

## ~DAGGER MEN (84)

- The dagger men were members of a fanatical political Jewish faction existing in the **First Century C.E.** that engaged in organized political killings.
- When the Jews rioted against Paul at Jerusalem during his last visit there, the military commander Claudius Lysias suspected the apostle of being the Egyptian who had previously stirred up sedition and had led the 4,000 dagger men into the wilderness.
- And the whole city was set in an uproar, and a running together of the people occurred, and they laid hold of Paul and dragged him outside the temple. And immediately the doors were closed. (**Acts of Apostles 21:30**)
- And while they were seeking to kill him, information came up to the commander of the band that all Jerusalem was in confusion. (**Acts of Apostles 21:31**)
- And he at once took soldiers and army officers and ran down to them. When they caught sight of the military commander and the soldiers, they quit beating Paul. (**Acts of Apostles 21:32**)
- Then the military commander came near and took hold of him and gave command for him to be bound with two chains, and he proceeded to inquire who he might be and what he had done. (**Acts of Apostles 21:33**)
- But some in the crowd began shouting out one thing, and others another. So, being unable himself to learn anything certain because of the tumult, he commanded him to be brought to the soldiers quarters. (**Acts of Apostles 21:34**)
- But when he got upon the stairs, the situation became such that he was being carried along by the soldiers because of the violence of the crowd. (**Acts of Apostles 21:35**)
- for the multitude of the people kept following, crying out; Take him away! (**Acts of Apostles 21:36**)
- And as he was about to be led into the soldiers quarters, Paul

said to the military commander. Am I allowed to say something to you? He said; Can you speak Greek? (**Acts of Apostles 21:37**)

- Are you not really the Egyptian who before these days stirred up a sedition and led the **four thousand dagger men** out into the wilderness? (**Acts of Apostles 21:38**)
- Claudius Lysias to his excellency, Governor Felix; Greetings! (**Acts of Apostles 23:26**)
- This man was seized by the Jews and was about to be done away with by them, but I came suddenly with a force of soldiers and rescued him, because I learned he was a Roman. (**Acts of Apostles 23:27**)
- The **Greek** expression translated **dagger men** literally means men of the Sicarii. The **Greek** word for Sicarii, *si-ka'ri-oi* comes from the **Latin** *sicarii*, which, in turn, is derived from *sica* or dagger.
- According to the Jewish historian Josephus, especially during the festivals, the **dagger men**, or Sicarii, with **daggers** concealed under their garments, mingled among the crowds at Jerusalem and stabbed their enemies in broad daylight. Then, to avoid suspicion, they joined those expressing indignation about the killings.
- Josephus further indicates that the Sicarii took a leading part in the revolt against Rome. In **66 C.E.**, a band of Sicarii, under the command of Eleazar, son of Jairus, seized and massacred the Roman garrison at Masada.
- This band of fanatical patriots continued their defiance of Rome until **73 C.E.**, in which year the defenses of Masada were breached. The Romans, however, did not have to make an assault on the fortress itself. In order to avoid being captured, the Sicarii had carried out a systematic suicidal massacre of 960 men, women, and children. Only two women and five children, who had hidden in a cave, survived.