AS one reads the New Testament and other early Christian documents, he cannot help but recognize how little we know about James, "the brother of the Lord". What little information we do possess tends to confuse any real understanding of the man and his work. This results, in large degree, from two different factors: (1) most of the canonical writers, representing a viewpoint quite opposed to that of James, tended to downgrade him; (2) while the more conservative early Christians tended to elevate him to a place of ever greater importance.

It is uncertain just when James became a member of the Christian movement. Many writers feel that James (and his brothers) did not follow Jesus during the period of his ministry. This view is usually based upon the episode where the family of Jesus, feeling that Jesus is "beside himself", attempts to seize him in order to withdraw him from his work.¹ Later Christians "remembered" the family's opposition to Jesus and retained this story. It is unknown, however, at what point in his career this event may have happened.

When the book of Acts was written some sixty years after the start of Christianity, the author assumed that the brothers of Jesus had belonged to the movement from the time of its Jerusalem beginnings.² When Paul mentioned the resurrection appearances of Jesus, one of them was to James.³ It seems necessary to agree with Johannes Weiss that "there must

¹ Mark iii. 21, 31.
² Acts i. 14. The author purposely obscures the fact that the followers of Jesus left Jerusalem at the time of the crucifixion. To him the Jerusalem beginnings and the Church's beginnings would be the same.
³ 1 Cor. xv. 7. The resurrection appearances probably took place in Galilee, although Paul assigns no geographical setting.
accordingly have taken place a change of attitude on the part of the brothers, sometime before the appearance to James."¹ What may have happened, however, remains unknown.

Not only the time of James's inclusion in the movement but also the nature of his earliest position in the Church is unknown. It would seem that, practically from the beginning, he occupied an authoritative and dominant place in the Christian community. Paul, three years after his experience on the Damascus Road (c. A.D. 35), visited Cephas (Peter) and James but saw "none of the other apostles".² Although this passage in Galatians suggests that James did not have quite the same outstanding position that Peter possessed, it none the less makes clear the fact that "it was already impossible for a Christian believer to make a stay in Jerusalem without coming into contact with James".³

Certainly by the time of Paul's second visit to the Jerusalem leaders ⁴ James stands on an equal position with Cephas and John. James, Cephas, and John are regarded as "pillars" (στύλοι) of the Christian movement and are the ones who make the authoritative decisions concerning the faith and practice of the Church.⁵ By the time Paul writes Galatians, James, who is listed first in Galatians ii. 9 and who is significantly identified as "the Lord's brother", has become the leader of the Church.⁶ The later author of the Book of Acts attests this supreme position of James.⁷ Brandon writes that "James is obviously regarded as pre-eminent; he enjoys the unique designation of the Lord's brother . . ., his name is given precedence over those of others when they are mentioned together, and to the reproof of his emissaries at Antioch Peter, without apparent protest, submits".⁸

¹ Johannes Weiss, *Earliest Christianity: A History of the Period A. D. 30-150*, trans. by Frederick C. Grant (New York, 1937), i. 52. ² Gal. i. 18-19. ³ Oscar Cullmann, *Peter: Disciple, Apostle, Martyr*, trans. by Floyd V. Filson (London, 1953), p. 39. This passage in Galatians makes no definite statement about the nature of Peter's leadership, whether single or shared. ⁴ Gal. ii. 1. It is uncertain whether the "then after fourteen years" refers to his conversion experience or his first trip to Jerusalem. ⁵ Ibid. ii. 9. ⁶ Ibid. i. 18-19; ii. 12. ⁷ Acts xii. 17; xv. 13, 19; xxii. 18. ⁸ S. G. F. Brandon, *The Fall of Jerusalem and the Christian Church: A Study of the Effects of the Jewish Overthrow of A. D. 70 on Christianity* (London, 1951), p. 20. On page 5 he notes: "This situation with regard to the leadership of the Church certainly does not correspond with that which the Gospels seem to
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Even though at first James had not, according to the later (and somewhat unfriendly) gospel tradition, belonged to the inner circle of Jesus’ followers—or perhaps to the movement at all—he was very early counted as one of the “apostles”.¹ It was primarily his status as a physical brother of Jesus which elevated him to this position alongside Peter and the others.² Along with Peter and John (and possibly James the son of Zebedee also in the earliest days), James gave leadership and guidance to the movement. There is a real doubt that “The Twelve” ever occupied this position. Only three of the Twelve ever emerge as personalities in the Synoptic material.³ Some scholars point out that the historical reality of The Twelve is open to serious doubt.⁴

James, as the Lord’s brother, soon outpaced the others as leaders of the Church. Lietzmann writes that

The leader of the first Church was James. He had gladly been given this honour, immediately on joining the Church, obviously because he was Jesus’ brother. After James’ death, a cousin of Jesus was chosen to be his successor,

presuppose. In these writings Jesus is represented as having a special band of twelve disciples 'to be with him' and among these Cephas or Peter is obviously the leader. James, the lord’s brother, is definitely not reckoned among these twelve, and, moreover, he is represented by inference as unsympathetic and perhaps even hostile to the mission of Jesus. Peter, on the other hand, is not only depicted as the spokesman and leader of the twelve, but also singled out as the recipient of special attention from Jesus, and in one Gospel he is actually described as receiving a unique spiritual authority from the Master. Thus a strange lacuna appears in our picture of the constitution of the Church in the matter of government as we move from the later Gospels to the earlier Epistles. If the Gospel version be true, then clearly in some unexplained way Peter had been ousted from his original primacy by James, the erstwhile sceptical brother of the Lord. How such an unexpected change was effected during the two vital decades after the Crucifixion obviously presents a problem of considerable moment for a proper understanding of Christian Origins.” See also Burnett Hillman Streeter, The Primitive Church (London, 1929), p. 39.

¹ Gal. i. 19.
² Cullmann, op. cit. p. 39.
³ Brandon, op. cit. p. 49. Sherman E. Johnson, Jesus in His Homeland (New York, 1957), p. 41, points out that the Qumran community was ruled by a group of twelve men, including three priests. He raises the question of the possibility that there may have existed among the early Christians, just as in the Essene community, “a council which included an inner leadership of three men”.
and, even at a later date, blood relations of Jesus enjoyed special regard in the Church.\textsuperscript{1}

Streeter likewise emphasizes the importance of this blood relationship of James to Jesus (and David) when he writes,

\ldots the position of James as the eldest male of the Messianic House, brought it about that in the Church of Jerusalem there was from the earliest times a single person credited with unique authority, different in kind from that of the ordinary presbyter. From the first, then, the government of this church was of the type that it will be convenient to describe by the adjective "monepiscopal"—which I shall use to imply the presidency of an individual "bishop" whose status is confessedly much more than that of \textit{primus inter pares} among the presbyters.\textsuperscript{2}

Another factor which contributed to the ascendancy of James was the controversy stirred up by the presence of the Hellenists within the early Christian movement. Stephen, the great spokesman for the Hellenists, brought death upon himself and persecution to Christianity by his extreme beliefs, statements, and practices.\textsuperscript{3} Weiss feels that "the death of Stephen was a warning to be cautious and gave the upper hand to the conservative element in the Church".\textsuperscript{4}

Any swing to the right could only benefit James. James's religious beliefs were primarily those of the orthodox Jew of the first century—"modified little save by the


\textsuperscript{2} Streeter, op. cit. p. 73. See also Joseph Klauser, \textit{From Jesus to Paul}, trans. by William F. Stinespring (London, 1943), p. 350; Brandon, op. cit. p. 50.


\textsuperscript{4} Weiss, op. cit. i. 171. He continues: "Perhaps the distrust of the primitive church for the Hellenistic movement dates from this period, that distrust which becomes prominent in the story of Paul, and also that stiffening in its attitude of loyalty to the Law which we notice more and more as time goes on, and the rise to great prominence of James who now takes up the leadership of the church. It is at this period that the saying about the jot and tittle (Matt. v. 18), if it did not actually originate, at any rate began to be emphasized as the shibboleth of the stricter tendency in the church. Moreover the narrow-minded missionary regulation 'Go not into any way of the Gentiles, and enter not into any city of the Samaritans' \ldots must have originated at this time. What was in Jesus' case instinctive self-limitation, has here become a maxim of exclusiveness. One would probably not go far astray in surmising that this timid attitude of fear of defilement, so foreign to the spirit of Jesus, emerged only when the primitive church, alarmed by far-reaching enterprises, withdrew completely within itself and confined itself to work among its own race."
conviction that He was the Messiah, which followed on a post-
resurrection appearance". 1 James, and the school of thought
which followed him, "strove for the ideal of Jewish ' rightous-
ness'". 2 Later tradition pictured James as a devout man who
was held in high respect by the Jews; through his long and
frequent prayers his knees had grown callouses "like a camel's". 3

Stephen's work brought persecution and suffering upon the
early Christian community. Acts reports, "And on that day a
great persecution arose against the Church in Jerusalem: and
they were all scattered throughout the region of Judea and
Samaria, . . .". 4 The author of Acts qualifies this statement by
saying that all but the apostles fled. This probably results from
his desire to show that The Twelve never left Jerusalem—a view
which also led him to hide the fact that the disciples returned to
Galilee after the crucifixion and likewise caused him to move
the resurrection appearances of Jesus to the Jerusalem area. In
all probability Peter and the other apostles must have fled or at
least gone into hiding. James, as one of the most "loyal" Jews,
would not have been bothered. An interesting parallel to this
occurs a few years later when Agrippa I put James the son of
Zebedee to death and arrested Peter (c. a.d. 43-44). Peter was
"miraculously" delivered from prison and fled from Jerusalem. 5
James then became the leader of the Jerusalem Church. James
and the Christian community in Jerusalem were then free from
being disturbed by the authorities for almost twenty years.
This, says Klausner, was because "James was punctilious about
observing the ritual requirements and honouring the Temple". 6

These three factors—James's blood relationship to Jesus (and
David), the swing to conservatism following Stephen's death, and

1 Streeter, op. cit. p. 73. 2 Lietzmann, op. cit. p. 66.
3 Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, ii. xxiii, 4-18.
4 Acts viii. 1 5 Acts xii. 1-17.
6 Klausner, op. cit. p. 348. It was not until a.d. 62 that a change occurred.
At this time the high priest Ananus convened the Sanhedrin upon his own author-
ity and condemned James to death. The Pharisees were displeased by this act
and complained to Agrippa II. They also met with Albinus, the newly appointed
procurator, while he was still in Alexandria and complained that Ananus had
unlawfully convened the Sanhedrin. Ananus was therefore removed from office
after having been high priest only three months. See Josephus, *Antiquities*, xx,
lx. 1.
the departure of Peter and others from Jerusalem—combined to make James the great leader of the early Church. Flew points out clearly the dominant position which came to James:

It is James who is the leader of the Church at the time of Peter’s release from prison. When a formal decision is chronicled at the Council of Jerusalem, it is James who makes the decisive speech. It is probably true that Protestant exegetes and historians have been inclined to underestimate the position of Peter among the Apostles, and in the primitive community. But it is equally true that if we were to call any Apostle “pope” in a primitive hierarchy, it would be not Peter, but James. The Twelve disappear from the pages of Acts after the Council of Jerusalem. According to the Travel-Document used in the last part of the book, Paul meets James and the elders when he visits Jerusalem for the last time.1

In the above quotation we glimpse the power and thought of James at work at two different times during the period of his leadership of the Mother Church in Jerusalem (and, therefore, of the whole Church). Paul and Barnabas, because of the attacks of the Judaisers upon their work, came to Jerusalem to meet with James and the other leaders of the Church. At this conference James made the decisive speech. Out of this came some sort of “general agreement” (something which is often interpreted in different ways when the parties involved attempt to write down their own understanding of what was arrived at.) Out of this decision—either immediately or some time later—came the “Apostolic Decree” governing the terms under which Gentiles were to be admitted.2

In connection with this problem one should point out that at a later time some people commissioned by James appeared in Antioch, the centre of the Gentile mission, and insisted that a Jewish Christian could not disregard the Law in any way—thereby making table-fellowship between Jewish and Gentile Christians impossible. This was responsible for Peter’s “backsliding” from his earlier and more liberal position. Paul says,

2 Acts xv. 29. Many scholars feel that Paul never “set his hand” to these provisions. Some would feel that these represent essentially what was agreed upon at this Jerusalem Conference while others would feel that James and his followers later sent these to Antioch to cover the situation. See Burnett Hillman Streeter, The Four Gospels: A Study of Origins (London, 1924), pp. 550-1 and Brandon, op. cit. pp. 27-8.
But when Cephas came to Antioch I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned. For before certain men came from James, he ate with the Gentiles; but when they came he drew back and separated himself, fearing the circumcision party. And with him the rest of the Jews acted insincerely, so that even Barnabas was carried away by their insincerity.¹

James, through the weight of his position and argument, was able to convince Peter and Barnabas that the Jewish food laws must be observed if fellowship were to be continued. The fact that these two established leaders in the missionary field changed their views on the terms of Gentile inclusion shows the strength of James's power.²

The final episode which throws light on the nature of James's position comes from near the end of his life—when Paul makes his last journey to Jerusalem, probably to accompany and interpret the "collection for the poor" which Gentile Christians had collected for the use of the Jerusalem Church.³ Acts records that, upon his arrival, Paul went "unto James; and all the elders were present".⁴ Brandon says,

The picture thus given of James as the essential head of the Mother Church, attended by the elders, must certainly be a natural expression of the author's conception of the organization of the authority in the apostolic community, a conception which by virtue of its tacit inclusion in the narrative must surely be regarded as representative of common knowledge in contemporary Christian circles.⁵

James probably met his death in A.D. 62,⁶ and Peter was removed by death shortly thereafter. Even in death, though, the struggle for supremacy between the two men and their schools of thought continued. Whereas in life James became the dominant leader of the Church, in death Peter prevailed. This was

¹ Gal. ii. 11-13. ² Lietzmann, op. cit. p. 108. ³ Rom. xv. 25-27. ⁴ Acts xxi. 18. ⁵ Brandon, op. cit. pp. 27-8. Acts xxi 18 is from one of the "We" passages, which are usually interpreted to mean that the author was present at these times. ⁶ Josephus, Antiquities, xx, ix. 1, is the basis for the date of 62. Many scholars, however, feel that this passage is a later Christian interpolation. Some would feel that the second-century Christian writer Hegesippus, whose testimony is preserved in Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History (ii, p. xxiii), is to be preferred. Hegesippus says that the martyrdom of James took place after the outbreak of the Jewish War because Christians refused to participate in this struggle against Rome. This would make his death occur about A.D. 67.
due to the fact that Christianity was increasingly, and almost exclusively, becoming a Gentile movement. It also stemmed from the events of A.D. 70—when Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed, the Jewish-Christian Church was decimated, and it was forced to flee Jerusalem. This struggle is reflected in much of early Christian literature. Our canonical writings tend to depreciate James and glorify Peter while the writings of the more conservative Jewish Christians do just the opposite.

II

A reading of the canonical Gospels shows how the feeling against James and the claims made in his name expressed itself in a number of ways. The most striking example of this attitude, perhaps, is the rather unfavourable picture which is drawn of the brothers of Jesus. In different degrees this attitude of reproach is found in all four Gospels.

Mark, the earliest Gospel to be written, represents the view of the Church at Rome—where the influence of Peter and Paul made itself felt. Mark, according to tradition, was closely connected with Peter. It is only natural that this rivalry for leadership and the feelings raised by the claims made for each would show forth in this work. Mark shows the family of Jesus alarmed at his work, feeling that he was "beside himself", and attempting to seize him. Jesus refused to see them when they arrived and, in a sense, disowned them—saying "Whoever does the will of God is my brother, and sister, and mother". Once again, a little later on, Mark describes the unfavourable reaction that Jesus received in his home town of Nazareth and has Jesus summarize it in this way: "A prophet is not without honour, except in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house." Mark, in order that people might not mistake who "his kin" are, then proceeds to name all his brothers, starting with James.

1 In recent years scholars have come to realize that Peter and Paul, instead of being poles apart, were actually very close to one another in attitude and practice. See Weiss, op. cit. i. 201, and Flew, op. cit. pp. 218-19.
2 Mark iii. 21-22, 31-35.
3 Mark vi. 1-6. Italics mine.
Matthew, generally thought to have been written about A.D. 80, is usually said to have come from the neighbourhood of Antioch in Syria. One should remember the close connection of Peter (and of Paul) with the Church here. Although this Gospel is more Jewish than Mark and Luke, it still has a strong Gentile bias that shines through at many places. Written in an area where Peter was especially revered, it could only be expected to retain the views which the author found in Mark. Matthew omits any reference to his family’s thinking Jesus is “beside himself”, probably feeling that such a view was better left unsaid. Yet he does retain the account of Jesus’ refusing to see his mother and brothers. The author likewise retained Jesus’ declaration about a prophet being without honour in his own country but omitted the word “kin”. Luke, writing his Gospel about 90, treated the first episode in very much the same way as Matthew did; he omitted Mark iii. 21-22 but retained the story of Jesus’ refusal to see his family. When Luke came to write of Jesus’ reaction to his reception in Nazareth, Luke toned down the whole answer of Jesus. Here, as in other places, Luke was undoubtedly motivated by his ultimate purpose of presenting Jesus and his work in a way most appealing to a Roman reader.

John, the latest of the canonical Gospels to be written, likewise possessed this bias against the brothers of Jesus and even accentuated it. When Jesus was working in Galilee, his brothers told him to go to Judea to work—for “even his brothers did not believe him”. Jesus then strongly reproached his brothers, “For 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.” Some scholars have also felt that there is also a criticism of the brothers of Jesus when John has Jesus commit his mother to the “beloved disciple” as her “son.”

5 Ibid. iv. 16-30. 6 John vii. 3-5. 7 Ibid. vii. 6-7.
8 Ibid. xix. 26-27. In all probability none of the disciples was present at the crucifixion. All of them, in all likelihood, had gone into hiding or fled the city.
A second way in which the canonical Gospels seem to express their hostility to James and his interpretation of Christianity is in their bitter attacks upon the Pharisees. One of the great achievements of modern scholarship has been the establishment of the Pharisees as a group worthy of respect. Jesus was much closer to the Pharisees than to any other group in Jewish religious life. They represented the best in Judaism. Yet, at certain points, the Gospels show Jesus criticizing the Pharisees. Only in one or two instances does Jesus clearly criticize the Pharisaic interpretation of Scripture. In other cases he simply goes farther in the extension of privilege. Most of the Christian scholars who have worked on this problem (men such as Branscomb, Robert Grant, Herford, Moore, and Riddle) have suggested that Jesus was not attacking the Pharisees as a whole (since his own religious and ethical beliefs were almost wholly in agreement with theirs), but that he was attacking those Pharisees who took advantage of their position of authority to exploit or oppress the Jewish masses. His charges of hypocrisy against these were echoed by the Jewish rabbis of the time.

Some of the scholars who have dealt with the question of Jesus' attitude toward the Pharisees have suggested that the authors of the Gospels were more hostile to the Pharisees than Jesus himself was—so that our canonical Gospels possess a bias against this religious group. In recent years there has been an "increased recognition of the motivated and interpretative element in the Synoptics. Their narratives like those in Acts appear to combine much accurate historical colouring and much unhistorical framework."

It seems quite true that the Synoptics have accentuated and heightened Jesus' statements concerning the Pharisees. Mark, the earliest Gospel to be written, expresses some anti-Pharisaism, but his bias is more anti-scribal than anti-Pharisaic—for his "identifications hardly characterize the Pharisees as a class".


Riddle feels, however, that it is different in Matthew (so closely connected with Antioch and/or Syria):

However it is to be accounted for, it is unmistakable that in this gospel there is pronounced anti-Pharisaic polemic. This is observable in all relationships, in the editorial alterations of the Markan source, in the other forms of tradition, and in the peculiar materials. While there is in the Matthean Gospel a basic appreciation of the legalistic point of view, and some knowledge and appreciation of the values of Judaism, there can be no doubt that the writer intended a gulf of distinction to be understood as existing between Jesus and the Pharisees. This is a basic element in the point of view of the evangelist. 1

Riddle likewise believes that the author of Luke-Acts, in his first volume, desired to give his readers an unfavourable picture of the Pharisees:

The reader is expected to understand that there was a great gulf between Jesus and the Pharisees. To be sure, the presentation is not so unfavourable as that of Matthew, and there are exceptions in Luke to the generally unsympathetic delineation. . . . But the lack of consistency and the several exceptions do not obscure the development of the process as a whole. 2

By the time that John—generally, although not universally, agreed to be the latest of the Gospels to be written—was produced, the author has gone beyond Matthew and Luke:

On the whole it may be said that the Fourth Gospel, in its highly interesting modifications of the earlier traditions, represents Jesus and the Pharisees in a relation in which unfriendliness is not only much farther advanced, but is inclusive of several new features. Of special importance is the alleged association of the Pharisees with the groups which secured Jesus' death. This marks a complete departure from the Synoptic tradition. Another important datum is the objective attitude toward the Law which is ascribed to Jesus. 3

The reason given most often to explain this hostility on the part of the evangelists towards the Pharisees is the great rivalry between the Church and the Synagogue at the end of the first century 4—from the Fall of the Temple in A.D. 70 onward. This undoubtedly, heightened the antagonism of the writers where

1 Ibid. p. 31. One should note especially chapter 23 of Matthew where there is a blistering attack upon the Pharisees.
2 Ibid. p. 37.
3 Ibid. p. 52. He says also, "It is apparent that the picture of Jesus and the Pharisees in the latest gospel in several respects goes beyond those of the earlier sources, so far beyond, in fact, that the opposition between Jesus and the Pharisees is practically coincident with that between Jesus and the Jews."
the Pharisees were concerned. There was, however, a much earlier basis for this antagonism, I believe. Its roots go back before the events of A.D. 70, back to the second and third decades of Christian history. James, the leader of the more conservative elements in the early Church and the one who eventually reached the position of greatest leadership and influence in the Jerusalem Church, was a Christian Pharisee. This is the picture of James given in Paul’s Letter to the Galatians and in Acts. The second-century portrait of him by Hegesippus confirms the earlier biblical presentation. It was only natural that, as the struggle for dominance took place between Peter and James (and their followers) in the second and third decades following the resurrection appearances, the followers of Peter, more liberal on matters of the Law and Gentile inclusion, would resent the pharisaic character and claims of James and his followers. Certain statements of Jesus would be “remembered” (although, perhaps, a slightly different emphasis might now be given to his words). Probably at this time, especially in the late forties, the anti-Pharisaic elements in the Gospel tradition worked their way into the collected sayings of Jesus. These provided the basis for the further developments that the individual Evangelists made.

In this same period and out of the same situation, it would seem, came the basis for the universalistic statements that rest in the Gospel of Matthew. As the inclusive nature of the message of Jesus really became understood and as the Gentile mission increasingly prospered, there arose the problem of the terms of Gentile inclusion that rocked the early Church. The more liberal or universalistic wing of the early Christian movement needed more than Peter’s vision to justify its action in the light of James’s opposition to much of their work. Statements by Jesus himself were needed. Undoubtedly at the heart of some of these would lie a genuine utterance of Jesus; but, at the same time, the needs of the hour heightened and expanded Jesus’ attitudes and teachings. The author of Matthew found a certain amount of universalistic material already formed by the Church in the neighbourhood of Antioch. This he developed and

1 Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History, ii, p. xxiii.  
2 Acts x.
interpreted in a way that was "strongly partisan, favouring the Gentile and renouncing the Jew".¹

The clearest and strongest rejection of James and the claims made for him is to be found in the tradition that has come to rest in Matthew xvi. 17-19. At this point in the Synoptic account Jesus, after being told by the disciples what the masses thought of him, asked what the disciples themselves believed. Peter, acting as the spokesman for The Twelve, answered that Jesus was the Christ. At this point Matthew makes an addition to the account that he found in Mark:

And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jona! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the powers of death shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

The genuineness of this particular statement or promise has been widely challenged by scholars. The main objections to its authenticity have been four: (1) Matthew alone gives this passage; (2) nowhere else does Jesus speak of establishing a church; (3) Peter only served as the spokesman for all the disciples to whom the question had been addressed, so why should he be singled out for this honour; and (4) the whole passage seems out of keeping with the context in which it is found. Elsewhere, Jesus' thoughts on his messiahship led him immediately to the subject of his suffering and death.

Scholarly opinion on the question of the genuineness of Matthew xvi. 17-19 is sharply divided. Some writers would insist that it is quite acceptable just as it is. Others, somewhat troubled but wishing to retain this saying, suggest that Jesus actually made such a pronouncement but upon some other occasion. This is the view taken by Flew and Cullmann.² Many other scholars

¹ Clark, op. cit. pp. 171-2. See especially pp. 166-7 for examples of the pro-gentile material. Clark says that the author of Matthew "was persuaded that the Christian gospel, originally delivered to the Jews, had been rejected by them as a people; that God had now turned his back upon Judaism and chosen the largely gentile Christianity. The two strains of his gospel reflect these two stages in God's plan to save his chosen people. But the assurance that the gentiles have displaced the Jews is the basic message and the gentile bias of Matthew" (p. 172).

such as Goguel and Weiss reject the genuineness of this passage.  

Cullmann, who strains every possible way to hold on to this passage, says:

Thus at the present time the question is once more in flux, and we can scarcely speak any longer of a consensus of opinion. A statistical study of the position that thirty-four modern authors take on this question has shown that they divide into two approximately equal groups.

It seems to this writer that those who oppose the authenticity of Matthew xvi. 17-19 are on much more solid ground than those who argue in its favour. Not only do the four arguments cited above rule against it but so also does the fact (too often overlooked) that this same Gospel of Matthew assigns the same power of binding and loosing, in another place, to all the apostles:

Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven.

This second form, where Jesus gives the power of binding and loosing to all the apostles, is probably the earlier form. The alternative version conferring it on Peter is later and comes from Antiochene oral tradition. In connection with this point we should remember what the Antiochene Church was like. It was founded by "refugees from the persecution in which Stephen fell"—that is, by "members of a group whose general attitude toward the Law and Temple was evidently not that of James and such of The Twelve as were then in Jerusalem". This was the place where the message was first preached to the Greeks. The Church at Antioch sponsored the Gentile missionary movement led by Paul, Barnabas, and others. Peter was associated with Antioch after taking up his missionary work.

1 Goguel, op. cit. pp. 378-9, n. 1; and Weiss, op. cit. ii. 719.
2 Cullmann, op. cit. pp. 169, 211.
3 Matt. xviii. 18-19. See also John xx. 23, "If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."
4 Streeter, The Primitive Church, pp. 74-5. Streeter writes, "This may be one reason why the constitution of the newly formed Church at Antioch was definitely not modelled on that of Jerusalem. At any rate, the evidence [Acts xviii. 1 ff.] shows that it was not so modelled."
5 Acts xi. 20.
6 Acts xiii. 1-3.
7 Gal. ii. 11.
Peter, it would seem, had a very close connection with the Church at Antioch—perhaps making this his operating base after the Jerusalem part of his career was over. Cullmann feels that Antioch would have been the centre of the Jewish Christian mission as well as the Gentile Christian mission.\(^1\) Streeter says, quite rightly, "If we are to associate the outlook of Antioch . . . with the name of any Apostle, it will be with that of Peter."\(^2\) Later tradition made Peter the first "bishop" of Antioch.\(^3\)

The more liberal [Jewish] Christians of Antioch would naturally feel that Jesus had given the authority to "bind and loose" to Peter rather than James who was the leader of the conservatives and reactionaries.\(^4\) Peter, rather than James, should determine how much (or how little) of the Jewish Law would be binding on the Gentile converts. If, as many scholars suggest, Matthew was produced as the Gospel of the Church at Antioch, then such a statement as xvi. 17-19 was only to be expected, for "the preservation of the saying . . . is due to the conviction in Antioch that the rules of Peter for the admission of Gentiles were better than the conservatism of James".\(^5\) Weiss, although rather hesitant to locate geographically the origin of the statement, none the less shows its significance:

Where this tradition of Peter's headship arose, whether in Antioch, Asia Minor, or Rome, we do not venture to say. It is very significant, however, that Matt. 16:18 considers St. Peter the sovereign authority for the whole Church. In this is reflected again the viewpoint opposite to that which maintains that the head of the church in Jerusalem stands at the head of the whole Church—that the congregation there represents the Church in general. We see in Matt. 16:18, on the other hand, the self-consciousness of the missionary church making itself felt.

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\(^1\) Cullmann, op. cit. p. 53.
\(^2\) Streeter, *The Primitive Church*, p. 45. See also p. 58.
\(^3\) Cullmann, op. cit. pp. 226, 229, 231. It should be noticed that even later tradition claimed Peter as the first bishop of Rome and Caesarea.
\(^4\) Streeter, *The Primitive Church*, p. 60.
\(^5\) Flew, op. cit. pp. 218-19, n. 4. Streeter, *The Primitive Church*, p. 60, says that Matthew "reflects alike the missionary spirit, and the liberal Jewish atmosphere, of Antioch. At any rate, even if compiled elsewhere than in Antioch, we know that it soon became the most favoured Gospel in Syria; for it is the Gospel most often quoted, indeed the only one undoubtedly quoted, both in that early Syrian work the *Didache* and by Ignatius of Antioch."
While here the whole Church is bound together under the leadership of Peter, it has freed itself from the authority of Jerusalem and has emphasized that the strength of the Church lies in the mission field.¹

III

At the same time that the more liberal or universalistic Christians were downgrading James in the various ways we have seen in the canonical writings, the more conservative Jewish Christians were already involved in just the opposite process. The early position of influence, prestige, and authority that James possessed, as a result of the factors we noted in Part I, was steadily accentuated and heightened. A number of examples of this development can be found today—in spite of the fact that the type of literature in which it was found, belonging to the right wing branch of the Christian movement, was rejected by the Church as heretical and has largely disappeared.

The first notable development in the growing Jewish Christian tradition about James was the emphasis upon his holiness. Hegesippus, the early second-century Christian writer whose work has been partially preserved by Eusebius, shows how revered James was by the second century:

James, the Lord's brother, . . . has been universally called the Just, from the days of the Lord down to the present time. For many bore the name of James; but this one was holy from his mother’s womb. He drank no wine or other intoxicating liquor, nor did he eat flesh; no razor came upon his head; he did not anoint himself with oil, nor make use of the bath. He alone was permitted to enter the holy place; for he did not wear any woollen garment, but fine linen only. He alone, I say, was wont to go into the temple: and he used to be found kneeling on his knees, begging forgiveness for the people—so that the skin of his knees became horny like that of a camel's, by reason of his constantly bending the knee in adoration to God, and begging forgiveness for the people. Therefore, in consequence of his pre-eminent justice, he was called the Just, and Oblias, which signifies in Greek Defence of the People, and Justice, in accordance with what the prophets declare concerning him.²

Hegesippus’ somewhat legendary description of James shows how almost overnight James became the “patron saint” of the Jewish

¹ Weiss, op. cit. ii. 719. Perhaps some of the factors led to the post-resurrection commission in John xxi. 15-18.
² Hegesippus, as quoted in Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History, ii. p. xxiii. This is from the translation in The Ante-Nicene Fathers (Grand Rapids, 1951), viii. 762.
Christians because of his holiness and asceticism. James's memory, to the Jewish Christians, was as effective as that of Peter or Paul to the Gentile churches.

James's holiness, then, gave him a claim upon the devotion of the Jewish Christians (and of the whole Jewish people, according to Hegesippus). Accentuating this claim upon their devotion was the fact that James "was a successor with Jesus of the royal line of David". Where the Gentile Christians emphasized the position that had come through Jesus' choosing Peter (and The Twelve), the Jewish Christians were more interested in James's blood relationship to David and to Jesus.

Before long, however, for their own "protection" Jewish Christians began to make known their belief that James too had been chosen. Hegesippus wrote, "James, the Lord's brother, succeeds to the government of the Church, in conjunction with the apostles." James came to be viewed as the head of the Church—as the "bishop of bishops". The Clementine Homilies, which Streeter dates about 225, "represent a party feeling of an earlier period" in their understanding of James's position. James is called "the lord, and the bishop of bishops, who rules Jerusalem, the holy church of the Hebrews, and the churches everywhere", the "prince of priests", and "the lord and bishop of the holy Church, under the Father of all, through Jesus Christ". The later Liturgy of St. James, which incorporates earlier sources, raises James to the dignity of "the brother of the very God" [ἡδὲλφόθεος].

At the same time that the Gentile Christian community was in the process of elevating the position of Peter (in part against the claims of the followers of James and his relatives who succeeded him), the Jewish Christians sought more and more to show Peter as subordinate to James. Peter writes to James as subordinate to James. Peter writes to James as subordinate to James.

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2 Ibid. p. 96.
3 Ibid. pp. 97, 250.
7 Liturgy of St. James, cited in Philip Schaff, History of the Christian Church (New York, 1901), i. 268.
"the lord and bishop of the holy Church, under the Father of all, through Jesus Christ". Peter's commission appears to have come from James, along with the command that he report year by year what he has done. Peter was sent to Caesarea by James to oppose Simon. No teacher was to be believed "unless he bring from Jerusalem the testimonial of James the Lord's brother". All of these things are stated in the Clementine literature which is, basically, still friendly to Peter.

This same attitude is also found in the writings of Clement of Alexandria who flourished at the end of the second century. Peter and John do not contend with James for the leadership of the Church but, gracefully and rightfully, step aside: "Peter and James and John, after the Saviour's ascension, though pre-eminently honoured by the Lord, did not contend for glory but made James the Just bishop of Jerusalem." Still another way in which the Jewish Christians attempted to show that James (and his successors) rightfully owned the primary position of leadership in the Church can be seen in their account of the resurrection appearances of Jesus. Gentile Christians and the more liberal Jewish Christians taught that the Risen Christ had first appeared to Peter. This is the testimony of Paul a generation after the resurrection. Luke, although he does not describe this appearance of Jesus to Peter, speaks of it as having taken place. It should be noted that Paul was closely attached to the Church at Antioch, where Peter's claim to leadership seems to have been strong. Luke, closely associated with Paul, echoes the accepted tradition here. Jewish Christians of the more conservative type, however, came to believe that Jesus appeared first

3 Recognitions of Clement, i. lxxii [Ante-Nicene Fathers, viii. 96].  
4 Ibid. iv. p. xxv [Ante-Nicene Fathers, viii. 142]. Cullmann, op. cit. p. 62, points out that the Clementine Homilies (i. xvi. xix) reject the apostolic rank of Paul because it rests only on a vision. In this writing Peter (who is thought to have been given to visions) denies the value of visions in general (Recognitions of Clement, ii. lxvii).  
5 Clement of Alexandria, Hypotyposes (Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History, ii. i. 3) [Ante-Nicene Fathers, viii. 579.]  
6 Cor. xv. 5.  
7 Luke xxiv. 34.
The Gospel of the Hebrews taught that the earliest resurrection appearance of Jesus was to James:

But the Lord, when he had given the linen garment to the high priest’s slave, went to James and appeared to him; for James had sworn that he would not eat bread from that hour when he had drunk the Lord’s cup until he saw him rising from those who sleep. . . . “Bring,” says the Lord, “a table and bread.” He took bread and blessed it and broke it and gave it to James the Just and said to him, “My brother, eat your bread, for the Son of Man has arisen from those who sleep.”

Robert Grant, after noting that the author of this Gospel has made James a guest at the Last Supper and also made James take an oath similar to that which Jesus took, has said that “In general, the sole purpose of this story is to strengthen the claims of the Church of Jerusalem at the expense of gentile Christians.”

Clement of Alexandria perhaps reflects this story from the Gospel of the Hebrews when he speaks of Jesus imparting knowledge \(\tau\eta\nu\gamma\nu\omega\sigma\nu\) “to James the Just, and John and Peter, . . . after his resurrection”. His ordering of these three early leaders of the Church is, to say the least, unusual.

The Jerusalem Church even developed its own form of the commission of leadership. Whereas Matthew (the Gospel of the Church at Antioch) gave this to Peter in xvi. 17-19, the Gospel of Thomas (retaining a story of Jewish Christian tradition) assigns it to James:

The disciples said to Jesus
We know that you will go away from us.
Who will then be great over us?
Jesus said unto them:
In the place to which you have gone,
You will go to James the Just,
for whose sake the heaven and the earth came into existence.

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1 This fragment from the Gospel of the Hebrews is preserved in Jerome, De Viris inlustr. 2. It can be found quoted in Robert M. Grant with David Noel Freedman, The Secret Sayings of Jesus (New York, 1960), p. 35.

2 Grant, The Secret Sayings of Jesus, p. 36.

3 Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History, vii. ii. 1.

4 Grant, The Secret Sayings of Jesus, p. 77, suggests that the author of this gospel may have been influenced by the Gospel of the Hebrews.