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The Problem With Names

At the outset of the program, once the tomb and cluster of burial chambers is discovered, the site is referred to as the “Jesus family tomb”. That is probably a convention for the sake of the program since folks did not go by last names the way we do today. That raises the question about whose tomb it is. It is interesting in the scriptures there is a listing of genealogies throughout the text. It is through these genealogies that the identities are maintained and verified. In other words, their pedigree revealed their identity. In the case of Christ I wonder what his tomb would have read if the claims by some folks are true. Would Christ (a title) be referred to as Jesus (common or familiar name) or would he be referred to by his true legal name given to him at birth? That name was not Jesus, or Yeshua, it was Emmanuel (**Matt 1.23**). Why is there no reference to this name on the ossuary? It was noted that the inscriptions were more than likely intimate notes for family and did not serve the purpose of identification as much as serving as placeholders when the time came for moving the containers to make room for someone else. They might not have recorded legal names as we do but the question remains. The next point that is repeatedly gone over in the program is the statistical probability of the occurrence of these names in the same place. We have the name Yeshua, Mary and Joseph all in the same area. There is another name there but we will discuss that later. These three are significant according to the program. A Harvard statistical analyst is called upon to review this and form a model for the probability of the occurrence. The name Yeshua is assumed to be Jesus. That assumption is held to because he is the son of Joseph (Yusef). It was noted that 4% of males at the time of the first century had the name Jesus and 25% of women had the name Mary. The names from the tomb, Yeshua bar Yosef (Yusef), Mary and two other names are analyzed to determine the probability that these are coincidental and not related to the NT names. While statistically this is possible in the minds of those conducting the research, we have seen that statistics are not always correct and there is a wide margin for error on their part. There remains

an absence of solid proof to support the conclusions to the extent that they would like for them to. Based on this, however, they are as sure of their findings as scientists are of the theory of evolution. The evidence appears to back up the conclusions they have made and insist that others must consider the possibility. The other problem is the family tree. We know that Christ had earthly siblings. In the scriptures we have a record of the names of four brothers (**Matt 13.56, Mk 6.3**). The program not only names his brothers but also his sisters. Now we have to ask where this came from. It is apparent that they are relying on information that did not come from the New Testament, nor are there any credible historical sources from the period that can verify this. So we have names, assumptions of their identities and the insertion of the family relationships. All of this seems to create a solid case for their theories but the proof that is offered is based on an assumption. While they criticize the scriptures for not being able to corroborate the story we read there, we have no credible external sources from the time that are being relied on. There is as much faith at work in their conclusions as there is to accept the Bible record. While doing this statistical analysis, it would be interesting to see what the probability of the truth of scriptures is using the same methods. The Bible has been proven through external evidences historically and archaeology. While these people want to insist that there is another story that constitutes the “real truth” the probability is greater that the Bible indeed is true and they have to consider that possibility.

Next: **Suspicious Sources.**

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