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## THE *KERYGMATA PETRI* RECONSTRUCTED

JASON OLSON

THE following are excerpts from the Clementine Homilies as translated in the *Ante-Nicene Fathers* series. The choice, arrangement, and titles of excerpts follows the reconstruction given by Johannes Irmscher and George Strecker in *New Testament Apocrypha*, 2.531–41. The *Kerygmata Petri* is known only from the Pseudo-Clementine literature and must be distinguished from the Preaching of Peter quoted by Clement of Alexandria. The *Kerygmata Petri* is a series of fictional sermons of Peter and his disputations with Simon the Gnostic. Though scanty and fragmentary, the evidence concerning Jewish-Christian sects indicates their practices and beliefs were diverse and that there was not one such sect at a certain point in history but a variety of movements at different stages of development. The *Kerygmata Petri* is believed to be a source for the basic document (dating to the third century C.E.) of the *Pseudo-Clementines*, which was incorporated into the Recognitions and the Homilies of Clement. The *Pseudo-Clementines* achieved their final form in the fourth century C.E.

The *Kerygmata Petri* is evidence that Jewish Christians continued to obey the Law of Moses long after Jesus' Resurrection. They believed that Jesus himself had commanded them to do so forever. There is also evidence that the Jewish Christians and even Jesus taught that the Jewish nation is a part of God's plan and was to be governed by the Law of Moses.

### *Clementine Homilies* 3.51–52

And His sending to the scribes and teachers of the existing Scriptures, as to those who knew the true things of the law that then was, is well known. And also that He said, "I am not come to destroy the law," and yet that He appeared to be destroying it, is the part of one intimating that the things which He destroyed did not belong to the law. And His saying, "The heaven and the earth shall pass away, but one jot or one tittle shall not pass froth the law," intimated that the things which pass away before the heaven and the earth do not belong to the law in reality. Since, then,

while the heaven and the earth still stand, sacrifices have passed away, and kingdoms, and prophecies among those who are born of woman, and such like, as not being ordinances of God.

**Polemic against Paul: *Clementine Homilies* 7.19**

If, then, our Jesus appeared to you in a vision, made Himself known to you, and spoke to you, it was as one who is enraged with an adversary; and this is the reason why it was through visions and dreams, or through revelations that were from without, that He spoke to you. But can any one be rendered fit for instruction through apparitions? And if you will say, "It is possible," then I ask, "Why did our teacher abide and discourse a whole year to those who were awake?" And how are we to believe your word, when you tell us that He appeared to you? And how did He appear to you, when you entertain opinions contrary to His teaching? But if you were seen and taught by Him, and became His apostle for a single hour, proclaim His utterances, interpret His sayings, love His apostles, contend not with me who accompanied with Him. For in direct opposition to me, who am a firm rock, the foundation of the Church, you now stand. If you were not opposed to me, you would not accuse me, and revile the truth proclaimed by me, in order that I may not be believed when I state what I myself have heard with my own ears from the Lord, as if I were evidently a person that was condemned and in bad repute. But if you say that I am condemned, you bring an accusation against God, who revealed the Christ to me, and you inveigh against Him who pronounced me blessed on account of the revelation. But if, indeed, you really wish to work in the cause of truth, learn first of all from us what we have learned from Him, and, becoming a disciple of the truth, become a fellow-worker with us.

Peter in this quote is responding to Paul's preaching against the Law of Moses. Peter is showing the difference between his physical revelation of Christ compared to Paul's vision. He is accusing Paul of rebellion against him and the other Apostles's authority. This would support the Jewish Christian claim that Paul was trying to destroy the Law and the Jewish nation.

***Clementine Homilies* 11.19**

Therefore He made use of this memorable expression, speaking the truth with respect to the hypocrites of them, not with respect to all. For to some He said that obedience was to be rendered, because they were entrusted with the chair of Moses. However, to the hypocrites he said, "Woe to you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, for ye make clean the outside of the cup and the platter, hut the inside is full of filth."

Here Peter is quoting from Matthew 23:1-3, where Jesus commands the Jews to obey the Mosaic teachings of the Pharisees. Jesus had trust in some of the Pharisees to teach the Law, but others he considered hypocrites.