

THE ORDERING, RHETORICAL FUNCTION AND PURPOSE OF *EXEMPLA* IN *FIRST CLEMENT*

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Abstract. *First Clement* deploys numerous historical *exempla* comprising central proofs in the argument of this letter. Elsewhere I have investigated the privileged position of the Golden Calf tradition among these *exempla*, even suggesting a specific historical occasion. This essay offers a general overview of the ordering, rhetorical function, and purpose of all *exempla* in this text.

Keywords: First Clement, *exempla*, rhetoric, Apostolic Fathers.

I. Introduction

First Clement deploys numerous historical *exempla* comprising central proofs in the argument of this letter. Elsewhere I have investigated the privileged position of the Golden Calf tradition among these *exempla*, even suggesting a specific historical occasion.¹ This essay offers a general overview of the ordering, rhetorical function, and purpose of all *exempla* in this text.

II. What is an *exemplum*?

In *Inst.* 5.11.6 Quintilian defines an *exemplum* (Gk. παράδειγμα) as: *rei gestae aut ut gestae utilis ad persuadendum id quod intenderis commemoratio*.² Heinrich Lausberg helpfully parses this definition as follows:

Thus *exemplum* has a source for its content (*res gesta, res ut gesta*), a function of *utilitas (utilis ad persuadendum)*, and a literary form (*commemoratio*).³

¹ C. K. ROTHSCHILD, "Golden Calf Incident in 1 Clement," in *New Essays on the Apostolic Fathers*, WUNT 1/375 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017), 81-96. I wish to thank R. Matthew Calhoun for comments on a prior version of this essay.

² Quintilian, *The Orator's Education*, Vol. 3: Books 6-8, ed. and trans. Donald A. RUSSELL, Loeb Classical Library 126 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002).

³ *Handbook of Literary Rhetoric*, ed. D. E. ORTON, R. Dean ANDERSON (Leiden, Boston, and Köln: Brill, 1998), 196-198, here: 196.

Lausberg also points out that the *exemplum* has a source “outside of the *causa*: the *exemplum* is a *probatio* drawn from outside.”⁴

Aristotle divides παραδείγματα into two groups: historical and invented (or poetic), noting the enhanced difficulty of locating historical examples (*Rh.* 2.20.7).⁵ That said, the historical variety is also preferred on account of its greater credibility—a trait traced to both its correspondence to real life and its memorialization of real-life events in literature. Accordingly, according to Anaximenes, *Rhetorica ad Alexandrum* 8, *exempla* were popular for arguments regarded as improbable, a point to which I will return.⁶

Quintilian (*Inst.* 5:11.15-16) further distinguishes in-depth *exempla* from mere references, reporting that some theorists prefer ἐνθυμήματα (deductive reasoning) for written speeches and παραδείγματα (inductive reasoning from particulars to universals) for oral delivery (*Inst.* 12.10.51).⁷

III. Exempla in 1 Clement

The sacrosanct literary status of the scriptures together with Christianity’s audacious claims (e.g., resurrection) and tenuous foundation (i.e., contrived apostolic succession), thus, made historical biblical exempla proofs *par excellence* for rhetorically-minded Christians. Ps.-Clement deploys numerous such exempla, referred to as ὑποδείγματα, in his argument that certain usurping presbyters must step down to restore concord and peace in the Corinthian church.⁸ With a deep

⁴ *Handbook of Literary Rhetoric*, 196. Cf. also Karl ALEWELL, *Über das rhetorische ΠΑΡΑΔΕΙΓΜΑ: Theorie, Beispielsammlungen, Verwendung in der römischen Literatur der Kaiserzeit* (Leipzig: Hoffmann, 1913); Kristoffel DEMOEN, “A Paradigm for the Analysis of Paradigms: The Rhetorical Exemplum in Ancient and Imperial Greek Theory,” *Rhetorica* 15 (1997): 125–158. For a survey on this topic, see Frederick E. BRENK, “Setting a Good Exemplum: Case Studies in the *Moralia*, the *Lives* as Case Studies,” in IDEM, *With Unperfumed Voice: Studies in Plutarch, in Greek Literature, Religion and Philosophy, and in the New Testament Background*, Potsdamer Altertumswissenschaftliche Beiträge 21 (Stuttgart: Steiner, 2007), 195–215, here: 201.

⁵ Aristotle, *Art of Rhetoric*, trans. J. H. FREESE, Loeb Classical Library 193 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1926).

⁶ Anaximenes apud R. Dean ANDERSON JR., *Glossary of Greek Rhetorical Terms*, Biblical Exegesis & Theology 24 (Leuven: Peeters, 2000), 87–88.

⁷ Quintilian, *The Orator’s Education*, Vol. 3: Books 46 (see n. 2 above); *ibid.*, Volume V: Books 11–12 ed. and trans. Donald A. RUSSELL, Loeb Classical Library 494 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002).

⁸ Editions of the text consulted for this essay: Kirsopp LAKE, *Apostolic Fathers*, vol. 1, LCL (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University, 1985; [1912]; Robert M. GRANT and Holt H. GRAHAM, *First and Second Clement*, vol. 2, *The Apostolic Fathers: A New Translation and Commentary* (New York: Nelson & Sons, 1965); *The Apostolic Fathers: Greek Texts and English Translations*, 3rd ed., ed. Michael W. HOLMES (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, repr. 2007); J. B. LIGHTFOOT, *The Apostolic Fathers*, vol. 1. “Clement” (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1989 = 2 Parts in 5 Vols. [1890]); Adolf W. ZIEGLER, *Neue Studien zum ersten Klemensbrief* (München: Manz, 1958); Adolf von HARNACK, *Der erste Korintherbrief*, KEK (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck &

appreciation for the value of the LXX to Ps.-Clement, Horacio Lona characterizes these exempla as “edle Beispiele” (γενναῖα ὑποδείγματα), observing the resemblance of the roles of Peter and Paul to the Maccabean literature.⁹ Differently, Adolf von Harnack acknowledges Clement’s use of *exempla* as a rhetorical technique.¹⁰ Like Harnack, Odd Bakke and Cilliers Breytenbach regard the *exempla* as a rhetorical strategy, an aspect of the letter’s deliberative argument.¹¹ For Bakke and Breytenbach, 1 Clement’s rhetorical argument utilizes *exempla* to (a) expose the deleterious role of jealousy and (b) teach the edifying effects of repentance and self-sacrifice. Breytenbach expands the examination of *comparanda* beyond Isocrates (Bakke) to Dio Chrysostom, Aelius Aristides, and Plutarch.¹²

Whereas Breytenbach examines twenty-one exempla, 1 Clement in fact contains forty-three exempla, organized in seven thematic units of seven *exempla* each (one unit has only a single *exemplum*, see below), usually ordered chronologically within the unit. An *exemplum* is typically one individual person such as Abraham, Moses, or Paul, but might also be a group such as kings, Christians, or women. Themes include jealousy, repentance, and obedience. As a

Ruprecht, 1910). Other crucial studies consulted: W. C. van UNNIK, *Studies over de zogenaamde eerste brief van Clemens I Het littéraire genre* (Amsterdam: N. V. Noord-Hollandsche Uitgevers Maatschappij, 1970); L. L. WELBORN, “On the Date of 1 Clement,” *BR* 29 (1984): 35-54; IDEM, “On the Discord in Corinth: 1 Corinthians 1-4 and Ancient Politics,” *JBL* 106/1 (1987): 85-111; IDEM, “A Conciliatory Principle in 1 Cor 4:6,” *NovT* 29/4 (1987): 320-46; IDEM, “Clement, First Epistle of,” *ABD* 1.1056-1060. Translations are my own.

⁹ Horacio E. LONA, *Der erste Clemensbrief*, Kommentar zu den Apostolischen Vätern 2 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1998), 156-157, 168-169, 236, 490-491. On the general importance of the LXX for Ps.-Clement, see LONA, *Der erste Clemensbrief*, 42; Donald HAGNER, *The Use of the Old and New Testaments in Clement of Rome*, *NovTSup* 34 (Leiden: Brill, 1973).

¹⁰ Adolf von HARNACK, “Das Schreiben der römischen Kirche an die korinthische aus der Zeit Domitians (1. Clemensbrief) (1929),” in *Encounters with Hellenism: Studies on the First Letter of Clement*, ed. Cilliers BREYTENBACH and Laurence L. WELBORN, *Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums* 53 (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 1-103, here: 67. Cf. Werner JAEGER, “Early Christianity and the Greek Paideia: 1 Clement (1961),” in *Encounters with Hellenism*, 104-114, here: 104; and Odd M. BAKKE, “*Concord and Peace*”: *A Rhetorical Analysis of the First Letter of Clement with an Emphasis on the Language of Unity and Sedition*, *WUNT* 2/43 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001). See Breytenbach’s insightful discussion of the author’s merging biblical history and the Greek philosophical tradition in “The Historical Example in 1 Clement,” *ZAC* 18/1 (2013): 22-33, here: 32-33. Lona is less amenable to rhetorical approaches to the letter rejecting its deliberative status in favor of a ‘real’ letter (*Der erste Clemensbrief*, 21-22).

¹¹ BAKKE, “*Concord and Peace*, ” 56.

¹² “Historical Example in 1 Clement,” 22-33; cf. also IDEM, “Civic Concord and Cosmic Harmony: Sources of Metaphoric Mapping in 1 Clement 20:3,” in IDEM, *Grace, Reconciliation, Concord: The Death of Christ in Graeco-Roman Metaphors*, *NovTSup* 135 (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 297-311.

part of the exemplum, Ps.-Clement may cite or paraphrase biblical passages. In a few cases, mere mention of the name serves to recall an individual's reputation.

On the Use of Exempla

What is more, the writer marks each unit of exempla with an explicit reference either just prior to or immediately following the set (labeled below: 'A,' 5:1; 'B,' 5:1 and 6:1; 'C,' 7:5; 'D,' 16:17; 'E,' 17:1; 'F,' 31:1; 'G,' 53:1 and 55:1). The following seventeen passages include these cues (denoted with an asterisk) as well as a few additional passages in which the writer discusses the use of *exempla* in the letter:

*(1) Although the *exempla* in chapter 4 begin without warning, 1 Clem. 5:1 qualifies the contents of the previous chapter as *exempla* from the historic past, then proposes to offer their contemporary counterparts:

But to stop giving ancient examples (τῶν ἀρχαίων ὑποδειγμάτων), let us come to the most recent champions. Let us consider the noble examples (τὰ γενναῖα ὑποδείγματα) of our own generation.

*(2) In 1 Clem. 6:1 the writer summarizes the use of contemporary (as opposed to much older) *exempla*:

To these men who conducted themselves in a holy manner has been added a great multitude of the elect, who have set a superb example among us (ὑπόδειγμα κάλλιστον ἐγένοντο ἐν ἡμῖν) by the numerous torments and tortures they suffered on account of jealousy.¹³

(3) In 1 Clem. 7:1, Ps.-Clement articulates the underlying hermeneutical principle behind the deployment of *exempla*: because our circumstances resemble those of biblical figures who went before us, he writes, the sacred scriptures contain models that serve as *reminders*:

We are writing these things, loved ones, not only to admonish you but also to remind ourselves (ἀλλὰ καὶ ἑαυτοὺς ὑπομνήσκοντες). For we are in the same arena and the same struggle lies before us.

*(4) In 1 Clem. 7:5, the writer describes consultation of the past as a review of the generations (in this case on the topic of repentance):

¹³ Cf. John 13:15; Jas 5:10; Heb 4:11 (cf. 8:5; 9:23); 2 Pet 2:6.

Let us review all the generations and learn (διέλθωμεν εἰς τὰς γενεὰς πάσας καὶ καταμάθωμεν) that in generation after generation the Master has given an opportunity for repentance to those wanting to return to him.

(5) 1 Clem. 9:2 exploits a metaphor of transformative vision to exhort addressees to model their lives after figures of the past:

Let us gaze intently on those who have perfectly served his magnificent glory (ἀτενίσωμεν εἰς τοὺς τελείως λειτουργήσαντας τῇ μεγαλοπρεπεῖ δόξῃ αὐτοῦ).¹⁴

(6) In 13:1, foregoing *exempla* are followed by an exhortation to imitate them:

Let us, therefore, be humble-minded, brothers, laying aside all arrogance, conceit, foolishness, and anger; and let us do what is written (πούησωμεν τὸ γεγραμμένον).

(7) In 14:1, the writer contrasts following good models, referred to as “obedience to God,” with imitating bad ones, resulting in “jealousy”:

Therefore, it is right and holy, brothers, for us to obey God (ὕπηκούς ἡμᾶς μᾶλλον γενέσθαι τῷ θεῷ), rather than follow the instigators of a filthy jealousy in arrogance and anarchy.¹⁵

*(8) In 1 Clem. 16:17, the entire chapter upholds Jesus as an example (ὕπογραμμὸς) to imitate:

Look, beloved, at what a model has been given to us (τίς ὁ ὑπογραμμὸς ὁ δεδομένος ἡμῖν).

*(9) In 17:1, the author exhorts the imitation of humble forerunners:

Let us also be imitators of those who walked around in goat- and sheepskins (Μιμηταὶ γενώμεθα κάκείνων, οἵτινες ἐν δέρμασιν αἰγείοις καὶ μηλωταῖς περιεπάτησαν).

¹⁴ Cf. the phrase ἴδε εὐθύτητα (“focus on the upright”) in 14:5 and Abraham’s transformative intentional gaze upon God in 17:2. The “evil eye” is often construed as an envious (“jealousy,” φθόνος) gaze which apotropaic devices seek to avert by staring back. The writer’s diagnosis of “jealousy” as the root cause of the community’s στάσις, together with the recommendation to “stare intently” and “cling” (15:1; 19:2; 30:3; 31:1; 46:1, 2, 4; 49:5; 56:2) to *exempla* may suggest such a construction in the background.

¹⁵ In this passage the word μωσσερός is traced to Lev 18:23 LXX—the prohibition of bestiality.

(10) In 1 Clem. 19:1, the writer articulates the imitation of role models from the past as a universal principle:

The humility and submission of so many people of such great renown have, through their obedience, improved not only us, but also the generations before us (οὐ μόνον ἡμᾶς ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰς πρὸ ἡμῶν γενεὰς βελτίους ἐποίησεν) who received his oracles in fear and truth.

*(11) 1 Clem. 31:1 uses the metaphor of unrolling a scroll to describe learning from history:

Let us cling (κολληθῶμεν), then, to his blessing and discern the paths of blessing. Let us roll out what has taken place from the beginning (ἀνατυλίξωμεν τὰ ἀπ' ἀρχῆς γενόμενα).¹⁶

(12) In 1 Clem. 33:7-8, the writer refers to the *exemplum* as a “model” (ὕπογραμμός) for believers:

Let us observe that all the righteous have been decorated with good deeds, even the Lord himself decorated himself with good deeds and celebrated. Having such a model (ἔχοντες οὖν τοῦτον τὸν ὑπογραμμόν), let us do his will post-haste; with all our strength, let us commit to righteous work.

(13) In 1 Clem 45:2-4, the author summarizes the message of certain *exempla* as proving the principle that the righteous are persecuted and not vice versa:

You have searched the holy scriptures, which are true, and [there]... You will not find the righteous have been cast out by holy men. The righteous were persecuted, but it was by the lawless. They were imprisoned, but it was by the unholy.

(14) In 1 Clem. 46:1-4, the writer encourages audience members to “cling” (κολλάω) to examples, explaining the transformative effect of such mimesis:

Therefore, brothers, we too must cling to such examples (τοιούτοις οὖν ὑποδείγμασιν κολληθῆναι καὶ ἡμᾶς δεῖ). For it is written, “Cling to the holy; for those who cling to them will be made holy.” And, again, in another place it says, “With [i.e., in the company of] the innocent, you will be innocent, with the elect, you will be elect, and with the perverse, you will pervert.” Let us then cling to the innocent and righteous, for these are God’s elect.¹⁷

¹⁶ ἀνατυλίσσω, literally “to unroll” (antonym: “to twist”) although with the meaning “to call to mind again”; BDAG 74.

¹⁷ Cf. 15:1, “Therefore we should cling to those who keep the peace with piety...” (Τοίνυν κολληθῶμεν τοῖς μετ' εὐσεβείας εἰρηνεύουσιν). See n. 14 above.

*(15) As 1 Clem. 7:1 (above), 1 Clem. 53:1 states the hermeneutical principle behind the *exempla*, namely that they are models that serve as reminders:

For you know, and know well, the sacred scriptures, loved ones, and you have searched God's oracles. Therefore, we write these things as a reminder (πρὸς ἀνάμνησιν οὖν ταῦτα γράφομεν).

*(16) In 1 Clem. 55:1, the writer acknowledges the effectiveness of extra-biblical *exempla* (here with respect to the theme of self-sacrifice):

Let us bring forward examples (ὑποδείγματα) from the Gentiles as well. During a pandemic, many kings and rulers, on the instruction of an oracle, have handed themselves over to death that they might rescue their subjects with their own blood.

(17) Finally, 1 Clem. 63:1 specifies the desired effect of the *exempla*, namely their imitation:

Therefore, it is right for us, having considered so many great examples (τοῖς τοιούτοις καὶ τοσοῦτοις ὑποδείγμασιν), to bow our necks and assume a position of obedience, blamelessly quelling the futile faction that we might, in truth, reach the goal set before us.

Exempla

Turning to the *exempla* themselves, chapters 4-6 contain two units of seven *exempla* each. The topic of each is ζήλος (“jealousy”): the first set (‘Group A’) introduces the countertype: notoriously envious people—the *perpetrators*. The second set (‘Group B’) presents models to follow: famous *victims* of jealousy.

Group A. Jealousy: Perpetrators

1. 1 Clem. 4:1-7 Cain
2. 1 Clem. 4:8 Jacob
3. 1 Clem. 4:9 Joseph's brothers
4. 1 Clem. 4:10 Pharaoh
5. 1 Clem. 4:11 Aaron, Miriam
6. 1 Clem. 4:12 Dathan and Abiram [Korah implied]
7. 1 Clem. 4:13 Saul

The first segment designates Cain as the progenitor of the jealousy to blame for the στάσις in the community being addressed.¹⁸ Subsequent names cascade

¹⁸ On the first seven exempla, see BREYTENBACH, “Historical Example in 1 Clement,” 29-30.

from Cain's in a florilegium on ζήλος that gradually crescendos over the course of the chapter:

You see, brothers, *jealousy* (ζήλος) and envy (φθόνος) brought about a brother's murder. Because of *jealousy* (ζήλος) our father Jacob fled ... *Jealousy* (ζήλος) caused Joseph to be persecuted ... *Jealousy* (ζήλος) compelled Moses to flee ... Because of *jealousy* (ζήλος) Aaron and Miriam were excluded from the camp. *Jealousy* brought Dathan and Abiram down to Hades alive ... Because of *jealousy* (ζήλος) David was envied not only by the Philistines, but was also persecuted by Saul, king of Israel. (4:7-13)

The second unit ('Group B') showcases Peter as the progenitor of jealousy's victims in a string of 'most recent' (ἔγγιστα) examples.¹⁹ The identities of the figures in these lines are much discussed by scholars, especially the multitude of unnamed men (6:1), the Danaids and Dircae, the wives, cities, and nations (6:4).²⁰ Here it will suffice to acknowledge that Group 'A' and Group 'B' blend Jews (Jacob, Joseph, Aaron, Miriam), pagans (Pharaoh, cities, and nations), and Christians (Peter, Paul) across countertypes and types.

Group B. Jealousy: Victims

1. 1 Clem. 5:1-5 Peter
2. 1 Clem. 5:6-7 Paul²¹
3. 1 Clem. 6:1 Multitude of the Elect

¹⁹ On the second seven exempla, see BREYTENBACH, "Historical Example in 1 Clement," 30-31.

²⁰ On the Danaids and Dircae, see Chance E. BONAR, "Danaids and Dirces in Roman Corinth: Sexualized Violence and Imperial Spectacle in *1 Clement*," in *Sex, Violence, and Early Christian Texts*, ed. C. COBB and E. VANDEN EYKEL (Lanham, Boulder, New York, and London: Lexington Books, 2022), 17-36.

²¹ On the relationship of Paul and the corpus Paulinum to 1 Clement, see Andrew GREGORY, "1 Clement and the Writings that Later Formed the New Testament," in *The Reception of the New Testament in the Apostolic Fathers*, ed. IDEM, C. M. TUCKETT (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 129-157; Andreas LINDEMANN, *Paulus im ältesten Christentum: Das Bild des Apostels und die Rezeption der paulinischen Theologie in der frühchristlichen Literatur bis Marcion*, BHT 58 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1979); IDEM, "Paul's Influence on 'Clement' and Ignatius," in *Trajectories through the New Testament and Apostolic Fathers*, ed. A. GREGORY and C. TUCKETT (Oxford: Oxford University, 2005), 9-24; IDEM, "Paul in the Writings of the Apostolic Fathers," in *Paul and the Legacies of Paul*, ed. W. S. BABCOCK (Dallas: Southern Methodist University, 1990), 25-45; IDEM, "Der Apostel Paulus im 2. Jahrhundert," in *The New Testament in Early Christianity*, ed. J.-M. SEVRIN, BETL 86 (Leuven: Leuven University, 1989), 39-67; D. K. RENSBERGER, "As the Apostle Teaches: The Development of the Use of Paul's Letters in Second-Century Christianity," Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 1981. Cf. the older study, *The New Testament in the Apostolic Fathers*, ed. A. J. CARLYLE, For the Committee of the Oxford Society of Historical Theology (Clarendon: Oxford, 1905); and my own essay, "Reception of First Corinthians in First Clement," in *New Essays on the Apostolic Fathers*, 35-60.

4. 1 Clem. 6:2 Danaids
5. 1 Clem. 6:2 Dircae
6. 1 Clem. 6:3 Wives (estranged from husbands)
7. 1 Clem. 6:4 Great cities and nations

Following these negative (Cain's line) and positive (Peter's line) *exempla* in chapters 4-6, chapters 7-18 contain one unit of seven exempla on the theme of obedience:

Group C. Obedience

1. 1 Clem. 7:6 Noah
2. 1 Clem. 7:7 Jonah
3. 1 Clem. 9:3 Enoch
4. 1 Clem. 9:4 Noah (reprise)
5. 1 Clem. 10:1-7 Abraham
6. 1 Clem. 11:1-2 Lot
7. 1 Clem. 12:1-8 Rahab

In this case, the individuals are not presented chronologically, even if Noah (an antediluvian figure) is the progenitor of the group. He obediently proclaimed repentance, rescuing many from danger. Jonah obediently proclaimed impending disaster to the Ninevites who repented and were saved. Enoch did not suffer death on account of his righteous obedience. Abraham obeyed God's commands to depart from his land and sacrifice his son. Lot was saved from Sodom for his obedience (φιλοξενία and εὐσέβεια) and Rahab was saved from danger for hosting the scouts (Joshua 2). In this group, Ps.-Clement specifies that the last three figures (Abraham, Lot, and Rahab) demonstrated φιλοξενία ("hospitality"), a particularly potent form of obedience (i.e., obedience to the most venerable customs, cf. 1 Clem. 1:2). We note that Noah appears twice in this set, each time as a model for the loyal proclamation of repentance. Perhaps Noah served as the author's personal model since the writer too exhorts repentance.²²

Chapters 16-18 feature two units of *exempla* on the topic of humility. The first, chapter 16 has just one *exemplum*, Jesus (vv. 1-17). Chapter 17 begins with the exhortation, μιμηταὶ γενώμεθα ("become imitators"; cf. Eph 5:1) after which the writer lists three prophets ordered chronologically plus four historical figures also arranged chronologically.²³

²² On these exempla see BREYTENBACH, "Historical Example in 1 Clement," 31-32.

²³ On situating the figure, Job in chronological order, see LONA, *Der erste Clemensbrief*, 237.

Group D. Humility

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| 1. | 1 Clem. 16:1-17 | Jesus |
|----|-----------------|-------|

Group E. Humility

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|----|-----------------|---------|
| 1. | 1 Clem. 17:1 | Elijah |
| 2. | 1 Clem. 17:1 | Elisha |
| 3. | 1 Clem. 17:1 | Ezekiel |
| 4. | 1 Clem. 17:2 | Abraham |
| 5. | 1 Clem. 17:3-4 | Job |
| 6. | 1 Clem. 17:5 | Moses |
| 7. | 1 Clem. 18:1-17 | David |

Jesus demonstrated humility *par excellence*. His presence lacked glory and his form was dishonorable. He experienced trauma, toil, and oppression. He bore weakness; he was wounded, enervated, and punished, all the while remaining silent. Likewise, Elijah, Elisha, and Ezekiel proclaimed Christ (κηρύσσοντες τὴν ἔλευσιν τοῦ Χριστοῦ) with a humble appearance (ἐν δέρμασιν αἰγείους καὶ μηλωταῖς περιεπάτησαν, “in goatskins and sheepskins,” 17:1). Abraham acted humbly when, despite his distinguished reputation as “friend of God” (φίλος τοῦ θεοῦ, 17:2) he referred to himself as “dirt and ashes” (γῆ καὶ σποδός, 17:2). As upright, blameless, and truthful, Job too exhibited humility by censuring himself (οὐδεὶς καθαρὸς, “no one is clean...,” 17:4). Moses was greatly exalted but pronounced himself “weak-voiced and slow-tongued” (ἰσχνόφωνος καὶ βραδύγλωσσος, 17:5)—mere “steam from a pot” (ἐγὼ δέ εἰμι ἀτμὶς ἀπὸ κύθρας, 17:6). Even David, despite his reputation as great king, decried himself as guilty of unlawful behavior (τὸ ἀνόμημά μου, 18:2).

Chapters 20-50 traverse a range of theological topics (e.g., creation, resurrection) and yet, embedded within these discussions, we find another set of *exempla* on the theme of obedience.

Group F. Obedience

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|----|-------------------|---------|
| 1. | 1 Clem. 31:2 | Abraham |
| 2. | 1 Clem. 31:3 | Isaac |
| 3. | 1 Clem. 31:4-32:2 | Jacob |

[Digression]

- | | | |
|----|----------------|--------------------|
| 4. | 1 Clem. 42:1-5 | Apostles |
| 5. | 1 Clem. 43:1-6 | Moses |
| 6. | 1 Clem. 45:6-8 | Daniel and friends |
| 7. | 1 Clem. 47:3-7 | Paul |

Abraham was blessed for his righteous obedience through faith (31:2). Isaac permitted himself to be sacrificed (31:3). Jacob received the twelve scepters of Israel for departing the land and accepting life as Laban’s slave (31:4-32:2). Jesus’s

apostles faithfully transmitted God's truth as did Moses when he recorded God's directives (42:1-5). Daniel and his friends were victims of hatefulness but persisted in righteousness (45:6-8) and Paul, too, upheld righteous behavior in the face of partisanship and strife (47:3-7).

Following an appeal to the addressee to confess in 51:1 that is reiterated in 52:1, the author provides his final group of *exempla*. The theme of Group 'G' is self-sacrifice.

Group G. Self-Sacrifice

1. 1 Clem. 51:3, 5 Korah (counter example)
2. 1 Clem. 51:5 Pharaoh and his army (counter example)
3. 1 Clem. 53:4-5 Moses
4. 1 Clem. 55:1 Gentile rulers
5. 1 Clem. 55:2 Christians
6. 1 Clem. 55:4-5 Judith
7. 1 Clem. 55:6 Esther

Group 'G' reprises, in part, the *exempla* of 'Group A' (counter examples) and 'Group B' (examples to follow), however the set newly accents the mistakeness of the Egyptians at the time of Moses and the exemplarity of certain pagans. With respect to the former, the author submits that Korah and Pharaoh were punished for selfish hardness of heart—to be contrasted with Moses, who offered to sacrifice himself on behalf of the Israelites who sinned against God in the Golden Calf incident. Moses demonstrated crowning unselfishness when he exclaimed, “Forgive the sin of this people, or cancel me too from the book of the living” (ἢ καὶ με ἐξάλειψον ἐκ βιβλίου ζώντων). Similarly, some Gentile rulers have shed their blood on behalf of their people (56:1), as have Christians (56:2), including some Christian women (56:3). Group 'G' is ordered chronologically until the writer mentions women (55:3), when the examples of Judith and Esther flash back to prior generations.

Summing up, 1 Clement contains seven groups of seven *exempla* except Group 'D' in which Jesus is the sole *exemplum*. Seven represents “fullness,” “completeness” and “perfection,” which Jesus is able to symbolize himself. The first two groups ('A' and 'B') are reprised in the last ('G'),²⁴ the key witness of which is Moses, representative of the paradigm of self-sacrifice.

The seven sets of seven are organized by theme as a five-part chiasm demonstrating the author's central message that obedience and humility generate self-sacrifice which upends jealousy.

²⁴ Like Groups 'A' and 'B,' Group 'E' includes the *exempla* of Moses, Christians, pagans, and women.

‘A’ and ‘B’ (Jealousy)
 ‘C’ (*Obedience*)
 ‘D’ and ‘E’ (Humility)
 ‘F’ (*Obedience*)
 ‘G’ (Self-sacrifice)

The seven units also demonstrate a complementary seven-part chiasm which draws attention to section ‘D’ (4/7) the model of Jesus (16:1-7):

‘A’—Cain (Jealousy: Perpetrator)
 ‘B’—Peter (Jealousy: Victim)
 ‘C’—Noah (Obedience)
 ‘D’—Jesus (Humility)
 ‘E’—Elijah (Humility)
 ‘F’—Abraham (Obedience)
 ‘G’—Moses (Self-sacrifice)

We note that the *exempla* of Group ‘F’ (chapters 31-47) span the two major sections of the work 1-38 and 40-65 with possible implications for source-critical and partition theories about 1 Clement.²⁵ Correspondingly, the author may have relied on thematic lists of biblical personages—sources he amplified with scriptural citations, theological arguments, and other exhortation.

IV. Conclusion

This essay has argued that 1 Clement contains forty-two *exempla* as proofs in a rhetorical argument against στάσις. Careful organization of these examples into seven groups of seven reflect the author’s diagnosis that ζήλος is responsible for instigating στάσις, but that, through obedience (ὕπακοή),²⁶ humility (ταπεινώσις) will bring about the self-sacrifice necessary to reestablish peace and concord (εἰρήνη, ὁμόνοια, e.g., 1 Clem. 63:2). *Exempla* are interspersed with other forms of theological argument generously but not rigidly throughout the letter. Their rampant (almost comedic) deployment suggests that the author sought enhanced credibility from ‘real-life’ examples anticipating recalcitrance even rejection. Integration of data in seven sets of ‘seven’ is calculated to reflect a progression of themes (envy leading to self-sacrifice) and biblical progenitors (Cain, Peter, Moses, etc.), and to provide thoughtful readers with a quick mnemonic for recalling the letter’s recommendation (voluntary exile). Despite the sprawling length of this

²⁵ Lona (*Der erste Clemensbrief*, 249) sees a new section beginning in 20:1 (20:1-26:3). Cf. A. LINDEMANN, “The First Epistle of Clement,” in *The Apostolic Fathers: An Introduction*, ed. W. PRATSCHER (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2010), 47-69, here: 55-57.

²⁶ Cf. 1 Clem. 2:1-2.

missive, the writer thus clarifies a pedagogical, in addition to a social and political, aim.

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