

BY is variegated, at times appearing to be the end result of a direct compositional appeal to a fixed "corpus" of tradition, while other times appearing to be the result of an oral manipulation and reproduction of tradition. In this respect, the text of the *Mek. RaShBY* is best understood as a written embodiment and representation of the broad and diverse pedagogical and transmissional culture from which it stemmed, and within which it functioned. Or stated differently, the diversity of the parallel interpolations of mishnaic and toseftan traditions in the *Mek. RaShBY* is an overt manifestation, in written form, of the different methods of rabbinic transmission of tradition.

Finally, our examination of these parallel traditions presents yet another challenge to an attempt to understand the *Mek. RaShBY* as a programmatically fashioned and editorially unified "composition." Instead of discerning an overarching pattern (of either rhetoric, logic or form) that dictated and shaped the appearance of these traditions in our text, we found, instead, that mishnaic and toseftan traditions appear haphazardly in our tractate in a variety of settings, introduced by a variety of rhetorical devices, and in a varied relationship to their parallel counterparts in the Mishnah and Tosefta. Such a random inclusion of these materials lends support to a general, anthological conceptualization of our text, encyclopedic in design, and devoid of a more specific editorial agenda.

## 6. DERASHAH AS PERFORMATIVE EXEGESIS IN TOSEFTA AND MISHNAH

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### ABSTRACT

*The practice of derashah in the early Rabbinic (tannaitic) period did not involve the systematic application of hermeneutic rules. It was rather a mode of communion with God through sacred text. To be doresh is to enter into this state of communion. Derashah is a mode of engaging Scripture, of relating to its elements in new and revelatory ways. Derashah always happens in a social context, which includes those who are present and participating actively or passively with the darshan; the verses in play, the Torah herself; and the Divine author whose Presence hovers above the activity and peeks through the words. The process of derashah is ritualized and requires boundary formation and spatial definition.*

### INTRODUCTION: SEARCHING FOR SECRETS

אין דורשין בעריות בשלשה ולא במעשה בראשית בשנים ולא  
במרכבה ביחיד אלא אם כן היה חכם והבין מדעתו כל המסתכל  
בארבעה דברים רתוי לו כילו לא בא לעולם מה למעלן מה למטה מה  
בפנים ומה לאחור וכל שלא חס על כבוד קונו רתוי כילו לא בא  
לעולם

One may not engage in exposition of the Scriptural passages on the topic of prohibited relationships (Lev 18:6-30; 20:8-22) with three persons, nor the Story of Creation (Gen 1:1-2:3) with two, nor the Chariot (Ezek 1:1-28) with one alone, unless he is a sage who has discerned of his own awareness. Whosoever gives his mind to four things it were better for him if he had not come into the world—what is above? what is below? what was before? and what is after? And whosoever takes no thought for the honor of his Maker, it were better for him if he had not come into the world (*m. Hag.* 2:1).<sup>1</sup>

Many scholars have approached this *Mishnah* in isolation, paying little if any attention to the surrounding material or tractate *Hagigah* as a whole. The contents are assumed to be part of a separate “mystical collection,” adventitiously placed in its current location; still less consideration is given to the *Mishnah*’s relationship to the corpus of *Mishnah* and *Tosefta* as a whole. Thus David Halperin, for example, states near the very beginning of his study *Faces of the Chariot*, “Nothing in *M. Hag.* 2:1 has anything to do with the *hagigah* sacrifice,”<sup>2</sup> and Michael D. Swartz has written that our *Mishnah* “does not hold to the main themes of the tractate; it is apparently building on the tractate’s discussion of the scanty scriptural basis for rabbinic law in *mHag* 1:8.”<sup>3</sup>

Estrangement from place buttresses the supposition that the *Mishnah*’s restrictions are meant to hide some esoteric teaching. While this idea surfaces as early as the amoraic period, the notion of secret doctrines in rabbinic Judaism came to full flower in the Middle Ages, and is central to the Maimonidean project of reconfiguring Jewish theology. Maimonides’ rereading of the Bible in the *Guide of the Perplexed* and his integration of medieval philosophy with the rabbinic tradition was greatly assisted by appealing to this *Mishnah* in *Hagigah*, and identifying *מעשה בראשית* (“the Story of

Creation”) with physics and *מרכבה* (“the Chariot”) with metaphysics.<sup>4</sup>

Esotericism was also a feature of kabbalah, at least in the early stages of its development. As Moshe Halbertal has written, for all the differences between Maimonides and the kabbalists, they shared the notion that their systems were explaining a putative hidden layer or layers of sacred scripture.<sup>5</sup> The rabbinic *מעשה בראשית* and *מרכבה* served the kabbalists as a screen upon which to project a new and creative theology, much as those topics had done for Maimonides.

The idea that *m. Hag.* 2:1 points to some early rabbinic secret remains alive in modern academic scholarship. Halperin’s *Faces of the Chariot* claims to discover something “inherently thrilling or appalling” that the rabbis found in Ezekiel’s Chariot-vision,<sup>6</sup> which so frightened them that they sought to suppress it even as they could not avoid hinting at it. According to Halperin, this turns out to be “a troubling ambiguity in the being of the Jewish God”: the golden calf worshipped by the Israelites after the Exodus “*was* divinity, split off and become demonic.”<sup>7</sup> Moreover, chaos remains at the core of creation, “which engulfs God even as he masters it.”<sup>8</sup>

The claim that there is a secret hidden in foundational rabbinic texts has proved useful to generations of interpreters, allowing them to read their theories and concerns into material that, as they believe, chooses not to speak for itself. But this entire approach should be called into question. For how likely is it that if the early rabbis harbored concealed lore, they would first flag it and then try to set limits to its study and promulgation? Surely the best way to keep a secret is not to announce its existence at all.

Rabbinic culture encourages sharing; it censures certain priestly houses for harboring Temple-related skills in a proprietary man-

<sup>1</sup> The *Mishnah* text follows ms. Kaufmann; the translation is based on Herbert Danby, *The Mishnah Translated from the Hebrew with Introduction and Brief Explanatory Notes* (London: Oxford University Press, 1933), 212-13, with modifications.

<sup>2</sup> David J. Halperin, *The Faces of the Chariot: Early Jewish Responses to Ezekiel’s Vision* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1988), 24.

<sup>3</sup> Michael D. Swartz, “Mystical Texts,” in *The Literature of the Sages, Part Two* (ed. S. Safrai, Z. Safrai, J. Schwartz, and P. J. Tomson; Assen: Royal Van Gorcum/Fortress Press, 2006), 397.

<sup>4</sup> See Moses Maimonides, *Guide of the Perplexed* (trans. with an Introduction and Notes by Shlomo Pines; Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1963), Introduction, 6-7; ch. 17, 42-3; ch. 33, 70-1.

<sup>5</sup> Moshe Halbertal, *Concealment and Revelation: Esotericism in Jewish Thought and its Philosophical Implications*, translated by Jackie Feldman (Princeton & Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2007).

<sup>6</sup> Halperin, *Chariot*, 8.

<sup>7</sup> Halperin, *Chariot*, 449.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 450.

ner.<sup>9</sup> In common with the major philosophical schools of the Hellenistic-Roman world, the rabbis held an ideal of open knowledge. As Amos Funkenstein has observed, knowledge was key to salvation, but it was "totally open and accessible knowledge." Only in Hermeticism and Gnosticism was secrecy ostensibly required, but those claims to secrecy were disingenuous, intended to encourage wider circulation.<sup>10</sup>

If this *Mishnah* ever intended a call for secrecy, it was soon disregarded. The *Yerushalmi* claims that our *Mishnah* follows Rabbi Akiva, but Rabbi Ishmael's view is more permissive, thus providing a handy rationale for disregarding the supposed provisions of the *Mishnah*. The *Bavli*, with its lengthy presentation of cosmological material, seems entirely unconcerned with the prohibition. Among modern scholars, David Halperin claims that the mishnaic restrictions had fallen into disuse sometime in the amoraic period.<sup>11</sup> Amoraic complacency about alleged secrecy has also been noted by Alon Goshen-Gottstein<sup>12</sup> and Philip Alexander.<sup>13</sup>

Of course it is always possible to claim that the cosmological speculations presented in our received texts are not the genuinely esoteric materials intended by the *Mishnah*. Israel Abrahams, in his translation of *Hagigah* for the Soncino Talmud, states that "[t]he cosmological details mentioned *infra* in the Gemara ..., such as the ten elements, the ten agencies etc., do not form part of the secret doctrine of *Ma'aseh Bere'shith*, for the *Mishnah* expressly forbids the teaching of the creation mysteries in public."<sup>14</sup> But this kind of cir-

<sup>9</sup> See *m. Yom.* 3:11.

<sup>10</sup> See Amos Funkenstein, "The Disenchantment of Knowledge: The Emergence of the Ideal of Open Knowledge in Ancient Israel and in Classical Greece," *Aleph: Historical Studies in Science and Judaism* 3 (2003), 76-8.

<sup>11</sup> David J. Halperin, *The Merkabah in Rabbinic Literature* (New Haven, CT: American Oriental Society, 1980), 37.

<sup>12</sup> See Alon Goshen-Gottstein, "Mitos Ma 'aseh Bereshit be-Sifrut ha-Amorait," *Eshel Beer-Sheva* 4: *Myth in Judaism*, edited by Havivah Pe-dayah (Jerusalem: Mosad Bialik/Ben-Gurion University of the Negev Press, 1996), 59.

<sup>13</sup> Philip S. Alexander, "Pre-Emptive Exegesis: Genesis Rabba's Reading of the Story of Creation," *Journal of Jewish Studies* 48:2 (1992), 230-45.

<sup>14</sup> *Hagigah Translated into English with Notes, Glossary and Indices* by Israel Abrahams (London: Soncino Press, 1938), 59.

cular reasoning completely rules out the possibility of disconfirmation from contrary evidence: if a doctrine appears in a rabbinic text, then *ipso facto* it could not have been the esoteric material governed by the prohibition. Instead of such closed logic, it seems preferable to reexamine the initial supposition that the restrictions in *m. Hag.* 2:1 somehow relate to esoteric lore. But if not secrecy, what is this *Mishnah* about?

## MIDRASHIC ENCHANTMENTS

Michael Fishbane has observed that "the role of interpretation is... the religious duty to... *reactualize* the ancient word of God for the present hour."<sup>15</sup> The midrashist must do more than (as is often said) reinterpret an ancient text in light of changed circumstances, but make the word come to life. This insight points the way to an examination of a sometimes neglected topic in the study of Midrash, namely its experiential component: consideration of Midrash not as a mode of biblical interpretation or as a category of rabbinic literature, but as an activity. Our thesis is that "doing Midrash," the rabbinic practice of *derashah* (דרשה) is understood to have performative power. This idea is well expressed by Daniel Boyarin in his discussion of a passage from *Song Rab.* describing Ben Azzai surrounded by fire as he was sitting and making midrash: "Ben-Azzai... read in such a way that he reconstituted the original experience of revelation...." Midrashic activity is "re-citing the Written Torah, as in Ben-Azzai's wonderful experience, recreating a new event of revelation."<sup>16</sup>

The close connection between textual interpretation and visionary experience has been noted by Elliot Wolfson, who writes regarding the rabbinic figures who expounded the Chariot that "as a result of their exegetical activity they experienced paranormal states of religious inspiration frequently involving the phenomenon

<sup>15</sup> *The Garments of Torah: Essays in Biblical Hermeneutics*, 38; emphasis in original. See also *idem*, "Midrash and the Nature of Scripture," in *The Exegetical Imagination* (Cambridge, MA, and London: Harvard University Press, 1998), 9-21.

<sup>16</sup> Daniel Boyarin, *Intertextuality and the Reading of Midrash* (Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1990), 109.

of fire.”<sup>17</sup> Wolfson concludes that “the restrictions on study may have been related to a fear that exegesis provides the occasion for ecstatic experiences that may be harmful or even lethal.”<sup>18</sup>

“The phenomenon of fire” naturally evokes associations with the revelation at Sinai, as Wolfson and others have pointed out. But the linkage between exegesis and experience can be extended beyond the Ezekiel-Sinai connection. In his work *Absorbing Perfections*, Moshe Idel analyzes the verb להבין (“to understand”), noting the special meaning this word carries in Qumran materials, as Steven Fraade has pointed out. Bringing Fraade’s work to bear on *Mishnah Hagigah* and related talmudic passages, Idel concludes that “Understanding is more than simply decoding the meaning ...; it involves bringing someone into a direct relation to the entity represented by words in the text, and thus it creates a dangerous situation.” As Idel puts it, “the discussion of topics related to the Chariot induces the presence of the Shekhinah and produces some fiery phenomena fraught with danger.”<sup>19</sup>

Moshe Halbertal, in his recent study of esotericism in Jewish thought, has discussed our *Mishnah* and noted the possibility that “the requirement of esotericism in dealing with the chariot vision is not the fear of error, but reticence toward the exposure inherent in the visual image. Seeing is a kind of intimacy restricted to the elect few who know how to peek with a cautious, fleeting glance.”<sup>20</sup>

To summarize, while many readers of *Hagigah* have assumed that the mishnaic restrictions refer to some secret, another possibility emerges: the *Mishnah* is placing restrictions not on the promulgation of supposed secret doctrines or teachings, but rather on the

activity of *derashah* in the mode of “inspired exegesis” or “pneumatic interpretation.”<sup>21</sup> In the remainder of this essay I will take up this suggestion, develop it systematically by placing it in context, in light of similar texts found elsewhere in *Mishnah* and *Tosefta*. I will show that in the tannaitic period, some modes of *derashah* are not merely inspired and pneumatic, but performative and transformative; that is, they can make things happen in the world.<sup>22</sup> *Derashah* can unleash power, which may be dangerous and which needs to be governed by restrictive rules. By the same token, the existence of this power buttresses rabbinic claims to be the genuine successors of the prophetic tradition and to be the legitimate stewards of the Divine presence within the Jewish people.

ב-אין דורשין ב, the phrase which introduces the restricted scriptural topics, has thus far escaped the attention it deserves. It is not a commonly found expression. For all the rabbinic interest in biblical texts, it turns out that the word דרש or דורשין followed by the preposition ב- (in the sense of ‘in’ or ‘with’), and with a scriptural passage as the object of the preposition, occurs rarely in *Mishnah* and *Tosefta*. In addition to our *m. Hag.* 2:1, and the parallel *t. Hag.* 2:1, there is the closely linked passage in *t. Meg.* 3(4):28. Beyond this, the list is short indeed: database search yields *t. Sot.* 7:9 and *t. Sanh.* 11:5.<sup>23</sup> I shall endeavor to show that in these passages ב-דרש indicates performative, empowered exegesis, where the touchstone of success is self-referential exemplification.

In a philological study, Natan Braverman has written that in Rabbinic Hebrew the preposition ב- after a verb is emphatic, con-

<sup>17</sup> Elliot R. Wolfson, *Through a Speculum that Shines: Vision and Imagination in Medieval Jewish Mysticism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994), 122.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.* Cf. also Elliot R. Wolfson, “Jewish mysticism: a philosophical overview,” in *History of Jewish Philosophy* (ed. Daniel H. Frank and Oliver Leaman; London and New York: Routledge, 2003), 457.

<sup>19</sup> Moshe Idel, *Absorbing Perfections: Kabbalah and Interpretation* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2002), 207.

<sup>20</sup> Moshe Halbertal, *Concealment and Revelation*, translated by Jackie Feldman (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2007), 14. Compare Moshe Halbertal, *Seter ve-Gilui*, in *Yeriot: In memoriam of Yitzhak (Iz'ik) Hess: Essays and Papers in the Jewish Studies Bearing on the Humanities and the Social Sciences* (ed. Elhanan Reiner, Yisrael Ta-Shma, and Gidon Efrat; Jerusalem: Arma Hess, 2001), 15-17.

<sup>21</sup> The terms are used by Elliot R. Wolfson, *Speculum*, 121.

<sup>22</sup> A similar suggestion was made long ago, by Avaraham Biram in the 1904 *Jewish Encyclopedia*, vol. 8:236, s.v. *ma'aseh bereshit*; *ma'aseh merkabah*. Biram wrote: “The belief was apparently current that certain mystical expositions of the Ezekiel chapter, or the discussion of objects connected with it, would cause God to appear.”

<sup>23</sup> Including the *Yerushalmi* and the *Bavli* in the search does not significantly affect the yield, since most of the talmudic occurrences are linked to the aforementioned tannaitic texts. In addition to *Yerushalmi* and *Bavli Hagigah*, ch. two, based on *Mishnah* and *Tosefta Hagigah*, there is *y. Sanh.* 7:11, discussed at length presently; and *b. Hag.* 3a, based on *Tosefta Sotah*, which is discussed herein. I hope to discuss the formulation as found in *Midrash Halakhah*, especially *Sifrei Zuta*, on another occasion.

veying durative or iterative action.<sup>24</sup> Applying this to our case, I will argue that the intensivity of the דרש- formulation is meant to suggest a highly charged engagement with the verse, which may release and display not only the verse's meaning, but its power.

### PILGRIMAGE BY SAGES TO SAGES

T. *Sot.* 7:9 (the full text of which can be found in Appendix 1) presents a sermon given at Yavneh by a prominent sage during the Sukkot pilgrimage festival. The passage is constructed of a frame story and three homiletic units. Shlomo Naeh has devoted a recent study to what this passage reveals about the rabbinic "craft of memory,"<sup>25</sup> and in another essay he explores the question of pluralism in rabbinic Judaism.<sup>26</sup> Steven D. Fraade examines *t. Sot.* 7:9 in an extensive survey of rabbinic polysemy and pluralism.<sup>27</sup> Fraade's essay engages with Naeh's work as well as that of Daniel Boyarin on a related talmudic passage in *b. Hag.* 3a-b. However interesting and important these discussions of polysemy and pluralism are, my focus here is on another point: the דרש- formulation in the frame story.

We are told in the frame story that Rabbi Yohanan b. Beroqah and Rabbi Eleazar Hisma came from Yavneh to Lydda; while on their way, they visited Rabbi Joshua in Peki'in. He asked them about the sermon they heard in Yavneh, delivered by R. Eleazar b.

<sup>24</sup> Natan Braverman, "Akhal be and the Like in Tannaitic Hebrew," in *Sha'arei Lashon: Studies in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Jewish Languages Presented to Moshe Bar-Asher* (ed. A. Maman, S. E. Fassberg, and Y. Breuer; Jerusalem: Bialik Institute, 2007), Vol. II: Rabbinic Hebrew and Aramaic, 47-61. Professor Moshe Bar-Asher himself, in a personal communication, suggested that דרש- conveys intense and deep engagement with the verse. I offer my sincere thanks to him for graciously sharing his insights with me on this and many other points.

<sup>25</sup> Shlomo Naeh, "Omanut ha-Zikaron: Mivnim shel Zikaron ve-tavniyot shel Tekst be-Sifrut Hazal," in *Mehqerei Talmud: Talmudic Studies Dedicated to the Memory of Professor Ephraim E. Urbach* 3:2 (ed. Yaakov Sussmann and David Rosenthal; Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 2005), 543-89.

<sup>26</sup> Shlomo Naeh, "'Aseh Libkha Hadrei Hadarim: 'Yun Nosaf be-Divrei Hazal 'al ha-Mahaloket," in *Renewing Jewish Commitment: The Work and Thought of David Hartman*, vol. 2 (ed. Avi Sagi and Zvi Zohar; Tel-Aviv: Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 2001), 851-75.

<sup>27</sup> Steven D. Fraade, "Rabbinic Polysemy and Pluralism Revisited: Between Praxis and Thematization," *AJS Review* 31:1 (2007), 1-40.

Azariah. They tell him that the sermon was based on Deut 31:9-13, the covenant ceremony held every seven years in the sabbatical year on Sukkot.<sup>28</sup> In Rabbinic texts this event is called *Haqhel* ("Gatherer"), after the first word in Deut 31:12. The full verse reads: הקהל את העם האנשים והנשים והטף וגדך אשר בשעריך למען ישמעו ולמען ילמדו ויראו את ה' אלקיכם ושמרו לעשות את כל דברי התורה הזאת (*Gather the people—men, women, children, and the strangers in your communities—that they may hear and so learn to revere the Lord your God and to observe faithfully every word of this teaching*). Rabbinic descriptions assign the reading to the king.

The first of the three homiletic units addresses *Haqhel* itself. Rabbi Joshua queries Rabbi Yohanan ben Beroqah and Rabbi Eleazar Hisma as to the scriptural reading that served as the basis of the day's homily. They respond by quoting Deut. 31:12. He continues, מה דרש בה, "What exegesis did he perform in/with the verse?" They respond, כך דרש בה, "Here is the exegesis he performed": אם אנשים באו ללמוד נשים באו לשמוע טפילין למה הן באין כדי ליתן שכר למביאיהן ("If the men came to learn, and the women came to listen, why did the little children come? To provide a reward to the people who brought them").<sup>29</sup>

The second part of the homily focuses on Deut 26:17-18, a passage that speaks to the personal, intimate, reciprocal relationship between God and Israel. The homily's third section cites Eccl 12:11, דברי חכמים כדרבנות וכמשמרות נטועים בעלי אספות נתנו מרעה אחד, (*The words of the wise are like goads, and like nails firmly planted are the collected sayings; they were given by one shepherd*). This section, which discusses the proliferation of rabbinic opinions, comes under intense scrutiny by Fraade and Naeh. For our purposes it is useful to note that Ecclesiastes is of course *Qobeleth*—the "gatherer." The book's

<sup>28</sup> Bernard M. Levinson in *The Jewish Study Bible* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 439.

<sup>29</sup> I cite from *The Tosefta* (ed. Saul Lieberman; New York: The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 5733-1973), The Order of Nashim: Sotah, 193-4, according to Codex Vienna. Codex Erfurt (presented here by Lieberman in parallel columns) has a shorter version of this exchange. In the Erfurt manuscript, the key words of interest here read ובמה דרש, "In/with what did he perform exegesis?" followed by Deut 31:12. Since the referent of the 'what' pronoun is the verse, the Erfurt formulation is not materially different: the דרש- formulation is still present, in the order preposition-pronoun-verb.

title is closely related to *Haqhel*—"gather." Thus the third *derashah* links back to the homily's beginning: the sage gathers together the opinions and views of Torah, and in the process gathers the people together who come to hear his exposition. The assembly of Jews—men, women and children—who gather for authoritative Torah teaching at Yavneh both confirms the ongoing covenantal relationship between Israel and Israel's God (section two of the homily) and is a re-enactment of the *Haqhel* ceremony as performed when the Temple stood in Jerusalem (section one of the homily). In turn, *Haqhel* itself is a commemoration and re-enactment of the Sinai event as described in Deuteronomy.

The *derashah* in its entirety has a self-referential quality: Rabbi Eleazar ben Azariah has successfully instantiated the theme of *Haqhel* by attracting disciples for a sermon on *Haqhel*. Hence Rabbi Joshua at the end of the narrative says, *אין דור יתום שר' לעזר שריו* ("It is not an orphaned generation in whose midst Rabbi Eleazar [ben Azariah] dwells").<sup>30</sup> That is, Rabbi Eleazar ben Azariah has fulfilled his role of bringing progeny in the form of disciples together to hear his *derashah* on *Haqhel*. He was engaging in *derashah*, exegesis of *Haqhel*, while performing *Haqhel*. This explains the analogy of teacher:father::disciple:child. If, despite loss of the Temple, "the generation is not an orphaned one," then the teacher—Rabbi Eleazar ben Azariah—is the generation's true parent who has brought his children to Yavneh. He has gathered people together with his *derashah*. The mode of fulfilling *Haqhel* in the days of Rabbi Eleazar ben Azariah depended on the skill of the *darshan* himself. Thus, he is a true exemplar of the principle that Temple pilgrimage—with its aspect of presentation to the Divine—is still operative. Shlomo Naeh has shown that the *Haqhel* custom was still practiced after the destruction of the Temple, during the Tannaitic period.<sup>31</sup>

The sage is now in the role of king, and the command of *Haqhel* is now understood to mean: You, the sage, gather the people together with the effective power of your *derashah*. Not only is the *derashah* self-referential, it is self-exemplifying, self-authenticating.

<sup>30</sup> Lieberman, 195.

<sup>31</sup> Shlomo Naeh, "The Torah Reading Cycle in Early Palestine: A Re-Examination," *Tarbiz* 67,2 (1998), 167-87.

Rabbi Eleazar ben Azariah's homily illustrates the iterative, durative, intensive quality of *derashah*, insofar as his presentation has distinct sections, with the third linking back to the beginning. *Derashah* is a persistent inquiry into the sacred text. The frame story's concluding remark, *אמ' להם אין דור יתום שר' לעזר שריו בתוכו* ("He [Rabbi Joshua] said to them [Rabbi Yohanan ben Beroqa and Rabbi Eleazar Hisma], 'It is not an orphaned generation in whose midst Rabbi Eleazar [ben Azariah] dwells.'") is a capstone encomium that emphasizes genealogy and lineage—a central concern for the nascent rabbinic movement as a whole, where disciples are claimed as children. Furthermore, this sheds light on the original question and answer of Rabbi Eleazar ben Azariah: "Why did the little children come? To provide a reward to the people who brought them"—not, as we might expect, "to their parents." Note that it was Rabbi Eleazar ben Azariah himself who was responsible for Rabbi Yohanan ben Beroqa and Rabbi Eleazar Hisma's coming; so the *darshan* is obliquely referring to himself, and the *derashah* exemplifies and confirms itself. The generation is not orphaned because it enjoys a parent/sage in the person of Rabbi Eleazar ben Azariah.

Let us now turn to our next example of a text with the *derashah* formula, from tractate Sanhedrin.

### SAGES AND SORCERERS

A key source for rabbinic views of magic is *m. Sanh.* 7:19. The *Mishnah* reads:

המכשף העושה מעשה לא האוחז את העיניים ר' עקיבה או' משם ר'  
יהושע שנים לוקטים קישואים אחד לוקט פטור ואחד מלקט חייב  
העושה מעשה חייב האוחז את העיניים פטור

The sorcerer—he who does the deed, but not he who creates an illusion [lit., who holds the eyes]. Rabbi Akiva says in the name of Rabbi Joshua: Two are gathering cucumbers—one gatherer is exempt, but the other gatherer is culpable. He who does the deed is culpable, but he who creates an illusion is exempt.

As Philip S. Alexander has recently pointed out,

The *Mishnah* ... envisages a situation in which a magician has produced a cucumber apparently from nothing: if he has ac-

tually *created* the cucumber, then he is guilty of a capital offense; if he has only *appeared* to create it, but by some sleight of hand which deceived the eyes of the observer produced it from where it had been secreted, then he is not guilty.<sup>32</sup>

Yet it emerges that there can be “real” magic that is not forbidden—namely, if performed by a Rabbi! In the famous narrative of the death of Rabbi Eliezer, the ostracized sage recounts how he demonstrated for Rabbi Akiva how to fill a field with cucumbers, and then how to gather them. Invoking the *Mishnah*’s prohibition, “[i]f he actually does the deed, he is culpable,” the *Bavli* asks how Rabbi Eliezer performed real magic. The answer, “you may not learn in order to *practice*, but you may learn in order to *understand*,” does not convince Alexander. He suggests that Rabbinic magic is permissible because it “reinforces the divine order”; “the Rabbi-magician has a positive duty to practice Torah-magic ... because ... it increases God’s power in the world.”<sup>33</sup> Alexander explains that “[a] Rabbi ... could create a real cucumber, because he was, with God’s permission, replicating God’s creative act.”<sup>34</sup>

Rabbinic magic is a major theme in the parallel *sugya* in *y. Sanh.*, mentioned by Alexander and discussed more extensively by Rivka Ulmer.<sup>35</sup> Ulmer sees the *Yerushalmi* narrative, which describes astonishing magical feats performed by Rabbis, as illustrating the “competition between rabbis and heretic,” and concludes that magic may be permitted when “rabbis want to teach others a lesson,” that is, when rabbis wish to vanquish their opponents. This is surely correct, but still leaves open the question of how Rabbis engage in activity that for others is a grievous sin.

<sup>32</sup>Philip S. Alexander, “The Talmudic Concept of Conjuring (‘Ahizat ‘Einayim) and the Problem of the Definition of Magic (Kishuf),” in *Creation and Re-Creation in Jewish Thought: Festschrift in Honor of Joseph Dan on the Occasion of his Seventieth Birthday* (ed. Rachel Elior and Peter Schäfer; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), 7-26; quote on pp. 13-4.

<sup>33</sup>Alexander, 23.

<sup>34</sup>Alexander, 25.

<sup>35</sup>Rivka Ulmer, “The Depiction of Magic in Rabbinic Texts: The Rabbinic and the Greek Concept of Magic,” *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 27 (1996), 289-303.

Recently the *Yerushalmi sugya* has been analyzed by Joshua Levinson.<sup>36</sup> As Levinson sees it, in confrontation narratives the rabbis vanquish adversaries because their magic is superior: it really works. Levinson writes: “Whereas the *Mishnah* has set up an opposition between true and imaginary, between prohibited and permitted, for the *Yerushalmi* not only is magic shared by both sides, but the sages deploy genuine magic to a greater degree than their opponents.” Levinson asserts that “[b]oth Rabbis and *minim* are magicians, and there is no distinction between them on the practical plane—both employ the same means, and the narrator describes them in the same style. At the end of the day the rabbis prevail because they are better magicians.”<sup>37</sup>

This approach is quite implausible. While the *Yerushalmi* indeed celebrates the superiority of rabbinic magic, it cannot be entertained that the talmudic discussion would utterly disregard its own centerpiece—the *Mishnah*, itself grounded in a severe scriptural prohibition—without addressing the obvious problem. Levinson’s conclusion, that “the distance between sage and sorcerer [בין חכם לחובר] shrinks; ... Rabbi Joshua is very much like the *min*-magician,”<sup>38</sup> must face the ineluctable question: How can rabbis perform magic—“real” magic, not sleight-of-hand—when magic is a capital sin?

In a landmark essay on law and narrative, Robert Cover writes that “[n]o set of legal institutions or prescriptions exists apart from the narratives that locate it and give it meaning.”<sup>39</sup> It follows that the full significance of stories on rabbinic magic can only be grasped by attending to their legal frame, not by excluding it. To that end, I shall present the entire *Yerushalmi sugya* in outline form.

The following outline of the *Yerushalmi* (the full text of which can be found in Appendix 2) is keyed to the Sussmann edition, based on the Leiden manuscript.

<sup>36</sup>Joshua Levinson, “Enchanting Rabbis: Contest Narratives between Rabbis and Magicians in Rabbinic Literature of Late Antiquity,” *Tarbiz* 75, 3-4 (2006), 295-328.

<sup>37</sup>Levinson, 302.

<sup>38</sup>Levinson, 303.

<sup>39</sup>Robert M. Cover, “*Nomos* and Narrative,” *Harvard Law Review* 97:4 (1983), 4-68; quotation on p. 4.

**A. Mishnah 7:11/19:**

המכשף העושה מעשה כו

"The sorcerer—he who does a deed [is liable ...]." (Sussmann [=S] 1306:5)

**B. Quotation of Exod 22:17, and comment:**

מכשפה לא תחיה אחד האיש ואחד האשה אלא שלמדתך התורה  
דרך ארץ מפני שרוב הנשים כשפניות

*You shall not permit a sorceress to live:* Men as well as women are included in the prohibition, although the Torah addresses the most common circumstance, since most women are inclined to sorcery. (S 1306:5-7)

**C. Halakhic dispute between Rabbi Eliezer and other sages on mode of execution for sorcery.**

At issue is the best scriptural analogy for the phrase לא תחיה ("do not permit to live") in Exod 22:17. Rabbi Akiva supports the view of sages, who argue for death by sword, on the basis of the appearance of the identical phrase, לא תחיה, in Deut 20:16. (S 1306: 7-16)

**D. A story:**

Rabbi Eleazar, Rabbi Joshua, and Rabbi Akiva went into the baths of Tiberias, where a *min* saw them. The *min* puts a hex on them (אמר מה דמר, "he said what he said"), and the arched chamber in the bath held them fast. Rabbi Eleazar asks Rabbi Joshua to respond in kind; Rabbi Joshua bewitches the *min*, who is seized by the doorway and buffeted by people entering and leaving the bath. The two sides being stuck, both agree to release each other simultaneously. Once they get outside, Rabbi Joshua challenges the *min*: "Is that all you know?" The *min* invites the rabbis down to the sea (of Galilee), which the *min* splits, pointing out that he has equaled the feat of Moses. They remind him that Moses walked through the sea. Rising to the bait, he walks into the water. Rabbi Joshua instructs the ruler of the sea, who swallows him up. (S 1306:16-28)

**E. Another story:**

Rabbi Eliezer, Rabbi Joshua, and Rabban Gamaliel go to Rome. They locate Jews by noticing children who play with piles and say,

"Children of the land of Israel make this sort of thing and say, 'This is tithe.'" (S 1306:28-31). Receiving hospitality, they are asked by their host's elderly father to pray for his son, who has no children. Rabbi Eliezer calls on Rabbi Joshua to respond with magical arts. Rabbi Joshua conjures up the witch who has placed a spell on the host, and forces her to release the spell. As a result, the host has a child, who grows up to be the prominent sage, Rabbi Judah ben Betherah. (S 1306:31-47)

**F. A statement of Rabbi Joshua ben Hananiah:**

יכל אנא נסיב קריין ואבטיחין ועביד לון איילין טבין והידנן עבידן  
איילין וטבין, "I can take cucumbers and pumpkins and turn them into rams and hosts of rams, and they will produce still more." (S 1306:47-49)

G. Reports of *minim* appearing to turn objects into a calf, followed by suggestions that the effects were mere illusion. (S 1306:49-1307:8)

**H. A statement of Rabbi Joshua [cf. *t. Sanh.* 11:5]:**

שלש מאות פרשיות היה רבי ליעזר דורש בפרשת מכשפה ומכולם  
לא שמעתי אלא שני דברים שנים לוקטין קישואין אחד לוקח פטור  
ואחד לוקט חייב העושה מעשה חייב והאוחז את העינים פטור אמר  
רבי דרוסא תשע מאות פרשיות היו שלש מאות לחיוב ושלש מאות  
לפטור ושלש מאות לחיוב שהוא פטור

Three hundred topics did Rabbi Eliezer expound [דרש ב] in the passage, You shall not permit a sorceress to live (Exod 22:17). And of all of them I only heard two things: "Two may gather cucumbers. One gatherer may be exempt, and one gatherer may be liable. He who does a deed is liable, but he who merely creates an illusion is exempt." (S 1307:8-12)

I. A late amoraic note, making the number 900 rather than 300. (S 1307:12-14)

Our *sugya* begins and ends with Exod 22:17, *You shall not permit a sorceress to live*, thus framing the basic theme. We are told at (B) that men as well as women are covered by this death penalty for sorcery; and indeed, the story (D) illustrates this, for Rabbi Joshua



causes the death of the (male) *min* by drowning. In the second story, Rabbi Joshua bests the (female) sorceress; while we are not told that he causes her death, he brings forth the new life that she had prevented. The stories thus illustrate the halakhic principle of (B). To be sure, the offenders are not executed in a court-ordered proceeding, but we are assured that the long arm of Divine law is still operative, as asserted in *t. Sanh.* 8:3 (Zuckerman, p. 427:19-24).

In G, toward the end of the *sigya*, the redactor suggests that *minim* have no genuine magical powers but merely create effects by illusion. Rabbis, by contrast, clearly have magical power. Rabbi Joshua entraps a *min* and leads him to his death; and he subdues a sorceress, releasing the fertility of a Jewish man in Rome and resulting in the birth of Rabbi Judah ben Betheria. Finally, Rabbi Joshua avers that he can take cucumbers and pumpkins and turn them into rams and hosts of rams, and that they will produce still more. Being fertile, the rams are quite real! So pagan magic is fraudulent and sterile, but Rabbinic magic is real and fertile. It is only the Rabbis who can truly do things with words. They mediate life and fertility; paganism and *minut* yield sterility and death.

What is the source of Rabbi Joshua's knowledge of magic? Whatever he knows, he has learned from Rabbi Eliezer. This is made clear all through the *sigya*, where Rabbi Eliezer turns things over to Rabbi Joshua, as if to say, "This is something that my disciple can handle." Rabbi Joshua appears as Rabbi Eliezer's understudy, his apprentice.

But where do Rabbi Eliezer's knowledge and abilities come from? The answer is made clear in (H), which returns to the verse *You shall not permit a sorceress to live* (Exod 22:17), first introduced at (B), informing us that Rabbi Eliezer has actively engaged the passage with the *דרש ב* formula. Rabbi Eliezer's power comes from, and is legitimated by, the performative *derashah* in the scriptural realm centering on sorcery. He is interested in halakhah, not magic. But it is precisely this engagement that releases the power of the text—in this case, the power of magic. By the agency of the verse, the Rabbi and his disciple Rabbi Joshua have power and the warrant to exercise it as transformative interpreters of Torah.

The placement of (H) at the end of the *sigya* not only completes the bookend structure that was opened at (B), but illuminates the entire intervening discussion. What we have is not rabbinic complacency about illicit activity, but rabbinic mastery over it.

Rabbis can access and channel magic because they have touched its scriptural epicenter and grasped its meaning. Exegesis is powerful. *Derashah* is performative; in fact, it is transformative.

I have already noted that (H) is very close to *t. Sanh.* 11:5, which reads:

אמ' ר' עקיבא שלש מאות הלכות היה ר' אליעזר דורש במכשפה לא תחיה ולא למדתי הימנו אלא שני דברים שנים מלקטין קישואין אחד לוקט חייב ואחד לוקט פטור העושה מעשה חייב והאוחז את העינים פטור

Said Rabbi Akiva, "Three hundred laws did Rabbi Eliezer expound [היה ... דורש ב] concerning the verse, *You shall not permit a sorceress to live* (Exod 22:17), and I learned from him only two things: Two may gather cucumbers, and one gatherer is liable, and the other gatherer is exempt [from capital punishment]. [The explanation is:] He who does a deed is liable, but he who merely creates an illusion is exempt. (*t. Sanhedrin* 11:5; Zuckerman, 431; cf. *mSanhedrin* 7:11[19])

This *Tosefta* is quite similar to the tannaitic text we have as (H) in *Yerushalmi*;<sup>40</sup> the main difference is that in *Yerushalmi* the statement is attributed to Rabbi Joshua, and in *Tosefta* to Rabbi Akiva.

<sup>40</sup> The key words *דרש במכשפה לא תחיה* appear in the Erfurt ms. of *Tosefta*, reflected in Zuckerman's edition. Zuckerman's apparatus does not note any variants, but according to Bar-Ilan University, *Primary Textual Witnesses to Tannaitic Literature*, ms. Vienna reads *היה ר' אליעזר שונה במכשפה לא תחיה*, Thus ms. Vienna has *שונה* like the *Bavli*, while ms. Erfurt reads *דורש* like the *Yerushalmi*. This supports the observation of Adiel Schremer in his article "The Text-Tradition of the Tosefta: A Preliminary Study in the Footsteps of Saul Lieberman," in *Jewish Studies: An Internet Journal* 1 (2002), 11-43, that more often than not, variant readings in ms. Erfurt resemble those in the *Yerushalmi* rather than the *Bavli*. Schremer's broader point is to reaffirm Saul Lieberman's view that the *Tosefta* was transmitted in two different branches, reflected in ms. Erfurt and ms. Vienna. The Erfurt manuscript embodies an ancient, genuine textual tradition, and its variant readings should not be assumed to be the result of emendations influenced by the *Bavli*, as some scholars have argued. Schremer's examples (he examines over 120) follow the range of Lieberman's *Tosefta* and *Tosefta Ki-fshuta* and do not include *Sanhedrin*. The current instance from *Sanhedrin*, therefore, confirms and extends his conclusion that "in most cases where these two manuscripts preserve different readings preserved in the Babylonian Talmud on the one hand and the

Comparison must also be made to *m. Sanh.* 7:19 (repeated here for convenience):

המכשף העושה מעשה לא האוחז את העיניים ר' עקיבה או' משם ר'  
יהושע שנים לוקטים קישואים אחד לוקט פטור ואחד מלקט חייב  
העושה מעשה חייב האוחז את העיניים פטור

The sorcerer—he who does the deed, but not he who creates an illusion [lit., who holds the eyes]. Rabbi Akiva says in the name of Rabbi Joshua: Two are gathering cucumbers—one gatherer is exempt, but the other gatherer is culpable. He who does the deed is culpable, but he who creates an illusion is exempt.

Finally, there is the *baraita* in *b. Sanh.* 68a:

פעם אחת אני והוא מהלכין היינו בדרך אמר לי רבי למדני בנטיעת  
קשואין אמרתי דבר אחד נתמלאה כל השדה קשואין אמר לי רבי  
למדתי נטיעתן למדני עקירתן אמרתי דבר אחד נתקבצו כולן למקום  
אחד

Once I [Rabbi Eliezer] and he [Rabbi Akiva] were walking on a road, when he said to me, “My master, teach me about the planting of cucumbers.” I made one statement, and the whole field was filled with cucumbers. Then he said, “Master, you have taught me how to plant them, now teach me how to pluck them.” I said one word, and all the cucumbers gathered in one place.

Addressing the variation in tannaitic tradents, Jacob Neusner states that these “traditions are in a confused state.”<sup>41</sup> The confusion is not as great as it appears. Rabbi Eliezer/Rabbi Joshua may be explained in part by the *Yerushalmi*’s stories, which suggest that

Palestinian Talmud on the other, the reading of the Erfurt MS resembles that of the Palestinian Talmud.” See also Haya Nathan, *The Linguistic Tradition of Codex Erfurt of the Tosefta*, unpublished doctoral dissertation, The Hebrew University, Jerusalem, 1984. Nathan’s dissertation, which notes that ms. Erfurt is approximately two hundred years older than ms. Vienna (p. 22), makes a penetrating and sustained argument for the excellence and the antiquity of the readings in ms. Erfurt. My thanks to Professor Moshe Bar-Asher for bringing this dissertation to my attention.

<sup>41</sup> Jacob Neusner, *Eliezer ben Hyrcanus: The Tradition and the Man* (Leiden: Brill, 1973), 1:399.

Rabbi Eliezer is the master of rabbinic magic, but that he turns to Rabbi Joshua as a kind of mentoring or deputizing—that is, deliberately assigning the work to someone else to show that even a deputized rabbi can do what is needed.

Rabbi Eliezer delegates Rabbi Joshua to show the viability of the Rabbinic tradition—he can teach, and he can give his power to another rabbi, thus showing that the power is real. Rabbi Akiva in *Tosefta* and in the *Bavli baraita* cites Rabbi Eliezer for the genuine magic/illusion distinction, while in *Mishnah* he cites Rabbi Joshua. The *Bavli* addresses this and its resolution is: “He learned it from Rabbi Eliezer but did not grasp it; then he learned it from Rabbi Joshua, who made it clear to him.” While this is of course a harmonization, in this instance it quite reasonably diminishes the distance between the literary sources; since Rabbi Joshua was Rabbi Eliezer’s disciple in magical matters, it is reasonable to suppose that while Rabbi Eliezer demonstrated his power to Rabbi Akiva, the latter’s proximate source for the technique was Rabbi Joshua, the disciple of Rabbi Eliezer.

Of greater significance than the question of whether Rabbi Akiva learned from Rabbi Joshua or Rabbi Eliezer is the verse that serves as the starting point for the legal and narrative discussion. The *Mishnah* addresses a legal category: “a sorcerer” (מכשף), likely drawn from Deut 18:10. The difference from Exod 22:17 is not only one of gender—מכשף/מכשפה, sorcerer/sorceress, but the fact that Exodus explicitly mandates the death penalty—a point that, as we have already seen, looms large in the *Yerushalmi*. Where Deuteronomy prohibits a certain type of activity, Exodus enjoins that the sorceress not be allowed to live. While the *Mishnah* presents a legal category for discussion, the *Tosefta* and the *Yerushalmi* engage a verse, activating and deploying its power. The ability to defeat witches or sorcerers and even to bring about their death emerges from Exod 22:17. And only *Tosefta* and *Yerushalmi* have the בדרש formula.

The *baraita* in *b. Sanh.* 68a is a reworking of earlier sources placed in the construction of the *Bavli* narrative on the death of Rabbi Eliezer.<sup>42</sup> While the shapers of this *sugya* likely had the *Yeru-*

<sup>42</sup> Jeffrey L. Rubenstein calls these redactional compositions “pseudo-baraitot.” See his *Talmudic Stories: Narrative Art, Composition, and Culture* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), 261.

*shalmi* in front of them, they do not engage the exegetical trope which was central to the *Tosefta* and *Yerushalmi*; thus, they have Rabbi Eliezer “teaching” about magic. This follows the lead of the *Mishnah*, which presents the “real magic”/ “illusion” distinction as a legal principle without any exegetical anchoring. The *דרש ב* inflection is lost. While Exod 22:17 is mentioned at the beginning of the *Bavli sugya*, it is not the keynote and does not make a reprise appearance as in *Yerushalmi*’s coda (H). Thus the crucial difference between the various sources is not who learned about magic from whom, but whether what transpired was the teaching of legal rules on the one hand, or rather exegetical magic—empowering interpretation of scripture.

In this complex skein of interrelated texts, the *Tosefta* and *Yerushalmi* use the *דרש ב* formula, while the *Mishnah* and *Bavli* do not. Without the *דרש ב* formula, what transpires is the demonstration of magic for didactic purposes, or something even more quotidian: instruction in points of law.

With the *דרש ב* formula, what happens is the tapping and unleashing of a scriptural mother lode.

### BEHOLD THE GLORY: EXEGESIS AND THEOPHANY

I now return to *m. Hag.* 2:1, with its restrictions phrased in the form *Ein dorshin be-...* Rather than secrecy, the concern of the *Mishnah* is to regulate the power of exegesis, which, in the *Mishnah*’s view, can activate and make manifest the phenomenon immanent

More generally, see Rubenstein’s excellent summary of the *Bavli*’s narrative art, 243-67. While the story of Rabbi Eliezer’s death is mentioned by Rubenstein only in passing, 255, it is the central focus of a study by Alon Goshen Gottstein, “*Hakham Boded al Eres Davvai: Sippur Mitat Rabbi Eliezer—Nituah idiologi*,” in *Studies in Talmudic and Midrashic Literature in Memory of Tzvi Lifshitz* (ed. M. Bar-Asher, A. Edrei, J. Levinson and B. Lifshitz; Jerusalem: Bialik Institute, 2005), 79-112. Goshen Gottstein discusses the narrative structure and the way the composition relates to earlier sources such as *Tosefta Sanhedrin* (the reference in n. 28 should be corrected to *t. Sanh.* 11:5), but he does not examine the role of *derashah*. Daniel Boyarin, *Dying for God: Martyrdom and the Making of Christianity and Judaism* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999), 22-41, discusses the *Bavli* narrative from the perspective of Rabbi Eliezer’s relationship to Christianity, but does not compare the *Bavli sugya* to either *Tosefta Sanhedrin* or *Yerushalmi Sanhedrin*.

in the underlying biblical texts. The concern is not for some heretical belief, but the danger of encountering Divine presence and creative power.

Like much of *Mishnah*, Tractate *Hagigah* discusses sacrifices. But unlike some tractates, sin and expiation are not primary concerns for *Hagigah*. Offerings of expiation are barely mentioned; rather, the main focus is celebration, thanksgiving, and the cultivation of closeness with God, a God with whom one rejoices and in whose Presence one feels welcomed, blessed, and secure. Concern for purity looms large because impurity impedes the pilgrim’s access to the Temple. The suggestion of mystical experiences should not surprise us, since, as Victor and Edith Turner have put it, “Pilgrimage may be thought of as extroverted mysticism, just as mysticism is introverted pilgrimage.”<sup>43</sup> This is especially so in early Rabbinic Judaism, where sages were not only nurturing institutions that in some measure compensated for the loss of the Temple, but in their very persons were taking on certain Temple-like roles.

Much of *Seder Mo’ed* is concerned with the details of the sacrifices that define the rites of specific Holy Days: *Yoma* and *Pesahim*, for example. By contrast, *Hagigah* addresses what is common to all pilgrimage festivals: encounter with the Divine in the Jerusalem Temple, and barriers to that encounter, primarily relating to ritual impurity. In this light, *Hagigah* is indeed a congenial location to pause and reflect on the rabbinic project as a whole, and the ways by which its characteristic activity—study of sacred texts—might be a worthy continuation of the Temple function of seeing and being seen by God. Far from being an aggregation of distinct, even disparate materials,<sup>44</sup> the tractate is a unified composition on pilgrimage, its preconditions of purity rules, its goal—proximity to the Divine, perhaps leading to a Divine vision, and the ongoing access to Divinity still possible in the post-Temple period by means of sages’ exegetical power.

<sup>43</sup> Victor Turner and Edith Turner, *Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture: Anthropological Perspectives* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), 33, quoted by David Frankfurter in *Pilgrimage and Holy Space in Late Antique Egypt* (ed. David Frankfurter; Leiden & Boston: Brill, 1998), 5.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. J. N. Epstein, *Introduction to Tannaitic Literature* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press of the Hebrew University, 1957), 46-52.

Indeed, the Erfurt manuscript of *Tosefta* calls this tractate, not *Hagigah*, but *Re'iyah* (ראייה)—"Appearance."<sup>45</sup> This name points to Deut 16:16, a summary statement of the pilgrimage obligation: *Three times a year—on the Feast of Unleavened Bread, on the Feast of Weeks, and on the Feast of Booths—all your males shall appear before the Lord your God in the place that He will choose. They shall not appear before the Lord empty-handed.* As Jeffrey Tigay explains in his commentary to Deuteronomy, it is widely assumed that the consonantal text ראה, vocalized as *yera'eh* ("shall be seen") and translated here as "shall appear before the Lord],” was originally vocalized *yir'eh* ("shall see"), so that the original meaning here was "shall see [the face of the Lord]."<sup>46</sup> Indeed, *Sif. Deut.* 143 on Deut 16:16 asserts that כדרך שבא לראות כן בא לראות "just as he comes to see, so he comes to be seen." Aharon Shemesh has argued that this early midrash points to pilgrimage as a Divine-human encounter: "The pilgrim stands before God, sees God's face, and is seen by God."<sup>47</sup> Similarly, Israel Ta-Shma writes that pilgrimage to the Jerusalem Temple was understood as a mutual visual encounter with the God of Israel; God is envisioned in the mirror of the human pilgrim who is His image. Since God is whole, intact, this wholeness must be reflected in the physical body of the pilgrim.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>45</sup> The fact that ms. Erfurt provides a different name for this tractate has not received the attention it deserves. Lieberman makes no mention of it in the body of his textual presentation of the *Tosefta* or in his critical apparatus. It does appear in the listing of tractates on the unnumbered Hebrew contents page at beginning of the volume. See Saul Lieberman, *The Tosefta: According to Codex Vienna, with Variants from Codices Erfurt, London, Genizah Mss. And Editio Princeps* (Venice 1521) (New York: The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 5722-1962), *The Order of Mo'ed*. Zuckerman does indeed note that ms. Erfurt gives the tractate's name as *Re'iyah*. See M. S. Zuckerman, *Tosefta. Based on the Erfurt and Vienna Codices* (Jerusalem: Wahrman Books, 1963), 231; also xvi.

<sup>46</sup> Jeffrey H. Tigay, *The JPS Torah Commentary* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 5756/1996), 5:159.

<sup>47</sup> "The Holy Angels are in their Council: The Exclusion of Deformed Persons from Holy Places in Qumranic and Rabbinic Literature," *Dead Sea Discoveries* 4.2 (July 1997), 205.

<sup>48</sup> Israel Ta-Shma, "One Who is Blind in One Eye is not Obligated to Bring the Festival Burnt Offerings of Appearance—an Unclear Tannaitic Homily and its Explanation," in *Bar-Ilan: Annual of Bar-Ilan University Stu-*

Proximity with God—perhaps culminating in a visual experience—was the goal of pilgrimage. That aspiration is the generative core of this tractate, implied in the alternate name *Re'iyah*. And since the tractate, being a product of the tannaitic period, also reflects the transition from Temple- to sage-centered religion, it is to be expected that a key concern will be sages' ability to bring about theophanic events in their own right, along with the requisite safeguards needed to appropriately channel this power.

One reason the second chapter of *Hagigah* has often been read as alluding to some secret doctrine is the admonition that "Whoever gazes at (כל המסתכל ב) four things, it would be merciful for him if he had not come into the world: What is above, what is below, what is before, and what is after." The Hebrew מסתכל has been taken to refer to "intellectual contemplation,"<sup>49</sup> presumably of some esoteric teaching. But Alon Goshen-Gottstein has shown that the words מה למעלה ומה למטה מה בפנים ומה לאחור may refer to the parts of the divine bodily form; they are anthropomorphic descriptions of God, following Ezek 1:27 and Exod 33:23.<sup>50</sup> Accepting this suggestion means that the phrase "what is above, what is below..." need not be a warning against the contemplation of some philosophical or theological doctrine—presumably the mysterious "secret"—but an admonition against gazing at God, or more precisely at God's Glory (כבוד)—that is, His visible Presence.

Time and again, the Bible tells us that to see God is to court death, at least in part because God's overwhelming beauty is so dangerous to the viewer. Elaine Scarry reminds us that "[i]n accounts of beauty from earlier centuries, it is precisely the perceiver who is imperiled, overpowered, by crossing paths with someone

*dies in Judaica and the Humanities* 30-3. In *Memory of Prof. Meyer Simcha Feldblum* (Ramat-Gan: Bar-Ilan University Press, 2006), 591-96.

<sup>49</sup> So David J. Halperin, *The Merkavah in Rabbinic Literature* (New Haven: American Oriental Society, 1980), 12-3, n. 10.

<sup>50</sup> Alon Goshen-Gottstein, "Is *Ma'aseh Bereshit* Part of Ancient Jewish Mysticism?", *Journal of Jewish Thought and Philosophy* 4 (1995), 85-201; reference on p. 190. While Goshen-Gottstein takes the Mishnah to contrast "exegetical interpretation, which is legitimate within certain boundaries, with forbidden visionary activity" (191), I would say that the concern of the Mishnah is to restrict *derashah* that produces visions. It is precisely the performative power of the *derashah* which provokes the visionary activity.

beautiful.”<sup>51</sup> Taken for granted in biblical texts,<sup>52</sup> the beauty of the Divine Glory is also widely assumed in rabbinic materials—especially the midrashim associated with Song of Songs, where the strikingly described male lover turns out to be God Himself.<sup>53</sup> As Saul Lieberman has pointed out, this tradition appears already in tannaitic sources, often associated with Rabbi Akiva or his school.<sup>54</sup>

The three scriptural topics listed in *m. Hag. 2:1* are all proto-logical—dealing with first things, with God and God’s creative work. This is self-evident with *מַעֲשֵׂה בְּרֵאשִׁית* and *מִרְכָּבָה*, but is also true for *עֲרִיּוֹת* (“prohibited relationships”): biological creativity, albeit misused and misdirected. As Charles Mopsik has written, “the concept of human generation and filiation is rightfully inscribed within the divine creative movement.... [P]rocreation merely continues cosmogenesis.... [I]t is a later stage of cosmogenesis.”<sup>55</sup> Mop-

<sup>51</sup> Elaine Scarry, *On Beauty and Being Just* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 1999), 73. Note also the remark that “[s]taring .... is a version of the wish to create” (72). Also relevant to our point is Scarry’s exploration of the semantic and conceptual connections between “fair” as beautiful and “fair” as just; that is, between the aesthetic and ethical virtues (91ff.). This is exactly what we are arguing for the Hebrew *tov* or *tin*.

<sup>52</sup> This is the plain sense of Exod 33:19, *I will cause my beauty [tin] to pass before you*, as well as Isa 33:17, *Your eyes shall see the King in His beauty*, and is the clear implication of Ezek 1:28.

<sup>53</sup> See, for example, *Exod. Rab.* 23:8, “... A certain beautiful and praiseworthy man came down and took care of all our needs, as it is written: *My beloved is fair and ruddy, a paragon among myriads* (Song 5:10). This and other relevant midrashim are discussed in Arthur Green, “The Children in Egypt and the Theophany at the Sea,” *Judaism* 24,4 (1975), 446–56. See also Elliot R. Wolfson, *Through a Speculum that Shines* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994), esp. ch. 1, “Israel: The One Who Sees God”—Visualization of God in Biblical, Apocalyptic, and Rabbinic Sources,” 13–51.

<sup>54</sup> Saul Lieberman, “*Mishnath Shir ha-Shirim*,” in *Jewish Gnosticism, Merkabah Mysticism, and Talmudic Tradition* (ed. Gershom G. Scholem; New York: The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1975–1965), 118–26.

<sup>55</sup> Charles Mopsik, “The Body of Engenderment in the Hebrew Bible, the Rabbinic Tradition and the Kabbalah,” in *Fragments for a History of the Human Body* (ed. by Michel Feher with Ramona Nadaff and Nadia Tazi; Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1989), 1: 51. See also *idem*, *Sex of the Soul: The Vicissitudes of Sexual Difference in Kabbalah*, ed. Daniel Abrams (Los Angeles: Cherub Press, 2005), 61.

sik shows how a careful reading of the initial chapters of Genesis demonstrates that human conjugal procreation may be considered as “the ritual reenactment of cosmogony.”<sup>56</sup> *עֲרִיּוֹת*, then, involves God’s image in illicit generative activity; it is Godly creativity gone awry. Similarly, Yair Lorberbaum has shown how the Divine image connects *מַעֲשֵׂה בְּרֵאשִׁית* (Creation, whose capstone is the human being, made in God’s image) and *מִרְכָּבָה* (the image of God on the Chariot), and perhaps *עֲרִיּוֹת* as well: forbidden sexual liaisons adversely affect the Divine.<sup>57</sup> Sex is the activity of reproducing the Divine image. Depending on whether the sexual activity is licit or illicit, the result will be appropriate, befitting God, or skewed and corrupted. But in either case, sex has theurgical moment; to make a child is to channel the Divine image into flesh.<sup>58</sup>

Furthermore, as Bruce Rosenstock has recently shown, Leviticus 18 and 20, the sections dealing with *עֲרִיּוֹת*, are anchored in the incest prohibition implicit in Gen 2:24 (*A man shall leave his father and his mother*), and the conjugal *one flesh* (*ibid.*) that results when a man cleaves to his wife (*ibid.*) constitutes embodied Divine self-revelation.<sup>59</sup>

All of this means that the three subject areas specified in *m. Hag. 2:1* are not a congeries of disparate or loosely related scriptural topics, but a carefully graded sequence: *עֲרִיּוֹת* instantiates the Divine image in generative activity (albeit illicit); *מַעֲשֵׂה בְּרֵאשִׁית* opens the window to the Divine act of creation; and the *מִרְכָּבָה* trains the gaze directly on the Divine Glory. Illuminated exposition uncovers the power of these texts, exposing and revealing what is generally hidden. Here we must carefully draw a distinction between hiddenness and secrecy. When two paramours arrange an illicit tryst, they endeavor to keep the whole affair secret. But what husband and wife

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 53.

<sup>57</sup> Yair Lorberbaum, *Image of God: Halakhah and Aggadah* (Tel Aviv: Schocken, 2004), 472, n. 8.

<sup>58</sup> See Lorberbaum, ch. 8, 386–435, esp. n. 19. See also Adiel Schremer, *Male and Female He Created Them: Jewish Marriage in the Late Second Temple, Mishnah and Talmud Periods* (Jerusalem: Zalman Shazar Center, 2003), 52–3. Schremer notes that the idea of sexual reproduction as theurgy was emphasized in particular by the sages of the Yavneh period; see his note 79 on p. 52 and note 82 on p. 53.

<sup>59</sup> Bruce Rosenstock, “Incest, Nakedness, and Holiness: Biblical Israel at the Limits of Culture,” *Jewish Studies Quarterly* 16 (2009), 333–62.

do in their bedroom is not secret at all. The shades are kept down not to control esoteric content, but to maintain privacy—to shield entirely licit but intimate activity from the prying gaze of outsiders. The sacred intimacy inscribed within these three scriptural domains must be guarded and preserved.

This is quite analogous to the restricted access to the inner precincts of the Temple. *M. Kel.* 1:6-9 famously delineates ten concentric sacred domains, culminating in the Holy of Holies, where no one may enter except for the High Priest on the Day of Atonement to perform the day's unique rites. There is nothing secret about this service, which is meticulously described in *Lev* 16 and *Mishnah Yoma*. Rather, the ministrations of the High Priest, involving incense and blood-application at the foot of the Divine Glory, are so sacred and intimate that no one else may witness them. It is this intimacy and privacy that are suggested by the restrictions in *m. Hag.* 2:1.

Far from being an isolated mystical intermezzo, *אין דורשן* is a key text developing and emphasizing core rabbinic themes: rabbinic authority and the continuity between Temple-based Judaism and the Rabbinic Judaism which succeeded it.

All of this is confirmed in the parallel toseftan section. A full analysis of *t. Hag.* 2:1-7, with its narratives, parables, and especially its celebrated "Four Entered Paradise" passage, requires its own treatment and is beyond the scope of this paper. I hope to devote a separate essay to this material, including the question of relative chronological priority and the literary relationship between the mishnaic and toseftan corpora. For now, however, it is important to note that the toseftan presentation, while largely dovetailing with the mishnaic material, represents a significant expansion and elaboration of it, and makes reference to a visual experience of the Divine Glory,<sup>60</sup> associated with *derashah* on the מרכבה. The *Tosefta* quotes Rabban Yohanan ben Zakkai that נאה דורש ואין נאה מקיים ("Some expound well but do not perform well; others perform well but do not expound well") and praises Rabbi Eleazar ben Arakh for being נאה דורש ונאה מקיים, for "ex-

<sup>60</sup> See Alon Goshen Gottstein, "Four Entered Paradise Revisited," *HTR* 88,1 (1995), 69-133. Goshen Gottstein asserts (correctly in my view) that "visionary experiences" (76) are of central concern for these texts, but I differ with his oppositional categorization of hermeneutical discourse and visionary activity (132).

pounding well and performing well." As Yair Loberbaum has shown, this phrase is associated in Rabbinic literature with production of the Divine image, either in sexual generativity or מרכבה exegesis.<sup>61</sup> So the *Tosefta*, in the voice of Rabban Yohanan ben Zakkai, indicates that *derashah*-activity is not always correlated with effective performance; one is possible without the other. There is thus a special virtue when one leads to the other, that is, when *derashah*-activity results in the effective production of the phenomenon described in the biblical text. That is why Rabbi Eleazar ben Arakh was praised for being a true "son of our father Abraham" who knows ידע להבין ולדרוש בכבוד אביו שבשמים<sup>62</sup> ("to expound performatively on the Glory, thus bringing our Father in Heaven to discernment").

The *derashah* setting is a session of beckoning and invitation whose outcome cannot be fully predetermined or controlled. *אין דורשן* expresses a warning for what might occur when unworthy or unprepared people are present, influencing the *derashah* proceedings. This means that there may be anxiety about *derashah* performance. Since, as *t. Meg.* 4:28 tells us, הרבה דרשו במרכבה ולא ראו אותה מעולם, "Many expounded but never saw the *Merkavah*"—that is, many had an unsuccessful, dysfunctional *derashah* experience with regard to the מרכבה—it is important to expound מרכבה only with someone who has already successfully channeled the Divine Presence with his *derashah* and who will therefore confirm the efficacy of the power of *derashah*, thereby buttressing Rabbinic authority.

In summary: each of our examples displays a different aspect of the power of דרש ב. *Tosefta Sotah* is significant precisely because it does not involve magical or miraculous occurrences or paranormal phenomena. It is remarkable in that it shows a Tannaitic sage doing precisely what a sage is expected to do: teach and interpret, attracting an audience of both close disciples and other auditors. The fact that the base text was the *Haghel* passage in Deuteronomy, and that the sage engaged the verse to reveal exegetically what he was accomplishing performatively, demonstrated that the work of דרש ב was effective, actualized. The underlying text was shown to

<sup>61</sup> Loberbaum, *Image of God*, 387-90; 418-22; 472, n. 7. See also Mara Schiffren, *The Mystical Apprehension of God in the Rabbinic Age* (unpublished doctoral dissertation, Harvard University, 2000), 352-84.

<sup>62</sup> Following ms. Erfurt; see Zuckerman, 234.

be vital and powerful. The generation who had such a sage in its midst was not orphaned. It had a sagely father who could engender children/disciples by intimate engagement with Scripture.

The Sanhedrin texts display the sage's power over magic, not in the role of magician, but in the role of scriptural interpreter of passages dealing with magic and magicians. Magicians die in encounters with such a sage not because the magic of Rabbis is stronger than the magic of *minim* or pagans, but because the sage taps the power of Scripture, and Scripture states that magicians will die, will not be allowed to live, will be overcome. Once again, the work of דרש is realized, actualized.

Finally, in tractate *Hagigah/Re'iyah*, אין דורשן is not a caution or warning but an assurance: the Temple with its continual access to the Divine is gone for now, but the greatest sages can still draw down the Divine Presence through the power of their exegesis. *Derashah* on a passage of Scripture is able to conjure the reality described in the passage. Illuminated exegesis of Ezekiel 1 can produce a divine theophany—a circumstance fraught with danger for the participants on the one hand, and concern for the respect due the Divine manifestation, on the other. אין דורשן is part of *Mishnah's* own self-construction: rabbinic *derashah* is an exegesis of power, a belief congenial to sages who knew that their interpretive work was often “flying in the air.”

## APPENDIX 1

### t. *Sot.* (Lieberman) Chapter 7

הלכה ט

מעשה בר' יוחנן בן ברוקה ור' לעזר חסמא שבאו מיבנה ללוד והקבילו פני ר' יהוש' בפקיעין אמ' להם ר' יהושע מה חידוש היה בבית המדרש היום אמרו לו תלמידך אנו ומימך אנו שותין אמ' להם אי אפשר שלא יהא חידוש בבית המדרש שבת של מי היתה אמרו לו של ר' לעזר בן עזריה היתה אמ' להם היכן היתה הגדה הקהל את האנשים והנשים והטף אמ' להם מה דרש בה אמ' לו ר' כך דרש בה אם אנשים באו ללמוד נשים באו לשמוע טפילין למה הן באין כדי ליתן שכר למביאיהן

הלכה י

ועוד אחרת דרש את ה' האמרת היום וה' האמירך היום אמ' להם הקדוש ברוך הוא כשם שעשיתם אותי חטיבה אחת בעולם אף אני אעשה אתכם חטיבה אחת בעולם הבא

הלכה יא

ועוד אחרת דרש דברי חכמים כדרבונות וכמסמרות נטועים מה דורבן זה מכזב את הפרה להביא חיים בעולם אף דברי תורה אינן אלא חיין לעולם שנ' עץ חיים היא וגו' או מה דורבן זה מיטלטל יכול אף כך דברי תורה ת"ל וכמסמרות נטועים [או אינן חסירין ולא יתירין תלמוד לומר נטועים] מה נטיעה פרה ורבה אף דברי תורה פריין ורבין בעלי אסופות אילו שנכנסין ויושבין אסופות אסופות ואומ' על טמא טמא ועל טהור טהור על טמא במקומו ועל טהור במקומו

הלכה יב

שמא יאמר אדם בדעתו הואיל ובית שמיי מטמין ובית הלל מטהרין איש פלי אוסר ואיש פלי מתיר למה אני למד תורה מעתה ת"ל דברים הדברים אלה הדברים כל הדברים נתנו מרועה אחד אל אחד בראן פרנס אחד נתנו רבון כל המעשים ברוך הוא אמרו אף אתה עשה לבך חדרי חדרים והכניס בה דברי בית שמיי ודברי בית הלל דברי המטמאין ודברי המטהרין אמ' להם אין דור יתום שר' לעזר שרוי בתוכו

## APPENDIX 2:

## y. Sanh. 7:11/19

המכשף העושה מעשה כו' מכשפה לא תחיה אחד האיש ואחד האשה אלא שלימדך התורה דרך ארץ מפני שרוב הנשים כשפניות אמר רבי לעזר מכשף בסקילה מה טעמא דרבי לעזר נאמר כאן מכשפה לא תחיה ונאמר להלן אם בהמה אם איש לא יחיה מה לא יחיה שנאמר להלן בסקילה אף כאן בסקילה מה טעמון דרבנן נאמר כאן מכשפה לא תחיה ונאמר להלן לא תחיה כל נשמה מה לא תחיה שנאמר להלן מיתה בחרב אף לא תחיה שנאמר כאן מיתה בחרב אמר רבי עקיבה מן הדבר הזה אני מכריעו מוטב שילמד לא תחיה מלא תחיה ואל יוכיח לא יחיה מה טעמא דרבי יהודה נאמר כאן מכשפה לא תחיה ונאמר להלן כל שוכב עם בהמה מות יומת מה מיתת הבהמה בסקילה אף כאן בסקילה דלמא רבי לעזר ורבי יהושע ורבי עקיבה עלון למיסחי בהדין דימוסין דטיבריא חמתון חד מיניי אמר מה דמר ותפשיתון כיפה א"ר ליעזר לר' יהושע מה יהושע בן חנניה חמי מה דאת עבד מי נפיק אהן מינייא אמר רבי יהושע מה דמר ותפש יתיה תרעה והוה כל מאן דעליל הוה יהיב לי חד מרתוקה וכל מאן דנפיק הוה יחיב ליה בנתיקה אמר לון שרון מה דעבדתון אמרין ליה שרי ואנן שריי שרון אילין ואילין מן דנפקון אמר רבי יהושע לההוא מינייא הא מה דאת חכם אמר נוחות לימא מן דנחתין לימא אמר ההוא מינייא מה דאמר ואיתבזע ימא אמר לון ולא כן עבד משה רבכון בימא אמרין ליה לית את מודה לן דהליך משה רבן בגויה אמר לון אין אמרון ליה והליך בגויה הלך בגויה גזר רבי יהושע על שרה דימא ובלעיה דלמא רבי לעזר ור' יהושע ורבן גמליאל סלקון לרומי עלון אחד אתר ואשכחון מיינוקיא עבדן גבשושין ואמרין הכן בני ארעא דישראל עבדן ואמרין ההן תרומה וההן מעשר אמרין מסתברא דאית הכא יהודאין עלון אחד אתר ואקבלון בחד כיי יתבון למיכל והוה כל תבשיל דהוה עליל קומיהון אי לא הוון מעלין ליה בחד קיטון לא הוה מייתי ליה קומיהון וחשון דילמא דאינון אכלין זבחי מתים אמרין ליה מה עיסקך דכל תבשיל דאת מייתי קומינן אין לית את מעיל להן קיטונ' לית את מייתי לון קומינן אמר לון חד אבא גבר סב אית לי וגזר על נפשיה דלא נפק מן הדא קיטונא כלום עד דייחמי לחכמי ישר' אמרין ליה עול ואמור ליה פוק הכא לגביהון דאינון הכא נפק לגבון אמרין ליה מה עיסקך אמר לון צלון על ברי דלא מוליד אמר רבי לעזר לרבי יהושע מה יהושע בן חנניה חמי מה דאת עביד אמר לון אייתון לי זרע דכיתן ואייתון

ליה זרע דכיתן איתחמי ליה זרע ליה על גבי טבלה איתחמי מרבץ ליה איתחמי דסלקת איתחמי מיתלש בה עד דאסק חדא איתא בקלעיתא דשערה אמר לה שריי מה דעבדתין אמרה ליה לי נא שרייה אמר לה דלא כן אנא מפרסם לך אמרה ליה לי נא יכלה דאינון מטלקין בימא וגזר רבי יהושע על שריא דימא ופלטון וצלון עליו וזכה למיקמה לרבי יהודה בן בתירה אמרו אילו לא עלינו לכאן אלא להעמיד הצדיק הזה דיינו אמר רבי יהושע בן חנניה יכל אנא נסיב קריין ואבטיחין ועביד לון איילין טבין והידנן עבידין איילין וטבין אמר רבי ינאי מהלך הוינא בהדא איסרטא דציפורי וחזית חד מיניי נסיב צריר וזרק לי לרומא והוה נחת ומתעביד עגל ולא כן אמר רבי לעזר בשם רבי יוסי בר זימרא אם מתכנסין הן כל באי העולם אינן יכולין לבראות יתוש אחד ולזרוק בו נשמה נימר לא נסבה הוא מינייא חד צרור וזרקה לרומא ונחת ואיתעביד חד עגל אלא לסריה קרא וגנב ליה עגל מן בקורתא ואייתי ליה אמר ר' חנינא בי רבי חנניה מטייל הוינא באילון גופתא דציפורין וחמית חד מיניי נסב חדא גולגלא וזרקה לרומא והיא נחתא ומתעבדא עגל אתית ואמרת לאבא אמר לי אין אכלת מינה מעשה הוא ואי לא אחזית עינים הוא אמר רבי יהושע בן חנניה שלש מאות פרשיות היה רבי לעזר דורש בפרשת מכשפה ומכולם לא שמעתי אלא שני דברים שנים לוקטין קישואין אחד לוקח פטור ואחד לוקט חייב העושה מעשה חייב והאוחז את העינים פטור אמר רבי דרוסא תשע מאות פרשיות היו שלש מאות לחיוב ושלש מאות לפטור ושלוש מאות לחיוב שהוא פטור



# Midrash and the Exegetical Mind

**Judaism in Context**

**10**

**Proceedings of the 2008 and 2009 SBL Midrash  
Sessions**

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Judaism in Context is a series of monographs and collections focusing on the relations between Jews, Judaism, and Jewish culture and the other peoples, religions, and cultures among whom Jews have lived and flourished.



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