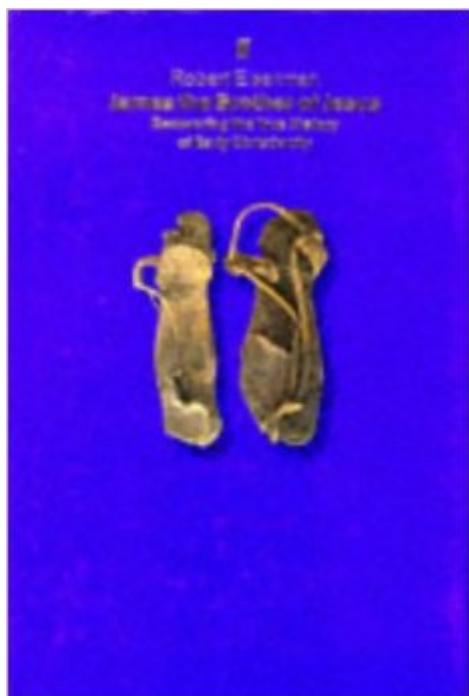


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James, The Brother Of Jesus: The Key To Unlocking The Secrets Of Early Christianity And The Dead Sea Scrolls



Synopsis

In a work of detection based on a lifetime of research, a co-author of "The Dead Sea Scrolls Uncovered" identifies the "missing link" between Judaism and early Christianity as James the Just, the brother of Jesus. Professor Eisenman argues that, as the leader of all opposition groups in Jerusalem, James - a figure almost entirely marginalized in the New Testament - was the heir to Jesus and the true successor in Palestine to the movement we now call Christianity.

Book Information

Hardcover: 865 pages

Publisher: Faber & Faber (July 7, 1997)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0571175732

ISBN-13: 978-0571175734

Product Dimensions: 1 x 1 x 1 inches

Shipping Weight: 4.2 pounds

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 starsÂ See all reviewsÂ (5 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #706,987 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #68 inÂ Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Bible Study & Reference > Additional Texts > Dead Sea Scrolls #4385 inÂ Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Leaders & Notable People > Religious #144249 inÂ Books > Religion & Spirituality

Customer Reviews

Robert Eisenman was the leading figure in the movement to free the Dead Sea Scrolls and make them all public, which was essential to start understanding what happened twenty centuries ago around Jesus. The present book is the result of his lifelong research in Middle East religious history. First the method. He brings together all documents available from the end of the 1st century BC to the beginning of the 3rd century CE. He considers all that is common but that does not give him the truth. For him the truth may come, and any interpretation can only come, from the differences in overlapping documents. He considers all documents are ideological interpretations of facts and stylistic rewriting of these same facts. The New Testament is a complete rewriting in Greek (he uses the concept of overwrites) of previous documents (he does not specify what they were : probably oral tradition in local semitic languages). He tries to decipher the rewriting and discover the buried version, using the method invented and devised by Kenneth Burke in his logology and his approach of Augustine. And it is the different elements he can find in other documents that lead him along the

way to a reasonable and effective interpretation. Second the style. His extremely detailed work leads him to many repetitions of documents and facts in the whole book. It is circular, but each document or fact that is used several times, is used every single time in different conditions and thus helps build a different interpretation and thus gets a different meaning. We have to be patient and very humble in our search for truth, because one fact can have a great number of values and interpretations. That is the style at book level.

In this massive and challenging scholarly tome, Eisenman seeks to reconstruct the earliest origins of what became Christianity. Drawing on sources such as the Dead Sea Scrolls, Apostolic Constitutions, Clementine Recognitions & Homilies, Eusebius, the Western Text of Acts, Josephus and the Slavonic Josephus plus the two James Apocalypses from the Nag Hammadi library, he investigates the personalities and events behind a formative proto- Christianity with reference to the struggle between the Jamesian and Pauline strains. The major finding is that Jamesian "Christianity" emerged from the Zadokite priestly sect that was not much different from, overlapped with or later became Essenes, Zealots, Nazoreans, Nazirites, Ebionites and Mandaeans. John the Baptist might have been the founder and is likely to have been succeeded by James the Just. Yeshua/Jesus did not occupy a soteriological role in this movement which eventually fragmented along the lines of loyalty to Jesus (Ebionite Christianity), John the Baptist (the Mandaeans), and James the Just (the Qumran sect). In his earlier work now available as *Dead Sea Scrolls And The First Christians*, the author identifies James the Just as the Qumran Teacher of Righteousness. James's struggle against Paul is one of the major themes in the book under review. The person of Yeshua was not central to the movement whilst the canonical Twelve Apostles were an artificial replacement for the smaller circle of his brothers. The portrait of Jesus in the Greek gospels appears to be based on episodes relating to various messianic and prophetic figures in Josephus.

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