

THADDEUS

Disciple of Jesus

BEFORE HIS CALLING

- The Scriptures don't provide details about his life before being a disciple or his calling to be a disciple
 - That means we're left to speculate based on the historical and cultural context of the time
- His life, much like many of his contemporaries, likely centered around the routines of first-century Judea
- He was possibly a common man, engaged in agriculture, fishing, or another similar trade
- While there isn't a Bible verse that directly tells us what drew him to Jesus, his decision to follow Jesus was not just a personal turning point; it was a step into a new way of understanding God, society, and himself.

AFTER THE ASCENSION

- He was in the upper room, praying and receiving the Holy Spirit with the other disciples (Acts 1:13)
- Historical and traditional sources claim that he ministered throughout Judea, Mesopotamia, Syria, and Lybia
- Some traditions hold that he went as far as Persia to preach Christianity
- Armenians believe that he came to their country in AD 43 and was later martyred there

HIS NAME

- Throughout the New Testament, he is referred to as Thaddeus, Lebbaeus, and Judas of James
 - Called "Thaddeus" in Matthew 10:3 and Mark 3:18
 - The New King James and the King James Version of Matthew 10:3 tells us that he was also called Lebbaeus, which can mean "a man of heart"—similar to the meaning of Thaddeus
 - In Luke 6:16 and Acts 1:13, the name "Thaddeus" has been replaced with the name "Judas", so we can assume it's the same person
 - John 14:22 directly clarifies that this Judas is not the same Judas (Iscairiot) who betrayed Jesus
- He wasn't the only disciple to be referred to by more than one name. Such was also the case for Matthew (Levi), Nathanael (Bartholomew), and Peter (Simon, Cephas), among others.
- Depending on the Bible version you refer to, Luke 6:16 and Acts 1:13 might tell you that Thaddeus is either the brother of James (NKJV or KJV) or the son of James (other versions).
 - However, the original Greek text says neither. It simply reads "Judas of James," and this wording has led scholars to conclude that this James was Judas's father, not his brother
- Some suggest that since Thaddeus also went by Judas, he may have written the Epistle of Jude
 - Jude 1, however, identifies its author as the brother of James, while evidence points to Judas Thaddeus being the son, rather than the brother, of James
 - The way Jude writes suggests he wasn't one of the disciples
 - He refers to the twelve apostles of Jesus as though he wasn't one of them (Jude 17)

AS A DISCIPLE

- Though he doesn't stand out like some of the other disciples, he helped lay the foundation of the early Christian church simply by being there, learning, and later spreading Jesus' teachings
- The one time that his words are recorded is in John 14:19-22
 - Jesus was explaining to His disciples that He was going to go away and that He would only reveal Himself to some. Confused, Thaddeus (called Judas in this passage) asked "Lord, how is it you're going to reveal yourself to us and not to the world?"