

**LIVING GODS WILL**

**The Apostle**

**THADDAEUS**



**Apostle Thaddaeus by Anthonis van Dyck**

# The Apostle **THADDAEUS**

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**Born:** Galilee, Judea

**Died:** AD 65, Beirut, Syria

**Death:** Fatally beaten and then beheaded with a halberd

Also known as "**Jude or Judas**", "**Lebbaeus**"

He was the **son** of **Alphaeus and Mary (of Clopas)**

He was the **brother** of **James the Less**

He was the **cousin of Jesus**

His mother was the **Virgin Mary's sister**

He was one of the **original 12 disciples**

**Thaddeus** was one of the **original twelve disciples** chosen by **Jesus Christ**. **Thaddeus**, whose name is also spelled **Thaddaeus**, is somewhat of a mystery apostle.

For one, **Thaddeus** is hardly mentioned in the Bible. To complicate matters, Scripture refers to **Thaddeus** by a few different names.

Jerome, a fourth-century Bible scholar, dubbed **Thaddeus** "**Trinomious**," which means "**the man with three names**."

In both the Gospels of **Matthew** and **Mark**, the apostle is listed as **Thaddeus** (**Matthew 10:3**; **Mark 3:18**).

In the King James Version of **Matthew 10:3**, he is called "**Lebbaeus**, whose surname was **Thaddaeus**."

**Luke**, however, replaces the name **Thaddeus** with "**Judas son of James**" in both **Luke 6:16** and **Acts 1:13**.

And when the apostle **John** mentions **Thaddeus**, he calls him "**Judas (not Iscariot)**" (**John 14:22**).

**Judas** was a popular name in New Testament times. It means, "**Jehovah leads**." Bible scholars suggest that **Judas** was likely the name given to **Thaddeus** at birth, while **Lebbaeus** and **Thaddeus** were nicknames.

**Lebbaeus** translates as "**heart-child**," and **Thaddeus** means "**breast-child**," so it's possible these were terms of endearment given him by family members.

The only recorded words of **Thaddeus** are in **John 14**. **Jesus** and the twelve disciples were gathered together in the Upper Room for the Last Supper. The Lord was speaking to them about the troubling matter of His impending death.

The apostles had questions and concerns. Jesus promised to give them the **Holy Spirit** to help them and to dwell within them. Then He said, **“Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show myself to them”** (**John 14:19–21**).

Confused, **Thaddeus** asked Jesus, **“Lord, why are you going to reveal yourself only to us and not to the world at large?”** (**John 14:22**).

**Thaddeus’s question reveals a few things about the man.**

- a. First, he felt comfortable enough in his relationship with **Jesus** to interrupt Him with a question.
- b. Second, **Thaddeus** wanted to know why **Jesus** would treat the disciples differently from the world.
- c. And third, like most first-century Jews, **Thaddeus** was expecting a **Messiah** who would reveal Himself in power to the world.

The answer Jesus gave **Thaddeus** was simple: **“Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them. Anyone who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me”** (**John 14:23–24**).

Our love for God is expressed through obedience to His teaching. Love and obedience are inseparable for Christians. Those who love and obey God are His children. These children receive the **Holy Spirit**, who reveals Christ to them, but Christ remains hidden to the world.

Nothing more is revealed about **Thaddeus** in the Bible. We know **Thaddeus**, like the other disciples, left his former life to follow and serve Jesus Christ faithfully, enduring hardship and persecution.

Tradition holds that **Thaddeus** preached the Gospel in Judea, Samaria, Idumaea, Syria, Mesopotamia and Libya. He is also said to have visited Beirut and Edessa.

According to tradition, **Thaddeus** suffered martyrdom about **65 AD** in **Beirut**, in the Roman province of **Syria**, together with the apostle **Simon the Zealot**, with whom he is usually connected.

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The **axe** that he is often shown holding in pictures symbolizes the way in which he was killed. **Thaddeus** was **Fatally beaten and then beheaded with a halberd**.

Sometime after his death, **Thaddeus'** body was brought from **Beirut to Rome** and placed in a crypt in **St. Peter's Basilica** which was visited by many devotees.

Now **his bones** are in the left transept of St. Peter's Basilica under the main altar of St. Joseph in one tomb with the remains of the apostle **Simon the Zealot**.

### SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE

**Matthew 10:2** Now the names of the twelve apostles are these: 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 tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and **Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus**; Simon the Cananite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed Him.