

The Brother of Jesus

And the Lost Teachings of Christianity

by Jeffrey J. Butz

Part 3: The Nature of Jewish Christianity

Chapter 7: The Brother of God: James, Gnosticism and Jewish Christianity

The story of the discovery of the Nag Hammadi. Codices, written in Coptic: *The Gospel of Truth, the Gospel of the Egyptians, The Acts of Peter and the Twelve Apostles, The Apocalypse of Peter. The First Apocalypse of James, The Second Apocalypse of James, and the Gospel of Thomas.*

The Gospel of Thomas

Believed to be as old as the canonical gospels-legitimate fifth gospel. Entirely a collection of Jesus' sayings – many not found in the canonical gospels. Believed by some to be the missing "Q Source" (quelle). Saying 12 re: James: Portrays James as the leader of the apostles over Peter.

Saying 13 re: Thomas: Not Peter, but Thomas gives the correct response and is taken aside for secret teachings. Jesus spoke and Judas Thomas (Didymus – the (Jesus') twin) recorded. Is Thomas Jesus' (twin?) brother Jude? Gnostic writers gave priority to Jesus' brothers.

The Apocryphon of James

The Secret Book of James was known, but lost, prior to Nag Hammadi. A letter from James revealing secrets revealed by Jesus to James and Peter and not to the other disciples. The leadership of James at the end: It is James who assigns disciples their mission territories.

The First Apocalypse of James

The Apocalypse of James in two Coptic translations of Greek – circa third century - based on earlier Jewish Christian writings that survived in Syria. Includes post-resurrection dialogs between James and Jesus (Rabbi). Jesus' mission is handed directly to James by Jesus.

First Apocalypse: Three Parts: 1. Dialogue between Jesus and James (a matter-of-fact disciple of Jesus) prior to the crucifixion. Gnostic stuff: The Transcendent Christ did not have a material body – could not suffer. James' death like Jesus' destroys the power of darkness. James is warned to flee Jerusalem before its destruction (Flight of Jerusalem Christians to Pella?).

The Second Apocalypse of James

Second Apocalypse may be the basis for Hegesippus' *Memoirs*. James is portrayed as the keeper of the door to heaven. Again, Gnostic belief: Jesus only appeared to be human. Assigns the unjust death of James to the Sadducees and High Priests and not the Pharisees and scribes. James is a Pharisee, not a Sadducee.

The Jewish Christian Communities

Three common characteristics of the various diverse Jewish Christian Communities:

1. Faithful adherence to the Law of Moses.
2. The exaltation of James and the denigration of Paul.
3. A "Christology" of "adoption." Jesus was the natural born son of Mary and Joseph – adopted by God upon the baptism by John.

The Gospel of the Hebrews

No copies if this gospel exist today. Written at the end of the first century or early second century, The *Gospel of the Nazareans* or the *Gospel of the Ebionites* is quoted by Jerome: James is at the last supper. Jesus appears to James (first) and broke bread on Easter. Rivalry between the supporters of James and the supporters of Peter.

The Pseudo-Clementines

Disputed authorship of Clement of Rome – end of first century. Scholars: No earlier than fourth century, but underlying traditions contained as much older anthology of smaller works. In the *Ascents of James* Saul (before Paul) attacks James in the Temple – history or just anti-Pauline?

Jewish Christian Orthodoxy

Review Pages 137-138. The first followers of Jesus were thoroughly Jewish and opposed to Paul's gospel. Then what is orthodoxy? And what is heresy?