

happen later on. I was not so inclined to experience the present with judgment, because how could I judge what I was going through without bringing in the past or the future. It is a beautiful and powerful way to practice—as well as a beautiful way to live and die.

This leads to an admonition against staking a proprietary claim on the nature of truth: "The truth will sustain us, we don't have to sustain it. The Buddhadharma offers a way to love that proves its own validity, just in the practice of it." Her method is characterized by this simple and direct talk.

Salzberg opens her book with this bit of verse that explains both her title and the motive of her book and practice. It is by German-Austrian poet Rainer Maria Rilke:

I live my life in widening circles  
that reach out across the world.  
I may not ever complete the last one,  
but I give myself to it.

Sharon Salzberg's work is such a gift, moving us clearly and tenderly toward an opening of the heart. Who can question such a gentle and generous book?

*Larry Smith is a poet and professor of humanities at Firelands College of Bowling Green State University in Huron, Ohio, and co-editor of The Heartlands Today. His working-class novel, Working It Out, is forthcoming from Ridgeway Press in Detroit.*

#### **James the Brother of Jesus**

By Robert Eisenman. New York: Viking, 1997.  
Pp. 1074. \$39.95, cloth.

*Reviewed by Douglas Auchincloss*

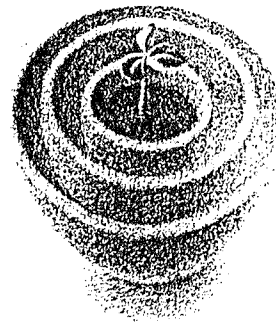
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of Robert Eisenman's new book. Its hero is the hard-nosed brother of Jesus, and its villain is the letter-writing mystic we know as St. Paul.

Robert Eisenman, a recognized authority and author of two books on the Dead Sea Scrolls, is Professor of Middle East Religions and Archaeology and Director of the Institute for the Study of Judeo-Christian Origins at California State University. He is also a Visiting Senior Member of Linacre College, Oxford University. Eisenman accepts James as the literal blood brother of Jesus, though the Roman Catholic Church, concerned to maintain the perpetual virginity of Mary, holds that Jesus' "brothers" were really cousins or children of Joseph by a previous marriage. But whatever his relationship to Jesus, James was the recognized leader of the little band of Christians that assembled in Jerusalem after the crucifixion.

Though he has been largely ignored by historians, quite a lot is known about James. He was a vegetarian, he dressed in linen, he bathed daily—all characteristics that reinforce Eisenman's tendency to equate "James the Just" with Qumran's famed "Teacher of Righteousness." His teaching was profoundly nationalistic and centered in the Law, dietary rules, and circumcision.

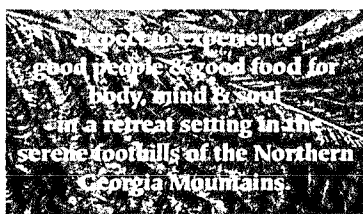
When Paul turned up in Jerusalem, claiming that although he had never seen Jesus (except in that vision on the road to Damascus), he had been mystically authorized to make converts of all nations without requiring them to be circumcised or to follow dietary restrictions, James naturally took a dim view of him. He sent Paul to the Temple to have himself "purified" and his "head shaved" so that "all may know that the things they have been told about you are not so, but that you yourself also walk regularly keeping the Law" (Acts 21:24).

As is well known to readers of the New Testament, Paul was mobbed in the Temple, rescued and arrested by the Roman occupying forces, and ended up in Rome, writing

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those letters that have formed the basis of so much of the Christian faith.

Throughout this heavy (four-pound) book, Eisenman brilliantly pieces together references and quotations from a wide range of sources. He cites James' Biblical letter: "Don't you know that making the world your friend makes God your enemy" (4:4) as an attack on Paul's: "I made myself all things to all men" (I Corinthians 9:22). And he reaches into the newly discovered Gospel of Thomas to buttress the idea that Jesus appointed James as his successor.

"The disciples said to Jesus: 'Who is it that shall be great over us after you depart?' Jesus answered: 'Go to James the Just, for whose sake Heaven and earth came into existence'" (Logion 12).

Whether elected or appointed, Eisenman's James has clear preeminence over Peter, whom he dismisses as "the more or less mythological" individual known, in the West, as "Peter" or "the Rock." Eisenman

attributes the Peter "myth" to promotion by the Hellenized "Gentile church" at Rome after the failed Jewish uprising.

James died a martyr's death. According to Church Father Jerome, he was thrown from the Temple, his legs broken, then dispatched with a fuller's club. Eisenman's passionate scholarship has rescued James from the oblivion in which he was cast "abetted by one of the most successful rewrite enterprises ever accomplished—the Book of Acts," and James, he holds, is a key to the discovery of the historical Jesus.

*Douglas Auchincloss is a retired editor of Time Magazine, where he wrote the Religion section for many years.*