

DAVID TATE

WHO WAS BARTHOLOMEW? (NATHANAE?)



BARTHOLOMEW

IN THE

THE CHOSEN

BARTHOLOMEW

ACCORDING TO

THE BIBLE

NATHANAEAL = BARTHOLOMEW?

- The name Nathanael is never mentioned in the Synoptic Gospels. Bartholomew is. (Mt 10:3; Mk 3:18; Lk 6:14)
- The name Bartholomew is never mentioned in the Gospel of John. Nathanael is. (Jn 1:43-49; 21:2)
- In John's Gospel, Nathanael seems to be presented as one of the Twelve. (especially in 21:2)
- Traditionally, Nathanael and Bartholomew have been identified as the same person.

DETERMINING A SOLUTION:

- 1 Both Nathanael (Jn 1:43-49) and Bartholomew are closely associated with **Philip** (Mt 10:3; Mk 3:18; Lk 6:14)
- 2 Both Nathanael and Bartholomew are presented as **members of the Twelve**
- 3 Bartholomew is a **family name**, not a proper name

While we cannot be certain, both biblical and historical evidence would seem to suggest that **Nathanael & Bartholomew are one and the same.**

BIOGRAPHICAL INFO

NAME: NATHANAEL (נְתַנְאֵל / Ναθαναήλ) – “God has given”

NICKNAME(S): BARTHOLOMEW (בֶּר-תּוֹלַמַי / Βαρθολομαῖος) – “Son of Tolmai”

FATHER: TOLMAI/TALMAI (תּוֹלַמַי) – “my furrows” (see Gk. Πτολεμαῖος)

MOTHER: ???

SIBLING(S): ???

SPOUSE: ???

HOMETOWN: CANA (Jn 21:2)

PLACE OF RESIDENCE: CANA(?)

EDUCATION: LIMITED(?)

LANGUAGE: ARAMAIC (very likely understood Greek and Hebrew as well)

OCCUPATION: FISHERMAN(?) (Jn 21:1-3) / **FARMER(?)** (Bar Tolmai)



HOW OLD WAS BARTHOLOMEW?

HOW OLD WERE THE DISCIPLES?

- Jesus was around 30 when he began his ministry (Lk 3:23), the typical age for a rabbi.
- Students were usually younger than their rabbis. Jesus refers to them as “little children” (Mt 10:42; 11:25).
- Education ended between ages 12-15. Some disciples were already practicing trades (i.e. Lk 5:1-11; Mt 9:9).
- As far as we know, Simon was the only married one at the time (Mt 8:14-15; Mk 1:29-31; Lk 4:38-39) at the beginning of Jesus’ ministry; the average age for marriage was 18.
- As far as we know, by the third year of Jesus’ ministry, Simon was the only one who had to pay the temple tax (Mt 17:24-27), which began at age 20 (Ex 30:14).

Most of the disciples were likely young teenagers at the time they began following Christ.

Bartholomew was likely in young teenager (~14-16) at the time he began following Christ.

BARTHOLOMEW IN THE GOSPELS

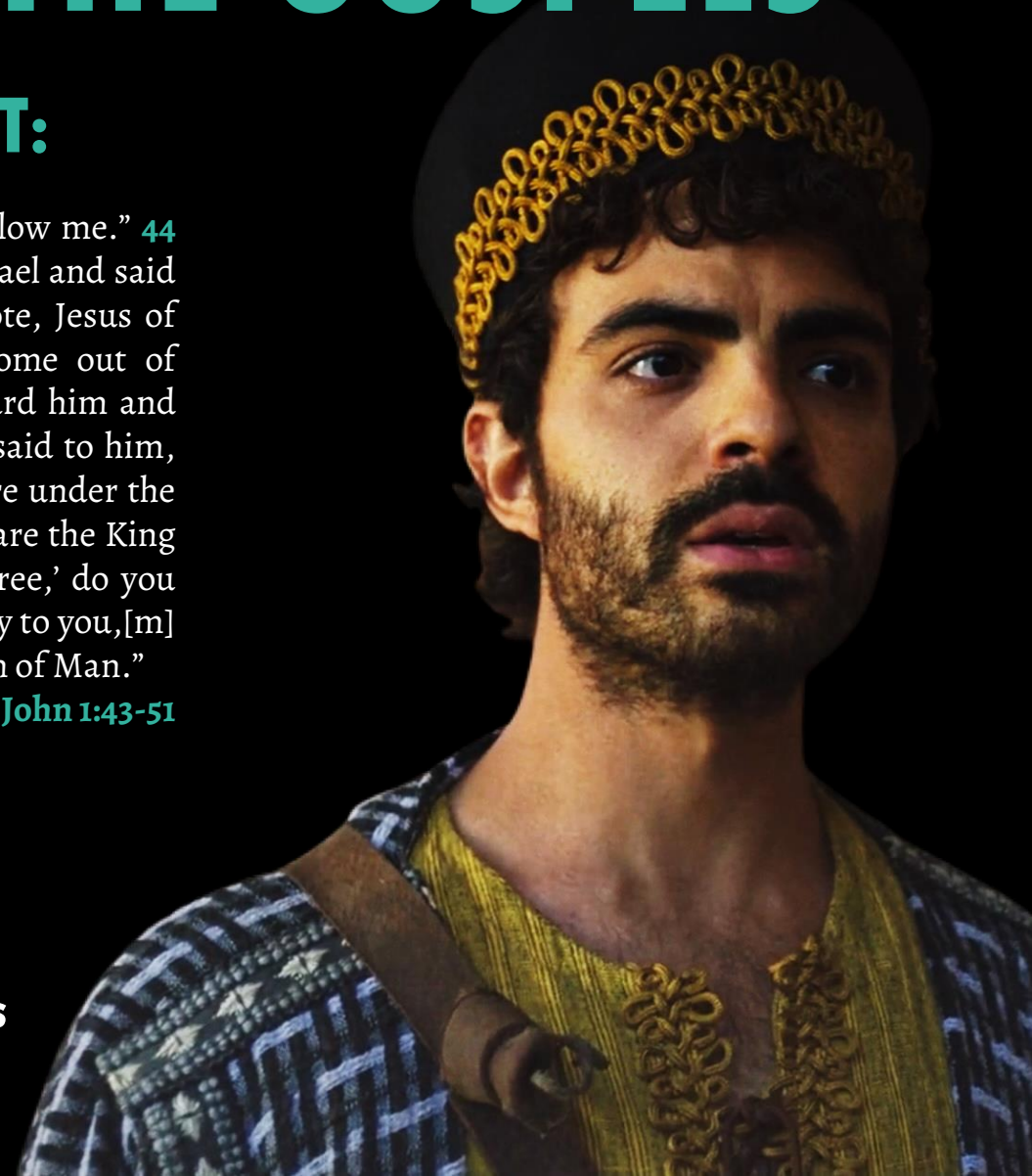
FIRST ENCOUNTER, CALLING, & KEY MOMENT:

43 The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, “Follow me.” **44** Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. **45** Philip found Nathanael and said to him, “We have found him of whom Moses in the Law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.” **46** Nathanael said to him, “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” Philip said to him, “Come and see.” **47** Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him and said of him, “Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no deceit!” **48** Nathanael said to him, “How do you know me?” Jesus answered him, “Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you.” **49** Nathanael answered him, “Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!” **50** Jesus answered him, “Because I said to you, ‘I saw you under the fig tree,’ do you believe? You will see greater things than these.” **51** And he said to him, “Truly, truly, I say to you,[m] you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man.”

John 1:43-51

PHILIP & BARTHOLOMEW

- Each of the Synoptic Gospels link Philip and Bartholomew
- The Gospel of John presents Philip introducing Nathanael to Jesus
- Early church traditions often link these two as ministering partners



BARTHOLOMEW IN THE GOSPELS

LIFE AS A DISCIPLE:

Bartholomew is listed 6th in every list of the Twelve found in the Gospels (Mt 10:2-4; Mk 3:16-19; Lk 6:14-16), and 7th in the list found in Acts (1:13).

Like the rest of the Twelve, Bartholomew...

- ...was appointed by Jesus (Mt 10:1-2; Mk 3:13-16; Lk 6:12-13)
- ...travelled with Jesus (Mt 26:20; Mk 14:17)
- ...received insight to Jesus' teachings (Mk 4:10)
- ...was sent out to preach (Mt 10:5-42; Mk 6:7-13; Lk 9:1-6)
- ...baptized people (Jn 4:2)
- ...performed miracles (Mk 6:13; Lk 9:1-2)
- ...was challenged by Jesus' teachings (Mk 9:36; Jn 6:67-71)
- ...heard the predictions of Christ's death (Mt 20:17; Mk 10:32)
- ...fled at Christ's arrest (Mt 26:56; Mk 14:50)
- ...witnessed the resurrected Christ (Lk 24:33-49; Jn 20:19-28)
- ...witnessed the ascension (Lk 24:50-53; Ac 1:6-11)

MATTHEW 10	MARK 3	LUKE 6	ACTS 1
Simon Peter	Simon Peter	Simon Peter	Peter
Andrew	James of Zebedee	Andrew	John
James of Zebedee	John	James of Zebedee	James
John	Andrew	John	Andrew
Philip	Philip	Philip	Philip
Bartholomew	Bartholomew	Bartholomew	Thomas
Thomas	Matthew	Matthew	Bartholomew
Matthew	Thomas	Thomas	Matthew
James of Alphaeus	James of Alphaeus	James of Alphaeus	James of Alphaeus
Thaddaeus	Thaddaeus	Simon the Zealot	Simon the Zealot
Simon the Zealot	Simon the Zealot	Judas of James	Judas of James
Judas Iscariot	Judas Iscariot	Judas Iscariot	

BARTHOLOMEW'S CHARACTER

- **Passionate about Scripture (Jn 1:45)**
- **Snobbish, Prejudiced (Jn 1:46)**
- **Pure-hearted (Jn 1:47)**
- **Willing to learn, humble in faith (Jn 1:48-49)**

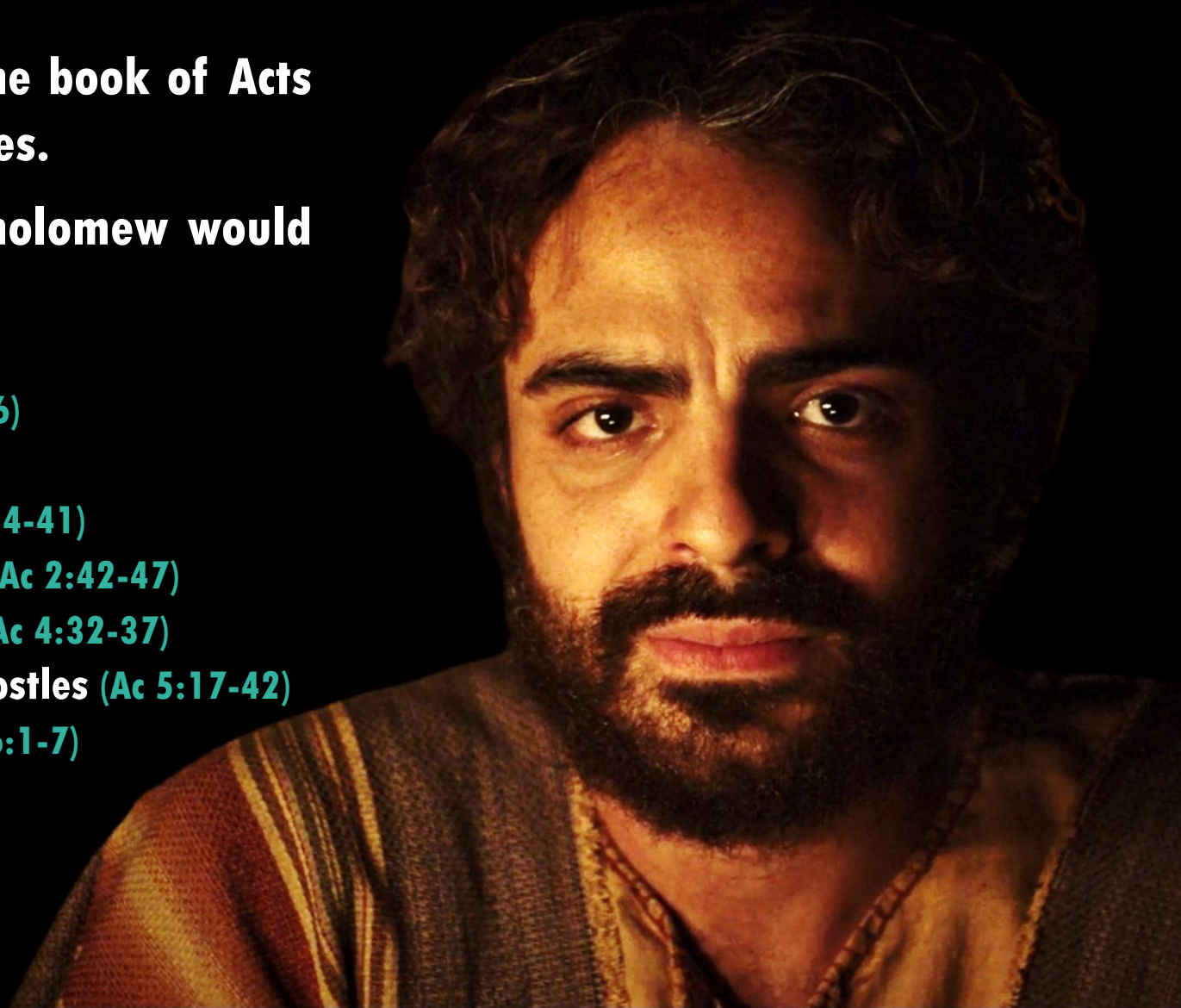


BARTHOLOMEW IN ACTS & THE EPISTLES

Bartholomew is only mentioned once in the book of Acts (1:13), and is never mentioned in the Epistles.

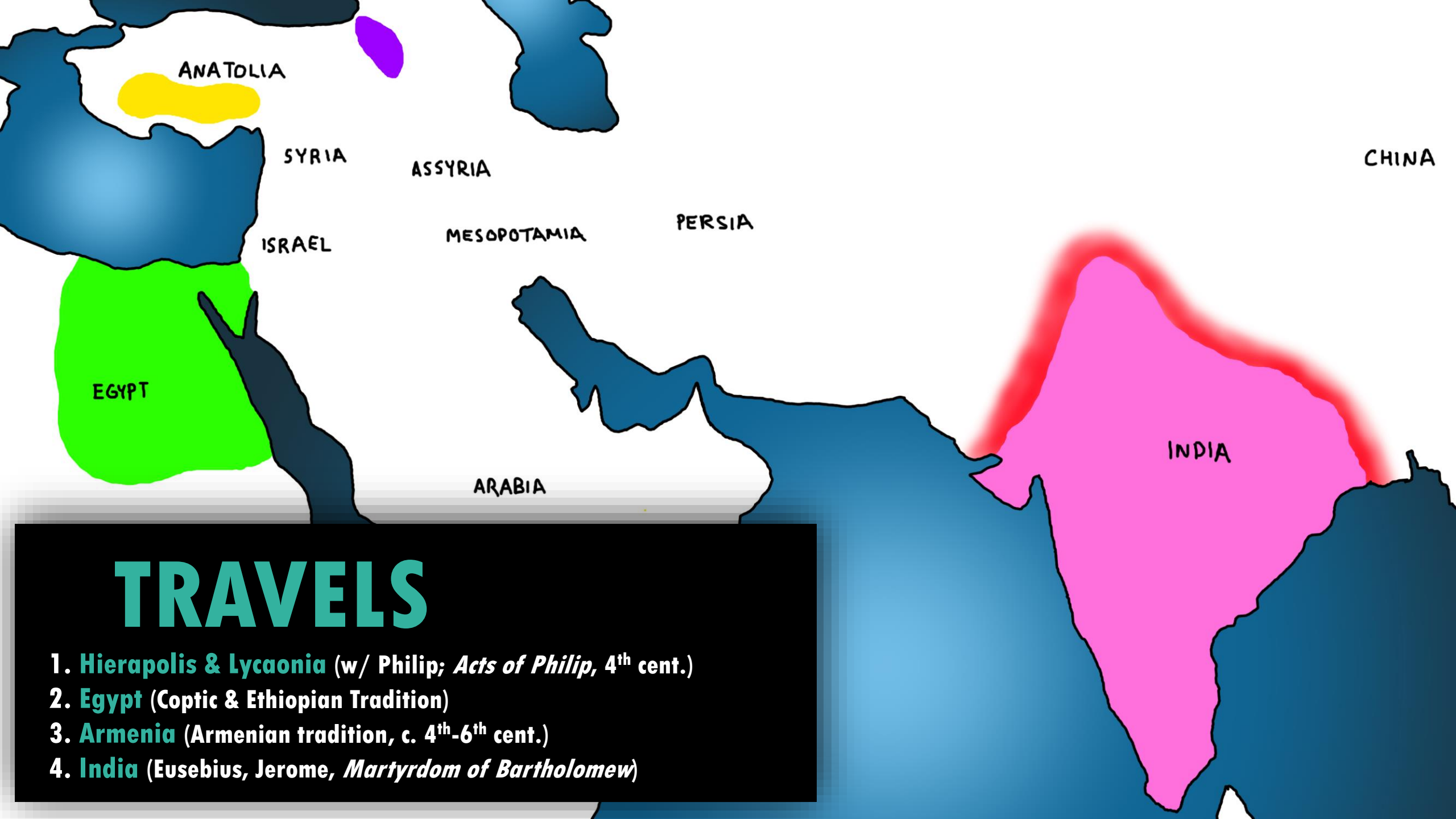
Along with the rest of the apostles, Bartholomew would have been present...

- ... at the Ascension (Ac 1:6-11)
- ... when they replaced Judas Iscariot (Ac 1:12-26)
- ... when the Spirit fell at Pentecost (Ac 2:1-13)
- ... when Peter delivered the first sermon (Ac 2:14-41)
- ... in the establishing of the Jerusalem church (Ac 2:42-47)
- ... as the Jerusalem church continued to grow (Ac 4:32-37)
- ... when the high priest began to arrest the apostles (Ac 5:17-42)
- ... when they appointed the seven deacons (Ac 6:1-7)



**BARTHOLOMEW
ACCORDING TO**

TRADITION



ANATOLIA

SYRIA

ASSYRIA

CHINA

ISRAEL

MESOPOTAMIA

PERSIA

EGYPT

ARABIA

INDIA

TRAVELS

1. **Hierapolis & Lycaonia** (w/ Philip; *Acts of Philip*, 4th cent.)
2. **Egypt** (Coptic & Ethiopian Tradition)
3. **Armenia** (Armenian tradition, c. 4th-6th cent.)
4. **India** (Eusebius, Jerome, *Martyrdom of Bartholomew*)

VARIOUS TRADITIONS

One tradition actually provides us with a **physical description** of Bartholomew:

He has black hair, a shaggy head, a fair skin, large eyes, beautiful nostrils, his ears hidden by the hair of his head, with a yellow beard, a few grey hairs, of middle height, and neither tall nor stunted, but middling, clothed with a white undercloak bordered with purple, and upon his shoulders a very white cloak; and his clothes have been worn twenty-six years, but neither are they dirty, nor have they grown old. Seven times a day he bends the knee to the Lord, and seven times a night does he pray to God. His voice is like the sound of a strong trumpet; there go along with him angels of God, who allow him neither to be weary, nor to hunger, nor to thirst; his face, and his soul, and his heart are always glad and rejoicing; he foresees everything, he knows and speaks every tongue of every nation.

The Martyrdom of Bartholomew (5th-6th century?)



THE FATE OF BARTHOLOMEW

- **There are no known traditions of Bartholomew dying a peaceful death.**
- **There are various traditions regarding the fate of Bartholomew:**
 1. **LYCONIA: Crucified** (*Acts of Philip, 4th cent.*)
 2. **PARTHIA: Put in a sack of sand & tossed into the sea** (*Contendings of the Apostles*)
 3. **ARMENIA: Crucified upside down, AD 68** (*Hippolytus on the Twelve, 3rd cent.*)
 4. **ARMENIA: Flayed to death** (*Armenian tradition, c. 9th-12th cent.*)
 5. **INDIA: Beaten, beheaded, thrown into sea** (*Martyrdom of Bartholomew, 5th-6th cent., Hieronymian Martyrology, 5th cent.*)

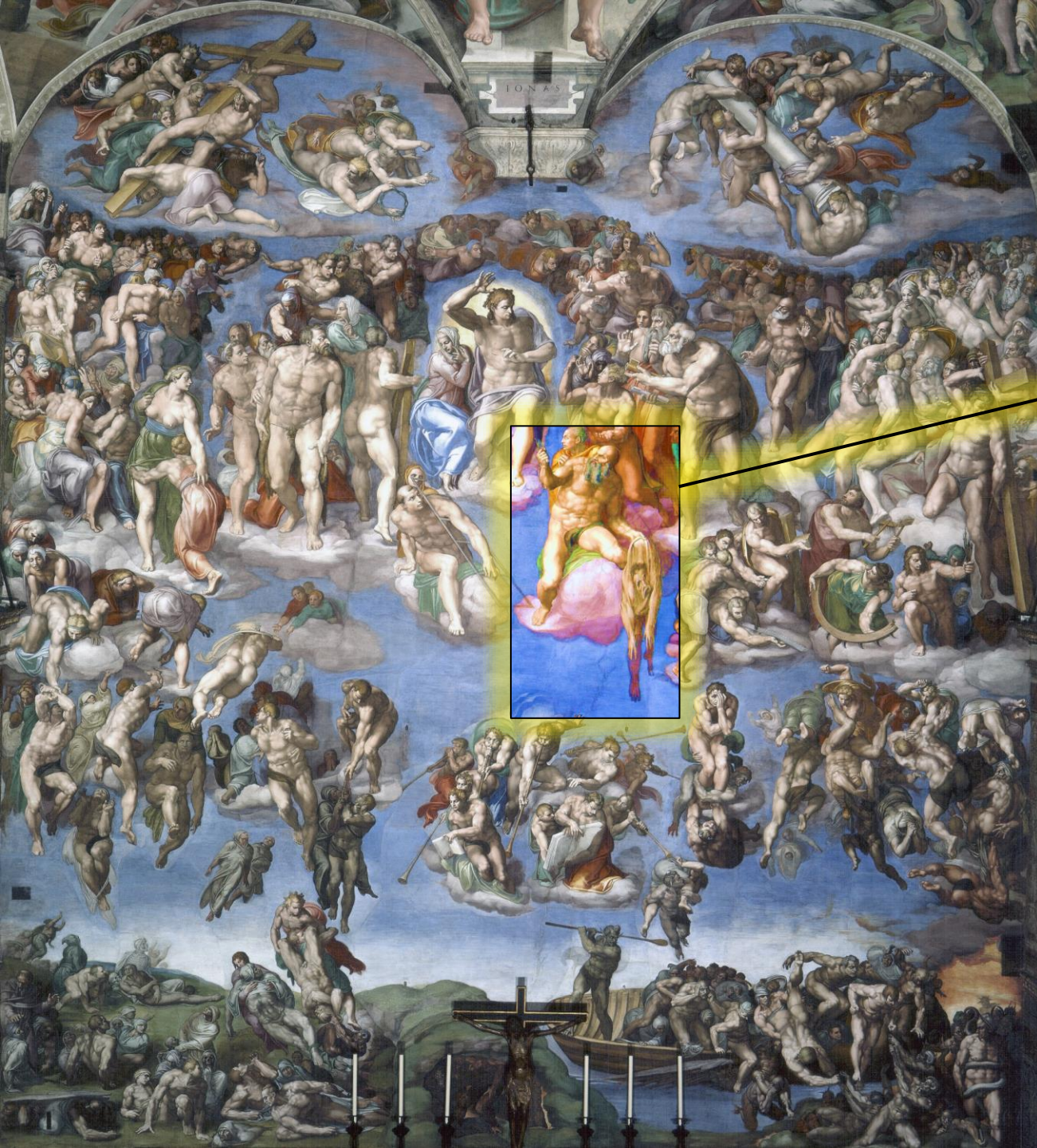
This all being said, we cannot be 100% certain how Bartholomew died, though we have no evidence of him dying peacefully.

SEAN McDOWELL'S CONCLUSIONS:

1. **BARTHOLOMEW ENGAGED IN MISSIONARY WORK OUTSIDE JERUSALEM – very probably true**
2. **BARTHOLOMEW EXPERIENCED MARTYRDOM – as plausible as not**

The Martyrdom of St. Bartholomew, Jusepe de Ribera (1634)





THE LAST JUDGMENT

**Michelangelo, 1536-1541
Sistine Chapel, Vatican City**

Michelangelo included St. Bartholomew holding his own flayed skin. Most people believe that the face of the skin is intended to be a self-portrait of Michelangelo.

