

Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

[PayPal](#)

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

A table of contents for *Bibliotheca Sacra* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_bib-sacra_01.php

ARTICLE III.

CITATIONS FROM THE NEW TESTAMENT BY THE
APOSTOLIC FATHERS.¹

BY REV. WOLCOTT CALKINS, PASTOR OF CALVARY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

"It would unquestionably be an argument of decisive weight in favor of the credibility of the biblical history, could it be shown that it was written by eye-witnesses, or even by persons nearly contemporaneous with the events narrated." — STRAUSS, *LEBEN JESU*, Vol. I. § 13.

I. THESE Fathers bear direct testimony to three of Paul's Epistles :

1. Clem. Cor. 47. "Take in your hands the Epistle of St. Paul the apostle. What did he write you when the gospel first began to be preached? ² Truly he was moved of the Spirit to write you concerning himself and Cephas and Apollos, because even then you had begun to form factions. But this faction did not lead you into the worst sin, because you yielded to apostles so illustrious, and to a man approved by them."

The reference to 1 Cor. i. 12 is unmistakable. Paul's inspiration is also claimed.

2. Ign. Eph. 12. "Ye are partakers of the sacred mysteries with Paul, who is sanctified, crowned with martyrdom, and worthily called the blessed; whose footsteps I hope to follow when it is mine to attain unto God; who also through-

¹ In the enumeration given in this Article the so-called second Epistle of Clement and the larger recension of the Ignatian Epistles have, of course, been disregarded as spurious. The references are to: S. Barnabæ Epistola Catholica (Bar.); S. Clementis Epistola ad Corinthios I. (Clem.); S. Ignatii Epistola ad Ephesios (Ig. Eph.); S. Ignatii Epistola ad Magnesios (Ig. Mag.); S. Ignatii Epistola ad Trallianos (Ig. Tral.); S. Ignatii Epistola ad Romanos (Ig. Rom.); S. Ignatii Epistola ad Philadelphenses (Ig. Phil.); S. Ignatii Epistola ad Smyrnaeos (Ig. Smyr.); S. Ignatii Epistola ad Polycarpum (Ig. Pol.); S. Polycarpi Epistola ad Philippenses (Pol.); Hermae Pastor. Visiones (Her. Vis.); Hermae Pastor. Mandata (Her. Man.); Hermae Pastor. Similitudines (Her. Sim.).

² ἐν ἀρχῇ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου. Cf. the Latin version and note ad loc. in Hefele.

out his whole epistle¹ makes mention of you in Christ Jesus.”

The reference to Eph. i. 9; iii. 3 is very striking :

3. Pol. 3. “Neither I, nor any other like me, can attain unto the wisdom of the sainted and illustrious Paul, who, when he was with you, taught clearly and forcibly the word of truth in the presence of men then living; and when absent from you wrote a letter,² by which you may be built up in the faith, if you study it attentively.” Cf. Phil. i. 27.

It is possible that Polycarp also refers to the Gospels under the title of *λόγια τοῦ κυρίου* (Phil. 7): “Whosoever prostitutes the oracles of the Lord to his own lusts, denying that there be resurrection and judgment, this man is the first-born of Satan.”

II. A few passages of the New Testament are distinctly quoted, either as the language of the Lord and the apostles, or of scriptures :

Bar. 4. “Let us beware, therefore, lest we be found as it is written³: ‘Many are called, few are chosen’” (Matt. xx. 16 = xxii. 14).

Bar. 7. “So they,” he says,³ “who desire to see me and be received into my kingdom must reach me through afflictions and sufferings” (Matt. xvi. 24). Cf. Hefele, *Send-schreiben des Ap. Barn.* p. 66.

Clem. 34. “For he says: ‘Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, nor hath entered into the heart of man what things he hath prepared for them that wait for him’” (1. Cor. ii. 9).

The fact that Paul quotes these passages from the Old Testament increases the certainty that Clement quotes from Paul, not from the LXX.; for Paul and Clement agree almost word for word, while they both differ from Isa. lxiv.

¹ *ἐν πάσῃ ἐπιστολῇ*, not “every epistle,” as usually rendered. Credner’s reasons for rejecting this as an interpolation from the larger recension are wholly insufficient; Einleit. i. 395.

² *ἐπιστολὰς*, plur. for sing. For similar instances in New Testament account, cf. DeWette, *Einleit. Neu. Test.* 150.

³ These signs of quotation, *scriptum est*, inquit, are constantly employed by the PP. Ap. in citing from the Old Testament.

3, 4, in synonymes, arrangement, and everything but sentiment.

Clem. 46. "Remember the words of the Lord Jesus; for he said: 'Woe to that man; it had been good for that man if he had not been born (Matt. xxvi. 24), rather than offend one of my elect (Matt. xviii. 6); it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about him, and that he were drowned in the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones¹'" (Matt. ix. 42 = Luke xvii. 2).

Pol. 2. "Mindful of what our Lord said when he taught: 'judge not that ye be not judged' (Matt. vii. 1, lit.); 'forgive and ye shall be forgiven' (Luke vi. 37); 'be merciful that ye may obtain mercy' (Luke vi. 36); 'in what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again' (Matt. vii. 2); and 'blessed are the poor and those who suffer persecution, for theirs is the kingdom of God'" (Matt. v. 3 = Luke vi. 20).

Pol. 7. "The Lord said: 'The Spirit truly is willing, but the flesh is weak'" (Matt. xiv. 38, lit.).

Pol. 11. "Do we not know that the saints shall judge the world? as St. Paul teaches" (1 Cor. vi. 2).²

Pol. 12. "As is said in *these* scriptures: 'Be ye angry and sin not; and let not the sun go down upon your wrath'" (Eph. iv. 26). Paul quotes the first clause from Psalms iv. 5 (without express acknowledgment), and adds the second. Polycarp quotes both, and designates them as *these scriptures*. This and Clem. 34, above, are alone decisive proofs that the Old and New Testaments were even then acknowledged together to be the word of God.

These are believed to be the only examples of explicit citations with acknowledgment, except such as are quoted in the New Testament from the LXX., and may have been taken from either by the Fathers.

¹ Similar instances of citing from various Gospels under the general designation of *λόγοι τοῦ κυρίου* may be found in Clem. Alex. Strom. 3. 18, also frequently in Irenaeus and Justin.

² Apparently literal, but the Greek is lost. Credner's ground for suspecting the clause *sicut Paulus docet*, is singular enough: "Because Polycarp does not usually give the name of an author cited" ! Einleit. Neu. Test. p. 445.

III. Many passages are cited with substantial accuracy, but without acknowledgment :

Bar. 19. "Give to every one that asketh thee" (Lk. vi. 30).¹

Clem. 2. "Ready for every good work" (Tit. iii. 1).²

Clem. 36. "Who being the brightness of his majesty³ is so much better than the angels, as he has obtained a more excellent name" (Heb. i. 3, 4).

Ign. Rom. 3. "For the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal" (2 Cor. iv. 18).⁴

Ign. Rom. 6. "For what is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul" (Matt. xvi. 26).⁵

Pol. 1. "In whom, not having seen, ye believe; and believing ye rejoice with joy unspeakable" (1 Pet. i. 8, with a slight omission).

Pol. 2. "Believing on him that raised our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead, and gave him glory" (1 Pet. i. 8; slight change in arrangement).

Pol. 2. "Not rendering evil for evil, nor railing for railing" (1 Pet. iii. 9, lit.).

Pol. 4. "The love of money is a beginning of all evil. Knowing therefore that we brought nothing into this world, neither can carry anything out," let us, etc. (1 Tim. vi. 7; the order of the clauses transposed). Cf. Pol. 8 = 1 Pet. ii. 24 + 22.

Pol. 5. "Lust warreth against the spirit, and neither fornicators, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind shall enter the kingdom of God (1 Cor. vi. 9, 10).⁶

Pol. 7. "For whosoever confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is antichrist" (1 John iv. 3).

¹ Lit., if with MSS. B K L. 131-57 $\delta\epsilon$ be omitted, and $\tau\phi$ with B.; Matt. v. 42, nearly.

² Lit. except *eis* for *πρός*.

³ *μεγαλοσύνης* for *δόξης*.

⁴ Lit.; but the passage is doubtful. Not found in ancient Latin versions, nor Syriac Fragm. nor Syrus.

⁵ Slight change in arrangement.

⁶ This citation is remarkable, because while many words in Paul are omitted, *μαλακοί* and *ἀρσενοκοῖται*, which had acquired a scandalously technical meaning, are retained; cf. the long list of sins in Clem. 35 and Rom. i. 29-32. The resemblance is too perfect to be casual.

Herm. Man. 12. 5. "If ye resist him, he will flee from you with confusion" (Jas. iv. 7).

Her. Sim. 8. "They denied the name by which they were called" (Jas. ii. 7).¹

A list of the most accurate quotations and resemblances is given in a note below.²

IV. Many extended passages in these Fathers are close imitations of similar passages in the New Testament:

Clem. 9-12. The example of ancient worthies is adduced on the model of Heb. xi.; the list not only corresponds, — Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Lot, Rahab, — but many expressions agree; and the magnificent close of the chapter in Hebrews is reproduced with little change in Clem. 45. He then begins chap. 46 like Heb. xii., with a reference to these examples for our encouragement. Heb. xii. 1 is, however, reproduced still more accurately in chap. 19.

Clem. 36 is a close imitation of the beginning of Heb. i.

Her. Sim. 9-21 is a paraphrase of the parable of the sower, Matt. xiii. 5-23 (cf. Her. Vis. 3. 6; also Sim. 9. 20, and Matt. xiii. 7; xix. 23; also Her. Vis. 4. 3 and 1 Pet. i. 6-7).

Pol. 5. The advice to deacons is a remarkable imitation of Paul's charge to Timothy (chap. iii.).

Clem. 49. The praise of charity, closely following 1 Cor. xiii., with additions from Col. iii. 14; 1 Pet. iv. 8; Jas. v. 20; Gal. i. 4; John iii. 16; 1 John iv. 9, 10. There is not a thought in the whole chapter of Clement which is not to be found in the New Testament

¹ Far more exact than appears in the translation: quod super eos erat invocatum = τὸ ἐπικληθῆν ἐφ' ὑμᾶς.

² Bar. 5 = Matt. ix. 13. 7 = Acts x. 42; 2 Tim. iv. 1; 1 Pet. iv. 5.

Clem. 2 = Tit. iii. 1. 21 = Heb. iv. 12. 35 = Rom. i. 29. 48 = 1 Cor. x. 24. Ign. Eph. 14 = Matt. xii. 33. Mag. 10 = 1 Cor. v. 7. Rom. 5 = 1 Cor. iv. 4. Smyr. 1 = Matt. iii. 15. 6 = Matt. xix. 12.

Pol. 1 = Acts ii. 24; Eph. ii. 8, 9; 1 Pet. i. 8. 2 = Matt. x. 26; 2 Cor. iv. 24; 1 Pet. i. 13; 1 Pet. iii. 9. 3 = Gal. iv. 26; 1 Thess. v. 17; 1 Tim. vi. 7, 10. 5 = Eph. v. 25; 1 Cor. viii. 9, 10; Gal. vi. 7; 1 Pet. ii. 11. 6 = Rom. xiv. 10, 12; 2 Cor. viii. 21. 7 = 1 Pet. iv. 7; 1 John. iv. 3. 8 = 1 Pet. ii. 24, 22. 10 = 1 Pet. ii. 12; 1 Pet. ii. 17. 11 = 2 Thess. iii. 15. 12 = Gal. i. 7.

Her. Man. 3 = Eph. iv. 30. 4 = Luke xvi. 18; Matt. v. 32. 12. 5 = Jas. iv. 7. Her. Sim. 9. 12 = John. xiv. 6.

V. Besides the above enumeration there is a mass of brief expressions, apparently taken from the New Testament ; also resemblances which might appear casual if they did not recur on every page : " For in him are all things, and to him " (Bar. 12. ; cf. Rom. xi. 36). " We ought in all things to give thanks unto him " (Clem. 24 ; cf. 1 Thess. v. 18). " Crocus hath refreshed me in all things " (Ig. Eph. 2 ; cf. 1 Cor. xvi. 18). This word *ἀνέπαισεν* is one of a multitude which Ignatius has taken from Paul, and made his own. " Praying without ceasing for all " (Pol. 4 ; cf. 1 Thess. v. 17). " Be at peace one with another " (Her. Vis. 3. 9 ; cf. 1 Thess. v. 13).

These are examples taken at random. If these writers were not familiar with authors whom they imitate so constantly, their casual coincidences are the most wonderful in all literature. For, as in the case of Ig. Eph. 2, above, the agreement extends to the most peculiar and idiomatic expressions. e.g. *ἀγαθοποιία*, Clement and Peter ; *ἀγαθησυνειδησις*, Clement and Paul ; *Ἰουδαϊσμος*, Ignatius and Paul ; *ἀγάπη*, Ignatius and John ; *ἀρραβών*, Polycarp and Paul.¹

The following classification of the references given indiscriminately in Hefele's edition will be of service.²

VI. In a few instances these Fathers appear to make misquotations ; i.e. they cite as " words of the Lord," or of " scripture " what is nowhere to be found in the New Testament :

Bar. 4. " The son of God says : Let us resist all iniquity, and hold it in hatred." This has never been traced, we believe, to any apocryphal Gospel. It may have been a tradition ; or the merc sentiment may have been cited from Jas. iv. 7 or 2 Tim. ii. 19 (*ἀποστήτω ἀπὸ ἠδικίας*), and Ps. cxix. 163 (*ἀδικίαν ἐμίσησα*).

Bar. 6. " Behold, saith the Lord, I will make the last things like the first." This may be a loose quotation of Matt. xx. 16 ; cf. Ezek. xxxvi. 11.

¹ Lists of these coincidences in expressions of each of the PP. Ap. with each New Test. writer, are given in Westcott Canon New Testament pp. 30, 40, 47, though not as exhaustive as he claims.

² A few which seem fanciful have been omitted ; e.g. all those to 2 and 3 John.

Clem. 23. "Far from us be this scripture, which saith: Wretched are they who are double-minded and doubtful, saying, we have heard these things even from the time of our Fathers, and behold we have grown old, and none of them have happened to us." This is supposed by some to be taken from an apocryphal source.¹ Others regard it as a careless citation of Jas. i. 8 and 2 Pet. iii. 4. Both explanations are unsatisfactory. It may be a mere blunder of Clement.

Ign. Smyr. 3. "And when he came to those who were with Peter, he said unto them, take, handle me, and see that I am not a spirit without body." Eusebius² says he does not

Hefele's index will be of little service, as so many references are contained in the LXX.; also the references to Ep. to Diognetus, etc. are not distinguished from the PP. Ap. The second column gives the number of quotations acknowledged; the third, those unacknowledged, but literal or close imitations; the fourth, apparent allusions; and the fifth the total number.

Matthew,	6	9	53	68
Mark,	0	2	7	9
Luke,	4	1	14	19
John,	0	2	20	22
Acts,	0	1	16	17
Romans,	0	2	26	28
1 Corinthians,	2	7	39	48
2 Corinthians,	0	2	12	14
Galatians,	0	3	11	14
Ephesians,	1	3	17	21
Philippians,	0	2	8	10
Colossians,	0	1	6	7
1 Thessalonians,	0	1	3	4
2 Thessalonians,	0	0	1	1
1 Timothy,	0	1	14	15
2 Timothy,	0	0	8	8
Titus,	0	2	4	6
Philemon,	0	0	1	1
Hebrews,	0	3	20	23
James,	0	4	10	14
1 Peter,	0	12	12	24
2 Peter,	0	0	10	10
1 John,	0	3	5	8
Jude,	0	0	1	1
Revelations,	0	0	10	10
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	13	61	328	402

¹ Coteler, etc. The precise source has not been indicated.

² Hist. Eccl. 116. 26.

know whence Ignatius quotes this. Jerome¹ conjectures that it was from the Gospel of the Nazarenes. Pierson suspects an oral tradition.² But the imitation of Luke xxiv. 39 is quite as close as many unchallenged quotations.

But the most remarkable fact about these false citations is, that they are not confined to the New Testament.

Bar. 9. "The scriptures relate that Abraham circumcised three hundred and eighteen men of his own household." A loose combination of Gen. xvii. 26, 27 and xiv. 14.

Clem. 8. Many sentences not to be found are inserted in quotations from the Old Testament.

Clem. 46. "For it is written: Join yourselves with the saints, because all who adhere to them will be sanctified (unscriptural, perhaps; certainly not in scripture). And again, in another place: With an innocent man thou shalt be innocent, with the elect thou shalt be elect, and with the froward thou shalt be froward" (Psalms xviii. 26, very loosely).

Bar. 7. Ceremonies are quoted from "the prophet" which are only to be found in Jewish traditions.³

Our conclusions from these facts are:

1. No citations of these Fathers have been traced with any plausibility to apocryphal books now in existence; a fact which goes far to determine the later origin of the latter. The conjecture that they used apocrypha now lost can never be anything but a mere conjecture — a gratuitous one at that; since the few cases where, at the worst, it is demanded, may be attributed to blunders, without dishonoring any respectable writers in these days of bound volumes. Besides, there must have been many "words of the Lord" never recorded at all (as we learn from John xxi. 25), well known in these times. Paul himself quotes from these in one instance (Acts xx. 35).

2. And yet it must be candidly admitted there is no sufficient evidence that these Fathers copied from the MSS.

¹ De Vir. Ill. Ign. p. 16.

² Cf. Credner, Beiträge 1. 407.

³ Cf. Justin, Dial. cum Tryph. 40, and Tertul. adv. Jud. 14; adv. Marc. 3. 7.

of the New Testament in any instance. The citations absolutely literal are very few and brief, and of the nature of proverbs or maxims,¹ which could not be readily forgotten or varied. (e.g. Tit. iii. 1, cf. Clem. 2; 1 Cor. ii. 9 in Clem. 34; Matt. vii. 1, in Pol. 2; Mark xiv. 38, in Pol. 7; 1 Pet. iii. 9, cf. Pol. 2). Citations only from Matthew, Luke, 1 Corinthians, and Ephesians, and only thirteen in all, are expressly acknowledged; and not more than sixty out of four hundred apparent references are close imitations.

3. But the Old Testament is quoted quite as carelessly in many instances as the New. Very few books of the Old Testament are expressly named. The few texts agreeing perfectly with the LXX. are also for the most part of the nature of Proverbs (e.g. Prov. v. 5 in Clem. 30; Prov. x. 12 in Clem. 49, etc.). More citations are falsely accredited to the Old Testament than to the New. In fact, the citations of the Fathers from the Old and New Testaments both are not more inexact than those of the New Testament from the Old. Our Lord himself often varies both in synonymes, arrangement, and construction from the LXX., giving only the sentiment.

4. Therefore the same argument which would prove that these Fathers had never seen the MSS. of the New Testament would prove that neither they nor our Lord and the apostles, had ever seen the LXX. The explanation of inexact citations from the one will apply to the other. And that explanation is a very natural one. They quoted from memory. The unrolling of immense parchments, even if they carried them, was a useless trouble in hurried writing amid the pressure of missionary journeys. It was an age of intense activity, not of textual and critical accuracy.

But beyond all question they possessed these books. Incidentally, they appeal to their authority. They call them "scriptures." They are so familiar with them that they quote the Old Testament in the very language of the New,

¹ The most important exception to this rule is 2 Cor. iv. 18, which adds to the suspicion of that passage in Ignatius (Vid. p. 596, not. 4).

where this differs widely both from the LXX. and the Hebrew. They blend texts of the two indiscriminately as scriptures. They fall into the same style. They use the same expressions on every page. They paraphrase whole passages. Can it be doubted, then, that the written Gospels which Eusebius says were circulated by Christian missionaries in the reign of Trajan¹ were our present Gospels; that they were familiar to these Fathers and to their readers? The only books of the New Testament to which no certain reference is made in these writings are the second Epistle of Peter, the second and third of John, and the Epistle of Jude.

It is beyond the scope of the present Article to point out the inferiority of these writings to the models they imitate. They are mere imitations; imperfect, full of blunders, exaggerations, and omissions. The supposition that they could have been drawn from the same source and been guided by the same inspiration is more incredible than that they had never seen the New Testament. And yet they had one common purpose: "Jesus Christ is my record; my inviolable records are his Cross, his Death, his Resurrection, and faith through him."²

¹ A.D. 97-117. Euseb. Hist. Eccl. 3. 37.

² Ign. Philad. 8.