

original congregation that was founded by the disciples and early followers of Jesus of Nazareth. "The Gospel according to the Ebionites," because that was the term, or nickname of contempt which the apostate "fathers" gave the Nazarenes, or the Hebrews who accepted the Messiahship of Jesus, but whose social position in general was poor and lowly (like that of Jesus and his disciples) and whose views of the nature of the Messiah, "the fathers" denounced as "poor and mean" because they contended that Jesus of Nazareth was by nature of the human race, and the natural offspring of Joseph and Mary, though as to character the most righteous and God like of the sons of men. This biography of Jesus was also sometimes termed—"The Gospel according to the twelve apostles" because the people who used this work in preference to the Canonical Gospels, contended that it was written by one of the original apostles, and received the sanction of the rest of "the Twelve." It should however be noted that in after centuries there was in existence a gospel known as "the Gospel of the Twelve Apostles" which appears to have been a different work from "the Gospel of the Hebrews or Nazarenes."

The ecclesia of believers in the Messiahship of Jesus of Nazareth (who was also called "the Nazarene") after its organization under the Eldership of James, "the Lord's brother" was distinguished from the other sects of the Jews by the name of Nazarenes, and this name though evidently given to the early disciples of Jesus, by the un-

believing Jews, yet they appear to have adopted and called themselves by. For when Paul was brought before Felix, among other charges brought against him was that of being "a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes" which charge he admits; and James writing to his fellow-believers of the twelve tribes, referring to the evil treatment which they were subjected to by their rich and worldly persecutors. Queries—"Do not they blaspheme the honorable name by which ye are called," or as in the margin "which was called upon you" probably at their immersion) and that name was Jesus of Nazareth, and from him they received the name of Nazarenes, and by that name the congregation of Jerusalem, and the believers of the Hebrew race, and those who accepted their views in dispersion were afterwards known in contradistinction to the name of Christian, which the Gentiles early adopted, and which was first conferred on the Disciples by the Greeks of Antioch. But when the majority of the Gentile Christians had adopted the dogma of the dual nature of "the Christ" and kindred errors, against which a vigorous opposition was offered by the Hebrew Nazarenes, the former deemed the name of 'Nazarenes' too honorable for their opponents, and therefore in spite and malice gave them the more despicable term of Ebionites, yet some of the more honorable of the Catholic fathers, as Jerome, still allowed them their original and honorable name of Nazarenes, and he has recorded the pleasing fact that from the Nazarenes of Berea in Syria he procured