



The son of Zebedee (q.v.) and Salome (q.v. Cf. Matt., xvii, 56; Mark, xv, 40; xvi, 1).

Zahn asserts that Salome was the daughter of a priest. James is styled "the Greater" to distinguish him from the Apostle James "the Less," who was probably shorter of stature. We know nothing of St. James's early life. He was the brother of John, the beloved disciple, and probably the elder of the two. His parents seem to have been people of means as appears from the following facts. Zebedee was a fisherman of the Lake of Galilee, who probably lived in or near Bethsaida (John, 1, 44), perhaps in Capharnaum; and had some boatmen or hired men as his usual attendants (Mark, 1, 20). Salome was one of the pious women who afterwards followed Christ and "ministered unto him of their substance" (cf. Matt., xxvii, 55, sq.; Mark, xv, 40; xvi, 1; Luke, viii, 2 sq.; xxiii, 55-xxiv, 1). St. John was personally known to the high-priest (John, xviii, 16); and must have had wherewithal to provide for the Mother of Jesus (John, xix, 27). It is probable, according to Acts, iv, 13, that John (and consequently his brother James) had not received the technical training of the rabbinical schools; in this sense they were unlearned and without any official position among the Jews. But, according to the social rank of their parents, they must have been men of ordinary education, in the common walks of Jewish life. They had frequent opportunity of coming in contact with Greek life and language, which were already widely spread along the shores of the Galilean Sea. Some authors, comparing John, xix, 25, with Matt., xxviii, 56, and Mark, xv, 40, identify, and probably rightly so, Mary the Mother of James the Less and of Joseph in Mark and Matthew with "Mary of Cleophas" in John. As the name of Mary Magdalen occurs in the three lists, they identify further Salome in Mark with "the mother of the sons of Zebedee" in Matthew; finally they identify Salome with "his mother's sister" in John.

They suppose, for this last identification, that four women are designated by John, xix, 25; the Syriac "Peshito" gives the reading: "His mother and his mother's sister, and Mary of Cleophas and Mary Magdalen." If this last supposition is right, Salome was a sister of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and James the Greater and John were first cousins of the Lord; this may explain the discipleship of the two brothers, Salome's request and their own claim to the first position in His kingdom, and His commendation of the Blessed Virgin to her own nephew. But it is doubtful whether

the Greek admits of this construction without the addition or the omission of kai (and). Thus the relationship of St. James to Jesus remains doubtful.

The Galilean origin of St. James in some degree explains the energy of temper and the vehemence of character which earned for him and St. John the name of Boanerges, "sons of thunder" (Mark. iii, 17); the Galilean race was religious, hardy, industrious, brave, and the strongest defender of the Jewish nation. When John the Baptist proclaimed the kingdom of the Messiah, St. John became a disciple (John, i, 35); he was directed to "the Lamb of God" and afterwards brought his brother James to the Messiah; the obvious meaning of John, i, 41, is that St. Andrew finds his brother (St. Peter) first and that afterwards St. John (who does not name himself, according to his habitual and characteristic reserve and silence about himself) finds his brother (St. James). The call of St. James to the discipleship of the Messiah is reported in a parallel or identical narration by Matt., iv, 18-22; Mark, i, 19 sq.; and Luke, v, 1-11. The two sons of Zebedee, as well as Simon (Peter) and his brother Andrew with whom they were in partnership (Luke, v, 10), were called by the Lord upon the Sea of Galilee, where all four with Zebedee and his hired servants were engaged in their ordinary occupation of fishing. The sons of Zebedee "forthwith left their nets and father, and followed him" (Matt., iv, 22), and became "fishers of men". St. James was afterwards with the other eleven called to the Apostleship (Matt., x, 1-4; Mark, iii, 13-19; Luke, vi, 12-16; Acts, i, 13). In all four lists the names of Peter and Andrew, James and John form the first group, a prominent and chosen group (cf. Mark, xiii, 3); especially Peter, James, and John. These three Apostles alone were admitted to be present at the miracle of the raising of Jairus's daughter (Mark, v, 37; Luke, viii, 51), at the Transfiguration (Mark, ix, 1; Matt., xvii, 1; Luke, ix, 28), and the Agony in Gethsemani (Matt., xxvi, 37; Mark, xiv, 33). The fact that the name of James occurs always (except in Luke, viii, 51; ix, 28; Acts, i, 13—Gr. Text) before that of his brother seems to imply that James was the elder of the two. It is worthy of notice that James is never mentioned in the Gospel of St. John; this author observes a humble reserve not only with regard to himself, but also about the members of his family.

Several incidents scattered through the Synoptics suggest that James and John had that particular character indicated by the name "Boanerges," sons of thunder, given to them by the Lord (Mark, iii, 17); they were burning and impetuous in their evangelical zeal and severe in temper. The two brothers showed their fiery temperament against "a certain man casting out devils" in the name of the Christ; John, answering, said: "We [James is probably meant] forbade him, because he followeth not with us" (Luke, ix, 49). When the Samaritans refused to receive Christ, James and John said: "Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them?" (Luke, ix, 54; cf. v. 49). On the last journey to Jerusalem, their mother Salome came to the Lord and said to Him: "Say that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left, in thy kingdom" (Matt., xx, 21). And the two brothers, still ignorant of the spiritual nature

of the Messianic Kingdom, joined with their mother in this eager ambition (Mark, x, 37). And on their assertion that they are willing to drink the chalice that He drinks of, and to be baptized with the baptism of His sufferings, Jesus assured them that they will share His sufferings (ibid., v. 38-39). James won the crown of martyrdom fourteen years after this prophecy, A.D. 44. Herod Agrippa I, son of Aristobulus and grandson of Herod the Great, reigned at that time as "king" over a wider dominion than that of his grandfather. His great object was to please the Jews in every way, and he showed great regard for the Mosaic Law and Jewish customs. In pursuance of this policy, on the occasion of the Passover of A.D. 44, he perpetrated cruelties upon the Church, whose rapid growth incensed the Jews. The zealous temper of James and his leading part in the Jewish Christian communities probably led Agrippa to choose him as the first victim. "He killed James, the brother of John, with the sword." (Acts, xii, 1-2). According to a tradition, which, as we learn from Eusebius (Hist. Eccl., II, ix, 2, 3), was received from Clement of Alexandria (in the seventh book of his lost "Hypotyposes"), the accuser who led the Apostle to judgment, moved by his confession, became himself a Christian, and they were beheaded together. As Clement testifies expressly that the account was given him "by those who were before him," this tradition has a better foundation than many other traditions and legends respecting the Apostolic labours and death of St. James, which are related in the Latin "Passio Jacobi Majoris", the Ethiopic "Acts of James", and so on. The tradition asserting that James the Greater preached the Gospel in Spain, and that his body was translated to Compostela, claims more serious consideration.

According to this tradition St. James the Greater, having preached Christianity in Spain, returned to Judea and was put to death by order of Herod; his body was miraculously translated to Iria Flavia in the northwest of Spain, and later to Compostela, which town, especially during the Middle Ages, became one of the most famous places of pilgrimage in the world. The vow of making a pilgrimage to Compostela to honour the sepulchre of St. James is still reserved to the pope, who alone of his own or ordinary right can dispense from it (see VOW). In the twelfth century was founded the Order of Knights of St. James of Compostela.

With regard to the preaching of the Gospel in Spain by St. James the greater, several difficulties have been raised:

- St. James suffered martyrdom A.D. 44 (Acts, xii, 2), and, according to the tradition of the early Church, he had not yet left Jerusalem at this time (cf. Clement of Alexandria, "Strom.", VI, Apollonius, quoted by Euseb., "Hist. Eccl." VI, xviii).
- St. Paul in his Epistle to the Romans (A.D. 58) expressed the intention to visit Spain (Rom., xv, 24) just after he had mentioned (xv, 20) that he did not "build

upon another man's foundation."

- The argument ex silentio: although the tradition that James founded an Apostolic see in Spain was current in the year 700, no certain mention of such tradition is to be found in the genuine writings of early writers nor in the early councils; the first certain mention we find in the ninth century, in Notker, a monk of St. Gall (Martyrol., 25 July), Walafried Strabo (Poema de XII Apost.), and others.
- The tradition was not unanimously admitted afterwards, while numerous scholars reject it. The Bollandists however defended it (see Acta Sanctorum, July, VI and VII, where other sources are given).

The authenticity of the sacred relic of Compostela has been questioned and is still doubted. Even if St. James the Greater did not preach the Christian religion in Spain, his body may have been brought to Compostela, and this was already the opinion of Notker. According to another tradition, the relics of the Apostle are kept in the church of St-Saturnin at Toulouse (France), but it is not improbable that such sacred relics should have been divided between two churches. A strong argument in favour of the authenticity of the sacred relics of Compostela is the Bull of Leo XIII, "Omnipotens Deus," of 1 November, 1884.