

a copy of Matthews Hebrew Gospel.

The first fifteen pastors of the Nazarene ecclesia of Jerusalem—including James and Simon, near relations to Jesus of Nazareth were converts from the Jesus. The names of these elders are all recorded by Eusebius, and it is very probable that John—the seventh—is the “John, the Presbyter,” mentioned by Papias, and other early writers, and the author of the two short epistles under the name of “John, the Elder” which are embodied in “the canon” of the new testament. Speaking of these Nazarene Elders of Jerusalem, Eusebius says, “I learned from writers that down to the invasion of the Jews, under Adrian, there were fifteen bishops in that church, all of which, they say, were Hebrews from the first, and received the knowledge of Christ pure and unadulterated, so that in the estimation of those who were able to judge, they were well approved and worthy of the episcopal office. For at that time the whole church under them, consisted of faithful Hebrews who continued from the time of the Apostles, until the siege that then took place” (His Ecc. p. 130) Here was the true successors of the Apostles, and the knowledge of Christ pure and unadulterated which these Nazarene bishops received, held and taught, was derived from Jesus himself, his mother and his family relations, as well as from the Hebrew scriptures, including Matthews Gospel and that knowledge was (according to the Hebrew Scriptures, that the Messiah should be a man of Abraham’s family, Judah’s tribe, and David’s sons)

and according to Matthew’s gospel, and his family record, Jesus was descended in the male line from Abraham, and David, and the natural offspring of Mary, by Joseph her legal husband. and possessed of the same nature as the rest of the Hebrew race, but possessing a very different disposition to most of them.

When the Romans under Adrian, A.D. 134, again captured Jerusalem, they prohibited all Jews returning to the ruined city and in this dreadful calamity the Nazarenes who had escaped the war and the persecutions of the false Messiah—Bar-cho-che-Bas—were included, they being circumcised and keepers of the Sabbath day, like the rest of the Hebrew race. From Judea the remnant of the Nazarenes were dispersed into many lands, as Syria, the countries beyond the Jordan, Asia Minor and the isles in the Mediterranean sea, where they strengthened or revived the Apostolic faith in the places to which they came, and in these as in other countries we find indications of their opposing the Catholic leaders for several centuries afterwards, and through all this period, amid opposition and slander, and persecution from Pagans, Jews and Gentile Christians, they still preserved it in its original purity and completeness, the Hebrew gospel of Matthew.

It is very evident from the belief of the original congregation of Jerusalem, under its first fifteen Bishops, or Elders, as well as those, who from the Hebrew race accepted the Messiahship of Jesus of Nazareth besides many of the