



The apostle St. Jude is distinguished from the Iscariot by the surname of Thaddaus, which signifies in Syriac praising or confession (being of the same import with the Hebrew word Judas), also by that of Lebbaeus, which is given him in the Greek text of St. Matthew. St. Jude was brother to St. James the Less, as he styles himself in his epistle; likewise of St. Simeon of Jerusalem, and of one Joses, who are styled the brethren of our Lord, and were sons of Cleophas and Mary, sister to the Blessed Virgin.

This apostle's kindred and relation to our Saviour exalted him not so much in his Master's eyes as his contempt of the world the ardour of his holy zeal and love, and his sufferings for his sake. It is not known when and by what means he became a disciple of Christ, nothing having been said of him in the gospels before we find him enumerated in the catalogue of the apostles. After the last supper, when Christ promised to manifest himself to every one who should love him, St. Jude asked him why he did not manifest himself to the world? By which question he seems to have expressed his expectation of a secular kingdom of the Messias. Christ by his answer satisfied him that the world is unqualified for divine manifestations, being a stranger and an enemy to what must fit souls for a fellowship with heaven; but that he would honour those who truly love him with his familiar converse, and would admit them to intimate communications of grace and favour.

After our Lord's ascension and the descent of the Holy Ghost, St. Jude set out, with the other great conquerors of the world and hell, to pull down the prince of darkness from his usurped throne; which this little troop undertook to effect armed only with the word of God and his Spirit. Nicephorus, Isidore, and the Martyrologies tell us that St. Jude preached up and down Judea, Samaria, Idumaea, and Syria; especially in Mesopotamia. St. Paulinus says that St. Jude planted the faith in Libya. This apostle returned from his missions to Jerusalem in the year 62, after the martyrdom of his brother, St. James, and assisted at the election of St. Simeon, who was likewise his brother. He wrote a catholic or general epistle to all the churches of the East, particularly addressing himself to the Jewish converts,

amongst whom he had principally laboured. St. Peter had written to the same two epistles before this, and in the second had chiefly in view to caution the faithful against the errors of the Simonians, Nicolaites, and Gnostics. The havoc which these heresies continued to make among souls stirred up the zeal of St. Jude, who sometimes copied certain expressions of St. Peter, and seems to refer to the epistles of SS. Peter and Paul as if the authors were then no more. The heretics he describes by many strong epithets and similes, and calls them wandering meteors which seem to blaze for a while but set in eternal darkness. The source of their fall he points out by saying they are murmurers, and walk after their own lusts. The apostle puts us in mind to have always before our eyes the great obligation we lie under of incessantly building up our spiritual edifice of charity, by praying in the Holy Ghost, growing in the love of God, and imploring his mercy through Christ. From Mesopotamia St. Jude travelled into Persia. Fortunatus and the western Martyrologists tell us that the apostle St. Jude suffered martyrdom in Persia; the Menology of the Emperor Basil and some other Greeks say at Arat or Ararat, in Armenia, which at that time was subject to the Parthian empire, and consequently esteemed part of Persia. Many Greeks say he was shot to death with arrows: some add whilst he was tied on across. The Armenians at this day venerate him and St. Bartholomew for the first planters of the faith among them.