

BLOOMSBURY
ACADEMIC COLLECTIONS
BIBLICAL STUDIES:
EARLY CHRISTIANITY

JUDE AND THE RELATIVES OF JESUS IN THE EARLY CHURCH

Richard Bauckham



B L O O M S B U R Y

Jude and the Relatives of Jesus in the Early Church

Biblical Studies: Bloomsbury Academic Collections

Bringing back into print many titles from the renowned British theological publishers T&T Clark, this is a fascinating collection comprising seven sets of Biblical Studies titles. Founded in 1821 in Edinburgh, and still publishing under its own name to this day, T&T Clark established itself early on as the doyen of Biblical Studies publishing, most notably with its translations of influential theological titles.

This collection encompasses the numerous and varied subjects of Biblical Studies, starting with the history of Judaism and the Hebrew Bible, then tracing the origins and influences of early Christianity, looking at the epistolary writings of the New Testament, giving in-depth analyses and interpretation of the Gospels and its writers, as well as detailing criticism of the Bible itself over the years and examining the complex and diverse languages of the Bible.

The collection is available both in e-book and print versions.

Titles in Biblical Studies are available in the following subsets:

Biblical Studies: The Hebrew Bible

Biblical Studies: Early Christianity

Biblical Studies: The Epistles

Biblical Studies: Gospel Interpretation

Biblical Studies: Gospel Narrative

Biblical Studies: Historic Texts

Biblical Studies: Biblical Languages

Other titles available in Biblical Studies: Early Christianity include:

The New Testament and Gnosis, Ed. by Alastair Logan and Alexander J. M. Wedderburn

Human Agents of Cosmic Power in Hellenistic Judaism and the Synoptic Tradition, Mary E. Mills

James and the "Q" Sayings of Jesus, Patrick Hartin

Eschatology and the Covenant: A Comparison of 4 Ezra and Romans 1-11, Bruce Longenecker

Power and Politics in Palestine: The Jews and the Governing of their Land, 100 BC-AD 70, James S. McLaren

Paul, Antioch and Jerusalem: A Study in Relationships and Authority in Earliest Christianity, Nicholas Taylor

Jesus, Paul and Torah: Collected Essays, Heikki Räisänen

Paul and the Scriptures of Israel, Ed. by Craig A. Evans and James A. Sanders

Redemptive Almsgiving in Early Christianity, Roman Garrison

Jude and the Relatives of Jesus in the Early Church

Richard Bauckham

Biblical Studies: Early Christianity
BLOOMSBURY ACADEMIC COLLECTIONS

Bloomsbury Academic

An imprint of Bloomsbury Publishing Plc

B L O O M S B U R Y

LONDON • NEW DELHI • NEW YORK • SYDNEY

Bloomsbury Academic
An imprint of Bloomsbury Publishing Plc

50 Bedford Square
London
WC1B 3DP
UK

1385 Broadway
New York
NY 10018
USA

www.bloomsbury.com

BLOOMSBURY and the Diana logo are trademarks of Bloomsbury Publishing Plc

First published in 1990 by T & T Clark
Reprinted in 2004
This edition published by Bloomsbury Academic 2015

© Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, 2015

Richard Bauckham has asserted his right under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act, 1988, to be identified as Author of this work.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or any information storage or retrieval system, without prior permission in writing from the publishers.

No responsibility for loss caused to any individual or organization acting on or refraining from action as a result of the material in this publication can be accepted by Bloomsbury or the author.

British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

ISBN: HB: 978-1-4742-3046-9
ePDF: 978-1-4742-3047-6
Set: 978-1-4742-2894-7

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the Library of Congress

Series: Bloomsbury Academic Collections, ISSN 2051-0012

Printed and bound in Great Britain

**JUDE AND THE RELATIVES OF JESUS
IN THE EARLY CHURCH**

This page intentionally left blank

JUDE AND THE RELATIVES OF JESUS IN THE EARLY CHURCH

RICHARD BAUCKHAM



T & T CLARK INTERNATIONAL
A Continuum imprint
LONDON • NEW YORK

Published by T&T Clark International

A Continuum imprint

The Tower Building, 11 York Road, London SE1 7NX
15 East 26th Street, Suite 1703, New York, NY 10010

www.tandtclark.com

Copyright © T&T Clark, 1990

First published 1990

This edition published 2004

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording or any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publishers.

British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN 0567082970 (paperback)

Typeset by C. R. Barbers (Highlands) Ltd, Fort William

Printed on acid-free paper in Great Britain by The Bath Press, Bath

To Charlie Moule
who by his generous encouragement
and his example
introduced me to New Testament scholarship

This page intentionally left blank

Contents

Introduction	I
Chapter One: Who Were the Relatives of Jesus?	5
I Who's who in the Gospels	5
II What kind of brothers?	19
III Judas Thomas the twin brother of Jesus?	32
Additional Note on the Names of the Sisters of Jesus	37
Chapter Two: The Relatives of Jesus in the Early Church	45
I The Gospels	46
II Travelling missionaries	57
III The Jerusalem bishops list	70
IV Symeon the son of Clopas	79
V The grandsons of Jude	94
VI Jacob of Sikhnin	106
VII Conon the martyr	121
VIII A Christian caliphate?	125
IX Conclusions	131
Chapter Three: The Letter of Jude: A Survey of Research	134
I Textual criticism	135
II Literary Relationships	136
III Literary form and structure	149
IV Theological character	155
V The opponents	162
VI Date	168
VII Authorship	171

Chapter Four: Jude's Exegesis	179
I The structure of Jude's commentary	179
II Exegesis of Jude's exegesis	186
III Exegetical formulae	201
IV Exegetical techniques	206
V Jude's Exegetical Links	211
VI Hermeneutical presuppositions	216
VII For comparison: 1 Peter 2:4-10	221
VIII Jude's use of apocryphal literature	225
IX Conclusion	233
Chapter Five: Jude and the Testament of Moses	235
I Reconstructing the story Jude knew	235
II The evidence for the story Jude knew	245
III The Assumption of Moses	259
IV The exegesis of Jude 9	270
V Other possible allusions to the Testament of Moses in Jude	275
VI Implications of Jude's use of the Testament of Moses	278
Chapter Six: Jude's Christology	281
I The christological titles	282
II Jude 14	288
III Jude 4	302
IV Jude 5	307
V Conclusion	312
Chapter Seven: The Lukan Genealogy of Jesus	315
I The Enochic Dimension	315
II The Davidic Dimension	326
III The genealogy and the relatives of Jesus	354
IV The genealogy and the <i>Davidssonfrage</i> (Mark 12:35-37)	365
V The genealogy in Luke	367
Additional Note on the Text of the Lukan Genealogy	371

Contents ix

Conclusion	374
Abbreviations	379
Bibliography	389
Index of Passages Cited	421
Index of Ancient Persons and Places	447
Index of Modern Authors	453

This page intentionally left blank

Introduction

This book is a contribution to the history of Palestinian Jewish Christianity in the New Testament period. It examines only one aspect of that history: the activity and influence of the relatives of Jesus. Because the most important of these relatives, James the Lord's brother, is the only one whose role in the early church has received any serious attention up till now – and because James requires a book to himself – he has been largely omitted from this study. His eminent figure is here kept deliberately in the background, so that his lesser known relatives may emerge from the shadows for once into the foreground. Important as James was – surely as important in his time as Paul or Peter – the other relatives of Jesus should not be seen merely as obscure members of his circle. When Paul instanced the brothers of Jesus as especially good examples of travelling missionaries, to be mentioned in the same breath as Peter (1 Cor 9:5), he was not thinking of James but of the other three brothers. For Paul it was a well known fact – well known even in Corinth – that they played a major role as influential Christian leaders in their own right. Moreover, other members of the family became, after James' martyrdom, the most prominent Christian leaders in Jerusalem and Galilee until at least the early second century. This study is dedicated to recovering what can be recovered of the role of these brothers and other relatives of Jesus from the neglected evidence which survives here and there in early Christian literature. These fragments of evidence have never before been brought together and thoroughly and critically

studied. In some cases they yield less than at first sight they seem to offer, but in other cases we can learn more than we might have expected to know. Owing to the fragmentary nature of the evidence which has survived, the emergent picture is a very incomplete one: there remain huge blank areas, where even speculation has no basis, but there are also some clear broad outlines and some patches of vivid detail.

The traditions of the early church about these relatives of Jesus, examined in the first two chapters of this book, give us some insight into their important role as missionaries and leaders of the church, but offer very few clues as to their understanding of Christian faith. Therefore the rest of the book is devoted to two texts which, it will be argued, derive from the circle of the brothers of Jesus and from which a surprising amount can be learned about the character of the Jewish Christianity they preached and promoted and about the important theological contributions they made to the early development of Christianity. One of these texts is the letter of Jude, that most neglected of the books of the New Testament, which will prove to be a much more interesting document of early Christianity than New Testament scholars have usually realized. As a glimpse of the theological creativity of the circle of the brothers of Jesus it is invaluable. This book has in fact grown out of an interest in the letter of Jude, on which I published a commentary¹ a few years ago — the only really detailed commentary on Jude to appear for over sixty years. There I already argued for the authenticity of the letter as actually written by Judas the brother of the Lord and showed how consistent it is with an early Palestinian Jewish Christian context, rather than with the late 'early Catholic' context to which recent scholarly tradition tends to assign it. It might have been expected that I could have no more to say on these mere twenty-five verses of the New Testament, even though they have always been among the least studied verses in the New Testament. I thought so myself when I finished the commentary, but since then I have surprised myself by finding there is more to be said about

¹ Bauckham (1983A).

Jude. The detailed exegetical work which I published in the commentary is not repeated in this book. Instead, in chapter 3, a detailed review of scholarship on Jude is offered, and in chapters 4, 5 and 6 the importance of Jude for our understanding of early Palestinian Jewish Christianity is explored by way of certain issues and themes.

Thus Jude's letter lies at the centre of this book, but the circumference encompasses the role of all the relatives of Jesus in the early church about whom we have information, James only excepted. A focus on the letter of Jude provides a different approach to the role of these relatives from the usual approach by way of the figure of James. The significance of the letter is illuminated by placing it within the context of what we can discover about the leadership exercised by the relatives of Jesus in the early church, while conversely the activity of the relatives of Jesus can be given a considerable amount of theological content from careful study of the letter of Jude. What we already know from James about the kind of Christianity promoted by the circles in which the relatives of Jesus were leaders can be considerably augmented and enhanced by fresh understanding of his brother Jude's letter.

Martin Hengel has remarked on the importance of particular leaders in early Palestinian Christianity: 'Individual figures kept standing out in the earliest community, despite its collective constitution. They – and not the anonymous collective – exercised a decisive influence on theological developments.'² Among those who played a creative theological role in the crucially important earliest decades of Christianity were the relatives of Jesus. Not only the letter of Jude provides us with insight into that role. The conclusion which took me most by surprise during my work on this book was the discovery that the genealogy of Jesus recorded in Luke's Gospel can be shown to derive from the same circle as Jude. Properly understood, it is a sophisticated theological document, a precious relic of the messianic-apocalyptic Christology which the brothers of Jesus preached on their

²Hengel (1983) 149 n. 124.

missionary travels throughout Palestine. Such a conclusion, baldly stated, may initially sound like the kind of sheer speculation which gets some forms of New Testament scholarship a bad name. I hope the final chapter of the book will show that it is a well-grounded conclusion. If so, some entirely fresh light will be shed on that early Palestinian Jewish Christianity to which all subsequent Christianity was indebted.

Who Were the Relatives of Jesus?

The identification of relatives of Jesus is a topic on which speculation has been rife. A surprisingly large number of persons mentioned in the Gospels have been supposed, by one author or another, to be related to Jesus,¹ while four of those who were undoubtedly related to him – his so-called brothers – have been the subject of exhaustive, but inconclusive, discussion, aimed at establishing precisely what their relationship to Jesus was. Since we cannot discuss the role of the relatives of Jesus in the early church without first ascertaining who they were, this first chapter attempts to find a way through the maze of scholarly discussion of this topic, distinguishing the more probable identifications of relatives of Jesus from the untenable and improbably speculative theories.

I. Who's who in the Gospels?

It will be convenient to begin by identifying the relatives of Jesus who are known from the New Testament and other reliable early Christian sources. Jesus' presumed father Joseph² appears alive in the Gospel narratives only in the birth and

¹The record must belong to Wenham (1975), who finds no less than twenty named relatives of Jesus in the Gospels (excluding the ancestors in the two genealogies of Jesus).

²The topic of the virginal conception is beyond the scope of the present investigation, though I take the historical case for it to be better than is now often supposed.

infancy narratives of Matthew and Luke, though he is also named as Jesus' father in Luke 3:23; 4:22; John 6:42. Only in Matthew 13:55 is he called a carpenter (τέκτων),³ a term which in the Markan parallel (6:3) applies to Jesus himself. From Joseph's absence from the Gospels in the period of the ministry and the Gospels' references to Jesus' mother and brothers together but without Joseph (Matt 12:46; Mark 3:31; Luke 8:19; John 2:12; Acts 1:14; cf. also GNaz 2), it is generally concluded that Joseph must have died before the outset of Jesus' public ministry. This argument from silence has some weight, but it is not as conclusive as is often supposed.⁴ Jesus' mother Mary, though often unnamed, appears a number of times in the Gospel narratives of the ministry (Matt 12:46; Mark 3:31; Luke 8:19; John 2:1-5, 12; 19:25-27; cf. Matt 13:55; Mark 6:3; John 6:42): after Acts 1:14 she disappears from reliable sources (cf. John 19:27). Her presence in Acts 1:14 may indicate that she was known as an active figure in the early church, but if so, we know nothing of her role. Joseph, whether or not still alive, certainly played no part in the beginnings of Christianity. Luke alone attests a family relationship, no more precisely specified, of Mary the mother of Jesus with Elizabeth the mother of John the Baptist (1:36).

Mark 6:3 names four brothers of Jesus: James, Joses, Judas and Simon. In the Matthean parallel (13:55) the names are: James, Joseph, Simon and Judas. On the assumption of Markan priority, Matthew has made two changes. First, he has changed the name of the second brother Ἰωσῆς to Ἰωσήφ. Ἰωσῆς represents Jose (הוֹסֵי or יוֹסֵי), which was a common abbreviated form of the common Jewish name Joseph (יְהוֹשֻׁעַ). The abbreviated name was that of several rabbis,⁵ before and after the New Testament period, occurs in a letter of the early second century A.D. from Muraba'at (Mur 46 line 1), and is found ten times in Palestinian synagogue inscriptions

³ On the meaning and significance of this term, see McCown (1928); Furfey (1955); Albright and Mann (1971) 172-173; Batey (1984).

⁴ Cf. Oberlinner (1975) 73-78, who allows it no weight at all.

⁵ Blinzler (1967) 22 n. 6.

from the centuries after the New Testament period.⁶ The Greek form Ἰωσήφ is found not only in Mark 6:3; 15:40, 47 (and as v.l. at Matt 13:55; 27:56),⁷ but also in inscriptions⁸ and as a variant reading at Acts 1:23; 4:36; and Josephus, *BJ* 4:1:66. The same variation between the full name Joseph and the abbreviated form occurs in the two versions of the Jerusalem bishops list (Ἰωσήφ and Ἰωσίς; see chapter 2 section III below). Matthew prefers the full form Ἰωσήφ to Mark's Ἰωσήφ not only in Matthew 15:33 || Mark 6:3, but also in Matthew 27:56 || Mark 15:40. Presumably, in both cases he simply preferred the full form as the more familiar form of the name, especially outside Palestine. His preference for the full form of the *name* in both cases indicates nothing about whether he thought the Joseph/Joses of Matthew 27:56 || Mark 15:40 to be the same person as the Joseph/Joses of Matthew 15:33 || Mark 6:3.⁹

Matthew's other alteration of Mark is that he has reversed the order of the last two brothers. This is less easy to understand.¹⁰ It may mean that Matthew thought he knew better than Mark the actual order of the brothers in seniority and so corrected Mark. Whether the tradition on which he relied was actually more accurate than Mark's at this point we cannot tell. But if Matthew was correcting Mark from the list of the brothers he knew in his own tradition, then at least this tradition confirms Mark as far as the seniority of James and Joses goes. We may therefore be fairly sure that James was the eldest of the four and Joses the second, though we cannot be sure whether Simon or Judas was the youngest.¹¹

⁶ Mur 46 in Benoit, Milik & de Vaux (1961) 165. Synagogue inscriptions in Fitzmyer & Harrington (1978) 254 (text A4), 256 (A9), 260 (A22: twice), 262 (A25, A27), 264 (A29), 266 (A33, A36, A38). Cf. also ossuaries mentioned in Milik (1956-57) 243 and n. 21.

⁷ For the text of all five verses, see Blinzler (1967) 30, 82-85.

⁸ Frey (1936) 271 (no. 347), 426 (p. 581); cf. Latin on p. 441 (no. 614).

⁹ Oberlinner (1975) 96-97.

¹⁰ The suggestion of Oberlinner (1975) 353, that it is stylistic - Matthew wishes to avoid a sequence of three names beginning with 'I' - is not very convincing.

¹¹ Oberlinner (1975) 355, strongly denies that such precise information is available from the Gospels, but this is because he presumes the Evangelists to

All four names, it is worth noting at this point, were among the commonest Jewish names of the period. Simon is used, as by many Jews, as the Greek equivalent of Symeon. (In English Judas is often known as Jude, a form of the name which is conventionally reserved for this Judas, the brother of Jesus and the author of the letter of Jude. In this book he will usually be called Jude.)

Sisters of Jesus are explicitly mentioned in the Gospels only in Mark 6:3 || Matt 13:56, though their existence may also be implied in Mark 3:35 || Matt 12:46. To Mark's 'his sisters' (6:3) Matthew adds 'all' (πᾶσαι: 13:56), but the addition may be purely stylistic. In Greek 'all' can refer to only two.¹² We cannot tell whether there were more than two sisters. Of the names which later tradition gives to sisters of Jesus, the best attested are Mary and Salome.¹³ In the Additional Note at the end of this chapter we shall show that there is some degree of probability that these names are authentic. If two sisters of Jesus were remembered by name in at least one branch of early Christian tradition, then the probability is that they played some part in the early Christian movement, though they cannot have been as prominent as those women disciples of Jesus whose names are preserved in the Gospel traditions.

know nothing, on this subject, but the actual traditional *Vorlage* of their text, which itself is not necessarily in touch with historical fact. I presuppose, on the contrary, that information of this kind, about prominent members of the early church, would be widespread in the early church and available to the Evangelists in a variety of ways. It would not always be entirely accurate (as in this case, where Matthew and Mark differ), but has a good chance of accuracy.

¹² Bauer, Arndt & Gingrich (1979) 632 (27); Blinzler (1967) 35–36; against Zahn (1900) 334; Gunther (1974) 39.

¹³ These names are given, probably from some apocryphal work, by Epiphanius, *Pan.* 78:8:1; 78:9:6: by his previous marriage Joseph had four sons and these two daughters. I think it likely that the Salome who appears in ProtJas 19:3–20:3 is this daughter of Joseph, in which case the tradition of her name goes back to the mid-second century. A witness, earlier than Epiphanius, to the name Mary for a sister of Jesus is GPhil 59:10–11. In the History of Joseph the Carpenter, Joseph's daughters are called Lydia and Lysia. For other names given to the sisters of Jesus in patristic tradition, see Blinzler (1967) 36–38.

By contrast, the preservation of all four names of the brothers of Jesus in Matthew and Mark indicates that all four brothers were well-known figures in the early church.¹⁴ Elsewhere in the Gospel tradition they are collectively called Jesus' 'brothers' (Matt 12:46; Mark 3:31; Luke 8:19; John 2:12; 7:3-10; Acts 1:14; GNaz 2), while the phrase 'his mother and his brothers' seems to be a stereotyped expression in the Gospel tradition (Matt 12:46; Mark 3:31; Luke 8:19; John 2:12; Acts 1:14; GNaz 2; EpApp 5; cf. GThom 99), indicating, presumably, his closest relatives as they were known in the early church. The brothers were known in both Jewish and Gentile Christianity as 'the Lord's brothers' (1 Cor 9:5; Gal 1:19; Hegesippus, *ap.* Eusebius, *HE* 2:23:4; 3:20:1; cf. GNaz 2). The precise relationship intended by the term 'brothers' has been very much discussed. We shall take up the question in the next section, but we should notice at once that the only plausible case for considering them neither sons of Jesus' presumed father Joseph nor sons of his mother Mary, but more distant relatives, depends upon identifying the two eldest brothers James and Joses with the James and Joses to whom Mark 15:40 refers. But this issue is best considered in relation to the wider issue of the names of the women at the cross and at the tomb in the four Gospels, and their possible relationships to Jesus.

The names given are as follows:

Mark 15:40 (cross):	Mary Magdalene
	Mary the mother of James the little and Joses
	Salome

¹⁴I regard it as a good general rule – not without exceptions – that where the early Gospel tradition preserves the names of characters in the Gospel story (other than those of public figures such as Pilate and Caiaphas), these named people were Christians well known in the early church. In circles where they ceased to be known, their names often dropped out of the tradition (e.g. the name Bartimaeus, given in Mark 10:46, is dropped in Luke 18:35, doubtless because Luke's readers would not have known the name).

- Mark 15:47 (burial): Mary Magdalene
Mary [the mother?] of Joses
- Mark 16:1 (empty tomb): Mary Magdalene
Mary [the mother?] of James
Salome
- Matt 27:56 (cross): Mary Magdalene
Mary the mother of James and
Joseph
the mother of the sons of Zebedee
- Matt 27:61 (burial): Mary Magdalene
the other Mary
- Matt 28:1 (empty tomb): Mary Magdalene
the other Mary
- Luke 24:10 (empty tomb): Mary Magdalene
Joanna
Mary [the mother?] of James
- John 19:25 (cross): Jesus' mother
his mother's sister
Mary [the wife?] of Clopas
Mary Magdalene
- John 20:1 (empty tomb): Mary Magdalene.

It may seem obvious that the second Mary in each of Mark's three lists is the same person, but this has sometimes been doubted. Some have thought that the traditions taken over by Mark named 'Mary [the wife?] of Joses' (at 15:47) and 'Mary [the wife?] of James' (at 16:1), and that Mark

himself harmonized these two traditions in 15:40 by a creating a Mary who was mother of both James and Joses.¹⁵ This suggestion can be countered on redaction-critical grounds.¹⁶ But it can also be criticized, probably more securely, on the grounds that it neglects the probability that the names which Mark retains from the Gospel traditions were not mere names to him, but people who, because of their prominence in the early church, were known, at least by reputation, to him and his readers. This probability is confirmed by the fact that in 15:40 Mark calls James 'the little', to distinguish him from the other Jameses well known in the early church. This James is no mere name to him, but a person whose distinguishing nickname he knows. So just as Mark identifies Simon of Cyrene by calling him the father of Alexander and Rufus (Mark 15:21), since these two men were known, at least by reputation, to his readers (cf. Rom 16:13), so he identifies this Mary by calling her the mother of James the little and Joses, since these were known, at least by reputation, to his readers. In circles in which this Mary had become completely obscure, she was dropped from the Gospel tradition (John 20:1; GPet 50; cf. EpApp 9-11). There is no difficulty in supposing that Mark first describes her fully (15:40), and then, having established her identity, refers to her briefly as either 'Mary of Joses' or 'Mary of James'. Evidently neither of her two sons was in Mark's mind a more prominent figure than the other, and so, when he needs a brief identification, he thinks of her as the mother of Joses as readily as he considers her the mother of James.

If we now compare the lists of women in the various Gospels, it will be seen that Mary Magdalene, the best known woman disciple of Jesus in the early church, appears in every group in every Gospel. We may also be sure that the second Mary in Mark's lists, the mother of James the little and Joses,

¹⁵References in Bode (1970) 21.

¹⁶So Oberlinner (1975) 97-117, who concludes (111-112) that pre-Markan tradition had 'Mary the mother of James the little and Joses' (15:40) and 'Mary the mother of Joses' (15:47), while the names at 16:1 are Markan composition.

is the same as the second Mary in all three of Matthew's lists and as the 'Mary of James' of Luke 24:10. (Matthew has substituted the more familiar form 'Joseph' for the less familiar 'Joses', just as he has at Matt 13:55.) However, there seems to be no firm ground for identifying any other woman in one Gospel with a woman in another Gospel. All three Synoptic evangelists state explicitly that many women who followed Jesus from Galilee were present at the cross (Matt 27:55-56; Mark 15:40-41; Luke 23:49), while according to Luke more women than the three he names went to the tomb on Easter morning (Luke 24:10). Even John's narrative suggests that Mary Magdalene was not the only woman at the tomb, though she is the only one named (John 20:2).¹⁷ It is natural to suppose that the evangelists name different women, who for some reason were prominent in their own traditions, as representative of the group of women disciples. Thus Luke names Joanna, who featured in his special tradition at Luke 8:3. Salome appears only in Mark, though she is prominent in some extracanonical Gospel traditions (GThom 61; 1 ApJas 40:25; Secret Gospel of Mark 5; Clement of Alexandria, *Str.* 3:45, 63, 64, 66; *Exc. ex Theod.* 67; Pistis Sophia). But evidently she was not well-known in Matthew's church, and so he drops her name and at 27:56 substitutes 'the mother of the sons of Zebedee', who had already appeared in his Gospel (but nowhere else in the Gospel traditions) at 20:20. He cannot have thought that Mark's Salome was the mother of the sons of Zebedee, because at 28:1 he simply drops Salome from Mark's list of women at the tomb, without substituting the mother of the sons of Zebedee, as he would surely have done had he thought she was Salome. Presumably, since he knew that the mother of the sons of Zebedee was one of the women who travelled with Jesus to Jerusalem (20:20), he felt free to include her in the women at the cross, but not to add her, without any authority from tradition, to the witnesses at the empty tomb.

¹⁷However, the women at the cross in John (19:25) are not part of a larger group, but constitute with the beloved disciple a small group near the cross.

There is even less reason to identify Salome or the mother of the sons of Zebedee with the sister of Jesus' mother mentioned in John 19:25,¹⁸ or to identify the second Mary of Mark and Matthew with the sister of Jesus' mother¹⁹ or the Mary of Clopas mentioned in John 19:25.²⁰ Theories about the relatives of Jesus which depend on such identifications have no foundation.²¹ But before turning to the women in John, we must pause further over the second Mary of Mark and Matthew, since a case might be made for her relationship to Jesus, independently of a theory of her identity with one of the women of John 19:25. Such a case depends on identifying her sons James the little and Joses with the two eldest 'brothers' of Jesus James and Joses.²² We may first of all rule out the possibility that she is the mother of Jesus,²³ since it is incredible that Mark, Matthew or pre-Markan tradition should choose this way of referring to the mother of Jesus. But this Mary's sons James and Joses must have been known in the early church: this is why she is identified (distinguished from other Marys) by reference to them. Could it not be, therefore, that she was the mother of Jesus' so-called brothers

¹⁸ The threefold identification – Salome (Mark 15:40) = the mother of the sons of Zebedee (Matt 27:56) = the sister of Jesus' mother (John 19:25) – is made by Zahn (1900) 341; others listed in Oberlinner (1975) 125 n. 395; Wenham (1975) 10–11.

¹⁹ Most of those who make this identification take John 19:25 to refer to only three women, so that Jesus' mother's sister is Mary of Clopas (see next note). But McHugh (1975) 242–244, proposes the novel theory that John 19:25 refers to four women and that, not Mary of Clopas, but Jesus' mother's sister is identical with the second Mary of Matthew and Mark.

²⁰ This identification was made by Jerome, and has been followed by many: see Blinzler (1967) 113 n. 11; Oberlinner (1975) 121–122. Most of those who make it take 'his mother's sister' and 'Mary of Clopas' in John 19:25 to be in apposition, describing the same woman, so that the second Mary of Matthew and Mark becomes the sister (-in-law) of Mary the mother of Jesus.

²¹ Cf. Blinzler (1967) 111–117; Oberlinner (1975) 121–125.

²² This identification was made by Jerome and has been followed by many, including Blinzler (1967) 78–82; McHugh (1975) 239–242. On the question, with full bibliography, see Oberlinner (1975) 86–120.

²³ Trompf (1972); Gunther (1974) 30–35; but against these, see Oberlinner (1975) 117–120.

James and Joses, but not the mother of Jesus, so that these two were not strictly brothers of Jesus, but stood in a more distant relationship (such as cousins)? At first it might seem plausible to identify two sets of brothers, both named James and Joses and both known in the early church (specifically in the circles known to Mark and Matthew). However, there are two impediments to this view:

(1) James the Lord's brother, leader of the Jerusalem church, could certainly not have been called 'the little' in any sense other than a reference to his physical height,²⁴ but such a designation for him is nowhere else attested. The designations by which he was distinguished from other Jameses were 'the Lord's brother' (Gal 1:19; Hegesippus, *ap.* Eusebius, *HE* 2:23:4) and 'the just' (GHebr 7; GThom 12; Hegesippus, *ap.* Eusebius, *HE* 2:23:4, 7, 16; 1 ApJas 32:2-3; 2 ApJas 44:14; 59:22; 60:12; 61:14), though the latter designation could have originated later than Mark's Gospel.²⁵ Blinzler supposes that 'the little' was a very early designation of James, before 'the Lord's brother' became his firm title or 'the just' became his distinguishing epithet.²⁶ But this will not do, because 'the Lord's brother' was certainly the term in common use for him by the time Mark wrote his Gospel. If Mark retains the description 'the little' from his tradition, it will be because it could still serve, for his readers, the purpose of distinguishing this James from others. We must conclude that for Mark it serves precisely to distinguish this James from the Lord's brother to whom he refers in 6:3,²⁷ and this James' mother from the mother of Jesus.

It is true that neither Matthew (27:56) nor Luke (24:10) feel the need of this epithet 'the little'. They must have assumed that 'Mary the mother of James and Joseph' (Matt 27:56) or, in Luke's case, just 'Mary of James' (24:10), was sufficient identification. While it is true that normally in the

²⁴ For this sense, see the parallels in Bauer, Arndt & Gingrich (1979) 521.

²⁵ Pratscher (1987) 115-116. But the saying in GThom 12 may indicate a fairly early origin.

²⁶ Blinzler (1967) 76 n. 6.

²⁷ Oberlinner (1975) 112.

early church only James the Lord's brother could be called simply James without risk of ambiguity (Acts 12:17; 15:13; 21:18; 1 Cor 15:7; Jude 1), it does not follow, as McHugh argues,²⁸ that the James of Luke 24:10 must be the Lord's brother, since it is not there a case of an otherwise unidentified James but of a James who is connected with a Mary. If Luke could assume, as surely he could, that no one would refer to the mother of Jesus as 'Mary of James', he may have known only one Mary and one James, so connected, who were well known in the early church.

(2) The Lord's brother Joses was an insignificant figure by comparison with his brother James. It is incredible that the mother of these two should be distinguished from other Marys as 'the mother of Joses' (Mark 15:47). She would always be 'the mother of James'. That Mark can call his second Mary either 'the mother of Joses' (15:47) or 'the mother of James' (16:1) suggests that, unlike the brothers of Jesus, these two brothers were equally well known figures.²⁹ We must conclude that no relatives of Jesus appear among the women disciples named by the Synoptic evangelists.

In John 19:25, however, the case is different.³⁰ It seems that, along with the indispensable Mary Magdalene (named here to anticipate her necessary appearance at 20:1), the Johannine tradition here focussed on the relatives of Jesus.³¹ Unlike the Synoptic picture of a large group of women distant from the cross, John has, close to the cross, a small group of those

²⁸ McHugh (1975) 205, 210, 453-454.

²⁹ Zahn (1900) 348-350, identified this Mary as the Mary of Rom 16:6, who would be known to Mark's readers in Rome, and her son Joses as Joseph/Joses Barsabbas (Acts 1:23), who he supposes, on the rather dubious evidence of Martyrdom of Paul 2, was also known in Rome. Either or both of these identifications is *possible*. The Mary of Rom 16:6 was certainly a Jewish Christian whom Paul had known elsewhere before she went to Rome.

³⁰ On the women of John 19:25, see Blinzler (1967) 111-118; Brown (1971) 904-906; Oberlinner (1975) 120-135.

³¹ McHugh (1975) 243-244, thus rightly distinguishes John's interest from that of Matthew and Mark in their lists of women. John's list is the context for 19:26-27; Matthew and Mark are interested in the women as witnesses to the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus.

who were closest to Jesus. But it is not certain whether he intends to refer to three or to four women.³² His list is in the form: A and B, C and D. This could be read, more probably, as two pairs of women, the first pair unnamed but designated by their relationship to Jesus, the second pair named. Less probably, the list could be read as of three women, in which case Jesus' mother's sister would be the same person as Mary of Clopas. The second possibility is not entirely excluded by the extreme improbability of two sisters' having the same name Mary, since 'sister' could designate a more distant relationship such as sister-in-law.³³ A further uncertainty lies in the description 'Mary of Clopas', which could mean wife, mother or daughter of Clopas.

Clopas, since he is named, must have been a known figure in the early church. There is therefore little room for doubt that he is the Clopas to whom Hegesippus refers, as the brother of Joseph and therefore uncle of Jesus, and the father of Symeon or Simon who succeeded James the Lord's brother in the leadership of the Jerusalem church (Hegesippus, *ap. Eusebius, HE* 3:11; 3:32:6; 4:22:4). In that case, his Mary can scarcely be his mother. She could be his daughter,³⁴ but is probably most naturally taken to be his wife. In that case she would be the wife of Jesus' mother's brother-in-law. Perhaps 'his mother's sister' could cover this relationship. Thus it seems that John refers to either two or three women of Jesus' mother's generation of the family. If his mother's sister is not Mary the wife of Clopas we know nothing further of her.³⁵

Finally, we must ask whether Clopas appears elsewhere in the Gospel tradition. He has sometimes been identified as Alphaeus the father of James, one of the twelve (Matt 10:3;

³²The ancient versions already differ on this: Zahn (1900) 338 n. i; Blinzler (1967) 112. According to Oberlinner (1975) 124 n. 391, the majority of exegetes think four women probable.

³³Cf. Gunther (1974) 29-30; McHugh (1975) 245 n. 19.

³⁴So Bishop (1961-62).

³⁵GPhil 59:8-9 ('Mary his mother and her sister') looks at first sight like a reference to her (though it could scarcely be treated as reliable information), but should probably be corrected to 'his sister,' in accordance with 59:10.

Mark 3:18; Luke 6:15; Acts 1:13; the father of Levi has the same name in Mark 2:14), on the grounds that the two Greek names (Κλωπᾶς, Ἀλφαῖος or, better, Ἀλφαῖος) are alternative Greek forms of the same Semitic name (Ḥalpai).³⁶ Even if this identity of the names were accepted, it would still be surprising for a particular individual to be known by two such different Greek forms of his name. But the identity of the names has always been doubtful on philological grounds.³⁷ Moreover, the Semitic original of the name Κλωπᾶς, which used to be very uncertain, has now been found in an Aramaic document of the early second century A.D. from Muraba'at (Mur 33 line 5).³⁸ It is a distinct name (ܩܠܦܐ)³⁹ from that of which Ἀλφαῖος is the Greek form (אֶלְפַי).

The name ܩܠܦܐ may be a Semitic imitation of the Greek name Κλεόπατρος or its abbreviated form Κλεόπας,⁴⁰ but whether or not this is so, the Clopas of John 19:25 is likely to be the same person as the Cleopas of Luke 24:18.⁴¹ This Greek name, borne by a Galilean Jew, will be used as the Greek equivalent of Clopas, in the same way as Jason was used as the equivalent of Jesus (Joshua) and Simon of Symeon. Luke's Cleopas must be named (unlike his companion) because he was known in the early church. So he can be probably identified with the Clopas whose wife Mary had come with the group of Jesus' followers from Galilee (John 19:25). And if Luke calls Clopas Cleopas, we can take it that he does not also call him Alphaeus (Luke 6:15; Acts 1:13). A later church tradition named the other disciple on the road to

³⁶ Still maintained by Wenham (1975) 13-14; cf. Blinzler (1967) 135-136 n. 40 for other references. For an original but very improbable suggestion about the names, see also Harris (1927) 65.

³⁷ Blinzler (1967) 120-121; Gunther (1974) 25-26. See the many Greek forms of אֶלְפַי attested in Wuthnow (1930) 16-18, 61-62, 119, 141: all lack the long first vowel of Κλωπᾶς.

³⁸ Benoit, Milik & de Vaux (1961) 151.

³⁹ The name was already known as a Nabataean name (אֶלְפַי): Chabot (1897) 327.

⁴⁰ Milik in Benoit, Milik & de Vaux (1961) 151; cf. Zahn (1960) 343-344.

⁴¹ Cf. Gunther (1974) 26-30.

Emmaus as Simon.⁴² If this were trustworthy, he could be Clopas' son Symeon, whom we know from Hegesippus. But it may well be only a misunderstanding of Luke 24:34, or merely a guess that Clopas' well-known son Symeon would have been his companion. It is rather unlikely that someone so important at the time when Luke heard the tradition and wrote his Gospel should not be named.⁴³

Various members of the twelve have, on various grounds, been identified as relatives of Jesus.⁴⁴ We have already rejected the identification of the mother of the sons of Zebedee (Matt 27:56) with Jesus' mother's sister or with Mary of Clopas (John 19:25), which would make James and John the cousins of Jesus. We have also already rejected the identification of Clopas with Alphaeus, which would make James the son of Alphaeus a cousin of Jesus. The fact that three of the names of the brothers of Jesus (James, Judas, Simon) recur in the lists of the twelve (Judas only in Luke 6:16; Acts 1:13; cf. John 14:22) is no argument at all for identifying the persons so named: all three were among the most common Jewish names at the time. Because the names were so common, each of these three among the twelve is distinguished in some way from others of the same name: James as the son of Alphaeus (Matt 10:3; Mark 3:18; Luke 6:15; Acts 1:14), Simon as 'the Cananaean' (Matt 10:3; Mark 3:18) or 'the Zealot' (Luke 6:15; Acts 1:14), and Judas as '[son] of James' (Luke 6:16; Acts 1:14). These – plainly traditional – ways of distinguishing the members of the twelve give no ground for identifying them with the brothers of Jesus,⁴⁵ or for identifying Simon with the son of Clopas. Moreover, the Gospel tradition several times distinguishes the brothers of Jesus from the twelve (Mark 6:13–35; John 6:66–7:10; Acts 1:14), which would be just tolerable if one of the brothers were a member of the twelve, but not if more were. We conclude that it is unlikely that any of the twelve were related to Jesus.

⁴² Zahn (1900) 350–352.

⁴³ The same objection can be made to the suggestion of Gunther (1974) 28, that Cleopas' companion was James the Lord's brother.

⁴⁴ For references, see Oberlinner (1975) 121–122. Most recently Villegas (1987) identifies three brothers of Jesus among the Twelve.

⁴⁵ Cf. Lightfoot (1892) 14–15; McHugh (1975) 231–232.

The information which survives about later generations of the family, a few members of which are known by name, will be discussed in chapter 2.

II. What kind of brothers?

The relationship to Jesus of the four men known in the early church as the 'brothers of the Lord' has been extensively discussed,⁴⁶ mainly because of its bearing on the traditional doctrine of the perpetual virginity of Mary. In the Greek patristic and eastern Orthodox tradition this doctrine has been accompanied by the view that the 'brothers of the Lord' were the sons of Joseph by a marriage prior to his marriage to Mary. Since Jerome the Latin western and Roman Catholic tradition has preferred the view that they were not brothers in any modern sense, but first cousins of Jesus. Only in modern Protestant scholarship, with no commitment to and often deeply suspicious of the idea of the perpetual virginity of Mary, has the view become at all common that the 'brothers of the Lord' were sons of Joseph and Mary, though probably the majority of exegetes, including a few Roman Catholic scholars,⁴⁷ now take this view. The three views have come to be known by the names of fourth-century proponents of each, as the Helvidian view (sons of Joseph and Mary), the Epiphonian view (sons of Joseph by his first marriage) and the Hieronymian view (cousins).⁴⁸ All three views have been ably defended in modern times: for example, the Helvidian view by Mayor,⁴⁹ the Epiphonian view by Lightfoot,⁵⁰ and variants of the Hieronymian view by

⁴⁶ Such discussions nearly always assume that the 'sisters' of Jesus (Matt 13:56; Mark 6:3) must be related to Jesus in the same way as the brothers.

⁴⁷ Notably Pesch (1976) 322-324.

⁴⁸ The three terms were perhaps first used by Lightfoot (1892) 5. McHugh (1975) 200-233 gives a useful account of the three views, with criticism from his own perspective. For patristic views, see Blinzler (1967) 130-136.

⁴⁹ Mayor (1897) vi-xxxvi; (1898) 320-326.

⁵⁰ Lightfoot (1892).

Blinzler⁵¹ and McHugh.⁵² For full discussion, readers are referred to these treatments. Here it will only be possible to touch on the major issues involved in a decision between the three views.

Of the three views the Hieronymian is the least plausible. The meaning of the word ἀδελφός is not decisive here. Leaving aside uses which do not refer to family relationships (fellow-countryman, co-religionist, etc.) and are clearly not relevant to this case, the word normally refers, like the English 'brother', to those who are related as sons of the same parent(s) (including, of course, adoptive and step-relationships), but there is good evidence that it could sometimes be used more loosely of other close kinship relationships.⁵³ However, since ἀδελφός was regularly used for the 'brothers' of Jesus in the early church and no other kinship term is ever used to describe their relationship to Jesus, we should need positive evidence that in this case the term is not being used in its normal sense. Such evidence the Hieronymian theory finds in a series of identifications between various people mentioned in the Gospels.

In its traditional form, as proposed by Jerome and followed by many others,⁵⁴ the theory involves the following identifications: (1) The Lord's brothers James and Joses (Mark 6:3) are the same people as 'James the little and Joses', the sons of Mary (Mark 15:40). (2) This Mary is the same person as Jesus' mother's sister, Mary of Clopas (John 19:25). (3) James 'the little',⁵⁵ the Lord's brother, is the same person as James the son of Alphaeus, one of the twelve.⁵⁶ (4) Alphaeus and

⁵¹ Blinzler (1967).

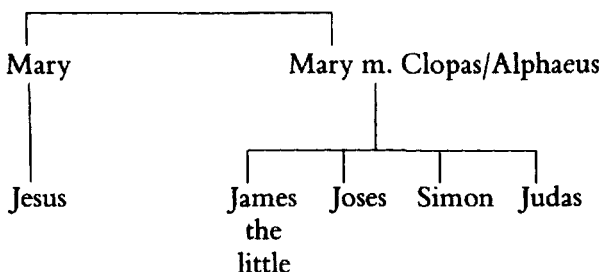
⁵² McHugh (1975) 200-254.

⁵³ The evidence is well presented and assessed by Oberlinner (1975) 16-49; cf. also Blinzler (1967) 39-48.

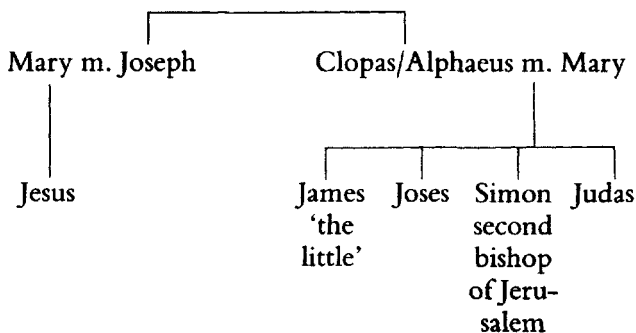
⁵⁴ See Lightfoot (1892) 6-9; McHugh (1975) 223-226, 230; Oberlinner (1975) 121-122.

⁵⁵ Jerome uses the Latin *minor*, 'the less', and so gives the epithet a comparative force not required by the Greek (ὁ μικρός, 'the little'). He therefore supposed that this 'James the less' must be compared with just one other, greater James. So he must be the second James in the list of the Twelve, 'less' by comparison with James the son of Zebedee.

Clopas are the same person.⁵⁷ These identifications produce the following relationships:



A variant of this view eliminates the improbability of the two sisters both called Mary, by considering Mary of Clopas to be not the sister but the sister-in-law of Mary, and adding a further identification: (5) The Lord's brother Simon is the same person as Symeon the second leader of the Jerusalem church, who according to Hegesippus was the son of Clopas the brother of Joseph:



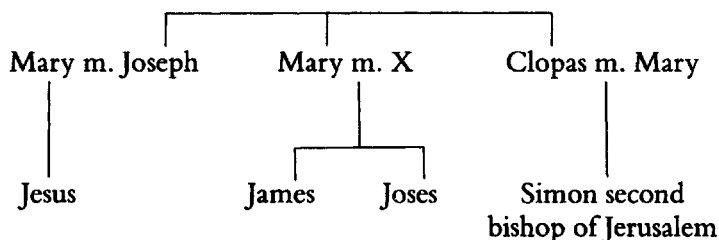
McHugh's modern variant of the Hieronymian view⁵⁸ de-

⁵⁶Two further identifications have frequently been added: that the Lord's brother Simon is Simon the Zealot, one of the Twelve, and that the Lord's brother Judas is 'Judas of James' (understood as 'Judas the brother of James'), one of the Twelve. But these are inessential to the theory.

⁵⁷This identification was not made by Jerome, who did not take Clopas to be the husband of 'Mary of Clopas' (cf. Lightfoot [1892] 8), but many of Jerome's followers have made it.

⁵⁸McHugh (1975) 234-254.

depends on the following identifications: (1) The Lord's brothers James and Joses (Mark 6:3) are the same people as 'James the little and Joses', the sons of Mary (Mark 15:40). (2) This Mary is the same person as Jesus' mother's sister, understood as sister-in-law (John 19:25), but not as Mary of Clopas. (3) The Lord's brother Simon is the same person as Symeon the second leader of the Jerusalem church, who according to Hegesippus was the son of Clopas the brother of Joseph. These produce the following relationships:



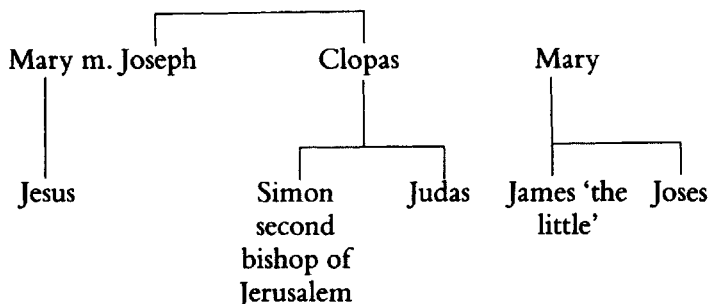
This leaves the relationship of the Lord's brother Judas to Jesus indeterminate: McHugh assumes he was another close relation. But the particularly novel element which McHugh adds to this scheme is that the brothers of the Lord were not called his brothers because they were his cousins, but because they were his foster-brothers, brought up with Jesus in the same household after the death of Joseph's sister Mary's husband. What McHugh apparently fails to realise is that this explanation, to have any plausibility, must apply to all four brothers, since all four are called brothers (Mark 6:3), but he does not explain why Simon and Judas were also brought up in Joseph's household.⁵⁹ Any credibility the theory of foster-brothers might have is lost if the four foster-brothers are not the sons of the same parents.

Blinzler's variant of the Hieronymian view⁶⁰ is the most economical with identifications. It requires only two: (1) The Lord's brothers James and Joses (Mark 6:3) are the same people as 'James the little and Joses', the sons of Mary (Mark

⁵⁹ Cf. McHugh (1975) 246–248, where he leaves it uncertain whether Simon and Judas were foster-brothers of Jesus.

⁶⁰ Blinzler (1967).

15:40). (This Mary or her husband was related to the family of Jesus, but Blinzler leaves the relationship indeterminate. Her husband may, he suggests, have been a brother of Mary the mother of Jesus.⁶¹) (2) The Lord's brother Simon is the same person as Symeon the second leader of the Jerusalem church, who according to Hegesippus was the son of Clopas the brother of Joseph. The relationships are therefore:



It will readily be seen that the indispensable lynchpin of all forms of the Hieronymian view is the identification of the Lord's brothers James and Joses with the James 'the little' and Joses of Mark 15:40. This identification we have already rejected in section I above, along with the other identifications on which the traditional form of this view depended. The second key identification in the modern variants – the identification of the Lord's brother Simon with Symeon the son of Clopas – would have no plausibility if there were not already ground for supposing James and Joses to be related to Jesus more distantly than as actual brothers.

In fact, Hegesippus seems to distinguish the relationship to Jesus of Symeon the son of Clopas, whom he calls 'cousin of the Lord' (*ἀνεψιός τοῦ κυρίου*: *ap.* Eusebius, *HE* 4:22:4; cf. 3:11), from that of James and Jude, for both of whom he uses the traditional description 'brother of the Lord' (*ap.* Eusebius, *HE* 2:23:4; 3:20:1). Modern advocates of the Hieronymian view counter this evidence by the claim that Hegesippus (in Eusebius, *HE* 4:22:4) refers to Symeon as 'a second (i.e. another

⁶¹ Blinzler (1967) 145.

er) cousin of the Lord' (ὄντα ἀνεψιόν τοῦ κυρίου δεύτερον) with the implication that his predecessor James (whom Hegesippus has just mentioned) was also a cousin of the Lord.⁶² However, if this is what Hegesippus meant to say, his whole sentence is an awkward way of saying it. The phrase in question is best understood by analogy with Eusebius, *HE* 3:22, where the word δεύτερος describes first Ignatius as second bishop of Antioch and then Symeon as second bishop of Jerusalem, without in either case the use of the word ἐπίσκοπος, which must be understood. Like that passage, *HE* 4:22:4 describes the succession in the episcopal see of Jerusalem (purportedly in Hegesippus' actual words, but summarized by Eusebius: see chapter 2 section IV below). In such a context, δεύτερον should be taken, not with ἀνεψιόν, but with ἐπίσκοπον understood, and the whole passage translated:⁶³

And after James the Just had suffered martyrdom, as had also the Lord, on the same account, the son of his [i.e., probably, James'] uncle, Symeon the son of Clopas, was next appointed bishop, whom, since he was a cousin of the Lord, they all put forward as the second [bishop].

In that case, Hegesippus' evidence must be held to count against the Hieronymian view. While he clearly describes Symeon as the Lord's cousin, he does not explain James' relationship to Jesus in the same way, but remains content with the traditional term 'brother of the Lord'.

It is much harder to decide between the Helvidian and Epiphonian views, despite the fact that most modern exegetes seem to treat the former as virtually self-evident. The references to the brothers of Jesus, including their association with his mother, in the Gospels and other early Christian literature are perfectly consistent with the view that they were his step-brothers. Positive evidence that they were the sons of Mary, as well as of Joseph, is lacking. The following points have been regarded as such evidence, but in fact are not: (1) Matthew 1:25

⁶² Blinzler (1967) 96-98, 105-108; McHugh (1975) 245-246; for other literature, see Oberlinner (1975) 140 n. 457.

⁶³ For discussion and justification of this translation, see Lightfoot (1892) 29-30; Zahn (1900) 236-237.

(Joseph 'knew her not until she had borne a son'). Matthew's interest here is in the fulfilment of the Isaianic prophecy that a virgin shall conceive and bear a son (1:23), and so he states that Mary remained a virgin up to the birth of Jesus. This is the extent of the information he intends to convey.⁶⁴ His words cannot be pressed to imply that Joseph and Mary had sexual relations after the birth of Jesus, but even if they could it need not follow that they had children. (2) Luke 2:7 ('she gave birth to her firstborn son'). The term firstborn (πρωτότοκος) can specify the firstborn child in relation to other children born later, but in Jewish usage need not do so.⁶⁵ The 'first to open the womb' (Exod 13:1, 12; Num 3:12) was the firstborn, consecrated to God and requiring redemption by sacrifice, whether or not other children followed. Luke did not need to state that Jesus was born before other children of Mary, if there were such, since he has already made it clear that Mary was a virgin when she conceived Jesus. His interest in Jesus' status as Mary's firstborn in 2:7 is in anticipation of 2:22–24 and with reference to his consecrated status, as 2:23 makes clear. The question of other children of Mary does not come into Luke's view here.⁶⁶ (3) No argument can be built on the silence of the infancy narratives of Matthew and Luke as to children of Joseph already living at the time of the birth of Jesus. The evangelists have no interest in providing such information.⁶⁷

In the absence of positive evidence for the Helvidian view, it may still be regarded as the most natural assumption, unless there is evidence against it and for the Epiphonian view. The only serious evidence for the Epiphonian view is that it is the only view positively attested in Christian tradition before Tertullian, if Tertullian is correctly interpreted as holding the Helvidian view, or before the late fourth century, if he is

⁶⁴ Oberlinner (1975) 51–57; cf. Blinzler (1967) 50–56; against, e.g., Mayor (1897) xxiii–xxv.

⁶⁵ See Blinzler (1967) 57; Oberlinner (1975) 58, for a Jewish grave inscription referring to a woman who had died giving birth to her firstborn child (πρωτότοκου)!

⁶⁶ Oberlinner (1975) 57–61; McHugh (1975) 203–204; Blinzler (1967) 56–61; against, e.g., Mayor (1879) xxv.

⁶⁷ Cf. Oberlinner (1975) 65–68.

not.⁶⁸ It appears around the middle of the second century in the Protevangelium of James (9:2; 17:1-2; 18:1), in the Gospel of Peter (in the part of this work which is no longer extant, according to Origen, *In Matt.* 10:17), and in the Infancy Gospel of Thomas (16). Probably through the influence of the first two of these works, it was then accepted by Clement of Alexandria, Hippolytus, Origen and many subsequent writers.⁶⁹ To assess the value of this tradition, we need to investigate its second-century origins.

In the Protevangelium of James the view that the brothers of Jesus were his step-brothers, sons of Joseph by a previous marriage, is combined with two other beliefs concerned with the human origins of Jesus, which are not found in the New Testament: the Davidic descent of Mary (10:1) and the miraculous birth of Jesus (19:2-3), whereby Mary's virginal condition was unimpaired by childbearing (the *virginitas in partu*). Clearly all three notions are connected with the virginity of Mary. Emphasis on this must have seemed to require that Jesus' descent from David must be traced through Mary, not (as in Matthew and Luke) through Joseph. Regarding the brothers of Jesus as step-brothers and the story of the miraculous birth both ensure that Mary's virginity was preserved: her *perpetual* virginity, though not explicitly stated, is already implied. The Protevangelium of James is clearly interested in glorifying the figure of Mary as consecrated virgin.⁷⁰ But it is unlikely that any of these three beliefs originate with the Protevangelium of James. That the brothers of Jesus were sons of Joseph by his previous marriage is taken for granted (as it is also in InfGThom 16) as though the readers are already quite aware of it. This is also the case with Mary's Davidic descent, which in any case is already found in traditional credal formulations in Ignatius of Antioch (*Eph.* 18:2; *Trall.* 9:1; *Smyrn.* 1:1) and occurs in a number of other second-century works (*AscIsa* 11:2; 3 Cor 3:5; Justin, *Dial.* 45:4; 100:3; cf. TJos 19:8). The story of the miraculous birth

⁶⁸ For differing interpretations of Tertullian, see Lightfoot (1892) 31-32; Blinzler (1967) 139-141; McHugh (1975) 448-450.

⁶⁹ See Lightfoot (1892) 32-40; Blinzler (1967) 131-133.

⁷⁰ Smid (1965) 17-19.

is found in a simpler and probably earlier form in Ascension of Isaiah 11:9–14⁷¹ and Odes of Solomon 19:8–9 (cf. 28:17)⁷² and is implied by Ignatius' reference to the birth of Jesus in *Ephesians* 19:1.⁷³ Thus all three beliefs were probably already traditional when the Protevangelium of James took them up.

If we compare all the second-century works in which either the miraculous birth of Jesus or the view that the brothers of Jesus were step-brothers is found, we get the following pattern:

	Davidic descent of Mary	Miraculous birth ⁷⁴	step-brothers
Ignatius	✓	✓	
Asclsa	✓	✓	
OdesSol		✓	
GPet			✓
InfGThom			✓
ProtJas	✓	✓	✓

Since the extant section of the Gospel of Peter is quite closely related to traditions in the Ascension of Isaiah,⁷⁵ it is quite possible that it had something similar to the latter's birth narrative and so included, along with the identification of the brothers of Jesus as step-brothers, the Davidic descent of Mary and the miraculous birth. What is of particular interest is that all six of these works are either certainly or quite probably of Syrian origin.⁷⁶ It looks as though we have here a complex

⁷¹ Cf. Aldama (1970) 204–206.

⁷² Cf. Aldama (1970) 207–211.

⁷³ Since Ignatius here refers to Mary's virginity and her giving birth (τοκετός) as two distinct mysteries, he probably refers to two miraculous acts by which the Son of God entered the world: the virginal conception and the miraculous birth. See the discussion and this conclusion in Aldama (1970) 189–203.

⁷⁴ This is also found in Acts of Peter 24 (dependent on Asclsa 11) and probably in SibOr 8:472, which may not be as early as the second century.

⁷⁵ The most striking parallel is Asclsa 3:14–17 with GPet 28–42.

⁷⁶ As well as Ignatius of Antioch, the Gospel of Peter and the Ascension of Isaiah probably come from the west Syrian area around Antioch, the Odes of Solomon are associated with east Syria, the Infancy Gospel of

of traditions which dates from the very beginning of the second century in Syria. The tradition about the brothers of Jesus may therefore seem condemned as unhistorical by association with the other two traditions: it looks like part of a doctrinal or hagiographical development of the theme of the virginity of Mary. On the other hand, it is possible that the brothers of Jesus were correctly remembered not to have been sons of Mary and that this made possible the development of the idea of Mary's perpetual virginity as a result. Good historical tradition certainly was still available in the early second century, even if mixed with much legendary material.

This view of the brothers of Jesus would have more probable historical value if it could be plausibly traced to Palestinian Jewish Christian tradition. None of these six Syrian works can be very closely associated with such tradition. But we must, finally, consider three possible witnesses to Palestinian Jewish Christian tradition about the brothers of Jesus.

(1) The early medieval Irish writer Sedulius Scotus attributes to a 'Gospel according to the Hebrews' an account of the arrival of the magi at the cave in Bethlehem, in which Joseph addresses Simon – clearly his son, one of the brothers of Jesus.⁷⁷ This has been treated and discussed as a possible fragment of the second-century Jewish Christian Gospel, which scholars usually call the Gospel of the Nazarenes.⁷⁸ In fact, it is an extract from chapter 89 of the Latin Infancy Gospel published by M. R. James.⁷⁹ Another Irish reference to the same passage, in a twelfth-century manuscript, also attributes it to the Gospel according to the Hebrews, but may be dependent on the quotation in Sedulius Scotus.⁸⁰

Thomas may also be east Syrian in origin, while the Protevangelium of James may be probably located in Syria because of its affinities with these other works.

⁷⁷ Latin text in Bischoff (1974) 203–204; Klijn (1988) 4027; English translation (as frag. 28 of GNaz) in Vielhauer (1963) 151.

⁷⁸ Klijn (1988) 4028, 4030, treats it as questionable.

⁷⁹ James (1927) 82–83.

⁸⁰ James (1927) xxviii, 99–100; Gijssels (1976) 300. The same manuscript (Harl. 1802) contains an Irish poem on the magi (Stokes [1887] 346–351) which is dependent on this passage in the Irish version of James' Latin Infancy Gospel (see Stokes [1887] 360–361; James [1927] 112).

James' Latin Infancy Gospel is a (probably Carolingian)⁸¹ compilation from the Protevangelium of James, the Infancy Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew, and an otherwise unknown ancient source (followed in chapters 59–76, 81–85, 89–95). This unknown source, from which the passage attributed to the Gospel according to the Hebrews by Sedulius Scotus comes, could well be as early as the second century: it has affinities with the Protevangelium of James. Joseph's son Symeon is prominent in this source. It is possible that Sedulius Scotus knew this source itself as the Gospel according to the Hebrews and that it was in fact the second-century Gospel of the Nazarenes.⁸² On the other hand, it may be the *compilation* (James' Latin Infancy Gospel) which he called 'the Gospel according to the Hebrews,' a title which was sometimes used inaccurately in the medieval period. The matter deserves further study, but in the present state of investigation it would be hazardous to use this material as evidence of early Jewish Christian tradition.

(2) The Second Apocalypse of James from Nag Hammadi, despite its Gnostic and anti-Jewish character, certainly has taken over some Jewish Christian tradition. Its account of the martyrdom of James the Lord's brother (61:1–62:14) is probably independent of Hegesippus' account but derived ultimately from the same Jewish Christian tradition.⁸³ It also has a curious account of a meeting of James with Jesus (50:5–51:22), which looks as though it is based on an account of the resurrection appearance to James like that in Gospel of the Hebrews 7.⁸⁴ As in the latter, Jesus addresses James as 'my brother' (50:11–12), but this apparently astonishes James. James' mother (unnamed) then explains that 'both of you were nourished with the same milk. Because of this he calls me "My mother." For he is not a stranger to us. He is your [step-brother . . .]' (50:18–22).⁸⁵ But Jesus himself goes on to explain a better reason for calling James his

⁸¹ Gijssel (1976) 301–302.

⁸² So Gijssel (1976) 300–301.

⁸³ Brown (1975) 227–231; Pratscher (1987) 241–251, 255.

⁸⁴ Bagatti (1971B) 72.

⁸⁵ Translation from Robinson (1977) 251. Unfortunately for our purposes, the restoration of the end of line 22 is problematic: see Funk (1976) 120–122.

brother: his divine Father has become a Father to James (51:19–22). This passage expresses the rather common Gnostic view⁸⁶ that Jesus had no real human origin and that neither of his supposed parents were really his parents⁸⁷ (cf. 51:19–20), but it also regards James as the son of Jesus' supposed mother. It might be suggested therefore that it reflects a Jewish Christian tradition which held the brothers of Jesus to be sons of Mary. However, this is rendered very unlikely by the quite unparalleled name Theuda⁸⁸ which this Apocalypse of James gives to James' father (44:20), which indicates that the author either depended on a very eccentric tradition about the family of Jesus or had no traditional information about the parents of James or Jesus at all. Probably the tradition he used in 50:5–22 informed him only that Jesus called James his brother (as in GHeb 7): the rest is his own attempt to explain this, given his Gnostic presupposition that Jesus could have no real human parents.

(3) If the view held by Hegesippus about the brothers of Jesus could be ascertained, it would probably be our best chance of access to Palestinian Jewish Christian tradition on the subject. But from the fragments of Hegesippus extant in Eusebius it is not possible to be sure whether he held the Helvidian or the Epiphonian view. Significance has sometimes been attached to his reference to Jude 'who was called [the Lord's] brother according to the flesh' (*ap.* Eusebius, *HE* 3:20:1). But, on the one hand, 'according to the flesh' (κατὰ σάρκα; also used of the relatives of Jesus by Eusebius, probably following Hegesippus, in *HE* 3:11; Julius Africanus, *ap.* Eusebius, *HE* 1:7:11; Didascalia 24; Ap. Const. 8:35:1; HistJos 2)⁸⁹ does not distinguish blood-relationship from, say, mere adoptive or step-relationship (so that, given the virginal conception, Jude would have to be the son of Mary), but distinguishes natural, earthly relationship from spiritual relationship. On the other hand, the word 'called' (λεγόμενου; cf. Eusebius, *HE* 2:1:2; ClemHom 11:35) does not mean that

⁸⁶ Brown *et al.* (1978) 269–270.

⁸⁷ Funk (1976) 120; Pratscher (1987) 168.

⁸⁸ Against attempted identifications see Brown (1975) 225 n. 4; and cf. Funk (1976) 90.

⁸⁹ On the phrase see Blinzler (1967) 108–110.

Jude's brotherhood of Jesus was reputed rather than real⁹⁰ (since, on the Epiphonian view, he was not a blood-relative), but merely indicates that Hegesippus is reporting a common usage.

However, Lawlor argues that two passages of Epiphanius himself, which clearly support the Epiphonian view, derive from Hegesippus.⁹¹ The first (*Pan.* 78:7) states that Joseph's first wife was of the tribe of Judah and bore him four sons and two daughters. The second (*Pan.* 78:8) gives the names of the four sons in the Matthean order (*Matt* 13:55) as the order of birth, and the names of the two sisters as Mary and Salome. Joseph is said to have been about forty when his eldest son was born, and over eighty when, as a widower, he married Mary. But elsewhere in this chapter Epiphanius clearly draws, directly or indirectly, on the Protevangelium of James, and although the information in these two passages does not come from the Protevangelium of James, it more plausibly comes from some apocryphal account, perhaps dependent on the Protevangelium of James, than from Hegesippus. Much more plausibly dependent on Hegesippus⁹² is a passage in *Pan.* 29:4, which begins, 'For he [James] was Joseph's firstborn son': but this statement, of course, is consistent with the Helvidian as well as the Epiphonian view.

The most that can be said with confidence about Hegesippus is that, if he had clearly stated the Helvidian view, we should expect other writers to have respected his authority on this point and to have followed him, but none do. Eusebius, who relied heavily on Hegesippus' information about the family of Jesus and shows no sign of crediting apocryphal infancy literature such as the Protevangelium of James, himself takes the Epiphonian view for granted (*HE* 2:1:2). But, of course, Hegesippus may not have clarified the relationship of the brothers to Jesus further than in the extant fragments.

In conclusion, the Epiphonian view has a better claim to serious consideration than is often nowadays allowed. The second-century tradition could preserve an accurate historical memory. On the other hand, it could be a legendary construct

⁹⁰ As Lightfoot (1892) 30, suggests.

⁹¹ Lawlor (1917) 11-12; the two passages are printed on p. 98.

⁹² Lawlor (1917) 10.

in favour of the perpetual virginity of Mary. We cannot be sure. Fortunately, whether the Helvidian or the Epiphonian view is preferred will make no difference to our discussion, in the following chapters, of the role of the brothers of Jesus in the early church.

III. Judas Thomas the twin brother of Jesus?

Some attention must be given to the tradition that appears to identify Jude the Lord's brother with the apostle Thomas, known in the East Syrian tradition as Judas Thomas. Some recent scholars have appeared to favour the historicity of this tradition⁹³ and to associate the letter of Jude with it.⁹⁴ However, this tendency is based on an insufficiently critical view of the tradition.

In the east Syrian tradition of Edessa and its region, the apostle Thomas was known as Judas Thomas (GThom title; ActsThom 1; 2; 11 etc.; BkThom 138:1; John 14:22 in the Curetonian Syriac; Abgar legend *ap.* Eusebius, *HE* 1:13:4, 11; 2:1:6; Doctrine of Addai; Ephraem; the additional name Didymus, the Greek equivalent of Thomas,⁹⁵ is also given in GThom; ActsThom 1). Only in works from this particular geographical area of the early church is the name Judas given to the apostle Thomas.⁹⁶ The church of Edessa claimed some special connexion with this apostle, who in the Abgar legend was responsible for sending Thaddaeus/Addai to evangelize Edessa. Moreover, in just two works which originate from this area, probably c. 200,⁹⁷ the sur-

⁹³ Koester (1965) 296–297.

⁹⁴ Layton (1987) 359. Koester (1982) 247, suggests that the letter of Jude was written in Syria under the pseudonym of Jude the brother of Jesus, chosen for anti-Gnostic polemical purposes, because Judas Thomas was an authority for Gnostic circles in Syria.

⁹⁵ Cf. John 11:16; 20:24; 21:2.

⁹⁶ For the east Syrian origin of the Gospel of Thomas, see Fallon and Cameron (1988) 4227–4228.

⁹⁷ For the date of the Book of Thomas, see Turner (1975) 233–237. The Acts of Thomas seem to have influenced Mani before his break with the Elkasite Christian group in which he grew up, i.e. before 240 (Lieu [1985] 29–32, 51–53, 61), and so cannot be dated much after 200.

name Thomas, which is the Aramaic word for twin (תאומא),⁹⁸ is taken to indicate that the apostle Judas Thomas was the twin brother of Jesus (ActsThom 11; 31; 39; BkThom 138:4, 7, 19) and so presumably the same person as Jude the Lord's brother.⁹⁹ Again, this identification of Thomas as a brother of the Lord is known at an early date only in the east Syrian area, appearing elsewhere only in much later works under the influence of the Acts of Thomas.¹⁰⁰ It should also be noticed that in this tradition Judas Thomas was *not* identified with the apostle 'Judas of James' (Luke 6:16; Acts 1:13; cf. ActsThom 1), so that such an identification cannot be the reason why he was called Judas.¹⁰¹

What has not been sufficiently noticed is that in several of the sources which attest the name Judas Thomas there is no hint of his identification with the Lord's brother. In particular, Ephraem distinguishes Judas Thomas from both the apostle Judas of James and Jude the Lord's brother, but regards the last two as the same person.¹⁰² The explicit identification of Judas Thomas as Jesus' twin brother is confined to the Acts of Thomas and the Book of Thomas, though it may well be presupposed in the Gospel of Thomas.¹⁰³ These three works are closely associated both in theology and in traditions (they seem all to be dependent on the Gospel tradition which

⁹⁸ Another etymology, deriving the name from תהומא ('abyss') was also current in Syria: Poirier (1981-82).

⁹⁹ The Infancy Gospel of Thomas is problematic in this connexion. Attributed to 'Thomas the Israelite', rather as the Protevangelium of James is to James the Lord's brother, it mentions James as Joseph's son (16:1-2), but Thomas himself does not appear in the stories at all and is not called Judas Thomas. Its traditions were known to the author of the Acts of Thomas. Probably it did not originate in the east Syrian Judas Thomas tradition, but was adopted into it because of its attribution to Thomas.

¹⁰⁰ For these occasional later traces of the idea, see Harris (1927) 54-56; Blinzler (1967) 32.

¹⁰¹ Bauer (1909) 444; against Blinzler (1967) 32-34.

¹⁰² Harris (1894) 37-38, gives an extract (preserved in Armenian) from Ephraem's commentary on Acts 1:13, where in the list of the Twelve he identifies the apostle Judas of James (understood as Judas the brother of James) with Judas the Lord's brother, but neither with Thomas. He also identifies the apostle Simon the Zealot with Simon the Lord's brother.

¹⁰³ Cf. Gunther (1980) 114-115.