



James, Jesus' brother, Joseph's son

James the Just, or James, brother of the Lord (from Hebrew: יעקב, *Ya'akov* and Greek: Ἰάκωβος, *Iákōbos*) is the Anglicized as "Jacob"), was the brother of Jesus, according to the New Testament. He was the designated leader/shepherd of the church in its first decades. He was martyred in AD 62 or 69 by being stoned to death by the Pharisees on order of High Priest Ananus ben Ananus. The brothers of Christ are listed in the gospels as James, Joses, Simon, and Judas as well as two or more unnamed sisters. (See Matthew 13:55; Mark 6:3.)

Paul describes James as being one of the persons to whom the risen Christ showed himself, (1 Corinthians 15:3-8). In Galatians 2:9, Paul mentions James with Cephas (Peter) and John the Apostle as the three *Pillars of the Church*. Paul describes these pillars as the ones who will minister to the "circumcised" (in general Jews and Jewish Proselytes) in Jerusalem, while Paul and his fellows will minister to the "uncircumcised" (in general Gentiles) (Galatians 2:12), after a debate in response to concerns of the Christians of Antioch. The Antioch community was concerned over whether Gentile Christians need be circumcised to be saved, and sent Paul and Barnabas to confer with the Jerusalem church. James played a prominent role in the formulation of the council's decision. James was the last named figure to speak, after Peter, Paul, and Barnabas; he delivered what he called his "decision" (Acts 15:13-21). The original sense is closer to "opinion". James supported them all in being against the requirement (Peter had cited his earlier revelation from God regarding Gentiles) and suggested prohibitions about eating blood as well as meat sacrificed to idols and fornication. This became the ruling of the council, agreed upon by all the apostles and elders and sent to the other churches by letter.

According to Josephus, in his work *Antiquities of the Jews* (Book 20, Chapter 9, 1), refers to the stoning of "James the brother of Jesus" by order of Ananus ben Ananus, a Herodian-era High Priest.

Ananus, who, as we have told you already, took the high priesthood, was a bold man in his temper, and very insolent; he was also of the sect of the Sadducees, who are very rigid in judging offenders, above all the rest of the Jews, as we have already observed; when, therefore, Ananus was of this disposition, he thought he had now a proper opportunity [to exercise his authority]. Festus was now dead, and Albinus was but upon the road; so he assembled the Sanhedrin of judges, and brought before them the brother of Jesus, who was called Christ, whose name was James, and some others, [or, some of his companions]; and when he had formed an accusation against them as breakers of the law, he delivered them to be stoned. (more Josephus below)

Clement of Alexandria relates that "James was thrown from the pinnacle of the Temple, and was beaten to death with a club".¹⁹⁴

Eusebius wrote: "This James, whom the people of old was called the Just because of his outstanding virtue, was the first, as the record tells us, to be elected to the episcopal throne of the Jerusalem church.

[AJ 20.197] And now Caesar, upon hearing the death of Festus, sent Albinus into Judea, as procurator. But the king deprived Joseph of the high priesthood and bestowed the succession to that dignity on the son of Ananus, who was also himself called Ananus. [AJ 20.198] Now the report goes that this eldest Ananus proved a most fortunate man; for he had five sons who had all performed the office of a high priest to God, and who had himself enjoyed that dignity a long time formerly, which had never happened to any other of our high priests. [AJ 20.199] But this younger Ananus, who, as we have told you already, took the high priesthood, was a bold man in his temper, and very insolent; he was also of the sect of the Sadducees, who are very rigid in judging offenders, above all the rest of the Jews, as we have already observed.



[AJ 20.200] When, therefore, Ananus was of this disposition, he thought he had now a proper opportunity. Festus was now dead, and Albinus was but upon the road; so he assembled the sanhedrin of judges, and brought before them the brother of Jesus, who was called Christ, whose name was James, and some others; and when he had formed an accusation against them as breakers of the law, he delivered

them to be stoned: [AJ 20.201] but as for those who seemed the most equitable of the citizens, and such as were the most uneasy at the breach of the laws, they disliked what was done; they also sent to the king, desiring him to send to Ananus that he should act so no more, for that what he had already done was not to be justified; [AJ 20.202] nay, some of them went also to meet Albinus, as he was upon his journey from Alexandria, and informed him that it was not lawful for Ananus to assemble a sanhedrin without his consent.

[AJ 20.203] Whereupon Albinus complied with what they said, and wrote in anger to Ananus, and threatened that he would bring him to punishment for what he had done; on which king Agrippa took the high priesthood from him, when he had ruled but three months, and made Jesus, the son of Damneus, high priest.