



•Considered a myth / invention

- Not mentioned in Talmud, Old Testament, letters of Paul or Josephus.
- Talmud and Josephus list 100 other villages in Galilee.
- The current Nazareth was then thought to have been built much later.

•In 2009, a the ruins of a house (as well as nearby tombs) were discovered in Nazareth and were dated to the time of Jesus (1st century)

- This shows that Nazareth was in fact a real place at this time.
- The evidence now suggests it was a very tiny place, "an out-of-the-way hamlet of around 50 houses on a patch of about four acres" (that's about two football pitches) which explains why people didn't mention it.



•John 5:2.

"Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool, in Aramaic called Bethesda, which has five roofed colonnades."

- A colonnade is a row of columns suspended an arch or ceiling.
- People have sometimes suggested that having 5 colonnades (or 5 sides around the pool) made no sense, and was made up for literary reasons.

•Unearthed in 1950's but it's identify has recently been confirmed.

- In the correct location, near the sheep gate.
- It is a regular rectangular pool, but with two basins separated by collonade.

•This is evidence that the author of John (or his sources) had contemporary knowledge of Jerusalem, before it was destroyed in AD 70. (note also the present tense "there is in Jerusalem").

•John 9:7

"Go, wash in the pool of Siloam"

•This pool turns out to have a long history, but was re-discovered in 2004.

## Synagogue in Capernaum



- Luke 7:1-4

"[Jesus] entered Capernaum. Now a centurion had a servant who was sick... When the centurion heard about Jesus, he sent to him elders of the Jews... And when they came to Jesus, they pleaded... saying, "He is worthy... he is the one who built us our synagogue."

- People used to argue that synagogues (associated with the Pharisees) did not exist in Galilee before 70 AD, because the Pharisees only fled to Galilee after the fall of Jerusalem

- The remains of a synagogue were discovered in Capernaum in the 19th century, but this was indeed built much later, 4th/5th century. However, it is evident that this was built on top of another earlier synagogue from the 1st century, likely to the one mentioned in Luke.

## The Crucifixion and Burial of Jesus



- The Gospels claim that Jesus was nailed to the cross and then buried in a tomb by Joseph of Arimathea.
- People have argued that a victim of crucifixion would not have been allowed to be buried in such an honourable way. Instead, he would have been buried in a shallow (or mass) grave.
- The remains of a 1st century Judean man called Jehohanan were discovered in 1968.
  - He was the victim of crucifixion
  - A nail was found through one of his ankle bones.
  - He was found in his family tomb.

## Names in the Gospels

- Names change from place to place and time to time. The relative popularity of names changes also.
- So it would be very hard for legendary stories about Jesus to accurately represent real contemporary names, and their relative frequencies.
- But this is exactly what we find in the gospels

- Palestinian Jewish names from Ossuaries (bone boxes), Josephus, rabbinic texts. (50 BC - 130 AD)

- 15.6% of men named Simon or Jospheh
- 41.5% of men had one of the 9 most popular names.
- 28.6% of women named Mary or Salome
- 49.7% of women with 9 most popular names.

- Gospels

- 18.2 % of men named Simon or Joseph.
- 40.3% of men had one of the 9 most common names
- 38.9% of women named Mary or Salome
- 61.1% of women with 9 most popular names.

- In other places, the most popular Jewish names are different. For example, in Alexandria, popular names include Eleazar, Sabbataius, Jospheh, Dositheus, Pappus, Ptolemaeus.

- Popular names are disambiguated. Less popular names are not.

- Simon Peter, Simon the Zealot, Simon the leper, Simon of Cyrene.
- 12 disciples.
  - Simon. 1. Peter
  - Andrew. >99
  - James. 11. Son of Zebedee.
  - John. 5. Son of Zebedee.
  - Philip. 61st.
  - Bartholomew. 50
  - Thomas. >99.
  - Matthew. 9 the tax collector.
  - James. 11. Son of Alphaeus.
  - Judas. 4. son of James / Thaddaeus (39)
  - Simon (1) the zealot.
  - Judas (4) Iscariot.

- The name of Jesus

- Jesus of Nazareth (Mark 1:24)
- Jesus (Mark 1:9,14,17)
- Jesus, Son of David (Mark 10:47)
- The Nazarene (Mark 14:67)