

James, Brother of Jesus, and the Jerusalem Church: A Radical Exploration of Christian Origins

Alan Saxby

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James, Brother of Jesus, and the Jerusalem Church opens fresh ground in our understanding of Christian origins through an exploration of the role of James in the founding of the church. Based on the author's doctoral research, that first Christian church, with its roots in the Baptist movement, is shown to be part of the broad contemporary Judaic movement for the restoration of Israel. The events surrounding the death of Jesus (their leader's brother) both confirmed their commitment to Judaic reform and transformed their understanding of it. Despite the impact of that experience, they seem to have had neither knowledge nor interest in the teaching and ministry of Jesus in Galilee. Set in the world of James, this careful study of the difficulties and opportunities facing Judaic peasants in first-century Palestine proposes that James and his other brothers moved to Jerusalem (where work was available) several years before the final visit of Jesus and, under James's leadership, became the kernel of a growing group of followers of the Baptist that would later emerge onto the page of history as the Jerusalem Church.



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