HEBREW UNION COLLEGE - JEWISH INSTITUTE OF RELIGION
NEW YORK SCHOOL

INSTRUCTIONS FROM AUTHOR TO LIBRARY FOR THESES

AUTHOR Arthur Rutberg

TITLE A Comparitive Analysis of the Pesher/Peter Forms of Biblical Interpretation

TYPE OF THESIS: D.H.L. ( ) Rabbinic (✓)

Master's ( )

1. May circulate (✓)

2. Is restricted ( ) for ___ years.

Note: The Library shall respect restrictions placed on theses for a period of no more than ten years.

I understand that the Library may make a photocopy of my thesis for security purposes.

3. The Library may sell photocopies of my thesis. ✓ yes ___ no

March 25, 1983
Date

Arthur Rutberg
Signature of Author

Library Record

Microfilmed
Date

Signature of Library Staff Member

A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE PESHER/PETAR FORMS OF BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION

ARTHUR RUTBERG

Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for Ordination

Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion
New York, N.Y.

March 25, 1983

Referee: Professor Norman J. Cohen

This thesis is dedicated to the memory of

MAX DUBESTER
1885 - 1981

whose love of Judaism inspired me to become a rabbi in the tradition of his grandfather, Shaiah Tepper, who was a hazzan in Tysmenitsa in Galitzia.

And to

ANNA DUBESTER

whose love has always uplifted me and whose ninety-sixth birthday is celebrated today.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my advisor, Dr. Norman J. Cohen, whose help, advice and encouragement have been indispensable in the planning, researching, structuring and writing of this thesis.

I would also like to thank my friend, Howard L. Jaffe, without whose encouragement and friendship, when it was most needed, this thesis would not have been written and whose personal example served as an incentive to write the best possible thesis.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this thesis is to analyze and compare two forms of biblical interpretation, the pesharim found in the Dead Sea Scrolls and the petihtot, mainly found in Vayiqra Rabbah, which open with the formula "petar qerei." This comparison seems justified, since the formulae pesher and petar convey similar meanings and in both forms of interpretation, the passage from the Bible is applied to particular people, places or events. In order to facilitate such a comparison, other uses of the terms pesher and petar in the Bible and Rabbinic Literature as well as those passages in the New Testament in which biblical verses are applied to particular people or events must be examined.

The choice of this topic is due both to my desire to learn more about the Dead Sea Scrolls as well as to my general interest in Midrash. The people and the literature of the period following the Maccabean period until the Roman destruction of Jerusalem, in particular the Dead Sea Scrolls and the sect that lived at Qumran, have always fascinated me. I am most interested in understanding the relationship between the Dead Sea Scrolls and the rest of Jewish literary development, in particular the development of biblical interpretation. Though it may be impossible to come to definite conclusions about their relationship,

nevertheless, the composite petihtot with the "petar gerei" introductory formula are quite similar to the biblical interpretations written at Qumran known as pesharim. Therefore, by a comparative analysis of these forms, we may be able to determine if a relationship exists between them and if indeed the petirah developed from the pesher. In so doing, a clearer understanding of both the rabbinic petirah and the Qumranian pesher will be achieved.

Unfortunately, such a comparison is fraught with many problems, not the least of which is the isolation of the Qumranians and their literature. There is no concrete evidence that the contemporary Judean society knew of them or their writings. The references to Essenes in Josephus are tendentious and unreliable, nor are there any recognizable references to contemporary Judean society within the Dead Sea Scrolls themselves. In addition, there are no parallel passages or interpretive traditions of the pesharim, as there are of the petirot. This is probably due to the limitation of applications in the pesharim to people and events particular to the Qumranians. The pesher represents an isolated form of biblical interpretation which makes it difficult to compare it to parallel forms like the petirah.

Another problem in the comparison between pesher and petirah is the element of time. The Dead Sea Scrolls, and therefore the pesharim, have been dated roughly to the two hundred year period between the Maccabees and the destruction of the Second Temple.[1] In contrast, petirah is a much later rabbinic form, first appearing in midrashic compilations dated to the fifth century and beyond. This makes it difficult to determine if there is a chain of development from one to the other. Parallel forms in Tannaittic literature might help bridge this gap and buttress conclusions regarding a development from pesher to petirah. However, the only biblical interpretations similar to the pesharim and contemporary with the Tannaim are found in the New Testament, which will be examined in translation.

In academic circles, the comparisons between pesher and petirah have been dealt with minimally, with scholars concentrating on the more exotic form, the pesher. Maurya Horgan has done the most extensive work on the pesharim to date,[2] presenting pesher as a unique form of biblical interpretation with certain formulae, a particular understanding of the Bible and a consistent usage of various exegetical techniques.[3] She analyzes, linguistically, the terms pesher and petar,[4] but discounts any relationship

between pesher and petirah as forms of midrash because of the time difference and the Qumranian belief that the interpretations are revealed by God,[5] a notion not found in the petirot.

Some scholars agree with Horgan, saying that pesher can not be compared to later midrashim, but even add that pesher does not demonstrate any exegetic techniques typical of midrash. One of these scholars is Isaac Rabinowitz, who states that the word pesher does not mean 'interpretation' but 'presage' and, therefore, the pesharim of Qumran are not forms of exegetical interpretation.[6] For Rabinowitz, pesher at Qumran is the same as pesher in the book of Daniel or pittaron in Genesis 40-41, in that it is simply the declaration of what the biblical passages presage without the use of exegetic techniques. Rabinowitz is convinced that since pesher, that is, what a dream presages, in Daniel was divinely revealed and declared without any exegesis, then pesher at Qumran must also indicate divine revelation and public disclosure of what the biblical verse presages and to whom it applies without any exegesis. Asher Finkel, however, while paralleling the interpretation of biblical verses in pesher with the interpretation of dreams, does admit to various techniques being utilized by the writers of the pesharim in their interpretations.[7] He does

not refer to it as exegesis, but he does highlight the use of words from the biblical text, word splittings, transposition of letters and variant readings within the pesher to connect the allegorical interpretation with the biblical verse. Asher Finkel also admits that these techniques are common in the New Testament and in midrashim, though he does not go so far as to classify pesher as a form of midrash.

On the other side of the question of whether pesher is a form of midrash stand Addison Wright, William Brownlee and Lou Silberman. Wright, in his work, "The Literary Genre Midrash,"[8] first summarizes the views on this issue and then classifies pesher in the general category of midrash. Pesher can be considered midrash because it actualizes the biblical text and makes it relevant to the listener. Though midrash was meant to provide religious edification, moral instruction and intellectual stimulation, and was not designed, as pesher seems to be, to seek out the original meaning of the text, nevertheless, the general purpose of interpreting the biblical text and making it relevant is shared by all Midrash, and pesher, with a like purpose, falls into that category. For further proof of this, Wright notices the striking similarity in structure, method and aim between the pesher and the petirah found

in later midrashim, which for him confirms that pesher stands in the midrashic tradition.[9]

While Wright classifies pesher as a form of aggadic midrash, William Brownlee, in the introduction to his book on the Habakkuk pesher,[10] goes one step further by classifying pesher as a unique form of midrash, different from midrashei halakhah and midrashei aggadah. He refers to it as "midrash pesher." According to him, pesher, in contrast to other midrashic forms, entails a special type of prophetic knowledge that enables one to declare the true meaning of the text. Because of its exegetic techniques and form, therefore, Brownlee classifies it as a form of midrash.

A stronger case for pesher as a form of midrash is made by Lou Silberman, in his article on the structure and language of the Habakkuk pesher.[11] There he states that although pesher offers a theory of revelatory interpretation, its exegetic interpretations are almost identical with literary devices used in early midrashim. The closest parallel are the homiletic interpretations introduced by the formula, "petar qerei," where the abstract biblical text is applied to a specific situation. Petar in these midrashim, just like pesher, introduces a specific point of reference from which the biblical text is to be understood. Silberman

notes, however, that this point of reference for the pesher is always contemporary, while in the petirah the text usually refers to a biblical figure or event.

Knowing, then, all the divergences of opinion regarding the nature of pesher, its possible association with the petirah, the similarities and differences between these forms and also the difficulty of conclusively determining a relationship between them, we attempted to analyze and compare the pesharim of Qumran and the rabbinic petirah. To do so, we first located every use of the term "pesher" or "petar" in the Bible. Those usages will be analyzed in Chapter One. Second, the application of the Tanach in the New Testament to specific people will be examined to find parallels to pesher or petirah (Chapter Two). Next, we will analyze the pesharim in the Dead Sea Scrolls and pay particular attention to the structure and methods of interpretation employed by the Qumranians (Chapter Three). Lastly, through the use of aids such as Kassovsky's Otsar Lashon Ha-Talmud[12] and the Arukh Ha-shalem[13] of Nathan ben Jehiel as well as indices of such compilations as Bereshit Rabbah[14] and Vayiqra Rabbah,[15] we located and analyzed all the rabbinic uses of the term petar and in particular the use of petar qerei, the formulaic introduction to the petirah. The results will be found in Chapter Four.

Following this examination, we will be able to compare closely the forms of pesher and petirah to determine the relationship between them (Chapter Five).

CHAPTER I

PESHER AND PETAR IN THE BIBLE

A thorough investigation of the forms of pesher and petar must include an examination of their usage in the Bible. Pesher and petar appear in three biblical books: Genesis, Ecclesiastes and Daniel. Petar is only found in the Genesis sources, while pesher appears once in the book of Ecclesiastes and throughout the book of Daniel.

A. Examination of the Forms

In all three books, pesher and petar refer to some sort of interpretation. They usually are used in dream interpretation, focussing on the symbols in the dream and what they portend for the future. In addition, there are two cases in which pesher is used in which we find references to the interpretation of certain mysterious words or the solving of a riddle. These references are in Ecclesiastes 8:1 and Daniel 5:26.

Although they may appear to be two different words, pesher and petar do not connote two different forms of dream interpretation. Pesher and petar are actually two forms of the same word.

The noun form of petar, pittaron, is used in Genesis 40:5,8,12. Pittaron is a special form of dream interpretation which is best described in the dreams

of the butler and baker in Joseph's cell:

> The butler and the baker of the king of Egypt who were prisoners in jail had dreams that night, each man dreamed his own dream according to the interpretation (pittaron) of the dream (40:5).
>
> They said to Joseph, 'We have had dreams and there is no one to interpret (petar) them,' and Joseph said, 'Surely God has the interpretations (pittaron), tell me your dreams' (40:8).

The meaning of the dreams is implicit and Joseph, by focussing on the symbols in the dreams, while claiming God to be the source of the interpretations (pittaron) interprets the dreams and tells their interpretations to the dreamers. This is the function of pittaron, the noun form of petar, in Genesis 40.

Pesher, the counterpart to petar, is used extensively in the book of Daniel. There we see that pesher, used exclusively in the noun form, is analogous to pittaron. In reading Daniel, chapters 2, 4 and 5, we learn that pesher, like pittaron, is an interpretation of a dream based on the secrets enclosed in the dream's symbols. Note, for example, Daniel 2:44-45:

> And in the days of those kings, the God of Heaven shall set up an eternal kingdom which shall not be destroyed or lost to another nation, but it shall break into pieces and include

> all these kingdoms and it shall exist forever. Even though you envisioned (in your dream) a stone cut out from a mountain without the use of hands and that it was broken into iron, brass, clay, silver, and gold, the great God has made known to the king what shall come to pass after this. The dream stands and the interpretation (pesher) of it is reliable.

This interpretation is inseparable from the dream and is uncovered by Daniel, who is then able to tell the interpretation to the king. From this, it is apparent that the usage of pesher in the book of Daniel is analogous to the use of pittaron in Genesis 40.

We also know of an analogous term to pesher and pittaron -- the Akkadian term pašar. Pašar refers to an interpretation of a dream through its symbols. This term pašar, like pesher and pittaron, refers to fortelling the future and is used in reference to one divinely gifted to interpret dreams. God has placed the interpretation in the dream and has revealed it to the interpreter who then relates it to the dreamer.[1]

These analogous terms, all having similar usages although they are different words, can be explained as coming from the proto-Semitic root, ptr. This root referred to the interpretation of dreams or words relating to the future. It is this proto-Semitic root that most

probably later developed into the Akkadian pašar, the Hebrew pesher and the Aramaic petar.[2]

It seems strange, however, that in Genesis 40-41, petar, an Aramaic word, is used to denote this kind of interpretation. We know that petar is an Aramaic word from its usage in B.T. Berachot 55b, where it refers to dream interpretation. In addition, it is seen as an Aramaic word for 'interpretation' by its usage in the complex rabbinic petihtot with the petar qerei formula. In Genesis, a Hebrew text, the Hebrew root pesher should have been used to denote interpretation. Since pesher is used in the Dead Sea Scrolls and Ecclesiastes, two definitely Hebrew texts, to mean interpretation, it is odd that it was not also used in Genesis 40-41.

Maurya Horgan explains that petar in Genesis 40-41 is there as a loan word from the Aramaic. The writers of Genesis 40-41 were reluctant to use pesher, the Hebrew word, because of its similarity to the Akkadian pašar, which has connotations of magic and occult.[3]

Similarly, the use of pesher in the book of Daniel and in Targum Onkelos is curious. Both are Aramaic texts from 200 BCE-200 CE, the same period as the Dead Sea Scrolls and Ecclesiastes, which are written in Hebrew. Petar, not pesher, would have been appropriate in an Aramaic text. Horgan acknowledges that pesher

is not an Aramaic word and explains its use in the Targum Onkelos and Daniel as a loan word from the Hebrew or Akkadian.[4]

Petar is definitely an Aramaic term for "interpretation" in the complex petihtot with the petar qerei formula, B.T. Berachot 55b, and in the Targum Yerushalmi II on Genesis 40:12. The Targum Yerushalmi II as well as the petirot are much later than Onkelos and the book of Daniel. Targum Yerushalmi II can be dated to approximately the sixth century CE in Palestine.[5] This would make it contemporary with the last of the Palestinian Amoraim who compiled the complex petihtot using the petar qerei formula.

So, until the late Amoraic period, pesher and petar seem to have been interchangeable. This is evidenced by the use of petar in Genesis 40-41 and pesher in Daniel. Pesher may have been the more common form in the period of 200BCE-200 CE, as we see from its use in Daniel, Onkelos and at Qumran. Its use in Daniel does not lessen the Aramaic nature of the book. As far as we can tell, therefore, pesher and petar were set as the Hebrew and Aramaic terms for the interpretation of dreams or prophetic words by the end of the Amoraic period.

B. Nature of Interpretation

The nature of pesher/petar interpretation in the book of Daniel is not very different from that of Genesis. On the surface, one obvious difference seems to exist: petar appears in both the noun and verb form in Genesis 40-41, while pesher only appears in the noun form in Daniel. Joseph not only declares the interpretation of the dream, as does Daniel, but he seems to be the actual interpreter. In contrast, the pesher of the dream seems revealed to Daniel by God and then he declares it before the king. There is no indication that Daniel is an active participant in the interpretation. He is merely a conduit for God's interpretation.[6]

While one may think that this indicates a substantive difference between the two biblical texts regarding the process of dream interpretation, it actually seems that the account of Daniel's revelation is very similar to Joseph's view of interpretation. After all, Joseph does claim that God is the source of all interpretations in Genesis 40:8. He does not claim any interpretive skill of his own. It is the Egyptian king in Genesis 41:15 that acknowledges Joseph's proficiency in oneiromancy.

While the same recognition was bestowed upon

Daniel, the Babylonian king made more of a demand on Daniel, which may explain the attribution of the revelation of God. Daniel, in verse 2:26, was commanded to tell the king his dream as well as its interpretation. It is for this reason that we are made aware of God's revealing the mystery (raz) to him in verse 2:19. Since within the context of the story, Daniel's ability to tell the king his dream and its interpretation was beyond his human capacity, the writers of Daniel wanted to avoid attributing to him supernatural powers. Therefore, they described it as a revelation from God. On the other hand, we are not told about Joseph's revelation presumably because his task was not as awesome and did not require direct divine intervention. Though Joseph does acknowledge God's control over dream interpretation, the revelation of Daniel may have been inserted to accord Daniel prophetic status. In short, these accounts represent similar understandings of dream interpretation.

These stories share common attributes of dream interpretation. They both contain: 1) a person specially skilled in oneiromancy;[7] 2) an understanding that God is the source of the interpretation;[8] 3) a conception that the dream and its interpretation do not exist separately;[9] and 4) the interpretation is based on

symbols in the dream which are used to predict the future.[10]

Additionally, the basic thematic elements of dream interpretation in the Bible come together in the stories of Daniel and Joseph. In a foreign kingdom, there is an Israelite held in captivity, who is skilled in dream interpretation. This is made known to the foreign king who has had a dream. When the interpretation of the dream can not be extracted by the king's wise men, God reveals the interpretation to the captive Israelite. This captive Israelite is then able to declare the interpretation of the dream to the king. Though the revelation of the interpretation by God to the Israelite is spelled out with Daniel but not with Joseph, the Daniel account merely reflects an embellishment of the process for the sake of the story and Daniel's character. It does not represent a difference in the understanding of dream interpretation.

The book of Daniel also contains an interpretation that involves specific words, not just dreams, and may prove to be the precursor of pesharim on words of prophecy as in the Dead Sea Scrolls. This is clearly the case in Daniel 5:25-28, which is the account of the hand-writing on the wall at Belshazzar's feast. The uniqueness of this account is in the setting, the formulaic intro-

duction and the manner of interpretation. It is through these elements that parallels to Qumran pesharim may be drawn:

> And this is the writing that was inscribed: MENE MENE, TEKEL UPHARSIN. This is the interpretation of the word (pesher milta): MENE, God has numbered the days of your kingdom and brought it to an end; TEKEL, you are weighed in the balances and are found lacking; PERES, your kingdom will be divided and given to the Medes and the Persians.

By setting, I am referring not only to Belshazzar's feast, but to the way in which Daniel presents the interpretation. Belshazzar is frightened by the writing and calls for Daniel who was known to be a riddle and dream interpreter in the days of his father, Nebuchadnezzar. Daniel, after a long praise of Belshazzar and Nebuchadnezzar, reads aloud the writing on the wall. This reading of the writing is followed by its interpretation. Based on an analysis of the pesharim in the Dead Sea Scrolls, this passage in Daniel resembles the way in which the biblical verse and then its interpretation were presented at Qumran.

In terms of formula, the form pesher milta, which is synonymous with the Qumranian pesher hadabar, is used in Daniel to introduce the interpretation of

the writing on the wall in verse 5:26. Dena pesher milta is rendered as "this is the interpretation of the word." Milta is the Aramaic equivalent for hadabar, both meaning "the word." Since pesher was not yet finalized as a Hebrew or Aramaic word, it can be used in both sources and means the same thing -- interpretation with application for the future. The forms, therefore, are analogous since they both come after the reading of mysterious or prophetic words and mean the same thing.

It should also be noted that in the interpretation of prophetic or mysterious words, there is a similarity between the pesher hadabar of the Dead Sea Scrolls and the pesher milta of Daniel 5:26. In Daniel 5:26, each of the three words of the riddle, mene, tekel and upharsin, are dissected and interpreted separately. Mene, which is similar to the Hebrew verb limnot, is taken as referring to the numbering of the days of Belshazzar's kingdom which was soon to fall. Tekel, the Aramaic equivalent to the Hebrew word, shekel, refers to Belshazzar being weighed on the scales of justice. The interpretation of the last word, upharsin, involves some word play. Its root, prs, is understood not only in its Hebrew meaning, "to divide," but it is also applied to Persia which in Hebrew is paras. By comparing this to the

Qumran pesharim, which we will analyze later on,[11] the interpretation of the writing on the wall, pesher milta, could be seen as a primitive precursor of the pesharim, which involve more developed word plays in their interpretations of prophetic verses.

C. Summary

Our investigation of the forms pesher and petar in the Bible has yielded some valuable insight for our further comparison of the Qumran pesharim and the rabbinic petirot. Though the only source from which to glean information about the form and structure of pesher or petar in the Bible is Daniel 5:26, we have learned a good deal about these terms and about riddle and dream interpretation. Linguistically, we have learned that the terms are closer than previously imagined. They share a common proto-Semitic root and they have been used interchangeably. This buttresses the notion of the similarity between them. Indeed, we have not seen any appreciable difference when they are used in reference to dream interpretation.

Yet, in the Bible, pesher, not petar, is also used for interpretations of mysterious prophetic words.

This may have led to its usage at Qumran. We will not be able to fully compare pesher and petar until we investigate their forms later in this thesis.[12]

CHAPTER II

APPLICATION OF BIBLICAL VERSES

IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

In Palestine, when Christianity was in its nascent stages and the New Testament was being written, scriptural interpretation was a widespread phenomenon. We see evidence of this in literature contemporary with the New Testament, such as the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Mishnah. The Qumranians and the early rabbis interpreted biblical texts and to justify their authority and philosophy, each group developed a unique tradition of interpretation. It is not surprising, therefore, that in this atmosphere, the early Christians developed an interpretive tradition of their own.

A. Interpretation

One difference, however, in these various interpretive traditions, is that the early Christians in the Gospels and the Qumranians in the Dead Sea Scrolls focussed on verses from Prophets and Writings, while the early rabbis focussed on Torah. The rabbis were concerned with laws which were found in the Torah and with personages from the Torah who they could use to validate their positions as legislators.[1] The Qumranians and the early Christians, who did not assume the roles of legislators but viewed themselves instead as representing the true community of Israel for the coming end of days,

focussed on Prophets and Writings which were filled with prophecies of apocalypse and redemption.

The mode of the interpretation of verses from Prophets and writings in the New Testament is similar to that of Qumran and resembles the style of Targum. As with Targum, the passage from scripture was read at a public gathering, usually a synagoge, and an oral Aramaic interpretation was presented after each verse or groups of verses was read from the Bible.[2] It is assumed that the pesharim at Qumran were taught in like fashion by the Teacher of Righteousness.[3] A similar pattern is in evidence in the account of Jesus' reading and interpreting scripture found in the Gospel of Luke 4:16-21:

> He came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and went into the synagogue on the sabbath day as he usually did. He stood up to read and they handed him the scroll of the prophet Isaiah. Unrolling the scroll, he found the place where it is written: 'The spirit of the Lord has been given to me, for he has annointed me. He has sent me to bring the good news to the poor, to proclaim liberty to the captives and to the blind new sight, to set the downtrodden free, to proclaim the Lord's year of favor! He then rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the assistant and sat down. All eyes in the synagogue were fixed on him. Then he began to speak to them, 'This text is being fulfilled today even as you listen.'[4]

Jesus' actions following the reading of Isaiah 61:1-2 bespeak a tradition, present in Palestine at that time,

of an oral interpretation following the reading of a passage from the weekly biblical portion.

Jesus' interpretation not only implies that there is more to the text than the literal (peshat) meaning, a concept implicit in all Targum and Midrash, but that there is also a mystery hidden in the verse which is unknown to most people. His interpretation, just as that of the Teacher of Righteousness in Qumran, reveals the mystery in the prophetic verse to the masses. This element of mystery (raz) in the verse and the notion that this prophetic verse is being fulfilled by contemporary events allows this interpretation to be seen as a form of pesher.

Using Luke 4:16-21 as our model, we can see certain basic components of the biblical interpretations in the New Testament which are shared by the Qumran pesharim. These components include: 1) interpretation given by one teacher specially skilled; 2) the concept of a hidden meaning within prophetic verses; and 3) contemporary events or people are seen as fulfilling and being predicted by biblical verses from Prophets and Writings.

B. Method

Structurally, however, there are clear differences between scriptural interpretations in the New Testament

and the Qumran pesharim. In the Dead Sea pesharim, we first have the citation of the biblical verse, then the formula pesher hadabar (the interpretation of these words), which is applied to certain people or situations. In contrast, certain applications of biblical texts found in the Gospel of Matthew and in the Book of Acts begin with the contemporary situation or a particular person and are then followed by the biblical verse. In Matthew 8:17, for example, Jesus is described as performing excorcisms and curing the sick. The verse then says:

> This was to fulfill the prophecy of Isaiah: 'He took our sicknesses away and carried our diseases for us'. (53:4).

Another is seen in Matthew 3:3, where John the Baptist is the subject of discussion:

> This was the man the prophet Isaiah spoke of when he said, "A voice cries out in the wilderness-Prepare a way for the Lord, make his paths straight" (40:3).

A third form of construction is seen in Acts 2:25:

> As David says of him (Jesus), "I saw the Lord before me, for with him at my right hand nothing can shake me. So my heart was glad and my tongue cried out with joy; my body, too, will rest in the hope that you will not abandon my soul to Hades nor allow your holy one to experience corruption. You have made known

> the way of life to me, you will fill me
> with gladness through your presence"
> (Psalms 16:8-11).

In all these examples, the biblical verse comes after the contemporary application and the formula, which includes such phrases as, "this was to fulfill the prophecy" or "this was the man the prophet spoke of" or "as David says of him." These are all formulae for bridging the biblical verse to the contemporary situation and are thereby analogous in function to pesher hadabar in the Dead Sea Scrolls.

One more structural component of the interpretations in the New Testament, which differs from the Qumran pesharim, is the application of biblical verses to certain people. In the Qumran pesharim, the majority of Biblical verses are applied to groups of people in given situations.[5] In the New Testament, the application is almost always to an individual, and usually to Jesus. This difference in application highlights the distinction between the two groups. The Qumranians were concerned with creating and perfecting the true and holy community of Israel. For the early Christians, such perfection and holiness was achieved only through the salvation of Christ.

C. Paul

While the interpretations most analogous to the pesharim can be found in the Gospels and Acts, the uses of biblical verses in Paul's Epistles are worthy of investigation. There are marked differences between the "pesher-type" applications in the Gospels and the interpretations in such Epistles as Galatians and Romans in the areas of construction and choice of biblical citations. The structure of Paul's interpretations do not resemble inverted pesharim with the exception of Galatians 4:22-31, which will be cited in full later in this chapter. This passage seems to represent a meld of the Qumran pesharim and the rabbinic petirot. The choice of biblical citations is different in that the Gospels and Acts drew verses solely from Prophets and Writings, yet Paul uses Torah as well. This use of Torah, in particular the use of figures from the Torah such as Abraham, Sarah and Isaac, is reminiscent of the extensive use of Torah by the rabbis in the petirot.

Paul's use of biblical verses in indicative of his Pharisaic background. The similarity between his focus on personages from the Pentateuch and the predominance of such personages in the midrashim of the rabbis, the literary descendants of the Pharisees, is one indication. Second, Paul himself claims to be a Pharisee.[6]

The Pharisees, as previously noted, were concerned with law and therefore focussed on Torah. In contrast, the early Christians, being concerned with the coming kingdom of God, focussed on the Prophets and Writings which lent themselves to apocalyptic and Messianic interpretations. Paul, not coming from an apocalyptic background but rather from a Pharisaic one, inherited not only the use of the Prophets and Writings and early Christian interpretation, but the Pharisaic focus on Torah as well. Paul could use Torah to expand the biblical grounding for the early Christian interpretations. I would speculate that Paul's Pharisaic background made it possible for him to be a more effective 'Good News' distributor, especially among those who knew Torah.

Though not highly structured, some of Paul's simple interpretations of biblical verses apply to his contemporary situation. One very common one is his equating of Abraham's faith in God with the faith the Christians should have in Jesus. Paul understands Genesis 15:6 to mean that for God to favor Abraham, all Abraham had to do was have faith. This interpretation then was applied to the Christians in Romans 4, Galatians 3 and Hebrews 11 to show them that they need not be circumcised to be Christian. All they needed to do was to have faith in

God., i.e., Jesus, just like Abraham did before he was circumcised.

There are, however, other illustrations of Paul applying the Bible to contemporary circumstances. For example, in II Corinthians 6:2 we read:

> "At the favorable time, I have listened to you; on the day of salvation I came to your help" (Isaiah 49:8). Well, now is the favorable time, this is the day of salvation.

and in I Corinthians 9:9:

> It is written in the Law of Moses: "You must not put a muzzle on the ox when it is treading out the corn" (Deut. 25:4). Is it about oxen that God is concerned or is there an obvious reference to ourselves?

Paul consistently applies the text to his day. In Romans 15:21, Paul even applies Isaiah 52:15 to himself as the one who must "fulfill the text."[7]

It is interesting to note that in the Epistle to the Hebrews, Paul makes extensive use of Psalms. I suppose that a Hebrew who was a regular synagogue attender would be very familiar with Psalms. Paul uses Psalm 8:6 in Hebrews 2:9 in the following manner:

> We do see in Jesus one who was "for a short while made lower than the angels" and is now "crowned with glory and splendor" because he submitted to death.

We read in Psalm 95 about the Israelites in the desert who rebelled and therefore would not reach the place of rest that God had promised them. In Hebrews 4:2, Paul equates the rebellious Israelites with those who did not have faith in Jesus. He also equates the place of rest with the Shabbat--the day of rest. Paul tells his congregation that those who have faith will merit a day of rest, which is reminiscent of the notion that in the time of the Messiah every day will be Shabbat.

Paul's most interesting and well-structured interpretation of the Bible using personages from the Torah and applying them to the contemporary situation is found in Galatians 4:22-31. In this section, Paul expands upon an interpretive tradition of seeing Isaac as the ancestor of the Christians, which was first mentioned in Romans 9:10. While Paul does not quote directly from Torah, he does develop an allegorical interpretation from a Pentateuchal narrative:

> (The Law) says,[8] if you remember, that Abraham had two sons, one by the slave girl and one by his free-born wife. The child of the slave girl was born in the

> ordinary way; the child of the free woman was born as the result of a promise. This can be regarded as an allegory: the women stand for the two covenants. The first who comes from Mt. Sinai, and whose children are slaves is Hagar--since Sinai is in Arabia--and she corresponds to the present Jerusalem that is a slave like her children. The Jerusalem above, however, is free and is our mother, since Scripture says: "Shout for joy, you barren women who bore no children. Break into shouts of joy and gladness, you who were never in labor, for there are more sons of the forsaken one than sons of the wedded wife" (Isaiah 54:1). Now you, my brothers, like Isaac, are children of the promise, and as that time the child born in the ordinary way persecuted the child born in the spirit's way, so also now. Does not scripture say: "Drive away that slave-girl and her son; this slave-girl's son is not to share the inheritance with the son" (Gen. 21:10) of the free woman? So, my brothers, we are the children not of the slave-girl but of the free-born wife.

If we analyze closely, we can see a parallel between Paul's interpretation and the pesher/petar form. The elements can be broken down along many lines. First, we see a biblical narrative cited. In this case, it is stated indirectly and is taken from the account of Hagar and Ishmael found in Genesis 16 and 21. The statement: "This can be regarded as an allegory" is analogous to saying, "the (allegorical) interpretation of this is."[9] The next element is the simple statement of the allegorical interpretation of the biblical narrative and its

application: "The women stand for the two covenants," which is somewhat parallel to the pesharim and petirot. In addition, the final element, which is the development of the interpretation and an explanation of the application, also occurs in the pesharim and petirot.

By quoting Isaiah 54:1, however, Paul breaks with the pesharim, but not with the petirot. While the pesharim never go beyond the primary biblical verse or verses quoted at the outset, both Paul and the compilers of the petirot utilize other biblical verses to further develop their interpretation. Paul displays classic rabbinic petihta/petira style in the next verse of this passage: he brings his allegorical interpretation back to the pericope verse, Genesis 21, which is part of the source of the Hagar story. It certainly is the direct source for the inferiority of the slave-girl's children and the just claims of the children of the promise.

However, Paul's last verse is clearly closer to pesher style than to petirah. The rabbis would have ended with the verse from Genesis 21. In contrast, Paul and the writers of the pesharim were more conscious of the apocalyptic faith community they were addressing. Their interpretations contemporize the Bible in such a way to make it apply to their community and its world view. They

want their community to be convinced that what they are doing is right and justified. This is why Paul ends with an uplifting message and not the verse from Genesis 21.

D. Summary

We have seen the basic elements of the pesher form in New Testament texts: citation of biblical verses, introductory formula, and the contemporary application/ interpretation of the biblical material. We have also seen a fairly consistent interpretive tradition of using the Prophets and Writings to show that Jesus and the early Christian movement had been predicted by the prophets and the Psalmist. Paul, with his Pharisaic background, represents not so much a break from this tradition but an embellishment of it with his focus on Torah. Though Paul does not claim that the importance of Jesus and the role of the Christian community are implicit in the verses from the Torah, he does use Torah to teach the nascent Christian community that the moral and spiritual messages of the Torah need not be seen as contradictory to Christianity.

Though the parallels with the basic elements of pesher and a consistent interpretive tradition utilizing Prophets and Writings might place the interpretations of biblical verses in the New Testament squarely in the

category of pesher, Paul's use of Torah and his interpretive style, most strongly evidenced in Galatians 4:22-31, would lead me to believe that we are looking at an intermediate style of pesher/petar. Paul's interpretation may well be a link between the Qumran pesharim and the rabbinic petirot. Though we have little evidence to corroborate this, it does seem that Paul's interpretive use of Tanach, as seen in Galatians 4 and elsewhere, may represent a meld of the pesher and petirah forms.

CHAPTER III

PESHAR AT QUMRAN

The most developed form of pesher-type interpretation is found in the Dead Sea Scrolls from Qumran. Among the scrolls found in the caves at Qumran, eighteen of them are pesharim.[1] While we have become acquainted with pesher as a form of dream interpretation,[2] Qumran pesharim are interpretations of books of the Bible. Seven biblical books have pesharim: Habakkuk (1QpHab), Nahum (4QpNah), Hosea (4QpHos), Isaiah (4QpIs), Micah (1QpMic), Zephanian (1&4QpZep), and Psalms (4QpPs).[3] Of these seven books, the one with the most complete and intact pesher scroll is Habakkuk. Though this chapter will deal with all the pesharim, a large portion of my study of pesharim will involve the pesher on the book of Habakkuk.

A. General Description of the Pesharim and Qumran

Due to the apocalyptic world view of the Qumran community, the pesharim deal with verses from the Prophets and Psalms which often contain moral messages to the Israelite community. They focus on punishment of those who do not walk in the ways of God and great rewards for those of the House of Israel who righteously follow God's law. This reward and punishment, and in particular the concept of redemption at the end of days (beaharit hayamim) found in Isaiah, Hosea, Micah and Psalms,[4] is an appropriate

biblical grounding for an apocalyptic community such as the one that lived at Qumran. Due to the social, religious and political circumstances in post-Maccabean, pre-70 Judea, the Qumran community believed itself to be living at the end of days. The Qumranians, therefore, used verses from these prophets to prove that the prophesied end of days was going to happen in their lifetime. It was imperative for the Qumranians to be aware of the coming ultimate end (qets ha-aḥaron), and the purpose of these pesharim was to teach the Qumranians about it.

B. View of Prophecy

In the pesharim, there is not only a fortelling of the apocalypse, but there is also a sense that the details of this apocalypse were hidden in the words of the prophets and were a mystery decreed by God. While the prophets predicted a coming end of days, the pesharim claim superior knowledge regarding this end of days. In 1QpHab 7:7, the pesher concludes with the words:

> The final end (qets ha-aḥaron) will be long in coming, but it will be better than that predicted by the prophets; for the mysteries of God are truly wonderful.

The actual end of days is not going to be like that predicted by the prophets, but it will be better. This

superior vision of the end of days is apparently contained in a mystery (raz) given by God through the prophets. Moreover, this superior and accurate vision is understood only by the teacher of the pesharim and not by the prophets. This is quite similar to the notion of a mystery revealed by God but unknowable to most people as found in the Book of Daniel, when it refers to dreams. As we saw in Chapter I of this thesis,[5] the mystery (raz) is hidden in the dream. The dreamer, like the prophet, does not know this secret mystery, yet it is revealed to an interpreter. This mysterious message hidden in the dream is then declared publicly by the interpreter. This mystery, once declared, becomes the pesher.

We can draw an analogy between dreams and prophecy by looking at Sifre Bamidbar, pisqa 103, which states that God spoke to the prophets in dreams and visions. Since dreams and prophetic visions are comparable, we can make a comparison between the Qumran pesher and the pesher interpretation in Daniel. The source for both dreams and prophecy is God. Both contain mysterious messages which are extracted and declared publicly as pesharim. As in the case of the king and his magicians in Daniel 2:19-30, where the true meaning could not be ascertained, and only Daniel knew it, so, too, the prophet Habakkuk, did not

understand the hidden message of his words and only the one whom God so endowed could interpret the prophecy correctly. We see this in 1QpHab 2:5 referring to Hab. 1:5:

> The interpretation of this verse is to the traitors at the end of days. They are the violators of the covenant who did not believe all they heard about what was to happen to the last generation from the priest, in whose heart God put the understanding to interpret all the words of his servants, the prophets, and through whom God foretold all that is to happen to His people and His congregation.

We see that an individual, here identified as a priest, has been given the skill by God to interpret (liphshor from pesher) the words of the prophets and apply them to the last generations. Through this pesher we can see that the Qumranians referred to themselves as God's congregation (eydah) who will witness the end of days. We also learn that the priest who interpreted the prophecies lived before the end of days and presumably before the writing of the pesharim. A further identification of the interpreter of the prophecy is found in 1QpHab 7:3:

> The interpretation of this is to the Teacher of Righteousness to whom God has made known all the mysteries of the words of his servants, the prophets.

We can now create a composite picture of the Qumran view of prophecy and its interpretation. We see that prophecy contains mysteries, and that the end of days is foretold by God in these mysteries which He declared. God, therefore, is not only the source of the prophecy, which we learn from the prophets themselves, but of the mysteries within the prophecies which foretell the end of days as well. God has also granted the Teacher of Righteousness, like Daniel, the ability to extract the mysterious message concerning the end of days and its participants from the words of the prophets. Though he could not be the writer of all the pesharim, it would seem that the Teacher of Righteousness taught the pesharim to the Qumran community.[7]

Taking this view of the Teacher of Righteousness and the notion of a mystery within prophecy into consideration, we have a direct parallel to Daniel. In both texts, there is a concept of a mystery within the dream or prophetic words. In addition, the two characters, Daniel and the Teacher of Righteousness, have divinely granted skills to extract the pesher, the true meaning, and declare it publicly.

The Qumran pesharim are not just the revelations by God to the Teacher of Righteousness. If they were, we would have no grounds for comparison to any form of biblical

interpretation. The Qumran pesharim involve not only the revelation of mystery but an exegetical commentary on parts of the Bible. While the revelation of mystery within the biblical verses to the Teacher of Righteousness may be the premise or pre-supposition for the pesharim, the important aspect for our study is the structure of the pesharim and their method of biblical interpretation.

C. Examination of the Pesher Form of Bibical Interpretation

Owing to the important of the Bible to the Qumranians, as evidenced by the proliferation of biblical citations throughout the Dead Sea Scrolls, the first structural component of the pesher is the citation of the biblical source. It always comes from a book of the Prophets or Psalms and is never restated within the body of the pesher. It is, however, often repeated, though sometimes in part, at the end of a pesher and usually leads to a secondary pesher on the same verse or part thereof.[8] The biblical citation can be part of a verse, a whole verse or more than one verse, yet the most common form is one verse quoted in toto. The verses are always quoted sequentially as they appear in the Bible. This would lead me to believe that the pesharim were given as the book was being

read in public, verse by verse.

There are also cases in which the cited biblical verse is different from the Masoretic text. Some cases are noteworthy because the differences in the readings of certain words are often the basis for word plays in the interpretations. Most of them are found in the pesharim of Habakkuk, Nahum and Psalms. For example, in 1QpHab 2:1, what the Masoretic text has as bagoyim (among the nations) in Habakkuk 1:5, the pesher renders it as bogedim, traitors. The rest of the pesher deals with the traitors and who they are for the Qumranians. Since the reading of bogedim is so crucial for the pesher, it would seem that the writer consciously emended the biblical text to create a valid proof text. If that is the case, then the writers of pesher employed rabbinic exegetic techniques, but did not feel compelled to spell them out.[9] In 1QpHab 8:3, the reading from Hab. 2:5 was changed from, "Alas wine (hayayin) will make a man a traitor," in the Masoretic text to "Alas, wealth (hon) will make a man a traitor," The changed word, hon, is the key to the interpretation and may represent the original reading of the verse. In 4QpNah fragment 3-4, column ii:4, the change of yamish to yamush probably represents nothing more than a common misreading of a yod as a vav or vice-versa. A similar misreading of a bet as a

kaf is found in 4QpPs fragment 1-10, column iii:7.

Whereas almost all of these changes in the texts could be ascribed to scribal error or textual variants, giving no credit to the pesher writer, the same claim can not be made for 1QpHab 12:7. The phrase from Habakkuk 2:17, medamei adam veḥamas arets kiryah (from the blood of man and the pillages of the land, the city), is not directly interpreted or applied to their contemporary situation in the first part of the pesher. Later, however, the verse is repeated within a new pesher, but the word order is reversed and the word adam, man, is removed. It reads, medamei kiryah veḥamas arets, from the blood of the city, 'that is Jerusalem,' and the pillages of the land, 'that is Judea.' The writer, in a manner similar to that of the rabbis, has cleverly emended the biblical text to apply the word 'blood' not to a man's blood, but rather to the defiled blood on the altar of the Temple in order to implicate the Wicked Priest. The writer or writers of the pesharim have cleverly demonstrated their ability to interpret the Bible and have shown themselves to have the same literary freedom with the text as the rabbis gave to themselves.

Following the biblical quote from the focussed text, is the formula which introduces the application and the interpretation. The formula utilizes the word pesher

in two ways: pesher hadabar and pishro. Pesher hadabar can be translated as "the interpretation of this word," while pishro means, "its interpretation." Though both convey the same meaning, the more common form is pishro.

To bridge the introductory formula to the application of the verse, the writer used a preposition, either 'al or asher. Including the introductory formula, the basic openings for a pesher, following the biblical citation, are "the interpretation of this word concerns" or "its interpretation applies to that" and other variations. Following this introductory formula and verse citation, is the application.

The application, though it does not utilize a set formula or formulae, does appear to follow a certain pattern. The application can be either to individuals or groups, in a given time or place. The applications to types of people in groups are most common. There are thirty-two of them in all the pesharim. Some examples of the groups that the verses are applied to are: the traitors with the Man of the Lie (1QpHab 2:1), the Kittim whose fear is upon all the nations (1QpHab 3:4), all the idols of the nations (1QpHab 12:12), the last priests of Jerusalem (1QpHab 9:4), those that did not lust with their eyes at the end of wickedness (1QpHab 5:7), and the wicked ones of Ephraim and

Manasseh (4QpPs[a] f. 1-10, ii:18). Of these thirty-two, eighteen have specific details applied to them; for example: the Seekers of Smooth Things whose evil deed will be revealed to all Israel at the end of time (4QpNah f.3-4, iii:3), the Council of the Poor who chose to do God's will (4QpPs[a] f.1-10,i:21), the traitors at the end of days (1QpHab 2:5), and all the nations who worship stone and wood (1QpHab 13:1).

The applications to specific individuals predictably refer to the personages within the Qumran tradition. They include the Wicked Priest, the Teacher of Righteousness and the Man of the Lie. As in the case with groups, the majority of these applications place the specified individual in a given situation or condition. There are other verse applications to times and places, but they are in a distinct minority. The applications to people, as individuals or in groups, is limited to the people directly involved with the Qumran community either positively or negatively, and the applications to these people are often repeated with minor changes in the setting or condition.

If the elements we have seen so far (the biblical citation, the introductory formula and the application) were the sole components of the pesher, then this would be a primitive form of interpretation like we saw in Daniel.[10] There is, however, an interpretation that follows the

application and it is this interpretation that raises pesher at Qumran to the level of midrash.

At its simplest level, the interpretation expands and buttresses the application of the verse. One example is 1QHab 12:7, which deals with an emended verse from Hab. 2:17. In this case, the interpretation (which is underlined) simply explains the application, but does not utilize any distinguishable exegetic techniques:

> "For the blood of the city and the pillages of the land." The interpretation of the 'city' is Jerusalem where the Wicked Priest performed acts of abomination and defiled the sanctuary of God. "And the pillages of the land," they refer to the cities of Judah where he stole the possessions of the poor.[11]

Another example is found in 4QpNahum fragment 3-4, column iii:3, regarding Nahum 3:7:

> "Are you better than Amon who sits by the rivers." The interpretation of 'Amon' is Ephraim and the 'rivers' they are Manasseh, the honored ones of the city who are in control of Manasseh.

In both of these cases, the interpretation explains and expands the parameters of the application, but does not employ techniques using the words from the biblical citation, which we will see later on.

A further development in the interpretation section is seen in 1QpHab 2:12 where the Chaldeans, mentioned in Habakkuk 1:6, are applied to the Kittim. We see a parallel made between the quick and fierce Chaldeans and the swift and mighty Kittim.

> "Beware, for I am raising up (against you) the Chaldeans, the quick and fierce nation!" Its interpretation concerns the Kittim who are swift and mighty in war who destroy many with the sword and famine. Under the rule of the Kittim, the wicked will betray the covenant and will not be faithful to the laws of God.

However, the interpretive methods most commonly used in the pesharim are word plays. These word plays utilize words from the focussed biblical text, either whole, divided or metathesized, within the interpretation. In so doing, the writer of the pesher proves that the application relates to the biblical verse. This interpretation functions as a proof text by using the words from the verse and demonstrates the validity of the pesharim. A legitimate connection is thereby established between the pesher, on the one hand, and the biblical verse, on the other. Thus the Qumranian self-perception and its understanding of prophecy are justified by the pesher interpretation. Our first example of this type of word play is quite simple and

is found in 4QpPs fragment 1-10, column iii, referring to Psalm 37:22:

> "For those who bless him will inherit (yoresh) the land and those who curse him will be cut off (yekharetu)." Its interpretation concerns the Council of the Poor who have the portion of all the great ones who will inherit (yoresh) the exalted mountain of Israel and in the mountain of his sanctuary, they will rejoice. "And those who curse him will be cut off (yekharetu)"--they are the violators of the covenant, the wicked ones of Israel, who will be cut off (yekharetu) and destroyed for ever.

Another example of the use of words from the biblical citation in the interpretation is in 4QpNah fragment 3-4, column ii:1-2, referring to Nahum 3:1:

> "Woe to the bloody city filled with deceit (kahash) and destruction." The interpretation of this is the city of Ephraim, where the Seekers of the Smooth things, who live by deceit (kahash) and lies, will be at the end of days.

In both cases, the words are used in descriptive statements about the applied personages, but really do not involve a play on words.

There is, however, a greater sense of word play in 1QpHab 8:1 referring to Habakkuk 2:4:

> "And the righteous (tsadik) by his faith (emunato) shall live." Its interpretation

> concerns all those who observe the word of God in the House of Judah, whom God will save from the House of Judgement for the sake of their work and their faith (emunatam) in the Teacher of Righteousness (tsedek).

In this case, the writer did not feel compelled to maintain the key words for the interpretation in the same form as they appear in the biblical citation. This would indicate a development in the art of the interpreter. The interpreter can still tie the interpretation into the verse, while using a different form of the quoted word. We can also see this is 1QpHab 5:3 and 4Qp Nahum frag 3-4, column ii:4.

One of the most advanced uses of word play in the pesharim is found in 1QpHab 11:8 which interprets Habakkuk 2:16 and illustrates the artistry of the interpreter:

> "You are more full of shame (qalon) than of glory (kavod). Drink you, too, and stagger. The cup (kos) of God's right hand will turn to you and disgrace (qigalon) will be on your honor." Its interpretation concerns the Wicked Priest whose shame (qelono) exceeded his glory (kevodo). For he did not circumcise the foreskin of his heart but walked in the ways of satiation in order to quench his thirst. Therefore the cup (kos) of God's anger will destroy him, to heap upon him the vomit (qi) of his shame (qalon)...

Although this pesher remains incomplete, it contains examples of the exegetic techniques of word splitting and metathesis. The metathesis is of the word, "stagger," which in Hebrew is hera'el. The letters hr'l are re-arranged to read 'orlah, that is, "foreskin." This is how the pesher writer explains the interpretation regarding the priest with the uncircumcised heart. The word splitting is equally sophisticated in the word disgrace, qiqalon, taken from the biblical verse and split in the interpretation into qi and qalon to produce a very graphic picture of this priest's disgrace. This is one of the best examples of the liberties which the pesher writer took with the text. It is also the best example of the high level of exegetical techniques utilized at Qumran, which are very similar to those employed by the rabbis.

D. Summary

Even with this investigation of the Qumran pesharim in regard to their theology and exegetical techniques, it is still difficult to determine the place of the Qumran pesharim in the spectrum of biblical interpretation. Lou Silberman claims that the Qumran pesharim are a link in a continuous chain from the interpretations in Daniel to

the complex rabbinic petiḥtot using the petar qerei formula.[12] While the understanding of a hidden mystery within prophetic visions or dreams and the pesher milta regarding the writing on the wall in Daniel 5:26 might indicate a close connection between the material in Daniel and the Dead Sea Scrolls, there is a vast difference in interpretive technique. Not only is the word play of the Qumran pesharim far more developed and complex, but the interpretation does not proceed from the prophetic words themselves, as in Daniel 5:26, but from its application. While there is some similarity between the theologies of these pesharim, the unique character of the Qumran pesharim is found in the nature of its exegesis.

Similarly, one might think that there is no connection between the pesharim and the petirot, since they contain such differences in theology and world view. Yet, the same factor that influenced the similarity between Daniel and the pesharim regarding theology can account for the difference between the pesharim and the petirot and that is chronology. The writers of Daniel lived in a world influenced by Greek and Persian cultures contemporary with the Hasmoneans, which was similar to the world of the Qumranians. Their shared apocalyptic world view was due to the time in which they were writing.

However, the destruction of the Temple, the emergence of both Christianity and Rabbinic Judaism put an end to this apocalyptic world view, and, in large measure, eliminated the need to contemporize the Bible and to rely solely on prophetic eschatology as the biblical source for interpretations. Theology and eschatology, being so influenced by contemporary events, are not the areas for comparison between the pesharim and the petirot.

Techniques of interpretation and application, on the other hand, are grounds for comparison between the two. According to Joseph Heinemann,[13] petar qerei in the complex petiḥtot introduced an application which presupposes that the original intended meaning of the text is not apparent in the peshat and is still in the text. In other words, there is a secret meaning within the verse yet to be extracted. In terms of interpretation, both pesharim and petirot use word plays, word splittings, metathesis and substitutions as exegetical techniques.

In summation, the Qumran pesharim, while sharing certain theological principles with the book of Daniel, represent a unique and well-structured form of biblical interpretation reminiscent of the petirot. We will be able to see more clearly the relationship between these

two forms of biblical interpretation in the material which will follow.

CHAPTER IV

RABBINIC USE OF PETAR

The final area of examination in this study is in the rabbinic use and understanding of pesher and petar. While the form of petar most frequently found in Rabbinic literature is the petar qerei formulation in the complex petihtot, there are some uses of petar in the Talmud as well. One example is in Talmud Bavli, Berachot 55b, where both pesher and petar refer to dream interpretation:

> R. Yochanan says, 'He who has had a dream and is troubled by it, should have someone interpret (petar) it.'...So says R. Hisda, 'A dream that is not interpreted (pesher) is like a letter that is not read.'[1]

While this demonstrated that pesher and petar were interchangeable, it, more importantly, teaches us that petar was understood to refer to some form of interpretation. We can see this also in Ketubot 107b and Yebamot 97b where petar refers to the explanation of a riddle that has a secret solution. Petar, for the rabbis, indicates a hidden meaning that has to be figured out. As we shall see, the rabbis attributed to themselves this ability to determine the hidden meaning; there is no need to rely on God's revelation, as was evident in Daniel and at Qumran.

However, the use of the term petar as referring specifically to the interpretation of biblical verses is found in the complex petiḥtot of Bereshit Rabbah (BR),

Vayiqra Rabbah (LR), Shir Hashirim Rabbah (SR), Qohelet Rabbah (QR) and Numbers Rabbah (NR).[1] While some of the petirot found in Qohelet Rabbah are directly parallel to ones in Vayiqra Rabbah, others are independent. In addition, many of these petirot are restated in the later Yalkutim with no change in the form or language. It should also be noted that there is a rare example of petirah in the Pesiqta de Rav Kahanna, Pisqa 4 (Parah).

A. Time Frame of Petirah

It is very probable that pesher and petar were familiar terms to the Tannaim, due to their use in the books of Qohelet and Daniel, though there are no references to pesher or petar, either as dream or biblical interpretations, in any of the so-called Tannaitic midrashim. The existence of such a reference or usage would have served as a link between Qumran pesher and rabbinic petirah.

In the petirot, where there is no interchange of pesher with petar, petar is the only term used to mean the interpretation of a specific biblical verse. As shown by the Targum Yerushalmi II,[2] the petirot were written when petar was already established as the term for interpretation. Since the presumed dating for the Targum Yerushalmi II is the 5th to 7th centuries CE,[3] the term petar was

probably fixed as the term for interpretation at that time in Palestine.

Another indication of the dating of the petirah form is the dating of these rabbis to whom the petirot are attributed. In the overwhelming majority of petirot, the tradents cited are third, fourth and fifth generation Palestinian Amoraim. They can be dated roughly from the end of the third century CE to the end of the fourth century CE.[4] Of the forty plus petirot that were examined for this thesis, only six were attributed to Amoraim from the first and second generations (200-290 CE)[5] and a few were attributed to Tannaim.[6] Most of the passages attributed to Tannaim, usually found in Bereshit Rabbah[7] and Shir Hashirim Rabbah,[8] are simply restatements of earlier midrashic traditions with the addition of the formula "petar qerei" and do not represent proof that the full petirah form of biblical interpretation was used by the Tannaim. The petirot are therefore most probably the products of the Palestinian Amoraim, and the most sophisticated and prolific exponents of this midrashic form are those Amoraim of the third, fourth and fifth generations in Palestine.

B. Formulaic Components of Petirah

While the first component of the petirah is the attribution to a tradent, its unique trademark is the use

of the introductory formula of "petar qerei" following the attribution. Petar, in the petirot, appears only in the verb form and not in the noun form pittaron, though its function is analogous to pesher hadabar. Petar qerei, like pesher hadabar, introduces the application upon which the interpretation is based and directed. The major difference is that the introductory formula is not preceded by the biblical verse, perhaps disavowing God's authorship of the interpretation, a notion inherent in Qumran pesher, but rather by the attribution to a tradent. Whereas in the pesharim the prophetic word of God was the source for the pesher, the writers of the petirot attributed the petirah to a rabbi.

To bridge the introductory formula with the application, the preposition "b'" is employed. This preposition should be rendered as "through," and, therefore, the entire formula preceding the application, petar qerei b', can be translated as, "(the tradent) interprets the verse through _____." This is only slightly different than the Qumranian formula, "the interpretation of this word concerns," and is due to the fact that peshar is a noun form meaning "interpretation," while petar is a verb meaning "interprets." Another difference to be noted is that while the Qumran introductory formula can be pesher hadabar 'al

or pishro asher or other variations, the rabbinic formulation is always petar qerei b'.

The application, while not focussed on contemporary personages as was the case at Qumran, does follow a similar pattern. The verses are predominately applied to types of people in groups. Of the fifteen such applications, six of them are geared to particular historical contexts, including: those that left Egypt (LR 23:2), Israel before Mt. Sinai (LR 6:5) and the Amalekites (LR 21:3). The other types of applications are more evenly dispersed in the petirot than in the Qumran pesharim. There are five applications to particular personages, such as Rebecca (LR 23:1) and Miriam (LR 16:5); a number of applications to certain types of people, such as a bachelor (LR 27:2), an adultress (LR 6:4) and a worker (LR 30:3); as well as applications to places and times. Some of the petirot, however, defy classification. These include focus on Torah (LR 11:3), vows (LR 16:5) and the tribes (BR 99:1).

In most of the developed petirot, the citation of the focussed biblical text, which is usually fragmented, follows the formulaic opening of tradent, petar qerei b' and the application with situational context.[9] Most, if not all, of the biblical citations are taken from the Writings and are presented in segments throughout the body

of the petirah. Contrary to the Qumranian usage of Prophets and Writings to validate their apocalyptic world view, the rabbis in the petirot used the Writings to demonstrate the homiletical skill of the interpreter, to teach something new about the pericope text from Torah, as well as to emphasize the importance of these sections of the Bible.

The homiletic technique seen in the petirot and in other complex petiḥtot involves citing a verse from Writings and evolving a complex chain of expositions and interpretations through the process of ḥarizah, the stringing together of seemingly unrelated interpretations. By the end of this process, through the interweaving of verse, interpretations and secondary applications, the darshan has directed the interpretation back to the pericope text from the portion from the Writings being discussed. He has not only excited the reader or listener with his skill, but he has made a linguistic and thematic connection between Writings and Torah.[10]

Following the first segment of the focussed biblical citation, there is either an exposition of the verse fragment, a secondary application or a proof text from Torah, all of which are designed to make the focussed text connect with the primary application and eventually the pericope

text. When the first segment or any segment of the focussed text is cited and is then followed by a secondary application, a proof text is usually drawn from Torah to justify that secondary application. The connection of the proof text to that secondary application is on the basis of common words or a thematic connection between them. After this proof text, another segment of the focussed verse is cited and the pattern of citation, interpretation/application, proof text, repeats itself. This pattern often continues throughout the petirah until the entire focussed verse (or verses) is interpreted. At the end of the process of harizah, the themes in the focussed text have been so specially defined that the primary application and the pericope text seem to connect to it naturally. Through this process of interweaving verse, interpretation and proof text, the darshan has not only demonstrated a connection between the verse from Writings and the pericope text from Torah, but he has validated the application as well.

It should be noted that although the secondary applications are somewhat analogous to the Qumran pesharim, there are differences. The secondary application follows the citation of part of the focussed biblical text and, although it is similar in purpose to the primary applications introduced by pesher hadabar or petar qerei, the formulaic

introductions are "zeh" or "eleh" in the petirah, in contrast to "ki" or "hem" in the pesharim. We see examples of this in the following petirot:

> "She has mixed her wine" (Prov. 9:1). These are (eleh) the methods of inference from minor to major and from analogies of expression. "She has set her table" (Prov. 9:2). These are the values. "She has sent her young ones calling"--this is (eleh) Israel. (LR 11:3)

> "Do not speak before the messenger" (Qoh. 5:5)--this is (zeh) Moses, as it is written (hada hu dikhtib), "And he sent a messenger and he brought us out of Egypt" (Num. 20:16). (LR 16:5)

This last example demonstrates not only the forms for the secondary application and the proof text introduced by "hada hu dikhtib," but the linguistic/thematic connection between the proof text and the focussed text. The proof text is chosen on the basis of the application which, in the latter case, is to Miriam when she was striken with leprosy. Leprosy just happens to be the subject of the pericope text from Leviticus 14:2. Similarly in the petirah of Vayiqra Rabbah 6:4, we find thematic and linguistic connections between the pericope text and the focussed text's application. The focussed text is Lev. 5:1, "a person who sins," and it is applied to the adulterous woman. The proof texts are drawn from Numbers 5, which contains the laws

regarding the adulterous woman. Each segment of the focussed text is related to one of the aspects of the ritual. For example, the phrase, "And hear this voice" (Lev. 5:1) is parallelled by, "And the priest causes the woman to take this oath" (Num. 5:21), while "and he is the witness" (Lev. 5:1) is similar to "and she has no witness" (Num. 5:21).

One of the best examples of the linguistic and thematic connections between the focussed text, the secondary applications and the proof text can be found in a petirah in Shir Hashirim Rabbah 2:4, which is attributed to R. Akiva, and focusses on Song of Songs 2:14. The primary application of the verse is to Israel before Mt. Sinai:

> "Let me hear your voice"--This is the voice that came before the commandments, as it says, "All that God has spoken, we will do and we will hear" (Ex. 24:3). "For your voice is sweet"--This is the voice that came after the commandments, as it says, "And God heard the voice of your words" (Deut. 5:25).

It should be noted, however, that in the majority of petirot the secondary interpretations are not well developed. They are not always introduced by the terms "zeh" or "eleh," and often function like the interpretations at Qumran, only explaining the application or justifying the relationship between unrelated verses by expanding the

focussed verse. Frequently, there is even a total absence of secondary interpretation/applications, and the body consists of proof texts, whether or not they are introduced by hada hu dikhtib, and segments of the focussed texts. While there may have been uniformity regarding the formula for the opening of the petirah, there is a great deal of variation regarding the levels of development in the harizah second of the petirot.

Even though it is impossible to determine the reason for this wide degree of variation in the formulaic elements among the petirot, examples of the different levels of development can and should be presented.

In Vayiqra Rabbah 30:3, for example, we find a simple use of the petar qerei formula minus any recognizable exegetic techniques:

> "Consider the prayer of the destitute and do not scorn their prayers. Let this be written for the last generation and the created nation shall praise God." (Psalm 102:18-19). R. Yitzhak interprets this verse through these generations that have no king or prophets and no priest with Urim and Tummim. All they have is prayer alone. David said before God: 'Master of the Universe, do not scorn their prayers, let this be written for the last generation" (Ps. 102:18, 19). From here we learn that God accepts the penitent ones. "And the created nation shall praise God" for God created them anew: (The text goes on to apply the phrases, "Let this be written for the last generation"

> and "And the created nation shall praise God" to the generations of Mordechai and Hezekiah.) Another interpretation of, "Let this be written for the last generation" refers to these generations that are about to die. "And the created nation shall praise God" for God, in the future, will create us anew. And what should we do? We should take the lulav and etrog and praise God. Therefore, Moses warned the Israelites and said, "You shall take on the first day" (Lev. 23:40).

Although a return to the pericope text (Lev. 23:40) is achieved at the end of the petirah, there is an almost arbitrary connection made with the focussed text, rather than a connection achieved through creative exegesis.

An example of a chain of petirot, attributed to early tradents and exhibiting early uses of exegetical techniques and the petar qerei formulations can be found in Vayiqra Rabbah 21:1-4:

> "Thus shall Aaron enter" (Lev. 16:3), as it is written, "For David, God is my light and my salvation from whom shall I be afraid" (Psalm 27:1). R. Elazar interprets this verse through the (Red) Sea. "My light" was in the sea, as it says, "And it lit up the night" (Ex. 14:20); "and my salvation"--"stand and see the salvation of God" (Ex. 14:13); "from whom shall I be afraid"--"And Moses said to the people, 'Do not be afraid" (Ex. 14:13). (LR 21:1)

While the secondary applications and the introductory formula of hada hu dikhtib for the proof text are absent

from this petirah, a strong thematic and linguistic connection is made between Exodus 14, the source for the narrative on the Red Sea, the application to the Red Sea and the focussed text from Psalm 27.

Another example of a less developed petirah is found in a chain of petirot in Vayiqra Rabbah 16:5 and parallelled in Qohelet Rabbah 5:5:

> "Do not let your mouth disgrace your flesh and do not plead before the messenger for it is a mistake, why should God be agitated by your voice and destroy your possessions" (Qohelet 5:5). R. Joshua b. Levi interprets this verse through those that teach charity, but do not give. "Do not let your mouth disgrace your flesh," do not permit any one of your organs to harm all of your body, your mouth can harm your whole body. "And do not plead before the messenger"--This is the cantor of the congregation. "For it is a mistake"--your teaching was worthless. "Why should God be agitated by your voice"--this is the same voice that taught but did not give; "And destroy your possession"--even the few possessions that you have will be lost to you.

In LR 21:1 we saw a petirah with no secondary applications for the focussed text, but many citations of proof texts, while here in LR 16:5, we have seen a petirah with secondary applications, but no use of proof texts to validate them.

In the last and best developed petirah in this chain of petirot using Qohelet 5:5, the primary application is to Miriam who is striken with leprosy after speaking badly about Moses. Although the petirah does not return to it, the pericope text is Leviticus 14:2, "This is the law concerning the leper." The petirah possesses secondary applications and proof texts and is attributed to R. Mani, in the Qohelet Rabbah version, a fifth generation Palestinian Amora.

It is significant that the majority of well-developed petirot are attributed primarily to Palestinian Amoraim of the fifth generation. This might indicate an evolution of the form until it reaches its most developed state by the fourth century CE, just before the Byzantine rulers closed the doors of the Palestinian academies. Other examples of well-developed petirot attributed to late tradents are found in Vayiqra Rabbah 10:1-3 and 11:1-4, which will be shown in greater detail and compared to selected Qumran pesharim in the next chapter.

In summation, we should mention that while they do not exist in every case, there are basic components present in the well-developed petirah. These include:

1) attribution to a tradent--usually Palestinian Amora

2) opening formula: petar qerei b' (interprets this verse through)

3) application--usually to types of people in groups in a specific situation

4) focussed biblical text--usually from Writings, cited in segments

5) interpretation of the focussed text--can involve a secondary application or the expansion of the context of the focussed verse

6) proof text--usually from Torah with some linguistic and/or thematic connection made with the applications of the focussed text.

7) ḥarizah--interweaving of 4) 5) and 6) to validate the application and connect it and the focussed text to the pericope text.

8) return to the pericope text--the verse from the portion of Torah under discussion is usually quoted at the end of the petirah focussed text.

The above are the components of a well-developed petirah and they now will be the basis for the detailed comparison of petirah and Qumran pesher.

CHAPTER V

A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE PETIRAH

Now that we have identified the basic components of the petirah, an in-depth critical analysis of specific petirot is essential to our understanding this method of interpretation and will facilitate a comparison of the petirah with the pesher. Therefore, at the outset, we will analyze two petirot, Vayiqra Rabbah 10:1-3 and 11:1-4, and then compare them to several Qumran pesharim.

A. Vayiqra Rabbah 10:1-3

Our first passage, LR 10:1-3, is actually a chain of petirot whose pericope text is Leviticus 8:2, "Take Aaron and his sons," and whose focussed Writings text is Psalms 45:8, "You have loved righteousness and hated evil, therefore God will annoint you with the oil of gladness above your comrades." In this chain of petirot, the applications are first to Abraham then to Isaiah and finally to Aaron. In the first petirah, the application is to Abraham when he asks for mercy for the people of Sodom and Gommorah. It is expanded by the common midrashic flourish of filling in the missing conversation for the sake of the interpretation. Abraham reminds God that he swore to never again bring a flood upon mankind and claims that to destroy Sodom would mean bringing another flood, this time of fire, upon the earth and, in so doing, God would break His oath. This

notion of God breaking His oath by destroying the cities justifies Abraham's saying, "It is wrong for you to do this thing, to kill the righteous as if they were wicked: should not the judge of all the world practice justice" (Gen. 18:25). The quote from Genesis 18 indicating a relationship between justice and the world plays into the next exposition on Abraham's words. The argument is expanded with Abraham saying to God that he can not establish the universe and expect absolute justice to rule. To paraphrase the midrash, "You can not burn the candle at both ends. If you are not flexible in your judgements, then the world can not exist." In other words, middat ha-din must be complemented by middat ha-raḥamim. In the latter part of this petirah, the focussed text of Psalm 45:8 is subject to a secondary interpretation:

> God says to Abraham, "You have loved righteousness;" you have loved to defend the righteousness of your fellow man. "And you have hated evil;" you have hated to accuse them of wrongdoing. "Therefore God will annoint you with the oil of gladness above your comrades." What is it that is "above your comrades?" He said to him, 'By your life, of the ten generations from Noah to you, I never spoke, it was your nation of which I spoke:' "After all these things, God spoke to Abram" (Gen. 15:1).

In this final section regarding Abraham, the words of the focussed text are applied directly to him, as is done in the pesharim. Psalm 45:8 is connected to the preceding exposition of Abraham's character by the themes of justice, mercy, innocence and guilt. Although it is implicit in the Genesis 18 source, the interpreter expanded Abraham's role as an intercessor to make it coincide better with Psalm 45:8.

The second petirah in this chain, LR 10:2, applies Psalm 45:8 to Isaiah. The elements of Isaiah's character that are expanded upon are: 1) his superiority as a prophet over Micah and Amos, both of whose names are played upon (Micah--makah, struck; Amos--amoos, heavy tongue); and 2) his willingness to put up with physical and verbal abuse in order to serve as God's messenger to the people. The usage of the words in the first part of Psalm 45:8 is the same as it was with Abraham. The elevation over comrades in the second part of the verse is related to the fact that while most prophets received their prophetic insight from other prophets, Isaiah is superior because he received prophetic insight direct from God. In addition, a number of verses from Isaiah containing the repetition of certain words like "Nahamu nahamu" (40:1) are used as proof texts for his being rewarded with a

double portion of prophecy.

The final application of Psalm 45:8 to Aaron is the last and longest petirah, LR 10:3, which leads us back to the pericope text (Leviticus 8:2: "Take Aaron"). The application to Aaron is set at the time of the building of the Golden Calf, which the Israelites first requested of Hur, Moses' nephew, who was a leader along with Aaron.[1] When Hur refused the people's request, they killed him. A proof text from Jeremiah 2:34 is then cited in which the phrase, "innocent blood," is interpreted to mean Hur's blood which had been spilt. In addition, the use of the word eleh in Jer. 2:34 ("ki 'al kol eleh") is parallelled to eleh in Exodus 32, when the Israelites said of the Golden Calf, "eleh elohekha Yisrael"(32:4). The ones that worshipped the Golden Calf thereby are implicated in the spilling of Hur's blood. In the following section, the proof text for Aaron's reaction to Hur's death is Exodus 32:5, and the word play is very clever:

> The people said to Aaron, "Make us a God!" When Aaron heard this, he was frightened (nityare), as it is written, "And Aaron saw (vayar) and he built (vayeven) an altar (mizbeiaḥ) before him." And Aaron understood (vayaven) from the slaughtered one (mezabuaḥ), i.e., Hur, before him. (Ex. 32:5)

The change in vocalization of those three words, yar, yeven and mizbeiaḥ, brings a whole new meaning to the verse and aligns it with the story of Hur. The rest of the exposition relates Aaron's apprehension regarding the incident. He is afraid that if he refuses to build the Golden Calf, they will kill him, too, and if they kill him, according to Lamentations 2:20, they will be exiled. This petirah shows Aaron's unwillingness to allow the Israelites to be guilty of an illegal act for which they will be severely punished. Aaron's desire to keep the Israelites free from guilt plays thematically into the focussed verse of "You have loved righteousness and hated evil," and is understood as, "You have loved to keep my children righteous and hated to allow them to be guilty." The end of the focussed verse, "God has anointed you with the oil of gladness above your comrades," is interpreted as referring to the fact that from all the families in the Tribe of Levi, only Aaron's can be High Priests. This leads back to the pericope text, which states, "Take Aaron and his sons with him," and concerns their annointing and consecration.

We have seen in this composite petirah a number of exegetic techniques, the most important of which was the play on words and names. The word plays, especially highlighted in the above petirah regarding Aaron, are

similar to the word plays seen in the Qumran pesharim, in particular 1QpHab 5:3, 8:1 and 11:8. Yet, while word plays may have been used throughout the petirah to make connections between verses and interpretations, the important connections between the application and the focussed text, and lastly the pericope text, were established on the basis of theme.

This chain of petirot served to develop two specific themes based on a particular understanding of Psalm 45:8. At the outset, the petirah on Abraham gave us an understanding of the first part of the verse ("you have loved righteousness") which indicates a conscious effort to highlight the righteousness of people and undercut their guilt. This leads directly to Aaron and the building of the Golden Calf, and the rabbi's attempt to eradicate his sin. Then the petirah on Isaiah concentrates on the latter part of the verse ("God has anointed you"), highlighting Isaiah's superiority regarding his divinely ordained prophetic skills. This leads to the emphasis on Aaron and his sons being divinely ordained above all other Levites to be the High Priests.

B. Vayiqra Rabbah 11:1-4

One of the most developed and concise examples of the petirah form and therefore a good candidate for comparison with the pesharim is found in Vayiqra Rabbah 11:1-4. This is a chain of four petirot relating to Proverbs 9:1-4 and based on the pericope text, Leviticus 9:1, "And it came to pass on the eighth day that Moses called Aaron and his sons."

In the opening section, the primary application is to the creation of the world and is followed by an interweaving of verse segments, interpretations and proof texts:

> "Wisdom has built her house" -- This is the Holy One, Blessed be He, who created the whole world with wisdom, as it is written, "The Lord established the earth with wisdom" (Prov. 3:19); "She has hewn seven pillars"--These are the seven days of creation, as it says, "For in six days God created" (Ex. 31:17); "She has prepared her meat" is an allusion to "Let the earth bring forth every kind of animal" (Gen. 1:24); "She has mixed her wine" is an allusion to "Let the waters under the sky be gathered together" (Gen. 1:11); "She has sent her young ones calling"--this is Adam and Eve. "Up to the highest place in the city"--for God shook them and called them Gods, as it is written, "And you will be like Gods" (Gen. 3:5). After all this praise (on man),--"one who is stupid shall turn away presently;" they forsook the advice of God and followed that of the serpent. For this, "She said to the heartless ones," "For dust you are and to dust you shall return" (Gen. 3:19).

It seems apparent that the compiler of this text took Genesis 3:5 totally out of context, associating the line, "You shall be as gods," with God's praise of Adam and Eve and not the deception of the serpent. Although the intention of the interpreter is hard to determine, it seems unnecessary to have gone beyond the verse, "She has sent her young ones calling." In both the next and especially the last petirah, the focussed verse stops there, and in the last petirah, it leads back to the pericope text. The additional verses and interpretations seem to weaken the original interpretation with extraneous data that is seemingly superfluous. The petirot of LR 11:1 and 3 may represent another tradition which involved Proverbs 9:4 as well and was incorporated into the chain. This first petirah, however, has shown the flexibility seen throughout this chain in interpreting the subject of the Proverbs message. The fact that the subject of the verses is feminine does not seem to affect the application to different people, places and events.

The second petirah begins with the primary application of the Proverbs passage to Gog, Israel's great enemy, who will be defeated at Armageddon before the coming of the Messiah. The phrase "Wisdom has built her house" (Proverbs 9:1) is understood as referring to the Temple with the

appropriate proof text drawn from Proverbs 24:3. Considering the primary application, the reference to the Temple must refer to the rabbinic view that it will be rebuilt when the Messiah comes. The second part of Proverbs 9:1, "She has hewn seven pillars," is applied to the seven years of Gog. Now the proof texts move from word for word parallels to thematic connections with the application and focussed text. R. Jonah, the attributed tradent, a fifth generation Palestinian Amora, tells us that these are the seven years in which the weapons of Gog will be burnt. The proof for this tradition of seven years regarding Gog is found in Ezekiel, chapters 38 and 39. In these chapters, Gog is pictured as a foreign king who will wage war on Israel. Yet, by the time of R. Jonah, Gog is seen as an apocalyptic figure, the final enemy who will fight against God's people seven years before the coming of the Messiah.

R. Jonah describes these seven years as the seven years of the wedding preliminaries of the righteous in the days to come, and after the seven years, those who partook of the preliminaries can partake of the wedding feast. The symbolism of the wedding feast as referring to the coming of the Messiah, when God will be united with the Shekhinah, is well known in rabbinic sources and alluded to

in the Gospel of Matthew 9:15. The rest of the petirah concentrates on thematic connections between Ezekiel's prophecy on Gog and Proverbs 9:2-3:

> "She has prepared her meat" is an allusion to "You shall eat the flesh of the mighty" (Ezek. 39:18); "She has mixed her wine" is ar allusion to "And you shall drink the blood of the princes" (Ezek. 39:18); "She has prepared her table" is an allusion to "And you shall be sated at my table with horses and drivers" (Ezek. 39:20); "She has sent her young ones calling"--this is Ezekiel, "And you, son of man, says God, speak to all kinds of birds and animals of the field" (Ezek. 39:17).

We see from this petirah that although the phrase, "She has sent her young ones calling," is written in the feminine plural, it can be applied to a single male.

The last petirah of this chain, LR 11:4, which returns us to the pericope text of Lev. 9:1, is one of the most developed and yet concise petirot:

> R. Abba bar Kahana (petar qerei b') interprets the verse (Prov. 9:1-4) to apply to the Tent of Meeting: "Wisdom has built her house"--this is Bezalel, "And I will fill him with the divine spirit" (Ex. 31:3); "She has hewn seven pillars,"--these are the seven days for consecration, as it is written, "You shall not leave the entrance of the Tent of Meeting for seven days...seven days are required for consecration," (Lev. 8:33) "She has prepared her

> meat"--these are the sacrifices; "She has mixed her wine"--these are the libation offerings; "She has set her table"--this is the arrangement of the bread of display (on the Table in the Tent of Meeting); "She has sent her young ones calling"--this is Moses, as it is written, "On the eighth day Moses called" (Lev. 9:1).

This chain of petirot has shown a connection between wisdom in Proverbs 9:1 with God's overall plan for the world. In addition, we have seen a strong sense of literary freedom among the rabbis, particularly in their ability to disregard the context of certain verses and the obvious gender identifications in Proverbs 9:1-4. We have also seen examples of both thematic and linguistic connections throughout these petirot, with the most obvious linguistic connection coming with the return to the pericope text in LR 11:4, which would not have been as feasible had not the rabbis already shown a flexibility in understanding Proverbs 9:1-4.

C. Comparison between Petirah and Pesher

Now that we have seen a well-developed petirah with all the necessary components, including focussed text, secondary application and transition to a pericope text, we are in a much better position to compare the petirah form with that of a pesher. For the sake of a close comparison, let us compare the above petirah with 1Qp Hab 12:1-10, which reads:

> "For the pillage of Lebanon will overwhelm you. A ravager will take livestock by shedding a man's blood amid the pillages of the land, the city and all its inhabitants" (Hab 2:17). The interpretation of these words (pesher hadabar) concerns the Wicked Priest who will receive his just reward, the same as he gave to the poor. For (ki) "Lebanon" applies to (hu) this community and the "livestock" applies to (hem) the simple ones of Judah, the doers of Torah, for he has been condemned by God to be destroyed just as he planned to destroy the poor. As he said (veasher amar), "From the blood of the city and the pillages of the land" (Hab. 2:17--emended)--the interpretation (pishro) of the "city" is Jerusalem where the Wicked Priest performed acts of abomination and defiled God's sanctuary and "the pillages of the land"--they (hemah) are the cities of Judah where he robbed the possessions of the poor.

Even in regards to the source of the interpretation, the pesher and the petirah clearly differ. For the compiler of the pesher, the source of the interpretation is God who has implanted the interpretation within the biblical verse. In this pesher, the interpretation is implicit in Habakkuk 2:17. For the rabbis who compiled the petirah, however, it was the tradent who was the source of the interpretation of Proverbs 9:1-4.

Yet, a similarity exists between the pesher and petirah regarding the formulary introduction to the application. The terms "petar qerei" and "pesher hadabar" are analogous in function, if not in language, in that both

formulae introduce an application upon which the verse is interpreted. The application is usually to people or places. In our case, the pesher application is to the Wicked Priest, while the petirah application is to the Tent of Meeting.

The method of interpretation employed after the application is made is also fairly similar. The pesher follows the application with an exposition or expansion on the application giving it a broader context, which helps to connect it with the verse and its secondary applications. Petirah follows the primary application with a segment of the focussed text which necessitates a secondary interpretation designed to relate to the overall application. This secondary interpretation is validated by a verse from Torah. While the pesher contains a secondary interpretation with thematic and linguistic connections to the verse or primary application with the petirot, there is no use of Torah verses to validate these secondary interpretations. This is not due to an absence of Torah from the books at Qumran, but that the Qumranians held the interpretation to be divinely inspired, much like the rabbis viewed the Torah.

In both 1QpHab 12:1-10 and LR 11:4, the focussed verse is then segmented and secondary interpretations are given for it. In the pesher, the words "Lebanon" and "livestock" are

taken from the verse and applied to the congregation at Qumran and the "simple ones of Judah" respectively. These secondary interpretations do not refer to the primary application, unlike the secondary interpretations of the petirah, however they do support the correlation of the verse to the world of the Qumranians. One may assume that there is a considerable amount of "oral tradition" regarding "the Wicked Priest," "the simple ones of Judah" and "the poor" which is not spelled out in the pesher, but is implicit in it.

In the petirah, all the secondary applications refer to the people of Israel and the actions are directly related to the Tent of Meeting, the primary application. In addition, all of the connections between the focussed verses, interpretations and proof texts are spelled out very clearly. When the last of the focussed verse segments and secondary interpretations have been reached, Moses has become the subject and is connected to the verse. "She has sent her young ones calling." The reference to 'calling' and its application leads us to the pericope text, "And on the eighth day Moses called," at the conclusion of the petirah.

The pesher turns out to be a composite, like the petirah. It repeats part of the focussed verse, but inverts the word order, eliminates the word "adam" (man) and provides us with two more secondary interpretations for the focussed verse.

In contrast to the petirah, however, the pesher does not end clearly. It has no validation of the application, nor does it return to the Habakkuk text, but instead

concludes with a reference to what the Wicked Priest did to the poor. While the rabbis drew upon the whole Tanach tc validate their applications, the Qumranians did not use Torah texts to support their interpretations.[2] Though secondary interpretations and expositions utilizing words from the focussed verses may have been sufficient proof for the Qumranians, it was not adequate for the rabbis who shaped the petirah.

In pesher and petirah, connections are made both thematically and linguistically. The thematic connections in pesher are generally based on unfamiliar Qumran traditions, while those in the petirah are based on better known rabbinic traditions. For example, in the petirah of LR 11:2, where Gog was the subject, an obvious thematic connection is made between the application of the Proverbs 9:1-4 text to Gog and the passages in Ezekiel 38-39. However, thematic connections of a different variety are established in the pesharim. Note for example 1QpHab 10:9:

> "Woe to the one that builds a city with blood and sets up an assembly through deceit. It is not from the Lord of Hosts that the peoples have labored for fire and the nations have grown weary in vain" (Hab. 2:12-13). The interpretation of this applies to the Preacher of the Lie who misled many to build the city of his vanity with blood and to set up a congregation by falsehood. For the sake of its glory, many people labored in the work of his vanity and were filled with acts of falsehood, so that their work will be in vain. For this they will enter the

judgement of fire, since they have reviled
an insulted the elect of God.

Linguistically, we can see the words from the verse in the interpretation, yet we can not comprehend the thematic connection between the verse and the Preacher of the Lie. We do not know nor can we determine accurately what event, real or imagined, which involved the Preacher of the Lie, is referred to in the pesher. This limitation on our part and the lack of secondary development with proof texts on the part of the writers of pesher cause it to appear unclear and less developed in comparison to petirah.

We have seen that even a highly developed pesher with secondary interpretations and repetition of phrases from the focussed verse does not have a clear beginning, middle and end as we find in the petirah. There is no sense of development within the pesher and no conclusive end. In the pesher, all we really have is a verse that is interpreted, which is marginally supported by further interpretations. Although there are many petirot that do not have all the components outlined above,[3] yet the majority of them have a clear and consistent direction and they return to the pericope text at the end.[4] This sense of direction and closure is absent from even the most highly developed pesher.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS

We have seen that the terms pesher and petar, which are found in the Bible, Dead Sea Scrolls and Rabbinic Literature, refer to some sort of interpretation. In the Bible, they refer to the interpretations of dreams or puzzling riddles which are revealed to human beings by God. God reveals the secret meaning of the dream or riddle to one man and it is then declared in public. In the Dead Sea Scrolls, pesher connotes the same kind of interpretation, but instead of a dream or riddle containing the secret meeting, it is found in verses from the Bible, particularly those from Prophets and Psalms. Finally, in certain types of midrashim, petar refers to the application of a biblical verse to people, places or events. The interpreter, though not endowed with secret knowledge by God, as in Qumran and Daniel, is aware, however, of a special understanding of the verse which he relates to the public through a homily.

We can compare these last two sources in which pesher and petar are used, the Qumran pesharim and the rabbinic petirot. Of course, they emanate from different times. One form, the pesher at Qumran, was written by a secluded sect in the Judean desert during the years after the Maccabean revolt and before the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. The other, the petirah, was complied by Palestinian Amoraim toward the end of the Amoraic period

(4-6th century CE). However, we have seen a similarity in the nature of the application of the biblical verses and in the techniques of interpretation in the two forms. In both, the application of the verse is usually to people, places or times, and is introduced by set formulae which are analogous. The exegetic techniques that these forms share include plays on words as well as the use of secondary interpretations and applications. Yet, not withstanding these similarities, we have seen several marked differences between the pesher and the petirah. One difference is the lack of proof texts for the interpretations in the pesher. Another is the attribution of the petirah interpretation to the rabbi, while the pesher interpretation is attributed to God. There is also a lack of direction and closure in the pesher, in contrast to the petirah which flows directly to the pericope text.

Since their methods of interpretation are so different, a close relationship between these two forms is not clearly discernible. Yet, in order to determine if a close relationship exists between the pesher and petirah, one developing out of the other, one would have to examine more critically Tannaitic uses of biblical texts being applied to certain people or events and the use of biblical texts in the original Greek version of the New Testament. While

a developmental relationship can not be clearly shown at this time, the similarity between the pesher and the petirah, particularly regarding the opening formula and application, must indicate a relationship greater than mere coincidence.

The comparison made between examples of pesher and petirah, as well as my analysis of numerous petirot, have led me to another conclusion regarding the nature of the rabbinic petirah form. The formulaic trademark of the petirot, the petar qerei, seems appended in many cases to earlier midrashim as a form of introductory headline and does not indicate a unique form of biblical interpretation. Most of the petirot are really composite petiḥtot with petar qerei tacked on at the outset. Almost all of the basic components and key terms of the petirah cited above are identical to the components and key terms in the classic composite petiḥta.[1] In addition, several petirot do not even follow the classic petiḥta model, but still open with "petar qerei." For example, in LR 23:3, petar qerei is the heading for a mashal lamelekh (king parable) attributed to R. Judah bar Simon, a fourth generation Palestinian Amora. Similarly, most of the petirot in LR 16:5 and LR 23: 1, 2, and 4 do not conform to the petirah model. I would speculate that the petar qerei formula was simply added later by the

redactor of the homily as a form of introductory heading.

If this view is correct, we must attempt to explain why the redactors used petar qerei as the formulaic heading. It would seem that there are several possible explanations for this development.

One possible explanation is that petar qerei was a widely known formula among the Palestinian academies, though it was little used until the fourth century CE. This seems highly unlikely, since formulae such as petar qerei, if they were widespread, would have been included in Tannaitic sources as well as in the Palestinian Talmud.

Another possibility is that the term pesher milta of Daniel or pesher hadabar of Qumran was borrowed directly and transformed into a more acceptable and contemporary Aramaic formulation. This explanation is problematic as well, since there is no proof that the Rabbis had access to the Dead Sea Scrolls or that they consciously copied the form in Daniel.

A better explanation for the development of this particular form and its usage centers on the crystallization over time of the term petar as the Palestinian Aramaic equivalent for the Hebrew pesher. Petar qerei, therefore, became analogous to pesher hadabar and/or pesher milta with which the rabbinic community of Palestine might have been

familiar. In addition, since the Jewish community was heavily persecuted by Byzantine authorities and this might have given rise to messianic and apocalyptic speculation,[2] midrashic redactors, by using the petar qerei formula, might have attempted to allude to the eschatology at Qumran and in Daniel. While it was not uncommon among Tannaim and Amoraim to interpret biblical verses and apply them to certain people,[3] the use of the formula petar qerei, as an editorial term to introduce such an interpretation and application, clued the reader or listener into possible apocalyptic and messianic connotations.

Finally, we should add that a thorough analysis of literary forms used by the surrounding cultures at that time might give us added insight into the reasons for the appearance of the petirah form in rabbinic midrashim. Though it is not a totally new form of midrashic interpretation, the use of the petar qerei application might reflect foreign influences on the rabbis. This comparison, however, is one of the things that remains to be done which would buttress further the work of this thesis.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Sources for Petirah

Bereshit Rabbah - 99:1.

Vayiqra Rabbah - 4:1, 6:4, 6:5, 10:1-3, 11:1-4, 16:5, 19:2-4, 21:1-4, 23:1-5, 30:3, 32:8.

Pesiqta de-Rav Kahanna - pisqa 4 (Parah)

Shir Hashirim Rabbah - 2:2, 2:14.

Qohelet Rabbah - 4:1, 5:5, 12:8.

Numbers Rabbah - 9:33, 19:2.

APPENDIX B

Cited Tradents

R. Abba bar Kahanna - 4th generation Amora

R. Abbahu - 3rd generation Palestinian Amora

R. Akiva - 3rd generation Tanna

R. Alexander - 2nd generation Palestinian Amora

R. Azariah - 5th generation Palestinian Amora

R. Benjamin - 4th generation Palestinian Amora

R. Berachiah - 5th generation Palestinian Amora

R. Eliezer bar Kappara - 5th generation Tanna - teacher of Joshua b. Levi

R. Haninah of Sepphoris - 5th generation Palestinian Amorah

R. Isaac - 3rd generation Palestinian Amora

R. Jeremiah - 4th generation Palestinian Amora

R. Jonah - 5th generation Palestinian Amora

R. Jose bar Hanina - 2nd generation Palestinian Amora

R. Jose the Galileean - 3rd generation Tanna

R. Joshua b. Levi - 1st generation Palestinian Amora

R. Judah bar Simon - 4th generation Palestinian Amora

R. Mani - 5th generation Palestinian Amora

R. Pinhas - 5th generation Palestinian Amora

R. Tanhuma - 5th generation Palestinian Amora

R. Yudan - 5th generation Palestinian Amora

NOTES

INTRODUCTION

1. Roland DeVaux, Archaeology and the Dead Sea Scrolls (London, 1973), pp. 97-102.

2. Maurya Horgan, PESHARIM: Qumran Interpretations of Biblical Books (Washington, DC, 1979).

3. Ibid, pp. 237-246.

4. Ibid, pp. 230-236.

5. Ibid, p. 249.

6. Isaac Rabinowitz, "Pesher/Pittaron: Its Biblical Meaning and Its Significance in the Qumran Literature," Revue de Qumran 8 (1973):219-32.

7. Asher Finkel, "The Pesher of Dreams and Scriptures," Revue de Qumran 4 (1963):357-70.

8. Addison Wright, "The Literary Genre Midrash," Catholic Biblical Quarterly 28 (1966): 105-38, 417-57.

9. Ibid, p. 421.

10. William H. Brownlee, The Midrash Pesher of Habakkuk (Missoula, Montana, 1979), p. 25.

11. Lou Silberman, "Unriddling a Riddle: A Study in the Structure and Language of the Habakkuk Pesher," Revue de Qumran 3 (1961-2):323-364.

12. H.J. Kassovsky, Otsar Lashon Ha-Talmud 4 vols. (Jerusalem, 1954).

13. Nathan ben Jehiel, Arukh Hashalem 8 vols. (Vienna, 1926).

14. Hanokh Albeck, Bereshit Rabbah (Jerusalem, 1965), vol. 3.

15. Mordechai Margulies, Vayiqra Rabbah (Jerusalem 1960), vol. 5.

CHAPTER I

1. A.L. Oppenheim, "Interpretation of Dreams," Transactions of the American Philosophy Society Vol. 46, part 3 (1956):217-25.

2. Horgan, PESHARIM: Qumran Interpretations of Biblical Books, p. 235.

3. Ibid., p. 235.

4. Ibid, p. 236.

5. B. Grossfeld, "Bible: Translations, the Targumim," Encyclopedia Judaica (Jerusalem, 1972) IV:845-6.

6. See, in this regard, Daniel 2:16-20.

7. See Daniel 1:17; Genesis 41:15.

8. See Genesis 40:8, 41:16 and Daniel 2:28.

9. See Daniel 2:6 and Genesis 40:5.

10. See Genesis 40:18 and Daniel 2:35, 42.

11. See below chapter 3, p. 44.

12. See below chapter 5.

CHAPTER II

1. See, in this regard, M. Avot 1:1.

2. B. Grossfeld, "Bible: Transactions, the Targumim," Encyclopedia Judaica IV:841.

3. F.M. Cross, The Ancient Library of Qumran (New York, 1958), p. 113.

4. For this and other New Testament citations, the translation of The New Testament of the Jerusalem Bible, A. Jones, ed. (Garden City, New York, 1966) will be used.

5. The same pattern can be seen in rabbinic petirot in the application of verses to groups of people. See below chapter IV, p. 52.

6. See Acts 23:6, 26:5 and Philipians 3:5.

7. In contrast to Paul, the Teacher of Righteousness at Qumran, while being the teacher and often the subject of the pesharim, never claimed to "fulfill" the text. See W. LaSor, The Dead Sea Scrolls and the New Testament (Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1972), p. 120.

8. The Jerusalem Bible translation renders Torah as Law, which would appear to be a translation of the Greek word NOMOS.

9. In other words, pesher hadabar or petar qerei.

CHAPTER III

1. M. Horgan, PESHARIM, p. 1.

2. See above Chapter I, p. 3.

3. These abbreviations for the pesharim are derived from Horgan, PESHARIM, p. 1.

4. A parallel can be found in Daniel 12:13 with the term qets hayamim. Qets is used as well in the pesharim. See, for example, 1QpHab 7:7 and 1QpHab 5:7.

5. See above Chapter I, p. 8.

6. See also Ezekiel 1:1, Obadiah 1:1 and Nahum 1:1 for further indication of the relationship between prophets and visions. These prophets received their prophecy from God through visions, which are akin to dreams.

7. See Chapter I, nn. 3,7.

8. See 1QpHab 12:6, 6:3, 3:9, 5:3 in this regard. These repetitions are introduced by either "veasher amar" or "ki hu asher amar." It is interesting to note that amar and not katab is used. It is almost as if the prophet was speaking to them personally.

9. I refer here to the use of the rabbinic phrase "al tiqra . . . eleh . . ." See B.T. Berachot 64a for an example.

10. There is one instance in 1QpHab 1:13 in which the pesher included only these elements.

11. As we see, the secondary interpretation which comes after part of the verse has been repeated is not introduced by pesher hadabar or its variation, but by the word hem. Hem, hemah and ki in various forms, often introduce secondary "pesharim" for part of the original focussed text. See 1QpHab 2:5, 9:7, 12:2 and 4QpIsaiah 2:1-10 and 4QpPs f.1-10, col. iii for other examples.

12. Lou Silberman, "Unriddling a Riddle: A Study in the Structure and Language of the Habakkuk Pesher," Revue de Qumran 3:329.

13. Joseph Heinemann's citation is from Lou Silberman's article.

CHAPTER IV

1. See Appendix A for a list of all the petirot and their sources.

2. See above Chapter I, p. 6.

3. See above Chapter I, n. 5.

4. See Appendix B for a listing of all the cited tradents.

5. See Appendix B. See also QR 12:8 and LR 16:5, 21:1, 21:3, 23:2, 30:3.

6. Ibid. See also LR 11:3, BR 99:1 and SR 2:14.

7. R. Akiba and R. Jose the Galileean are cited in BR 99:1.

8. R. Akiba and R. Jose are cited in SR 2:14.

9. A term commonly used in the petirot to present the situational context of the application, if its not inherent in the application, is besha'ah she (at the time that) or in other words, "when."

10. J. Heinemann, "The Proem in the Aggadic Midrashim - A Form Critical Study," SCRIPTA HIEROSLYMITANA 22 (1971):100-122.

CHAPTER V

1. See Exodus 24:14 in this regard.

2. The one exception to this is found in 1QpHab 6:10 where Isaiah 13:18 is used to give more of a biblical grounding for the actions of the Kittim detailed in the interpretation.

3. See above Chapter IV, p. 60-61.

4. The exception to this case is LR 16:5, which might be considered a link between pesher and petirah, were it not for some formulary problems and an attribution to late tradents.

CHAPTER VI

1. See above Chapter IV, p. 60-61.

2. See LR 11:2 in this regard.

3. For example, see Lamentations Rabbah 2:4 regarding Bar Kokhba and Numbers 24:17.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Reference Works:

Alcalay, Reuben. The Complete Hebrew-English Dictionary. Ramat-Gan: Massada Publishing Company, 1963.

Jastrow, Marcus. A Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Bavli and Yerushalmi and the Midrashic Literature. London: Luzac, 1903.

Kassovsky, Haim Joshua. Otsar Lashon Ha-Talmud. 4 vols. Jerusalem: Ministry of Education and Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1954.

Mandelkern, Solomon. Concordantsiah La-Tanakh. Tel Aviv: Schocken Publishing House Ltd., 1978.

Nathan ben Jehiel. Kohut, Alexander, ed. Arukh Hashalem. 8 vols. Vienna: Menorah, 1926.

Strack, Hermann. Introduction to the Talmud and Midrash. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1931.

Primary Sources:

Albeck, Hanokh and Theodor, J. Bereshit Rabbah. 3 vols. Jerusalem: Wahrmann Books, 1965.

Allegro, John. Qumran Cave 4:I, Discoveries in the Judean Desert V. Oxford: Clarendon, 1968.

Brownlee, William H. The Midrash Pesher of Habakkuk. Missoula, Montana: Society of Biblical Literature, 1979.

Horgan, Maurya. PESHARIM: Qumran Interpretations of Biblical Books. Washington: The Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1979.

Jones, Alexander, ed. The New Testament of the Jersualem Bible. Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Co., 1966.

Margulies, Mordechai. Va-yigra Rabbah. 5 vols. Jerusalem: J & M Epstein, 1960.

Midrash Rabbah. 2 vols. Jerusalem: 1975, new edition based on Vilna edition with numerous commentaries.

Secondary Sources:

Cross, Frank M. The Ancient Library at Qumran and Modern Biblical Studies. Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Co., 1958.

De Vaux, Roland. Archaeology and the Dead Sea Scrolls. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973.

Finkel, Asher. "The Pesher of Dreams and Scriptures," Revue de Qumran IV (1963):357-70.

Gaster, Theodore H. The Dead Sea Scriptures in English Translation. Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Co., 1956.

Grossfeld, Bernard. "Bible: Translations, the Targumim," Encyclopedia Judaica. Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House, 1972, IV: 841-847.

Heinemann, Joseph. "The Proem in the Aggadic Midrashim - A Form Critical Study," Scripta Hierosolymitana 22 (1971):100-122.

LaSor, William S. The Dead Sea Scrolls and the New Testament. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdman's Publishing Co., 1972.

Lehmann, O.H. "Midrashic Parallels to Selected Qumran Texts," Revue de Qumran 3 (1963):545-551.

Oppenheim, A.L. "Interpretation of Dreams in the Ancient Near East," Transactions of the American Philosophy Society 46, part 3, (1956):217-225.

Rabinowitz, Isaac. "Pesher/Pittaron. Its Biblical Meaning and Its Significance in the Qumran Literature," Revue de Qumran 8 (1973):219-32.

Silberman, L.H. "Unriddling a Riddle: A Study in the Structure and Language of the Habakkuk Pesher," Revue de Qumran 3 (1961-62):323-364.

Wright, Addison. "The Literary Genre Midrash," Catholic Biblical Quarterly 28 (1966):105-38, 417-57.