

H-1.-b-396

THE EARLY CENTURIES

Jewish Believers
in **JESUS**

OSKAR SKARSAUNE

and

REIDAR HVALVIK, *Editors*



Jewish Believers in Jesus: The Early Centuries

© 2007 by Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.

P. O. Box 3473

Peabody, Massachusetts 01961-3473

ISBN 978-1-56563-763-4

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

Printed in the United States of America

Second Printing, corrected — November 2007

Cover Photo: iStockPhoto.com. Used with permission.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Jewish believers in Jesus : the early centuries / [edited by] Oskar Skarsaune and Reidar Hvalvik.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and indexes.

ISBN-13: 978-1-56563-763-4 (alk. paper)

1. Jewish Christians—History—Early church, ca. 30–600.

I. Skarsaune, Oskar, 1946– II. Hvalvik, Reidar.

BR195.J8J49 2006

270.1089'924—dc22

2006021311



Contents

<i>Preface</i>	xi
<i>Contributors</i>	xv
<i>Abbreviations</i>	xix

Part One: Introduction

1 Jewish Believers in Jesus in Antiquity—Problems of Definition, Method, and Sources	3
<i>Oskar Skarsaune, Oslo, Norway</i>	
1. The Question of Definition	3
2. Questions of Method and Sources	16
2 The Definition of the Terms <i>Jewish Christian</i> and <i>Jewish Christianity</i> in the History of Research	22
<i>James Carleton Paget, Cambridge, England</i>	
1. The Origin of the Term “Jewish Christian”	23
2. Various Definitions since Baur	30
3. Concluding Observations	48

Part Two: Jewish Believers in Jesus in The New Testament and Related Material

3 James and the Jerusalem Community	55
<i>Richard Bauckham, St. Andrews, Scotland</i>	
1. The Community’s Self-Understanding	55
2. The Community’s Life and Practice	60
3. Leadership	66
4. Mission and Gentile Believers	70
5. Opposition from the Jewish Authorities in Jerusalem (up to the Death of James)	75
6. After James	77

7. Prosopography of the Jerusalem Church	81
8. Literature	93
4 Paul as a Jewish Believer—According to His Letters	96
<i>Donald A. Hagner, Pasadena, California, United States</i>	
1. The Changing Understanding of Paul	97
2. Studies in Continuity and Discontinuity	101
3. Old and New in Paul	118
5 Paul as a Jewish Believer—According to the Book of Acts	121
<i>Reidar Hvalvik, Oslo, Norway</i>	
1. Paul in Acts—The Problem	121
2. Paul's Continued Relation to the Synagogue	123
3. The Circumcision of Timothy	135
4. Paul Assuming Vows	139
5. Paul Participating in Jewish Festivals	143
6. Paul as a Pharisee and "Orthodox" Jew	145
7. Conclusion	151
6 Named Jewish Believers Connected with the Pauline Mission	154
<i>Reidar Hvalvik, Oslo, Norway</i>	
1. Prosopography of Jewish Believers Connected with Paul and His Mission	155
2. Other Possible Jewish Believers Attested in the Pauline Letters and Acts	170
3. Conclusion	177
7 Jewish Believers and Jewish Influence in the Roman Church until the Early Second Century	179
<i>Reidar Hvalvik, Oslo, Norway</i>	
1. The Origin of the Church in Rome	180
2. The Jewish Community in Rome	184
3. Paul's Letter to the Romans	190
4. The Roman Churches until Nero's Persecution	196
5. Traces of Jewish Influence in the Roman Church after Paul and Peter	203
6. Epilogue	215
8 Jewish Believers in Asia Minor according to the Book of Revelation and the Gospel of John	217
<i>Peter Hirschberg, Bayreuth, Germany</i>	
1. The Revelation of John	218

2. The Gospel of John	230
3. Revelation and the Gospel of John in Comparison	237
Part Three: The Literary Heritage of Jewish Believers	
9 The Jewish Christian Gospel Tradition	241
<i>Craig A. Evans, Wolfville, Nova Scotia, Canada</i>	
1. Introduction	241
2. Matthew: A New Testament Jewish Gospel	242
3. The Jewish Gospels outside the New Testament	245
4. Fragments of Jewish Gospels	258
5. Results	276
10 Jewish Christian Editing of the Old Testament Pseudepigrapha	278
<i>Torleif Elgvin, Oslo, Norway</i>	
1. Introduction	278
2. <i>Lives of the Prophets</i>	281
3. <i>Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs</i>	286
4. <i>Ascension of Isaiah</i>	292
5. <i>Fourth Baruch (Paraleipomena Jeremiou)</i>	295
6. <i>Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Ezra</i>	299
7. <i>Apocalypse of Abraham 29:3–13</i>	302
8. <i>Sibylline Oracles</i>	303
9. Tentative Conclusions	304
11 Jewish Christian Elements in the Pseudo-Clementine Writings	305
<i>Graham Stanton, Cambridge, England</i>	
1. An Overview of the Extant Writings	307
2. Towards a Tradition History	309
3. The <i>Letter of Peter (EpPet)</i> and the <i>Contestatio (C)</i>	313
4. Anti-Paul Traditions in the <i>Homilies</i>	315
5. An Apologia for Jewish Believers in Jesus [<i>Recognitions 1, parts of 27–71</i>]	317
6. Conclusions	323
12 Fragments of Jewish Christian Literature Quoted in Some Greek and Latin Fathers	325
<i>Oskar Skarsaune, Oslo, Norway</i>	
1. Introduction	325
2. Traces of Early Jewish Christian Eschatology (1): Papias	326
3. Traces of Early Jewish Christian Eschatology (2): The "Elders" in Irenaeus	333

4. Jewish Christian Traditions about James and the Early Community: Hegeppus	338
5. Traditions from the Relatives of Jesus: Julius Sextus Africanus	348
6. Jewish Christian Traditions in Origen	361
7. Nazoraean Fragments in Jerome	373
13 Jewish Christian Sources Used by Justin Martyr and Some Other Greek and Latin Fathers	379
<i>Oskar Skarsaune, Oslo, Norway</i>	
1. Introduction	379
2. Jewish Christian Sources in Justin	380
3. Material from the "Kerygma Source"	381
4. Material from the Other Source behind the <i>Dialogue</i>	398
5. Conclusions to Chapters 12 and 13	414
 Part Four: Jewish Christian Groups according to the Greek and Latin Fathers	
14 The Ebionites	419
<i>Oskar Skarsaune, Oslo, Norway</i>	
1. Preliminary Considerations	419
2. The Sources	423
3. The Term <i>Ebionim</i>	424
4. Ebionitic Doctrines and Practices according to the Fathers	427
5. Conclusion	462
15 The Nazoraeans	463
<i>Wolfram Kinzig, Bonn, Germany</i>	
1. The Sources	463
2. Some Remarks on Terminology	468
3. Main Features of the Group	471
4. The Origins of the Nazoraeans	478
5. The Condemnation of the <i>Noṣrim</i> in the Birkat Haminim	482
6. Conclusion	486
16 Cerinthus, Elxai, and Other Alleged Jewish Christian Teachers or Groups	488
<i>Gunnar af Hällström, Joensuu, Finland, and Oskar Skarsaune, Oslo, Norway</i>	
1. Cerinthus	488
2. Elxai, Elkesaites, and Sampseans	496
3. Conclusion	501

Part Five: Other Literary and Archaeological Evidence for Jewish Believers	
17 Evidence for Jewish Believers in Greek and Latin Patristic Literature	505
<i>Oskar Skarsaune, Oslo, Norway</i>	
1. Ignatius (ca. 110 C.E.?)	505
2. Justin Martyr (150–160 C.E.)	510
3. Celsus	514
4. Polycrates of Ephesus (ca. 195 C.E.) on the Quartodecimans	516
5. Epiphanius on Joseph of Tiberias	528
6. Jerome (331–420)	541
7. Gennadius on Isaac the Jew	549
8. Socrates	551
9. Sozomen	557
10. Severus of Minorca	559
18 Evidence for Jewish Believers in the Syriac Fathers	568
<i>Sten Hidal, Lund, Sweden</i>	
1. The Emergence of Christianity in Syria	568
2. The Sources	570
3. Jewish Believers in Jesus in Syria?	578
19 Evidence for Jewish Believers in Christian-Jewish Dialogues through the Sixth Century (excluding Justin)	581
<i>Lawrence Lahey, New Orleans, Louisiana, United States</i>	
1. Survey of the Dialogues	585
2. The Role of <i>Contra Iudaeos</i> Literature in Christian-Jewish Interaction	620
3. Conclusion	631
4. Appendix	637
20 Evidence for Jewish Believers in "Church Orders" and Liturgical Texts	640
<i>Anders Ekenberg, Uppsala, Sweden</i>	
1. The Sources	640
2. <i>Didache</i>	643
3. <i>The Odes of Solomon</i> and <i>The Apostolic Tradition</i>	646
4. <i>Didascalia Apostolorum</i>	649
5. <i>The Apostolic Constitutions</i>	653
6. Conclusion	657
21 Jewish Believers in Early Rabbinic Literature (2d to 5th^s Centuries)	659
<i>Philip S. Alexander, Manchester, England</i>	
1. Problems of Method	659
2. Jewish Believers in Tannaitic Sources	665

3. Jewish Believers in Amoraic Sources	687
4. General Conclusions	708
22 Archaeological Evidence of Jewish Believers?	710
<i>James F. Strange, Tampa, Florida, United States</i>	
1. Previous Studies	710
2. Ossuary Inscriptions	711
3. Inscriptions, Amulets, and the Bethphage Graffiti	718
4. Architectural Remains: Nazareth, Capernaum, Beth Ha-Shittah	723
5. "Venerated Caves" in Nazareth and Bethany	732
6. Jerusalem's "Essene Quarter" and Mt. Zion	737
7. Conclusion: The Problem of Method	740
 Part Six: Conclusion and Outlook 	
23 The History of Jewish Believers in the Early Centuries— Perspectives and Framework	745
<i>Oskar Skarsaune, Oslo, Norway</i>	
1. The Purpose and Approach of this Chapter	745
2. Jewish Believers in Jesus—An Artificial Category?	747
3. How Close Were Jews and Christians in Antiquity?	749
4. Were Jewish Believers in Jesus to Be Found in Clearly Defined Sects?	754
5. Where Do We Find the Jewish Believers?	755
6. How Many Jewish Believers in Jesus Were There?	767
7. The Significance of the Constantinian Revolution	772
8. Concluding Remarks	777
 Bibliography	 783
Index of Modern Authors	885
Index of Subjects	896
Index of Ancient Sources (selective)	907



Preface

They just don't fit very neatly; they never did. Ever since it became clear that the law-free mission to the [G]entiles would create a church and not a synagogue, Jewish-Christianity has been an uncomfortable reality with which to deal. The "Synagogue" didn't like it. The "Church Catholic" didn't like it. And modern scholarship, far less ready to accept the vagaries of a religion that resembles but cannot be made to fit known varieties of religion, seems to like it even less. . . . Yet it is the very fact that Jewish-Christianity occupies a middle ground between Judaism and Christianity (as though there were such "normative" religions in antiquity or today) that makes it the object of fascination to modern scholarship.¹

This is as true today as when Burton L. Visotzky wrote it in 1989. The present book is another fruit of this "object of fascination." In 1995 the director of the Caspari Center of Biblical and Jewish Studies in Jerusalem, Torkild Masvie, suggested to me that time was ripe for a full history of Jewish Christianity, or rather, as we soon agreed, a history of the Jewish believers in Jesus—the "they" rather than the "it" in Visotzky's quote.

In a moment of rashness that came with enthusiasm for the idea I agreed to act as chief editor of such a project. Had I known the magnitude and the difficulty of the subject, I would certainly have thought twice about undertaking the task. In any case, it took quite some time before the initial idea had gestated so as to be mature for birth. I soon realized that the organizational part was completely beyond my capacity, and I was happy to be joined by my good and close colleague Reidar Hvalvik, who has carried the main burden of organization, and also, and increasingly as the work went along, acted as co-editor. Without his administrative, organizational, and editorial talents, this project had never been realized.

I realized right from the beginning that this was a subject beyond the competence of one scholar. We would have to be a team in order to handle the different

¹ Burton L. Visotzky, "Prolegomenon to the Study of Jewish-Christianities," *AJSR* 14 (1989): 47.