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THE BRETHERN OF THE LORD
AND
THEIR RELATION TO JESUS

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it himself with the words, "Whosoever does the will of God is my brother, and mother, and sister." But the question concerning the blood relationship to His of those of whom the people spoke He did not answer. While no one doubts that Mary was the mother of Jesus, not all will answer the question, who are His brothers? in the same way.

This question concerning the Brethren of the Lord and their exact relationship to Him is not something new. True, in the past decades one view has been gaining ground among Protestant scholars, but it is not a new one. It goes back into the first few centuries of the Christian era, as do the two other chief views concerning this problem. In fact, the three same solutions have stood more or less side by side

INTRODUCTION

"And his mother and his brothers came; and standing outside they sent to him and called him. And a crowd was sitting about him; and they said to him, 'Your mother and your brothers are outside asking for you.' And he answered, 'Who are my mother and my brothers?'" -- Mk. 3:31-33. These words of the evangelist can well serve as an introduction for this thesis. True, when Christ asked this question, He was using these words in a spiritual sense. Thus He answered it Himself with the words, "Whosoever does the will of God is my brother, and mother, and sister." But the question concerning the blood relationship to Him of those of whom the people spoke He did not answer. While no one doubts that Mary was the mother of Jesus, not all will answer the question, Who are His brothers? in the same way.

This question concerning the Brethren of the Lord and their exact relationship to Him is not something new. True, in the past decades one view has been gaining ground among Protestant scholars, but it is not a new one. It goes back into the first few centuries of the Christian era, as do the two other chief views concerning this problem. In fact, the three same solutions have stood more or less side by side

for all these centuries, ever since they have been put forward by their respective champions. Lightfoot in the excellent dissertation he has on the subject¹ has named them after their chief exponents the Epiphanian, the Helvidian, and the Hieronymian² theories.³ These names are still applied quite generally to this day to the theories and will also be used in this thesis to identify them. At times some noted individual has championed some variation of one or the other and, thus in a sense, put forth his own, but none of these variations have taken hold to any appreciable extent and so will only be referred to in passing.⁴

While all three views go back at least as far as the days of Jerome, not all of them have held equal prominence in the history of the Church in subsequent centuries. Since the time of Jerome (340?-420), his view (the Hieronymian theory) has been accepted as the correct one in the Roman Church. It was therefore also quite naturally taken over

1. J.B. Lightfoot, in his commentary on Saint Paul's Epistle to the Galatians, pp. 252ff.

2. This theory is named after its chief exponent, Jerome, Hieronymus being the Latin name of Jerome.

3. According to the Epiphanian hypothesis the Brethren of the Lord are sons of Joseph from a former marriage. The exponents of the Helvidian view, on the other hand, say that the word 'brother' is to be taken in its most literal sense, the Brethren of the Lord, then, being actual sons of Joseph and Mary; while the Hieronymian theory assumes that the word 'brother' is to be taken in the wider sense of cousins.

4. Lightfoot says concerning them: "These however have been for the most part built upon arbitrary assumptions or improbable combinations of known facts, and from their artificial character have failed to secure any wide acceptance" (Ibid., p. 254.).

into most of the Protestant churches at the time of the Reformation. The Epiphonian view, which apparently goes back much further (especially if the apocryphal literature is taken into consideration), is still the dominant one in the Eastern Orthodox Churches.⁵ The third view was championed by Helvidius, a contemporary of both Jerome and Epiphanius. In fact, the only things we know of him and his views are those which are found in the strong article written against him by Jerome.

There is one more point in connection with this problem which must not be forgotten. As we consider it today, we can sit back and look at it objectively, weighing the evidence on each side and then accepting that view which seems to satisfy us best. Controversies and differences of opinion of this sort, however, have never arisen simply for the sake of controversy. There has always been something behind them which has prompted the men involved to take the views they did take. So also the problem of the Brethren of the Lord is not an isolated matter about which men have argued because they have had nothing better with which to occupy themselves. On the contrary, each view is definitely bound up with other more important matters. Helvidius argued the way he did because he was opposed to the asceticism and growing disapproval of marriage in his day. Both Epiphanius and Jerome, on the other

5. Thus the East has followed the lead of the Greek father of the Church, Epiphanius, even as the West has to a large extent followed the lead of Jerome.

hand, were interested in preserving the perpetual virginity of Mary when they put forward their views. While it is true that this does not effect the merits of either of the hypothesis, yet it must be kept in mind in evaluating them.

It is my purpose to examine these various hypotheses in the light of tradition and Scripture. Thus the theories themselves will first be discussed briefly. Next they will be examined on the basis of the references to this problem in the literature of the early Church. Finally, the Scripture passages which have a bearing on the subject will be taken up. The correct interpretation of these passages is after all the real key to the problem.

The Hieronymian hypothesis might also be called the cousin theory. As was mentioned before, Jerome was the first chief exponent of this theory. In fact, there are those who feel that there is no real evidence for this theory before the time of Jerome.¹ It was he who maintained that they were cousins of the Lord over against the view of Helvidius, whose claims Jerome countered with his article on "The Perpetual Virginity of the Blessed Mary." The first section of this work contains Jerome's counterarguments against Helvidius. He then takes up the problem of the persons called James in

1. Cf., e.g., Lightfoot, op. cit., pp. 358f. and note, p. 273. In this footnote he discusses at length the supposed references to the Hieronymian hypothesis in the writings of Papias. He proves conclusively "that the passage was written by a medieval namesake of the Bishop of Hierapolis, Papias, the author of the 'Elementarium,' who lived in the 11th century."

CHAPTER I

THE THREE THEORIES

Before we can come to any conclusions concerning the merits of these various hypotheses it will be necessary to give an outline of them. This will simply be an objective statement of some of the points advanced in their favor. Once these facts are known, it will be possible to evaluate their merits and demerits more easily.

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the New Testament. He says that there are two by that name among the Apostles: James the son of Zebedee and brother of John, and James the son of Alphaeus. This latter one is also called James the Less. This shows that there were only two by this name. How, then, can we account for the other prominent James, who is called the Lord's brother? He must be one of these two, especially since he is called an Apostle in Gal. 1:19. Since at this time James the son of Zebedee was already dead, we must identify James the Lord's brother with James the son of Alphaeus, who is also known as James the Less. He is mentioned together with his brother Joses as a son of Mary (Mk. 15:40; Matt. 27:56). Since we know that this James was the son of Alphaeus, "the only conclusion is that the Mary who is described as the mother of James the less was the wife of Alphaeus and sister of Mary, the Lord's mother, the one who is called by John the Evangelist 'Mary of Clopas,' whether after her father, or kindred, or for some other reason" (Chap. 15).² Thus James and the other 'brethren of the Lord' were cousins of Jesus, for they were sons of His mother's sister. Jerome then goes on to show how it happens that they are called 'brothers.' He says: "In Holy Scripture there are four kinds of brethren--by nature, race, kindred, love. . . . Moreover, they are called brethren by kindred who are of one family, that is πατρία, which corresponds to the Latin pater-

2. The translation of Jerome's treatise which I have used is that of W.H. Fremantle in the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, Henry Wace & Philip Schaff eds., VI.

nit, because from a single root a numerous progeny proceeds" (Chap. 16). He mentions as proof Gen. 13: 8, 11, Abraham's words to Lot ("For we are brethren"). To Jerome, then, "it is clear that our Lord's brethren have the name in the same way that Joseph was called his father" (Chap. 18).

These are the essentials of the cousin theory, as Jerome propounded it. However, as Lightfoot points out, there are several other important additions which were made later on to this theory. One of these is the identification of Alphaeus with Clopas. It is held that they are simply different forms of the same Aramaic word, "Chalpai."³ This explains the difficulty otherwise involved in James being called the son of Alphaeus in the lists of the Apostles and the son of Clopas (if the Mary mentioned in Mk. 15:40, is to be identified with the Mary of John 19:25). That Jerome did not make this identification of names is evident, since he says that if you think they are two persons, "you have still to learn that it is customary in Scripture for the same individual to bear different names" (Chap. 15). Furthermore, Lightfoot says "In his treatise on Hebrew names too he gives an account of the word Alphaeus which is scarcely consistent with this identity. Neither have I found any traces of it in any of his other works, though he refers several times to the subject."⁴

3. Cf. F. Bechtel, "The Brethren of the Lord," in the Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. I, p. 767; or Lightfoot, op. cit., pp. 256f.

4. Lightfoot, op. cit., p. 257.

Another addition to this theory also involves an identification. The Judas, who is one of the Brethren of the Lord, is identified with the apostle Judas, whom Luke refers to as Τουδᾶς Ἰακώβου (Lk. 6:16; Acts 1:13). This also fits in perfectly with the opening verse of the Epistle of Jude. There its author calls himself the brother of James. Thus according to this view this epistle was written by an Apostle. It has therefore been readily accepted by those who wish to make the author of the Epistle of James an Apostle also. Some have even identified the Simon mentioned among the Brethren of the Lord with Simon Zelotes in the list of the Twelve in Luke 6:15.⁵

A further slight variation is referred to by Bechtel in his article in the Catholic Encyclopedia. While maintaining that the Brethren of the Lord are cousins of Jesus, he is not so sure if they are related through Joseph or through Mary. Thus he says:

"The Brethren of the Lord, James, Joseph, and Jude are undoubtedly His cousins. If Simon is the same as the Symeon of Hegesippus, he also is a cousin, since this writer expressly states that he was a son of Clopas the uncle of the Lord, and the latter's cousin.⁶ But whether they were cousins on their father's or their mother's side, whether cousins by blood or merely by marriage, cannot be determined with certainty. Mary of Clopas is indeed called the sister of the Blessed Virgin, (John 19:25)⁷ but it is un-

5. Ibid., pp. 257f.

6. This statement of Hegesippus will be discussed in Chap. II in connection with the testimony of the Church fathers.

7. Provided this passage refers to only three persons and not to four, as many scholars maintain.

certain whether 'sister' here means a true sister or a sister-in-law. This would favor the view that Mary of Clopas was only the sister-in-law of the Blessed Virgin, unless it be true, as stated in MSS. of the Peshitta version, that Joseph and Clopas married sisters.⁸

Before going on to the view of Helvidius, it should be recalled that Jerome maintained his theory for a specific purpose. The title of the treatise in which it is found: "The Perpetual Virginity of the Blessed Mary," shows the reason for this theory in the thinking of Jerome. Thus he states his purpose as follows:

I must call upon the Holy Spirit to express His meaning by my mouth and defend the Blessed Mary. I must call upon the Lord Jesus to guard the sacred lodging of the womb in which he abode for ten months from all suspicion of sexual intercourse. And I must also entreat God the Father to show that the mother of His Son, who was a mother before she was a bride, continued a Virgin after her son was born. (Chap. 2)

The Helvidian Theory

As was already mentioned, Jerome wrote his treatise on "The Perpetual Virginity of the Blessed Mary" against Helvidius, a contemporary of his in Rome. This Helvidius had argued quite strongly against celibacy. In so doing he had used the example of the mother of Jesus and had referred to her sons and daughters to show that the raising of a family was something quite honorable and not something to be discouraged. Thus, understood correctly, the Helvidian theory might also

8. Bechtel, loc. cit.,

be called the brother theory, since it assumes that the Brethren of the Lord are sons of Mary and Joseph, born in the natural way after the miraculous birth of Jesus.

Jerome appealed to Scripture to show how the passages involved could be interpreted according to his view. In so doing he attempted to refute Helvidius, who had also appealed to the statements of the passages themselves to show that the Brethren of the Lord were children of Joseph and Mary. The exponents of this theory, then, as it is still developed today, appeal to the simplest and most natural meaning of the words and phrases involved.⁹ Besides Matt. 1:25 and Lk. 2:7 all those places where the Brethren of the Lord are actually mentioned are important.¹⁰ Two points are brought out in connection with these passages. In the first place, the use of the word 'brother' (ἀδελφός) is stressed. Thus Plummer says:

No instance in Greek literature has been found in which "brother" (ἀδελφός) means "cousin" (ἀνεψιός),¹¹ which occurs Col. 4:10; and it is to be noted that the ancient tradition preserved by Hegesippus (c. A.D. 170) distinguishes James the first overseer of the Church of Jerusalem as the "brother of the Lord" (Eus. H.E. II. xxiii. 1), and his successor Symeon as the "cousin of the Lord" (IV. xxii. 4). Could

9. "This [the view that they are real brothers] is exegetically the most natural view favored . . . by the obvious meaning of Matt. 1:25 . . ., and Luke 2:7 . . ., as explained from the standpoint of the evangelist, who used these terms in full view of the subsequent history of Mary and Jesus." --Philip Schaff, History of the Christian Church, Vol. I, pp. 272f.

10. John 2:12; Mk. 6:1-6 (cf. Matt. 13:54-56; Lk. 4:16-30; Jn. 6:42); Mk. 3:20-22, 31-33 (cf. Matt. 12:46-59; Lk. 8:19-21); Jn. 7:2-8; Acts 1:14; Gal. 1:18f.; 1 Cor. 9:5.

11. So also J.B. Mayor, The Epistle of St. James, p. xiv.

Hegesippus have written thus if James were really a cousin? If a vague term such as "kinsman" were wanted, that also might have been used, Luke 1:36, 58; 2:44.¹²

The second point worthy of note in the argument of the advocates of the Helvidian view is that the so-called brothers and sisters of Jesus^{are} always mentioned together with Mary. They go down to Capernaum with Jesus and His mother and His disciples in the early days of His ministry (Jn. 2:12). They are mentioned by the inhabitants of Nazareth as brothers (and sisters) of Jesus, when He taught in their synagogue (Mk. 6: 1-6 and parallel pass.). They come with Mary to seize Jesus when they felt that He was beside Himself (Mk. 3:20-22, 31-33 and parallel pass.). Finally, they are mentioned together with Mary and the disciples after the resurrection (Acts 1:14).

In the third place, those who hold to the Helvidian view maintain that the Brethren of the Lord are always distinctly separate from the Twelve, while the cousin theory assumes that at least two and perhaps three were Apostles. In Jn. 2:12, they are mentioned as a separate group from the disciples when they went down to Capernaum. Later on their growing opposition (Mk. 3:20-22, 31-33 and parallel pass.) set them off from the Apostles. Finally, the statement of the evangelist John: "For even his brothers did not believe in him" (Jn. 7:5) seems to show that they could not have been members of the Twelve. Also Acts 1:14 and 1 Cor. 9:5, seem

12. Alfred Plummer, The Epistles of St. James and St. Jude, p. 28.

to put them in a separate class.

There is yet one final point which the advocates of the Helvidian hypothesis have argued in its favor. If the Brethren of the Lord were cousins of Jesus and sons of Mary and Clopas, why are they never mentioned in connection with their reputed parents but always with the mother of Jesus?¹³ This point as well as the others already mentioned are real difficulties which the defenders of the Hieronymian hypothesis must face. However, it must be remembered that there is yet another theory, that of Epiphanius; and, as will be seen, most of these arguments can also be used in support of this theory.

The Helvidian hypothesis has been gaining ground among Protestant scholars in recent years. It is entirely unacceptable, however, to the Roman Church as well as to the Greek Orthodox Churches, because it is contrary to the doctrine of the perpetual virginity of Mary. In fact, some of the Protestants who have not accepted it have plainly admitted that they preferred to maintain the perpetual virginity of Mary, as did Luther and the other Protestant reformers.

The Epiphanian Theory

The third important theory, that of Epiphanius, takes a middle-of-the-road course between the two just mentioned. It assumes that the Brethren of the Lord were His half brothers, children of Joseph from a former marriage. Its chief exponent was Epiphanius, who was born in Palestine about 315 and died

13. So argues Lightfoot, op. cit., p. 262.

near Cyprus in 403. Thus he was a Greek father, and so it might be expected that the Eastern Orthodox Churches would follow him, as has also happened.

Like the other theories, so this one involves a doctrine. Epiphanius in advancing it wanted to maintain the perpetual virginity of Mary. For that reason, too, it is still accepted in the Eastern Church today (and also by some Protestants who feel this doctrine should be maintained). While this does not necessarily speak for or against the theory, it should be kept in mind together with the doctrinal implications of the other theories. This view of Epiphanius occupies a middle position from the point of view of doctrine. While preserving the perpetual virginity of Mary, it does not go as far as the theory of Jerome. The latter maintains not only the virginity of Mary but that of Joseph also.¹⁴

Although it has this one point in common with the Hieronymian hypothesis, the Epiphanian theory has several things in common with the Helvidian view. Concerning this Lightfoot says: "They both assign to the word brethren its natural meaning; they both recognize the main facts related of the Lord's brethren in the Gospels--their unbelief, their distinctness from the Twelve, their connexion with Joseph and Mary--and they both avoid the other difficulties which the Hierony-

14. "You say that Mary did not continue a virgin: I claim still more, that Joseph himself on account of Mary was a virgin, so that from a virgin wedlock a virgin son was born" --Jerome, op. cit., Chap. 21.

mian theory creates."¹⁵

The strongest argument advanced in favor of this theory is that from tradition. Before the days of Jerome it seems that the view which Epiphanius adopted was quite generally accepted. It perhaps goes back the farthest of any if we wish to consider the apocryphal gospels. Some of the earliest of these, like the Gospel according to the Hebrews and the Protevangelium of James,¹⁶ both dating from around the middle of the second century, definitely speak of Joseph's children from a former marriage. It is to these that men like Origen appealed for support for the half-brother theory. However, as will be shown in the next chapter, one must be very careful in relying too strongly on the testimony of these apocryphal writings.¹⁷

Besides this argument from tradition, which certainly does carry some weight with it, there are also others advanced from the language of Scripture. Some feel that Mary's words to the angel: "How shall this be, seeing that I know not a man?" (Lk. 1:34), imply that Mary had devoted herself to a life of virginity even in marriage. Again others say that the attitude of the brothers toward Jesus is that of older brothers

15. Lightfoot, op. cit., p. 265.

16. These apocryphal books will be discussed together with all the patristic evidence in the following chapter.

17. Jerome in his Comm. in Matt. xii. 49, "taunts those who considered the Lord's brethren to be sons of Joseph's [sic!] by a former wife, as 'following the ravings of the apocryphal writings, and inventing a certain Melcha or Escha' (for Joseph's first wife)." -- Mayor, James, pp. xi f.

and not of younger ones toward an elder brother. An examination of the passages involved seems to point to this conclusion, and so this is definitely something in favor of the Epiphonian view. To these arguments Lightfoot adds another from the negative side. After ruling out the Hieronymian theory, he shows how one objection, in his words, "has been hurled at the Helvidian theory with great force, . . . which is powerless against the Epiphonian."¹⁸ This objection involves the story of the Crucifixion. There we are told that Jesus turned Mary over to John, His beloved disciple, so that she would be cared for. Lightfoot feels that this is reconcilable with the Epiphonian but not with the Helvidian theory and so speaks for the former.¹⁹

These, then, are the three chief theories concerning the Brethren of the Lord. Jerome claimed that they were cousins and thus maintained the virginity of both Mary and Joseph. Helvidius argued on the basis of the apparent meaning of the Scriptures that they were real sons of Joseph and Mary.

18. Lightfoot, *op. cit.*, p. 272.

19. This incident in the life of Christ has always been a crux in the whole problem of the Brethren of the Lord. I believe it causes the same difficulty no matter which of the major theories one accepts. Certainly there is a real problem here for the Helvidian hypothesis. However, I believe the same problem remains for those who consider the brethren to be step-children of Mary, especially when viewed in the light of Acts 1:14, where they are once more mentioned together with her. Even the cousin theory, especially if it assumes that the two sisters (Mary the mother of Jesus and Mary the wife of Clopas) combined their households after the death of their respective husbands, must face this difficulty.

Epiphanius avoided some of the main objections to both of these theories by advocating the traditional view of his time. By making them children of Joseph from a former marriage, he did not have to explain the word ἀδελφός in any unusual manner and yet he preserved the perpetual virginity of Mary inviolate.

Other Theories

Besides these three principal theories, many others, the majority of which are simply variations of these, have been advanced.²⁰ Most of these can be passed by without consideration. However, two of them are worthy of mention, one because it shows how involved one can make this problem, and the other because of the ingenious way in which it appeals to tradition and thus deserves notice.

The first of these variations is the theory of Renan. It is found in an appendix of his Les evangiles.²¹ It "assumes four Jameses, and distinguishes the son of Alphaeus from the son of Clopas. He holds that Joseph was twice married and that Jesus had several older brothers and cousins."²² Thus it is a combination of the Hieronymian and Epiphanian theories.²³

20. Cf. Lightfoot, op. cit., p. 254, for a brief summary of some of these variations.

21. I am indebted to Philip Schaff for the information concerning this theory. He mentions it in his History of the Christian Church, Vol. I, p. 275.

22. Ibid.

23. The lineup of cousins and brothers according to Renan is as follows:

1. Children of Joseph from the first marriage, and older brothers of Jesus:

It is interesting to note that Renan distinguishes between (half) brothers and cousins and does not include the latter among the Brethren of the Lord. He traces the cousinship through Joseph and not through Mary, as Lange does in the theory which will be discussed next.

This hypothesis of Lange is a variation of the cousin theory. Most of the scholars who have written on this subject since his time have taken note of this theory to a greater or less degree. Since it has also found some support in Lutheran circles, I shall devote some time to it. According to this view James the brother of the Lord is also identified

- a. James, the brother of the Lord, or Obliam. This is the one mentioned Matt. 13:55; Mark 6:3; Gal. 1:19; 2:9, 12; 1 Cor. 15:7; Acts 12:17, etc; James 1:1; Jude 1:1; and in Josephus and Hegesippus.
 - b. Jude, mentioned Matt. 13:55; Mark 6:3; Jude 1:1; Hegesippus in Eusebius' Hist. Eccl. III. 19, 20, 32. From him were descended those two grandsons, bishops of different churches, who were presented to the emperor Domitian as descendants of David and relations of Jesus. Hegesippus in Euseb. III. 19, 20, 32.
 - c. Other sons and daughters unknown. Matt. 13:56; Mark 6:3; 1 Cor. 9:5.
2. Children of Joseph (?) from the marriage with Mary: Jesus.
 3. Children of Clopas and cousins of Jesus, probably from the father's side, since Clopas, according to Hegesippus, was a brother of Joseph, and may have married also a woman by the name of Mary (John 19:25).
 - a. James the Little (ὁ μικρός), so called to distinguish him from his older cousin of that name. Mentioned Matt. 27:56; Mark 15:40; 16:1; Luke 24:10; otherwise unknown.
 - b. Joses, Matt. 27:56; Mark 15:40, 47, but erroneously (?) numbered among the brothers of Jesus: Matt. 13:55; Mark 6:3; otherwise unknown.
 - c. Symeon, the second bishop of Jerusalem (Hegesippus in Eus. III. 11, 22, 32; IV. 5, 22) also erroneously (?) put among the brothers of Jesus by Matt. 13:55; Mark 6:3.
 - d. Perhaps other sons and daughters unknown.

with James the son of Alphaeus. Lange says:

The assumption is highly improbable that James, the son of Alphaeus, should in so short a time, have vanished from the stage past all tracing, without being thought worthy even to have his death noticed by Luke, the historian,²⁴ and that there should suddenly have sprung up some non-apostolic James, who actually occupied a prominent position among the Apostles. We are thus forced to maintain that if after the death of the son of Zebedee, who was simply called James, there arose forthwith another James who went simply by that name, that James must have been the son of Alphaeus.²⁵

He quotes H.E. IV, 22, to show that James was a cousin of Jesus. Concerning this passage he writes:

Hegesippus says that Simon the son of Cleophas succeeded James the Just as bishop, this one again being a descendant of the same uncle of the Lord (θεῖου ἀδελφοῦ referred to the next following ὁ κύριος), and that all gave him this preference, as being the second relative of the Lord (ἀνεψιός). Cleophas, or what amounts to the same thing, Alphaeus (cf. Bretchneider's Lexicon) was consequently our Lord's uncle, James and Simeon (the same as Simon) his sons, James and Simon brothers, both the sons of Alphaeus, both cousins of the Lord, but the former, as appears from what has gone before, revered by the surname 'the brother of the Lord.'²⁶

24. The argument from silence is always dangerous. That is especially true in this case since there is no reason why Acts should contain any references to James the son of Alphaeus. It was not written to give us a complete historical account of the early Church but rather to trace the spreading of the Gospel of Christ from Jerusalem to Samaria and then to the ends of the earth. If that were not the case, how can we explain the fact that 'Luke, the historian,' permitted Joseph, Mary, and the great majority of the apostles to pass from the scene unnoticed?

25. J.P. Lange and J.J. Van Oostersee, The General Epistle of St. James, p. 10.

26. Ibid., p. 11. The meaning of this citation from Hegesippus has been widely disputed, however, Its real significance will be discussed in the following chapter as part of the testimony of Hegesippus.

But to continue the argument of Lange, he points out that according to Hegesippus (H.E. III, 11) Alphaeus or Clopas, the father of Symeon the second bishop of Jerusalem, was the brother of Joseph. "Hence the sons of Alphaeus were at the most cousins of the Lord in the legal sense through their father Alphaeus and Joseph the foster father of Jesus, while the sons of Zebedee were in all events His cousins in the stricter sense, as sons of Salome, the sister of Mary the mother of Jesus."²⁷ Yet the former were called the Brethren of the Lord while the latter were not. The reason for this, so Lange claims, is very easy to find. Clopas died, and his family was 'adopted' by his brother Joseph. Thus the cousins of Jesus came to be regarded as His brothers.²⁸

This theory of Lange hinges largely on the above-mentioned passage from Hegesippus (H.E. IV, 22). Here also is its most vulnerable spot in the eyes of its critics. Thus Mc Giffert says: "Hegesippus plainly thinks of James and of Simeon, as standing in different relations to Christ, -- the former his brother, the latter his cousin, -- and therefore his testimony is against, rather than for Lange's hypothesis."²⁹ If this

27. Ibid., p. 13

28. Variations of this "adoption hypothesis" are found in practically all of the cousin theories. However, it is usually the two sisters (?), Mary the mother of Jesus and Mary the wife of Clopas who unite their families after the death of their respective husbands. In this detail the hypothesis of Lange varies.

29. A.C. Mc Giffert, footnote to Book I Chap. XII, of Eusebius' H.E., in the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, p. 99. Both Mayor, James, pp. viii f., and Lightfoot, op. cit., pp. 276f. also claim that this passage cannot be translated in the way that Lange translates it.

is true, as it certainly seems to be, the entire hypothesis falls to the ground, and must be abandoned. Such will be demonstrated in the following chapter, in considering the references in Hegesippus.

Lightfoot calls it "one of the earliest and most respectable of the apocryphal narratives,"³ and Zahn says that the Nazarenes had it not later than 150.⁴ Some feel it was an Aramaic or Hebrew version of Matthew with which it was often confused.⁵

CHAPTER II

THE PATRISTIC EVIDENCE

Having briefly discussed the theories themselves, we can go on to examine them historically. The final test must come on the basis of the Scripture passages involved, but before those are taken up it will be worthwhile to look at the patristic evidence as best as that can be done.¹ Such an examination will shed light on the view of the early church fathers and should also help to determine the origin of some of these theories.

Gospel to the Hebrews

Unfortunately there is very little literature extant from the post-apostolic age, and so there are also not many references to the Brethren of the Lord from this time. However, there are several uncanonical gospels composed in this early period which contain references to the Lord's brethren. Perhaps the earliest of these is the Gospel to the Hebrews.²

1. Perhaps the most complete collection of this evidence is found in Lightfoot's excellent dissertation to which repeated reference has been made.

2. "Clement of Alexandria, Eusebius, and St. Epiphanius speak of the 'Gospel according to the Hebrews', which was the sole one in use among the Palestinian Judeo-Christians, otherwise known as the Nazarenes. Jerome translated it from the Aramaic into Greek. It was evidently very ancient, and

Lightfoot calls it "one of the earliest and most respectable of the apocryphal narratives,"³ and Zahn says that the Nazarenes had it not later than 150.⁴ Some feel it was an Aramaic or Hebrew version of Matthew with which it was often confused.⁵

In a fragment of this gospel the story is told of the appearance of the risen Lord to His brother James. At the time of this appearance Jesus frees James from the oath which he is represented as having taken to the effect that he would not eat bread "until he should see him risen again from among them that sleep."⁶ This passage is of interest because it

several of the above-mentioned writers associate it with St. Matthew's Gospel, which it seems to have replaced in the Jewish-Christian community at an early date. . . . The surviving specimens lack the simplicity and dignity of the inspired writings; some even savour of the grotesque. We are warranted in saying that while this extra-canonical material probably has as its starting point primitive tradition, it has been disfigured in the interest of a Judaizing Church." -- George J. Reid, "The Apocrypha," in The Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. I, p. 608.

3. Lightfoot, op. cit., p. 274.

4. Theodore Zahn, Introduction to the New Testament, Vol. II, p. 520.

5. Cf. Montague Rhodes James, The Apocryphal New Testament, p. 3.

6. The entire quotation, as it is preserved in Jerome's De Vir. Illustr. 2, reads as follows: "Now the Lord when he had given the linen cloth to the servant of the priest, went unto James and appeared to him (for James had sworn that he would not eat bread from that hour wherein he had drunk the Lord's cup until he should see him risen from among them that sleep)." To this Jerome adds a little further on the words of Jesus to His brother: "'Bring ye, saith the Lord, a table and bread,' and immediately it is added, 'He took bread and blessed and brake and gave it unto James the Just and said unto him: My brother, eat thy bread, for the Son of Man is risen from among them that sleep.'" -- Ibid., p. 4.

represents James as present at the Last Supper ("For James had sworn that he would not eat bread from that hour wherein he had drunk the Lord's cup until he should see him risen again from among them that sleep.").⁷ If this quotation is exact and if it represents true traditions, it certainly speaks for an identification of James the Lord's brother with the Apostle James. It would then favor the Hieronymian (or Lange's) hypothesis. However, the historical value of some of the details of this account have been seriously questioned, especially since this appearance is represented as being one of the first on Easter morning, contrary to the order of the Evangelists and Paul (1 Cor. 15:5-8).⁸ There are those who

7. Lightfoot quotes a part of this passage differently: "For James had sworn that he would not eat bread from that hour in which the Lord had drunk the cup (biberat calicem Dominus), till he saw him risen from the dead." Concerning this he says: "I have adopted the reading 'Dominus,' as the Greek translation has *Κύριος*, and it also suits the context better; for the point of time which we should naturally expect is not the institution of the Eucharist but the Lord's death. Our Lord had more than once spoken of His sufferings under the image of draining the cup (Matt. 20:22-23; 26:39-42; Mark 10:38-39; 14:36; Luke 22:42); and He is represented as using this metaphor here." -- Lightfoot, *op. cit.*, p. 274. -- This translation and the arguments advanced in its defense are worthy of note. I believe Lightfoot can make a fairly good case for his view. Yet he stands alone among the scholars I have read on this passage. Zahn also follows the translation of James (quoted above) and says that this passage represents James as present at the Last Supper. -- Zahn, Intro. to the N.T., Vol. III, p. 227, note 12.

8. Zahn says: "Wenn der Herr das Leichentuch, in das sein Leichnam gewickelt war (Mt. 27:59; Mr. 15:46; Lc. 23:53), dem Knecht eines Priesters (des Hohenpriesters?) übergibt, und sich darauf sofort zu Jk begibt, so werden wir offenbar in die ersten Augenblicke nach der Auferstehung versetzt, und Jk ist der erste Jünger, dem der Auferstandene erschienen ist. Indem dies dem unafechtbareren Zeugnis des Paulus und

believe nevertheless that the story of the oath of James is true. While doubting some of the details, Zahn says concerning the oath: "There is no reason for questioning its historicity."⁹ I do not agree with Zahn here and feel we cannot use this excerpt for much more than a confirmation of the claim that the James, referred to by Paul in 1 Cor. 15:7, is the Lord's brother. That this James is represented as being present at the Last Supper and being the first one to whom Jesus appears seems to be an attempt to glorify the 'patron saint' of the Judaistic Christians.¹⁰ Thus I do not believe the value of this quotation in determining the general tradition of this period is nearly so important as some would claim it to be.

Gospel of Peter

Another very early uncanonical gospel which came into existence perhaps around the middle of the second century is

aller kanonischen Überlieferung widerspricht, erweist es sich als eine zum Zweck der Verherrlichung dieses Jk ersonnene Dichtung." -- Theodore Zahn, Forschungen zur Geschichte des neutestamentlichen Kanons, VI, p. 278.

9. Zahn, Intro. to the N.T., I, p. 110.

10. Cf. the words of Zahn in footnote 8. Lightfoot also mentions this as a possibility (if we read Domini instead of Dominus in this fragment). He says: "He may have assigned to him a sort of exceptional position such as he holds in the Clementines, apart from and in some respects superior to the Twelve, and thus his presence at this critical time would be accounted for." Furthermore, this seems probable, "since an appearance, which seems in reality to have been vouchsafed to this James to win him over from his unbelief, should be represented as a reward for his devotion." -- Lightfoot, op. cit., p. 274. Thus Zahn (Forschungen, VI, p. 278) also says: "Es wäre aber sehr unvorsichtig, hieraus zu schlieszen, dasz die Nazarder diesen Jk für einen der 12 Apostel gehalten haben."

11

the Gospel of Peter. Very little outside of the few references to it in the early church fathers was known of this gospel until some fragments of it together with other lost works were found in Upper Egypt in 1886.¹² Orr says: "The author knows and uses the Canonical Gospels, including John, but his narrative is largely independent, and departs freely from the received tradition."¹³ It is apparently a Gnostic document.¹⁴ Unfortunately the section which must have contained the reference to the Brethren of the Lord is not extant. However, Origen appeals to it together with the Protevangeli-um of James as the source of the view that the brethren were sons of Joseph from a former marriage. Thus it no doubt definitely favored the Epiphonian hypothesis.

Protevangeli-um of James

Another very early apocryphal gospel--at least in its

11. Eusebius in H.E. VI, 12, mentions the fact that Serapion, who was bishop of Antioch around 190 A.D., wrote against this gospel. It seems to have been in use for some time when Serapion wrote his refutation of its false teachings. Thus Reid, op. cit., says: "Its composition must be assigned to the first quarter or the middle of the second century of the Christian era." (p. 608).

12. Cf. James Orr, "The New Testament Apocryphal Writings," p. xx, in The Temple Bible.

13. Ibid., p. xxi.

14. Ibid., There we read: "The Gnostic stamp is already apparent in such descriptions [as that of the Resurrection]. But more direct evidence of its origin in docetic circles--i.e., among those who held that Christ had but the semblance of a body--is found in the statement that on the cross Jesus was silent as one who felt no pain, and in His dying cry, 'My Power, my Power, thou hast forsaken me.'"

20. James Orr, op. cit., p. xv, says: "A prominent motive of the composer is obviously to exalt the virginity of Mary."

original form--is the Protevangelium of James.¹⁵ This gospel, or its predecessor, was perhaps in use already by the middle of the second century. However, "the Gospel in its present form can hardly (notwithstanding Tischendorf) be put earlier than the third century."¹⁶ Concerning its contents Reid says: "It is based on the canonical Gospels which it expands with legendary and imaginative elements, which are sometimes puerile and fantastic."¹⁷ Thus Lightfoot calls it "purely fictitious."¹⁸

This gospel, like the several other apocryphal works which seem to have it as their source, pictures Joseph as an old man with sons of his own at the time of his marriage to Mary.¹⁹ However, the value of its testimony in discovering the true tradition at this time is not very great, not only because of the erratic character of the work but also because of the obvious purpose for which it was written, namely, to glorify Mary.²⁰ It is natural that such a work would establish

15. Ibid., p. xiv, where Orr says it is the "oldest of the extant Apocryphal Gospels."

16. Ibid.

17. Reid, loc. cit.

18. Lightfoot, op. cit., p. 275.

19. The passages in question read as follows: Chap. IX: "And the priest said unto Joseph: Unto thee hath it fallen to take the virgin of the Lord and keep her for thyself. And Joseph refused, saying: I have sons, and I am an old man, but she is a girl." --Chap. XVII: "And Joseph said: I will record my sons: but this child, what shall I do with her? How shall I record her? as my wife? nay, I am ashamed. Or as my daughter? but all the Children of Israel know that she is not my daughter." --Chap. XVIII: "And he found a cave there and brought her into it, and set his sons by her." --Quoted from James, op. cit.

20. James Orr, op. cit., p. xv, says: "A prominent motive of the composer is obviously to exalt the virginity of Mary."

a relationship between Jesus and His brethren which would preserve the virginity of Mary. Therefore the fact that it follows the Epiphonian hypothesis shows that this explanation was known at the time but does not necessarily give us any idea of the true tradition.²¹

Gospel of Thomas

One more apocryphal gospel, the Gospel of Thomas, is worthy of comment. It is not quite as old as the above-mentioned ones but does come from the second half of the second century. It was written to fill in the silent years in the canonical Gospels and is no doubt the source of the several other childhood gospels which appeared later on.²² This apocryphal book speaks of James as the son of Joseph²³ and so supports the Epiphonian hypothesis. However, this

Along much the same line, J. Hutchinson in an article on "The Apocryphal Gospels," in the International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, Vol. I, p. 198, says: "In its latest forms the document indicates the obvious aim of the writer to promote the sanctity and veneration of the Virgin."

21. Even the Roman Church warns against using such apocryphal material (or statements of the church fathers based on these books) in picturing Mary. See, e.g., M.J. Scheeben, Mariology, I, p. 43. There in a footnote he says: "The conclusion may be drawn that no historical value can be ascribed to the facts related in these books, unless those facts are confirmed by trustworthy testimonies apart from the influence of the apocryphal."

22. Orr, op. cit., p. xi, says: "The blank in the narrative of the childhood and youth of Jesus was early filled up with an abundance of prodigies of the crudest and most puerile kind. The parent of this class of Gospels, or rather the earliest form of it, was the so-called Gospel of Thomas."

23. In Chap. XVI we read: "And Joseph sent his son James to bind fuel and carry it into the house. And the young child Jesus also followed him." --James, op. cit., pp. 53f.

story is found only in the Greek text "A" and is missing in the Greek text "B" and in the Latin text. That, together with the fact that all three of these texts are only late catholic recasts,²⁴ also weakens the value of this work considerably.

Clementina

Before passing over from the New Testament apocryphal gospels to the early church fathers, there is one more work among the apocryphal writings which should be mentioned briefly, and that is the Clementina. These writings (the Clementine Homilies and the Recognitions) claim to come from Clement of Rome, but were actually written at a much later time.²⁵ Their purpose, as Lightfoot says, was "to support a peculiar phase of Ebionism."²⁶

In the Homilies (XI, 25) James is spoken of as the one who was "called the brother of the Lord," (ὁ λεχθεὶς ἀδελφὸς τοῦ Κυρίου),²⁷ an expression which Lightfoot says "has vari-

24. Hutchinson, op. cit., p. 199.

25. Uhlhorn says: "It is impossible to assert the absolute priority of either the Homilies or the Recognitions, or to regard one as a working over of the other. Opinions as to the date of composition differ more widely than ever. Where there used to be practical unanimity in referring the works to the second century, 170 or 180 at the latest, Harnack has said that they cannot go further back than the first half of the third century. The importance of the Clementina for early church history, asserted by Baur and Schwegler, is now abandoned." -- G. Uhlhorn, The "Clementina," in the New Schaff-Herzog Religious Encyclopedia, Vol. III, p. 143.

26. Lightfoot, op. cit., p. 276.

27. The passage, in which Peter is the reputed speaker, reads as follows: "Wherefore, above all, remember to shun apostle or teacher or prophet who does not first accurately

ously been interpreted as favouring all three hypotheses, and is indecisive in itself."²⁸ However, the Epistle of Clement to James, which precedes the Homilies, begins thus: "Clement, to James, the lord,²⁹ and bishop of bishops, who rules Jerusalem, the holy church of the Hebrews, and the churches everywhere excellently founded by the providence of God, . . ." Lightfoot calls attention to the fact that here "James is styled not Apostle, but Bishop of Bishops, and seems to be distinguished from and in some respects exalted above the Twelve."³⁰ In the Recognitions a similar attitude is taken toward James. From Book I it seems quite apparent that the author clearly distinguished between James the son of Alphaeus and James the Bishop of Jerusalem.³¹

Thus the Clementina, since they make this distinction, speak

compare his preaching with that of James, who was called the brother of my Lord, and to whom was entrusted to administer the church of the Hebrews in Jerusalem." --Quoted from the translation of A.C. Coxe, in the Ante-Nicene Fathers, VIII.

28. Lightfoot, loc. cit., where nevertheless in a footnote he says: "The word λεχθεῖς is most naturally taken, I think, to refer to the reputed brotherhood, as a consequence of the reputed fatherhood of Joseph, and thus to favour the Epiphanian view."

29. To this the following footnote is added by Coxe: "More probably 'the Lord's brother.' So it must have been in the text from which Rufinus translated" (Coxe, op. cit., p. 218).

30. Lightfoot, loc. cit.

31. In Chap. LIX, James the son of Alphaeus is definitely mentioned among the disciples who disputed with a "certain Pharisee" (not necessarily Caiaphas, as Lightfoot asserts, loc. cit.). Yet in Chap. LXVI we read: "Now when we [the Apostles] were come to our James, while we detailed to him all that had been said and done [in the dispute in which James the son of Alphaeus also took part], we supped, and remained with him."

since the tradition is found in apocryphal literature of such a questionable nature.

against the Hieronymian hypothesis and can be interpreted to favor either the Helvidian or the Epiphonian view. However, since both of them belong to that type of apocryphal literature which tried to raise James to a position of honor above the Apostles, the distinction made between him and the Apostles cannot be pressed too strongly. Yet I believe there is some basis for saying that these words do speak against the Hieronymian hypothesis.

In looking over the references in the apocryphal literature, one must admit that it is divided to some extent and not at all reliable. The Gospel to the Hebrews, if taken as it stands, definitely seems to favor the Hieronymian hypothesis. However, its value must be seriously questioned. The Gospel of Peter, the Protevangelium of James, the Gospel of Thomas, and several other uncanonical gospels definitely favor the Epiphonian hypothesis. However, one must again seriously question the testimony of these early writings, since some of the MSS were changed in later decades and others were obviously written to exalt the virginity of Mary. Finally, the Clementina seem to speak against the Hieronymian view, but also are not too reliable because of the purpose for which they were written. This apocryphal literature does show, however, that the Epiphonian hypothesis can be traced back to at least 150 A.D., and that it is therefore a very old tradition. Nevertheless this does not give us the answer to the problem, since the tradition is found in apocryphal literature of such a questionable nature.

Hegesippus

Outside of the apocryphal references to the Brethren of the Lord the first writer to touch on this subject is Hegesippus, a Jewish-Christian, who lived in Palestine around the middle of the second century. Unfortunately very little is known about him, his life, work, or the exact time when he was active.³² We must rely almost entirely on the quotations by Eusebius from his Hypomnemata³³ for our information concerning him. Among these quotations there are some which have a bearing on this subject and which must be discussed,³⁴ especially since they are the earliest references outside of the apocryphal literature. They are all taken from Eusebius'

32. On the basis of H.E., IV, 22, 1-3, it has been determined that Hegesippus wrote his work during the time that Eleutherus was bishop of Rome (174-189). See Zahn, Forschungen, p. 250.

33. Weizsäcker says: "Eusebius quotes him frequently as a witness of the true faith, and always from one work, known as the Upomnemata, and composed of five books, written at different times and fused into unity in the course of their development. A careful examination of what Eusebius tells of it and what he quotes from it leads to the conclusion that it was not a history in any strict sense of the word, but rather a historical apology, purporting to contain a true account of the traditions received from the apostles. . . . What he tells of his own time has historical value in the strict sense; his relation to earlier events has conditional value as a sometimes obscure tradition, but substantive importance as reflecting the ideas entertained about that period in the middle of the second century." -- C. Weizsäcker, "Hegesippus," in the New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, Samuel Macauley Jackson ed., Vol. V, pp. 201f.

34. I am indebted to Zahn for the complete list of these quotations. In his Forschungen, Vol. VI, pp. 226-281, he has a thorough discussion of Hegesippus in connection with this problem. This is the best collection of these passages that I know.

Ecclesiastical History.

The first of these (H.E., II, 23, 3-19) is a long quotation which deals with the death of James. It begins thus: "The charge of the Church passed to James the brother of the Lord, together with the Apostles.³⁵ He was called the 'Just' by all men from the Lord's time to ours, since many are called James, but he was holy from his mother's womb."³⁶

In this passage Hegesippus seems to distinguish James from the Apostles. The modifying phrase 'the brother of the Lord' is put in direct apposition with James. The limiting phrase 'who was called,' which is found in several of these early references, is lacking in this case, but no significance can be attached to this because of the following words in the sentence.³⁷

It is, however, interesting to note that one reason why the title 'the Just' was used, was to distinguish him from others with the same name, 'since many are called James.'" This is inconclusive in itself, though one might argue from

35. To this μετὰ τῶν ἀποστόλων A.C. McGiffert remarks: "'With the apostles'; as Rufinus rightly translates, cum apostolis. Jerome, on the contrary, reads post apostolos, 'after the apostles,' as if the Greek were μετὰ τοὺς ἀποστόλους. This statement of Hegesippus is correct. James was a leader of the Jerusalem church, in company with Peter and John, as we see from Gal. 2:9," --A.C. McGiffert, "The Church History of Eusebius," in the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, Henry Wace and Philip Schaff eds., second series, Vol I, p. 125, note 8.

36. The translation of sections of Eusebius, unless otherwise indicated, are the work of Kirsopp Lake, in the Loeb Classical Library, E. Capps, et al, eds.

37. ὁ ὀνομασθεῖς ὑπὸ πάντων δικαίος.

it that he was distinct from the Apostles, especially when it is viewed in the light of the first section of this quotation. The following part of this section, though it speaks of the death of James, adds nothing to the problem under consideration. The only significance which it might have would be to cause one to question the value of the entire passage because of the obvious apocryphal character of these last words.³⁸

The next fragment continues, as it were, the thought of the preceding one. In H.E. III, 11, 1, we read:

After the martyrdom of James and the capture of Jerusalem which immediately followed, the story goes that those of the Apostles and of the disciples of the Lord who were still alive came together with those who were, humanly speaking, of the family of the Lord, for many of them were still alive, and they all took counsel together as to whom they ought to adjudge worthy to succeed James, and all unanimously decided that Simeon, the son of Clopas, whom the Scripture of the Gospels also mentions, was worthy of the throne of the diocese there. He was, so it was said, a cousin of the Saviour, for Hegesippus related that Clopas was the brother of Joseph.³⁹

38. "It is manifestly legendary, and possibly comes from Essene Ebionites, who appear to have been fond of religious romances. It is sometimes accepted as historical, as by Clement in the passage just quoted; but its internal improbabilities and its divergencies from Josephus condemn it." -- Plummer, James & Jude, pp. 36f.

39. There is some doubt as to whether this passage is really a fragment of Hegesippus or not. Zahn seems to feel that the information came from other sources also. He says: "Da Eus. den Heg. ausdrücklich nur für eine ergänzende Bemerkung als Gewährsmann anführt, kann nicht dieser allein die einzige Quelle sein." -- Forschungen, p. 238. Yet he feels that the indirect origin of this quotation is Hegesippus (Ibid.) On the same subject Lawlor says: "All the statements in these chapters [11 & 12] are in the oratio obliqua, and depend on 'it is recorded' (λόγος κατέχει, implying a document), or on 'Hegesippus relates.' It is in fact probable that these two

There are two things to be noted in this passage. According to Hegesippus three classes participated in the election of a successor to James: the Apostles, the disciples, and those of the family of the Lord.⁴⁰ In this last group the word γένους is in itself indecisive. It can refer to a wider relationship as well as to an immediate one, though one might have expected συγγενείας if the former was meant. However, it is always dangerous to argue about what word the writer should have used. It should be noted in connection with this phrase, though, that Hegesippus once more seems to separate the Apostles, and even the wider circle of the disciples, from the relatives of the Lord.

The other point worthy of note in this quotation is the relation of Simeon, the second bishop, to Jesus. "He was, so it was said, a cousin of the Saviour, for Hegesippus relates that Clopas was the brother of Joseph." Here the word ἀνεψιός is used to fix his relation to the Lord definitely. No where is he called a 'brother' of the Lord as are James and Jude by Hegesippus.⁴¹ Thus there is no reason on the basis of this

phrases are identical in meaning. If so, the whole passage is derived from the Memoirs of Hegesippus." --Hugh Jackson Lawlor, in Eusebius, The Ecclesiastical History and the Martyrs of Palestine, II, pp. 84f. There he also states that the reason for this conclusion is the result of a comparison of the various quotations from Hegesippus with this one. It might also be added that the content of this section fits in well with the aim of his work: to show the unity of the Church (cf. H.E. IV, 22, 1).

40. ἀμα τοῖς πρὸς γένους κατὰ σάρκα τοῦ κυρίου.

41. See H.E. III, 32, 5-6; IV, 22, 4, below for a further discussion.

passage for identifying him with Simon, mentioned among the Brethren of the Lord in Mk. 6:3. Finally, the phrase, "He was, so it was said (ὡς χέ φασί), a cousin of the Lord," causes some difficulty. It does not necessarily express doubt concerning his relationship. It may be simply a phrase used to show that Simeon was known as a cousin of the Lord. Then the word 'cousin' would become a title. That would explain the somewhat strange way in which the phrase is introduced. There is also the possibility that Hegesippus was conscious of the virgin birth and so used this phrase to make it clear that the line of relationship which passed through Joseph was no more than a legal one.

In H.E. III, 20, Eusebius tells the story of the persecution of the grandsons of Jude by Domitian. They were summoned before him but were released because he saw that they were only poor farmers and no threat to his government. This section begins with the words: "Hegesippus relates exactly as follows: 'Now there still survived of the family of the Lord grandsons of Judas, who was said to have been his brother according to the flesh.'"⁴² Here Jude (like James in H.E. II, 23, 4, above) is mentioned as one of the family of the Lord and is specifically called a 'brother of the Lord.'

This passage is also inconclusive in determining the attitude of Hegesippus toward this problem. The limiting phrase, "who was said to have been his brother according to

42. ἔτι δὲ περιῆσαν οἱ ἀπὸ γένους τοῦ κυρίου υἱωνοὶ Ἰουδα τοῦ κατὰ σάρκα λεγομένου αὐτοῦ ἀδελφοῦ.

the flesh," a variation of which is used by other writers of the early Church, causes some difficulty. Lightfoot finds in it support for the Epiphanian hypothesis,⁴³ though I do not believe his line of argument can be pressed too strongly. The explanations mentioned in connection with the similar phrase used to introduce Simeon in H.E. III, 11, 1, above, could also be used here. I do not believe therefore that any inference can be drawn safely from this passage as to the relation of the brethren to Jesus.

In H.E. III, 32, 5-6, the grandsons of Jude are again mentioned as is also Simeon the son of Clopas.⁴⁴ This section continues the story of the "grandsons of one of the so-called brethren of the Saviour named Judas" (ἑτέρους ἀπογόνους ἑνὸς τῶν φερομένων ἀδελφῶν τοῦ σωτηῆρος) and of the "son of the Lord's uncle [ὁ ἐκ θείου τοῦ κυρίου], the aforesaid Simon, the son of Clopas," and shows how they were martyred under Trajan. In this account Hegesippus in no way intimates that Jude and Simon

43. He says, op. cit., p. 277: "In this passage the word 'called' seems to me to point to the Epiphanian rather than the Helvidian view, the brotherhood of these brethren like the fatherhood of Joseph, being reputed but not real."

44. The passage reads as follows: "The same writer says that other grandsons of one of the so-called brethren of the Saviour named Judas survived to the same reign after they had given in the time of Domitian the testimony already recorded of them in behalf of the faith in Christ. He writes thus: 'They came therefore and presided over every church as witnesses belonging to the Lord's family, and when there was complete peace in every church they survived until the reign of the Emperor Trajan, until the time when the son of the Lord's uncle, the aforesaid Simon the son of Clopas, was similarly accused by the sects on the same charge before Atticus the Consular.'"

were brothers. The former is one of the Brethren of the Lord; the latter a cousin of Jesus. This again seems to indicate that Hegesippus considered this Simeon to be outside the circle of the Brethren of the Lord.

There is yet one more fragment of Hegesippus which deals with this matter. It is perhaps the most important of all and is certainly the most widely referred to passage. In H.E. IV, 22, 4, we read: "And after James the Just had suffered martyrdom, as had also the Lord, on the same account . . . again . . . the son of His [or his] uncle, Symeon, the son of Clopas, was appointed bishop; whom all put forward, being a cousin of the Lord, as the second [bishop] . . . For this reason they used to call the church a virgin: for she had not yet been corrupted by vain teachings."⁴⁵

This passage has been translated and thus interpreted in several different ways. The difficulty lies in the proper translation of two words: πάλιν and δεύτερον. The supporters of the Hieronymian hypothesis have rendered both words with 'another.' Thus the passage would mean that "another son of His uncle, Symeon, the son of Clopas, was appointed bishop; whom all put forward because he was another cousin of the Lord."⁴⁶

45. This translation is not that of Lake. I have used the one of J.E. Oulton instead (Lawlor and Oulton, op. cit.) since I do not agree with the interpretation of Lake in this instance. The Greek reads as follows: καὶ μετὰ τὸ μαρτυρηθῆναι τὰ κωβὸν τὸν δίκαιον ὡς καὶ ὁ κύριος, ἐπὶ τῷ αὐτῷ λόγῳ, πάλιν ὁ ἐκ θελοῦ αὐτοῦ συνέωυ ὁ τοῦ κλωπῆ καθίσταται ἐπίσκοπος ὃν προέδειτο πάντες ὄντα ἀνεψιὸν τοῦ κυρίου δευτέρου.

46. See Lightfoot, op. cit., p. 277, note 2.

Then James and Simon would be brothers, both sons of Clopas and cousins of the Lord. This would mean that one of the so-called Brethren of the Lord would actually be His cousin, and so the way would be open for the Hieronymian hypothesis.

The other possible way of construing δεύτερον is to supply ἐπίσκοτον ("was elected second bishop"). From the point of view of Greek both constructions are possible. In both instances δεύτερον stands at the end of the sentence for emphasis and can be construed in either way. However, Mayor has called attention to two somewhat parallel passages in Eusebius⁴⁷ in both of which δεύτερον is used to signify the episcopal succession.⁴⁸ These citations definitely give weight to the interpretation which would supply ἐπίσκοτον with δεύτερον.⁴⁹

47. In H.E. III, 22, we read: "Moreover, at the time mentioned, Ignatius was famous as the second at Antioch where Evodius had been the first. Likewise at this time, Simeon was second [δεύτερος] after the brother of our Saviour to hold the ministry of the church in Jerusalem." Again in H.E. III, 32, 1, Eusebius says: "We have learned that in it a certain persecution Symeon, the son of Clopas, whom we showed to have been the second [δεύτερον] bishop of the church at Jerusalem, ended his life in martyrdom. The witness for this is the same Hegesippus, . . ."

48. Mayor, James, p. ix.

49. Zahn centers the argument concerning the meaning of δεύτερον around αὐτοῦ in the first part of the sentence. He says: "Die Beziehung des fraglichen αὐτοῦ auf Jk ist aber nicht nur sachlich möglich, sondern stilistisch geboten; denn des Herrn ist nur in einer beiläufigen Erinnerung an die früher berichtete Veranlassung des Martyriums des Jk gedacht, Jk dagegen, ist das Subjekt der Hauptaussage" (Forschungen VI, p. 236). Such an interpretation would immediately make it impossible to consider Simeon and James brothers and would necessitate the translation of δεύτερον with a supplied ἐπίσκοτον. However, the αὐτοῦ can also refer back to κύριος, though Zahn's conclusion seems the more natural (see e.g., Lightfoot, loc. cit., where he admits that either interpretation is possible.

The other difficulty centers around the translation of πάλιν. As was mentioned above, some would translate it in the sense of 'another,' a very improbable translation for this word. The heart of the sentence is πάλιν . . . Συμεών . . . καθίσταται. Thus it was Simeon who was elected. The statement that he was a son of James' (or Jesus') paternal uncle is merely a subordinate modifier. Zahn is correct when he says that if πάλιν be taken in its natural sense we get the nonsense that Simeon was elected a second time.⁵⁰ However, his solution, in which he takes the πάλιν simply as a connective between two similar ideas (both bishops were related to the Lord), is also unsatisfactory.⁵¹ Lightfoot's translation, "His paternal uncle's child Symeon the son of Clopas is next [πάλιν] made bishop" is, I believe, a conjecture. He gives no parallel for such a use of πάλιν, and I was unable to find one. Another conjecture which I have found in none of the references to this word but which would make sense is to take πάλιν as marking an interval of time. Zahn mentions the fact that Simeon was elected perhaps first after the restoration of the church in Jerusalem.⁵² That would mean several years elapsed between the death of James and the election of his successor. This would explain the use of some such expression to denote the lapse of time, though I can find no parallel for

50. Zahn, Forschungen VI, p. 236.

51. Ibid.

52. Ibid., p. 363.

this usage of πάλιν.

Perhaps the best explanation of all of this difficulty is that of Lawlor. He says:

It appears that this passage has been badly handled in the process of transcription, and that much of it has been omitted of set purpose. But see Hort, Jud. Christ., p. 170f. (1) After the word "the same account" there may have been some such clause as "and Jerusalem had been taken." See the paraphrase in iii. 11. If so, this was probably omitted per incuriam. (2) The word "again" (πάλιν) causes difficulty. In the text as printed it is naturally connected with "was appointed" (καθίσταται): "Symeon was again appointed." This is obviously impossible, and other explanations (such as offered by Lightfoot, Gal., p. 276f. and Zahn, Forsch. vi. 237) are unsatisfactory (see Euseb., p. 18f.). It is best to suppose that Eusebius marked a clause or two for omission, and that the transcriber, mistaking the marks, wrote a word which he was instructed to omit. Similar mistakes are made in ii. 17. 17; iv. 8. 2. The omitted passage (see iii. 11) stated that the electors assembled at Jerusalem, and probably began, πάλιν συνέρχονται οἱ ἀπόστολοι κτλ.: "the apostles (and others) again assembled" etc. (3) After "a cousin of the Lord" there seems to be another lacuna, the justification of that phrase as applied to Symeon (iii. 11) having been passed over. (4) We find a difficulty in the phrase "For this reason." For what reason? No answer (page Zahn, l.c.) is forthcoming in the context as we have it here. But iii. 32. 7f. (see notes there) is partly based on the clause, "For this reason they used to call the church a virgin," and it tells us what we want to know. The church was called a virgin because it was free from overt heresy. If a sentence is inserted to the effect that there was no public teaching of false doctrine, the whole extract becomes intelligible. If it be asked why Eusebius deliberately passed over so much of the passage which lay before him, the answer is plain. He doubtless desired to avoid needless repetition. At all events his interest at this point is not in the appointment of Symeon itself, but the rise of heresy at Jerusalem (cp. par. 2) of which it was the occasion. Accordingly he omits everything which does not bear directly on that subject. ⁵³

Such an approach to this passage would give a satisfactory explanation for this fragment, especially for the difficulty involved in the translation of παλιν.

No matter what course one follows, there is one thing which seems to be definite from this passage. Hegesippus distinguishes between the relation of James and that of Simeon to Jesus. In his eyes they are not brothers. Also all the other passages of his which have been quoted, while they are inconclusive as to the exact relationship, do testify against this cornerstone in the Hieronymian hypothesis.⁵⁴ I agree with Lightfoot when he says:

To this rendering the presence of the definite article alone seems fatal (ὁ ἐκ τοῦ θείου not ἕτερος τῶν ἐκ τοῦ θείου); but indeed the whole passage appears to be framed so as to distinguish the relationships of the two persons; whereas, had the author's object been to represent Symeon as a brother of James, no more circuitous mode could well have been devised for the purpose of stating so very simple a fact.⁵

Tertullian

Around the close of the second century we find references again to this problem in the writings of Tertullian.⁵⁶ Apparently Helvidius had appealed to his writings in support of his

54. With it also falls one of the chief arguments of Lange. This is the vulnerable spot in his hypothesis, which was referred to above in Chap. I.

55. Lightfoot, loc. cit.

56. D.S. Schaff (in the New Schaff-Herzog Religious Encyclopedia, XI, p. 305) calls him: "The first great writer of Latin Christianity and one of the grandest and original characters of the ancient Church." He was born about 150 or 160 at Carthage and lived to 220 or 240.

view, for Jerome brushes aside this authority with the words: "Of Tertullian I say no more than that he did not belong to the Church."⁵⁷

The first section of Tertullian which is worthy of note in connection with this problem is found in one of his polemic works. The followers of Marcion had apparently quoted Jesus' words, "Who are my mother and my brothers?" to show that Jesus Himself claimed that He was not born. In discussing this mis-applied passage Tertullian says, "We, for our part, say in reply, first, that it could not possibly have been told Him that His mother and His brethren stood without, desiring to see Him, if He had had no mother and no brethren."⁵⁸

In another place he argues against the Marcionite Appelles on the basis of the same Scripture text (Matt. 12:48). He says:

First of all, nobody would have told Him that His mother and His brethren were standing outside, if he were not certain that He had a mother and brethren, and that they were the very persons whom he was then announcing, . . . Besides, if He had to be tempted about His birth, this of course was not the proper way of doing it, --by announcing those persons who, even on the supposition of His birth might possibly not have been in existence. We have all been born, and yet not all of us have not either brothers or

57. Jerome, op. cit., Chap. 19. Around the middle of his life Tertullian left the Catholic Church and became one of the outstanding leaders of Montanism, and thus Jerome refuses to consider his testimony.

58. Adv. Marc. IV, 19. The quotations of Tertullian are taken from the Ante-Nicene Fathers, A. Roberts & J. Donaldson eds., III. The Latin original may be found in Mayor, James, pp. ix f. I am indebted to him for the list of pertinent passages in Tertullian.

mother" (De Carne Christi, 7).

These passages from Tertullian⁵⁹ and the argument he develops in them against the Marcionites definitely seem to indicate that he considered the Brethren of the Lord to be His real brothers. At least in no way does he indicate that they were anything else. In fact, his whole argument would be senseless without the premise that he was speaking of brothers in the real sense. Thus Lightfoot, though he personally favors the Epiphonian hypothesis, says: "It is therefore highly probable that he held the Helvidian view. Such an admission from one who was so strenuous an advocate of asceticism is worthy of notice."⁶⁰

One more point should be mentioned in connection with the writings of Tertullian. Mayor has pointed out that these quotations "do not betray any consciousness that he is controverting an established tradition in favour of the perpetual virginity."⁶¹ While it is dangerous to draw any general conclusion for his age on the basis of these quotations alone, it does seem as though Tertullian felt that it was not at all out of the ordinary not to accept the perpetual virginity of Mary. This is particularly noteworthy when considered in the

59. There are other passages which do not mention the Brethren of the Lord specifically but which seem to indicate that Mary ceased to be a virgin after the birth of Jesus. Cf. De Monogamia, 8; De Virg. Vel., 6; De Carne Christi, 23. See also Lightfoot, op. cit., p. 279 and Mayor, James, x, for an evaluation of these passages.

60. Lightfoot, loc. cit.

61. Mayor, loc. cit.

light of the apocryphal gospels which were in circulation at his time (cf. above). One might well argue that the Epiphanian hypothesis, contained so clearly in these apocryphal gospels (and a natural corollary to the perpetual virginity), was a separate strain from the established tradition at this time. However, it must be admitted that one has to be very careful in drawing any conclusions on such circumstantial evidence.

Clement of Alexandria

A contemporary of Tertullian in the East was Clement of Alexandria.⁶² There are two passages cited from him which touch on this subject but are not at all clear. One of these is in H.E. II, 1. There Eusebius describes the course pursued by the Apostles after the Ascension of Jesus. The first part of this description (Eusebius' own words) definitely favors the Epiphanian hypothesis. This section then goes on as follows:

Clement in the sixth book of the Hypotyposes adduces the following: "For," he says, "Peter and James and John after the Ascension of the Saviour did not struggle for glory, because they had previously been given honour by the Saviour, but chose James the Just as bishop of Jerusalem." The same writer in the seventh book of the same work says in addition this about him, "After the Resurrection the Lord gave the tradition of knowledge to James the Just and John and Peter, these gave it to the other Apostles and the other Apostles to the Seventy, of whom Barnabas also was one. Now there were two Jameses, one James the Just, who was thrown down from the pinnacle of the temple

62. He is known as the successor of Pantaeus and teacher of Origen in the famous catechetical school in Alexandria. The dates of his life are uncertain, but he was no doubt born around 150 or 160 and died between 211 and 216.

and beaten to death with a fuller's club, and the other he who was beheaded.

The James mentioned together with Peter and John in the beginning of this quotation is quite obviously the son of Zebedee and brother of John. He is definitely distinguished from James the Just. It is the last sentence of this quotation, however, that causes trouble. What does Clement mean when he says, "Now there were two James"? Some would argue that he meant that there were only two Jameses (of any importance) in the Apostolic Church and that James the Just must therefore be identified with the Apostle James the son of Alphaeus. Lightfoot objects to this. He says: "This passage however proves nothing. Clement says there were two of the name of James, but he neither states nor implies that there were two only. His sole object was to distinguish the son of Zebedee from the Lord's brother; and the son of Alphaeus, of whom he knew nothing and could tell nothing, did not occur to his mind when he penned this sentence."⁶³

While I am inclined to agree with Lightfoot when he says that this quotation from Clement proves nothing, I feel that he has gone too far. It is impossible to say definitely what someone else had in his mind, and to say that "the son of Alphaeus, of whom he knew nothing and could tell nothing, did not occur to his mind when he penned this sentence," is very dangerous. That is especially the case since we know that

63. Lightfoot, op. cit., pp. 280f.

Clement of Alexandria was not only well-versed in Greek philosophy but also in Scripture. If this passage stood alone, one certainly would have the right to interpret it as saying that there were only two Jameses (the son of Zebedee and the Just, who then must have been the son of Alphaeus and one of the Twelve). However, besides this statement of Clement there is the one of Hegesippus where he says that the Lord's brother was called the Just, "since many are called James."⁶⁴ These two reports, then, seem to be at variance with one another, unless we see in the words of Clement simply a distinction between James the son of Zebedee and James the Just. Such an interpretation does seem possible on the basis of the passages themselves. If it is not correct, then Clement of Alexandria and Hegesippus simply do not agree.

There is another quotation from Clement of Alexandria, however, which plays into this discussion. It is a passage of the Hypotyposes which has been preserved in a Latin translation by Cassiodorus. Lightfoot has translated this passage as follows:

Jude, who wrote the Catholic Epistle, being one of the sons of Joseph and [the Lord's] brother, a man of deep piety, though he was aware of his relationship to the Lord, nevertheless did not say that he was His brother; but what did he say? Jude the servant of Jesus Christ, because He was his Lord,

64. See H.E. II, 23, 3, above. In connection with this name it should be remembered that the Jews, too, had certain favorite ones even as we have. The names of their Patriarchs, of course, were used very commonly. Thus it is only natural that many of the early Christians, including several leaders, should have the name of the Jews' great patriarch, Jacob.

but brother of James; for this is true; he was his brother, being Joseph's son (ed. Potter, p. 1007).

It is quite obvious from these words that Clement here puts forward the Epiphanian hypothesis. This must be considered in evaluating the above difficult citation, though Lightfoot also mentions that "in a writer so uncritical in his historical notices such contradiction would not be surprising."⁶⁶ I am inclined, however, to agree with Lightfoot when he claims Clement as a supporter of the Epiphanian hypothesis.

Origen

The successor of Clement in the Catechetical School of Alexandria was Origen (c. 185-c. 254).⁶⁷ It is quite definite that he espoused the Epiphanian hypothesis, having taken it over, perhaps, from Clement, his predecessor. In his commentary on Jn. 2:12, he says definitely that the Brethren of the Lord were sons of Joseph from a former wife.⁶⁸ Furthermore, commenting on Matt. 13:55f., he says:

They thought, then, that He was the son of Joseph and Mary. But some say, basing it on a tradition in the Gospel according to Peter, as it is entitled, or "The Book of James," that the brethren of Jesus were sons of Joseph by a former wife, whom he married before Mary. Now those who say so wish to preserve the

65. Lightfoot, op. cit., p. 279, which see for a further discussion of this passage.

66. Ibid. There Lightfoot mentions instances of Clement's uncritical historical notices.

67. A. Harnack calls him "the most distinguished and most influential theologian of the ancient church, with the possible exception of Augustine." --A. Harnack, "Origen," in the Encyclopaedia Britannica, 16th ed., XVI, p. 900.

68. Lightfoot, op. cit., p. 281. There he quotes the passage in Greek from Catena Corder., p. 75.

honour of Mary in virginity to the end, so that that body of hers which was appointed to minister to the Word which said, "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee," might not know intercourse with a man after that the Holy Ghost came into her and the power from on high overshadowed her.⁶⁹

This statement of Origen is very interesting. It shows, first of all, that the Epiphonian hypothesis was not unanimously accepted ("some say"). It shows further the source of this hypothesis in the thinking of those who held it. It was based on a tradition found in the Gospel according to Peter and the Protevangelium Jacobi. Since the trustworthiness of these gospels has been seriously questioned,⁷⁰ one must say that both Origen and those whom he includes in this statement had built their view upon a very insecure foundation. It is also to be noted that the reason why some adopted this view in his day was to preserve the perpetual virginity of Mary inviolate.⁷¹

69. The translation is that of John Patrick in the Ante-Nicene Fathers, Allan Menzies ed., IX, p. 424.

70. See the discussion of these apocryphal gospels above.

71. O. Zöckler, "Mary, Mother of Jesus Christ," in the New Schaff-Herzog Religious Encyclopedia, VIII, p. 220, says: "As early as the middle of the second century, she appears as the anti-type of Eve, bringing life into the world as Eve brought death (Justin, Dialogue, C.; Irenaeus III, xxii, 4; V, xix. 1; Tertullian, De Carne Christi, vii); . . . These developing views [of giving special honor to Mary beyond that which she is given in Scripture] took shape as legends in a long series of Apocryphal narratives. The most important of these is the Protevangelium Jacobi, some features of which were known to Justin and Tertullian." It is these apocryphal books especially which show that very early some were promoting the sanctity and veneration of Mary (see above the section on the Protevangelium of James, where this tendency is discussed in connection with this uncanonical gospel).

In the following decades after the time of Origen this view apparently gained more ground as the Church continued to emphasize the superiority of the celibate state over marriage and as the position of Mary grew in importance. It is therefore not necessary to examine the writings of the following fathers as has been done with the preceding ones.⁷² All that is necessary is a summary. Cyril of Jerusalem (d. 386) and Victorinus the philosopher (d. c. 360) distinguished James the brother of the Lord from the Apostles. Eusebius (d. c. 340), Hilary of Poitiers (d. 368), Ambrosiaster (d. 375), Basil the Great (d. 379),⁷³ and Gregory of Nyssa all accepted the Epiphonian view. From the time of Jerome and Epiphanius the West followed the lead of Jerome and the East that of Epiphanius.⁷⁴

In summing up the findings of this chapter, it seems quite evident that up until the time of Jerome there is little or no trace of the Hieronymian hypothesis. The Epiphonian view, on the other hand, was known and accepted by various church fathers long before the time of Jerome. The apocryphal literature is almost unanimous in its acceptance of this

72. Lightfoot continues the list of patristic evidence, op. cit., pp. 282ff.

73. He personally adopted the doctrine of the perpetual virginity of Mary. Yet he realized (Homilia in Christi generationem, v.) that the natural sense of Matt. 1:25, favored the view that she did not remain a virgin (see Zöckler, loc. cit.).

74. Lightfoot has an excellent chart, op. cit., p. 291, by which one can see at a glance how the patristic evidence lines up on this question.

theory. In fact, on the basis of the words of Origen (see above), it appears that the theory originated in this group of writings. The several passages in Hegesippus which deal with the subject speak against the Hieronymian hypothesis but otherwise are non-committal as to the exact relationship. Some years later Tertullian speaks quite clearly of the Brethren of the Lord as real brothers, a very significant fact when considered in the light of his otherwise ascetic views. While there is some doubt about the position of Clement of Alexandria, one is still quite safe in saying that he held the Epiphonian hypothesis, as his successor Origen certainly did.

Luke 1: 34

Before considering those passages which speak directly of the Brethren of the Lord, it is necessary to examine a few that deal with the birth of Jesus and that are related directly to this problem. The first of these passages is found in the story of the Annunciation. There we are told that Mary questioned the possibility of the angel Gabriel's message. She said: "How can this be, since I am not knowing a man?" (Lk. 1:34) These words are cited by Roman Catholic dogmatists and exegetes as proof for the perpetual virginity

CHAPTER III

THE BRETHERN OF THE LORD IN SCRIPTURE

The advocates of all three theories have appealed to Scripture for support for the view which they have espoused in connection with the Brethren of the Lord. Since it is claimed that there is evidence--at least of a circumstantial nature if not actual--for these various hypotheses in Scripture, it is important to examine the passages involved. Such an examination will reveal the strong points and the weak links in the individual line of argument.

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of Mary.¹ It is claimed that the only way to explain this question satisfactorily is to look at it in the light of a previous vow of perpetual virginity. They say such a previously formed vow would justify the question and would explain why it was not answered in the same way as that of Zechariah (1:18).²

1. Cf., e.g., Joseph Pohle, Dogmatic Theology, Vol. VI, pp. 97ff. There we read: "Mary's virginitas post partum cannot be cogently proved from Sacred Scripture, but the dogma is deducible with moral certainty from the fact that she had resolved to remain a virgin all her life. It was this resolution which inspired her timid query: 'How shall this be done, because I know not a man?' Only after the angel had assured her that her chastity would remain intact, did she consent to become the mother of Jesus: 'Be it done to me according to thy word.'"

2. Machen makes an excellent distinction between these two questions and thus answers this objection to the words of Mary. He says concerning these questions:

"In form it must be admitted there is a certain similarity. Both Zacharias and Mary, instead of accepting the lofty promises of the angel without remark, ask a question betokening at least bewilderment; and both of them ground their bewilderment in an explanatory clause. But there the similarity ceases. Zacharias' question reads, 'According to what shall I know this?' That question cannot be interpreted as anything else than a definite request for a sign; the wonder that is promised must be able to exhibit an analogy with something else before Zacharias will consent to 'know' it. Mary, on the other hand, says simply, 'How shall this be?' She does not express any doubt but that it will be, but merely inquires as to the manner in which it is to be brought to pass. Certainly she does not demand a sign before she will consent to 'know' that what the angel has told her will be a fact. . . .

"Even in the wording, then, Mary's question is different from that of Zacharias. But still greater is the difference in the situation which the two questions, respectively, have in view. Zacharias has been promised a son whom he had long desired, a son whose birth would bring him not misunderstanding and slander (as Mary's son might bring to her), but rather a removal of the reproach to which, by his childlessness, he had been subjected. Moreover, the birth of a son, even in the old age of his parents, would be in accordance with the Old

There is no denying that there is a real problem here. While the words certainly do not force one to accept the Roman Catholic interpretation, such an interpretation at first glance does seem to give a logical reason for this question.³ However, granting such a vow was taken, it would be very difficult, then, to explain her betrothal to Joseph. The explanation of Lagrange is wholly unsatisfactory. He says: "We do not know, and to frame hypotheses would be unprofitable enough. The simplest solution is to suppose that marriage with such a man as Joseph protected her from proposals incessantly renewed, and assured her repose."⁴

Furthermore, as Machen says:

Such a resolve in a Jewish maiden of the first century would have been an unheard-of thing. Asceticism, with the later prejudice against marriage and the begetting of children, was quite foreign to the Jewish circles that are depicted in Lk. i-ii in such a vivid manner. If, therefore, the narrator were

Testament analogies which Zacharias knew very well. What except sinful unbelief could lead, under those circumstances, to the request for a sign? Mary, on the other hand, when the angel, prior to her marriage, spoke of a son, was promised something which at first sight seemed to run counter to her maidenly consciousness. . . . Surely it is small cause for wonder that in such bewilderment she should have asked the angel for light" (J. Gresham Machen, The Virgin Birth of Christ, pp. 141f.).

3. Klostermann sees the difficulty clearly. He says: "Also ist ἐπει ἀνδρα οὐ χινώσκω (sexuell s. zu Mt 1, 25) unter allen Umständen höchst verwunderlich, wenn man nicht die katolische Voraussetzung macht, die Verlobte habe eine Gelübde immerwährender Keuschheit abgelegt" (Eric Klostermann, "Die Evangelien," in Handbuch zum neuen Testament, Hans Lietzmann ed., Vol. II, p. 373).

4. Quoted by John M. Creed, The Gospel According to St. Luke, p. 19.

intending to attribute so extraordinary a resolve to Mary, he would naturally have taken pains to make his meaning clear. . . . As a matter of fact, the narrator has done nothing of the kind.⁵

Finally, if the Roman Catholic interpretation is correct, it would still have been very presumptuous on the part of Mary to place her vow above the will of God, as it was revealed to her through the words of the angel. Yet that is exactly what her question would have implied under those circumstances. Thus the Roman Catholic view of this passage has its real difficulties also.

If the future tense used by the angel (συλλήμψη) were a present tense or could be interpreted as referring to present time instead of future, the passage would be very clear. Mary would then have a right to ask how it could happen that a son was at that moment being conceived in her womb, since her marriage had not been consummated. However, there is no basis for translating this future as a present tense.⁶

5. Machen, *op. cit.*, p. 144.

6. Mayor ("The Helvidian versus the Epiphonian Hypothesis," in the *Expositor*, series seven, Vol. VI, pp. 15-41) suggests a variation of this view. He says: "The only explanation known to me, which gives a natural sense to the words, is a suggestion I have seen, I forget where, that the Greek συλλήμψη in Luke 1:31 may be an incorrect translation of an Aramaic original, meaning: 'Behold, thou art now conceiving in thy womb,' to which οὐ χινώσκω ἄνδρα would be a natural rejoinder on the part of one who was seeking to find a reconciliation of two seemingly contradictory facts, not opposing her human volition (the vow) to the Divine Will" (p. 21).

But this suggestion of Mayor must be rejected. It is true, there may well be an Aramaic document behind the birth and childhood narratives in Luke. It is also true that an Aramaic imperfect could be translated by a future tense instead of a present. But we cannot assume that Luke wrote his Gospel in

Mayor suggests another possibility which he resorts to as the only alternative, if the previous interpretation is not correct. He says:

If not, I confess that I am disposed to look upon the words ἐπεὶ οὐ χινώσκω ἄνδρα as a marginal adscript, which has crept into the text in the same way as the insertion of the injunction to fast in Mark 9:29; Matthew 27:21. I am led to this conclusion not only by the many difficulties we have been considering, but by the want of harmony between the apparent self-assertion of verse 34 and the general tone of the Gospel of the Infancy, especially the beautiful submission of verse 38.⁷

There certainly is very little evidence for such a conjecture. Actually the evidence is all against it.⁸

In summing up the discussion of this verse, I believe that in spite of the difficulties involved we can say with

Aramaic, nor that in using Aramaic sources he mistranslated this word (See also Machen, *op. cit.*, p. 145.

The explanation of Machen is somewhat akin to this view. He assumes that Mary took the promise of the angel to refer to the immediate future rather than to a period after her marriage. While this is no doubt the correct explanation, the argument advanced by Machen is not convincing. He says:

"Annunciations, as they were known to Mary from the Old Testament, were made to married women; and when such an annunciation came to her, an unmarried maiden, it is not unnatural that she should have been surprised. . . .

"If, indeed, she had looked at the matter from the point of view of cold logic, her surprise might possibly have been overcome. She could have reflected that, after all, she was betrothed, and that the annunciation could in her case, as was not so in the Old Testament examples, be taken as referring to a married state that was still to come. But would such a reflection have been natural; is it not psychologically more probable that she should have given expression, in such words as those of Lk. 1:34, to her instinctive surprise?" (Machen, *op. cit.*, p. 146.)

7. Mayor, "The Helvidian versus the Epiphonian Hypothesis," p. 21.

8. See Machen, *op. cit.*, pp. 119ff. for a thorough discussion of the evidence against such an interpolation.

Mayor: "There is nothing to show that οὐ γινώσκω ἀνδρα would have been understood in the sense 'I am under a vow.'⁹ Apparently Mary had some indication that this promise of the angel was to be fulfilled before her marriage with Joseph was consummated, though just what made her realize that we do not know. Perhaps the greeting of the angel, "The Lord is with you," caused her to assume that something remarkable was to happen at once, even though her wedding with Joseph was still far distant. At any rate, the evidence of this passage alone is insufficient to prove a vow of perpetual virginity and thus rule out the possibility of children born in the natural way. That is especially the case when we remember that at this time Mary was engaged to Joseph, an engagement which we have no reason to doubt looked forward to the ideal of Jewish married life, a family.

Matthew 1:25

There are two passages in the narrative of the birth of Jesus which are very important. The first is Matt. 1:24f: "When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took his wife, but knew her not until she had born a son."⁹ Two things must be looked at in this passage:

1) the meaning of ἕως οὐ and 2) the significance of the im-

9. There is little doubt among modern scholars that the above translation of the Revised Standard Version is based on the correct text. The τὸν πρῶτόκεν found in the Textus Receptus is obviously an insertion from the parallel passage in Lk. 2:7.

perfect ἐγένωσκεν. It is argued on the one hand that ἕως οὐ in this passage marks a definite period of time after which that which had not taken place was fulfilled. In that case we would have every right to assume that Mary had other children besides Jesus. However, the opponents of this view point out that ἕως οὐ does not necessarily imply that intercourse did follow the birth of Jesus.

Jerome was the first one of the early Christian writers whose works are extant to argue that way. He cites example after example as proof that the use of ἕως οὐ in this passage does not disprove the perpetual virginity.¹⁰ There are definitely many passages in the LXX and in the New Testament where ἕως or ἕως οὐ does not necessarily imply that there was a period of time when the preceding negative statement became a positive. A good example would be Ps. 110:1; "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." It is quite obvious that this verse does not imply that there would be a time when this session at the right hand of God would cease.¹¹

Thus the use of ἕως alone does not necessarily settle the question. Nevertheless I think Broadus is correct when he says: "The word will inevitably suggest that afterwards it was otherwise, unless there be something in the connection

10. See Jerome, Op. cit., chaps. 5-7.

11. A parallel in the New Testament is 1 Cor. 15:25: "For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet."

or the nature of the case to forbid such a conclusion."¹²
 Thus if it had been clearly stated somewhere in Scripture that Mary remained a virgin after the birth of Jesus, we would have every right to interpret this passage accordingly. However, since that is not the case, the more simple way to interpret these words is to assume that ἕως οὗ marks a definite period of time at the end of which the foregoing negative became an affirmative.

Plummer calls attention to another point which should not be overlooked. He says:

In 'he knew her not' (οὐκ ἐγίνωσκεν αὐτήν), the imperfect tense is important. It is against the tradition of the perpetual virginity of Mary. This has been questioned; but it hardly needs argument that in such a context, 'he used not to' or 'he was not in the habit of' means more than 'he did not.' It is quite obvious that the aorist, 'he knew her not until,' would have implied that she subsequently had children by him. But the imperfect implies this still more strongly.¹³

Because this imperfect is used together with the following ἕως οὗ, to me the inference seems to be that this intercourse

12. John A. Broadus, Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew, in An American Commentary on the New Testament, p. 13. -- Zahn (Forschungen, VI, pp. 335f.) says: "In allen wirklich vergleichbaren und unzweideutigen Fällen aber ergibt sich die erforderliche Korrektur des nächstliegenden Verständnisses aus der Natur der Sache. Hier dagegen handelt es sich um das Verhältnis Josephs, der schon 1, 16.19 als Ehemann der Maria bezeichnet war, und zwar recht eigens um ihr eheliches Verhältnis. In solchem Zusammenhang schlieszt die Behauptung, dasz Joseph sich bis zur Geburt Jesu der ehelichen Gemeinschaft mit Maria enthalten habe, allerdings die andere ein, dasz er später solche Gemeinschaft mit Maria gepflogen habe."

13. Plummer, An Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to St. Matthew, p. 9.

which did not take place before the birth of Jesus, became the customary thing after His birth.

Finally, the fact that the normal meaning of these words would lead one to think that intercourse did follow afterwards also points in this direction. Matthew was writing to Jewish people to show them that Jesus was the Messiah. He is anxious throughout to glorify Jesus and to avoid what might detract from His glory. If Jesus had been an only son, we would expect Matthew to have indicated this fact either in this passage or elsewhere. At any rate, he would not use an expression which would most likely be interpreted in the opposite direction. That is especially true when we remember that at the time this Gospel was written the Brethren of the Lord were apparently well-known in the Church (1 Cor. 9:5). Certainly if they were not Jesus' real brothers, Matthew would have made sure that this passage was not misinterpreted to make them such. But he does nothing of the kind.¹⁴

This passage, then, is a very important one. It must be admitted that it is possible to take these words as referring simply to the miraculous birth of Jesus without any further reference to the subsequent married life of Joseph and Mary.¹⁵ However, while this passage is not absolutely conclusive, its interpretation becomes much more simple if it is interpreted as it stands in the light of the references in the

14. So Plummer argues, loc. cit.

15. So Lightfoot, op. cit., pp. 270f.

New Testament to the brothers and sisters of Jesus.

Luke 2:7

In reporting the birth of Christ Luke says: "And she gave birth to her first-born son and wrapped him in swaddling clothes" (2:7). Much discussion has centered around the exact connotation of the word 'first-born' (πρωτότοκον) in this account. Did Luke mean to intimate thereby that Jesus was the first-born of a number of children? or is this word simply used to indicate that there were no other children born to Mary before Jesus?

Lightfoot argues that this word must be interpreted in the light of Lk. 2:23. It is used in the story of the birth of Jesus because of the Jewish Ceremonial Law. He says: "The prominent idea conveyed by the term 'firstborn' to a Jew would be not the birth of other children, but the special consecration of this one. The typical reference in fact is foremost in the mind of St. Luke, as he himself explains it, 'Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord' (2:23)."¹⁶

However, the connection between this verse (2:7) and the story of the Presentation (2:22ff.) is not so easy to prove. As Mayor points out, "The story of the Birth is followed by the visit of the Shepherds, and that again by the Circumcision. Then at length comes the Presentation in the Temple, which is an independent narrative, introduced to

16. Lightfoot, op. cit., p. 271.

give the prophetic utterances of Simeon and Anna, and explained by the offering required by the law."¹⁷ Zahn also feels that if this is the reason why Luke used 'first-born,' he would have used it in the story of the Presentation and not in this disconnected way.¹⁸

The word first-born is found throughout the Old and New Testaments in its proper sense, marking the first of several children, and not an only son. It is true, there are several instances where an only son might come under the category of first-born. Thus in the story of the slaying of the first-born in the land of Egypt certainly we have the right to assume that in some cases the person slain was an only child. Likewise in the command of God: "Sanctify unto me all the first-born, whatsoever openeth the womb among the children of Israel: it is mine," (Ex. 13:2) an only child would be included. However, in both these cases the word still retains its proper meaning of the first-born of several children. It is only by accident, as it were, that "only-begotten" is equated with "first-born." Thus if Jesus were included in a larger class, He could be called a first-born son even

17. Mayor, "The Helvidian versus the Epiphonian Hypothesis," p. 27.

18. He says: "Das τὸν πρωτότοκον erklärt sich auch nicht aus dem Vorblick auf v. 23f. und die dort angeführte gesetzliche Bestimmung; denn nicht hier, wo der Leser nicht ahnen kann, was Lc an der spätern Stelle sagen werde, sondern erst dort wäre darauf hinzuweisen gewesen sein, dasz Jesus der Erstgeborene seiner Mutter war, . . ." (Zahn, Das Evangelium des Lucas, p. 136.)

though He were an only son. But it is difficult to prove that this is the way Luke uses the word in this passage, as was shown above.

One point that must not be overlooked in this discussion is the time and setting in which the Gospel was written. By the time Luke wrote these words about the birth of Jesus, the so-called "Brethren of the Lord" were well-known in the Church (1 Cor. 9:5; Gal. 1:18f.; 2:9). Yet Luke uses 'first-born,' a term which might be very misleading if these brothers were not sons of Mary. As Plummer points out, "He might have avoided all ambiguity by writing μωφογενῆν, as he does 7:12; 8:42; 9:38,"¹⁹ but instead he uses 'first-born.' Under those circumstances the use of this word by Luke, the careful historian, seems to indicate to me that he took it for granted that Jesus was the first-born of Mary in the full sense of that word. That is especially the case when we remember that he mentions the brothers of Jesus twice (8:19-21; Acts 1:14), in both cases referring to them together with Mary.

John 2:12

Very soon after the beginning of the ministry of Jesus the Brethren of the Lord enter the picture. Immediately after the wedding at Cana and before the first Passover which Jesus attended in His public ministry we are told that He "went down to Capernaum, with his mother and his brothers

19. Plummer, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to St. Luke, p. 53.

and his disciples; and there they stayed for a few days" (Jn. 2:12). It does not matter for this discussion whether Jesus went straight from Cana to Capernaum or by way of Nazareth. The important thing to note is the people who made up this little band. Three distinct groups are mentioned: His mother, His brothers, and the disciples. Thus already in the first reference to the brothers of Jesus they are not included among the disciples, but are rather mentioned separately together with His mother.²⁰

Mark 6:1-6

After the Early Judean Ministry (Jn. 1-4), Jesus returned once more to Galilee. But before beginning the Great Galilean Ministry, He paid a visit to Nazareth, the village of His childhood and early manhood.²¹ It was at this time that He taught the people in the synagogue so that they were amazed at first but later, in their anger, tried to throw Him from

20. Why this group went together to Capernaum is not certain. There is no reason to assume, as Edersheim does (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Vol. I, p. 364), that Jesus was already at this time establishing his residence at Capernaum, nor that Mary and His brothers moved there from Nazareth. That may be the case. It is more likely, however, that they went to Capernaum to await there "the starting of the great caravan of pilgrims who, at this time, were about to wend their way to the great feast at Jerusalem" (Frederic W. Farrar, The Life of Christ, p. 148). That would also explain why these various persons went together to Capernaum. They were all on their way to the Passover.

21. The most complete record of this visit is found in Lk. 4:16-30. Matthew refers to it in Chap. 13:54-56. For our study, however, perhaps the most significant account is that found in Mk. 6:1-6. It is here taken for granted that the three accounts of the Synoptists refer to one and the same event.

a cliff. In their amazement they asked: "Where did this man get all this? What is the wisdom given to him? What mighty works are wrought by his hands! Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon, and are not his sisters here with us?" (Mk. 6:2f.)

This, then, is the first place in Scripture where the Brethren of the Lord are mentioned by name.²² Though they are not called the children of Mary here, they are mentioned together with her once again as they were in Jn. 2:12. It is true, they are simply called brothers²³ and sisters of the Lord.

22. So also in the parallel passage, Matt. 13:54-56.

23. The significance of the word ἀδελφός in this problem concerning the Brethren of the Lord has been discussed at length ever since the time of Jerome. Roman Catholics and others who wish to support the Hieronymian hypothesis have pointed to the somewhat loose use of πῦν in the Old Testament. There is no denying that it is used of relatives in a good number of passages in which the LXX translates it with ἀδελφός. However, that of itself does not prove that the same wider use applies in the New Testament. We must not forget that the LXX is in most instances a very literal translation of the Hebrew. It does not therefore follow necessarily that the New Testament writers used it in the same loose sense. In fact, if we omit the passages referring to the Brethren of the Lord, there is no single instance in the New Testament where it is used in this loose sense. Certainly we find it used many times of fellow-Christians, but that does not apply here. Add to this the fact that there is a word for cousin (ἀνεψιός, see Col. 4:10) which the New Testament writers could have used, as well as the more general word συγγενής, and the significance of the use of 'brother' seems to become even more clear. According to Mayor those who would give this word a wider meaning cannot find satisfactory parallels in classical Greek either. He says: "There is no instance in classical Greek, as far as I know, of ἀδελφός being used to denote cousin" (James, p. xiv). However, ἀδελφός certainly can be used of a half-brother. Thus, while causing trouble for those who accept the Hieronymian hypothesis, ἀδελφός does not run counter to the view of Epi-phanus.

However, that is exactly what one would expect here. The center of the discussion is Jesus, not Mary, and so all is related to Him. His occupation is named first by the townspeople. Then they mention His mother and finally His brothers and sisters.

No doubt also the fact that the people of Nazareth use the words 'brother' and 'sister' is important. There certainly is no reason for them to use the word as a term of endearment. Nor would we expect them to use it in the wider sense, which some claim the word has. On the contrary, it would seem that they are pointing to actual brothers and sisters in order to justify their amazement (and later anger) over Him. Broadus therefore says: "In their mouths 'his brother' and 'all his sisters' cannot have meant less than children of Joseph, if not of Joseph and Mary."²⁴

The proverbial saying which Jesus uses to answer these people has some bearing on this subject also. He lists three groups among whom a prophet is without honor. These are mentioned in an ascending order, growing more tragic with each group. By His own country he was no doubt in this instance thinking of the city of Nazareth. Next He refers to His relatives (συγγενῆς) and finally to those of His own house (ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ αὐτοῦ). By this last group He was no doubt thinking of the brothers and sisters mentioned above. They

24. Broadus, op. cit., p. 310.

and He grew up in the same household, and yet they rejected Him. One is reminded of the words of John in the Prologue: "He came to his own home, and his own people received him not" (Jn. 1:11), though in this reference "his own people" no doubt refers to Israel. If Jesus is then referring to His brothers and sisters in this passage, the only way to explain that these were cousins is to assume that two households were combined. It is true, this assumption has been made by many of the advocates of the cousin theory,²⁵ but there is absolutely no Scriptural basis for such an assumption. The evidence is rather in the opposite direction. It is much more in keeping with the facts we know about this incident to believe that Jesus and these brothers and sisters grew up in the same household as members of one family. Thus the Epiphanian or the Helvidian hypothesis seems to fit this story much more accurately.

Mark 3:20-22, 31-35

In the second half of the Great Galilean Ministry the Brethren of the Lord appear in the Gospel accounts once again. This time the incident recorded takes place in Capernaum. Jesus and His disciples were so busy with the people that they were unable to find time to eat. It is then that Mark says: "And when his friends heard it, they went out to seize him, for they said, 'He is beside himself'" (Mk. 3:21). Then

25. See, e.g., Carl F. Keil, Commentar über das Evangelium des Matthäus, where in connection with Matt. 12:46-50, he discusses the Brethren of the Lord (pp. 303-308).

follows the story of the Scribes coming from Jerusalem with the charge that Jesus is possessed by Beelzebub. Whereupon Mark adds: "And his mother and his brothers came; and they said to him, 'your mother and your brothers are outside asking for you'" (3:31f.).²⁶

The question which has been discussed much in this connection is: Do these words in 3:31ff. finish the incident referred to in 3:20-22, or are they two different stories? Some have gone so far as to equate the 'friends' of v. 21 (οἱ παρ' αὐτοῦ) with 'his mother and his brothers' in v. 31. Thus Clarke says: "'His friends' of verse 21 are 'his mother and his brothers' of verse 31."²⁷ Others claim that these are two entirely different groups.²⁸ The actual meaning of this phrase lies perhaps between these two views. οἱ παρ' αὐτοῦ is no doubt more inclusive than 'his mother and his brothers,' yet it does not thereby exclude them. It is a striking idiom which can perhaps best be rendered "his people." I believe, then, that verse 21 refers to a larger group of relatives and friends of whom His mother and His brothers are mentioned in

26. See Matt. 12:46-50; Lk. 8:19-21, for the parallel accounts.

27. W.N. Clarke, Commentary on the Gospel of Mark, in An American Commentary of the New Testament, Alvah Hoveh ed., Vol. II, p. 52. --For the same view see also B. Harvie Branscomb, The Gospel of Mark, in the Moffatt New Testament Commentary, p. 67f.; Ezra P. Gould, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to St. Mark, p. 61; and Henry Barclay Swete, The Gospel according to St. Mark, p. 63.

28. See, e.g., Keil, Commentar über die Evangelien Markus und Lukas, pp. 43ff.

particular in vv. 31ff.²⁹

In that case the whole incident might well have happened something like this. Jesus was very busy this day in Capernaum. In fact, it seemed to some of those who saw Him that He would not be able to stand up under the strain. They felt that the lack of restraint in the way he was taxing His powers was foolhardy. Perhaps those who observed this were actually some of His relatives. At any rate, it was called to the attention of Jesus' mother and brothers, and they in turn felt they must do something quickly before He would wear Himself out completely. They start out to find Him. In the meantime the Scribes come from Jerusalem and Jesus deals with them (vv. 22-30). Then His mother and His brothers arrive at the house, as it is recorded in vv. 31-35. There is no reason to doubt that Mary had actually been persuaded at this time that her son was 'beside himself.'³⁰

29. Wohlenberg has the following to say on the connection of these two incidents: "Damit ist nicht gegeben, dasz die Schar der παρ' αὐτοῦ sich deckte mit 'seiner Mutter und seinen Brüdern', von denen allein an unsere Stelle [vv. 31ff.] die Rede ist (s.o.). Vielmehr ist jener Kreis ein weiterer; auch schien uns dort die Mutter Jesu nicht hinzupassen. Hier aber sind es die allernächsten Anverwandten, Mutter und Brüder" (Gustav Wohlenberg, Das Evangelium des Markus, in Kommentar zum neuen Testament, Theodor Zahn ed., p. 116.

30. Branscomb (op. cit., p. 67) suggests another possible way of construing the Greek so that this strong statement does not come from Mary and from Jesus' brothers. The subject of ἔλεγον need not be the same as that of the foregoing ἔειπεν. It can be taken as an "impersonal plural meaning 'people were saying,' as in English we have the expression 'they say.'" Such an impersonal plural is used by Mark certainly in 2:18 and perhaps in several other instances." In that case His mother and brothers would have come to Him to stop Him from doing that which was causing some people to make unkind remarks about Him.

This passage, then, fits in with the general picture which the Evangelists give us of the Brethren of the Lord. They are not of the Twelve, but rather a distinct group who in this instance wanted to take Jesus away from His work. Furthermore, they are mentioned here again together with Mary, as if they were her children.³¹ It is also important to note that it is the people once more who call them His brothers, even as that was the case in Nazareth.³² Thus this incident likewise seems to fit into the general picture which the Evangelists give us of the Brethren of the Lord, a picture which does not fit the theory that some of His brothers were disciples, but which rather confirms the view that they were brothers, if not sons of Joseph and Mary, then at least sons of Joseph.

John 7:2-8

Six months before His death Jesus left Galilee to visit Jerusalem at the time of the Feast of the Tabernacles. It is just before he leaves that the Brethren of the Lord play an important role in the Gospel narrative. John is the only one who has recorded this incident. He says:

Now the Jews' feast of Tabernacles was at hand. So his brothers said to him, "Leave here and go to Judea, that your disciples may see the works you

31. That they are called brothers of Jesus and not sons of Mary does not detract from the argument. As in Mk. 6:1-6, so also here Jesus is the center of the story, and the brothers are therefore identified by their relation to Him rather than by their mother.

32. See above on Mk. 6:1-6.

are doing. If you do these things, show yourself openly to the world." For even his brothers did not believe in him. Jesus said to them, "My time has not yet come, but your time is always here. The world cannot hate you, but it hates me because I testify of it that its works are evil. Go to the feast yourselves; I am not going up to the feast, for my time has not yet fully come" (7:2-8).

These words contain several problems. In the first place, what is the attitude of these brothers towards Jesus? It has been argued that both this incident and the one recorded in Mk. 3:20-22, 31-35, definitely prove that these brothers were not younger but rather older than Jesus. In Jewish family life the first-born son was looked up to highly and honored by the other children, since he would succeed his father as the head of the family. Thus, according to this line of argument, these brothers could not have been younger brothers but must have been older.³³ The defenders of the Epiphanian hypothesis use these passages as proof for their theory, for if the brothers of Jesus were older sons of Joseph from a former marriage, all would be explained.³⁴

There certainly seems to be a difficulty here for the Helvidian hypothesis. And yet the whole tenor of this incident recorded by John must be considered. Why has John introduced it into his Gospel in the first place? Is it simply to fill a gap left by the Synoptists? or is there some

33. See, e.g., "Professor Mayor and the Helvidian Hypothesis," in the Expositor, series seven, VI (Nov. 1908), p. 472f.

34. So B.F. Westcott, The Gospel according to St. John, p. 116.

special purpose for it? It seems to me that this passage must be viewed, in the first place, in the light of Jn. 6:66. There we are told that many of those who had followed Jesus now left Him. His Gospel and His program was not what they wanted. To this John adds the further tragic account of the attitude of Jesus' own brothers. There is a note of sadness in those words: "For even his brothers did not believe in him." These words are, as it were, the leitmotiv of this whole passage. The very brothers of Jesus refused to accept Him for what He claimed to be. In fact, it even seems that there was hostility in their attitude. That becomes all the more tragic if these brothers were taking such an attitude toward their elder brother whom they should have rather honored. Thus, if viewed in the whole context, this attitude of the brothers can be accounted for. It is one aspect of the fulfillment of those words of Isaiah, "He is despised and rejected of men" (Is. 53:3).

A second point to consider is the bearing which this passage has on the relation of the Brethren of the Lord to the twelve disciples. To my mind this is one of the clearest passages from which we can conclude that none of the brothers of Jesus were numbered among the Twelve. The brothers of their own accord seem to exclude themselves from even that wider group of disciples or followers which Jesus had (v.5).³⁵

35. On this verse Bengel says: "Eo ipso ostendunt se non esse discipulos" (Joh. Albert Bengel, Gnomon Novi Testamenti, p. 358.

They also take an antagonistic, unbelieving attitude toward Him. Thus their whole approach seems to exclude them from the Twelve.

In explaining this John adds those words: "For even his brothers did not believe in him" (v. 5).³⁶ He is here excluding them from the disciples. True, members of that latter group had at times fallen from their faith or had grown very weak in faith, but the use of the imperfect here (ἐπίστευον)

36. This verse has been explained in many ways. The words οὐδε . . . ἐπίστευον have been watered down so far by some that they mean hardly anything. Thus Lange says: "The unbelief of these brothers was a want of confidence in Him of the same sort, at the worst, as that of Mary in Mark 3:31, of Peter in Matt. 16:22, and of Thomas in Jno. 20:25; that is, while believing in His Messiahship, they lacked in the perfect yielding of a believing obedience, and assumed to prescribe to Him from their own judgment" (Lange, The Gospel according to John, Vol. III, in a Commentary on the Holy Scriptures, Lange-Schaff, p. 240). -- Keil argues much the same way. He says: "Endlich ist noch zu beachten, dass die ἀδελφοί hier und auch in v. 10 nicht ausdrücklich von den Aposteln unterschieden (s. zu v. 10), wir also nicht berechtigt sind, nur an die beiden nicht zu den Aposteln gehörenden Brüder zu denken, sondern ohne Bedenken annehmen können, dass Jakobus und Judas in diesem Punkte mit Josés und Simon einverstanden waren, ja dass auch andere Apostel den Wunsch hegten, Jesus möge sich bald in Jerusalem als messianischer König kundgeben, wenn auch nur die Brüder Jesu, weil ihm dem Vetter näher stehend, dieses Verlangen äuszerten" (Keil, Commentar über das Evangelium des Johannes, p. 289).

Others have said that these words do not apply to all the brothers but only to those who were not disciples. However, according to the Hieronymian hypothesis at least two, and perhaps even three of the brothers were disciples. Thus this argument appears rather untenable. Alford says: "It is inconceivable that John should have so written, if any among them believed at that time. The attempt to make the words mean that some of his brethren did not believe on him, is in my view quite futile" (Henry Alford, The Four Gospels, in The Greek Testament, Vol I, p. 767).

shows that this was the habitual attitude of these brothers. The disciples may have had a wrong idea about His Messiahship, but the "brothers had not yet gained the conviction of His Messianic commission. They knew of His claims, but they did not accept them in faith."³⁷ Thus they were actually in the same class with those who left Him, as John records it in 6:66. Above all, none of them were of that group for whom Peter had made his famous confession (6:69f.).³⁸

Finally, the words which Jesus uses to answer His brothers necessarily exclude them from the disciples. He puts them in the same class with the world which is opposed to Him. He says: "The world cannot hate you, but it hates me because I testify of it that its works are evil" (v.7). Yet to His own disciples He says just the opposite: "If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before you. If you were of this world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hates you" (Jn. 16:18f.).

In summing up the import of this passage, I should say that it is perhaps the strongest in the cumulative evidence

37. P.E. Kretzmann, The Gospel of the Beloved Disciple, chap. 7, p. 3.

38. Zahn says: "Dasz vollends der eine oder andere dieser Brüder Jesu zum Kreise der längst erwählten Apostel gehört haben sollte, welche durch den Mund Petrus schon Früher einmal (6:68f.) oder mehrmals (s.A. 18) ihren Glauben an Jesus zur Freude ihres Meisters bekannt hatten, ist eine mit dem vorliegenden Text unvereinbare, aber überhaupt haltlose Annahme" (Zahn, Das Evangelium des Johannes, in Kommentar zum Neuen Testament, Vol. IV, p. 371.

in the Gospels that the Brethren of the Lord were not disciples. It is therefore entirely against the Hieronymian hypothesis. On the other hand, the difficulty which the Helvidian view must face here can be accounted for, once the context of this passage is thoroughly understood. Thus either the Epiphonian or the Helvidian hypothesis would fit the incident.

Acts 1:13-14

After receiving this rebuke from Jesus, the Brethren of the Lord disappear from the Gospel records completely. While Mary is present at the Crucifixion (Jn. 19:25), no mention is made of the Brethren of the Lord. Thus we are led to assume that their unbelieving, almost hostile attitude persisted. Yet suddenly after the Ascension they are mentioned in that little circle of the first believers. After listing the eleven Apostles, Luke goes on: "All these with one accord devoted themselves to prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers" (Acts 1:14). Thus somehow the hostility of the brothers was changed to faith. No doubt the resurrection of Jesus produced the change. For one of them, James,--he who was destined to become the leader of the Jerusalem church, --this change quite evidently resulted from an appearance of the risen Lord (1 Cor. 15:7).

Two things should be noted in connection with this passage. In the first place, true to the Gospel accounts, the Brethren of the Lord are once more mentioned together with Mary.³⁹

Thus also this passage leads one to the conclusion that she and they formed one household, or more specifically that they were her children.

Secondly, the Brethren of the Lord once more constitute a separate group from the Apostles. In this passage there are two main groups mentioned besides the disciples: 1) the women (of whom the mother of Jesus is singled out especially), and 2) the Brethren of the Lord. Thus this passage also points to the improbability of the claim that some of the Brethren of the Lord were Apostles. We have here another instance, therefore, in which Scripture seems to speak against the Hieronymian hypothesis.

1 Cor. 9:5

After the reference to the Brethren of the Lord in Acts, they as a group disappear from the New Testament writings, except for one passing remark in 1 Cor. 9:5. However, one of them, James, plays a prominent part in the history of the early Church and so is mentioned several times in the Epistles and Acts. It is necessary to look at these passages in the Epistles, since it is on them to a large extent that those who would identify some of the Brethren of the Lord with Apostles, rest their case.

As was mentioned above, there is a passing reference to

39. The only time that she is not mentioned with them is in the incident recorded in Jn. 7:2-10, when the hostility toward their brother became so outspoken.

the Brethren of the Lord in 1 Cor. 9:5. There Paul uses them together with the Apostles as examples in his line of argument. He says: "Do we not have the right to be accompanied by a wife, as the other apostles and the brothers of the Lord and Cephas?"

This passage is important because of the order in which these various groups are mentioned. There are those who have argued that here we have conclusive proof that the Brethren of the Lord were looked upon by Paul as apostles.⁴⁰ In that case, however, it would almost be necessary to assume that all of the Brethren of the Lord were apostles.

The first problem in this passage, then, involves the meaning of οἱ λοιποὶ ἀπόστολοι. As Robertson says, "The exact meaning of λοιποί is not clear; it may distinguish those who are included from 'the brethren of the Lord and Cephas,' or from Paul and Barnabas (v. 6). In the former case 'the brethren of the Lord' are Apostles, for the Apostolic body is divided into three parts; 'Cephas,' 'the brethren of the Lord,' and 'the rest of the Apostles.'⁴¹ Thus this word can be understood in such a way that it would make the Brethren of the Lord apostles. However, it is also very possible, as Robertson

40. The use of the word ἀπόστολος by Paul in the Epistles is disputed. Some feel that quite generally it is equivalent to 'the Twelve,' while others claim it is used of a wider group. If the exact meaning of this word can be established, it will shed light on the relation of the Brethren of the Lord to the Twelve. For that reason the word will be discussed fully below in connection with Gal. 1:19.

41. A.T. Robertson and Alfred Plummer, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on St. Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians, p. 181.

has pointed out, that Paul is thinking of himself and Barnabas as apostles⁴² in distinction from 'the other apostles.'

The other problem involves the order in which Paul enumerates these groups. He begins with 'the other apostles' and ends with 'Cephas.' Between these two groups he mentions the Brethren of the Lord. Cephas is certainly one of the apostles. It is argued therefore that the brothers of the Lord must also be apostles.

However, another interpretation is possible. If Paul is contrasting himself and Barnabas with the other apostles, then the brothers of the Lord and Cephas become two separate groups. Plummer says: "It is possible, that without any strictly logical arrangement, he is mentioning persons of high position in the Church who availed themselves of the privilege of having their wives maintained as well as themselves when they were engaged in missionary work."⁴³ Thus Peter, though he is technically included in the 'other apostles,' is singled out for special mention at the end because he is so important. The final καί, then, might be translated: "and even Cephas."

If translated in that way, this passage does permit an interpretation which would not necessarily make the Brethren of the Lord apostles. Furthermore, if the word 'apostle' is used in a wider sense, including more than the Twelve, there

42. In Acts 14:14, both Barnabas and Paul are called apostles.

43. Robertson and Plummer, loc. cit.

is still no proof that some of the brothers were disciples of Jesus before the resurrection.⁴⁴

1 Cor. 15:7

At the beginning of Paul's great resurrection chapter (1 Cor. 15) he lists some of the appearances of the risen Lord. He mentions various groups to whom Jesus appeared: Cephas, the Twelve, more than five hundred brethren, James, all the apostles, and finally himself.⁴⁵ Again the difficulty lies in distinguishing the various groups from one another and defining them.⁴⁶ Again the word to be studied closely is ἀποστόλοις together with its modifier πᾶσιν.

There are several interpretations of this passage possible. If the πᾶσιν is used in reference to James--first to one (James), then to all the rest of the apostles--James becomes one of the apostles. However, this is not the only way to interpret this passage. Paul may very well be mentioning distinct groups all along the line without any repetition. In that case the τοῖς ἀποστόλοις would be a wider group than

44. Zahn (Forschungen VI, p. 356) feels that ἀπόστολος must be taken in the wider sense. Then both the 'brothers of the Lord' and 'Cephas' would be special groups in the οἱ λοιποὶ ἀπόστολοι.

45. That this is not a complete list of the appearances of the risen Lord is obvious. Paul is merely singling out certain witnesses which he feels will be useful for his argument. It is also not certain if this is a strictly chronological order.

46. By the official title οἱ δώδεκα the apostles of Jesus are meant. We cannot press the use of this number too strongly. Obviously there were not twelve present, since Judas was no longer with them. In fact, if this appearance is identified with that which took place on the evening of Easter, only ten were present. Thus Paul uses this word as a technical term.

the τοῖς δώδεκα.⁴⁷ It would include also those who were not of the Twelve, but who later became apostles by virtue of the very fact that they had seen the risen Lord.⁴⁸ Thus James might very well be included among this group.⁴⁹ Furthermore, even if τοῖς ἀποστόλοις is equated with τοῖς δώδεκα, this does not necessarily imply that James is therewith included. The πᾶσιν may simply be added by Paul to stress the fact that on another occasion all the disciples, including Thomas, had seen the risen Lord. It would then be used entirely independent of James and would mark technically a different group from the δώδεκα, since this time all the living disciples were present.⁵⁰

It is difficult to decide which of these various interpretations is the correct one. At any rate, this passage does not necessarily include James among the Twelve Apostles. In

47. So Alford, op. cit., p. 604.

48. According to Acts 1:21f., and 1 Cor. 9:1, a prime requisite of an apostle was to have seen the risen Lord.

49. Burton suggests this as one possibility (A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians, pp. 371f.). Zahn, however, feels that οἱ ἄποστολοι can only be taken in its narrow sense in this passage, "Denn hier redet Pl von den ersten Tagen nach der Auferstehung, wo es noch kein andere Apostel gab, als die, welche Jesus dazu gemacht hatte" (Vorschungen VI, p. 356). This certainly is the most natural interpretation.

50. Blass goes so far as to say that the πᾶσιν actually argues against James being included in the number of the apostles. He says: "If πᾶς is placed after a subst. with the art., special stress is laid upon the substantive" (Friedrich Blass, Grammar of New Testament Greek, Henry Thackeray trans., p. 316). Thus the πᾶσιν would emphasize the fact that those now mentioned were apostles, in contrast to James, who was not.

fact, since several other interpretations are possible, this passage cannot be used as definite proof for the Hieronymian hypothesis. On the other hand, neither can it be used dogmatically to disprove the identification of James the brother of the Lord with the apostle James. It therefore adds nothing to the material clarifying the problem of the Brethren of the Lord.

Gal. 1:18-19

One of the passages which has been discussed very much in connection with the problem of the Brethren of the Lord is Gal. 1:18-19. There Paul says: "Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas, and remained with him fifteen days. But I saw none of the other apostles except James the brother of the Lord." Since the time of Jerome (op., cit., chap. 15) it has been argued by the advocates of the Hieronymian hypothesis that this statement of Paul proves definitely that the James he here mentions was one of the Twelve. It is therefore the basis for the identification of James the Lord's brother with James the son of Alphaeus.⁵¹

The whole problem centers around εἰ μὴ. If the meaning is: "Another of the apostles I did not see, except the apostle James, the Lord's brother," Paul is here including James among the apostles. Many commentators feel that the ἕτερον carries

51. Joh. Ylvisaker says: "The collation of Gal. 1:18 with 2:9, 12 however, offers the most convincing evidence that may be adduced upon this point" [that James is an apostle in the narrow sense] . --The Gospels, p. 220.

with it the idea of one of τῶν ἀποστόλων and that this must therefore be the meaning of Paul's words here.⁵² Yet most of these same commentators take the word ἀπόστολοι in the wider sense⁵³ and therefore do not identify James with

52. Lightfoot says: "It seems then that St. James is here called an Apostle, though it does not therefore follow that he is one of the Twelve" (op. cit., p. 85). Burton likewise says: "The phrase must probably be taken as stating an exception to the whole of the preceding assertion, and as implying that James was an apostle" (Burton, op. cit., p. 60.). See also H.A.W. Meyer, Critical and Exegetical Handbook to the Epistle to the Galatians, p. 33.

53. For the various views on ἀπόστολος see Burton, op. cit., pp. 363-381; Lightfoot, op. cit., pp. 92-101; Kirsopp Lake, "The Twelve and the Apostles," in The Beginnings of Christianity, The Acts of the Apostles, F.J. Foakes Jackson and Kirsopp Lake, Vol. V. pp. 37-59. Lake says (Ibid., p. 51): "Two usages can be distinguished. (1) In the Pauline Epistles ἀπόστολος is used in the sense of a Christian missionary who has been commissioned to the service of the Gospel. . . . There is no implication that he regarded the Apostles as limited in number to twelve, . . . (ii) Over against this extended view is a more contracted one which limits the Apostles to the Twelve. This is plain from a comparison of Acts 1:2ff.; 1:17; 1:25f., etc." -- This distinction between two different uses of the word is certainly legitimate. That the word apostle is used in the wider sense is evident not only from the fact that Paul considers himself to be one, but also from the fact that it is applied to others (Barnabas, Acts 14:4, 14; 1 Cor. 9:5; Epaphroditus, Phil. 2:25). In this same connection Lightfoot says (op. cit., p. 97): "It may be added also that only by such an extension of the office could any footing be found for the pretensions of the false apostles (2 Cor. 11:13; Rev. 2:2). Had the number been definitely restricted, the claims of these interlopers would have been self-condemned." Thus the word 'apostle' is not limited only to the Twelve and Paul. The exact meaning of ἀπόστολοι in any given passage can be determined solely by the context. No doubt in some instances it is difficult to determine if the term applies to the Twelve or to a larger group. Certainly it is used practically as a title; but that title at times includes a larger group than the Twelve. Thus this word alone can not be used to prove that James was one of the Twelve. In passages where the context does not indicate that it is synonymous with the Twelve, one is justified in applying it to a wider group.

the son of Alphaeus. Thus James might very easily be included among the apostles, and yet be an entirely different person from James the son of Alphaeus.

However, there is also another possible interpretation of this passage. Instead of supplying εἶδον τὸν ἀπόστολον after εἰ μὴ, it is legitimate to supply only εἶδον. The sentence would then read: "I saw none other of the apostles, but I did see James the Lord's brother."⁵⁴ This is the interpretation which Zahn placed upon these words.⁵⁵ While the trend of interpretation has swung away from this view since his time, an able defense of it has been made by Koch,⁵⁶ He cites numerous instances from the New Testament including the epistles of Paul in which εἰ μὴ is best translated 'but only' rather than 'except.'⁵⁷ The examples he lists from Galatians itself are almost in themselves convincing (1:6f.;

54. See George B. Winer, A Grammar of the Idiom of the New Testament, seventh edition, J. Henry Thayer trans., par. 67, l, e, p. 633. He cites as parallels Acts 27:22; Rev. 21:27.

55. See Zahn, Der Brief des Paulus an die Galater, p. 70. There he says: "Da es nun sinnlos wäre, zu behaupten, dass Pl bei einem 15 tägigen Aufenthalt in Jerusalem abgesehen von dem Apostel Pt überhaupt keinen anderen Menschen als Jakobus mit Augen gesehen habe, so ergänzt der verständige Leser die vorliegende Aussage: 'einen zweiten von den Aposteln auszer Pt sah ich nicht,' durch den Satz 'und ich sah überhaupt keine hervorragende kirchliche Persönlichkeit, keines der Häupter der Urgemeinde, denen ich mich damals unterwürfig gezeigt haben soll, auszer Jk, dem Bruder des Herrn.'"

56. Hugo Koch, "Zur Jakobusfrage Gal 1. 19," in Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche, Vol. 33 (Nov. 1934), 2-3, pp. 204-209.

57. Such passages are: Matt. 12:4; Lk. 4:25-27; Matt. 5:13; Matt. 17:8; Mk. 13:2; Jn. 13:10; Rom. 14:14; Gal. 1:6f.; Gal. 2:16.

2:16). Thus I see no reason why these words cannot be interpreted in the same way. It seems that εἰ μὴ does come very close to ἀλλά in some places. The only difficulty is the use of ἕτερον in this passage, a parallel to which is lacking anywhere else.⁵⁸

Since the exact meaning of these words of Paul are once again not too clear, it is impossible to draw any definite conclusions on the basis of this passage. That James is here given a position of high honor in the early church is evident. Paul certainly places him on the same level with the Twelve, though it is not therefore necessary to conclude that he was an apostle. Furthermore, the reference in v. 17 to "those who were apostles before me" seems to indicate that Paul is including more than the Twelve among the apostles. In that case James might very well be one of these apostles. On the other hand, the fact that in this whole section Paul is trying to show that he was an apostle in the same right as the Twelve would point to the more narrow use of ἀπόστολοι in v. 19. Thus, though James might well have been an apostle in the wider sense, Paul would here be excluding him from the apostles in the narrow sense, while at the same time placing him on the same level with them. In all fairness it should be said that if we had only this passage we would be justified in placing James among the apostles and identifying him with the

58. But see Koch, op. cit., note 8.

person called James the son of Alphaeus. However, when these words of Paul are read in the light of all the other pertinent passages one must admit that they do not necessarily imply a reference to this James. Thus this passage cannot be used as definite proof that James was one of the Twelve. That being the case, the supporters of the Hieronymian hypothesis cannot claim that these words of Paul prove conclusively that their theory is the correct one. On the other hand, this passage certainly cannot be used against the Hieronymian hypothesis.

Gal. 2:9

In the second chapter of this same letter Paul mentions James once more. He speaks there of another visit he made to Jerusalem, this time together with Barnabas and Titus. In describing the outcome of the meeting he had with the church leaders in Jerusalem at this time he says: "And when they perceived the grace that was given to me, James and Cephas and John, who were reputed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised" (2:9). While the James here mentioned is not identified in any other way, it is quite obvious that the same person is meant as the one who was mentioned previously (1:19). Thus there would be no reason for Paul to identify him particularly in this second reference.

The question that has been asked in connection with this verse is: Could this James, mentioned in this context, be any-

one else but an apostle, one of the Twelve? The advocates of the Hieronymian hypothesis have said he could not be. They therefore use this passage as further proof that James the Lord's brother was one of the Twelve.⁵⁹ However, these men here mentioned are not specifically called apostles, but rather 'pillars' (στυλοὶ). It was upon them, as it were, that the Church rested. While that is a name of great honor, it does not per se imply that these men were all apostles, even though two of them obviously were.

Furthermore, the order in which these men are mentioned is important. Zahn says: "Als erster wird Jk genannt, dann erst Pt zu einem Parr verbundene Joh.: eine unbegreifliche Ordnung, wenn unter Jk einer der 12 Apostel zu verstehen wäre; denn als Erster unter diesen galt von jeher Pt."⁶⁰ Under these circumstances this order is perhaps easier to explain if we assume that this James was not an apostle, but rather the brother of the Lord.⁶¹ Thus also this passage does not neces-

59. Even Otto Scholler, though he does not defend the Hieronymian hypothesis, feels that the context demands that this James is an apostle. He says: "We must then either take James the Lord's brother as identical with James, the son of Alphaeus, and therefore himself an Apostle (A view already rejected in commenting on chap. 1:19), or take the James of this passage as a different one, i.e., the son of Alphaeus, and not the Lord's brother" (Otto Scholler, The Epistle of Paul to the Galatians, C.C. Starbuck trans., in A Commentary on the Holy Scriptures, Lange-Schaff, p. 39.).

60. Zahn, Galater, p. 103.

61. See Meyer, Galatians, pp. 71f., for a similar argument. Among other things he says: "If James had been precisely one of the twelve, Paul would not have given him precedence over Peter; for, as mouthpiece of the twelve, Peter was the first for Jerusalem also and for the whole of the Jewish Christians.

sarily support the Hieronymian hypothesis. In fact, it finds its most natural explanation in the assumption that this James was not one of the Twelve, though no definite conclusions can be drawn either way from it.

Outside the references to James in Acts 15:13ff., and 21:18ff., as head of the Jerusalem church, this completes the list of passages in which the Brethren of the Lord are mentioned in the New Testament. However, there are several other passages in the Gospels which must be considered, because they are used by the advocates of the Hieronymian hypothesis in support of that theory.

Luke 6:14ff.; Acts 1:13

The first group of these passages is the lists of the Apostles in Luke's Gospel and in Acts.⁶² In both cases Luke mentions Ἰουδᾶς Ἰακώβου at the end. This is no doubt a Genitive of Relationship.⁶³ Such a genitive can stand for practically any relationship,⁶⁴ though it is most frequently used

The precedence, however, finds its explanation and justification solely in the unique personal relation to Christ, -- which belonged to none of the apostles."

62. In the Gospel, "Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor," follows the "Judas of James," while in the Acts account he would naturally no longer be mentioned.

63. See Robertson, A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research, pp. 501f.

64. Debrunner lists the following uses of this genitive in the New Testament. To identify: 1) a person by his father (Matt. 4:21 et al.); 2) a mother by her son (Mk. 15:47 et al.); 3) a wife by her husband (Jn. 19:25); 4) slaves by the family to which they belong (Rom. 16:10f.). Concerning the usage in these lists of the Apostles he says: "Ob beim Apostel Ἰουδᾶς Ἰακώβου L 6,16; A 1,13, υἱός oder nach Jd 1 ἀδελφός zu ergänzen ist (. . .), ist grammatisch nicht zu entscheiden." --Albert

to identify a son by his father.⁶⁵

One reason why it has not been taken universally in this usual sense is that such an interpretation would not fit into the framework of the Hieronymian hypothesis.⁶⁶ Yet in the Gospel lists themselves there is no ground for assuming that 'brother' is to be supplied. In the list in Luke, Andrew is identified as the brother of Peter by the addition of ἀδελφόν, though, it is true, this is not done in Acts. There these two brothers are separated, though the reason seems to be to place Peter, James and John together at the head of the list. Matthew uses the word 'brother' to join Peter and Andrew, and James and John, but shows no indication that there is any relation between James and Judas, whom he calls Thaddaeus.⁶⁷ Mark treats these pairs of brothers the

Debrunner, Friedrich Blaschke's Grammatik des neutestamentlichen Griechisch, fourth edition, par. 162, 4, p. 99.

65. Robertson, Grammar, p. 501

66. It is claimed that the word 'brother' must be supplied because of the opening words of the Epistle of Jude. There the author calls himself Ἰούδας Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ δούλος, ἀδελφὸς δὲ Ἰακώβου. However, to my mind this passage argues against a similar relationship in Lk. 6:16. The very fact that the writer of the Epistle of Jude supplies ἀδελφός in order to make his relationship to James clear, seems to indicate that he did not want this genitive understood in its usual sense of naming the father, but that he was referring to his brother. This involves the whole question of the authorship of the Epistle of James and that of Jude, something which it is not my purpose to discuss here. In passing, however, it should be said that both of these epistles can just as well have been written by brothers of Jesus as by Apostles.

67. Matthew uses the name 'Thaddaeus' in place of 'Jude of James.' There is also a Western variant, 'Lebbaeus,' and a conflate reading in the Textus Receptus, 'Lebbaeus who was called Thaddaeus.' The use of two names for the same person is not unusual.

same way as Luke has done in Acts and also gives no indication that James and Thaddaeus are brothers.

The genitive Ἰακώβου, it seems, is simply used by Luke to distinguish this Judas from the betrayer. If there were no parallel construction in these lists, there would be more room for argument, but there is a definite parallel in Ἰάκωβος Ἀλφαίου. This is quite generally translated in the usual way 'James, the son of Alphaeus.' Consequently, the parallel construction Ἰουδᾶς Ἰακώβου should be translated 'Judas, the son of James,' unless there would be some good reason for not doing so. That this James is otherwise unknown does not make any difference. The name is simply used as a means of distinguishing him from the betrayer. Alphaeus is also unknown, and yet his name is used in a similar way to distinguish his son from James the son of Zebedee.

Thus the natural interpretation of this passage points against the construction placed upon it by the advocates of the Hieronymian hypothesis. There is no reason for making this James and this Judas brothers and thus identifying them with the two Brethren of the Lord with the same names. Furthermore, this natural interpretation fits in well with the general picture which the Gospels give us of the Brethren of the Lord, namely, that they were not of the Twelve.

John 19:25

Matthew 27:56; Mark 15:40

In describing the Crucifixion John says: "But standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister,

Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene" (19:25). In describing this same scene Mark says: "There were also women looking on from afar, among whom were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the younger and of Joses, and Salome, who, when he was in Galilee, followed him, and ministered to him; and also many other women who came up with him to Jerusalem" (16:40f.). Matthew says: "There were also many women there, looking on from afar, who had followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering to him; among whom were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of the sons of Zebedee" (27:55f.).

These parallel accounts have raised the question: How many women are named specifically by the evangelists? or, how many of the women in these three accounts can be identified with each other? It should be noted, first of all, that the accounts of Matthew and Mark are very close to each other, in fact, so close that it seems probable that Matthew is simply following Mark here. That being the case, it becomes evident that Salome was the mother of the sons of Zebedee, since Matthew substitutes this latter phrase for Salome in Mark 15:40. Thus in the Synoptists' accounts three women are mentioned in particular: Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James the younger and of Joses, and Salome, who was the mother of James and John. However, once we compare this account with that of John, the picture is no longer so clear. The number of women mentioned by John is not absolutely certain.

The advocates of the Hieronymian hypothesis say John mentions three women, as do the Synoptists, though they are not entirely the same ones. It is here that the chain of identifications begins, a chain which ends eventually by making the Brethren of the Lord His cousins. Mary the mother of James the younger⁶⁸ and of Joses is identified with Mary the wife (?) of Clopas.⁶⁹ Furthermore, if only three women are mentioned in John's account, she is a sister of the mother of the Lord.⁷⁰ Thus the James and Joses of Mk. 15:40 are cousins of Jesus. The next step is to identify them with the James and Joses in Mk. 6:3, two of the Brethren of the Lord. There is yet one final step. Clopas (Κλωπᾶς) is identified with Alphaeus (Ἀλφαῖος), the father of James the apostle.⁷¹

68. Jerome makes much of ὁ μικρός to show that there were only two persons of importance in the apostolic Church by the name of James. He says: "James is called the less to distinguish him from James the greater, who was the son of Zebedee" (op. cit., chap. 14). But this is a misapplication of the Greek. He is not called James the less, but James the little, no doubt because he was small of stature (So Lightfoot, op. cit., pp. 262f.).

69. Such an identification is possible, though it need not necessarily be made. It might well be that she is distinguished from the other Marys in one case by her children (James and Joses) and in the other case by her husband (Clopas). However, the name Mary is so common in the Gospel narratives that these could easily be two different persons.

70. Here the advocates of this theory must face the problem that two sisters should both be named Mary. Various explanations have been given for this phenomenon, all the way from the conjecture that they were step-sisters originally coming from two separate families, to the view that the parents of the virgin named another daughter Mary because their first one was dedicated to the Lord and so lost to them. Unless some such reason is given, it is highly improbable that two sisters should have the same name.

71. The identification of Κλωπᾶς and Ἀλφαῖος has been made

That would make the James of Mk. 15:40 not only a cousin of Jesus but also one of His disciples. However, it becomes evident that if any one of these conjectures is wrong, the whole chain breaks, and almost every link has a definite weak spot.

While at first sight it may seem as though only three women are mentioned by John, closer consideration will reveal that no doubt there are four. If 'Mary the wife of Clopas'

by many commentators on the assumption that there is one Aramaic word behind both forms. However, there are others who have asserted just as strongly that these two words cannot come from the same original. Thus J.H. Bernard (A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to St. John, Vol. II, pp. 631f.) says: "Philological considerations will not permit us to reduce Clopas and Alphaeus to the same Hebrew original." Furthermore, Paul W. Schmiedel ("Clopas," in the Encyclopaedia Biblica, Vol. I, column 847) says: "This name cannot be derived from the same Hebrew (Aramaic) word as αλφάϊος. In the first place, the vocalization is not the same. Clopas would require some such form as 'Ⲛ'ⲓⲛ, while Alphaeus presupposes 'Ⲛ'ⲓⲛ or 'Ⲛ'ⲓⲛ. In the second place, as regards ⲓ, all that is certainly known is that it becomes K at the end and in the middle of certain words (2 Ch. 20:1; Neh. 3:6 [ⲡⲌⲤⲎⲔ]; Gen. 22:24 [ⲒⲌⲔⲎⲔ]; Josh. 16:6 [ⲒⲌⲎⲎⲔ]). True, it has been conjectured that the same holds true at the beginning of words. . . . This hardly comes into consideration, however, in the present case, for the Hebrew (or Aramaic) derivation is never probable in the case of a word beginning with two consonants. In Greek transliteration of Hebrew names, initial shēwā is always represented by a full vowel. . . . Further, the Syriac versions of the N.T. betray no consciousness that both names are derived from a common Semitic source; with them the initial letter of αλφάϊος is always ⲓ (or ⲓ), of κλωπᾶς P." Thus the evidence seems quite convincing that these two names do not come from a common Aramaic ancestor. Nor is there any definite proof that κλωπᾶς is identical with κλεόπᾶς, mentioned Lk. 24:18. Zahn makes such an identification (Forschungen, VI, pp. 351f.) and Lightfoot shows the possibility that they are the same name (op. cit., pp. 267f.). Such an identification would not effect the problem under discussion in any way.

is an appositive to 'his mother's sister,' then two sisters would have the same name. It is therefore much more likely that four women are mentioned in two pairs. Each pair is joined with a Kaí and no conjunction joins the two pairs.⁷²

If there are four women mentioned here, several other things become clear. John throughout his Gospel prefers to refer to himself simply as "the disciple whom Jesus love," rather than by name. It would be in keeping with that style for him to refer to his mother simply as "the sister of Jesus' mother" instead of mentioning her by name. Thus 'his mother's sister' would be equated with the 'mother of the sons of Zebedee' in Matt. 27:56, and with 'Salome' in Mk. 15:40. The sons of Zebedee then would be the Lord's cousins. As Westcott points out: "The near connexion of St. John with the mother of the Lord helps to explain the incident which follows, as well as the general relation in which St. John stood to the Lord."⁷³ It would also explain why James and John became members of that inner circle of Jesus' disciples, as well as the request of Salome that her sons might sit at the right

72. Concerning such a construction Bernard says: "The balance of the sentence, if four persons are indicated, is thoroughly Johannine" (*op. cit.*, p. 631. Zahn likewise says: "Nichts dagegen ist natürlicher als dasz eine Reihe von Personen paarweise aufgezählt und die Paare unverbunden nebeneinander gestellt werden, hier also zwei namenlose und zwei mit Namen und anderen Attributen ausgestattete Frauen" (*Ev. Johannes*, p. 647.)). A good example of just such a construction occurs in Matt. 10:2-4, where several of the Apostles are mentioned in pairs in exactly the same way as here. Thus grammatically this is possible, in fact, even probable.

73. Westcott, *op. cit.*, p. 276.

and left hand of Jesus in His glory (Matt. 20:20f.). Therefore also from this point of view it seems reasonable to follow the interpretation of Zahn, Westcott, Bernard, and others, who have taken these words of John to refer to four women. If that is correct, then, as Mayor says, "The foundation-stone of the Hieronymian theory is removed, and the whole fabric topples to the ground."⁷⁴ Thus this passage is another very vulnerable spot in the Hieronymian hypothesis. While it is not conclusive, it is a very important part of the cumulative evidence in the Gospels to the fact that the Brethren of the Lord were not disciples of Jesus before the Crucifixion.

John 19:26f.

There is yet one final point to consider in connection with the Crucifixion. After John mentions these four women at the cross, he goes on and says: "When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing near, he said to his mother, 'Woman, behold thy son!' Then he said to the disciple, 'Behold your mother!' And from that hour the disciple took her to his own house" (19:26f.). As was mentioned before (Chap. I, above), this act of Jesus is regarded by many as the greatest objection to the Helvidian hypothesis. How could Jesus do this if Mary had four sons and several daughters of her own?

In answering this question, it should be noted first of all that this objection does not apply simply to the Helvidian

74. Mayor, James, p. xx.

hypothesis but raises series questions for all three theories. The fact remains that in all but one passage in which the Brethren of the Lord appear in the Gospels, Mary is always mentioned with them. There is a definite close relationship existing between them and the Lord's mother, no matter what their blood relationship actually was.⁷⁵ Thus Lightfoot is unfair when he says that this objection "is powerless against the Epiphonian"⁷⁶ hypothesis. Why this close relationship which existed between the brothers of Jesus and Mary was ignored cannot be explained satisfactorily by any of the existing theories. Alford is correct when he says: "The reasons which influenced Him in His selection must ever be far beyond our penetration: -- and whatever relations to Him we suppose those brethren to have been, it will remain equally mysterious why He passed them over, who were so closely connected with His mother."⁷⁷

Various reasons have been given for this act of Jesus, but none are entirely satisfactory. The usual one is that Mary was given over into the keeping of John, because her

75. Most of the advocates of the Hieronymian hypothesis assume that Mary and the Brethren formed one household as the result of the death of Joseph or Alphaeus or of both.

76. Lightfoot, op. cit., p. 272. -- This also applies to Westcott, who says (op. cit., p. 276): "If, as appears most likely, the 'brethren' were sons of Joseph by a former marriage, and St. John was the son of the sister of the Lord's mother, the difficulty which has been felt as to the charge which he received in preference to the brethren, who appear among the first believers (Acts 1:14), wholly disappears. St. John was nearest to the virgin by ties of blood."

77. Alford, op. cit., p. 894.

sons did not believe in Jesus.⁷⁸ However, this argument loses much of its force when one remembers that soon after the resurrection (Acts 1:14) the Brethren of the Lord are mentioned in that first group of believers.

Mayor gives another reason which may be correct, though again it is not entirely convincing. He says:

It is generally supposed (from 1 Cor. 9:5) that the brothers of the Lord were married men: the usual age for marriage among the Jews was eighteen; supposing them to have been born before the visit to the Temple of the child Jesus, they would probably have married before his Crucifixion. If then all her children were dispersed in their several homes, and if, as we naturally infer, her nephew John was unmarried and living in a house of his own, is there anything unaccountable in the Lord's mother finding a home with the beloved disciple?⁷⁹

That John was no doubt well qualified to fulfill this request cannot be denied. There is reason to believe that he was not a poor fisherman as were most of the other disciples. Furthermore, it is apparent that he had the spiritual qualities to care for the mother of the Lord. He was also at hand under the cross at the time when Jesus committed His mother to Him. He therefore would certainly be the most logical one to care for her, if there had not been this other group, with whom she had been together for the past years. I do not believe there is any satisfactory explanation for this incident. However, it can not be hurled against the Hieronymian hypothesis only, to the exclusion of the others.

78. Even Bernard, op. cit., II, pp. 632., assumes that this is the reason.

79. Mayor, James, p. xxvi.

CONCLUSION

The problem of the Brethren of the Lord actually centers around the doctrine of the perpetual virginity of Mary.¹ If Mary remained a virgin all her life, then the Epiphanian or the Hieronymian hypothesis would furnish an acceptable explanation for the existence of the Brethren of the Lord in Scripture and early church history. On the other hand, if one does not accept this doctrine, then there is no valid, reason which can be urged against taking the word 'brother'

1. While there is no Scriptural evidence for the perpetual virginity, Luther continued to hold it throughout his life. Two passages in the Lutheran confessions have been interpreted by some as teaching this doctrine. In the Formula of Concord, Thor. Decl., VIII, 24, we read: "Is filius Dei etiam in utero matris divinam suam maiestatem demonstravit, quod de virgine, inviolata ipsius virginitate natus est. Unde et vere θεοτόκος, Dei genitrix est et tamen virgo mansit" (Concordia Triglotta, p. 1022). Schaller is no doubt correct when he says concerning these words: "This obviously does not declare that she remained a virgin ever after, but emphasizes the fact that the birth of Christ made no change in her virginity" (John Schaller, Biblical Christology, p. 62.). The reference to Mary as semper virgo in the Smalcald Articles (Part One, Section IV, p. 460 in Concordia Triglotta) is not found in Luther's first German edition of 1538, but is in the Latin. However, the first Latin translation--that of Peter Generanus--did not appear until 1541. The final revision for the Latin Concordia was made in 1584, while the German text of Luther's first edition of 1538 was received into the Book of Concord (Concordia Triglotta, p. 60). See also P.E. Kretzmann, "Das Semper Virgo und die 'Brüder (Geschwister) Jesu,'" in Concordia Theological Monthly, V (Feb., 1934), pp. 108-113. There the author concludes that the Confessions cannot be used against the Helvidian hypothesis.

in its most literal sense. Both Matt. 1:25 and Lk. 2:7 seem to indicate that the Evangelists knew nothing of the perpetual virginity of Mary and so used phrases which are most naturally interpreted as implying that the marriage of Joseph and Mary was consummated after the birth of Jesus and blessed with children. The only passage which has been advanced in favor of the perpetual virginity (Lk. 1:34) offers a real problem to such an interpretation.

Furthermore, the Brethren of the Lord appear in Scripture as a separate group from the Apostles. It is true, there are several passages in the Epistles of Paul (1 Cor. 9:5; 15:7; Gal. 1:18f.; 2:9) where it is possible to argue that some of them are included among the Twelve. However, these passages must be viewed in the light of the references to the Brethren in the Gospels, where they always appear as a separate (sometimes even antagonistic) group from the Twelve. Then, too, the passages in the Epistles which are doubtful can be explained just as easily by assuming that the brothers were not of the Twelve.

This point becomes all the more clear when the passages used to supply the needed links in the Hieronymian hypothesis are examined carefully. It is much more in keeping with ordinary usage to translate "Judas son of James" (Lk. 6:14f.; Acts 1:13) and to assume that John mentions four women instead of three in his account of the Crucifixion (Jn. 19:25). Thus this identification, which is an integral part of the Hiero-

nymian hypothesis, is very improbable.

The fact that the brothers of Jesus are mentioned together with Mary in all but one instance in the Gospels also leads one to conclude that they were not the cousins of Jesus, but His real brothers. This fact is not only an argument against the Hieronymian hypothesis, but is one of the difficulties of the Epiphanian theory. This latter hypothesis must also face the natural meaning of Matt. 1:25 and Lk. 2:7, and the lack of any direct evidence which might point in that direction.

To sum up the position of Scripture, in any objective weighing of evidence, the Hieronymian hypothesis is outweighed by far by either of the other two. In fact, Scripture makes this theory highly improbable. Of the two remaining ones, the natural meaning of the passages involved definitely favor the Helvidian hypothesis, though many of the objections raised against the theory of Jerome are powerless against that of Epiphanius.

The tradition of the early Church is also important in evaluating these theories. Again, this tradition leaves little room for the Hieronymian hypothesis. No church father can be appealed to in defense of this theory until the close of the fourth century, when Jerome himself championed it. Nor does he claim any earlier support for his view. Furthermore, the purpose for which he advocated it is clear. He was interested in preserving not only the perpetual virginity of Mary but that of Joseph also. Both the ascetic movement and the ten-

dency toward "deification" of the Lord's mother were highly developed. His view fits into this picture perfectly.

The Epiphanian theory, on the other hand, is much older. In fact, definite references to it are found as early as 150. However, all these references are in unreliable apocryphal literature, some of which was obviously written to glorify Mary. The first church father to refer to this theory is Clement of Alexandria, who was active at the close of the second century. However, a contemporary of his, Tertullian, though himself an advocate of asceticism, takes it for granted in the way he argues against the followers of Marcion that Jesus had real brothers, sons of Mary. Origen, the successor of Clement, names certain of these apocryphal Gospels as the source for the view that the Brethren of the Lord were older sons of Joseph from a former marriage. Thus this theory seems to find its origin in unreliable apocryphal literature.

It is true, outside Tertullian there is little direct evidence for the Helvidian hypothesis in the Early Church. Yet the background against which the Epiphanian theory grew up is one of the most important points to consider in defense of the Helvidian view. That background of a growing asceticism and veneration for Mary explains more than anything else the origin and the perpetuation of the Epiphanian hypothesis. Ropes is correct when he says concerning this theory:

It seems to derive its origin, and certainly gained its rapid spread, from the feeling of veneration for the Virgin Mary which has produced so vast an outgrowth of legends about her life. This was here con-

joined with the far-reaching asceticism which, foreign to Judaism, came with Hellenism into Christian thought and life. Ascetic doctrine speedily supplemented the virgin birth by the perpetual virginity of Mary; hence a first wife had to be assumed as the mother of Joseph's children.²

The following, then, is a summary of the facts, as presented in this Thesis. The Hieronymian hypothesis is ruled out almost completely by an objective study of Scripture and tradition. The Epiphonian hypothesis likewise finds little trustworthy support and seems to be a natural outgrowth of the religious attitudes of the first centuries of the Christian era. The Helvidian hypothesis, on the other hand, is the most natural and satisfying explanation. With it we do not in any way detract from the miraculous nature of the virgin birth, nor from the honor which Mary deserves as the chosen vessel from whom the Lord Jesus was born. That He had brothers and sisters with whom He grew up is in no way inconsistent with what we know of Jesus. He was the Son of Man even in this respect, our Brother, who is able to appreciate the joys and problems of family life, not as an only child, but as the first-born son in a family made up of God-fearing parents and children.

2. James Ropes, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle of St. James, p. 55.

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