

Historic Overview: James and John, sons of Zebedee

James:

He was a son of Zebedee and Salome, and brother of John the Apostle. He is also called James the Greater to distinguish him from James, son of Alphaeus, who is also known as James the Lesser.

James is described as one of the first disciples to join Jesus. The Synoptic Gospels state that James and John were with their father by the seashore when Jesus called them to follow him [Matt. 4:21-22, Mk. 1:19-20].

James was one of only three apostles whom Jesus selected to bear witness to his Transfiguration. James and his brother wanted to call down fire on a Samaritan town, but were rebuked by Jesus [Lk 9:51-6].

The Acts of the Apostles 12:1 records that Herod had James executed by sword. He is the only apostle whose martyrdom is recorded in the New Testament. He is, thus, traditionally believed to be the first of the 12 apostles martyred for his faith. [Acts 12:1-2]

This may have been caused by James' fiery temper, for which he and his brother earned the nickname *Boanerges* or "Sons of Thunder"[Mark 3:17].

Legend of St James: St James preached the gospel in Iberia as well as in the Holy Land; after his martyrdom at the hands of Herod Agrippa I his disciples carried his body by sea to Iberia, where they landed at Padrón on the coast of Galicia, and took it inland for burial at Santiago de Compostela.

An even later tradition states that he miraculously appeared to fight for the Christian army during the battle of Clavijo, and was henceforth called *Matamoros* (Moor-slayer). *Santiago y cierra España* ("St James and strike for Spain") has been the traditional battle cry of Spanish armies.

The biblical epistle of James is not attributed to James, brother of John, but rather to James, brother of Jesus.

Wikipedia, James, son of Zebedee - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James,_son_of_Zebedee

John:

John the Apostle (c. AD 6 - c. 100) was one of the Twelve Apostles of Jesus. He was the son of Zebedee and Salome and brother of James, son of Zebedee, another of the Twelve Apostles. Christian tradition holds that he outlived the remaining apostles--all of whom suffered martyrdom--and ultimately died of natural causes "in great old age near Ephesus". The Church Fathers consider him the same person as John the Evangelist, John of Patmos, and the Beloved Disciple.

John the Apostle was the son of Zebedee and the (probably younger) brother of James, son of Zebedee (Saint James the Greater). Zebedee and his sons fished in the Lake of Genesareth. James and John first were disciples of Saint John the Baptist. Jesus then called Saint Andrew, Saint Peter, and these two sons of Zebedee to follow Him. James and John did so and thus rank high among the Twelve Apostles of Jesus. John and James both held prominent positions among the Apostles. Jesus referred to the pair collectively as "Boanerges" (translated "sons of thunder") [Mk 3:17].

Peter, James and John were the only witnesses of the raising of Daughter of Jairus [Mk 5:37]. John and his brother James wanted to call down fire on a Samaritan town, but Jesus rebuked them [Lk 9:51-6]. Peter, James, and John also witnessed the Transfiguration [Mt 17:1].

Jesus sent only John and Peter into the city to make the preparation for the final Passover meal (the Last Supper).[Lk 22:8] At the meal itself, the "disciple whom Jesus loved" sat next to Jesus and leaned onto His chest. Tradition identifies this disciple as Saint John [Jn 13:23-25].

Peter, James, and John also witnessed the Agony in Gethsemane more closely than the other Apostles did [Mt 26:37]. After the arrest of Jesus, Peter and the "other disciple" (according to Sacred Tradition, John) followed Him into the palace of the high-priest [Jn 18:15]. John, alone among the Apostles, remained near Jesus at the foot of the cross on Calvary alongside myrrh-bearers and numerous other women; following the instruction of Jesus from the Cross, John took Mary, the mother of Jesus, into his care as the last legacy of Jesus [Jn 19:25-27].

After Jesus' Ascension and the descent of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost, John, together with Peter, took a prominent part in the founding and guidance of the church. He is with Peter at the healing of the lame man in the Temple.[Ac 3:1] With Peter he is also thrown into prison.[Acts 4:3] He is also with Peter visiting the newly converted in Samaria.[Acts 8:14]

John survived James by more than half a century after James became the first Apostle to die a martyr's death.

There is no positive information in the Bible (or elsewhere) concerning the duration of this activity in Judea. Apparently, John in common with the other Apostles remained some 12 years in this first field of labor, until the persecution of Herod Agrippa I led to the scattering of the Apostles through the various provinces of the Roman Empire. [cf. Ac 12:1-17] It does not appear improbable that John then went for the first time into Asia Minor.

It is traditionally believed that John survived his contemporary apostles and lived to an extreme old age, dying naturally at Ephesus in about AD 100.

Wikipedia, John, the Apostle - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_the_Apostle