

# Zealots

also known as "Sicarii"

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Entry tags: Jewish Traditions, Religious Group

The Zealots were a Jewish sect of the first-century CE that appeared after the Roman occupation of Palestine. They are often characterized by their active resistance to Roman rule. Our primary resource for data concerning the Zealots comes from the Jewish historian, Josephus (War 2.4; 2.13; 2.22; 4.3; Ant. 14.9; 14.15; 16.9; 20.9), who offers a biased presentation of certain radical sectarian movements during the First Jewish Revolt (66-73 CE). For this reason, historical descriptions of the Zealots within Josephus are to be evaluated with caution. Josephus makes reference to a "fourth philosophy" that he speaks of with great disdain. In addition to the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes, this philosophy is founded by Judas the Galilean or "of Gaulanitis" (see also Acts 5:37) and a certain Pharisee named Saddok. This philosophy attracted a great many people, some of whom were young and "zealous" (Ant. 18.1). Other characteristics that Josephus ascribes to Judas' movement include a close affiliation with the philosophy of the Pharisees, an interest in freedom, and a belief that only God should be their ruler. Elsewhere, early Christian literature refers to a disciple of Jesus with the titular Simon "the Zealot" (Luke 6:15; Acts 1:13); however, it is unclear if this term refers to a religious group, a character trait of Simon (e.g., one who possesses zeal), or a geographical reference (Matt 10:4; Mark 3:18). The Sicarii are traditionally understood as a more radical and violent subset of the Zealots led by the descendent of Judas, Eleazar (Josephus calls them a "another sort of robbers" in War 2.13); however, our sources are not always clear and some have advocated that the two groups be viewed as distinct from each other. The Greek term sikarios is a Latin loan word, meaning assassin, originating in Josephus (War 7.8-11; Ant. 20.9) with a lone reference in the book of Acts (21:38). It appears that the term derives from their weapon of choice, short daggers (see scimitar or sica). According to Josephus, the Sicarii assassinate Jonathan the High Priest and continue on from there to preform "many" other "daily" murders. The Sicarii are traditionally associated with Masada because of our account in Josephus: they are described as holding the fortress at Masada against the Romans (7.8.2), eventually committing mass suicide at the behest of Eleazar ben Yair; an event that some have described as Josephus' own literary invention. A wealth of archaeological discoveries have been made at Masada, which has lead some to corroborate Josephus' stories with material data (Yadin, Masada [1966]); however, such literal connections have been rightly questioned (see Jodi Magness, Masada: From Jewish Revolt to Modern Myth [2019]). One of the challenges in differentiating these groups is the range of terms used in our sources including "robbers" (Greek: *lēstai*), "sicarii" (Latin: *sicarius*), "Galileans" (see Acts 5:37; Epictetus, Diss. 4.7.6), the "Barjone" in rabbinic texts, and the Zealots. Especially outside of Josephus in later rabbinic writings (e.g., Maksh 1.6), these terms appear to take on different meanings. For example, the term Zealot itself has come under scrutiny because the etymology of the semitic term "zeal" (*qn'*) possesses a range of meaning outside of Josephus, including one who is zealous for God. With that said, some scholars insist that distinctions are necessary and important, especially considering the more violent descriptions of the Sicarii. Richard Horsley has characterized the Zealots as a group of "non-violent, if active, resistance" in stark contrast to the Sicarii (Bandits, Prophets, and Messiahs, 199). In one passage, Josephus appears to make a clear distinction between the Sicarii and Zealots (esp. War 7.8). Nonetheless, our source material is limited in that Josephus is both inconsistent and also shows contempt for both groups.



Date Range: 0 CE - 74 CE

Region: Roman Palestine

Region tags: Israel, State of Palestine, Middle East

Roman Palestine

## Status of Participants:

✓ Non-elite (common people, general populace)

## Sources

Print sources for understanding this subject:

- Source 1: Mark Brighton. The Sicarii in Josephus's Judean War: Rhetorical Analysis and Historical Observations. EJM 27. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2009.
- Source 2: Martin Hengel. The Zealots: Investigations into the Jewish Freedom Movement in the Period from Herod I until 70 A.D. Trans. David Smith. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1989.
- Source 3: Richard A. Horsley. Bandits, Prophets, and Messiahs: Popular Movements in the Time of Jesus. Minneapolis: Winston Press, 1985.

Specific to this answer:

Date Range: 63 BCE - 74 CE

Online sources for understanding this subject:

- Source 1 URL: <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/sicarii>
- Source 1 Description: A short description of the Sicarii sourced from the Encyclopaedia Judaica.
- Source 2 URL: <https://www.bibleodyssey.org/HarperCollinsBibleDictionary/z/zealot>
- Source 2 Description: A short description of the Zealots.
- Source 3 URL: <https://archaeology.huji.ac.il/exhibitions/story-masada-discoveries-excavations>
- Source 3 Description: The Institute of Archaeology at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem offers pictures of archaeological discoveries at Masada with descriptions.

Specific to this answer:

Date Range: 63 BCE - 74 CE

Relevant online primary textual corpora (original languages and/or translations):

- Source 1 URL: <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/searchresults?q=Josephus>
- Source 1 Description: A link to Josephus' writings in Greek and English online at Perseus.
- Source 2 URL: <https://www.academic-bible.com/en/online-bibles/novum-testamentum-graece-na-28/read-the-bible-text/>
- Source 2 Description: A link to the New Testament and Hebrew Bible with relevant Greek, Hebrew, and English options.

Specific to this answer:

## General Variables

### Membership/Group Interactions

Are other religious groups in cultural contact with target religion:

— Yes

↳ Is the cultural contact competitive:

— Yes

Notes: In his historical account, Josephus refers to the Zealots as the "fourth philosophy" (Ant. 18.1); he pits them in contrast with the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes. One of their co-founders, Saddok, is a former Pharisee, which has led some to believe that the Pharisees and Zealots held some philosophical similarities. Elsewhere, the Zealots are described as one's who "imitated every wicked work" (War 7.8.1). The Sicarii are described with arguably more disdain by Josephus. In one example, Jonathan, a member of their group, is described as causing sedition and "accusing men falsely" supposedly in line with the Sicarii way (War 7.11).

↳ Is the cultural contact accommodating/pluralistic:

— No

Notes: Whereas cultural accommodation seems to be present in sectors of early Judaism, this does not seem to be the case with either the Zealots or Sicarii. Their groups are defined by strict cultural opposition.

↳ Is the cultural contact neutral:

— No

↳ Is there violent conflict (within sample region):

— Yes

Notes: Our evidence occasionally indicates breaks in terms of internal religious affairs. For the Zealots, John of Gischala appears to break away from the main group over an internal disagreement to form his own faction (see War 4.3).

↳ Is there violent conflict (with groups outside the sample region):

— Yes

Notes: This seems to be especially so among the Sicarii who are said to kill people in "day time" (War 2.13.3). There is scholarly dispute over the nature of the Zealots (and their connection with the Sicarii. Richard Horsley has contended for a much more tame picture of the Zealots (see Bandits, Prophets, and Messiahs) than the Sicarii. However, even so, there is a scene in Josephus where the Zealots are driven away by Ananus and Jesus son of Gamala (War 4.3.9)

Does the religious group have a general process/system for assigning religious affiliation:

– Yes

↳ Assigned at birth (membership is default for this society):

– No

↳ Assigned by personal choice:

– Yes

Notes: Especially by Josephus' account, there seems to be a high emphasis on personal choice for joining either the Zealots or Sicarii. In the case of the Zealots, we have a clear account of a "fourth philosophy" that attracted a great number of the young and "zealous." Some have suggested that the Sicarii consisted of intellectuals and teachers, attracted members by their more radical methods.

↳ Assigned by class:

– No

↳ Assigned at a specific age:

– No

↳ Assigned by gender:

– Yes

Notes: The answer is presumably yes, since our source material is limited to male examples.

↳ Assigned by participation in a particular ritual:

– No

↳ Assigned by some other factor:

– Yes [specify]: At least in the case of the Sicarii, Josephus tells us that they had their own "daggers," the source of their name. According to Josephus: "They made use of small swords, not much different in length from the Persian Acinacæ, but somewhat crooked, and like the Roman Sicae, [or sickles] as they were called. And from these weapons these robbers got their denomination: and with these weapons they slew a great many" (Ant 20.8.10; trans. Whiston).

Does the religious group actively proselytize and recruit new members:

– Yes

Notes: The answer is likely yes. Our records indicate that for both the Zealots and the Sicarii, their doctrine attracted a great many. One is also to assume for the Sicarii that their strategy to overthrow the Jewish aristocracy by violence needed support. Josephus only tells us that they grew in number, but this seems likely.

↳ Is proselytizing mandated for religious professionals:

– No

↳ Is proselytizing mandated for all adherents:

– No

↳ Is missionary work mandated for religious professionals:

– No

↳ Is missionary work mandated for all adherents:

– No

↳ Is proselytization coercive:

– No

Does the religion have official political support

– No

*Notes:* This stands in contrast with other early Jewish groups, such as the Pharisees and the Sadducees, who did secure political support at various times. Some historians have described the Sicarii as a terrorist group (Horsley), and as such, a frequent threat to local political communities.

Is there a conception of apostasy in the religious group:

– Yes

*Notes:* If we consider the motivations of the Sicarii to assassinate Jonathan the High Priest, it would likely fall under the umbrella of some type of religious apostasy. The doctrine of the Zealots is more clear on this point. They believed that only God could be king and ruler of the Jewish people.

↳ Are apostates prosecuted or punished:

– Yes

↳ Apostates are socially shunned and/or publicly vilified:

– Yes

↳ Do apostates receive corporal punishment:

– Yes

*Notes:* The Zealots and Sicarii would likely have viewed the Jewish aristocracy in terms of apostasy, and the punishment is either directly caused by them (such as the assassination of Jonathan the High Priest) or indirectly by the Romans. From our sources, the method of punishment largely appears to be execution.

↳ Apostates are physically marked as such (e.g. branding, mutilation):

— No

↳ Apostates are executed:

— Yes

*Notes:* Again, there is a degree of historical speculation here. But the assassination of Jonathan the High Priest by the Sicarii suggests that execution was the punishment assigned to him, and to other members of the Jewish aristocracy. Josephus is less clear regarding the Zealots on this note.

↳ Other corporal punishment:

— No

## Size and Structure

Number of adherents of religious group within sample region (estimated population, numerical):

— Field doesn't know

*Notes:* We do not possess exact numbers for either the Zealots or the Sicarii. Josephus records that the initial count for Zealots were two thousand four hundred (War 5.6.1). For the Sicarii, there is one passage in Josephus that tells us, after a long speech by their leader, Eleazar, 960 Sicarii committed mass suicide (men, women, and children) survived by only two women and five children (War 7.8–9). This number does not tell us the total amount of Sicarii. It is also important to note that Josephus is prone to exaggeration in his calculations. In another text, in the Book of Acts, Luke records Paul responding to the following question: “Aren’t you the Egyptian who started a revolt and led four thousand terrorists out into the wilderness some time ago? (21:38). The term here “terrorists” in Greek is sikariōn.

Number of adherents of religious group within sample region (% of sample region population, numerical):

— Field doesn't know

*Notes:* We do not possess exact numbers for either the Zealots or the Sicarii. Josephus records that the initial count for Zealots were two thousand four hundred (War 5.6.1). For the Sicarii, there is one passage in Josephus that tells us, after a long speech by their leader, Eleazar, 960 Sicarii committed mass suicide (men, women, and children) survived by only two women and five children (War 7.8–9). This number does not tell us the total amount of Sicarii. It is also important to note that Josephus is prone to exaggeration in his calculations. In another text, in the Book of Acts, Luke records Paul responding to the following question: “Aren’t you the Egyptian who started a revolt and led four thousand terrorists out into the wilderness some time ago? (21:38). The term here “terrorists” in Greek is sikariōn.

## Scripture

Does the religious group have scriptures:

Scripture is a generic term used to designate revered texts that are considered particularly authoritative and sacred relative to other texts. Strictly speaking, it refers to written texts, but there are also “oral scriptures” (e.g. the Vedas of India).

— Yes

↳ Are they written:

— Yes

Notes: Both the Zealots and the Sicarii would have read and studied Torah.

↳ Are they oral:

— Yes

Notes: The evidence suggests that at least the Zealots had ideological connections with the Pharisees. This would mean that they were familiar with oral traditions.

↳ Is there a story (or a set of stories) associated with the origin of scripture:

— Yes

↳ Revealed by a high god:

— Yes

Notes: This would have been a general feature of early Judaism. It is important to keep in mind that Josephus tells us that the “fourth philosophy” believes only God is their true leader.

↳ Revealed by other supernatural being:

— No

Notes: The evidence is unclear. From early Judaism, it is possible revelation is mediated by other supernatural beings, but it properly comes from God.

↳ Inspired by high god:

— Yes

Notes: For the Sicarii, the speeches of Eleazar are especially telling for understanding the role of God in their doctrines. A small excerpt: “For the laws of our country, and of God himself, have from ancient times, and as soon as ever we could use our reason, continually taught us; and our forefathers have corroborated the same doctrine by their actions, and by their bravery of mind; that it is life that is a calamity to men, and not death” (War 7.8).

↳ Inspired by other supernatural being:

— No

↳ Originated from divine or semi-divine human beings:

— No

↳ Originated from non-divine human being:

— No

## Architecture, Geography

Is monumental religious architecture present:

— Yes

Notes: Central to Josephus's account for the Zealots is the role of the Jerusalem Temple. Take, for example, this passage in War 4.3.10 (trans. Whiston): "And now, when the multitude were gotten together to an assembly, and every one was in indignation at these mens seizing upon the sanctuary; at their rapine and murders; but had not yet begun their attacks upon them: (the reason of which was this, that they imagined it to be a difficult thing to suppress these zealots; as indeed the case was), Ananus stood in the midst of them; and casting his eyes frequently at the temple, and having a flood of tears in his eyes, he said, "Certainly it had been good for me to die before I had seen the house of God full of so many abominations." Additionally, the Sicarii also aim their attacks at the Temple, killing Jonathan the High Priest there.

Are there different types of religious monumental architecture:

— Field doesn't know

Notes: Whereas we have clear indication of other types of religious architecture in early Judaism (e.g., graves, synagogues, altars), we do not receive this type of information for the Zealots and Sicarii. The most data Josephus offers is in regard to the Temple, and either group's attempts to control it. Presumably, they would have used other religious sites, such as graves to bury their loved ones, but our dearth of information allows only speculation.

Is iconography present:

— Field doesn't know

Notes: It is possible but unclear from the data. One of our best examples for artwork and iconography in early Judaism is the third-century CE synagogue at Dura-Europos.

## Beliefs

### Burial and Afterlife

Is a spirit-body distinction present:

Answer "no" only if personhood (or consciousness) is extinguished with death of the physical body. Answering yes does not necessarily imply the existence of Cartesian mind/body dualism, merely that some element of personhood (or consciousness) survives the death of the body.

— Yes



↳ Spirit-mind is conceived of as having qualitatively different powers or properties than other body parts:

— Field doesn't know

Notes: While the spirit/body distinction is present, it is unclear if a spirit/mind distinct exists. The best evidence we have about the Sicarii's understanding of the body/spirit/mind comes from Eleazar's speech in War 7.8. See for example, this excerpt: "For while souls are tied down to a mortal body, they are partakers of its miseries: and really, to speak the truth, they are themselves dead. For the union of what is divine, to what is mortal, is disagreeable. 'Tis true, the power of the soul is great, even when it is imprisoned in a mortal body. For by moving it, after a way that is invisible, it makes the body a sensible instrument; and causes it to advance farther in its actions than mortal nature could otherwise do" (trans. Whiston).

Belief in afterlife:

— Yes

↳ Is the spatial location of the afterlife specified or described by the religious group:

— Field doesn't know

Notes: The information about the afterlife is inferred partly from the Pharisees. If their philosophical beliefs are shared with the "fourth philosophy" then the Zealots would have a place for the righteous and the wicked. For the Sicarii, in Eleazar's speech, he says the following: "Let us die before we become slaves under our enemies: and let us go out of the world, together with our children, and our wives, in a state of freedom" (War 7.8.7). This appears to imply an afterlife.

Reincarnation in this world:

— No

Are there special treatments for adherents' corpses:

— Field doesn't know

Notes: Death and dying occurs somewhat regularly in Josephus's account of the Sicarii. However, there is virtually no details on care for the dead. If we take Josephus at face value, he states that the fourth philosophy: does not "heed the deaths of their relations and friends" (Ant. 18.1.6). However, we also know that Josephus does not speak well of these religious groups. As a sect of early Judaism, the Zealots and Sicarii would likely have had general protocol for caring for the dead. For example, "burial with one's fathers" (Gen 25:8) was common practice. Specific customs would have varied depending on geographic location (Rome, Egypt, Palestine). From the early Christian literature, we learn that bodies were wrapped in linen according to the "custom of the Jews" (Matt 27:59; John 19:40). It is also important to note that socio-economic factors would have played a role in the degree to which one was carefully shrouded in linen, or if one could afford a "family" or "private" burial site.

Are co-sacrifices present in tomb/burial:

— No

Are grave goods present:

— Field doesn't know

Notes: This would be difficult to determine for the Zealots and the Sicarii. By and large, it seems that grave good may have been prohibited in some sectors of early Judaism, at least in the literary evidence; however, this does not mean that grave goods were not present considering it was not uncommon in Greco-Roman culture.

Are formal burials present:

— Field doesn't know

Notes: This is unclear. If we take Josephus at face value, he states that the fourth philosophy: does not "heed the deaths of their relations and friends" (Ant. 18.1.6). However, we also know that Josephus does not speak well of this religious group. According to the archaeological discoveries of Yadin and the later investigation by Magness and others, no physical remains of Jews were found at Masada. (There were five skeleton remains discovered but they were found near pig bones, suggesting they were Roman not Jewish; see Magness, Masada, 198). One is to assume burials are possible in accordance with the practices of early Judaism; however, our information is scarce. For the Sicarii, the nature of Josephus's descriptions of them as fringe marauders makes it difficult to assess the formality of their deaths. Even in the description of the mass suicide that takes place at Masada, Josephus does not offer any information about how the bodies were disposed, leaving some to speculate that the Romans may have burned the bodies.

## Supernatural Beings

Are supernatural beings present:

— Yes

↳ A supreme high god is present:

— Yes

↳ The supreme high god is anthropomorphic:

— No

Notes: In the Hebrew Bible, God can be described with anthropomorphisms.

↳ The supreme high god is a sky deity:

— No

↳ The supreme high god is chthonic (of the underworld):

— No

↳ The supreme high god is fused with the monarch (king=high god):

— Yes

Notes: This point is distinct to what Josephus describes as the "fourth philosophy. The sectarian distinctive of this group is a belief that God alone can be ruler of the people. This seems to fuel various attacks by more radical groups, such as the Sicarii, in assassinating the High Priest.

↳ The monarch is seen as a manifestation or emanation of the high god:

– No

↳ The supreme high god is a kin relation to elites:

– No

↳ The supreme high god has another type of loyalty-connection to elites:

– No

Notes: And emphatically so. From the presentation we have, God's loyalty is with the people, and members of both the Zealots and Sicarii are growing dissatisfied with Roman rule and the aristocracy's inaction.

↳ The supreme high god is unquestionably good:

– Yes

Notes: This is the case for most, if not all, forms of early Judaism. The disagreement between some of these groups is the degree to which human beings should actively rebel against the Romans.

↳ Other feature(s) of supreme high god:

– Yes [specify]: For the most part, it is likely that both Zealots and Sicarii would have professed a monotheistic understanding of God.

↳ The supreme high god has knowledge of this world:

– Yes

↳ The supreme god's knowledge is restricted to particular domain of human affairs:

– No

Notes: While there is nothing in particular about the Zealots or Sicarii, God's knowledge would not be restricted for most forms of early Judaism.

↳ The supreme high god's knowledge is restricted to (a) specific area(s) within the sample region:

– No

↳ The supreme high god's knowledge is unrestricted within the sample region:  
— Yes

↳ The supreme high god's knowledge is unrestricted outside of sample region:  
— Yes

↳ The supreme high god can see you everywhere normally visible (in public):  
— Yes

↳ The supreme high god can see you everywhere (in the dark, at home):  
— Yes

↳ The supreme high god can see inside heart/mind (hidden motives):  
— Yes

↳ The supreme high god knows your basic character (personal essence):  
— Yes

Notes: In regard to the Zealots, and most of early Judaism, this would be true. As we see in the doctrine of the Pharisees, an ideology with which the Zealots may share, God weighs human action as either righteous or wicked. For the Sicarii, Eleazar's speech in Josephus seems to indicate that the ensuing mass suicide is partly a result of God's judgment upon their sins (War 7.8).

↳ The supreme high god knows what will happen to you, what you will do (future sight):  
— Yes

Notes: The details for God's future knowledge for the Sicarii is also found in Eleazar's speech recorded in Josephus (War 7.8.1): "Accordingly they all met with such ends as God deservedly brought upon."

↳ The supreme high god has other knowledge of this world:  
— Yes [specify]: God's knowledge would be unlimited for both the Zealots and Sicarii.

↳ The supreme high god has deliberate causal efficacy in the world:  
— Yes

Notes: Most certainly. A distinctive about the Zealots (and possibly the Sicarii) is the

need for human cooperation in executing God's plan. (See Hengel, *The Zealots*, 81).

↳ The supreme high god can reward:  
— Yes

↳ The supreme high god can punish:  
— Yes

*Notes:* This seems especially true through the eyes of the historian Josephus who describes "impiety toward God" as the human action deserving of great consequence.

↳ The supreme high god has indirect causal efficacy in the world:  
— Yes

↳ The supreme high god exhibits positive emotion:  
— Yes

*Notes:* Positive emotion described as love, mercy, compassion, and so forth. The notion of justice would perhaps receive a higher level of emphasis from the Zealots and Sicarii considering their political and ideological campaigns against Rome.

↳ The supreme high god exhibits negative emotion:  
— Yes

*Notes:* Negative framed in terms of rightful judgment. While we do not have much to explain how the Sicarii justify their murders, it would appear that they are enacting God's will through human cooperation.

↳ The supreme high god possesses hunger:  
— No

↳ Is it permissible to worship supernatural beings other than the high god:  
— No

*Notes:* And for these two groups (Zealots and Sicarii), the might perceive inaction toward the governing Roman powers as a type of idolatry among the Jewish aristocracy. God is the exclusive ruler of the people.

↳ The supreme high god possesses/exhibits some other feature:  
— No

↳ The supreme high god communicates with the living:

– Yes

↳ In waking, everyday life:

– Yes

Notes: This seems likely especially considering that God alone is to be their ruler.

↳ In dreams:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: We do not possess any evidence of dream communications with these particular sects of Judaism. It is possible considering evidence within the Hebrew Bible (Num. 12:6-8; Jer. 23:25-28; Dan. 7:1).

↳ In trance possession:

– No

↳ Through divination practices:

– Yes

Notes: Prayer would have been a common practice in early Judaism, and likely among the Zealots and Sicarii.

↳ Only through religious specialists:

– No

Notes: Though, Richard Horsley speculates that the "fourth philosophy" was comprised of teachers: "The Fourth Philosophy would thus appear to be a group composed of, or at least led by, Pharisaic and other teachers of a more activist bent" (Bandits, Prophets, and Messiahs 198). What percentage of God's revelation was communicated or taught through these teachers is unclear.

↳ Only through monarch

– No

Notes: Once more, emphatically so. The politically resistant nature of the Zealots and Sicarii (however different their strategies may have been) is opposed to earthly rulers over the Jewish population.

↳ Other form of communication with living:

– No

↳ Previously human spirits are present:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: This is unclear, but likely no. The doctrine of the "fourth philosophy" appears to share with the Pharisees an understanding of the soul departing the body. It is never articulated in the form of a lingering spirit, but the soul's transfer from the body is worth considering.

→ Non-human supernatural beings are present:

— Yes

Notes: During the the late Hellenistic and early Roman period, early Judaism by and large possesses a belief in demons and angels within the literature. Nothing in particular applies to the Zealots or Sicarii here, but it seems likely that they would have shared these beliefs.

→ These supernatural beings can be seen:

— Yes

→ These supernatural beings can be physically felt:

— Yes

Non-human supernatural beings have knowledge of this world:

- Field doesn't know

Notes: If we extrapolate from the evidence in early Judaism, the answer would be yes. Demons, for example, appear to possess knowledge of the present world; however, Josephus does not provide us with any of these details in regard to the Zealots and Sicarii.

→ Non-human supernatural beings have deliberate causal efficacy in the world:

— Yes

→ These supernatural beings can reward:

- Field doesn't know

Notes: We do not have evidence of the Zealots or Sicarii here. We can only guess that if angels are involved in rewarding humans, it is facilitated by God.

→ These supernatural beings can punish:

- Field doesn't know

Notes: Once more, it is better to avoid too much speculation here. Demons function to harm and punish in the literary evidence, but we do not have access to these kinds of beliefs for the Zealots or Sicarii.

→ These supernatural beings have indirect causal efficacy in the world:

— No

↳ These supernatural beings exhibit positive emotion:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: The nature of emotions exhibited by either angels or demons is hard to determine from the evidence. The Testament of Solomon would be one source to investigate further for early Jewish beliefs.

↳ These supernatural beings exhibit negative emotion:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: The nature of emotions exhibited by either angels or demons is hard to determine. The Testament of Solomon would be one source to investigate further for early Jewish beliefs.

↳ These supernatural beings possess hunger:

– No

Notes: The answer is likely no here simply because we do not have the evidence. In early Judaism, there is a story told in Tobit chapter six about expelling demons by the smell of fish odor.

↳ These supernatural beings possess/exhibit some other feature:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: We can only speculate from our literary sources. Demons appear to possess human bodies, torment, and harm them. It also appears from the Greek Magical Papyri and the Testament of Solomon, that demons could also be controlled and expelled through magical formulae.

↳ Does the religious group possess a variety of supernatural beings:

– No

## Supernatural Monitoring

Is supernatural monitoring present:

This refers to surveillance by supernatural beings of humans' behaviour and/or thought particularly as it relates to social norms or potential norm violations.

– Yes

Notes: This is possible for the Zealots and Sicarii. There are examples of supernatural monitoring in early Judaism, especially in apocalyptic literature. In the Testament of Abraham, for example, Abraham, guided by an angel/messenger, appears to survey or "monitor" the world, including very private activities. These groups would have interpreted monitoring through the lens of God's judgment against inaction or Roman oppression.

↳ There is supernatural monitoring of prosocial norm adherence in particular:



Prosocial norms are norms that enhance cooperation among members of the group, including obviously “moral” or “ethical” norms, but also extending to norms concerning honouring contracts and oaths, providing hospitality, coming to mutual aid in emergencies, etc.

– Yes

Notes: Interesting note here is the content of Eleazar's speech. He invokes the idea that they stand before God in their final self-execution (see Josephus, War 7.8).

↳ Supernatural beings care about taboos:

– Yes

↳ Food:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: Food is possible, considering the dietary restrictions we see from the Pharisee group, and its possible connection to the Fourth Philosophy.

↳ Sacred space(s):

– Yes

Notes: Once more, the Jewish aristocracy and their occupation of the Temple would have been perceived by these groups as morally reprehensible.

↳ Sacred object(s):

– No

↳ Supernatural beings care about other:

– No

↳ Supernatural beings care about murder of coreligionists:

– Yes

Notes: There is speculation here as to why the Sicarii thought it necessary to kill Jonathan the High Priest. We are left only to infer that they saw themselves as carrying out a directive by God. In their mass suicide at Masada, it appears that God considers this end as punishment for their sins.

↳ Supernatural beings care about murder of members of other religions:

– Yes

Notes: Once more, we are left to speculate motivations for the Sicarii here. We might infer that they saw themselves as carrying out a directive by God, though it is not always clear.

↳ Supernatural beings care about murder of members of other polities:

– Yes

↳ Supernatural beings care about sex:

– Yes

Notes: From the evidence in early Judaism and the Hebrew Bible, and the degree to which the Sicarii and Zealots desired a theocracy, the answer yes seems likely here.

↳ Adultery:

– Yes

↳ Incest:

– Yes

↳ Other sexual practices:

– Yes [specify]: Sexual intercourse with "pagans" seems to be a discussion among those who possess zeal in the Hebrew Bible.

↳ Supernatural beings care about lying:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: From the evidence in early Judaism and the Hebrew Bible, and the degree to which the Sicarii and Zealots desired a theocracy, the answer yes is possible here, but we do not have specific evidence for either of these two groups on the subject.

↳ Supernatural beings care about honouring oaths:

– Yes

Notes: From the evidence in early Judaism and the Hebrew Bible, and the degree to which the Sicarii and Zealots desired a theocracy, the answer yes is likely here.

↳ Supernatural beings care about laziness:

– Yes

Notes: From the evidence in early Judaism and the Hebrew Bible, and the degree to which the Sicarii and Zealots desired a theocracy, the answer yes is possible here, but we do not have specific evidence for either of these two groups on the subject. It is worth adding that the Zealots were particularly upset with inaction by leading Jewish officials.

↳ Supernatural beings care about sorcery:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: There are locations in the Hebrew Bible in which sorcery appears to be condemned (1 Sam 28); however, we do not possess evidence for these religious groups.

↳ Supernatural beings care about non-lethal fighting:

– Yes

Notes: These fringe groups often engaged in fighting, much of which was lethal, but not all. We cannot be certain how much God "cared" about these issues, but it is likely that they understood God to be giving them a divine directive in many cases.

↳ Supernatural beings care about shirking risk:

– Yes

Notes: The course for justice likely involved "shirking risk." However, "shirking" implies carelessness, and it would not have been careless risk taking per se. This would seem to be a hallmark of the Zealots: according to Josephus, actionable steps to resist loss of freedom.

↳ Supernatural beings care about disrespecting elders:

– Yes

Notes: This would almost certainly have been engrained in the daily life of any sect of early Judaism (Leviticus 19:3).

↳ Supernatural beings care about gossiping:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: Gossiping as an immoral practice does not appear directly in Josephus, it would also be hard to discern the level that this was enforced in any religious group in early Judaism.

↳ Supernatural beings care about property crimes:

– Yes

Notes: The Sicarii inflicted damage to individual property, at least according to Josephus. We can only speculate the degree to which they understood God to be ordering all of their actions. When Eleazar articulates that the Sicarii's final stand is a result of God's judgment upon their sins, one could infer much of their previous activities were "sinful" (again, according to Josephus here), but here we move into speculative territory.

↳ Supernatural beings care about proper ritual observance:

– Yes

↳ Supernatural beings care about performance of rituals:

– Yes

↳ Supernatural beings care about conversion of non-religionists:

– No

Notes: The Zealots and the Sicarii seem less interested in the prospect of converting non-religionists than other early Jewish groups. They are more interested in securing freedom for Judaism.

↳ Supernatural beings care about economic fairness:

– Yes

Notes: Unfair Roman taxation as impingement upon Jewish freedoms appears to be one cause for resistance.

↳ Supernatural beings care about personal hygiene:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: This would be difficult to determine. Washing rituals appear to belong to Essene groups, and there is evidence regarding ritual washing among Pharisees; however, personal hygiene is unclear.

↳ Supernatural beings care about other:

– Yes [specify]: The thrust of the Fourth Philosophy would be obtaining freedom. Eleazar's speech mentions that death is better than enslavement. One could assume that this is a divine prerogative.

Do supernatural beings mete out punishment:

– Yes

↳ Is the cause or agent of supernatural punishment known:

– Yes

↳ Done only by high god:

– Yes

Notes: This one needs further explanation, in that divine punishment appears in Josephus' account of Zealots and Sicarii; however, because of his bias, he does not provide us with extensive details. It would seem that human beings cooperate with God's will in some way for these Jewish activists, thus participating in God's divine judgment. See also the quote in Josephus, War 7.8.1: "Accordingly they all met with such ends as God deservedly brought upon them in way of punishment" (trans. Whiston).

↳ Done by many supernatural beings:

– No

Notes: It would appear that according to Josephus at least, human beings are the enactors of judgment in this world for these groups, more so for the Sicarii; however, God is the ultimate actor in judgment.

↳ Done through impersonal cause-effect principle:

– No

↳ Done by other entities or through other means [specify]

– Yes

Notes: Once more, the role of human beings in executed judgment appears to play a role in how either of these two groups understood themselves. Overall, God is still the final judge. This line in Josephus summarizes the point well: "The punishments of which let us not receive from the Romans, but from God himself, as executed by our own hands" (War 7.8.6)

↳ Is the reason for supernatural punishment known:

– Yes

Notes: In Eleazar's speech, God's judgment is in response to "our manifold sins" (War 7.8.6).

↳ Done to enforce religious ritual-devotional adherence:

– Yes

Notes: We are to infer from context the reason for the Sicarii's assassination of the High Priest; it would appear that a violation related to ritual-devotional adherence is at play.

↳ Done to enforce group norms:

– Yes

↳ Done to inhibit selfishness:

– No

Notes: At least not directly. Because of the nature and quality of resistance by these groups outlined in Josephus, divine punishment is of a more severe variety.

↳ Done randomly:

– No

↳ Other [specify]

– No

↳ Supernatural punishments are meted out in the afterlife:

– Yes

↳ Supernatural punishments in the afterlife are highly emphasized by the religious group:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: The degree to which the afterlife and its accompanying consequences is emphasized by the Zealots or Sicarii is not available to us. We may infer from the doctrine of the Pharisees that they had a working belief in the afterlife, however.

↳ Punishment in the afterlife consists of mild sensory displeasure:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: Once more, at least as Josephus presents it, this group appears to emphasize punishment in the present life over the afterlife. The leader of the Sicarii, Eleazar, in his final speeches considers death to be a good result, and life to be an obstacle in some ways.

↳ Punishment in the afterlife consists of extreme sensory displeasure:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: See answer above for this case. We do not have vivid depictions of the afterlife for these target religious groups.

↳ Punishment in the afterlife consists of reincarnation as an inferior life form:

– No

↳ Punishment in the afterlife consists of reincarnation in an inferior realm:

– No

↳ Other [specify]

– No

↳ Supernatural punishments are meted out in this lifetime:

– Yes

↳ Supernatural punishments in this life are highly emphasized by the religious group:

– Yes

Notes: It would seem that the nature of punishment in the present life is a distinctive feature of at least the Sicarii. They are described as murders and robbers by Josephus.

↳ Punishment in this life consists of bad luck:

– No

↳ Punishment in this life consists of political failure:

– Yes

Notes: Consider the assassination by the Sicarii of the High Priest, Jonathan. Regardless of Josephus' accuracy, it seems that both the Zealots and Sicarii were unhappy with the present political situation.

↳ Punishment in this life consists of defeat in battle:

– Yes

Notes: This is very clear in the Sicarii's last stand at Masada as recorded by Josephus. As described by Eleazar, the Romans final approach and impending capture is due to God's judgment upon them for their many sins. He convinces them to commit suicide rather than to be captured.

↳ Punishment in this life consists of crop failure or bad weather:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: This is possible from the broader scope of early Judaism, but we do not have evidence for this among Zealots and Sicarii specifically.

↳ Punishment in this life consists of disaster on journeys.

– Field doesn't know

Notes: This is possible from the broader scope of early Judaism, but we do not have evidence for this among Zealots and Sicarii specifically.

↳ Punishment in this life consists of mild sensory displeasure:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: The answer here is possibly yes. The Sicarii kill their victims, it is not clear if they use torture to prolong the feelings of displeasure.

↳ Punishment in this life consists of extreme sensory displeasure:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: The answer here is possibly yes. The Sicarii kill their victims, it is not clear if they use torture to prolong the feelings of displeasure.

↳ Punishment in this life consists of sickness or illness:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: Once more, it is plausible to imagine this type interpretation of illness from our range of literary sources in early Judaism, but we do not have specific information for the target group on this.

↳ Punishment in this life consists of impaired reproduction:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: Once more, it is plausible to imagine this type interpretation of illness from our range of literary sources in early Judaism, but we do not have specific information for the target group on this.

↳ Punishment in this life consists of bad luck visited on descendants:

– No

↳ Other [specify]

– No

Do supernatural beings bestow rewards:

– Yes

↳ Is the cause/purpose of supernatural rewards known:

– Yes

↳ Done only by high god:

– Yes

*Notes:* This seems highly likely based on the literary evidence in Josephus. One's reward is given in this life through political victory, or victory in battle.

↳ Done by many supernatural beings:

– No

↳ Done through impersonal cause-effect principle:

– No

↳ Done to enforce religious ritual-devotional adherence:

– Yes

↳ Done to enforce group norms:

– Yes

*Notes:* A distinctive group norm of the "fourth philosophy" is the commitment to freedom as well as to God's rule of the people. Any reward could be understood in this context according to our limited source material.

↳ Done to inhibit selfishness:

– No

*Notes:* This is possibly an indirect consequence of reward, but not within the boundaries of our source material. Divine reward seems to have a broader, more political scope for these groups.

↳ Done randomly:



– No

↳ Supernatural rewards are bestowed out in the afterlife:

– Yes

↳ Supernatural rewards in the afterlife are highly emphasized by the religious group:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: The degree to which reward in the afterlife is emphasized is hard to discern from the evidence. We may imply from the doctrine of the Pharisees that it is a central feature, since Josephus compares the Pharisees with the "fourth philosophy" of the Zealots.

↳ Reward in the afterlife consists of mild sensory pleasure:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: The nature of the reward is difficult to discern from our limited source material.

↳ Reward in the afterlife consists of extreme sensory pleasure:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: The nature of the reward is difficult to discern from our limited source material.

↳ Reward in the afterlife consists of eternal happiness:

– Yes

Notes: The answer here is likely yes, based on evidence regarding the afterlife in comparative early Judaism.

↳ Reward in the afterlife consists of reincarnation as a superior life form:

– No

↳ Reward in the afterlife consists of reincarnation in a superior realm:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: It would depend on how one interprets the transmigration of the soul as illustrated in Josephus. If one's soul leaves the body to enter into another body, this would not be properly "reincarnation" but there are some similarities here.

↳ Other [specify]

– No

↳ Supernatural rewards are bestowed out in this lifetime:

– Yes

Notes: The emphasis we receive from Josephus on these groups is active resistance to Roman rule. For that reason, the reward in this lifetime would be one's freedom. At one point in Elezar's speech he declares that death is a better alternative to being enslaved by the Romans.

↳ Supernatural rewards in this life are highly emphasized by the religious group:

– Yes

Notes: However, this would be reward in the singular. The only emphasis we receive from our sources is on freedom.

↳ Reward in this life consists of good luck:

– No

↳ Reward in this life consists of political success or power:

– No

Notes: Reward is freedom, debatable how freedom relates to power or freedom from political oppression.

↳ Reward in this life consists of success in battle:

– Yes

↳ Reward in this life consists of peace or social stability:

– Yes

↳ Reward in this life consists of healthy crops or good weather:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: This seems plausible, but our source material does not elaborate.

↳ Reward in this life consists of success on journeys:

– Field doesn't know

↳ Reward in this life consists of mild sensory pleasure:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: The experience of freedom is the main interest of these groups (though, the Sicarii seem to take this interest a bit far). The relationship between freedom and pleasure is a question worth debating here.

↳ Reward in this life consists of extreme sensory pleasure:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: The experience of freedom is the main interest of these groups (though, the Sicarii seem to take this interest a bit far). The relationship between freedom and pleasure is a question worth debating here.

↳ Reward in this life consists of enhanced health:  
– Field doesn't know

↳ Reward in this life consists of enhanced reproductive success:  
– Field doesn't know

↳ Reward in this life consists of fortune visited on descendants:  
– Field doesn't know

Notes: Our sources do not provide us with these kinds of details in regard to reward in the present life. It seems possible from speculation.

↳ Other [specify]  
– No

### Messianism/Eschatology

Are messianic beliefs present:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: While there is little evidence of messianic expectations among the Zealots and Sicarii (there is, however, among Simon bar Giora and his followers in the same period), Martin Hengel (*The Zealots* [1989]) is generous in ascribing eschatological beliefs to the Zealots, outlining the importance of prophecy to their movement. Horsley's conclusion is more measured: "Thus, Josephus' statement that they argued that 'if successful, the Jews would have paved the way for good fortune' would mean more or less that the Fourth Philosophy believed that by carrying out God's eschatological will they would be helping to bring about the Kingdom of God" (*Bandits, Prophets, and Messiahs*, 194).

Is an eschatology present:

– Yes

### Norms and Moral Realism

Are general social norms prescribed by the religious group:

– Yes

Notes: One worth mentioning is the need for "collective leadership" as Horsley calls it (*Bandits, Prophets, and Messiahs*, 235). It appears as if John of Gischala broke with the Zealots over this issue.

Is there a conventional vs. moral distinction in the religious group:

— Field doesn't know

Notes: The degree to which the Zealots or Sicarii would have separated normal social conventions from moral ones seems unlikely. The literature portrays them as theocratic (and more so than the Pharisees or the Sadducees). The rules that governed their body would have been God-given and time contingent. Thus, their need to actively resist Roman occupation.

## Practices

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### Membership Costs and Practices

Does membership in this religious group require celibacy (full sexual abstinence):

— No

Notes: This is more obviously the case from our evidence for Essenes.

Does membership in this religious group require constraints on sexual activity (partial sexual abstinence):

— Yes

↳ Monogamy (males):

— Yes

↳ Monogamy (females):

— Yes

↳ Other sexual constraints (males):

— Yes

Notes: The literature seems to suggest a ban on sexual relations with "pagans." This data is from a later rabbinic text and may not refer to some group: "With regard to one who steals a kasva, and one who curses with a sorcerer, and one who engages in intercourse with an Aramean woman, zealots strike him and kill him" (Sanh. 9.6)

↳ Other sexual constraints (females):

— Yes

Notes: Likely same restraints as above (Sanh. 9.6)

Does membership in this religious group require castration:

— No

Notes: Circumcision, yes. For the Zealots, Martin Hengel has a brief discussion on the prohibition of circumcision, and in some cases, its conflation with castration by outsiders (The Zealots, 52).

Does membership in this religious group require fasting:

— Field doesn't know

Notes: We can infer from other sources in Second Temple Judaism that fasting was likely practiced by some. It is unclear if fasting was a requirement, however.

Does membership in this religious group require forgone food opportunities (taboos on desired foods):

— Yes

Notes: We learn from the Pharisees about strict dietary practices. It is possible these types of regulations were also up-and-running with the Zealots and Sicarii. According to Josephus, for example, we see strict practices regarding oil: "For [John of Gischala] said, that those Jews who inhabited Caesarea Philippi, and were shut up by the order of the King's deputy there, had sent to him to desire him, that, since they had no oil that was pure for their use, he would provide a sufficient quantity of such oil for them: lest they should be forced to make use of oil that came from the Greeks, and thereby transgress their own laws. Now this was said by John, not out of his regard to religion; but out of his most flagrant desire of gain" (trans. Whiston).

Does membership in this religious group require permanent scarring or painful bodily alterations:

— Yes

Notes: The practice of circumcision.

Does membership in this religious group require painful physical positions or transitory painful wounds:

— No

Does membership in this religious group require sacrifice of adults:

"Adults" here referring to an emic or indigenous category; if that category is different from the popular Western definition of a human who is 18-years-old or older and who is legally responsible for his/her actions, then please specify that difference in the Comments/Sources: box below.

— No

Notes: Not directly. When the Sicarii are surrounded by the Romans at Masada, they do end up taking their own lives according to Josephus.

Does membership in this religious group require sacrifice of children:

"Children" here referring to an emic or indigenous category; if that category is different from the popular Western definition, please specify that difference in the Comments/Sources: box below.

— No

Notes: Once more, Josephus tells us that children are killed at Masada, but not in the traditional child sacrifice manner, but to avoid capture from the Romans.

Does membership in this religious group require self-sacrifice (suicide):

— No

Notes: There is an important caveat here. Suicide does not seem to be a requirement to join the Sicarii. However, Josephus' narrative famously depicts a mass suicide 960 men, women, and children (War 7.9). The historical authenticity of this event has been questioned by scholars over the years.

Does membership in this religious group require sacrifice of property/valuable items:

— No

Does membership in this religious group require sacrifice of time (e.g., attendance at meetings or services, regular prayer, etc.):

— Yes

Notes: One would assume that in addition to liturgical practices of prayer and eating customs, the Zealots and Sicarii were more or less activists (and the Sicarii radically so), which would have required investment of one's time.

Does membership in this religious group require physical risk taking:

— Yes

Notes: Especially for the Sicarii, who engage in assassination.

Does membership in this religious group require accepting ethical precepts:

— Yes

Does membership in this religious group require marginalization by out-group members:

— Yes

Notes: The "fourth philosophy" as Josephus calls it is marginalized from the start. While the relationship between the Zealots and the Sicarii remains uncertain, they were certainly marginalized by other Jewish sects (e.g., Pharisees and the Sadducees). The more extreme practices of the Sicarii would have put them even further on the margins of Judaism.

Does membership in this religious group require participation in small-scale rituals (private, household):

— Yes

Notes: Our archaeological evidence at Masada suggests that the Sicarii were prepared for everyday living, likely including daily religious rituals.



What is the average interval of time between performances (in hours):

Performances here refers to small-scale rituals.

— Field doesn't know

Does membership in this religious group require participation in large-scale rituals:

i.e. involving two or more households; includes large-scale “ceremonies” and “festivals.”

– Field doesn't know

Notes: This question is difficult to answer in some respects. Technically, we know from Josephus that the Zealots and Sicarii may have planned particular attacks on the days of festivals (see Hengel, *Zealots*, 361-62). However, the extent to which they joined in mass gatherings at the Temple peacefully is unclear.

Are extra-ritual in-group markers present:

E.g. special changes to appearance such as circumcision, tattoos, scarification, etc.

– Yes

↳ Tattoos/scarification:  
– No

↳ Circumcision:  
– Yes

↳ Food taboos:  
– Yes

↳ Hair:  
– No

↳ Dress:  
– No

↳ Ornaments:  
– No

↳ Archaic ritual language:  
– No

↳ Other:  
– Yes [specify]: The Sicarii were known for their small daggers.

Does the group employ fictive kinship terminology:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: The employment of fictive kinship terminology seems possible. The indication in Second Temple Judaism is that several forms of Judaism did employ fictive kinship terminology (including early Christians). For example, the designation of "children" for the people of Israel and "Father" for God could indicate fictive kinship. However, we cannot say for certain or to what extent this applies to the Zealots or Sicarii.

## Society and Institutions

### Levels of Social Complexity

The society to which the religious group belongs is best characterized as (please choose one):

— A state

Notes: During the Roman period, Judea became a Roman province, before which Jews enjoyed a degree of autonomy and self-governance under the High Priest at the Jerusalem Temple. During this period, the role of the High Priest and his connection to the Romans became a source of intra religious conflict. To this end, the Sicarii eventually assassinate Jonathan the High Priest according to Josephus. It is also worth mentioning that early Jews had a governing body (gerousia) within the state, which appears to have functioned autonomously prior to Roman rule. For more, see Mary Smallwood, *The Jews Under Roman Rule: From Pompey to Diocletian, A Study in Political Relations* (Leiden: Brill, 1981).

### Welfare

Does the religious group in question provide institutionalized famine relief:

— No

Notes: We learn from Josephus that the "robbers" (Sicarii?) stole remaining provisions from the masses after the siege of Jerusalem (War 6.3.3).

Is famine relief available to the group's adherents through an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

— Field doesn't know

Notes: According to Josephus, when famine struck in Judea and Syria, Herod offered charitable assistance (See Ant. 15.9). In another case, Queen Helena, who purportedly worshipped at the Jerusalem temple provided famine relief (Ant. 20.2.5). The extent to which this was offered to the Zealots or Sicarii is unclear.

Does the religious group in question provide institutionalized poverty relief:

— No

Notes: Especially for the Sicarii, their potential occupation as "robbers" tells us even if they had access to funds, they operated by their own fringe strategies.

Is poverty relief available to the group's adherents through an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:



— No

Notes: As stated previously: Especially for the Sicarii, their potential occupation as "robbers" tells us even if they had access to funds, they operated by their own fringe strategies.

Does the religious group in question provide institutionalized care for the elderly and infirm:

— Field doesn't know

Notes: The data does not tell us the extent to which these groups cared for vulnerable populations among them. It would have been recommended from their sacred Scriptures (the Torah), but we do not possess enough evidence for these groups in particular.

Is institutionalized care for the elderly and infirm available to the group's adherents through an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

— No

## Education

Does the religious group provide formal education to its adherents:

— Yes

Notes: According to Richard Horsley's account of the Zealots (Bandits, Prophets, and Messiahs), their founders would have been religious teachers of some kind. Josephus confirms this in part by telling us of the founders of the Fourth Philosophy, Judas and Saddok.

Is formal education available to the group's adherents through an institution(s) other than the religious group:

— Field doesn't know

Notes: As inhabitants of the first-century, Greco-Roman world, it is certainly possible that traditional education was available to some. However, our data concerning these fringe groups suggests (especially for the Sicarii), a lower level populace that may not have had access.

## Bureaucracy

Do the group's adherents interact with a formal bureaucracy within their group:

— Yes

Notes: Horsley refers to the Zealots as maintaining a "collective leadership." According to Horsley, this splits: "For a time there was a three-way battle raging, with the main body of the Zealots in the inner court of the temple above, John of Gischala and his followers in the temple courtyard in between, and Simon bar Giora in control of most of the rest of the city" (Bandits, 219).

Do the group's adherents interact with other institutional bureaucracies:

— Yes

Notes: The Zealots and Sicarii are recorded as actively resisting Roman rule and Jewish aristocracy; the

Sicarii assassinating Jonathan the High Priest.

## Public Works

Does the religious group in question provide public food storage:

— No

Is public food storage provided to the group's adherents by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

— No

Does the religious group in question provide water management (irrigation, flood control):

— No

Is water management provided to the group's adherents by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

— Yes

*Notes:* In first-century Judea (as a province of Rome), the water management would be controlled by the government.

Does the religious group in question provide transportation infrastructure:

— No

Is transportation infrastructure provided for the group's adherents by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

— Yes

*Notes:* Judaism functioned freely as a legal religion under Roman rule until Emperor Nero and the destruction of the Temple, and so would have likely had access to transportation infrastructure such as roads.

## Taxation

Does the religious group in question levy taxes or tithes:

— No

*Notes:* Not the Zealots or Sicarii, but they would have been subject to heavy taxes

Are taxes levied on the group's adherents by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

— Yes

Notes: One of the likely reasons that the Zealots and Sicarii form active resistance against Roman rule is heavy taxation. They desired freedom, and burdensome taxes by the Romans would have a reason for resistance.

## Enforcement

Does the religious group in question provide an institutionalized police force:

— No

Notes: Not formally; however, these groups are actively resisting Jewish and Roman leadership, and in the case of the Sicarii, by way of violence.

Do the group's adherents interact with an institutionalized police force provided by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

— No

Notes: These groups appear to have formed their own vigilante type forces, in opposition to governing authorities and structures.

Does the religious group in question provide institutionalized judges:

— No

Do the group's adherents interact with an institutionalized judicial system provided by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

— Yes

Notes: It would appear that at Masada, the Sicarii are awaiting impending prosecution from the Romans (a death sentence), so they end up taking their own lives.

Does the religious group in question enforce institutionalized punishment:

— No

Notes: Not institutionalized per se, in that these are fringe resistance groups. However, they would have enforced (likely religious) punishment both internally and externally.

Are the group's adherents subject to institutionalized punishment enforced by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

— Yes

Notes: As subjects of the Roman empire, the Zealots and Sicarii would have been prosecuted to the full extent of the law, including death. Our events take place primarily during the First Jewish revolt (a war time scenario), so most of the options listed below were likely at play, including death, corporal punishment, and seizure of property. Death being the most likely of outcomes for active (if not violent) resistance to order.



Do the institutionalized punishments include execution:

– Yes



Do the institutionalized punishments include exile:

– Yes



Do the institutionalized punishments include corporal punishments:

– Yes



Do the institutionalized punishments include ostracism:

– No



Do the institutionalized punishments include seizure of property:

– Yes

Does the religious group in question have a formal legal code:

– Yes

*Notes:* In addition to the Torah, the Fourth philosophy was governed by a commitment to freedom and God as their ruler.

Are the group's adherents subject to a formal legal code provided by institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Yes

*Notes:* Both groups in question would have been subject to Roman rule.

## Warfare

Does religious group in question possess an institutionalized military:

– No

*Notes:* Likely not "institutionalized" because of the fringe identity of these groups, more appropriately "brigand groups." There were certainly strengths in numbers when going to battle, and Josephus is notorious for inflating these numbers.

Do the group's adherents participate in an institutionalized military provided by institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– No

Are the group's adherents protected by or subject to an institutionalized military provided by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Yes

Notes: They would have been subject to the Roman military.

### Written Language

Does the religious group in question possess its own distinct written language:

– No

Notes: Not a distinct semitic dialect for Zealots or Sicarii; however, archeologists did discover ostraca at Masada with Hebrew inscriptions.

Is a non-religion-specific written language available to the group's adherents through an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Yes

Notes: Most likely Greek, Latin is possible.

Is a non-religion-specific written language used by the group's adherents through an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: How much Greek the adherent of the Zealots or Sicarii had access to is unclear. Their founders, Judas and Saddok likely would have known and used Greek, but our evidence is scarce on this issue.

### Calendar

Does the religious group in question possess a formal calendar:

– No

Notes: Not distinctly for their group. There is evidence among the Dead Scrolls of sectarian calendars at Qumran.

Is a formal calendar provided for the group's adherents by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Yes

### Food Production

Does the religious group in question provide food for themselves:

– Yes



Please characterize the forms/level of food production [choose all that apply]:

– Gathering

– Hunting (including marine animals)

- Pastoralism
- Small-scale agriculture / horticultural gardens or orchards
- Other [specify in comments]

Notes: We know from Josephus, that certain radical, fringe groups engaged in stealing food during the siege of Jerusalem.

Is food provided to the group's adherents by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

- No

## Bibliography

### General References

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