

# How Did the 12 Apostles Die?



The **12 apostles of Jesus Christ** played a vital role in spreading Christianity after Jesus' death and resurrection. Their deaths are surrounded by historical accounts, Christian traditions, and some speculation, as historical sources are not always clear. Here is a detailed overview of what is known about their deaths based on Scripture, Church history, and ancient traditions.

## 1. Peter (Simon Peter)

Peter, often considered the leader of the apostles, was martyred in Rome under Emperor Nero's reign around AD 64 or 67. Tradition says he was crucified, but out of humility, he requested to be crucified upside down, feeling unworthy to die in the same manner as Jesus.

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## 2. Andrew

Andrew, Peter's brother, was crucified in Patras, Greece, on an X-shaped cross, later known as the "St. Andrew's Cross." Tradition states he preached to onlookers for two days before dying.

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### **3. James the Greater**

James, the son of Zebedee, was the first apostle to be martyred. According to the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 12:1-2), he was beheaded by the order of King Herod Agrippa I around AD 44. His martyrdom is one of the few documented in the New Testament.

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### **4. John**

John, the brother of James the Greater and author of the Gospel of John, is the only apostle believed to have died of natural causes. He lived to an old age in Ephesus, Asia Minor. Before his death, he was exiled to the island of Patmos, where he wrote the Book of Revelation.

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### **5. Philip**

Philip is said to have preached in Asia Minor and Phrygia. Tradition holds that he was crucified in Hierapolis, though some accounts claim he was stoned or hanged.

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### **6. Bartholomew (Nathanael)**

Bartholomew is associated with missionary work in India and Armenia. According to tradition, he was flayed alive and then beheaded, particularly in Armenia, where he converted many people to Christianity.

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### **7. Thomas (Didymus)**

Thomas, known for initially doubting Jesus' resurrection, is believed to have traveled to India to spread the Gospel. There, he was reportedly speared to death, possibly by soldiers near Chennai (formerly Madras).

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### **8. Matthew (Levi)**

Matthew, the tax collector turned apostle, is said to have preached in Ethiopia or Persia. According to some traditions, he was killed by the sword, though accounts of his death vary.

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### **9. James the Lesser**

James, the son of Alphaeus, also known as James the Lesser, is believed to have been the first bishop of Jerusalem. According to the historian Flavius Josephus and other accounts, he was thrown from the pinnacle of the Temple in Jerusalem, then stoned and beaten to death with a club.

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### **10. Jude (Thaddeus)**

Jude is said to have preached in Persia (modern-day Iran), where he was martyred alongside Simon the Zealot. According to some traditions, they were killed with clubs or crucified.

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## **11. Simon the Zealot**

Simon the Zealot's death is subject to varying accounts. Some traditions say he was martyred in Persia alongside Jude, while others suggest he preached in Africa before being crucified.

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## **12. Matthias**

Matthias was chosen to replace Judas Iscariot after his betrayal and death (Acts 1:26). According to some traditions, he was stoned and then beheaded in Jerusalem, while other accounts claim he preached in Ethiopia and died as a martyr there.

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## **Conclusion**

The deaths of the apostles symbolize their unwavering commitment to their faith and their mission to spread the Gospel. Though the details vary by source, their sacrifices marked the history of Christianity, inspiring the missionary efforts that allowed the faith to spread worldwide. The apostles remain enduring symbols of courage and devotion for believers.

## **Sources**

- [fr.wikipedia.org](https://fr.wikipedia.org)
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