Tiberius Julius Alexander was probably born early in the reign of the Emperor [Tiberius](#) (14–37). His father was [Alexander](#), an [Alexandrian](#) Jew who held the office of [Alabarch](#) as head of customs on the Arabian frontier,^[2] but it may have denoted a senior customs official. The family of the older Alexander, a member of the Egyptian gentry, had Roman citizenship, something not infrequent among the wealthy Jews of Alexandria.^{[2][3]} He also had business connections both with [Agrippa](#), grandson of [Herod the Great](#), and with [Antonia](#), mother of the emperor [Claudius](#).^[4] Another prominent member of Tiberius Alexander's family was his uncle, the philosopher [Philo](#).^[2]

With both Tiberius and his younger brother [Marcus Julius Alexander](#), the father preferred to give them a grounding in [classical languages](#), rather than have them receive a traditional Jewish education, and both had been groomed to enter into the Roman bureaucracy.^[2] Marcus Julius Alexander was the first husband of Herodian Princess [Berenice](#). Marcus died in 43 or 44, leaving no children. The Jewish historian [Josephus](#) introduces his portrait of Tiberius by condemning him for impiety, explaining that he "did not remain in his ancestral customs".^[5] This has traditionally been taken to mean that he became an [apostate](#) from Judaism at an early age, a view which finds some support in his appearance as a character in two of Philo's philosophical dialogues, making arguments against [divine providence](#) which Philo attempts to refute.^[6] However, some more recent scholars believe that Josephus is criticizing Alexander simply for his decision to take up the service of Rome, placing the interests of the Empire above the Jewish religion.^[7]

He nevertheless continued to benefit from his family's connections, which were enhanced after the Emperor [Claudius](#) came to power in 41. Agrippa had helped to secure Claudius' accession after the assassination of [Caligula](#), and was appointed king of [Judea](#). Tiberius' father, who had been imprisoned by Caligula, was released on Claudius' orders, and it was at this time that his younger

brother Marcus became Berenice's husband.^[8] Tiberius's first senior appointment was as governor of the [Thebaid](#) in 42 CE.^[2]

Career until 63

Tiberius Alexander was evidently well enough connected for an [equestrian](#) career in Roman public life. The first position he is known to have held, beginning in about 42, was that of [epistrategus](#) of the [Thebaid](#), one of the three regions into which the Roman province of [Egypt](#) was divided.^[9] This was an administrative and judicial post involving no military command. He may have perhaps maintained contacts with his brother Marcus, who was trading in the same area until his premature death in 43 or 44.^[10]

In recognition of his administrative abilities in the Thebaid after four years of service there, Claudius appointed him [procurator](#) of Judea in 46 CE.^[2] The province had returned to direct Roman rule only after the death of Agrippa in 44, and from the tenure of Alexander's predecessor [Cuspius Fadus](#) it had been a hotbed of [zealot nationalism](#). Despite the opinion of some fellow Jews that he was a turncoat, his period of office as Procurator in Judea was marked by peace, as Josephus himself writes.^[2] He did condemn James and Simon, sons of an earlier rebel named [Judas of Galilee](#), to [crucifixion](#). It was also at this time that Judea was afflicted by a severe famine. In 48 he was succeeded by [Ventidius Cumanus](#).^[11]

Alexander appears to have risen in the ranks – though the details are unknown, until, with the reign of [Nero](#), he served as a staff officer under the prominent general [Gnaeus Domitius Corbulo](#) during [campaigns](#) against [Parthia](#), under whom he distinguished himself.^[2] In 63 he was dispatched along with Corbulo's son-in-law to escort the [Armenian](#) king [Tiridates](#), with whom he himself had initiated negotiations,^[2] to the Roman camp, on the first stage of his journey to receive the status of [client king](#) from Nero.

VENTIDIUS CUMANUS

Josephus, the main source for Cumanus' career, presents him as governing the whole of Iudaea until 52, when he was succeeded by [Marcus Antonius Felix](#).^[2] However, Tacitus states that Felix was already governing [Samaria](#) before 52, while Cumanus had authority over [Galilee](#) to the north (see map).^[3] Tacitus does not mention who

controlled other areas of the province.[]

This conflict has led historians to take a number of positions on political arrangements in the province. Some have argued that Josephus' greater knowledge of Jewish affairs justifies favouring his account.^[4] M. Aberbach believes that there was a division of power, but that Tacitus reversed the governors' areas of authority and that Cumanus actually governed the south and Felix the north; this fits better with Josephus, who describes Cumanus as active in [Jerusalem](#) and nearby.^[5] Another suggestion is that part of the province was transferred to Felix after disturbances under Cumanus' rule.

ANTONIUS FELIX

Antonius Felix (possibly **Tiberius Claudius Antonius Felix**, in [Greek](#): ὁ Φήλιξ; born circa 5–10) was the 4th [Roman procurator](#) of [Judea Province](#) in 52–60, in succession to [Ventidius Cumanus](#).

Felix was the younger brother of the Greek [freedman](#) [Marcus Antonius Pallas](#). Pallas served as a secretary of the treasury during the reign of the Emperor [Claudius](#). Felix was a [Greek freedman](#) – either of Claudius, according to which theory [Josephus](#) (*Antiq.* xx. 7) calls him **Claudius Felix**, or of Claudius's mother, [Antonia Minor](#), a daughter of Triumvir [Mark Antony](#) to [Octavia Minor](#) and niece of Emperor [Augustus](#). According to [Tacitus](#), Pallas and Felix descended from the Greek Kings of [Arcadia](#).^[1]

Felix became the procurator by the petition of his brother. Felix's cruelty, coupled with his accessibility to bribes (see [Book of Acts](#) [24:26](#)), led to a great increase of crime in Judaea. The period of his rule was marked by internal feuds and disturbances, which he put down with severity.^[2]

In 58, Felix hired assassins to murder [Jonathan, the High Priest](#), shortly after the latter took office.^[3] Jonathan had often criticized Felix about governing the Jewish affairs, and threatened to report to Caesar if Felix did not do well because Jonathan was the one who made recommendation to Caesar to send Felix to be the procurator of Judea. Felix persuaded one of Jonathan's most trusted friends, Doras, a citizen of Jerusalem, to hire robbers to kill Jonathan by promising to give him a large sum of money. Doras arranged for some hired men to mingle with the worshippers in the Temple in Jerusalem, while they hid daggers under their garments. These assassins succeeded in killing Jonathan during a Jewish festival and were never caught.^[3]

According to the [Acts of the Apostles](#), after [Paul the](#)

[Apostle](#) was arrested in [Jerusalem](#) and rescued from a plot against his life, the local Roman [chiliarch](#) [Claudius Lysias](#) transferred him to [Caesarea](#), where he stood trial before Felix. On at least one further occasion Felix and his wife Drusilla heard Paul discourse, and later on frequently sent for Paul and talked with him. However, his actual desire was to receive a bribe from Paul, a request that the Apostle didn't give into ([Acts 24:24-26](#)). When Felix was succeeded as procurator, having already detained Paul for two years, he left him imprisoned as a favor to the Jews ([Acts 24:27](#)).

Upon returning to Rome, Felix was accused of using a dispute between the Jews and Syrians of Caesarea as a pretext to slay and plunder the inhabitants, but through the intercession of his brother, the freedman Pallas, who had great influence with the Emperor [Nero](#), he escaped unpunished.

PORCIUS FESTUS



Procurator of Judea about 60-62 C.E., after [Felix](#) (Josephus, "Ant." xx. 8, § 9; "B. J." ii. 14, § 1). Although he was more just than his predecessor, he could not allay the intense bitterness of feeling among the Jews, caused chiefly by their being slighted in the affair of [Caesarea](#). Felix left him also the suit with Paul (Acts xxiv.-xxvi.), whom he sent to Rome (*ib.* xxvii.), Paul having appealed to the emperor as a Roman citizen. Festus proceeded with rigor against the [Sicarii](#), pursuing them with infantry and cavalry. He also took severe measures against a certain "magician," as Josephus calls him, but who was probably one of the numerous prophets who enticed the people into the desert, promising them salvation (compare "Ant." l.c.; "B. J." l.c.). When King Agrippa II., in order to be able to oversee the court of the Temple, erected a high wall in the former Hasmonean castle, the Jews in turn erected a higher wall to cut off his view. Festus, however, for military reasons would not allow this latter wall to stand; but he was just enough to permit the Jews to send an embassy to appeal against his decision to Nero, who decided in their favor ("Ant." xx. 8, § 11). Festus died after a short term of office, and was succeeded by [Albinus](#).

LUCCEIUS ALBINUS

Roman procurator of Judea, 62-64 c.e. During the brief interval between the death of his predecessor Festus and his arrival, the [high priest](#) [*Anan](#) son of Anan summoned

the Sanhedrin and sentenced James, the brother of Jesus, to death. Thereupon delegations were sent to Agrippa ii and even to Albinus, then on his way from Alexandria, to protest against Anan's illegal act, since he had no authority to convene the Sanhedrin without the procurator's consent (Jos., Ant., 20:197–203). Josephus depicts Albinus as unusually rapacious. He increased the burden of taxes and released prisoners only on payment of a ransom (Jos., Wars, 2:272–3). Under Albinus the [*Sicarii](#) intensified their activities and when they were unable to ransom their followers they would seize some of the leading citizens and make their release dependent upon that of their members held prisoner by Albinus. Thus Ananias, the [high priest](#), was constrained to persuade Albinus to release ten Sicarii in exchange for his son, Eleazar's secretary, kidnapped by them (Jos., Ant., 20:208–9). Josephus relates that several years before the destruction of the Second Temple, portents foretold its approaching doom. Among them was a farmer, Jesus, the son of Ananias, who day and night proclaimed the coming destruction by crying out: "A voice from the east, a voice from the west, a voice from the four winds, a voice against Jerusalem and the sanctuary, a voice against the bridegroom and the bride, a voice against all the people." Brought before Albinus, Jesus unceasingly repeated his dirge, even under torture. Albinus concluded that he was mad and sent him away (Jos., Wars, 6:300–5). Signs of the imminent outbreak of hostilities were probably evident in the days of Albinus, who, in 64 c.e., was succeeded by Florus, the last procurator of Judea.

GESSIUS FLORUS



Last procurator of Judea (64-66). **Florus was notorious for his cruelty and rapacity, and was so much detested by the Jews that in comparison with him Albinus was considered a just man.** Florus, indeed, hastened the outbreak of the revolution by rendering the condition of the Jews unbearable. He protected the Sicarii in return for a share of their plunder, and during his administration many towns were sacked. When the Jews of Cæsarea opposed the obstruction of the entrance to their synagogue by the Greeks, they bribed Florus not to interfere. Florus accordingly went to Samaria. Finding themselves overpowered, the Jews sent to him an embassy of twelve, imploring his protection against the Greeks; but Florus, instead, threw the ambassadors into prison. Later he sent to Jerusalem, demanding from the warden of the Temple treasury seventeen talents of gold. His demand being refused and even ridiculed, he

went to Jerusalem and ordered his soldiers to attack the upper market-place.

The Jews were killed, regardless of sex or age, and the houses plundered. On that day (16th of Iyyar, 66) more than 3,600 were slaughtered; many were scourged and crucified. Queen Berenice in vain implored him on her knees to stop the carnage. Florus even demanded a friendly reception for the troops appointed to seize the Temple. But the people opposed him with so much vigor and determination that he left Jerusalem with the larger number of his troops. When the insurrection had broken out, Florus gave full liberty to the Greeks of Cæsarea to attack the Jews. The majority of the latter were killed; the remainder, by the command of Florus, were sent to the galleys.

SO FAR MY COLLECTED INFORMATION FROM SEVERAL WELL REPUTED WEB SITES, AMONG WHICH WIKIPEDIA AND BRITISH, AS WELL AS JEWISH, ENCYCLOPEDIA ARE FOUND.

I do hope that my readers have found interesting historical facts here, since these Roman Procurators and 'Middlemen' commissioners were involved in God's and Christ's *dealings and rulings* during the period of the Gospels and the Book of Acts – and not the least, involving the apostle chosen by Jesus Christ post-Ascension, Paul.

Isn't it interesting to learn of the often *rude and corrupted minds of those leaders who had to 'handle' the greatest apostle (to my mind) PAUL?*

Little did they know that they were all just minor 'Chess Figures' in God's mighty plans, so that finally we find, through the earthly powers of the Roman Empire, that God was the one Who made all the 'moves'.

We learn of Agrippa II *almost becoming a Christian.* We learn of Felix as a money-lover and ultra-corrupted 'Mafia Boss' hoping to receive a bribe from Paul; while as a contrast to him, we see Festus as a more wise Procurator seeking peace and civil order, even if he did not exactly come clean in all incidents told. And we end up in 66 CE with the *monster* Procurator Gessius Florus, **whom God saw fit** to use as an 'ignitor' of the fuse which made it all explode into a total frenzy, as he plundered the Second Temple and installed images of Nero around it to insult and provoke the Jews. Yes, - it is up to you to study all of this, and make your own impressions about it all.

It is obvious for all that it *was indeed God* Who ruled all this judgmental incidents because His wrath had been firing up *against those* who had persecuted and killed the 'King's Servants' – the apostles. Ref. Mat. 22:7.

*Paul was protected from persecution of the angry Jews by

Rome's servants

* Paul was transferred by them over to Rome for judging the Sanhedrin counsel

* Ultimately Rome was the *capital instrument* in God's wrathful hands, and destroyed the evil Jesus-hating persecutors, the Jewish leaders, their temple, and actually the whole nation

Look out! – National leaders anywhere – be sure *not* to be in enmity with God Almighty whatever your comings and goings might be!

This very same kind of rule and involvement into 'who leads what' in governing this world – shall soon be revived on God's hand: He will send the Great Tribulation upon Zionist Israel, and they shall learn of His indignation and fierce wrath. But after those *seven wrathful years*, Israel shall see Jesus Christ coming down from heaven in great glory and power! (Rev. 19-20).