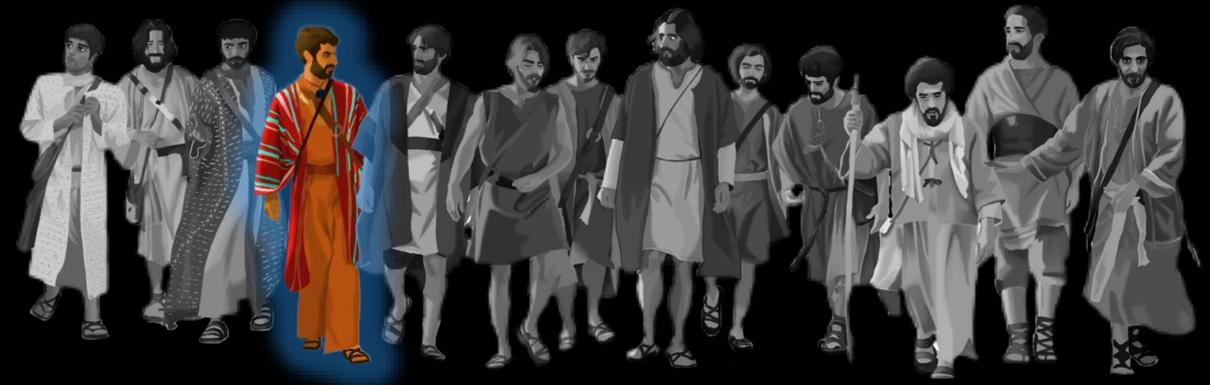




DAVID TATE

# WHO WAS THOMAS?



**THOMAS  
IN THE**

**THE CHOSEN**

**THOMAS  
ACCORDING TO**

**THE BIBLE**

# BIOGRAPHICAL INFO

**NAME: ???** (possibly Judas, according to some early traditions)

**NICKNAME(S):**

**THOMAS** (Ar. ܬܘܡܐ / Gk. Θωμάς) – “twin” (Mt 10:3; Mk 3:18; Lk 6:15)

**DIDYMUS** (Gk. Δίδυμος) – “twin” (Jn 11:16; 20:24; 21:2)

**FATHER: ???**

**MOTHER: ???**

**SIBLING(S): ???**

**SPOUSE: ???**

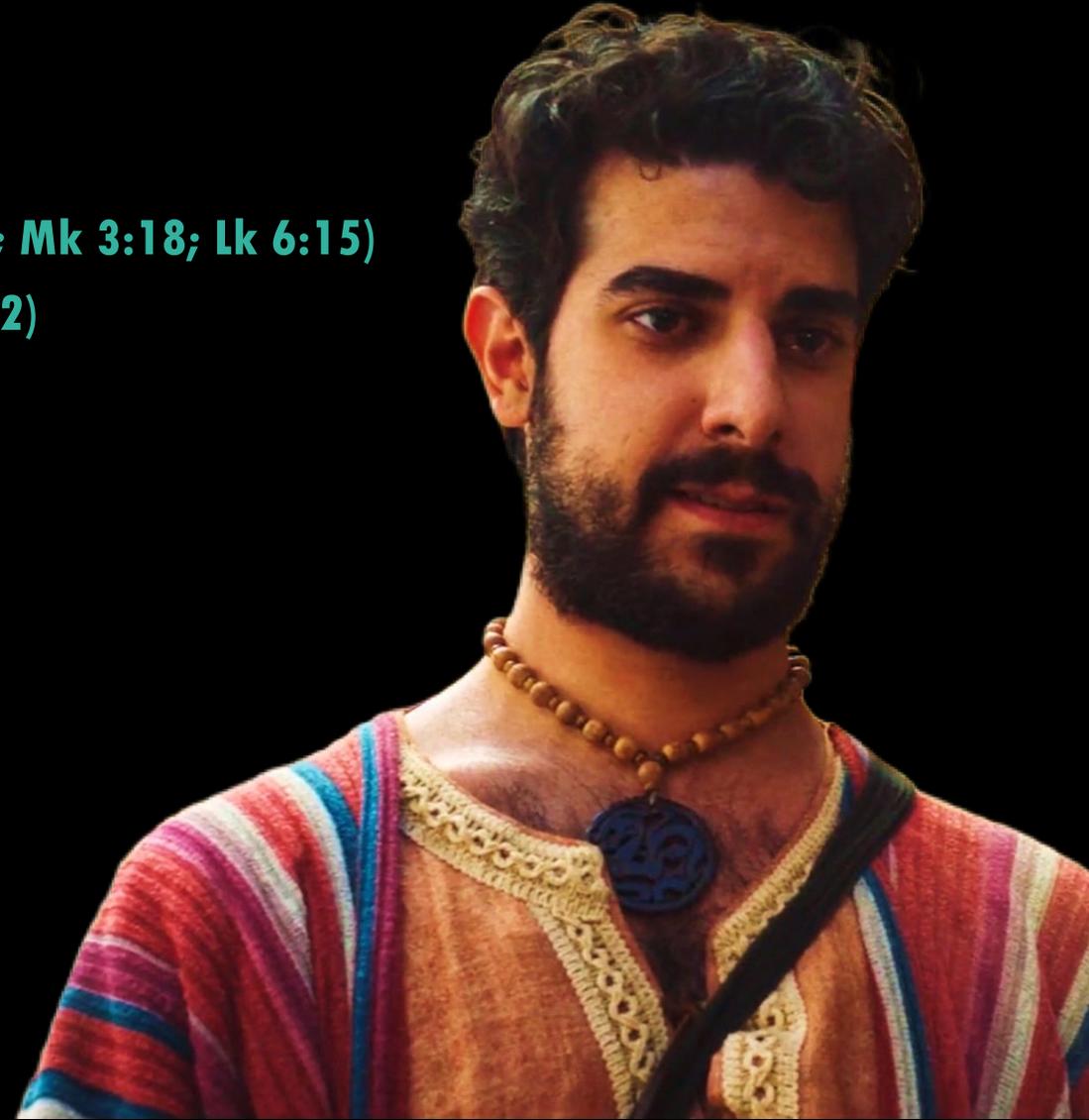
**HOMETOWN: ???**

**PLACE OF RESIDENCE: ???**

**EDUCATION: ???**

**LANGUAGE: ARAMAIC** (likely Greek & biblical Hebrew as well)

**OCCUPATION: ???**



# HOW OLD WAS THOMAS?

## 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.**

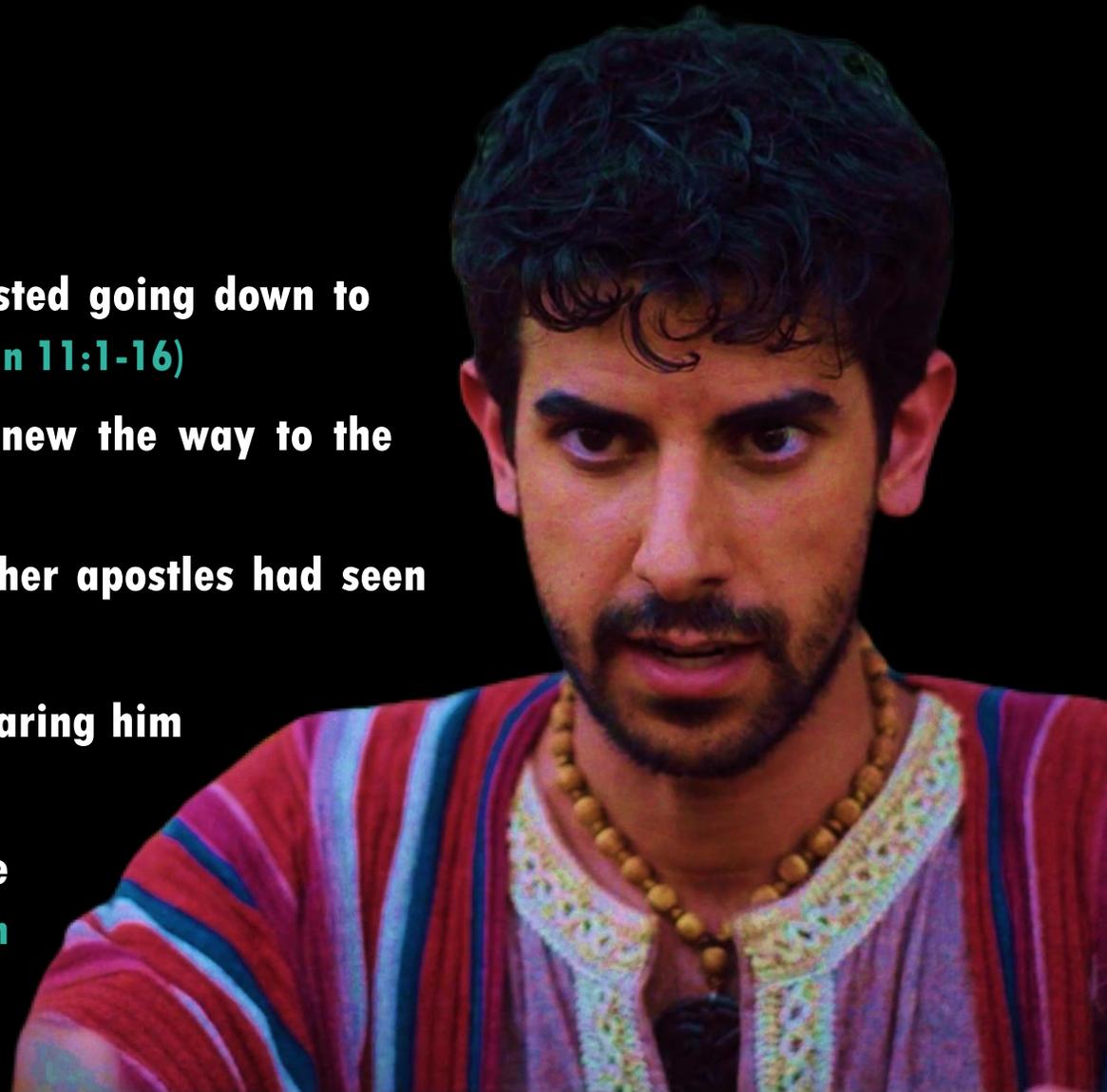
**Thomas was likely a young teenager (~14-16) at the time he began following Christ.**

# THOMAS IN THE GOSPELS

## FIRST ENCOUNTER, CALLING: ???

## KEY MOMENTS:

- His **pessimistic (courageous?)** response when Jesus suggested going down to Judea to visit the family of the recently-deceased Lazarus (Jn 11:1-16)
- His **confused** response when Jesus told them that they knew the way to the Father (Jn 14:1-7)
- His **doubting** response when he received word that the other apostles had seen the risen Jesus (Jn 20:19-25)
- His **worshipful** response when he saw the risen Jesus, declaring him “My Lord and my God!” (Jn 20:26-31)
- His being present with six other disciples when the resurrected Jesus appeared to them again in Galilee (Jn 21:1-14)



# THOMAS IN THE GOSPELS (CONT.)

## LIFE AS A DISCIPLE:

Like the rest of the Twelve, Thomas...

- ...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	

# THOMAS' CHARACTER

- **Pessimistic, sarcastic (Jn 11:16)**
- **Courageous, faithful (Jn 11:16)**
- **Confused, curious (Jn 14:5)**
- **Doubting, skeptical, honest (Jn 20:25)**
- **Worshipful (Jn 20:28)**

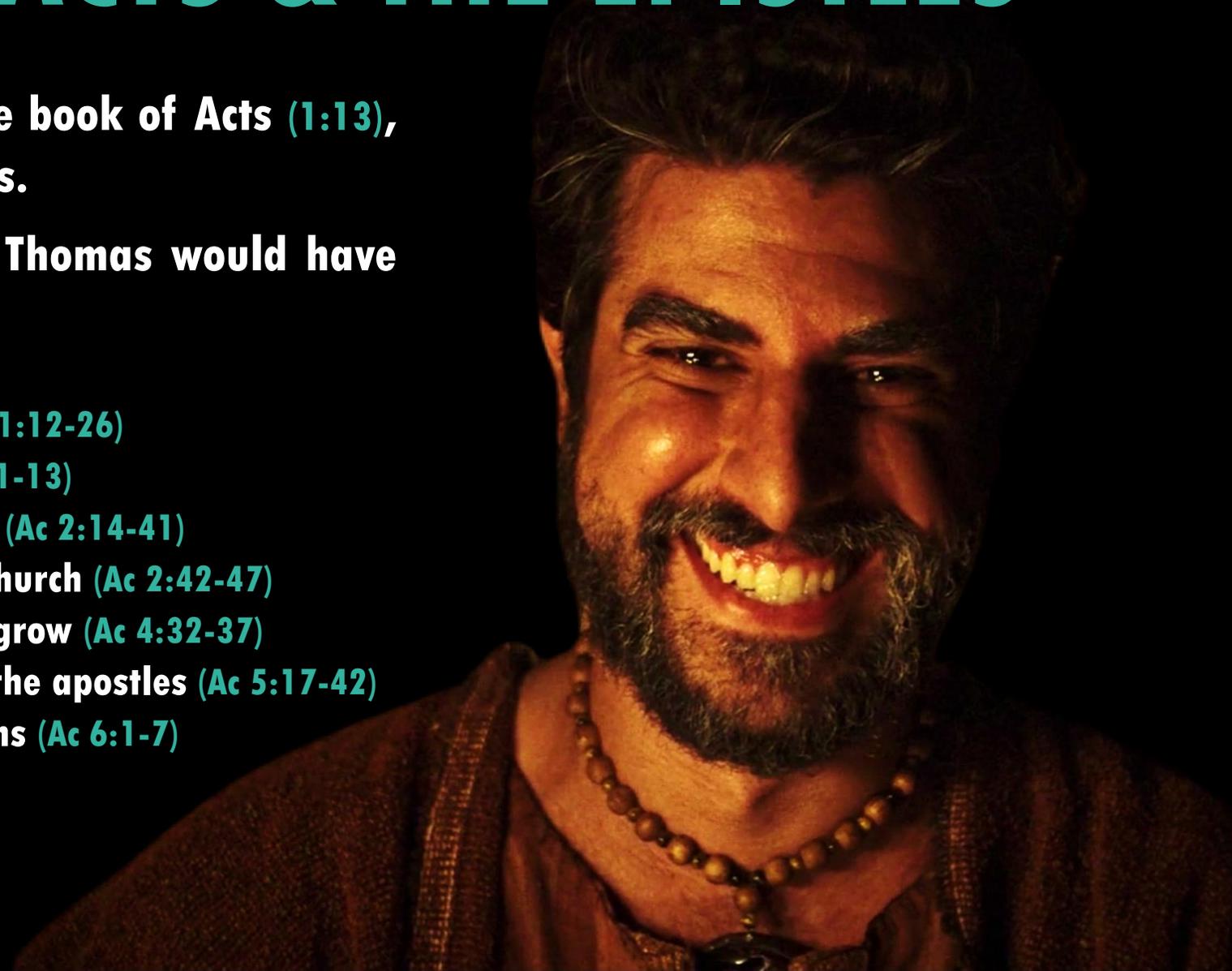


# THOMAS IN ACTS & THE EPISTLES

Thomas 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, Thomas 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)



**THOMAS  
ACCORDING TO**

**TRADITION**

# TRAVELS & TRADITIONS

The Eastern church has consistently held to the tradition that Thomas founded the church in **India** before his martyrdom. Many early church traditions (*Teachings of the Apostles*, *Hippolytus on the Twelve*, both 3<sup>rd</sup> cent.) affirm this. One such tradition (*Acts of Thomas*, 3<sup>rd</sup> cent.) presents him as being sold as a slave to a merchant.

Thomas became an extremely prominent figure in the **Gnostic and apocryphal texts** of the early church (most of which have been condemned as heresy):

- *Infancy Gospel of Thomas* (c. AD 140-170) – details the childhood of Jesus
- *Gospel of Thomas* (c. AD 150) – presents “extra sayings” of Jesus; condemned as heresy
- *Book of Thomas the Contender* (c. AD 150-225) – presents “special teachings” Jesus gave to Thomas
- *Acts of Thomas* (c. AD 200-220) – depicts his mission & martyrdom in India
- *Apocalypse of Thomas* (c. 6<sup>th</sup> cent.) – a Revelation-styled book, said to be written by Thomas

When **Marco Polo** landed in India (AD 1293), he reported that Thomas was accidentally killed by an arrow intended for a peacock (*The Travels of Marco Polo*, Book 3, Chapter 18).



# THE FATE OF THOMAS

*Martyrdom of St. Thomas, Peter Paul Rubens, 1636-1638*

Most traditions surrounding the death of Thomas present him as being martyred in India:

- Killed with spears by the guards of King Misdaeus (*Acts of Thomas, 3<sup>rd</sup> cent.*)
- Martyred near the Little Mount (*Indian tradition*)
- Killed with a pine spear at Calamene (*Hippolytus on the Twelve, 3<sup>rd</sup> cent.*)
- Killed by Brahmans with a single spear (*St. Thomas tradition; also, Edessene, Nestorian, and Monophysite traditions*)

That all being said, we cannot be entirely certain how Thomas died, but the most common tradition suggests that he was **speared to death in India around AD 72.**

## SEAN McDOWELL'S CONCLUSIONS:

1. THOMAS TRAVELED TO INDIA – more probable than not
2. THOMAS EXPERIENCED MARTYRDOM – more probable than not

