

Zeitschrift: Theologische Zeitschrift
Herausgeber: Theologische Fakultät der Universität Basel
Band: 29 (1973)
Heft: 2

Artikel: The Fate of the Jerusalem Church : the Flight to Pella
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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-878770>

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The Fate of the Jerusalem Church

The Flight to Pella

In a recent article in *Theologische Zeitschrift*, Sidney Sowers has collected weighty evidence for the tradition¹. The purpose of this article is to offer some alternate interpretations.

1.

The beginning of the end of the Jerusalem Church has been traced to the *death of James*, the brother of Jesus. The Sadducean high priest, Ananus, assembled the Sanhedrin, accused James and some others of being lawbreakers and had them stoned. Josephus (*Antiquities* xx, 9. 1) dated this event after the death of the procurator Festus and before the arrival of his successor, Albinus, i.e. in 62, or possibly 61². The Clementine Recognitions (i, 44, 69–70)³ and the Memoirs of Hegesippus (ap. Eusebius, *Hist.* ii, 23, 10) specify Passover as the time of martyrdom. The latter source (ii, 23. 18) associates the stoning of James by some scribes and Pharisees with Vespasian's immediate attack upon the Jews. As that Roman commander campaigned in Palestine from the Spring of 67 until the Fall of 69 (Josephus, *War* iii, 2. 4; iv. 10), the anachronism needs explanation. F. J. A. Hort suggested that Eusebius took literally the phrase, «καὶ euthýs...»,⁴ which Eusebius had used rhetorically following his hypothetic description of the capture of Jerusalem. The implication that Vespasian was an instrument of divine punishment for James' martyrdom, was a Hebrew Christian belief which is reflected in Mt. 22: 6–7. The Jews killed such servants of the king

¹ S. Sowers, *The Circumstances and Recollection of the Pella Flight*: *Theol. Zeits.* 26 (1970), pp. 305–320.

² W. Ramsay, *A Second Fixed Point in the Pauline Chronology*: *Expositor* vi (1900), pp. 93ff.; bibliography in H. J. Schoeps, *Theologie und Geschichte des Judenchristentums* (1949), pp. 263–64.

³ On this source see K. Beyschlag, *Das Jacobusmartyrium und seine Verwandten in der frühchristlichen Literatur*: *Zeits. ntl. Wiss.* 56 (1965), pp. 150–57.

⁴ F. J. A. Hort, *Judaistic Christianity* (1894), pp. 170–71; cf. H. J. Lawlor, *Eusebiana* (1912), pp. 32–33.

as Stephen (Acts 7: 57–8:1), James the brother of John (Acts 12:2) and James the Lord's brother. "The king was angry, and sent his troops and destroyed those murderers and burned their city." The destruction of Jerusalem by the Roman army carrying out the purposes of God is a teaching of Matthew which is found also in Origen (*Contra Celsum* i, 47; ii, 13; *Comm. in Matth.* x. 17): The destruction and desolation of Jerusalem were disasters which "happened to the Jews as a punishment for the death of James the Just". This vengeance is *kat' ekdíkēsin*: a term found in Luke 21: 22. As Origen attributes this explanation to the *Antiquities* of Josephus, whereas the *Chronicon pas chale* (Migne, *Patr. gr.* 92, 596) attributes it to his War, we may deduce that a manuscript had been altered to this effect. Hans Joachim Schoeps finds that Symmachus, a late second century Ebionite, held the same view (*Qohelet rabba* 12. 5)⁵. Though the account transmitted by Eusebius has telescoped events in order to emphasize and confirm the connection, the murder of James must have strengthened the Jerusalem Church's existing expectation of coming divine punishment and diminished the Church's willingness to remain there indefinitely.

There were many prophecies of the *doom of Jerusalem* (Josephus, War iv, 6. 3; vi, 2. 1; 5. 3).

Jesus, who had prophesied woe for Capernaum, Bethsaida and Chorazin (Mt. 11: 20–24; Lk. 10: 13–15) and lamented over Jerusalem (Mt. 23: 37–39; Lk. 13: 34–35) with weeping and sobbing (*éklausen*; Lk. 19: 41), foresaw the destruction coming upon Israel (Mk. 12: 9). If he foretold the ruin of the Temple (Mk. 13: 2; Mt. 24: 2; Lk. 19: 44; 21: 6), he may have spoken of the desolating sacrilege (because it was prophesied by Daniel) and of the expected events surrounding the destruction (encirclement by armies, siege with ramparts, captivity, perishing by the sword: Lk. 19: 43; 21: 20, 24). Alfred Plummer rightly observed: "It is not logical to maintain that Jesus could foresee the siege, but could not have foreseen these details... What is there in these details which is not common to all sieges?"⁶ (cf. Ps. 137: 9; Isa. 29: 3; Ezek. 4: 2). In other contexts Christ taught how one should respond to eschatological signs (Mt. 24: 26; Lk. 17: 22–37). Nevertheless, actual events may have shaped certain words attributed to Jesus. Revelations received later by the Jerusalem Church could have had a similar effect. According to Epiphanius (*Haer.* 29. 7), Christ himself told (*Christoû phēsantos*) the disciples to leave Jerusalem behind and withdraw from it on account of the

⁵ Schoeps (n. 2), pp. 264, 359–60.

⁶ A. Plummer, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to St. Luke* (1896), p. 451.

impending siege. Elsewhere (in *De mens. et pond.* 15) Epiphanius stated: "When the city was about to be captured and sacked by the Romans, all the disciples were warned beforehand by an angel (*prochrēmatisthēsan hypò angélou*) to remove from the city, doomed as it was to utter destruction." Eusebius (*Hist.* iii, 5. 3) related, "The people of the church at Jerusalem in accordance with a certain oracle (*tina chrēsmón*) delivered by revelation to approved men there (*tois autóthi dokímois*) before the war, had been commanded to depart from the city and to dwell in a certain city of Peraea called Pella." These contradictions might imply different sources (Aristo of Pella, Hegesippus or Julius Africanus). However, Epiphanius and Eusebius, knowing only that the warning came in time, may have specified its time without any authority. It is not easy to reconcile the supposed forms of the revelation, unless the resurrected Christ had been considered to be an angel who continued to teach to approved prophets the proper application of his earthly teachings. Or else he took the form of an angel or sent one. Such a view would legitimize the shaping of tradition concerning his teachings. Acts reports revelations by angels (7: 30, 55; 8: 26; 10: 3, 7, 22; 12: 7–11; 23: 9; 27: 23), the Spirit (8: 29; 10: 19; 11: 12, 28; 16: 7; 21: 4; 23: 9) and Jesus himself (1: 3; 9: 5; 22: 8; 26: 15–16). In any case the divine warning to leave Jerusalem was understood to interpret, or at least accord with, the earlier prophecies of Jesus; the time of their fulfillment was at hand; the signs were to be obeyed. He willed that they leave. The prophecies of woe by Agabus were also understood to imply a definite response (Acts 11: 27–30; 21: 10–12). An angel's words were authenticated by a sign in Lk. 1: 18, 20, 36; 2: 12; an angel's command to flee danger and the reason for it appear in Mt. 2: 13 (cf. 20, 22).

Because the Jerusalem Church would naturally try to follow, as far as possible, the will of Jesus (as confirmed through an approved revelation), the Synoptic Gospels record that Church's intent, if not its actions. It is reasonable to assume that, as far as circumstances permitted, they responded to the signs and injunctions later recorded in the Gospels. They did so, whether they represent the words of the earthly Jesus, or the Church's application of his words or those of Daniel, or the angelic oracle, or an accommodation and adaptation to historical facts.

The differences among the Synoptic apocalypses reflect this variety of sources. Yet each has its value in recording the historical plans of the Jerusalem community of believers. If one Gospel repeats the words of another in "the Synoptic Apocalypse", the failure to emend a passage gives some indication of historical fulfillment. For example, "then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains" (Mt. 24: 16; Mk. 13: 14; Lk. 21: 21); "and alas for those who are with child and for those who give suck in those days" (Mt. 24: 19; Mk. 13: 17; Lk. 21: 23). These two logia are prime candidates

for consideration as the very words of Jesus, at least if it is proper to presuppose an early (pre-war) date for Mark and the influence on accounts in Mark and Matthew by the attempt of Caligula in 40 A.D. to set up a "desolating sacrilege" (i.e. a statue of his deified self) in the Temple. For, it is unlikely that the Jerusalem church, including pregnant and lactating women, fled in terror to the mountains at that time. If Mk. 13: 14, 17 is not a report of a mass exodus in A.D. 40 or 66–69, its originality is more credible. Most commentators hold that Mt. 24: 15 and Mk. 13: 14 reflect the Caligula crisis. At least the apocalypse in those two Gospels took its present general shape no later than the decade of A.D. 40–50. If so, then we should not expect to find therein a vaticinium ex eventu or the angelic oracle concerning the flight during the war. The account in Luke is so historically concrete in detail and so relevant that it is open to suspicion. If historical events are described anywhere in the Synoptic apocalypses, then Lk. 21: 23c–24 ("...and wrath upon this people; they will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led captive among all nations; and Jerusalem will be trodden down by the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled") is the most likely such passage. And, if the angelic oracle is preserved anywhere, it would be in Lk. 21: 20, 21b, 22 ("when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then you know its desolation has come near... Let those who are inside the city depart, and let not those who are out in the country enter it; for these are days of vengeance"). Be that as it may, the fact that Luke replaced the long-standing traditions of Mark (and Matthew) with more relevant, specific directions and prophecies, indicates that he deemed them to be the explanation, application or fulfillment of the older parallel traditions.

What historical information may be gathered from this analysis? Three commentators on Lk. 21: 20–21 merit quotation. "At the appearance of the investing armies the inhabitants should evacuate the city and take to the hills."⁷ "Kyklouménēn, being encompassed: when the process was completed it would be too late; comp. Hebr. 11: 30."⁸ "The imperfect might almost be rendered 'beginning to be compassed'.⁹ When, at the beginning of a siege of Jerusalem, was the desolating sacrilege seen and the Church able to flee? Only on about the 13th of Tisri, 66, when Cestius Gallus

pitched his camp upon the elevation called Scopus, which was distant seven furlongs from the city; yet he did not assault them in three days' time... On the fourth day... when he put his army in array, he brought it into the city... He set the part called Bezetha (the new city) on fire; as he did also

⁷ B. S. Easton, *The Gospel according to St. Luke* (1926), p. 311.

⁸ Plummer (n. 6), p. 481.

⁹ L. Ragg, *St. Luke* (1922), p. 267.

to the timber market; after which he came into the upper city, and pitched his camp over against the royal palace... Many of the principal men of the city were persuaded by Ananus... and invited Cestius into the city, and were about to open the gates for him; but he overlooked this offer... The Romans made their attack against the wall for five days, but to no purpose. But on the next day... the soldiers undermined the wall (at the northern quarter of the temple)... and got all things ready for setting fire to the gate of the temple. And now it was that a horrible fear seized upon the seditious... It then happened that Cestius was not conscious... how the besieged despaired of success... and so he recalled his soldiers from the place, and... retired from the city (Josephus, War ii, 19. 4-7)... After this calamity had befallen Cestius, many of the most eminent of the Jews swam away from the city, as from a ship when it was going to sink... (They) ran away from the city, and went to Cestius (xx, 1. 556).

William Whiston, whose classic translation we have quoted (pp. 641-42), commented that this afforded

the Jewish Christians in the city an opportunity of calling to mind the prediction and caution given them by Christ... that 'when they should see the abomination of desolation' (the idolatrous Roman armies, with the images of their idols in their ensigns, ready to lay Jerusalem desolate), 'stand where it ought not', or 'in the holy place'; or 'when they should see Jerusalem encompassed with armies', they should then 'flee to the mountains'. By complying with which those Jewish Christians fled to the mountains of Perea, and escaped this destruction.

Philip Carrington concurs: "Perhaps Jerusalem Christians took refuge in the hill-country of Judaea during the winter of 66-67 and organized their flight to Pella in 67."¹⁰ Samuel G. F. Brandon, who denies the historicity of the flight, does point out¹¹: "That the Jews well understood that the standards of the Roman army were the sacred emblems of a heathen religion is certain from the fact of their violent reaction to the introduction by Pilate of military standards into the Holy City (Antiq. xviii, 3. 1; War ii, 9. 2-3 (169-74))."

¹⁰ Ph. Carrington, *The Early Christian Church*, 1. *The First Christian Century* (1957), pp. 227-28. W. Wink, *Jesus and Revolution: Union Seminary Quart. Rev.* 25 (1969), p. 43: "Either before the war or after the defeat of Cestius Gallus, Christians could have escaped the city."

¹¹ S. G. F. Brandon, *The Fall of Jerusalem and the Christian Church* (1951), p. 174. He gives compelling reasons, however, against the exodus of Christians to Pella during the final siege of Jerusalem.

Believers within Jerusalem were warned to depart without delay (Mt. 24: 17; Mk. 13: 15; Lk. 21: 21) and those in the field or country (Lk. 21: 2; cf. Mt. 24: 18; Mk. 13: 16) were not to take refuge in Jerusalem. Temptation to do so must have been great when Cestius, while pitching camp on Scopus, "sent out a great many of his soldiers into neighboring villages, to seize upon their" grain (War ii, 19. 4). Rather, all Judean Christians were to take refuge in the mountains, i.e. the surrounding "hill country of Judah" (Lk. 1: 39, 65)¹², where followers of John the Baptist lived. That the hill country of Judah is meant is indicated by Lk. 23: 28–31 ("Daughters of Jerusalem, ... weep for yourselves and for your children. For behold, the days are coming when they will say, 'Blessed are the barren, and the breasts that never gave such!' Then they will begin to say to the mountains, 'Fall on us'; and to the hills, 'Cover us'."') Those who live through the coming siege of Jerusalem will wish they had no children to impede their flight; they will wish to be crushed to death (cf. Hosea 10: 8) or swallowed up and hidden by the surrounding mountains (i.e. in caves). The Book (Protevangelium) of James illustrates the latter interpretation:

Elizabeth, when she heard that John was sought for, took him and went up into the hill-country... There was no hiding place. And Elizabeth groaned aloud and said: 'O mountain of God, receive me, a mother, with my child'... And immediately the mountain was rent asunder and received her... For an angel of the Lord was with them and protected them (22: 3).

In Rev. 6: 14–17 the fallen mountains hide men on the day of wrath. The injunction, "Pray that it may not happen in winter (cheimōn)" (Mk. 13: 18; Mt. 24: 20) indicates that hardships were to be expected because of inadequate shelter. Luke's omission of the passage could indicate that, while Jerusalem was not abandoned in the winter, the refugees did not escape the subsequent ravages of the rain and cold. Cestius' siege is dated in September or October.

As the Roman army was then attacking Jerusalem from the north, and as it later retreated north to Antipatris via Scopus (War ii, 19. 7–9), pursued by Jewish revolutionaries, the safest escape route for

¹² W. L. Reed, *Judah, Hill Country of: The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, ii (1962), p. 1005.

Jerusalem Christians was toward the south or southeast. The chief elevations lie to the north, east and south of the Holy City. Temporary refuge might be sought in Bethlehem, Herodium or Tekoa in the wilderness of Judea¹³. Eschatological promises concerning the wilderness (Isa. 32: 14–19; 35: 1, 6; 41: 18–19; 43: 18–21) may have encouraged them to wait nearby. The “poor” (Rom. 15: 26) with their families may have had to go wherever they might seek aid from believers in the area. The length of their stay probably depended upon military and economic conditions. If the plundering of Simon, the son of Gioras (War ii, 22. 2; cf. iv, 9. 7, 9), did not make their continued position there untenable, they may have taken advantage of the relative peace prior to the campaign of Vespasian in the spring and summer of 67, to cross the Jordan. According to the Ascension of Isaiah, during Nero’s reign (4: 2–3) “a few will remain as (Christ’s) servants, fleeing from desert to desert and awaiting his coming” (4: 13).

This situation may well be envisioned in Revelation 12: 5–6, 13–16, which many scholars¹⁴ have interpreted in light of the flight from Jerusalem to Pella. The women (symbolizing the true Israel or the heavenly Jerusalem: Gal. 4: 26–27), her child (the Messiah) and “the rest of her offspring” (12: 17, i.e. the entire Messianic community, the brethren of Christ: Rom. 8: 29) are attacked by the devil-dragon (the Roman empire). Events in heaven (vv. 4–8) are repeated on earth (vv. 13–17). The Jerusalem believers, in whom the old and new Israel were united, fled from the attacking Roman army into the wilderness of Judea. This constituted a continuation of Nero’s persecution in A.D. 64 (v. 13). Just as God protected Israel in the wilderness after the Exodus and before it entered the Promised Land (Exod. 19: 4; Deut. 1: 31; 32: 10–11), and as He sent an angel before them to guard them on the way and brought them to the place which He had prepared for them (Exod. 14: 19; 23: 20–21; 33: 14; Isa. 63: 9), so through an angel He guided the Jerusalem church to a prepared place of safety in the wilderness as it awaited the Parousia. Parallels may exist in the case of the Roman and Egyptian armies, or of Jerusalem and Egypt. This shelter from persecution during the war

¹³ V. R. Gold, Tekoa: *ibid.*, iv (1962), pp. 527–29. Perhaps they stayed in caves. Jesus was born in a cave at Bethlehem, according to Justin Martyr (Dial. 78. 5) and the Book of James (18: 1; 19: 2).

¹⁴ Bibliographies in Schoeps (n. 2), pp. 267–68; Brandon (n. 11), p. 176. Also W. H. Simcox, *The Revelation of St. John the Divine* (1894), p. 79; H. B. Swete, *The Apocalypse of St. John* (1909), p. 152; L. E. Elliott-Binns, *Galilean Christianity* (1956), p. 68; T. F. Glasson, *The Revelation of John* (1965), pp. 74–76, 78; Sowers (n. 1), pp. 315–16, 319–20.

lasted for three and one half years, i.e. the approximate time between the first encirclement of Jerusalem and its destruction. The dragon, a water monster (Ezek. 29: 3; 32: 2-3; Ps. 74: 13), poured out a river of troubles (Pss. 32: 6; 124: 4; Isa. 43: 2) upon the righteous; but they were not swept away like the rest of Jerusalem (or Palestinian Jewry). The dry earth of the wilderness-desert swallowed (absorbed) the waters and helped the Church; she was protected from the woes of war by her isolated situation.

2.

The historicity of the *flight to Pella* has not been universally accepted¹⁵. The objections have sufficient validity to force qualifications concerning the size, timing and path of the flight; but they are not so weighty as to justify the conclusion that no Jerusalem Christians reached Pella. S.G.F. Brandon concedes that "the naming of Pella certainly points to a tradition that some Jewish Christians took refuge there, and that they were identified with the members of the Mother Church of Jerusalem".¹⁶ But this tradition does require careful scrutiny. The naming of Pella as a major refuge is credible. The apologist Aristo lived there before Celsus (Origen, *Contra Cels.* iv, 52; cf. Maximus, *Comm. in Dion. Areop.*, ed. Routh, *Rel. Sacr.* i, 95) and after the final destruction of Jerusalem in 135 (Eusebius, *Hist.* iv, 6, 3). As there is no evidence of episcopal rivalry between Pella and Jerusalem, a motive is lacking for the aggrandizement of the Transjordanian city.

Estimates of the time of the reported flight to Pella vary between 66 and 69.¹⁷ Eusebius (*Hist.* iii, 5, 3) dates the oracle to dwell in a town of Perea called Pella, "*prò tou polémou*". Epiphanius relates that Christ ordered the disciples to leave Jerusalem on account of the impending siege; therefore they migrated to Pella (*Haer.* 30, 2). The disciples were warned to depart when the city was about to be captured; "on migrating from it they settled at Pella" (*De mens. et pond.* 15). As the Biblical evidence conflicts with Eusebius, his timing is more dubious than that of Epiphanius. And, since Epi-

¹⁵ Bibliographies in Brandon (n. 11), p. 172 n. 2; Jesus and the Zealots (1967), pp. 209-10 n. 1; J. Munck, *Jewish Christianity in Post-Apostolic Times: New Test. Stud.* 6 (1959-60), pp. 103-04 nn. 3-4; Sowers (n. 1), p. 306 n. 5.

¹⁶ Brandon (n. 15), *Jesus and the Zealots*, p. 213.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 210; *The Fall of Jerusalem*, p. 171 n. 3; Schoeps (n. 2), p. 266.

phanus does not state that the revelation included the counsel to migrate to Pella, it is unsafe to go beyond the Biblical evidence that only the flight from Jerusalem was directed. There may well have been a later, additional oracle, "go to Pella" (cf. Mt. 2: 20-22, the form of which may have been shaped by the experiences of escaping Jerusalem Christians). The unpredictable military situation at the time of the abortive siege of 66 probably led the church to seek divine guidance as to the specific course of the flight. But, on the other hand, Eusebius or his source may have heightened the miraculous aspect of the pre-dated oracle by including within it the command to proceed to Pella. The contemporary political and military situation was less favorable for a flight to Pella in Oct., 66 than it was the following spring or summer. By the Spring of 68, the Zealots were allowing only the wealthy to escape alive (Josephus, War iv, 6. 3. 377-83; 7. 3. 410).

Pella was among the fifteen cities throughout Palestine, Phoenicia, and Syria (in addition to many villages) which Josephus (War ii, 18. 1) named as having been plundered and either destroyed or set on fire by parties of Jews in reprisal for the killing of Caesarean kinsmen. "An immense slaughter was made of the men who were caught in" these cities by Hebrew marauders. Gentiles in no area escaped their wrath. Many Jews living in these cities, with the exception of a few like Gerasa, were then put to death or in bonds due to Gentile fear and hatred; those in Scythopolis, Hippos and Gadara suffered the most (ii, 18. 3-5). Presumably at nearby Pella surviving inhabitants were weary of bloodshed even before Cestius besieged Jerusalem (ii, 19. 4-7). By the end of the following April Vespasian had subdued much of Galilee (except for a few strongholds, which fell during the next six months: iv, 2. 1); most Jews were so discouraged that they were willing to come to terms with Rome (iii, 6. 3). Vespasian set fire to Gadara (14 miles from Pella) and surrounding towns, "some of which were quite destitute of inhabitants" (iii, 7. 1). When the Romans marched through Perea between Feb. and June, 68 they met little resistance (iv, 7. 3-8. 1). It was "une ville neutre, dans un pays paisable, voisin des deserts d'Arabie et où le bruit de la guerre n'arrivait que fort atténué".¹⁸

Several other factors made Pella an adequate place of retreat. It had abundant water (acquis divitem, Pliny, Nat. Hist. v, 16. 74). There were caves in the area.¹⁹ The Christians anticipated destruc-

¹⁸ H. Leclercq, Pella: Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie, xiv, 1 (1939), p. 177.

¹⁹ G. Schumacher, Pella (1895), pp. 36-40. "It may be accepted as beyond doubt that we here have a cave once inhabited by those Christian anchorites

tion of Jerusalem by Roman armies acting as God's agents of punishment: an attitude which would have endeared them to bitter Gentiles whose city had been destroyed by Hebrews. Jews and Christians had become distinguished since Nero's persecutions of A.D. 64. To the extent that the anti-Phariseism (23: 13-35) and Gentile mission interest (22: 9-10; 24: 14; 28: 19) of Matthew reflect the views of the Jerusalem believers, they would be acceptable to inhabitants of Pella. And, if they had fled the insurgents' terrorism in southern Judea (War ii, 22. 2; iv. 4-6; 9. 7), some sympathy toward them is conceivable.

In the spring and early summer of 67 Christian Judeans escaping to Pella would elude Roman attention or wrath²⁰, or both. There is no evidence that Pellans or Jerusalem Christian refugees resisted the Roman army. That the Church settled at the right time in a subsequently safe place is indicated by the Clementine Recognitions (i, 37 Syrian; 1, 39 Rufinus)²¹: "Everyone who, believing in this Prophet who had been foretold by Moses, is baptized in this name, shall be kept unhurt from the destruction of war which impends over the unbelieving nation and the place itself; but... those who do not believe shall be made exiles from the place and kingdom." It is implied that all believers lived through the war under similar safe circumstances. Prof. Brandon concedes that Jewish Christians escaped from Galilee and Samaria to Pella, though he does not explain why they would be treated any more charitably than Jerusalem Christians by revolutionaries, the Roman army and Pellan Gentiles²². L. E. Elliot-Binns considers it "almost certain" that refugees at

who, in the beginning of the Christian era and during the Jewish wars, found a refuge at Pella (Eusebius, H. E. iii. 5)... The entire northern slope is honey-combed with such caves" (pp. 38-39). If so, the good will of the Gentiles of Pella was not as important as Prof. Brandon envisions. See also J. Richmond's report in *Palestine Exploration Fund Quarterly* 66 (1934), pp. 20-22.

²⁰ Archbishop Carrington (n. 10), p. 251, writes: "The Nazarean refugees could hardly have settled in his [Herod Agrippa II] domains unless he had extended them some degree of recognition or protection, which he would be likely to do, as they had not been in favour of the war with Rome. Their situation was similar to that of the non-belligerent Jewish Rabbis who had been allowed by Vespasian to settle at Jamnia."

²¹ Schoeps (n. 2), p. 267.

²² Brandon (n. 15), *Jesus and the Zealots*, p. 215; cf. *The Fall of Jerusalem*, p. 172; *Jesus and the Zealot Aftermath*: *Bull. J. Ryl. Libr.* 54 (1971), pp. 62-63.

Pella included Christians from both Galilee and Jerusalem²³. Epiphanius (Haer. 30. 2) related that "all who believed in Christ settled down about that time in Perea, the majority of the emigrants taking up their abode at Pella". The fugitives are "all the apostles" in Haer. 29. 7 (ed. Dindorf: other editors have read, *mathētaí*) and "all the disciples" in *De mens. et pond.* 15, but their place of origin is Jerusalem. Scout-messengers from the Jerusalem church must have prepared the way for the gathering of Judaeans and Galilean refugees.

3.

Confirmation that believers gathered in Pella from various parts is gained from the following report of Eusebius (Hist. iii, 11):

After the martyrdom of James, and the taking of Jerusalem, which took place immediately afterwards, it is recorded that those apostles and disciples of the Lord who still survived met together from all quarters and, together with the Lord's relatives according to the flesh (for the majority of these were still living), took counsel together as to whom they would judge worthy to be the successor of James; and furthermore they all unanimously approved Symeon the son of Clopas, ...who was a cousin of the Lord.

His source is probably Hegesippus' *Memoirs* (see ii, 23. 18; iv, 22. 4), wherein Vespasian's attack is said to have quickly followed James' martyrdom²⁴. Elliott-Binns perceives: "Where the election took place we are not told, but in the eyes of Eusebius it cannot have been Jerusalem which would then have been in the possession of the Romans and in a state of disturbance."²⁵ That the sequence of events according to Hegesippus and Eusebius is correct, is indicated by the fact that, in spite of his urge to prove the principle and fact of episcopal succession (Eusebius, Hist. iv, 22. 2-4), Hegesippus allowed the intervention of the attack on Jerusalem. Pella was the gathering place of the "disciples" and leaders from the area over which James had effectively exercised patriarchal authority. In their precarious position they sought and elected a new head of the church.

An official list of "*successors of James*" was drawn up; primacy was given to Simeon. They would preserve tradition and peace and oppose such heresy as that of Thebouthis (Hist. iv, 22. 4; cf. iii. 32.

²³ Elliott-Binns (n. 14), pp. 68-69.

²⁴ Lawler (n. 4), pp. 32-33.

²⁵ Elliott-Binns (n. 14), p. 69.

7-8), obey oracles "vouchsafed by way of revelation to approved men" there and "preside over every church as witnesses and relatives of the Lord" (iii. 32. 7). Such functions were mentioned by Hegesippus. The Jerusalem Hebrew bishops list appears to be a "Who's Who of Palestinian Christendom" in A.D. 67-68:

kinsmen of Jesus (Simeon, Judas [of James: Apostolic Const. vii, 46] and Zacharias his son²⁶, Joses),
apostles (Matthias, Philip, Levi, Justus [Barsabbas: Acts 1: 23; Papias, ap. Eusebius, Hist. iii, 39. 9-10])
prophet (John [the Elder, author of Revelation]²⁷),
unidentifiable disciples (Tobias, Benjamin, Seneca, Ephraem).

Scholarly doubts are universally raised concerning the lists of Hebrew bishops of Jerusalem (Eusebius, Hist. iv, 5. 3; Epiphanius, Haer. 66. 20) because they include thirteen names for the supposed 30-year period between the death of Simeon and the exclusion of Jews from Jerusalem by Hadrian. The most recent investigator of this list, Arnold Ehrhardt, concluded that the list was compiled officially, from older material, at the end of the second century by Bishop Narcissus of Jerusalem, and that it was first used by Julius Africanus²⁸. The disproportionately long list of bishops Theodor Zahn believed to have included the names of bishops of neighboring sees²⁹. Louis Duchesne considered it a list of bishops of Pella and of other colonies of the Jerusalem church³⁰. Adolph Schlatter held that it was a list of Jerusalem presbyters³¹, while Rudolph Knopf

²⁶ Zoker is the name of a son or grandson of Judas: Th. Zahn, *Forschungen zur Geschichte des neutestamentlichen Kanons und der altkirchlichen Literatur*, vi (1900), p. 240; Lawlor (n. 4), pp. 44-45. Other equivalents are Zachary (II Esdras 1: 40) and Zechar (1 Chron. 8: 31).

²⁷ A. Schlatter, *Die Kirche Jerusalems vom Jahre 70-130* (1898), pp. 40-41. 46. 47; B. Bacon, *The Fourth Gospel in Research and Debate* (1910), pp. 122. 150-51. 256, and various articles in *Zeits. ntl. Wiss.*: 12 (1911), pp. 178-79; 26 (1927), pp. 187, 194; 31 (1932), p. 149; *Hibbert Journ.* 26 (1927-28), pp. 114-15; 29 (1930-31), p. 323; *Harvard Theol. Rev.* 23 (1930), p. 247. Bacon claimed Scholten as another proponent of the view that John was a Palestinian elder (cf. Acts 21: 18).

²⁸ A. Ehrhardt, *The Apostolic Succession* (1953), pp. 38-41. 59-61; cf. H. E. W. Turner, *The Pattern of Christian Truth* (1954), pp. 383-86.

²⁹ Zahn (n. 26), pp. 296-300; J. Weiß, *Das Urchristentum* (1917), pp. 561ff., concurred.

³⁰ L. Duchesne, *Histoire ancienne de l'Eglise* (3rd ed. 1907), pp. 120-21.

³¹ Schlatter (n. 27), pp. 23-24. 29-30.

thought that the names of the relatives of Jesus (*despósynoi*) were included³²; Harnack accepted and combined both explanations³³. Erich Caspar suggested that the transmitters of the apostolic tradition were named as well as the first bishops³⁴. Philip Carrington considers it likely that Simeon "was the bishop of the Jerusalem church-in-exile at Pella".³⁵ "Perhaps the thirteen [following] names are the names of a bishop, Justus [Judas], together with twelve elders from whom a successor would be chosen when the necessity arose."³⁶ We would find an element of truth in all of these hypotheses.

Confirmation of the survival of Matthew (Levi) and Thaddaeus (Judas of James)³⁷ into the postwar period is provided by an early Baraita: "Yeshu had five disciples – Mattai, Nakkai, Netzer, Buni and Todah" (Sanh. 43a)³⁸. The Amoraic text relates the judgment that they all should be killed. This hostility stemmed from the period in which Christians were cursed in the Eighteen Benedictions (Barakoth 28b) and some were put to death (Jn. 16: 2)³⁹. Moreover, a tradition of the church of Edessa (Doctrine of Addai, pp. 5, 21; Eusebius, Hist. i, 13; ii, 1. 6–8) has Judas, the "twin" brother of Jesus, sending Addai to Edessa; the Chronicle of Adiabene relates that he subsequently reached Adiabene in A.D. 99⁴⁰. Matthew "compiled his oracles in the Hebrew language" (Papias, ap. Eusebius, Hist. iii, 39. 16), presumably

³² R. Knopf, *Das nachapostolische Zeitalter* (1905), pp. 27–28.

³³ A. Harnack, *Die Chronologie der altchristlichen Litteratur bis Eusebius* (1897), pp. 220–21.

³⁴ E. Caspar, *Die älteste römische Bischofsliste: Schriften der Königsberger Gel. Ges., Geisteswiss. Kl.* (1926), pp. 122–32.

³⁵ Carrington (n. 10), p. 250.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 419.

³⁷ We hope to show in a monograph the identity of Judas, brother of James (Jd.1) and of Jesus, as the Beloved Disciple (Jn. 19: 26–27), to whom Jesus gave the hypocoristic names, Thaddaeus (from *tadda*, female breast) and Lebbaeus (from *leb*, heart) because of his love. He was the last disciple to die (Jn. 21: 23).

³⁸ R. Herford, *Christianity in the Talmud and Midrash* (1903), p. 93, rightly deduces the other three names to be titles of Jesus: the innocent, branch (from Jesse) and Son. J. Klausner, *Jesus of Nazareth*, transl. H. Danby (1947), p. 30, believed Buni to be a corruption of Yuani, John. See also, M. Goldstein, *Jesus in the Jewish Tradition* (1950), pp. 31–32. 111–13; E. Bamel, "What is Thy Name?": *Nov. Test.* 12 (1970), pp. 223–28.

³⁹ J. L. Martyn, *History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel* (1968), pp. 47–48. 59. 65–68; cf. 31–41.

⁴⁰ J. N. Farquhar, *The Apostle Thomas in South India*: *Bull. J. Ryl. Libr.* 10 (1926), p. 82; cf. 11 (1927), p. 37. Bibliography in A. Adam, *Erwägungen zur Herkunft der Didache*: *Zs. Ki.gesch.* 68 (1957), pp. 39–41.

after the war; for the eschaton had failed to appear, while "heresy" was arising and reliable witnesses were becoming few. John the Elder was Papias' primary source.

If Christians from all over Palestine gathered in Pella under such leadership, four questions merit further consideration:

(1) Was it here that Matthew compiled the *logia*? This would account for the existence of several Gospels under his name; each purported to be based on his traditions. "Everyone interpreted them as he was able" (Papias). Only after the destruction of Jerusalem was the "true Gospel sent forth for the refutation of sects" (Clementine Homily ii, 17. 4).

(2) While the community at Pella would be united in the emergency by the "bishops", to what extent did apocalyptic disappointment, the Roman victory and prophetic discontent release centrifugal forces (the linguistic, regional and theological cleavages) which were inevitable within a conglomeration of converts from the various "sects" of Judaism (Hegesippus, ap. Eusebius, Hist. iv, 22. 4 & 7)?

(3) Subsequently did more believers remain at Pella (e.g. the forebears of Aristo of Pella and the preservers of earlier and later Jerusalem traditions) or return to Jerusalem (Epiphanius, Haer. 29, 7)⁴¹ or gradually to their ancestral homes?

(4) Was Kokaba of Basanitis chosen for (re-)settlement from Pella at this time, or from all over Palestine during the Bar Cochba Revolt? It was later inhabited by relatives of Jesus (Julius Africanus, ap. Eusebius, Hist. i, 7. 14), Ebionites (Eusebius, Onomasticon 172. 1; Epiphanius, Haer. 30, 2 & 18) and Nazorenes (29. 7; 40. 1), both of which groups had their own "Gospel according to Matthew" (29, 9. 4; 30, 3. 7 & 13. 2; cf. Irenaeus, Adv. Haer. i, 26. 2). If R. Meir (Pesikta 59b)⁴² was correct in calling Dositheus a native of Kokaba, it had been a Jewish sectarian center.

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⁴¹ Sowers (n. 1), p. 312.

⁴² A. Buechler, Les Dosithéens dans le Midrasch: Rev. des ét. juiv. 42 (1901), p. 230; R. North, Verbum Domini 35 (1957), p. 49; J. Danielou, L'étoile de Jacob et la mission chrétienne à Damas: Vig. chr. 11 (1957), pp. 131. 135.