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Editorial {Inside Cover}

Introduction

The storm clouds of war are once again gathering over the Middle East. Troops stream toward the Persian Gulf to confront a modern-day Sennacherib who has risen out of the sands of ancient Babylon. The rising specter of a modern dictator, armed with weapons of mass destruction and poised to throttle the industrial lifeblood of the world powers, gives pause to even the most jaded observer.

Israelis, Jew and Arab alike, stand in line to receive gas masks and chemical warfare protection kits. Moslems riot on the Temple Mount; Israeli policemen are stabbed by Intifada teenagers; Jewish zealots riot at the funeral of the assassinated Rabbi Meir Kahane - these events press in on the Israeli public, forcing them to grapple with hard questions. "I lift my eyes to the mountains; from where shall my help come?"

The fields are white unto harvest. As the foundations of our world tremble ever so slightly, many begin to lift their eyes toward Heaven and wonder if God actually exists, and if He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.

Now, more than at any other time in human history, the opportunity for world evangelization lies before us. The good news about Messiah Yeshua is of crucial importance for this generation, and we must have confidence that we are together "contending for the faith which was once delivered to the saints."

MISHKAN is pleased to present a closer examination of those saints, the early Jewish Christians, in their historical, theological and archeological context. The last few decades have seen much scholarly discussion on this topic, but little consensus. In this issue MISHKAN reviews some of the basic positions in the debate, and presents some new contributions which we hope will stimulate further discussion. Joan Taylor critically reappraises the ground breaking theories of Bellarmino Bagatti O.F.M. and Emmanuele Testa O.F.M., Franciscan scholars whose contribution to the study of early Jewish-Christian archeology has had wide influence and coverage. We hope to present further interaction on this topic in upcoming issues of MISHKAN. It **{96}** is with genuine sorrow that we mourn the recent passing of Bagatti; his interest in the ancient Messianic Jewish communities of the land of Israel will continue to inspire many in the search for Christianity's original Jewish roots. Bargil Pixner O.S.P., a Benedictine priest and archeologist brings to bear a different approach with a fascinating article on the Church of the Apostles on Mount Zion. Is the traditional Tomb of King David actually the former Messianic Jewish synagogue wherein David's greater Son was worshipped? Ray Pritz presents an interesting analysis of Eusebius' comments on Hebrew-Christians. How did the father of church history perceive them? What were the source documents he used?

Some important books on early Jewish-Christianity are reviewed in this issue. Strange and Meyer's *Archeology, the Rabbis and Early Christianity is* evaluated by Randy Cook; Oskar Skarsaune considers Jean Daniélou's *The Theology of Jewish Christianity;* Darrel Bock weighs Richard Longenecker's *The Christology of Early Jewish Christianity;* Ole Kvarme analyzes the respective positions of Hans Joachim Schoeps and Georg Strecker on Jewish-Christianity in the Pseudo-Clementine writings.

This issue is rounded out by two other reviews of especially pertinent contributions. David Rausch's *Messianic Judaism is* critiqued by Louis Lapides, a pastor and theologian much involved with the Fellowship of Messianic Congregations. *Justice, and Only Justice: A Palestinian Theology of Liberation,* a challenging book written by Canon Naim Ateek of Saint George's Episcopal Church in East Jerusalem, is appraised by Avner Boskey. Ateek's is the first theological analysis of the Israeli-Palestinian dispute written from the perspective of an Israeli who is also a Palestinian Arab.

The Budapest Manifesto, issued in October, 1990 by the European Lausanne Consultation on Jewish Evangelism, calls for inter-organizational net-working and consultation in all cases, and cooperation where possible, in the monumental task of reaching Eastern and Central Europe's Jewish communities with the message of Messiah. May the prayer of all our hearts be that such a paradigm will be imitated in other parts of the world as well. Maranatha!

Avner Boskey

{1} The Bagatti-Testa Hypothesis and alleged Jewish-Christian Archeological Remains

Joan E. Taylor

Joan E. Taylor is a graduate of Auckland and Otago Universities in New Zealand. She was the 1986 scholar at the British School of Archeology in Jerusalem, and in 1990 received the Ph.D. at the University of Edinburgh for work on the Bagatti-Testa hypothesis and the origins of Christian holy places in Palestine. She is co-author of a forthcoming book on the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

Over the past 30 years, numerous books and articles have been published by the Franciscan scholars Bellarmino Bagatti and Emmanuele Testa and their followers, which attempt to show that early Jewish-Christians (or Judeo-Christians - the term is synonymous), with a heterodox theology, existed in late Roman and early Byzantine Palestine.[1]

The Bagatti-Testa hypothesis[2] is that many Christian holy places are genuine because Jewish-Christians identified and preserved sites which were meaningful in the life of Jesus, from the time of His ministry without interruption until the fourth century. These sites were then appropriated by the mainstream "gentile" church when the Emperor Constantine began establishing Christian shrines in Palestine. The Jewish-Christian church was centred in Jerusalem and headed first by Peter and then by James, Jesus' brother. The Jewish-Christians practiced the Mosaic law and opposed Paul's mission to the gentiles. In the war preceding Titus' destruction of the Jewish Temple in A.D. 70, the Jewish-Christian community fled to Pella in the Decapolis, where an important Jewish-Christian community was established. Many Jewish-Christians then returned to Jerusalem after the war ended and established themselves on Mount Zion. The community was headed by Simeon, son of Cleopas, another of Jesus' relatives. The Jewish-Christian church continued in Jerusalem and existed alongside the gentile church there, even after Hadrian banned all Jews from Jerusalem and its vicinity after A.D. 135. The former developed a distinctive theology, used caves for mystic initiation rites, employed a complex system of cryptic signs and symbols and shunned the orthodox gentile church.

{2} The existence of Jewish-Christians in Palestine, their maintenance of Christian holy places and their distinctive theology and practice are all presented as part of a closely-argued package which is supplemented by a wealth of archaeological and iconographical material. At first the hypothesis can appear plausible. However, after a detailed examination of the argument and the evidence, I have found nothing that would justify the notion that Jewish-

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[1] It should be noted at the outset that the Bagatti-Testa school's views must not be equated with those of all the members of the Studium Biblicum Franciscanum in Jerusalem. The Studium is made up of scholars of various opinions. It engages in a broad spectrum of Biblical and archaeological work. Its library acts as a focus for scholars from all over the world and its journal, the Liber Annuus, provides a forum for exciting debate.

[2] See for a summary: B. Bagatti, *The Church from the Circumcision,* Jerusalem, 1971 (repr. 1984), pp.3-14. The history of the Jewish-Christians, according to the Bagatti-Testa school, is also found in J. Briand, The Judeo-Christian Church of Nazareth, transl. by M. Deuel of L'Eglise Judéo-Chrétienne de Nazareth (Jerusalem, 1979), Jerusalem, 1982, pp.10-17.

Christians of the type outlined by the Bagatti-Testa school existed in late Roman and early Byzantine Palestine. None of the archaeological remains attributed to them have been rightly classified.

This is a bold statement, and it is unfortunate that in such a short article it is impossible to refute the Bagatti-Testa hypothesis in any adequate way. In order to do this it would be necessary not only to define Jewish-Christianity and determine who the historical Jewish-Christians were, but also to explore the demography of second and third-century Palestine, to trace the historical context of the development of Christian holy places and to analyze all relevant archaeological material, especially at such sites as Nazareth, Capernaum, the Mount of Olives and Mount Zion. While I have done all this very recently in my doctoral thesis, to which I must refer the reader,[3] it seems better that here I concentrate on looking at the fundamentals of the Bagatti-Testa hypothesis - the definition of Jewish-Christianity and the methodological framework of the hypothesis - in order to establish a background against which their work can be viewed. I will then look briefly at two examples of the application of the Bagatti-Testa hypothesis - the case of the ossuaries and the Khirbet Kilkish funerary steles -in order to show how it is prone to undermine the proper empirical examination of archaeological material.

Jewish-Christianity: Term and Definition

In concentrating on the ethnic and theological characteristics of the conjectural group it calls "Jewish-Christian," the Bagatti-Testa school stands very firmly in the tradition of Jean Daniélou.[4] Daniélou attempted to define a kind of Jewish-Christian thought which expressed itself in forms borrowed from Judaism. The main criteria he used to establish a piece of literature as Jewish-Christian were: a date prior to the middle of the second century, a literary genre popular in Judaism and the presence of ideas, **{3}** notably those of apocalyptic literature, which he thought characteristic of Jewish-Christianity.[5] Since it was not necessary to apply all criteria simultaneously, Daniélou was able to classify a text as Jewish-Christian on the basis that it showed, for example, liberty in its use of biblical citations, an allegorical exegesis and an angelomorphic Christology.[6] As R. A. Kraft has pointed out, this approach was undertaken without consideration of whether any historical groups consciously adhered to such a theology. Daniélou's argument was circular: the theology became the evidence for positing the existence of historical groups, while the groups' existence became the rationale for introducing the theology.[7] Many scholars now ask whether Daniélou's approach has obscured historical realities rather than illuminated them. Should Jewish-Christians be defined, primarily, on the basis of a peculiar theology?

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[3] Joan E. Taylor, A Critical Investigation of Archaeological Material assigned to Palestinian Jewish-Christians of the Roman and Byzantine Periods, Ph.D. thesis submitted to the University of Edinburgh, August 1989.

[4] J. Daniélou, Théologie du Judéo-Christianisme (Hist. de doctrines chrétiennes avant Nicée 1), Tournai, 1958; Eng. transl. by J. A. Baker, The Theology of Jewish Christianity, London, 1964.

[5] Daniélou, Eng. transl., p.11.

[6] J. Daniélou, "Le traite de centesima, sexagesima, tricesima et le judéo-christianisme latin avant Tertullian", *Vigilae Christianae (VC)* 25, 1971, pp.171-181.

[7] R. A. Kraft, "In Search of 'Jewish Christianity' and its 'Theology', Problems of Definition and Methodology," *Recherches de Science Religieuses (RSR)* 60, 1972, pp.81-96, at p.86.

In the world of Jewish-Christian scholarship, terminological chaos abounds. For some, Jewish-Christians are all those of Jewish race who embrace Christianity; to others, the term should encompass only one or two of the heretical groups mentioned by the Church Fathers, the Ebionites, for example, or the Nazarenes.[8] Many scholars today find the notion of a "Jewish" Christianity standing apart from the "gentile" church inadequate. Certainly, there is nothing ancient about the idea of the two streams. It originated only 160 years ago in the work of the Tübingen School, and is not found in ancient sources. Some may even find in this German innovation a dangerous tendency that would later culminate in the anti-Semitic "German Christian" church of the Third Reich, in which "Jewish" elements were expunged from the "pure" gospel message.

F. C. Baur, who initiated the Tübingen School's notion, saw a grave conflict between a "Jewish" Christianity led by Peter, and a gentile Christianity led by Paul, standing behind the gloss of Acts.[9] Already in 1886, W. A. Hilgenfeld modified Baur by pointing out the varieties of thought among the Urapostel.[10] Indeed, Baur's determination of Jewish and gentile Christianity has long been recognized as being too simplistic a model, but it is still considered useful to hold on to the concept of these two streams in the early period. However, as R. E. Brown has argued, Jewish culture and Hellenistic culture were not mutually exclusive milieux. Consequently a distinction between a Jewish and a gentile Christianity on cultural or theological terms is a false one.[11]

The beliefs and practices of Jews within the early Church would have varied as much as did those of Christian gentiles. There is no reason to doubt that both groups participated in the full spectrum of possible attitudes. There is no sure way of dividing the Christian Jews from the gentiles on theological terms. Simply in regard to the Jewish law, some Jews and their gentile converts appear to have steadfastly followed Jewish **{4}** practice, the דת משה ויהודית *(dat Moshe wiyhudit) (m. Ket. 7:6):* Sabbath observance, customs, festivals, food laws, circumcision of sons (following the "circumcision party"). Other Jews and their gentile

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[8] For a survey of what has been written about Jewish-Christianity up to 1972, see: B. Malina, "Jewish Christianity: A Select Bibliography", *Australian Journal of Biblical Archeology (AJBA) 1,* 1973, pp.60-65; and see also: idem, "Jewish Christianity or Christian Judaism: Toward a Hypothetical Definition", *Journal for the Study of Judaism (JSJ)* 7, 1976, pp.46-57; S. K. Riegel, "Jewish Christianity: Definition and Terminology", *New Testament Studies (NTS)* 24, 1977-78, pp.410-415; R. Murray, "Defining Judaeo-Christianity", Heythrop Journal 15, 1974, pp.303-310; Jews, Hebrews and Christians: Some Neglected Distinctions", *Novum Testamentum (NT)* 24, 1982, pp.194-208; G. Quispel, "The Discussion of Judaic Christianity", VC 22, 1968, pp.81-93; J. Munck, "Jewish Christianity in Post-Apostolic Times", *NTS* 6, 1959-60, pp.103-116; A. F. J. Klijn, "The Study of Jewish Christianity", NTS 20,19734, pp.419-431; Kraft, "In Search of 'Jewish Christianity'", and his review in *Journal of Biblical Literature (JBL)* 79, 1960, pp.91-94; J. G. Gager, "Some Attempts to Label the Oracular Sibyllina", *Harvard Theological Review (HTR)* 65, 1972, pp.91-97.

[9] F. C. Baur, "Die Christuspartei in der korinthischen Gemeinde, der Gegensatz des petrinischen und paulinischen Christentums in der ältesten Kirche, der Apostel Paulus in Rom", Tübinger Zeitschrift für Theologie 5:4, 1831, pp.61-206. Baur's understanding of the dichotomy is reflected by many modern writers. J. B. Tyson, for example, distinguishes between Jewish-Christians, who believed Jesus became Messiah only at the time of his resurrection, and Gentile Christians, who understood him to be the Son of God who descended to earth and was at his resurrection restored to divine status *(A Study in Early Christianity,* New York, 1973, pp.312-316). Such simplifications owe much to Baur.

[10] A. Hilgenfeld, *Judentum und Judenchristentum,* Leipzig, 1886.

[11] R. E. Brown, "Not Jewish Christianity and Gentile Christianity but types of Jewish/Gentile Christianity", *Catholic Biblical Quarterly (CBQ)* 45, 1983, pp.74-79; R. E. Brown and E. Meier, *Antioch and Rome,* London, 1983, pp.1-9.

converts rejected most Jewish practice as obsolete under the new covenant (Paul). Still more stood somewhere between the two positions (Peter and James). For my own part, in seeking to find a workable definition of Jewish-Christianity, I began to recognize that if Jewish-Christianity were to be defined as encompassing all Jews who were also Christians, then the term would be meaningless.[12] To have any meaning, the term must refer not only to ethnic Jews but those who, with their gentile converts, upheld the practise of Judaism. Jewish-Christians were those Jews who maintained a Jewish lifestyle beyond the point, early in the second century, when most Jews in the Church found it unnecessary to sustain this lifestyle. As Ignatius wrote, c. A.D. 110-115: "We have seen how former adherents of the ancient customs have since attained to a new hope; so that they have given up keeping the sabbath, and now order their lives by the Lord's Day instead" *(Magnes.* ix). Some Jews did not abandon the Sabbath as blithely as Ignatius' words might suggest. However, major theological differences between groups that maintained Jewish traditions and those that abandoned it are impossible to determine. Until the middle of the second century, Jewish-Christians appear to have been generally accepted in the Church despite their increasingly marginalized position. For example, Justin Martyr (c. A.D. 160) finds no quarrel with Jewish-Christians who do not attempt to Judaize communities that do not practise a Jewish lifestyle *(Dial.* xlvii, cf. xlvi.l-2), though he admits that some of his colleagues object to them.

After Justin, Jewish-Christians, defined as groups of Christian Jews and their converts who upheld the Mosaic customs, are no longer described in surviving literature as accepted within the catholic Church. Celsus (c. A.D. 178) would characterize Jews who believed in Christ as having left the ancestral law, deserting to another name and another life (Origen, *Contra Celsum ii.1).*

In abandoning a Jewish lifestyle, Jews followed Paul. His campaign against the maintenance of Jewish observance was a *leitmotiv* of his mission. To Paul, Jewish practice was irrelevant under the new covenant in which, "There is neither Jew nor Greek" (Gal. 3:24). He would understand the Church as the new Israel in which all were Abraham's seed (Gal. 3:29) and **{5}** would speak of his "former life in Judaism"(Gal. 1:13); the law was obsolete. Paul was therefore not a Jewish-Christian, properly speaking, even though a Christian Jew. Ethnicity alone cannot be a criterion for determining whether a person is a Jewish-Christian. The history of Christianity is littered with examples of Jews who converted to Christianity and ceased to maintain their Jewish identity. Jerome speaks of "a believing brother who had been a Jew" *(Ep.* cxxv.l2). The Theodosian Code records laws, which forbid harassment of Jews who fled Judaism "and resorted to the worship of God" (e.g. xvi.8.1, A.D. 315/339; cf. xvi.8.5, A.D. 335; xvi.8.28, A.D. 426).

Any attempt to define Jewish-Christianity by theology alone is doomed to fail. The theological positions of Jewish-Christian groups varied considerably, making a distinctive "Jewish" theology as defined by some modern scholars, arbitrary, since all the main beliefs of early Christianity are grounded in post-exilic Jewish thought. Christianity is the child of Judaism. The very idea of a Christ is a Jewish one. The Christian God is the Jewish God.

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[12] It is easily replaced by the simple term "Christian", since the adjective "Jewish" serves no useful purpose, see Klijn, p.426.

During the late second to fourth centuries the Church Fathers condemned groups who sustained Jewish observances, but they tended to be loose in their descriptions of such groups. A. F. J. Klijn and G. J. Reinink's analysis of the relevant patristic texts shows that these writers tended to refer to anything that was perceived as "Jewish" in some way as "Ebionite," and went much by hearsay and what others before them had written.[13] This makes heresiological study of the groups mentioned in such texts an extremely complex field, since what might be termed "Ebionite" by one writer is not necessarily what is referred to as "Ebionite" by the next. While a Jewish-Christian sect of the Ebionites probably existed in the late Roman world, we have to allow for Jerome's pejorative use of the term *(in Esa.* cxvi.20) to refer to Christian millenialists (cf. *in Esa. Prol. xviii; in Zech.* xiv.9-11; *in Zeph.* iii.8-9), a category which includes such notables as Tertullian, Irenaeus, Victorinus, Lactantius and Apollinaris.[14] They were by no means Jewish-Christians, but simply Christians who believed that God's holy ones would be physically gathered together in Jerusalem in a time of peace which would last 1000 years. Since this was perceived by the orthodox as a "Jewish" idea, Jerome would label them *Ebionitae.*

Behind the patristic term "Ebionites" lurk the "Jewish-Christian" groups of modern scholarship, and yet the tendency manifested by the Church Fathers to mass these groups together to form a precise identifiable heresy needs to be resisted. Jewish-Christians were not all sectarian Ebionites. They may not have given themselves a sectarian name. Some of the "heretics" described in the third-century Syriac *Didascalia Apostolorum* are, for example, clearly Jewish-Christians *(Didasc. xxiii-xxvi)* but their **{6}** opponents in the "catholic church, holy and perfect" *(Didasc. ix)* know of no neat title under which they could be defined and no founding heresiarch who could be denounced; only that they were wrong to observe Jewish practice food laws, circumcisions of sons and hygiene laws.[15]

Other groups described by the Church Fathers under different titles but with the common attribute of somehow following Jewish customs (or being influenced by Ebionites) may not have been Jewish-Christian or have even existed at all. Frank Williams has pointed out that a "sect" to Epiphanius meant anything from an organized church to a school of thought, or a tendency manifested by some exegetes.[16] He can then speak of "Origenists" when there was

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[13] A. F. J. Klijn and G. J. Reinink, *Patristic Evidence for Jewish-Christian Sects,* Leiden, 1973.

[14] See R. L. Wilken, "The Restoration of Israel in Biblical Prophecy" in J. Neusner and E. S. Frerichs (eds), *To See Ourselves as Others See Us,* Chico, Ca., 1985, pp.443-471 at p.450.

[15] See G. Strecker, "On the Problem of Jewish Christianity", Appendix 1 in W. Bauer, *Orthodoxy and Heresy in Earliest* Christianity (transl. Of *Rechtgläubigkeit und Ketzerei im ältesten Christentum,* Tübingen, 1964), London, 1971, pp.241-285 at pp.244-257. Strecker notes that W. C. van Unnik ("De beteeknis van de mozaische vet voor de kerk van Christus volgens de syrische Didascalie,'° *Nederlandsch Archief voor Kerkgeschiedenes* 31, 1939, pp.65-100) argues that the heretics are Judaising Christians who adopted only some Jewish praxis, but Strecker rightly suggests that the term "heretics" would then be too harsh for the group. Certainly, Christians who adopted a few Jewish customs and participated in festivals were considered to be in error, but not exactly heretics. Strecker's view that in this part of Syria the Jewish-Christians occupied the "orthodox" position superior to "catholicism" (p.257) does, however, push the evidence somewhat. The reference to "believing Hebrews" (Didasc. xxi), with whom the catholic church is in communion, surely does not refer to the Jewish-Christian "heretics" but to Jews who had converted to the "catholic" type of Christianity.

[16] F. Williams, *The Panarion of Epiphmnius of Salamis,* Leiden, 1987, p.xviii.

no "Origenist" church. Klijn and Reinink suggest that the "Jewish-Christian" Cerinthians, Symmachians, Sampsaeans and Ossaeans were largely the product of polemic.[17]

The Elchasaites, once thought to have been a Jewish-Christian sect, have had to be re-classified after the work of G. P. Luttikhuizen,[18] who has concluded that the group arose after an Aramaic book of revelation (written in a Parthian Jewish community at the turn of the first century), was adopted almost 100 years later by a Christian group headed by Alcibiades of Apamea. The book may have been called *The Revelation of Elchasai,* where "Elchasai" is a Greek transliteration of חיל כסי *hel kassi,* Aramaic for "the hidden power/God" (cf. Epiphanius, *Pan.* xix.2.2). The Elchasaites were therefore influenced by Jewish apocalyptic writings, and possibly by Jewish-Christians, but were not actually Jewish-Christian themselves.

This serves as an example of how complex the origins of so-called "Jewish-Christian" groups might be (even without venturing into the problems of Pseudo-Clementine research). Certainly, it is almost impossible to see in the plethora of possible Jewish-Christian groups any real case for them being a unified movement centred in Jerusalem. There is, in fact, no evidence whatsoever for Jewish-Christians existing in Palestine past the beginning of the second century, although they are found in many other parts of the Roman Empire.

One group appears to have a good case for being a continuation of an early Jewish-Christian church which may have been founded by Jerusalem **{7}** missionaries: the Nazarenes of Syria.[19] Theologically, there is nothing that would have distinguished them as being anything but broadly orthodox. According to Epiphanius *(Pan. xxix.7.2-5;* xxix.9.4), the Nazarenes used both the Old and New Testaments, including a Gospel of Matthew in Hebrew, believed in the resurrection of the dead and proclaimed one God and his son Jesus Christ. The only difference between them and the vast majority of other churches was that they maintained Jewish practice: Hebrew language, circumcision of sons, keeping the Sabbath and so on (cf. *Pan. xxix.5.4;* xxix.8.1ff). From Jerome's quotations from a Nazarene interpretation *(pesher?)* of the prophet Isaiah *(in Esa.* viii.l4, 19-22; ix.l-*4;* xxix.l7-21; xxxi.6-9) it appears

[17] Klijn and Reinink, pp.3-19.

[18] G. P. Luttikhuizen, *The Revelation of Elchasai,* Tübingen, 1985. Fundamentally the same conclusions about the Elchasaites were reached by Klijn and Reinink, pp.66-7, who describe them as "an apocalyptic syncretistic missionary movement which originated during the Roman invasion of Parthia within a Jewish community which tried to show its allegiance with the Parthians". The relationship between the Kerygmata Petrou and the Elchasaites has not been satisfactorily established, but see Klijn and Reinink, p.78-79 - Appendix II.

[19] The name "Nazoraeans" is unlikely to be a sectarian self-reference; instead, it indicates that the group spoke a dialect of Aramaic or Syriac. The term, transliterated into Greek as *nasorao,* was that by which the Aramaic-speaking church referred to itself from the beginning, but it carried no implication of theological separation. The word "Nazoraeans" and its cognates (as opposed to the Greek term "Christians") became the normative reference to believers in Christ in Persia, Arabia, Armenia, Syria and Palestine, providing a clue to the extent of the success of missions from the Aramaic-speaking Jerusalem church. See H. H. Schaeder, *Nasarenos/Nasoraios* in G. Kittel (ed.), *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Vol. 4, Grand Rapids, Mich., 1942, pp.874-889, at 874-879. The waw in the Hebrew term *nozrim* may have arisen from a plene spelling. The *nazrim* of Jer. 4:16; 31:6(5) was pronounced *nozrim* (see W. Weinberg, "The History of Hebrew Plene Spelling: from Antiquity to Haskalah", *Hebrew Union College Annual (HUCA)* 46, 1975, pp.457-87, esp.473, n.49). For rabbinic examples see: (sing.) b.Sanh. 43a; b.AZ 6a, 16-17a; (plur.); b.Taan. 27b; b.Ber. 17b; b.Sota 47a; b.Sanh. 103a, 107a. In the Middle Ages, references to *Nozrim* were frequently obscured by pseudonymous expressions such as "Amalekites" or "Egyptians". For a recent examination of the Nazoraeans as a Jewish-Christian sect, see: R. A. Pritz, *Nazarene Jewish Christianity,* Jerusalem/ Leiden, 1988.

that they accepted the apostle Paul and were deeply suspicious of "scribes and Pharisees," the rabbis.[20]

There would appear to be no evidence in patristic sources for justifying the notion that a multifibrous strand of heterodox sectarianism unravelled itself from Jerusalem. Certainly, there is no evidence that Jewish-Christians continued to occupy a position in Jerusalem past the cataclysmic events of the middle of the second century. The *minim* of rabbinic literature are rarely specifically identified in a way that indicates that they are Jewish-Christians. It is well known that the category of *minim* appears to include orthodox Christians, along with almost anyone of whom the rabbis disapproved theologically. It is partly an attempt to find evidence of a Jewish-Christian presence in Palestine, not found in the literature, that Bagatti and Testa stress the importance of archaeological material.

The Bagatti-Testa School

Bagatti and Testa have not concerned themselves with a serious attempt to find among Christian archaeological remains in Palestine evidence of sustained Jewish observance. They define Jewish-Christians primarily as Christians of Jewish race who held peculiar theological beliefs. While it is taken for granted that these people maintained Jewish tradition, what has been of great concern to the Bagatti-Testa school is to demonstrate that many of the archaeological artifacts indicate that the community responsible for them adhered to a heterodox "Jewish-Christian" theology. In his preface to F. Manns' bibliography on Jewish-Christianity,[21] Bagatti claims to base his own views about the Jewish-Christians on the *"contexte humain des premiers chrétiens "* and a desire to avoid anachronism, for archaeology itself *"constitue la source essentielle de notre connaissance du judéo-christianisme"* and "*il est possible aujourd'hui de se faire une idée plus exacte des judéo-chretiens de Palestine".* He asserts that excavations of sites such as Nazareth and Capernaum to levels before the fourth century have exposed the cult, liturgical objects and inscriptions of the Jewish-Christians who lived in these places, so that we can now better determine *"éléments de leur pensée théologique".*[22] In defining this theological thought, Bagatti makes extensive use of apocryphal literature which, like **{8}** Daniélou, he ascribes to Jewish-Christians. Without this initial contentious identification of the literature as Jewish-Christian, Bagatti has nothing on which to base his ideas about the nature of the archaeology. Furthermore, Bagatti can speak of *"des premiers chrétiens", "pre-constantinienne"* Christians and Jewish-Christians as if there is no question that these must be one and the same uniform group; he is apparently unaware of the questions of continuity between the earliest Jewish-Christian communities of Palestine and later manifestations of Jewish-Christianity, so-called, or the great diversity probable within the early Church as a whole.

Despite many references to patristic and apocryphal texts, the Bagatti-Testa school is highly selective in what it uses from the field of Jewish-Christian scholarship. Its attitude

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[20] A. F. J. Klijn, "Jerome's Quotations from a Nazarene Interpretation of Esaiah", *RSR* 60, 1972, pp.241-255; Klijn and Reinink, pp.49-50.

[21] F. Manns, *Bibliographie du Judéo-Christianisme,* Jerusalem, 1979.
[22] *Ibid.,* PP.5-7.

to historical studies tends to be aloof. This is perhaps in keeping with its origins within the discipline of archaeology rather than history. The Bagatti-Testa school of "Jewish-Christian" archaeology is in fact a prodigal child of Biblical archaeology in Palestine and the Roman school of Christian archaeology. In tracing the development of these two scholarly trends, the methodological and conceptual framework of the Bagatti-Testa school may be better understood.

Biblical Archaeology and the Roman School of Christian Archaeology

Biblical archaeology as such began in the 19th century when numerous European archaeologists (Flinders Petrie, Charles Clermont-Ganneau, Ernst Sellin, R. A. S. Macalister, for example) came to Palestine with an interest in finding material that would in some way illuminate the Bible. Western archaeological societies were founded with the purpose of digging up artifacts from the land of the Bible. The Palestine Exploration Fund, founded in 1865, was presided over by the Archbishop of York (and now the Archbishop of Canterbury). When it was established, it was understood that one of its leading aims would be to contribute to "the elucidation of Biblical problems."[23] The motivations of the American Palestine Exploration Society (founded 1870), the Deutsche Palestina-Verein, and other societies from Western countries were essentially the same.[24] The legacy of these foundations continues to a greater or lesser extent in the archaeological organizations, which exist today in Israel and Jordan.

Perhaps more significant a factor in the origins of the Bagatti-Testa school, is its connection with the Roman school of Christian archaeology. The Jerusalem Franciscans, with whom Bagatti and Testa belong, have strong links with the Vatican and are Italian in character. They are keenly **{9}** interested in archaeological developments in Christian Rome and participate in the mainstream of Roman Christian archaeology today, with its scholarly publication *Rivista di Archaeologia cristiana.* Unlike other Western societies, the Franciscans have been deeply entrenched in the Holy Land since Pope Clement VI entrusted them with the custody of Christian. holy places in Palestine in the papal bulls *Gratias agimus* and *Nuper carissime* of November 21, 1342.[25] Six centuries later, in 1923, following the example of other Western groups, they founded the Studium Biblicum Franciscanum in Jerusalem, in which Biblical and archaeological studies were to be combined. The Franciscan Printing Press had already been established in 1847. At the outset, the Custody of the Holy Land was particularly interested in the Christian sites it owned. Archaeologists educated in Rome were the founders of the programme of excavations.

The Roman school of Christian archaeology can be traced back to Antonio Bosio, who in 1632 published a work, *Roma sotteranea* on the Roman catacombs then known,[26] although the two main founders of the school were Giuseppe Marchi and Giovanni B. de Rossi, who

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[23] R. A. S. Macalister, *A Century of Excavation in Palestine,* 2nd ed., London, 1930, p.29.

[24] A discussion on the history of Biblical archaeology can be found in *The New International Dictionary of Biblical Archaeology,* ed. by E. M. Blaiklock and R. K. Harrison, Grand Rapids, Mich., 1983, pp.47-60. See also: W. F. Albright, *The Archaeology of Palestine,* Harmondsworth, 1949, pp.219-249.

[25] *Bullarium Franciscanum,* Rome, 1902.

[26] See P. Testini, Archeologia cristiana, Rome, 1958, p.66; J. Stevenson, The Catacombs: Rediscovered Monuments of Early Christianity, London, 1978, pp.50-52.

worked in the 19th century.[27] The classic work which outlines the results of the school's work is undoubtedly the *Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie* edited by F. Cabrol and H. Leclercq (Paris, 1924-1953), which will not be superseded as the most comprehensive reference work on early Christian art and archaeology for many years to come.

Despite the monumental achievements of the Roman school, its methodology is such that it has recently been subject to heavy criticism. Graydon Snyder has pointed out that it presupposes a continuity of tradition which has led scholars to assign archaeological evidence to earlier centuries than might be appropriate. Furthermore, the Roman school stressed the importance of first relating the subject to biblical and patristic literature to ground it in a literary milieu, which might appear to be sound methodology, but in practice this meant that archaeological data was used to supplement the Roman tradition of the development of the Church.[28] Scholars have become increasingly doubtful about the manner in which archaeological evidence has been used. The errors of methodology parallel those of the 19th-century biblical archaeologists who wished to "prove the Bible true" by science: The science of archaeology, the physical remains in Palestine, would illuminate the theological world of the Bible. However, science's virtue as a discipline has always been its ostensible determination to be empirically objective, so that the truth of the nature of a physical object or phenomenon is tested by experiments, which require the fullest awareness of all contingencies. In seeking to endorse biblical or ecclesiastical tradition, the early biblical archaeologists and the proponents of the Roman school of Christian archaeology fell into the same methodological trap.

{10} The Bagatti-Testa school may be seen to use the Roman school's methodology, with a slight twist. They too are fastidious in relating archaeological material to evidence found in Biblical and patristic writings, but instead of using the archaeological evidence to bolster the orthodox ecclesiastical tradition, they use it to support a hypothesis of their own, based on an understanding of Jewish-Christianity gleaned from a select body of literary material.[29] The same methodology is used, but with quite different results. Every literary source at their disposal is employed to support a definition of the archaeological evidence as being Jewish-Christian in character. On account of their understanding of a homogeneous Jewish-Christian tradition, they are able to date material very early. It may be noted that Snyder uses the example of Testa himself to make his point about the dangers of using the Roman school's methodology:

> *To be sure, there are still some scholars who insist on harmonizing the literary tradition with the archaeological data, or more pointedly, producing*

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[27] G. Marchi, Monumenti delle arti cristianae primitive nella metropoli del cristianismo, Rome, 1844; G. B. de Rossi, Inscriptiones christianae urbis Romae, Rome, Vol. 1, 1857-1861; Vol. 2, 1888 (et al); idem, Roma sotteranea cristiana, Vols. 1-3, Rome, 1864-1867.

[28] For a history of the Roman school and an argument against its methodology, see G. F. Snyder, *Ante Pacem: Archaeological Evidence of Church Life before Constantine,* Macon, Georgia, 1985, pp.3-11, particularly, as regards an outline of the school's methodology, p.6. Snyder himself argues for a contextual methodology.

[29] Texts which the Bagatti-Testa school identifies as Jewish-Christian and texts which show evidence of Jewish-Christianity have been collected and translated into Italian by Bagatti and Testa in *Corpus Scriptorum de Ecclesia Matre, Vol IV: Gerusalemme. La redenzione secondo la tradizione biblica dei SS. Padri,* Jerusalem, 1982. Volumes 1 to 3 are still in preparation.

archaeological data that will confirm presupposed traditions. One thinks here of P. E. Testa on the presence of the cross in early Palestinian remains...[30]

As Roland de Vaux has stressed, literary and archaeological material must be evaluated separately and then used together to reconstruct history.[31] Any approach which at its outset seeks to prove a view of history by archaeology is biased and prone to produce tendentious results. Today, we are more aware of the difference between popular religion and the literature of the theologians. This insight is largely the result of work carried out by the Bonn school, which stands over against the Roman school in its approach to early Christian archaeology. Founded by Hans Lietzmann and Franz Joseph Dolger, the approach of the Bonn school is to try to understand early Christian remains in terms of the context of the Mediterranean world, with Christianity seen as a *Volksreligion.* The results of this approach may be seen in the *Reallexikon fur Antike und Christentum* (Stuttgart, 1950-) and the *Jahrbuch fur Antike und Christentum.*[32] Looking at sites in Palestine, particularly early pilgrim centres, it may be necessary to consider the popular "folkish" side of the Christian religion and to allow symbols to remain ambiguous, or representative of a current popular iconography that has not been recorded **{11}** in known accounts of Church writers, orthodox or heterodox. The orthodox ecclesiastical tradition, which sees the pure Church, beset by heresies and successfully fighting them off cannot be exclusively used in assessing the types of Christianity manifest in many of the early levels of Christian holy places. An unusual symbol does not by necessity indicate the existence of a heterodox mind, let alone a sectarian group, but perhaps a popular faith in which certain pre-Christian elements have been preserved. One might also need to consider the context of archaeological data, not only in terms of the Mediterranean world, but more closely in terms of Palestine. One might need to consider the demography of the country and the influence of different religions in the land.

The Ossuaries

As an example of how the Bagatti-Testa school has used its methodology to argue for the identification of a body of archaeological material as being specifically Jewish-Christian, the case of the ossuaries immediately presents itself. The roots of its identification of certain ossuaries are to be found in the 19th century. It was of some concern to Biblical archaeologists at this time that while important Old Testament sites were being identified in many places, and interesting artifacts were coming to light, no evidence of first-century Christianity was found. Then, in 1873, Charles Clermont-Ganneau claimed that a collection of ossuaries discovered in a tomb on the Mount of Offence might show evidence of the earliest Christian fraternity of Jerusalem. There were 30 mainly Aramaic inscriptions scratched on a cache of about 30 ossuaries. Eight of these were thought by Clermont-Ganneau to be indicative of Christians, since there were names found in the New Testament: Judah, Salome and Jesus, for example. He was equally convinced of their Christian character

[30] Snyder, p.6.
[31] R. de Vaux, "On Right and Wrong Uses of Archaeology," in J. Sanders (ed.), *Near Eastern Archaeology in the Twentieth Century,* New York, 1970, pp.64-80.
[32] Snyder, p.5.

by the rough crosses and symbols reminiscent of crosses incised close to their names.[33] There was also a clearly carved Latin cross with the Greek name HΔHA, *Edea.*

During the next century, much speculation ensued about ossuary use and burial customs. The early view was that first and second-century ethnically Jewish Christians found a resting place in their Jewish family graves, their new faith being indicated by nothing more then a rough cross.[34] Ironically, it was a later Israeli scholar, (E. L. Sukenik) who made the strongest case for certain ossuaries being "Jewish-Christian."[35] Sukenik excavated a first-century tomb in Talpiot, west of Jerusalem, in September, 1945 and concluded that two inscriptions, 'Ιησους 'Iou, *('Iesous 'Iou*) and 'Ιηδους αλωθ *('Iesous aloth),* represented lamentations over the crucifixion of Jesus by some of his disciples. 'Iou he translated as "woe" and in *aloth* he saw the Semitic root אלה *(ala),* "to wail."[36] Crosses on another ossuary, he thought, "were placed there with some definite purpose."[37] As comparative material for the early employment of the cross as a Christian symbol he pointed to the **{12}** Casa del Bicentenario in Herculaneum, where a shape something like a Latin cross is cut in the plaster of a back wall.[38]

However, already in 1946, Carl H. Kraeling had the sobering realization that the "crosses" of Pompeii and Herculaneum were not evidence of Christians, but the result of wooden wall brackets which had since decomposed.[39] He was also one of the first to point out that the names in the ossuaries, so like those of the people found in the New Testament, were extremely common in the first century, as was the name Jesus itself.[40] A cursory survey of the names found in Josephus' works confirms this.

The clearly carved Latin cross with the Greek name in Clermont-Ganneau's cache probably comes from the Byzantine period, drawn by a Christian hand. The cave in which the ossuaries were found was not their original resting-place. It was a rock-hewn chamber without loculi. Clermont-Ganneau thought it was a storehouse for ossuaries collected from other tombs. The ossuaries were piled one on top of the other in a disorderly fashion. Their lids did not match and bones were randomly placed with vases and other debris.[41]

Over the past 30 years Clermont-Ganneau and Sukenik have been proven wrong. Even Bagatti saw that Sukenik's *'Iesous 'Iou* was a misreading of the graffito, which should be read *'Iesous 'Ioud(o)u ,* Jesus, (son) of Judah.[42] The word *aloth is* not a lament, but probably a

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[33] C. Clermont-Ganneau, *Archaeological Researches 1873-1874,* Vol. 1*,* London, 1899; idem, "Epigraphes hebraiques et grecques sur des ossuaires juifs inedits", *Revue Archéologique (RA)* (3d) 1, 1883, pp.257-268.
[34] See C. M. Kaufmann, *Handbuch der Christlichen Archeologie,* 3d, Paderborn, 1922, p.143.
[35] E. L. Sukenik, "The Earliest Records of Christianity", *American Journal of Archeology (AJA)* 51, 1947, pp.351-
C. H. Kraeling, "Christian Burial Urns", *The Biblical Archeologist (BA)* 9, 1946, pp.16-20 at p.19.
[36] *Ibid.,* p.363.
[37] *Ibid.,* p.364.
[38] See M. Maiuri, "La croce di Ercolano", in *Rendiconti della Pontificia Accademia Romana di Archaeologia* 15, 1939, pp.193-218.
[39] C. H. Kraeling, "Christian Burial Urns", *The Biblical Archeologist (BA)* 9, 1946, pp.16-20 at p.19.

[40] *Ibid.,* p.18.
[41] Clermont-Ganneau, *Archaeological Researches,* p.381.
[42] B. Bagatti, "Resti cristiani in Palestina anteriori a Costantino", Rivista di Archeologia Cristiana (RAC) 26, 1950, pp.117-131, at pp.118-120.

name transcribing Hebrew אהלות *(ahalot)*.[43] Furthermore, the purpose of the cross marks and other symbols without doubt indicated how the lid should be placed on the ossuary box.[44] As Paul Figueras writes:

> *...not only prudence, but scholarly objectivity should restrain us from forcing a Christian interpretation where a Jewish one is acceptable. This is not an a priori position as we know ... that secondary burial and the use of ossuaries were the norm among Palestinian Jews during this period.*[45]

Figueras is in this case arguing not so much against Sukenik but against Bagatti, for 10 years after Sukenik published his findings at Talpiot, Bagatti, with J. T. Milik, proposed that another cache of Jewish-Christian ossuaries had been discovered.

Bagatti had been interested in uncovering early Christian remains in Jordan[46] and Israel[47] for some years. In 1953, when workmen discovered a Jewish cemetery in the Franciscan Dominus Flevit property, he was given the task of making an archaeological examination of the site. For precisely the same reasons as Clermont-Ganneau, Bagatti identified ossuaries in the first and second-century *kokhim* tombs as being Jewish-Christian.[48] He **{13}** admitted that the majority of signs scratched on the sides and lids of the ossuaries served to indicate the correct way to place the lids but he remained convinced the cross shapes had religious significance. He believed these crosses were instances of the ancient Hebrew letter *tau* which was written as + or x. This, he claimed, was a Jewish-Christian symbol.[49]

Bagatti summarizes his understanding of Church history in the excavation report.[50] It is helpful to review this report in order to comprehend why he fought against the developing scholarly consensus about the Jewish (and possibly exclusively Pharisaic) use of ossuaries. The key component in his historical summary is a stress on the number of converts in the Acts of the Apostles. He notes that in the early period, there were many *"cristiani di razza ebraica."* He takes the numbers converted in Acts 2:41 (3000) and Acts 4:4 (5000) literally, and uses Eusebius to support his view *(Hist. Eccles.* iii.33, 35). To Bagatti's mind, there simply had to be some archaeological record of this vast movement.

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[43] For an examination of both these inscriptions, see J. P. Kane, "By No Means, 'The Earliest Records of Christianity' - with an Emended Reading of the Talpioth Inscription IESOUS IOU", Palestine Exploration Quarterly (PEQ)1971, pp.103-108.

[44] R. H. Smith, "The Cross Marks on Jewish Ossuaries", PEQ 1974, pp.53-66.

[45] P. Figueras, "Jewish Ossuaries and Secondary Burial: Their Significance for Early Christianity", Immanuel 19, 1984-5, pp.41-57. For further clarifications about these ossuaries and ossuaries in general see: P. Figueras, Jewish and Christian Beliefs on Life after Death in the Light of Ossuary Decoration, Thesis submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, Hebrew University, March 1974; J. P. Kane, "The Ossuary Inscriptions of Jerusalem", Journal of Semitic Studies.

[46] B. Bagatti, "II cristianesimo a Kerak in Transgiordania", TS 20, 1940, pp.l-4*;* idem,"Il cristianesimo nella capitale della Transgiordania (Amman)", *Terra Santa (TS)* 23,1948, pp.35-39.

[47] B. Bagatti, "Resti cristiani" (see above, note 22*);* idem, *Gli antichi edifici sacri di Betlemme in seguito agli scavi erestauri praticati dalla Custodia di Terra Santa (1948-1951*), Jerusalem, 1952.

[48] B. Bagatti, "Scoperta di un cimitero giudeo-cristiano al Dominus Flevit' (Monte Oliveto - Gerusalemme)", *Studium Biblicum Franciscanum Liber Annum (LA)* 3, 1953, pp.149-184; B. Bagatti and J. T. Milik, *Gli scavi del 'Donunus Flevit'* Part 1, Jerusalem 1958, pp.166-182.

[49] Bagatti and Milik, p.177.

[50] *Ibid.,* pp.166-169.

While Bagatti enjoyed some initial support during the 1960s, his hypothesis concerning the ossuaries is now almost entirely discredited. Antonio Ferrua, who was among those critical of his approach, responded to preliminary reports by noting that it would have been better to fix the religious nature of the tomb and then to deduce the cryptography, rather than to argue for the presence of Christianity on the basis of cryptic symbols.[51] Michael Avi-Yonah took issue with Bagatti's assumptions about the numbers of converts and maintained that the chances of finding tombs of the tiny minority of Jewish-Christians in Jerusalem were exceedingly slim.[52] Even if the reading of the letter *tau* were to be credited with some validity, the rare symbolic value of the Hebrew letter is based on Ezekiel 9:4, where the elect of God are marked with this sign, and could therefore have been the property of innumerable sects, which existed in Judea at the end of the Second Temple period, many of whom claimed to be the elect. We need not look so far; Avi-Yonah did not quote evidence for the importance of the Hebrew *tau,* written like a Greek *chi,* in rabbinic tradition *(b.Shab.* 55a; *b.Men.* 74b cf. *b.Ker.* 5b), but he did note that Bagatti's reasoning was faulty due to using an invalid syllogism: The *tau* is a Jewish symbol. The early Christians were Jews. Thus the *tau* is a Christian symbol.[53]

The names of a "Christian character" are, as has been stated, ordinary Jewish names of the first and second centuries A.D. Avi-Yonah pointed out that no specifically Christian onomasticon existed before the latter part of the third century A.D., when Gentiles in Egypt appear to have taken names from the Old and New Testaments upon baptism.[54] Another matter was the problem of what appeared to be a *chi-rho* monogram drawn on ossuary no. 12 at Dominus Flevit, which belonged to "Judah the son of Judah the proselyte."[55] It was this sign that provided a key reason for Bagatti to **{14}** identify the whole of Chamber 79 at Dominus Flevit as Jewish-Christian[56] and yet it is very doubtful that this sign should be considered Christian, since it was in use in the ancient world long before Constantine adopted it. Figueras notes that here the *chi-rho* may be short for χαράκτεον or, χαράσμενος *(charakteon* or *charasmenos),*[57] but it could have been an abbreviation for any word, or name, with a Greek *chi* and a *rho* prominent within it. This certainly explains the *chi-rho* recently found in an inscription from a synagogue in Sepphoris.[58] It is axiomatic that a *chi-rho* found in a Jewish setting should be interpreted in the light of its Jewish context. It would not appear to be methodologically sound to interpret it in the light of a much later, religiously alien symbol.

The case of the Dominus Flevit ossuaries demonstrates the manner in which Bagatti and, soon after him, Testa, would approach a wide variety of archaeological data. An important

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[51] A. Ferrua's review of Bagatti and Milik, in *RAC 30,* 1954, p.268.
[52] Review of Bagatti and Milik, in *Israel Exploration Journal (IEJ)* 11, 1961, pp.91-94.
[53] *Ibid.,* pp.93-94.
[54] *Ibid.,* p.94.
[55] Bagatti and Milik, pp.64-65*,* Photo 75, Fig. 17.
[56] *Ibid.,* pp.178-179.
[57] Figueras, *"Jewish Ossuaries",* p.49. See also: P. Colella, "Les abbreviations et XP", *RevueBiblique (RB)* 80, 1973, pp.547-558; M. Avi-Yonah, *Abbreviations in Greek Inscriptions: The Near East, 200 B.C. A.D. 1100* (QDAP Suppl. to Vol. 9), Jerusalem, 1940, pp. 111-112.

[58] Pace E. M. Meyers, "Early Judaism and Christianity in the Light of Archaeology", *BA 51*, 1988, pp.69-79 at p.71.

feature of Bagatti's aim was to find on the ossuaries definite symbols which might illuminate the thought of the "Jewish-Christian" church of Judaea, which he was sure existed from the first to the fourth century. It was Bagatti's firm belief that such a church must have left some material evidence. The perceived symbols were the way into the minds of these Jewish-Christians but even more, they were the earliest evidence of Christian iconography itself.[59] With his interest in signs and symbols, Bagatti can be seen to stand in succession to another tradition of European scholarship, that of the iconographers who hoped to decipher the symbols of the ancient world.[60] Daniélou stood in this tradition.[61] Bagatti was indebted to him for many primary identifications of so-called Jewish-Christian symbols, but Bagatti and Daniélou soon mutually influenced by the other. Daniélou's *Théologie du Judéo-Christianisme* (Paris, 1958) provided Bagatti with the foundations upon which he could build a grander hypothesis. Daniélou, on the other hand, sought justifications for his notions of a specific Jewish-Christian theology by appealing the Bagatti's work, for example the ossuary scratchings. In *Les Symboles Chrétiens Primitifs* (Paris, 1961), Daniélou lauds Bagatti for his discoveries of a certain number of ossuaries in which "le caractre judo-chretien est certain."[62] Daniélou continued to reserve high praise for the work of the Bagatti-Testa school in many reports,[63] maintaining as little **{15}** regard for voices which challenged its results as the Bagatti-Testa school maintained toward critics of Daniélou.

The Khirbet Kilkish Steles

A further example of how alleged Jewish-Christian remains began to proliferate on slender and contentious evidence, may be seen in the case of the Khirbet Kilkish funerary steles near Hebron. Ignazio Mancini, in his review of Jewish-Christian archaeology in Palestine, provides a compact outline of the steles' discovery which will not be repeated here.[64] Suffice it to note that, in 1960, a quantity of inscribed stone steles were brought to the attention of Augustus Spijkerman, then director of the Museum at the Studium Biblicum Franciscanum, by an antiquities dealer on the Via Dolorosa who later showed Spijkerman the freshly ploughed field in Khirbet Kilkish, from which the objects originated. Excavation of the field eventually uncovered over 200 of these steles (which Bagatti thought were stone amulets) within a metre of the surface of the ground. Curiously, the steles bear some resemblance to the steles of the Shapira fraud, (which may be seen in the basement of the Palestine Exploration Fund in London) and to objects shown to the present director of the Museum, Michele Piccirillo, in Jordan, which he confirms are of recent local production.[65] In fact, it is unnecessary to publish a detailed refutation of the Khirbet Kilkish steles' claims to

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[59] B. Bagatti, "Origine e svilluppo dell'iconografia cristiana in Palestina", *LA 4,* 1954, pp.277-309.
[60] See Manns, pp.195-207.
[61] J. Daniélou, "Symbolik des Taufritus", *Liturgie und Monchtum 3,* 1949, pp.45-68*;* idem, "Le symbolism du Jour de Paque", *Diera Vivant 18,* 1951, pp.45-56*;* idem, "Le symbole des quarante jours", *La Maison-Dieu* 31, 1952, pp.19-33; idem, "La charrue symbole de la croix", *RSR* 42,1954, pp.193-203.
[62] J. Daniélou, *Les symboles chretiens primitifs,* Paris, 1961, p.8. This book collects together a further nine articles written about early Christian symbols.
[63] Daniélou reported on the theories of Bagatti and Testa in *RSR* 51, 1963, pp.117-122, *RSR* 55,1967, pp.92-96; *RSR* 56,1968, pp.119-120 and *RSR* 58,1970, pp.143-145.
[64] I. Mancini, *Le scoperte archeologiche sui Giudeo-Cristiani Note storiche* (Collectio Assisiensis 6), Assis, 1968, Eng. transl. by G. Bushell, *Archaeological Discoveries Relative to the Judaeo-Christians,* Jerusalem, 1970, updated and reprinted 1984; French transl. by A. Storme, *L'Archologie judeo-chretienne,* Jerusalem, 1977.
[65] Pers. comm.: letter to J. E. Taylor dated Jan. 18,1988.

archaeological authenticity, for a trained eye will see that the inscriptions are relatively fresh and the stone unhurt by the ravages of time. The location of the steles just below the surface of a ploughed field, which was equipped with a hoarde of diverse Roman sherds, along with the very probable conspiracy of the antiquities dealer and the land owner, all seem to indicate rather strongly that the Franciscans were in this case shamefully conned. Piccirillo has accordingly removed all but two of these steles from display in the Museum.[66] However, the iconography of the steles has formed a basis for E. Testa's extensive discussion of Jewish-Christian symbolism in II *Simbolismo dei Giudeo-Cristiani* (Jerusalem, 1962), from which many conclusions were drawn about the details of Jewish-Christian theology.

Bagatti believed that Hebron was the centre of a fourth-century sect, the so-called Archontics, described by Epiphanius *(Pan. xl, xli),*[67] which may be, but Epiphanius nowhere indicates that the Archontics were a Jewish-Christian sect. Rather, it is clear from his description that they were Gnostics. For example, they believed in seven heavens, each presided over by an archon, at the top of which, in an eighth, was the shining Mother *(Pan.* x1.2.3). They believed in the resurrection of the soul but not of the flesh, and rejected Christian baptism *(Pan.* x1.2.4-9). They were found in Palestine in a place named by Epiphanius as *Kapharbaricha (Pan.* x1.1.3), three miles from Hebron, which Bagatti identifies with Bene Naim.[68]

{16} Epiphanius says that a certain Peter, the originator of the sect, was expelled by Bishop Aetius, and fled to Kochaba, which Epiphanius considered to be a centre for Ebionites and Nazarenes (*Pan*. x1.1.5). This Peter was clearly not an Ebionite or a Nazarene. He returned to Kaphar Baricha as an old man and, having told certain people about his views, he was anathematized by no less a person than Epiphanius himself, after which he became a hermit in a cave where he would receive a few devotees (*Pan*. x1.1.6-9). Peter does not appear to have had any interest in Jewish practice, and the ideas of the Archontics are quite unlike those that Epiphanius associated with his "Ebionites." The closest group to the Archontics were the Sethians. Both groups used the *Ascension of Isaiah* and believed in the power of Seth (*Pan.* x1.6.9-7.5 cf. xxxix.1.3-2.7), son of Adam and Eve. H. C. Puech accordingly sees the Archontics as nothing more than a ramification of the Sethians.[69] Seth is also found in Jewish haggadic material, which was a source of ideas for both Gnostic and catholic Christians. As Klijn has noted, we should not come to hasty conclusions about the origins of Gnostic groups simply because haggadic elements are present in Gnostic treatises.[70] Seth was an attractive figure capable of a variety of interpretations. The Bagatti-Testa school has erred in identifying the Archontics as Jewish-Christians. The steles were interpreted by Testa in the light of Archontic theology, which was then considered to be representative of Jewish-Christian theology. His extensive study on the steles then formed the foundation for subsequent analyses of possible Jewish-Christian material found in holy sites in Palestine. However, since the steles are generally regarded as being fraudulent,[71] and the identification

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[66] I understand that these remain out of respect for Father Bagatti.
[67] B. Bagatti, "A1 centro degli Arcontici, Kh. Kilkish presso Hebron", TS 40, 1964, pp.264-269.
[68] Bagatti, *Circumcision,* p.38.
[69] H. C. Puech, "Archontiker", in *Reallexikon fr Antike und Christentum,* Stuttgart, 1950-, Vol. 1, pp.634-643.
[70] A. F. J. Klijn, *Seth in Jewish, Christian and Gnostic Literature,* Leiden, 1977, p.119.
[71] This is a matter discussed amongst archaeologists in Jerusalem but, in the sensitive climate there, no one has published a work designed to prove the steles are frauds. Certainly, it has been felt that only a Franciscan could do this without causing bitter animosity between the different archaeological communities, none of which wishes to

of the Archontics as Jewish-Christians is erroneous, it is not too strong to say that Testa's work based on the steles is entirely valueless for illuminating the symbolism or the possible theology of Jewish-Christians. Any analysis of supposed Jewish-Christian remains which relies on Testa's conclusions about the Khirbet Kilkish material is thereby also invalidated.

Further Work by the Bagatti-Testa School

By the middle of the 1960s, Bagatti and Testa had assembled a large body of archaeological data that they considered Jewish-Christian. Already in 1955, Bagatti had begun work on excavating a section of ancient Nazareth on land belonging to the Franciscan Custody of the Holy Land, and had soon developed the theory that it had been a Jewish-Christian cult centre prior to the fourth century.[72] Testa argued that sacred rites of baptism were administered in the main caves there, the "mystic grottos."[73] Unlike the case of Dominus Flevit, the judgments passed on Nazareth by Bagatti and Testa have not yet been assessed in detail. It is now no simple task to examine the site, as it has been covered by the erection of the Basilica of the Annunciation, which incorporated the caves into the church. Other **{17}** important remains are accessible to visitors only with the permission of the authorities.

It would appear that the conclusions reached by Bagatti and Testa influenced the work of Virgilio Corbo, Stanislao Loffreda and Augustus Spijkerman in their excavations in Capernaum, which began in 1968. While a four volume report of the excavations was produced on the basis of results from nine campaigns,[74] work still continues at the Franciscan part of the site, although the area of a Byzantine octagonal church is now being enclosed in a large church which, like that in Nazareth, will incorporate the archaeological evidence into its design. Corbo argued that under the octagonal church there was a house-church belonging to the Jewish-Christian community of Capernaum, which in turn was created out of the original house of Peter, the apostle. Thus, yet another important Christian holy site was alleged to have been the property of Jewish-Christians. A number of Franciscan scholars joined with Bagatti and Testa in supporting the idea that at Nazareth and Capernaum, as in many other places, Jewish-Christians preserve the memory of important sites in Jesus' life.[75]

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publicly embarrass another. Since the steles have now been put away out of view, it would seem that it is hoped that everyone will quietly forget about them. It may also be mentioned *sotto voce* in this note that in regard to another fraud Testa has fared badly. In 1973 Testa published a bought stone inscription which he thought came from Samaritan Christians and indicated a Samaritan Christian regeneration myth (see: E. Testa, "La mitica rigenerazione della vita in un amuleto samaritano-cristiano del IV secolo", *LA* 23, 1973, pp.286-317). R. Pummer ("New Evidence for Samaritan Christianity?", *CBQ* 41, 1979, pp.107-112) thought the identification of the letters as being Samaritan very questionable (p.109). Then, J. Naveh showed that the letters derived from the coins of the Bar Kochba revolt ("An Ancient Amulet or a Modern Forgery?", *CBQ* 44, 1982, pp.282-284; cf. H. Shanks, "Clumsy Forger fools the Scholars - But Only for a Time", *Biblical Archeological Review* 10, 1984, pp.71-72) and that the stone "amulet" was a forgery.

[72] B. Bagatti, "Ritrovamenti nella Nazaret evangelica", LA 5, 1955, pp.5-44; *Gli Scavi de Nazaret, Vol. 1,* Jerusalem, 1967; Engl. transl. by E. Hoade, *Excavations in Nazareth,* Jerusalem, 1969.

[73] Testa, "Le grotte mistiche dei Nazareni"; cf. B. Bagatti, "I battisteri della Palestina", in *Actes du Ve Congrès International d'Archéologie Chrétienne,* Vatican/Paris, 1957, pp.213-227; idem, "Gli altari paleo-cristiani della Palestina", *LA* 7,1957, pp.64-94.

[74] V. C. Corbo, Cafarnao *I: Gli edifici della Citta* Jerusalem, 1975; S. Loffreda, Cafarnao II: La Ceramica, Jerusalem, 1974; A. Spijkerman, Catalogo *della Monete della Citta,* Jerusalem, 1975; E. Testa, Cafarnao IV: I graffiti *della Casa di S. Pietro,* Jerusalem, 1972.

[75] The output of the Bagatti-Testa school may be seen in the list supplied in Manns, pp.190-195. This list also includes authors who are sympathetic with the Bagatti-Testa position.

None of these writers show real interest in the findings of scholarship about the Jewish-Christians, save from the work of Daniélou. Igino Grego has published a study which presents the Bagatti-Testa school's view of patristic writings concerned with the Jewish-Christians and Judaizers, and which completely ignores the important source critical work of Klijn and Reinink.[76] The impetus of the speculations which characterized the school's work in the 1960s and early 1970s has, however, slowed down. Before his illness Bagatti concentrated on later Christian iconography, though Testa continues to produce some articles on Jewish-Christians,[77] while guidebooks to the Franciscan holy places deliver the main theories of the school to the public as if they were the unquestionable truth, widely supported by the archaeological community.[78]

As it was stated at the outset, the Bagatti-Testa hypothesis has been formulated as an argument for the antiquity and authenticity of many Christian holy places. The positive conclusions I have drawn have to do with the origins of these places as centres of pilgrimage. There is simply nothing - no literary nor archaeological data - that indicates that Jewish-Christians were present in Roman Palestine past the middle of the second century. This is not to say that Jewish-Christians did not exist in Palestine, but only that we have no evidence for them. If one wishes to classify archaeological material as being Jewish-Christian in nature, it would have to be such that no other interpretation is possible.

The excavations of Nazareth and Capernaum have been undertaken in an exacting manner, but the material from these sites has often been assigned to earlier centuries than those to which it belongs. The graffiti alleged to be **{18}** Jewish-Christian, in both cases, belongs to the fourth century and later and is testimony to waves of Christian pilgrims that came into Palestine from the early part of the fourth century onwards. Pilgrims who visited holy sites throughout the Empire were in the habit of leaving a name or, if they could not write, a sign to indicate that they had visited these places. The structures at Nazareth ("the House of Mary") and Capernaum ("the House of Peter") were probably built before the middle of the fourth century by Joseph of Tiberias, who was a Jew converted to orthodox Christianity and an emissary of the emperor Constantine. He was not a sectarian Jewish-Christian. Even Epiphanium, who was fanatically orthodox, has nothing but praise for him (Pan. xxx. 11-12). He constructed pilgrim churches at Nazareth, Capernaum, Sepphoris and Tiberias in order to promote the evangelization of the Jews, and the Jewish authorities of these places probably let him do this because pilgrimage, like tourism of any kind, brought outside revenue to the towns. Certainly, it is significant that the Jews of Capernaum soon had enough money to build one of the most splendid synagogues in Palestine, which would tower over the small pilgrim church.[79]

Caves and tombs were frequently used in the Byzantine period as sites for Christian pilgrimage.[80] The reason this was so was not because Jewish-Christians underwent mystic

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[76] I. Grego, *I Giudeo-Cristiani nel IV Secolo,* Jerusalem, 1982.

[77] E. Testa, "L'Angelologia dei giudeo-cristiani", LA 33, 1983, pp.273-302; idem, "La settimana santa dei giudeo-cristiani e suoi influssi nella Pasyua della grande Chiesa", LA 35,1985, pp.163-202.

[78] Briand's guidebook to Nazareth is a characteristic example.

[79] For my discussions on Nazareth and Capernaum see: Taylor, *"Investigation",* pp. 136-376 and pp. 377-406. See also, idem, "A Graffito depicting John the Baptist at Nazareth?", *PEQ* 1987, pp. 142-148.

[80] For caves in general see, Taylor, *"Investigation ",* pp. 242-268.

initiation rites in them but because Christianity absorbed the practices of both Judaism and paganism in their respective veneration of tombs of the righteous dead and sacred grottoes. The former had already developed into the Christian cult of the saints before Constantine established pilgrimage centres in Palestine. The absorption of many pagan ideas and practices into early Byzantine Christianity is well known.

For the two centuries prior to Constantine, Palestine had largely been populated by pagans.[81] Galilee was almost entirely Jewish,[82] there was a Samaritan "strip" around Mount Gerizim,[83] and in the cosmopolitan cities of the land Jews, Samaritans and pagans lived together, along with some Christians.[84] There were also two Christian villages in the south of the country and one on the other side of the Dead Sea. The Christians of Palestine were in the main orthodox, though Montanists, Marcionites and Gnostics are also found in the literature.

During the fourth and fifth centuries, large numbers of pagans converted to Christianity. Some pagan caves were Christianized by the Church: the **{19}** cave now identified as the birthplace of John the Baptist in Ein Karim was probably part of the large temple of Aphrodite there;[85] the cave identified as the birthplace of Jesus in Bethlehem was part of the cult of Tammuz-Adonis.[86] Since it was natural for newly converted pagans to see Biblical events taking place in caves, some caves which had been merely cellars or cisterns were redecorated and given a Christian significance: the Bethany Cave, for example, which was identified as the guest-room of Martha and Mary in the fourth century.[87] In addition, pilgrimage centres were often created or modified to fulfil the expectations of visitors. An artificial cave in the Rock of Calvary was created in the seventh century after pilgrims had become familiar with a legend in which Adam was buried in a cave there.[88] A Jewish tomb from the Roman period in the Valley of Jehoshaphat was converted in the fifth century to become "the Tomb of the Virgin," in accordance with popular apocryphal stories.[89] Caves were featured in a number of these stories on account of their symbolic resonances. In the apocryphal nativity accounts, for example, Christ (the light) born in a dark cave (the world) in a (spiritually) barren desert outside Bethlehem has a didactic purpose, but by the end of the third century the symbolic cave was thought to indicate the real pagan cave *inside* Bethlehem.[90] A Gnostic work, the *Acts of John,* appears to have provided the idea of the Ascension taking place in a cave on the Mount of Olives. It was this that Constantine glorified with the Eleona Church, a factor the catholic Church would later find embarrassing; the Ascension was soon relocated to a hill on top of the Mount to accord better with Scripture.[91] The only cave that probably is genuine as a site where Jesus and his followers

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[81] Ibid, pp. 104-130.
[82] Ibid, pp. 78-88.
[83] Ibid, pp. 99-104.
[84] Ibid, pp. 88-99.
[85] Ibid, pp. 249-252.
[86] Ibid, pp. 178-202.
[87] Ibid, pp.269-283. See also: idem, "The Cave at Bethany," *RB* 1987, pp.120-123.
[88] Idem, *"Investigation ",* pp. 203-230.
[89] Ibid, pp. 311-315.
[90] Ibid, pp. 182-188.
[91] Ibid, pp. 231-241.

met is the Gethsemane cave, which appears to have been used as an olive press until it became a centre for pilgrimage in the fourth century.[92]

The small Christian community of Jerusalem probably kept the memory of such sites as the Gethsemane cave, the pool of Bethesda and Golgotha, although interest in actually *venerating* "holy places" as such (as opposed to dead saints) is not found in Christian writings before the fourth century. The Church of Jerusalem was ethnically Jewish until the time Hadrian evicted Jews from Jerusalem and environs c. A.D. 135 (Eusebius, *Hist Eccles.* iv. 5). This church is never classified as "Ebionite" or separationist. Jerusalem Christians would have had enough contact with the Church overall to ensure the passing on of traditions about certain places. It appears that when Melito of Sardis visited the city in the latter part of the second century the place where Jesus died was pointed out to him in its present position (Hom. *Pasch. 94).*

Evidence for the Jerusalem church meeting on Mount Zion is wanting. In the first century this part of the city was affluent, an area of palaces. Such a location for the church would be very strange considering what we know about the socio-economic status of the earliest Christians. After Hadrian, it **{20}** was a region of ruins and agriculture outside the Aelia Capitolina. The ruins thought by Bagatti to come from a Jewish-Christian synagogue-church are most likely a corner of the great Church of Holy Zion, built in the latter part of the fourth century.[93]

There is some possible archaeological evidence for Jewish-Christians but not in the heartland of Roman Palestine. It is found where we do have some corroborative literary evidence for Jewish-Christians existing - east of the Jordan rift in the Golan. Here inscriptions have been discovered in which the motif of the menorah occurs with the Christian cross and other Christian symbols from the early Byzantine period. The problem is that the menorah with the cross was used by orthodox Christians, and therefore the evidence is inconclusive.[94]

Those familiar with the Bagatti-Testa hypothesis will have many objections to what I have outlined above, since it is not possible for me to argue the reasons why I have come to these conclusions and I have not touched on a number of superficially persuasive aspects of the school's argument. Nevertheless, I hope it can be seen from this brief survey of the background and work of the Bagatti-Testa school that its definition of Jewish Christianity may be erroneous and its methodology inadequate in assessing the finds made at Christian holy places, and that alternative proposals may be more likely.

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[92] Ibid, pp. 283-297.
[93] Ibid, pp. 298-310.
[94] Ibid. pp. 76-78. See also: G. Schumacher, *The Jaulan,* London, 1888, pp. 114-116, 183, Figs. 23, 27, 74-76; W. F. Albright, "Bronze Age Mounds of Northern Palestine and the Hauran: the Spring Trip of the School in Jerusalem:, Bulletin of the American *Schools of Oriental Research* 19, 1925, pp. 5-19, at p. 14; C.M.Dauphin, "Farj en Gaulanitide: refuge judeeo-chretien?", *Proche-Orient Chrétien* 34, 1984, pp. 233-245; idem, "Jewish and Christian Communities: A Study of Evidence from Archaeological Surveys", *PEQ*, 1982, pp. 129-142; Z.U. Maoz, "Comments on Jewish and Christian Communities in Byzantine Palestine", *PEQ,* 1985, pp. 59-68.

{27} Church of the Apostles on Mt. Zion

Bargil Pixner

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I believe the famous Church of the Apostles, intended to mark the site where the apostles prayed when they returned from the Mount of Olives after witnessing Christ's post-resurrection ascent to heaven (Acts 1:1-13), can still be found on the southwestern hill of Jerusalem, today called Mt. Zion. This was also the traditional site of the Last Supper. There too Peter delivered the famous Pentecost sermon recorded in Acts 2.

Paradoxically, what remains of the Church of the Apostles is now part of the structure traditionally venerated as the tomb of King David. The second floor of this structure, however, is still revered as the cenacle, the traditional room of the Last Supper.

Our demonstration is in three steps.

The first one is the easiest and is not really disputed by any serious body of scholarship. That is, that the structure in which the traditional tomb of David is located on Mt. Zion is really a Roman-period synagogue and not the tomb of David.

The second step in my argument is that this was not a usual Jewish synagogue, but a Judéo-Christian synagogue.

At first, places where Jewish Christians worshipped were of course called synagogues. Only later did Christian places of worship come to be called churches instead of synagogues. And at some time after that, this particular Judéo-Christian synagogue became known as the Church of the Apostles. Demonstrating this last statement will be the third part of my argument.

{28} The Odyssey of Mt. Zion

Indeed, Zion has been something of a movable mountain. The Bible tells us that David captured Metsudat Tsion, the fortress of Zion (2 Samuel 5:7). Archaeologists have established beyond cavil that the original City of David and the original Mt. Zion (Zion I) that David captured were on the eastern hill.

King Solomon, David's son, built his palace and a Temple to the Lord on a hill north of King David's city, on what is today still called the Temple Mount, the jewel of the Old City, with the Dome of the Rock at its center. Even in Biblical times, the site of Zion seems to have shifted, for the Temple Mount became known as Zion (Zion II). This shift to the Temple Mount is already noticeable in Isaiah (for example, Isaiah 60:14) and in the Psalms, but is especially clear in the First Book of Maccabees (4: 37, 60, 5: 54, 7: 33).

So it remained until the Roman destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. At that time, the Romans utterly destroyed the city, including the Temple, and in time people wondered where the ancient Davidic fortress could have been. First-century residents of Jerusalem could not

imagine the splendid palace of David having stood on the lowly eastern hill. Common opinion held that it must have stood on the highest hill of the city as they perceived it, the western hill. The first-century Jewish historian Josephus already refers to the City of David on the western hill.[1] In this way a third place, the western hill, became known as Mt. Zion (Zion III), which name it still retains, although erroneously.

The Wandering Tomb of King David

In ancient times the tomb of David was of course well known, but it is difficult to learn from these ancient references just where it was located. Nehemiah refers to the tomb of David in his description of the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem when the exiles returned from Babylon in the late sixth century B.C. (Nehemiah 3:16). From this description it appears he located David's tomb on the eastern hill.[2]

Only in the tenth century did a new Christian tradition develop that placed David's tomb on the *western* hill, which had long been identified, if incorrectly, as Mt. Zion.

When the Crusaders arrived in Jerusalem in 1099, they found on Mt. Zion (Zion III) the Byzantine Church of Hagia Sion (Holy Zion) that had been destroyed; in the better-preserved annex south of the church, they discovered not only what had been identified as David's tomb, but also the **{29}** tomb of his son Solomon and the tomb of St. Stephen. Both of the latter were attached to David's tomb.[3] The Crusaders disregarded the tradition concerning Stephen's tomb, because a Byzantine Church of St. Stephen containing a reliquary of the martyr already existed north of Damascus Gate. The Crusaders focused their attention instead on the tradition of David's tomb that placed it on Mt. Zion (Zion III) and they erected an enormous Gothic cenotaph (a sepulchral monument, in this case an empty sarcophagus) to mark it.

But the Tomb of David was, for the Crusaders, of less importance than the much older tradition, also found by the Crusaders, that this sanctuary was the site of Jesus' Last Supper, of the resurrection appearances, of the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles on Pentecost and of the *dormition* (passing away) of Mary.

Gradually this pseudo-tomb of David of the Christians came to be accepted, first by the Jews and later also by Moslems.

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1 Josephus thought that the ancient wall (First wall) encompassing the western hill had been built by David and Solomon *(Wars* 5.143). Describing David's conquest of Jerusalem, he lets Joab first conquer the Lower City, then the Jebusite fortress in the Upper City *(Antiquities* 7.62-66).

2 Nehemiah tells us that "Shallum rebuilt the Fountain Gate" and then "built the wall of the Pool of Solomon at the royal garden as far as the stairs that go down from the City of David" (Neh 3:15). This clearly places the City of David on the eastern hill. The next verse contains the description of the repair of a portion of the wall "opposite David's tomb." The tomb of David must have lain inside the city wall, not far from the Siloam Pool, yet still at a distance from the Temple Mount, precisely where Weill in 1913 found some magnificent tombs he postulated to be those of the Davidic family.

3 Raymund de Aguilers writes: "In that church are the following holies: the sepulchre of King David and of Solomon and the sepulchre of the proto-martyr Saint Stephen" (D. Baldi, *Enchiridion Locorum Sanctorum,* 2nd ed. Jerusalem 1982, no. 757).

A Mortar Shell and a Dig

In 1948, during Israel's War of Independence, considerable fighting occurred on and around the western hill, Mt. Zion (Zion III), in the course of which a shell exploded in the building housing the traditional tomb of King David. In 1951 the Israeli archaeologist Jacob Pinkerfeld was entrusted with the task of repairing the damage. While doing so, he also examined the site from an archaeological perspective.[4] Behind the cenotaph of King David, Pinkerfeld found a niche that was part of the original structure of the building. When he removed the marble floor slabs for repair, he dug two trial pits in which he found three earlier floor levels. About 5 inches (12 cm) below the present floor, he found the Crusader floor. About a foot and a half (48 cm) below that, he found a late Roman or early Byzantine floor that consisted of a colored mosaic with geometric designs. Then, about 4 inches (10 cm) below that, Pinkerfeld found the plaster of the original building's floor, along with the remains of what appeared to be a stone pavement.

In Pinkerfeld's excavation report he described this original floor:

> *Seventy cm below the present floor level another floor of plaster was found, quite possibly the remains of a stone pavement. Some small fragments of smooth stones, perhaps the remains of this pavement were found slightly above the level ... It is certain that this floor belonged to the original building, i.e., to the period when the northern wall and its apse [niche] were built. This is evident from a section of the wall which shows at that level a foundation ledge projecting into the hall.*[5]

{30} As Pinkerfeld noted, in the northern wall (which was part of the original construction) was a niche about 6 feet (1.8 m) above the original floor level. Similar niches at similar heights above floor level have been found in ancient synagogues and were presumably used to house an ark for Torah scrolls. Pinkerfeld reasoned that this niche served the same function. He concluded that the building was originally a Roman-period synagogue.

That this building was originally a synagogue now seems clear, and scholars who have examined the matter agree. The next step is to determine what kind of synagogue it was. Was it a traditional Jewish synagogue, or a Judéo-Christian synagogue?

The earliest Christians were all Jews. And for several centuries Judéo-Christians and even some gentile Christians referred to their houses of worship as synagogues.[6]

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4 This report was only published posthumously, the author was killed in a terrorist attack on the 1956 Archaeological Convention at Ramat Rachel, south of Jerusalem.

5 Jacob Pinkerfeld, "'David's Tomb,' Notes on the History of the Building," *Bulletin of the Louis Rabinowitz Fund for the Exploration of Ancient Synagogues,* 3 (Jerusalem: Hebrew Univ., 1960), pp. 41-43.
6 See for example, Ignatius of Antioch *(Letter to Polycarp 4:2); Pastor of Hermas* 43:9; Justin the Martyr *(Dialog with the Jew Tryphon* 63:5).

A Peculiar Orientation and Revealing Graffiti

Pinkerfeld concluded that the building was a Jewish synagogue, because, he thought, it was oriented precisely toward the Temple Mount, whereas churches are usually oriented toward the east. Pinkerfeld's reasoning is based on at least two errors. Moreover, additional evidence suggests that the building was originally a Judéo-Christian synagogue.

Pinkerfeld's first error is his assumption that all Christian houses of worship were oriented to the east. Actually, this became the general rule only in the second half of the fourth century, after Christianity had become the official religion of Rome. The construction that concerns us here is of a much earlier date.

Second, this synagogue - or more precisely, its niche - is not oriented exactly toward the Temple Mount, where the Jewish Temple once stood. As several observers have now noted, the synagogue is oriented slightly off north, rather than toward the northeast where the Temple was located. The difference is small, but important. And with the Temple Mount but a few hundred yards away, the builders surely knew the difference. In fact, the synagogue's orientation is toward what is presently the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, which, at the time the synagogue was built, was believed to be the site of Jesus' tomb and of his crucifixion at Golgotha.

Was this directional orientation intentional? I believe it was. Would it not be logical that, after the Temple had been destroyed, Judéo-Christians, instead of orienting their synagogues toward the destroyed Temple as was the case with traditional Jews, would orient their synagogues toward the **{31}** new center of their redemption, the site of Jesus' burial and resurrection? This suggestion is supported by the fact that when the emperor Constantine built the Church of the Martyrion[7], the earliest section of today's Church of the Holy Sepulchre, in 326 A.D., it too was oriented toward Jesus' tomb.

Another sanctuary oriented toward Jesus' tomb, according to the Franciscan archaeologist Emmanuele Testa, was the oldest church in front of Mary's tomb, an ancient Judéo-Christian holy place in the Kidron Valley.

But there is more. In the lowest layer, Pinkerfeld found pieces of plaster with graffiti scratched on them that came from the original synagogue wall. In his own words: "In the first [Roman] period, the hall was plastered. The fragments were handed over to the late Prof. M. Schwabe for examination." Both Schwabe and Pinkerfeld died without publishing these graffiti.[8]

Ultimately they were published by a team of experts from the Studium Biblicum Franciscanum led by Professors Emmanuele Testa and Bellarmino Bagatti. Their interpretation is as follows:

> *One graffito has the initials of the Greek words, which may be translated as 'Conquer, Savior, mercy.' Another graffito has letters which can be translated as 'O Jesus, that I may*

7 The Greek word martyrion means that the church was standing as a "witness" of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

8 Pinkerfeld, "David's Tomb," p. 43.

live, O Lord of the autocrat.[9] (The word "autocrat" perhaps refers to King David, compare Ps 110:1 and Matt 22:43).

I agree with the Franciscan authors that on this basis we can conclude that the synagogue building was originally a Judéo-Christian house of worship. As we shall see, later references to the building as the "Church of the Apostles" also support its identification as a Judéo-Christian synagogue.

The Building of a Judéo-Christian Synagogue

The historical conditions after the Roman destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. and some new archaeological evidence suggest the circumstances under which this Judéo-Christian synagogue was built.

In 70 A.D. the Roman general Titus suppressed the First Jewish Revolt (66-70 A.D.) by utterly destroying Jerusalem and burning the Temple. The first-century historian Josephus tells us that the destruction reached the farthest corners of the city and was so complete that someone passing by would not know a city ever stood there.[10]

This destruction, indeed, included the western hill, Mt. Zion (Zion III). In 1983, during an excavation in the Dormition Abbey, the building on Mt. Zion **{32}** adjacent to this ancient Judéo-Christian synagogue, I found coins, dating from the second and third years of the First Jewish Revolt (67 and 68 A.D.), on the steps of a ritual bath lying under huge layers of destruction debris, and in the remains of an oven. Thus, it is safe to conclude that the building that stood on the site of the adjacent Judéo-Christian synagogue also fell victim to the Roman onslaught.

The Judéo-Christian community in Jerusalem escaped this terrible catastrophe by fleeing to Pella in Transjordan and the countryside of Gilean and Bashan[11] in expectation of the Parousia, the second coming of Christ.[12] When this did not occur and they realized that the time of Jesus' return was not yet at hand, they decided to go back to Jerusalem to rebuild their sanctuary on the site of the ancient Upper Room - where the Last Supper had been held, where the apostles returned after witnessing Jesus' ascension on the Mount of Olives and where Peter delivered his Pentecost sermon as recorded in Acts 2. It was this site on which they made their synagogue. They were free to do this because they enjoyed a certain religious freedom from the Romans *(religio licita*) inasmuch as they were Jews who confessed Jesus as their Messiah, and not gentile converts. (The religion practiced by the Jews, even when practiced by believers in Jesus, was recognized by Roman law as legitimate - *religio licita*. Gentiles who became Christians, on the other hand, were persecuted until the time of Constantine in the early fourth century. This might be one reason why Jewish believers in Jesus did not call themselves Christians, but rather Israelites, Nazarenes or Ebionites).

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9 Bellarmino Bagatti, *The Church from the Circumcision* (Jerusalem: Franciscan Printing Press, 1971), p. 121

10 *Wars* 7.3-4.
11 Eusebius, *Church History* 3.5,2-3; Epiphanius, *Panarion* 29.7; 30.2,7.
12 "Ascension of Isaiah 4" in James H. Charlesworth, ed., *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha,* vol. 2 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1985), pp. 161f.

The archaeological evidence is consistent with this suggestion. On the outside face of the synagogue, at the base of the eastern and southern walls, we can see building stones of the original Roman-period building, which still exists to a considerable height. These large stones (for example, in the third course, 3 by 3.5 feet [96 by 110 cm]) are assigned by most archaeologists to the Herodian period, that is, before 70 A.D. But these stones were not originally hewn for this building. They were brought here from elsewhere and are in secondary use. This is evident because the corners of the stones were damaged during transport. Moreover, squared ashlars (large rectangular stones) of different heights were used in the same course on the eastern wall. Had this been original construction, the heights of stones in any one course would have been uniform.

Someone during the Roman period (after the destruction of Jerusalem) must have erected this synagogue structure by using ashlars brought here from elsewhere. Who would have done this? I believe that the returning Judéo-Christians did it in the late first century, when they put up their synagogue on the site they identified with the cenacle (the Upper Room, where the **{33}** Last Supper was held), the center of the primitive community around James, "the brother of the Lord" (Gal 1:19. The most probable period when such an imposing structure would have been built was between 70 and 132 A.D. According to Eusebius, during those years there was a flourishing Judéo-Christian community in Jerusalem presided over by a series of 13 bishops from the circumcision (that is, Judéo-Christians)[13]. Early Church writers identified this Judéo-Christian synagogue as the Church of the Apostles.

Mt. Zion in Pre-Byzantine Times

Why was this ancient Judéo-Christian synagogue on Mt. Zion (Zion III) called the Church of the Apostles? Bishop Epiphanius (315-403 A.D.), a native of the Holy Land, transmitted to us the following information: When the Roman emperor Hadrian visited Jerusalem in 130/131 A.D., there was standing on Mt Zion "a small church of God. It marked the site of the *hypero-on* (Upper Room) to which the disciples returned from the Mount of Olives after the Lord had been taken up [see Acts 1: 13]. It had been built on that part of Sion."[14] The ancient sanctuary on Mt. Zion known to Epiphanius could only have been a Judéo-Christian synagogue, for the building of Christian "churches" was made possible only after Constantine's Edict of Milan (313 A.D.).

Who built this synagogue-church - already standing on the southwestern hill in 130 A.D. - in memory of the place of the Last Supper and the Pentecost event? Some information comes from a tenth-century Patriarch of Alexandria named Euthychius (896-940 A.D.), who wrote a history of the church based on all the ancient sources that were available to him. According to Euthychius, the Judéo-Christians who fled to Pella to escape the Roman destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D., "returned to Jerusalem in the fourth year of the emperor Vespasian, and built there their church."[15] The fourth year of Vespasian was 73 A.D., the year Masada,

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13 In his own words: "And the history also contains the remark that there also was a very big church of Christ in Jerusalem, made up of Jews, until the time of the siege of Hadrian" (Eusebius, *Demonstratio Evangelica* 3.5, in *Patristic Evidence for Jewish-Christian Sects, ed. A.F.J. Klijn* and G.J. Reinink [Leiden, E.J. Brill, 1973], p. 139). The list of bishops is to be found in Eusebius, *Church History* 4.5:1-4.

14 Baldi, *Enchiridion,* no. 733.

15 J.P. Migne, ed., *Patrologia Latina* (Paris, 1844), vol. 111, p. 985 (hereafter cited MPL).

the last outpost of the Jewish rebellion, fell to the Romans. The Judéo-Christians returned to Jerusalem under the leadership of Simon Bar-Kleopha, who was the second bishop of Jerusalem after James, "the brother of the Lord;" and, like Jesus, a descendant of the royal Davidic family.

The Judéo-Christians probably built their church, at that time called a synagogue, sometime in the decade after 73 A.D. For its construction, they could have used some of the magnificent ashlars from Herod's destroyed citadel, not far away. Or perhaps they used stones from the ruins of the Temple itself, standing on Zion II, with the intention of transferring some elements of the Holy Temple to a site becoming a new Mt. Zion (Zion III). **{34}** If that is so, the event may in fact be referred to in one of the apocryphal *Odes of Solomon* composed about 100 A.D. by a rival sectarian Judéo-Christian group. The fourth ode begins:

> *No man can pervert your holy place, O God, nor can he change it, and put it in another place, because [he has] no power over it. Your sanctuary you designed before you made special places.*[16]

Was this passage in condemnation of the effort of the Judéo-Christians who built the synagogue on Mt. Zion to transfer some of the holiness of the destroyed Temple to their place of worship on the new Mt. Zion by constructing it in part with stones from that Temple?

From this time on, the western hill of Jerusalem was referred to by Christians as Mt. Zion (Zion III). Very few places in Jerusalem can point to such an enduring tradition as Zion's claim to be the seat of the primitive church. No other place has raised a serious rival claim.

The earliest mention of Zion in this new outlook is found in the apocryphal *Life of the Prophets* from the end of the first century A.D. It mentions that Isaiah's tomb was close to the Siloam Fountain, near the tombs of the Kings, "to the east of Zion."[17] The "east of Zion" could only refer to Christian Zion on the western hill.

Other sources regarding Christian traditions on Mt. Zion are found in the early church fathers. An outstanding early witness is Eusebius (265-349 A.D.), the great church historian. His testimony is of special value because it was written before the Council of Nicea (325 A.D.) and the consequent development of a Christian Jerusalem. Eusebius writes in his *Demonstratio Evangelica (*c. 312 A.D.):

> *This is the word of the Gospel, which through our Lord Jesus Christ and through the Apostles went out from Sion and was spread to every nation. It is a fact that it poured forth from Jerusalem and Mt. Sion adjacent to it (In Eusebius's time, Mt. Zion was south of the rebuilt Roman*

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16 Charlesworth, *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, p.* 736.

17 Charlesworth, Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, p. 386.

Jerusalem), on which our Savior and Lord had stayed many times and where he had taught much doctrine.[18]

How Pilgrims and Bishops Saw Mt. Zion

In the year 333 A.D. a man known to us only as the Pilgrim of Bordeaux, arrived in the Holy City. According to his itinerary, he did not go, as other pilgrims did, first to the Holy Sepulchre. Instead he took the road from the Temple to Mt. Zion (Zion III). He records for us how he came down from the Temple to the Siloam Pool and ascended Mt. Zion, passing the ruins of the house of Caiaphas, the High Priest in the time of Jesus, and entered the **{35}** "wall of Sion." He reports that this is the place where the Palace of David must have stood. He also observes that a synagogue, still visible, was left standing on the site. Afterwards he exits from the wall of Sion and goes in the direction of the Neapolis Gate (today's Damascus Gate) viewing also some walls of Pilate's palace, located on his right, on the slope of the Tyropoeon Valley.[19]

In the opinion of some scholars, the Bordeaux Pilgrim may have been a Jewish Christian, [20] who was well versed in the Hebrew Scriptures and who was drawn to places connected with Jewish history. The synagogue that he saw on Mt. Zion could only have been a Judéo-Christian one, because he himself mentions that at this time Jews were allowed in Jerusalem only once a year to lament the destruction of the Temple near a "perforated stone" in its vicinity (most probably the perforated rock *[sahne I* under the Dome of the Rock).

Since we know of no other synagogue building standing at the pilgrim's time on Mt. Zion, the synagogue he refers to must be identified with the building we have been discussing. This same Judéo-Christian building, called a synagogue by the Bordeaux Pilgrim, was called a church by others (for example, Epiphanius) when seen from a different perspective.

Another piece of evidence for the identification of this building comes from the pen of a man whose name is easily confused with the tenth-century Euthychius, quoted earlier. I refer now, however, to a man named Eucherius, who wrote in about 440 A.D., 500 years before Euthychius. Eucherius was a very learned man, originally a Roman senator and then archbishop of Lyons in France. Basing his work on Jerome and other earlier sources, Eucherius writes:

The plain upper part [of Mt. Zion] is occupied by monks' cells, which surround a church. Its foundations, it is said, have been laid by the Apostles in reverence to the place of the resurrection of the Lord. It was there that they were filled with the Spirit of the Paraclete [the Holy Spirit] as promised by the Lord.[21]

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18 Baldi, *Enchiridion,* no. 728.
19 Baldi, *Enchiridion,* nos. 729, 886.
20 See Herbert Donner, *Die ersten Palestinapilger* (Stuttgart: Catholic Bibelwerk, 1983), pp. 41f.

21 Baldi, *Enchiridion,* no 735.

The puzzling and somewhat difficult expression "in reverence to the place of the resurrection of the Lord" might indicate the synagogue's orientation towards Jesus' tomb in the Holy Sepulchre Church, which was also the site of the resurrection.

In 348 A.D., just a few decades after the Roman emperor Constantine declared Christianity a licit religion, thus allowing it to develop freely, Cyril, later bishop of Jerusalem, delivered a famous sermon in the newly constructed basilica of the Holy Sepulchre. In the course of his address, he **{36}** remarked that it would have been more appropriate to speak about the Holy Spirit in the very place where the Pentecost Spirit descended upon the apostles, namely "in the Upper Church of the Apostles."[22] By this time the Judéo-Christian synagogue on Mt. Zion had become known as the Church of the Apostles. It became known as the Church of the Apostles not only because the apostles returned there after witnessing Christ's post-resurrection ascent to heaven, but also because the building was built, as we have seen, under the leadership of Simon son of Kleophas. Kleophas was known as a brother of Joseph of Nazareth[23] therefore Simon was a cousin of Jesus. Simon was later considered one of the apostles, outside the circle of the 12. For this reason, the house of worship built by Simon could rightfully be called the Church of the Apostles.

At this point, it becomes clear why Cyril, the bishop of the gentile Christian community of Jerusalem, did not preach in the Church of the Apostles, although he acknowledges that that would be the more appropriate place to talk about the Holy Spirit. He did not preach at the Church of the Apostles because this church was a synagogue in the hands of Judéo-Christians, as we deduced from the Pilgrim of Bordeaux. At this time Judéo-Christians and Gentile Christians had already separated.

But how could a Judéo-Christian community exist in Jerusalem from the second to the fourth century?

A Judéo-Christian Community on Mt. Zion

After the emperor Hadrian suppressed the Second Jewish Revolt against Rome in 135 A.D., Jews were banished from Jerusalem by imperial decree. Whether this included Judéo-Christians is not clear. The revolt had been led by a man named Bar-Kokhba, who made messianic claims of his own - the revolt is sometime called the Bar-Kokhba Revolt. Naturally, Christians of Jewish descent opposed these messianic claims, thus incurring the wrath of Bar-Kokhba's followers, so perhaps the Judéo-Christians were not required by the Romans to leave Jerusalem. Or perhaps, after Jerusalem was rebuilt as a Roman city named Aelia Capitolina - to obliterate any associations with the Jews - and Hadrian was succeeded by a much milder emperor named Antoninus Pius (138-161 A.D.), the Judéo-Christians drifted back to Mt. Zion.

Their adherence to Jewish customs, especially circumcision and observance of Jewish holy days, naturally alienated them from the church of the gentiles. The fissure became a gaping canyon with the strongly anti-Judaic positions taken by the Byzantine church after the Council of Nicea (325 A.D.). **{37}** Though recognizing the authenticity of the place, the

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22 Baldi, *Enchiridion,* no. 730.

23 Eusebius, *Church History* 3.11, 32:4ff.

gentile Christians looked with suspicion and almost contempt at the synagogue of the Judéo-Christians on Mt. Zion, considering their way of life outdated, if not heretical.[24]

This dispute, especially as it relates to Mt. Zion, is referred to in a letter from the church father Gregory of Nyssa, who visited Jerusalem in 381 A.D. Gregory reported that the very place that was the first to receive the Holy Spirit was now in turmoil, and that a counter-altar had been set up.[25] Bishop Epiphanius of Salamis also declared that Mt. Zion, which was once a privileged height, had now been "cut off' (as heretical) from the rest of the church.[26] This was the situation during the second half of the fourth century A.D.

To fend off gentile influence, both pagan and Byzantine (that is, gentile Christian), the Judéo-Christians of Mt. Zion built a wall around their ancient sanctuary. It was this kind of ghetto wall that the Bordeaux Pilgrim referred to when he visited Mt. Zion in 333 A.D. He entered and exited through a wall, he reported. In our 1977 excavations at Mt. Zion we found the remains of a primitive gate built some time between 70 and 350 A.D. on top of the earlier Gate of the Essenes. This gate could very well be a part of this 'ghetto wall' of the Judéo-Christians.[27]

Byzantine Christian Takeover of Mt. Zion

How the Byzantine Christians finally took possession of the ancient Judéo-Christian sanctuary, we do not exactly know. Until very recently we did not even know when. But in 1984, Belgian scholar Michel van Esbroeck published some texts, recently discovered in a Georgian monastery in Russia, that seem to answer at least this question. In one of these texts a certain bishop, John of Bolnisi, records that the feast of dedication of the Anastasis (a circular structure built over Jesus' tomb as a memorial of his resurrection) occurred on September 13, whereas the nearby Constantine church of the Martyrion was dedicated on September 14 and the Church of Hagia Sion (Holy Zion), the mother of all churches on Mt. Zion, on September 15.

In Bishop John's own words:

> *And the 15th of the same month was the dedication of the Holy and Glorious Zion, which is the mother of all churches, that had been founded by the Apostles, which emperor Theodosius the Great has built, enlarged, and glorified, and in which the Holy Spirit had come down on the holy day of Pentecost.*[28]

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24 The church fathers (Eusebius, Epiphanius, Jerome and others) called it "a cottage in a cucumber field" (J.P. Migne, ed. *Patrologia Graeca* 22, pp. 43-44 (hereafter cited MPG); Baldi, E*nchiridion,* nos. 733, 734).

25 G. Pasquali, ed., *Seconde Lettre* (Berlin, 1935), pp. 11-17.

26 *MPG* 41, p. 845.

27 B. Pixner, "The History of the 'Essene Gate' Area", *Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palestina-Vereins* 105/1989, pp. 96-104, p.101; B. Pixner, D. Chen, Shlomo Margalit, "Mount Zion: The 'Gate of the Essenes' Re-excavated," *ibid*. pp. 85-89.

28 Michel van Esbroeck, *Les plus anciens homiliaires Georgiens* (Louvain, Belgium, 1975), pp. 314-315.

{38} So the construction of the first Byzantine church on Mt. Zion was ordered by Theodosius I, who reigned between 379 and 395 A.D. This emperor also had built the first Byzantine church in Gethsemane. The structure of the apostolic synagogue was left untouched, however. The new church simply formed a kind of vestibule to the ancient structure. This we know from the famous mosaic in the apse of the Pudentiana church in Rome, which was made about 400 A.D. This mosaic not only shows the Church of the Holy Sepulchre but also the two buildings on Mt. Zion next to each other.

The reconciliation between Judéo-Christians and gentile Christians of Jerusalem was brought about by an illustrious person of this period, Saint Porphyrius, later bishop of Gaza. He himself seems to have been of Jewish descent. He came to Jerusalem from Thessalonica and may have become a monk on Mt. Zion. In any event, he was a great preacher who succeeded in integrating the Judéo-Christians into the imperial church. Prior to this the two groups had lived physically apart and intellectually aloof from one another.

The reconciliation was finalized when the bishop of Jerusalem, John II (served 387-419 A.D.), blessed the altar of the Judéo-Christians (propitiatory, Hebrew *kapporet),* now in the Theodosian church, on the feast of Yom Kippur (September 15), possibly 394 A.D. On that occasion Bishop John gave a most astonishing sermon full of Judéo-Christian symbolism. In it he praised again and again the great merits of Porphyrius the Israelite.[29]

From both the text of Bishop John's sermon and the Pudentiana mosaic, I am inclined to agree with van Esbroeck that the Byzantine vestibule church, adjacent to the Church of the Apostles, was built as an octagon. The octagonal form was used for Christian memorial churches, in this case a memorial to the mother of all churches, the Church of the Apostles. Other examples of octagonal memorials are the church memorializing Saint Peter's house in Capernaum, which has in large parts survived and the Constantinian sanctuary built above the grotto of Jesus' nativity in Bethlehem.

To enhance the attraction of the Theodosian building, the presumed column of the flagellation of Jesus, which so far had been lying in the ruins of the house of Caiaphas, was inserted into the portico.[30] Crowds of people came to venerate this column on Good Friday morning, according to Egeria, an intrepid female pilgrim who visited Jerusalem around 394 A.D. From her description of the liturgy, there was a double sanctuary on Mt. Zion,[31] the old Church of the Apostles and the Theodosian Church in front of it.

{39} It seems as if on Pentecost the people gathered in the newly built church of Theodosius, while the presbyters (ordained priests) went also to another church, apparently the ancient Judéo-Christian synagogue. One gets the same impression from a moving passage in Bishop John's dedication sermon, where he exhorts the builders, priests and architects to go to the Upper Room.

It appears that John also built on Mt. Zion the great rectangular Hagia Sion church shown on the Madaba mosaic map from the sixth century and described by Bishop Arculph in the seventh century.

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29 van Esbroeck, "Jean II de Jerusalem," *Analecta Bollandiana* 102 (1984), pp. 99-133.41, p. 813.

30 Baldi, *Enchiridion,* no. 734.
31 Baldi, *Enchiridion,* no. 732. 32 *MPL*

After the reconciliation with the original Judéo-Christian owners of Mt. Zion and their absorption into the gentile church, John was free to conceive a great plan of reconstructing Mt. Zion and adding the great church of Hagia Sion. To realize this grandiose scheme, a monk's vision came to his aid.

In 415 A.D. the bones of the first martyr, St. Stephen, were found in Kafar Gamaliel, at a site indicated in a vision experienced by the monk Lucien. John then ordered the bones handed over to him. Interpreting the monk's vision, John declared, "The carriage, you have seen [in your vision], drawn by a large ox signifies Stephen. Zion, the first church, is the big carriage."[32]

Based on this interpretation, the relics of Stephen were solemnly brought in a great procession into the sacrarium of Mt. Zion, that is, the old Judéo-Christian synagogue.[33] The date of the transfer of St. Stephen's bones was December 26, 415 A.D., and this became the date of the feast of St. Stephen.

The relics of Stephen, whether genuine or not, did not stay on Mt. Zion for very long. The entire Byzantine Empire was caught up in the excitement of the discovery. When Theodotus's wife, the empress Eudocia, came to Jerusalem, she had a new church erected in honour of St. Stephen north of the Damascus Gate, at the site of today's Ecole Biblique. Most of St. Stephen's bone relics were moved there in 439 A.D.; others were taken to Constantinople; still others went to the Mount of Olives. Apparently only the empty sarcophagus remained in the old sanctuary on Mt. Zion. Because of the erroneous notion at the time that the City of David and the tombs of the kings of Judah stood on this hill, two more memorial tombs were added in the tenth century, one for David and one for Solomon. It was these two tombs, plus St. Stephen's sarcophagus that the Crusaders found upon their arrival.

{40} Mt. Zion from the Crusader Period Until Today

The Church of Hagia Sion was burnt during the Persian invasion of 614 A.D. It was rebuilt by Patriarch Modestos, and partially destroyed again in 1009 A.D. by Hakim, the Fatimid sultan of Egypt. So, when the Crusaders arrived in Jerusalem in 1099 A.D., they found the magnificent Byzantine Church of Hagia Sion in a heap of ruins. On the south part of the ruins of the Hagia Sion, the Crusaders in the 12th century built a new church, which they named St. Mary of Mt. Zion, in memory of the tradition that Mary had lived on Mt. Zion after the resurrection of her son and had also died there.

In 1985, while a sewage channel was being dug in front of the Dormition Abbey, I took the occasion to examine the area archaeologically and was able to locate the foundation of the facade of this Crusader church. The southwest corner of the church is in an exact alignment with the southern wall of the building of the ancient Judéo-Christian synagogue. The bases of nine Crusader pilasters and the western section of the northern wall of the Crusader church were also discovered and preserved.

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32 *MPL* 41, p. 813.
33 From this time on, this building is often called in Greek the *diakonikon,* that is, a side chapel of the Hagia Sion church.

Thus, it was the Crusaders who first included the walls of the ancient Judéo-Christian synagogue, which had become the Church of the Apostles, into their own basilica. As the Madaba map clearly shows, even the big rectangular Byzantine Hagia Sion was separate from the remains of the older Church of the Apostles.

Above the remaining walls of the Church of the Apostles, the Crusaders built a second floor. The room on this floor, known as the cenacle, commemorated both the Last Supper and the Pentecost event described in Acts 2. This may have been the actual site of the Upper Room, referred to in Acts, where the Last Supper was held. This room is still visited today by Christian pilgrims. On the lower floor, next to the pseudo-tomb of David, the Crusaders commemorated the place where Christ washed the feet of his disciples (John 13: 1-20).

Since 1948, Mt. Zion has been part of Israel. The government's Department of Religious Affairs now administers both floors of the building. The pseudo-tomb of David is used as a Jewish synagogue and the upper room is left open for Christian visitors. Unfortunately, the only archaeological exploration of this very important site was the cursory examination by Pinkerfeld. Perhaps one day it will be excavated more thoroughly. In the meantime, we may venerate it as Christendom's most ancient shrine: The mother of all churches.

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{43} Jewish Christianity according to Eusebius

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For almost the first half-century of its history, the Church was predominantly Jewish in its ethnic makeup. After the New Testament itself, our single most important source for this period of church history, as it is for its first 300 years, is the *Ecclesiastical History (HE)* of Eusebius Pamphilii or Eusebius of Caesarea. Ironically, Eusebius has relatively little to tell us about Jewish backgrounds of the Church or about the continued existence of Jewish Christianity. The purpose of this article is to identify what data he does provide, indicate his biases and, where possible, his sources, and arrive at some assessment of the usefulness of Eusebius as a source for our ongoing study of early Jewish Christianity.

Ebionites[1]

By far the greatest proportion of Eusebius' information about Jewish Christian sects concerns the Ebionites. The bulk of the material appears in *HE* III 27 but let us first look at relevant texts, all of which are brief.

> *1. It is said that Symmachus was an Ebionite. This was a heresy of some so-called Jews who claim to believe in Christ, and Symmachus was one of them.*[2]

Symmachus, one of the translators of the Old Testament into Greek, probably lived sometime after Irenaeus, near the end of the second century. Jerome *(De vir.* ill., 16) also calls him an Ebionite, but Jerome's contemporary Epiphanius *(De mens. et pond.,xvi)* says he was a Samaritan who became a Jewish proselyte.[3] This reference of Eusebius is incidental. He is in fact commenting on the virgin/young woman passage in Isaiah 7:13-14 quoting Symmachus' translation. The source of his statement about the Ebionites (or the fact that Symmachus was one) is not given.

Symmachus' translation of this passage may be of some significance, since he chose to translate עלמה *almah* as *neanis* (young woman) rather than **{44}** the *parthenos* (virgin) of the LXX. If he were an Ebionite, we could have here some confirmation of Ebionite rejection of the virgin birth. This, however, should be treated with caution. First of all, as stated, it is not sure that Symmachus was an Ebionite. Secondly, *neanis is* probably a more straightforward

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1 The sources for the Ebionites and the other groups mentioned in this paper have been conveniently collected by A. F. J. Klijn and G. J. Reinink in their *Patristic Evidence for Jewish-Christian Sects* (Leiden, 1973), from which English quotations are taken, unless otherwise stated.

2 Demonstratio evangelica vii 1.

3 Some have tried to identify this Symmachus with the tanna Symmachus b. Joseph, who was a disciple of R. Meir (BM *6:5; Hull. 5:3),* but the identification is unlikely. On the identity of Symmachus, see Klijn-Reinink, *op. cit.,* 52-54.

translation of *almah* than *parthenos.* Even if it is a tendentious rendering, it could equally be ascribed to a Jewish polemicist rather than Ebionite. The next entry gives support to the latter possibility.

> *2. With regard to the translation of the inspired scriptures according to the seventy, listen to the very words he (Irenaeus] writes: God became man and the Lord himself saved us, giving the sign of the virgin [parthenos], but not as some say of those who at the moment venture to translate the scripture: 'See, a young woman [Neanis] shall conceive and bring forth a son,' as Theodotion of Ephesus and Aquila of Pontus, both Jewish proselytes, interpreted, whom the Ebionites follow when they say that he was born of Joseph.*[4]

Again we find that Ebionites ascribed to Jesus normal human conception. In this case, Eusebius says that the Ebionites follow the idea found in the literal renderings of Aquila and Theodotion. He does not describe either of these men as Ebionites. The earliest to say so (of Theodotion) is Jerome.[5] Aquila was not an Ebionite; he was converted to Judaism from Christianity.

> *3. As to these translators, one must know that Symmachus was an Ebionite. But the heresy of the Ebionites, as it is called, consists of those who say that Christ was the son of Joseph and Mary, considering him a mere man and insisting strongly on keeping the Law in a Jewish manner, as we already know from this History. Treatises of Symmachus are still extant in which he appears to support this heresy by attacking the Gospel of Matthew. Origen makes clear that he obtained these and other commentaries of Symmachus on the Scriptures from a certain Juliana whom, he says, received the books from Symmachus himself.*[6]

Once again Eusebius connects Symmachus to the Ebionites, and again his wording calls into doubt whether he is sure of himself. He does not seem to derive Symmachus' affiliation from a direct statement but by deduction from the fact that Symmachus attacked the Gospel of Matthew. The data could be explained with equal validity by the fact that Symmachus was a Jewish polemicist, not necessarily a Jewish Christian. As to the rest of the information about the Ebionites, Eusebius himself indicates that he is repeating his earlier statements (in V *27,* with which we shall deal presently).

> *4. Choba (Gen. 14:15). 'This is to the left of Damascus.' There is also a village in the same region in which live those of the Hebrews who believed in Christ, called Ebionites.*[7]

{45} The exact location of this village cannot be ascertained with certainty, but it may correspond to a modern village of the same name about 100 kilometers northwest of

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4 *HE* V8,10.
5 De Vir. Ill., liv. Epiphanius (De mens. et pond. 17) calls him a follower of Marcion.
6 *HE* VII 17.
7 Onomasticon 172,1-3.

Damascus. Note that Choba is not the name of the unnamed Ebionite village but of one near it.[8]

The region indicated is roughly that of Coele Syria, where Epiphanius locates the Nazarenes.[9] No ancient source places the Ebionites so far north or west as this. It is highly possible that Eusebius has confused Ebionites with Nazarenes, and perhaps Choba with another village named Kochaba or Chochaba.[10]

> *5. The first preachers of our Saviour himself called them by a Hebrew name Ebionites, indicating them to be poor of understanding. They say they know one God and do not deny the body of the Saviour, but they do not recognize the divinity of the Son.*[11]

Note the significance of Eusebius' omission of any person called Ebion, first mentioned by Tertullian and Hippolytus. This would seem to indicate that Eusebius is generally dependent on Irenaeus, who was the first to write about the Ebionites, predates Tertullian and Hippolytus, and knows nothing of "Ebion." This short passage affirms Ebionite belief in the unity of God to in a manner that denies the divinity of the Son. We have seen this latter element as a connecting thread in every reference by Eusebius to the Ebionites. The statement that "they do not deny the body of the Saviour" refers, of course, to their rejection of the docetic solution as a way of maintaining the unity of the godhead.

6. We may now turn our attention to the one extensive treatment of the Ebionites in Eusebius. It is found in HE III 27,1-6:

> *1. The evil demon, however, being unable to tear certain others from their allegiance to the Christ of God, yet found them susceptible in a different direction, and so won them over to his own purposes. The ancients quite properly called these men Ebionites, because they held poor and mean opinions concerning Christ. 2. For they considered him a plain and common man who was justified only because of his progress in virtue, born of the intercourse of a man and Mary. In their opinion the observance of the Law was altogether necessary, on the ground that* **{46}** *they could not be saved by faith in Christ alone and by a corresponding life. 3. There were others, however, besides them that were of the, same name but avoided the strange absurdity of the former, and did not deny that the Lord was born of a virgin and the Holy Spirit. But nevertheless*

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8 A point overlooked by the author, op, cit., p.121.

9 Panarion 29, 7.Epiphanius' information on this point should be treated as accurate, since he addresses the Panarion to two priests from Coele Syria (Migne, PG 41, 156). See further Pritz, op. cit., 120-121.

10 See Pritz, loc. cit.

11 De eccl. theol. I 14. The final short reference to Ebionites (De eccl. theol. 120) is nothing more than a condemnation and need not be dealt with here.

> *inasmuch as they also refused to confess that he was God, Word and Wisdom, they turned aside into the impiety of the former, especially when, like them, they did their best to observe strictly the bodily worship of the Law. 4. These men, moreover, thought that it was necessary to reject all the epistles of the Apostle, whom they called an apostate from the Law; and they used only the so-called Gospel according to the Hebrews and made small account of the rest. 5. The Sabbath and the rest of the discipline of the Jews they observed just like them, but at the same time, like us they celebrated the Lord's day as a memorial of the resurrection of the Saviour. 6. Wherefore, in consequence of such a way of life, they received the name Ebionites, which signified the poverty of their understanding. For this is the name by which a poor man is called among the Hebrews.*

The question of Eusebius' sources for this passage has been dealt with at length in the present author's *Nazarene Jewish Christianity,*[12] where it was concluded that Eusebius is primarily dependent on Irenaeus, but also used Origen and perhaps Justin Martyr for some minor points.

At first look, we seem to have here a description of two kinds of Ebionites. Paragraph 2 deals with the first kind and paragraphs 3-6 with the other. Of the first group, (Let us call them Group L) we are told that they hold Jesus to have been conceived and born in the normal manner. His righteous status was not achieved because of a pre-relationship to God, but because of his exceptional virtue as a man. For Group I, salvation is attained by a combination of faith in Christ and observance of the Law of Moses.

Group II is distinguished from Group I by one point only: their Christology. They believed Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit and that Mary was not impregnated by man. Like Group I, the latter "Ebionites" observed the commands of the Law, and denied that Jesus was "God, Word, and Wisdom." This latter phrase is borrowed from Origen's description of the Ebionites.[13] Eusebius seems to be dependent on Origen for the information that there are two sorts of Ebionites. As I have shown elsewhere,[14] Origen and Justin Martyr had both referred to two kinds of Jewish Christians who had kept the law, distinguished by their Christology. The vocabulary used by Eusebius indicates that he is dependent on both men. His basic source, Irenaeus, did not mention two kinds of Ebionites, and when Eusebius tried to combine his sources into a contiguous narrative, he faced a difficulty. Justin seemed to accept one group of Law-keepers, while Origen rejected both. Eusebius' solution was to accept the view of one group concerning the virgin **{47}** birth, but to attribute to them several traits which probably are properly characteristic only of the first group.

From his use of *houtos/ekeinos,* it is evident that Eusebius has consciously kept the two items separate, and yet it is not easy to see what distinction he is making, since they both accept Jesus' divine conception but deny his divinity. We conclude that Eusebius is not to be

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12 pp. 24-27.
13 in Ep. ad Titum.
14 op, cit., 17-23.

considered reliably informed of Group II, which group believes in the virgin birth of Jesus. Nevertheless, paragraphs 3-5 may still contain some valid historical data. We know from other sources that some Jewish Christian groups did, in fact, reject Paul's ministry, and that the Ebionites made use of the Gospel according to the Hebrews.

If we compare the information in paragraphs 3-5 about Jewish Christian sects with that known with relative certainty from other sources, we can affirm that the Ebionites who subscribed to non-divine origins of Jesus kept the Law, used the Gospel according to the Hebrews and rejected Paul. They rejected the idea that Jesus was "God, Word, and Wisdom". On the other hand, the Nazarenes kept the Law and used the Gospel according to the Hebrews, but seem to have held Paul in esteem and would probably have been ready to attribute the titles "God, Word, and Wisdom" to Messiah.[15]

The information that the Ebionites celebrated the Lord's day in remembrance of Jesus' resurrection is unique. While patristic sources agree that all Jewish Christian sects kept the Sabbath, no other source corroborates Eusebius' claim to Sunday observance.[16] Since we have no evidence that Eusebius had any personal contact with Jewish Christians, and since none of his sources mentions Sunday observance, the reference must be considered suspect. If he had heard it by word of mouth, it is more likely to be true of the Nazarenes than of the Ebionites or Elkesaites.

It can be seen from this that, while the Nazarenes are never mentioned by name by Eusebius, they may be Group II Ebionites. The information he provides is all secondary and can add nothing to our knowledge of the Nazarenes.

Cerinthians and Elchasaites

We may safely omit discussion of the two references to Cerinthus and the Cerinthians.[17] While many modern authors assume they describe Jewish Christians, there seems no valid reason for defining Cerinthians as such.[18] Similarly, the Elchasaites are probably better omitted from a discussion of Jewish Christianity. Klijn and Reinink[19] conclude that the Elchasaites were influenced by Jewish Christians but did not themselves belong to that **{48}** group in any case, Eusebius mentions them once,[20] where he provides a verbatim quote from Origen's homily on Psalm 82.

Information from lost sources - Hegesippus

In addition to the sparse data about different sects, Eusebius passes on information from earlier writers, some of whom may themselves have been Jewish divisions. For example, in

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15 See Pritz, op. cit., p. 44.
16 The only exception to this is Theodoret, Prol. lib. II 1, but he is clearly following Eusebius.
17 *HE* III 28, 1-6; VII 25,1-3.
18 Irenaeus, Adv. haer. III,II, I seems to identify them as gnostics. Ps. Tert., Adv. omn. haer. 3, says of Cerinthus that he taught that the God of the Jews was not the LORD but an angel, and he contrasts Cerinthus with "Ebiori" precisely in some areas of Jewishness. While Epiphanius (Pan. 28 2, 6) says that Cerinthus was circumcised, (Pan. 28 1, 3) he elsewhere says that Cerinthus "adhered to Judaism only partially". Klijn and Reinink, op. cit. [note 2 above], p. 68, conclude that "the Jewish Christianity ascribed to the Cerinthians is an invention of early Christian authors."
19 op, cit., pp. 66-67.
20 *HE* VI 38.

HE III 5, 3 we read about the Jerusalem church's flight to Pella during the course of the a>D>66-70 war.[21] His source (and that of Epiphanius after him) was probably the lost works of the second century writer, Hegesippus.

Elsewhere in the *Ecclesiastical History* Eusebius preserves several important records from the *Memoranda* of Hegesippus. These include an account of the martyrdom of James the Just (II 23, 4-18), which can be compared with the versions found in Josephus *(Ant.* XX 9*)* and in the Pseudo-Clementine *Recognitions* (66-70). In III 19, 1-20, 7 [22] we have the story of the arrest and investigation by Domitian of the relatives of Jesus, the so-called *"desposynoi."* He also tells us that other relatives of Jesus, (grandsons of his brother Judah) presided over the Church until the reign of Trajan when Simeon b. Clopas was accused to the authorities, tortured and put to death.[23] Simeon was a cousin of Jesus who had been chosen to lead the congregation in Jerusalem after the death of James.[24]

Hegesippus followed this information with the observation that the first heresies appeared with the election of Simeon.[25] It seems likely that the Ebionites separated from the Nazarenes at this period, the time of the great revolt against Rome. Eusebius mentions a certain Thebouthis, who caused a split (haeresis) because he was not chosen to succeed James.[26] We may surmise that Simeon and Thebouthis held opposing christological views and that those who believed like Thebouthis followed him in pulling out of fellowship.

Finally, we have Eusebius affirming that Hegesippus was himself a Jewish Christian:[27] "He also wrote much more, from which we have already made some quotations, arranging the narratives chronologically, and he makes extracts from the Gospel according to the Hebrews, and from the Syriac and particularly from the Hebrew language, showing that he had been converted from among the Hebrews, and he mentions points as coming from the unwritten tradition of the Jews."

Papias

Two valuable texts were preserved from this early second century bishop of Hierapolis in Asia Minor. First, we have the oft-quoted statement of Papias that Matthew recorded the sayings of Jesus in Hebrew.[28] The second **{49}** immediately follows it, where Eusebius tantalizes us with the brief statement that Papias "has expounded another story about a woman who was accused before the Lord of many sins, which the Gospel according to the Hebrews contains."

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21 See Pritz, "On Brandon's rejection of the Pella Tradition", Immanuel 13 (1981), 3943, and the discussion there of Eusebius' source and the historicity of the flight to Pella.
22 See also 111 32, 5-6.

23 *HE* II I 32,1-6.
24 This information was also given by Hegesippus, as related in *HE III II.* He said that Clopas was the brother of Joseph.
25 III 32, 7-8, and see also N 22, 4-6.
26 26 N 22, 4-5.
27 IV 22, 8. This was called into question by W. Telfer, "Was Hegesippus a Jew?, Harvard Theological Review 53 (1960), 143-153.
28 III 24,6; 3916-17; V 8,2.

In only one other place Eusebius preserves something of the content of the Gospel according to the Hebrews. In his *theophania*[29] he relates the following parallel to the parable of the talents:

> *The gospel which has come to us in Hebrew letters directs its threat not against the one who has hidden [his talent] but against the one who lived in spendthrift - for he possessed three slaves, one who spent the fortune of his master with harlots and flute-girls, the second who multiplied his trade and the third who hid his talent; the first was accepted, the second rebuked only, the third, however, was thrown into prison...*

Ariston Of Pella

In Pella, one of the Decapolis cities, members of the Jerusalem church found refuge during the revolt against Rome. One early Christian author connected with Pella was Ariston. It is commonly accepted that he lived in the second century, but Eusebius' one mention of him[30] is his only appearance in early Christian literature. Not until the seventh century does Maximus the Confessor attribute to him the "Disputation between Jason and Papiscus".[31] Origen *(Contra Celsum* 6,52) mentions the work, as do Clement of Alexandria and other Greek and Latin authors of the 2nd - 4th centuries. In the "Disputation" Jason represents the author and is called a Hebrew Christian.

The one passage which Eusebius attributes to Ariston describes the fate of Jerusalem following the Bar Kochba revolt of A.D. 132-135, and it seems to have added the information that Hadrian's expulsion of Jews from the city included Jewish Christians. Eusebius observes that "the church, too, in it was composed of Gentiles, and after the Jewish bishops the first who was appointed to minister to those there was Marcus."[32] Immediately preceding this is Eusebius' list of the first 15 bishops of Jerusalem.[33]

> *I have not found any written statement of the dates of the bishops of Jerusalem, for tradition says that they were extremely short-lived, but I have gathered from documents this much - that up to the siege of the Jews by Hadrian the successions of bishops were fifteen in number. It is said that they were all Hebrews by origin who had nobly accepted the knowledge of Christ, so that they were counted worthy even of the episcopal ministry by those who had the power to judge such questions. For their whole church at that time consisted of Hebrews who*

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29 MPG 24,685-688.

30 *HE* N 6,1-4.
31 See Harnack, Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur, I, 92ff; and in Texte und Untersuchungen, I, 115-130. Also R. H. Smith, Pella of the Decapolis (Wooster: 1973), 49.
32 Cf *Demonstratio evangelica* III 5: "there was also a very big Church of Christ in Jerusalem, built by Jews, until the time of the siege of Hadrian:"
33 N 5,1-4. Translation by Lake.

> *had **{50}** continued Christian from the Apostles down to the siege at the time when the Jews again rebelled from the Romans and were beaten in a great war. Since the Jewish bishops then ceased, it is now necessary to give their names from the beginning.*
>
> *The first then was James who was called the Lord's brother, and after him Simeon was the second. The third was Justus, Zacchaeus was the fourth, Tobias the fifth, the sixth Benjamin, the seventh John, the eighth Matthias, the ninth Philip, the tenth Seneca, the eleventh Justus, the twelfth Levi, the thirteenth Ephres, the fourteenth Joseph, and last of all the fifteenth Judas. Such were the bishops in the city of Jerusalem, from the Apostles down to the time mentioned, and they were all Jews.*

Eusebius does not give a source, and words his introduction in such a way that we could gather that he used several sources. If he was using other authors, then Ariston or Hegesippus would be the most likely. However, his use of *engraphai* may indicate that he had access to some official church records in the libraries at Caesarea, or Jerusalem. The passage raises serious questions of chronology.[34] But of interest to us is the note that the Jerusalem congregation was overseen by Jewish Christians until official action prohibited that possibility, and that Eusebius is able to accept this historical fact with equanimity.[35]

Miscellaneous references to Jewish Christians

We may conclude our overview by mentioning two minor, almost off-hand references to Jewish Christians in *Ecclesiastical History.* Both are from third century authors.

In *HE* V 11, 3-4 Eusebius quotes from the *Stromateis* (I 11) of Clement of Alexandria: "This work is not a writing composed for show, but notes stored up for my old age ... and a sketch of those clear and vital words which I was privileged to hear, and of blessed and truly notable men. Of these one, the Ionian, was in Greece ... another in Palestine of Hebrew origin. But when I had met the last, and in power he was indeed the first, I hunted him out from his concealment in Egypt and found rest. But these men preserved the true tradition of the blessed teaching directly from Peter and James and John and Paul ..." We have no other

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34 Why do we have 13 names for the short time between the death of Simeon in 106 or 107 (according to Eusebius in the *Chronicon)* and the end of the revolt in 135? Many suggestions have been offered. The most reasonable is that Simeon indeed lived to a ripe old age. Eusebius gives him the biblical maximum of 120 years, which must be exaggerated. Even if he did not reach this age, he could have been close to 70 when he was elected to replace James. It is conceivable that within a short time of his installation he was not able to carry out the functions of his office. It could well be that the names in Eusebius' list were men who assisted Simeon and who in everything but name were the real leaders in Jerusalem.

35 Another writer mentioned by Eusebius in passing *(HE* VI 7) was a certain Judas, (the third century). "At this time Judas also, another writer, composed a written discourse on the seventy weeks in the book of Daniel; he stops his record of the time at the tenth year of the reign of Severus. He also was of the opinion that the much talked of coming of the antichrist was then already near. So strongly did the persecution which was then stirred up against us disturb the minds of the many." Surely the man's name indicates that he was born into a Jewish family, for it is hard to imagine either Christian or pagan parents giving the name to a son.

indication who this Jewish Christian teacher might have been, nor what it means that he was in "concealment in Egypt." Inasmuch as the *Stromateis* have been preserved, Eusebius' quote is not of particular documentary value.

{51} Finally, we have a fragment from Julius Africanus, a non-Jewish native of Jerusalem. At the end of a lengthy discussion of the genealogy of Jesus, Eusebius cites him for the following:[36]

> *Now a few who were careful, having private records for themselves, either remembering the names or otherwise deriving them from copies, gloried in the preservation of the memory of their good birth; among these were those mentioned above, called desposynoi, because of their relation to the family of the Saviour, and from the Jewish villages of Nazareth and Cochaba they traversed the rest of the land and expounded the preceding genealogy of their descent, and from the Chronicles so far as they went.*

It is interesting to read that physical descent from the family of Jesus was of sufficient importance that detailed genealogies were kept for some generations. The geographical details correspond reasonably well with what is recorded elsewhere, particularly in the *panarion* of Epiphanius.[37]

Conclusions

Eusebius has little to add to our knowledge of Jewish Christian sects. With the one exception that some of them observed both Sabbath and Sunday, he provides nothing that cannot be found in the sources he used. This statement itself must be treated with caution. When he transmits information from lost sources, Eusebius becomes most valuable for our study of early Jewish Christianity. Here we find details which can fill the gaps in other records. Unlike his skewed discussion of Jewish Christianity, his casual information seems to be free of polemical bias.

Perhaps as significant as any of this is the fact that nowhere does Eusebius add anything from personal knowledge or hearsay. As far as we can tell from his writings, this early fourth century Palestinian historian and bishop had never met a Jewish Christian and had never talked with anyone who had met one.

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36 I7,14.

37 Pritz, op. *cit.,* 120f.

{54}The Theology of Jewish Christianity A History of early Christian Doctrine before the Council of Nicaea, Vol. I

Jean Daniélou

Translated and edited by John A. Baker, Darton, Longman and Todd, London 1964. Reviewed by Oskar Skarsaune.

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This fascinating volume has had great appeal among all students of early Jewish Christianity. Daniélou's purpose in writing the book was to prove that there did in fact exist a theology of Jewish Christianity, and that this theology is preserved - to a surprising extent - in Jewish Christian writings which we possess also in the writings of gentile Christians. The latter, of course, have been known and read for centuries, but the massive deposits of Jewish Christian traditions to be found in them were never recognized or analyzed.

Daniélou contends that none of these sources were given due attention in the classic period of Patristic scholarship (1880-1914). The result was, for example, that Harnack's monumental monograph[1] did not consider the phenomenon of Jewish Christian theology at all. "Harnack ... regarded Theology as born from the union of the Gospel message and Greek philosophy; and in his *History of Dogma* a Jewish Christian theology finds no place, simply because he never suspected its existence" (TJC, 2).

As an alternative to Harnack's framework (gospel message versus Greek philosophy), Daniélou propounded a threefold scheme. Early Christian theology was cast in three thought-forms: Jewish, Hellenistic, and Latin. Accordingly, Daniélou's history of "Christian Doctrine before the Council of Nicaea" is divided into three corresponding volumes.[2]

One should note very carefully the concept "thought-form." It is of crucial importance with regard to an intelligent reading of Daniélou's book. Closer inspection reveals that Daniélou is not concerned to write of the theology of the Jewish Christians or of the Jewish Christian community. The exact meaning of "Jewish Christian theology," as defined by him, is: Christian **{55}** thought expressing itself in forms borrowed from Judaism (TIC, 9). In this sense, Jewish Christian theology "does not necessarily involve any connection with the Jewish community" (TIC, 9). This important qualification seems to have been overlooked by some of Daniélou's critics, who have complained that the contents of the book are not described by its title. That may be true, if the title is taken to mean "the theology of the Jewish Christian community." It may also be true that Daniélou is not free from ambiguity on this point. His other two books clearly depict the theology of the Greek and the Latin

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1 *Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte* I-III (4. Aufl.) 1909-10.
2 *Vol. 2: Gospel Message and Hellenistic Culture* (transl. by j. A. Baker), London Philadelphia 1973. Vol. 3*: The Origins of Latin Christianity* (Transl. by D. Smith and J. A. Baker), London/ Philadelphia *1977.*

communities. Nevertheless, when his critics insist that his book should be described by the title "Jewish thought-forms (or: Jewish motives) in early Christian Theology," Daniélou is entitled to respond that this is exactly his intention in the title given. When critics object that the "theology" reconstructed by Daniélou may not have been taught by any single individual or existing community - and therefore may actually never have existed - Daniélou would be likely to respond that the objection is valid but not to the point. He never claimed to have reconstructed a body of teaching. Rather, he laboured to give a survey of Jewish elements in early Christian theology.[3]

That, in any case, is what the body of the book deals with despite the fact that the title of the first chapter ("The Literary Heritage of Jewish Christianity") again evokes the expectation that we are being offered a body of teaching propounded by the Jewish Christians. The literary heritage spoken of is said to be works that are "the direct product of Jewish Christian thought," or written by "Christians still deeply involved with Judaism" (TJC, 11 and 12). But the basic ambiguity crops up in that one of the Old Testament Pseudepigrapha[4] is said to have been written by "a Jewish Christian," and two others to have been "cherished by the same group of Jewish Christians" (TJC, 14 and 17).

It is typical of Daniélou's approach that the first sources treated by him are the Old Testament Pseudepigrapha and the New Testament Apocrypha. In the second place come the better known writings of the "Apostolic Fathers" - Barnabas, Hermas, Ignatius, and Clement. This rather generous use of the Pseudepigrapha and the Apocrypha raises the question of orthodoxy versus heresy in "Jewish Christianity." Normally, the Pseudepigrapha are tinged with heterodoxy. Daniélou maintains a rather clear-cut division between orthodox and heterodox Jewish Christianity, advocating a liberal definition of orthodoxy which stresses the archaic character of "Jewish Christianity." Whatever came to be branded as heresy later, was not necessarily heretical in the first or early second centuries. For example, a trinitarian theology in which the Son and the Spirit are spoken of as the two highest angels of God should not automatically be branded heretical. This imagery may be an archaic way of expressing an orthodox intention.

{56} No doubt, Daniélou's view raises many questions and calls for criticism. His clear-cut division between orthodoxy and heresy as so important an issue and at such an early period may be open to objection. But his rather broad definition of orthodoxy enables him to treat a whole array of literature with great respect and perceptiveness to which others accord scant attention at best. This is the main asset of his book.

No one can reasonably deny that the bulk of Daniélou's work, in which he surveys the different "Jewish Christian" elements in early Christian theology, makes for fascinating reading. He may not have reconstructed a coherent body of teaching, but he has certainly introduced his reader to a world of images and symbols in early Christian theology, and he has shown beyond doubt that the primary background to these is to be sought in Judaism. A major asset in Daniélou's exposition is his evident sympathy for imagery and symbols that, at

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3 Cf. his own statement: "The thesis of this volume is that *there was a first form of Christian theology expressed in Jewish-Semitic terms,* and it is this theology which is the real object of the present study" (TIC, 10, Daniélou's emphasis).

4 A group of Jewish writings written mostly between 200 BC and 100 AD; some of them with Christian interpolations or additions, some of which may derive from Jewish Christians.

first sight, might strike the modern reader as bizarre, and somewhat less than orthodox. Daniélou has an extraordinary gift for eliciting poetry as well as theology from texts which other scholars have often dismissed as hopelessly "primitive."

On one point Daniélou is quite explicit in his demands of his readers: There is no way one can appreciate early Jewish Christian theology without coming to terms with apocalyptics and - related to that - cosmic imagery. Here Daniélou is more helpful than demanding. He succeeds to a considerable degree in communicating to the reader his own fascination with these elements in early theology. They come through as sources of theological riches, rather than embarrassment.

It would be futile to try and summarize Daniélou's treatment of the several theological issues and the imagery in which they are expressed. The learned author's strength sometimes becomes his weakness: His extraordinary gift for elegant combinations of seemingly unrelated materials sometimes makes him produce combinations that are too elegant and therefore untenable. If it is true that early theology is a theology through images, Daniélou is a perceptive and enthusiastic guide through the gallery of images required.

{57} A comprehensive reconstruction of the theology of Jewish Christianity, in which different bodies of teaching are correlated to historically and sociologically definable communities of Jewish believers, remains an unfulfilled task, even after Daniélou's book. He has not written the story of "orthodox" Jewish Christian theology in response to H. J. Schoeps' story of Jewish Christian heterodoxy.[5] Daniélou's book is at its weakest when it comes to sociology and historical circumstances to which the various documents he quotes could be related.

With these limitations, TIC remains a great book. I have used the word fascinating several times, and I can think of no alternative if I were called to characterize the book in one word.

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5 *Theologie und Geschichte des Judenchristentums,* Tübingen 1949 - which is exclusively devoted to the ebionite form of Judeo-Christianity found in the so-called Pseudoclementine writings, which in their present form derive from the 4th century AD.

{58} The Christology of Early Jewish Christianity

Richard N. Longenecker

Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1970

Reviewed by Darrell L. Bock

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Richard Longenecker's significant study on Jewish Christian christology was first published in 1970 through SCM Press (London) and later reprinted in 1981 through Baker Books (Grand Rapids). Twenty years after its publication, the study still has relevance and value. The author has limited his investigations to the christology of early Jewish Christianity. Longenecker bases this on an analysis of Matthew, John, Hebrews, James, the Johannine epistles, I Peter and the Apocalypse as major witnesses, with lesser roles assigned to 2 Peter and Jude. His examination proceeds thematically, first through ancient Jewish materials and then on to the Jewish Christian materials, with a cursory glance at the rest of the New Testament for comparison. His rationale for the study is that both the Qumran and the Nag Hammadi texts have given new insight into the Judaism of Jesus' time. Longenecker also makes use of most of the Jewish non-canonical works (also known as the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha in some Christian circles) to supply comparative Jewish sources.

The author divides his investigation into three key categories. The first is "distinctive Jewish images": these refer to eschatological but non-messianic titles within early Jewish Christianity. In this category come angelomorphic motifs, the Mosaic Prophet, the New Exodus, the New Torah, the Name, the Righteous One, the Shepherd, the Lamb, the Beginning, the First Born, and the "ascending-descending" motif. The background to each of these concepts is well handled, though one might question whether the concept concerning the prophet like Moses belongs here; early Christian usage, sees parallels between Jesus and Moses because the former leads a new community. This usage actually begins to draw closer to messianic categories.

{59} The second category is "Messiahship and Its Implications." There are found eschatological and Messianic uses. Longenecker examines Messiah, Son of Man, Son of God, God's salvation, Suffering Servant, Davidic King, and High Priest. He notes that a title like "Son of God;" previously regarded by many as only possible in a Hellenistic setting, has been shown in the Qumran materials (4Q Flor) to have a Jewish messianic usage. Thus christological material, which previously had been identified as stemming from a context due to the limited nature of our historical knowledge, is now having its Jewish origins more positively re-assessed as more ancient materials are discovered. Another hotly contested issue concerns the title "Son of Man." Longenecker has placed it under this category, but it could just as well have been placed in his third division. In fact, it should be noted that some of his titles truly share features of two categories, and thus were able to function as bridges between those categories.

The third category is "Lordship and Attendant Features." Sovereign and divine designations are dealt with here. This category represents the most sophisticated level of christological affirmation. Titles in this grouping are Lord, God, Saviour, and The Word. Here is where the uniqueness of Christian claims comes to the fore.

Longenecker makes seven conclusions: 1) The resurrection, not the delay of the parousia, is the key factor in christological development. 2) Messiah is the central title out of which development arose (p. 149). 3) The use and frequency of a title changes, because old titles no longer carry clear meaning and/or because old meanings were better conveyed in newer titles. The titles in the first grouping tended to fall out of use for such reasons. 4) Christological titles were at the first functional, and only later came to be more ontological. 5) As titles fused together, new christological insights emerged. So, for example, the concept of first born came to be associated with lordship and a high cosmic christology. 6) Jesus has a filial consciousness which preceded and was the basis of His messianic consciousness. Longenecker's use of the term "preceded" here is not clear: If it is logically preceded, then the term makes sense, but if it is temporally preceded, then such a remark could be challenged. Logical precedence seems the more likely idea. 7) Early Jewish Christian christology found its point of departure in the resurrection /exaltation of Jesus; gained support from remembrances of Jesus' teaching; derived substantiation from the Old Testament read christologically; developed through the guidance of the Spirit employing circumstances; and reflected the situation of Jewish mission, which developed certain ideas and retarded others. The reviewer finds himself in agreement with these general historical conclusions.

How should one evaluate this study? The monograph is an excellent study of the relationship of early christological titles to Judaism (or Judaisms, cf. **{60}** *Judaisms and their Messiahs,* ed. by J. Neusner, W.S. Green, E. Frerichs [Cambridge University Press, 1987]). Twenty years after its publication, Longenecker's survey and his comparisons are still helpful in charting the extent of our knowledge. He has also shown how numerous titles do not require a Hellenistic or late Christian community origin, as many New Testament scholars of the previous two or three generations claimed (cf. pp. 98,103, 116, 121). Qumran has put to rest such a narrow view of the origins of these titles. Herein lies a major contribution of this study.

The most important methodological contribution of this book is the attempt to distinguish between how Jesus saw Himself, and how the disciples came to see Jesus as they did (p. 96). This distinction is not often made in christological discussions, yet it is a crucial one, especially when historical judgments are to be made concerning the New Testament materials. These documents consistently portrayed Jesus as having a high self-understanding, while the disciples are honestly portrayed as wrestling to understand who Jesus is. The Synoptic Gospels portray a Jesus who presents His claims circumspectly rather than explicitly. But these claims nevertheless had implications and, on reflection, they could be seen to contain great claims of authority. John's Gospel pointedly brings out the force of such claims and implications, while the Synoptics leave them in the somewhat more ambiguous form heard by the original disciples. Longenecker suggests that what Jesus thought of Himself may not always be fully conveyed in the words He used to present Himself; rather it may be indirectly reflected. Thus one can and should distinguish *implicit* from *explicit* christology when discussing the perspective of the disciples. Theirs was a wrestling involved

with working out the force of an implicit christology. It is worth noting that the opponents of Jesus, who were definitely theologically trained listeners, often arrived more quickly at the explicit implications of Jesus' implicit remarks and thus actively opposed His high claims.

Some small reservations could be noted concerning the study and its structure. As already noted, one might quibble about the placement of a given title or two in one category or the other. This quibbling would only reflect the fact that some titles were "bridges" between simpler and more complex categories. Such bridges would probably include the figures of "the prophet like Moses" and "Son of Man."

Longenecker's treatment of the complex "Son of Man" figure is not as strong as might be wished. The attempt to link the "suffering Son of Man" in the Jewish-Christian materials with Daniel 7 is not persuasive. In the book of Daniel the Son of Man does not suffer, but rather vindicates the saints. Perhaps Isaiah 52: 13 - 53: 12 would be a more likely point of integration. In addition, "Son of Man" in Daniel is not a title, nor does it have the appearance of a title; it is rather a description, which conceptually was strong enough to be developed into a titular concept (p. 86).

{61} Longenecker slightly overplays "situational" factors in the developments of titles, and underplays the role of alternative titles or of Jesus' teaching. Two examples suffice. First, he notes the lack of explicit attribution of kingship to Jesus in these titles (pp. 109-113). Longenecker suggests that the situation was such that such an attribution would be misunderstood, and that Jesus Himself also had avoided such usage. Both observations are correct, but the underlying reason might be different; the attribution of Jesus as the "Christ" would inherently suggest this kingly association, and the reality of resurrection/ ascension meant that "king" (at least in a political sense) became a less significant attribution to make than a title like "Lord." Second, he argues that the use of the title "Lord" demonstrates a reflective use of the Old Testament. But Jesus' teaching on this subject is clearly more significant. The force and implications of this title were the focus of a dispute in the last week of Jesus' ministry (Luke 20: 41-44) and the use of Psalm 110 (from which the title comes) at Jesus' trial shows that it was a title of some significance (Luke 22: 69). The importance of this title to Jesus has been underplayed in disputes about christology, since many regard it as reflecting the christology of the later Christian community (cf. the absence of any discussion of "Lord" in J.G.D. Dunn's *Christology in the Making,* a major omission; contrast this to the treatment of Psalm 110 in Luke - Acts in *Proclamation from Prophecy and Pattern: Lucan Old Testament Christology* by Darrell L. Bock).

The New Testament stress on Psalm 110 and its role in these key controversies would indicate that this tendency is in need of reexamination. No doubt the force of Jesus' teaching was reflected upon, and it later emerged, with greater clarity upon reflection; but the catalyst of and outlines for that reflective search came from Jesus' own teaching. The guidelines for christological reflection were not given by the post-resurrection community; rather it was the remarks of Jesus which guided the community in her examination of the ancient texts. Longenecker notes this, but I think he de-emphasizes it in explaining the process by which the various titles emerged as dominant.

In sum, the implications of this reemphasis would indicate that early Jewish Christianity would have used many titles at first (as the variety in Longenecker's first category suggests) but ended up reducing them to a few titles for clarity's sake. This is the exact opposite of

many developmental theories about Christian christology. These theories suggest that titles got more numerous as time passed. Longenecker, however, is not guilty of such a misreading and, in our opinion, he is right to suggest that titles coalesced, rather than multiplied. These few minor caveats aside, Longenecker's book is a fine summary of the development of early Jewish Christian christology. It comes highly recommended to any reader interested in christology. The author should be commended for his contribution to this important subject.

{62} Early Jewish Christianity and the Pseudo-Clementines:

An Introduction to the Works of H.J. Schoeps and G. Strecker

Ole Chr. Kvarme

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Clement and Peter

A fascinating story is conveyed to us by the ancient Church concerning a first-century Roman nobleman named Clement, a man searching for the truth. When rumours reached him from the land of Israel about a certain prophet named Jesus, Clement travelled to Caesarea and joined the circle of learners which had gathered around the apostle Peter. Clement came to faith in Jesus, was taught by Peter and witnessed encounters between the apostle and Simon the magician. Clement later accompanied Peter on his journeys in the Syro-Palestinian area, listened to Peter's sermons and his discussions with Jews and gentiles, and observed the apostle's healing ministry.

The stories of Clement and Peter were written down in two literary works: in the 10 books of the *Recognitions of Clement,* which were translated into Latin by Rufinus (ca. 400 AD) and in the 20 *Greek Homilies of Clement.* These two works more or less tell the same story and contain much parallel material; they are usually referred to as the Pseudo-Clementine literature.[1]

The Traditional View of Jewish Christianity

The Pseudo-Clementine literature has traditionally been one of the major sources about the history of Jewish Christianity in the first centuries. Today this literature is commonly regarded as having its origin and its compilation in the fourth century, by Jewish Christian groups in the Syrian region. Modern research in the Pseudo-Clementine literature was initiated more than 100 years ago by F. C. Baur and the Tübingen school. Baur dated the Pseudo-Clementine writings to the end of the second century or the beginning of the third, and from these writings he drew a picture of early **{63}** church history in which the growing, gentile and Pauline Christianity was opposed by a Jewish Christianity inspired by Peter.[2]

In the controversies between Peter and Simon the magician in the Pseudo-Clementine literature, it was assumed that the picture of Simon was a circumscribed attack on the apostle Paul. Based on this background, the Pseudo-Clementines were regarded as representative of

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1 Editions of the text: B. Rehm, Die *Pseudoklementinen* I: *Homilien,* with Irmscher and Paschke, GCS 42, 1953/1969;Die *Pseudoklementinen* 77: *Rekognitionen in Rufins Ubersetzung,* with Paschke, GCS 51, 1965. An English Translation by T. Smith, in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers,* Vol. 8, pp. 73-346.

2 Cf. F. Chr. Baur, Das *Christentum und die christliche Kirche der ersten drei Jahrhunderte,* Tübingen 1860.

a movement which stood in historical continuity with the anti-Pauline party of New Testament times. The Tübingen school saw the emergence of the Catholic church as a mediation between the broad movements of gentile and Jewish Christianity, but their picture of the first centuries has nevertheless deeply affected the way Jewish Christianity in this period normally has been described - as a sectarian and heterodox error.

In recent decades the Pseudo-Clementine literature has been re-evaluated with new results. The two main scholars who have renewed the study of this literature are both German: the Jewish scholar Hans Joachim Schoeps and the Christian scholar Georg Strecker. Whereas Schoeps has deepened and broadened the views of the school of Tübingen, Strecker has provided a completely different understanding of the Pseudo-Clementines and of early Jewish Christianity.

Schoeps: Drawing on New Sources

In 1949 Schoeps published his major work on the theology and history of early Jewish Christianity, *Theologie und Geschichte des Juden-christentums*[3] In it he upholds the traditional view of Jewish Christianity as an Ebionite movement, and he uses the Pseudo-Clementine literature as the major source for recovering its history and theology. The unique elements of Schoeps' contribution would include, first of all, his extensive use of rabbinic material. References to Jewish Christians in this literature (e.g. *minim, poshei-Yisrael)* provide significant information, and the rabbinic literature also helps fill in the context for a proper understanding of the place of Jewish Christianity in the history of Jewish, Christian and Near-Eastern religions. Secondly, Schoeps also makes use of the Greek Bible translation of Symmachus in his description of early Jewish Christianity.[4]

Eusebius identified Symmachus as an Ebionite,[5] but it is to Schoeps' merit that the latter convincingly demonstrated the Jewish-Christian and Ebionite character of this second-century translation of the Old Testament.[6] The Jewish identity of Symmachus is reflected in his familiarity with rabbinic exegesis of Old Testament texts, whereas his Christian identity may be expressed in his rendering of the Hebrew *Mashiach* as "Messiah" (anointed). The second century Greek translation of Aquila the Jew uses the word *eilemmenos,* whereas Symmachus translates it *christos*. The particular Ebionite christology of Symmachus is reflected in his translation **{64}** of Isaiah 7:14. There the Septuagint (as well as the early Christians) refers to the virgin *(parthenos)* who shall give birth, but Symmachus says that "a young woman" *(neanis)* shall conceive.

Schoeps also points out another interesting feature in the translation of Symmachus which corresponds to Ireneus' information concerning the Ebionites--that they adore Jerusalem.[7] Some biblical texts speak about the land of Israel as "the most beautiful" (צבי *sevi)* of all

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3 Published in Tübingen. A more popular, shortened and updated version of the scholarly work has been published in German as well as in English, *Jewish Christianity: Factional Disputes in the Early Church.* Philadelphia 1969.

4 Cf. also H.J. Schoeps, *Symmachusstudien,* Coniectanea Neotestamentica VI, Uppsala 1942.

5 In his Church History, 5:17.

6 Symmachus is primarily known to us through fragments from Origen's *Hexapla* - his edition of six parallel columns of different Bible translations.

7 *Adv. Haer.* 1:26:2. Cf. Klijn-Reinink, *Patristic Evidence for Jewish-Christian Sects,* Leiden 1973, p. 105.

lands. In three instances this expression is translated by Symmachus as "the place for the worship of God" *(threskeia;* Jer 3:19; Ezek 20:6,15). This peculiar translation is not the natural choice from a semantic point of view, and obviously reflects a particular concern for the land. Both for Symmachus and the Ebionites the land of Israel is the only proper place wherein the people of God may worship.

The Pseudo-Clementines and Source Analysis

The literary history of the *Recognitions* and *Homilies of Clement is* rather complex, and much of the scholarly research and debate on the Pseudo-Clementines have dealt with the questions of older sources within the current text. Today there seems to be some consensus with regard to these sources, although there are still varieties of opinion regarding their specific identification. These sources are important for our context, as they throw considerable light on the development of early Jewish Christianity. Schoeps follows earlier scholars in his source analysis and identifies a common source, a *Grundschrift,* for the *Recognitions* and the *Homilies.* He maintains that this source document was compiled by an author of Jewish origin in the third century who had joined the gentile-dominated, larger catholic church. Within this basic source Schoeps identifies another older source: ten chapters called the *Preachings of Peter* - usually called *Kerygamata Petrou (KP* in rest of article).[8] According to Schoeps this work was authored by an Ebionite ca. 160-190 A.D., and has its background in an anti-Marcionite and anti-Gnostic polemic. Schoeps further believes that *KP* is based on an old Ebionite parallel to the "Acts of the Apostles" *(Acta Apostolorum)* which describes the life of the mother church in Jerusalem from an Ebionite perspective.

Schoeps on Ebionite Theology

To Schoeps *KP* expresses a theology which emphasizes Jesus as the new Moses, the true prophet and as an angel. Jesus is primarily a teacher of the Torah, and his followers practice circumcision and celebrate the Sabbath. These elements establish a link between the mother church in Jerusalem and the pseudo-clementine Ebionites. However, the particular elements in this Ebionite Christianity are their prohibition against the eating of meat, their ideal of poverty and their daily ritual-baths and purification rites.

{65} *KP* also reflects a millennial theology which comes closer to rabbinic eschatology than to the eschatology of the surrounding gentile church. Parallel to the prohibition against meat is the opposition to the sacrificial cult and temple, and to kingship in biblical Israel. Some have interpreted these elements as a particular Jewish-Christian Gnosticism. Schoeps, however, sees them as part of Jewish tradition, positing an historical link from the Old Testament Rechabites to the Essene movement and on to the Ebionites of *KP.*

A distinct element in both *KP* and Ebionite theology is the teaching on the pairs of good and evil: all of history and the Old Testament must be understood in terms of the development of

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8 According to Schoeps they consist of the following sections from the *Homilies* and the *Recognitions:*
H. 1:18-20/R. 1:15-17,22,24,27-71,74. H. 2:16-18,33,38-52. H. 3:2-10,17-28,33-56/R. 2:20-48,66-70.
H. 8:4-23/R. 3:2-61 (most of this section). H.9:1-23/R.4:1-21,26-36. H.11:16,19-33,35/R.5:34-35.
H.15:5-11/R.6:4-14. H. 16:5-21;17:3-19;18:6-10,19-22;19:1-23; 20:1-10.

such pairs of opposites, where evil comes first and then the good (e.g.: Cain and Abel, the giants and Noah, Pharaoh and Abraham, Esau and Jacob, the magicians and Moses, etc.). *KP* also contain teaching on a secret tradition of false and original pericopes in the Hebrew Scriptures. Others have identified these elements as Gnostic, but Schoeps maintains that they too are part of Jewish tradition, with parallels in rabbinic literature. Schoeps demonstrates that *KP* contains strands of identifiably Jewish and Christian revelation, and that these pseudo-clementine Ebionites regarded themselves as "the true Pharisees."

Schoeps on the History of Jewish Christianity

On the basis of these source studies, Schoeps draws his picture of the history of early Jewish Christianity (e.g. Ebionite Christianity) with the following four basic elements:

* The first Ebionites were "the believers of the Pharisaic party" who participated in the Apostolic Summit in Jerusalem (Acts 15:5). They were a growing group of Jerusalemite believers who were "zealous for the Law" (Acts 21:20).

* Eusebius and Epiphanius report about the flight of the Jerusalem church to Trans-Jordanian Pella in connection with the fall of the Holy City in the year 70 A.D. Schoeps accepts the historicity of this report, but adds that the Ebionite tradition links this flight not only to the siege of Jerusalem, but to the death of James, the brother of the Lord, in 62 A.D.

* The early church of Jewish Christians already had a strong foothold in Galilee[9], and Schoeps believes this to be the reason for the flight to Pella. In the following decade there was close contact between the Jewish Christians in Galilee (where encounters with rabbinic Judaism took place) and those in both Pella and Kochabe in the Trans-Jordan area. The persecution of Jewish Christians during the Bar-Kochba revolt of 132-135 A.D. brought an end to their presence both in Galilee and in Israel proper.

{66}* In the last part of the second and in the third centuries, the Ebionites flourished in the Pella-Kochabe region and in the greater Trans-Jordan area. Rabbinic sources also confirm Ebionite settlements in the Trans-Jordan area in the fourth century, and various sources indicate that the movement of the Ebionite Jewish Christians disintegrated and died out in the middle of the fourth century.

From Schoeps to Strecker

The work of Schoeps has broadened the scope of research on early Jewish Christianity. However, his basic understanding of early Jewish Christianity and its development has received only limited support. The scholar who has taken up the challenge from Schoeps and the Tübingen school, is Georg Strecker. In 1959 he published his work *Das Judenchristentum in den Pseudoklementinen* (Jewish Christianity in the Pseudo-Clementines), and this was followed up by a later study in 1971 "On the problem of Jewish Christianity."[10]

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9 As in the classical study of E. Lohmeyer, *Galilaa und Jerusalem,* 1936.
10 Strecker's work *Das Judenchristentum in den Pseudo klementinen:* 2nd edition, Berlin 1981; "On the Problem of Jewish Christianity," in W. Bauer, *Orthodoxy and Heresy in Earliest Christianity,* Philadelphia 1971/79.

Recent studies of the Pseudo-Clementines seem to accept Strecker's basic source analysis, and there is growing confidence that two of the basic sources are "quite pertinent to the study of second century Jewish Christianity."[11] Strecker initially follows Schoeps in the identification of one basic source - a *Grundschrift,* but then goes on to identify two main sources within this larger complex:

* First, Strecker also identifies *KP,* but his list of source texts within the *Recognitions* and the *Homilies* differs somewhat from Schoeps.

* Secondly, in *Recognitions* 1:33-71 there is a survey of salvation history from Abraham to Jesus and a report on events in the early church - a description of the way of the true prophet from the beginning of the world to the church in Jerusalem. This section is identified by Strecker as a separate source and called "The Ascent of James II" - *Anabathmoi Jakobou II (AJ* II in rest of article).[12] This source is identified with the number II, since Strecker posits a relation between it and an early work mentioned by Epiphanus and given the name *Anabathmoi Jakobou (e.g.* I) by him.

Kerygmata Petrou and Early Christian Milieus

Strecker shares Schoeps' view that *KP* emphasizes Jesus as the true Prophet and as Law-interpreter. However, Strecker also points out an identification between Jesus as the true Prophet and Adam, with a resulting polarity between Jesus and Moses. *KP* is concerned with the proper interpretation of the Scriptures - in particular with the secret tradition of the false pericopes, and it is marked by opposition to Paul and his gentile ministry. In opposition to Schoeps, Strecker sees these elements as Gnostic tendencies within a Jewish-Christian milieu, and regards the anti-Pauline **{67}** polemic in *KP* as a literary creation and not as its heritage from the mother church in Jerusalem.

Strecker concludes his analysis of *KP* by stating that it is wrong to regard this work as Ebionite: it is not marked by the poverty-ideal of early Christian communities (the term "Ebionite" is derived from Hebrew *ebyon,* i.e. "Poor"). Nor can it be regarded as a product of the heretical group called "Ebionites" by the church fathers: the work itself reflects no sect situation within which the group behind *KP* is separated from the surrounding church. On the contrary, *KP* is using the whole of the Old Testament and all four Gospels - similar to Edessene Christianity further to the East during the same period. Also, the work is concerned to show continuity between Israel and the community of those who believe in Jesus. At the same time it is worth noting that *KP* lacks any anti-Jewish polemic. Strecker assumes that *KP* was compiled in the Syrian area, maybe in the vicinity of Beroea, around the year 200 A.D. The Syrian work known as the *Didaskalia* (The Teachings of the Twelve Apostles) comes from that same period and area. Strecker points to the fact that the *Didaskalia* addresses the Torah-observing Jewish Christians in the Syrian area as "dear brothers." This and other evidence indicate that these Jewish Christians were a significant element of the wider Christian church in the Syrian area and not considered a separatistic group - neither by neighbouring gentile Christians nor by their own confession. Ebionite elements and

11 Cf. J.L. Martyn, *Clementine Recognitions* 1:33-71, "Jewish Christianity, and the Fourth Gospel," in *God's Christ and His People, Festschrift for N.A. Dahl,* ed. J. Jervell and W.A. Meeks, Oslo 1977, pp. 265-295.

12 Strecker excludes R. 1:44:3-53:4a from this source.

tendencies may be identified in *KP,* but the Jewish Christians behind this work had not developed into a sect, and their relations to the greater church were not regarded as problematic. *KP* should therefore be regarded as an expression of a "Jewish-Christian legalistic system" which still is part of the wider Christian fellowship, and which also pursued a distinct ministry to Jews as well as to gentiles.

Anabathmoi Jakobou II and "Orthodox" Jewish Christianity?

The picture of early Jewish Christianity becomes even more clear though many-faceted when we approach the second source in the Pseudo-Clementines - *AJ* II. Following a sketch of salvation history, one finds a report on events in the early church describing encounters between the apostles and Pharisees, Sadducees and Samaritans. It also provides supposed apostolic refutation of these groups' rejection of Jesus' messiahship.

AJ II has a positive view of circumcision and other Jewish religious observances. It emphasizes that Jesus is the new and second Moses, but it is also noteworthy to find elements here of basic New Testament Christology (the pre-existence of Christ and the soteriological significance of his death and resurrection), since these are absent from *KP*:

{68}* In his discussion with the Pharisees, Bartholomew asserts that Jesus is greater than Moses: "He is doubtless greater who is both prophet and Christ, than he who is only prophet"(Recog. 1:59).

* With regard to Jesus' pre-existence and salvation in him, certain statements mention this as well as the Trinity and baptism:

"They should be reconciled to God, receiving his Son, for I showed them that in no way else could they be saved - unless through the grace of the Holy Spirit they hastened to be washed with the baptism of the threefold invocation and receive the Eucharist of Christ the Lord, whom alone they ought to believe concerning these things, so that they might merit to eternal salvation." *(Recog.* 1:63)

"Do not think that we speak about two unbegotten Gods, or that one is divided into two, or that the same is made male and female. But we speak of the only-begotten Son of God, not sprung from another source, but ineffably self-originated; and in the like manner we speak of the Paraclete." *(Recog.* 1:69)

Strecker maintains that *AJ* II has been authored by a Jewish-Christian in the Pella area in the second half of the second century. This source is without Gnostic influence, and its theology comes closer to the New Testament than does *KP*. However, Strecker also finds some opposition both to its Jewish surroundings and to Pauline gentile Christianity. But the author of *AJ* II and his group of Jewish Christians seem also to have been part of the wider Christian fellowship in the Syrian area.

Strecker concludes his analysis of *KP, AJ* II and *Didaskalia* with a reference to the pluralistic view of early Jewish Christianity in the writings of Justin Martyr, Origen and Eusebius. He claims: "The simplistic, dogmatically determined classification of Jewish Christianity as a

heresy which confronts the 'great church' as a homogeneous unit does not do justice to the complex situation existing within legalistic Jewish Christianity."[13]

Concluding Remarks

With today's scholarly debate on early Jewish Christianity and the Pseudo-Clementines, it seems more reasonable to follow the broader and more pluralistic picture drawn by Georg Strecker, than the narrower focus upon Jewish Christianity as a monolithic Ebionite movement. However, it is to the merit of both Schoeps and Strecker that they have catalyzed further study and deeper understanding of the early Jewish Christian movements. It is therefore natural to conclude this presentation with some of the questions that their works pose for future research into the development of early Jewish Christianity:

* *AJ* II reflects a rather orthodox Jewish Christianity in the Syrian area in the second half of the second century. Can any links be established between **{69}** this group and other groups of Jewish Christians in Eretz Israel during the same period (e.g. the Nazarenes mentioned by the church fathers and recently studied by Ray Pritz)?[14]

* The rabbinic material used by Schoeps has provided a basis for a better understanding of the role of early Jewish Christianity in Jewish history. Although it is difficult to accept his Ebionite identification of early Jewish Christianity, how can this material compliment and broaden the information in the Patristic literature and in the picture drawn by Strecker?[15]

* The *Didaskalia* and other Patristic works up to this point have barely been analyzed with early Jewish Christian history in mind.[16] Is it too optimistic to hope that these works will provide us with a richer and more detailed knowledge of the continued life of the Jewish Christian communities in the land of Israel and the Syrian area?

For those involved in Jewish evangelism today, it is also fascinating to read many of the sections in the Pseudo-Clementines and other writings from the early Jewish Christian milieus. In pseudo-clementine discussions between the disciples of John the Baptist and the disciples of Jesus, the latter group stresses that Jesus is the Messiah of Israel. They profess "For the very fact that He assumed a Jewish body, and was born among the Jews, how has not this incited us to love Him?" *(Recog.* 1:60) Indeed, this statement was put on paper in the second half of the second century, and it reflects the faith and witness of Jewish Christians at that time in the Syrian area - both their love of the Messiah and their concern for the salvation of their own people.

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13 Strecker, "On the Problem ", *supra,* p. 285.

14 R.A. Pritz, *Nazarene Jewish Christianity,* Leiden 1988. Cf. also O. Skarsaune, *The Proof from Prophecy,* Leiden 1988.

15 In this respect I am more optimistic than J. Maier, Jesus von Nazareth in der talmudischen Uberlieferung„ Darmstadt 1978, and Judische Auseinnndersetzung mit dem Christentum in der Antike, Darmstadt 1982.

16 An exemplary study of this kind has been undertaken by J. Jervell with regard to *The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs,* in *Studien zu den Testamenten der* Zwolf *Patriarchen,* ed. W. Eltester, *BZNW* 36, 1969, pp. 30-61.

{71} Archaeology, The Rabbis and Early Christianity

Eric M. Meyers & James F. Strange Abingdon/Nashville 1981, 207pp.

Reviewed by Randy Cook

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Jerusalem sports a "new" museum. With the re-opening of the Citadel Museum in May 1989, visitors have another *must* to add to their itinerary: A walk through the beautifully designed, air-conditioned roof. However, the display case labeled "Jesus of Nazareth" in the Second Temple Room betrays a sad misconception of the early history of Christianity. One reads, "Three hundred years later the sites associated with his life and death became sacred to a new faith which developed out of Judaism - Christianity."

While it is true that Christianity developed out of Judaism, it is hardly true that this "new faith" appeared after three hundred years of void. It's unfortunate that the curators did not take notice of a significant book published in 1981 by Eric M. Meyers and James F. Strange (London: SCM press), entitled *Archaeology, the Rabbis and Early Christianity*. More recently *(Biblical Archaeologist,* June, 1988), Meyers has published an update.

Eric M. Meyers is the director of the graduate program in religion at Duke University (North Carolina) and has been excavating at sites in Upper and Lower Galilee (Khirbet Shema, Meiron, Gush Halav, Nabratein, and Sepphoris) for 20 years, concentrating on the first centuries of the common era. James F. Strange is Professor of Religious Studies at the University of South Florida (Tampa). This combination between a Christian and a Jewish scholar to deal with such a subject follows in the tradition of Avi-Yonah and Albright, or Goodenough and Kraeling. Their masterful combination of archaeology and literary history is not only worthy of praise but provides a needed corrective in a lamentably lack area.[1] The authors bring together texts and monuments as they relate to early Palestinian Judaism and early **{72}** Palestinian Christianity. Prior to their work this period had been dealt with primarily by literary historians due to the apparent scarcity of material remains.

On the basis of literary sources,[2] a common assumption has been that all or most of the followers of Jesus left Palestine during the course of events associated with the First Jewish Revolt (AD 66-70). This would mean that Christianity developed exclusively the gentile and hellenized world outside Palestine. There is, in fact, material evidence that, after the

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1 For example, see Ray Pritz' *Nazarene Jewish Christianity* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1988) which deals with all the literary sources but never once tips the hat to archaeology. Actually, this is a common phenomenon on the part of literary historians while the converse is not so common; archaeologists are generally well-versed in the pertinent literary source materials.

2 Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica, 111* 5, 3 and Epiphanius, *Panarion* 29, 7; 30, 2 and *De mens. et pont.* 15. See also Ray Pritz' Appendix III on the "The Historicity of the Pella Tradition" where he also rejects the assumption that Jewish Christianity was destroyed but does not offer any suggestion of a continuing Jewish-Christian presence in *Eretz Israel* for the crucial period of A.D. 70 to 270.

destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple, many early believers fled to Transjordan after the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple, having Pella as their center. But Meyers & Strange contend that many actually settled in Upper and Lower Galilee, side by side with the Jewish community.

> *It should be noted here that the Jewish community relocated in Galilee after the revolt. Would Christians have ignored this area - the place of Jesus' childhood and ministry? Later generations certainly did not ... I think it probable that some Christians remained with their fellow Jews to resettle the Galilee and surrounding areas after the revolt.*[3]

The Jewish-Christian remains[4] at Nazareth, Sepphoris, Cana, Cochaba, Tiberias, Gush Halav, Caparisima, and most notably at Capernaum, together with over 200 churches from a slightly later period, would "make it difficult to imagine that there was a tremendous new immigration to Palestine by Christians in the third through fifth centuries,"[5] on a scale which Meyers equates with the Zionist movement of the 19th and 20th centuries!

Perhaps the uniqueness of Meyers' and Strange's position regarding the coexistence of the two communities in the Galilee/Golan region is that they

> *take the fact that the holy places of the Jewish and Christian communities operated side by side within Capernaum and Nazareth - two towns associated with the very founding of the ministry of Jesus - as highly suggestive for Jewish - Christian relations. In other words, the reconstruction of Jewish - Christian relations that we gain from archaeology and epigraphic data presents a far more ironic picture than usually has been suspected (p. 10).*

Why is it that we do not have more archaeological evidence for early Christianity in Palestine? Meyers suggests (pp. 28f) several contributing factors: (1) The dominant scholarly tradition in Western Jewish circles is associated with the study of sacred texts, not monuments; i.e. they've been digging in books, not balks. (2) Biblical archaeology for the past 125 years has been concerned primarily with the Old Testament period while the New Testament world is often relegated to a sub-discipline of Classical **{73}** studies. (3) The New Testament time frame covers only about two generations (c. late 20's to AD 70).

> *This very brief time span means that the reality of their everyday life is indistinguishable from anything that was purely Jewish or Jewish Christian, for the early community of the followers of Jesus was to all intents and purposes the same, except in theology and belief, as the Jewish community.*[6]

(4) The "Pella hypothesis" (that the Jewish-Christian community fled the Holy Land) has led many to assume that there is probably nothing to be found anyway for Christian remains in

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3 Meyers, *Biblical Archaeologist* (June 1988), pp. 69, 71.
4 See B. Bagatti, *The Church from the Circumcision* (Jerusalem: Franciscan Printing Press, 1971).
5 Meyers, *BA,* p. 71.
6 Meyers, *BA*, p. 75.

the second and third centuries AD. Consequently, few have attempted to look in that direction. (5) There is still a tendency not to take archaeology seriously, to denigrate the results of archaeological research, or to base historical reconstruction on "more reliable" literary sources.

Before looking at some of Meyers' and Strange's evidence, it would be worthwhile to consider what archaeology can contribute to our understanding of the first century. The authors suggest[7] that it can (1) support the literary record, (2) facilitate the exegetical task, particularly in clarifying obscure texts, (3) correct the written text, and (4) confirm the reliability and/or establish the veracity of historical information preserved in the rabbinic or New Testament texts. Since the authors owe no allegiance to an inspired original text, the third and fourth points often lead them into error in their handling of Scripture.[8] However, they correctly point out the essential role of archaeology in answering questions concerning the dominant language of Judaism, the attitude toward iconography on the part of the Jews, the extent of hellenization of Palestine, the religiosity of the people (as opposed to "official" synagogue or Temple religion), the extent of literacy in first-century Judaism, the social milieu of Jerusalem and other cities, and the pattern of Jewish life in the Diaspora. "In a sense, the archaeological (as opposed to the literary) evidence is the most important of all, for the paraphernalia of everyday life is manufactured for one's personal needs, not for one's audience" (pp. 27f).

Most of the material mentioned so far is covered in chapter one of the book. Chapters two and three examine the region of Galilee (including the Golan) as the seat of both rabbinic Judaism and earliest Christianity. The authors begin with a general overview of the region and then focus on Nazareth and Capernaum, with several additional pages on Jerusalem.

With the benefit of an additional eight years of study, Meyers sums up this material in the BA article:

> **{74}** *The large corpus of material unearthed and published from these sites has provided the opportunity to establish the following: a common ceramic family indigenous to the north and common also in the Golan; a dominant economic orientation to Tyre for sites in Upper Galilee; a limited, aniconic posture - that is, with little or no representational art - for sites away from the Rift Valley and clustered in the center of Upper Galilee; a varied architectural plan for towns and synagogues that enables us to speculate about their religious preferences beyond sensibility to the Second Commandment; a distinct settlement pattern that links Jewish towns and villages in clusters here and there; a dominant linguistic pattern in which Aramaic and Hebrew are preferred to Greek, in contrast to a preference for Greek in other*

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7 Ibid., pp. 74,75.

8 For example, see: p. 29 - difficulty of the "sixty stadia" to Emmaus; pp. 35-36 - late dating of N.T. texts ("two generations" after the events); pp. 66 - late dating of O.T. texts (most only written down in 6th cent. BC - note also p. 73 where they appear to date Ezra and Daniel after 400 BC); p. 157 - acceptance of the JEDP theory; p. 162 - doubts historicity of Matt 27:52, 53.

> *regions; and a life span for sites that is reasonably predictable when such elements as precise location and proneness to earthquakes are taken into consideration.*[9]

Chapter 4 brings together archaeological evidence concerning the prevalent language(s) in use in Palestine in the first centuries of the common era. The author's conclusions are that there is "no hard evidence that Hebrew was the common language of people in Palestine between the period of Ezra and Herod the Great" (p. 67). Since this is contrary to much recent thinking in Israel (e.g. Bivin and Blizzard, the so-called "Jerusalem school of synoptics" etc.), it might be worthwhile to consider some of their evidence. Of 194 ossuaries considered, 26 percent were in Hebrew or Aramaic, nine percent in Greek and another semitic language, and 64 percent in Greek alone. The Septuagint (c. 275 BC) is a major piece of evidence. Greek use is well established by other examples such as the "Thanatos Inscription," the Theodotus synagogue inscription, the "Decree of Caesar" inscription from Nazareth, and several of the earliest catacombs at Beth Shearim. On the other hand, Hebrew usage includes many of the Dead Sea Scrolls, some ossuaries, some public inscriptions ("to the place of trumpeting"), finds at Masada, Bar Kochba archives at Wadi Muraba'at and Wadi Habra, many coins, and the Mishnah. However, Aramaic "was the dominant language of the people ... both as a literary language and as the household language of most Jews" (pp. 62, 65).

> *Aramaic, at first the language of all the people, gradually suffered a decline that probably accelerated with each war against Rome. It appears, that sometime during the first century BCE Aramaic and Greek changed places as Greek spread into the countryside and as knowledge of Aramaic declined among the educated and among urban dwellers.*[10]

Chapter 5 deals with Jewish and Christian views of afterlife from a survey of burial practices. The authors claim the idea of the immorality of the **{75}** soul is not in Hebrew Scripture but "entered into Jewish considerations of afterlife only after the rise of Hellenism and the experience of and exposure to a century or so of late Greek thinking"(p. 99). This is impossible to uphold in the light of Job 19:25-27 and II Samuel 12:23.

The archaeology of churches (chapter 6) and synagogues (chapter 7) is an intriguing subject and Eric Meyers is in the forefront in the redefinition of the traditional architectural development theories. His own excavations have led him to conclude that "such an evolutionary theory presupposed a certain chronology that can no longer be maintained" and that "new discoveries ... attest the simultaneous existence of one type i.e. basilical,

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9 Meyers, *BA,* p. 74.

10 *AREC,* p.90. Thus, it seems rather hard to sustain the position of Bivin and Blizzard that the Synoptic Gospels and parts of Acts were actually written originally in Hebrew and later translated (!) into the Greek as we have them. This is especially so since they have not one scrap of manuscript evidence to support their hypothesis. For an excellent, well-balanced article on this whole issue see: Weston Fields, "Understanding the Difficult Words of Jesus: A Review Article" in *Grace Theological Journal* (Fall 1984), pp.271-288.

broadhouse, and apsidal alongside another" (p. 145). The evidence ... "underscores the capacity of an individual religious community for originality within certain parameters" (p.147). The lack of evidence for Christian church buildings in the early centuries coincides nicely with the picture in James 2:2 and throughout the book of Acts where we find the early believers continually meeting (though not exclusively) in synagogues. The book deals at some length with the question of art and the rabbinic interpretations of the Second Commandment. "A good portion of rabbinic leadership in the talmudic period saw no conflict between representational art and Jewish learning. That some rabbis did, however, is evidenced by the defacing of images at many sites" (p. 53). The presence of such art is indicative of "a growing flirtation with mysticism and astrology, well-documented in the rabbinic literature" (p.53), and is especially prevalent in the Rift Valley sites and notably absent in Upper Galilee.

The Christian attachment to the Land is not generally a well-known or recognized factor, but in chapter 9 the authors raise the question of the role of the land in Jewish as well as Christian theology, and conclude that "the land as a controlling theological concept was already implicit in the idea of pilgrimage. For Jews and Christians alike, then, cords of history and tradition bind them to the land" (p. 165). Though many non-Jewish believers living in the land of Israel today would shout "Amen" to that, one must be careful not to overstate the position. It would be difficult to demonstrate that traditional Christian theology has been as attached to *Eretz Israel* as has the Jewish people.

Conclusions are drawn in chapter 9 and a plea is made (p. 167):

> *We are not asking students of ancient Judaism or early Christianity to surrender any of their traditional interests. We are simply urging them to broaden their horizons and to recognize the fact that the present generation of scholars has already produced sufficient quantities of new data pertaining to such study to warrant serious review and attention.*

{76} Both the book and the article have several excellent illustrations, floor plans, artist's conceptions, etc. to enhance their value for those of us who still must resort to picture books to grasp such materials. The article also provides a short bibliography of books and excavation reports which provide the raw material dealt with in the texts.

The continuity and the congruence in Judaism and early Christianity in Roman Palestine will undoubtedly provide many valuable studies in the future and should be an encouragement for today's Jewish as well as gentile Christians who have begun to discover their roots. Indeed, as Edith Schaeffer has so aptly put it, "Christianity is Jewish."

{77} Justice, and Only Justice
A Palestinian Theology of Liberation

Naim Stifan Ateek

Orbis Books, Maryknoll, NY, 1989; 229 pp., paperback.

Reviewed by Avner Boskey

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With the issuing of *Justice, and Only Justice: A Palestinian Theology of Liberation,* a significant theological contribution has been made to the ongoing debate concerning both the Arab-Israeli crisis and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Naim Ateek is Canon of Saint George's Cathedral in East Jerusalem and pastor of its congregation. He speaks as a representative of the Anglican (or Episcopal) Church of Jerusalem and the Middle East, a bishopric which has the challenging job of overseeing Arab Anglican works in Jordan, Syria and Israel.

Ateek's book must be understood against the background of its unusual context. The Anglican denomination which he represents numbers a little over 1000 in Israel (p.55), a small flock similar in size to the burgeoning Israeli Messianic Jewish community, and equally marginal in its impact on secular society. But, in that he speaks for the larger Arab Anglican body, and considering the fact that he is interacting with viewpoints representative of much larger groups of Moslems (including Intifada activists and supporters of the P.L.O.), Christian readers should both be aware of Ateek's perspective and weigh his arguments carefully. Many religious and political leaders among Israeli and Diaspora Jewry will understand Ateek's positions to be representative of Christianity in general and of Palestinian Christianity in particular. Therefore, all those involved in Jewish-Christian dialogue or Jewish evangelism should acquaint themselves with this book's hypotheses and their potential ramifications.

Ateek's unique contribution must also be viewed against the backdrop of the precarious situation within which Arab Christians find themselves in the Middle East. Radical and virulently anti-missionary Islam is on the rise; Protestant and Roman Catholic Christians are already suspect for pro-Western leanings. Palestinian Christians can be excused for feeling a little nervous; those who have not yet clearly identified themselves politically **{78}** run the risk of having to face a tidal wave of extremist backlash, if, when and where those forces come to power. The recent experiences of the Maronite Christian community in Lebanon convey an eloquent and sobering message. Ateek's book is the first attempt by Israeli Protestant Arabs to grapple with some of these issues publically (i.e., in the English language). It is to be hoped that it is not the last such endeavour.

In the first of the book's eight chapters, Ateek describes the indelible impressions left upon him when, as an 11-year old, he and his family were evacuated from Beth Shean by the Haganah, two days prior to the Israeli War of Independence. In idyllic terms, similar to Elias Chacour's description in *Blood Brothers,* Ateek describes his childhood memories of fruit trees and gardens - memories that were suddenly interrupted by the tumultuous events of May 1948. He then challenges what he feels are stereotypical and harmful definitions of four

basic terms - Christian, Palestinian, Arab and Israeli. His conclusions? Arab Christianity has its roots in the ancient Middle East; most Palestinians are not terrorists; Arab Christianity before the rise of Islam was originally neither peripheral or marginal; and "Israeli" refers only to Ateek's legal citizenship.

In his second chapter *An Arena for Strife,* Ateek surveys the historical and political origins of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. "The one single problem that has had the most devastating impact on the life of the church in Israel /Palestine and on the whole of the Arab East throughout this century is the Arab-Israeli conflict ... the fundamental, basic source that feeds and nourishes other disputes ..."(p.18). Ateek uses the allegory of strangers brutally kidnapping a small child innocently playing in front of his house, to symbolize his own view of the Arab-Israeli conflict: Jewish strangers have kidnapped Palestine from the greater Arab family, and have abducted the land and a significant part of its population from functioning as an integral part of the Arab world.

Ateek briefly surveys the history of Zionism, defining it as a Western, secular phenomenon inspired by European colonialism. He refers to the duplicitous foreign policies of Britain in the second decade of our century, and concludes with a sketch of the origins of the Palestinian Arab exodus in 1948. Ateek's evaluation is that the Palestinian Arab community in Israel since 1948 has passed through three different stages: shock (1948-55), resignation (1956-67), and awakening (1968 to the present, including the Intifada). In this third stage, however, Ateek focuses primarily on Palestinian Arabs in the disputed territories and not on Israeli Palestinian Arabs; this detracts somewhat from the reliability of his appraisal.

The third chapter discusses the present state of the church in Israel, and refers to initial attempts at civil disobedience sponsored by Archbishop Joseph Raya of the Greek Catholic Melkite Church. Ateek's perception is **{79}** that the Zionist movement and the state of Israel have participated in "the usurpation of a country, with the expropriation of land, with refugees, with the denial of the political and human rights of an entire people" (p.62). He criticizes the International Christian Embassy in Jerusalem, whose "unequivocal support (ed., of *the State of Israel)* blinds it to flagrant violations of Palestinians' human rights in the immoral and unjust practices of the State against the Palestinians"(p.65). Such one-sided support, says a concerned Ateek, "further complicates the precarious position of Palestinian Christians" (p.66).

The church in Israel "needs to reach the politically active group that stands outside its door" and "to interpret current events from a Christian perspective;" only then will Catholic and Orthodox Christians see "that the Church has finally fulfilled its God-given call to be relevant and prophetic"(p.61). Ateek thinks that the Church "must accept the political context as its challenge for a viable ministry to its own people ... and as its challenge to address that situation prophetically" (p.72).

In the fourth chapter *The Bible and Liberation: A Palestinian Perspective,* Ateek points out that the Bible seems like a Zionist text to many Palestinians; it refers to the election of Israel, God's gift of the land to them and a prophetic return of the Jews to their ancient homeland. All of these cause great anguish of soul to the Palestinians, who have come to view the God of the Bible as partial and discriminating. Indeed, the Old Testament "has become almost repugnant to Palestinian Christians. As a result, (it) has generally fallen into disuse among

both clergy and laity..." (p.77). Ateek's question, then, is "How can the Bible, through which many have been led to salvation, be itself saved and redeemed?" (ibid.).

Ateek now suggests a possible hermeneutic: when a passage is confronted which seems to bolster the Zionist perspective, one should ask the question, "(I)s what is being read an authentic insight from God about who God is? ... Or, to put it bluntly, is it basically a statement from humans put into the mouth of God?" (p.79). He adds that "Palestinian Christians are looking for a hermeneutic that will help them to identify the authentic Word of God in the Bible and to discern the true meaning of those biblical texts that Jewish Zionists and Christian fundamentalists cite to substantiate their subjective claims and prejudices" (ibid). According to Ateek:

> *(C)ertain passages in the Old Testament ... need not be affirmed by the Christian today, because they reflect an early stage of understanding of God's revelation that conflicts with the Christian's understanding* of *God as revealed in Jesus Christ ... Their value lies partially in their negative aspect: they clarify what God is not, as much as what God is"* (pp.82-3).

{80}This new hermeneutic can be communicated simply:

> *Is the way I am hearing this the way I have come to know God in Christ? Does this fit the picture I have of God that Jesus has revealed to me? If it does, then that passage is valid and authoritative. If not, then 1 cannot accept its validity or authority. (p.82).*

With the use of this hermeneutic, Ateek asserts, the Bible can be reclaimed for Palestinian Christians.

Ateek attempts to apply this hermeneutic to various biblical passages, including 1 Kings 21 (Naboth's vineyard), 1 Kings 22 (the prophet Micaiah's denunciation of King Ahab) and Psalms 42,43 (the lament of one far removed from the Holy Land). It should be noted that Ateek is not making use of his hermeneutic in these above examples; rather, he is merely attempting to exegete principles from these passages and to apply them to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This methodology is an acceptable part of biblical hermeneutics when properly followed; however, such usage does not bolster his argument for a "new hermeneutic." Ateek adds that the Jewish people's disobedience has resulted in a violation and dissolution of God's covenant with them, “and incurs the unequivocal loss of the land" *(*p.106*).* It therefore makes sense to apply the new hermeneutic in order to excise the narrow and exclusivistic view about God found in the Bible, a view which insists on linking Him with the Jewish people.

> *Throughout their history the people vacillated between a narrower and a broader view of God, between attributing to God an exclusive or inclusive character ... have no doubt that the universalist understanding of God ... is the truer concept" (p. 110).*

Ateek concludes quite forcefully that "what is at stake today in the political conflict over the land of the West Bank and Gaza is nothing less than the way we understand the nature of God" (p.111).

Chapter five focuses on the definition of "justice." The distinctions between biblical and ethical morality (on the one hand) and legal or state justice (on the other) are considered. Ateek rejects an "all or nothing" attitude which would demand absolute justice, questioning whether retaliation might be a better description of such a stance. He refers to the Hebrew prophets' cry for justice in the Scriptures, and finally concludes that "the challenge for the Palestinian Christian, indeed, for all Palestinians, is that of nonviolent resistance" (p. 136). The Church must condemn the violence of the state and impress on its own people the need for non-violent resistance. This is the way of Jesus.

{81} The sixth chapter presents two concrete steps for those willing to work for Ateek's view of justice. The leadership of the historic churches in the land should be encouraged to participate in the struggle for peace, justice and reconciliation. This would lead to networking and a greater expression of Christian unity. Second, an organization should be established, a *Center for Peacemaking in Israel-Palestine.* This ecumenical center "is the greatest calling of the Church in Israel-Palestine and should receive the highest priority" (p. 158). This center should propagate the agenda outlined in Ateek's book, and should look to the United Nations for the adjudicating of justice and the resolving of conflicting claims regarding Israel-Palestine. Its outreach to Western Christians:

> *should aim at de-stereotyping Western images of the people of the Middle East, de-Zionizing the Bible, and de-mythologizing the State of Israel. The support of Western Christians is invaluable in the struggle for justice and peace. They can encourage their governments to act even-handedly ... "* (p. 159).

The last two chapters of Canon Ateek's book are visionary and personal. He states that, although the Land actually belongs to the Arab Palestinians, he would be prepared to allow the Jews to have their own state within pre-1967 borders. The reasons for this are two: first, the elimination of the State of Israel would risk the lives of millions, and cause much suffering to those Israelis who know no home except Israel; second, it is the Holocaust and only the Holocaust that necessitated the creation of a home for the Jews - that is the only justification that Palestinians will accept for the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine.

Jews, on the other hand, must be prepared to admit that the Palestinians have been wronged; that Palestine is in fact not the Jewish people's land; that Israel was wrong not to negotiate with the P.L.O. and will now correct that error. Ateek suggests a confederation of Lebanon, Jordan, Palestine and Israel - a United States of the Holy Land, having its common federal capitol city in Jerusalem. Each state would be welcome to have its own national capitol as well, provided that the national capitol is at a different location from the federal capitol.

A number of theological, methodological and political issues are raised by Canon Ateek in his thought-provoking book. I would first like to add a personal note: This book, like no other, has allowed me to see the conflict through the eyes of a Palestinian/ Israeli. The anger, pain, frustration and powerlessness of many Palestinians are accurately represented from their perspective. That alone makes this book well worth reading.

{82} Canon Ateek is to be commended for forcing us to consider the tensions between the biblical concept of chosenness (or election), and that same Book's moral perspectives and high ethical demands of its readers. His appeal to Western Christians to consider issues of justice as bearing at least as much moral weight as issues of eschatology is a much needed corrective for theological irresponsibility. His accurate insight into the Palestinian soul and his grasp of the precariousness of their position in the broader Middle Eastern context, help the reader to understand in a day when understanding is in short supply.

In broad strokes, however, Ateek's presentation must be faulted on many counts. In his depiction of Middle Eastern realities, not a hint of fault is attributed to Palestinian Arabs; justice is unreservedly on their side. As well, Ateek has not succeeded in keeping the two important biblical doctrines of election and justice in tension. He has jettisoned the election of Israel, though perhaps he is unaware of the grave theological ramifications of such a step. It is significant that this work has not interacted with New Testament teaching on the election of Israel (e.g. Rom. 9-11). It is to be hoped that such a glaring omission will be corrected in future editions. Or perhaps Ateek would have us apply his new hermeneutic to the writings of Paul, and test the Apostle's teaching against the internal and hypothetically authoritative witness of Christ within our hearts.

The book's most serious challenge lies in its hermeneutical presuppositions. Ateek's "new" hermeneutic sees the Spirit of Christ at war with the word of God. The ramifications of such a postulate are staggering for theology proper, christology, pneumatology, bibliology, etc. His position stands in stark opposition to the Pauline bibliology of 2 Tim. 3:15-16. The ramifications of his hermeneutic for Old Testament studies are perilously close to those of the ancient Marcionite heresy, which saw unresolvable contradictions between a wrathful Old Testament Jehovah and a gracious, loving Jesus. Marcion's solution was to jettison the entire Tanach; Ateek only wants to get rid of the more troublesome portions.

Ateek insists that God is emphasizing a universalist perspective at the expense of an exclusivistic one, and that this shift in emphasis undercuts Israel's claim to the land. Logically, however, it would also undermine Palestinian claims to the land, since all such claims are exclusivistic in nature. Such argumentation opens the way for the decisive arbitrational role of secular historical and sociological criteria such as relative length of time in the land (or out of it!), relative percentages of population at different historical periods, etc. Would that the outcome of the Israeli-Palestinian dispute were solely dependent on such computations - one could safely put off a resolution of the conflict for a few centuries, until the necessary scholarly consensus was achieved!

{83} It is to be deplored that Canon Ateek has resorted to *ad hominem* attacks on those who understand the Bible to be teaching a covenantally assured future for the nation and land of Israel. The overabundance of the terms *uncritical, primitive, narrow, utter, abuse, ignorance, naivete,* etc. indicate that Ateek has room for improvement in his application of Saint James' dictum, "mercy triumphs over justice" (Ja.2:13)! Ateek's contention that a position which expects a physical return of the Jews to Israel "is theologically unacceptable from a Christian point of view" (p.86) sounds suspiciously like the narrow-minded, intolerant fundamentalist opponents whom (he insists) Palestinian Christians supposedly confront on a regular basis.

It is to be noted with great sadness that nowhere in his book does the author confer on evangelism any role, either in establishing the kingdom of God or in forwarding its purposes.

I find it difficult to attribute such an omission to oversight. Especially significant is the redefinition of many central Christian terms (e.g. *metanoia,* liberty and peace in Christ, martyrs, prophetic ministry, collaboration with God, etc.) into the political terminology of liberation theology or even Marxism. It staggers the imagination to consider that an Israeli Anglican Canon can publish a book wherein no mention is made of Israel's Jewish-Christian community, of the Great Commission, or of the peace that God alone can establish between Israeli and Palestinian in Messiah Yeshua.

Another troubling tendency in Ateek's book is an unusual variation of replacement theology (also promoted in Chacour's *Blood Brothers).* Christians are first described as originating in the Holy Land, though no mention is made of their being Jewish. Arab Christians' roots in the land are then described as going back to apostolic times. Next, the Palestinians are depicted as having indigenous ancestors in the land from time immemorial. Finally, Palestinian Christians are described as the first humble witnesses to the Resurrection, and it is their modern descendants who continue that same witness to Christ and for justice 2000 years later (pp.14, 87,103, 113-14). Were not the political and theological implications of such a propagandistic attempt of the utmost seriousness, Ateek's proposals could be written off as ludicrous and amateurish.

Ateek's accuracy and evenhandedness in dealing with historical issues leave much to be desired. In chapter two (which deals with history) he draws 47 percent of his referenced material from blatantly anti-Zionist Jewish sources, including Uri Davis' *Israel: An Apartheid State,* Uri Avnery's *Israel Without Zionism,* and Moshe Menuhin's *The Decadence* of *Judaism in Our Time.* He points out the seemingly tragic fact that Jews, who only owned about six percent of the total land area of Palestine in 1947, were granted a state consisting of over 56 percent of the country (p.31).

{84} But Ateek fails to include the historical fact that makes all the contextual difference in the world: according to the British Mandate Government Survey of Palestine of 1946, 70 percent of the land was owned by the Government, 16.5 percent by absentee landlords in Lebanon, Syria, Egypt, etc., and only 3.3% was owned by local Arabs. Such selective citing of sources enhances no author's credibility.

Other examples of inaccuracy and *tendenz* would include Ateek's figures on Arab casualties in the 1982 Peace for Galilee campaign (19,000 dead, as opposed to Israel's usually highly reliable figures of 370 Syrian, 480 Israeli and 1000 P.L.O. casualties); his description of the majority of the United Christian Council in Israel's constituency as being indigenous Episcopalians and Baptists (again incorrect); and his quoting of the infamous Pittsburgh Platform of 1885 without any comment as to Reform Judaism's subsequent and total repudiation of the anti-Zionist statements contained in that document.

More troubling are the inexplicable omissions of key contextual circumstances surrounding events which took place in Ateek's present domicile, Jerusalem. He describes the events of January 1988, when Palestinian Muslims rioted on the Temple Mount and nearly beat an Israeli policeman to death, severely fracturing his jaw. Ateek states on page 46:

> *On a Friday noon in mid January 1988, as Muslim worshippers were finishing their prayers at the AI-Aksa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock (one of Islam's holiest sites), they were attacked by soldiers who beat them and used tear gas to*

> *disperse them. Many people were injured. Two days later a similar incident took place in the courtyard of the Church of the Resurrection (the Church of the Holy Sepulcher-sic) as Christian worshippers left on Sunday morning.*

The impression given is that of innocent worshippers of God, brutally attacked in their houses of worship by Israeli security forces. For reasons best known to Ateek himself, the occurrence of a riot on the Temple Mount prior to police involvement was not deemed necessary or helpful information for his readers. Similarly, the fact that Palestinian stone throwers had attacked Israeli security forces in the Christian Quarter, and had fled from them into the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, seems also to have struck Ateek as having little importance. When discussing Jerusalem's Christian response to these events, Ateek states:

> *On January 22, 1988, in an almost unprecedented move, the heads of the Christian communities in Jerusalem issued a statement against injustice and oppression, calling upon all Christians to pray, fast, and give generously to meet the dire need of those who were already suffering in the camps from shortages of food and supplies (p.* 46).

{85} Ateek does not inform his readers that over ninety percent of the United Christian Council in Israel's member denominations had no part in this statement, and that a number of them even issued a public disclaimer of it. Ateek begins his book with a plea to "Jews of influence and prominence" explaining that, though they may not agree with the Christian perspective of his observations, he trusts "that they can recognize a human spirit trying to reach them, talking about the real possibilities of peace and appealing for the realization of justice for all peoples of Israel-Palestine" (p.3). Though this is a worthy endeavour, Ateek seems to go out of his way to use concepts and phrases which show little awareness of Jewish historical sensitivities, and which are bound to offend.

Thirteen times Ateek uses Holocaust symbolism, comparing Jews to Nazis and Palestinians to Jewish victims. Some examples include: "We. have been subjected to our own holocaust at the hands of the Jews" (p.168). "(Israel's) actions stem from frustration, defiance, greed, and megalomania ... Israel's oppressive policies cannot sow the seeds of peace; they are only setting the stage for another holocaust whose instigators and executors are the Israeli Jews themselves" (pp.178-9).

Ateek's descriptions of Zionism will also not encourage a sympathetic hearing among most Jews. "What is quite clear from a Palestinian Christian point of view ... is that the emergence of the Zionist movement in the twentieth century is a retrogression of the Jewish community into the history of its very distant past, with its most elementary and primitive forms of the concept of God" (p.101). "The State of Israel lives in a state of paranoia... It is destroying itself because of its morbid fear of peace" (p.137) "...if the State of Israel clings to its obsession with real estate, it will only heap destruction on itself and on all the people living in the land" (p.112).

Ateek's agenda and political perspective in his book is similar in most respects, though not in all, to that of the P.L.O. An analysis of the 33 articles of the Palestinian National Covenant (the P.L.O.'s legal and binding charter) shows a remarkable agreement between this Covenant and the main points of *Justice, and Only Justice.* Three significant areas of divergence should

be noted: (1) Ateek's willingness to settle for the finality of a partition plan for the disputed territories (the P.L.O. will only accept partition as a first step to the total vanquishing of the "Zionist enemy" by military means - cf. Articles 2,9); (2) Ateek's allowing for the possibility of Israeli Jews remaining within Israel after a partition (the P.L.O. refuses to allow for the existence of the State of Israel, or for any Jews remaining in Palestine who arrived there subsequent to the beginning of the "Zionist invasion "cf. Articles 5,6,22.); (3) Ateek's qualified repudiation of armed conflict as an acceptable Christian means to liberate Palestine (as opposed **{86}** to Articles 9 and 10 which state that armed struggle is the only way to liberate Palestine, that this is an overall strategy and not merely a tactical phase, and that commando action constitutes the nucleus of the Palestinian popular liberation war).

A logical inconsistency may have escaped Canon Ateek; it does seem contradictory to insist that, on the one hand, Israel must negotiate with the P.L.O. (its sworn enemy and supposedly the Palestinian people's only legitimate representative), and yet, on the other hand, to protest that, on central questions of strategy and practise, the P.L.O.'s position does not represent that of Ateek and his Arab Anglican constituency. Further, Ateek has nowhere even hinted that *Islamic Jihad* and *Hamas,* local Islamic fundamentalist movements, are presently engaged in a life-and-death struggle with the P.L.O. in the territories over who will be the authentic representative of the Palestinian people. The P.L.O.'s recent public embrace of Sadaam Hussein, and its support for both his invasion of Kuwait and his threats of genocide against Israel have dealt a death blow to even the Israeli left-of-center's support for dialogue with the P.L.O. The linchpin of Ateek's argument may have already been totally sheared off.

One last concern: Ateek describes the Intifada as having brought hope, unity, self-respect, confidence, high morale, a soaring spirit of nationalism, and a spiritual sense of identity to the Moslems and Christians involved. He describes the Intifada's tactics as "relatively non-violent" (p.47) and "an active yet non-violent resistance" (p.49). No reference is made to the hundreds of Israeli civilians - men, women and children - injured or killed as a result of these "non-violent" measures. Nor is any mention made of the over 300 Palestinian men and women who, since the beginning of the Intifada, have been axed, strangled, burned and tortured to death for supposedly collaborating with Israel, or being adulterers, members of *Hamas* or warring factions within the P.L.O. and all this at the hands of the very Palestinians whose high morale and soaring spirit Ateek so warmly praises.

Justice, and Only Justice is the first contribution, it is to be hoped, to an increasingly productive theological dialogue among Christians. In spite of its many failures and its unnecessarily strident tone, Ateek's book raises many thought provoking issues worthy of consideration. Unfortunately (in Ateek's own words), "a theology that does not grapple with present realities in their many dimensions and complexities will inevitably be condemned as too simplistic and irresponsible" (p. 64).

{87} Messianic Judaism
Its History, Theology and Polity

David A. Rausch

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Evaluating the Messianic movement is akin to describing a photograph while it is being developed. To dwell on any one phase or period of the movement would only give an inaccurate description of a constantly developing process. In spite of these pitfalls, David Rausch's *Messianic Judaism: Its History, Theology, and Polity* is a valuable contribution as a "snapshot" analysis of the Messianic Jewish movement up to 1982. Unfortunately, as with any work observing an increasing swell such as *Messianic Judaism,* the author is handicapped by the confines of his own period.

David Rausch is Professor of Church History and Judaic Studies at Ashland College Theological Seminary, and author of several books, including *A Legacy of Hatred: Why Christians Must Not Forget the Holocaust* (Moody Press) and a contributor to *A Time To Speak: The Evangelical Jewish Encounter* (Eerdmans, 1987). In addition to his literary research of *Messianic Judaism,* Rausch draws much of his information from firsthand interviews with leaders in the Messianic movement.

The Perspective

Messianic Judaism opens with a description of the Jewish believer, searching for his Jewish identity. At times he encounters "Hebrew Christian" groups where Jewishness is a flavor rather than a commitment ("Introduction", ix-xviii). He is also observed by Rausch through the eyes of the Jewish community, which insists that Jews who accept Yeshua as Messiah and Lord are no longer Jewish. For those who have never understood the dynamics and tensions facing the Messianic Jewish movement due to the perspectives of the Christian and Jewish communities **{88}** respectively, and the subsequent need for Messianic congregations Rausch's *Messianic Judaism is* eye-opening.

Rausch offers five chapters on Messianic Jewish History, two on theology and five describing various Messianic congregations. One major flaw in Rausch's *Messianic Judaism* is that the two chapters devoted to the theology of a controversial movement are insufficient. In a final chapter, a response to the Messianic movement from the Christian and Jewish perspectives is included. The book is well documented, with detailed footnotes and a subject index. His 13 page bibliography is an excellent resource for any who might desire to research *Messianic Judaism* more thoroughly.

The History of the Messianic Jewish Battles

Early Messianic Jewish history as laid out by Rausch is summarized by one word: War! In this early history we observe the "de-Judaization" of Christianity, the negative and sometimes anti-Semitic relationships between the Church and Israel, and the Jewish believer's place in this scenario. This battle-like dilemma of the Jewish believer throughout the early centuries of Christian history is captured by Rausch:

> *One intriguing aspect of today's Messianic Jewish movement is its opposition by both Christians and Jews. It is an opposition which has historical foundations. During the early centuries of church history through the Medieval period, there is ample evidence of animosity by both the synagogue and the church toward Jewish Christians who tried to maintain any semblance of Jewish heritage (p. 11).*

The Jewish community ostracized Messianic Jews for embracing Yeshua while maintaining their Jewish heritage. In addition, the Christian community castigated Jewish believers for continuing to insist upon their jewishness. The Church sought to "Christianize" Jews who believe in Jesus. Regardless of the early Jewish believers' response to the Church's efforts to "gentilize" them, Rausch credits all Jewish followers of Yeshua with the desire to maintain some sort of Jewish identity.

According to Rausch, it was not until the beginning of the 19th century that Hebrew Christians experienced a renaissance, which came through the missionary societies that sprang up throughout England and the United States. This renaissance gave birth to the Hebrew Christian Alliance of America (HCAA), which was formed to provide fellowship and interaction between Jewish believers in Yeshua. Messianic Judaism came to the forefront at the same time during a significant controversy that arose within the Alliance in 1917, when an advocate of Messianic Judaism, the **{89}** Rev. Mark John Levy, claimed that "by observing Jewish ceremonies and customs" they (the Jewish believers) could demonstrate their "national continuity" and "would win some Jewish people to the Lord" (pg. 34). The Alliance held to its position that Jewish Christians owe no allegiance to Judaism. As a result (until the early 1970's) Messianic Judaism went underground for fear of being accused of Judaizing.

After the 1967 Six Day War many young Jewish people came to faith in Yeshua and the face of the Messianic movement began to change. In 1975 the name of the HCAA was changed to the Messianic Jewish Alliance of America, a change expressive of the desire of many younger Jewish believers to be more notably recognized as Jewish. The Alliance experienced opposition from Hebrew-Christian missionary groups, who accused Messianic Judaism of being separatist and of returning to the religion of Judaism. In spite of this opposition, the Messianic movement began to grow.

At this point Rausch begins to focus on the main distinctive which distinguishes Hebrew Christianity and Messianic Judaism. This forms a major core in Rausch's definition of Messianic Judaism. As a Messianic Jew with experience in Hebrew Christianity, I found Rausch's description of the dividing wall between Hebrew Christianity and Messianic Judaism to be overstated. Rather than presenting Hebrew Christianity and Messianic Judaism as two separate and opposing movements, Rausch would have been better off describing

Jewish believers by where they fall on the scale of commitment to Jewishness and Jewish observance (traditional and non-traditional, cf. Steinberg, Milton, *Basic Judaism).* These are not two opposing movements! Even Rausch admits that within Messianic Judaism, there is a variety of positions toward the Torah: "The greatest problem for these traditional Messianic Jews is the response of others within the movement to their following Law and Talmud" (pg. 136).

In response to Rausch's description of the "battles" in Messianic Jewish history, this reviewer shares several insights: 1) the only battle that has really ended is that which was waged between Jewish believers and their own sense of Jewish identity. According to Rausch, Messianic Judaism has only validated Jewish believers' freedom to express their privatized Jewishness within the context of a Messianic congregation; 2) in contrast, the battle between Jewish believers and the Church has not come to an end. Gentile Christianity continues unaware of its Jewish roots. I ask: What is Messianic Judaism doing to awaken the gentile wing of the Body of Christ to its Jewish roots? 3) The battle between Jewish believers and the Jewish community also continues. Rausch says, "the driving motive of the Jewish Christian was to be evangelism" (pg. 31). But how has Messianic Judaism **{90}** opened new avenues of outreach which the Hebrew Christian movement has not?

The Jewishness of a Messianic Congregation

After taking the reader through Messianic Jewish history, Rausch focuses on the Messianic congregation as a major distinctive of the Messianic movement. Explaining this, Rausch takes the opportunity to indicate the difficulties which Hebrew Christians recognize vis-à-vis Jewish observances being maintained within a Messianic congregation: 1) "any return to Jewish observance would put one under the Law" (pg. 87). 2) "the Jewish believer has a right to maintain his Jewish heritage and identity: (pg. 88). On this second point Rausch comments,

> *The movement toward the second attitude has grown steadily to the point where one might describe 'messianic Judaism' as advocating a return to Jewish heritage and practice, while 'Hebrew Christianity' maintains the first attitude of separation from Jewish practice (ibid).*

The above is a sample of Rausch's truncated view of Hebrew Christianity. The problem Hebrew Christians have had with Messianic Judaism has always been theological. It is not one of anti-Jewishness. But Rausch accords little credibility to the theological astuteness of Hebrew Christian leaders who have been grappling with the sometimes "theologically sloppy" declarations and practices of Messianic Judaism. The confusion found in the infancy stages of the Messianic Jewish movement during the early 70's created great concern (not anti-Jewishness) among Hebrew Christian leaders. Unfortunately, this concern carried the potential of separation from Jewish practices, but this was not its intent. Hebrew Christians questioned Messianic Judaism's view on a number of issues Rausch does not touch: Gentiles being required to convert to Judaism, as has been the case in some Messianic congregations; a separatist attitude toward gentile churches by Messianic congregations; a poor understanding of Messianic Jews' relationship to the Torah; and the designation of leaders in Messianic congregations as "rabbis."

This reviewer agrees with Rausch that many Jewish believers have assimilated into the Church and certain Hebrew Christian missionaries have encouraged Jewish believers to do so. But Hebrew Christianity (like Messianic Judaism) has always been concerned with Jewish identity. What I found ironic is that several of Rausch's examples of Messianic congregations were all too similar to many Hebrew Christian groups. Such examples appear to undermine Rausch's argument for a distinction between Messianic Judaism and Hebrew Christianity**.**

{91}An Insufficient Messianic Jewish Theology

Throughout *Messianic Judaism* I anticipated a crystallization of Messianic Jewish theology. However, Rausch only provides a discussion of bibliology, soteriology and eschatology. These happen to be issues both Hebrew Christianity and Messianic Judaism agree upon. Rausch seemed to be playing leap frog with the issues of theology that form the dividing wall between Hebrew Christianity and Messianic Judaism. He does not address the following questions: What about the crucial issue of ecclesiology in the thinking of Messianic Judaism? How does Messianic Judaism define a local Messianic congregation? What is the place of gentiles in such congregations? How does calling a congregation a synagogue square with the New Covenant description of a local body?

In all fairness, Rausch includes a section in which he refutes objections raised concerning Messianic Judaism. He sufficiently answers the charge of Judaizing based on Galatians, and of dividing the Body of Christ by reconstructing the wall of partition (Ephesians 2), as well as several objections from the book of Hebrews. But nowhere do we find responses to some of the issues raised by Hebrew Christian works such as *Hebrew Christianity: Its Theology, History and Philosophy* by Arnold Fruchtenbaum.

A Walk Through A Messianic Congregation

For several concluding chapters, Rausch takes the reader through an enlightening walk through various Messianic congregations in the United States. In several cases he gives the history of the congregations, a profile of the congregational planter/pastor, the tensions between Jewish and gentile leaders of Messianic congregations; the function of Messianic elders, examples of Messianic services, music ministry, religious education for the children, and attire for Messianic services.

In the closing chapter on Jewish and Christian responses to Messianic Judaism, Rausch closes with an insightful quote from a Messianic congregational leader:

> *Why are they (Jewish and Christian leaders) so mad at us? It is as though they have kept a well-guarded secret that Judaism and Christianity are not incompatible and we have exposed their little game?*

I am grateful to David Rausch for taking part in that exposure through his book, *Messianic Judaism.*

{92} Budapest LCJE Statement

The European chapter of the Lausanne Consultation on Jewish Evangelism met in Budapest October 5-8, 1990. Participants from 12 countries and 18 societies working for the gospel and the Jewish people, together with the representatives of Hungarian churches, discussed how the current situation in Europe and Israel affects gospel ministry among Jewish people in these areas. The conference concluded by issuing the following statement:

> The historic changes in today's Europe also represent significant changes in the life of Jewish people. The current developments in Eastern Europe not only provide opportunity for Jewish people to return to the Land of their Fathers, but they also raise the question of the future of Jewish people in Europe as well as in other parts of the world. We see the present situation as an historic opportunity for the churches to renew their biblical commitment to the Jewish people. We call on the churches not to let this opportunity pass.
>
> We challenge the churches to give practical help to Soviet Jews who, in these and coming days, are emigrating to Israel. Help is urgently needed for their emigration from the USSR; for travel and for their settlement in the Land of the Fathers and other destinations.
>
> We challenge the churches to remember the tragic history of European anti-Semitism and to actively combat renewed anti-Semitic tendencies in Europe today. In this respect we are particularly concerned about such developments in the USSR and in Central Europe.
>
> We challenge the churches unequivocally to speak for and work towards justice and freedom for Jewish people within the structures of the new Europe. It was in the aftermath of the Holocaust that Europe was divided and entered a 45 year period of cold war. The full acceptance of Jewish people and the recognition of the legitimacy of Jewish identity will be a litmus test in the building up of a new European home.
>
> We challenge the churches to a fresh consideration of how local congregations and individual Christians can best share the Good News with Jewish people in their own communities. Despite the significant Jewish population in Europe today many churches and Christians have failed to witness to Jewish people. Whilst we regret this, we also recognize that the time has come to renew our commitment to a biblical testimony to our Jewish friends. As our evangelistic ministries in Europe are being renewed to face the present challenges, we remind the church that Jewish evangelism is a necessary element in the total evangelistic **{93}** endeavour of the Church. In our testimony to Jewish people we must endeavour to appreciate the integrity of Jewish identity and uphold the New Testament witness of Jesus as Messiah and Saviour.

As we in LCJE face the situation in the new Europe and the task of Jewish evangelism, we commit ourselves to work in coordination and unity with each other. We also call the churches and Christian organisations to express their solidarity in Messiah by coordinating their endeavours in sharing the Gospel with Jewish people everywhere.

Murdo A. MacLeod
President LCJE

Ole Chr. Kvarme
International Coordinator LCJE

{94} Scalp-Hunting Christians

Elwood McQuaid

The Jewess was livid with anger. She had been approached by a man on the street in Jerusalem who had offered her a tract and tried to strike up a conversation about Jesus as the Messiah of Israel. "He didn't care about me," she exclaimed. "All he wanted to do was hang another Jew's scalp on his belt." A tirade about Christians attempting to proselyte Jews erupted from the experience.

The fear that believers in Jesus are bent on brainwashing Jewish people, stripping away their Jewishness, and turning them into Gentiles who practice another religion is born from memories of dark days of suffering and forced conversions. Consequently, proselyting – word and concept – has been clothed with such disreputable connotations that for some it is flashed as an instant mind–closer whenever a word is spoken about Jesus.

In actuality, proselyting (making converts) has been very much a part of the fabric of Judaism. The Midrash refers to the statement about the "souls that they had gotten in Haran" (Gen. 12:5) as converts Abraham had made while in that land. The observation concludes with the comment that every proselyte is to be viewed as if a soul had been created. The Midrash further contends that when Israel is obedient to the will of God, He brings in as converts to Judaism all of the just of the nations – Jethro, Rahab, and Ruth are cited as examples. First-century Pharisees were zealous to win converts. "Ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte" (Mt. 23:15).

Some modern rabbis promote the concept that Judaism should return to its soul-winning ways. Rabbi Alexander Schindler contends that "Judaism from its birth has been a missionary religion. Abraham was a missionary. We ought to resume our time-honored tradition."

Evangelical Christians who practice Judaism's "time-honored tradition" of being "a missionary religion" are not, therefore perpetrators of a dangerous enterprise that is foreign to the rules of religious fair play. Nor, because they seek to make Christ known to Jews as well as Gentiles, are they avowed enemies of the Jewish people.

Here are the ground rules responsible evangelicals scrupulously observe:

> Our commitment to Jesus Christ compels us to make Him known through the message of the gospel. The Church has been so commissioned.
>
> **{95}** Coercion through deception, inducement, or emotional manipulation is abhorrent and contrary to the message and spirit of the gospel.
>
> People who become believers in Christ must do so of their own free will and with a clear understanding of the implications of their decision.
>
> Propagators of the Christian faith act with a level of integrity consistent with standards acceptable in any arena where the free exchange of ideas is encouraged, not viewed as something to fear.

Thus, true believers are not scalp-hunting marauders or entrenched enemies of the Jewish people. And those who portray them as such are making a very serious error. In fact, Jewry

and the state of Israel have no firmer friends or more eager encouragers than are numbered among *missionary-minded* Christians. Today, when Israel is being increasingly isolated in a world propagandized by anti-Israel antagonists, these people stand firmly committed to Jewish rights and privileges in the Middle East.

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