

# Got to go Home: Jewish Sovereignty in Antiquity Essay

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“Miserable men indeed were they, whose distress forced them to slay their own wives and children with their own hands, as the lightest of those evils that were before them.” (qtd Josephus, 393) Two thousand years ago an ancient historian named Josephus wrote those words about the zealots in Masada. After the Romans destroyed [Jerusalem](#) in 70 A.D. the rebels who made it out alive fled to Masada, where three years later they were attacked. Every man had to kill his family and then commit suicide in order to not get enslaved by the Romans. Although the Ancient Israelites were completely outnumbered by many of their enemies, they would not give up their contented lifestyle to anyone even if it meant killing themselves.

The first Israelites supposedly migrated from Mesopotamia. They were a mix of races that were just trying to survive (Orlinsky, 8). The Assyrians, the Egyptians, the Canaanites, the Amorites and the Babylonians had all thrown these people out of their country before a true golden era could arise (Hintz, 37). Israel was at its strongest starting in 1030BC. During this time Israel dominated west Asia. Two kings, David and Solomon were strong leaders and helped lead a strong nation. The golden era ended in 931 BCE when King Solomon died (Hintz, 37). After the king’s death the country slowly died from weak leaders, and split into two. The [kingdom of Judah](#) took over the south, including

Jerusalem. About 200 years later, the [kingdom of Israel](#) died out. Judah lived on uninterrupted, until Alexander the Great and the Greeks came in 332BC (Hintz, 38).

One of the first conquerors of Judah was Alexander the Great and the Greeks. The Greeks did not just want to conquer land, and wealth; they wanted to change the ideas of other co...

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