

THE WORD FELL SILENT

BY KIERAN COGHLAN

Jerusalem – 63 AD

It is a time of turmoil in the holy city. Judea groans under the rule of the Roman Empire, its king, Herod Agrippa II, nothing more than a puppet for the Roman governor. Some demand action against the Romans, others believe it a mistake to antagonise their masters. And there is turmoil between the different Jewish sects and with the new religion that has grown recently, spreading throughout the Roman World and threatening the Jewish faith: Christianity. This new faith undermines the authority of the Temple and invites Gentiles into matters meant only for the Jews.

Jerusalem is at a critical point in history. But its future has yet to be decided . . .

The Jewish Sects

At this time, there are three dominant Jewish sects in Jerusalem: the Sadducees, the Pharisees and the Zealots. YOU are an ardent follower of one of these sects. But which one? You must decide which sect you belong to for this adventure. Each has its own beliefs, policies and advantages. Choose wisely:

The Sadducees

The Sadducees are the dominant force in the Jewish Temple and its council, the Sanhedrin. They believe only what is written in the Torah and have no time for oral tradition. As members of the Jewish ruling class, they believe maintaining good relations with the Romans is the key to keeping power and authority. Their arrogant air and closeness to the Roman overlords means they are not very popular with most of the other Jews.

Advantage: If you choose to play as a Sadducee, you begin the adventure with 10 extra sestertii.

The Pharisees

The most popular of the Jewish sects and a rising power in the Sanhedrin, the Pharisees believe in the Torah, but also see the value of oral teachings and are even open to some outside influences such as the thoughts of the Greek philosophers. They are however no friends to the Romans, though they do not actively oppose them.

Advantage: If you choose to play as a Pharisee, you may add 1 point to your starting Charisma score.

The Zealots

Like the Pharisees and the Sadducees, the Zealots believe the Jews are a chosen people. However, they do not believe the Jews will achieve their destiny by letting themselves be walked over by a foreign oppressor. The Zealots are militantly anti-Roman and will stop at nothing to see Judea free.

Advantage: If you choose to play as a Zealot, you may add 1 point to your starting Combat score.

Your Attributes

On page 5 you will find your adventure sheet. Listed at the top of the adventure sheet are the 6 attributes that determine your capabilities. These are as follows:

Agility: Representing your speed, nimbleness and acrobatic skills.

Charisma: A measure of how well liked you are and how convincing your speech.

Combat: Representing how well you perform in battle.

Dexterity: Indicating your accuracy, keenness of eyesight, etc.

Lore: A measure of how well versed you are with both Jewish scriptures and that of the Gentiles.

Toughness: Representing how much punishment you can take.

Choose which of these attributes you think your character should be best at and put a '5' in the score box next to it. Then, place a '4' next to your second best attribute and a '3' in all the rest. These scores may change over the course of your adventure, but they can never rise higher than 5 or lower than 1. This includes your starting bonuses, so a Zealot cannot start with a **Combat** of 6!

Life Points

Your **Life Points** are a measure of how healthy you are. To find out your starting total, multiply your **Toughness** score by 4. You will lose **Life Points** throughout the course of your adventure and if your **Life Points** ever reach 0 or below, you are dead. You will notice some sections will be marked with a * next to the section number. Upon reaching such a section, you may restore 1 lost Life Point. You may never exceed your original total however.

Testing your Attributes

At times you may be asked to test an attribute. To do this, roll one die. If you roll equal to or less than your score for that attribute, you have been successful. Otherwise, you have failed.

Combat

At times you may find yourself having to do battle against an enemy. You will be informed of the enemy's **Combat** and **Life Points**. Combat is conducted as follows:

1. You strike first unless the text says otherwise.
2. If you are fighting more than one enemy you must select which opponent you are targeting.
3. Roll one die. If you roll equal to or less than your **Combat** you have hit your opponent! The number you rolled is subtracted from the target's **Life Points**. If you roll higher than your **Combat** you have missed.

4. Any opponent's with 0 **Life Points** or less are now dead and can take no further role in the battle. If there are no opponents left alive, you have won the battle.
5. Any surviving opponents now have an opportunity to strike back. For each opponent, roll a die and compare it with their **Combat**. If they roll equal to or less than their **Combat** they have struck you. Subtract the number rolled from your **Life Points**. Otherwise they have missed.
6. Providing you still have Life Points, you must now fight back. Return to step 2 and continue fighting into either you or all opponents are dead.

Your Possessions

You must keep a record of all items you find on your adventures on your Possession List on your adventure sheet. You start the adventure with a dagger given to you by your father.

Money

You begin the adventure with 10 sestertii (unless you are a Sadducee, in which case you start with 20). You should keep track of your money in the Money Pouch section of your adventure sheet.

How to Read this Book

A cursory glance through the book will reveal that reading it in order makes no sense. The book is divided into numbered sections. You should follow instructions in the text as to which sections to turn to.

Now Begin!

If you are playing as a:

Zealot	Start at section 1 .
Pharisee	Start at section 12 .
Sadducee	Start at Section 16 .

Adventure Sheet

ATTRIBUTES	SCORE
Agility:	_____
Charisma:	_____
Combat:	_____
Dexterity:	_____
Lore:	_____
Toughness	_____

LIFE POINTS

POSSESSION LIST

MONEY POUCH

NOTES

1

You wait, crouched in the shadows, your brethren hidden in the narrow alley with you, daggers at the ready. Dozens of men and women waddle past your hiding place, completely unawares. Most of them are fat merchants and their wives. They have made their fortunes by trading with the hated enemy, but they are not the targets today. In time they will pay for their treachery, but not yet. Now you wait for the procurator from Cæsarea. A symbol of the harsh rule over God's chosen, his death will inspire the masses. The weak-willed Romans will be no match for a people enflamed with righteous ire and their young emperor will see no point in trying to keep this unstable province. Or at least, so your leader Pessach says.

The shadows lengthen as the sun sets above you. The passers-by get fewer, the dusty Jerusalem streets now all but deserted. You begin to worry that the procurator will not come, that you will be discovered by the police, the hated pawns of the grandest pawn of all: Agrippa II. Then Aaron next to you grabs your shoulder and points out into the gloom where a line of soldiers escorts a balding man in loose fitting robes, accompanied by a standard bearer. The procurator has arrived.

Your body tenses, your heart pounding and your breath seeming to come in ragged gasps as the soldiers come ever closer. There are more than you had expected, but you will have the element of surprise. This will be a glorious battle!

'Attack!' yells Pessach as the soldiers pass your position. With a hearty cry of battle, you pour from the alleyway on top of the surprised Romans. You cut down one of them easily as you wade into the turmoil. You are almost on top of the procurator when he is shoved aside by a burly Syrian in ill-fitting Roman armour. With a snarl, he pulls forth his short sword and stalks towards you. You must fight!

Roman Soldier **Combat: 3** **Life Points: 10**

If you defeat him, turn to 7.

2

'Are you alright?' you ask, stooping over the fallen man. Suddenly, he grabs your arm and flings you to the ground! As you struggle to rise, he draws a knife and is joined by two similarly armed men who were lurking behind the nearby boulders.

'Well, well, boys,' gloats the man in a heavy Samaritan accent. 'A good Judean! We commend your nobility, stranger, but unless you hand over all your money it will do you little good where you'll be going.' His companions chuckle menacingly at this slight joke.

If you wish to surrender all your money to the bandits, turn to 79. If you would rather fight them, turn to 21.

3

'It's now or never,' you mutter to yourself. You stride towards the two guards.

'What do you want?' demands one.

'To see Paul,' you state plainly.

'Paul has no time to see just anyone. Get lost.'

'I'm not taking no for an answer,' you snarl drawing your dagger. The guards pull forth their swords, ready to give their lives in defence of Paul.

First Guard **Combat: 3** **Life Points: 9**

Second Guard **Combat: 3** **Life Points: 10**

If you slay your foes, turn to 47.

4*

The ship you sail on is mostly crowded with Roman passengers of high birth who are treated as kings by the subservient crew.

'Where do you hail from?' asks one of the Romans of you as you pass a group of them sunning themselves on the deck.

'Judea,' you answer.

'Ah, Judea! Wonderful place, or so I've heard. It was Antony who conquered there, was it not?'

'I could've sworn it was Pompey,' chimes in another.

'No, no, I'm sure it was Antony. He knew how to handle those desert peoples.'

'Wasn't Cassius out there?' questions another.

'Cassius? Yes, I think you're right. Now there's a man I wouldn't want to have got on the wrong side of.'

The conversation continues in this direction, the patricians paying you no further heed. You stalk off to your sleeping quarters, hoping this voyage will not be a long one. Turn to **94**.

5

No sooner do you hit the water than you begin swimming with all your might away from the cursing Romans. Once you are out of range of their javelins, you surface and try to think of how you are going to return to the docks safely. You don't have to take the decision however, as a battered ship draws up to you and you are thrown a line. Warily, you clamber aboard to find yourself confronted by a motley crew indeed. One of them slaps you hard on the back with nearly enough force to knock your teeth out.

'Very impressive,' he laughs. 'Never saw anyone give the Romans the slip like that before. Where are you headed?'

'Rome,' you reply, struggling to get your breath back.

'Hmm, well, we're not headed that far but we are travelling to Athens after making a stop at Karpathos. I'd be happy to offer you board as far as that, if you want? I'm sure you'll keep us all amused during the voyage.'

Seeing little alternative, you agree to the captain's suggestion, and soon Joppa is just a speck on the horizon behind you. Turn to **18**.

6

Your companion puts an arm on your shoulder.

'We had best not get involved,' he warns, leading you away from the spectacle. As he guides you towards the Jewish area of the city you try to turn a deaf ear to the screams coming from the temple. Turn to **97**.

7

The soldier is down, but the procurator is being spirited away, the troops surging towards you to cover his escape. A cry comes from across the square as the armoured forms of the police rush forward to aid the Roman soldiers.

'Retreat!' yells Pessach before his thrown is transfixed by a hurled javelin. You race towards the safety of the alleyways, the sounds of your brethren being slaughtered behind you. Another javelin strikes the crumbling masonry above your head as you duck down a narrow lane, running with all your might to stay ahead of your pursuers. You duck round a corner to find an open doorway before you with a bearded priest beckoning you inside.

'Hurry!' he hisses. You duck inside and he quickly closes the door behind you. Seconds later, the sound of pounding feet passes the door, followed by silence. Your saviour motions for you to follow him. He leads you through his elegantly decorated home to a small audience room where a man dressed in rich dark robes and wearing a thick grey beard sits expectantly. You recognise him immediately: he is Ananus ben Ananus, High Priest of Israel!

'Sit down,' instructs your saviour. You think you recognise him now - a Sadducee priest, though you are unsure of his name.

'I will not sit with those who whore themselves to Rome,' you state, folding your arms.

'You will sit,' thunders the voice of Ananus, 'or would you prefer I walk out to the market square and announce your presence to the police? You're too young to be beheaded, boy. Now, sit!'

Somehow his way with words wins you over and you sit opposite the High Priest. Your rescuer takes a seat next to Ananus and introduces himself as Ephram.

'You should be thankful we are such friends with the Romans,' says Ephram. 'For no-one else would be able to save you from the penalties your foolish actions this evening have earned you.'

'We knew all about your little plan,' rumbles Ananus.

'But how?' you start.

'Some members of your brethren are not as loyal as others. But luckily for you, your betrayer chose to come to us rather than the Romans or the police. We hoped one of you would escape. For we have a task that only a desperate man could accomplish.'

You say nothing, wondering what cruel fate you have walked into.

'Tell me your thoughts on the Christians,' says Ephram.

'I am no friend of theirs if that's what you're insinuating,' you answer. 'They cause division amongst us when we should unite. And they treat Romans and other Gentiles as our equals.' You spit at this suggestion.

Ephram frowns. 'I would thank you not to do that again. At any rate, your assessment of those crackpots is fair. Perhaps you will not find this task so unpalatable after all. This Jesus that they follow was not the first madman to come out of Galilee. You're probably too young to remember his trial, but he never once stated he was the Son of God. Others thought it of him and so he was executed justly as a blasphemer. Which was probably the biggest mistake ever made by the Sanhedrin.'

'Caiaphas had his reasons,' grumbles Ananus.

'Indeed,' says Ephram. 'But it still remains a mistake. If Jesus of Nazareth had been allowed to live, his followers would soon see his miracles and prophecies for what they were, his teachings would be replaced by those of the next fool to wander southwards. But as he was killed, his followers never lost the enchantment he had over them. And this enchantment has been strengthened and distorted by another: Saul of Tarsus.'

'Or Paul as he insists calling himself now,' snaps Ananus.

'Yes, Paul. This Paul was once a trusted friend to the Sanhedrin. He was even a vehement prosecutor of the Christians when the rest of us preached tolerance. But something changed. He became more Christian than the Christians themselves, going round telling groups of the blasphemers how to live, delivering dissertations on the nature of Jesus - a man he never met. Then he started converting Gentiles, and he did not even have them live cleanly. They can eat swine, fornicate, ignore the Sabbath, so long as they believe that this Jesus was the Son of God. And every day they grow in number.'

'He returned here recently,' say Ananus. 'We should have killed him then, but we did not want to offend the Romans for, unfortunately, he is a Roman citizen. He appealed that the emperor should be the one to try him and the governor accepted his request.'

'You were fools to bow to the Romans then as you are now,' you retort.

'Perhaps,' says Ephram, uninterested in arguing the point. 'Last I heard, Nero has released him from house arrest,' continues Ephram. 'He intends to leave Rome and spread his blasphemy further afield. He must not be allowed to do this.'

'You must rectify our mistake,' says Ananus. 'You must kill Paul!'

'And what's in it for me?'

'Other than the fact you will have rid the world of an enemy to the true faith?' Ephram sighs. 'Well, you need not worry about any Romans knocking on your door, ready to nail you to a cross.'

'In that case, I suppose I can't refuse.'

Ephram smiles and hands you a stone ring with a lamb inscribed on it. 'How you choose to complete your task is up to you. But if you go to the Sweet Honey Tavern in Cæsarea and show this ring to the proprietor he will put you in touch with someone who can help. Good luck.' You pocket the ring and rise to leave. Ephram leads you back to the alleyways behind his home and you stealthily make your way back home, your mission weighing heavily on your mind. For the sake of your freedom and the end of the blight that is Christianity, Paul of Tarsus must die!

Turn to **45**.

8

'Um, because, um . . . "Thou shalt not kill!"'

'Who says?'

You are taken aback. 'It's one of the Ten Commandments.'

'What on earth are the Ten Commandments?' quips another in the mob.

'The Commandments God gave to Moses to guide the Israelites, of course,' you answer in desperation.

'Moses? Never heard of him.'

'Why would we care about Israelites? We're all Greeks!' snaps another.

'But you worship a Galilean,' you protest.

'Doesn't matter; Jesus came to save all,' states an old woman with a sage nod of the head.

'Yes. And the Jews killed him for it!' roars the hulking man. 'You look like a Jew to me. Stone the Jew too!'

'Stone the Jew! Stone the Jew! Stone the Jew!' chant the crowd. Before you have a chance to move, you are buffeted by a hail of stones. You hear the screams of the girl behind you as she too is struck by this rocky maelstrom.

At long last, a Roman patrol notices the mob and chases them off, but by that stage you are lying in a bloodied heap (deduct 10 **Life Points**). If you are still alive, you find the girl has not been so lucky. Her once beautiful face is now a bloodied mess of flesh and bone. Sickened by the behaviour of these Christians, you search out a place to spend the night. Turn to **97**.

9

You leap to your feet, drawing your dagger. Your accuser flexes his muscles before pulling forth a wickedly-sharp hunting knife. The crew whoop with excitement at this unexpected source of entertainment.

Sailor Combat: 4 Life Points: 10

If you reduce him to 2 or fewer Life Points he will beg for mercy. Sparing him, you snatch up the 5 sestertii and head to your sleeping quarters followed by the thunderous applause of the crew. Turn to **76**.

10*

The ship seems to make good time, cutting through the deep blue of the Mediterranean at a rapid speed. You should be in Athens before you know it. If you have a companion, turn to **22**. If not, you spend your time taking in the sun and sights and occasionally swapping tales with the crew. Turn to **94**.

11

You stand over your fallen opponent, the awareness that you are the only member of the crew still alive slowly dawning you as the pirates close in on you, blood-stained weapons still gripped tightly in their hands.

'This one fights well,' chuckles one of the pirates.

'Aye, he does. Would seem almost a shame to kill him.'

An opportunity suddenly presents itself. You drop to your knees and beg the captain for him to let you join his crew. He strokes his thick beard thoughtfully. Will he be convinced? Test your **Charisma**. If you are successful, turn to 57. If you fail, the captain snaps his fingers. Two of the bloodthirsty crew seize you by the arms and throw you over the side of the ship: a feast for the sharks.

12

You look up at the sun and sigh. It is too glorious a day for the task before you. But it is God's will and it must be done. You lower your gaze to the crowd before you, pushing and yelling, jostling to get a good look at the man who stands before the ornate doors of the Temple. A wild-eyed man, his hair caked in dust, his clothes in rags, yet when he speaks it is with a voice laden with authority:

'Though you may strike me down, you destroy only the shell. The spirit lives on for I am saved by the Lord Christ!'

There are cries of 'Blasphemy!' from the crowd as they surge forward, pressed back only by the Temple guards. You push to the front of the crowd, the guards recognising you and helping you pass. You stand before the young Christian and lick your dry lips as you prepare to pronounce his doom.

'Joshua, Son of Jonathan. You stand accused of blasphemy and of allowing the uncircumcised to enter the Temple. But you still have a chance to repent.'

'He has no need to repent,' yells a man from the crowd. 'He does God's will!' The man tries to push forward, but the guards keep him back.

'It is as he says,' replies Joshua smilingly. 'It is not I, but all of you who serve the Temple that should repent for the murder of our Lord God.'

'Blasphemy!' screams one man and then a stone is thrown, crashing into the youth's temple. More follow and soon Joshua falls to the ground under a barrage of stones, blood oozing from his wounds.

Then suddenly, there are cries of terror from the crowd as they suddenly find themselves being attacked by men and women on all sides.

'Avenge our fallen brother!' is bellowed from the chaos. The guards try to control the frenzy, but find themselves beaten back. You must do something to prevent a mass slaughter! Test your **Charisma**. If you are successful, turn to 52. Otherwise, turn to 23.

13

A sleek quinquereme appears from around the coast of Rhodes and closes on your vessel fast. The captain squints at the approaching ships. A man on the deck is waving coloured flags in your direction.

'They wish to make an inspection,' mutters the captain. 'I think it would be a serious mistake to resist. We have nothing to hide anyway.'

The Roman ship pulls alongside your own and several soldiers cross over to your ship. An overweight officer barks out orders and the soldiers get to work searching the stores and checking the faces of each and every person on board. If you have a companion, turn to 73. If not, the soldiers complete their inspection and their officer seems happy enough that there is nothing amiss. He leads his soldiers back onto the patrol ship which then pulls away, allowing your own vessel to continue its journey towards Athens. Turn to 94.

14

'But,' you argue, 'does Scripture not say: "If there happens to be a poor person in your midst among one of your brothers in one of your cities in your land which Hashem your God gives to you, do not harden your heart and do not close your hand from your poor brother. Instead, you must throw open your generosity to him, and you must surely extend a loan to him for his needs to cover the wants which he lacks."''

'Ah,' says Shiloh, 'but one is not required to give when one has nothing to give.'

'You have money for the olives,' you respond. 'Surely, that is a luxury you could afford to lose?'

There is a sharp intake of breath from Jeriah. 'He has a point there.'

The high priest looks from you to Jeriah and then back to you. 'Oh, very well then. Jeriah, give this beggar some money for passage. And I hope you run aground!'

Jeriah escorts you back into the main part of the synagogue and presents you with 10 sestertii. 'Use it well,' he says. 'For it is not as if we have much to spare.'

Thanking him, you make your way to the docks. A ship is sailing to Athens today and the cost of passage is 8 sestertii. Paying this amount, you climb aboard. Turn to 4.

15

You are alarmed to find Judas waiting for you. He is pacing agitatedly and seems eager to ask you something.

'We near our goal,' he says. 'Yet can I be sure of your motives? You know the words of Isaiah, but what do they mean to you?'

'That one will come to intercede for sinners,' you reply.

He nods. 'A Messiah. As these Christians believe Jesus was. Yet the Sanhedrin did not see him as such. Were they right to doubt the prophecies of their ancestors? Was it not at least theoretically possible that Jesus could have been the Messiah?'

He looks at you expectantly. Will you reply "Yes" (turn to 89) or "No" (turn to 32)?

16

You fidget nervously as you wait in the Sanhedrin audience chamber, its rich drapes and fine furniture illuminated by the light of ornate gold-plated braziers. Your stomach lurches with excitement. To think, you summoned before the High Priest himself! What you have done to deserve such an honour you don't know, yet here you are. Your parents were delighted when you told them of the summons - perhaps they might have a son sitting on the Sanhedrin!

You are not waiting long before the chamber door opens and in strides High Priest Ananus, clothed in elegant dark robes. Following him comes Ephram, another Sadducee and a highly respected member of the Sanhedrin. These two illustrious personages take a seat at the desk and motion for you to sit opposite them.

'Do you know why we have asked you here?' inquires Ephram in a thin nasal voice.

'I'm afraid not,' you answer humbly. 'But I will serve the Sanhedrin in any way I can.'

'Your dedication to the Temple has never been in doubt,' replies Ephram. 'And it is for this reason we have selected you for a mission of grave importance.'

You nod, giddy with the chance to show your loyalty.

'What do you think of these Christians?' asks Ananus in a deep, rumbling voice.

'They are contaminating the Jewish way of life, daring to say a blasphemer is the son of God.'

Ephram smiles. 'Yes. This Jesus was not the first crackpot to come out of Galilee. You're probably too young to remember his trial, but he never once stated he was the Son of God. Others thought it of him and so he was executed justly as a blasphemer. Which was probably the biggest mistake ever made by the Sanhedrin.'

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became more Christian than the Christians themselves, going round telling groups of the blasphemers how to live, delivering dissertations on the nature of Jesus - a man he never met. Then he started converting Gentiles, and he did not even have them live cleanly. They can eat swine, fornicate, ignore the Sabbath, so long as they believe that this Jesus was the Son of God. And every day they grow in number.'

'He returned here recently,' say Ananus. 'We should have killed him then, but we did not want to offend the Romans for, unfortunately, he is a Roman citizen. He appealed that the emperor should be the one to try him and the governor accepted his request.'

'Yes, I remember,' you say.

'Last I heard, Nero has released him from house arrest,' continues Ephram. 'He intends to leave Rome and spread his blasphemy further afield. He must not be allowed to do this.'

'You must rectify our mistake,' says Ananus. 'You must kill Paul!'

With a gulp you accept the task laid before you.

Ephram smiles and hands you a stone ring with a lamb inscribed on it. 'How you choose to complete your task is up to you. But if you go to the Sweet Honey Tavern in Caesarea and show this ring to the proprietor he will put you in touch with someone who can help. Good luck.' You pocket the ring and thank Ephram and the High Priest before excusing yourself from the audience chamber, your mission weighing heavily on your mind. For the sake of the Temple and the true religion, Paul of Tarsus must die by your hand!

Turn to 45.

17

'For the Senate and People of Rome!' bellows one of three soldiers, revelling in the opportunity to show off his loyalty. The other two say nothing as all three close in on you murderously. This will not be an easy battle.

First Roman Soldier **Combat: 3 Life Points: 6**

Second Roman Soldier **Combat: 3 Life Points: 5**

Third Roman Soldier **Combat: 3 Life Points: 7**

If you somehow prevail, you find the street deserted - all the onlookers having fled after seeing hardened soldiers being slaughtered so easily. Hurriedly, you search the bodies of your foes and find three sestertii. Pocketing these, you spit on the corpses of these vile oppressors before rushing on to the waterfront. Turn to 71.

18*

The ship you find yourself on is little more than a large fishing vessel posing as a merchant ship and you're not utterly convinced it's entirely seaworthy. The crew are a diverse bunch; dark-skinned Africans, fair-haired Germans and curly haired Greeks are united only in the amount of tattoos, earrings and battle-scars they display. Despite being a passenger, the ruddy faced Spanish captain expects you to pull your weight on board and you are forced to endure weeks of mending rigging and pulling at the oars. When you are ready to return from Rome you will definitely have to find a more comfortable form of transportation. But perhaps this is not all you will have to deal with on this voyage. Roll one die.

Score 1 Storm Turn to 67.

Score 2-3 Pirates Turn to 77.

Score 4-5 A Spot of Gambling Turn to 83.

Score 6 Mutiny Turn to 38.

19*

Following the directions given to you by the Zealot you befriended en-route to Caesarea, you reach his brother's house. It is a large house on the edge of the Jewish quarter. Unsure of what to expect, you knock on the front door. It is opened by a tall man with a long bushy beard who

gives you a look full of suspicion. This suspicion is quickly replaced by warmth however when you show him your brass medallion and explain who you are. He happily invites you inside.

'How surprising to meet a friend of my brother out here,' he says as he shows you round his finely upholstered living room. 'He's a bit of a headstrong one though his heart's in the right place. Sees himself as the man to deliver Samaria from Roman control. I keep telling him it's much more profitable to be friends with the Romans but he refuses to listen. Anyway, make yourself at home.'

You spend the evening dining and chatting with the man who apparently made a fortune in pottery trading and is happily living off the proceeds. When you mention that you intend to go to Rome, he insists on arranging passage for you. The next morning you are on a ship bound for Ostia, the port of Rome. Turn to **40**.

20

'Ship ahoy!' calls out a keen-eyed crewman. The captain squints at the approaching vessel, a suspicious grimace on his face. The ship appears to be bearing down on you with incredible speed.

'Boarders!' yells the captain. 'Stand ready to repel!'

Not long after those words have left his mouth, the attacking ship pulls itself alongside yours and is soon throwing over ropes and grappling irons. A horde of battle-scarred men leap onto your vessel, howling at the top of their lungs. The crew are swift to meet them and you soon find yourself confronted by a heavy-set, bald pirate brandishing a viciously sharp trident.

Pirate Combat: 4 Life Points: 8

If you defeat him, you find the rest of your crew have also fared well against the marauders. Tails between their legs, the pirates leap back onto their vessel, cut the ropes and are soon fading into the distance as quickly as they had arrived. In good spirits over your victory, you join in a celebratory drink with the crew before sailing on. Turn to **94**.

21

The bandits are surprised to see you pull forth your dagger and take a battle stance. They have carried out this scheme several times and none have dared to stand up to them before.

'Seems this one wants to give us some sport, eh boys?' laughs the leader as they stride towards you.

First Bandit Combat: 3 Life Points: 7

Second Bandit Combat: 2 Life Points: 9

Third Bandit Combat: 2 Life Points: 10

You may surrender to the bandits at any time by turning to **79**. If you fight to the end and kill them all, a quick search of their bodies reveals only 2 sesterii; no wonder they had chosen to attack you. Tired after your battle, you decide to camp for the evening here and press on to Caesarea in the morning. Turn to **86**.

22

One starlit night you lean on the railing of the ship, gazing out at the dark and tranquil Mediterranean. Judas comes over to join you and the two of you stand there silently, simply enjoying the beauty before you. After several minutes, Judas begins to intone:

'Therefore I will give him a portion among the great,
and he will divide the spoils with the strong,
because he poured out his life unto death,
and was numbered with the transgressors.'

Test your **Lore**. If you are successful, turn to **30**. If not, turn to **58**.

'My friends!' you call out to the crowd. The brawlers stop trying to kill one another for a second to listen to your words. 'A grave thing has occurred this day. A man loved by many here has died. You may feel his death the fault of others here, but in truth he had every opportunity to save himself.'

'Only by denying that which should not be denied,' shrieks a wizened crone. A roar of support accompanies this, followed by cries of derision.

'But what he says is blasphemy,' you answer. 'You all know this deep down.'

'Well I say, those that deny our saviour are the blasphemers!' yells a shaven-headed man.

'See how you like it!' cries the crone again, hurling a stone at you. The stone smashes into your head and you grunt in pain. Further stones and cries of abuse follow and the non-Christians run in terror back to their homes. You curl into a ball as the stones thud relentlessly into your body (lose 4 **Life Points**). Just when you feel you cannot take anymore, the Temple guards manage to chase off the mob of Christians and you are helped to your feet by a man in a dark robe.

'You were brave there,' says the man who you recognise as a Sadducee priest by the name of Ephram. 'But foolish. These Christian dogs can't be reasoned with.'

'So much bloodshed caused by a group that claims to be non-violent,' you mutter, rubbing your bruises.

'If only they followed their Messiah's teachings as strongly as they believe he is their saviour. And this bloodshed will only increase until the Christians are dealt with once and for all.'

'But how?' you say. 'These stonings only seem to encourage them.'

'You take away their leader.'

'But this Jesus has been dead for thirty years!'

'Jesus was never the leader of this movement,' states Ephram. 'He was just one of many Galilean madmen. But he has been made into something else entirely by the true leader of this movement: Saul of Tarsus.'

You are about to respond when Ephram motions for you to be silent. 'Follow me,' he says.

He leads you through the Temple into a small audience chamber.

'Wait here,' he instructs. 'You sit uncomfortably for what must be a good half hour before Ephram returns accompanied by a figure you know well: Ananus ben Ananus, High Priest of Israel! The two sit opposite you and regard you cautiously.'

'How dedicated are you to ending this Christian blasphemy?' asks Ephram at last.

'If there was a way to bring the people back to the light and end the infestation of Gentiles to our holy mysteries then I would do it in a heartbeat.'

Ephram smiles. 'And there just might be a way. To stop this plague, its spreader must be stopped. Saul of Tarsus must die!'

You start in alarm. 'Murder Saul of Tarsus? I couldn't.'

'It's either that or let all that we hold dear crumble into nothing. We Sadducees and Pharisees have our disagreements, but we agree on the fundamentals of clean living and worshiping only the one true God! Saul seeks to destroy that and replace the true religion with that of unclean fornicators who worship an executed carpenter!'

Ananus nods. 'For the good of Judaism, Saul, or Paul as he insists on calling himself now, has to die.'

You gulp. 'I'll do it,' you say finally.

'Excellent,' says Ephram enthusiastically. 'Paul is in Rome now. Reports state that the emperor has released him from house arrest and he has plans to spread his lies further afield. You must not let this happen. Travel to Rome and do what must be done.'

You nod and start to rise. Ephram grabs your arm and hands you a stone ring with a lamb inscribed on it. 'How you choose to complete your task is up to you. But if you go to the Sweet Honey Tavern in Caesarea and show this ring to the proprietor he will put you in touch with someone who can help. Good luck.'

You pocket the ring and say farewell to the two priests. You leave the Temple and walk towards your home, your heart heavy with the importance of the task before you: for the sake of all you believe, Paul of Tarsus shall die!

Turn to **45**.

24

You step back in alarm. The Sicarii are a group of extreme Zealots, specialising in assassinating high ranking Roman officials as well as the Jews that they deem collaborators.

'What's wrong, little Sadducee?' snarls Zohar, rising to his feet. 'Scared to be alone, away from your precious Roman-loving Sanhedrin?'

'I have no quarrel with you,' you start.

'Maybe not, but I have one with you!'

You turn to flee, but have only taken two strides before a dagger thuds into your spine. You crumple to the floor, dead even before your head strikes the wine-stained wood.

25

As you twist and turn your dagger into the lock, you inadvertently push the safe box forward. The iron box tumbles from the table, crashing to the wooden floor with a clatter. On the plus side, the safe box bursts open, revealing a mass of coins and jewels. Unfortunately, the noise has also attracted the attention of the crew who now all stand before you, glowering.

'Seize the thief!' comes the unanimous cry. You ready your dagger, but there is no fighting this many off. You are hastily disarmed and bundled up, carried to the side of the ship.

'Wait, don't drop me!' you scream. 'I'll make it worth your while.'

'If you had anything of worth you wouldn't be trying to rob me,' says the captain. 'Throw him in boys!'

With a yelp, you are chucked into the water, left to fend for yourself stranded in the wide expanse of the Mediterranean. You manage to survive almost two days before you die from exhaustion, swimming aimlessly in hope of rescue.

26

Gazing about anxiously for Zohar, you finally spot him bobbing in the water some distance off. He appears to be trapped in a piece of rigging. It is keeping him afloat barely, but he does not seem to be conscious. You swim over to him and try to pull him free of the rigging. Test your **Dexterity**. If you are successful, turn to **42**. If you fail, turn to **62**.

27

Too late you spot Zohar about to blunder into a patrol of soldiers heading his way. You don't even have time to yell an alarm before he is cornered. He fights valiantly, killing two of the Romans before they bear him to the ground by the virtue of sheer numbers. You can only watch in tears as your companion is gutted by a spear thrust before your very eyes. Shaking your head, you climb down from the old tower and re-think your options. There are two possible ways you can think of to make enough money to continue your journey. You could resort to begging in the streets (turn to **37**) or you could ask for aid from the local synagogue (turn to **63**). Remember to note down that Zohar will no longer be your companion.

28

You race down the street, the three soldiers in hot pursuit. You reach the waterfront with a crash as you knock over the wares of an irate fruit merchant. More soldiers have joined the chase and you are slowly being herded along a pier. There's no escape now - unless you jump into the sea! As if sensing your plan, one of your pursuers heaves his spear in your direction just as you dive forward. Test your **Agility**. If you are successful, you land with a splash at **5**. Otherwise, the spear thuds into your back and you land in the water a corpse.

29

Many of the resplendent ships that crowd the great wharves of Caesarea are headed to Rome. Unfortunately for you, all of them are solely for the transportation of Roman officials and troops and their captains turn their noses up at a "provincial" like you. One Phoenician captain offers you passage as far as Athens, but the price is not cheap: 22 sesterii. If you have this amount and are willing to pay, deduct 22 sesterii from your money purse. If you have a companion, he has enough money to pay his own fare. Once you have deducted the amount from your money pouch, turn to **10**. If you cannot or will not pay such an amount, you have no choice but to follow the road northwards from Caesarea and hope to find cheaper passage at one of the Phoenician ports. Turn to **95**.

30

"For he bore the sin of many,
and made intercession for the transgressors," you finish. Judas looks impressed.
'You know Isaiah well,' he says. 'But have you ever considered what his words truly mean?'
With that, he returns to his cabin leaving you to continue staring at the sky alone. Mark an X on your adventure sheet before turning to **94**.

31

'You got yourself a deal then,' he says gruffly. 'I'll meet you at your ship tomorrow morning. Now I reckon it's time I turned in. Killing's a tiring business.'
You say farewell to the assassin before returning to sit with the crew. The reminder of your mission has dampened your good spirits however and you spend the rest of the evening sipping timidly at your cup of wine.
The next morning, the ship is just about to set off when the figure of Zohar comes ambling up the gangplank to stand next to you on the deck.
'Oh no, you don't,' says one of the beefier members of the crew, striding up to him. 'No freeloaders on this ship.'
'I won't be any trouble,' assures Zohar. 'You'll barely notice I'm here.'
'I'd rather not see you at all,' says the sailor, grabbing Zohar roughly by the shoulders.
'As you wish,' sighs Zohar. With a twist almost faster than the eye can see, he spins out of the astonished crewman's hands and seizes him by his tunic, flinging the unfortunate sailor over the side of the ship to land with a splash in the sea.
'I suggest you sail on now,' Zohar calls out to the captain. 'I'll fill in for our unfortunate friend there. I've sailed a bit in my time and I reckon I'm a bit handier in a fight.'
The crew stare at him open-mouthed before turning to the captain. The captain shrugs.
'You make a good case,' he says. 'Onwards to Athens then.'
The ship casts off, leaving one of its crew irate and soaking in Karpathos. Turn to **48**.

32

'So you share the same reservations as the Sanhedrin. Interesting, although not unexpected. You have given me much to think about. Good night.'
He takes his leave. Shaking your head at the oddness of your travelling companion, you decide to get some sleep. Turn to **66**.

33

You tell the story of King Eglon of Moab to a rapt audience:

'He was a greedy man, covetous of food, gold and disastrously for him, knowledge. He and his people had conquered the Israelites and treated them as little more than slaves. Ehud, a great hero of my people, decided on a way to remove the Moabites from Israel forever. He constructed the perfect sword, double-edged, well-balanced and with a blade keen enough to cut through the wind itself. Strapping this magnificent weapon to his leg, Ehud brought a huge tribute of food and gold to the King. Greedy Eglon was only too happy to admit this generous subject into his throne room. It is then that Ehud offered the King that which would undo him. He said the Lord God had spoken to Ehud with a message for Eglon's ears alone. Any other man would have been suspicious, but Eglon desired this secret knowledge so greatly that he dismissed all the members of his court once more. Ehud approached the king as if to whisper his secret, but instead pulled forth his sword and thrust it right through the king's grotesquely fat belly, losing the fabulous blade entirely in the bulk; a final gift to the King who wished to possess everything.'

The Corinthians are greatly impressed by the irony of Eglon's fate and applaud loudly. You are unanimously decided the winner and presented with the pot: 5 sestertii. Placing this sum in your money pouch, you excuse yourself and retire for the night, pleased with yourself. Turn to **94**.

34*

You enjoy a pleasant few weeks on the quinquereme. The crew hail from Corinth in Greece and they delight in telling you tales of their fine city.

'Do you know Corinth was the only city in Greece to put up any resistance against the Romans when they came to invade?' asks a seasoned mariner with a well-weathered face. 'The Athenians, Spartans, Thebans, all of them were too cowardly to stand against Rome's might but not we Corinthians!'

'Do you still dream of freedom from Rome?' you ask.

The mariner hesitates. 'Well, what man does not dream of freedom? But, to tell the truth, things are not so bad under the Romans. They have more respect for Greeks than they have for one another. And if you have to be ruled by someone, best it be someone who respects you.'

Such are the exchanges you share with the crew. When they are otherwise occupied, you spend your time gazing out at the vast Mediterranean, wondering how anyone can navigate such an expanse of water.

Roll one die to see if anything else awaits you on your voyage.

Score 1-2 Storm Turn to **67**.

Score 3 Pirates Turn to **20**.

Score 4-5 A Storytelling Contest Turn to **50**.

Score 6 A Chance for Thievery Turn to **87**.

35

'So this is where that self-righteous bastard is holed up,' snarls Elena. 'You wait here. I'll flush him out like the cowardly rabbit he is.'

Taking cover in an alleyway, you watch Elena sidle up to the surprised guards. She strokes the face of the uglier of the two.

'Can I speak to your master?' she purrs. 'I need someone to turn me aside from the ways of sin.'

'I don't know, miss,' says the handsomer guard. 'Are you a Christian?'

She puts her hand on his shoulder and shoots him a dazzling smile. 'Oh yes. I have seen the light. And it is ecstasy.'

The guard mops his brow. 'In that case, um, I guess you can go on in.'

Elena enters, the door closing behind her. A few minutes later you hear a voice raised in alarm coming from inside the house:

'Madame, no! . . . The desires of the flesh must not be indulged . . . You can't touch me there! . . . Stop that!'

The door is thrown open and a bald man wearing a patchy beard and a terrified expression comes running out of the house as fast as his legs can carry him. As he nears you, you draw your dagger. Test your **Dexterity**. If you are successful, turn to **55**. Otherwise, turn to **70**.

36

Following directions from some helpful passers-by, you find the Sweet Honey Tavern nestled in the most ramshackle area of old Stratonospyrgos. A badly-faded sign hangs over a rotted door. Entering the building, you find it near-deserted; it's only customers lounging in the dark corners of the smoke-filled building, hopeless eyes staring mournfully at a bearded bard strumming a lyre tunelessly beside the door. Paying the rest of the clientele no heed, you stride towards the bar. The barman watches you without much interest.

'Do you need something, stranger?'

You show him the stone ring in reply.

'So, you're looking for him then. Been a while. Well, take a seat. I'll see if I can find him.'

You sit at one of the few tables not covered with the remnants of various beverages and less wholesome fluids, wondering who this mysterious man could be and why he chooses to meet in such a place. The barman seems content to leave the bar unattended. His customers seem far too lost in despair to even think of robbing the place in his absence. After about half an hour of waiting, the barman returns with a tall man in a hooded cloak. The barman points towards you and the hooded man approaches. Wordlessly, he takes a seat at your table and removes his hood to reveal the well worn face of a man in his sixties. There is strength to him however and piercing black eyes watch you fixedly from over a hooked nose.

'You come seeking my assistance?' he asks in a deep voice.

'Yes,' you reply, rather unsure of yourself. 'Your friend Ephram suggested you might be able to help me with a vital mission.'

He strokes his short grey beard. 'Ephram is no friend to me though he has been of use over the years. As I'm sure I have been to him. What is it your mission?'

You lean forward conspiratorially. 'He wishes the death of Paul of Tarsus.'

The man smirks. 'So he has decided to do something at last. Better late than never I suppose. None have damaged the true religion with such venom as Paul.'

'Not even Jesus of Nazareth?'

He smirks. 'Not even him. Very well, I shall aid you. My name is Judas Iscariot.'

He holds out his hand as you stare at him open-mouthed.

'My reputation precedes me it seems,' he remarks wryly.

'I thought you had died,' you stuttered.

'Some thought it better that that rumour should be circulated. I have done nothing to deny it. The last thing I want is a so-called Christian coming after me to avenge his "saviour" after all.'

He rises from his seat. 'So where is Paul to be found?'

'Rome. Provided he has not left it already.'

'We must hurry then,' Judas says. 'We may be able to get a ship from here to Rome. Or we could try heading north towards Ptolemais where the fares would most likely be cheaper.'

As you turn to leave, Judas tosses a sesterti to the dour-faced barman before following you back into the dazzling sunlight. Note down that Judas is now your companion. If you wish to head to the docks, turn to **29**. Otherwise, the overland route to Ptolemais beckons. Turn to **95**.

37

A few hours of sitting on the streets with arms outstretched results in you making little more than a couple of rusted coins of an unrecognizable denomination, a few pieces of lint and an invitation to come to a local philosopher's talk on the virtues of stoicism. The people of Rhodes just don't seem to be very giving. And it's not as if they have little to give; well-dressed

patricians and their tittering wives walk past you several times and none so much as spare you a glance. Driven to frustration, you spit at the feet of one grotesquely overweight Roman noble. His bodyguards chase you and it takes you several minutes to lose them in the city's warren of alleyways by which time you are quite lost yourself. A man with oiled hair and dressed in clothing that likely hasn't been washed in some time, suddenly appears from a shadowy doorway.

'Saw what you did back there,' he says in an accent so guttural you have trouble understanding his Greek. 'Pretty amusing. Looks like you've worked out begging isn't going to get you anywhere fast. The only way to make money is with a bit of risk.'

'What do you mean?' you ask.

'Have you been to the Temple of Dionysus?'

You shake your head. 'I do not enter the worship houses of the Gentiles.'

'Heh heh. Sounds like you're exactly the kind of person for this job.'

'What job?' you ask, fast becoming exasperated.

'There's a golden chalice that rests on the altar to Dionysus. It's worth a fair bit, but most of the folk around here are too scared of the god's wrath to risk stealing it.'

'So take it yourself.'

'And get turned into a satyr for my sins? I don't think so! But you don't believe in our gods so you have nothing to fear, right?'

You reluctantly agree and soon you find yourself entering the temple. The worshippers of Dionysus are enjoying one of their regular orgies and those that are not lying in a tangled, drunken heap are chasing scantily clad maidens around the columns of the fabulously decorated temple. The chalice rests undisturbed on the stone altar at the back of the temple. Surely none of this drunken lot would see you take it? Test your **Dexterity**. If you succeed, turn to **54**. If you fail, turn to **90**.

38

You are taking a well-deserved rest after several hours on the oars when you hear raised voices from the deck, followed by the sounds of a scuffle and finally, a splash. Before you have a chance to investigate, three burly sailors charge towards your reclining position and pick you up roughly by your arms and legs. You are brought over to the prow of the ship and dumped before the first-mate, a gap-toothed brute by the name of Cyrus.

'What's going on here?' you demand, somewhat worried by the unsavoury grins you're getting from the rest of the crew.

'There's been a bit of a disagreement between the ship's officers. It's been resolved now though. Suffice it to say I'm the new captain and the former captain is most likely now in the belly of a shark. But what to do with you, my friend? I'm not sure we can afford to keep any dead weight under my jurisdiction.'

If you did not pay for your passage on this ship, turn immediately to **59**. Otherwise, you stutteringly try to explain to this pack of murderers why killing you might be a very bad idea. Test your **Charisma**. If you are successful, turn to **44**. Otherwise, turn to **72**.

39

The sun begins to sink over the horizon, taking its oppressive heat with it. You decide to travel on for a while in the fading light and enjoy the welcome coolness of evening. Not long after, your pleasant walk is disturbed by the sound of clashing arms and cries of battle ahead. Startled, you race forward, following the trail round the curve of a small hill. Then you see the cause of the commotion: a patrol of Roman soldiers is being set upon by a group of bearded men in loose robes wielding daggers. The robed men far outnumber the Romans, but the patrol are well organised, forming a circle and keeping their shields up while jabbing at the marauders with their spears. One of their attackers, on seeing you, calls out:

'Friend! Come help us against the hated oppressors!'

A tempting offer perhaps, but is it prudent to take it up? Will you help this band of Zealots? If so, turn to **78**. If you would rather take no notice and rush past the battle scene, turn to **86**. Alternatively, you could decide to fight against your countrymen and aid the beleaguered patrol by turning to **68**.

40*

Some days into your voyage, you find yourself talking to the captain. He is a Jew like yourself, albeit of Roman birth. He tells you that life is good for the Jews in Rome.

'The old emperor, Claudius, was no friend to our people. Those blasphemous Christians began causing trouble in the city and he ejected all of us, Christian and Jew alike, for their crimes. But things are better under Nero. We Jews are allowed to flourish now. And I hear he is no friend to the Christians. Their rise to prominence won't last long with him in charge.'

Cheered by this, you take your leave of the captain, returning to your sleeping quarters. If you have an X marked on your adventure sheet, turn to **15**. Otherwise, turn to **66**.

41

One of the soldiers, a heavily bearded Syrian, turns to look at you in surprise. 'I know him!' he yells. 'He's one of those bastards who attacked the procurator two nights ago!'

The soldier's companions draw their swords and the three converge on you menacingly. Will you fight them (turn to **17**) or make a run for it (turn to **28**)?

42

You manage to pull Zohar free of the rigging and give him a good slap to bring him round.

'What?' he splutters. 'Where are we? What happened to the ship?'

'It's at the bottom of the sea. And so will we be if you don't start swimming now!'

Supporting one another whenever one of you gets tired, the two of you swim with all your might towards a speck of land in the distance. Turn to **84**.

43

'Splendid!' exclaims the young patrician. Hastily, he orders his slaves to erect a target. Once this is done, a burly Nubian slave ambles over and presents you both with bows and one arrow each.

'Nearest to the bull's-eye is the victor,' declares the nobleman. He notches an arrow and without even taking much of an effort to aim, he lets fly at the target. The arrow thuds into the wood no more than an inch from the bull's-eye. 'Not bad,' he says to himself. 'But perhaps you can do better my Judean friend?'

Slowly, you notch your own arrow, take careful aim, and let loose. Test your **Dexterity**. If you succeed, you have struck the bull's-eye dead centre! Turn to **64**. Otherwise, your shot fails to get as close as the patrician's. He is ecstatic with his victory, but to show he is not a bad sport, he allows you to carry on your way with fresh provisions and a new canister of water. Turn to **53**.

44

'Oh, very well then,' says the new captain. 'Have your miserable life then. But I expect you to pull your weight.'

'Your predecessor had no complaints,' you insist.

'True, I suppose. And Gods know he complained about just about everything else under the sun.'

Thus spared, you get to work as the ship carries on towards Karpathos. Turn to **76**.

45*

You set off the next morning, pausing at the town square to obtain provisions for your journey. Dozens of Jews and merchants from further afield clamour for your custom, but you manage to get food for your journey for free from an old friend who owes you a favour. Thus equipped you take your leave of Jerusalem, following the dusty road westwards to the sea.

The going is hard, the sun almost unbearable, and you are forced to make frequent stops. You are never short of company however; the road to Jerusalem is always filled with gaudily dressed merchants, simple pilgrims, weather-beaten soldiers and jolly faced farmers. On the second day you manage to catch a lift on a passing farmer's wagon and he regales you with stories about the difficulties he's facing raising crops with the current drought. You nod along dutifully. At one stage, the conversation turns to religion, but you quickly get him off this subject; you have no wish to know whether he is a member of the religion you are setting out to destroy.

He drops you at his farm outside Joppa. You wave goodbye to the helpful farmer then deliberate on your next course of action. You should be able to get a ship from Joppa to take you at least part of the way to Rome. Alternatively you could skirt round the city and head northwards to Caesarea: a long journey, but Ephram's contact may be able to help you in your quest.

To head to Joppa, turn to **91**. To journey northwards to Caesarea, turn to **98**.

46

You protest as to the unfairness of this. But will the crew take your side? Test your **Charisma**. If you are successful, the crew side with you and convince your accuser to hand over the 5 sestertii. Add it to your money pouch before turning to **76**. If you fail, however, turn to **65**.

47

You barge into the house, bloodied dagger in hand. An old man with a bald head and wispy beard looks in alarm as you enter.

'Paul?' you snap.

He nods. 'So have you come to kill me?'

In answer you stalk towards him. Suddenly something slams into your back, a blade forcing its way into your lung. You fall to the floor, coughing blood as you gasp for air. Paul nods at the bodyguard who had been hiding behind the door.

'Regrettable that blood had to be spilt,' he says. 'But my message is too important to be silenced.'

All you can do is gurgle and die.

48*

The ship glides along the Aegean between the islands of Karpathos and Rhodes. The captain stands looking at the sky doubtfully and sniffing worriedly with his large nose.

'I don't like the smell of the air,' he remarks. 'Smells like a storm coming.'

Roll one die:

Score 1-3	Storm	Turn to 67 .
Score 4-5	Uneventful Journey	Turn to 94 .
Score 6	Roman Patrol Ship	Turn to 13 .

49

Stealthily, you tiptoe into the room, keeping a wary look out for witnesses. Unfortunately, the safe box is locked. Taking your dagger from your belt, you place its point in the lock and try to pick it open. Test your **Dexterity**. If you are successful, the lock snaps open to reveal a hoard of coins. You grab a handful (12 sestertii in all) then quickly close the box again and return to your sleeping quarters (turn to **94**). If you fail the roll however, turn to **25**.

50

On a balmy night a few weeks into your voyage, one of the crew suggests a story telling competition. Each of you throws in a sesterti into the pot (deduct this from your money pouch) and then you take it in turns to tell an enthralling tale. Whomever the rest of the crew decides told the best story gets the pot.

Your turn comes last. The current front-runner is a bright-faced young man who told the story of Androcles and the Lion's Paw. He told it well, but the Corinthian crew are all fairly familiar with this tale. Perhaps you can better it with one of your own people's legends? Test your **Lore**. If you are successful, turn to 33. Otherwise, turn to 75.

51

'I might know how to make a bit of money,' says Zohar with a thoroughly unwholesome smile. 'I've got a few friends here. They generally have a job or two that needs doing. If you could help me out we should make more than enough to get off this rock.'

Although you shudder at the thought of what vile deed Zohar would be hired to do you have no choice to agree. Zohar asks you to wait at the waterfront for him while he seeks out his "friends". He returns about an hour later, rubbing his hands together eagerly.

'Dead easy. There's a Roman senator visiting the island and making a nuisance of himself. All you have to do is keep a look-out while I do the job.'

'I'm not sure,' you start.

'Don't be a wimp. It's only a Roman. They're the enemy, remember?'

'I guess,' you say, not totally convinced.

'That's the spirit,' says Zohar, slapping you soundly on the back.

He leads you through the busy streets to an old stone tower. Zohar helps you climb up to its highest point. From up here you can see most of the city. Zohar points out a picturesque house of white marble.

'That's where the senator is staying. Once I've done the deed, there'll probably be soldiers swarming there from all over the city. I'll try to make it back here, but if you see any soldiers coming this way, yell out a warning and then flee. We'll meet up elsewhere.'

You nod your understanding. Zohar climbs down from the tower and heads towards the house. About ten minutes later you hear screams coming from the house. Soon after, Zohar comes sprinting from the house. Test your **Dexterity**. If you are successful, turn to 88. If you fail, turn to 27.

52

'My friends!' you call out to the crowd. The brawlers stop trying to kill one another for a second to listen to your words. 'A grave thing has occurred this day. A man loved by many here has died. You may feel his death the fault of others here, but in truth he had every opportunity to save himself.'

'Only by denying that which should not be denied,' shrieks a wizened crone. A roar of support accompanies this, followed by cries of derision.

'If he is correct in his belief in eternal salvation then his death means nothing,' you answer. 'If he is wrong then the sentence for such blasphemy is just and you have no argument.'

The crowd mutter at this, but there is no defeating your logic. Their ire cooled slightly, the two warring factions split and drag away their wounded. You let out a sigh of relief. Suddenly you feel a hand on your shoulder. You spin round in alarm to find yourself confronted by the smiling face of Ephram, a senior member of the Sanhedrin and a well-respected Sadducee.

'You did well there,' he comments. 'Though it is perhaps unwise to even acknowledge the possibility that these Christians' beliefs could be correct.'

'I just said what I had to in order to prevent more bloodshed,' you sigh.

'Understandable,' replies Ephram. 'I remember this Jesus that the Christians claim to follow. A blasphemer of course, though he preached tolerance, forgiveness and non-violence. His

followers seem to pay little heed to such teachings. And I believe the bloodshed will only increase until the Christians are dealt with.'

'But how?' you ask. 'These stonings just seem to increase their zeal.'

'You take away their leader.'

'But this Jesus has been dead for thirty years!'

'Jesus was never the leader of this movement,' states Ephram. 'He was just one of many Galilean madmen. But he has been made into something else entirely by the true leader of this movement: Saul of Tarsus.'

You are about to respond when Ephram motions for you to be silent. 'Follow me,' he says.

He leads you into the Temple to a small audience chamber.

'Wait here,' he instructs. 'You sit uncomfortably for what must be a good half hour before Ephram returns accompanied by a figure you know well: Ananus ben Ananus, High priest of Israel! The two sit opposite you and regard you cautiously.'

'How dedicated are you to ending this Christian blasphemy?' asks Ephram at last.

'If there was a way to bring the people back to the light and end the infestation of Gentiles to our holy mysteries then I would do it in a heartbeat.'

Ephram smiles. 'And there just might be a way. To stop this plague, its spreader must be stopped. Saul of Tarsus must die!'

You start in alarm. 'Murder Saul of Tarsus? I couldn't.'

'It's either that or let all that we hold dear crumble into nothing. We Sadducees and Pharisees have our disagreements, but we agree on the fundamentals of clean living and worshiping only the one true God! Saul seeks to destroy that and replace the true religion with that of unclean fornicators who worship an executed carpenter!'

Ananus nods. 'For the good of Judaism, Saul, or Paul as he insists on calling himself now, has to die.'

You gulp. 'I'll do it,' you say finally.

'Excellent,' says Ephram enthusiastically. 'Paul is in Rome now. Reports state that the emperor has released him from house arrest and he has plans to spread his lies further afield. You must not let this happen. Travel to Rome and do what must be done.'

You nod and start to rise. Ephram grabs your arm and hands you a stone ring with a lamb inscribed on it. 'How you choose to complete your task is up to you. But if you go to the Sweet Honey Tavern in Caesarea and show this ring to the proprietor he will put you in touch with someone who can help. Good luck.'

You pocket the ring and say farewell to the two priests. You leave the Temple and walk towards your home, your heart heavy with the importance of the task before you: for the sake of all you believe, Paul of Tarsus shall die!

Turn to **45**.

53

The road to Ptolemais is a lonely one, but you do not go unobserved on your journey. They come in the night: bandits, riding horses and armed with spears. You put your back to some nearby boulders and draw your dagger. The bandits mock you, charging their horses towards you then turning them aside as you swipe out. Once you are in a state of exhaustion from this sport, the leader takes his spear and flings it straight into your chest, pinning you to the rock to endure a long and agonising death.

If you had a companion, you can at least take solace in that he managed to slip away unnoticed while the bandits were having their fun with you.

54

Stealthily, you tuck the chalice under your tunic and stride towards the exit. Just as you are almost out, a hand suddenly grabs your shoulder. You spin round to face a man wearing only a

pair of antlers strapped to his forehead. He starts a sluggish dance, motioning for you to join him. Disgusted, you push him away and leave the temple.

You return to the alleyway where you met your contact. He emerges out of the shadows once more, smiling broadly as you produce the chalice.

'Good job,' he says, taking the chalice from you as he presses 15 sestertii into your hand. 'But if I were you, I'd make myself scarce. Those Dionysians may be off their faces now, but they'll soon notice the chalice is missing.'

'Don't worry,' you say. 'I don't tend to spend any more time on this rock than I have to.'

Saying goodbye to your partner in crime, you make your way to the docks. A ship is sailing to Athens today and the cost of passage is 8 sestertii. Paying this amount, you climb aboard. Turn to **4**.

55

You leap in front of him, plunging your dagger into his chest. He looks straight at you, eyes wide with shock. Then he collapses in your arms, his breathing ragged before it ceases completely.

'Hey! What have you done?' screams a voice. You fling Paul's corpse to the ground and dash into an alleyway as Paul's bodyguards come running up to help him. As you disappear into the shadows, you hear their sobs behind you. A beloved man, dead by your hand. Turn to **100**.

56

You spend the rest of the night drinking more than you ever have in your life and you pay for it the next morning. With a splitting headache you return to the ship, trying to keep yourself from vomiting as the vessel continues onwards to Athens. Lose 1 **Life Point** before turning to **48**.

57*

You manage to convince the pirates that you could be of some use to them.

'Very well then,' growls the captain, 'you're in. But don't think you'll be getting out very easily. Now boys, let's load up and let this piece of rot sink!'

You help the crew take the goods from the ship and put them in their own. Then the pirate ship sails off, leaving your former vessel sinking into the Mediterranean.

The next few weeks you spend in a life you thought would never be your own: that of a freebooter. Several merchant ships are raided in this time. You avoid killing except when you must to save your own life, but the fighting is often furious. You have become a better fighter as a result, but you are racked with guilt and self-disgust (increase your **Combat** by 1, but decrease your **Charisma** by 1). The pirates are beginning to treat you as one of their own. They give you a share of the loot (4 sestertii) and they have even stopped mocking your Sabbath practices. Even so, when the ship stops at the island of Rhodes, you decide to make your escape. When the pirates are getting heavily drunk you slink off and spend two weeks hiding in a cave on the coast, living off fish. Then, once you are sure the pirates are long gone, you enter the city of Rhodes and try to find passage off the island. A ship to Athens is leaving shortly, but the fare is not cheap: 8 sestertii. If you have enough to pay this sum, deduct the amount from your money pouch then turn to **4**. If you do not have enough money, you could head for the local synagogue and ask for money there (turn to **63**) or you could try begging on the streets by turning to **37**.

58

You cannot place his quotation and ask Judas where it comes from. He makes no response for some time then gives a long sigh.

'What does it matter?' he asks before stalking off back to his cabin, leaving you to continue your starlit musing alone. Turn to **94**.

59

'No room for freeloaders!' cries one of the mutinous crew. Before you can protest, or even offer to pay for your place, the crew seize you, and laughing all the while, carry you to the side of the ship before hurling you over the side.

'Maybe we should have searched him first?' says one of the crew. It is the last thing you ever hear before the sharks come . . .

60

'And so dies an enemy of Christ,' says Judas.

Your eyebrows shoot up in alarm. 'But Paul was the leader of the Christians.'

'Those fools who followed him were not Christians. Did they know Christ? Did they ever follow His teachings? Or merely the words of a Romanised Jew who sought to cover himself in glory?'

'But you got Jesus killed!' you protest.

'As He instructed me to do. There can be no resurrection without death!'

You stand there, mouth agape for several moments. 'But I am no servant of Jesus,' you say quietly.

'You are. You just don't know it. You realise the wisdom of Isaiah. You ended the perversions of Christ's teaching. You are as much a true Christian as we Apostles.'

'You seem very confident of that,' you manage.

'Of course. Otherwise I would have killed you too.'

With that, the man known as Judas Iscariot takes his leave down a narrow street. You never see or hear from him again. Turn to **100**.

61

Getting somewhat lost in this bustling city, you are drawn to the rowdy yells of a mob. Coming closer to investigate you see a crowd of men and women in dark robes clustered in front of a temple. In front of the temple is a large statue of a beautiful goddess. The unruly crowd is attaching ropes to the statue and is yelling for it to be pulled over. Suddenly a young woman, wearing little more than a few strips of cloth attached to some brass upholstery, comes charging into the crowd, shoving the mob away from the statue.

'How dare you filthy Christians desecrate the image of Aphrodite!' she screams, laying a vicious right hook into the nearest black robed man.

'Silence whore!' cries another man seizing the woman by her long dark hair. She is dragged away by the crowd and pinned to the wall of the temple.

'We all know in what way you serve your filthy false goddess,' cries an old lady.

'I serve the Goddess in the ways of love,' she spits. 'While you Christians do nothing but eat the flesh of your brothers and sisters!'

'Silence woman! We will not tell you again!'

'Your "temple" is now a church of Christ! Accept it and never foul this place again!'

'It is you filth who desecrate this place!' the young woman cries out bravely. 'May the Goddess have mercy on all of you!'

'Enough of this!' calls out a booming voice from the mob. 'Stone the blasphemous whore!'

The girl is held tightly against the wall while several of the Christians pick up loose stones, smiling evilly. Although you are no friend to the Gentiles your heart goes out to this beautiful brave girl. If you have a companion, turn immediately to **6**. Otherwise, you can choose to leave her to her fate anyway and try to find a place to stay for the night by turning to **97**. If you decide to try to save her, read on.

You step in between the murderous mob and the girl, your hands raised in defiance.

'Stop!' you call out. 'You cannot hurt this woman.'

'And why not?' one hulking man, hefting a large rock in his right hand, demands. Test your **Lore**. If you are successful, turn to **74**. If you fail, turn to **8**.

62

You just cannot free him from the rigging. In fact whatever way you've pulled it about, the rigging is now sinking, dragging Zohar down to the bottom of the sea with it. Saddened by the loss of your companion (note he will no longer be with you) you look around desperately for salvation. Then you spot a speck of land in the distance! Invigorated by hope, you swim towards the far off island. Test your **Toughness**. If you are successful, turn to **84**. Otherwise, you just do not have the strength to reach dry land. You drown just a few yards short of your goal.

63

You find the synagogue in the small, run-down part of the city that houses the Jewish quarter. Many Jewish communities have been established by those that left the Holy Land in the Great Diaspora. Some have become incredibly successful. It seems the community in Rhodes is not one of them. The synagogue is a simple, timber affair. You enter and ask a humourless-faced priest if you could speak to the high priest of the synagogue. He ushers you into a back room, where a bald-headed man sits plucking a chicken.

'High Priest Shiloh, you have a visitor,' announces the priest who escorted you.

'Well, what is it?' snaps Shiloh in a high-pitched voice.

'I come seeking financial aid,' you say. 'I find myself stranded on this island without a coin to my name and I must reach Rome on a matter of great urgency.'

'Pah! I'm sure you do, friend, but in case you haven't noticed we're not exactly dripping in wealth here! We even have to prepare our own meals,' the high priest says, indicating the half-plucked chicken. 'That reminds me, Jeriah, has that old fool Icos brought those olives we ordered yet?'

'No,' replies the other priest. 'I suppose it must have slipped his mind.'

'Slipped his mind, my eye! The man does this every time. He's probably going to sell them to some Roman for a better price and leave us with the leftovers again.'

'Excuse me,' you say, feeling this conversation is fast moving on without you, 'what about the funds I require?'

'Are you still here?' asks Shiloh in surprise. 'We have no money to spare! Begone!'

Jeriah puts a hand on your shoulder. 'Maybe you'd better listen to him. High Priest Shiloh is not at his best at this time of the day.'

'Or any other time of day if you're thinking of coming back!' Shiloh chips in.

Test your **Lore**. If you are successful, turn to **14**. Otherwise, you can think of no rejoinder. You thank the high priest for his time and head to the streets for a spot of begging. Turn to **37**.

64

'Unbelievable,' whispers the patrician after witnessing your magnificent shot..

'Perhaps we Jews are stiffer competition than you expected?' you say with a laugh.

The man smiles. 'Indeed! And isn't that what I came here seeking? I have no right to complain. But you, my superb archer, deserve some reward for your skill. What is it you desire?'

'Passage to Rome?' you suggest hopefully.

'Hmm, not sure about Rome. But I was planning to visit Athens for a spell. Perhaps you would like to accompany me? It should be easy to get a ship from there to Rome.'

You happily agree and you spend the next few days travelling in the young patrician's company as the camp travels to the port of Ptolemais. The Roman quickly arranges for a vessel and soon you are sailing to Athens. Turn to **10**.

65

'Look here,' snarls one of the crew rising to his feet. 'We don't take kindly to passengers accusing one of crew!'

'But he cheated me!' you protest.

'What did I just say?' snaps the man.

'I say we teach our Jewish friend a lesson he won't forget in a hurry!' says the sailor who cheated you, an evil smirk on his face. Before you can say anything, you are seized by the crew and thrown roughly to the deck where you are kicked mercilessly. As you lie in a bloody stupor (deduct **6 Life Points**), the crewman who cheated you bends close to your ear.

'I shall enjoy spending my winnings, my friend. Maybe you should be careful about accusing people falsely in future.'

With that, you are left to recover. You head to your sleeping quarters and it is a long time until you say so much as a word to any of the sailors again. Turn to **76**.

66*

Late at night you are nudged awake by one of the crew.

'We're approaching the harbour of Ostia,' he informs you.

You dress quickly and join the rest of the passengers to watch the torch-lit ship glide into the harbour. The harbour is the busiest you have ever seen, with hundreds of vessels of all shapes, sizes and origins crowding the water. It takes several hours for the ship to navigate through the turmoil to dock and the sun is beginning to rise as you disembark. You follow a crowd of travellers from the port along the well paved road towards Rome. Then you get your first glimpse of the magnificent capital of the world's greatest empire. Perched atop the hills that make up the great city are magnificent palaces and glorious temples of white marble. It is only as you near the city that you see its reality: the lower parts of the city are a warren of narrow streets lined with rotting wooden houses, crowded next to each other seemingly with no rhyme or reason. The streets are packed with hundreds of passers-by and the unmistakable stench of disease, faeces and rubbish permeate the air. Fighting your way through the unfriendly crowd you at last emerge into a fairly open space and begin asking those you pass where you can find Paul of Tarsus. Most pay you no heed, some scream abuse at you and one begins to pelt you with old fruit. Eventually, a kind faced old woman points you in the right direction and you come to a reasonably big house in the west of the city. Two men, dressed in simple tunics and carrying short swords stand outside the entrance, clearly guarding the man inside, the man you have travelled hundreds of league to kill: Paul of Tarsus, leader of the Christian movement. Do you have a companion?

If so, is it:

Judas? Turn to **80**.

Zohar? Turn to **93**.

Elena? Turn to **35**.

If you have no companion, turn to **3**.

67

The sailors mutter nervously as the wind begins to pick up and soon rain is lashing down on the deck.

'I'd take cover if I were you,' suggests the captain before barking commands to his crew. Knowing you'd just be in the way if you tried to help, you follow the captain's advice and hide under one of the wooden planks that serve as seats for the oarsmen. The wind increases to a

howl and there is a rumble of thunder above. Sheets of rain lay into the ship from seemingly all sides as the craft is borne up and down on the crests of monstrous waves. Suddenly, there is a horrible crack followed by the screams of the crew as the ship begins to break apart and a surge of water floods in, washing everyone, including you, into the expanse of sea. Still clinging on to the plank for dear life, you are rocked mercilessly back and forth until unconsciousness takes you.

You awaken to find yourself in a calm sea, still floating on the plank. If you have a companion, turn to **26**. Otherwise, all that is left of the ship is a few pieces of driftwood. But all hope is not lost for there is a speck of land far in the distance. Heaving yourself off the plank you swim towards this opportunity for salvation. Test your **Toughness**. If you are successful, turn to **84**. Otherwise, you just do not have the strength to reach dry land. You drown just a few yards short of your goal.

68

The Zealots are caught completely by surprise as you barrel into one of them before thrusting your dagger into the belly of another. Eager to take advantage of the situation, the Romans wade into the melee and you are soon caught in the middle of a vicious brawl, daggers, cudgels, swords and spears thrusting all around you. Test your **Combat**. If you are successful, you manage to avoid being hurt in the fracas. Otherwise, you receive a nasty wound across your shoulder (deduct 5 **Life Points**).

Providing you are still alive, the surviving Zealots, dismayed at how this battle has turned against them, turn tail and flee into the desert.

'You are a traitor!' yells one of them at you as he departs. 'You will be forever cursed! May jackals defecate on your corpse!' You are not one to take such words lightly and you can't help but feel uneasy and unconfident about your mission (lose 1 **Charisma**).

The Roman decurion removes his helmet and mops his brow with a cloth.

'Thanks for your help there,' he says. 'If all you Jews were as civil, perhaps this place would be less of a hellhole. Asu! Give our Jewish friend a token of our appreciation.'

A battle scarred soldier gruntingly hands you a few coins - five sesterii in all.

'Now if you'll excuse us, friend,' continues the decurion, 'we must continue on to Joppa.'

The soldiers leave, following the road southwards. The curse of your countryman still ringing in your ears, you head onwards to Caesarea. Turn to **86**.

69

Though your lungs feel like they are about to burst and your legs feel heavy as lead, somehow you manage to outdistance the young patrician and he can only look on in dismay as you cross the finishing line before him.

'Well done,' he says, trying to put a brave face on. 'I cannot believe I lost, but I suppose it was always going to happen sooner or later. I guess I'm just not used to running in this accursed heat. But anyway, to the victor the spoils, as they say: what do you ask as your prize?'

'Passage to Rome?' you suggest hopefully.

'Hmm, not sure about Rome. But I was planning to visit Athens for a spell. Perhaps you would like to accompany me? It should be easy to get a ship from there to Rome.'

You happily agree and you spend the next few days travelling in the young patrician's company as the camp travels to the port of Ptolemais. The Roman quickly arranges for a vessel and soon you are sailing to Athens. Turn to **10**.

70

You leap in front of him, swiping at him with your dagger, but he dodges out of your way. 'Help!' he calls out before disappearing into an alleyway. His bodyguards hear his cry.

'Get him!' screams one of them. You race into the streets, pursued by a rapidly increasing mob of Christians. Unfortunately, they know the layout of the city much better than you. You find yourself cornered in a narrow dead end.

'Um, turn the other cheek?' you suggest hopefully.

'I'd rather turn you inside out,' growls a heavy set man. There is a murmur of agreement amongst the throng. You may not be turned inside out, but you're not far off the mark by the time they have finished with you.

71

You reach the waterfront and make a few discreet inquiries about getting a ship to Rome. You're out of luck; a ship bound for Rome left yesterday and there will not be another for some time. Several captains, eager for your custom, offer to take you part of the way, however.

'I could take you to Alexandria for a small fee,' offers a portly Egyptian.

'Isn't that a bit out of the way?' you ask.

'Yes. But it's worth it to see the sights of the greatest city on Earth. And you'll be able to get a ship to Rome from there no problem - the city is a veritable hub!'

You politely decline this over-enthusiastic offer and continue your inquiries. You do manage to find two ships bound for Athens. One is a sleek quinquereme heading straight for that fabled city of philosophers. The price is steep however: 12 sestertii. Alternatively, the other ship will take you there after a stop at Karpathos for the cheaper price of 7 sestertii. The crew look like they'd slit your throat for a couple of coppers however. To take the ship going straight to Athens, deduct 12 sestertii and turn to 34. If you cannot, or will not, pay such an amount, deduct 7 sestertii and take the other ship by turning to 18.

72

You make what you hope is a heartfelt plea, but the murderous crew looks decidedly unimpressed.

'Those were very sweet words,' says the new captain. 'Only I have no wish to babysit a passenger on *my* ship. But maybe Poseidon won't mind taking care of you. Send 'im to the sea god, boys!'

You yell in protest and draw your knife, but you cannot fight off the battle-hardened sailors closing in on you. You are disarmed and several hands lift you off the deck before tossing you into the sea. Poseidon seems to take little interest in you as you bob lamely in the sea. The sharks on the other hand . . .

73

One of the soldiers near jumps when his eyes settle on Zohar's face.

'You,' he gasps. 'Decurion!'

'What is it?' grumbles the decurion until he sees Zohar. 'The murderer of Scipio! Everyone on this ship is under arrest!'

Zohar flings a dagger from his belt straight at the officer. The man crumbles to the ground, gurgling as he claws desperately at the blade in his throat. Then his struggling ceases. Enraged, the soldiers charge on the crew, more from the ship coming to join them. The fight is bloody, brutal and short. You are one of the first to die; transfixed on the spear of a young Roman.

74

'Is it not said among you Christians,' you begin, 'that "let he without sin cast the first stone"?''

The members of the mob mutter uncertainly amongst themselves. One big man begins to heft a rock, when another puts a restraining hand on his shoulder.

'I certainly don't think anyone could accuse you of being without sin, Kleon.'

The man scowls but lowers his rock.

'What's going on here then?' comes the cry from across the square as a patrol of Romans heads towards the mob. With alarming speed, the Christians forget their righteous zeal and scatter into the streets, leaving their intended victim behind. You help her to her feet.

'Thank you,' she says. 'But you look a foreigner. Why did you risk your life to save mine?'

'Let's just say I am no friend to Christians.'

The girl spits. 'It sickens me to even hear their name. These people who were about to stone me were once devout worshippers of the Goddess, but now their heads have been turned and they act superior to all now. All because of the words of that self-important bastard from Tarsus!'

'You mean Paul?' you ask.

'Yes, that's the one. Sending letters telling people how to live and to worship some dead carpenter from the desert. In cities everywhere people are heeding his message, stripping their temples and declaring them Christian churches. Why the Gods allow him to live is beyond me.'

Sensing you have found an ally here, you tell her about your mission.

'You plan to kill him?' the girl, whose name is apparently Elena, gasps. 'I always thought you Jews were alright. Once that do-gooder is gone, maybe these Christian fools will come to their senses. I'll be coming with you of course.'

'What?' you exclaim, unsure that you feel comfortable travelling with a gentile acolyte.

'Don't argue,' she states. 'Murder is something that requires a woman's subtlety. And Aphrodite will reward me for avenging the desecration of her temple.'

There seems no dissuading her. Note that Elena is now your companion before turning to **97** to find somewhere to rest for the night.

75

You tell the story of Job, but you feel you may have got a few of the details wrong and the crew seem unimpressed.

'So, your God punished his most faithful servant for the sake of a bet with his arch enemy?' heckles one of the crew. 'And you Jews accuse our Gods of being cruel!'

There is hearty laughter at this. 'Even old Ares wouldn't sink that low!' chimes in another.

'That's not the point!' you protest, but the crew are not greatly interested. The story of Androcles is chosen as the best and the crewman who told the tale walks away with the pot. Disappointed in yourself, you slink off to your sleeping roll. Turn to **94**.

76

At long last, the ship reaches the Greek island of Karpathos, a lusciously verdant land such as you have never seen before. The captain docks the ship quickly and orders his crew (including you) to unload supplies and carry them to a warehouse of an immensely fat Greek merchant. After the captain has been paid, all of you have to then load the ship with corn bound for Athens. Once this back-breaking labour is finished, you join the crew in a dank dive on the waterfront for a celebratory drink. The evening is filled with witty banter and bawdy tales and you are fast forgetting your mission when you spot a figure staring at you from across the bar. He is a wiry-man with a drooping moustache and a sneer to his thin lips. He looks oddly familiar. You think you know him from Jerusalem, but you can't think of who exactly he is. Will you go over to introduce yourself (turn to **85**) or will you carry on carousing with the crew (turn to **56**)?

77

'Ship ahoy!' The crew cluster nervously at the side of the ship to look at this approaching vessel.

'These waters are rife with pirates,' mutters one of them. It seems his fear is well-founded as the ship is soon bearing down upon you.

'Every man to his oars!' bellows the captain. You are all too eager to comply and all of you are near breaking your backs trying to stay ahead of the pirate ship. Then, with a crunch, the vessel rams into the back of your own, stopping it in its tracks. With a blood-curdling yell, the pirates pour aboard the ship, cutting a swathe through the disorganised crew. You draw your dagger and race towards the nearest pirate: a red-bearded man with an eye-patch.

Pirate Combat: 4 Endurance: 7

If you win, turn to **11**.

78

The Zealots attack with renewed determination as you join them. Unable to withstand the barrage of blows, the Romans' formation breaks and they rush forth to fight their attackers. You find yourself battling a battle-scarred brute of a soldier.

Roman Soldier Combat: 4 Life Points: 12

If you defeat your foe, you see the Romans are soon defeated by the Zealots, their leader taking great pleasure in hacking the decurion's head from his shoulders. This gory trophy is tossed between the Zealots as they give whoops of celebration. Once their grisly sport is finished, the leader gives you a congratulatory slap on the back.

'Every success against our enemies is another reason for Rome to leave the Holy Land forever, friend. But where are you headed?'

'Caesarea. En-route to Rome.'

'Into the belly of the beast itself. I shan't ask what grim business takes you to the land of the enemy, but I might be able to aid you. I have a brother in Athens. Should you reach that city in your travels he should be able to provide you succour.' He gives you directions to his brother's house and also a small bronze medallion in the shape of a ram. 'My token' he explains. 'He will know you are a friend with this.'

The zealots make short work of looting the Roman bodies and you are given your share: 2 sestertii. Waving goodbye to your new friends, you continue northwards to Caesarea. Turn to **86**.

79

'Alright, you win,' you say, offering them your money pouch. It is snatched greedily from you.

'Glad you've seen sense,' laughs the bandit. 'Although I'd better make sure you're not holding out on me.' He forces you to lie on your stomach, hands frisking you.

'What have we here?' he asks, pulling forth the stone ring Ephram gave to you. 'Doesn't look too valuable, but might be worth a coin or two.'

'My thanks, stranger. It's been a profitable meeting. I'll let you keep your dagger; this is dangerous country after all.'

With that you are left alone. Too depressed to travel on, you decide to camp here for the evening and press on to Caesarea in the morning. Turn to **86**.

80

'Are you ready for this?' Judas asks. You nod. 'Then follow me,' he says. 'And do nothing unless I tell you otherwise.'

He leads you up to the front of the house. The two guards watch you warily.

'Good day,' says Judas. 'I wish to speak to Paul.'

'So do many, friend,' replies one of the guards humourlessly. 'Paul does not wish to be disturbed at present.'

'Maybe he will make an exception in my case.'

'Yeah? Who are you that you're so special?'

'Judas Iscariot.'

The two guards exchange glances, one of them reaching for his sword uncertainly until the other puts a restraining hand upon his shoulder.

'I will see if Paul will see you,' he says. He disappears into the house leaving you with the other guards who watches Judas nervously. Finally the first guard returns.

'Paul will see you,' he says, indicating for Judas to enter. As you follow Judas inside, one of the guards bars your way.

'Wait a minute,' he says. 'Who are you?'

'He goes where I go,' says Judas, looking the guard straight in the eyes. The guard tries to say something else, but seems to have lost his voice. He then nods and stands aside to let you pass.

You enter the house to find it simply furnished. A bald headed man with a patchy grey beard sits at a wooden table, watching you both warily. A third guard stands near him, his hand on the hilt of his sword.

'You may leave us, Demetrius,' says the bald man in a voice weighed with authority. The guard looks uncertain for a second, then nods and leaves, closing the front door behinds him. You and Judas are now alone with Paul of Tarsus!

'Please, sit,' invites Paul. To your surprise, Judas does just that, taking a seat at the table. You follow suit. Paul pours all three of you a cup of wine from an earthenware jug. The three of you sip timidly at the rich wine, none of you seemingly willing to speak.

'So the fabled Judas Iscariot comes to my door,' mutters Paul at last. 'And who are you, my friend?' he asks of you.

Judas answers for you. 'Lot, a friend from Jerusalem.'

Paul nods amiably at you then turns to Judas once more. 'I must confess, I was of the belief that you were dead.'

'I allowed all to believe this. Some do not understand my . . . motivations behind what I did.'

Paul gulps his wine nervously. 'I do not understand them much myself. Yet, if you ask me it was your actions that allowed the man to become God.'

'Did you ever meet Him?' ask Judas, seemingly changing the subject.

'No. But I feel Him in my heart. And I hear his words.'

'And you carry out what he tells you to do?'

'That's right,' says Paul with a half-hearted smile.

'So fortunate that He has one who can so accurately spread his message,' says Judas.

The conversation continues in this vein, you saying precious little as these two almost legendary figures pay each other thin compliments. Then Judas rises from his seat, motioning for you to do likewise.

'We have taken up enough of your time,' says Judas. 'However, it has been a very illuminating meeting.'

Paul appears visibly relieved and is incredibly eager in his goodbyes. The two of you leave the house, watched suspiciously by the three guards as you disappear back into the streets of Rome.

'What was all that about?' you demand. 'We were supposed to kill him!'

'And it is done,' states Judas. 'I am a master of sleight of hand. I drugged his wine while he talked. He will be dead within minutes.'

If you have two Xs marked on your adventure sheet, turn to **60**. If you have none or only one, turn to **92**.

81*

The noble gladly agrees though he insists you spend the day resting so you are at full strength for the race the next day. You are only too glad to comply and spend the rest of the day treated like a prince, dining on succulent dates and fanned by strapping slaves before you are shown into a luxuriously appointed tent.

You awaken the next day to find the camp is already full of life. A track has been drawn in the sand along the camp's circumference and the young patrician paces impatiently waiting for you.

'Ah, awake at last,' he says as you approach. 'Well let's get started then. First around the camp wins.'

You take position at the starting line. A burly Nubian slave watches closes and then in a booming voice he commands you both to start. You sprint forward, the noble seeming to keep pace with you effortlessly. Test your **Agility**. If you are successful, turn to **69**. If you fail, turn to **96**.

82

Elena sidles over to the captain, hands on hips and eyelashes fluttering. 'Perhaps you would like to reconsider your price? Are you and your crew inducted in the ways of Aphrodite?'

The captain gulps. 'The Greek Gods hold no interest for us.'

Elena simpers. 'Then you have never truly enjoyed the true rapture that the Goddess offers.'

The captain stares for a long time, rubbing his chin. 'Alright then. But this Goddess better be all you say she is.'

'That and more,' smiles Elena as you follow her on board. Turn to **40**.

83

One clouded night, the crew invite you to join them in a game of dice. Not wishing to appear aloof, you agree to play and contribute 1 sesterti to the pot. Soon the group of you are sitting on your knees on the deck rolling a pair of bone dice ('Not pig bone,' one of the crew assures you). It seems your luck is in and you are just about to claim the pot of five sestertii when a gnarled hand seizes your wrist.

'Just a second,' your grabber growls. He is a lean man with a vicious scar running down the left side of his face. 'I think you've been a bit too lucky there, friend. I reckon you must have another die up your sleeve.'

The rest of the crew murmur amongst themselves. They probably know well you hadn't been cheating, but none are keen to speak in your favour.

'I reckon I should get this money, since I got the next highest and I rolled fairly. Alright?'

Will you let him keep the money (turn to **76**)? Or will you protest that you had not cheated in the hopes that the crew will take your side (turn to **46**)? Alternatively, if your honour will not let you take such an insult, you can launch yourself forward to attack your accuser by turning to **9**.

84

Somehow, you manage to make it to the shore. Exhausted (lose 2 **Life Points**), you crawl onto the beach and then collapse into a deep sleep. The storm has robbed you of all your money and possessions.

You are awakened by a concerned foot prodding you softly in the ribs.

'Are you alive?' asks the owner of the foot.

'I think so,' you rasp, looking up into a kindly bearded face. 'Where am I?'

'Rhodes,' comes the reply. 'Were you sunk by that storm? It seemed to come out of nowhere. Must be a bad omen.'

You stagger to your feet, a quick search revealing you have lost all your money and objects in the sea.

'Um, how do I get to Rome from here?' you ask.

'Rome? Well, you could get a ship from the city, but I doubt there's any going as far as Rome. I can give you a lift there in my wagon if you like?'

You humbly accept and take a seat next to the driver. If you have a companion, he climbs into the back and is soon snoring gently among the sacks of olives. The driver is full of questions.

'So, where do you come from, friend? Parthia? Phoenicia?'

'Judea.'

'Judea, eh? Knew it was somewhere like that. So what brings you to Rome then?'

'Business.'

'Business? I know all about business. I'm in the olive trade myself.'

'I gathered.'

Soon, you crest a hill and are gazing down at the city of Rhodes; a charming port of white walled buildings, the scent of freshly cooked fish wafting upwards to your nostrils.

'Pah, fish!' says the driver with a grimace. 'Never could stand the stuff. Give me lamb or pork any day, eh?'

'If you say so,' you reply, trying not to wretch at the thought of eating pork.

As you near the city, the driver points out to the remains of a gigantic statue lying on the hillside. One of its massive hands lies near the road, its fingers as long as you are tall.

'The Colossus of Rhodes! Or what's left of it at any rate. They say a massive earthquake destroyed it not long after it was built.'

'Such is the fate of all false idols,' you answer solemnly.

He looks at you quizzically. 'You Jews are an odd bunch. Still, Alexander himself only enjoyed a brief few years of glory, so perhaps it's fitting that his likeness suffered the same fate.'

At last you reach Rhodes. The driver lets you dismount the wagon and hands you a small dagger. It is nowhere near as fine a weapon as your father's dagger but it should serve you well in combat. 'The city can be a dangerous place, particularly to foreigners,' explains the driver. 'Maybe this will protect you.'

You thank the driver and head into the city. If you have a companion, he follows you, yawning all the while. Rhodes may be a busy port, but you'll be stranded here unless you can make some money to buy passage elsewhere. If you have a companion, turn to **51**. Otherwise, you could head for the local synagogue and ask for money there (turn to **63**) or you could try begging on the streets by turning to **37**.

85

'I think I know you from Jerusalem,' you say as you approach the mysterious man.

'Yes, you do,' he rasps. 'I am Zohar of the Sicarii.'

If you are a Sadducee, turn immediately to **24**. Otherwise, read on. The Sicarii are an extreme group of Zealots who specialise in assassinating important Romans and their collaborators. They are widely regarded as repugnant even among extremist groups. This Zohar has a reputation for being particularly nasty, killing his victims in the bloodiest way possible. He motions for you to sit at his table.

'So what brings you to these parts?' he snaps.

'The High Priest has sent me on a mission,' you reply, unsure of how much you should reveal.

'That Roman loving fool? I thought you better than to work for him. Has he sent you to give his felicitations to the Emperor then? Maybe he'd like the Romans to knock down the Temple and build a new bathhouse?'

'No. It concerns the Christians.'

Zohar spits. 'Now there's a group I'd happily exterminate. Bunch of Gentiles trying to take over our religion!'

'The High Priest feels the same way. He wants their leader, Paul of Tarsus, dead.'

Does he now?' say Zohar softly, stroking his stubbly chin. 'Maybe he's not such a fool after all. Tell you what: I've just completed a mission of my own and I was planning to return to Jerusalem, but perhaps it might be worth me accompanying you. For a small fee of course.'

'How much?'

'Three sestertii. Take it or leave it.'

If you wish to hire Zohar, cross off 3 sestertii then turn to **31**. Otherwise, you take your leave of the assassin and return to drinking with the crew. Turn to **56**.

86*

Two days later you reach Caesarea. You have not visited the city since you were a child and you are amazed at how much it has grown in magnificence over the years. White walled mansions compete for space with inspiring gardens of brilliant green and beautifully carved statues of notable figures and mighty gods. All false idols of course, but there is no denying the mastery that went into producing them. The governor's mansion sits on the highest point of the city, overlooking the crowded docks where dozens of sleek ships from all over the empire are moored. It is small wonder that the Romans chose to make this fabulous city their provincial capital. Away from the grandeur of the city centre are the wooden homes and market stalls of the old town of Stratonospyrgos; a constant reminder of the city's pre-Roman heritage.

If you still have your stone ring and wish to track down Ephram's contact, turn to **36**. Otherwise, there is little else for you here. You could head down to the docks and try to gain passage on a ship (turn to **29**) or you can continue to journey northwards overland by turning to **95**.

87

One night, you are just returning from answering a call of nature when you pass the open door of the captain's cabin and something catches your eye. The captain's safe box is lying on a table with no sign of the captain or any other member of the crew anywhere. You can't help but lick your lips at the thought of what valuables might be inside. If you wish to sneak into the cabin and try to open the safe box, turn to **49**. If you would rather not, you return to your sleeping quarters. Turn to **94**.

88

Not a second too late, you spot a Roman patrol rushing down an alleyway straight towards Zohar. You yell out a warning and then quickly clamber from the tower as Zohar changes direction, losing his pursuers in the warren of alleyways that make up the city centre.

You spend the next few hours wandering the streets of Rhodes aimlessly, wondering if you will ever see Zohar again. Then you feel a tap on shoulder and spin around to see the wiry assassin grinning from under his thick moustache.

'You saved my hide back there, friend. Thanks. I got enough money to pay for both our fares off this island. I suggest we don't hang about though.'

You follow Zohar to the docks. A ship is headed for Athens in a few hours and Zohar quickly pays both your fares. You climb aboard, keeping a low profile until at last the ship casts away, leaving Rhodes a dot on the horizon. Turn to **4**.

89

'Interesting,' responds Judas, stroking his chin. 'But if it is theoretically possible Jesus was indeed the prophesied Messiah, then why did the Sanhedrin reject him? Consider that.'

With that he leaves you alone and thoroughly confused. Shaking your head, you bed down for the night. Mark a second X on your adventure sheet before turning to **66**.

90

Just as you are about to reach out for the chalice, your foot slips on some odd substance smeared on the temple floor, resulting in you knocking the chalice to the ground with a clatter. The drunken revellers cease their depraved activities to stare at you, mouths agape.

'He's trying to rob Dionysus,' yells a naked overweight man.

'During one of our most sacred rites, no less,' shrieks a woman dressed like a goat.

'Sieve him!' cries out a hermaphroditic figure.

You are grabbed roughly and marched out of the temple by the Dionysians. You hear many a titter and mocking name as the motley crew pushes you along the street of Rhodes to the local garrison. As a non-Roman citizen committing such a blasphemous offence you have little cause for appeal. You are executed the next day, your blood used in a rite for the Dionysians' next orgy.

91*

Joppa: the gateway to Palestine. Conquered several times in its history, the natural port with its commanding view of the coastline has long been of great strategic importance. Now it is completely devoted to the shipbuilding industry. The wide streets are lined with factories and warehouses and are inhabited by shrill voiced merchants of all extractions hawking their wares to the city's many travellers. Shaven-headed slaves and plainly garbed apprentices work hard at the shipyards that surround the docks, while gaudily painted courtesans showcase their wares in broad daylight. The harbour is dotted with ships, from humble fishing vessels, to enormous galleys and sleek triremes. Surely one of these can take you to Rome? Marvelling at the sights around you, you make your way to the waterfront, brushing past three drunken soldiers on your way there. If you are a Zealot, turn to 41. Otherwise, turn to 71.

92

Suddenly, you feel a burning sensation in the back of your throat. You throw yourself to the ground, coughing and spluttering, vaguely aware of Judas' voice as your body screams with agony.

'I took the liberty of slipping some of the drug into your wine as well.'

'Why?' you gasp.

'All enemies of Christ must die,' Judas says simply.

'But you don't serve Jesus. You betrayed him!'

He bends down to you, looking into your teary eyes with his humourless black eyes. 'You misunderstand. They all misunderstand. I am His true servant. One of the few. I suggest you spend your last few seconds of life begging for His forgiveness.'

Judas leaves as you wretch and groan in the street. It is not long before the welcome release of death comes.

93

'Time for me to earn my money,' mutters Zohar.

Before you can say anything, the wiry assassin strides towards the two guards, dagger in hand.

'Ready to meet your Christ?' he snarls. One of the guards draws his sword in alarm, but before it is even free of its sheath, Zohar's dagger strikes him in the throat. The second guard yells out in anger, bringing his sword down in a sweeping arc towards the Sicari's head. Zohar twists expertly out of the way of the cumbersome blow, his dagger coming at his opponent in two blurring flashes. With a scream the guard falls to the ground, clutching at the oozing wounds in his chest. Zohar kicks the front door open, revealing a terrified bald headed man with a wispy grey beard cowering under a table.

'Ready to die, oh lover of Gentiles?!'

Too late you spot the danger Zohar is in. A third guard emerges from his hiding places behind the door, plunging his sword into Zohar's exposed neck. As the assassin drops you yell out a war-cry and charge into the house.

Guard Combat: 3 Life Points: 7

If you defeat your opponent, you find Paul is now standing defiantly before you, face angry yet accepting.

'So you have come to kill me then?' he states in a booming voice.

'That's right,' you say. You pull the old man close, thrusting your knife into his heart. 'Let this blasphemy die with you.'

The corpse of your target finally at your feet, you wipe your dagger on his robe and then disappear into the warren of streets that make up Rome. Turn to **100**.

94*

On an uncharacteristically cold morning, one of the crew yells that Piraeus, the port of Athens, is in sight. The harbour is so crowded that it takes several hours before the ship is able to dock and you spend the time pacing restlessly on the deck. At last, the ship is moored and you can disembark. Waving goodbye to the crew you have spent the past days with, you enter Piraeus. A crowd of tunic-wearing newcomers are making their way to Athens and you fall in with them. They chat to you of philosophy as you follow the Long Walls towards Greece's most famous city. Many have come here to study under the great teachers and they find your own outlook on life exotic and, you suspect, a bit quaint. Once you enter the city proper, you marvel at the sights before you. The Parthenon looks down at you from the mighty Acropolis; as architecturally amazing as it was when it was built five-hundred years ago. Less grand than the Parthenon, but still spectacular in every other sense are the marble temples to the many Greek Gods that litter the city. The streets are more crowded than even those of teeming Jerusalem and the curly-haired philosophers have to yell over the hubbub to impart their lessons to prospective students. If you have a brass medallion, turn to **19**. Otherwise, turn to **61**.

95

You follow the road north, leaving Samaria for Phoenicia. There are few settlements along this strip of coast and your supplies soon begin to run low. Two days after leaving Caesarea, a vicious sandstorm blows up and you are forced to shelter in a handful of caves on the beach. By the time the storm dissipates, your water canister is all but dry. Licking parched lips, you press on, hoping to come across a well soon.

Half an hour later, you sight something that gives you hope. A few yards from the road are a number of pitched tents in the Roman style. Servants and animals pace about the campsite and where there are so many there must be water! Staggering to the campsite, you collapse exhausted in the centre. A shaven-headed slave brings you a cup of water and you gratefully drink it down. A lean man, with a handsome face, and dressed in a white tunic with gold trim, pushes the slave aside and offers you his hand.

'Welcome to my camp, friend,' he says cheerfully. 'You Jews generally want little to do with us Romans, but I have never been one to let one in dire straits suffer. Do you journey to Ptolemais?'

You nod.

'I have just come from there myself,' he continues. 'I had hoped to find a worthy challenge there, but few seem interested. Perhaps I will find the Caesareans more keen.'

'What kind of challenge?' you ask.

'Oh, any kind of sporting challenge really. I travel the provinces, testing my mettle against the Empire's subjects. So far I am unbeaten. But perhaps I need not travel as far as Caesarea for my next challenge. Perhaps you would be interested - once you are rested of course. Should you win I can make it worth your while. I'm from a very distinguished family in Rome though most of my relatives cannot understand my need for challenge. So, what do you say?'

If you refuse, the young patrician does not insist. With a fond farewell, he escorts you from his camp with a fresh supply of water, leaving you to continue your journey northwards (turn to **53**). If you accept, he is overjoyed and asks you to name your game. Will you challenge him to a race (turn to **81**) or an archery contest (turn to **43**)?

96

You begin to tire halfway around the course and can only gasp in despair as you see the young patrician outdistance you easily. You are panting with exhaustion by the time you cross the finish line long after your opponent.

'Never mind,' he says, slapping you on the back. 'We can't all be brilliant.'

The patrician allows you to leave his camp and even gives you supplies for the journey onward. Waving goodbye, you continue onwards, deeper into Phonecia. Turn to 53.

97*

You find the small Jewish quarter of Athens. You volunteer to help a pottery merchant load his wares and are rewarded with room and board for your efforts. The next day, you thank your host and head back to Piraeus, eager to get a ship to Rome.

Surprisingly, you do find a vessel bound for the Empire's capital for the relatively cheap fare of 5 sestertii (this price will pay for your passage as well as any companions that travel with you). If you can afford this amount, cross off 5 sestertii then turn to 40.

If you cannot, perhaps you can convince the captain to let you on board for free? If Elena is with you, turn to 82. If Zohar is with you, turn to 99. Otherwise, you argue your case to the captain. Test your **Charisma**. If you are successful, you convince the captain to let you work your passage on the ship (turn to 40). Otherwise, there is nothing you can do to convince him to grant you passage. It is many months before you get another opportunity to reach Rome, by which time Paul is long gone. You have failed in your mission.

98*

The coastal road between Joppa and Caesarea is little travelled by the nobility, who prefer to travel by boat between the two cities. Instead you pass only humble peasants from the nearby fishing villages. They greet you reservedly; you are deep in Samaria now and relations between the Judeans and Samaritans have always been tense. To your left is the mighty blue expanse of the Mediterranean Sea. It is a sight you have seen many a time, yet you have never sailed upon its waters. This mission will take you far further than you have ever travelled in your life. The countryside gets rockier as you continue northwards and the passers-by get less and less. You are just pausing to eat some provisions and drink from your water flask when you spot something ahead on the trail. It is a robed man collapsed in the dirt, probably from heat exhaustion. If you wish to help him, turn to 2. Otherwise, you continue your journey, strolling past the unfortunate man. Turn to 39.

99

Before you have a chance to say anything, Zohar suddenly has a knife at the captain's throat.

'I know you,' he hisses. 'You're that Jew who's become rich ferrying fat Romans about the place.'

'Zohar,' gulps the captain. 'I, um, didn't recognise you for a second.'

'I'm sure. Now how would you like a chance to make amends for your misdeeds by aiding Judaism?'

The captain nods enthusiastically, sweat beading on his bald head. 'Of c-course,' he stammers. 'I'll take the two of you wherever you want to go.'

'Just Rome will suffice for now,' says Zohar, removing his knife and giving the captain a friendly slap on his chubby cheek. He climbs aboard and you follow, the white-faced captain mopping his brow with a handkerchief. Turn to 40.

Paul of Tarsus is dead. Christianity has been struck a mighty blow, but now you are in a strange city, hundreds of miles from home with little money to make your way back. In time you will return to Jerusalem, but you will find it a very different place. Already, Ananus ben Ananus has lost his position as High Priest of Israel after angering Herod Agrippa II and bad feeling between the Zealots and the Sanhedrin has reached melting point. In a few short years, the Judeans will attempt a revolt against their Roman masters. The future emperors Vespasian and Titus will put down the revolt brutally and in the year AD 70, the Temple will be destroyed, never to be rebuilt. With its destruction, so too disappear the Sadducees and the Zealots, leaving only the Pharisees to continue on as Rabbis. Agrippa II, ever the puppet of Rome, will support the Roman troops against his countrymen. When he dies, so too dies any pretence of Judean independence.

Christianity will continue to thrive however. By the time of Paul's death his message had already taken on a life of its own, spreading across the Roman world like wild fire. Nero, and many of the emperors after him, will try to stop the religion through persecuting its adherents, but ultimately Christianity will win out. And the teachings of Jesus of Nazareth, and of Paul of Tarsus, will become the dominant religion of the Roman world.
