

Jesus, Paul and Midrash

God's Truth versus Men's Traditions [1, 2]

“Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. ***Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.*** For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men . . .” Emphasis added, Jesus, quoting Isaiah 29:13 in Mark 7:6-8, KJV

The Jews and “the Oracles of God”

Amidst all the spiritual chaos in the world, ancient and modern, arising from mystics claiming that God has revealed “this or that” to them, the Lord committed His “oracles” to the Jews. After indicting the Jews for having lived hypocritically under the Law, the Apostle Paul rhetorically asked, “What advantage has the Jew?” He then answered, “Great in every respect” because “they were entrusted with the oracles [Greek, *ta logia*] of God” (Romans 3:1-2, NASB). The Lord chose to speak to the world through the Jews. Moses noted the incomparable nature of God’s revelation to the Israelites when he asked them before entering the Promised Land, “What great nation is there that has statutes and judgments as righteous as this whole law which I am setting before you today?” (Deuteronomy 4:8, NASB). In his book *The Gifts of the Jews*, Thomas Cahill says that, “The Bible is the record *par excellence* of the Jewish religious experience, an experience that remains fresh and even shocking when it is read against the myths of other ancient literatures.” [3]

God’s supernatural endowment of Israel with the *Torah* (the Law of Moses) and the *Tanakh* (the rest of the Old Testament) distinguishes the Jews from all the other peoples and nations of civilization, whether ancient or modern. Though the Lord gave the Law, the Prophets and the Writings (i.e., the constitutive parts of the Hebrew Bible Jesus recognized, Luke 24:44) for the benefit of the Gentiles, He did not originally give it to them. *Torah* was and is a part of Israel’s peculiar national identity. But from the time of Moses to the Babylonian Exile (for about ten centuries) Israel neither appreciated nor obeyed the Law.

The Babylonian Captivity—Separated from the Temple

After the Assyrians invaded and took captive the northern kingdom for its disobedience to the Lord (*circa* 722 BC), God allowed the southern kingdom Judah, because like her northern sister she continued in rebellion and idolatry (See Jeremiah 25:8-11.), to suffer a similar fate at the hand of the Babylonians a century and a half later (*circa* 586 BC). The invaders destroyed the Temple and seized its holy furniture and furnishings (i.e., the very objects the Lord had designed and commanded to be used in worshipping Him). For seventy years, their exile in Babylon would separate the Jews from their homeland and the religious institutions God

ordained. Being forced by their captors to relocate hundreds of miles to the east with just the clothing on their backs and the possessions they could carry, *Torah* was the only portable object of their religion. During the exile, the Book of the Law served as a rallying point for Jewish exiles so that they would not be seduced by the morals and spirituality of their pagan captors (i.e., “influences from the east,” Isaiah 2:6, NASB), the spirituality which 1,400 years earlier, the Lord commanded Abraham to separate from (Genesis 12:1). As Terry summarizes, “The loss of temple, throne, palace, and regal splendour turned the heart of the devout Jew to a more diligent inquiry after the words of Jehovah.” [4] In the aftermath of and perhaps during the Babylonian Exile, Ezra, a priestly descendent of Aaron, “prepared his heart to seek the law of Jehovah and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments” (Ezra 7:10, KJV).

Remember Torah!

So the rallying cry on the part of teachers like Ezra was for Jews to live separate from the religious influences of Babylon and Canaan. But neutralizing the pagan pressures upon Israel would not be an easy task. Far too convenient it was for God’s people to compromise with the religious beliefs and practices of their captors and neighbors. (See Daniel 1:8; 3:1-12; Revelation 17:1-7.) So having survived their seventy-year stay in Babylon and when they were about ready to return to Jerusalem, the Lord told the returning Jews and their spiritual leaders, “Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence, touch no unclean thing; go ye out of the midst of her [i.e., Babylon]; be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the Lord” (Isaiah 52:11, KJV). As did Abraham, the leaders and the people were to separate themselves from Babylon’s idolatry, both literal and mystical.

But upon Israel’s return to the Land, the cultural climate had changed. *Torah* “had to be fitted to these latter times and [had] to be expanded, and this was done by the process of midrash.” [5] This task of studying and applying the Law to the new social and legal situations the Jews encountered would belong to the leadership of the synagogues, the rabbis and elders. So from Ezra’s example of devotion to the law, a Great Synagogue was called (Nehemiah 8:1-15). It was hoped that Ezra’s dedication to the Law would be contagious and inspire commitment on the part of other priests, rabbis and elders to read, study, teach and apply God’s oracles to the lives of the people. In the beginning the teaching was oral and came to be known as “Midrash” (from the Hebrew verb *darash*, meaning “to seek, to study or to inquire”); specifically, the Jews called the legal Midrash Halakah.

Preserved in oral form for several centuries, the *Midrashim*, or teachings of the rabbis, were not finally edited and codified until two centuries after Christ by Rabbi Judah Ha-Nasi (d. circa 217 AD). When codified, both the *Halakah* (the interpretations and applications of the Law) and *Haggada* (the expositions of the other writings of the Old Testament) came to form *Midrash*. Today and within the context of the Talmud, *Midrash* is a treasury of Hebrew folk lore; and hence to discover the Jewish identity of their faith, those within the Hebrew Roots movement desire to study *Midrash*. So these interpretive expositions of Midrash include two divisions, the *Halakah* and the *Haggada*.

Keeping Torah Relevant—Midrash Halakah

To adapt and make the Law of Moses relevant for the Jewish people upon their return to Jerusalem, the rabbis, with Torah as the reference point, interpreted and applied the Law (i.e.,

casuistic or case law) to resolve issues, controversies and conflicts that arose as during the intertestamental period the Jewish people intermingled with and confronted the legal and spiritual challenges posed by Greco-Roman culture. These expositions and applications of Torah were known as the *Halakah*. In some instances, these newly formed case laws were claimed to have been transmitted by “oral tradition” from Moses. A century ago Rabbi Samuel Rapaport (1907) informed:

Just as the Written Law given by Moses emanates from God . . . so he [Moses] likewise received the Oral law, which he was not allowed to commit to writing. This Oral law had to be taught by word of mouth side by side with the Written law, and thus the former became an unfolding and sequel to the latter. [6]

Making *Tanakh* Interesting—Midrash *Haggada*

But there was more to the Jewish Bible than just the Law of Moses, or *Torah*. In addition to the Books of Moses (i.e., Genesis thru Deuteronomy), the Hebrew canon included the books of the prophets and other writings. Jesus spoke of this when He recognized that the established Jewish canon consisted of “the Law of Moses [*Torah*], the Prophets and the Psalms [*Tanakh*],” the same thirty-nine books in our Protestant Bibles (Luke 24:44). During the Babylonian Exile and after the return, the rabbis and elders gave sermons based upon individual and isolated texts (atomistic interpretations) in *Tanakh*. These sayings/sermons were memorized and collected as other rabbis later borrowed or quoted (“ . . .”) from them in synagogue meetings (kind of like contemporary pastors who get their sermons from the Internet). Sermons that were thought worthy (i.e., like today’s “best selling” authors and pastors) were collected and became known as the *Haggada*.

Midrash

So as has been pointed out, over time two divisions of Midrash evolved in Jewish life; *one*, the *halakah*—which term refers to rabbinical interpretations of Torah or the Law (i.e., the books of Genesis though Deuteronomy), and *two*, the *haggada*—which designates the rabbinical expositions and commentaries on the rest of the Hebrew Bible (i.e., the prophetic, poetic and historic writings). But Midrash also possesses other meanings. *First*, term includes **the rabbinical methods** or rules that are to govern the exegesis of the text of Scripture (i.e., *middot*); and *second*, Midrash designates **the rabbinical messages** themselves (i.e., *haggada*). To the non-initiated, the word Midrash appears to refer to a confusing mix of literary genres and interpretive techniques. So because of the panoply of meanings associated with the term, understanding exactly what is meant by Midrash can be unclear, even befuddling. So to further unpack the meaning of Midrash, we proceed to look at the hermeneutical categories or “senses” Hebrew interpreters believed resided in their Scriptures.

Which meaning is in the text?

Yarchin calls Midrash “a Hebrew term for the notoriously hard-to-define rabbinic mode of interpretation.” [7] As to its literary genre, one Jewish source states: “‘Legendary exposition’ best expresses the full meaning of the word Midrash.” [8] The source further noted that the Midrashim “are not literal interpretations [though based upon literal texts], but figurative and allegorical, and as such enigmatic.” [9] To different rabbis, the meaning of Midrash was to be

found in different “senses.”

First, there was the *peshat*—that is the text’s literal-grammatical-historical meaning [10]; second, *peshet*—a contemporary meaning or application of an ancient prophetic/predictive text (common in the New Testament) [11]; third, *remaz*—a hidden or less obvious meaning that was believed to reside behind the words, markings and numbers of a particular Scripture, or between the interplay of various texts; fourth, *derush*—extensively searched out meanings than could only be described through the use of allegory or legend; and fifth and finally, *sod*—mystic or Cabalistic meaning thought to be in the text.

In summarizing the later interpretive categories (the third through the fifth), Yarchin understands that Midrash “almost always involved establishing of connections between the biblical texts by any number of linkages: philological, paronomastic [i.e., word plays], thematic, numeric, historical,” and then adds that, “almost any basis could be employed to shed light from one biblical text upon another.” [12] With a mix of interpretive “senses” like that, who could ever, with any assurance, understand the text’s meaning? But perhaps that is the point of the enterprise called Midrash for as Yarchin observes, “understanding the Bible more authentically resides, perhaps strangely, in the uncertainty of its interpretation, never fully finished.” [13] In midrashic interpretations, there always appears to be “loose ends.”

From his evangelical perspective, R.T. France (1938-2012) sought a more defined understanding of Midrash. Cunningham and Bock summarized the categories he observed for approaching Midrash.

(1) Some authors use it [the term Midrash] to refer to “every interpretation and application of the Scripture.” (2) Others use “midrash” to mean a specific literary genre (a much narrower meaning of the term). (3) Some mean an exegetical technique involving the creative use of the Old Testament. (4) Others use it to refer to the hermeneutical axioms that underlie such exegesis. [14]

Thus, it can be observed that the last two of France’s categories refer to *methods* (i.e., rabbinical rules or *middot*) of how Scripture should be interpreted (i.e., the exegesis of texts), while the first two refer to *messages* of the rabbis (i.e., the expositions of texts by the rabbis). Ideally, the former should govern the later, but that unfortunately was frequently not the case. For the most part, the sermons of Midrash by the rabbis were based upon the non-legal portions of the Old Testament—the books of the prophets, poetry and history. These expositions became known as *Haggada*. Authors Cunningham and Bock note that despite containing a wide variety of literary genres, Midrash “does not necessarily imply [though, I might add, often does] the absence of historicity.” [15]

Evangelicalism’s Doctrine of Inspiration

Unlike the open struggle between liberalism and fundamentalism over *inerrancy* during the early part of the last century, division in evangelicalism over the nature of Scripture resides in realm of *hermeneutics*, of how the Bible is to be interpreted and understood. Interestingly, Midrash has become a player in this dispute. As evangelicals seek to understand Scripture in the context of

Jewish Midrash, a major problem in the formulating a doctrine of biblical inspiration surfaces. Does the Bible, even the Gospel record, consist of a weird mix of history and non-history? In their recording of the salvation events that occurred in the historical continuum of time, matter and space, did the biblical authors import myths to supplement historical facts of their records? As we shall see, some evangelical scholars claim that in particular and in symphony with the prevailing Jewish worldview of his day, Matthew literarily originated and arranged his Gospel as a midrashic blend of historic and non-historic materials. [16]

So one is forced to ask, “How did this ancient Jewish belief—that Scripture contained different “senses” or levels of meaning mixing history and non-history—come about?” The explanation, I believe, resides in how the Hellenistic worldview came to influence Judaism during the four to five centuries between the completion of the Old Testament and the writing of the New.

After the Exile—Judaism meets Hellenism

After their exile and return to the land during the fifth century BC, the Jews could not entirely escape “the influences from the east” that surrounded them during their exile in Babylon (Isaiah 2:6, NASB). When the Medes and Persians conquered Babylon (See Daniel 5:17-31) many of Babylon’s priestly caste fled to the west. They carried Babylonian spirituality (acclaimed to be the “Gateway of the Gods” [17]) along with them. This spirituality intermingled and cross-fertilized with the Grecian, the synthesis of which exerted pressure upon the faith and worldview of Judaism.

Yarchin explains the attitude of the ancient Greeks and Romans toward their own religious writings:

The basic interpretive presupposition was this: due to the inherent limitations of human understanding, there will always be something in the sacred text that remains undisclosed to unglossed reading. *Mystery then, was characteristic of sacred texts.* God is the speaker, but humans are the writers, and multiplicity of meaning (plain and obscure) is to be expected in the discursive space between what the words humanly say and what they divinely teach. [18]

Many Greeks, especially the educated elite, viewed the myths of their civilization to be incredible, too unbelievable for the empirical mind to accept. So “interpreters turned to allegory to find meanings that would make them [the myths] acceptable to the educated mind.” [19]

Seemingly, as the two cultures interacted, the manner in which Greek interpreters treated their myths came to influence how some Jews treated their sacred writings, especially influencing the *haggadic* expositions of the narrative portions of the Old Testament. Like the surrounding Greco-Roman cultures, they mixed “memorable sayings of illustrious men, parables, allegories, marvelous legends, witty proverbs, and mystic interpretations of Scripture events” into their expositions of the plain narrative. [20] Then as they were redacted by other rabbis over time, the *haggadim* “became more and more complicated as new legends, secret meanings, hidden wisdom, and allegorical expositions were added by one great teacher after another.” [21] To stimulate and arouse feelings of experiencing Scripture in new ways (like many evangelicals

today, the Jews too were perhaps bored with “just” the Bible), the rabbis sought to embellish the literal meaning of the narratives.

In Alexandria, Egypt, which city and intellectual center had become a hot bed for fusing Hellenistic philosophy and Judaism, Philo (25 BC—40 AD), a contemporary of Jesus, became a notorious proponent of midrashic interpretation and exposition as exhibited by his allegorical, even superstitious, handling of the Hebrew Bible. Like the Greeks, rabbis engaged the sophistry of seeking out esoteric or subjective meanings they thought resided “behind,” “in” or “beyond” the markings, words, sentences and numbers of the Hebrew text; that to understand the Bible, the senses of *remaz* (i.e., hidden meanings), *derush* (i.e., extensively searched out meanings of allegory or legend), or *sod* (i.e., mystic or Cabalistic meanings) must be searched out and explicated. If such “senses” of Scripture were discovered, then the rabbis and their audiences might encounter and share in “the divine mind” that was believed to lay behind the sacred text. As evidenced in *haggadic* Midrash, Jews began to elaborate their Scriptures as did the Greeks did their myths. Taken from Midrash, a few examples are now cited which exhibit the unhistorical elaborations of the Scriptures by the rabbis. [22]

Rabbi Yeremiah, the son of Elazar said, “When the Holy One—blessed be He!—created Adam, He created him an androgyne [neither male or female], for it is written (Gen. v. 2), “Male and female created He them.” *Midrash Rabbah*, chap. 8. (Adam was hermaphroditic. Interestingly, this is the view of radical feminism, ed.)

Noah was deficient in faith, for he did not enter the ark till the water was up to his ankles. *Bereshith Rabba*, Chap. 32. (The Genesis narrative states that seven days after Noah entered the ark “the flood of water came upon the earth,” Genesis 7:4, 10, ed.)

“And Abraham rose up early and saddled his ass” (Gen. xxii. 3). This is the ass on which Moses also rode when he came into Egypt; for it is said (Exod. iv.20), “And Moses took his wife and his sons, and set them upon an ass.” This is the ass on which the Son of David also shall ride; as it is said (Zech. ix.9), “Poor and riding upon an ass.” *Pirke d’Rab. Eliezer*, chap. 31. (If identical, this ass lived for centuries! ed.)

“Esau said, ‘I will not kill my brother Jacob with bow and arrow, but with my mouth I will suck his blood,’ as it is said (Gen. xxxiii. 4), “And Esau ran to meet him and embraced him, and kissed him, and they wept.” Read not “and he kissed him,” but read, “and he bit him!” *Pirke d’Rab. Eliezer*, chap. 36. (Was Esau vampiric? ed.)

“A window shalt thou make to the ark” (Gen. vi.16). Rabbi Amma says, “It was a real window.” Rabbi Levi, on the other hand, maintained that it was a precious stone, and that during the twelve months Noah was in the ark he had no need of the light by day nor the moon by night because of that stone, which he had kept suspended, and he

knew that it was day when it went dim, and night when it sparkled. *Bereshith Rabbah*, chap. 31 (Was Noah into magic crystals? Was he *Romancing the Stone?* ed.)

By “discovering” allegorical and mysterious meanings behind an otherwise plain text and by elaborating upon them, Jewish teachers believed they could be entertained by, perhaps even enter into, the mind of God thereby obtaining union with Him. This may explain what Jesus was getting at when He said to the Jews, “You search the Scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life . . .” (John 5:39, NASB).

To this point Kaiser warns that the *playful* rabbinical “search (*Derash*) for the deeper and more exotic meaning [*sod*] tended to work at cross-purposes with the more sober and literal approach to the text.” [23] He then points to, as exhibited by many ancient rabbinical sayings, the affect that mystical-non-literal meanings had upon Scripture’s plain meaning: “Eventually the *Sod* [esoteric and mystical meanings] overtook the concerns of *Peshat* [the plain and literal meaning of the text].” [24] In other words, amidst the dialectical exchange between the plain sense of the Bible and a mystical understanding of it, human imagination obscures, even hides, the text’s plain meaning. Biblical interpretation becomes a hermeneutical Disneyworld. [25] This is the Jewish mindset Jesus confronted during His life and ministry on earth, a mindset influenced by the allegories of *Derash* and mysticism of *Sod*.

As can be observed from the midrashic examples just cited, Judaism’s interface with pagan Hellenism introduced “the stuff” of allegory, legend and Cabbalistic meanings into *haggadic* Midrash. Some Jewish teachers seemed to have been influenced by the Gnostic dictum that, “Truth did not come into the world naked, but in symbols and images.” [26] But Paul warned of *the danger of dancing with such a deceptive dialectic*. He cautioned the Colossians: “See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ” (Colossians 2:8, NASB).

Midrash, Revelation from God?

But returning for a moment to the centuries before Jesus’ life, a major aberration regarding the role of *Midrash* in Jewish life developed. During the intertestamental period, the “contextualizations” of the rabbis came “to be placed upon a par with divine revelation,” [27] and by the time of our Lord’s life on earth, the explanatory teachings had grown to become “a fixed and growing supplement to the biblical text, possessing an *authority equal to that of the Scriptures* [so much for *sola scriptura*].” [28] As can be observed in His interaction with the Pharisees over *Halakah*, the Lord Jesus did not accept this development (Mark 7:1-13; Matthew 15:1-14; 23:1-33). [29]

This background regarding the origin and implications of *Midrash* brings us to the issue of Jesus’ relationship to it. Regarded by some as “Rabbi,” a title He resisted (Matthew 23:6-8), it must be asked: “Did Jesus and His apostles’ approve of the Midrash?” or “Did the Lord and the New Testament writers employ midrashic methods of exegesis?” We look first to the Bible for answers and then to scholarly confirmation.

Jesus and Halakah-Midrash

During the centuries between the prophet Malachi and John the Baptist (the four centuries between the Old and New Testaments when God's oracles were silent), the Pharisees eventually became the heirs and custodians of "the *halachic* and *haggadic* traditions." [30] The condescending attitude of elitist Jewish scholars and lawyers toward Jesus is evidenced in the gospel record when on the occasion of the Feast of Booths (a.k.a., Tabernacles), He went up to and taught in the Temple. Upon listening to the Lord's words, the response of the Jews (i.e., Jewish leaders) toward Jesus was, "How has this man become learned, having never been educated?" (John 7:15, NASB)

Learned in what and educated by whom? The only answer can be, learned in Jewish traditions (i.e., *Midrash*) and educated in the interpretive methods of the rabbis. So to their question, Jesus tersely replied: "My teaching is not Mine [And by implication not theirs either!], but His [the Father's] who sent me" (John 7:16, NASB). This interchange and clash between Jesus and the leaders of the nation indicates what the Lord thought about the teaching-traditions of the Jews, or *Midrash*. Jesus did not teach like the rabbis. To embellish His authority, He did not quote other rabbis (other than to occasionally tell his audiences, "You have heard . . ."). No, in a manner of speaking, Jesus quoted His Father and the Old Testament Scriptures! The authority of heaven, the ultimate location of Jesus' origin (John 8:23), endowed the Lord's teachings. So, after alluding to a rabbinical teaching ("You have heard . . ."), Jesus would emphasize, "but **I say** to you . . ." (See Matthew 5:22, 28, 32, 34, 39, 44; etc.).

So upon reading the Gospel records, one gets the impression that Jesus and the Jews were on different wavelengths (Matthew 13:10-15; Acts 7:51-53). The clash may be accounted for by reason of the prevailing midrashic-mindset of the Jewish leaders and their followers. The whole enterprise of Midrash may be behind Jesus' words to the Jews (to cite the text again) when He said: "You search the Scriptures because *you think that in them you have eternal life*; it is these that testify about me" (Emphasis added, John 5:39). To this point, Visotsky notes that, unlike post-apostolic Christianity, salvation issues of sin and free will were inconsequential in Jewish circles because, "God's grace is manifest to the rabbis through the study of Torah." [31] Assuming such inattention was extant amongst the Jews during Jesus' ministry, the disinterest may help explain why in the end they rejected Him as Savior. Studying the Scriptures (Midrash) was more crucial than accepting the Messiah. Despite Jesus' rebuke, they could not accept that the "literal" Scriptures, which they so diligently studied, testified (i.e., *peshet*) of Him. The text contained other more captivating and "eternal-life" meanings.

Though unhistorical embellishments were pervasive in *haggadic* Midrash, it did not mean that *halakic* Midrash was not without problems. On a few occasions the Lord condemned *halakic* expositions and applications. He once told Jewish leaders:

"Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. Howbeit *in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men*. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men . . ." (Emphasis added, Jesus, quoting Isaiah 29:13 in Mark 7:6-8, KJV; Compare Matthew 15:1-10; 23:16-24.)

Some might dispute that in this instance Jesus specifically attacked *halakic* Midrash. But Lane's comments on Jesus' words enforce the point. He wrote:

Jesus' sharp rebuttal sets in radical opposition the commandment of God and the halakic formulations of the scribal tradition. Theoretically, the oral law was fence which safeguarded the people from infringing the Law. In actuality it represented a tampering with the Law which resulted in distortion and ossification of the living word of God. The exaggerated reverence with which the scribes and Pharisees regarded the oral law was an expression of false piety supported by human precepts devoid of authority. Jesus categorically rejects the authority of the oral [then halakic-midrash] law. [32]

In defending the use of Midrash, there are those who suggest that Jesus employed the method. But such an opinion places Jesus in conflict with Himself. How can He on the one hand criticize the Jews for conjuring up Midrash on the Torah and then turn about and embrace the same? No, as is evident in His words to and about the Pharisees, Jesus would have none of that. His words were different and set apart from those of the Rabbis. Though Jesus often quoted the Old Testament, He did not Midrash it. As one Old Testament scholar notes, "Jesus gives us no examples of midrashic . . . exegesis." [33] Kaiser then explains that, "It is likewise doubtful that one can find an allegorical approach in Jesus' use of parables" because they are "direct analogies rather than the more indirect allegories." [34] We turn to the Apostle Paul. What was his attitude toward Midrash?

Paul and Midrash Halakah/Haggada

On a number of occasions, the Apostle Paul describes false teachings which obscure the Gospel and deceive people as "**tradition** (*paradosis*—a giving over by word of mouth or in writing) [35] . . . **fables** (*muthos*—a fiction, a fable, an invention, a falsehood) . . . **endless genealogies** (*genealogia*—inconsequential and embellished records of descent or lineage) . . . **profane and vain babblings** (*kenophroneia*—words which captivate hearers by their "sound" rather than their truth) . . . **oppositions of science** (*antitheseis tns pseudonymou gnoseos*—unhistorical Gnostic beliefs sourced in mystery which contradict the apostolic faith) . . . **Jewish myths** (*'Ioudaikois muthois*—unhistorical fictions, fables which are distinctly Jewish in their origin) . . . [and] **commandments of men** (*entolais anthropon*—commandments which originate with man, not God)." (See Colossian 2:8; 1 Timothy 1:4; 6:20; Titus 1:14.)

Once at the beginning and then again at the end of his first letter to Timothy, Paul warned him not to "give heed to fables and endless genealogies" (1 Timothy 1:4), and to avoid "profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called" (1 Timothy 6:20). As regards the meaning of Paul's caution to young Timothy, J.N.D. Kelly (1909-1997) commented that because of the letter's Jewish background,

the fables and genealogies must have had to do with allegorical or legendary interpretations of the O.T. centring on the pedigrees of the patriarchs. Much of the rabbinical Haggadah consisted of just such a fanciful rewriting of Scripture; the Book of Jubilees and Pseudo-Philo's *Liber antiquitatum biblicarum*, with its mania for family trees, are apt examples. It has also been shown that in post-exilic Judaism there was a

keen interest in family-trees, and that these played a part in controversies between Jews and Jewish Christians. [36]

Kelly then concludes that, "Viewed in this light the errorists are Judaizers who concentrate on farfetched minutiae of rabbinical exegesis *to the detriment of the gospel.*" [37]

Paul also warned Titus, who ministered on the island of Crete, about dealing with the opposition posed by "many rebellious men, empty talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision" (i.e., Jews, Titus 1:10). After informing Titus of the motives, message and methods of these false teachers (Titus 1:11-13a), Paul tells the young pastor to resist and correct the false teachers by reproving "them severely so that they may be sound in faith, not paying attention to *Jewish myths* [*haggadic mysticism?*] and **commandments of men** [*halakic legalism?*] who turn away from the truth" (Emphasis added, Titus 1:13b-14). We can note that the adjective "Jewish" modifies both "myths" and "commandments." Paul is warning Titus about *Jewish* myths (stories, legends, etc.) and *Jewish* commandments that did not come from God, but originated in the rabbinical mind. As such, the extra-curricular myths and commandments have nothing whatsoever to do with the Christian faith. We have seen that the Midrash genre contains stories, allegories, myths and commandments that intermingle with rabbinical expositions of Holy Scripture. Presumably then, Paul told Titus (What else could it be?) to pay no attention to Midrash *haggada* ("myths") and *halakah* ("commandments").

What if Jesus and Paul used Midrash?

For a moment and for the sake of argument, let's assume that Jesus and the apostles commonly employed midrashic methods (other than *peshat* or *peshet*) in their Old Testament citations and expositions regarding His ministry and life. [38] When applied to an understanding of the biblical books, how does a midrashic hermeneutic (borrowed from the way the Greeks sought to understand their sacred writings) affect the perceived meaning, especially prophetic, residing in the words of Scripture? Shepherd observes that if non-literal meanings are assumed to reside in or behind the plain text (i.e., allegorical, legendary, Cabbalistic, etc.), a new problem presents "itself in relation to the literal sense of Scripture." [39] Of this problem he deduces that, "If New Testament writers depended on nonliteral interpretations, then their interpretive techniques contradicted the norm of 'the literal sense' as the only basis for arguments about doctrine and failed to make any compelling case for prophetic fulfillment." [40] In an internal and contradictory way, any "literal sense as the norm of theological interpretation" would seem to be "ignored within Scripture itself, by its own earliest Christian interpreters of the Old Testament." [41] If it is assumed that there are meanings secreted in the biblical text, then interpretive and doctrinal chaos emerges. Thus, understanding Scripture, to borrow from Churchill's assessment of Russia, is reduced to "a riddle, wrapped in a mystery, inside an enigma." Is there not a word from God for the simple man?

Sidebar Issues

Issue # 1: Seemingly, the way *Midrash* originated and was formulated finds analogy in how liberal source criticism accounts for the origin of biblical books. Source critics assert that after their oral introduction, numerous authors over generations redacted and revised various "traditions" of the biblical books. Source critics contend multiple authors redacted the

Pentateuch (at least four, JEDP, and maybe more), Isaiah (perhaps three), Daniel and other Old Testament books. (I do not believe this. Like Jesus, I accept that one man, Moses, authored the Pentateuch.) Turning to the Gospel record, liberal scholars suppose that the record of Jesus' life was based upon His sayings collected in a fictional source named "Q". (Again, I do not believe this.) Perhaps the sayings of "Q" were originally oral and became written—who knows for sure? The theory goes that these sayings or "Q" lay behind the writing of the Gospels. So critics propose that in writing his Gospel, Mark borrowed sayings from "Q" even as that gospel's later redactors would revise his gospel by inserting other traditions about Jesus' life into the account. In writing his Gospel, Matthew borrowed from "proto-Mark" and "Q" even as He embellished those sources (other sayings, miracle accounts, etc.) when he wrote his interpretation of Jesus' life. [42] The historian Luke consulted sources, but he tells readers he did so (Luke 1:1-4). Then you have John (though not one of the Synoptic—"through the same eyes"—Gospels) whose Gospel seems to be a more mystical meditation upon the life of Jesus (i.e., *Sod*). So in the manner of their composition, Mark becomes a sort of Midrash on "Q"; Matthew on "proto Mark" and "Q"; with John supplying a more mystic flavor to his account of Jesus' life. When it is understood how Midrash historically developed, and that the gospels originated in that Jewish literary era, the Midrash approach becomes a "cue," even template, to explain the origin and redaction of the Christian gospels in that era. [43] After all, if the Talmud developed as various rabbis "midrashed" or redacted the parts of it, why could not that literary *modus operandi* be used to explain how the gospels came to be? After all, their authors, as Jewish, must have been indoctrinated in the midrashic method.

Issue #2: Is there a meaning in the text? Midrash seems to have indiscriminately blended together the Word of God and the word of men, and in many instances, made them equal. Yet there are those within pan-evangelicalism who suggest that to understand the Bible, we need to shuck our western Greco-Roman mindset and immerse ourselves into the Hebrew way looking at Scripture. Because Jesus and the apostles were Jews, to understand the Christian faith we need to enter into a Jewish understanding of it. For such entrance, a study and knowledge of Talmud (which contains Midrash) is necessary. Some emergent church leaders argue that Paul's message was too "Greekish" (i.e., western in orientation). They contend that a western mindset (with its creeds, rituals, liturgies and so forth) has deformed Christianity. [44] The Hebrew Roots Movement also views that "western-ism" has infected the Christian church and that only attention to Christianity's distinctly Hebrew heritage (which presumably involves knowledge of Midrash and Talmud) can cure it. Both "emergent" and "roots" movements seem to ignore that overemphasis upon the "Hebrew-ness" of Christianity could diminish appreciation for the ministry and message of the Apostle Paul who after all, was "an apostle to the Gentiles" (Galatians 2:8; Romans 11:13), and the one in whom the Lord placed custody of the Gospel. [45] In fact, Paul's letters of Galatians and Ephesians argue against placing a Judaic template on the Christian faith. The irony of today's advocacy for a returning to "the Hebrew mindset" is that the Jewish cultural milieu in which Christianity was birthed—the intertestamental period—was corrupted by worldly methods of interpreting and understanding divine oracles!

Issue #3: Those who argue that the apostles contextualized their message via the methods of Midrash cite Matthew's citation of Hosea as an example. Referencing the Exodus motif, that Gospel compared Jesus' sojourn in Egypt to escape Herod's murderous design upon Him with the quotation, "Out of Egypt I called My Son" (Matthew 1:15 and Hosea 11:1). Without

developing the argument, I would simply note two points: first, there is no ancient Jewish literature which contains a typology of the Messianic exodus like Matthew's (the reference is particular only to this apostle) [46]; and second, by referring to the Exodus motif, Matthew simply reminded his readers that as God sovereignly and providentially protected Israel His "firstborn" in Egypt (Exodus 4:22), so He protected Jesus. [47]

Issue #4: The assertion that the New Testament gospel writers employed midrashic techniques in writing their accounts of Jesus' life (i.e., supplementing the historical record by adding non-historical embellishments) calls into question the doctrine of the Bible's inspiration and authority (See footnote 33). Back in the early 1980s Douglas Moo recognized that if Robert Gundry's "midrash" template for interpreting Matthew's gospel was accepted, it would force "jettisoning belief in an inerrant Bible." [48] History and fantasy cannot be mixed if the Bible's theme of salvation is to mean anything in a historical time-space continuum. Other scholars similarly pointed out that, "This midrashic approach [by Gundry then and others now] to Matthew has important implications for evangelicals on the question of the historicity of the Gospel and the issue of inerrancy." [49] Thus, it is noteworthy that in 1983, Robert H. Gundry was removed from the Evangelical Theological Society for his view that Matthew's gospel was a midrashic account of Jesus' life. A seventy percent consensus within ETS viewed that Gundry's 1982 commentary on Matthew "reached conclusions that were judged to be incompatible with the doctrine of biblical inerrancy." [50]

Conclusion

We have seen that, despite the quotations from (approximately 250) and allusions to (approximately a thousand) the Old Testament in the New Testament, neither Jesus nor the apostles offered midrashic interpretations. Jesus disapproved of exchanging Yahweh's Word (The Jewish canon Jesus quoted, approved of, and said bore witness to Him!) for men's traditions (Mark 7:8). The Apostle Paul—who underwent rabbinical training and testified that at one time he had been "extremely zealous for [his] . . . ancestral traditions" (Acts 22:3; Galatians 1:14)—warned Timothy and Titus about the imagined myths and the invented commandments of Judaism (1 Timothy 1:4; 6:20; Titus 1:14). Frankly, if both Jesus' condemnation of and Paul's warning about "traditions" do not refer either in part or whole to Midrash, it becomes difficult to know what in their historical context they were warning about.

Even if it might seem that an apostle employed a midrashic method in his exposition of the meaning of Jesus' life, fine biblical scholars note that,

Where their [the apostles'] interpretations seem to parallel methods of their Jewish forbearers, their uses generally appear extremely restrained. We cannot lump together the apostles, the Qumran exegetes, and the rabbis as if they all operated in the same way. The NT writers borrowed some methods of their Jewish counterparts, but they spurned others. [51]

A Jewish mindset intruded upon by Hellenism's non-literal allegorical and mythological approach to sacred writings may in part explain why the Jews had so much difficulty in accepting Jesus' words at face value. The concept of Messiah was lost in mystery and myth,

not unlike liberal scholarship's denigration of accounts of Jesus' miracles to be unhistorical elaborations added by wishful redactors to embellish and sensationalize the gospel record. This may explain why Longenecker admitted that, "we cannot possibly reproduce the revelatory stance of pesher interpretation, nor the atomistic manipulations of midrash, nor the circumstantial nor ad hominem thrusts of a particular polemic of that day—nor should we try." [52] This also is why Milton Terry wrote: "The study of ancient Jewish exegesis is, therefore, of little practical value to one who seeks the true meaning of the oracles of God." [53]

"[T]here are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision . . . Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith; **Not giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men, that turn from the truth.**" Emphasis added, Paul to Titus, Titus 1:10, 13b-14, KJV

Endnotes

[1] For a fuller picture of how the Bible is being interpreted today, readers are invited to peruse previous posts which are: Larry DeBruyn, "Deliteralizing' the Bible from Plato to Peterson: Scripture amidst the Shadows," *Guarding His Flock Ministries*, January 3, 2012 (<http://guardinghisflock.com/2012/03/01/deliteralizing-the-bible-from-plato-to-peterson/#more-2038>); "Babylon Rising' and Canon in Crisis: Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, Fresh Revelations, and an 'Open' Canon," *Guarding His Flock Ministries*, January 27, 2013 (<http://guardinghisflock.com/2013/01/27/babylon-rising-and-canon-in-crisis/#more-2365>).

[2] **MIDRASH IN THE MAZE:** The Midrash (from the Hebrew verb *darash*, meaning "to seek, study or inquire." The noun occurs in 2 Chronicles 13:22 where the historian states: "Now the rest of the acts of Abijah . . . are written in the midrash of the prophet Iddo," and 2 Chronicles 24:27 which refers to what is written "in the midrash of the Book of the Kings.) Midrash refers to the ancient expositions of the Hebrew Bible given by Jewish rabbis and elders spanning the centuries following the Babylonian Captivity (*circa* 500 BC) until two centuries after Christ (*circa* 200 AD). Midrash is composed of two parts: first, the *halakah* which refers to the rabbinical interpretations and applications of the Law or Torah; and second, the *haggada* which refers to the collected sermons of rabbis on Tanakh, the name assigned to the rest of the Hebrew Bible. Depending upon which traditions and sermons the rabbis thought worthy, parts of the oral Midrash were edited and reedited through many years until the "written" Mishna was formed. In the centuries following, rabbis developed additional commentary upon the Mishna which became known as the Gemara. Together, the Mishna and Gemara comprise Talmud. So Midrash refers to the earliest and most ancient expositions of the Bible known as *halakah* (on Torah) and *haggada* (on the Old Testament narratives). I offer this overview with the knowledge that, as Yarchin writes, Midrash is "a Hebrew term for the notoriously hard-to-define rabbinic mode of interpretation." See William Yarchin, *History of Biblical Interpretation: A Reader* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, Inc., 2004): xvi. In a way, the activity of midrash may illustrate what Paul wrote about when he described the opponents of Moses, Jannes and Jambres, as men who were "always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth" (2 Timothy 3:6-7).

[3] Thomas Cahill, *The Gifts of the Jews: How a Tribe of Desert Nomads Changed the Way Everyone Thinks and Feels* (New York, NY: Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing Group, Inc.,

1998): 6. I disagree that the Bible is only a record of “the Jewish religious experience.” It goes beyond that mystical dimension. While God’s work of salvation work includes a divine encounter with His word, it is neither parochial to nor exhausted by human experience. The biblical record is one of God’s sovereign and providential dealings with the world through the Jewish people, which divine workings were preliminary to the incarnation of Jesus Christ, were focused upon His penal substitutionary death on the cross and resurrection from the dead, and will culminate with the Lord’s future return and reign on earth. Genuine spiritual experiences are not self-induced because the Holy Spirit initiates all of them (John 3:4-8). In other words, without God’s prompting, there’s no real divine experience, only “religion.”

[4] Milton S. Terry, *Biblical Hermeneutics: A Treatise on the Interpretation of the Old and New Testaments* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, n.d.): 604.

[5] Hermann Leberecht Strack, “Midrash,” *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*, Volume VII, Samuel Macauley Jackson (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, Reprint 1977): 366-370.

[6] Rev. Samuel Rapaport, *Tales and Maxims from the Midrash* (New York, NY: E.P. Dutton & Co., 1907): Introduction.

[7] Yarchin, *History of Biblical Interpretation*, xvi.

[8] Various, “The Midrashim: Introduction,” *Hebraic Literature; Translations from the Talmud, Midrashim and Kabbala* (New York, NY: Tudor Publishing Co., 1943): A Kindle Book.

[9] Ibid.

[10] Let it be stated that not all of the interpretive guidelines (i.e., *middot*) established by the rabbis are to be faulted. For example, *peshat*, which to the rabbis was/is the clear, simple, plain, literal and historical meaning of the text (the objective meaning) can be agreed to by most Bible teachers and scholars.

[11] The Jews also used *peshet* (“this is the prophetic fulfillment of that,” compare Acts 2:15-21 and Joel 2:28-32) as a method to interpret Old Testament prophetic passages. The method was employed especially by the Qumran community as they believed they were living at the end of days. For an evaluation of how one rabbi uses *peshet* interpretation in our modern world, see my review of the best-selling book, *The Harbinger*. Larry DeBruyn, “The Harbinger: A Review and Commentary,” *Guarding His Flock Ministries*, June 9, 2012 (<http://guardinghisflock.com/2012/06/09/the-harbinger/#more-2144>).

[12] Yarchin, *History of Biblical Interpretation*, xvi.

[13] Ibid: xvii.

[14] Scott Cunningham and Darrell L. Bock, “Is Matthew Midrash?” *Bibliotheca Sacra* (April—June 1987): 161.

[15] Ibid: 162. Robert H. Gundry, for example, approaches the study of Matthew’s gospel by assuming that parts of it, like Apocryphal or Pseudepigraphal books, contain midrashic embellishments of a non-historical nature. See quote in footnote 43.

[16] In 1982, liberal scholar Robert H. Gundry wrote a commentary on Matthew claiming that, “in comparison with the other gospels . . . Matthew’s style and theology show that he materially altered and embellished historical traditions and that he did so deliberately and often.” See R.H. Gundry, *Matthew: A Commentary on His Literary and Theological Art* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1982): 639.

[17] Anton Gill, *The Rise and Fall of Babylon: Gateway of the Gods* (London: Quercus Publishing Plc, 2011).

[18] Yarchin, *History of Biblical Interpretation*, xii. See Larry DeBruyn, “‘Deliteralizing’ the Bible

from Plato to Peterson: Scripture amidst the Shadows,” *Guarding His Flock Ministries*, January 3, 2012 (<http://guardinghisflock.com/2012/03/01/deliteralizing-the-bible-from-plato-to-peterson/#more-2038>).

[19] Ibid.

[20] Terry, *Biblical Hermeneutics*, 609.

[21] Ibid: 608.

[22] The examples are excerpted from, “The Midrashim: Introduction,” *Hebraic Literature; Translations from the Talmud, Midrashim and Kabbala*. See footnote 8.

[23] Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., *Toward an Exegetical Theology: Biblical Exegesis for Preaching and Teaching* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1981): 55.

[24] Ibid.

[25] Milman observed: “The reader [of the Babylonian Talmud] at each successive extract from this extraordinary compilation hesitates whether to admire the vein of profound allegorical truth, and the pleasing moral apologue, to smile at the monstrous extravagances, or to shudder at the daring blasphemy.” See Henry Hart Milman, *The History of the Jews*, Volume 3 (London: John Murray, 1929): 172.

[26] Marvin Meyer, “The Gospel of Philip,” *The Gnostic Gospels of Jesus: The Definitive Collection of Mystical Gospels and Secret Books about Jesus of Nazareth* (New York, NY: HarperCollins Publishers, Inc., 2005): 67.

[27] Moisés Silva, “Has the Church Misread the Bible?” *Foundations of Contemporary Interpretation: Six Volumes in One* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1996): 77.

[28] Emphasis added, Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., “A Short History of Interpretation,” *An Introduction to Biblical Hermeneutics: The Search for Meaning* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1994): 212.

[29] “Authority” of other writings beyond “the Jewish oracles” recognized and preauthorized by the Lord Jesus Christ characterizes other religions (*The Koran*), cults (*Book of Mormon*) and the Roman Catholic Church (The Pope speaks in the voice of God, *ex cathedra*). The mystical addiction of looking to writings other than the Bible for spiritual illumination, even on the part of evangelicals, is difficult to rehabilitate. Now we can add to the confusion the interpretive method of those peddling their novel post-modern prophecy paradigm who support their prophetic interpretations by finding exotic meanings in the Bible which they then attempt to buttress by citing other ancient but non-canonical writings, i.e., the Apocryphal and Pseudepigrapha which derive from a midrashic mindset. Now-a-days, everybody seems to want to breathe the air of strange doctrine.

[30] “The central concept in rabbinic exegesis, and presumably that of earlier Pharisees as well, was ‘midrash’.” See Richard N. Longenecker, “‘Who is the Prophet Talking About?’ Some Reflections on the New Testament’s Use of the Old,” *Themelios* 13.1 (Oct. / Nov. 1987): 6.

[31] Burton L. Visotsky, “Will and Grace: Aspects of Judaizing in Pelagianism in Light of Rabbinic and Patristic Exegesis of Genesis,” *The Exegetical Encounter Between Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity*, Emmanouela Grypeou and Helen Spurling, Editors (Boston, MA: Brill, 2009): 60.

[32] Emphasis added, William L. Lane, *The Gospel of Mark* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1974): 248-249.

[33] Kaiser, “Short History of Interpretation,” 217.

[34] Ibid.

[35] In the Colossian context, “tradition” in Colossians 2 verse 8 refers not only to the teaching of a Gentile false teacher but also to a Jew who drew “on Jewish magical and mystical traditions [i.e., like those that form a part of Midrash].” See Clinton E. Arnold, *The Colossian Syncretism: The Interface between Christianity and Folk Belief at Colossae* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1996): 209-210.

[36] J.N.D. Kelly, *A Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles* (New York, NY; Harper & Row, Publishers, 1963): 44-45. It ought to be noted that Kelly was an expert in the historical milieu which surrounded the New Testament and early church.

[37] *Ibid.*, emphasis added.

[38] In Galatians 4:21-31, and in a few other passages (e.g., 1 Corinthians 10:1-5), Paul employs a literary device that might appear midrashic. But upfront he informs readers that it is an allegory (Greek, *allegoroumena*). The reader does not have to dig too deep to understand the allegory’s meaning in the historical Genesis account. That the apostle did not use non-historical material to embellish that salvation is by God’s promise and not by man keeping the law is evident. Furthermore, the type of exegesis found in the Hagar/Sarah analogy (i.e., allegory) is not typical of Paul. So why in this instance? As Fung states, “The reason is not far to seek: if the Judaizers in Galatia [ed. “the false brethren secretly brought in,” Galatians 2:4; “They eagerly seek you,” Galatians 4:17] were using a similar kind of [ed. Midrash?] argument to persuade the Christians that sonship to Abraham entailed circumcision and observance of the law, it would be especially appropriate for Paul to turn his opponents’ own weapons against them.” See Ronald W.K. Fung, *The Epistle to the Galatians: The New International Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1988): 219.

[39] Gerald T. Shepherd, “Biblical Interpretation in the 18th & 19th Centuries,” in *Historical Handbook of Major Biblical Interpreters*, Donald K. McKim, Editor (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1998): 265.

[40] *Ibid.*

[41] *Ibid.*

[42] See footnote 43. Conservative Douglas Moo took Gundry to task for his treating the Gospel as a Midrash by Matthew; that Matthew mixed “history with unhistorical elaborations”; that in his gospel Matthew combined “history with nonhistory.” See Douglas Moo, “Matthew and Midrash: An Evaluation of Robert H. Gundry’s Approach,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*, March, 1983: 37.

[43] In responding to Moo who questioned that Matthew was an early Christian Midrash, Gundry justified his literary analysis by responding that, “if a spirit of free adaptation and embellishment runs through a large body of Jewish literature extending from the late OT period to a time several centuries after the NT was written, and runs through this body of literature in spite of diversity in the forms and contents of its representatives, the chronological position of Matthew in the middle of that era favors the possibility of our discovery the spirit of free adaptation and embellishment in that Jewish Christian gospel . . .” See Robert H. Gundry, “Gundry: A Response to ‘Matthew and Midrash’,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* (March, 1983): 50.

[44] Emergent church leader Brian McLaren makes this point when he wrote: “If we locate Jesus primarily in light of the story that has unfolded since his time on earth [according to the Greek-Roman western mindset], we will understand him one way. But if we see him emerging from within a story that has been unfolding through his ancestors [according to a eastern

Hebrew-Jewish mindset], and if we primarily locate him in that story, we might understand him in a very different way.” See Brian D. McLaren, *A New Kind of Christianity: Ten Questions that are Transforming Faith* (New York, NY: HarperCollins Publishers, 2010): 36-37.

[45] See Larry DeBruyn, “Apostatizing from the Apostle: Oh, and by the Way, from Jesus Too!” *Guarding His Flock Ministries*, April 2, 2010

(<http://guardinghisflock.com/2010/04/02/apostatizing-from-the-apostle-2/#more-923>).

[46] Craig L. Bloomberg, “Matthew,” *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, G.K. Beale and D.A. Carson, Editors (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2007): 9.

[47] This is but one of other analogies or types in this quotation which remind us of God’s care for and work on behalf of His children (Romans 8:28).

[48] Moo, “Matthew and Midrash,” 31.

[49] Cunningham and Bock, “Is Matthew Midrash?” 158.

[50] Adam Omelianchuk, “The Curious Case of Robert Gundry,” *First Things*, September 14, 2011 (<http://www.firstthings.com/blogs/firstthoughts/2011/09/the-curious-case-of-robert-gundry>). As Omelianchuk points out, the inerrancy controversy remains.

[51] Dr. William W. Klein, Dr. Craig L. Blomberg, and Dr. Robert L. Hubbard, Jr., with Kermit A. Ecklebarger, Consulting Editor, *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation* (Dallas, TX: Word Publishing, 1993): 129. Kaiser cites Frederic Gardner (1822-1889) when he made the same point. He wrote: “In all quotations which are used argumentatively, or to establish any fact or doctrine, it is obviously necessary that the passage in question should be fairly cited according to its real intent and meaning, in order that the argument drawn from it may be valid. There has been much rash criticism of some of these passages, and the assertion has been unthinkingly made that the Apostles, and especially St. Paul, brought up in rabbinical schools of thought, quoted Scriptures after a rabbinical and inconsequential fashion. A patient and careful examination of the passages themselves will remove such misapprehension.” See Kaiser, “A Short History of Interpretation,” 218, citing Frederic Gardner, *The Old Testament and New Testament in Their Mutual Relations* (New York, NY: James Pott, 1885): 317-318.

[52] Longenecker, “Who is the Prophet Talking About?” 4-8.

[53] Terry, *Biblical Hermeneutics*, 609.