

James, the Lord's Brother

In Galatians 1 we saw that Paul did not communicate with the apostles directly, but he stayed at Damascus for a little while, went out into Arabia, and then came back to Damascus. There he taught the Word boldly and then after a period of three years he went back to Jerusalem. He was there only 15 days and saw only Peter and James. The other apostles he didn't see. Then he went up to Tarsus and Cilicia and from there over to Antioch of Syria with Barnabas and then they came back to Jerusalem when the famine was at Jerusalem. That's when James was killed and Peter was put in jail and released and went to the house of Mary where they were having a prayer meeting and Rhoda answered the door. After that, when Herod died, then Paul and Barnabas went back up to Antioch in Syria. From there he went out on his first itinerary and after that itinerary he came back to Antioch and then went down to Jerusalem for the third time to the Jerusalem council. In Galatians 1 he talks about that first trip to Jerusalem.

Galatians 1:18:

Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days.

He didn't stay there a very long time; as a matter of fact the record in Acts told us that he was supposed to get out of there real quick.

Galatians 1:19:

But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother.

After this he goes up to Syria and Cilicia. In our next session we're going to get into Paul's first itinerary. Before we do that I want to go into some things that you have to weigh the evidence on and can't draw any solid conclusion on a lot of the things. You have to say, "Well, I just don't know for sure."

It says real clearly, here, that the one he saw was Peter when he went to Jerusalem. The other one that he saw was James, not the brother of John because John was the son of Zebedee. This James was the Lord's brother. We want to look at who this was that Paul saw on his first trip back to Jerusalem after his conversion. He saw James, who was the Lord's brother. That's for sure because that's what it says.

One thing you have to be straight on is that, anything it doesn't say, that you read into it, would be conjecture. There are several possibilities but there are some things it says exactly. That you can know. But there are some things, you can say, "It could be this way. It could be that way." This is what I want you to see. The reason for this is; because so many people speculate when it comes to the Word. Instead of reading what's written, they start coming up with all these ideas and they base what they think a lot on

tradition, or what other men have said. We can't do that. It's God's Word. God's Word means what it says and says what it means and we can't read into it.

Matthew 10:2-4:

Now the names of the twelve apostles are these; The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James *the son* of Zebedee, and John his brother;

Philip, and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the publican; James *the son* of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus;

Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him.

Matthew:

- 1) Simon also called Peter
- 2) Andrew, Peter's brother. It doesn't say here, who their dad was.
- 3) James
- 4) John, James' brother. Sons of Zebedee.
- 5) Phillip
- 6) Bartholomew
- 7) Thomas
- 8) Matthew
- 9) James, son of Alphaeus
- 10) Lebbaeus also called Thaddaeus
- 11) Simon the Canaanite
- 12) Judas Iscariot

Mark 3:14-19:

And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach,

And to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils:

And Simon he surnamed Peter;

And James the *son* of Zebedee, and John the brother of James; and he surnamed them Boanerges, which is, The sons of thunder:

And Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the *son* of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus, and Simon the Canaanite,

And Judas Iscariot, which also betrayed him: and they went into an house.

Mark:

- 1) Simon surnamed Peter
- 2) James
- 3) John, James brother; sons of Zebedee. They were surnamed Boanerges; sons of thunder.
- 4) Andrew
- 5) Philip
- 6) Bartholomew
- 7) Matthew
- 8) Thomas
- 9) James the *son* of Alphaeus
- 10) Thaddaeus
- 11) Simon the Canaanite
- 12) Judas Iscariot

Luke 6:13-16:

And when it was day, he called *unto him* his disciples: and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles;

[every apostle is a disciple; not every disciple is an apostle]

Simon, (whom he also named Peter,) and Andrew his brother, James and John, Philip and Bartholomew,

[Cephas is the same as Peter, meaning; stone]

Matthew and Thomas, James the *son* of Alphaeus, and Simon called Zelotes,

And Judas *the brother* of James, and Judas Iscariot, which also was the traitor.

Luke:

- 1) Simon named Peter
- 2) Andrew, Simon's brother
- 3) James
- 4) John
- 5) Philip
- 6) Bartholomew
- 7) Matthew
- 8) Thomas
- 9) James, son of Alphaeus
- 10) Simon called Zelotes (Also; Canaanite. Zelotes means; the zealot, Canaanite is Hebrew or Aramaic which means the same; zeal)
- 11) Judas, James' brother
- 12) Judas Iscariot

The Zelotes was a name of a specific group of people; very belligerent; anti-Roman, anti-Greek, anti-anything not Jewish. They were very pro-Semitic but very belligerent. They were like extreme Jews. They fought physically and carried weapons. When they

opposed the Romans, it wasn't just politically with words like the Pharisees did but they used weapons.

Whether or not Simon was of that group, I don't know. Perhaps that's just a nickname that he picked up. It's possible that he had been a member of that group. The Zelotes was the group who were the main fighters in the war against Rome that started in 66 A.D. that ended with the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. when the Romans suppressed the Jews. It's possible that Simon was of that particular band.

The Sicarii were a band of the Zelotes. They were just the opposite of the Herodians. The Herodians were those who favoured the Roman rule, who supported the Herods. The Zealots were very much opposed to it.

Matthew was a tax collector, very pro-Roman. Simon, if he were a Zealot, was on the other end of the spectrum. It's kind of neat how the Word can bring such extremes together. Wherever the Word lives, it will do it.

Something's wrong. I don't see Judas, the brother of James in the other lists. But I do see Lebbaeus, Thaddaeus who's not named in the Luke list. All the others are named here. It wasn't uncommon to have more than one name. Notice the word "brother" is in italics in **Luke 6:16**:

And Judas *the brother* of James, and Judas Iscariot, which also was the traitor.

It could be Judas, the son of James, indicating another James. That's one thing I can't say with absolute certainty. Leaving the word out it's, "Judas of James." Generally "of" means father. But grammatically, it could mean "brother." There are some other scriptures that point out that James had a brother named Judas, yet you can't say it with absolute certainty because James and Judas were very common names in those days. There is great probability that they were brothers. I'll show you a couple of other scriptures along this line.

Acts 1:13:

And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James *the son* of Alphaeus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas *the brother* of James.

Acts:

- 1) Peter
- 2) James
- 3) John
- 4) Andrew
- 5) Philip
- 6) Thomas

- 7) Bartholomew
- 8) Matthew
- 9) James *the son* of Alphaeus
- 10) Simon Zelotes
- 11) Judas *the brother* of James

This is the only record where it splits up Philip and Bartholomew and Thomas and Matthew but the four are closely associated. This is the same basic listing as in Luke. Simon Peter and Andrew were brothers. We've already read that.

John 1:35-40:

Again the next day after John [John the Baptist] stood, and two of his disciples;

And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he [John the Baptist] saith, Behold the Lamb of God!

And the two disciples [John's disciples] heard him speak, and they followed Jesus.

Then Jesus turned, and saw them following, and saith unto them, What seek ye? They said unto him, Rabbi, (which is to say, being interpreted, Master,) where dwellest thou?

He saith unto them, Come and see. They came and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day: for it was about the tenth hour.

One of the two which heard John *speak*, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother.

Andrew was a disciple of John the Baptist. John the Baptist pointed out Jesus to Andrew and some other disciple. So Andrew and this other disciple followed him. That's how Andrew got to know him.

John 1:41-42:

He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ.

And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone.

That's how Simon got to know him. It tells you here that Simon was the son of Jona. So Andrew was more than likely the son of Jona also. You can safely assume this. Now, there's always the possibility one father could have died and there could be another. For all practical purposes we'll just say that he's the son of Jona along with Simon.

John 21:15a:

So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, *son* of Jonas...

Matthew 4:18-22:

And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers.

And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.

And they straightway left *their* nets, and followed him.

And going on from thence, he saw other two brethren, James *the son* of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and he called them.

And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed him.

You know that Simon Peter and Andrew were brothers; they were fishermen. You know that James and John were the sons of Zebedee and they were fishermen.

Luke 5:10:

And so *was* also James, and John, the sons of Zebedee, which were partners with Simon. And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men.

Now you know those first four were partners in the fishing business. James and John were fishermen. Simon and Andrew were fishermen and it says they were partners. That gives you some idea of their closeness in their associations.

John 1:43-44:

The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me.

Now Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter.

Philip came from the same general area as Andrew and Peter. Again you see the closeness between Philip and these others. At least they came from the same city.

John 1:45:

Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.

If you read the rest of the chapter Nathanael was the one that didn't believe at first, then Jesus said, "I saw thee under the fig tree," in other words, "I knew you when you were born." Then Nathanael said, "Rabbi, thou art the son of God. Art thou also the king of Israel?" [**John 1:49**]

Now is Nathanael one of the twelve? No. He is, by certain tradition, considered identical with Bartholomew. He could be. On the other hand, he may not be. I don't know. I know he was closely associated with Philip here. I know that Philip and Bartholomew are very close in the listings but I can't say, "Yes, Bartholomew is Nathanael." But there's always that possibility. At any rate you know there was a close association between the first five, if not the first six, in this listing, before they became apostles.

John 21:2:

There were together Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and the *sons* of Zebedee, and two other of his disciples.

Nathanael is also mentioned here, where Peter goes fishing after Jesus had appeared twice to them and Peter wants to go fishing and the others go with him. Nathanael was one of them.

Bartholomew is not mentioned any other place in the Word than what we've read, at least not by that name.

Thomas is mentioned in **John 11:16**, **John 14:5** and **John 20:24ff**. In **John 11:16** is where Jesus was informed that Lazarus had died and Jesus said, "Lazarus sleepeth" and he says, "we're going to go wake him up, that you can believe." They thought, "Well if he's asleep, that's not too bad." Finally Jesus told them, "He's dead." He communicated to them that they were going to go down there to raise Lazarus that they could believe. Thomas was the one that said, "Let's going along with him and die with him." This indicated he had some doubt on the resurrection. He also doubted the Resurrection in **John 20** where Jesus had appeared to the others and Thomas had to "put his hands on the situation."

A group that did doubt the resurrection was the Sadducees. They didn't believe in the resurrection. Thomas could have been from that kind of a background; some type of intellectual, liberal background. I don't know. There are some indications along that line. On the other hand, you've got Peter and these other guys that are fishermen. On the other hand, you've got Matthew who's the tax collector, a very strong Roman and on the other side you've got the Zealot, perhaps, Simon, which were very anti-Roman. To bring all these together, only God could do it; only His Word.

Some verses on Matthew are: **Matthew 9:9**, **Mark 2:14** and **Luke 5:27-29**. Matthew is also called, in some of these verses, Levi. He's the one, where Jesus went to his house and had the big feast with the "sinners and publicans."

Judas Iscariot, I think you know a lot about him. He was a thief and yet he was given the responsibility of treasurer. He held the bag. To think that Judas could be accepted in a group like that, only the Word.

Now the other three: Simon Zelotes the Canaanite, James the son of Alphaeus and Judas, Lebbaeus Thaddeus. If Judas were the brother of James then his father would be Alphaeus.

It said in Galatians, where we started, that the apostle James, who Paul went to see, was the brother of the Lord. That couldn't have been James the son of Zebedee. There's only one other of the original twelve that's left, unless he became an apostle later.

Matthew 13:55:

Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas?

There are his four brothers. It had said in the listings of the apostles, James and Judas of James. If they were brothers and it could be the brothers of Jesus. It says that their father was Alphaeus. Could Joseph have had another name? Yes, that's possible. Or, could Joseph have died and Mary remarried? That's possible. James, Simon and Judas are listed and always associated together in the listings. It's possible that Simon the Zealot was a brother. **Mark 6:3** has the same basic thing. Paul's first visit to Jerusalem is recorded in Acts chapter 9 and that's where it says he saw James, the Lord's brother.

Acts 12:17:

But he, beckoning unto them with the hand to hold their peace, declared unto them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison. And he said, Go shew these things unto James, and to the brethren. And he departed, and went into another place.

Why does he single out James of all the apostles?

Acts 15:13-15, 18-19, 22:

And after they had held their peace, James answered, saying, Men *and* brethren, hearken unto me:

Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name.

And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written,

Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.

Wherefore my sentence [revelation, or declaration] is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God:

Then pleased it the apostles and elders ...

Why did James have the final word? Why did he give judgement or sentence?

Acts 21:18:

And the *day* following Paul went in with us unto James; and all the elders were present.

Again, it singles out James, when Paul went to Jerusalem.

Galatians 1:19:

But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother.

Why does he mention that he only went to see Peter, "oh yea and there was one other; James." He makes a point of that.

Galatians 2:9:

And when James, Cephas [Peter], and John, who seemed to be pillars [they're the one that hold the situation up], perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we *should go* unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision.

Why are they singled out, here, as the pillars?

Galatians 2:11-12:

But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed.

For before that certain came from James...

There are indications that James was the one who was in charge of the operation at Jerusalem. But I wouldn't say with absolute certainty, "He was the president or the chairman. Or that Peter James and John were the trustees." That, we didn't read. But there are indications.

James 1:1:

James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting.

Jude 1:1:

Jude [Judas], the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James...

But this could be a different Judas than the one in the list of the twelve. That's why you can't say it with absolute certainty. There's one other possibility, where it says that James the Lord's brother was an apostle. There were other apostles and it's possible that

he became an apostle later. Therefore the James who was Lebbaeus, Thaddaeus could have been another James and not Jesus' brother. But this James, I know, was the Lord's brother.

Here are some scriptures that talk about Mary being the mother of James and Judas who could have been Mary, the mother of Jesus.

Matthew 27:56:

Among which was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of Zebedee's children.

Matthew 27:61:

And there was Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary, sitting over against the sepulchre.

Matthew 28:1:

In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first *day* of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre.

Mark 15:40:

There were also women looking on afar off: among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the less and of Joses, and Salome;

Mark 16:1:

And when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the *mother* of James, and Salome, had bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him.

Luke 24:10:

It was Mary Magdalene and Joanna, and Mary *the mother* of James, and other *women that were* with them, which told these things unto the apostles.

John 19:25:

Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the *wife* of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene.

This is another scripture to consider but I think there are different spellings in the names like: Miriam and Mary.

John 7:1-5:

After these things Jesus walked in Galilee: for he would not walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill him.

Now the Jews' feast of tabernacles was at hand.

His brethren therefore said unto him, Depart hence, and go into Judaea, that thy disciples also may see the works that thou doest.

For *there is* no man *that* doeth any thing in secret, and he himself seeketh to be known openly. If thou do these things, shew thyself to the world.

For neither did his brethren believe in him.

This talks about Jesus' brothers disagreeing with him. They didn't believe their brother, Jesus. But, look how doubtful Thomas was. Look at Peter. Look at Judas Iscariot. It doesn't add anything one way or the other but it is something to consider.

Here are some other scriptures you may want to consider where it talks his brothers:
Mark 3:31-34 Luke 8:19-21 John 7:3-10 Acts 1:14 I Corinthians 9:5 Matthew 12:46-49

Also look up **Acts 15:22-33**. That's one of the men that was sent along with Paul and Barnabas after the Jerusalem council meeting. His name was Judas Barsabas. Could that be this Judas?

What I want you to see is that James, Judas and Simon could be brothers of Jesus but not necessarily. At any rate we know that this one who Paul saw when he went to Jerusalem on his first visit was James who was an apostle and he was the Lord's brother. That much we know.

This is from The New International Commentary of The New Testament:

Peter, Philip and James, son of Alphaeus are always first fifth and ninth in the list. There is no sufficient reason for thinking that James, the son of Alphaeus was a blood relation of Jesus or if the name Alphaeus could be identified with Cleopas. Simon the Zealot as he is called here is called Simon the Canaaninian [Canaanite] which represents the Hebrew and Aramaic words corresponding to Zealot which is of Greek origin. The Zealots constituted the militant wing of Jewish nationalism in the early decades of the First century A.D. It was they who took the lead in the rebellion against Rome in A.D. 66.

Alphaeus, it says is Aramaic; the Aramaic "Halfi." Cleopas is said by Hegessipus to be the brother of Joseph, the husband of Mary and the father of Simeon, who succeeded James as the leader of the Jerusalem church.

In other words: Simon was the son of Joseph and he's the one that succeeded his brother James in leading the Jerusalem church. But that's all tradition. A lot of things you read like that in the commentaries. They say that Matthew spent time in Ethiopia; Andrew did some work in Greece; John in Asia; Philip in Phrygia and Syria; Thomas went east,

some say as far as India; James the brother of John stayed in Judea, that you find in the Word; Judas the brother of James is said to have gone to Persia, Mesopotamia, Syria and Arabia; Simon Zelotes, they say went to the northern Africa area and perhaps even to Great Britain. That's all tradition. Where they went, God knows.

It's interesting what I see in this. Looking through or past the tradition, the Word was spread everywhere. Their vision was: the Word over the world. They saw the Word move in many different areas around the world, wherever they found hunger. The only reason it terminated at the end of the first century is because the work of the Adversary and the lack of the stand of people. They started giving in on the greatness of the Word; giving in on Biblical principles and they started going along with what Satan threw in the way; his fronts, his opportunities, his pleasures, his pressures. So, the great knowledge of the mystery was lost. The hope of the return was lost and so-on. While Paul and these others were alive, they stood steadfast on the Word. A lot of things we don't know about their lives. When Paul went to Jerusalem, I know that James was there and he saw James who was an apostle, who was the Lord's brother. That much I know. The rest; there are certain indications and you can study it a lifetime and never come to any real conclusions but it's sort of interesting to see their vision and how the men reached out in the first century because they wanted to see Word over the world.