

1. Review of Zealots:

- The Zealots were a first-century revolutionary movement against the Roman Empire.
- Goal to bring about the kingdom of God – even if through violent means.
- Demanded allegiance only to God (Josephus Antiquities, Book 18 (23))

2. Review of Sea of Galilee geography:

- Divided Politically –
 - Herod Antipas ruled Galilee.
 - *Gaulanitis/Batanea* – ruled by Herod Philip.
- Herod the Great had persecuted the ancestors of the zealots at Mount Arbel.

3. Zealous Disciples:

- Jesus happened to call five disciples from the village of Bethsaida.
 - Peter, Andrew, James, John, and Philip (John 1:44)
- Simon the Zealot
- Nathaniel from Cana (Kana) in Galilee (John 21:2)

4. James and John:

- Request for power – Mark 10:35-45
 - According to Jesus – the kingdom of God is the opposite of the kingdoms of the world.
 - Those who are humble and serve are the ones who will be glorified in God’s kingdom.
- James and John call down ‘fire from heaven’ – Luke 9:52-55
 - Jesus ‘rebuked’ them. What did he say?
- James and John’s mother asks for power – Matt. 20:20-28.
 - Perhaps reminiscent of the mother of seven sons who were martyred by Antiochus Epiphanes¹ (see 2 Maccabees 7)²
- Nicknamed ‘sons of thunder’ – Mark 3:17

¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Woman_with_seven_sons

² <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+maccabees+7&version=CEB> - from the Common English Bible – a Catholic bible. On Biblegateway – www.biblegateway.com – first select CEB as your translation. Then search for 2 Maccabees 7.

5. Actions of Peter –

- Josephus tells us that the Zealot movement was called by the Romans – a Latin term – Sicarii.³

(186) And then it was that the sicarii, as they were called, who were robbers, grew numerous. They made use of small swords, not much different in length from the Persian acinacae, 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; (187) for they mingled themselves among the multitude at their festivals, when they were come up in crowds from all parts to the city to worship God, as we said before, and easily slew those that they had a mind to slay. They also came frequently upon the villages belonging to their enemies, with their weapons, and plundered them, and set them on fire.⁴

- John 18:10-11 – Peter cuts off the ear of the ‘servant to the High Priest.’
 - Luke 22:49-51; Matthew 26:51-56.
- Leviticus 21:16-23 – no priest who is disfigured is allowed to approach the altar of God.

6. Actions of Judas -

- Based on the mentality of the Zealots, it is likely that Judas was attempting to force Jesus into a fight with the Romans.
- Judas’ betrayal seems to be more than about the money – instead, it seems that Judas is frustrated that Jesus refuses to start the war.

7. Judas “the man from *Kerioth?*” or the “man of *sicarius*” i.e., “man of the Sicarii?” -

- *Kerioth* – a town south of Judea – near Hebron.⁵
- Hebrew *ish* = man
- Judas *ish-Kerioth* = Judas “man of *Kerioth*.”
- Judas is the only disciple from Judea.
- Judas *ish-sicarius* = Judas “man of sicarius” or the “dagger-men.”

³ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sicarii>

⁴ Josephus, F., & Whiston, W. (1987). *The works of Josephus: complete and unabridged* (p. 537). Peabody: Hendrickson.

⁵ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kerioth>