

# The Twelve Apostles

## Simon – the Zealot

### Listed Among the Twelve

“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 Alpheus; and Lebbeus, whose surname was Thaddeus; *Simon the Canaanite*; and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him.” Matthew 10:2

Mark 3:14

Luke 6:14 – 16

### He Was Not a Canaanite

The word was Cananaean: a member of a Jewish sect that bitterly opposed the Roman domination of ancient Palestine : zealot.

### He Was a Zealot

“Matthew and Thomas, James the son of Alpheus, and *Simon called Zelotes*.” Luke 6:15

### The Zealots in the Time of Jesus

Origins from the time of the Maccabees 160 BC

*“Be ye zealous for the Law, and give your lives for the Covenant.”* 1 Maccabees 2:50

A Jewish sect noted for its uncompromising opposition to pagan Rome and the polytheism it professed. The Zealots were an aggressive political party whose concern for the national and religious life of the Jewish people led them to despise even Jews who sought peace and conciliation with the Roman authorities. A census of Galilee ordered by Rome in AD 6 spurred the Zealots to rally the populace to noncompliance on the grounds that agreement was an implicit acknowledgment by Jews of the right of pagans to rule their nation.

Extremists among the Zealots turned to terrorism and assassination and became known as Sicarii (Greek sikarioi, “dagger men”). They frequented public places with hidden daggers to strike down persons friendly to Rome. In the first revolt against Rome (AD 66–70) the Zealots played a leading role, and at Masada in 73 they committed suicide rather than surrender the fortress, but they were still a force to be reckoned with in the first part of the following century.

Judas of Galilee (Samala) – leader of the Zealots; led an uprising in 6 AD against the census imposed for Roman tax purposes by Quirinius. See Acts 5:37

Barabbas may have been a Zealot.

### A Paradox in Calling: Simon and Matthew

Simon – a Zealot; despises the Romans      Matthew – a publican; a collaborator with Rome

Yet, Jesus has called them both to follow Him.

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## **In the Upper Room**

Acts 1:13 – 26 Simon is still known as a Zealot but follows a better Master.

“For the **zeal** of thine house hath eaten me up; and the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me.” Psalms 69:9 – See John 2:17

Zeal for a King and a Kingdom ‘not of this world’ – John 8:23 & John 18:36

## **Pentecost**

Acts 2:1 – 6

## **Martyrdom**

Martyred in Persia – sawn asunder (See Hebrews 11:37)