

LIVING GODS WILL

The Apostle

MATTHIAS



Saint Matthias by Peter Paul Rubens

The Apostle **MATTHIAS**

Page 1

Born: Bethlehem
Died: 80 AD, Jerusalem
Death: Stoned to death and beheaded

Also known as "**Zacchaeus**"

He was a follower of **Jesus** from the beginning of the Lord's ministry

He was the chosen replacement for **Judas Iscariot**

The Holy Apostle **Matthias** was born in **Bethlehem** and was a descendant of the tribe of **Judah**. He grew up with the study of religious writings and the law of God in **Jerusalem**. He was taught at the feet of **Simeon**, who is best known for receiving the Christ-child in the temple.

Matthias, short for the name **Mattathias**, means "**gift of Yahweh**." This meaning is fitting, for **Matthias** became one of the Twelve, replacing **Judas** after that disciple's betrayal of **Jesus**.

The Apostle **Matthias** was a follower of **Jesus** from the very beginning of the Lord's public ministry. Saint **Matthias** loved **Christ** and followed the many journeys and miracles that the Lord performed.

Jesus chose **Matthias** to be one of his **seventy disciples**, seeing his purity of soul and zeal for the Lord's work. "... **the Lord appointed seventy others also, and sent them two by two before His face into every city and place where He Himself was about to go**" (**Luke 10:1**).

Many do not know that **Matthias** was originally **Zacchaeus**. **Zacchaeus** climbed the sycamore tree because he could not see **Jesus** due to the crowd of people and his short stature (**Luke 19:1-10**). **He repented of his former life after meeting the Lord**.

We meet **Matthias** after **Jesus** had ascended back to heaven. About **120 disciples** gathered in **Jerusalem** for fellowship and prayer, awaiting **Jesus'** promise of His **Holy Spirit** (**John 14:16-17; Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4-8**).

Peter, knowing the Scriptures were to be fulfilled, proposed that another man be chosen to take **Judas Iscariot's** place among the Twelve to maintain their number and their ministry.

Peter based his suggestion on **Psalm 109:8**, "**May another take his place of leadership,**" and **Psalm 69:25**, "**May their place be deserted; let there be no one to dwell in their tents**".

The Apostle **MATTHIAS**

Page 2

Matthias and **Joseph** (also called **Justus and Barsabbas**) were selected as candidates for this particular ministry, as both met the qualifications laid out by **Peter**.

Both **Matthias** and **Joseph** had been faithful followers of **Jesus** "the whole time the Lord Jesus was living among us, beginning from John's baptism to the time when Jesus was taken up from us" (**Acts 1:21-22**).

The gospels do not mention these two disciples by name, but we know there were at least **72** other men, besides the **Twelve**, whom the Lord had commissioned for ministry (**Luke 10:1**).

The details of **Matthias's** and **Joseph's** faithfulness are hidden from our view. Yet **Peter** and the others were familiar with these men, and their constant, faithful discipleship made them stand out as worthy candidates to "become a witness with [the apostles] of his resurrection" (**Acts 1:22**).

After praying together, the disciples **cast lots** to discern who the chosen man would be, and the lot fell to **Matthias**. Trusting that God's hand was in these proceedings, the other apostles received **Matthias** as the replacement for **Judas** (**Acts 1:24-26**).

Saint **Matthias** was chosen at that time to preach to the **Jews in Judea**, but afterwards, he also preached the **Gospel to the Gentiles**.

An apocryphal story tells us that the Apostle **Matthias** preached the "Good News" to the inhabitants of **Ethiopia and Macedonia**.

In **Ethiopia** the heathen dragged him over the ground, beat him, hung him from a pillar and tore his stomach with an iron blade and burned him with fire. **Matthias** suffered many trials in the name of **Christ**.

One of the towns that **Matthias** preached in was called the "city of the man-eaters." This was a town where cannibalism was practiced.

He traveled with **Andrew** and **Peter** to Syrian **Antioch** after coming from **Jerusalem**. He was in **Sinope and Titanium**, alongside these two apostles of **Jesus**. When he was in the Cappadocian city, he was locked in a prison. However, **Andrew** freed him in a miraculous manner.

Upon being set free, **Matthias** went to **Amasea**. He also journeyed to **Sebaste** and **Edessa** with the **Apostle Andrew**. He preached at **Macedonia** and **Pontine Ethiopia**, based on the Church Tradition.

Although he met several instances that almost caused his **death**, he was constantly spared to continue his mission to preach and spread the Gospel.

One of the miraculous stories involving **Matthias** was when he was forced to drink a potion that contained **poison**. When he did so, he was not harmed, and he even healed some other prisoners who suffered from blindness after drinking the potion.

He was also able to leave the prison without anyone noticing him. Afterward, he headed back to **Judea** to preach the works of **Jesus**. He also performed numerous miracles and converted several people to believe in **Jesus**.

Toward the end of his travels **Matthias** returned to **Galilee** to preach to the Jews once again. The Jews, filled with malice and anger, seized **Matthias** and presented him to the High Priest, **Annas**.

The High Priest, **Annas**, who hated all Christians and was responsible for the death of **James**, the first bishop of Jerusalem, ordered that **Matthias** be stoned.

When **Matthias** was taken to be **stoned** he said to the Jews, "**You hypocrites, rightly did the Prophet David speak to those like you: 'they shall hunt down the soul of the righteous man, and the innocent blood shall they condemn'**" (**Psalm 93:21**).

After **Matthias** spoke these words, two witnesses who claimed that he blasphemed picked up stones to be the first two to stone him. **Matthias** asked that these **stones be buried with him** as a testimony of his suffering for the Lord.

They stoned Matthias to death, and as an added insult, they also beheaded him to express that he was an enemy of Rome.

Such was the faith and conviction of the Holy Apostle **Matthias**. This was the life of a man who lived his life believing and expressing his faith in **Jesus** as the savior. He

"Now let Your servant depart in peace, O Master, according to Your word, for mine eyes have seen Your salvation, which You did prepare before the face of all the peoples, a light for revelation to the nations and the glory of Your people Israel" (**Luke 2:29-32**).

SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE

Acts 1:23 And they proposed two: Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and **Matthias**.

Acts 1:26 And they cast their lots, and the lot fell on **Matthias**. And he was numbered with the eleven apostles.