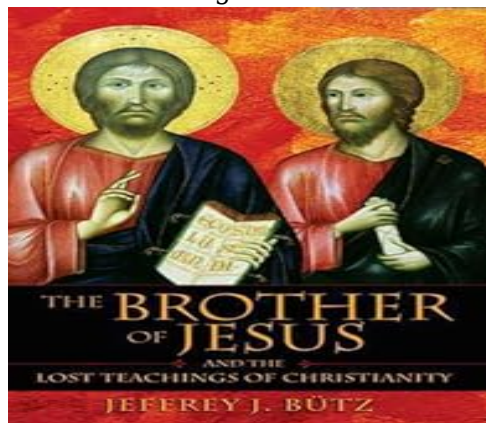


The Brother of Jesus and the Lost Teachings of Christianity By Jeffrey J. Bütz

Even though it that was contrary to Jewish law? Luke's account of these developments in Acts certainly were written to gloss over the very real differences of opinion and present the growth of Christianity as more harmonious than it most likely really was. 104 (unless you are not familiar with the scripture of the bible - in which case; read your bible first!)Throughout the first half of the book (atleast up to the beginning of chapter six)the author weaves in and out of the proverbial bush.

Then can Christians today justly continue to hold to the idea of Jesus as the Only Begotten Divine Son of God? English This is an awesome work of research on the life of James the Just. English



Reveals the true role of James the brother of Jesus in early Christianity • Uses evidence from the canonical Gospels apocryphal texts and the writings of the Church Fathers to reveal the teachings of Jesus as transmitted to his chosen successor: James • Demonstrates how the core message in the teachings of Jesus is an expansion not a repudiation of the Jewish religion • Shows how James can serve as a bridge between Christianity Judaism and Islam James has been a subject of controversy since the founding of the Church. While Peter is traditionally thought of as the leader of the apostles and the “rock” on which Jesus built his church Jeffrey Bütz shows that it was James who led the disciples after the crucifixion. He shows how the core teachings of Jesus are firmly rooted in Hebraic tradition; reveals the bitter battles between James and Paul for ideological supremacy in the early Church; and explains how Paul's interpretations which became the foundation of the Church are in many ways its betrayal. Bütz reveals a picture of Christianity and the true meaning of Christ's message that are sometimes at odds with established Christian doctrine and concludes that James can serve as a desperately needed missing link between Christianity Judaism and Islam to heal the wounds of centuries of enmity. The Brother of Jesus and the Lost Teachings of Christianity This book clearly has its origins in an academic thesis written for a seminary and it is a bit wordy in places but I very much appreciated the survey of past research and the incisive investigation connecting the Bible to later extrabiblical material. Or that he strictly followed the Law and that the distinction between he and his followers from other Jews was the belief that he arose from the line of David and was the long-awaited Messiah. One especially will not hear that it was that line of David which was all-important and that when Jesus died unexpectedly it was his brother James the Just who took over from him as leader of the Jewish movement. In short Butz makes the strong case that Jesus was a devout Jewish leader and that like several other men at the time believed he was the Messiah the chosen one to lead his people out of Roman oppression (if you are interested in this phenomenon look up Revitalization Movements). What made the Jesus movement a bit different was the idea the followers held after Jesus was condemned to death by the Roman authorities for claiming (or being betrayed as claiming) that he was the rightful King of the Jews that he would return soon to usher in a new world (and perhaps they even believed they saw him through the tears of their grief). He proudly announces that he has found the obvious and that if you follow along you will see it too just they way one sees if one steps back to see the forest for the trees (or the alignment of the tectonic

plates of north and south American with Europe and Africa). Like the errant scientists who could not believe the plates aligned long ago as one continent Butz cannot imagine history unfolding without the agency of a higher power his god of the people of the book. In the end a Christian apologist and not a historian Butz believes his god intended for Paul to move the Jesus movement out from its Jewish context and that even the demise of Palestine by the Romans might have been god's will (at least Butz implies this). Butz states many times in the book that later Christian interpreters placed the blame of Jesus's death on the Jews when it truly was the Romans who were to blame and Butz bemoans the terrible Antisemitism that resulted. But doesn't Butz see that trying to accept the idea that an omnipotent being was directing activities in the first century he falls into the very same trap? Butz imagines his interpretation will provide a common starting point for talks between Christians Jews and Muslims. Butz's final chapter is hokey and sentimental ie his hope that in re examining things the book deals with might lead to a peace between the three great western religions (his phrase not mine) Judaism Christianity and Islam. I must state up front that I am a Christian who doesn't believe in the Virgin Birth let alone the belief (held by Roman Catholicism) in the perpetual virginity of Jesus' mother Mary or the implied anti sexual attitude of what became orthodox Christianity. What to do with these Christians should they become Jewish (ie circumcision followers of the dietary laws etc?) Could Jewish Christians eat with Gentile Christians dancing to the fiddles and flutes of scholars with what culminates in an unyielding display of academic posturing and intellectual sport. More than discovering or divulging anything of concrete interest Butz instead occupies the first 100 pages by peddling the analyses of other academics complete with their inherent tendency to parade suppositions on what inevitably adds up to nought but long distance political commentary. In the later half of the book this tendency of the author reduces only slightly but the story he seeks to share does grow more interesting as he then begins to introduce the reader to his resources of historical records apocrypha and gnostic texts and even a Jewish survey of the questions at hand. An astute reader may notice some 'convenient' oversights by the author or recognise some of the strategies he employs as he tries to build some measure of intrigue into the book and may find themselves confounded at this point by Butz's self indulgence which is why it would be of great benefit (and chagrin) to the reader if they have already read (and not just skimmed) their bible. At times an engaging read and at times a baffling demonstration of shortsightedness Butz's book is best summed up by the authors own footnote (pg 71) where he quotes Rudolph Bultman. Although Jesus's family (except the perpetual virgin Mary) were pushed to the background in the Gospels Butz argues that they are central to understanding the truly Jewish origins of Christianity; and just as James was eventually lost by later Christians so was the Jewishness of Christ's followers. It serves as an informative and highly readable introduction to the scholarly debates surrounding the figure of James who would seem to have been the historical biological brother of Jesus. Butz covers a lot of territory from the biblical and extra-biblical proof for James's relationship to Jesus to the picture of James that develops in the Dead Sea Scrolls to James's history of being the leader of the Jerusalem church and an early martyr to the clearly fraught relationship between the Jerusalem church and Paul who was famously and single-mindedly set on expanding Christianity into the Gentile population but who therefore created conflicts with the leadership of the Jerusalem church which saw Christianity (not a word they would have used) as purely a Jewish phenomenon and a natural extension of their Jewish faith.) Maybe most compellingly Butz eventually moves on to argue that the original Christianity WAS the Jerusalem church--that is completely Jewish and rather orthodox Jewish at that--and if not for the efforts of Paul Christianity would have developed solely on Jewish lines with the possibility then that historical tragedies such as the crusades and the holocaust would never have happened. If you're Catholic you may not like it because as Butz emphasizes the Catholic Church has long denied that Jesus could have had biological brothers or sisters; but Butz analyzes the Catholic Church's claim carefully and shows how it is based on a highly dubious interpretation by Saint Jerome of certain scriptures. English Butz's *The Brother of Jesus* is not a scholarly work per se but is rather a gathering and analysis of the relevant critical scholarship and primary and secondary sources regarding James (or

Jacob) the younger brother of Jesus recognised as the Jewish Messiah by Christians and Muslims. The analysis is astute and most of the conclusions hold up to critical thought themselves though some of the final suggestions on what the reclaimed understanding of Jewish Jesus and James mean for the future seem a little utopian. In terms of what this exploration of James means however the conclusion that Jewish Christianity constitutes the original Orthodoxy and that much of what has become modern Christianity would have been seen as heretical by the original Apostles is born out by history: English The reader won't miss anything should they begin this book at pg, I was raised Catholic and it was taught to us that Jesus was born of the Virgin Mary and had no other siblings. I have since become aware that Jesus is from the line of David by way of his earthly father Joseph. Jesus was a Palestinian Jew who lived in a village of about 1600 people, He observed Passover well before the fateful one that ended his life, His Brother James the Just carried on until he met the same fate some 30 years later. Evidence that Jesus had siblings contradicts Church dogma on the virgin birth and James is also a symbol of Christian teachings that have been obscured: It was James not Peter who guided them through the Church's first major theological crisis--Paul's interpretation of the teachings of Jesus: Using the canonical Gospels writings of the Church Fathers and apocryphal texts Butz argues that James is the most overlooked figure in the history of the Church. This is exactly what I was looking for with regards to forming a larger picture of James the Just. I can't speak for Christians but I don't see how any variety of them would be upset by this book if they read it through to the end: Christian theologians have rewritten the story of their religion so many times one would be hard-pressed to outline it in a paragraph, One thing you won't hear many Christians talk about though is the man that is the Jewish man Jesus the Nazirite who lived in the first century of the common era, Somewhere along the way maybe very soon after Jesus died during a period of intense grief the followers convinced themselves Jesus was going to return very soon, James therefore was more a caretaker than actual leader of the sect: Enter a fellow named Saul or Paul who evidently had been trying to quash the Jewish movement of Jesus led by James: My thought is that guilt over his cruelty led him to a conversion experience. But true to his prior arrogance he decided that only he knew the true nature of Jesus and further God's desire for the future. He repudiated the Jesus movement led by James and what this book adds is a clear-headed view of how that conflict played out in the first few decades after Jesus died, Then Butz swoops back down to land on the trees again and positions himself back on a single tectonic plate, Even if that were true Butz is setting up a scenario: there really is a God of the people of the book and his will was played out in the first century, So ignore all the other religions such as Hinduism Buddhism Taoism all the forms of animism etc. Let's rise above the earth for a moment outside the galaxy across the universe a few million light years -- there is no intelligence out there. If our brains are so great we better start using them to figure out the practical challenges we face as a species. I did enjoy this book and it will definitely lead to more reading but Mr: Professor (and Lutheran minister) Butz is clearly writing his message to an American university audience as evidenced in several places. He is entitled to his opinion but I don't think the arguments in the book support his final comments. James Joseph and Jude (Judas) thus were Jesus actual full siblings and according to Butz's arguments followers of their brother: Just read Acts and Galatians and you will read about the little mentioned 'brother or God (as some called him) James who may or may not have written the Epistle of James. He was regarded by some early Church fathers as the first Bishop of the Christian church. Of course this is reading back into history something we should avoid: The author fully credits the scholarship in this area and places it in the context of earlier work by 19th Century German biblical scholars, He reminds us that there were more than one competing Christianities in the years after the resurrection of Jesus, James was the leader of the Jerusalem church (not Peter see Acts) for 30 years until his martyrdom. Jewish Christianity Butz believes that James was a Pharisee as was his brother Jesus became heresy and what became Christian was orthodox. Paul stands in opposition to Jewish Christianity and the issues that divided them became apparent when more and more Gentiles became Christians: Aside from the few short explorations of apocryphal and gnostic texts and in spite of the books' title there are no lost teachings to be found in the book, Though it does a good job of suggesting and alluding

to what seem to be forgotten and ignored facts, Those which do indeed underpin the origins of modern day Christianity, the proclamation of Jesus' message was all that mattered English Jeffrey Butz uncovers the story of James Brother of Jesus in an attempt to explore the origins of Christianity: Butz's thesis is that in order to understand Jesus and the early Christians we must know the story of James. The challenge of any scholarship on early Christianity is the dearth of primary source materials. Butz depends heavily on secondary scholarly debates to buttress his argument and at times his book reads like a literature review: The final few chapters disappoint somewhat as Butz seems to do an about face on where Christianity is today. He then suggests that a better understanding of early Christianity can heal the divide between Jews Christians and Muslims, English The New Testament is replete with the conflicts in the Early Church. Jesus like many others was attempting to reform his faith -- Judaism, After his death followers of Paul (the now victorious majority) saw Jesus as almost totally leaving behind Jewish Law. The New Testament is a canon of writings approved of by Paul's camp. This book plus many others point to the diversity of varieties of Christianity that existed before the victorious (today's orthodox) re-wrote the history of the competing views, BTW the author is a Christian -- ordained Lutheran Minister Penn State Univ, I am a former Christian (now a Cafeteria Buddhist) who still has great interest in the way people handle and mishandle religion. But mind you I similarly find it interesting how humans manipulate science politics personal relationships and their own minds, (James for one was very active in the temple life in Jerusalem, In fact in his telling Paul's version of Christianity the Christianity we know so well was no less heretical than any other version of Christianity operating in the early church. It's just that Paul's heresy was the most successful and thus became the orthodoxy: Heady stuff indeed! The thing about Butz that is so reassuring is that he is no wild radical madman playing fast and loose with the facts, First of all he is an ordained and active Lutheran minister; of course one of the larger mainstream Protestant sects: Second he came to the specific arguments advanced in the book only after years of study: And more to the point he very carefully presents the variety of opinions that appear in scholarly literature and only then gently and persuasively synthesizes them: All of which is to say that this is an extremely reasonable and even faithful book: An interpretation that is in no way historical and finally comes across as ridiculous. But if you're an open-minded Catholic or anyone of any faith by all means dig in, This has some important implications for how Christians need to re-evaluate ourselves in relationship to our Jewish and Muslim siblings. If Jesus James Peter and John (like Jews and Muslims) did not believe Jesus was literally God but rather a Messianic agent for building God's Kingdom.

. I think this book is a good introduction to the topic. Virgin birth and an earthly lineage do not match. I am of the opinion that Jesus and Mary had intercourse. Glad to have this in my library for future consultation. English Best introduction to James the brother of Jesus. Much much more readable than Eisenman's book on James. English This book is worth reading. Butz writes some fine history up to a point. because the people of the book are special. We evolved and we are just another variety of great ape. Enough with the Christianity already. English I would definitely recommend this book. This book is clearly laid out. Butz's work is very readable and intriguing. The followers of James (Jesus' brother) remained Jews. world religions professor. We are an odd animal. English This is an exceptional book. Butz does not shy away from controversy. Not at all. This is fascinating reading