THE BIBLE QUOTATIONS IN THE PESIKTA DE RAV KAHANA*

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The Pesikta de Rav Kahana (henceforth P), a midrashic collection of sermons for the Sabbaths and the festivals which were preached in Galilaean synagogues during the third and fourth centuries A.D., contains about three thousand Bible quotations. The examination and analysis of such a large number of Biblical quotations which is attempted here, should help in elucidating the intricate problem of the evaluation of variations from the MT which are found in rabbinic literature.¹

As a rule, the Bible quotations in P do not differ from the MT. Much of P's exegesis is based on a close interpretation of the Biblical text, and the derasha frequently is introduced or concluded with the assertion או המחבר ואלא או חכם. The detailed analysis of the quotations in their midrashic context shows the importance of distinguishing between variants that are attested in the lemmata and those that are confirmed by the wording of the derasha.

The following example will illustrate the complexity of the problem:

Deut. 33:2 MT:

הֵפִּיצָה מָזוֹר מְסַלְלָן וּרְאָתָה מְרָבָּבְתָּ קָדוֹשׁ

PM 220:

הֵפִּיצָה מָזוֹר מְסַלְלָן וּרְאָתָה מְרָבָּבְתָּ קָדוֹשׁ

ומָזוֹר מָזוֹר מְסַלְלָן וּרְאָתָה מְרָבָּבְתָּ קָדוֹשׁ

Apart from the plene spelling of קָדוֹשׁ מְרָבָּבְתָּ, which will be discussed further, P's reading differs from the MT in its spelling of רָאָתָה מְרָבָּבְתָּ קָדוֹשׁ. But this difference occurs only in the quotation, while the derasha is obviously based on the reading רָאָתָה מְרָבָּבְתָּ קָדוֹשׁ which it divides into רָאָתָה מְרָבָּבְתָּ קָדוֹשׁ, taking these to stand for רָאָתָה מְרָבָּבְתָּ קָדוֹשׁ. The spelling of Aramaic מְרָבָּבְתָּ קָדוֹשׁ in the Bible is not consistent. In Daniel and Ezra it is spelled with either הֶה or aleph. In Is. 21:12, MT reads with aleph but Min-

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¹ The quotations in this study are from B. Mandelbaum (ed.), Pesikta de Rav Kahana, According to an Oxford Manuscript, with Variants from all known Manuscripts and Genizoth Fragments and Parallel Passages, with Commentary and Introduction, 2 vol. Publ. by the Jewish Theological Seminary of America (New York 1962), henceforth PM.
hath Shay documents a hé tradition, and this is corroborated by P’s derasha on Deut. 33:2.

Scribal Errors

Before dealing with the methods of quoting the Bible text employed in the Pesikta it is necessary to point to a few variants which are undoubtedly scribal errors. In the following instances P’s readings simply make no sense, and it may be safely assumed that they resulted from faulty copying:

a) Jer. 30:1
   MT: וֹרַשׁ בַּעַדָּן דֵּקָּד מְשֹּׁקָד
   PM 336: רָשַׁב ד
b) Hos. 14:10
   MT: כַּרְיֵר הַדְּרוֹר הַדּוֹדֵקָא יְלָבָה בָּמ
   PM 18: בָּמ

Plene Spelling

The analysis of the Pesikta lends further support to the view that on the whole variants of plene and defective spellings in rabbinic literature are of no consequence.2 The Pesikta manuscripts as a rule employ a radically plene spelling, as the following random examples show: דַּרְתֵּהַ בָּנָה (PM 1) (74), קְרָדֹר (137), מֵיתָה (100), לְהָרְוַה (154), שְׁנִיָּרָה (70), הָרְוַה (402), רֹאָיָה (96).

The plene spelling is equally found in P’s Biblical quotations, of which the following are typical examples:

Is. 54:11
   PM 294: עַטּיָּה סָמָרָה אֲלֵה דַּרְתֵּה
Jer. 11:23
   PM 361: וֹסֵיָרָה אֲלֵה דַּרְתֵּה לָבָּה
Ex. 15:17
   PM 86: מַכְּבָּרָה וֹסֵיָּרָה לָבָּה
Ps. 9:6
   PM 43: אָרָבְרָה רְשִׁי

But although the Pesikta usually has the plene spelling in both the derasha and the lemmata, it carefully distinguishes between them whenever the derasha hinges on the spelling.3 The following examples will illustrate the consistent application of this distinction:

2 'Arukh, s.v. מֵימָר, הָרָעָה interprets the passage in Bab. Tal. 'Aboda Zara 9a מַכְּבָּרָה וֹסֵיָּרָה לָבָּה: “The scribe of Bible scrolls writes defectively, e.g. מַכְּבָּרָה without a waw, but the Mishna teacher writes the word plene”. For a thorough discussion of this problem, see V. Aptowitzt, Das Schriftwort in der rabbinischen Literatur, Prolegomena, Heft 1 (Vienna 1906) 34–36. On defective and plene spelling in the text of the Mishna, see J. N. Epstein, נָטָה לְפֹּתֵה מַכְּבָּרָה (Jerusalem 1948) 1234–1249. On the method adopted by the HUBP, see the statement by M. H. Goshen-Gottstein, The Book of Isaiah, Sample Edition with Introduction (Jerusalem 1965) 35, n. 19: “No attention has been paid to differences of plene and defective spillings”.
The defective spelling of the wall (the wall) is used in the derasha to interpret the word as “sun”.

b) Lam. 1: 6 PM 380: יִרְכַּל בָּאָל בַּעַל רוּפָּה. أَرَّضَ أَنا روּפָּה مָלָא. The plene spelling of רוּפָּה (“pursuer”) in the phrase “And they are gone without strength before the pursuer,” is interpreted as a reference to a complete, or extreme pursuit. Equally, the plene spelling of נַעֲנָי (“redeemer”) in Is. 59:20 is taken to imply a full and complete redemption.

c) Gen. 1:14 PM 78: לֵא נִנַּעֲנָי אַלָּא גָּלַל הַמָּל. The defective spelling of the pl. נַעֲנָי (“lights”) here is read as a sing. fem. to the effect that in the beginning only one “sphere of sun” was created to light up the world.

d) In the following case the derasha seems to be rooted in an established tradition of an exceptional defective spelling.

Gen. 23:16 PM 160: נֵסַר נַעֲנָי. נָהַל נַעֲנָי. נְסַר נְסָרוֹ לְסַפְּרָה מָלָא מִלּוֹ. The defective spelling is used for midrashic purposes.

Defective Spelling

Since the plene spelling is the rule in P, and plene as against defective readings of the MT are to be found in almost every derasha, special attention should be given to each Bible quotation which goes counter to this rule and records a defective spelling instead of a Massoretic plene reading. These rare departures from the norm are bound to raise the question whether they represent true textual variants. Kutscher has made a similar observation in his analysis of

4 Rashi on Lam. 1: 6 quotes this Midrash and adds that the plene spelling of רוּפָּה is exceptional:
5 Significantly, the opposite view that in the beginning both lights, the greater and the lesser, were created to light up the world, is based on v. 15 where the spelling is partially plene: לְעַנְעַנִי. Cp. Gen. Rab. 6, 1 and Minhath Shay on Gen. 1: 14–15.
6 On the midrashic use of defective and plene spelling see מַרְדָּשׁ יְחִיר in: A. Berliner (ed.), Pletath Soferim (Breslau 1872); A. J. Wertheimer (ed.), בֶּוח מַרְדָּשׁ, II (Jerusalem 1950).
7 E. Y. Kutscher, וְלִשְׁנָה הַחְוִיק הָלוֹשִׁמָּה שלְּכַלָּא יִשְׁעִיאוֹת וְשָׁלֵמָה מֵעַלָּא יֵי הַמלָּא (Jerusalem 1957) 6. Where the Scroll’s reading is defective against the plene of MT, Kutscher suggests that רַבִּים בַּע (there is something in it). The question of the plene spelling in the Scroll is discussed by Kutscher on pp. 16–18 and 129–130. His theory for the consistent use of the plene spelling is the urge to preserve the correct pronunciation of the Hebrew
1QIsa, where the plene spelling prevails even where the MT reading is defective. However, it is doubtful whether any significance should be ascribed to P’s defective spelling of נָלָה where the MT reads נָלַה. The Qumran scrolls frequently spell רָאָשָׁה, but the Pesikta always reads these words defectively. For this reason it would seem that no conclusion can be drawn from Jer. 49:20 where the Pesikta (PM 51) has נָלָה against נָלַה of MT.

However, in the following two instances P’s defective reading obviously points to a textual variant:

a) Num. 7:1 MT: יָרֵא בֵּיתָם כָּלָה מַשָּׁה PM 9: כָּלָה

The defective כָּלָה is emphasized in the derasha which interprets the word as the sing. constr. (“bride”): כָּלָה נַחֲנוּ בִּיתָם דְּשָׁתָם כָּלָה לָגוּנָה

This Biblical verse is the subject of exegesis in the first chapter (פשכה) of the Pesikta and with one exception (PM 9, line 16) is quoted throughout defectively. Furthermore, the defective reading is attested by Rashi in his commentary on Num. 7:19 and Minhath Shay ad loc.

Of equal significance is the fact that the defective כָּלָה is confirmed independently by an authoritative halakhic responsum of the thirteenth century from Spain. The question is raised whether a Torah scroll is to be disqualified for having a reading which is attested in rabbinic literature but deviates from the MT. Specifically the question refers to the defective כָּלָה in Num. 7:1 as quoted by the Midrash which is opposed to the plene כָּלָה of MT. The reply by Rabbi Shelomo ben Adrat opens with the statement that the Torah scrolls of Jewish communities differ with regard to plene and defective readings, as they are recorded by the local scholars who are proficient in these matters. In view of these differences the decision should be made by the majority of scrolls, in accordance with the general halakhic rule of decision by majority. That this rule also applies to questions of the Biblical text is shown by the Talmudic tradition of the three Torah scrolls that were found in he Temple Court, which differed from each other in several respects, and the rabbis adopted in each case the reading of two and discarded the variant reading of the remaining one.

from the encroachments of the Aramaic. However, on the problem of spelling in rabbinic literature cp. Aptowitzner, op. cit.

8 MS כָּלָה more emphatically: כָּלָה חָרָם.
9 In his edition of Rashi’s commentary, A. Berliner notes that the defective reading is found in MSS and in early printed editions. W. Heidenheimer, תבנית המקרא, ad loc., notes that this is the reading in all Rashi sources in his possession.
10 חומש יֵשׁ עֲרָבִית - התוּנָהּותוּ תַלְפּוֹס חֲלוֹרָפָן - תַּשְׁיָרית רִיבִּי (Tel Aviv 1959) 201–202.
11 Cp. S. Talmon, “The Three Scrolls of the Law that were Found in the Temple”, Textus 2 (1962) 14–27. In the concluding paragraph on page 27, Talmon interprets the decision
The Formulas  אָיָן חָיָיו אֲלֵהֶם and חָיָיו אֲלֵהֶם

The assertion that "thus it is written" occurs also in the aforementioned derasha of כלם, where it obviously represents a genuine reading of the Biblical text and not merely a free midrashic variation. More important, P often introduces or concludes a derasha with אָיָן חָיָיו אֲלֵהֶם or חָיָיו אֲלֵהֶם with reference to a text which the derasha expounds and then this text as a rule is identical with the MT. It therefore seems justifiable to define אָיָן חָיָיו אֲלֵהֶם as formulas which are meant to indicate that an authentic Biblical text is used for the derasha. In the above case of כלם, the fact that P adds the formula indicates that a genuine textual variant is involved.

The following examples will illustrate the significance of the formula:

a) Ex. 19:2 PM 215: רוחים משישראל. רוחים משישראל אָיָן חָיָיו אֲלֵהֶם אֲלֵהֶם אֲלֵהֶם]
b) Num. 29:39 PM 434: אָלָה תשבו לִיּוּיָא-בַּמּוֹרְכָּה. אָלָה תשבו לִיּוּיָא-בַּמּוֹרְכָּה.

c) Jer. 8:17 PM 252: אָיָן חָיָיו אֲלֵהֶם וְתָשַׁמֵּם נָפָל. אָיָן חָיָיו אֲלֵהֶם וְתָשַׁמֵּם נָפָל.

d) Jer. 29:22 PM 374: אָשֶׁר קֶלֶם מְלֵךְ בָּאָשֶׁר. אָשֶׁר קֶלֶם מְלֵךְ בָּאָשֶׁר קֶלֶם מְלֵךְ בָּאָשֶׁר.

e) Ps. 29:4 PM 224: קָרָא אָיָן בָּכָה קָרָא אָיָן בָּכָה קָרָא אָיָן בָּכָה.

The next examples will show the implications of the formula:

by majority as “a mere formality, a sort of expedient peg on which to hang a legal decision which accorded official recognition to a factual situation, which obtained independently of this act of recognition”. In Rabbi Shelomo’s halakhic responsum the majority decision in the case of the three scrolls is interpreted as a legal precedent.

Apart from instead of וּרְשַׁמֵּהוּ. This kind of variant is not infrequent and is probably due to the familiar interchange of שָׁמַר וּרְשַׁמֵּהוּ/רְשַׁמֵּהוּ-שָׁמַר. The following rule of plene spelling.

13 MT: יְדוּשָׁה. Here P follows its usual rule of plene spelling.
a) Ez. 31:15 PM 146–147:

The quotation adheres to MT (מְדַבַּרָה הָאָרֶץ) but the derasha asserts and then goes on to derive this word from מִי מְחַלָּל אַחֲרֵיהּ מְרֻסֶּרֶק ("vanity") and not from מִי מְחַלָּל אַחֲרֵיהּ מְרֻסֶּרֶק ("mournning"), with a special reference to Eccl. 6:4: This clearly shows that the derasha is based on the variant מִי מְחַלָּל אַחֲרֵיהּ מְרֻסֶּרֶק instead of MT מְדַבַּרָה הָאָרֶץ.

b) Ex. 30:12 PM 26:

MT reads here משא, implying the taking of a census. But P has משא, reading ("lending") and in its interpretation of this verse it refers to Deut. 24:10. This interpretation follows an emphatic statement that משא כותב, which implies an actually extant reading. On the other hand, PM 18 has a different derasha on this verse, based on MT and interpreting משא, with reference to Is. 2:9 —moil משא — in the sense of "forgive". It appears that the Pesikta has preserved both MT משא and the variant משא.

'Al Tigrê

The discussion of the textual implications of משא כותב and משא כותב inevitably leads to a consideration of the midrashic method of 'al tigrê, as used by the Pesikta. The 'al tigrê is not used frequently in rabbinic literature. In the Pesikta its occurrence is rare. As the following examples will show, the evidence of P as to the textual value of an 'al tigrê variant is inconclusive:

a) Ps. 16:11 PM 405:

The derasha opens by quoting a plene reading for which it then substitutes a defective reading. But the fact is that also MT reads defective שבע. Since this derasha is repeated several times we could draw the conclusion that the rabbis

14 Cp. Yalkut on Ezekiel, 372: רבי יהודה אפומר חבל וכריב. However, Num. Rab. 1, 1 and Tanhuma ed. Buber (Num. 1) carry the derasha of the Pesikta with the exception of this very passage.

15 Cp. the different readings in the various MSS quoted by Mandelbaum ad loc. Cp. also הירשון המדרש גרום ed. Berliner, op. cit. 42 where Deut. 24:10 is used to interpret Nu. 14:1: יומא כל שבוע.


17 Z. Frankel, מנה הירשלמי (Breslau 1870) 18, has pointed out that the Palestinian Talmud mostly does not make use of the 'al tigrê formula, even when it cites a derasha which in the Babylonian Talmud is quoted with this formula. A complete list of 'al tigrê in the Babylonian Talmud (but not including the Midrashim) is given by Ch. J. Kasowski, ראו בקוקו, משלי ומשלי III (Jerusalem 1958) 1136–1137. For comprehensive lists see: N.H. Tur-Sinai, אוניקטלייסו תנאית II, s.v. אל תכירי, אוניקטלייסו תנאית II, s.v. אל תכירי, אוניקטלייסו תנאית II, s.v. אל תכירי.

18 Cp. PM 406 and B.T. 'Arakhin 13 b.
here had a plene reading — against MT — and that this gave them an opening to change שמשית שמשית into שמשית שמשית for midrashic purposes. But it would be no less plausible to argue that the lemmata in these passages are unreliable witnesses and that we should analyse only the contents of the derasha. We would then find that the difference between MT and the 'al tigré reading is merely a matter of vocalization: שמשית

b) Deut. 33:1 PM 441: והיה בברכה... והיה בברכה. The same derasha is found in Gen. Rab. 39, 18 on Gen. 12:2: והיה בברכה בברכה.

Although in both instances a yod was inserted, this probably was done only to emphasize the difference of vocalization: בברכה בברכה. However, the very fact that the same derasha is applied to two different Biblical verses seriously undermines its reliability as a textual variant-notation. It appears that בברכה is one of those words which are almost tailor-made for a midrashic pun.20

This may equally apply to בברכה. Its defective spelling practically invites midrashic punning. Moreover, the frequency of a midrashic pattern on the same word suggests that there existed an exegetical tradition which, on various occasions, was applied for a variety of midrashic purposes.21

Other derashot in the Pesikta which change the reading, without using the 'al tigré formula, are not more helpful with regard to their textual implications:

a) Is. 40:1 PM 276: נבון נבון שמיר נבון נבון שמיר, אמר להם الكبرى אバル אברך grandi נבון

The changes of נבון (MT: שמיר) and שמיר (MT: נבון) are used midrashically to suggest that God had been affected by the troubles that had afflicted His people, and that now He shares their need for consolation. But, there appears to be no reason to presuppose a textual variant for this derasha.

b) Jer. 30:14 PM 272: בְּבֵית אָבֶּרֶךְ, מַכְּת בָּדְרוֹחִים. Here, too, we have obviously no more than a derasha changing אברך ("enemy") into אברך ("Job").

c) Ps. 149:6 PM 207: תוּרֵבָּה מַפְּרִית מַמְּרֵה, מַפְּרִית מַמְּרֵה, תוּרֵבָּה מַפְּרִית מַמְּרֵה.

In place of the “two-edged sword” (תורבת מפרי) we get “one mouth which consists of many mouths” (المعир פמי), suggesting two Torot, the written Torah.

19 The formulas are interchangeable. For examples cp. דָּלְמָאָה, נֶפֶשׁ (Berlin 1857) 89.

20 Cp. I. Heinemann, דָּלְמָאָה דָּלְמָאָה (Jerusalem 1954) 243 n. 165, who quotes a suggestion by Speier that the derasha of רבך רבך as “pool” was influenced by Jos. 15:19 and Jud. 1:11 where the request for twoברך רבך implied “springs of water”. However, it is more likely that it is the very word רבך which begged to be punned.

21 This may account for the oft-quoted 'al tigré of נוּרְכָּה מבטינון.
and the oral Torah. The derasha is achieved by the simple expedient of dividing one word into two, without necessarily involving a textual variant.

The Tetragrammaton

The tetragrammaton is always written in the Pesikta with two consecutive yods.\textsuperscript{22} This manner of writing is not peculiar to P and it arises from the rabbinic prohibition to spell out the tetragrammaton except in a Torah scroll.\textsuperscript{23} Furthermore, P consistently substitutes two yods for the word א"לֶה wherever it interprets the word as the divine name.\textsuperscript{24} The following instances clearly illustrate this rule:

\begin{itemize}
\item [a)] Is. 6:8 \small{MT: קֹל אָדֹנִי, PM 269: קֹל אָדֹנִי}
\item [b)] 11:11 \small{MT: יִשָּׁר אָבִין, PM 279: יִשָּׁר אָבִין}
\item [c)] 49:14 \small{MT: וַהֲמֵמָר צְרִיּוּת תּוֹכִּנָה, PM 285: וַהֲמֵמָר צְרִיּוּת תּוֹכִּנָה}
\item [d)] 22:5 \small{MT: לָאָדֹנִי, PM 468: לָא"לֶה אָלֹהִים דָּבָאָה}
\end{itemize}

Here the written text of the Pesikta reflects the customary pronunciation of א"לֶה.

The Conjunctive Waw

Rabbinic literature makes considerable use of the conjunctive waw for midrashic as well as for halakhic purposes.\textsuperscript{25} And yet, in its Biblical quotations P either freely adds or omits the conjunctive waw, as the following examples show:

\begin{itemize}
\item [a)] Is. 30:18 \small{MT: לֹכֵן הַיָּהָה, PM 438: לֹכֵן}
\item [b)] Hos. 14:3 \small{MT: אָמְרָה אֶל-אָלֵי, PM 377: אָמְרָה}
\end{itemize}

\textsuperscript{22} Mandelbaum shows in his introduction, 19 n. 29, that each MS has a different but consistent manner of writing the tetragrammaton. However, all MSS write two yods. The differences affect only the type of the apostrophies between the yods. Cp. the list of 83 substitutes for the tetragrammaton and their discussion by J. Z. Lauterbach, “Substitutes for the Tetragrammaton”, PAAJR 2 (1930–1931) 39–67.

\textsuperscript{23} On the question of how the tetragrammaton was written and read in rabbinic literature, cp. Aptowitzer, \textit{op. cit.}, 10–12 and A. Marmarstein, \textit{The Old Rabbinic Doctrine of God} (London 1927) 17–147.

\textsuperscript{24} Cp. Mishna Berakhot 7, 3 which quotes Ps. 68:27 and substitutes א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"لֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"לֶה א"ל
In this instance the waw may have been added under the influence of the recurrent waw in the same verse: רָשָׁבוּת יְהוֹ הִכָּל הָרָעָה.

The lack of precision with regard to the conj. waw makes it impossible to decide whether in the following examples we have just another inaccuracy or whether the P text deliberately reflects the Qere tradition against the Ketib:

Jer. 5:24  
MT Ketib: הנֹּתַן בֶּן שָׁמִיר  
MT Qere: יוֹרֵה  
PM 138: יוֹרֵה

However, despite its general lack of precision with regard to the conjunctive waw, P draws on it heavily for purposes of expolation, e.g. חָוָה — זָכָה (PM 441, 447), בִּידֵם — בִּידֵם (PM 418, 429). For the requirements of a derasha P carefully distinguishes between the Ketib reading of a yod and the Qere reading of a waw, e.g. Zech. 14:6:

MT Ketib: אֶל יִהוּדָא יַעַקְבָּה יַמְסָאָה  
MT Qere: יַמְסָאָה  
PM 72: יַמְסָאָה חֲרִית. דְּבִרֵם שָׁם מַכֵּסָה מִכָּה בֵּית הָוֵי זוֹהֵר מִזְרַח לָעֲשֹׁרֶה פְּסִיקָה.  
לְכֵם חֲוָה בִּלְטָא.

By emphasizing the yod the word יַמְסָאָה is explained as referring to the future, when things which are hidden today will float upwards and become as clear as a mirror.

Paraphrastic Quotations

As long ago as the twelfth century the Tosafists found that in quoting Biblical passages the Talmud often shortens and conflates scriptures. The Pesikta, too, paraphrases its Biblical quotations, omitting words or entire phrases. The following examples will illustrate this paraphrastic method of quotation:

a) Is. 56:7  
MT: מְשַׁמֵּחַ בַּהֲלֹתֶיךָ וּמְסַלֵּלֵתָּם לְוהֵימָה לֵיתֵן עַל מַבְּרוֹחֵי  
כִּי בִּתְיָה בִּי הָמֵלָה  
PM 174: מְשַׁמֵּחַ בַּהֲלֹתֶיךָ וּמְסַלֵּלֵתָּם  
כִּי בִּתְיָה בִּי הָמֵלָה

b) Jer. 40:4  
MT: אֶם שָׁם בֵּעֲנִכָּה לֹא זָה וְבִי בְּהִילָה אָרְאָה אֶל הַשֵּׁמֶשׁ אֶל וָעֵינוֹת פְּלִיצְךָ  
אָם שָׁם בֵּעֲנִכָּה לֹא זָה וְבִי בְּהִילָה  
PM 232: אָם שָׁם בֵּעֲנִכָּה לֹא זָה וְבִי בְּהִילָה

26 Tosafoth Megilla 3a, s.v. בַּהֲלֹתֶיךָ; Shabbath 128a, s.v. תְּלֵה; Erubin 2a, s.v. עַרְיָהל. On the method of paraphrasing Biblical quotations see Aptowitz, op. cit., 21–33; Epstein, op. cit., 1131; S. Lieberman, Hellenism in Jewish Palestine, (New York 1950) 28. For a striking example of paraphrastic quotation see Pirke Rabbi Eliezer, ed. M. Higger, Horeb 10 (1948) 188, where the derasha is based on the word מָסִיק in Is. 31:9 and yet in the paraphrastic quotation the essential word is omitted.
c) Ez. 16: 19  MT:
    מִשְׁפֶּר רַע וּרְעָה
PM 170:
    מִשְׁפֶּר רַע וּרְעָה

Chiastic citations probably are a sub-group of the paraphrastic method:

a) Prov. 15:29 MT:
    רָחִיק הַלָּשׁוֹן נִחְנָתָה רְעָה
PM 422:
    רָחִיק הַלָּשׁוֹן נִחְנָת
b) Neh. 9: 6  MT:
    יְשֹׁמֵם שִׁמֵּרָה שִׁמֵּרָה קָרָע קָרָע שָׁלֵלָה
PM 452:
    יְשֹׁמֵם שִׁמֵּרָה שִׁמֵּרָה קָרָע קָרָע שָׁלֵלָה

It is significant that the ensuing *derasha* is intent upon connecting directly with the preceding thought, thus following the order of MT: שִׁמֵּרָה שִׁמֵּרָה קָרָע קָרָע

*Induced Variants*

Some of the textual variants in the Bible quotations of P can easily be traced to similar Biblical phrases which were remembered by the scribe and induced him by an associative thought process to change the text. The following examples will illustrate this type of “induced” variant:

a) Jer. 31:33  MT:
    אֲרוֹר יְרֵם הַמָּה לָא יֵאָתֵר אֲתַוְּרָה בָּכָרֶם
PM 219:
    אֲרוֹר יְרֵם הַמָּה לָא יֵאָתֵר אֲתַוְּרָה בָּכָרֶם

The change in PM may be due to the fact that the sentence contains the words לָא יֵאָתֵר אֲתַוְּרָה and לָא יֵאָתֵר אֲתַוְּרָה לָא יֵאָתֵר אֲתַוְּרָה.

b) Is. 48:12  MT:
    שְׁמַע אֶלֶּה יְעַקֵּב וּרְשָׁאָל מַכְרָא
PM 340:
    שְׁמַע אֶלֶּה יְעַקֵּב וּרְשָׁאָל מַכְרָא

The addition may have been induced by Is. 44:1 and 45:4 where occurs in a similar context.

c) Jer. 11:15  MT:
    וַשְּׁמֹאֲה הַמֹּאָמָה
PM 464:
    וַשְּׁמֹאֲה הַמֹּאָמָה

The variation may have been triggered off by the fact that the words וַשְּׁמֹאֲה occur rather frequently in the Book of Jeremiah, while וַשְּׁמֹאֲה occurs only twice (here and in 3:7).

d) Hab. 1:13  MT:
    וַשְּׁמֹאֲה יָעֲבָר מַרְאָה רְעָה
PM 77:
    וַשְּׁמֹאֲה רְעָה

27 Obviously a *homoioiteletum*, as noted by Mandelbaum.
28 Thus in MS. Oxford. Other MSS omit 28.
29 MS. מְשֹׁמֵם.
The variant may have been induced by the passage in Is. 33:15: מִשְׁתַּכֵּס עִנֵּים. Significantly, one MS of Midrash Hagadol, Numbers (ed. S. Fisch vol. 2 [Jerusalem 1963] 117) also reads וַיַּכְרֹא בַּר in quoting Hab. 1:13.

e) Is. 61:1 MT: לָכֶשֶׁר טַעֲמוֹרִים PM 466: עֶנִי מִים

If this variant is not simply another example of the well known difficulty of distinguishing in MSS yod from waw, it may have been induced by the prevalence of the variants נָעִי מִים in the Bible. נָעִי מִים occurs seventeen times, out of which there are five yod and waw variants between Kethib and Qerê. נָעִי מִים occurs nine times, of which two have Kethib and Qerê variants. There is also a Kethib and Qerê variant in Am. 8:4: נָעִי מִים.

The following variant requires closer examination:

f) Jer. 51:58 MT: תֹּמַת בַּכָל הַרְוָעֹת PM 46: תֹּמַת

PM 249 reads תֹּמַת, but two MSS have תֹּמַת. PM 311 reads תֹּמַת. The variant thus occurs in P on three occasions. It is also attested by LXX and V which translate the word in the singular. However, no conclusion can be reached since both the VSS and the Pesikta may have adjusted the noun to the adj. sing. This may therefore be a case of exegetical inducement.

Summary

The analysis of one Midrash collection cannot serve as a basis for generalizations with regard to rabbinic literature. But even its limited scope points to some hypotheses indicating the criteria by which rabbinic Bible quotations should be evaluated.

The most important conclusion is that a methodical distinction should be made between the lemmata and the quotations embedded in the derasha. For although the Pesikta is in many respects imprecise in its citations (e.g. in plene and defective spelling, the use of the conj. waw) it is meticulously exact in its observation of the most minute details when these affect the derasha.

On the other hand, the Pesikta points to the possibility that certain formulas ( bağlantı) are in themselves independent criteria for textual authority, regardless of the contents of the derasha.

Apart from the sufficiently attested paraphrastic method of quotation, this study of the Pesikta reveals a variety of conscious and subconscious inducements to textual deviations. However, this is a complex problem which requires further study on a wider scope.