

This presentation series is dedicated to the memory of Jim Kettlewell, a lifelong learner and an inspiring friend.


Jesus of Nazareth:
Jesus in historical context
James the Just, Brother of Jesus

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<https://jamestutor.com/category/james-brother-of-jesus/>

James the Just

The New Testament describes James, Joseph (Joses) Judas (Jude) as brothers of Jesus. (Greek: ἀδελφοί, translit. *adelphoi*, lit. 'brothers'). Also mentioned but not named, are sisters of Jesus. Wiki "Brothers of Jesus"



- **Though not a follower of Jesus during his ministry, James was at the ascension and is credited in the book of Acts in the New Testament as being the first leader of the Jerusalem church.**
- **Sources beyond the New Testament confirm his leadership.**
- **The first historical mention of Jesus of Nazareth outside the New Testament actually refers to the martyrdom of James, "brother of Jesus."**
- **"the overwhelming consensus is that the traditions contained within the epistle [of James] can confidently be traced to James the Just." (Aslan 204).**
- **James and his epistle are the most substantial link we have to the historical Jesus.**

Historical approaches to scripture



- Deep study of historical context to mentally recreate the world of the text through focusing on
- Outside verification
 - Josephus; Roman records, etc.
- Number of sources
 - all four gospels = more evidenced
- Lack of fit with tradition or overall message
 - "I do not bring peace but a sword"
- Earliest documents
 - Mark, Q, Paul's letters

Who was Jesus of Nazareth?

The Two Previous Sundays:

- What does it mean that the early church referred to Jesus as Jesus of Nazareth?
- Why did he forbid others to call him "Messiah" or "King"?
- What did it mean in his time to call oneself "Messiah" or "King"?
- Why did he refer to himself until his trial as "the Son of Man"?
- What was the role and function of his miracles?
- How were his words and actions related the powers of his day?

This Week

- How is this related to the Early Church leadership as focused in James, his brother?

Series:

What can we learn about the historical Jesus from the period history and his use of rhetoric? How can this enhance our understanding of Jesus and the Early Church?

Leader of the Early Church: James, brother of Jesus

Hulme, David. "The Apostles, Part 12: James, Brother of Jesus" Religion and Spirituality. *Vision*. Fall 2008.
<http://www.vision.org/visionmedia/religion-and-spirituality-apostles-of-jesus-james-brother-of-jesus/6812.aspx>

- ... in the early days of the Church, about 44 C.E., King Herod Agrippa killed the apostle James, the son of Zebedee and one of the original 12 (see Acts 12:1-2).
- Thus it must be another James to whom Luke refers in verse 17 of the same chapter, where he records that Peter sent news of his release from prison to someone named James.
- Though as many as seven different people by the same name have been identified in the New Testament, it is James the brother of Jesus (Galatians 1:19) who is the most likely in this case.

Paul in Galatians 1

Hulme, David. "The Apostles, Part 12: James, Brother of Jesus" Religion and Spirituality. *Vision*. Fall 2008.
<http://www.vision.org/visionmedia/religion-and-spirituality-apostles-of-jesus-james-brother-of-jesus/6812.aspx>

- ¹¹I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that **the gospel I preached is not of human origin.** ¹²I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it; rather, I received it by revelation from Jesus Christ.
- ¹³For you have heard of my previous way of life in Judaism, how intensely I persecuted the church of God and tried to destroy it. ¹⁴I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people and was extremely zealous for the traditions of my fathers. ¹⁵But when God, who set me apart from my mother's womb and called me by his grace, was pleased ¹⁶to reveal his Son in me so that I might preach him among the Gentiles, my immediate response was not to consult any human being. ¹⁷I did not go up to Jerusalem to see those who were apostles before I was, but I went into Arabia. Later I returned to Damascus.
- ¹⁸Then after three years, I went up to Jerusalem to get acquainted with Cephas^[b] and stayed with him fifteen days. ¹⁹I saw none of the other apostles—only James, the Lord's brother.

James, leader of the early church and author of the book of James

Hulme, David. "The Apostles, Part 12: James, Brother of Jesus" *Religion and Spirituality*. Vision. Fall 2008. <http://www.vision.org/visionmedia/religion-and-spirituality-apostles-of-jesus-james-brother-of-jesus/6812.aspx>

Note, some believe James was a disciple: In two small but potentially important works of Hippolytus, *On the Twelve Apostles of Christ* and *On the Seventy Apostles of Christ*, he relates the following: "And James the son of Alphaeus, when preaching in Jerusalem was stoned to death by the Jews, and was buried there beside the temple." James, the brother of Jesus was also stoned to death by the Jews. With this testimony of Hippolytus there is good reason to assume that James the son of Alphaeus is the same person as James the brother of Jesus. (James, son of Alphaeus, one of the Twelve Apostles of Jesus, and the son of Mary Cleophas. (Thus Jesus' cousin and one of the twelve; but this doesn't fit with other accounts.) -- Wiki "James, Brother of Jesus."

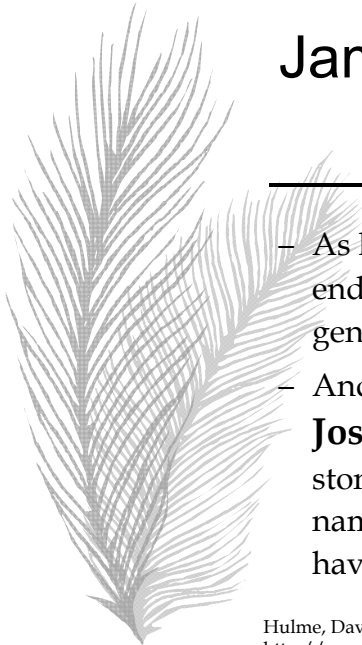
- ... Jesus' brothers were present with the apostles in Jerusalem as the Church began after Jesus' departure (Acts 1:14). This same James appears later in Acts as the leader of the church at Jerusalem, so it's reasonable to suggest that he is the author of the New Testament book by that name.

According to Paul: Then he [Jesus] appeared to James, then to all the apostles. Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me. (1Corinthians 15:7)

Acts 1: Jesus' Ascension

- ⁹ After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight.
- ¹⁰ They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. ¹¹ "Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven."
- ¹² Then the apostles returned to Jerusalem from the hill called the Mount of Olives, a Sabbath day's walk^[L] from the city. ¹³ When they arrived, they went upstairs to the room where they were staying. Those present were Peter, John, James and Andrew; Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew; James son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. ¹⁴ They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.

James as Leader of the Church



- As leader in Jerusalem, James spoke with authority to end an internal Church controversy over the circumcision of gentile believers (Acts 15:13-19; see also 21:18).
- And according to the first-century Jewish historian **Josephus**, the Jewish religious hierarchy put to death by stoning "the brother of Jesus, who was called Christ, whose name was James" (*Antiquities of the Jews* 20.200). This would have been around 62 C.E.

Hulme, David. "The Apostles, Part 12: James, Brother of Jesus" *Religion and Spirituality*. Vision. Fall 2008.
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Acts 13

James speaks with authority

- 15 Certain people came down from Judea to Antioch and were teaching the believers: "Unless you are circumcised, according to the custom taught by Moses, you cannot be saved." ² This brought Paul and Barnabas into sharp dispute and debate with them. So Paul and Barnabas were appointed, along with some other believers, to go up to Jerusalem to see the apostles and elders about this question. ³ ... ⁴ When they came to Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the church and the ~~apostles and elders, to whom they reported everything God had done through them.~~
- ⁵ Then some of the believers who belonged to the party of the Pharisees stood up and said, "The Gentiles must be circumcised and required to keep the law of Moses."
- ⁶ The apostles and elders met to consider this question. ⁷ After much discussion, Peter got up and addressed them: "Brothers, you know that some time ago God made a choice among you that the Gentiles might hear from my lips the message of the gospel and believe. ⁸ God, who knows the heart, showed that he accepted them by giving the Holy Spirit to them, just as he did to us. ⁹ He did not discriminate between us and them, for he purified their hearts by faith. ¹⁰ Now then, why do you try to test God by putting on the necks of Gentiles a yoke that neither we nor our ancestors have been able to bear? ¹¹ No! We believe it is through the grace of our Lord Jesus that we are saved, just as they are."

Acts 13

James speaks with authority

- ¹²The whole assembly became silent as they listened to Barnabas and Paul telling about the signs and wonders God had done among the Gentiles through them. ¹³*When they finished, James* spoke up. "Brothers," he said, "listen to me. ¹⁴Simon^[a] has described to us how God first intervened to choose a people for his name from the Gentiles. ¹⁵The words of the prophets are in agreement with this, as it is written:

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- ¹⁶"After this I will return and rebuild David's fallen tent. Its ruins I will rebuild, and I will restore it,

¹⁷that the rest of mankind may seek the Lord, even all the Gentiles who bear my name, says the Lord, who does these things'^[b]—

¹⁸ things known from long ago.^[c]

- ¹⁹"It is my judgment, therefore, that we should not make it difficult for the Gentiles who are turning to God. ²⁰Instead we should write to them, telling them to abstain from food polluted by idols, from sexual immorality, from the meat of strangled animals and from blood. ²¹For the law of Moses has been preached in every city from the earliest times and is read in the synagogues on every Sabbath."

Note that James is last to speak and the one who solidifies the response.

James an Apostle?

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- **But was this James also an apostle? While he is never named directly as such in the New Testament, the argument has been made that his family relationship to Jesus accorded him a unique role.**
- **Paul, who himself became an apostle but was not of the 12, seems to indicate James's apostolic function when writing about one of his visits to Jerusalem. He says, "I saw none of the other apostles except James the Lord's brother" (Galatians 1:19).**
- **But scholars have suggested that this is not an unequivocal statement. An alternate translation says, "Other than the apostles I saw no one except James, the Lord's brother."**

James beyond the Gospel Accounts

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Mark 3²⁰ Then Jesus entered a house, and again a crowd gathered, so that he and his disciples were not even able to eat.²¹ When his family^[1] heard about this, they went to take charge of him, for they said, "He is out of his mind."

- What more can we know of James and his earlier life from the Gospel accounts? Mark and Matthew indicate that he was one of several children born to Mary and Joseph after Jesus' birth.
- Mark records an incident in Jesus' ministry where his fellow townsmen derided Him as merely a local: "'Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon? And are not his sisters here with us?' And they took offense at him" (Mark 6:3; see also Matthew 13:55-56).
- There was a time when James and the rest of the family were opposed to Jesus' ministry and teaching. At one point, they actually thought Him mad (Mark 3:21). John tells us that "not even his brothers believed in him" (John 7:5).

James the Leader of the Jerusalem Church

Acts 21¹⁷ When we arrived at Jerusalem, the brothers and sisters received us warmly.
¹⁸ The next day Paul and the rest of us went to see James, and all the elders were present.

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- By the opening of the book of Acts, however, James had become one of the disciples.
- But even though he was Jesus' brother, he did not take up the vacancy caused by Judas's death, because the remaining 11 were to choose as a witness to Jesus' resurrection "one of the men who ha[d] accompanied [them] during all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among [them]" (Acts 1:21).
- James soon became the leader of the Jerusalem church, as demonstrated by the fact that Paul met with him and the apostle Peter (also called Cephas) when he first went to Jerusalem after his conversion (Galatians 1:18-19). He met James on another occasion when he brought famine relief to Jerusalem from the churches outside Judea (Acts 21:18).

Acts 21 James and the Leaders of the Church compel Paul to show he respects the law.

- ¹⁹ Paul greeted them and reported in detail what God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry.
 - ²⁰ When they heard this, they praised God. Then they said to Paul: "You see, brother, how many thousands of Jews have believed, and all of them are zealous for the law.
-
- ²¹ They have been informed that you teach all the Jews who live among the Gentiles to turn away from Moses, telling them not to circumcise their children or live according to our customs. ²² What shall we do? They will certainly hear that you have come, ²³ so do what we tell you.
 - There are four men with us who have made a vow. ²⁴ Take these men, join in their purification rites and pay their expenses, so that they can have their heads shaved. Then everyone will know there is no truth in these reports about you, but that **you yourself are living in obedience to the law.** ²⁵ As for the Gentile believers, we have written to them our decision that they should abstain from food sacrificed to idols, from blood, from the meat of strangled animals and from sexual immorality."
 - ²⁶ The next day Paul took the men and purified himself along with them. Then he went to the temple to give notice of the date when the days of purification would end and the offering would be made for each of them.

James the Leader of the Jerusalem Church

EUSEBIUS:
ECCLESIASTICAL
HISTORY, BOOK
VI. ii. X.

Now Clement,
writing in the sixth
book of the
Hypotyposes,
makes this
statement. For he
says that Peter and
James and John,
after the Saviour's
ascension, though
pre-eminently
honoured by the
Lord, did not
contend for glory,
but made James the
Just, bishop of
Jerusalem.

Hulme, David. "The Apostles, Part 12: James, Brother of Jesus" Religion and Spirituality. *Vision*. Fall 2008.
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- The fact that James was leader in Jerusalem is attested by such extrabiblical sources as the second-century historian Hegesippus.
- He wrote that following James's death, the Church chose another of Jesus' blood relatives, His cousin Simon or Simeon, to be leader – thus implying that up to that time James had held the post.
- According to Eusebius, another reference is found in the (now lost) writings of Clement of Alexandria (ca. 153–217 C.E.), who says that Peter and John chose James for his office (*Books of the Hypotyposes* 6).
- And writing in the fifth century, Jerome says that James "ruled the church of Jerusalem thirty years, that is until the seventh year of Nero" (*Lives of Illustrious Men*, chapter 2).

Josephus on the
Death of James
brother of Jesus, in
62 C.E.

Josephus, *Antiquiti*

es

Book 20: chapter 9

CONCERNING
ALBINUS UNDER
WHOSE
PROCURATORSHIP
JAMES WAS SLAIN;
AS ALSO WHAT
EDIFICES WERE
BUILT BY AGRIPPA.

The first historical mention of Jesus outside the scriptures is by the Jewish historian Josephus: It actually refers to his brother James...

- 1. AND now Caesar, upon hearing the death of Festus, **sent Albinus into Judea, as procurator**. But the king deprived Joseph of the **high priesthood**, and bestowed the succession to that dignity on **the son of Ananus**, who was also himself called Ananus. Now the report goes that this eldest Ananus proved a most fortunate man; for he had five sons who had all performed the office of a high priest to God, and who had himself enjoyed that dignity a long time formerly, which had never happened to any other of our high priests. But this younger Ananus, who, as we have told you already, took the high priesthood, was a bold man in his temper, and very insolent; he was also of the sect of the Sadducees, who are very rigid in judging offenders, above all the rest of the Jews, as we have already observed;

Dr. James Tabor. *The Jewish Roman World of Jesus*
<https://clas-pages.uncc.edu/james-tabor/ancient-judaism/josephus-james/>

Ananus seeks to prove himself by assembling the Sanhedrin to kill James

- when, therefore, Ananus was of this disposition, he thought he had now a proper opportunity [to exercise his authority]. Festus was now dead, and Albinus was but upon the road;
- so he assembled the sanhedrin of judges, and brought before them **the brother of Jesus, who was called Christ, whose name was James**, and some others, [or, some of his companions]; and when he had formed an accusation against them as breakers of the law, he delivered them to be stoned;
- but as for those who seemed the most equitable of the citizens, and such as were the most uneasy at the breach of the laws, they disliked what was done;

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Agrippa takes the High Priesthood from Ananus



- they also sent to the king [Agrippa], desiring him to send to Ananus that he should act so no more, for that what he had already done was not to be justified; nay, some of them went also to meet Albinus, as he was upon his journey from Alexandria, and informed him that it was not lawful for Ananus to assemble a sanhedrin without his consent. (24) Whereupon Albinus complied with what they said, and wrote in anger to Ananus, and threatened that he would bring him to punishment for what he had done; on which king Agrippa took the high priesthood from him, when he had ruled but three months, and made Jesus, the son of Damneus, high priest.

Hegesippus on James

Concerning the martyrdom of James, the brother of the Lord, from Book V Early Christian Writings. "Hegesippus." [a.d. 170.] "the earliest of the Church's chroniclers"



- James, the Lord's brother, succeeds to the government of the Church, in conjunction with the apostles. He has been universally called *the Just*, from the days of the Lord down to the present time. For many bore the name of James; but this one was holy from his mother's womb. He drank no wine or *other* intoxicating liquor, nor did he eat flesh; no razor came upon his head; he did not anoint himself with oil, nor make use of the bath. He alone was permitted to enter the holy place: for he did not wear any woollen garment, but fine *linen only*. He alone, *I say*, was wont to go into the temple: and he used to be found kneeling on his knees, begging forgiveness for the people-so that the skin of his knees became horny like that of a camel's, by reason of his constantly bending the knee in adoration to God, and begging forgiveness for the people. Therefore, in consequence of his pre-eminent justice, he was called *the Just*, and *Oblias*, which signifies in Greek *Defence of the People*, and *Justice*, in accordance with what the prophets declare concerning him.

Hegesippus on James
Concerning the martyrdom
of James, the brother of the
Lord, from Book V
Early Christian Writings.
"Hegesippus." [a.d. 170.]



James questioned as to the nature of Jesus

- Now some persons belonging to the seven sects existing among the people, which have been before described by me in the Notes, asked him: "What is the door of Jesus? " And he replied that He was the Saviour. In Consequence of this answer, some believed that Jesus is the Christ. But the sects before mentioned did not believe, either in a resurrection or in the coming of One to requite every man according to his works; but those who did believe, believed because of James. So, when many even of the ruling class believed, there was a commotion among the Jews, and scribes, and Pharisees, who said: "A little more, and we shall have all the people looking for Jesus as the Christ.

Hegesippus on James
Concerning the martyrdom
of James, the brother of the
Lord, from Book V
Early Christian Writings.
"Hegesippus." [a.d. 170.]

James before the "scribes and Pharisees"



- They came, therefore, in a body to James, and said: "We entreat thee, restrain the people: for they are gone astray in their opinions about Jesus, as if he were the Christ. We entreat thee to persuade all who have come hither for the day of the passover, concerning Jesus. For we all listen to thy persuasion; since we, as well as all the people, bear thee testimony that thou art just, and showest partiality to none. Do thou, therefore, persuade the people not to entertain erroneous opinions concerning Jesus: for all the people, and we also, listen to thy persuasion. Take thy stand, then, upon the summit of the temple, that from that elevated spot thou mayest be clearly seen, and thy words may be plainly audible to all the people. For, in order to attend the passover, all the tribes have congregated *hither*, and some of the Gentiles also."

⁶⁰ Then the high priest stood up before them and asked Jesus, "Are you not going to answer? What is this testimony that these men are bringing against you?" ⁶¹ But Jesus remained silent and gave no answer. Again the high priest asked him, "Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One?" ⁶² "I am," said Jesus. "And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven."

James before the "scribes and Pharisees"

James response exactly mirrors Jesus' response to the High Priest ...

- The aforesaid scribes and Pharisees accordingly set James on the summit of the temple, and cried aloud to him, and said: "O just one, whom we are all bound to obey, forasmuch as the people is in error, and follows Jesus the crucified, do thou tell us what is the door of Jesus, the crucified." And he answered with a loud voice:

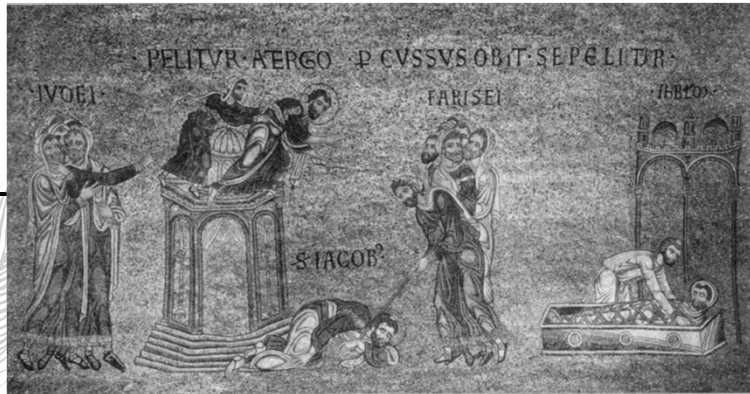
"Why ask ye me concerning Jesus the Son of man? He Himself sitteth in heaven, at the right hand of the Great Power, and shall come on the clouds of heaven."

James before the "scribes and Pharisees"



- And, when many were fully convinced *by these words*, and offered praise for the testimony of James, and said, "Hosanna to the son of David," then again the said Pharisees and scribes said to one another, "We have not done well in procuring this testimony to Jesus. But let us go up and throw him down, that they may be afraid, and not believe him." And they cried aloud, and said: "Oh! oh! the just man himself is in error." Thus they fulfilled the Scripture written in Isaiah: "Let us away with the just man, because he is troublesome to us: therefore shall they eat the fruit of their doings." So they went up and threw down the just man, and said to one another: "Let us stone James the Just." And they began to stone him: for he was not killed by the fall; but he turned, and kneeled down, and said: "I beseech Thee, Lord God our Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."

James the Just is Martyred



<http://www.apocryphicity.ca/2015/03/26/finding-jesus-episode-4-the-secret-brother-of-jesus/>

- And, while they were thus stoning him to death, one of the priests, the sons of Rechab, the son of Rechabim, to whom testimony is borne by Jeremiah the prophet, began to cry aloud, saying: "Cease, what do ye? The just man is praying for us." But one among them, one of the fullers, took the staff with which he was accustomed to wring out the garments *he dyed*, and hurled it at the head of the just man.

And so he suffered martyrdom; and they buried him on the spot, and the pillar erected to his memory still remains, close by the temple. ... And shortly after Vespasian besieged Judaea, taking them captive.

Paul does not narrate a single event from Jesus's life. Nor does he directly quote Jesus's words ... with the exception of his rendering of the Eucharistic formula; "This is my body." (Aslan 187)

The Book of James

Aslan goes so far as to say, "Paul shows non interest at all in the historical Jesus. (187).

- While Paul's letters never mention a single parable or directly quote Jesus except in terms of the Lords' Supper and a few other mentions, **James epistle mirrors and paraphrases the core of Jesus' teachings described in Matthew's "sermon on the mount" (chapters 5, 6, and 7) and Luke's "sermon on the plain" (Luke 6:20-49).**

the Poor

Jesus

- Luke 6²⁰ Looking at his disciples, he said:
- "Blessed are you who are poor,
for yours is the kingdom of God.

James

- 2 My brothers and sisters, believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ must not show favoritism. ²Suppose a man comes into your meeting wearing a gold ring and fine clothes, and a poor man in filthy old clothes also comes in. ³If you show special attention to the man wearing fine clothes and say, "Here's a good seat for you," but say to the poor man, "You stand there" or "Sit on the floor by my feet," ⁴have you not discriminated among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?
- ⁵Listen, my dear brothers and sisters: **Has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith and to inherit the kingdom he promised those who love him?** ⁶But you have dishonored the poor. Is it not the rich who are exploiting you? Are they not the ones who are dragging you into court? ⁷Are they not the ones who are blaspheming the noble name of him to whom you belong?

Jesus

Condemnation of the Rich

- Mark 10:25: It is easier for a **camel** to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God."
- Luke 6:24 - 25: ²⁴"But woe to you who are rich,
for you have already received your comfort.
²⁵Woe to you who are well fed now,
for you will go hungry.
Woe to you who laugh now,
for you will mourn and weep.

James

- ⁵Now listen, you rich people, weep and wail because of the misery that is coming on you. ²Your wealth has rotted, and moths have eaten your clothes. ³Your gold and silver are corroded. Their corrosion will testify against you and eat your flesh like fire. You have hoarded wealth in the last days. ⁴Look! The wages you failed to pay the workers who mowed your fields are crying out against you. The cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord Almighty. ⁵You have lived on earth in luxury and self-indulgence. You have fattened yourselves in the day of slaughter. ⁶You have condemned and murdered the innocent one, who was not opposing you.

Do not swear oaths



Jesus

– **Matthew 5:34-35** ³⁴ But I tell you, do not swear an oath at all: either by heaven, for it is God's throne; ³⁵ or by the earth, for it is his footstool; or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the Great King.

James

– **James 5:12** ¹² Above all, my brothers and sisters, do not swear – not by heaven or by earth or by anything else. All you need to say is a simple "Yes" or "No." Otherwise you will be condemned.

Practice the word



Jesus

– Matthew 7:24-27
 – ²⁴ "Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. ²⁵ The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. ²⁶ But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. ²⁷ The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash."

James

– **James 1:22**
 – ²² Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.

Keep the Law

James reflects an early belief that Christians still had to keep the law

Jesus

James

– **Matthew 5:19**

- ¹⁹ Therefore anyone who sets aside one of the least of these commands and teaches others accordingly will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

– **James 2:10**

- ¹⁰ For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it.

James 1: ²³ Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror ²⁴ and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. ²⁵ But whoever looks intently into the **perfect law that gives freedom**, and continues in it – not forgetting what they have heard, but doing it – they will be blessed in what they do.

James reflects a more Jewish orientation

James

Paul

– **Galatians 2:16**

- ¹⁶ know that a person is not justified by the works of the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in^[1] Christ and not by the works of the law, because by the works of the law no one will be justified.

- **James 2:14-19** ¹⁴ What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save them? ¹⁵ Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. ¹⁶ If one of you says to them, “Go in peace; keep warm and well fed,” but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? ¹⁷ In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.
- ¹⁸ But someone will say, “You have faith; I have deeds.”
- Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by my deeds. ¹⁹ You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that – and shudder.

James reflects a more Jewish orientation

Paul

- Galatians 3:6-9 New International Version (NIV)
- ⁶So also Abraham “believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.”^[1]
- ⁷Understand, then, that those who have faith are children of Abraham. ⁸Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: “All nations will be blessed through you.”^[1] ⁹So those who rely on faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith.

James

- ²⁰You foolish person, do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless^[1]? ²¹Was not our father Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? ²²You see that his faith and his actions were working together, and his faith was made complete by what he did. ²³And the scripture was fulfilled that says, “Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness,”^[1] and he was called God’s friend. ²⁴You see that a person is considered righteous by what they do and **not by faith alone.**

Suffering

- He then began to teach them that **the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and after three days rise again.**

Jesus

Matthew 5: 11 Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me. ¹²Rejoice and celebrate, because great is your reward in heaven; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets before you.

James

- ¹²Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, **having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him.**

James’ language mirrors the beatitudes found in Matthew and Luke.

Responsibility



Jesus

- **Mark 7 20** He went on: "What comes out of a person is what defiles them. **21For it is from within, out of a person's heart, that evil thoughts come – sexual immorality, theft, murder, 22adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly. 23All these evils come from inside and defile a person."**

James

- ^{1:3}When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; ¹⁴**but each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed.** ¹⁵Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.

Matthew
10:6
Go rather
to the **lost
sheep** of
Israel.

Matthew
15:24
He
answered,
"I was
sent only
to the **lost
sheep** of
Israel."

James reflects a more Jewish orientation

- James reflects the majority view of the early Christian church, where Christianity remained a Jewish sect and oriented toward the Jewish people. This view is closer to that of Jesus of Nazareth, sent primarily to the "Lost sheep of the house of Israel."

Acts 21:20 ²⁰When they heard this, they praised God. Then they said to Paul: "You see, brother, how many thousands of Jews have believed, and all of them are zealous for the law.

- James similarly begins his letter "James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes scattered among the nations: Greetings."

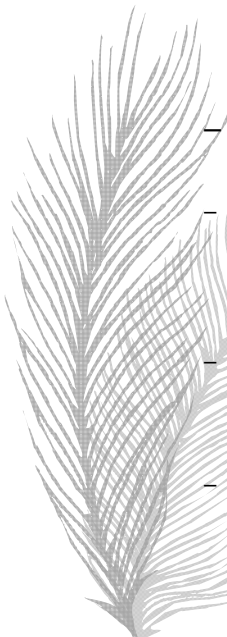
¹⁹ "It is my judgment, therefore, that we should not make it difficult for the Gentiles who are turning to God. ²⁰ Instead we should write to them, telling them to abstain from food polluted by idols, from sexual immorality, from the meat of strangled animals and from blood. ²¹ For the law of Moses has been preached in every city from the earliest times and is read in the synagogues on every Sabbath."

James sought a more moderate position and strove to keep Christianity and Judaism united.

- "James was willing to forgo the practice of circumcision and other "burdens of the law," for gentile converts. James did not want to force gentiles to become Jews before they were allowed to become Christians. He merely insisted that **they maintain a measure of fidelity for the beliefs and practices of the very man they claimed to be following** (Acts 15:12-21)."

(Reza Aslan . *Zealot: The Life and Times of Jesus of Nazareth* 140)

The death of James



- James was killed in 62 CE . Almost Immediately after James was killed,
- "In the year 66, Florus, the last Roman procurator, stole vast quantities of silver from the Temple. The outraged Jewish masses rioted and wiped out the small Roman garrison stationed in Jerusalem. Cestius Gallus, the Roman ruler in neighboring Syria, sent in a larger force of soldiers. But the Jewish insurgents routed them as well.
- This was a heartening victory that had a terrible consequence: Many Jews suddenly became convinced that they could defeat Rome, and the Zealots' ranks grew geometrically. Never again, however, did the Jews achieve so decisive a victory.
- When the Romans returned, they had 60,000 heavily armed and highly professional troops. They launched their first attack against the Jewish state's most radicalized area, the Galilee in the north. The Romans vanquished the Galilee, and an estimated 100,000 Jews were killed or sold into slavery."

Joseph Telushkin. *Jewish Literacy*. NY: William Morrow and Co., 1991. The Jewish Revolt. The Jewish Virtual Library.

During the summer of 70, the Romans breached the walls of Jerusalem, and initiated an orgy of violence and destruction. Shortly thereafter, they destroyed the Second Temple. This was the final and most devastating Roman blow against Judea. It is estimated that as many as one million Jews died in the Great Revolt against Rome.

The Jewish Revolt

- **The highly embittered refugees who succeeded in escaping the Galilean massacres fled to the last major Jewish stronghold – Jerusalem.**
- **There, they killed anyone in the Jewish leadership who was not as radical as they.**
- **Thus, all the more moderate Jewish leaders who headed the Jewish government at the revolt's beginning in 66 were dead by 68 – and not one died at the hands of a Roman. All were killed by fellow Jews.**

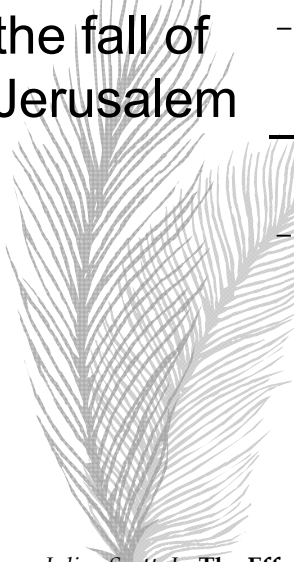
Joseph Telushkin. *Jewish Literacy*. NY: William Morrow and Co., 1991. The Jewish Revolt. The Jewish Virtual Library.

Effects of the Fall of Jerusalem

- The NT strongly implies that the leaders of the Jerusalem Church, including the Twelve Apostles, James, and the elders shared and were representatives of the spirit of Moderate Hebrew Christianity. If this is true, it is significant for two reasons.
- In any multifactional group the opinions of the leaders have a strong claim for being at least the quasi-official views of the body.
- Furthermore, the "average" members who comprise the majority of any popular movement, tend to accept the opinions of their leaders.
- If this were the case in the Jerusalem Church, then the Moderates were the largest group and thus had a second reason, numerical superiority, for claiming to represent the normative position.

Julius Scott, Jr. **The Effects of the Fall of Jerusalem on Christianity.** Wheaton College Graduate School Proceedings (Eastern Great Lakes Biblical Society), Vol. 3 (1983). **Introduction**

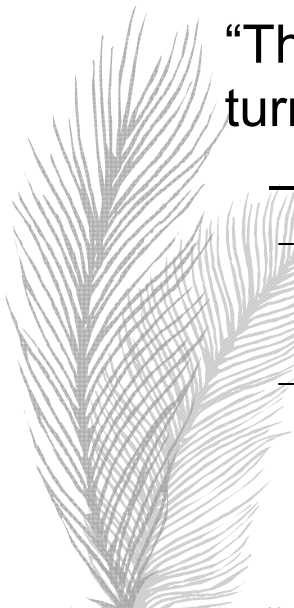
Effects of the fall of Jerusalem



- Before 70 C.E. the Moderate Hebrew Christians were probably the controlling and most influential voice in the Church. Afterwards they were a racial minority in a Church that was following lines of development other than those of their own choosing. The Moderates probably still dominated Palestinian Christianity.
- For all Jewish Christians, the fall of Jerusalem was "the beginning of the end." Although they may have continued to exert some influence, the grandeur of the Jewish Church was tarnished. Jewish Christianity survived, but it did so in obscurity, in backwaters, where some slipped into sectarianism, others into heterodoxy.

Julius Scott, Jr. The Effects of the Fall of Jerusalem on Christianity. Wheaton College Graduate School Proceedings (Eastern Great Lakes Biblical Society), Vol. 3 (1983). Introduction

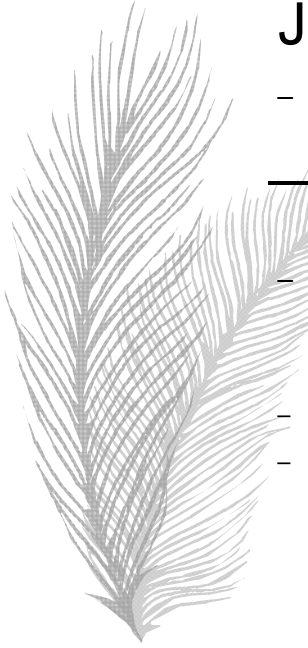
“The Larger Church, it seems, quickly turned its back upon its Jewish mother.”



- Its so doing was not without price. History records that she paid dearly for her neglect of some of the more distinctive Jewish emphases inherent within Christianity.
- Perhaps some of the excesses which entered the Christian faith and practice as a result of the influence of constant contact with Greco-Roman culture might have been moderated if the balancing effect of the Jewish Christian influence had remained vital.

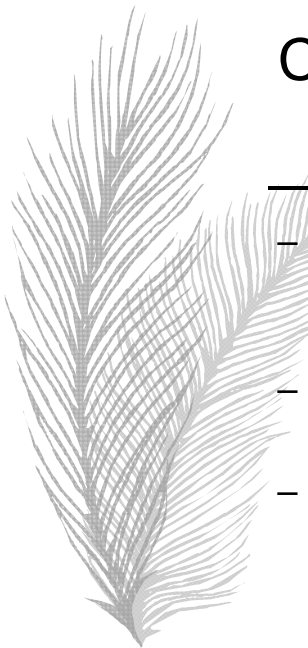
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James and Jesus of Nazareth



- The figure of James ties us to the historical Jesus of Nazareth as not only his brother, but as a connection to ~~Jesus the Jew and Rabbi who focused most of his time on~~ earth on trying to reach the Jewish people.
- James was not closed to Gentiles entering the church, but sought a middle space between Jew and Gentile from which all believers could build a common community.
- Eventually, Paul stopped trying to reach the Jews.
- Ephesus Acts 19: ⁸ Paul entered the synagogue and spoke boldly there for three months, arguing persuasively about the kingdom of God. ⁹ But some of them became obstinate; they refused to believe and publicly maligned the Way. So Paul left them. He took the disciples with him and had discussions daily in the lecture hall of Tyrannus.

Connections



-
- The story of James and his epistle connects us to the earliest form of Christianity, a moderate Hebrew Christianity.
 - This form of Christianity disappeared with the destruction of the temple.
 - Hellenistic Pauline Christianity emerged as the dominant form.

Matthew 22:36-40 New International Version (NIV)

³⁶ "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?"

³⁷ Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind."^[1]

³⁸ This is the first and greatest commandment. ³⁹ And the second is like it: "Love your neighbor as yourself."^[1] ⁴⁰ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

James and Jesus of Nazareth

- **This study of the historical Jesus (and his brother) re-focuses us on Jesus as a Galilean, a Jew, as a person involved in the history of the Jewish people. Though he also refers to him as "Lord," James understood Jesus as THE SON OF MAN, just as Jesus did.**
- **James paraphrases the words of Jesus far more than any other New Testament writer, focusing on the basics of the Kingdom of God - reversal of the social order, focusing on the positive use of "the Law," acting upon the word.**

James 2 ⁸ If you really keep the royal law found in Scripture, "Love your neighbor as yourself,"^[a] you are doing right. ⁹ But if you show favoritism, you sin and are convicted by the law as lawbreakers. ¹⁰ For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it."

James and his epistle are the most substantial link we have to the historical Jesus.

⁹ Then Jesus said, "Whoever has ears to hear, let them hear." Mark 4:9

James 1 ²² "Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says."

<http://todayquestions.blogspot.com/2012/10/the-sower-went-out-to-sow.html>