CHAPTER EIGHT

CLEMENT, THE APOSTOLIC FATHERS, AND THE NEW TESTAMENT

Our investigation of Clement’s acquaintance with the NT writings has led to the conclusion that he made use of the sayings of Jesus as contained in oral tradition—although it is not improbable that he also knew the written Synoptic Gospels—that he knew a majority of the Pauline Epistles, including quite probably the Pastorals, as well as a number of other writings including Acts, Hebrews, 1 Peter, and James, but probably none of those commonly designated Johannine. In marked contrast with his use of the OT, Clement nowhere provides us with a verbatim citation from these writings. Instead, he prefers to paraphrase or, more frequently, simply to allude to them—at times perhaps unconsciously, thereby indicating his thorough familiarity with them.

How does Clement’s use of the NT compare with that of the other Apostolic Fathers? What can be said of the manner in which Clement uses these writings, and can any explanation be given for it? In this chapter we propose to summarize the use of the NT in the sub-apostolic decades as illustrated in the Apostolic Fathers—and especially in relationship to Clement’s use of the NT—and then to draw together in more connected fashion the explanations of the phenomena observed in the preceding three chapters.

A. THE USE OF INTRODUCTORY FORMULAE

Although most of the Apostolic Fathers employ introductory formulae with OT quotations—not, however, consistently 1—they practically never use such formulae in introducing NT quotations.

Clement’s epistle, which, of course, abounds in introductory formulae used with OT quotations, employs formulae with NT material in only two places. In both places it is the words of Jesus which are being introduced and in both the formulae are specialized. In 13.1f. the formu-

1 For the use of introductory formulae with OT quotations in the Apostolic Fathers, see above, p. 31ff.
la reads μάλιστα μεμνημένοι τῶν λόγων τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ, οὗς ἔλαβεν διδάσκους ἐπειδήκειαν καὶ μακροθυμίαν· οὕτως γὰρ εἶπεν. In 46.7f. is the shorter, but comparable, formula μνήσθητε τῶν λόγων τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ· εἶπεν γάρ. These formulae immediately bring to mind that of Acts 20.35, μνημονεύειν τε τῶν λόγων τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ, ὥστε αὕτὸς εἶπεν, which introduces a saying of Jesus not found in the Gospels, and thus presumably one which was handed down orally. This, combined with the form of Clement’s citations, has led us to the conclusion that Clement derived these sayings of Jesus not from the Synoptic Gospels, but from oral tradition. The use of a similar formula in Polycarp 2.3, μνημονεύοντες δὲ δὲν εἶπεν ὁ κύριος διδάσκον, if not derived from Clement’s epistle, provides possible confirmation for such a conclusion.

There are in Clement’s epistle no further formulae introducing NT quotations or allusions. We may, however, call attention to words which introduce the clear allusion to 1 Corinthians in 47.3ff. Clement writes in 47.1f., ἀναλάβετε τὴν ἑπιστολὴν τοῦ μακαρίου Παύλου τοῦ ἀποστόλου· τί πρῶτον ὑμῖν ἐν ἀρχῇ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου ἔγραψεν; The phrase ἐν ἀρχῇ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου is probably an allusion to Phil. 4.15 and is therefore to be understood in a temporal rather than a local sense.1 It should be added that Clement on several occasions employs introductory formulae with quotations from apocryphal writings2 no longer known to us: in 46.2 γέγραπται γὰρ; in 17.6 καὶ πάλιν λέγει; in 23.3f. ἦ γραφή αὕτη, ὃποιον λέγει; cf. also 8.3.

What is true of Clement is very largely true of the other Apostolic Fathers. Ignatius often alludes to NT writings in his epistles, but he never once introduces such an allusion with a formula. This is perhaps not quite so surprising when one realizes that Ignatius is frugal even in his use of introductory formulae with OT quotations.

In Polycarp’s epistle to the Philippians, however, we encounter several interesting formulae. In addition to the formula of 2.3, which has just been discussed, Polycarp cites a saying of Jesus under the rubric καθὼς εἶπεν ὁ κύριος (7.2). The words which follow are in verbatim agreement with Mk. 14.38 and Mt. 26.41, whether they are derived from either of these Gospels or not. In 12.1 (extant only in Latin translation) Polycarp writes Modo, ut his scripturis dictum est, whereupon

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1 For further discussion of the use of the word εὐαγγελίου in the Apostolic Fathers, see below, p. 332.

2 For a discussion of these passages, see pp. 86-93.