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The Acts of the Apostles:
An Assessment of Its Presentation of the Church in Jerusalem

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Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for Ordination

Hebrew Union College - Jewish Institute of Religion

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DIGEST

The only New Testament writing attempting a description of earliest Christianity is the Acts of the Apostles. The history in Acts is not, however necessarily reliable.

The purpose of this thesis is to investigate those portions of Acts which are concerned with the Jewish-Christian Church in Jerusalem. We deal not only with chapters 1-8 but also with any references to the Church in the remaining chapters. As there are no written records preserved from the Church in Jerusalem itself, the foundation upon which to build our understanding is sadly incomplete.

The procedure will be as follows: first, to examine the testimony of Acts on the Jerusalem Church; secondly, to examine the testimony of sources other than Acts; thirdly, to compare the testimonies of the various sources with one another. Secondary scholarship will be systematically reviewed, and thereafter cited where relevant. Above all, special attention will be given to a consideration of the author of Acts who will hence be referred to simply as "Luke." Throughout we presume the Gospel According to Luke and the Acts of the Apostles were written by the same author.

Who was Luke? When and from where did he write? Did Luke use any sources for his information? Had he any hidden agenda which prompted the composition of his Gospel and Acts? Only when Luke is thus understood can his representation of the Jerusalem Church be evaluated.

CHAPTER I

THE PRESENTATION OF THE JERUSALEM
CHURCH IN THE ACTS OF THE
APOSTLES -- A SUMMARY,
AND A STATEMENT OF
THE PROBLEM

During the forty day period from the Resurrection until the Ascension Jesus teaches his apostles in Jerusalem. The new Church is to be located there as Jesus explicitly commands the apostles "not to depart from Jerusalem" (1:4). This does not mean, however, that only in Jerusalem is the gospel to be spread. Jerusalem is only the center, the starting point of a Church growing to all Judea, Samaria, and throughout the world (1:8).

Jerusalem, though, is the beginning. Initially all Church related activities are located there (1:14; 3:1 +) and any growth takes place by additions of converts from the Jerusalem Jewish community. In fact, it would appear that Luke pictures the Jerusalem Church as the only location of Christianity up until the persecutions following the death of Stephen (8:1).

With rapidly spreading Christianity comes an expanding role for the Jerusalem Church. As leaders of the Church, the apostles must extend their influence into the new regions. Early in the life of the Church conversion to the faith is considered incomplete unless the Holy Spirit is received. This bestowal is performed by the apostles who make special journeys for this purpose (8:14-18; 10:44-48). The apostles either bring the Spirit by a laying on of hands, or, as in the case of Peter converting the Gentiles, God brings the Holy Spirit without any physical bestowal by Peter (10:10-15), Peter simply being the agent of God to bring the gospel to the Gentiles. The movement of Christianity away from Jerusalem and Judaism is no longer the result of human initiation; it is, rather, an act of God's will. Barnabas is even sent to Antioch to inspect the conversions to Christianity which occur there (11:19-24). He is not an apostle, how-

ever, and does not lay on hands to bestow the Holy Spirit.¹ In fact, the Holy Spirit is not even received by these Christians although Barnabas is described as being "full of the Holy Spirit" (11:24).

Thus the Jerusalem Church is presented as the central body of Christianity from its earliest days. Its influence and control permeate to all areas of Christianity's expanse. Two internal struggles evidence its power: that over the conversion of the Gentiles, and that manifested in the description of the Apostolic Council. After Peter presents his case for the divinely ordained conversion of Gentiles nothing is rendered official until the apostles and brethren give their vote of approval (11:18). Implicit within the account of the Apostolic Council is the stipulation that approval from Jerusalem is a sine qua non for any decision regarding the religious practices of Gentile converts (ch. 15). According to Luke, the influence that the Jerusalem Church exerts extends even to Paul. He continually reports to the Jerusalem officials on the results of his ministry, as if answerable to them (21:19). When he is confronted with Church and lay dissatisfaction with his methods and is advised to show himself the observant Jew, he docilely obeys (21:20-26). Quite obviously, the group in Jerusalem maintains some abiding influence over Paul, even near the end of his life. Luke's presentation of the world-wide famine (11:27-30) highlights the position which the Church in Jerusalem holds in the eyes of all Christians. Even a world-wide famine cannot prevent the Antiochene Church from sending Barnabas and Saul to Jerusalem with relief aid.

Just who are these men who held power in Jerusalem? What charac-

terizes an apostle? The episode of replacing Judas Iscariot is instructive in determining what defines an 'apostle'. An apostle's status is contingent on two credentials (1:21ff; 3:15; 10:41):

1. one must have accompanied Jesus during his ministry; and,
2. one must be a witness to the Resurrection.

These men are also recipients of certain physical talents, including an ability to speak in many foreign tongues (2:4-12) and the capacity both to serve as instruments for the performance of "wonders and signs" (2:43) and themselves to perform miracles (4:16, 21). The apostles, however, also perform more mundane duties as leaders of the community: they are in charge of purchasing goods from the community and distributing them among needy Christians (2:45; 4:35); they thus become the financial administrators for the Jerusalem Church (6:2).² Besides shouldering these economic concerns, the apostles are also the religious leaders of their community. Daily they are to be found in the Temple, leading the believers in prayer, teaching them, and preaching to the new Church (2:46; 3:1; 5:42).

The apostles, therefore, are the authorities of the Jerusalem Church (6:6). From the evidence presented previously they would appear to be the authorities for the entire, world-wide, Christian movement. While many events occur which seemingly challenge apostolic authority, these men yet remain the central, governing body of the emerging Christian Church up through Paul's arrest in Jerusalem. They somehow are spared the afflictions of Jewish persecution following Stephen's death and remain in Jerusalem (8:1). As already indicated, they would appear to play some con-

firming role in the conversion process. The apostles also function as a legislative body for determining Christian policy (particularly in regard to Gentile conversion and ritual observance).

Including the replacement for Judas, the apostles are "Peter and John and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot and Judas the son of James" and Matthias (1:13, 26). Also included within the initial 120 brethren (1:15) are Jesus' brothers.³ From the prominent position given his speeches and actions (2:14ff., 37ff.), it seems the leader of this group is Peter (1:13, 15), or Simon as he is called on five occasions.⁴ He also would appear to be in charge of property distribution to the needy in the Church (5:3ff.). John is often associated with Peter but definitely plays a passive role in events which transpire. When Peter heals a lame man at the Temple (3:1ff.), John is only a spectator; he need not be there at all. On the two occasions when Peter and John are arrested by the Jewish authorities, Peter again is the dominant figure (4:1ff.; 5:29ff.). He speaks for the apostles and his work bears the authority of the Jewish-Christian community.

Consistent with the presentation of the Jerusalem Church being the central authority for the new, spreading faith, Peter plays a vital role as the prominent figure in that Church. He and John both are sent to Samaria to pray for the new believers there "that they might receive the Holy Spirit" (8:14-24). Once again, John is an observer. It would seem that Luke is dealing with some tradition that pairs these two apostles. Perhaps Luke

is then consciously allowing Peter the more dominant role. To follow through with the general plan of the expansion of Christianity to the entire world, the Gentiles eventually have to be converted. As with the case of the extension of the faith outside of Jerusalem, Peter here as well is vitally involved in the conversion of the Gentiles.⁵ Through him God grants acceptance of Gentiles into the Christians' ranks (10:10ff.). This process is not a simple one, as Peter is to receive great criticism from the apostles (11:1-18). Nevertheless, when Peter appeals to them that he had been compelled by a vision from God the apostles are easily convinced and accept His will (11:18).

Besides the persecutions it experiences at the hands of the Jews, the Jerusalem Church also has ill dealings with Rome. James the son of Zebedee and brother of John is killed by Agrippa I (12:1).⁶ Peter is arrested, but receives divine assistance and is freed in a passage markedly resembling the death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus (12:6-19a). He departs for "another place" (12:17)⁷ but only after instructing those at John-Mark's house to "tell... James and... the brethren" of the events which have occurred (Ibid.).⁸ James is thus singled out for special consideration. The phrase "James... and the brethren" is parallel to other references to Peter, i.e., "Peter... and the apostles." The interpretations of these verses are also parallel. Just as Peter's leadership is implied in the latter, so also is Peter's designating James as his successor in the former.

Thus, Peter disappears for awhile; but he does return. He is back

on the scene at the Apostolic Council (ch. 15). He delivers a short speech emphasizing that God initiated the conversion of Gentiles through him, that is Peter (15:7). He is never heard from again. James, the brother of Jesus, now appears to be the church member of preeminence. Earlier, Peter had been able to convince the apostles, without argument, that Gentiles were to be converted. So also is James able to persuade the entire group of apostles and elders at the Council that he is correct. They pursue no argument against his decision to demand only limited ritual observance from Gentiles (15:13-22).

Luke then concerns himself primarily with Paul and his travels. When Paul is in Jerusalem for his final visit, James is the spokesman for the community and the one in charge (21:18, 25). He warns Paul of the community's concern regarding Paul's tactics in the Gentile arena and suggests certain measures Paul should take (21:23, 24). As a reflection of the continued control and influence that James allegedly has over Paul (and probably the abiding influence of the Church over wider Christianity), Paul obeys and shows himself the practicing Jew. This is the final appearance for James in Acts, as the remaining chapters are concerned with Paul's trial and the extension of Christianity to Rome.

Peter and James (and John?) are thus preeminent among the governors of the emerging Church. This Jerusalem Church is highly organized, enjoying tremendous peace, and is, in a nutshell, the ideal community. They are Jews who believe Jesus to be the Messiah. They believe the Kingdom of God to be at hand and even initially comprehend

Jesus' post-resurrection appearance to be the promised return (1:6). Jesus himself instructs them that the appointed time is not theirs to know. The community must then be held together, their lives organized and given direction. They live an ideal communal life (1:13ff.). Worship is held at the Temple every day (2:46; 3:1 -- in continuation of Jesus' own daily appearances there in the Gospel itself), the community praying together and the apostles preaching to them and teaching them (2:42, 46; 5:42). Meals are held as a community, and the believers live together and openly share their possessions (2:44; 4:32). The apostles themselves regulate the purchasing of goods from the community and the distribution of those goods to the needy (2:45; 4:34, 35; 5:4).

Not only does the Jerusalem Church enjoy God's favor (2:47; 4:31), but their lives are marked by an ideal peacefulness. They enjoy the favor of all the people in the non-Christian community, except, of course, the Jewish leaders (2:47; 4:21, 32; 5:13, 26). In fact, this support and favor is so great as to completely govern the response of the Jewish authorities. Due to fear of recriminations from the Jewish residents, the authorities are quite careful in their dealings with the Christians: "...the captain with the officers... brought them the apostles... without violence, for they were afraid of being stoned by the people" (5:26).

Life becomes more complex in the Church, and the peaceful communal bliss of the early years falls prey to severe infighting. A division in the ranks emerges with factions of Hellenists and Hebrews (6:1). Since their involvement in the everyday activity of the Church is becoming increas-

ingly hectic, the apostles decide to relinquish their role as "financial administrators" for the community. They then choose seven men from the ranks of the disciples to handle these duties, while, at the same time not relinquishing their own positions as the community's leaders.

This immediate, and apparently minor, problem being solved, life becomes irenic once more (6:7). With the introduction of Stephen onto the scene, however, serious problems recur and severe persecutions by the Jews split the Church. The apostles remain in Jerusalem and the faction which was supporting the now-martyred Stephen is cast out from the city (8:1). Luke takes this opportunity to introduce Paul (as Saul). He is presented as what would seem to be the sole persecutor of the Church, even attacking Christians from house to house (8:3). After having wreaked havoc on the Jerusalem Christians (9:21), Paul journeys toward Damascus to continue his persecution of the believers (9:1). He experiences conversion along the road and, somewhat later returns to Jerusalem to dispute with the Hellenists. Thus, as if Paul's conversion is itself the single, most important factor of this entire period, the Church is at peace again and no longer persecuted (9:31).

Still other problems and internal strife are later to upset the equanimity of the Jerusalem Church. When Peter ordains the conversion of Gentiles another faction raises its head (11:2). This group is called "the circumcision party" and appears to be concerned with the fact that Peter had eaten with Gentiles (11:3). Nevertheless, following Peter's description of his vision and the apostles' subsequent acceptance of God's will, all re-

turns to normal. The Apostolic Council also presents evidence of internal difficulties. Paul and Barnabas, however, are gladly received by the Church's ranking officials (the apostles and elders), betokening the leaders' satisfaction with Paul's work (15:6). Also, following James' rendering of his (non-opposed) decision, peace returns once again to the Church (15:45).⁹

To reiterate, Luke presents a Church which enjoys the favor of both God and the Jewish multitudes (initially). This Jewish-Christian community is experiencing a peaceful, communal existence marred by infrequent, easily solved internal problems. The Jerusalem Church continuously maintains spiritual hegemony over Christianity within as well as without the city of Jerusalem (11:18, 22, 27-30; 15:22ff.).

The Church expands rapidly in Jerusalem and spreads very quickly as areas outside the city are penetrated and converted. In order to disseminate the gospel to all the various nations, a certain facility in language is required. Evidently, the Pentecost experience of the apostles serves this function (2:4-12). The Holy Spirit "gave them utterance" and people from various other nations are thus able to understand these men from Galilee: "we hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God" (4:11). Therefore the gospel can be preached to the entire world.

Before the world can be reached, however, Jerusalem has to be considered. The ranks are filled by Jews, of course, with even some converts from the priestly class (6:7). This early form of Christianity is very popular and successful. Believers in great numbers swarm to fill the ranks, as the Church grows in leaps and bounds of three and five

thousand converts at a time (2:41, 47; 4:4; 5:14; 6:7; 9:31). Thus the Jerusalem Church enjoys great success while still relatively young. The apostles perform miraculous deeds helping to rapidly spread the Church's reputation (4:16, 21).

Similar success is achieved as soon as the Church reaches the diaspora. Stephen's death and the attendant Jewish persecution occasion the first branching away from Jerusalem. The initial extension is into Judea and Samaria (8:1-8). Then ensues the conversion of the Gentiles. The apostle Peter is given credit for this major movement away from Jerusalem and Judaism (10:10-15, 36, 44-48). The apostles even approve of the mission to the Gentiles (11:18).

By the time of the Apostolic Council, the Christian message has spread into Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia, and churches have been founded there (15:23). Paul is their representative at the Council and in Acts is highly responsible for the spread of the gospel to the Gentile world. By the time of his arrest and trial in Jerusalem, there is a church in Rome. Even though his trial closely parallels the trial and Passion of Jesus, it is also possible that, in a small way, Paul's trip from Jerusalem to Rome represents the history of the Church. The authority and influence once enjoyed by Jerusalem has finally been shifted to Rome.

But this young Church in Jerusalem is by no means free from problems, both external and internal. The continual resistance of the Jews is one of three main external friction points. Jews refuse to accept the truth of Jesus. Already at the time of Peter's second speech (2:14ff.),

one learns that the Jews are aware of the wonders and miracles being performed in their midst. Yet they persist in their denial (2:22; 3:12, 14, 17; 7:35, 39, 51; 22:17, 18; 28:26-28). It is the continuation of this blindness which eventually will cause Paul to preach only to the Gentiles (18:6).

The earliest days of the Church, therefore, find the believers being held in high regard by the Jerusalem Jewish population (2:47; 5:13). Tensions do develop, however. The Jewish leaders; the priests, captains of the Temple, and the Sadducees, develop a hostile attitude toward the Church. This hostility appears to be a mere continuation of that hostility which they had expressed toward Jesus (4:1ff.; 5:17). Indeed, it is only the Pharisee Gamaliel I who speaks to his comrades for toleration: "you might even be found opposing God" (5:34-39). Thus these two Jewish factions, the citizenry and the authorities, are at such odds as to nearly fracture the Jewish community (4:21; 5:26). The authorities are afraid for their lives to act against this group of Jewish-Christians.

Stephen's speech ignites a violent response from the Jewish community. He is speaking against Jews and Judaism (6:8ff.), vehemently criticizing their blindness to the truth. The Jews respond with heavy persecution, and drive out from Jerusalem all of the Church except the apostles (8:1). Paul (as Saul) then proceeds to persecute the remaining Christians in Jerusalem (8:3).

Relations with the Jews deteriorate to such an extreme as to cause concern for Paul's life when he makes his final journey to Jerusalem. He is warned twice not to go to the city (21:4, 11). Paul is himself aware

that he will encounter great difficulty there (20:23). Feelings are evidently running very high when he is actually arrested (21:27-36).

The second external difficulty which imposes itself on the Jerusalem Church is a famine. This famine extends over the known world during the reign of Claudius (11:27-30). Aid, in the form of a relief mission, is rapidly organized by the church in Antioch. Their emissaries to the beleaguered Jerusalem community are Paul and Barnabas, who soon complete their mission and return to Antioch (12:25). Luke describes the death of Agrippa I as occurring sometime previous to the completion of the relief mission (12:20-23).

Trouble with Rome represents the third friction point. The only contact is on the occasion of the death of James the son of Zebedee at the hands of Agrippa I.

As stated previously, the Jerusalem Church is beset at times with internal strife. These difficulties express themselves in three ways. The first expression of internal problems is a division of the community into Hellenists and Hebrews. Their initial argument is over the neglect of the widows of the community in the daily distribution (6:1). As a result, to handle this problem, the apostles remove themselves from their positions as financial administrators. They then choose seven men from among the disciples to handle that responsibility. The seven would appear, from their names, to be Hellenists (6:2-4, 5).¹¹ This would seem to have solved the problem as the Church returns to normal business (6:7). On the other hand, some manner of disagreement between Hellenists and

Hebrews is in evidence later on. Following Paul's conversion and return to Jerusalem, he even is noted as speaking and disputing against these same Hellenists.¹²

Paul himself represents the second expression of internal difficulties experienced by the Jerusalem Jewish-Christians. He is first introduced as Saul and is present at and consenting to the death of Stephen. Following this incident he becomes a major, if not the primary, persecutor of the Church in Jerusalem (8:3; 9:21; 22:4, 5; 26:9-11). He is very zealous in his persecution, sometimes proceeding door to door. Paul also has, at this early period, close ties with the Jewish authorities in Jerusalem. They sanction his activities and even give him letters for the extradition of Christians from Damascus to Jerusalem (9:2). In reality, however, he has already been chosen as God's instrument to the Gentiles (although he does not realize this until later), as well as to kings and sons of Israel (9:15). Therefore his conversion on the road to Damascus would seem preordained though he is responsible to the Jerusalem leaders rather than receiving his commission from God directly and solely (cf. Galatians 1).

Upon his return to Jerusalem as a believer, Paul proceeds to preach and speak against the Hellenists there. He would appear to be supporting the other faction, the Hebrews. But finally, Paul succeeds in convincing the Jerusalem community that he is no longer their enemy, but is worthy of being a disciple (9:26-30). By now, though, the Church consists of not only the Jerusalem community, but the areas of Judea, Galilee, and

Samaria.¹³

Paul's next apparent point of conflict with Jerusalem revolves around the Apostolic Council. The Council is the third area of internal strife presented in Acts. It is initiated by the Antiochene Christians. They had objected to the preaching of Judean Christians that circumcision is vital to salvation (15:1). Apparently a group of Pharisaic Christians had insisted upon the observance of Mosaic Law and thus circumcision (15:5). Paul and Barnabas are then appointed by the church in Antioch to travel to Jerusalem for the purpose of discussing this problem with the apostles and elders. Paul and Barnabas are welcomed by the Church upon their arrival in Jerusalem (15:4). When the apostles and elders open the session, Peter (who has suddenly reappeared) delivers a short speech (15: 7ff.). He seems to indicate that the conflict is alive and brewing within the ranks of the apostles themselves (15:7, 10). Paul and Barnabas recount their success with the Gentiles; this is followed by James and his first speech. With neither discussion nor apparent disagreement (15: 13-23), James is able to obtain approval of the following change in policy: that the Gentiles should only "abstain from the pollutions of idols and from unchastity and from what is strangled and from blood" (15:20). The entire Church approves of the decision and Paul and Barnabas are sent back to Antioch with the good news.¹⁴ Once again, as so often before, peace is restored to the Church in Jerusalem. Besides, the entire commotion was the responsibility of only some upstarts in the community who possessed no religious authority in the first place (15:24).

Paul has his final contact with the Jerusalem Church shortly before his arrest. There are indications of severe dissatisfaction in the Jerusalem Church regarding the gospel which Paul is preaching to the Gentiles.¹⁵ With Paul's arrest by the Jews, however, the emphasis of the final chapters of Acts shifts rapidly away from Jerusalem (21:27-28:31). This shift had been obvious much earlier in the book, but, nevertheless, all concern in these final seven chapters is with Paul. The Jerusalem Church of Jewish-Christians is never heard from again.

The Acts of the Apostles is viewed by Christian tradition as an accurate historical text. It faithfully portrays the events following the Resurrection through the arrest and imprisonment of Paul. It also, within this structure, presents a fairly hazy picture of the first Christian community in Jerusalem, as just described.

Acts is the only book in the New Testament which seeks to present a description of the Jerusalem Church. Can it be argued that it presents an accurate picture of the Church? Or, is it more likely that we have a rather inaccurate or even tendentious presentation? Sources outside as well as inside the New Testament must be used to test the accuracy of Acts. One must determine as best we can the author and his location, his reason for writing the document, its date, and the sources he used, if any. All of these factors play some role in determining the historical accuracy of the presentation of the Jerusalem Church in Acts. None of them is blatantly obvious from the text; some are completely unknowable.

Several of these factors may be clarified by sources other than Acts. Thus the problem: is there enough material external to Acts to shed some light on its accuracy, or is this material so sparse as to leave the student of Primitive Christian history groping in the dark?

FOOTNOTES: CHAPTER 1

1. I was intrigued by the selection process for Judas Iscariot's replacement (1:15ff.). Of the two disciples between whom lots are drawn, Matthias seems the less likely choice. Strictly from the context of 1:23, one could assume that "Joseph called Barsabbas, who was surnamed Justus" would be chosen simply because of the detail in which his name is given as opposed to Matthias. There are, however, many ancient manuscripts which record Joseph's name as *Βαρσαββας* rather than *Βαρσαββας* or *Βαρσαβας*.

When Barnabas is first introduced his name is given as "Joseph who was surnamed by the apostles Barnabas" (4:36). There are also manuscripts which register his name as *Βαρσαββας*, and not *Βαρσαβας*. Obviously there existed at one time some measure of confusion between the two. Is it possible that they are one person? Also occasioning this speculation is the evidence that Barnabas has such an active role in the developing Church, is sent to inspect conversions when usually an apostle has that duty, and is associated closely with Paul (to tie Paul's authority closer to that of Jerusalem?). It is possible that Barnabas was an apostle, and was actually chosen instead of Matthias. Older manuscripts support reading *Βαρσαββας*, although the Syriac text of Clementines Recognitions I, 60 states that the choice fell on Barabbas. No authors were located who support this notion.

2. From 6:2, *οικονομικῆς διακονίας* is probably better understood, both from context as well as from possible definitions in other sources, to be "financial administration."
3. By introducing Jesus' brothers at this point, Luke allows for the eventual introduction of James as a leader of the community. Even though he is not an apostle, James is at least a member of the initial Church. As the years progress, Luke shows little, if any, concern to consciously restore to twelve the dwindling ranks of apostles. Possibly he does maintain the twelve in a round-about manner: when Peter goes off to "another place" and James the son of Zebedee is killed, perhaps Paul and James the brother of Jesus are intended to be considered as the replacements.
4. Luke never, in Acts, refers to Peter by the name Cephas.
5. There is some indication, however, that Peter may not have been the first to convert a Gentile (11:19, 20). On the other hand, there are several manuscripts which read *Ἑλληνιστῶν* rather than *Ἑλλήνων* (vs. 20). However, the contrast is with "Jews" (vs. 19) and *Ἑλλήνων* would appear to be the correct reading.

6. There is no apostle named to replace James as allegedly occurred with Judas.
7. There exists speculation as to where Peter went (see Filson, "Peter," in The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, pp. 749-57):
 - 1) Antioch: he apparently visited there (Gal. 2:11), and a strong Church tradition places him there as this community's first Bishop;
 - 2) Asia Minor: but there is no apparent evidence for this;
 - 3) Corinth: 1 Cor. 1:12; and,
 - 4) Rome: but there is no evidence that he left as early as Acts 12:17.

Regarding Peter in Rome: the New Testament never reports a visit by Peter to that city. Paul's letter to Rome does not indicate any connection of Peter to Rome. The earliest tradition that does connect Peter with Rome is late first century. Therefore:

- 1) Peter did not found the Roman Church or live there long; the persecutions described in I Peter are dated during the reign of either Domitian or Trajan. The dates assigned for I Peter are thus 87-95 or ca. 115, respectively;
 - 2) he was not there when Paul wrote to the Romans or when Paul reached Rome;
 - 3) he probably went there toward the end of his career and had a ministry of limited length; and,
 - 4) he probably suffered martyrdom in Rome.
8. Who this James is poses a slight problem. The only two choices would seem to be James, the son of Alphaeus, who is an apostle (1:13) and James the brother of Jesus. It is probably safe to assume that, if he relied on Josephus and/or Paul (Gal. 2), Luke is intending James the brother of Jesus.
 9. There is one problem which Luke does not cover up well. This is the Church's apparent dissatisfaction with Paul, surfacing with his final arrival in Jerusalem (21:17). Luke does not present a total solution this time. Even though Paul follows the apostles' advice,

his worries are only postponed and not eliminated, as he is soon arrested. Luke has paralleled Paul's final trip to Jerusalem with the Passion Narrative. The only possible result of Paul's experience in that city must be his arrest, trial, and projected death. These events may never have occurred. Perhaps Paul did not experience difficulties at the hands of Jews in Jerusalem. It is possible that Paul's troubles with the Jews as well as other Jewish related problems are, in truth, troubles within the Church itself. This will be dealt with later.

10. This fracture never occurs. In fact, as will be seen later, it is doubtful that there ever was a possible division in the Jewish community caused by the presence of this group of Jewish-Christians.
11. The seven are Stephen, Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolaus.
12. It seems probable that Luke is indicating the close ties that Paul has with Judaism. By arguing against the Hellenists, who are not even supposed to be in Jerusalem at this time (8:1), he is aligned with Jerusalem and thus Jewish tradition. When Paul finally casts off his mission to the Jews, their blindness is emphasized to an even greater degree.
13. Luke fails to mention Antioch (11:19) and Damascus (9:2).
14. It is interesting to note that, having approved James' resolution, the Jerusalem community's decision is obviously not unanimous, as evidenced in chapter 21. In fact, James' statement regarding the content of a letter sent to the Gentiles (21:25) reiterates the decision of the Apostolic Council. It is odd that the context of this passage makes it fairly obvious that Paul is hearing this for the first time.
15. The problem which surfaces at 21:20-21 is actually the same difficulty over which Jerusalem had repeatedly fought with Paul (i. e., his continued teaching the Gentiles to forsake the Laws of Moses). To remedy this serious situation, James instructs Paul to publicly show himself as an observant Jew (vss. 23, 24). It is difficult to imagine a Jewish-Christian community, angered for years by Paul, suddenly accepting this one act as honest repentance.

CHAPTER II

A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE ON ACTS

The immediate concern of this thesis is with the accuracy of the presentation of the Jerusalem Church as found in Acts. As indicated, the picture to be drawn from Acts alone is possibly unreliable. What have the efforts of New Testament scholars yielded that could help paint a clearer picture of the Church? The character of the author himself may provide useful clues: if definite characteristics of this author can be isolated, certain conclusions may then be reached regarding the accuracy of his presentation. Who wrote the book? When and where was it composed? What sources did he utilize? What were his motivations and, in the eyes of New Testament scholarship, has he accurately represented the primitive church?

PART 1: Regarding Its Authorship and Provenance.

Church tradition identifies the author of Acts as Luke, the physician-companion of Paul. Reputedly, he was born in Antioch and had close relations with the other apostles. This tradition, however, has been debated by scholars. Discrepancies have been noted within the various sources indicating that other conclusions are possible.²

Identification of the author with Paul's physician and companion Luke is not simply grounded on Eusebius' testimony. Texts are cited from Acts itself as well as from Epistles of Paul, genuine and pseudonymous. In Acts there are four passages written in first person plural, the "we" passages.³ On the basis of the last passage, we infer the author to be in Rome with Paul. As he is writing previous to Paul's trial in Rome he does not record Paul's death. If the author of the "we" passages is

to be identified as the author of Acts, then, taking into consideration the evidence in writings ascribed to Paul, this author would be Luke. The evidence contributed by the Pauline Epistles is:

- 1) Philemon 24 - "...and so do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, and Luke, my fellow workers." This letter has been written during a period of imprisonment. Paul here identifies several men, including Luke, who are his companions in prison. Since Paul was imprisoned in Rome, it is easy to presume a Roman provenance for this Epistle, and to view this writing in conjunction with the last "we" passage in Acts.
- 2) Colossians 4:14 - "Luke the beloved physician and Demas greet you." Paul makes the clear identification of his companion Luke as a physician.
- 3) 2 Timothy 4:11 - "Luke alone is with me." Traditionally, Paul wrote this Epistle while prisoner in Rome. Since in Acts 28:11-16 the author has identified himself as accompanying Paul to Rome, he therefore must be Luke. All others have deserted Paul (2 Tim. 4:9-10) and only the faithful Luke remains.

The earliest Christian writings thus indicate that Paul had a companion named Luke. As quoted previously, one of Paul's letters also states that Luke is a physician. Other Pauline passages indicate his need for a physician:

- 1) Galatians 4:13 - "...you know it was because of a bodily ailment that I preached the gospel to you at first...."

- 2) Acts 9:1-8 - This account of Paul's conversion has been interpreted as an epileptic seizure. Such an affliction would require the presence of a physician.

Those supportive of this reconstruction also cite the large number of medical terms which are present in Acts as indicative of Luke's training as a physician. Besides, how else could the author of Acts know so much about Paul? If he is a physician this intimate knowledge is more easily explained.

This presentation, however, is problematic. First, 2 Timothy is not genuinely Pauline. As one of the Pastoral Epistles, it was written possibly as late as 115.⁴ As a result, it would only reflect the tradition that Paul and Luke were companions. Thus it is not to be considered evidence in support of the tradition. This poses another, related question: is the identification of "Luke" as the author of Acts and the Gospel itself dependent on this tradition? Much is determined by the date we assign to Acts. If Acts were written during Paul's lifetime, then Acts would itself serve to underpin the tradition. If Acts is to be dated closer to 2 Timothy, then the ascription of authorship to "Luke" probably reflects rather than supports the tradition that Luke and Paul were companions. We shall pursue this matter shortly, and shall assume the latter position.

Further undercutting the traditional ascription are the many discrepancies found to exist between the Paul of Acts and the Paul of his own Epistles. These will be indicated in Chapters 3 and 5. They are of sufficient number, however, to render untenable the tradition that

Luke accompanied Paul and was rendering, in Acts, an eyewitness account of his travels.

Support for the traditional location of Acts, Antioch, is hinted at by Enslin and definitely supported by Knowling, Harnack, and Rackham.⁵ It is suggested that Luke's knowledge of Antiochene local geography is more accurate than for any other area, with the exception of the first missionary journey in South Galatia. Luke's picture of Antioch of Pisidia is the most vivid in Acts and is therefore construed to have been his home. He is at once of Macedonian, or Greek blood as well as being a Roman citizen. Luke is also an adherent to Jewish monotheism. He is thus of aristocratic descent with the "cosmopolitan sympathies" necessary for Acts. He also enjoys the comfortable income of a physician.

There are scholars, as previously mentioned, who do not accept this traditional view of the author of Acts. Some (e. g., Ramsay and Renan) accept the traditional Luke but place him in Philippi, a view occasioned by observations of his Greek characteristics. First is Luke's initial appearance (in the first "we" passage) at Troas (Acts 16:10-17) and his eagerness in directing Paul's steps toward Macedonia. Second is the vividness of Luke's narrative of the events at Philippi. Third is the "civic pride" he exhibits in referring to Philippi as "the leading city of the district" (Acts 16:12), an exaggerated claim. Finally, Luke maintains a close and continuous connection with the church at Philippi.⁶

Other scholars have rejected the traditional view of Luke as the

physician-companion of Paul. Cadbury effectively countered the physician hypothesis by a thorough study of other Greek writers.⁷ He was able to indicate that the same "medical" terms that are found in Acts are also to be found in a number of Greek works. The uses of these terms in the other works are in no way related to medicine. Nor are these other works themselves to be attributed to any physician.

Other scholars doubt as well that Luke was a companion of Paul. Haenchen as well as Feine, Behm, and Kümmel emphasize how weak was Luke's comprehension of the Pauline doctrine of salvation. Luke, at best, learns of this doctrine only through hearsay. Accordingly any personal contact by Luke with Paul must be construed highly unlikely.⁸ Conzelmann also does not accept the traditional Luke.⁹ The author of Acts has never had contact with Jerusalem. He is speaking from the perspective of third generation Christianity and reminiscing on the ~~20x7~~ of the Jerusalem Church as something unique and nonrepeatable. He is writing not in Palestine but in Rome. In fact, he presents the expansion of Christianity from only the perspective of Rome. According to Conzelmann, "the Way" is not only significant theologically but geographically as well. Although Paul's work is limited to the Aegean sphere, "the Way" leads to Rome as the final goal. In contrast to Ramsay and Renan, Conzelmann views Acts as omitting, or only mentioning in passing, certain regions: Galatia (16:6; 18:23); the mission by Paul's aides in Asia (it is passed over); congregations in the Lycos valley (missing); and Crete and Dalmatia (not mentioned). The two focal points in the realm of Christianity are Jeru-

salem and Rome.

Rome as the provenance of Acts is also supported by Knox.¹⁰ He claims that much of the form of the New Testament (contents and sequence of works) was determined there as a response to Marcionism. It was in Rome where Marcion first became conspicuous and was first attacked. The Roman church, in fact, took the leadership role in defining and fighting heresies. Knox also claims that the Roman church was intensely interested in uniformity among the various churches in Christendom, an emphasis definitely to be found in Acts. Also the first clear witnesses to the existence of the New Testament (Irenaeus, Tertullian, and the Muratorian fragment) all reflect the theological position of the Roman church.

Finally, Feine, Behm, and Kümmel also locate Luke outside of Palestine, suggesting several possible locales for Acts (Rome, Ephesus, a Pauline church in Macedonia, Achaia, or Asia Minor).¹¹ They conclude that Luke is a Gentile-Christian. First, he has no accurate conception of Palestinian geography. Second, he avoids the use of Semitic words, except for *ἐμὲν*.¹² Finally, Luke does not mention all traditions concerning Jesus' conflict with the Pharisaic understanding of Jewish Law.¹³

The approach in Feine, Behm, and Kümmel is the most appropriate. No theory regarding the provenance of Acts has proven completely satisfactory or convincing. Much of the problem hinges on the date we assign to Acts.

PART 2: Regarding Its Date.

Scholars generally assign Acts to one of three time periods. The traditional view is within the years 60-65. Another period proposed by but not limited to traditionalists is 95-100. Thirdly, some scholars prefer a much later dating, the vast period from the first through the third quarter of the second century. Other options -- before 50, or between 70 and 90 -- are distinctly less popular.¹⁴

In support of the traditional view are the following observations: First of all, the book ends abruptly, leaving Paul as a prisoner in Rome. As there is no certain reference to his death, Acts was obviously completed before the event, or the author left off before that time. Secondly, Luke's conciliatory attitude toward Rome makes it difficult to believe that Acts was written after Nero. It would be hard to understand Luke's presentation of peace and joyful optimism if the book is dated after the persecutions of 64. Thirdly, there is no reference to the Jewish revolt against Rome in the years 66-70. Related to this is the observation that the author gives prominence to Church-related subjects of the pre-70 years. Finally, and most obvious, if the author is understood to be Paul's physician-companion Luke, then he quite possibly is writing during that early period. As stated previously in a different context: why would Paul's physician wait a long time to write about him?

Once again, there are those who doubt the traditional view. Moffatt claims that Acts was written at a time when Jews and Gentiles no longer needed to be reconciled. The rights of Gentile-Christianity had long be-

fore been obtained.¹⁵ Depending upon whether or not Luke knew Josephus, Moffatt dates Acts either nearer 80 (if he did not know Josephus) or later than 100 (if he did use Josephus).¹⁶ Conzelmann throws a damper on the view that Luke knew nothing of the Jewish revolt and subsequent destruction of the Temple. He claims that Lk. 21:20-24 does render such evidence, although it is contested. Conzelmann argues that the style is historicizing and not apocalyptic and is therefore not to be considered prophecy. The way in which Luke connects the idea of the Church with Jerusalem presupposes that the Temple no longer stands. Paul's death as well is presupposed. Nevertheless, Conzelmann will not push the date too late as he would then no longer be able to explain why Acts shows no trace of using Paul's letters¹⁷ (which, at a later time, would have been collected and had extensive circulation).

In dating Acts to the vantage point of third generation Christianity, Conzelmann compares Acts to early Catholicism.¹⁸ He believes that several features of the early Catholic movement are either lacking or are only incipiently present within Luke or Acts:

- 1) The Church as the institution of salvation;
- 2) the institutional definition of the ecclesiastical office (priesthood) and the sacraments;
- 3) the binding of the Spirit to the institution; and,
- 4) the securing of the tradition through apocalyptic succession.

He arrives at this third generation date for Acts even though admitting that the only definite evidence of Acts' existence is from the second half

of the second century. Only three documents are cited. First, the Martyrdom of the Men of Lugdunum (citing Acts 7:60) which Conzelmann dates 177-178.¹⁹ Second, he believes that the Acts of Paul (197) know of the Acts of the Apostles.²⁰ Conzelmann's third source of evidence is the Muratorian Canon which dates toward the end of the second century.

A more detailed discussion of this type of evidence is, however, presented by Haenchen.²¹ He also concludes that only three second century sources mention Acts. These sources either mention the author or verbally cite from the text. On the other hand, he eliminates nine other sources as shedding no light on the problem.²² The first source to mention Acts is Justin Martyr whom Harnack dates 150-160, Andresen places around 180, and O'Neill dates closer to 135. Irenaeus' works are next, dated by Eltester around 180 as well. And, finally, agreeing with Conzelmann, Haenchen suggests that the Muratorian Canon also mentions Acts. This is not to imply, however, that Acts is necessarily contemporary with these later documents. Other conclusions are drawn from the textual similarities and differences evident between Acts and various other sources. Luke's supposed dependence on Josephus has previously been mentioned. It will be covered in more detail in Chapter 5.

Franz Overbeck suggests five reasons for dating Acts in the second or third decade of the second century:

- 1) "The political-apologetic aspect of Acts presupposes a reasonably advanced maturity and settled state of affairs in the church and particularly the absence of those questions concerning the relationship between Christianity and Judaism which dominated the life of the Church in its earliest days.

The Church has already achieved its independence, even though it recognizes a debt to Judaism";

- 2) "... the apologetic nature of Acts gives it the character of an immediate forerunner of the apologetic literature which flourished a few years later"; ²³
- 3) the parousia is no longer regarded by Luke as being "around the corner". Rather, it is projected into the infinite future;
- 4) Acts presents indications of the beginning of a hierarchical constitution within the Church (1:17, 20; 8:14, 17; 15:28; 20:17, 28); and,
- 5) Luke polemicizes against gnosticism (20:29). ²⁴

The anti-gnostic trend observed by Overbeck was also observed by Talbert and others. ²⁵ Talbert points out the presence of an anti-gnostic tendency in the Pastoral Epistles (which he dates ca. 120) as well as in the works of Ignatius of Antioch (110-125). It is further claimed by Haenchen and O'Neill that the authors of the Pastorals do not know Acts. ²⁶ The gnosis which can be deduced from Luke-Acts bears a striking similarity to that deduced from the Pastorals. The conclusion would then be that they are contemporary documents. This is not totally conclusive as the gnosis derived from Luke-Acts is also quite compatible with Marcionism of ca. 150 as well as later heresies (and the possibility exists of an incipient gnosticism even antedating Christianity itself). In fact Knox dates the compilation of the entire New Testament to the period 150-175 as a conscious and deliberate attack upon Marcionism. ²⁷ These were the years of Marcion's greatest and most influential activity. However, Knox does qualify his proposal with the observation that nothing which is known regarding Marcion's death would preclude the possibility of his being active

perhaps as early as 120 or 130.

O'Neill compares the theology of Acts with that of Justin Martyr and determines them to be contemporary. Justin did not use Acts.²⁸ Unlike Haenchen, O'Neill suggests that Marcion was the first witness to Luke. Marcion used Luke to reproduce a pure version of the most authentic gospel possible. The terminus ad quem of Luke and Acts would thus be 150. O'Neill believes, however, that there are two ways of dating Acts. The first is to determine whether or not Luke was dependent on Josephus. The difficulty in supporting this view is that one must assume that Luke misread his source or relied on recall of either the written text or an oral rendition. The text in question (Acts 5:36-38) is thought to be a misreading of Josephus, Antiq. XX, v, 1-2. Second, he suggests that Acts misrepresents Paul because it was written when knowledge of his life and word had been forgotten.²⁹ If Luke did not use the Pauline Corpus then his terminus ad quem would be ca. 90. O'Neill, however, dates the Corpus as only prior to 135.³⁰

Acts and Justin share an important theological point of view. They have a theological understanding of the connection of Jesus' work with that of the apostles. Justin's Apology 50:12 presents a detailed theology of Jesus' resurrection which, in the New Testament, is peculiar to Luke-Acts.³¹ O'Neill points out the similarities between Acts 24:25-27, 44-46 and Justin's Dialogue 53:5 and 106:12:

- 1) The chief business of the risen Messiah was to persuade the apostles that his suffering was foretold. Jesus refers back

to his own predictions of suffering made before the crucifixion.

- 2) Both authors greatly elaborate and illustrate that all that had happened was according to scripture.
- 3) Both record the ascension of Jesus.
- 4) Both describe the apostles receiving power from above.
- 5) In Acts and Justin the apostles went into the world to teach what Jesus had persuaded them was true (i. e., the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy in the events of the Passion).
- 6) Their attitude toward Jews is identical: the Jews have rejected the Gospel and the Gentiles will receive it.

In his comparisons of the wider scope of Acts and Justin, O'Neill points out six specific areas of similarity:

- 1) Acts 1:25-32 -- Luke argues from the Psalms in the same manner as does Justin.
- 2) Acts 4:13 and Apol. 39:3 -- the apostles are uneducated.
- 3) Acts 4:19; 5:29 and Dial. 80:3 -- the apostles obey God rather than humans.
- 4) Acts 10:41 and Dial. 51:2 -- Jesus ate and drank with his disciples after the resurrection.
- 5) In Justin's Second Apology 10:6, he provides a clue to the riddle of "the unknown god" of Acts 17:23.
- 6) Acts 26:25 and Dial. 39:4 -- both passages seem to be reflective of a standard apologetic approach toward Rome.

He then concludes that "there is no evidence that Justin cited Acts or even

knew of its existence. "32 Justin makes no reference to the context in which statements occur in Acts. Moreover, he often uses as his own the ideas ascribed by Acts to Paul and the other apostles (cf. 1, 3, 5, and 6 above).

On the other hand, in an analysis previous to O'Neill, Haenchen had indicated that Justin did indeed know Acts. 33 He bases his conclusion on the verbal reminiscence of Apol. 50:12 (*δύναμις . . . λαβόντες*) corresponding to Acts 1:8 (*λήμψεσθε δύναμιν*). O'Neill counters this with two fairly convincing objections:

- 1) The only pair of words in this passage which are common to Luke-Acts and Justin are the two mentioned above. In Acts they are spoken by Jesus, "and it is incredible that Justin should reproduce as his own comment words which are attributed to the Lord in his source. "34
- 2) If Justin knew Acts 2, it is surprising that he neglected to mention that the "power" was the power of the Holy Spirit.

Taking into consideration the evidence presented by O'Neill, i. e.,

- 1) Marcion is dependent on Luke. For Luke to have had some influence, its latest possible date is proposed as ca. 130.
- 2) Justin's Apology is dated 138-142. 35
- 3) Justin is not dependent on Acts for his theology. 36
- 4) Close similarities exist between the theologies of Luke and Justin.
- 5) The sort of apologetic argument they use.
- 6) Neither has read the other.

One concludes, therefore, that Justin and Acts are contemporary. Luke-Acts was written sometime during Justin's generation (115-170). The date must be set sometime between 130 and 140. An earlier date would require that Justin have heard of it. A later date would render unlikely the use of Luke by Marcion.

One final point is mentioned by Zeitlin, although he does not develop its possibilities.³⁷ He discusses the use of the word *Χριστιανόν* in Acts 26:28. The entire context is, "ἐν ὀλίγῳ με πείθει Χριστιανόν *πολεῖται* ." Zeitlin implies a late date for Acts as: 1) This term does not appear anywhere else in the Gospels or in Paul; and 2) the term had not yet come into vogue at the time of Agrippa II (ca. 55) -- he would not have used it.³⁸ Nevertheless, Zeitlin does not suggest a specific date or even a range of years for the composition of Acts.

The arguments researched concerning a date for Acts strongly suggest that the traditional understanding (60-65) is incorrect. This would cast doubt on its traditional authorship as well. As suggested in this section, considerable attention must be directed toward the sources utilized by Luke. If these can be identified, a date of composition could also be inferred. Scholars present strong evidence to suggest that Luke-Acts was written between the years 95 and 150, from Josephus to Marcion. These conclusions will be held in abeyance while the evidence from Luke's sources is considered.

PART 3: Regarding Its Sources.

Some have presumed the sources used by Luke in writing Acts to fall

into three categories: his own eyewitness experiences; oral reports to him; and written documents. There are, as well, those who reject Luke's use of any sources. They claim that he had none available.³⁹ Since none of these supposed sources is extant, even their original existence may be questioned.

If Luke were the companion of Paul, a large proportion of Acts would then be due to Luke's own personal, eyewitness account. He might also have oral and written sources available as well. Blaiklock has determined six sources from which Luke could have acquired information:

- 1) Eyewitnesses (chapters 16, 20, 21, 27, 28);
- 2) events within his immediate knowledge (chapters 21-27);
- 3) Paul's speeches in manuscript;
- 4) events not remote from his personal knowledge (chapters 16-20);
- 5) Paul; and,
- 6) Philip.⁴⁰

Many other scholars support this basic framework, although going into greater detail in some categories, adding various sources, or even deleting a source. Harnack proposes three other sources, one for which Philip is responsible. This Jerusalem-Caesarea source was transmitted in oral and written form and includes what is now 3:1-5, 16; 8:5-40; 9:31-11:18; 12:1-23. Harnack's second source, from Silas and Stephen, is called the Antioch-Jerusalem source.⁴¹ To it belong the following chapters and verses: 6:1-8:4; 11:19-30; 12:25-15:35. A third, the Legendary source, is composed of chapter 2 and 5:17-42. Harnack believes that none in the Apostolic Circle is responsible for this source but does not designate a responsible

party. Henry Alford has even suggested that a leader of the Church in Jerusalem provided a source for Luke.⁴² This unidentified person could easily be placed in Blaiklock's first category, eyewitnesses. Thus the proportion of Acts due to eyewitness accounts would be great indeed. Supporting this would be Charles Torrey, who proposes an Aramaic source for 1:1-15:35.⁴³

What sources did Luke have for the non-Pauline speeches in Acts? Could he have heard them personally? There is no indication that he did, and no scholar researched was found to support this view. Scholars who are proponents of the traditional Luke claim that he obtained written sources for these speeches, as well as for the early history of the Church.⁴⁴ Cadbury suggests the existence of written and oral sources for the speeches.⁴⁵ Nevertheless, the speeches may still be inaccurate. Luke reproduced his sources faithfully. However, since Cadbury realizes the discrepancies between Acts and various other bodies of evidence (such as Paul and archaeological findings), he also realizes that Luke is at the mercy of his sources.

Much of the discussion concerned with the speeches focuses on a statement by Thucydides:

As to the speeches that were made by different men, either when they were about to begin the war or when they were already engaged therein, it has been difficult to recall with strict accuracy the words actually spoken, both for me as regards that which I myself heard, and for those who from various other sources have brought me reports. Therefore the speeches are given in the language in which, as it seemed to me, the several speakers would express, on the subjects under consideration, the sentiments most befitting the occasion, though at the same time I have adhered as closely as possible to the general sense of what was actually said.⁴⁶

Scholars on either side of the discussion quote Thucydides -- to support

either Luke's reliability or unreliability with regard to transmitting speeches.⁴⁷

Even if Luke possessed written documentation of the speeches, why would he feel obligated to reproduce them accurately? His reasons for writing Acts could easily subvert any good intentions he may have nurtured in regard to faithful transmission. Dibelius suggests that Luke could have easily followed the pattern displayed by Josephus.⁴⁸ Josephus does not abide by the texts of speeches in the Bible and twice presents, in different versions, the same speech by Herod in the war against the Arabs.⁴⁹ This indicates how little he feels bound by respect for the text.

Dibelius believes that, apart from a travel journal, there are no substantial sources underlying Acts. There are rather, a number of small, self-contained accounts. The larger part of Acts is due to the author. There are summaries, generalizations of particular events, reworked and expanded legends (chapters 1-13), various links between items from the tradition, and speeches (Luke's own preaching) reflecting the philosophy and theology of late, first century Christianity.⁵⁰

Supporting this last point, how could even a companion of Paul remember the exact arguments given in a speech some twenty to forty years earlier? The speeches must therefore have been constantly repeated or written down. But there was no reason for those who heard the speeches to do so.⁵¹ The speeches are therefore viewed as attempts to bind together scattered and fragmentary traditions about the church into a flowing and compelling narration. By doing so Luke throws light

on various isolated incidents and assists in painting a picture, comprehensible only as a whole.

In connection with the problem of the speeches, Enslin discusses another source problem.⁵² He understands the speech of Gamaliel I (Acts 5:34ff.) to be free composition by Luke. Enslin dates Theudas no earlier than 44 and thus several years after the problem of which Gamaliel speaks. Also Judas the Galilean raised his rebellion in 6 C. E. Luke either knows of another rebellion not mentioned by Josephus or he is misreading or erring in recall of his Josephus source.⁵³ Thus the question, did Luke use Josephus as a source?

Scholars other than Enslin support the notion of dependence on Josephus.⁵⁴ Instances of parallel usage are as follows:

<u>Acts</u>	<u>Josephus</u>
2:29	<u>Antiq.</u> VII, xv, 3; XIII, viii, 4
3:2	<u>Wars</u> V, v, 3
5:36-37	<u>Antiq.</u> XX, v, 1-2
11:28	<u>Antiq.</u> III, xv, 3; XX, ii, 5; XX, v, 2
21:38	<u>Antiq.</u> XX, viii, 6
23:3	<u>Antiq.</u> XX, ix, 2
27:13ff.	<u>Life</u> 3

Conzelmann and Schürer, however, will not grant any dependence on Josephus. In fact, no author dating Acts before 90 would support this position. Schürer suggests that either Luke had not read Josephus, or he had forgotten all about what he had read. Besides, Conzelmann believes it

highly unlikely that Luke possessed one or more ancient sources. He has shaped the individual reports to which he had access and assembled them into the larger picture. It is unknown and undetectable where and how Luke found these reports.⁵⁵ Luke has no model to follow for Acts.⁵⁶

Two other possible sources need be considered: the "we" passages⁵⁷ and Paul's Epistles. Those who support the traditional Luke consider the four "we" passages to be an actual diary kept by Luke during his travels with Paul. If, however, Luke were not the traveling companion of Paul, how is the use of first person plural to be explained? Feine, Behm, and Kümmel discuss the written sources for Acts. They see evidence for such sources in the prologue to the Gospel According to Luke. They also view the "we" passages as having been found in a source which the author used.⁵⁸ As an aside, they then suggest that this perhaps indicates that Luke was not an original eyewitness. Overbeck proposes that the "we" passages were formerly a diary or itinerary that has been rewritten by Luke. He would rewrite it in order to pass himself off as one of Paul's companions, thus fitting in nicely with the traditional understanding of their relationship.⁵⁹

This tradition, as previously discussed, is derived from certain passages in epistles attributed to Paul, genuine and non-genuine. Does Luke have access to these Epistles? If he is not a companion of Paul, from what source(s) does he draw to tell Paul's story? Traditionalists would be of the opinion that Luke, as Paul's companion, of course knew of the existence of these letters. Why, however, would he use them? He

himself has experienced those events about which he writes.⁶⁰ Other scholars, such as Feine, Behm, and Kümmel, who date Acts between 80 and 90, claim that Luke did not use the Epistles. This is reasonable since they had not been published until ca. 90.⁶¹ Tyson even suggests that due to the various discrepancies between Galatians and Acts, Luke has at least not read Galatians.⁶² The fact that there are places of agreement and disagreement between Acts and Paul's Epistles has lead several scholars to suggest that Luke did make some use of the Epistles. Is there a reason why Acts would agree in certain instances and be at odds in others? Is Luke presenting us with his own hidden agenda? It is quite likely that he is, and this will be discussed in Part 4. Nevertheless several scholars do agree that Luke did make some use of the Epistles.⁶³

Luke either did or did not know Paul. He never makes mention of Paul having written letters, although he does mention others who did (15:23; 23:26-30).⁶⁴ As shown by redaction criticism of the Synoptics, Luke is always ready to modify and transform his sources. He stands in no awe of them but feels free to modify and change them as he deems it wise and necessary. Therefore he would also feel free to rewrite Paul in order to perhaps "free Paul from some unmerited disfavor or misuse."⁶⁵ How could Luke have been ignorant of Paul's letters? They were known and being used in the Church by the end of the first century. How could he not have seen them?

Enslin proposes five points by which some use of the Epistles may be suggested:

- 1) Each community Paul visited (as mentioned in his Epistles) is visited in Acts.
- 2) Luke's use of Gal. 3:19 in Acts 7:53 does not suggest an accurate knowledge of Paul's thought. It implies, rather, a secondary acquaintance with something Luke did not understand. Paul is rashly disparaging the Law. Luke, however, is giving an additional reason for its dignity.
- 3) Acts 9:23-25 is no doubt the same event as 2 Cor. 11:32.
- 4) Luke is drawing on Gal. 2 in his presentation of the Apostolic Council in Acts 15.
 - a) Acts 15:1 is a changed form of Gal. 2:12, and thus freeing James from the disingenuousness of Acts 15:24.
 - b) Peter is removed from the limelight. This avoids a clash between Peter and Paul, Luke's two primary church figures in Acts.
- 5) The narrative relating Stephen's death and Paul's persecution activity and subsequent conversion in Damascus parallels Luke's mixing of two other traditions. The parallel exists in the story of the birth of Jesus. Bethlehem is the birth site to which Joseph and Mary travel from their home, Nazereth.⁶⁶

Luke was either an eyewitness (or had eyewitness accounts) to the events he portrays or he was not. In either case there are problems with his text. Occasionally his testimony is in consonance with other sources; at other times, he varies from them. Why? Is there a reason why Luke would

present a different picture than his sources? Does he differ inadvertently, or does he choose to differ? With these questions in mind, we consider scholars' opinions on the Lukan purpose.

PART 4: Regarding Its Purpose.

Many traditionalists view Acts as a defense of Paul at his trial in Rome. When it comes to other suggested purposes behind Acts, traditionalists and non-traditionalists are often found promoting identical interpretations. Suggested purposes range from the very obvious to the more concealed; from a presentation of the history of early Christianity and its spread to Rome to a deliberate attack on Pauline theology.⁶⁷

Luke's concern with relating the history and spread of Christianity from Jerusalem to Rome is evident in 1:8, a verse considered by Feine, Behm, and Kümmel to be the theme of Acts.⁶⁸ This primary theme is developed throughout the book with a gradual broadening of the subject matter. The progression is from the preaching to Jews in Jerusalem until the final self-exclusion of the Jews from God's salvation. It is from the restrictive bonds of Palestinian Jewish-Christianity to the unhindered proclamation to the Gentiles of Rome. Luke then draws his theme to a tidy close at 28:30-31, his ultimate goal.

This presentation of Church history is understood as expressing several Lukan concerns. First, he could be seeking to preserve a record of Christian history for Christians, both for their edification and their comfort.⁶⁹ Second, Luke could be writing this history in order to woo

the Gentiles.⁷⁰ This concern would be primarily an evangelical one. Its interest is "proclamation and propaganda for the present in connection with the Gospel of Luke and for the confirmation of it."⁷¹ Acts is not intended, therefore, for later generations, but rather to spread the word of God farther and farther in Luke's own time.⁷² Third, Acts' history could have been written to correct misinformation about Christianity, to defend it. Its tone is defensive and not evangelistic, according to Talbert.⁷³ His conclusion is drawn from Lk. 1:4 which takes a knowledge of the kerygma for granted as well as the assumption by Luke that his readers are familiar with the Septuagint.

Moffatt, on the other hand, disagrees. He considers Luke to be more concerned with emphasizing the "providential developments upon which the Church looked back" rather than with reviving "the bitter memories of a bygone phase of controversy."⁷⁴ He had no intention of writing the history of early Christianity. Moffatt bases this proposal on the following:

- 1) Luke passes over large amounts of time silently or in a sentence;
- 2) he ignores a figure like Titus; and,
- 3) he is indifferent toward Christianity's movements in the east such as Peter's evangelization of Asia Minor and Paul's mission to North Galatia.⁷⁵

Other scholars have indicated a further purpose to Acts: Luke's concern to explain the delay in the parousia.⁷⁶ Luke replaces primitive Christian doctrine obsessed with the imminent End by a theology of a

saving history, the concept of salvation-history (Acts 1:6-7). The imminent expectation of the parousia is displaced from its controlling position. It has lost its character while the present is emphasized more strongly as the time of salvation.

The Book of Acts is also concerned to present an ideal image of life in the Jerusalem Church and throughout Christendom. This irenic picture permeates every aspect of Church life, as indicated previously in Chapter 1. Life in Jerusalem is idealized by Luke and any internal hostilities are easily solved. Paul's relations with the Jerusalem community are also quite good. Any hostilities toward him are for the most part easily subdued.⁷⁷ The operation of this Lukan Tendenz becomes evident when the Pauline Corpus as well as other Roman and Greek documents are seen as attesting to the presence of hostilities.

Recognized by nearly all scholars researched is Luke's apologetic approach toward Rome. His concern, both in his Gospel as well as in Acts, is to present Christianity as a religio licita in the Roman Empire.⁷⁸ This, however, poses a problem for Luke. While, on the one hand, he must prove that Israel is the precursor of the Church, he also must prove Christianity's independence from Judaism. Luke desires peaceful coexistence between the Church and Rome. Thus he points out the friendly relations that the original Christian leaders, especially Paul (and in the Gospel, Jesus), had maintained with the Empire. The Jews are responsible for initiating persecutions. The only link between the two religions is that Christianity is the true continuation of Israel, Verus Israel. Therefore Christianity

is politically legal.⁷⁹ Following Baur, Acts was understood as the attempt of Gentile-Christianity to explain its Jewish origins and how it came to be an essentially Gentile movement. It was written at a time when Christianity had lost touch with its Jewish heritage and this needed explaining.⁸⁰

An anti-gnostic purpose has also been inferred from the text of Acts.⁸¹ Knox and Packer both understand Acts as discrediting the teachings of Marcion. It is just as easy, though, to identify the target as some earlier form of gnosticism. Talbert finds Acts opposing the following gnostic principles:

- 1) Jesus the man is not the Christ.
- 2) The Christ is spiritual and would not suffer and rise.
- 3) There is no resurrection of the body as salvation is understood as escape from the body's wretchedness.⁸²

A final purpose inferred by scholars is concerned with Paul's image in Acts. Important considerations here are as follows:

- 1) There is no mention of Paul's death.
- 2) Luke has drawn a wide parallelism between the careers of his heroes: Jesus, Peter, and Paul.
- 3) Paul maintains traditional Jewish practices.

As mentioned previously, Luke could have been a prisoner of Rome with Paul and writing a defense for Paul's upcoming trial. As a result, Luke would have felt no compulsion to include the death of his still-living friend.⁸³ Those scholars, however, who support a date for Acts after Paul's death do not, for the most part, accept this reasoning. He fails

to mention Paul's death for some other reason. Cadbury suggests that Luke did not deliberately suppress a final sentence concerning Paul's fate. Whether Paul was condemned or acquitted at his trial in Rome, there is some other motivation behind Luke's lack of information.⁸⁴ Perhaps Paul's fate was too well known by Luke's readers to warrant iteration. Then again, Luke may have known nothing at all concerning Paul's fate or he may simply have been unsure. Perhaps (just as Acts had been the continuation of Luke) a third volume was planned. Luke could have intended this other volume for a presentation of Paul's trial. Finally, perhaps Luke had been using a source for this section of his book. If that is the case, it is possible that his source ended and thus also his account in Acts. For none of these suggestions is solid support presented. Paul's trial and death in Rome perhaps were unimportant to Luke. It is possible that Paul was only a vehicle for Luke. Perhaps Luke was not at all concerned with Paul's fate but rather only with the arrival of Christianity in Rome. These thoughts will be considered in Chapter 5.

Various events in the lives of Jesus, Peter, and Paul parallel each other in Luke-Acts. This parallelism is understood by scholars to be intentional on Luke's part.⁸⁵ Certain words and ideas are put into the mouths of more than one of them. For example, Paul assures his shipmates in Jesus' words, and Stephen forgives his executioners and commends his "spirit" at death.⁸⁶ Certain instances in their lives become parallel or interchangeable:

- 1) The threat to destroy the Temple is omitted from the charge

against Jesus in Luke's Gospel; it is the charge against Stephen.

- 2) Other details of Mark's Passion Narrative are altered in Luke.

The procurement of false witnesses and the charge of blasphemy against Jesus are not included in Luke's version of Jesus' trial.

These features have also been introduced into the charge against Stephen.

- 3) Paul preached the same gospel as Jesus (Lk. 16:17 and Acts 26:45; Lk. 14:14; 20:27 and Acts 17:18, 32; 23:6-8; Lk. 4:17-21; 22:37; 24:25-27, 44, 47; and Acts 9:22; 13:27, 33, 40-41, 46-27).
- 4) Both Jesus and Paul had four trials, the parallels of which (according to Mattill) originate with Paul's vision of himself and not with Luke.⁸⁷ Jesus is tried before the Sanhedrin, Pilate, Herod Antipas, and Pilate again. Paul's trials are as follows: Sanhedrin, Felix, Festus, and Agrippa. They are both charged with the same offense, are equally innocent and equally persecuted.
- 5) Jesus' prolonged progression to Jerusalem and his death there is possibly a reflection of Paul's own experience.
- 6) Acts repeatedly predicts Paul's fate just as the Synoptics repeatedly predict the fate of Jesus.

There are, in all, some thirty parallels which are discussed by Rackham, Mattill, and Talbert.⁸⁸ The interpretations of these parallels differ considerably. Rackham and Mattill suggest that the parallel structure of Luke-Acts supports the theory that Acts is an apology for Paul by his friend Luke.

Talbert, though, believes that these parallels are intended to represent the unity with which the Church developed. Jesus' life is paralleled to that of the Church.⁸⁹

Finally, the careers of Peter and Paul are balanced. It would hardly matter if any pattern can be derived from the sets of parallel passages.⁹⁰ The important observation is that a conscious effort has been made to equate the two figures, Peter and Paul. Luke's attempt may be to demonstrate that there is no part of primitive Christian history which is not connected with Pauline history. He may also be attempting to blunt the distinctiveness of Paul by making the two so similar. Luke also indicates that Christianity is legitimate, from both the Jewish and Gentile standpoints.⁹¹

Paul is even presented as having a good reputation among the Jews. He is frequently practicing traditional Jewish customs (16:3; 18:18, 21; 20:6, 16; 21:17-27). Luke even omits every trace of Paul's renunciation of the Law; his refusal to circumcise Titus, his dispute with Peter at Antioch, his conflicts with the Corinthians and Galatians, etc.⁹² Mattill's explanation for Luke's approach is that Luke did not want to awaken any memories of Paul's collisions with Judaizing opponents. He is presented on friendly terms with, and subordinate to, the apostles.

Whereas most of the scholars presented would understand Paul's career as being modeled after Peter's, Sandmel proposes an alternative.⁹³ According to Sandmel, Acts is not attacking Paul the person, but rather the Pauline doctrine. Knox argues similarly.⁹⁴ The means of the attack is Luke's version of Paul in Acts. This attack is the only way by which the

Church can accept Pauline doctrine as a correct, basic doctrine of Christianity. The Petrine tradition is the "hammer with which one blunts the sharp edge of Pauline doctrine."⁹⁵ Nevertheless Acts is not reliable for either tradition. No two traditions existed simultaneously, and in fact, the Petrine tradition was created by the later Church and used against Paul.

There is working in Acts a theory of authority resident in that person appointed by Jesus or his successors. By admitting Paul into that fellowship, the Church was able to take the edge off his sharpness. By neutralizing Paul, the Church could both be well organized and also claim the popular Paul as its own. According to Sandmel, the Petrine tradition is not primitive and not passed down from an early time. It is, rather, "Paul neutralized." Acts is therefore a view from a more matured church, attempting to minimize differences in order to forge a unity.⁹⁶

Certain facets of the history in Acts are no doubt explainable by one or more of the tendencies presented. More than likely, nearly all the given purposes played some role in the composition of Acts. A few of them are obviously to be considered more important than the others. But beyond the specific editorializing, beyond Luke's "special interests" which become evident, a further question must be offered. Has he been accurate in his presentation of the Church in Jerusalem; has he written a trustworthy account?

PART 5: Regarding Its Presentation of the Church in Jerusalem.

Not every scholar has contributed argumentation either for or against

the historical accuracy of Acts regarding the Jerusalem Church. Those who have can be placed in one of four categories. The first contains those scholars who believe Luke to be the companion (either physician or otherwise) of Paul, and writing an accurate history.⁹⁷ The second category is composed of those who also accept the traditional Luke but deny the historical accuracy of Acts.⁹⁸ Third, a category into which no scholars could be placed, is that understanding which rejects the traditional Luke, but nevertheless accepts Acts' presentation of the Jerusalem Church as historically accurate. The fourth category contains those scholars who both reject the traditional Luke as well as the historical accuracy of Acts.⁹⁹

The position taken by those in the first category is fairly simple to elucidate. The book is based on firsthand, personal experience as well as various eyewitness accounts. "There is little surviving of literary or historical significance to rival it."¹⁰⁰ This is true regarding its exactitude of the historical framework, the precision of detail of time and space, and its feel and tone of provincial city life.¹⁰¹

On the other hand, although Dibelius supports the traditional Luke, he rejects the historical accuracy of Acts.¹⁰² His position is founded upon analysis of three events: the Apostolic Council; the presentation of various speeches; and, the supposed communism of the Jerusalem Christian community. Luke's representation of the Apostolic Council is not accurate. Peter's speech at the Council refers back to the events of Acts 10:1ff., wherein is detailed his vision regarding foods which are no longer forbidden. Peter's relating of the vision is, in itself, quite vague, and cannot

truly be understood by those whom he is addressing. The speech can only be understood by the readers. Paul, himself, leaves the fundamental defense of his views up to Peter and James. There is even no record of Paul's account. Dibelius believes the portrayal of the Apostolic Council in Acts 15 to be a literary rendering. It is significant as such, but not in its understanding of an historical event. Luke is aware of a conflict about the circumcision of Gentile-Christians in Antioch. He is aware that this conflict was arbitrated in Jerusalem. But he does not simply reproduce a tradition about the events in Jerusalem. He considers the events to be as outlined in 15:12: "And all the assembly kept silence; and they listened to Barnabas and Paul as they related what signs and wonders God had done through them among the Gentiles." Luke's concern is literary and theological. His main thought is that the unconditional admission of Gentiles is a divine, not a human, endeavor. His reference to Cornelius is indirect and, as with Peter's speech, would be understood only by the reader. It would not be comprehended by those at the Council. Acts can make no claim to historical worth as the Apostolic Council did not originate in the meeting described in Gal. 2.¹⁰³

Dibelius also supports the opinion that ancient historians who wrote speeches laid no claim to historicity. Peter's speeches in the first part of Acts are only to present variations in the theology of the original community. Paul delivers a similar sermon in chapter 13. Thus Luke did not aim at being true to the speakers' personal characteristics. Again, his historical accuracy is doubted.

Consideration is then given to the supposed "communism" of the original community. Dibelius believes that 2:44 and 4:34f. are both narrative summaries with the function of making general statements (cf. 6:7; 9:31). The reproach to the free-will giving of Ananias and Barnabas, however, indicates that there was free and voluntary "communism out of love." There was no rule requiring distribution to the needy. According to Dibelius, Luke has, himself, created a clear and typical image of the earliest communities.¹⁰⁴

Haenchen disagrees with Dibelius. He suggests that the historian Luke would not have suppressed his own experiences in Paul's company just in striving for the typical. He would also not allow the Apostle's portrait to disappear in favor of an apostolic stereotype.¹⁰⁵ Possibly, both Haenchen and Dibelius could be correct. This conclusion would then necessarily require negation of Dibelius' position that Luke was a companion of Paul.¹⁰⁶

Conzelmann, O'Neill, and Feine, Behm, and Kümmel are representative of the fourth category. They differ, however: O'Neill argues that there are certain correct representations in Acts, as well as mistakes. Conzelmann is not as generous. He does not accept the rapid growth of the Jerusalem Church. The numbers of converts cannot be taken seriously: "at that time Jerusalem had some 20,000 residents."¹⁰⁷ The intent is to impress the point that the Lord is at work. He also suggests that the hierarchy in the Jerusalem organization is a reflection of a later period. The highest ranking officials in the Church are the twelve apostles. They have been replaced by the Pillars by the time of the Apostolic Council. Next in power are the elders. They were formed after the departure of Peter and

come into existence around the time of James' rise to power. Paul, however, does not mention them in Gal. 2, which may indicate that they did not exist when James attained leadership. The six deacons (Hellenists) are next in the hierarchy. This office is modelled on the later one. Conzelmann speculates that the Seven are the leading body of a special group in the community, and are standing alongside the apostles, and not subservient to them. The lowest level of the organization is the Democratic Assembly.¹⁰⁸

The "communistic community" is idealized in Acts. Conzelmann asserts that Luke's description of this type of community is incomplete. It could exist not simply if consumption were communally regulated; production also had to be organized. There is no description of how this community was able to produce anything after everyone had sold his land and belongings.¹⁰⁹

O'Neill, by contrast, readily suggests instances where Acts is indeed historically accurate.¹¹⁰ He believes that the Church in Jerusalem never demanded that Gentile believers be circumcised (cf. Antiq. XX, ii, 3ff.).¹¹¹ His evidence is primarily drawn from Galatians in which Titus is not circumcised. The early Church, moreover, did discuss how best to enable Gentile and Jewish-Christians to eat together. There are two different accounts of the discussion of this issue. One is Peter's vision and the other is the Apostolic Council. Peter's vision is the accurate tradition as based on Jesus' own words in Mk. 7:14-23 and Mt. 15:10-11, 15-20.

Two examples of errors committed by Luke are Acts 16:4 (Paul never referred to a decree in his Epistles) and the account of why Paul finally

chose to convert only Gentiles to Christianity. In Acts he is forced into that role by the hostility of the Jews (18:6). In Galatians, he is chosen by God to preach to the Gentiles (1:16). O'Neill blames the errors committed by Luke on his having two sources.¹¹² One is the Antioch source. Characteristic of this source is that Barnabas is named before Paul. Also, the events correspond well with the second visit to Jerusalem as mentioned in Galatians. The corresponding verses are 15:1-4, 12, 22, 23 (part), 24-27, 30-34. The second source is the Jerusalem source. It is concerned with the dispute which arises in the Jerusalem Church concerning how to treat Gentiles who have joined synagogues. Its corresponding verses are 15:5-11, 13-21, 23 (part), 28, 29.

Feine, Behm, and Kümmel do not believe Acts to be an historically reliable work. It lacks completeness in material and precision in historical details. The book also does not present a complete chronology. As previously mentioned, there is a crucial lack of necessary biographical interest. The authors also do not accept the notion that Luke's conception of the Jerusalem Church was the result of conscious idealization. Luke's representation, however, is not an accurate one. He has drawn the picture of the primitive Christian period as it was seen during his own time.¹¹³

Thus, there appears to be little agreement among scholars concerning the author of Acts, his date, sources, reasons for writing, and accuracy. Nearly everyone agrees, though, that the same author wrote both Luke and Acts.¹¹⁴ Consideration must now be given, however, to sources other

than Acts. The account of Acts has previously been presented. Perhaps these other sources will help clarify the picture which Luke has given to us.

FOOTNOTES: CHAPTER 2

PART 1

1. Eusebius The History of the Church III. 4, 6.
2. In our discussion of this matter now to follow, these scholars are cited: B. E. Beck, "The Common Authorship of Luke and Acts," New Testament Studies 23 (1977): 346-52; E. M. Blaiklock, The Acts of the Apostles: An Historical Commentary; F. F. Bruce, Jesus and Christian Origins Outside the New Testament; Henry J. Cadbury, The Book of Acts in History; Albert C. Clark, The Acts of the Apostles; Hans Conzelmann, "Luke's Place in the Development of Early Christianity," in Studies in Luke-Acts, ed. by Leander Keck, pp. 298-316; Martin Dibelius, Studies in the Acts of the Apostles; Morton S. Enslin, Christian Beginnings; P. Feine, J. Behm, and W. G. Kümmel, Introduction to the New Testament; Ward W. Gasque, A History of the Criticism of the Acts of the Apostles; Ernst Haenchen, The Acts of the Apostles: A Commentary; Richard Knowling, The Acts of the Apostles; John Knox, Marcion and the New Testament; Joseph B. Lightfoot, "Essays on the Work Entitled Supernatural Religion," reprinted from The Contemporary Review, 1889; I. H. Marshall, "Recent Study of the Acts of the Apostles," The Expository Times 80 (July, 1969): 292-6; A. J. Mattill, Jr., "The Purpose of Acts: Schneckenburger Reconsidered," in Apostolic History and the Gospel, ed. by Ward W. Gasque, pp. 108-22; J. C. O'Neill, The Theology of Acts in its Historical Setting; Richard B. Rackham, The Acts of the Apostles, an Exposition; Charles C. Torrey, The Composition and Date of Acts; Solomon Zeitlin, "Paul's Journeys to Jerusalem," Jewish Quarterly Review 57 (1967): 171-80.
3. Acts 16:10-17; 20:5-15; 21:1-18; 27:1-28:16.
4. Haenchen, Acts, p. 5.
5. The positions of Knowling and Harnack are cited in the survey by Gasque, History, pp. 130, 132, 148. Enslin, Beginnings, p. 425.
6. Rackham, Exposition, p. xlvii f. Rackham himself places Luke in the Aegean region. This is due to Luke's familiarity with Galatia, the Agora of Athens, as well as his thorough grasp of the Athenian character. Even though "Luke" is a Roman name, it does not necessarily denote Roman birth. Assigning Acts' provenance to Rome based on the book's ending would also constitute weak argument.
7. Haenchen, Acts, p. 43. Henry J. Cadbury, "Lexical Notes on Luke-Acts II," Journal of Biblical Literature 45 (1926): 190. id., "Lexical Notes on Luke-Acts. Luke and the Horse Doctors," Journal of Biblical Literature 52 (1933): 55.

8. Haenchen, Acts, p. 130. Feine, Behm, and Kümmel, Introduction, pp. 104ff.
9. Conzelmann, "Luke's Place," pp. 301ff.
10. Knox, Marcion, pp. 33ff.
11. Feine, Behm, and Kümmel, Introduction, ad. loc.
12. Charles Torrey, however, Composition, pp. 4-41, espouses an Aramaic original for Acts 1:1-15:35, and suggests the presence of many more Semitic words in the Lukan usage.
13. Passages concerned with the Jesus-Pharisee encounter which are missing in Luke are the following: Mk. 7:1-23, 24ff.; Mt. 5:17, 20; 6:1-8, 16-18; Feine, Behm, and Kümmel, Introduction, p. 105.

PART 2

60-65 c. e.

14. E. M. Blaiklock, The Acts of the Apostles: An Historical Commentary; F. F. Bruce, Jesus and Christian Origins Outside the New Testament; Ward W. Gasque, A History of the Criticism of the Acts of the Apostles; I. H. Marshall, "Recent Study of the Acts of the Apostles," see above; A. J. Mattill, Jr., "The Purpose of Acts: Schneckenburger Reconsidered," see above; Richard B. Rackham, The Acts of the Apostles, an Exposition; Charles Torrey, The Composition and Date of Acts. Torrey dates Acts in 49 or 50.

70-90:

Hans Conzelmann, "Luke's Place in the Development of Early Christianity," see above; P. Feine, J. Behm, and W. G. Kümmel, Introduction to the New Testament; James Moffatt, An Introduction to the Literature of the New Testament; J. W. Packer, Acts of the Apostles; Thomas E. Page, The Acts of the Apostles; Robert A. Spivey and D. Moody Smith, Anatomy of the New Testament; Joseph B. Tyson, A Study of Early Christianity.

later than 95

John Knox, Marcion and the New Testament; J. C. O'Neill, The Theology of Acts in Its Historical Setting; Charles H. Talbert, Luke and the Gnostics: An Examination of the Lukan Purpose.

15. Moffatt, Introduction, p. 301.
16. Ibid., pp. 311f.

17. Conzelmann, "Luke's Place," pp. 298f. Conzelmann, however, never considers as a possibility that Luke could have utilized Paul's letters.
18. Ibid., pp. 304ff.
19. Eusebius, History V. 2. 5
20. Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, s.v. "Paul, Acts of," by Morton S. Enslin, p. 678. The Acts of Paul is an attempt by second century Christianity to provide information about Paul which is missing in canonical Acts. The Acts of Paul was not accepted as accurate by early Christian historians such as Eusebius. Enslin dates the Acts of Paul between 160 and 170, as it is first mentioned by Tertullian. If accurate, this date would render Knox' late dating for Acts (150-175) unlikely. For this scheme does not allow enough time for the Acts of the Apostles to circulate before the appearance of the subsequent corrective volume. Therefore either an earlier date for Acts of the Apostles, or a later date for Acts of Paul, or both, need be considered.
21. Haenchen, Acts, pp. 1-12.
22. Haenchen's list is as follows with dating by various scholars:
 - a. First Epistle of Clement (Kümmel 80-90; Harnack 93-95; Knopf 95-96; Molland 96).
 - b. Ignatius of Antioch (Harnack 110-117; perhaps 117-125).
 - c. Second Epistle to Timothy (Schmithals ca. 150; possibly also 115).
 - d. Epistle of Barnabas (Harnack 130, 131; Kümmel, mid-second century).
 - e. Didache (Harnack 131-160; Molland, mid-second century).
 - f. Shepherd of Hermas (Harnack 110-140; Dibelius 120-130).
 - g. Epistle of Polycarp to the Philipppians (Harnack 110-154).
 - h. Second Epistle of Clement (Harnack 130-170; Knopf 120-150; Molland, mid-second century).
 - i. Eusebius' transmission of Papias (Harnack 140-160; Bammel 130-140; Jülicher-Fascher ca. 150).
 - j. Justin Martyr (Harnack 150-160; Andresen 180).
 - k. Irenaeus (Eltester ca. 180).

1. Muratorian canon (towards the end of the second century).

Only "j", "k", and "l" are proposed by Haenchen as definitely referring to Acts.

23. Gasque, History, pp. 85f.
24. Ibid.
25. Luke's anti-gnostic tendency will be discussed in greater detail in Part 4 of this chapter.
26. Haenchen, Acts, note 22 above. O'Neill, Theology, p. 9.
27. Knox, Marcion, pp. 32f.
28. O'Neill, Theology, p. 16.
29. Ibid., p. 4f.
30. Ibid., pp. 23ff. O'Neill believes that Clement of Rome and Ignatius knew some of Paul's epistles while Polycarp knew all of them. The Second Epistle of Polycarp is the first witness to the Pauline Corpus at 135. O'Neill thus dates the Corpus before 135. As a result, Luke-Acts still could have been written without knowledge of Paul's epistles.
31. Ibid., pp. 10ff.
32. Ibid., p. 16.
33. Haenchen, Acts, p. 8.
34. O'Neill, Theology, p. 16.
35. Ibid., p. 18.
36. For a more complete discussion of sources used by Luke, see Part 3 of this chapter.
37. Zeitlin, "Paul's Journeys," p. 175.
38. The term occurs only twice more in the New Testament: Acts 11:26, Χριστιανός; and 1Peter 4:16, Χριστιανός. Regarding the date for Agrippa II, see Haenchen, Acts, p. 671.

PART 3

39. Authors researched for this section are as follows: E.M. Blaiklock, The Acts of the Apostles: An Historical Commentary; S.G.F. Brandon, The Fall of Jerusalem and the Christian Church; Henry J. Cadbury, The Making of Luke-Acts; Hans Conzelmann, "Luke's Place in the Development of Early Christianity," see above; Martin Dibelius, Studies in the Acts of the Apostles; Morton S. Enslin, Christian Beginnings; id., "Once Again, Luke and Paul," Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft 61(1970): 253-71; C.F. Evans, "The Kerygma," Journal of Theological Studies N.S. 7(1956): 25-41; P. Feine, J. Behm, and W.G. Kümmel, Introduction to the New Testament; Ward W. Gasque, A History of the Criticism of the Acts of the Apostles; Ernst Haenchen, The Acts of the Apostles: A Commentary; Leander E. Keck, Mandate to Witness: Studies in the Book of Acts; Richard J. Knowling, The Acts of the Apostles; John Knox, Marcion and the New Testament; J. C. O'Neill, The Theology of Acts in Its Historical Setting; Richard B. Rackham, The Acts of the Apostles, an Exposition; Charles C. Torrey, The Composition and Date of Acts; Joseph B. Tyson, A Study of Early Christianity; H. H. Wendt, "The Historical Trustworthiness of the Book of Acts," Hibbert Journal 12(1913-14): 141-61; Leland E. Wilshire, "Was Canonical Luke Written in the Second Century," New Testament Studies 20(1974): 246-53.
40. Blaiklock, Acts, pp. 17-20.
41. Haenchen, Acts, pp. 31, 32, 369. On the other hand, Haenchen presents evidence which obviates the need for Harnack's Antioch-Jerusalem source.
42. Gasque, History, pp. 110f.
43. Haenchen, Acts, p. 25. Bolten had proposed in 1799 that Acts was written from various Aramaic sources, among others. In Torrey, Composition, pp. 67f., there is proposed that the Aramaic source was composed in Palestine in 49 C. E. The occasion is the successful completion of the Apostolic Council. Thus Torrey would be inclined to the view that the Aramaic source was highly trustworthy. Nevertheless, cf. p. 58, Torrey also states that the Aramaic document also had sources. Among these are hearsay reports that were composed "in perfect good faith."
44. Ibid., pp. 25ff.; Gasque, History, 110ff., 130.
45. Cadbury, Making, p. 189.
46. Enslin, Beginnings, p. 420.

47. It is possible that scholars make use of this reference to support their previously determined positions regarding the historicity of Acts. I would suggest that Thucydides' comment does not relate at all to the speeches in Acts. This position is based on the date and purpose for the composition of Acts, discussed further in Chapter 5.
48. Dibelius, Studies, p. 139.
49. Antiq. XV, 5, 3; Wars I, 19, 4.
50. Feine, Behm, and Kümmel, Introduction, pp. 119ff. Evans, "Kerygma," p. 40. Enslin, Beginnings, pp. 420ff. These speeches have been "Lucanized" and are thus similar to treatments by Josephus, Philo, Thucydides, and Livy. How could Luke have known what was said in secret council (4:15-17)?
51. Feine, Behm, and Kümmel, Introduction, pp. 118f. Evans, "Kerygma," p. 28.
52. Enslin, Beginnings, p. 423.
53. "... a certain magician, whose name was Theudas, persuaded a great part of the people to take their effects with them, and follow him. . . . Then came Tiberius Alexander as successor to Fadus. . . and besides this, the sons of Judas of Galilee were now slain; I mean of that Judas who caused the people to revolt. . ." (Antiq. XX, v, 1-2).
54. Gasque, History, pp. 88, 104, 115. The frequency of the term *ἐκκλῆσις* is also used to show Luke's dependence on Josephus. It is found nowhere else in the New Testament other than Acts 21:38. Josephus uses *ἐκκλῆσις* at least on seventeen occasions, while no other Greek writers record the term. The conclusion could thus be that Luke borrowed the word from Josephus.
55. Gasque, History, p. 104, n. 22.
56. Conzelmann, "Luke's Place," pp. 300ff.; O'Neill, Theology, pp. 5, 6.
57. "We" passages: Acts 16:10-17; 20:5-15; 21:1-18; 27:1-28:16.
58. Feine, Behm, and Kümmel, Introduction, pp. 130ff.
59. Gasque, History, pp. 84, 85.
60. Ibid., p. 132, n. 78. Haenchen, Acts, pp. 122ff.

61. Conzelmann, "Luke's Place," p. 299. He presents possible explanations as to why Acts shows "no trace of using Paul's letters": 1) Luke did not yet know the Pauline Corpus for he wrote before Paul's letters were collected; 2) he knew of the Corpus but deliberately ignored it ("why would he do that?"); 3) he wrote after its publication, but did not know of it ("is this probable?"); and 4) Luke knew the Corpus, but did not give the impression to the reader (Conzelmann finds little assent for this assumption).
62. Tyson, Study, pp. 207, 208.
63. Enslin, "Once Again," pp. 253-271; Knox, Marcion, pp. 116ff.
64. Knox, Marcion, pp. 115f.: The letters are never mentioned because they were being improperly used by unorthodox opponents of the Church (e. g., Marcion). Justin hesitates to use Paul, possibly in order to avoid what could become an awkward problem.
65. Enslin, "Once Again," p. 256.
66. Ibid., p. 264.

PART 4

67. The following authors are cited in this discussion: S. G. F. Brandon, The Fall of Jerusalem and the Christian Church; F. F. Bruce, Jesus and Christian Origins Outside the New Testament; Henry J. Cadbury, The Making of Luke-Acts; Hans Conzelmann, "Luke's Place in the Development of Early Christianity," see above; Martin Dibelius, Studies in the Acts of the Apostles; Burton S. Easton, The Purpose of Acts; Morton S. Enslin, Christian Beginnings; P. Feine, J. Behm, and W. G. Kümmel, Introduction to the New Testament; J. C. Fenton, "Order of the Miracles Performed by Peter and Paul in Acts," The Expository Times 77(1966):381-3; Ward W. Gasque, A History of the Criticism of the Acts of the Apostles; Ernst Haenchen, The Acts of the Apostles; A Commentary; Leander E. Keck, Mandate to Witness: Studies in the Book of Acts; John Knox, Marcion and the New Testament; A. J. Mattill, Jr., "The Jesus-Paul Parallels and the Purpose of Luke-Acts," Novum Testamentum 17(1975):15-46; James Moffatt, An Introduction to the Literature of the New Testament; J. C. O'Neill, The Theology of Acts in Its Historical Setting; J. W. Packer, Acts of the Apostles; Thomas E. Page, The Acts of the Apostles; Samuel Sandmel, The Genius of Paul; Charles H. Talbert, Luke and the Gnostics: An Examination of the Lucan Purpose; H. H. Wendt, "The Historical Trustworthiness of the Book of Acts," see above.

68. Feine, Behm, and Kümmel, Introduction, p. 116.
69. Enslin, Beginnings, p. 421; Feine, Behm, and Kümmel, Introduction, p. 115; Gasque, History, pp. 111-113, 123, 197.
70. Feine, Behm, and Kümmel, op. cit.; Gasque, History, pp. 144ff.
71. Conzelmann, "Luke's Place," p. 122. Dibelius, Studies, p. 107. The purpose of Acts is thus to portray God's leadership of the Christian community. Acts wishes to present historically the power of the Spirit of Jesus in the apostles.
72. Ernst Haenchen, "The Book of Acts as Source Material for the History of Early Christianity," p. 278.
73. Talbert, Luke, p. 102. Cadbury, Making, pp. 315f.
74. Moffatt, Introduction, p. 301.
75. Ibid., p. 305.
76. Gasque, History, pp. 292ff. Haenchen, Acts, pp. 94ff. Feine, Behm, and Kümmel, Introduction, pp. 101, 121.
77. Cadbury, Making, pp. 307f. Enslin, "Once Again," p. 269. John Knox, Chapters in a Life of Paul, pp. 27f. Sandmel, Genius, pp. 146ff., 190.
78. Cadbury, Making, pp. 308ff.; Conzelmann, "Luke's Place," p. 301.
79. Harnack, though, believes Acts was not intended to prove this; cf. Gasque, History, p. 155.
80. Ibid., p. 99, n. 56.
81. Knox, Marcion. Packer, Acts, p. 3. Talbert, Luke. However, Feine, Behm, and Kümmel (Introduction, pp. 113f.) believe that the purpose of Acts is not to rescue Paul from the gnostics. The only anti-gnostic polemic is 20:29f., but there is no need for Paul to differentiate himself from gnostics at that point in time.
82. Talbert, Luke, pp. 44ff. There are other previously mentioned tendencies within Acts which could be seen as serving a dual purpose. One example is the necessity of identifying Christianity as Verus Israel. This interpretation could also be in opposition to the gnostic desire to separate completely from Judaism and reject the Hebrew Bible outright.

83. It is possible, however, that Paul's death is suggested in 20:29, 30.
84. Cadbury, Making, p. 314.
85. Ibid., pp. 231ff. Mattill, "Jesus and Paul Parallels," pp. 16ff. Fenton, "Order," pp. 381ff. Talbert, Luke, pp. 85ff.
86. a. Acts 27:34 and Lk. 21:18.
b. Acts 7:59, 60 and Lk. 23:34, 46.
87. A.J. Mattill, Jr., "The Purpose of Acts: Schneckenburger Reconsidered," p. 115.
88. Ibid., p. 114. Talbert, Luke, pp. 85ff.
89. Talbert, Luke, pp. 33ff. The parallel passages are as follows:

<u>Luke</u>	<u>Acts</u>
7:27	18:24-28
4:16-30; 20:17; (cf. 19:28-44)	3:22-26; 4:11; 10:43; 13:23; 17:2-3; 28:23
9:22, 44; 17:25; 13:33; 24:7; 18:31-34; 22:37;	2:25-28, 31; 3:17-18, 24-25; 8:30-35; 13:27-39;
24:25-27, 32; 24:44-49	17:2-3, 11; 26:22-23
24:49	2:16-21
20:17-18	13:27, 40-41; 28:25-27
24:47; 4:25-27	13:47; 14:26; 15:15-18; 26:22-23
20:37	24:14-15; 26:6-8

90. Fenton, "Order," pp. 381f.
91. Cadbury, Making, p. 306.
92. Mattill, "Jesus-Paul Parallels," pp. 108ff.
93. Sandmel, Genius, p. 157.
94. Knox, Marcion, p. 116.
95. Sandmel, Genius, p. 158.
96. Ibid., pp. 161f.

PART 5

97. The following authors are cited in this discussion: E. M. Blaiklock, "The Acts of the Apostles as a Document of First Century History," in Apostolic History and the Gospel, ed. by Ward W. Gasque, pp. 41-59; F. F. Bruce, Jesus and Christian Origins Outside the New Testament; Henry J. Cadbury, The Book of Acts in History; Dom Gregory Dix, Jew and Greek; Joseph B. Lightfoot, "Essays on the Work Supernatural Religion," see above; I. H. Marshall, "Recent Study of the Acts of the Apostles," see above; id., "Palestinian and Hellenistic Christianity: some Critical Comments," New Testament Studies 19(1973):271-87; Richard B. Rackham, The Acts of the Apostles, an Exposition. Included are those references to Henry Alford, Sir William Ramsay, and Theodore Zahn in Ward W. Gasque, A History of the Criticism of the Acts of the Apostles, as well as Ernst Haenchen's reference to J. C. Riehm in The Acts of the Apostles; A Commentary.
98. Martin Dibelius, Studies in the Acts of the Apostles; references to Ernest Renan and Adolf Harnack in Gasque, History.
99. Hans Conzelmann, History of Primitive Christianity; Morton S. Enslin, Christian Beginnings; P. Feine, J. Behm, and W. G. Kümmel, Introduction to the New Testament; John Knox, Chapters in a Life of Paul; J. C. O'Neill, The Theology of Acts in Its Historical Setting; Samuel Sandmel, The Genius of Paul; references to F. C. Baur, Karl Schrader, Franz Overbeck, and Walter R. Cassels in Gasque, History and Haenchen, Acts.
100. Blaiklock, "Acts as a Document," p. 43.
101. Ibid., quoting from A. N. Sherwin White, Roman Society and Roman Law in the New Testament, Oxford (1963): pp. 120-122.
102. Dibelius, Studies, pp. 100ff.
103. Ibid.
104. Ibid., pp. 129, 136f.
105. Haenchen, Acts, p. 40.
106. Harnack takes a mediating position: Luke believes himself to be an historian, but his abilities are limited. In Gasque, History, p. 150.
107. Conzelmann, History, p. 63.

108. Ibid., pp. 54f.

109. Ibid., p. 36.

110. O'Neill, Theology, pp. 103ff.

111. However, Antiq. XX, ii, 4 would not support O'Neill's contention:

"Thou dost not consider, O king! that thou unjustly breakest the principal of those laws, and art injurious to God himself; for thou oughtest not only to read them, but chiefly to practise what they enjoin thee. How long wilt thou continue uncircumcised?"... When the king had heard what he said, he delayed the thing no longer... and did what he was commanded to do... The fruit of piety does not perish as to those that have regard to him [God], and fix their faith upon him only.

112. O'Neill, Theology, pp. 120ff.

113. Feine, Behm, and Kummel, Introduction, pp. 113-117.

114. For a dissenting opinion on a linguistic basis see Albert C. Clark, The Acts of the Apostles.

CHAPTER III

THE JERUSALEM CHURCH AND JEWISH-CHRISTIANITY IN SOURCES OTHER THAN ACTS

As the Jerusalem Church was developing and expanding there would have been individuals who encountered the new movement. Perhaps these people also wrote their impressions of the Church in letters or histories. Even if they did not, it is possible that they transmitted verbal information to someone else who was interested in preserving the information in written form. These various documents may contain information about the Church which would help to clarify the picture from Acts. Sources for this information fall into two general categories: Non-Christian and Christian. Non-Christian sources would include Greek and Roman documentation as well as the experiences of contemporary Jews as reflected in Rabbinic material. Christian sources are more diverse. The only sources contemporary with the Church are the Pauline Corpus and possibly archaeological evidence. Other New Testament writings may also reveal knowledge of the Jerusalem community. And even though much later, perhaps certain Christian apocryphal material is to be identified with the post-70 remnant of the primitive Church. The remaining Christian sources to be investigated will fall within the Patristic literature.

The testimonies from these sources can then be compared with each other as well as with Acts. By then also taking into consideration the various influences described in Chapter 2, we can appraise Luke's presentation of the Jerusalem Church.

NON-CHRISTIAN SOURCES

Greek and Roman Sources

References to Christianity do occur in various Roman sources.¹ Comments regarding the Jerusalem Jewish-Christian community are, however, few and far between. Tacitus mentions the origins of Christianity, but only in passing. He is also not specific: "Afterwards it [Christianity] began to break out afresh not only in Judea where the mischief first arose, but also at Rome..." (*Annals* xv, 44). Tacitus at least has the notion that Christianity began in Judea. It is unclear whether he derived this from common knowledge, from the Roman archives, or from the writings of the Synoptists themselves, particularly Luke. Other than this, he is silent.

Josephus is the only other ancient historian we know of who commented on events relating to the Jerusalem Church. Although he never mentions the existence of Christians or a Jerusalem Christian community, he does touch on related people and events.² Josephus records the death of Agrippa I (*Antiq.* XIX, viii, 2). This event is also recorded in Acts and will be discussed in detail in Chapter 5, as it relates closely to the problem of the sources used by Luke.³

An event which surely touched the lives of the Jerusalem Church was the famine which struck four years after Agrippa's death. Josephus records this famine as well as an interesting response to it:

...for whereas a famine did oppress them [in Jerusalem] at that time, and many people died for want of what was necessary to produce food withal, queen Helena sent some other servants to Alexandria with money to buy a great quantity of corn... And when her son Izates was informed of this famine, he sent

great sums of money to the principal men in Jerusalem
(Antiq. XX, ii, 5).

The final reference in Josephus is a comment on the death of James, the brother of Jesus. Christianity is not mentioned, but James (or the circumstances of his death) must have been fairly well known:

And now Caesar, upon hearing of the death of Festus, sent Albinus into Judea, as procurator... and Albinus was but upon the road; so he [Ananus] assembled the sanhedrin of judges and brought before them the brother of Jesus, who was called Christ, whose name was James, and some others... he delivered them to be stoned (Antiq. XX, ix, 1).

James is thus tried for breaking the Law. Ananus is described as a Sadducee seeking to exercise his authority in judging offenders. There is a public outcry in response to the execution of James. Nevertheless, there is no indication given as to whether James is tried as a Jewish-Christian, a Pharisee, or a Sadducee who has broken Jewish Law.

Thus from these scant references a faint picture may be drawn of the Jerusalem Church. Christianity began in Judea, and experienced a terrible famine four years after the death of Agrippa I. Relief aid was brought into Jerusalem by Queen Helena and her son Izates. This aid was in the form of food as well as money. Years later (ca. 62) the procurator Festus died. He was replaced by Albinus. At this time James, the brother of Jesus, was executed. His position in either the Jewish-Christian Church or even the more general local community is unknown. He would appear, however, to have been well known, in whatever capacity he served.

Rabbinic Sources

On a relative scale, it is far simpler to find references in Rabbinic

literature to Jesus than it is to find references to the Jerusalem Church. There are no instances where the Rabbis specifically mention a Christian group in Jerusalem. Either they know nothing about the Jerusalem Church or else the Jewish-Christians are considered to have been part of Judaism. In the latter case, differences would have become apparent after 70. Each group would then have had to develop its distinctive understanding of the destruction of the Temple.⁴ In either case, comments about Jewish-Christians would only be from encounters with them after 70.

In order to consider as many references as possible, we shall assume that the term יִשְׁרָאֵל refers, at all times, to Jewish-Christians. In this way, we may give every conceivably relevant passage its due, and not inadvertently overlook pertinent testimony. Nevertheless, even with such a loose approach, we cannot find any Rabbinic passage dealing with the יִשְׁרָאֵל which affords testimony concerning the Jerusalem Church or reflects theology which can be specifically connected with the Jerusalem Church. Clearly, there is no basis for identifying Jacob of K'far Sechanya with James the brother of Jesus.⁵

CHRISTIAN SOURCES

Paul's Genuine Epistles.

These letters were gathered into a corpus some time near the end of the first century.⁶ Clement was aware of the existence of at least one letter to the Corinthians. In his own communication to the church at Corinth, Clement states the following: "Read your letter from the blessed Apostle

Paul again" (Epistle to the Corinthians 47).

The author of II Peter has acknowledged the existence apparently of a Pauline Corpus. He evidently equates the status of this Corpus with that of the other scriptures:

... Paul wrote to you according to the wisdom given him, speaking of this as he does in all his letters. There are some things in them hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other scriptures (II Peter 3:15, 16).

This would therefore indicate the existence of a Pauline Corpus before 150. Scholars suggest also that the Epistle to the Ephesians (ca. 90-100) indicates use of a Pauline Corpus.⁷

The importance of these letters is to be found not in their existence as a corpus. Rather, they represent the only documents contemporary with the Jerusalem Church. As a result, any record of Paul's contacts with Jerusalem may prove beneficial.

Paul introduces himself as a Jew, well versed in his Tradition. Previous to his conversion, he "persecuted the Church of God violently and tried to destroy it" (Gal. 1:13, 14; see also Phil. 3:5-6). He is then converted to faith in Christ. Instead of proceeding to Jerusalem, Paul travels to Arabia. He then later returns to Damascus; we presume, accordingly, that he was converted in the vicinity of Damascus (see Gal. 1:17). Paul is unclear here; but why should this have been important to him? Three years later, he does proceed to Jerusalem to meet with Cephas for fifteen days (Gal. 1:18-19). During this period, the only other apostle with whom he meets is James, the brother of Jesus.

Paul's reputation, however, has preceded him. Even though the churches in Judea do not know him, they have heard rumors of his former passion for persecuting Christians. It would appear evident that Paul's pre-conversion persecutions did not occur in Jerusalem or Judea. He apparently persecuted the churches in and around Damascus.

"After fourteen years" Paul returns to Jerusalem (Gal. 2:1-2, 3).⁸ He is now accompanied by Barnabas and Titus. The apparent purpose of this trip is to validate the gospel which Paul has been preaching to Gentiles (Gal. 2:2). He has come to the church which bears knowledge of the "official" gospel. And with approval from the Jewish-Christian Church in Jerusalem he proves to the troubled Galatians that the gospel he preaches is correct. Even the Jerusalem Church leaders recognize that Paul's gospel and authority are from God and no earthly leader. Those leaders of repute in the Church add nothing to his message (2:6). They do, however, require him to "remember the poor."⁹ He fulfills this requirement gladly with collected contributions from the diaspora churches.

From Paul's description, the leaders of the Church are James, Cephas, and John (2:9). Peter is responsible for the gospel to the Jews, and apparently is not identified with Cephas (2:7). The pillars of the community (James, Cephas, and John) approve of Paul's gospel to the Gentiles. They themselves take overall responsibility for preaching to Jews (2:9).

All seems rather friendly, but there are those opposed to Paul. They are not identified but their opposition is apparently in response to Paul's "freedom... in Christ Jesus" (2:4-5). Just what does Paul understand this

"freedom" to entail? His position (at the time of this Epistle's composition) is fairly clear within the text (5:1-26). Simply stated, it is freedom from the requirement of circumcision. This does not mean that the Jerusalem community, by accepting Paul's understanding of the gospel, has also condoned the Gentile rejection of Jewish practice (2:11-14). They have only agreed that circumcision need not be a requirement for accepting the new faith (2:3). The entire presentation in Galatians 2 renders it feasible that the Jerusalem Church has been informed of Paul's divine appointment for the very first time at that meeting (2:7-9).

Also, an apparent contradiction arises: while in Antioch, Paul violently confronts Cephas (2:11); this seems inconsistent with their previous behavior in Jerusalem. James, though, has sent envoys from Jerusalem to Antioch. But these men, being of "the circumcision party" (2:12), should be themselves at odds with Cephas. If Cephas is aligned with James, there would appear to be no reason for Cephas to fear envoys sent by James.¹⁰

So Paul had been able to convince the Jerusalem authorities that he was worthy of preaching to the Gentiles. Now, he is, in his own eyes as well as theirs, an apostle. There are several criteria for apostleship. Paul is an apostle to those who are his "workmanship in the Lord" (I Cor. 9:1-3). In other words, the churches he has established are witness to his mission and they seal his apostleship. Paul has also seen Jesus (*ibid.*). In fact, Paul even lists the order of appearances by the risen Jesus. He appeared first to Cephas, then to the Twelve, and then to more than five hundred others. Following this he appeared to his brother James, then to all the apostles, and

finally to Paul, himself (I Cor. 15:5-8). This list is vitally important and reveals several interesting features:

- 1) The twelve (disciples?) would appear to be different from the apostles;
- 2) Whether or not Peter is one of the Twelve or one of the apostles, he is not specifically identified as "Cephas" by Paul; and,
- 3) James could be construed as neither one of the apostles nor one of the twelve disciples.

(It is also possible that Paul is simply repeating an early formula widespread in the Church such that the actual language is not his -- except for the statement that the Lord had appeared to him personally.) Paul also contends that the ability to perform miraculous deeds is indicative of an apostle: "The signs of a true apostle were performed among you in all patience, with signs, and wonders and mighty works" (II Cor. 12:12). When all else fails Paul can resort to the ultimate proof: his authority is from the Lord. (ibid., 10:8).

Paul's mission as an apostle is to convert Gentiles. His mission field ranges from Jerusalem to Illyricum (Rom. 15:18-22). He does state, however, that he would not preach in someone else's territory (ibid.). He thereby attests to the existence of other Christian missionaries preaching the gospel to Gentiles. This mission is not a voluntary task. Quite the contrary: Paul has been ordained by God to preach to the uncircumcised (Gal. 1:16; 2:1-2, 7, 8). The conversion of Jews, on the other hand, is entrusted to Peter (Gal. 2:7, 8).

In his epistle to the Romans, Paul discusses his upcoming trip to

Jerusalem (11:13). This trip is not one of those described in Galatians as he is bringing the donations for the poor. He was requested to do so during the final visit described in Galatians. Paul is anxious to have his services acceptable to "the saints." He even anticipates trouble in Jerusalem from "unbelievers" (Rom. 15:25-26, 31). Who these unbelievers are is not clarified; there is no indication whether they are Gentiles, Jewish-Christians, Jews, or even the Roman authorities.

Paul never mentions having delivered the collection in intervals. Perhaps the collection was made only once, from all of his churches, and delivered in lump sum. In either case, Paul would not necessarily be required to accompany the collection to Jerusalem (I Cor. 16:3-4). Nevertheless, the collection must be delivered (Gal. 2:7-10). Perhaps this was a stipulation imposed by the pillars in return for Paul's permission to preach to the Gentiles. More likely it is practice modeled on the familiar Jewish practice of collecting a Temple Tax from diaspora communities.

It is not clear whether Paul's intended trip in Romans is actually completed. There is no other indication that he again visited Jerusalem. He does compose two letters from prison, though. These two are Philippians and Philemon. Neither epistle mentions a final visit to Jerusalem. In fact, they also do not discuss any of the circumstances surrounding his arrest. It is indeed interesting that, even though not composed by Paul, II Timothy does make mention of Paul's various sufferings. The letter notes "...what befell me at Antioch, at Iconium, and at Lystra..." (II Tim. 3:14). If this letter were genuinely Pauline, why would he not mention an arrest

and trial in Jerusalem and Judea? Even if we understand the letter as pseudepigraphic, why was there not incorporated any tradition that Paul suffered in Jerusalem, was arrested and tried there, and extradited to Rome? Apparently there was no such tradition. Of course, this is an argument from silence.

Paul also speaks of Jewish persecution of the Church. He describes only once that the churches in Judea suffered persecution from the Jews. It is unclear whether or not he speaks of Jerusalem as well:

For you brethren, become imitators of the churches of God in Christ Jesus which are in Judea; for you suffered the same things from your own countrymen as they did from the Jews, who killed both the Lord Jesus, and drove us out..." (I Thess. 2:14-15).

The picture of the Jerusalem Church to be drawn from Paul is helpful. Life appears quite irenic. There are, however, indications of strife, both internal as well as external. There is also a contingent of poor Jewish-Christians who are cared for by means of contributions from the diaspora churches. This Jerusalem community is under the authority of three "pillars": James, Cephas, and John. James would appear to be the leader, although Jesus' initial appearance to Cephas may imply his leadership role. Peter is a missionary (as is Paul); his mission-field, however, is the Jewish community. Finally, Paul (in Galatians) reveals a genuine eagerness to establish his independence from, and not his submission to, Jerusalem. He does not view the Jerusalem Church as the mother Church, or as maintaining such a relation to the Gentile-Christian churches. He would appear, however, to understand the Jerusalem Church as the body which preserves an accurate

and authentic version of the gospel. He apparently believed that their approval would influence his relations with the Galatian Church.

Other New Testament Writings

The remaining books and letters in the New Testament also preserve information about the Jerusalem community.¹¹ Much of the material is contradictory, no doubt owing to the difference in traditions as well as the author's own tendencies.

There is no indication in Mark and Matthew that the Christian movement began in Jerusalem. It is a Galilean movement: "Certainly you are one of them; for you are a Galilean" (Mk. 14:70). The Resurrection appearances are associated with Galilee: "But after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee" (Mk. 14:28; Mt. 16:32; cf. Mk. 16:7; Mt. 28:7, 10, 16). Jesus' eleven disciples then proceed to Galilee to wait for him there. According to the Gospel of John (21:1ff.), Jesus appears to them in Tiberius. Neither Mark nor Matthew suggests that a church is to be founded in Jerusalem.

Luke does, however, locate the Resurrection appearance in the Jerusalem environs, as expected. Jesus' disciples are ordered to stay in the city until "clothed with power from on high" (Lk. 24:49, 49). John relates Jerusalem appearances to both Mary (20:14) as well as to the disciples (20:19ff.). But only Luke presents the opportunity for the founding of a Jewish-Christian community in Jerusalem.

The evidence in the gospels also suggests that Mark and Matthew understood the disciples and apostleship to be historically identified. In Mk. 6:7,

30 the apostles are so identified (cf. 3:14). This occurs again in Mt. 19:28 (cf. 10:2, where the names of the "twelve apostles" are given; everywhere else they are called disciples). In Luke the twelve apostles are selected from the larger group of disciples (Lk. 6:14f.). But these twelve later become the leaders of the Church.¹²

Without doubt the leader of the disciples is Simon-Peter. He is often placed in leadership roles as well as being isolated as a special member of the twelve. With assistance from Jesus, he walks on water (Mt. 14:28, 29). He alone identifies Jesus as the Christ and in turn is designated as the foundation of Jesus' Church (Mt. 16:16-19). Peter is given a position of prominence after Jesus departs. He is to comfort his brethren (Lk. 22:32). He is named as having seen the risen Jesus before any of the other apostles (Lk. 24:34). Peter's feet are washed by Jesus (Jn. 13:6ff.). Jesus washes the feet of all his disciples, but only Peter is named. Peter also loves Jesus more than do the others (Jn. 21:15). There exist many other passages in which Peter is given pre-eminence over the other disciples.¹³

On another occasion two other disciples are mentioned. The Gospel According to Mark possibly contains an account of the deaths of John and his brother James:

And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came forward to him, and said to him, "Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you." And he said to them, "What do you want me to do for you?" And they said to him, "Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory." But Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?" And they said to him, "We

are able." And Jesus said to them, "The cup that I drink you will drink; and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized"... (Mk. 10:35-40; cf. Mt. 20:20-28; Lk. 22:24-27).

James, the brother of Jesus, is not described as a disciple in any of the gospels. He is mentioned along with his brothers Joses, Judas, and Simon (Mk. 6:3). On other occasions James is placed with other family members. He is also present at the crucifixion with his brother Joseph and his mother Mary (Mt. 13:55; 27:56).

To whom do these disciples/apostles preach? In Matthew, they are initially commanded to not preach to the Gentiles or the Samaritans (10:5). Later, they are commanded to go to all nations with the gospel (28:19). The later addition to Mark (16:15, 20) also preserves this command. Luke requires that the gospel be preached to the entire world; the message, however, is to spread outwards from Jerusalem (Lk. 24:47).

There are two indications as to the spread of Christianity into the Gentile world. By the time of completion of Mark, the influence of Christianity has touched at least Galilee, Judea, Jerusalem, beyond Jordan, Tyre and Sidon. Perhaps Mark is here indicating a Galilean origin for the movement, or perhaps he focuses on Galilee because it was a region of the Holy Land which was extensively inhabited by gentiles. Seven major churches are listed in Revelation 1:11. They are Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicia. It is indeed interesting to note the absence of Jerusalem and Rome. This is explicable as all seven are located in Asia and this area would seem to be a major concern of the author. Nevertheless, the list does indicate the extensive

movement of Christianity into this area by the time Revelation was composed.

Returning to Jerusalem, there are indications in these other New Testament writings of strife. The most explicit example of a conflict within the Church is in Jn. 8:31-59. It apparently reflects the controversy regarding Jewish Law as opposed to Christian Faith. If this is the case, John may be presenting a confrontation between Jewish and Gentile-Christians. The passage in question is Jesus' argument with those Jews who were his followers:

Jesus then said to the Jews who had believed in him, "If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." They answered him, "We are descendants of Abraham, and have never been in bondage to anyone. How is it that you say, 'You will be made free'?"

Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly I say to you, every one who commits sin is a slave to sin. The slave does not continue in the house forever; the son continues forever. So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed.... I speak of what I have seen with my Father, and you do what you have heard from your father" (8:31-38).

Other references are found to be concerned with various Jewish traditions. These sources lack any indications, however, that the various authors are in fact dealing with the Jerusalem community. The first is concerned with Laws of Kashrut and holiday observance: "...let no one pass judgement on you in questions of food and drink or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a sabbath" (Col. 2:16). The second example is concerned with the controversy over circumcision (Titus 1:10). The circumcision party is again named, but probably refers to local Jewish-Christians in Crete and not in Jerusalem.

Finally, in James 2:8ff. and 4:1, obedience to Jewish Law is supported. This document also argues that faith is inseparable from works (2:20, 21; 3:13). These arguments, however, may well have nothing to do with the Jerusalem community.

The picture we may draw from other New Testament writings is minimal. Strong indications are that the Christian movement has its origins in Galilee. It was initially a Jewish movement but spread rapidly to the Gentile nations as a consequence of Jesus' own command. The disciples become the authorities for the new movement. Unquestionably, Simon-Peter is their leader. There is evidently friction between Gentile and Jewish-Christians. This information may be only a reflection of the provenance of an individual author. The source of the conflict, however, may extend back to difficulties faced by the expansion of the primitive Church into the Gentile world.

Christian Apocrypha

The most recent of the Christian literatures to be investigated are the Christian apocrypha. Perhaps they can be utilized to shed light on the Jerusalem Jewish-Christian community.¹⁴ If any of these writings were assignable to that community, it could provide a fund of information.

The first suggestion from Christian literature of any connection is to be found in Eusebius:

Furthermore, the members of the Jerusalem church, by means of an oracle given by revelation to acceptable persons there, were ordered to leave the City before the war began and settle in a town called Pella (History 3. 5. 2ff.).

It is then possible to understand the following New Testament passages as also indicating the same flight to Pella:

- 1) "... then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains." (Mk. 13:14; Mt. 24:16; Lk. 21:21); and,
- 2) "... and the woman [Christian Church] fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God... that she might fly from the serpent into the wilderness, to the place where she is to be nourished for a time..." (Rev. 12:6, 14).

According to Schoeps this flight is historical and was made by the Ebionites in 67-68. This sect is first mentioned by Epiphanius.¹⁵ He wrote that in the region of Pella, the migrating Jerusalem-Christians split into two sects, Nazoraeans and Ebionites.¹⁶ The Nazoraean tradition can be traced to the beginnings of the Christian Church only if Matthew is a Jewish document and these Nazoraeans have a common background with Matthew.¹⁷ Matthew is not a Jewish document.¹⁸ Therefore the Nazoraeans (the only recognizable Jewish-Christian sect with characteristics different from the Ebionites) will not be considered further.

The Ebionites, according to Schoeps, are the descendants of the Pharisaic-Christians of Acts 15:5.¹⁹ They are to be identified, as well, with Paul's opponents in Gal. 2:12 and II Cor. 11:5; 12:11 (cf. Acts 21:18ff.). These Ebionites are closely associated with James, the brother of Jesus. In the Ebionite "Acts of the Apostles," James is the authority of the Church. There are many parallels in this pro-James document between James' speech and that of Stephen in the canonical Acts. In Acts 15, James, as the mediator

at the Apostolic Council, was the guarantor of Church unity. The era of schisms began with his death. By the second and third generations, James had been idealized into James the Righteous. Schoeps argues for a close association between his martyrdom (Antiq. XX, ix, 1) and the emigration to Pella.²⁰

This group is not without its literature. The original Clementines were connected with the Ebionites, even though the "so-called Pseudo-Clementine" writings are from the third or fourth century.²¹ Schoeps also argues that the term "אֶבְיֹנִים" is an ancient title of honor which the remnant of the primitive Church adopted. This was done after the flight from Jerusalem. The Pseudo-Clementines also lack reference to this title. This is because it later became a nickname and an abusive term used against Jewish-Christians. Therefore, the Jewish-Christians themselves avoided its use.

But is the Ebionite claim to the Jerusalem tradition a valid one? Several scholars think not.²² Paul twice refers to the poor in Jerusalem:

- 1) "...poor (τῶν πτωχῶν) among the saints in Jerusalem..." (Rom. 15:26); and,
- 2) "...remember the poor (τῶν πτωχῶν)..." (Gal. 2:10).

Has he thus designated the name by which the Jerusalem Church knew itself: אֶבְיֹנִים or Ebiōnaioi? "Ebionite" could possibly derive from "Ebionim," a messianic self-designation of the primitive Church. This cannot, however, be verified. Rather, Paul's references to the poor (those which relate to the Jerusalem Church) should be taken literally.²³

Bauer rejects the use of Acts 11:27-30 to support the notion under discussion. Justin, also, does not use the term "Ebionaiot" in his statement about Jewish-Christianity.²⁴ Basing himself on Justin's treatment of Jewish-Christians and other religious groups, Bauer proposes that the Church had not yet applied the concept of "^{el}αἰρεσις" to the Jewish-Christians.²⁵

In Acts, Luke never calls the Church by the title "the Poor." As he is writing after Paul, and assuming that Paul is relating this title, is it not odd that Luke would not use it? The Epistle of James suggests a similar implication. Even if it is ascribed to James and therefore is an Ebionite document, the Epistle still offers no real evidence that the Jerusalem community called themselves "the Poor."

The first explicit mention of Ebionites dates from Irenaeus (ca. 175). He does not comment about them, however.²⁶ Hegesippus, a second century Palestinian Jewish-Christian, sketches the history of the Jerusalem Church for Eusebius.²⁷ But on no occasion does he mention the Ebionites. Neither does he refer to the Jerusalem Church by any other name. His silence is not accidental. He does not know of any group calling itself "the Poor" or "the Ebionites." There is simply no evidence for their existence in the first century, either before or after the destruction.²⁸

It would seem true that the writings of the Christian apocrypha do not originate with the Jewish-Christian community in Jerusalem. Eusebius' notation of the Pella migration may indeed be accurate. The link, however, between this community and Ebionite literature is tenuous indeed. Bauer appears correct in his statements concerning the term "Ebiōnaiot:"

- 1) It did not apply as a general Jewish-Christian self-designation;
- 2) it originally applied to a specific Jewish-Christian group which felt obligated to uphold the Jewish ideal of poverty; and,
- 3) the term was later transformed by heresiologists into a general description of "sectarian" Jewish-Christianity.

Patristics

The Patristic literature may also render some valuable information concerning the Jerusalem Church. Perhaps the Church Fathers had contacts with eyewitness sources unknown to the New Testament writers. As will be seen, the amount of material with which to work is quite limited.

As mentioned previously, Eusebius possesses a source in Hegesippus, a second century Palestinian Jewish-Christian. He presents Hegesippus as a writer who has shown his orthodoxy "and unshakable devotion to the apostolic tradition" (History 4, 21ff.). Hegesippus is cited by Eusebius as portraying the Jerusalem Church as the mother Church and the authentic prototype of orthodoxy: "The Corinthian Church continued in the true doctrine until Primus became bishop (ibid. 4, 22, 4); and, "...through the deceit of false teachers... attempted to counter the preaching of the truth by preaching the knowledge falsely so called" (ibid. 3, 32). There is no indication of the level of control, if any, exerted by Jerusalem over the diaspora churches.

Hegesippus does relate how authority is passed from one generation to another. As also described by Clement (Epistle to the Corinthians 44),

Jesus instructed the apostles to replace those who die. Hegesippus states that "Control of the church passed to the apostles together with the Lord's brother James... the Righteous..." (History 2. 23. 4). He then proceeds with a description of James' execution. It is unclear whether or not Eusebius has an actual document from Hegesippus, is using Acts and Josephus, or uses some other source.

In further descriptions of the apostles, Eusebius cites Clement concerning the death of James, the son of Zebedee: "...there were two Jameses, one the Righteous, who was thrown down from the parapet and beaten to death... the other the James who was beheaded" (History 2. 1. 1 quoting Outlines Book VIII). Also referring to Clement (Outlines Book V), Eusebius presents a most interesting comment: "Then there is Clement's story... in which he says that Cephas... was one of the seventy disciples, who happened to have the same name as Peter the apostle" (History 1. 12. 2). This separation of Peter and Cephas is further supported by Kirsopp Lake.²⁹ He notes two separate works, Epistola Apostolorum (second century) and Kirchen Ordnung (third century Egyptian work). Both of these contain a list of the apostles. They both include Peter and Cephas as two separate individuals.³⁰

Eusebius also records the death of Agrippa I (History 2. 10). His source is Josephus, Antiq. XIX, viii, 2. The important portion of the quote from Josephus is: "...and sitting over his head he saw an angel...."³¹ This occurs just prior to his death.

Finally, Lightfoot correctly comments that there is no remnant of a Pauline-Petrine conflict in the "genuine" First Epistle of Clement (ca. 96)

and the seven letters of Ignatius (98-117).³²

As can be observed, the evidence we can draw from the Patristic literature is meager. What does exist could prove quite important, however. This literature suggests a difference between Peter and Cephas. It also presents further evidence in support of Josephus as a source for Acts. These will be discussed later in detail. The Jerusalem Church is presented as the authentic orthodox community. Its leader is James the Righteous, Jesus' brother, who is later executed.

Archaeological Evidence

Archaeologists have yet to uncover concrete evidence of the existence of the Jerusalem Jewish-Christian community. There have been discovered no documents from this group of Christians. Nor have any church structures been found either. The only evidence supporting the existence of Christians in Jerusalem during the first century is to be located on that city's tombs.³³

In Sanhedria (a north-western district of Jerusalem), a group of twenty-one tombs was discovered. Jotham-Rothschild located crosses on three of the tombs (#V, X, and XII).³⁴ He identifies these tombs as belonging to a Jewish family of pre-70 Jerusalem. Early Christian descendants of this family were buried in the tombs. As the chambers are pitch dark, lacking ventilation, and only entered with great difficulty, Jotham-Rothschild concludes that they have had no inhabitants since they were formed.³⁵ He also dates these three tombs from mid-second century to mid-third.

This date is apparently based on two principles:

- 1) It is impossible to find Christian remains in Israel dating to pre-Constantine;³⁶ and,
- 2) the cross did not appear as a Christian symbol until the end of the second century.³⁷

There is, however, archaeological evidence for the early existence of Jewish-Christians in churches throughout Palestine. Mancini discusses the ossuaries at Bat'n el Hawa (Mount of Scandal in Jerusalem). The signs described by Clermont-Ganneau were of the presence of Christianity in a Jewish family.³⁸ The ossuaries at Talpiot contain at least one Christian who had been buried there.³⁹

Ambiguity surrounds the inscriptions of crosses on the tombs and ossuaries. These crosses are either the Ancient Hebrew X (or Ⲑ) or else they are the Christian symbol. A problem arises, however, as both the Aramaic Ⲑ and the older Hebrew X are used throughout the first century and until the Bar Kokhba War.⁴⁰ While there are coins from the Revolt as well as the Bar Kokhba War which have the older forms of Hebrew imprinted, the Aramaic square letters are also in use. For example, the tomb inscription of King Uzziah (first century B. C. E. to first century C. E.) is written with these letters as well as various papyri from the first century and earlier.

Another approach is utilized by Sukenik.⁴¹ Evidence from the city of Herculaneum proves most interesting. In a small chamber of one house was found a large cross carved into one of its walls. There are also two

holes through which nails were used to fasten what was possibly a wooden cross onto the wall. Herculaneum was one of the cities destroyed by the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 C.E. The cross was perhaps ripped off of the wall during the destruction.

Further evidence from the same house consists of coins dated to the sixth year of Agrippa. The year would be 42 or 43 if Agrippa I and ca. 59 if Agrippa II. There were also Herodian lamps and pottery found at the site.

Therefore, crosses must have been venerated by Christians by at least 79. There appears no reason why Jews would place a ⲁ (whether in the ancient Hebrew or in the Aramaic script) on the entrances or on the inner walls of a tomb. Archaeological evidence would thus indicate that Jewish-Christians did inhabit Jerusalem in the first century.

FOOTNOTES: CHAPTER 3

1. Suetonius, On the Life of the Caesars, "Claudius," 25; Tacitus, Annals, xv. 44; Letter of Pliny the Younger to the Emperor Trajan; Trajan's reply to Pliny.
2. The Testimonium Flavianum (Antiq. XVIII, iii, 3) does mention "Christians." On the basis of evidence from the Arabic text of Agapius, however, we would delete the term from the Greek text. It is probably one of a number of late alterations of the original Josephan text.
3. Josephus also mentions the destruction of Pella by insurgent Jews (Wars II, xviii, 1). This could imply the destruction of this supposed Jewish-Christian city of refuge before the migration took place. See below, paragraphs headed: "Christian Apocrypha," for a discussion of references to Pella.
4. R. T. Herford, Christianity in Talmud and Midrash, pp. 383f.
5. Contra J. Klausner, Jesus of Nazareth, pp. 41ff.
6. John Knox, Marcion and the New Testament, p. 57, n. 24.
7. Ibid., pp. 172ff.
8. It is unclear whether "after fourteen years" refers to the period of time following Paul's conversion or following his first visit to Jerusalem. For purposes of this investigation, it is irrelevant.
9. We will discuss the term, "the poor," shortly.
10. There is evidence from different manuscripts to support the alteration of the names 'Cephas' and 'Peter' in the Galatians text. These manuscripts support the use of 'Peter' on four occasions: 1:18; 2:9, 11, and 14. The implications of this observation will be discussed in detail in Chapter 4.
11. Even though Mk. 16:9-20 is to be considered a later addition and not from the author of Mark, it is nevertheless used as a possible source for information regarding the Jerusalem Church.
12. The twelve disciples are herein presented as they are named in each of the four Gospels:

Mark 3:16-19 - Simon-Peter, James the son of Zebedee, his brother John surnamed Bo-anerges, Andrew, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew (although Jesus selects Levi the

son of Alphaeus in 2:14), Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus, Simon the Cananaean, and Judas Iscariot;

Matthew 10:2-4 - Simon-Peter, Andrew, James and John the sons of Zebedee, Philip, Bartholomew, Thomas, Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus, Simon the Cananaean, and Judas Iscariot;

Luke 6:14-16 - In 5:27, Levi becomes a disciple. However, Jesus selects his twelve apostles from amongst the larger group of disciples. The apostles are; Simon-Peter, Andrew, James and John the sons of Zebedee, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, Simon the Zealot, Judas the son of James, and Judas Iscariot; and,

John - He only names nine of the twelve: Andrew (1:40), Peter (1:42), Philip (1:43), Nathanael (1:47), Judas Iscariot (6:71), Thomas (11:16), Judas (14:22), and the sons of Zebedee (21:2).

13. Peter's pre-eminence is evident in the following passages as well:

Mk. 1:16; 3:16-19; 5:37; 8:29; 9:2ff.; 10:28; 11:21; 14:29, 33ff., 54, 66ff.; 16:7.

Mt. 4:18; 15:15; 17:1-8; 18:21; 26:33, 37, 69-75.

Lk. 5:10, 11; 6:14; 7:40; 9:20, 28ff.

Jn. 1:42, the only location where Peter is specifically identified as Cephas.

14. The following authors were researched for this section: Walter Bauer, Orthodoxy and Heresy in Earliest Christianity; Joseph A. Fitzmyer, "Jewish Christianity in Acts in the Light of the Qumran Scrolls," in Essays on the Semitic Background of the New Testament (1971): 271-303; id., "The Qumran Scrolls, the Ebionites and Their Literature," in Essays on the Semitic Background of the New Testament (1971): 435-80; Leander E. Keck, "The Poor Among the Saints in the New Testament," Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft 56 (1965): 100-129; id., "Poor Among the Saints in Jewish-Christianity and Qumran," Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft 57 n. 1 (1966): 54-78; A. F. J. Klijn, "Jerome's Quotations from a Nazoraean Interpretation of Isaiah," in Judéo-Christiansme (1972): 241-53; id., "The Study of Jewish Christianity," New Testament Studies 20 (1974): 419-31; J. Munck, "Jewish Christianity in Post-Apostolic

Times, " New Testament Studies 6 (1960): 103-16; Hans-Joachim Schoeps, Jewish Christianity.

15. Klijn, "Study," p. 429 and note 7.
16. Harnack believes that the names Nazoraean and Ebionite describe only one group. Cf. ibid., p. 422.
17. Klijn, "Jerome's Quotations," p. 255.
18. The explanations most often given to prove Jewish identity are as follows: Eusebius quotes Papias who says that Matthew composed the Gospel in Hebrew and was a disciple of Jesus; Matthew quotes the Old Testament so frequently that he could only be a Jew; and, the Gospel is so concerned with Law that only a Jew could have written it. There has never been found, however, any Hebrew original of Matthew. The Greek of Matthew is identical to Mark, where they correspond. It is unlikely that an Aramaic original could have been translated so accurately. Second, just because someone knows the Old Testament does not make him a Jew. Finally, all institutions that grow have a need for laws. The Church has had a canon for centuries.
19. Klijn, "Study," p. 424, in reference to H. J. Schoeps, Theologie und Geschichte des Judenchristentums (Tübingen, 1949), p. 5.
20. Schoeps, Jewish Christianity, p. 21.
21. Ibid., p. 15.
22. Keck, "The Poor Among the Saints in Jewish-Christianity," pp. 56ff.; Fitzmyer, "The Qumran Scrolls," pp. 439ff.; Bauer, Orthodoxy, pp. 272ff.; Munck, "Jewish-Christianity," p. 104ff.
23. Bauer, Orthodoxy, p. 272, n. 86.
24. Ibid., p. 273.
25. Ibid., p. 275.
26. Keck, "The Poor Among the Saints in Jewish-Christianity," p. 56. By the time of Irenaeus, Jewish-Christianity is classified as a self-contained unit alongside of other groups. Irenaeus applies the name "Ebiōnaioi" to them and it is now the name of a sect.
27. For further discussion of Hegesippus, refer to Part II, Section 4.
28. Munck, "Jewish-Christianity," p. 104. Munck believes that Jewish-Christianity did not survive the destruction in 70. What remained was

a Christianity of a new type. As a result the Pseudo-Clementines render an untrustworthy account. It is impossible to arrive at primitive Jewish-Christianity via the three "Jewish-Christian Gospels," those of the Nazoraeans, Ebionites, and Hebrews. The assumption that James was the leader of the Church and also represented a strict form of Jewish-Christianity is not supported by Gal. 2 or Acts 15; 21:1ff.

29. Samuel Sandmel, The Genius of Paul, p.182, in reference to Kirsopp Lake in Harvard Theological Review 14(1921): 95-8.
30. The implications of the identification of Peter, Cephas, and Simon will be discussed in Chapter 4.
31. In Josephus, Antiq. XIX, viii, 2, the death of Agrippa I is associated with the presence of an owl over his head. In Acts 12:23 as well as in Eusebius' rendering here, an angel is associated with his death. This will be discussed in Chapters 4 and 5.
32. Lightfoot's conclusions are presented in Ward Gasque, A History of the Criticism of the Acts of the Apostles, p.118.
33. Authors researched in this section are as follows: Julius Jotham-Rothschild, "The Tombs of Sanhedria," Palestine Exploration Quarterly 84(1952): 23-38; id., "The Tombs of Sanhedria - II," Palestine Exploration Quarterly 86(1954): 16-22; Ignazio Mancini, Archaeological Discoveries Relative to the Judaeo-Christians; E. L. Sukenik, "The Earliest Records of Christianity," American Journal of Archaeology 51(1947): 351-65.
34. Jotham-Rothschild, "Tombs - II," pp.18ff.
35. Ibid., p.19.
36. Mancini, Discoveries, p.20.
37. Sukenik, "Earliest Records," p.361.
38. Mancini, Discoveries, pp.14ff.
39. Ibid., pp.19ff.
40. Encyclopaedia Judaica, s. v. "Coins and Currency," by Dov Genachowski; ibid., s. v. "Alphabet: Hebrew," by Jacob Maimon.
41. Sukenik, "Earliest Records," pp.364f.

CHAPTER IV

COMPARING THE TESTIMONY OF ACTS WITH
THAT OF OUR OTHER SOURCES

It is now possible to compare the various pictures of the Jerusalem Church. Not only must the sources other than Acts be compared with Acts, but they must be initially compared amongst themselves as well. Wherein do these other sources agree with or seem compatible with one another? Wherein do they agree with or seem compatible with Acts? Wherein do they prove to be at variance with the testimony in Acts? There are instances when this variance will prove to be of no significance. On the other hand, in other instances the variance will prove to be of definite significance.

These questions will be dealt with within the seven categories into which may be placed the testimonies regarding the Jerusalem Church:

- 1) The geographical origins of Christianity in Palestine;
- 2) the role of the Jerusalem Church in the developing Christian movement;
- 3) the role of the Apostles within the Jerusalem Church;
- 4) the Leaders of the Jerusalem Church;
- 5) life within the Jerusalem Jewish-Christian community;
- 6) the growth of the Jerusalem Church; and,
- 7) problems encountered by the Primitive Church in the First Century.

I. The Geographical Origins of Christianity in Palestine

A comparison of sources other than Acts reveals wide disagreement concerning the origins of Christianity in Palestine. Whereas Eusebius

records Jerusalem as the city of origin, no source other than Luke so identifies this city. Tacitus, however, does state Judea as the site from which Christianity grew. This would include Jerusalem within its boundaries and exclude Galilee.

Nevertheless, the sources more contemporaneous with the Jerusalem community (i. e., the Gospels of Mark and Matthew, and especially the Epistles of Paul) present a different picture. Paul does not claim that the movement began in Jerusalem, although there is a church located there. There are also churches in Syria as well as the general region of Judea. Archaeological evidence also supports the existence of a Christian group in Jerusalem sometime during the first century. The Gospels of Mark and Matthew present the new movement as Galilean. The resurrection appearance occurs there as well. Obviously these authors are indicating a tradition which places the origins of Christianity in Galilee and not in Jerusalem.

The testimony in Acts agrees with Eusebius. It is likely, however, that Eusebius has used Luke and Acts as his sources. He is therefore unreliable on this point. Tacitus, as well, may be reflecting knowledge of the Lukan tradition. It is also possible that he is presenting information from contacts he has had with contemporary Christians. The testimony from the Gospels of Mark and Matthew, however, differs greatly from that of Luke-Acts. The significance of this variance is twofold. First, it indicates one of Luke's purposes in writing Acts (conclusions to be drawn in Chapter 5); second, the variance may warrant the alteration in the traditional identification of the disciples of Jesus as the apostles of the Church

in Jerusalem (see section III, below).

As is evident, Paul does not specifically deal with the origins of the Christian churches in Palestine. He does, however, mention that he persecuted the Church before his conversion. If his conversion took place only a few years after Jesus' death, it would then appear inconceivable that the movement could have spread so rapidly from its origin, Jerusalem, throughout Judea, and to at least Damascus. Thus the implication from Paul is at variance with Acts. According to Acts the Church begins in Jerusalem. It spreads from there following Stephen's death. At that execution Paul is introduced and later converted. In his Epistle to the Galatians, however, Paul acknowledges having persecuted the Church at least three years prior to visiting Jerusalem for the first time (Gal. 1:13, 15-18). Churches did develop outside of Jerusalem. Their growth was contemporary with that of the Jerusalem community.

II. The Role of the Jerusalem Church in the Developing Christian Movement

The only sources other than Acts which deal with the influence of the Jerusalem Church are the writings of Paul and those of Eusebius. They do not agree with each other. Whereas Eusebius portrays the Church as the mother Church for all Christendom, Paul does not. In Eusebius, it is the prototype of orthodoxy. Paul is striving for status equal or exceeding to that of the leaders in Jerusalem. His authority is from God, and therefore his mission to the Gentiles is as important as Peter's God-given mission to the Jews, if not moreso. The image from Paul is that the Jerusalem

Church was the official authority regarding the correct gospel. The leaders in Jerusalem approve and authorize various missionaries and the gospel they preach. They do not govern Paul. They validate and verify his authority as an apostle to the Gentiles. Even the Jerusalem community, however, appears divided. There are those who strongly oppose Paul's mission, and even desire the circumcision of Gentiles.

In Acts, however, there is a more extensive presentation. Not only is the Jerusalem Church the prototype of orthodoxy, but it also maintains a far reaching control and influence over the entire movement. Its control extends into the diaspora and also strongly influences the actions of Paul. This authority gradually and eventually shifts to Rome. Paul, who is writing letters throughout this period of transition, does not indicate any loss of "control" by Jerusalem and/or gain by Rome. These differences appear significant as they probably reflect the ideal by which Luke is viewing the no longer existent Jerusalem Church.

III. The Role of the Apostles Within the Jerusalem Church

Besides Acts, Paul is the only source to define an apostle. His criteria are more detailed than are Luke's. In fact, the requirements for apostleship, as defined in Acts, would not include Paul as he did not accompany Jesus during his ministry. Luke does, however, identify Paul (and Barnabas) as apostles (Acts 14:14). The differences in definition on this point are not as significant as are the similarities. Where the two sources are similar could reflect Luke's awareness of the Pauline definition and his conscious

effort to alter it. This will be investigated further in Chapter 5.

In Paul, Eusebius, and the gospels, authority is given to the apostles from Jesus himself. The identity of these apostles, however, varies amongst these sources. The gospels agree with Acts, in that the twelve who were followers of Jesus are also the twelve apostles of the Jerusalem Church. In Luke's Gospel there is an indication that the disciples are not to be identified as the apostles. The twelve apostles are selected from the much larger group of disciples. These twelve, however, are still the leaders of the later Jerusalem Church.

Paul, again, presents a differing view. When he lists the order of Jesus' resurrection appearances, the Twelve [disciples] seem different from the apostles. This variance may be significant. Paul is a contemporary of the Jerusalem Church and should be considered more accurate than Acts on this point. The names of the apostles, as given in Acts, would appear to be incorrect. Luke, following Church tradition, has simply assumed the identity of the Twelve with the apostles of the Jerusalem Church.

Here, then, is where the differences between the Pauline and the Lukan criteria for apostleship enter the picture. Luke's requirement that an apostle must have accompanied Jesus during his ministry is to be considered an addition by Luke. It serves to indicate one of his own purposes in writing Acts (see Chapter 5).

It is unknown from any source other than Paul just what role these apostles played outside of the validation of the gospel for various missionaries, and the conversion of the circumcised. One of Paul's functions is to

collect contributions for the poor in Jerusalem. This is mentioned only once in Acts (24:17), although the famine relief aid could be a reflection of Paul's collection. Acts presents a fairly detailed picture of apostolic function with regard to the conversion process, the spread of the gospel, and the governing of everyday life in Jerusalem. The Epistles rarely mention these concerns. In fact, a major difference between the Paul of Acts and the Paul of the Epistles is that, in Acts, Paul is presented as having been forced to preach to the Gentiles. Luke portrays Paul as a loyal Jew. As the direct result of Jewish belligerence and blindness to the truth of the gospel he has no choice but to turn to the Gentiles. Acts only suggests once that Paul was pre-ordained for this mission (9:15-16). In his Epistle to the Galatians, however, Paul is quite explicit. He has been chosen by God to preach the gospel among the Gentiles (1:15-16): "But when he who had set me apart before I was born, and had called me through his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son to me, in order that I might preach him among the Gentiles, I did not confer with flesh and blood..." It could be supposed that once again, Luke has embellished the actual situation. Quite possibly, he has created part of the image as well.

IV. The Leaders of the Jerusalem Church

The sources other than Acts disagree on the leadership of the Jerusalem community. In the gospels, Peter (Simon) is the one disciple who is singled out for special consideration. He is first to see the risen Christ. On Peter's shoulders does Jesus found his own Church. Paul, Eusebius, and the Chris-

tian Apocrypha, however, all identify James (the brother of Jesus) as the authority in Jerusalem. Only Paul details his role. In the gospels, James is identified only as Jesus' brother; he plays no role in the growing movement. In Paul, however, he is Jerusalem's central figure.

Paul does not include James with the apostles when he details the resurrection appearances. In Gal. 1:18ff., however, describing his first trip to Jerusalem, Paul meets with "none of the other apostles except James the Lord's brother." He would thus seem to identify James as an apostle. Paul's own criteria for apostleship would appear to support this notion.

In Galatians, James is described as one of three pillars of the Jerusalem Church. Cephas and John are the other two. John plays no role in the Pauline presentation of the Jerusalem Church. On the other hand, Cephas does play a part. Whereas in the Gospels it is understood that Cephas is identified as Peter (only in John is the identification explicit), in Paul and Eusebius, he is not. Paul presents Peter as the apostle to the Jews in the diaspora, and not involved directly in the affairs of the Jerusalem Church.

It would appear that in Acts there is an attempt to reconcile the Church tradition regarding Peter's leadership and what Luke knows about James. Peter is the initial leader of the Jerusalem community. James later becomes his successor. Peter is responsible for converting Gentiles, as is Paul. Although Luke never uses the name "Cephas," it is clear that he accepts the identification of Peter with Cephas. Luke presents the leaders of the Church as Peter, James, and John.

The variance between the Pauline-Eusebian testimonies and Acts re-

garding the identifications of Cephas, Peter, and Simon is significant. As indicated in Chapter 3, there are verses in Galatians where other manuscripts read "Peter" instead of "Cephas." Obviously some confusion existed as to the correct identification.²

Also significant is the variance in understanding who are the specific leaders of the community. The differences are reflective not only of the Lukan purpose in composing Acts but of the various sources utilized by Luke -- specifically the Pauline Corpus.

V. Life Within the Jerusalem Jewish-Christian Community

Paul rarely touches on the living conditions of the Jerusalem Jewish-Christians. He does relate that there are poor believers living there. What can also be gleaned from Paul indicates a fairly calm situation in Jerusalem. In his negotiations with the pillars, peace pervades the scene. There are suggestions of problems, however. Conflicts exist, arising not only within the leadership of the Church but also from the outside -- from Jews and Romans.

The Synoptic Gospels suggest that the life-style in Jerusalem was a communal one. On several occasions, Jesus commands his various followers to sell all their goods and to give to the poor. Does this reflect an actual Jesus saying? If it does, the principle should apply to all churches. Paul does collect for the poor. The collection, however, is gathered specifically on behalf of the Jerusalem poor. Paul makes no mention in his letters of a communal-type lifestyle in any of the respective communities. It is thus

possible that the evangelists are presenting a later tradition concerning the message of Jesus. It is also possible that Jesus did suggest to his disciples this form of charity. Luke, then, has fashioned his picture of the Jerusalem Church accordingly.

The irenic and communal image in Acts would thus be at variance not only with Paul but also with various data presented within the text of Acts. Life in Jerusalem is not necessarily peaceful. The Church does not necessarily enjoy tremendous status within the Jewish community. It is likely that the Jerusalem Jewish-Christians were understood as simply another "sect" within the multi-faceted Jewish community.

During the time that the Jerusalem Church was in existence, Agrippa I died. Josephus records the event, as does Eusebius (quoting Josephus). The two texts vary. Acts also records Agrippa's death. The similarity between the Lukan account and that related by Eusebius is significant. It lends strong support to the notion that Luke utilized Josephus as a source (to be discussed in Chapter 5).

The remainder of the Lukan presentation of the Jerusalem Church's lifestyle is neither supported nor contradicted by any sources. The Church is simply not mentioned.

VI. The Growth of the Jerusalem Church

Little evidence regarding the growth of the Church may be culled from any source other than Acts; comparison is, therefore, difficult. Paul's evidence, although quite scant, is important. He indicates that there were

other missionaries preaching to the Gentiles. Other churches were established which he hesitated to visit as they were in someone else's mission-field. The arrival of the gospel to Rome is not Paul's responsibility. As the Epistle to the Romans was written to a Gentile-Christian church, it is safe to assume that Peter also had no role in founding the Roman Christian community. In Acts, however, is another dimension. The entire emphasis of leadership within the Church shifts from Jerusalem to Rome with Paul's arrival there. Even the Gospels reflect this movement away from Judaism. But in Acts, the growth of the Church outside of Jerusalem is primarily the responsibility of Paul. Although Peter initiates the mission to the Gentiles, Paul is definitely the catalyst.

The tremendous numbers of converts described in Acts are probably exaggerations, reflecting the Lukan concern to present a popular, irenic, vibrant community. He portrays an image of the Christianity with which he is familiar. He has retrojected that image, fashioning a portrait he believes was the case in the years following Jesus' death.

VII. Problems Encountered by the Primitive Church in the First Century

In general the Church encountered internal and external difficulties. The internal problems arose between those who could be labelled "Judaizers" and those concerned with less stringent requirements for conversion. In the Gospel According to John, this takes the form of an argument of Law versus Faith. John has retrojected the discussion to Jesus' own day. It nonetheless reflects the internal conflict of John's day. Perhaps it dates

back to the time of Paul as well.

Paul attests that the Jerusalem Church also was rankled by factionalism. The "circumcision party" appears to be the more conservative wing while the pillars represent various liberal interpretations of Christian doctrine. In Romans, Paul expects trouble from "unbelievers" when he reaches Jerusalem. These are commonly understood to be Jews, but Paul is unclear.

In Acts, there is detailed the rift between the "Hellenists" and the "Hebrews." Included is the later persecution and death of Stephen. The events of this narrative are not found in any other source. This is significant. It is understood that in Acts, the death of Stephen and resultant persecution of the Church is the direct cause for the spread of the gospel to the Gentiles and the regions outside of Jerusalem. As there is no evidence to support the testimony in Acts, it would appear unlikely that the persecution ever occurred to the extent described. Paul, though, does mention that the Jews did persecute the churches in Judea and "drove us out." It is possible that Luke knows of this comment and is drawing on it for his story.

Paul was initially among those Jews active in persecuting the Church. His activities ceased with his conversion. He did not, however, persecute the churches in Jerusalem or Judea as they have only heard tales about him. This is related in Galatians. Acts, on the other hand, presents Paul as the primary persecutor of the Jerusalem Church. The circumstances surrounding his conversion and later travels are also at odds with the testimony from Galatians. The variance here is of great significance. Not only is Luke's readiness to alter a story evident, but so is his use of Galatians.

These Jewish persecutions are part of the external difficulties experienced by the Church. The evangelist Mark appears aware of a tradition detailing the executions of the disciples John and James (the sons of Zebedee). Matthew and Luke both reproduce Mark's comments. Eusebius, in quoting Clement, mentions the death of this James. His death is also recorded in Acts. Luke either possesses some other source describing the death of James, or else he is making use of Clement for his information.

Besides confronting Rome and the Jews, the Church in Jerusalem also faced the destructive forces of a famine. Paul never mentions the event. Perhaps it was localized and his visits to Jerusalem never coincided with the famine. Josephus, on the other hand, does detail the circumstances surrounding the event. Agrippa I dies four years before the famine. To aid the victims Queen Helena responds by sending food from Alexandria and Cyprus and her son Izates sends money from Adiabene. This differs somewhat from the account in Acts. There the occurrence of the famine is prophesied. Paul and Barnabas are sent with relief aid from Antioch. Between the prophecy and the completion of the mission is inserted the account of Agrippa's death. There would appear to be a definite reason why Luke would insert the narrative in chapter 12, bordered on both ends by the brief famine account. A discussion of this follows in Chapter 5.

It is evident that the testimonies from sources other than Acts are quite minimal. The quantity of comparisons is disappointingly few in number. Much of the appraisal of the Church's presentation in Acts must be derived

from other considerations. The date and provenance of Acts are important, more so than who wrote the text. Of special significance are the sources used by Luke and his purposes for composing Acts. Chapter 5 will present an evaluation of these points. And when viewed in the light of the comparisons presented here, Luke's portrayal of the Jerusalem Church may also be evaluated.

FOOTNOTES: CHAPTER 4

1. As noted in Chapter 3 there are also indications from Josephus that James was very popular.
2. See Donald W. Riddle, "The Cephas-Peter Problem, and a Possible Solution," Journal of Biblical Literature 59(1940): 169-80; Samuel Sandmel, The Genius of Paul, pp. 182ff. Riddle suggests a seven step process through which Cephas became identified with Simon (the original name of Peter): 1) Cephas was among the early Christian leaders; 2) Simon was also a leader; 3) Cephas was cited in a primary tradition as having first seen the risen Lord; 4) The transition from Palestine to the diaspora involved a change in language medium from Aramaic to Greek; 5) Since "Cephas" and "Peter" both mean "stone" or "rock," the gospel references began to include references to "Peter"; 6) In this process, the name "Peter" became collocated with "Simon," the primary name; and, 7) "Simon Peter" evolved to "Peter" because Peter became an available figure for the ascription of the heroic role in early Christian legend.

Sandmel, however, suggests that the changes and identification are the result of a deliberate alteration. Cephas was a Palestinian Jew and a disciple of Jesus. Peter was not a disciple, but an apostle like Paul. Peter was a Hellenistic Jew with a mission to the circumcised in the diaspora. Sandmel finds it difficult to see the need for appointing an apostle to the Jews within Palestine. This would appear correct as the "pillars" in Jerusalem have also indicated their responsibility toward the circumcised (in Gal. 2). These can only be the circumcised in Jerusalem (and perhaps Judea). Peter and Cephas became identical perhaps because their names have the same meaning. Sandmel ascribes the intentional identification of Cephas as Peter to the tendencies displayed by the Synoptic Evangelists (pp. 184f.).

If, in the account of the controversy at Antioch (Gal. 2:11-14), "Peter" is read instead of "Cephas," Sandmel suggests that the controversy is clarified. It is quite possible, however, that the use of Cephas is correct. He was present at Antioch, and confronted by Paul. Paul implies that Cephas wants Gentiles to live like Jews. By eating with Gentiles, he is acting contrary to the wishes expressed not only by James, but also by Cephas himself. He was not living like a Jew. He would indeed fear a group sent by James, especially a group as conservative as the circumcision party. The controversy in the Jerusalem Church is apparently quite substantial. This party strongly opposes the position taken by the "pillars" in not requiring Gentile circumcision. How would they then respond to this breakdown in Jewish practice by Cephas? Quite negatively, indeed.

If "Cephas" is understood to be a later alteration from "Peter," could Peter be the individual involved here? Peter, by eating with Gentiles, is also not behaving like a Jew. If Peter's mission is to

preach the gospel to Jews, it is unlikely that he would even be concerned with Gentiles. It is likewise doubtful that he would wish to compel Gentiles to live like Jews. Thus, it is reasonable to retain the text as it now reads.

How then is Paul's mention of Cephas in I Corinthians to be understood? Sandmel suggests reading "Peter" for "Cephas" in 1:12; 3:22; and 9:5. There is, however, no manuscript support for such a change. An emendation of this type is justifiable in the passages from Galatians; other manuscripts permit it. But this is not the case with texts of Corinthians. Could it, therefore, be possible that Cephas is an emissary from Jerusalem, as are the members of the circumcision party? Perhaps he is sent to verify that all is well in Christendom. He could thus influence the Gentile and Jewish-Christians in the diaspora by virtue of his contacts with them. Plausibly, he also created a faction opposed to Paul in Corinth.

This picture would thus indicate that Luke clearly understood Peter as identified with Cephas. Peter's excursions into the world outside Jerusalem, as described in Acts, could be a reflection of the role Cephas played within the Jerusalem Church. Cephas' trip to Antioch would thus also be identified as the source for Peter's vision regarding the Laws of Kashrut (Acts 10:10-15).

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

Luke's description of the Jerusalem Church has thus now been compared with evidence presented in sources other than Acts. There is, hopefully, now sufficient material to warrant conclusions regarding Luke's historical reliability. As discussed in Chapter 4, there are seven categories into which information regarding the Church in Jerusalem may be divided:

1. The geographical origins of Christianity in Palestine.
2. The role of the Jerusalem Church in the developing Christian movement.
3. The role of the apostles within the Jerusalem Church.
4. The leaders of the Jerusalem Church.
5. Life within the Jerusalem Jewish-Christian community.
6. The growth of the Jerusalem Church.
7. Problems encountered by the primitive Church in the first century.

From Chapter 2, it is also evident that there are five areas of concern which, in varying degrees, have influenced Luke's presentation of the Jerusalem Church:

1. The identity of the author of Acts.
2. The sources he used.
3. When Acts was composed.
4. The provenance of the author.
5. His purpose(s) for writing Acts.

The purpose of this chapter is to determine, if possible, the relative

influence of these latter five concerns on the Lukan picture, and to assess, in this light, the reliability of the Lukan portrait. Are his locale and date so removed from the Jerusalem Church as to obscure on his part accurate knowledge of conditions having prevailed there? Are his sources trustworthy, and has he made trustworthy use of sources that are contemporary with the Church? Or, is Luke so tendentious that we must be cautious with him even if his sources were reliable? To a consideration of these questions we now turn.

I. Regarding the Author of Acts

Acts was written by either the physician-companion of Paul or by some other individual. His actual identity, however, has little bearing on the question of the reliability of his portrait of the Jerusalem Church. In either case, the considerations of sources, date, provenance, and purpose outweigh the matter of the identity of the author. In fact, the evidence presented in Chapter 2 strongly supports skeptics who disavow the traditional understanding of Luke. We concur with this view, as will become evident in the next three sections of this chapter. We will show that Luke's misuse of his Pauline sources, his late date, and his provenance outside of Jerusalem suggest that he had never accompanied Paul. Luke's possible dependence on Josephus and Paul also implies his lack of first-hand experience with events contemporary with the Jerusalem Church. Thus he could be neither the physician-companion of Paul nor, therefore, the composer of the four "we" passages.

II. Regarding the Sources behind Acts

As has been observed, scholars have suggested various sources used by Luke in composing Acts. These vary from eyewitness reports to written sources from early Christians, such as Philip. Few of these are extant. Those we do possess, however, (and which quite possibly were utilized by Luke) are: the writings of Paul and Josephus; the gospels; and remaining texts of the New Testament. These sources may have influenced the Lukan presentation of the following areas of early Christian history:

1. The role of the Jerusalem Church.
2. The role of the apostles in the Jerusalem Church.
3. The leaders of the Jerusalem Church.
4. Life in the Jerusalem Christian community.
5. Problems encountered by Jerusalem Jewish-Christianity.

From the evidence presented in Chapters 2 and 4, it would seem probable that Luke has indeed drawn upon the writings of Paul. On those occasions where the accounts in Acts agree with Paul, Luke may indeed be accurately representing historical events. These correlations may be due to his having accompanied Paul or to his reliance on the genuine Epistles. The occasions in which Luke varies from Paul, however, would indicate either his intentional alteration of fact, or else his misuse of his Pauline source, or both.

Further examples may be presented to indicate possible dependence on Paul. As discussed previously, there exists the parallel structure of Luke's Gospel and Acts. Both events as well as speeches by Peter and Paul are

seen to have been intentionally paralleled. This also appears to be the case with Jesus as well. As indicated, certain events in the lives of Jesus have been made to parallel Paul's life. It is also possible that knowledge of particular events in Paul's life were utilized in the gospel presentations of Jesus' life. Related to this is the notion expressed by Paul that a follower of Jesus must live a life in imitation of not only Jesus, but also of Paul himself: "Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ" (I Cor. 11:1). It is possible that this instruction may be the basis for the entire parallel structure of Luke-Acts.

The experience at Pentecost, and especially the description of glossalalia, may also have its origin in Paul. Admittedly, Luke is perhaps using the incident to show cause for the eventual spread of the gospel from Jerusalem to the diaspora. His portrayal of this Pentecost event, however, is perhaps derived from Paul's own discussion of glossalalia: "There are doubtless many different languages in the world, and none is without meaning; but if I do not know the meaning of the language, I shall be a foreigner to the speaker and the speaker a foreigner to me" (*ibid.*, 14:10-11); and, "in the law it is written, 'By men of strange tongues and by the lips of foreigners will I speak to this people'..." (*ibid.*, 14:21).

Paul also plays a role in the conflict between the Hellenists and the Hebrews in Acts. He is described as having "disputed against the Hellenists" (9:29). It seems puzzling that Paul would oppose a faction with which he would appear to be in agreement. Paul does refer to himself, however, using the term ἑβραῖος (II Cor. 11:22). Luke was

perhaps aware of this description when composing Acts and included it in his chapter 9. It would have been fortunate that Paul did so designate himself. For this coincides well with the Lukan purpose of presenting Paul as a practicing Jew.

Another instance where Lukan dependence on Paul may be involves the Apostolic Council (Acts 15). Possibly Luke has here used Galatians 2 in creating the details surrounding the Jerusalem meeting. Furthermore, Paul makes no mention of any communique being sent forth from a policy-deciding Jerusalem Church. Luke does, however (Acts 15:19-21, 27-30). From where does he know that Gentiles are to "abstain from what has been sacrificed to idols and from blood and from what is strangled and from unchastity"? I would propose the following sources:

1. I Cor. 7. Although Paul speaks against unchastity in other places, this discussion appears in such close proximity to the remaining examples that it may have nurtured Luke's idea.
2. I Cor. 8:7-13. "But some...eat food as really offered to an idol; and their conscience...is defiled...."
3. I Cor. 10:19-21. "...I imply that what pagans sacrifice they offer to demons, not to God. I do not want you to be partners with demons."
4. I Cor. 10:28-29. "...if someone says to you, 'This has been offered in sacrifice,' then out of consideration for...his conscience...do not eat it."

It would appear evident that Luke has constructed his Apostolic Decree from

the restrictions which Paul himself had placed on Gentile-Christians.

One further example of possible Lukan dependence on Paul is to be found in the use of the term "the circumcision party" (*ἐκ περιτομῆς*). Paul refers to them in Gal. 2:12. The circumstance is a confrontation with Cephas in Antioch over his having eaten with Gentiles. If we accept the notion that Luke identifies Peter with Cephas, then the Lukan description of Peter's confrontation with this "circumcision party" in Acts 11:2 may be seen as possibly derived from the Pauline picture. The Lukan incident takes place in Caesarea rather than Antioch. Nevertheless, the confrontation likewise results from Peter's having eaten with Gentiles. Luke also uses the same Greek, *ἐκ περιτομῆς*, to describe Peter's opponents. In this form, *ἐκ περιτομῆς*, the reference is to those of the circumcised who believe in Jesus as Messiah, i. e., Jewish-Christians (cf. Acts 10:45; Col. 4:11; Tit. 1:10). In all other occurrences of the term, *περιτομῆς* is used opposite *ἑθνοβυστία*, "Gentiles" (Rom. 3:30; 4:9, 12; 15:8; Gal. 2:7-9; Eph. 2:11; Col. 3:11). In these cases, the meaning would be "Jews." As is observed, the only use of this term occurs in Acts, the Pauline Epistles, and those letters identified by Church tradition as being Pauline. It would seem reasonable to suggest that Luke may have borrowed *ἐκ περιτομῆς* from Paul.

We not only propose that Luke has read and utilized the Pauline Corpus, but that he actually built upon Gospel themes in an imaginative fashion. Two examples are especially supportive of this notion. First, the only reference to the irenic and communal lifestyle of the Jerusalem Jewish-Christian com-

munity is to be found in Acts. The gospels, however, may suggest a source for this Lukan image:

1. "And Jesus... said to him, 'You lack one thing; go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven.... How hard it will be for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God' " (Mk. 10:21-23).
2. "Jesus said to him, 'If you would be perfect, go, sell what you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven...' " (Mt. 19:21; cf. 19:27).
3. "'Sell your possessions, and give alms...' " (Lk. 12:33), and "...Jesus... said to him, 'One thing you still lack. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven...' " (Lk. 18:22).

This material may be understood in a number of ways:

1. The evangelists' description of the actual situation that existed in earliest Christianity.
2. An authentic Jesus saying.
3. An idealized picture of that which Jesus might have said, and representing the life of the early Church as viewed by post-70 Christianity.
4. An eyewitness account of the evangelists.
5. The creation of the evangelists.

It would appear unlikely that Mark is presenting an authentic picture of early Christianity. If Jesus, himself, commanded that his followers sell all of their possessions, one could assume that this injunction extended to the diaspora churches as well. Paul makes no mention of this practice in his letters to several of those churches. If Mk. 10:21-23 is to be considered

authentic, perhaps the early Church did not consider the command binding on them. Only at a later date would this communal lifestyle be retrojected, in an idealized form, to the days of the early community in Jerusalem. It is to be suggested that Luke (who clearly has presented the most detailed form of this command) is describing an idealized community in Jerusalem. He is drawing from Jesus' own words in the Gospels of Mark and Matthew. Thus, his picture is what he would consider (or would like us to consider) to have been the community life in Jerusalem. His description is based on the authority of Jesus' own words.

The second example of possible Lukan dependence on the gospels may be found in his portrayal of Peter's vision regarding the laws of Kashrut. Not only is Gal. 2:12 a likely source for the Lukan picture in Acts 10:10-15. Perhaps Luke has also expanded Mk. 7:18-19 and made Peter (Cephas in Galatians) the vehicle by which the laws of Kashrut are abrogated. (And quite possibly the Markan account itself takes its cue from Galatians.) Originally, Jesus allegedly declared all foods clean: "'Do you not see that whatever goes into a man from outside cannot defile him, since it enters, not his heart but his stomach, and so passes on?' (Thus he declared all foods clean)."

The writings of Josephus have been mentioned previously as possible sources for Acts. Besides those passages indicated in Chapter 2, four other parallels warrant discussion:

1. Acts 25:11 and Life 29;

2. Acts 11:27-30; 12:25 and Antiq. XX, ii, 5;
3. Acts 12:19c-23 and Antiq. XIX, viii, 2; and,
4. Lk. 19:43-44; 21:20 and Wars V, xii, 1.

The first example from Acts (25:11) is Paul's trial before Festus in Caesarea. In his defense, Paul states, "I do not seek to escape death..." ("ὁὐ κεραιτὸύμαι τὸ ἀποθνήσκειν"). Parallel to this is Josephus' comment (Life 29) in his own defense in Galilee, "I do not refuse to die, if it is just" ("θνήσκειν . . . ὁὐ κεραιτὸύμαι").

The second example concerns the famine which afflicted Jerusalem after the death of Agrippa I. The account of Agrippa's death is the third example above. In Acts, this famine is discussed quite briefly. It is foretold in Antioch by the prophet Agabus. Paul and Barnabas are sent to Jerusalem with relief aid. The account is then interrupted with an entire chapter devoted to Agrippa's death. Finally, in one verse, we are told that Paul and Barnabas had completed their mission and returned to Antioch. Josephus contains parallel passages to both incidents. In Antiq. XX, ii, 5, he relates the famine aid sent by Queen Helena and her son Izates. Perhaps Luke has utilized this information and presented the Antioch Church as having fulfilled the duties of Queen Helena and Izates.

Luke must also detail an event as important as Agrippa's death. He knows from Josephus that it occurred close in time to the famine. He therefore inserts his account between the initiation and the completion of the famine relief mission. The main variance between Acts and Josephus is the description of how Agrippa I died. In Acts, an angel smites him

(12:23). In Josephus, however, an owl is perched over his head as a messenger of evil tidings. Agrippa then falls ill and later dies. As noted in Chapter 3, Eusebius presents a slightly different version (History 2.10). He is quoting Josephus and there is no mention of an owl. But we are told that an angel is present. Perhaps Luke has utilized the same Josephus source which Eusebius was quoting.

The final parallel to be discussed here is that description of the Roman forces surrounding the city of Jerusalem prior to the destruction in 70. The verses in parallel are Lk. 19:43-44; 21:20 and Wars V, xii, 1. Only Josephus and Luke mention the building of siege banks around the city to enclose its inhabitants. In parallel passages, neither Mark nor Matthew relates the construction of these banks. Nor do they suggest that Jerusalem is to be surrounded by armies (Mk. 13:14-15; Mt. 24:15-16). Josephus describes how the army of Titus was to surround (*κυκλώσει*) Jerusalem with banks (*χώματος*). In Luke as well, Jesus predicts that Jerusalem is to be surrounded (*κυκλουμένην*) by banks (*χώματα*). But there is an apparent variance between the Lukan and Josephus terms for "siege bank."

There are three examples from the prophetic literature which may resolve this variance. In the Septuagint translation of Is. 29:3; 37:33 and Ez. 4:2 the term *χώματα* is used for "siege bank." In all three cases, reference is to the building of siege mounds against Jerusalem. I would suggest that, while Luke is aware of the Josephus passage, he uses another term for "bank" so as to fashion a link with Old Testament prophecy: the

prophesied destruction of Jerusalem.

There are, therefore, strong indications that Luke has in fact used the Pauline Corpus, the gospels, and the writings of Josephus. His use of other New Testament writings will be considered when discussing the Lukan purpose in writing Acts. Nevertheless, his use of Josephus' Antiquities would require a terminus a quo of ca. 95 C. E. We now turn to a further consideration of the date of Acts.

III. Regarding the Date of Acts

While an exact date for Acts need not be particularly determinative for judging Luke's historical reliability, the time when Luke wrote could of course have had an effect on how he presented the Jerusalem Church.

I would propose one further analysis of date in addition to those presented in Chapter 2. This concerns the use of the term *Χριστιανός*, found twice in Acts (11:26; 26:28). Only in I Peter 4:16 is *Χριστιανός* to be found elsewhere in the New Testament. It would appear unlikely from Paul's response in Acts 26:29 that Luke considers the term debasing. In any case, the use of this term is not extensive in the early second century. In fact, excluding consideration of Acts and I Peter, its usage seems non-existent until the early second century. *Χριστιανός* does occur, however, in various documents:

<u>DOCUMENT</u>	<u>DATE</u>
Ignatius, to the Ephesians 11:2	} 110-125
Ignatius, to the Magnesians 4	
Ignatius, to the Romans 3:2	
Ignatius, to Polycarp 7:3	
Ignatius, to the Traillians 6:1	
The Epistle of Pliny the Younger to Trajan	ca. 112
Trajan's reply to Pliny	ca. 112
Suetonius, Nero 16	ca. 120
Tacitus, Annals 15:44	ca. 120
Martyrdom of Polycarp 3; 10:1; 12:1, 2	125-155
Kerygma of Peter	125-150
Lucian, Alex 25:38	Second century

From this evidence alone, it appears that *Χριστιανός* was in use by Christian writers as early as 110. It is possible that Acts could have been written contemporary with those listed above. The date of composition would then be ca. 110-120.

When considering I Peter 4:16, however, we encounter a difficulty. The author is using the term in a non-debasing fashion. This would also possibly date I Peter as late as ca. 110-120. It is generally accepted, on the other hand, that I Peter was composed between 87 and 95. There are those, however, who date this epistle ca. 115 (refer to Chapter 1). With this in mind, I would suggest a date for Acts between 95 and 120, but closer to 120.

IV. Regarding the Provenance of Acts

Scholars have suggested several locales for the composition of Acts. Many of their opinions are based on Luke's familiarity with various regions. His geographical knowledge and his awareness of certain cultures have been cited as evidence reflecting his locale. As stated in Chapter 2, perhaps the

approach of Feine, Behm, and Kümmel is correct: he could be located in any number of regions.

I would propose, however, one alternative to this approach. Perhaps it warrants consideration. Rather than draw conclusions from Luke's geographical and cultural knowledge, it may prove more worthwhile to investigate aspects of the Lukan Tendenz. Anyone may describe geographical and cultural details of a given region simply after spending time there, or by relying on someone who has been there. Two specific aspects of Luke's purpose may be crucial for determining the provenance of Acts:

1. the ultimate goal of the new movement; and,
2. the people Luke has described as leaders in the Jerusalem Church.

First, from the beginning of Acts, the spread of Christianity radiates outward from its center and origin in Jerusalem. The ultimate geographical goal of Acts is Christianity's arrival in Rome. Second, Peter is the unchallenged leader in Jerusalem and thus also in the entire Christian sphere of influence. If Sandmel is correct -- that the Petrine tradition was created by Luke to neutralize Paul -- then why did Luke select Peter and not someone like James, the brother of Jesus? We know from Paul that James was the leader in Jerusalem. Why would Luke not follow through with this lead? He has instead chosen Peter. By the time Acts was written, Peter had been identified as closely associated with Rome (I Peter 5:13). It is possible that Luke created the Petrine tradition in order to neutralize Paul. Perhaps he has drawn on that figure most famil-

lar to him within his own church. Considering the geographical aim of Acts and Luke's strong emphasis on Peter, I would suggest Rome as the city in which Luke composed Acts.

V. Regarding the Purpose of Acts

It is possible to describe the purposes of Acts in terms of each of the seven categories of information regarding the Jerusalem Church. To this I have alluded in the earlier discussion concerning Lukan purpose. The geographical origins of Christianity serve a dual function. By locating the Church in Jerusalem, Luke is identifying the heart of Christianity, as well as its origins, in Judaism. Not only does Christianity originate in the heart of Judaism, it is also rejected by that same Judaism. As a result, Christianity loses contact with Jews as it does with Jerusalem, spreads into the Gentile world, and finally reaches Rome. Both the roles of the Jerusalem Church and of the apostles can be understood as attempts by Luke to blur the distinctiveness of Paul. Included within this concern would be the Lukan presentation of the leaders in Jerusalem. By presenting Jerusalem as the authoritative Church body in the early years, Luke has subjugated Paul to its control. In fact, Luke's alteration of the Pauline definition of apostleship also has this effect. Luke has required that an apostle be an eyewitness to the ministry of Jesus, a position Paul never achieved. Paul does achieve, though, a limited status as an apostle in Acts. He has at least been converted by Jesus himself. Still, this is not equivalent to having accompanied Jesus during his ministry. In his

Epistles, Paul has three adversaries in Cephas, John and James. Luke understands Peter and Cephas to be the same person. He also pairs Peter and John in Acts, possibly taking his cue from the Galatians listings of Cephas, John, and James, the first two being apostles.

Luke also attempts to mute the radical nature of Paul's accomplishments in the Gentile mission-field. He does this by creating a vision for Peter which enables the apostle to institute the mission to the Gentiles. From Galatians, we know that Peter's mission was to preach the gospel to Jews. Nevertheless, in Acts God has ordained the mission to the Gentiles through Peter just as God had ordained Paul's mission to the Gentiles in Gal. 1:11ff. But, as mentioned, Peter plays the dominant role in Acts in order to blur the distinctiveness of Paul.

Luke's depiction of the community life of the Church in Jerusalem has also been affected by his own concerns. Acts is the only source in which is presented an irenic lifestyle among the Jewish-Christians in Jerusalem. This picture could be an idealization. Perhaps Luke is presenting the Jerusalem Church as his generation understood Christian life in those "good old days." It is also possible that the peaceful conditions he describes are his own creation. The purpose of this would be to indicate that the Jerusalem Church never encountered any irresolvable problems. Related to this is the question: has Luke also created the texts of the speeches to be found in Acts? As stated in Chapter 2, it is doubtful that the much debated paragraph from Thucydides has any bearing on the speeches in Acts. Neither, for that matter, does it at all relate to the

speeches present in the writings of Josephus. Although these speeches do not necessarily represent accurate accounts of the historical events with which they are associated, both Josephus and Luke no doubt intended their content to be believed.

Returning to the irenic community life, we feel Luke's purpose here could be to indicate the peaceful relations which existed between early Christianity and Roman authority. Disruptions are infrequent. When they do occur, however, Rome is seldom involved and seldom responsible. Most disturbances are at the instigation of the Jewish authorities. This apologetic would not be operative in Luke's presentation of the communal practices of the early Christians in Jerusalem. As indicated earlier in this chapter, Luke possibly derived this description from Jesus' own commands. Luke's purpose would thus be to parallel the Church's life in Acts with that of Jesus and his disciples.

Acts concludes with Paul a prisoner in Rome. Luke has drawn a parallel between Jesus' final journey to Jerusalem, his arrest and trial there and the final journey Paul has taken to Jerusalem. Paul is transported to Rome as a prisoner of the state. It is indeed interesting that neither Phil. 1:13, 14 nor the pseudepigraphic II Tim. 3:11 discusses an arrest in Jerusalem. There is mention of persecutions which Paul had apparently faced during his career. Surely an incident occurring in Jerusalem and Judea which was as detailed as it is presented in Acts would have been noted by Paul or by early Christian tradition. Neither Paul nor the writer of II Timothy sees reason to detail any final trip to

Jerusalem. I would propose, although arguing from silence, that Paul never completed that journey as it is described in Acts. Even though he indicates that he is indeed travelling to Jerusalem (Rom. 15:26-31) and anticipates trouble from unbelievers in Judea, there is no indication in any other letter that he received such ill treatment. Perhaps he did indeed visit Jerusalem, delivered his collection, and then made his promised visit to Rome (ibid., 15:32). It is not unlikely that he was arrested either on the road to Rome or at some time after he had arrived there.

After Paul brings Christianity to Rome, Luke leaves him in prison without describing his trial and death (but cf. Acts 20:17ff.). This may indicate that Paul served only as a vehicle for Luke. By detailing the spread of Christianity from Jerusalem to Rome, Luke has accomplished one goal. With Paul the vehicle, he has accomplished another. Paul, in Acts, is responsible for introducing the gospel to Rome. By accomplishing this, Luke has brought Paul under the wing of the Christian community which was developing as the orthodox Church in Christianity. That church was the Church at Rome.

The problems encountered by the Jerusalem Church may also be partially explained by Lukan Tendenz. I would like to deal briefly with one conflict in particular: that between the Hellenists and the Hebrews (Acts 6:1-8:1). This entire narrative serves as the Lukan description of the early Christian break with Judaism. What appears peculiar, though, is that the apostles remained in Jerusalem, untouched by the persecution. The Hellenists were, for the most part, forced to leave (however, cf.

Acts 9:29). It would seem unlikely that the Jewish authorities would have become violently distraught over Stephen's speech. He was apparently primarily concerned with abolishing Jewish Law practice by believing Christians. At that early stage in Church history, I would maintain, the Jewish-Christians would have been the ones against whom Stephen had originally directed his words (if, indeed, the narrative is not a creation of Luke). Perhaps the ensuing violence did not originate with the Jewish community. Rather, the Jewish-Christians in Jerusalem violently expelled an Hellenistic faction from within their own ranks.

Conceivably, however, there is a middle ground between the two extremes, between the total creation of the narrative by Luke or his extensive alteration of an actual internecine feud. Perhaps Luke was aware, from some unknown source, of a non-violent conflict between these two factions. He could then have created the violent aspect of the confrontation and identified the Jews as instigators. He does have a non-specific source for this in I Thess. 2:15-16: "...the Jews...who killed both the Lord Jesus...and drove us out.... But God's wrath has come upon them at last." This verse may be a later addition as Paul does not elsewhere accuse Jews of having executed Jesus. Also verse 16 possibly indicates awareness of the destruction of Jerusalem in 70. Nevertheless, Luke's purpose would be to introduce Paul at this time. Paul, in the Epistles, does mention his early persecution of the new faith. Perhaps Luke has utilized this information and developed the remaining scenario. Again, the Jerusalem Jewish-Christian community is essentially pacifistic and not a rebellious community.

We have seen that the various Lukan purposes could have played a rather extensive role in his composition of Acts. Even so, Luke could, conceivably, have maintained a high degree of accuracy when presenting his picture of the Jerusalem Church. But we doubt that this was the case. The case is plausible that Luke strongly depended upon Paul and Josephus. Luke adapts material from these sources when suiting his purpose and ignores or alters his sources as well. None of his sources, however, presents the Jerusalem Church in a description as detailed as that in Acts. One example is his presentation of the Apostolic Council. Paul's description of a meeting in Jerusalem (Gal. 2) probably forms the basic framework for Acts 15. Luke then develops his picture of the Council from the Pauline structure.

With procedures such as these, it is easy to see that Luke was, to some extent, at the mercy of his sources. It is not that his sources limited his presentation but rather that they served as spring boards for his creativity. Luke's creative expression was governed by aspects such as Christian theology in the late first and early second centuries, and his purpose in writing Acts. Thus the general, loose framework of Jerusalem Church history would appear to be accurate in Acts. Specific details which describe the seven categories into which may be divided the information regarding the Church in Jerusalem would appear to be the creation of Luke.

Our description of the Jerusalem Church may be only as detailed as that present in our sources. The most dependable sources would appear to be Paul and Josephus. They represent the only extant documents written

by persons who had contact with the Jerusalem community while it was in existence. The composite history we may assemble from these writers is extremely superficial. The detail in Acts is the result of either Luke's imagination, or his sources no longer extant, or both. Paul neglects to mention details seemingly essential to Luke. An argument from silence is, admittedly, inconclusive. Nevertheless, Luke does use his known sources quite freely. Would he not use all sources, extant or non, in the same manner? Thus, when considering the following factors:

1. the probable composition of Acts 60-80 years following the founding of the Jerusalem Church;
2. Luke's concern to neutralize Paul's popularity;
3. his lack of personal contact with the members of the Jerusalem Church;
4. his characteristically free interpretation of the sources; and,
5. his tendentiousness concerning Jews, Rome, and the Jerusalem community itself,

it would appear reasonable to conclude that his presentation is unreliable. The greater proportion of Luke's history would be his own creation. It is based on his sources, but these are quite loosely interpreted.

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