DISCERNING PARALLELISM

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Box 1826
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DISCERNING PARALLELISM
A Study in Northern French
Medieval Jewish Biblical Exegesis

by
Robert A. Harris

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For Ed Greenstein, teacher and friend
עשה לך רב וקנה לך חבר

Contents

Acknowledgments

I presented the first version of this study—called, with an affectionate nod to Adele Berlin's book of a similar title, "Biblical Poetry Through *Other* Medieval Jewish Eyes"—at the convention of the Society of Biblical Literature in New Orleans, 1996. At that time, I was a recipient of grants from the Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture and the National Foundation for Jewish Culture, and I am grateful to those two institutions for their assistance. Gary Anderson and Martin Lockshin read through a greatly expanded draft of the SBL paper, and made many valuable suggestions. I am indebted to them both. Steven Fassberg has always been a good friend and an enthusiastic supporter of my scholarship; he was helpful during the research and writing of this book in many ways, and I take this opportunity to reiterate my appreciation.

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An earlier version of chapter two was originally published in *The Encyclopedia of Judaism, Volume V, Supplement Two* (eds. Jacob Neusner, Alan J. Avery-Peck, and William Scott Green; Leiden: Brill, 2004). It is included here with permission of the publisher; I am most grateful to Julian Deahl at Brill for helping to facillitate this permission.

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As always, my wife, Nellie, and my daughters, Naamah and Merav, have been constant sources of encouragement during the time I spent researching and writing this book. אין אמר ואין דברים בלי נשמע קולם, "There is nothing I could have said or done without the contribution of their voices" (after Ps 19:4). If I may paraphrase the wisdom of the Sages about this verse (*Tanhuma, Mishpatim* 12), "As all of the heavenly lights borrow one from another to make the totality of their light, so do all of the wonderful qualities of humankind borrow one from another to create the human whole." I thank my family for the light they have shared with me.

Finally, I would like to thank my teacher, Professor Edward L. Greenstein for helping to clarify my thinking on many of the topics and texts

treated here. Through all of the stages in the preparation of this study, he read through many drafts, offered countless suggestions and made himself freely available for consultation, advice and encouragement. This study was vastly improved through his help, and I would like to acknowledge him here. In the Mishna (*Avot* 1:6), R. Yehoshua ben Perahiah advises, עשה לך רב וקנה לך חבר, "Find yourself a teacher and acquire for yourself a friend." I have been most fortunate for many years now in having in Ed both an exemplary teacher and a close friend. My life and my scholarship have been enriched immeasurably. I am happy to dedicate this book to him.

It goes without saying, and yet I say it here, that while I am grateful for all of the help that I have received from friends and colleagues, I take full responsibility for any and all errors that remain. שְׁגִיאוֹת מִי־יָבִין מִנִּסְתָּרוֹת נַקֵּנִי!

I close with thanks to God for granting me the great merit of occupying myself in Talmud Torah; I pray that the final result will be judged by God and humankind to be well worth the effort.

<div align="right">

Rosh Hodesh Tammuz, 5764
New York

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Abbreviations

AB	Anchor Bible
ABD	*Anchor Bible Dictionary*
AOAT	Alter Orient und Altes Testament
BJS	Brown Judaic Studies
BO	*Bibliotheca Orientalis*
HBOT	Saebo, Magne. *Hebrew Bible/Old Testament: The History of Its Interpretation. Volume I: From the Beginnings to the Middle Ages (until 1300). Part 2: The Middle Ages.* Gottingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2000.
JANES	*Journal of the Ancient Near Eastern Society*
JBL	*Journal of Biblical Literature*
JQR	*Jewish Quarterly Review*
JSIJ	*Jewish Studies, An Internet Journal* <http://www.biu.ac.il/JS/JSIJ/>
JSOT	*Journal for the Study of the Old Testament*
JSQ	*Jewish Studies Quarterly*
JSS	*Journal of Semitic Studies*
HAR	*Hebrew Annual Review*
HSM	Harvard Semitic Monographs
HTR	*Harvard Theological Review*
JANES	*Journal of the Ancient Near East Society*
KJV	King James Version
NJPS	*Tanakh: A New Translation of the Holy Scriptures According to the Traditional Hebrew Text.* Philadelphia, New York, Jerusalem: The Jewish Publication Society, 1985.
OTL	Old Testament Library
RSV	Revised Standard Version

SB   Fox, Everett. *The Schocken Bible: Volume I: The Five Books of Moses.* New York: Schocken Books, 1995.

UF   *Ugarit Forschungen*

WBC   Word Biblical Commentary

A Note on Citations of Biblical Texts

In the citation of biblical texts within exegetical texts, I wish to distinguish between the *incipit* and any additional verses the commentator may cite. Therefore, I have kept to the following format: *incipit* texts are in bold-face, and any other biblical text cited within the comment are in italics. I have included the sources of these additional biblical citations in parentheses only in the English translations.

Styles for citing the divine name differ in the various manuscripts and editions, both medieval and modern. For reasons of traditional Jewish piety, I have consistently represented this name as ה׳ in all Hebrew biblical and exegetical citations, whatever the original may have been. In English translations of Hebrew biblical texts, I have represented the name as "LORD"; for Targum, Latin or rabbinic texts, I have used "Lord."

1

Parallelism and Medieval Poetics in Modern Scholarship

The modern study of Biblical poetry properly begins in 1753 with the seminal publication of Robert Lowth's *De sacra poesi Hebraeorum*.[1] In this work, Lowth introduced the concept of *parallelismus membrorum*, the structuring of a verse in (ordinarily) two parallel stichs, as the principal element in biblical poetry. In Lecture 19, he described the phenomenon in the following way:

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1. Throughout this study, any references to Lowth's work will be to the facsimile edition of the English translation, published some thirty years later: *Lectures on the Sacred Poetry of the Hebrews (1787)* (Anglistica and Americana 43; 2 Vols.; Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlag, 1969). The publication of Lowth's commentary on Isaiah is likewise considered a watershed in modern scholarship; see Robert Lowth, *Isaiah. A New Translation With a Preliminary Dissertation and Notes* (London, 1778). Lowth himself acknowledged his debt to medieval Jewish scholarship in developing his understanding of parallelism. In particular, in "Lecture 19" he cited the work of the Italian Renaissance scholar, Azariah de Rossi, who in 1575 published his מאור עינים, "The Enlightenment of the Eyes" (Lowth, *Lectures*, 2:54–55). For the importance of de Rossi in the formation of Lowth's understanding of parallelism, see James L. Kugel, *The Idea of Biblical Poetry: Parallelism and Its History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981), 284 and n. 191 there; Adele Berlin, *Biblical Poetry through Medieval Jewish Eyes* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991), 142. De Rossi's wide-ranging, almost encyclopedic book contains a discussion of Hebrew poetics, including the nature of parallelism, which de Rossi himself had learned through the scholarship of his medieval predecessors. For a discussion of the importance of the מאור עינים in the history of the study of biblical parallelism, see Alan Mitchell Cooper, "Biblical Poetics: A Linguistic Approach" (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1976), 17–19; Kugel, *Idea,* 172, 200–203; Berlin, *Biblical Poetry,* 141–153.

> The poetical conformation of the sentences, which has been so often al-
> luded to as characteristic of the Hebrew poetry, consists chiefly in a cer-
> tain equality, resemblance, or parallelism between the members of each
> period; so that in two lines (or members of the same period) things for the
> most part shall answer to things, and words to words, as if fitted to each
> other by a kind of rule or measure. This parallelism has much variety and
> many gradations; it is sometimes more accurate and manifest, sometimes
> more vague and obscure: it may however, on the whole, be said to consist
> of three species.[2]

In particular, Lowth proposed that there are three types of biblical
parallelism. The first of these, which he designated as "synonymous par-
allelism," was defined as a structure in which "the same sentiment is re-
peated in different, but equivalent terms."[3] Lowth dubbed the second type
"antithetic parallelism,"; this is "when a thing is illustrated by its contrary
being opposed to it."[4] The third category he called "synthetic parallelism."
The definition for this third type proved to be more elusive, in that he ad-
mitted that the correspondence between the two stichs is not always im-
mediately evident:

> There is a third species of parallelism, in which the sentences answer to
> each other, not by the iteration of the same image or sentiment, or the op-

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2. Lowth, *Lectures,* 2:34. Compare this definition to the somewhat more pithy
description he offered in the commentary on Isaiah, some twenty-five years later:
"The correspondence of one verse, or line, with another, I call *parallelism.* When a
proposition is delivered, and a second subjoined to it, or drawn under it, equiva-
lent, or contrasted with it, in sense; or similar to it in the form of grammatical con-
struction; these I call parallel lines; and the words or phrases, answering one to an-
other in the corresponding Lines, parallel terms." See Lowth, *Isaiah,* 10–11; cited in
Lowth, *Lectures,* 2:4 n. 10.

3. Lowth, *Lectures,* 2:35. This definition is strikingly similar to the formula em-
ployed by the medieval Jewish commentators R. Abraham ibn Ezra and R. David
Kimhi. See ibn Ezra's comment on Num 23:7: הטעם כפול כמשפט, שהיא דרך לדבר
בטעם אחד במלות משונות ושנוהו לחזוק, "the sense is doubled according to the rule (of
poetic discourse), for it is the way (of poetry) to speak in one sense with different
words, repeated for emphasis." Even closer to Lowth's definition is the oft-re-
peated formula employed by David Kimhi (Radak): כפל הענין במלות שונות, "the
substance is doubled with different words" (see his comment on Gen 49:6; Ps 25:4).
On Radak's formula, see Mordechai Cohen, "The Qimhi Family," in *Hebrew Bi-
ble/Old Testament: The History of Its Interpretation, Volume I: From the Beginnings to the
Middle Ages (until 1300), Part 2: The Middle Ages* (ed. Magne Saebo; Gottingen:
Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2000), 388–415 (p. 402); on Radak inheriting this under-
standing of parallelism from his father, R. Joseph Kimhi, see p. 392. Further refer-
ences to this important collection of essays will be cited as *HBOT.*

4. Lowth, *Lectures,* 2:45.

position of their contraries, but merely by the form of construction. To this [category] may be referred all such as do not come within the two former classes.[5]

Lowth went on to acknowledge the difficulty in arriving at an absolute determination regarding the third category: "The variety in the form of this synthetic parallelism is very great, and the degrees of resemblance almost infinite: so that sometimes the scheme of the parallelism is very subtle and obscure, and must be developed by art and ability in distinguishing the different members of the sentences . . ."[6] Testimony to the elusive nature of Lowth's definition, this third classification of "synthetic" parallelism became over time a catch-all category for many of the other sub-types scholars have found in biblical parallelism.

Scholars who have studied biblical parallelism during the two centuries since Lowth have essentially reacted to him, either by refining his definitions and categorizations,[7] or by rejecting his analysis outright and seeking to understand the phenomenon of parallelism from a completely different point of view.[8] It is not the purpose of the present introduction to undertake a history of the study of biblical parallelism.[9] Rather, as the title of this study would indicate, our focus is decidedly medieval. It is therefore important only to review those modern studies that have investigated the degree to which medieval Jewish exegetes expressed an understanding of parallelism in biblical composition that at least roughly corresponds to Lowth's. These studies are comparatively few in number.

The most significant of these is James Kugel's *The Idea of Biblical Poetry: Parallelism and Its History*.[10] Actually, Kugel's attention to the medieval

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5. Lowth, *Lectures,* 2:48–49.

6. Lowth, *Lectures,* 2:52.

7. An example of this is Wilfred G. E. Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry: A Guide to Its Techniques* (JSOTSup 26; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995). See also Adele Berlin, *The Dynamics of Biblical Parallelism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985).

8. Two noteworthy examples of this are Stephen A. Geller, *Parallelism in Early Biblical Poetry* (HSM 20; Missoula: Scholars Press, 1979); and Michael P. O'Connor, *Hebrew Verse Structure* (2nd ed.; Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1997).

9. For a brief essay, see Adele Berlin's "Parallelism" in *The Anchor Bible Dictionary* (ed. David Noel Freedman; 6 vols.; New York: Doubleday, 1992), 5:155–162 (esp. 155–156 and the bibliography she provides, 160–162). See also Berlin's "Introduction to Hebrew Poetry," in *The New Interpreter's Bible* (ed. L. E. Keck et al.; 12 vols.; Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996), 4:301–315 (esp. 303–308).

10. Kugel, *Idea* (see n. 1, above). A precursor to Kugel's discussion of the medieval sources in this book appeared in his essay, "Some Medieval and Renaissance Hebrew Writings on the Poetry of the Bible," in *Studies in Medieval Jewish History*

Jewish understanding of parallelism in biblical poetry is only incidental to the two major objectives of the book as a whole. The first of these is, in Kugel's words, "to arrive at some comprehensive notion of biblical parallelism." Kugel devotes the first two chapters of his book to this goal.[11] The longer component of the book presents "a history of ideas about parallelism . . . from antiquity to the present."[12] It is this second part of the book, where Kugel's analysis of medieval considerations of parallelism is found, that draws our attention.

Before Kugel turns his eye to medieval Jewish understandings of parallelism, he first examines rabbinic texts from late antiquity—the rabbinic world that, in his memorable formulation, "forgot parallelism."[13] Kugel determines that the single most important factor that led the rabbis to overlook the parallelistic structure of any biblical composition was the principle he termed "omnisignificance":

> For the basic assumption underlying all of rabbinic exegesis is that the slightest details of the biblical text have a meaning that is both comprehensible and significant. Nothing in the Bible, in other words, ought to be explained as the product of chance, or, for that matter, as an emphatic or rhetorical form . . . Every detail is put there to teach something new and important, and it is capable of being discovered by careful analysis.[14]

This principle, Kugel asserts, animates the rabbinic treatment of every biblical verse. Moreover, it is not limited to a reluctance to recognize parallel-

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and Literature (ed. Isadore Twersky; Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979), 57–81.

11. For a similar approach, see Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Poetry* (New York: Basic Books, 1985). For a concise analysis of biblical Hebrew poetry, see Benjamin Hrushovski, "Prosody, Hebrew," in *Encyclopedia Judaica* (Jerusalem: Keter, 1971), 13:1200–1202.

12. Kugel, *Idea,* vii.

13. The whole of chapter three, "Rabbinic Exegesis and the 'Forgetting' of Parallelism" (96–134), is devoted to the examination of talmudic and midrashic readings of poetic biblical texts, which do not recognize their parallelistic, poetic structure. Kugel points out the great irony in contrasting rabbinic readings of Scripture that "forget" parallelism with rabbinic poetic compositions that employ it: " . . . while in their own compositions, the Rabbis showed ample awareness of the elements of biblical style, as exegetes they seem singularly blind to the same procedures . . . the ways of biblical parallelism are everywhere apparent in rabbinic prayers and songs: yet nowhere do the Rabbis speak of parallelism or acknowledge it in their explanations or interpretation of biblical verses, even when—to our eyes—it is so obvious that the greatest industry seems necessary to devise a reading that does *not* comment on it"; Kugel, *Idea,* 97; see also 108–109.

14. Kugel, *Idea,* 104.

ism as a rhetorical form. Rather, "it includes a thoroughgoing lack of interest in any deducible principle of composition in the Bible, or in explaining peculiarities of expression stylistically."[15] Put simply, the rabbis' assumption of omnisignificance in Scripture precluded any possibility of acknowledging the parallelistic structure of any biblical poetic composition. We may add that since the Rabbinic hermeneutical project—midrash—is predicated in large measure on the omnisignificance of Scripture, recognition of parallelism as the marker of biblical poetry would have to wait until the medieval exponents of *peshat,* or "contextual exegesis," enabled the Jewish reader to approach Scripture without recourse to midrash.[16]

In addition to the principle of omnisignificance, Kugel identifies a number of other factors that led the rabbinic world to "forget" parallelism. Among these he includes "the musical elaboration of the textual accents, the decline of antiphony in the synagogue, stichography, and the invention of poetry."[17] However, since it is specifically the rejection of midrash as an exclusive method for reading Scripture that leads the medieval contextual exegetes to pursue their own agenda—which will include the recognition of parallelism in biblical poetic composition—it is sufficient for us to have examined Kugel's presentation of the omnisignificant principle; it is therefore unnecessary for us to elaborate further on the other factors that Kugel discusses.

Kugel himself recognizes the primacy of omnisignificance in the midrashic enterprise as the major reason the rabbis failed to appreciate the nature of parallelism. In the beginning of his discussion of the role medieval Hebrew literature and exegesis play in clarifying the poetics of biblical composition, he writes, of rabbinic exegesis:

> . . . it insists that every B [stich of a clause] is significantly different from
> A, indeed, often a reference to some utterly separate matter. This reading

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15. Kugel, *Idea,* 105.

16. Throughtout this study, I follow Edward L. Greenstein in translating the terms פשט and פשוטו (sometimes more fully expressed as פשוטו של מקרא), as "contextual exegesis"; see his essay, "Medieval Bible Commentaries," in *Back to the Sources* (ed. Barry Holtz; New York: Summit Books, 1984), 212–59 (217–220). Others prefer a translation of "plain" sense; see, e.g., Raphael Loewe, "The 'Plain' Meaning of Scripture in Early Jewish Exegesis," in *Papers of the Institute of Jewish Studies London* (ed. J. G. Weiss; Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1964), 140–85; Sara Japhet, "'Lebanon' in the Transition from *Derash* to *Peshat*: Sources, Etymology and Meaning (with Special Attention to the Song of Songs)," in *Emanuel: Studies in Hebrew Bible, Septuagint and Dead Seas Scrolls in Honor of Emanuel Tov* (eds. Shalom M. Paul, Robert A. Kraft, Lawrence H. Schiffman and Weston W. Fields; Leiden: Brill, 2003), 707–724 (711 n. 22). We will examine the methodology of *peshat* exegesis, in its northern French manifestation, in the following chapter.

17. Kugel, *Idea,* 109; for his discussion of these factors, see 109–134.

. . . dimmed Jewish awareness of this rhetorical feature in their own Scripture. Moreover, the concentration of parallelism and other heightening features in this or that passage was of no consequence. Scripture was of one piece, sacred, incomparable to human texts, and certainly not divided into "poetry" and "prose."[18]

It is at this point in his study that Kugel addresses the texts that are the central focus of our own study. In considering medieval Jewish exegetical literature as a prelude to the achievements of such Jewish scholars from the Italian Renaissance as Azariah dei Rossi,[19] Kugel details the important contributions to the study of Hebrew language and biblical poetics by Jewish scholars writing mostly in Arabic and in the Islamic orbit. Kugel stresses the crucial role played by R. Saadia Gaon in the development of the study of Hebrew and the Bible among Jews, and observes his influence on a host of later writers, both Sephardic and Italian.[20]

Kugel affords Judeo-Islamic and Italian scholarship a thorough treatment and reviews it with great admiration.[21] However, when he turns his eye to northern France, the other great center of medieval Jewry, he underestimates the achievements of the Jewish exegetes of that school and, indeed, gives them short shrift. These scholars, beginning with Rabbi Solomon ben Isaac (Rashi) in the late eleventh century and continuing with Rabbis Joseph Kara, Samuel ben Meir (Rashbam), Eliezer of Beaugency, and Joseph Bekhor Shor in the twelfth century, also displayed sensitivity to literary and poetic matters.[22] While the representatives of this school did not apparently produce treatises on Hebrew rhetoric, such as those

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18. Kugel, *Idea,* 171.

19. Kugel, *Idea,* 200–203.

20. Kugel, *Idea,* 181–200.

21. Consider, for example, his assessment of the accomplishments of the Sephardic and Italian scholars (p. 172): " . . . in trying to reconcile different traditions and perceptions, [these scholars] stated a view of parallelism more reasonable— less misleading—than what had preceded in either [the Jewish or Christian world], and, sadly, [than] what was to follow."

22. A useful recent survey of the history of the northern French "school" of biblical exegesis is Avraham Grossman, "The School of Literal Exegesis in Northern France," in *HBOT,* 321–371. This essay is essentially condensed from Grossman's more extensive volume, *The Early Sages of France: Their Lives, Leadership and Works* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1995) (Hebrew). However, Grossman does not address literary matters *per se.* For that, see my essay, "Medieval French Biblical Interpretation," in *Encyclopedia of Judaism, Volume V, Supplement Two* (eds. Jacob Neusner, Alan J. Avery-Peck, and William Scott Green; Leiden: Brill, 2004), 2045–2061. An excellent, brief discussion of the role of *peshat* biblical studies in the curriculum of the northern European Jewish academies is found in Ephraim Kanarfogel, *Jewish*

produced by such favorites of Kugel as Moshe ibn Ezra[23] or Judah Messer Leon,[24] they do in their exegetical writings have much to say about the nature of parallelism and, hence, about Biblical composition.

In this study, I argue that the northern French rabbinic exegetes, often called the "School of Rashi," developed an understanding of biblical parallelism and expressed their sensitivity to the phenomenon primarily by using the term כפל. Kugel, however, has challenged the notion that an observation on parallelism by these exegetes reflects anything more than a cursory understanding. In the beginning of his brief overview of the northern French material, Kugel essentially dismisses the exegesis of Rashi as little more than a continuation of ancient talmudic and midrashic exegesis ("Thus, Rashi . . . is, in general, scrupulous in reading [the] B [stich] as a distinction over and against A").[25] While this assessment is indeed true for most of Rashi's Torah commentary, it would be an overstatement—as we shall see—to consider it the final judgment for the entire body of his biblical exegesis. Likewise, while Kugel evaluates the exegesis of Rashbam in a positive vein,[26] he cites very few of his comments and chooses not to engage the entirety of his work. Finally, he appears not to have considered at all the exegesis of Joseph Kara, Eliezer of Beaugency, and Joseph Bekhor Shor.[27] Indeed, Kugel's judgment on the twelfth-century medieval commentators is summary:

> Both ibn Ezra and Rashbam use the phrase *kefel lashon* ("repetition of an expression") and the like . . . what is meant is not necessarily repetition but any form of reiteration or restatement . . . The commentaries seen

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Education and Society in the High Middle Ages (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1992), 79–85.

23. See A. S. Halkin, ed. *Moshe Ben Ya'akov Ibn Ezra: Kitab Al-Muhadara Wal-Mudhakara: Liber Discussionis et Commemorationis (Poetica Hebraica)* (Jerusalem: Mekize Nirdamim, 1975) (Arabic and Hebrew). On this, and other, unpublished works of Moses ibn Ezra, see Mordechai Cohen, "The Aesthetic Exegesis of Moses Ibn Ezra," in *HBOT,* 282–301.

24. See Isaac Rabinowitz, ed., *The Book of the Honeycomb's Flow: Sepher Nopheth Suphim by Judah Messer Leon* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983).

25. Kugel, *Idea,* 173.

26. "It is clear from here that Rashbam understood the structure of the verses mentioned, that is, understood 'repetitive parallelism' as a specific stylistic construction that divided the verses"; Kugel, *Idea,* 174. See also on p. 176.

27. Kugel also examines the exegesis of Abraham ibn Ezra, David Kimhi (Radak), Joseph ibn Kaspi and Tanhum Yerushalmi, and considers the degree to which they observed parallelism in biblical poetry; see Kugel, *Idea,* 174–179. However, all of these are commentators who fall outside of our purview.

probably represent not so much a *new understanding* as a new willingness to approach the Bible's manner of expression—its style, as it were—phenomenologically . . . Yet there is something quite wrong-headed in describing any of these commentators as "understanding" parallelism, for even in ibn Ezra it is a most passive act of comprehension. They embraced this seconding style only in its most obvious form and only insofar as it aided them in their main task, explaining the meaning of the words.

Where it was possible to read verse halves as differentiated by nuances of meaning, they usually did so; only when the text literally repeated itself, or in an unmistakable way restated a single idea did they speak of "doubling," repetition, and so forth. And "elegant style," "the manner of prophecies," and "the habit of Hebrew" all explain what, to these commentators, ought really not to exist, mere repetition or restatement . . . Repetition still ran counter to their notion of the text's perfection . . .[28]

As the great number of texts presented and examined in this study will make clear, Kugel has not paid enough attention to the exegetical accomplishments of the northern French rabbinic exegetes, and has underestimated their achievements. With the exception of Joseph Kara, whose exegesis does not recognize parallelism as a structure in biblical composition,[29] the other commentators reviewed here all comment on "parallelism" at one point or another even where they make no philological use of it. Of course, Kugel would claim that such observations are essentially philological: to merely indicate a doubling without further comment is to say that one should interpret clause B according to the sense of clause A. But such an argument begs the question; if the exegetes are commenting on the phenomenon even for philological or semantic purposes, they must still be in possession of some kind of rhetorical understanding of the device. To put it another way: if an exegete bases a philological determination on a perception that a text is constructed in parallelism, then the discernment of the parallelism is not secondary and incidental but primary in the exegete's analysis. In addition, the exegetes of whom we are speaking had a name for the phenomenon they discern: כפל מלה (and other permutations of the term). Therefore, we will not only disagree with Kugel's judgment that these exegetes' "notion of the text's perfection" stands in opposition to their understanding that repetition in a text could be for purely stylistic considerations, and was not intended to convey additional information; we will also take issue with Kugel's denial that the medie-

28. Kugel, "Some Medieval and Renaissance Hebrew Writings on the Poetry of the Bible," 61–63. See also Kugel, *Idea,* 176–179, and Ezra Zion Melammed, *Bible Commentators* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1978), 465–468 (Hebrew).
29. This will be demonstrated below, in chapter 4.

vals examined in this study truly "understood parallelism" in the way a modern critic might.

One scholar who has treated the subject of parallelism within the northern French school in great depth is Sara Japhet. In the introduction that she wrote to the edition of Rashbam's commentary on Qoheleth (that she published together with Robert Salters), Japhet considered the awareness of parallelism as a distinctive component of Rashbam's exegesis.[30] In particular, she discusses the various formulations of technical terminology (e.g., כפל מלה, כפל לשון) that Rashbam employs to express his understanding of parallelism. Following her presentation of the evidence, Japhet concludes, "Rashbam's sensitivity to form and to the special nature of poetic language have led him to recognize the phenomenon of parallelism and to differentiate some of its forms."[31] Later, in her comprehensive examination of Rashbam's commentary on Job, Japhet reached similar conclusions regarding the important role that knowledge of parallelism played in Rashbam's interpretive strategy.[32]

Another work relevant to this study is Mayer Gruber's edition of Rashi's commentary on Psalms.[33] In an introductory chapter entitled "Synonymous Parallelism in Rashi's Exegesis,"[34] Gruber reviews Kugel's position and considers the degree to which Rashi incorporated an under-

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30. Sara Japhet and Robert Salters, *The Commentary of R. Samuel Ben Meir (Rashbam) on Qoheleth* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press; Leiden: Brill, 1985), 23–32, 51–55 (Hebrew and English). For a fuller discussion and bibliography, see below, p. 57 n. 7.

31. Japhet and Salters, *Commentary of Rashbam on Qoheleth*, 51.

32. Sara Japhet, *The Commentary of Rabbi Samuel Ben Meir (Rashbam) on the Book of Job* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 2000) (Hebrew), 170–200. In chapter 5, we shall investigate Rashbam's attention to parallelism as a major component of his exegesis.

33. Mayer I. Gruber, ed., *Rashi's Commentary on Psalms 1–89 (Books I–III), with English Translation, Introduction and Notes* (South Florida Studies in the History of Judaism 161; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998). This work has now been superseded by Gruber's monumental *Rashi's Commentary on Psalms* (The Brill Reference Library of Judaism 18; Leiden: Brill, 2004). Regretfully, this edition, containing the entire Hebrew text of Rashi's commentary, with a heavily annotated English translation and comprehensive introduction, was published too recently for me to be able to truly incorporate its findings in this study. At the present time, I can say that the principal presentation of Gruber's argument concerning Rashi and biblical parallelism found in the second edition (pp. 150–154) more or less reproduces that of the first edition (pp. 30–34); likewise, the brief discussion in the second edition on pp. 7–9 (see especially p. 8 n. 43; see also p. 597 n. 2) roughly repeats the first edition (pp. 4–5 and p. 8 n. 44). Gruber's discussion, particularly as regards Rashi's developing understanding of parallelism in such verses as Exod 15:6, somewhat parallels my own conclusions, found below in chapter 3, pp. 37–40.

34. Gruber, *Rashi's Commentary on Psalms 1–89,* 30–34.

standing of parallelism in his biblical exegesis. Following this, Gruber dis-
cusses several comments from Rashi's Psalms commentary that seem to
indicate that Rashi attained an understanding of parallelism, at least in his
ability to rely on that knowledge to explain difficult words.[35] Gruber con-
cludes that these examples "demonstrate that Rashi was far from unaware
both of the parallelistic nature of biblical poetry and of the tendency of
biblical writers to juxtapose precise synonyms."[36]

In addition to the preceding, two modern studies collect and present
texts by medieval Jewish authors who articulate various observations re-
lating to *ars poetica.* The first of these is by Alan Cooper.[37] While the central
focus of his dissertation is a modern, linguistic consideration of biblical
poetics, Cooper assesses as well observations on poetics contributed by an
array of medieval Jewish writers.[38] These are scholars who wrote either in
the Islamic world (mostly in Arabic) or during the Italian Renaissance or
later (and who wrote in Hebrew). Framing his selections with R. Saadia
Gaon in the tenth century and Immanuel Frances in the seventeenth, Coo-
per discusses the relevant observations of approximately twenty authors,
and translates several of the key texts; he also provides a bibliography for
each excerpt. However, he does not address the northern French exegetes
who are the subject of the present study.

In addition to the valuable collection provided by Cooper, an abun-
dant selection of excerpts from medieval Jewish literature on poetry and
poetics is found in Alex Preminger and Edward Greenstein's anthology,
The Hebrew Bible in Literary Criticism.[39] The editors have translated over

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35. See Gruber, *Rashi's Commentary on Psalms 1–89,* 31–33. In the index to
Gruber, *Rashi's Commentary on Psalms* (2004), 914 (s.v. "repetitive parallelism,"
"synonymous parallelism" and "synthetic parallelism"), Gruber lists a few dozen
examples in which he considers Rashi to rely on his understanding of parallelism
to interpret some aspect of a verse. Again, I regret that due to the very recent publi-
cation of this volume I am unable to consider much of this material. However, in
chapter 3, I will treat some of these comments.

36. Gruber, *Rashi's Commentary on Psalms 1–89,* 33. We will examine Gruber's
evidence in the course of our discussion of Rashi's understanding of parallelism in
chapter 3.

37. Cooper, "Biblical Poetics: A Linguistic Approach," cited in n. 1, above.

38. Most of the authors Cooper considers are found in the appendix, 150–162.
However, in this appendix Cooper refers as well to texts and discussions adduced
earlier, in the body of the dissertation.

39. Alex Preminger and Edward L. Greenstein, eds., *The Hebrew Bible in Literary
Criticism* (A Library of Literary Criticism; New York: Ungar, 1986); for the specific
references, consult the "Index to Critics," 615–619. In keeping with the format of
the series, the editors have not included discussions, but rather let the texts in-
cluded in the anthology speak for themselves.

twenty passages containing observations of literary interest by a variety of medieval Jewish authors. Although Preminger and Greenstein do include several texts written by the northern French exegetes, only one of those texts bears directly on the subject of parallelism.[40]

One other modern discussion is relevant to our discussion here. In 1991, Adele Berlin published a study entitled *Biblical Poetry Through Medieval Jewish Eyes.*[41] In its design, the book is more ambitious in directly tackling the subject than any of the works mentioned thus far.[42] Berlin divides her work into two sections. The first of these "contains a discussion of medieval and Renaissance views of biblical poetry and rhetoric in the context of the history of the study of biblical poetry and in the context of medieval views of poetic language and the place of the Bible in it."[43] In the second section, Berlin provides an anthology of texts about biblical poetics from medieval Jewish authors writing either in Hebrew or Arabic. Working with a catalog of writers and texts similar to that of Cooper, whom she acknowledges as a predecessor,[44] Berlin begins with a brief discussion of Saadia, and then examines primarily Spanish Jewish writers of the tenth–fourteenth centuries and Italian Jewish writers of the Renaissance. As others did before her, Berlin completes her survey to the virtual exclusion of the eleventh and twelfth century northern French rabbinic *peshat* commentators. Although, in passing, she acknowledges Rashbam's awareness of parallelism as a feature of biblical poetry,[45] Berlin assumes that there is not much in the way of literary observation to be mined in the exegetical writings of the rabbinic commentators. The "silence" of the ancient rabbis regarding the Bible's stylistic aspect

> continued, for the most part, in the medieval Jewish commentaries. This was not due so much to literary ignorance as to different hermeneutic principles. For Jewish exegetes, every word of Scripture had its own significance. This meant that words and phrases were never just "decora-

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40. This is Rashbam's commentary on Exod 15:6 (p. 145), which we discuss below. They have also included an observation of parallelism made by the Provençal scholar, R. David Kimhi (p. 146).

41. Cited above, n. 1.

42. For a critical appraisal of Berlin's book, see the review by Alan Cooper in *AJS Review* 19 (1994), 79–83.

43. Berlin, *Biblical Poetry,* x.

44. Berlin, *Biblical Poetry,* 4.

45. "Occasionally, we do find commentators who are sensitive to stylistic and poetic matters. For example, Abraham ibn Ezra and Rashbam . . . noted that a certain amount of repetition and/or parallelism was stylistic and did not necessarily add new information"; Berlin, *Biblical Poetry,* 10.

tive" stylistic devices, but always bore some specific meaning. This approach had the effect of limiting the recognition of literary features, including poetic forms . . . discussions of poetry were not apt to be found in commentaries; they were more likely to occur in the context of philosophical essays or grammatical works, where they grew out of a concern with current knowledge in those areas.[46]

We hear in Berlin's judgment an echo of Kugel's observation about the "omnisignificance" of Scripture in the ancient rabbinic perspective. Moreover, like Kugel, she does not appear to distinguish the *peshat*-oriented exegetes of northern France sufficiently from other, more *midrashically*-oriented writers. In addition, although it is true that philosophical, grammatical and rhetorical treatises are more likely sources of observations of poetics than are biblical commentaries, by overlooking the possibilities inherent in the writings of the northern French rabbinic exegetes, Berlin has perpetuated the modern scholarly under-appreciation of this literature.

It is precisely to rectify this oversight that the present work is dedicated. It is not the purpose of this study to offer a critique of the material Cooper, Preminger and Greenstein, and Berlin translated and presented to the public. Rather, with an intent to continue the study of biblical poetics "through medieval Jewish eyes," the present study will focus on the attention paid to the subject by the rabbinic exegetes of eleventh and twelfth century northern France.

As we shall see, the technical terminology employed by these scholars to identify the parallelistic structure found in biblical poetry almost invariably includes the word כפל, literally, "doubling."[47] For the purposes of this study, we will primarily limit ourselves to the consideration of one specific question: when the northern French rabbinic exegetes employed the technical term כפל, to what extent did they thereby demonstrate an awareness of parallelism as a rhetorical phenomenon that does not necessarily express in its repetitions a distinctively new semantic sense? Or did

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46. Berlin, *Biblical Poetry,* 10.

47. Variations include, but are not limited to, כפל מלה ("the term is doubled" or "it is a parallel term"), כפל לשון ("the language is doubled" or "it is a parallel expression"), כפולה ("[the structure is] doubled"). Throughout this study, I have chosen not to translate the technical terminology, as it appears, in a single, consistent fashion, but have preferred to render it in the manner most appropriate to the specific context in which it is found. The term "doubling" has taken on a new life in the structural linguistic analysis of parallelism; see Paul Kiparsky, "The Role of Linguistics in a Theory of Poetry," *Daedalus* 102 (1973): 231–44. However, the appropriation is only coincidental, as Kiparsky does not build his work upon that of the medieval exegetes considered here.

they express only a general sense of "doubling" in biblical rhetoric without actually articulating a definition of the phenomenon?[48]

Before immediately turning to the specific question of how the northern French exegetes approached the issue of parallelism, it is fitting that we should introduce the reader to the broader issues of exegesis that distinguished Bible scholarship in twelfth-century northern France, and to the exegetes themselves who advanced the particular kind of biblical exegesis that came to represent the northern French school.[49] We may then more fully understand and evaluate the achievements of these exegetes in their explication of parallelistic biblical texts. The following chapter, therefore, will consider the contribution of the northern French rabbinic masters to the advances in biblical studies made during the "Renaissance of the Twelfth Century."

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48. It should be recognized from the outset that the various exegetes will occasionally employ other technical language that may sometimes describe parallelism, e.g., the expression מוסב על, "is predicated upon" or "harkens back to." Moreover, they may also express awareness of parallelism, or rely upon it as an exegetical tool, without resorting to any technical language whatsoever. However, the most *prominent* term is, indeed, כפל, and we will therefore concentrate primarily on instances where the commentators invoke that term.

49. I explore this subject more fully in my article, "Medieval French Biblical Interpretation," cited above, n. 22. For a survey of northern French rabbinic exegesis within the broader sweep of the history of Jewish biblical interpretation, see my essay, "Medieval Jewish Biblical Exegesis," in *A History of Biblical Interpretation,* volume 2 (eds. Alan Hauser and Duane F. Watson; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, forthcoming).

2

"Contextual Reading":
The Development of Peshat in
Northern France

Between the middle of the eleventh century and the end of the twelfth century, a veritable revolution took place in biblical exegesis among rabbinic scholars of northern France. During that time, a group of rabbis began to formulate a new and innovative approach to reading and interpreting biblical texts according to a methodology that came to be called *peshat*, or "contextual exegesis."[1] This French rabbinic group included such illustrious figures as Rabbi Solomon ben Isaac, or Rashi (1040–1105); his younger contemporary, Rabbi Joseph Kara (late eleventh–mid twelfth century); Rashi's grandson, Rabbi Samuel ben Meir, or Rashbam (1080–

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1. This revolution paralleled, contributed to and was influenced by a similar advance made in *ad litteram* reading methodology by contemporary Christian scholars, most of whom were associated with the school of St. Victor. Moreover, Jewish and Christian masters were themselves influenced by earlier and contemporary Muslim, Jewish and Christian scholarship achieved in the Islamic world. A useful survey of the development of Jewish biblical scholarship emanating from the Judeo-Islamic world is Nahum Sarna's "Hebrew and Bible Studies in Medieval Spain," in *The Sephardi Heritage* (ed. R. D. Barnett; New York: Ktav, 1971), 323–66. Important studies highlighting the interdependence of Jewish, Christian and Islamic scholarship, in addition to the works by Avraham Grossman and Mordechai Cohen already cited above, are: Hava Lazarus-Yafeh, *Intertwined Worlds: Medieval Islam and Bible Criticism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992); and Theodore Pulcini, *Exegesis as Polemical Discourse: Ibn Hazm on Jewish and Christian Scriptures* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998).

1160); Rashbam's student, Rabbi Eliezer of Beaugency (mid twelfth century); and Rabbi Joseph ben Isaac Bekhor Shor (mid to late twelfth century), a disciple of Rashbam and Rashbam's younger brother, Rabbi Jacob Tam.[2] While they apparently did not compose treatises on rhetoric and poetics as did Jews of the Judeo-Islamic world,[3] their surviving works of biblical exegesis have much to say on the subject of how to read a text. Though many of the biblical commentaries they composed were subsequently lost, either to the vicissitudes of time or, more specifically, to the Christian purges of rabbinic texts that occurred throughout the thirteenth century,[4] enough of their exegetical *oeuvre* has survived to facilitate its evaluation and analysis.

In the development of *peshat* exegesis, perhaps no single aspect of late eleventh and early twelfth century Bible study figures more prominently than the abandonment of the authoritative *midrashic* readings of the ancient rabbis in favor of an approach that is rooted in what appears to the commentator to be the "common sense" meaning of a text. Whereas the methodology of midrash allows for a fanciful reading, encouraging embellishing details and often stressing a moral or legal teaching, the term *peshat* came to connote a reading that fits the "actual" meaning of a text, as understood by a particular commentator.[5] The pioneer in the northern

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2. Among the Christian scholars who flourished in the twelfth century were Hugh of St. Victor; his disciple, Andrew; and Herbert of Bosham; see Rainer Berndt, "The School of St. Victor in Paris," *HBOT,* 467–95; the classic consideration of medieval Christian exegesis is still Beryl Smalley, *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1952). While the present work is concerned with rabbinic exegesis, we will revisit the implications of the Christian parallels and consider the possibility of mutual influences in the conclusion to this study.

3. For a contrasting example of Jewish scholarship in the Judeo-Islamic world, see the study by Mordechai Cohen, "The Aesthetic Exegesis of Moses ibn Ezra," *HBOT,* 282–301.

4. See, e.g., Kenneth R. Stow, *Alienated Minority: The Jews of Medieval Latin Europe* (Cambridge, MA., and London: Harvard University Press, 1992), 251–259.

5. As a general rule, when the northern French rabbinic exegetes attempted to arrive at the contextual meaning of a biblical word, verse, or longer text, they cast their interpretation as פשוטו של מקרא or פשט, or the like. However, these terms will sometimes be supplemented or supplanted by use of the synonymous term ענין. In talmudic and midrashic texts, this word generally means "subject" or "matter." Its appearance in the Sifra's "Thirteen Rules of Rabbi Ishmael" (דבר הלמד מעניינו, "a matter learned from its context") makes it possible for ענין to become available as technical terminology. Even so, the word was never systematically applied in antiquity as it was in the Middle Ages. However, following the tenth century Spanish-Jewish grammarian, Menahem ibn Saruk, who used the word in a way more closely approximating what we would call "context," the rabbinic exegetes of

French effort to read contextually was the great Rashi.[6] He lived in Troyes, in the Champagne region of northern France, and as a young man had studied in the Jewish academies of the Rhineland. It is clear that there were important precedents to Rashi in the quest to develop contextual reading. These are mainly to be found in the work of the anonymous *poterim*,[7] as the scholars who glossed difficult words in the Hebrew Bible and translated them into the vernacular Old French were called; and in the exegesis of Menahem bar Helbo, an eleventh century Provençal rabbinic master whose commentaries were brought north by his nephew, Joseph Kara, later one of Rashi's disciples.[8] However, it is Rashi's work that became the most influential in beginning to reorient Jewish Bible study away from ancient rabbinic midrash, and towards truly contextual reading.

While Rashi remained fully committed to midrash in his Torah commentary (in fact, about three-quarters of his comments in that work relate in some way to a midrashic reading of rabbinic origin), he did articulate a vision of what an individually-derived, contextual reading should look like. This is famously seen in his commentary on Gen 3:8:

יש מדרשי אגדה רבים, וכבר סדרום רבותינו על מכונם בבראשית רבה ובשאר מדרשים. ואני לא באתי אלא לפשוטו של מקרא, ולאגדה המיישבת דברי המקרא ושמעו, דבר דבור על אפניו.

There are many homiletical midrashim (on these verses), and the Rabbis have long ago arranged them in their proper place in Genesis Rabbah and the other midrashim. Whereas I have only come to explain Scripture according to its contextual [*peshuto*] understanding, and according to the

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northern France expanded its use and regularly employed the word as a technical term indicating "context." For a fuller discussion of the word ענין, with citations in the source literature, see Robert A. Harris, "The Literary Hermeneutic of Rabbi Eliezer of Beaugency" (Ph.D. diss., Jewish Theological Seminary, 1997), 280–300. The question of whether and/or how the northern French exegetes employed the two terms (פשט and ענין) in distinctive ways awaits investigation.

6. For a comprehensive review of the life and works of Rashi, see Mayer Gruber, *Rashi's Commentary on Psalms* (2004), 1–105; *idem,* "Rashi," in *Encyclopedia of Judaism, Volume V, Supplement Two* (eds. Jacob Neusner, Alan J. Avery-Peck, and William Scott Green; Leiden: Brill, 2004), 2226–2241. For a review article summarizing earlier scholarship on Rashi's biblical commentaries, see Albert Van der Heide, "Rashi's Biblical Exegesis," *BO* 41 (1984): 292–318.

7. See the many works of Menahem Banitt, including *Rashi: Interpreter of the Biblical Letter* (Tel Aviv: Chaim Rosenberg School of Jewish Studies, 1985).

8. See Grossman, "The School of Literal Exegesis," *HBOT,* 331–332.

aggadah that reconciles the words of Scripture and its sense, each word understood according to its character.[9]

Rashi's ability to discern between contextual and midrashic exegesis is likewise clearly seen in his comment on Exod 19:17, a gloss that is typical of his pentateuchal commentary as a whole. The verse relates that, following their Exodus from Egypt and arrival in the Wilderness of Sinai, the Israelites "took their stand at the foot of the mountain" (RSV, translating the phrase ויתיצבו בתחתית ההר). The question animating Rashi's comment is: what is the precise meaning of the words בתחתית ההר? Ought it be taken literally or figuratively? In glossing the verse, Rashi first relates a reading that he considers to reflect the contextual meaning of the word בתחתית: לפי פשוטו: ברגלי ההר, "According to its contextual meaning,[10] this means: at the foot (lit. "feet") of the mountain." However, Rashi immediately supplements this reading with one based on the midrashic tradition: שנתלש ההר ממקומו ונכפה עליהם כגיגית ומדרשו:, "and its midrashic interpretation: the mountain was uprooted from its place and arched over them like a barrel."[11] Here Rashi is not favoring either the *peshat* or the *derash*. Rather, he provides both a midrashic and a contextual reading, in attempting to offer as best he can the fullest possible accounting of biblical language.[12] In this case, Rashi would consider that the figurative meaning of

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9. There is a long history of slight variations in the transmission of this important statement; I have adopted an eclectic choice among the variants, presenting my best sense of what Rashi may have written. For a somewhat different variant, cf. Menachem Cohen, ed., *Mikra'ot Gedolot 'Haketer': A Revised and Augmented Scientific Edition of 'Mikraot Gedolot' Based on the Aleppo Codex and Early Medieval Mss: Genesis, Volume I* (Ramat Gan: Bar Ilan University, 1997), *ad. loc.* (Hebrew). Other variations appear in the apparatus in the first edition of Abraham Berliner, ed. *Rashi on the Torah: The Commentary of Solomon B. Isaac* (Berlin, 1866), *ad. loc.* (Hebrew).

10. As noted earlier (p. 5 n. 16), I follow Greenstein in translating *peshat* and its related terms as "contextual" interpretation; again, see Greenstein, "Medieval Bible Commentaries," 217–220. In his own exegesis, Rashi did not attain as sophisticated an understanding of contextual interpretation as the later French exegetes who, in addition to the term פשוטו, also employed the term פשט. Thus, it could be argued that a more accurate practice with regard to Rashi's exegesis (at least) would be to render פשוטו as "plain sense." However, for clarity's sake, I have decided to remain consistent. See Kamin, "Rashi's Exegetical Categorization With Respect to the Distinction Between *peshat* and *derash*," *Immanuel* 11 (1980): 16–32 (22–23), and the more extensive treatment in her full length book *Rashi* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1986), 57–139 (Hebrew).

11. Certain editions of Rashi's commentary continue with a fuller citation of the midrash as it is found in *b. Shabb.* 88a or in other texts.

12. That Rashi's goal is to offer the "fullest possible accounting" of the language of Scripture is the heart of the argument found in Edward L. Greenstein, "Sensitivity to Language in Rashi's Commentary on the Torah," in *The Solomon Goldman*

the word תחתית provided by reading contextually needed to be supplemented by the literality (and bold religious teaching) of the midrash. In either case, Rashi drew upon his tremendous sensitivity to the nuance of language, as well as upon his mastery of the talmudic-midrashic tradition, in order to make sense of the text for his readers. While the problems associated with Rashi's "dual readings" should not be oversimplified,[13] it is best to understand his exegetical efforts as an early stage in the developing *peshat* methodology.

Rashi wrote commentaries on almost every book of the Bible.[14] In general, his commentaries on the Prophets and Writings are characterized by a more contextual, less midrashically-driven exegesis than is found in the Torah commentary. While partly this is due to the relative lack of ancient midrash on the later books of the Bible (e.g., there is no "midrash Isaiah"), it is also likely due to Rashi's increased awareness of the importance of engaging in the interpretive process without turning to the traditions of the Sages.[15] While there is continued discussion regarding the order in which Rashi composed his various exegetical works, it is probable that he wrote his commentaries on the Prophets and the Writings later in his lifetime; assuming this to be true, it is understandable that those exegetical works more faithfully reflected his gradually increasing determination to write comments that were more purely contextual.[16]

In turning to the scholars who carried on and developed Rashi's methodology in succeeding generations, we are faced with a serious problem—the great paucity of surviving examples of their commentaries. The ravages of the Middle Ages prevented the transmission of much of the scholarly corpus of the great northern French biblical exegetes. Crusades, disputations, book-burnings and whole scale expulsions of the Jewish communities of northern Europe all contributed to the destruction of

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Lectures (ed. Mayer I. Gruber; Chicago: The Spertus College of Judaica Press, 1993), 6:51–71.

13. On the understanding of the significance of Rashi's dual readings, contrast the somewhat differing approaches of Sarah Kamin, *Rashi,* 158–208; "Rashi's Exegetical Categorization," 25–28; and Benjamin J. Gelles, *Peshat and Derash in the Exegesis of Rashi* (Leiden: Brill, 1981), 28–33.

14. The commentaries attributed to him on Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles, and printed as such in most editions of the Rabbinic Bible, are not his. See, e.g., Gruber, "Rashi," 2232 nn. 41–42; *idem, Rashi's Commentary on Psalms* (2004), 58–75.

15. See, for example, such sentiments expressed in Rashi's commentary on Isa 26:11. See also Rashbam's oft-cited comment on Gen 37:2, where he cites Rashi's regret over not having enough time to rewrite his commentaries in light of "the newer contextual interpretations being innovated daily."

16. Again, see Gruber, *Rashi's Commentary on Psalms* (2004), 52–63; *idem,* "Rashi," 2227, 2232–2233.

much Jewish biblical scholarship produced there during the period.[17] While Rashi's commentaries have been preserved in hundreds of manuscripts and printed editions and have received the greatest amount of scholarly attention over the generations, the exegetical works of the other outstanding representatives of the northern French school survive in a precious few manuscripts that were hardly consulted until modern times. Nonetheless, these exegetes—each of whom probably composed commentaries on most of the Bible—are now experiencing a renaissance in modern studies of the history of medieval biblical interpretation. Here, we will briefly introduce the other commentators whose approach to biblical parallelism we will examine more extensively in subsequent chapters.

Rabbi Joseph Kara was one of the most prominent expositors in the generation following Rashi.[18] Although only a few comments of his on the Torah have been identified (and indeed, he may not even have composed an independent Torah commentary of his own),[19] he was one of the schol-

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17. On the various causes associated with the decline of northern French Jewry during the late twelfth and thirteenth centuries, see Robert Chazan, *Medieval Jewry in Northern France* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973), 63–153; Norman Golb, *The Jews in Medieval Normandy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 424–430; Emily Taitz, *The Jews of Medieval France: The Community of Champagne* (Contributions to the Study of World History 45; Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1994), 185–223. On the specific event of the "trial of the Talmud" and the role of Nicholas Donin in denouncing the Talmud to the ecclesiastical and royal authorities, see Salo Wittmayer Baron, *A Social and Religious History of the Jews* (18 vols.; New York: Columbia University Press; Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1965), 9:79–83; William Chester Jordan, *The French Monarchy and the Jews: From Philip Augustus to the Last Capetians* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1989), 137–141.

18. Wissenschaft-era treatments of Kara's exegesis may be found in Martin Littman, *Josef Ben Simeon Kara Als Schrifterklärer* (Breslau: Schottlaender, 1887); and in the comprehensive introduction found in Samuel Poznanski, ed., *Commentary on Ezekiel and the Twelve Minor Prophets of Eliezer of Beaugency* (Warsaw: Mikize Nirdamim, 1913), xxiii–xxxix (Hebrew). Further references to this important essay will be cited as Poznanski, *Eliezer of Beaugency.* For more recent scholarship, see the comprehensive historical treatment offered by Grossman, *The Early Sages of France,* 254–346. A survey of important issues in Kara's commentaries may be found in Gershon Brin, *Studies in the Exegesis of R. Joseph Kara* (Tel Aviv: University of Tel Aviv, 1990) (Hebrew). See also Michael A. Signer, "Exegese et Enseignement: Les Commentaires de Joseph ben Simeon Kara," *Archives Juives* 18:4 (1982): 60–63.

19. Two nineteenth century collections of comments, of Kara as well as other medieval exegetes, from a variety of manuscript sources, are: S. Z. Heilberg, ed., *Nit'ei Ne'emanim* (Breslau: H. Sulzbach, 1847) (German and Hebrew); and Abraham Berliner, *Pletath Soferim* (Mainz: Y. Bril, 1872) (German and Hebrew).

ars chiefly responsible for the transmission of Rashi's commentaries.[20] He did, however, compose commentaries on the Prophetic books, and on at least four of the five Scrolls.[21] While Kara on occasion expresses an appreciation for the value of midrash as a source of religious wisdom, he explicitly rejects it as *reading* methodology; moreover, he advocates contextual reading not only on the basis of its efficacy as a coherent approach to understanding a text, but also as fulfilling a Divine command. Consider the following statement, excerpted from Kara's comment on 1 Sam 1:17–18:

. . . אך דע לך, כשנכתבה הנבואה, שלימה נכתבה עם פתרונה וכל הצורך, שלא יכשלו בה דורות הבאים, וממקומו אין חסר כלום. ואין צריך להביא ראיה ממקום אחר, ולא מדרש, כי תורה—תמימה נתנה, תמימה נכתבה, ולא תתחסר כל בה. ומדרש חכמינו—כדי להגדיל תורה ויאדיר. אבל כל מי שאינו יודע פשוטו של מקרא, ונוטה לו אחר מדרשו של דבר, דומה לזה ששטפתהו שבולת הנהר ומעמקי מים מציפין, ואוחז כל אשר יעלה בידו להינצל. ואילו שם לבו אל דבר ה׳, היה חוקר אחר פשר דבר ופשוטו, ומוצא לקיים מה שנאמר: אם תבקשנה ככסף וכמטמונים תחפשנה אז תבין יראת ה׳ ודעת אלהים תמצא . . .

. . . Know well, that when Scripture was written, it was written completely, with every explanation and need taken care of, so that future generations would not stumble in it, and in its place, it lacks nothing. Moreover, one does not need to bring proofs from another place, and certainly not midrash, for the Torah was "given completely and written completely" (see Ps 19:8: תורת ה׳ תמימה), and lacks nothing. Whereas the midrash of the Sages is for the purpose of "glorifying Torah and enhancing it" (Isa 42:21, and the liturgy). But anyone who does not know the contextual understanding of Scripture (*peshuto shel miqra*), and prefers the midrash on some matter, is like one whom the current of a river has washed away and whom the depths of water have inundated, and who grasps at anything he can to save himself. Whereas if he had set his heart on the word of the Lord, he would have searched after the meaning of the matter and its contextual explanation—and in doing so would have fulfilled that which is written: *If you seek it as you do silver, and search for it as for treasures, then you will understand the fear of the LORD and attain knowledge of God* (Prov 2:4–5) . . .

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20. See Grossman, *The Early Sages of France,* 171. Grossman also describes the larger and more significant contribution of Rashi's disciple Shemaiah in the transmission of Rashi's commentaries; see esp. pp. 359–366, 403–405 and Grossman's "Marginal Notes and the Addenda of R. Shemaiah and the Text of Rashi's Biblical Commentary," *Tarbiz* 60:1 (1990): 67–98 (Hebrew).

21. For a summary of the evidence for Kara's biblical commentaries, including disputed attributions, see Grossman, *The Early Sages of France,* 290–318.

One ought not underestimate the radical nature of comments such as this. For rabbinic Judaism, midrash is hardly something employed merely for "glorifying and enhancing" Torah—it is the process through which the rabbis created and/or revitalized Judaism and is, in a sense, equivalent to it. Kara's spirited attack on midrash, by one who was himself thoroughly immersed in the world of rabbinic literature, therefore should be seen not as an attempt to undermine the foundations of rabbinic Judaism but rather as a way to "carve out space" for the new, contextual reading he advocated. Alternatively, it may be surmised that Kara was conceptualizing a process of reading that had virtually nothing to do with the observance of Judaism or its authoritative belief structure. Rather, his comment should be understood along the lines of rabbinic Judaism's concept of תלמוד תורה לשמה, "the study of Torah for its own sake."[22] The goal of this type of Torah study is not to determine halakha but is rather a religious value in its own right. Thus, Kara may be said to expand this notion, as it were, and favor a scriptural reading, qua *reading,* that served primarily to create contextual meaning in the encounter between reader and text.

Indeed, Kara's commentaries are replete with diatribes against the excesses of *derash.* Kara further expresses his preference for *peshat* over *derash,* for instance, in his comment on Isa 5:8–10:

והט אזנך וכפוף עצמך למקרא! שכל מקרא ומקרא שדרשוהו רבותינו, בטוב
תלין נפשם, משאמרו עליו מדרש, הם הם שאמרו עליו לסוף (שבת סג, א):
אמרו: אין מקרא יוצא מידי פשוטו, שאין לנו מידה טובה במקרא יותר
מפשוטו . . .

ועל כן אמרתי שאין לך מידה יתירה במקרא יותר מפשוטו של מקרא. וכן
שלמה מלך ישראל הוא אומר הט אזנך . . . לדברי חכמים ולבך תשית לדעתי.
ופתרון: אף על פי שמצוה עליך לשמוע דברי חכמים, לבך תשית לדעתי—
לגופו של דבר; לדעתם לא נאמר, אלא לדעתי. עד כאן פירשתיהם לפי הילוכו
ופשוטו . . .

Incline your ear and prostrate yourself before Scripture! For each and every scriptural text that the rabbis have expounded (may their souls dwell in a good place!), inasmuch as they told a midrash about it, they themselves (also) said about it: "No scriptural passage ever escapes the hold of its context." For we have no greater principle than contextual exegesis . . .

Therefore do I say that you have no greater principle in (the study of) Scripture than contextual exegesis. Thus did Solomon, King of Israel, say: *Incline your ear . . . to the words of the sages, apply your heart to knowing me*

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22. Among the many rabbinic texts stressing the importance of "Torah for its own sake," see, e.g., *b. Sukkah* 49b, or the combination of *m. Peah 1:1* and *b. Shabb.* 127a in the daily Jewish liturgy.

(Prov 22:17). The explanation (of this verse) is: even though it is a com-
mandment for you to "hear the words of the Sages," *apply your heart to
knowing me*—according to the body of the word, "to know <u>them</u>" [i.e., the
Sages] Scripture does not say; rather to know me [i.e., God, through
Scripture]. Thus far have I explained them [biblical passages] according
the Bible's conventions and its context . . .

Thus in this instance, in espousing a contextual approach versus a midra-
shic reading, Kara virtually turns an exegetical question into an internal
Jewish polemic: to truly know God, one should stress the primacy of
Scripture itself and not pay undue attention to rabbinic midrash.[23]

Kara's claim that the search for contextual exegesis does not represent
a rejection of religious values—and that, indeed, that very investigation
was itself a response to a biblical commandment—is a point not to be
overlooked. For while it has long been assumed that the *peshat* commen-
taries did little to engage Jewish communities which needed more spiritu-
ally-inclined commentaries (an assumption that has never been proved),[24]
there is no doubt that the practitioners themselves, i.e., the rabbinic exe-
getes whose works we are surveying, felt that they were not violating any
kind of religious principle. Rather, they averred that contextual exegesis
was long sanctioned by the talmudic authorities, even if these latter did
not regularly engage in that type of study.[25] Again, despite Kara's occa-
sional presentation of midrashic exegesis, in general he steers clear of it as
a reading strategy, and relies almost exclusively on the methodology of
peshat.[26]

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23. See, e.g., additional condemnations of midrash in Kara's comments on Judg
5:4 and 2 Sam 12:30.

24. Cf. Grossman, "The School of Literal Exegesis," *HBOT,* 371.

25. For contemporary attempts to develop a religious approach to historical-
critical biblical scholarship, see Uriel Simon, "The Religious Significance of the
Peshat," *Tradition* 23:2 (1988): 41–63; Stephen Garfinkel, "Applied *Peshat:* Histori-
cal-Critical Method and Religious Meaning," *JANES* 22 (1993): 19–28.

26. See, e.g., Kara's long midrashic excursus following his comment on Isa 4:6.
He begins this digression with the following caveat:

לפי שמתחילת הספר עד כאן ראיתי כל העניין מחובר מקרא אחר חבירו כקרסים
בלולאות, ואילו באתי ליתן מדרש ביניהם הייתי מפריד בין מקרא לחבירו ובין מליצה
לרעותה, ויתפרדו איש מעל אחיו; ואתנה לבי לחבר כל העניין לפי פשוטו, ואשיבה ידי
לפרשו לפי מדרשו שדרשו בו חכמינו זכרונם לברכה ועליהם השלום וטל אורות.

Since from the beginning of the book until this point I have seen the entire matter
as one text juxtaposed to its fellow, [fitting] like clasps into the loops (see Exod
26:11). Whereas had I come to offer midrash among them, I would have divided
each scriptural text from its fellow, and each expression from its mate; as a result
each text would have been separated from its brother. I have sought to interpret

Rashi's grandson, Rabbi Samuel ben Meir ("Rashbam"), was the most prominent rabbi to give voice to the need to distinguish between the worlds of *peshat* and *derash*.[27] The absolute devotion to *peshat* is characteristic of all of Rashbam's extant biblical commentaries (Torah, Job, Song of Songs, Qoheleth).[28] Whether in treating the Torah's narratives or, more significantly, the Torah's laws, Rashbam goes out of his way to announce his absolute adherence to *peshat* as a reading strategy. Indeed, in his strict adherence to the *peshat* methodology, Rashbam contrasts his approach to Scripture with that of everyone (!) who has come before him.[29] His commentary on Gen 37:2 contains the most extensive presentation of his understanding of the relative places of *peshat* and *derash* in rabbinic Judaism:

אלה תולדות יעקב: ישכילו ויבינו אוהבי שכל מה שלימדונו רבותינו, כי אין מקרא יוצא מידי פשוטו. אף כי עיקרה של תורה באת ללמדנו ולהודיענו ברמיזת הפשט ההגדות וההלכות והדינין על ידי אריכות הלשון ועל ידי שלשים ושתים מידות של ר׳ אליעזר בנו של ר׳ יוסי הגלילי, ועל ידי שלש עשרה מידות של ר׳ ישמעאל. והראשונים מתוך חסידותם נתעסקו לנטות אחרי הדרשות שהן עיקר, ומתוך כך לא הורגלו בעומק פשוטו של מקרא . . .

וגם רבנו שלמה אבי אמי מאיר עיני גולה, שפירש תורה, נביאים וכתובים נתן לב לפרש פשוטו של מקרא, ואף אני שמואל ב״ר מאיר חתנו זצ״ל נתווכחתי עמו ולפניו, והודה לי שאילו היה לו פנאי, היה צריך לעשות פרושים אחרים לפי הפשטות המתחדשים בכל יום . . .

These are the generations of Jacob: May lovers of reason become enlightened and understand that, as our Rabbis have taught us, no Scriptural verse ever loses its contextual meaning. Although it is also true that

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each matter according to its context, and to refrain from explaining it according to the midrash expounded by our Sages, of blessed memory, peace be upon them, as well as the life-giving dew.

See also at Isa 8:5; 22:14, 25, etc.

27. The following four essential studies bookend Rashbam research from the nineteenth century to the present day: David Rosin, *R. Samuel Ben Meir als Schrifterklärer* (Breslau: Verlag von Wilhelm Koebner, 1880); Poznanski, *Eliezer of Beaugency,* xxxix–l; Japhet, *The Commentary of Rashbam on Job*; Elazar Touitou, *Exegesis in Perpetual Motion: Studies in the Pentateuchal Commentary of Rabbi Samuel Ben Meir* (Ramat Gan: Bar Ilan University Press, 2003) (Hebrew).

28. I will not enter here into the discussion of Rashbam's authorship of several of these commentaries. For a perspective accepting the attribution, see Robert A. Harris, "The Rashbam Authorship Controversy Redux: A Review Essay," *JQR* 95:1 (2005; forthcoming). For a contrasting view, see Martin I. Lockshin, "'Rashbam' on Job: A Reconsideration," *JSQ* 8 (2001): 80–104.

29. See, e.g., his commentary on Exod 3:11–12.

the main aim of the Torah is to teach us and make known to us, through hints in the text, doctrines, laws, and rules of conduct which are derived by the use in Scriptural verses of superfluous words or by means of the thirty-two rules of Rabbi Eliezer ben Rabbi Yosi the Galilean or the thirteen rules of Rabbi Ishmael. In their piety the early scholars devoted all their time to the midrashic explanations, which contain, indeed, the main teachings of the Torah. But, as a result, they were not accustomed to the deeper aspects of the text's contextual meaning . . .

Moreover, our Master, Rabbi Solomon, my mother's father (i.e., Rashi), who illumined the eyes of all those in exile, and who wrote commentaries on the Torah, Prophets and the Writings, intended to elucidate the contextual meaning of Scripture. Yet I, Samuel, son of his son-in-law Meir, may the memory of the righteous be for a blessing, argued it out with him (Rashi, i.e., privately) and before him (presumably in the study hall, in front of others). He admitted to me that if he had the time he would have written new commentaries in accordance with the contextual interpretations being innovated every day . . .

Rashbam is not merely offering pious expressions of faith in claiming *derash* as the most important element in Torah study. He was a rabbi of great renown who composed detailed Talmud commentaries; moreover he was esteemed for his great piety and meticulous observance of rabbinic norms.[30] However, here in his commentary he is distinguishing between searching (*derash*) Scripture as a source of religious edification and halakhic observance, on the one hand, and reading Scripture as an exercise of pure textual study, on the other. In his elevation of the talmudic dictum, "no scriptural verse ever loses its contextual meaning" (lit. "no verse ever

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30. His great piety once nearly caused him to transgress a rabbinic prohibition arising from a biblical commandment (see Deut 22:10). As is related by the thirteenth-century halakhist, R. Mordecai b. Hillel Ashkenazi (*Sefer Mordecai, b. Eruv.,* par. 528 (with regard to *t. Kil.* 5:5); Vilna Ed., 39b [78]):

רשב״ם . . . שפל עינים היה, ורצה לעלות בקרון אשר סוס ופרד מושכין בו, ולא הרגיש
איתרחיש ליה. ניסא נזדמן אחיו רבינו תם שם. אמר ליה: אל תהי צדיק הרבה! סא מרום
עיניך, והנה סוס ופרד לקראתך! . . . ונמנע ולא עלה.

Rashbam . . . was "of downcast eyes" [i.e., he habitually looked only at the ground as he walked about, lest even through looking he become associated with some sight unsuitable for his great piety]. He wished to climb onto a wagon that was pulled by a horse and a mule, and he did not notice it. A miracle brought his brother, Rabbenu Tam, there, who said to him: "*Don't be so righteous* (Qoh 7:16)! Lift up your eyes to the sky—here, there are a horse and a mule coming your way!" . . . He was [thus] prevented, and he did not climb on.

Cited in Esra Shereshevsky, *Rashi: The Man and His World* (New York: Sefer Hermon Press, 1982), 30 n. 22.

escapes the hold of its context"; *b. Shabb.* 63a), Rashbam follows Joseph Kara in turning what is a most infrequent and unused observation in the ancient sources into the linchpin of the reading approach he advocates.

Rashbam articulates his adherence to *peshat* as a reading strategy even when dealing with legal matters. In his introduction to the Torah's first extended legal corpus (Exod 21–23), he recapitulates his methodological program:

> ידעו ויבינו יודעי שכל כי לא באתי לפרש הלכות אף על פי שהם עיקר, כמו
> שפירשתי בבראשית, כי מיתור המקראות נשמעין ההגדות וההלכות, ומקצתן
> ימצאו בפירושי רבינו שלמה אבי אמי זצ״ל. ואני לפרש פשוטן של מקראות
> באתי, ואפרש הדינין וההלכות לפי דרך ארץ. ואף על פי כן ההלכות עיקר, כמו
> שאמרו רבותינו: הלכה עוקרת מקרא.

> Let knowers of wisdom know and understand that I have not come to explain halakhot, even though these are the essence [of Torah], as I have explained in my Genesis commentary (e.g., at Gen 1:1; 37:2). For it is from the [apparent] superfluousness of Scriptural language that aggadot and halakhot are derived. Some of these can be found in the commentary of our Rabbi Solomon, my mother's father, may the memory of the righteous be for a blessing. But I have come to explain the contextual meaning of Scripture. And I will explain the laws and halakhot according to realia (lit. "the way of the world"). And (I will do this) even though (the rabbinic understanding of) the halakhot is the essence, as our rabbis taught: "*halakha* [rabbinic law] uproots Scripture" (*b. Sotah* 16a, with emendation).

This audacious statement, presented at precisely the point where the Torah moves from being an essentially narrative composition to an essentially legal one, is all the more significant when it is understood that the author had himself composed an important Talmud commentary and was one of the leading rabbinic figures of his generation. Let us consider one example in which Rashbam's willingness to expound Torah against the ancient rabbinic interpretation, even when touching on matters of law and Jewish observance, may be seen. Rabbinic Judaism had long enjoined the donning of *tefillin* (the so-called "phylacteries") for males, at least, during prayer and at other times during the day. This practice, ostensibly derived from such biblical passages as Exod 13:9 and Deut 6:8, involves preparing leather boxes containing parchment scrolls of verses from the Torah and wearing them on the arm and forehead; it is one of the central features of Jewish prayer and is a much-cherished ritual in rabbinic Judaism.[31] However, its biblical antecedents are only suggestive and Rashbam claims as much in his commentary on Exod 13:9: וְהָיָה לְךָ לְאוֹת עַל־יָדְךָ וּלְזִכָּרוֹן בֵּין עֵינֶיךָ

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31. See *b. Menah.* 32a–44a.

לְמַעַן תִּהְיֶה תּוֹרַת ה׳ בְּפִיךָ כִּי בְּיָד חֲזָקָה הוֹצִאֲךָ ה׳ מִמִּצְרָיִם, "And it shall be to you a sign on your hand and as a memorial between your eyes, in order that the Teaching of the LORD may be in your mouth—that with a mighty hand did the LORD bring you out of Egypt."[32] Rashbam interpreted what Rashi (and the rabbis of antiquity) had understood as the Torah's first reference to *tefillin*—as simply metaphoric language:

> **לאות על ידך:** לפי עומק פשוטו, יהיה לך לזכרון תמיד כאילו כתוב על ידך.
> כעין: שימני כחותם על לבך.

> **For a sign on your hand**—according to the depths of its contextual mean-
> ing, it should be for you as a continuous memorial, as if it were written on
> your hand. This usage is similar to *place me as a seal upon your heart* (Song
> 8:6).

Rashbam's use of the expression "as if" (כאילו) is testimony to his interpretation that Exod 13:9 is an idiomatic, metaphoric expression that describes what the nature of the Israelites' remembrance of the Exodus ought to be, and is not a statement expressing concrete law or ritual observance.

Turning his eye to the biblical concept of "day and night," Rashbam interprets Gen 1:5 (וַיְהִי־עֶרֶב וַיְהִי־בֹקֶר יוֹם אֶחָד, "There was setting, there was dawning: one day"[33]) as demonstrating that Scripture's day begins at sunrise. This is a bold departure from rabbinic teaching that, for Jewish calendric purposes, a day begins the preceding evening:

> **ויהי ערב ויהי בקר:** אין כתיב כאן "ויהי לילה ויהי יום." אלא ויהי ערב,
> שהעריב יום ראשון ושיקע האור, ויהי בקר, בוקרו של לילה, שעלה עמוד
> השחר—הרי הושלם יום א׳ מן הו׳ ימים שאמר הקדוש ברוך הוא בעשרת
> הדברות. ואחר כך התחיל יום שני: ויאמר אלהים יהי רקיע. ולא בא הכתוב
> לומר שהערב והבקר יום אחד הם, כי לא הצרכנו לפרש, אלא היאך היו ששה
> ימים, שהבקיר יום ונגמרה הלילה, הרי נגמר יום אחד והתחיל יום שני.

> *There was setting, there was dawning*: It is not written here, "there was night
> and there was day." Rather [it is written], *there was setting,* i.e., the first
> day became evening and the light subsided, and *there was dawning,* i.e.,
> that morning [that came at the end] of the night when dawn broke—at
> that point *one day* was completed of those six mentioned by the Holy One,

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32. That this verse referred to *tefillin* was considered self-evident by Rashi, who commented: **והיה לך לאות:** יציאת מצרים תהיה **לך לאות על ידך ולזכרון בין עיניך,** שתכתוב הפרשיות הללו ותקשרן בראש ובזרוע, "**And it shall be a sign for you**—the Exodus from Egypt shall be **a sign for you on your hand and as a memorial between your eyes**—i.e., you should write these paragraphs, and fasten them on your head and arm."

33. So SB; NJPS renders, "And there was evening and there was morning, a first day."

> Blessed be He, in the Decalogue (Exod 20:11). Then the second day began: *God said, "let there be a dome"* . . . (Gen 1:6). And the text did not come to state that the evening and the morning were one day, for we only needed [for Scripture] to make explicit what happened during each of the six days [of creation], that the day dawned and the [previous] night was completed—that is how one day ended and the next day began.

Indeed, this willingness to read against rabbinic tradition occasionally served as cause for religious attacks on him by Jewish scholars who claimed that his interpretations would undermine halakhic observance.[34]

Rashbam's principal disciple was Rabbi Eliezer of Beaugency.[35] Most of Eliezer's exegetical writings, including his Torah commentary, have not survived; however, his commentaries on Isaiah, Ezekiel and the Twelve Minor Prophets are extant.[36] Eliezer's devotion to the *peshat* and his almost complete neglect of rabbinic midrash are as complete as that of his master. His commentaries are replete with observations on the literary nature of biblical composition, and he regularly paraphrases difficult and allusive prophetic language. Although, unlike some of the previous exegetes surveyed, Eliezer's surviving writings do not contain an extended articulation of his approach to Scripture, his methodology is evidenced through-

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34. See, e.g., Abraham Ibn Ezra's *Iggeret Hashabbat* and Joseph Bekhor Shor's comment on Num 12:6. On the former comment, see Uriel Simon, "The Exegetical Method of Abraham Ibn Ezra, as Revealed in Three Interpretations of a Biblical Passage," *Bar-Ilan* 3 (1965): 92–138 (Hebrew). On the latter comment, see Sarah Kamin, "The Polemic against Allegory in the Commentary of Rabbi Joseph Bekhor Shor," *Mehkarei Yerushalayim Bemahshevet Yisrael* 3 (1984): 367–392 (Hebrew); repr. in *Jews and Christians Interpret the Bible* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1991), 73–98 (English and Hebrew).

35. For an argument suggesting a student-teacher relationship, see Harris, "Literary Hermeneutic," 82–111. There was not a great deal of scholarship generated about Eliezer between Poznanski, *Eliezer of Beaugency,* cxxv–clxvi, and my dissertation. For a brief overview of Eliezer's exegesis, see Grossman, "The School of Literal Exegesis," *HBOT,* 363–366.

36. All of the surviving commentaries are found in a single manuscript, Oxford Bodleian OMS 625 (= Neubauer 1465); see Harris, "Literary Hermeneutic," 12–13. Evidence for other biblical commentaries by Eliezer exists in his extant works, and in citations by later medieval authorities (e.g., see the commentary of Joseph Bekhor Shor on Lev 22:25). For details, see Harris, *ibid.,* 24–35. Eliezer's commentary on Isaiah was published by John W. Nutt, ed., *Commentaries on the Latter Prophets by R. Eliezer of Beaugency: Isaiah* (London, Paris and Frankfort: Joseph Baer and Co., 1879) (Hebrew, with English introduction); the commentaries on Ezekiel and the Twelve Prophets are found in Poznanski, *Eliezer of Beaugency.* Eliezer's extant commentaries are now being republished in Cohen, *Mikra'ot Gedolot "Haketer."*

out his commentaries. Indeed, his stress on using context as the ultimate determinant of meaning is one of the hallmarks of his approach.[37]

This may be seen in his commentary on Ezek 42:3. In the course of his explanation, Eliezer urges his readers not to turn to any outside source for an explanation of an elusive term, in cases where the context permits one to make a deduction about the word's meaning. In this case, with regard to a difficult phrase (אַתִּיק אֶל־פְּנֵי־אַתִּיק בַּשְּׁלִשִׁים),[38] he offers the following contextual interpretation:

. . . והאתיקים—מעשיהם ושיטות(ם)—ענינם יפרשום למטה, כפי אשר תשיג יד הלב. כי בתיבה שאין לה דומה, ואתה יכול ללומדה משיטת עניינה, למה תתן עיניך בקצה הארץ, הלא עניינה ימשכנה למה שהיא. הרי הודיעך הכתוב . . .

. . . with regard to the "ledges"—their construction and function—their context will explain them below,[39] as much as the mind can discern. For with regard to a word that has no cognate, and which you can understand from its function in context, why cast your eyes to the ends of the earth!? Its context indicates its meaning. Behold, the verse has informed you . . .

The formulation of his comment is reminiscent in its approach to the definition of *peshat* methodology by Joseph Kara; Eliezer uses almost the exact wording in his explanation of the Psalms passage he uses to illuminate Ezek 20:23.

Although Eliezer no doubt understood the biblical text as divine in nature, he evinces awareness that the books of the Bible underwent a process of redaction before achieving their final status in the canon of Jewish Scriptures. Like several of the other northern French exegetes, he expresses an understanding of the role of the human, non-prophetic redactor, who did more than simply serve as the receptacle of divine writ.[40] Rather, the redactor of each biblical book gathered up the words and speeches of

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37. Again, see Harris, "The Literary Hermeneutic," 280–300.

38. NJPS: *ledge by ledge in three tiers*; see Walther Zimmerli, *Ezekiel: A Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel, Chapters 25–48* (Hermeneia; trans. James D. Martin; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983), 398.

39. See his commentary to Ezek 42:5. There, in a fascinating aside, Eliezer relates that he was so frustrated over at not being able to determine the meaning of the elusive term אתיק—he "nodded off" (,מרוב צער שנצטערתי לידע מה הוא העניין נתנמנמתי על הספר)! While he was asleep, he dreamed the contextual explanation that he offers in his commentary.

40. See Robert A. Harris, "Awareness of Biblical Redaction among Rabbinic Exegetes of Northern France," *Shnaton: An Annual for Biblical and Ancient Near Eastern Studies* Volume XIII (2000): 289–310 (Hebrew); Richard C. Steiner, "A Jewish

the various prophets, edited, and indeed, ultimately composed the books that constitute the Hebrew Bible.

A case in point is his commentary on Ezek 1:1–4. Eliezer specifically refers to the responsibility of a redactor for the present composition of the biblical text:

> **וארא מראות אלהים . . . (וארא) והנה רוח סערה . . . .:** לא היו דברי יחזקאל מתחלתן יותר, ואף שמו לא פירש, לפי שענין ספרו יפרשנו למטה, כגון והיה יחזקאל לכם למופת. ועל זה סמך לקצר, כאשר אמרתי לך, על שנת שלשים, שענין ספרו יוכיח עליו. אבל הסופר שכתב כל דבריו יחד הוסיף לפרש מה שסתם וקיצר, בשני מקראות הללו.

> **And I saw visions of God . . . I looked, and lo, a stormy wind . . . :** Ezekiel's words did not continue from the beginning, and even his name he did not make explicit, since the context of the book will make it clear below, as in *and Ezekiel shall become a portent for you* (Ezek 24:24). And, relying on this, he allowed himself to abbreviate, as I have told you with regard to *(in the) thirtieth year* , that (there) the content of the book provides the proof for its (meaning, i.e., of the "thirtieth year"). But the redactor who wrote all of his words together added to what Ezekiel had left unclear and abbreviated, in these two verses.

This comment is significant on several grounds. First, whereas Rashi had assigned the third-person narration in Ezek 1:2–3 to the Holy Spirit, Eliezer attributes them to a redactor. Thus, the comment demonstrates Eliezer's exegetical independence in contradicting Rashi's authority.[41] But more important, the comment clarifies how Eliezer has related to the redactor's role in composing the biblical text. Eliezer has depicted a redactor taking prophetic material in some sort of prior stage, adding to it and compiling a finished literary product. For Eliezer of Beaugency, as for his teacher Rashbam, the redactor is not identical with the prophet whose speeches are included in the book that bears his name.

Rabbi Joseph of Orleans, known by the nickname of Bekhor Shor (after Deut 33:17), is the final northern French commentator whose work we will consider in the course of this study. His commentary on the Torah survives in but a single manuscript,[42] and virtually none of his other exe-

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Theory of Biblical Redaction from Byzantium: Its Rabbinic Roots, Its Diffusion and Its Encounter with the Muslim Doctrine of Falsification," *JSIJ* 2 (2003): 123–167.

41. See Greenstein, "Medieval Bible Commentaries," 249.

42. This is MS Munich 52. For a brief description of this manuscript and a brief history of publications of Bekhor Shor's commentary based on it, see Yehoshafat Nevo, ed., *The Commentary of Rabbi Joseph Bekhor Shor on the Torah* (Jerusalem: Mossad Harav Kook, 1994), 15–17 (Hebrew).

getical writings are extant.[43] Reportedly a student of R. Yaakov Tam, the younger brother of Rashbam,[44] it is possible that he was also a disciple of Rashbam himself. In any case, his exegetical works indicate that he had mastered the commentaries of both Rashi and Rashbam. He was a younger contemporary of Eliezer of Beaugency.[45] As in the case of Eliezer, the extant works of Bekhor Shor do not contain a defining methodological statement, and we are left to ascertain his approach to *peshat* through a reading of his commentaries.

Like the other exegetes of the northern French school, Joseph often comments with an eye to the literary quality of biblical composition; he, too, was willing to assign much of the responsibility for the final casting of the text—and, consequently, to at least some of its literariness—to a redactor.[46] Moreover, like Rashbam, Bekhor Shor was willing to interpret a biblical law contextually even when his reading yielded an interpretation that ran contrary to rabbinic law, or *halakha.* A case in point would be his comment on Exod 23:19 (לֹא־תְבַשֵּׁל גְּדִי בַּחֲלֵב אִמּוֹ, "You shall not boil a kid in its mother's milk"). As is well known, the rabbis had made the three-fold occurrence of this verse a cornerstone of their dietary laws (the phrase recurs at Exod 34:26 and Deut 14:21), and had taken it to indicate a separation between the consumption or preparation of meat and dairy dishes.[47] Whereas there is no doubt that Bekhor Shor, as a rabbi, upheld this midrashic understanding in his personal observance of Jewish ritual law, this did not prevent him from proffering a novel interpretation of the biblical verse:

לא תבשל גדי בחלב אמו: לפי הפשט, "בישול" לשון גידול וגמר, כמו: הבשילו אשכלותיה ענבים. והכי קאמר: לא תניחו לגדל ולגמול **בחלב אמו,** שתאחרנו עד

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43. One of the rare additional examples of his exegesis that has come to light is his commentary on Ps 19. See Moshe Idel, "A Commentary on Psalms XIX by R. Yoseph Bechor-Shor," *Alei Sefer* 9 (1981): 63–69 (Hebrew). Bekhor Shor is also cited in a variety of medieval exegetical and legal works. See Poznanski, *Eliezer of Beaugency,* lv–lx. For additional medieval citations of Bekhor Shor's exegesis, see the index of Efraim E. Urbach, ed., *Sefer Arugat Habosem: Auctore R. Abraham B. R. Azriel* (Jerusalem: Mikize Nirdamim, 1939–1963) (Hebrew), s.v., Bekhor Shor.

44. Efraim E. Urbach, *The Tosaphists: Their History, Writings and Methods* (Jerusalem: Mossad Bialik, 1986), 132–140 (Hebrew). For a more recent recapitulation of Bekhor Shor's career as an exegete of the northern French school, see Grossman, "The School of Literal Exegesis," *HBOT,* 367–369.

45. See Bekhor Shor's commentary on Lev 22:25. On this citation, see Poznanski, *Eliezer of Beaugency,* cxxviii.

46. See Harris, *Redaction,* 302–305.

47. See, e.g., *m. Hul.* 8:4; *b. Qidd.* 57b; *b. Hul.* 113a.

שתגדלנו האם בחלבה, אלא בראשית תביאנו, דומיית תחילת הפסוק שאמר:
ראשית בכורי אדמתך.

You shall not allow a kid to mature[48] **in its mother's milk:** According to the contextual interpretation, [in this instance the verb] ב־ש־ל is an expression [conveying] growth and completion, as in: *its clusters ripened into grapes* (Gen 40:10). This is what it means: Do not let (the kid) grow and be weaned **in its mother's milk,** i.e., do not delay (bringing) it until its mother has brought it to maturation with her milk; but rather at the beginning (of its life) you should bring it, which is analogous to the beginning of the verse, which says: *The first of the first fruits of your soil [you shall bring to the house of the LORD your God].*[49]

Thus, Bekhor Shor's devotion to contextuality as the ultimate determinant of meaning finds bold expression in his comment on this verse.[50] Since he is unwilling, apparently, to atomize the interpretation of the verse, and so presumes a connection between the verse's beginning and its end; and since the beginning of the verse is explicitly about the rite of "fruit fruits," Bekhor Shor ingeniously intuits that the end of the verse addresses the same issue as its beginning, albeit in idiomatic, metaphoric language.[51] Again, that he does this despite his interpretation's potential implications for halakhah is a demonstration of the independence in spirit he possesses, and his dedication to *peshat* exegesis above all other concerns.[52]

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48. This verb is normally translated as "boiling," but as Bekhor Shor takes it in another way altogether, I have translated the *incipit* according to his comment.

49. I gratefully acknowledge my good friend and colleague, Baruch J. Schwartz, for helping me to fully understand Bekhor Shor's comment on Exod 23:19; email communication on January 27, 2004.

50. Bekhor Shor offers virtually the same interpretation of the second of the three occurrences of this command in his commentary on Exod 34:26. See the following note.

51. It is perhaps in line with this rationale that Bekhor Shor's comment on the third occurrence of the phrase, at Deut 14:21, is much closer to the traditional midrashic interpretation. There, since the beginning of the verse in which the phrase לא תבשל גדי בחלב אמו occurs also deals with prohibited food (לא תאכלו כל נבלה, "You shall not eat anything that has died a natural death") and, indeed, since the entire verse appears in a context of dietary restrictions (Deut 14:3–21), Bekhor Shor interprets the verse rabbinically, beginning his comment: בשר בחלב אסור לבשל, "it is forbidden to cook meat with milk."

52. Like other thinkers, however, Bekhor Shor is not consistent in his application of this determination. For example, he implicitly critiques Rashbam's willingness to pursue the same course in the latter's interpretation of Exod 13:9 (see above). In Bekhor Shor's polemical comment on Num 12:6, he criticizes those who would interpret such verses as Exod 13:9 as metaphoric language and not as an actual law (*tefillin*). That he is quite probably referring to Rashbam's interpretation is

When explicating Scripture, the northern French rabbinic exegetes occasionally address their readers directly and point out rhetorical features found in biblical composition. In general, however, literary and rhetorical observations were for these rabbis secondary to their primary purpose, which was to explicate the *meaning* of the biblical text. While there were, of course, many factors enabling them to determine meaning—knowledge of biblical Hebrew and an uncanny ability to apply other biblical texts that shed light on the one under review are but two of the prominent elements—the factor that towers above the rest is their developing sense of what the immediate *context* indicates the meaning of a text to be.

Conclusions

As Avraham Grossman has argued, the origins of *peshat* in the rabbinic scholarship of northern France should be sought in the heritage of the Judeo-Islamic world, and in the complex historical processes that led to the twelfth century Renaissance in Christian Europe.[53] The often polemical relationship between Judaism and Christianity should likewise be seen as a crucial source in the development of northern French *peshat.*[54] Faced with a culturally enriching as well as theologically challenging Christian environment, the northern French rabbis developed interpretative strategies that would match the challenges facing the Jewish community. At least in part, the adoption of *peshat* by these rabbis (and of *ad litteram* by certain Christian schoolmen) afforded both Jew and Christian a kind of common ground in which to engage their interfaith polemics.

However important these factors were, the *peshat* methodology advocated by the northern French rabbinic exegetes was rooted at least partially in the dissatisfaction with the type of reading engaged in by the ancient sages of Talmud and Midrash. In shunning midrash, and adopting *peshat* in its stead, these medieval masters expressed their independence in determining the meaning of Scripture and their unwillingness to accept the authority of the ancients when it came to the reading process—even as they continued to live in adherence to the religious dictates of their ancient predecessors.

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demonstrated by Bekhor Shor's critical citation of the very prooftext (Song 8:6) employed by Rashbam in the latter's comment on Exod 13:9.

53. Grossman, *The Early Sages of France,* 13–46; 539–586; "The School of Literal Exegesis in Northern France," *HBOT,* 326–331.

54. Indeed, these Jewish-Christian polemics were themselves preceded by Islamic attacks on both religions. See Theodore Pulcini, *Exegesis as Polemical Discourse: Ibn Hazm on Jewish and Christian Scriptures* (American Academy of Religions 2; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998), 57–128.

The components of *peshat* exegesis examined in this chapter do not by any means exhaust the subject. However, enough texts have been considered here to illustrate the exegetes' sensitivity to rhetorical factors. In their identification of context as the most important determinant in meaning; in their understanding that the biblical canon had undergone a process of redaction; and in their attention to compositional technique in biblical literature, the northern French rabbinic exegetes transformed the concept of what it meant to read a text. As we turn now to the understanding displayed by the these masters of the principle of parallelism in poetic compositions and their awareness of it as a rhetorical dimension of biblical discourse, we will see how determined their effort was to express their autonomy in ascertaining the meaning of Scripture and their unwillingness to always defer to the authority of the ancients when it came to interpreting the Bible.

3

Rashi

We will begin our examination of the attention the northern French medieval rabbinic exegetes paid to biblical parallelism with Rabbi Solomon ben Isaac, or Rashi. While a multitude of studies have investigated the many dimensions of Rashi's biblical commentaries, few scholars have even raised the question of the extent of Rashi's understanding of the nature of biblical poetry.[1] As we shall see, this probably stems from at least two factors: 1) the virtual dearth of remarks in Rashi's most popular commentary—the one on the Torah—that evince any awareness of the significance of parallelism; 2) the critical problems in assessing the authorship of those comments attributed to Rashi that may exhibit an awareness of the phenomenon.

In his Torah commentary, Rashi uses the term כפל for a variety of (mostly midrashic) purposes, among them to interpret various types of doubling, as well as to explain the use of the infinitive absolute beside a finite verb. As a rule, he does not use the term to denote what we would call parallelism.[2] This should not be particularly "troubling," in that Rashi is,

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1. As noted earlier, a recent exception is Mayer I. Gruber. See our discussion, pp. 9–10.

2. For example, see his commentary on Gen 17:13 (המול ימול). We may consider a related use of the term in his explanations of תשלומי כפל, the rabbinic term for the biblically ordained "double indemnity" payments, in his commentary on Exod 22:3, 8, and especially v. 25. To explain the repeated mention of several of the tribal names in Deut 33:18–25 (זבולן, גד, דן, נפתלי, אשר), Rashi uses the expression כפל שמותיהם לחזקם: "their names are repeated for the purpose of strengthening"; see also on Gen 47:2. This example is close to the function of parallelism according to the understanding of some medieval exegetes; using similar phraseology in the late twelfth century, Rabbi David Kimhi (Radak) will sometimes refer to parallel-

after all, in Kugel's memorable words, heir to the rabbinic world that "forgot" parallelism.[3] However, there are at least a few prophetic or "poetic" texts in which Rashi seems to have been aware of some types of parallelistic structure.

In his discussion of Rashi's Torah commentary on texts that, to the modern eye, exhibit parallelism, Kugel equates Rashi's treatment of the Song of Moses (Exod 15) with his comments on other poetic texts (Num 23 and Deut 32).[4] However correct Kugel may be with regard to these texts in general, Rashi's comment on Exod 15:1 bears a second look. In part of this comment, Rashi seems to use the related terms כפל and כפולה in two different ways:

כי גאה גאה: . . . בא הכפל לומר שעשה דבר שאי אפשר לבשר ודם לעשות. כשהוא נלחם בחבירו ומתגבר עליו מפילו מן הסוס. וכאן הסוס ורוכבו רמה בים . . .

וכן כל השירה תמצא כפולה: עזי וזמרת יה ויהי לי לישועה; ה׳ איש מלחמה ה׳ שמו, וכן כולם.

He has triumphantly triumphed: this doubling comes to say that (God) has done a thing that it is impossible for a human being to do. When a man fights with his fellow and overcomes him, he throws him from his horse.[5] Whereas here [both] the horse and its rider has [God] thrown into the Sea . . .

And so throughout this Song you will find doublings: *My strength and my might is YAH/He has become my deliverance* (Exod 15:2); *The LORD is a man of war/the LORD is his name* (Exod 15:3); and so throughout."[6]

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ism as כפל הענין לחזק, "the sense is repeated for the purpose of strengthening," or the like. See, for example, his commentary on Ps 16:6 (כפל הענין במלות שונות לחזק הדבר כמנהג הלשון, "the sense is doubled with different words for the purpose of strengthening the matter, as is the custom of the [Hebrew] language"); see also on Pss 22:5; 29:1; 33:14; etc. Rashi uses the term כפל to explain (midrashically) the doubling of the phrase כי טוב in Gen 1:9–13 (in his commentary to Gen 1:7); for a similar usage, see his commentary also on Gen 2:3. At Gen 8:21, he claims the doubling of the expression לא אוסיף is the "language of oath-taking." Somewhat similar, although not equivalent, is his acknowledgment of the doubling of the word עיני in Lam 1:16: כלומר, תמיד עיני יורדה מים, כפל הלשון מלמד שאין הפוגות, "in other words, (the doubling means that) my eye will always flow with water; the doubling of the language teaches that there is no cessation."

3. See Kugel, *Idea,* 96–134.

4. Kugel, *Idea,* 173.

5. It would seem that Rashi has in mind either something like jousting or medieval cavalry warfare.

6. For a different translation, see Kugel, *Idea,* 173.

It is clear that the first time Rashi employs the term כפל in this comment (בא הכפל לומר) he intends the mere repetition of the consonants ג־א־ה in the case of the prepositive infinitive with the finite verb (כִּי־גָאֹה גָּאָה). However, the second usage (וכן כל השירה תמצא כפולה), which I have translated as "and so throughout this Song you will find doublings," may rather mean, "so you will find the entire song is doubled (in form)," i.e., parallelistic. As we shall see below, the transmission of Rashi's commentary on Exod 15 is among the most complex and storied of any of his works, and the variants in the manuscripts and editions are numerous.[7] For example, in this excerpt it is quite conceivable that the first part of Rashi's comment may reflect an early, relatively midrashic approach to the text, whereas the section beginning וכן כל השירה תמצא כפולה may in fact be a later, more poetically-oriented reading (authored either by Rashi or by a disciple or glossator), since the textual examples he adduces in what follows do not contain simple word-doubling but are rather parallelistic in structure. With regard to the first part of the comment, then, it seems more likely that Rashi's identification of doubling for exegetical purposes here does not move far beyond a decidedly midrashic-type of exercise, as Kugel correctly points out. On the other hand, Kugel does not make a distinction between the first and second part of Rashi's comment; on the contrary, he relates to the entire comment as though it were midrashic in character. The second part of the comment, however, appears to characterize the biblical song as a composition in parallelism.

Rashi's comment on Exod 15:6 begins in much the same midrashic way as the first part of his gloss on the phrase כִּי־גָאֹה גָּאָה in 15:1. Noting the repetition of the word ימינך, "your right hand" (or the two stichs of the verse that each begin with that word), Rashi explains:

> **ימינך, ימינך:** שתי פעמים: כשישראל עושין רצונו של מקום, השמאל נעשית ימין: **ימינך ה׳ נאדרי בכח**—להציל את ישראל. וימינך השנית **תרעץ אויב.**

> **Your right hand . . . Your right hand:** two times: when Israel does the will of the Omnipresent, (God's) left hand (also) becomes a right hand: **Your right hand, LORD, is glorious in power**—to save Israel. And the second "Your right hand" **shatters the enemy.**

As in the previous example, however, the comment then moves in the direction of appreciating the parallelistic structure of the verse, even as it evokes a midrashic-type of rationale by way of explanation:

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7. Even without reference to the manuscript tradition, a cursory comparison of three Rashi incunabula (Rome, 1470; Reggio de Calabria, 1475; Guadelajara, 1476) and the Venice edition (Bomberg, 1524) will demonstrate a complex transmission process. See *The Pentateuch With Rashi Hashalem,* Vol. V (Jerusalem: Ariel United Israel Institutes, 1998), *ad loc.,* and 254–257 (Hebrew).

ולי נראה אותה ימין עצמה תרעץ אויב, מה שאי אפשר לאדם לעשות, שתי
מלאכות ביד אחת.

But it seems to me that the self-same right hand (i.e., the one that is *glorious in power*) is (also) the one that **shatters the enemy,** i.e., something that a human being cannot do, two separate acts with one hand.

The first part of Rashi's comment is dependent on the midrashic exposition put forth by the Mekhilta.[8] Yet beginning with the words "but it seems to me . . . ," Rashi offers what appears to be a tentative attempt to make sense of the doubling contained in the verse. Of course, it is also possible that this sentence by itself (ולי נראה אותה ימין עצמה תרעץ אויב, מה שאי אפשר לאדם לעשות, שתי מלאכות ביד אחת) originated as a marginal gloss by a later hand.[9] In either case, what follows in his commentary *after* this sentence is an explanation that clearly seems to take into account the parallelistic structure that marks biblical composition as "poetic":

ופשוטו של מקרא: **ימינך** הנאדרת בכח—מה מלאכתה? **ימינך** היא **תרעץ אויב.**
וכמה מקראות דוגמתו: כי הנה אויביך ה׳ כי הנה אויביך יאבדו, ודומיהם.[10]

The contextual meaning of the verse is: **Your right hand,** i.e., the one that is **glorious in power**—what is its task? It is **your right hand** that **shatters the enemy.** And there are several Scriptural texts that (follow) its pattern: *behold your enemies, LORD, behold your enemies shall perish* (Ps 92:10), and others like these.

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8. See Haim S. Horowitz and Israel A. Rabin, eds. *Mekhilta De-Rabbi Ishmael* (Jerusalem: Bamberger & Wahrman, 1960), 134 (Hebrew).

9. Berliner, *Commentary of Rashi on the Torah* (1866), *ad. loc.,* n. 16, notes that several mss. (Erfurt, Leiden, Worms and Hamburg) do not contain either the sentence beginning ולי נראה nor the one beginning ופשוטו של מקרא; both comments are likewise deficient in the Reggio de Callabrio edition of 1475 and in MS Leipzig 1. In light of Avraham Grossman's advocacy of MS Leipzig 1 in reconstructing a more accurate text of Rashi's commentary, it is perhaps of greater significance to note the reading of that manuscript; see Avraham Grossman, "Marginal Notes and the Addenda of R. Shemaiah and the Text of Rashi's Biblical Commentary," *Tarbiz* 60:1 (1990): 67–98 (Hebrew); *idem, The Early Sages of France,* 184–193. Contrast Elazar Touitou, "Concerning the Presumed Original Version of Rashi's Commentary on the Pentateuch," *Tarbiz* 56:2 (1987): 211–242 (Hebrew); *idem,* "Does Ms. Leipzig 1 Reflect the Original Version of Rashi's Commentary on the Torah?" *Tarbiz* 61 (1992): 115–185 (Hebrew). I gratefully acknowledge the work of my student, Ms. Peri Sinclair, who examined variant readings in several key manuscripts and early editions in the seminar paper she wrote in Spring 2003 ("ולי נראה": בעקבות פירוש רש״י המקורי).

10. In some editions and manuscripts, additional examples are adduced. These include references (in the following order) to the staircase parallelism found in Pss 92:10; 94:3; 93:3; 115:1; Hos 2:23; Judg 5:3; Ps 124:2; Judg 5:12; Isa 26:6; Ps 135:12.

This paragraph, beginning . . . ופשוטו של מקרא, is quite likely originally unrelated to the preceding sentence, beginning . . . ולי נראה; if so it would by itself constitute Rashi's contribution towards a contextual reading.[11] Alternatively, on the off chance that the sentence beginning . . . ולי נראה is in fact an early attempt by Rashi to read against the midrashic tradition, then the section beginning . . . ופשוטו של מקרא might be seen as representing a still later stage in his own thinking. Either way, it represents a significant advance in Rashi's understanding of the poetic form.

As *Wissenschaft* scholarship observed over one hundred years ago, parallelism (or at least "staircase" parallelism) is one of those areas in which Rashi's knowledge was advanced by his grandson, Rabbi Samuel ben Meir (Rashbam).[12] In certain manuscripts[13] of Tosafistic compilations that cite Rashbam's commentary on Gen 49:22, the following notation is contained: . . . כל זה מיסוד רבי שמואל. וכשהיה רבי שלמה זקנו מגיע לאותן פסוקים, היה קורא אותן 'פסוקי שמואל' על שמו, ". . . all of this is from the *oeuvre* of Rabbi Samuel. And when his grandfather, Rabbi Solomon, would come to these verses [including Exod 15:6], he would call them 'Samuel's verses', after his name."[14] Rashi's indebtedness to Rashbam's comment on Exod 15:6 may be seen by comparing the two. Rashbam explains:

ימינך ה' . . .: ומקרא זה כעין נשאו נהרות ה' נשאו נהרות קולם; עד מתי רשעים ה' עד מתי רשעים יעלוזו; כי הנה אויביך ה' כי הנה אויביך יאבדו. חציו הראשון אינו מסיים דברו עד שיבא חציו האחרון, וכופלו ומשלים דברו, אך בחציו הראשון מזכיר במי הוא מדבר . . .

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11. Of course, it is possible that it simply constitutes Rashbam's explanation, interpolated by a later scribe into his copy of Rashi's commentary. See below.

12. Among modern studies that also acknowledge the observation by Rashbam and its influence on Rashi, see S. E. Loewenstamm, "The Expanded Colon in Ugaritic and Biblical Verse," *JSS* 14 (1969): 176–177.

13. These manuscripts are MS. Bodleian 271 and MS. Vienna 32. For further information, see Poznanski, *Eliezer of Beaugency*, 8–9 n. 44.

14. Abraham Berliner, ed. *Rashi: the Commentary of Solomon b. Isaac on the Pentateuch* (2nd ed., Frankfurt: J. Kauffmann, 1905), ix–x (Hebrew). See n. 15 there, where Berliner refers to his review of David Rosin's *R. Samuel b. Meir als Schriftterklärer* in *Magazin für die Wissenschaft des Judenthums* (1880), 182–190; that review (p. 189) cites earlier scholarship that first established how Rashi revised his own commentaries in light of his grandson's discoveries. Also see Adolf Neubauer's note in Abraham Geiger, *Jüdische Zeitschrift für Wissenschaft und Leben* 9 (1871), 215–216. This information does not appear to inform Kugel's discussion. Nehama Leibowitz and Moshe Ahrend review this material in their textbook, *Rashi's Commentary on the Torah: Studies in His Methodology* (2 vols.; Tel Aviv: The Open University of Israel, 1990), 1:92–93 (Hebrew).

Your right hand, O LORD . . . : This verse follows the pattern of *The rivers have lifted up, O LORD, the rivers have lifted up their voice* (Ps 93:3); *How long the wicked, O LORD? How long will the wicked rejoice?* (Ps 94:3); *Behold, your enemies, O LORD, Behold, your enemies perish* (Ps 92:10). Its first half does not consummate its intent until its latter half comes, doubles it and completes its intent; but in its first half it mentions about whom it is speaking . . .[15]

Thus, while we should "credit" Rashbam with the novel interpretation that Rashi puts forth in his comment on Exod 15:6, in this instance we also may be witnessing the development of Rashi's understanding of the parallelistic structure of at least certain types of biblical composition.[16]

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15. The text is also translated, slightly differently, in Preminger and Greenstein, *The Hebrew Bible in Literary Criticism,* 145. In the continuation of their excerpt, Preminger and Greenstein also present part of Rashbam's comment on Exod 15:11: "'Who is like you among the mighty, O LORD? Who is like you awesome in holiness?' [Exod 15:11]. This, too, is of the doubled [patterns] that I explained at 'Your right hand, O LORD, awesome in strength' [Exod 15:6]."

16. The subject of the status of Rashi's commentaries *vis à vis* the manuscript tradition is complex; since we have Rashi's own testimony regarding the changes in his thinking on the subject of parallelism to which he was led by his grandson's scholarship, any attribution to Rashi of comments related to parallelism in the printed editions should be considered tentative. On the subject of establishing the correct text of Rashi's commentaries through recourse to the manuscript tradition, see Avraham Grossman, "Marginal Notes"; *idem, The Early Sages of France,* 184–193; 210–215; Moshe Sokolow, "The Commentary of Rashi on the Book of Job," *World Congress of Jewish Studies* 8:1 (1982): 139–144; *idem,* "*Ta'ufa kabboqer tihyeh*: The Vicissitudes of Rashi's Commentary to Job 11:17," *JANES* 18 (1986): 87–89; Isaiah Sonne, "Textual Criticism of Rashi's Commentary on the Torah," *HUCA* 15 (1940): 37–56 (Hebrew Section); Elazar Touitou, "Traces of the Commentary of Rashbam in the Text of Rashi's Commentary on the Torah," *World Congress of Jewish Studies* 10 (1985), 79–86 (Hebrew); *idem,* "Concerning the Presumed Original Version of Rashi's Commentary on the Pentateuch," *Tarbiz* 56:2 (1987): 211–242 (Hebrew); *idem,* "Quelques critères pouvant aider à établir la version originale du commentaire de Rashi sur le pentateuch," in *Rashi, 1040–1990: Hommage à Ephraïm E. Urbach* (ed. Gabrielle Sed-Rajna; Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1993), 399–409. A recent dissertation has advocated using the citations of Rashi in tosafistic compilatory Bible commentaries as a resource in reconstructing a more authentic version of Rashi's commentary; see Deborah Abecassis, "Reconstructing Rashi's Commentary on Genesis from Citations in the Torah Commentaries of the Tosafot." (Ph.D. diss., McGill University, 1999). Below, we shall have occasion to cite Sara Japhet on the incorrect attribution to Rashi of the printed commentary on Job 40:27, 31; thus, the recognition of doubling in Job 40:18 (cited by Rashi in his commentary on Ps 9:5) might reasonably lead one to doubt the attribution of that ob-

Other comments of Rashi, while imprecise in their formulation, also seem to point to a developing understanding of the parallelistic idea. For example, we may consider Rashi's comment on Ps 9:5, in which he relies on a relevant midrash.[17] Noting the juxtaposition of the terms משפטי and דיני in the first stich of the verse (כִּי־עָשִׂיתָ מִשְׁפָּטִי וְדִינִי, "For You uphold my right and my claim"), Rashi comments:

יש תיבות כפולות במקרא ואין חילוק ביניהם. **משפטי ודיני;** בשמים עדי וסהדי במרומים; עצמיו אפיקי נחושה, גרמיו כמטיל ברזל.

> There are [many examples of] synonymous words in Scripture, and there is no distinction [in their meaning to be made] between them.[18] [Some examples are]: **my right and my claim** (here); *in heaven is my witness, and he who can testify for me is on high* (Job 16:19); *His limbs are like tubes of bronze, his bones like iron rods* (Job 40:18).

As Mayer Gruber correctly observes,[19] in this comment Rashi does not distinguish between the juxtaposition for intensification employed by the Psalmist in this example, and the synonymous parallelism evidenced in the two passages cited from Job. His terminology (תיבות כפולות), inexact as it may be, pertains to both features of biblical composition.

Occasionally, Rashi understands synonymous parallelism to be present in a verse even without recourse to the כפל terminology; his comment on Ps 55:20 is a case in point. The verse itself (יִשְׁמַע אֵל וְיַעֲנֵם וְיֹשֵׁב קֶדֶם) has been understood in various ways by modern critics and translators.[20] Rashi's pithy explanation of the passage makes his own understanding inescapably clear:

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servation to Rashi, or to date it to late in Rashi's life, after he had "learned" the principle from Rashbam.

17. The source is Midrash Tehillim, *ad. loc.* See Gruber, *Rashi's Commentary on Psalms 1–89,* 78 n. 12, who notes that "while the Rabbinic source limits duplication to five instances (Isa 46:4; Ps 9:5; Job 16:19; 39:5; 40:18) Rashi regards the phenomenon as far more characteristic of biblical style than the Rabbinic source would lead us to believe."

18. Rashi's terminology (תיבות כפולות) is somewhat ambiguous here. Gruber, *Rashi's Commentary on Psalms 1–89,* 74, translates: "There are in the Bible [numerous examples of] precise synonyms juxtaposed. . . ." Benjamin Gelles has translated this as "there are synonymous words in Scripture having the same meaning . . ." See Gelles, *Peshat and Derash in the Exegesis of Rashi,* 99–100. I have attempted to render as literally as I can.

19. See Gruber, *Rashi's Commentary on Psalms 1–89,* 78 n. 12.

20. NJPS translates "God who has reigned from the first, who will have no successor, hears and humbles those who have no fear of God"; NSRV renders "God, who is enthroned from of old, will hear and humble them. . . ." See also Marvin E. Tate, *Psalms 51–100* (WBC 20; Dallas: Word Books, 1990), 54 n. 20a.

יִשְׁמַע אֵל לתפילתם של אותם רבים, **וִיעַנֵּם** המלך שהוא **יוֹשֵׁב קֶדֶם.**

God hears the prayer of those [aforementioned] multitudes, and the King, He who is **enthroned from primeval times, answers them.**[21]

Thus, Rashi takes "hears" and "answers them" as synonymous; in addition, he understands "Enthroned from primeval times" (יושב קדם) as a divine epithet, parallel to the first stich's reference to "God" (אל).[22] Whether or not modern scholarship determines that parallelism is in fact to be found in the verse, Rashi's explanation of what he considers to be a text exhibiting synonymous parallelism is undeniable.

Gruber (and others) contend that Rashi wrote the Psalms commentary late in his career.[23] Moreover, Gruber has pointed to many examples in which Rashi seems to rely on an understanding of parallelism as an occasional tool in interpreting the book of Psalms.[24] Even if it is clear that most of these examples do not employ the כפל terminology, we may be able to refine our understanding of Rashi's developing sense of parallelism in biblical literature. If Gruber is correct in his judgment that the Psalms commentary is late, it would help to account for the relative lack of attention Rashi pays to parallelism in his Torah commentary, the first edition of which was composed when Rashi was a young man.

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21. Whether God is "Enthroned from primeval times," or "Enthroned in the East," is a matter still in dispute; see Gruber, *Rashi's Commentary on Psalms 1–89,* 257 n. 30; and Tate, *Psalms 51–100,* 54 n. 20b.

22. See Gruber, *Rashi's Commentary on Psalms 1–89,* 257 n. 30.

23. See Gruber, *Rashi's Commentary on Psalms* (2004), 57–58; cf. the contrary opinion of Avraham Grossman, "The Commentary of Rashi on Psalms and the Jewish-Christian Polemic," in *Studies in Bible and Education Presented to Professor Moshe Ahrend* (ed. Dov Rafel; Jerusalem: Touro College, 1996), 59–74 (Hebrew); cited by Gruber, 57–58 n. 104.

24. Gruber finds additional evidence for Rashi's understanding of parallelism, expressed without the כפל terminology, in his commentary on Pss 6:7; 36:6; 50:11; 80:18; 105:8, 20; 107:10; 141:7; 144:7. See also Rashi's comment relating to Ps 33:13–15 in his Talmud commentary, *b. Rosh Hash.* 18a: הכי קאמר: **הַיּוֹצֵר** רואה **יַחַד לִבָּם,** ואקרא דלעיל מיניה קא מהדר השגיח אל כל יושבי הארץ: **הַיּוֹצֵר** אותם השגיח **יַחַד** את **לִבָּם** "This is what it says: **[God who is] the fashioner** *sees* (Rashi follows the *gemara* in taking the verb from v. 13) **their hearts together:** this verse (v. 15) reverts to [what is in] the verse that precedes it, *He gazes on all the inhabitants of the earth* (v. 14) [to wit]: **[God who] fashions** them *gazes on* **their hearts together**"; on this see Gruber's discussion, p. 167 n. 9. Additionally, use of the root כ-פ-ל to evince parallelism is found in Rashi's commentary on Ps 68:14. Gruber discusses several of these passages in the introduction to *Rashi's Commentary on Psalms 1–89,* 30–34; see also 329 n. 33 (regarding Rashi's comment on Ps 72:15). Gruber also cites a responsum in which Rashi reflects on doubling in Ezek 47:14 and other verses in Ezek 47–48; see *Rashi's Commentary on Psalms 1–89,* 34 n. 9.

Rashi's awareness of parallelistic structure is more pronounced in cases of interrogatives. It is clear that in this regard Rashi was influenced by the biblical lexicon of Menahem ibn Saruk, the *Mahberet*.[25] For example, in his long discussion of the word אדם, Menahem describes the phenomenon of which Rashi will take notice:

> כה היה מתקן הפסוק בפנים המחולקים לעניני התמיהות . . . התמיהא העשויה
> לדבר אחד . . . וכאלה הרבה, שוים בענינים, שנוים בנקידתם כפי נחת המלה
> בפה ומושבה בלשון . . . ואת שתי התמיהות הבאות בפסוק אחד על שני
> דברים, מתמיה ב־הא ושונה ב־אם.

> This is how (King Solomon) fashions a verse, according to stichs that are divided into interrogative propositions . . . each question conveys its own sense . . . and there are many (instances) like this, equivalent in their senses, differentiated in their articulation according to where the word lies in a mouth and its place on the tongue . . . [26] and with regard to the interrogatives which come in a single verse but in two propositions, (Scripture) introduces the question with an interrogative *he* and repeats it with (the word) *if*.[27]

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25. See Aaron Mirsky, "Rashi and the *Mahberet* of Menahem," *Sinai* 100 (1987): 579–586 (Hebrew). For an observation on Menahem's awareness of parallelism as a structural device in Scripture, see Angel Saenz-Badillos, "Early Hebraists in Spain: Menahem Ben Saruq and Dunash Ben Labrat," in *HBOT,* 96–109 (108–109). Regarding the question of whether this understanding of parallelism reflects Menahem's innovation or his development of some predecessor's achievement, Sara Japhet has concluded: אין לדעת מדבריו אם חידוש בהם חידוש גמור משלו או נשען על חכמים קודמים לו; "one cannot learn from (Menahem's) observations whether his were pure innovations or to what extent he was reliant on sages who preceded him"; see Japhet, *Commentary of Rashbam on Job,* 171.

26. Edward L. Greenstein has explained Menahem's intent here: "Sounds are made both by locating the initiation of the sound in a particular part of the mouth and by raising or lowering the tongue to widen or flatten the sound." Personal communication, August 6, 2001. Martin Lockshin would prefer to read the phrase as referring to the vowel points, and would translate "though the vocalization may vary, the meaning is the same . . ." Private communication, July 1, 2001.

27. Angel Saenz-Badillos, ed. *Menahem Ben Saruq: Mahberet* (Granada: Universidad de Granada; Salamanca: Universidad Pontificia de Salamanca, 1986), 26*–27* (Hebrew and Spanish); the entry actually begins on p. 25*. In the full comment, Menahem is concerned with *disproving* those who would construe Qoh 3:21 (מי יודע רוח בני האדם העלה היא למעלה, ורוח הבהמה הירדת היא למטה לארץ) as an interrogative, and *inter alia* elucidates the rule of interrogative doubling, as he understands it. Menahem may well have learned about parallelism from the same source he derived other linguistic and rhetorical insights: Saadia Gaon. It is clear that Saadia had a sense of parallelism. Several examples of his understanding are found in his commentary on Job; see the appendix in Lenn E. Goodman, ed., *The Book of Theodicy: Translation and Commentary of the Book of Job by Saadiah Ben Joseph*

While, to be sure, Rashi does not follow Menahem's interpretations about interrogative doubling every time the latter makes them, it is apparent that Rashi owes at least part of his awareness of the phenomenon to Menahem. Gelles is correct in noting the relative ambivalence of Rashi towards Menahem's articulation of parallelism. However, he overstates his case when he asks: "Why did Rashi fail to take note of the existence of *parallelismus membrorum* after Menahem's clear description of it?"[28] Gelles is referring to the *Mahberet* on the fourth section of the word אב, concerning what Menahem considers to be the appearance of the root in Job 32:19:

כאובות חדשים: אין למלה זאת דמיון בתורה, אבל הענין יורה עליה, וחצי הפסוק ילמד על חציו, והיה די בחציו והשנה ענינו שנית, ונמצא ענין אחד דבור פעמים בפסוק אחד, וכהנה רבות.

Like new jugs: there is no word like this in Scripture, but its context elucidates it, the first stich informing us about the second one; and its first stich would have been enough, but its sense was doubled; the result of this is that one meaning is twice expressed in a single verse, and there are many (instances) of this (phenomenon).[29]

Although it is true that Rashi overlooks Menahem's observation of parallelism in Job 32:19, as he indicates no awareness of it in his comment on the verse, we shall see that in specific circumstances Rashi does "take note" of the phenomenon elsewhere in his Job commentary.

Al-Fayyumi (Yale Judaica Series; New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), 422. Likewise, Kugel cites Saadia's Hebrew dictionary (*Ha'egron*) in his discussions about the possible antecedents for later medieval conceptions of parallelism, *Idea,* 25 n. 64; 110 n. 25; 131; 184; for Kugel's citations, see Nehemya Allony, ed., *Ha'egron Kitab 'Usul Al-Shi'r Al-'Ibrani, by Rav Se'adya Ga'on* (Jerusalem: The Academy of the Hebrew Language, 1969), 79–81, 386–389 (Hebrew and Arabic). For additional evidence of Saadia's understanding of parallelism, see Moshe Zucker, ed. *Saadya's Commentary on Genesis* (New York: The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1984), 193–194 (Arabic and Hebrew); *idem,* "Towards a Solution to the Problem of the Thirty-Two Rules and the 'Mishnah of Rabbi Eliezer'," *PAAJR* 23 (1954): 1–39 (p. 11) (Hebrew Section). See also Saadia's commentary on Prov 25:11 in Yosef Kafih, ed., *Proverbs with the Translation and Commentary of Rabbenu Saadia Ben Joseph Fayyumi* (Jerusalem: Committee for the Publication of Saadia's Books, 1976), 197–203 (Arabic and Hebrew); see also Saadia's comment on Prov 1:8, cited in Yosef Tobi, "Saadia's Biblical Exegesis and His Poetic Practice," *HAR* 8 (1984): 241–57 (p. 244). Consider also the parallelistic liturgical poems composed by Saadia in biblical style; on these, see Menahem Zulay, *The Paytanic School of R. Saadia Gaon* (Jerusalem: The Schocken Institute for Jewish Research, 1964) (Hebrew).

28. See Gelles, *Peshat and Derash in the Exegesis of Rashi,* 100–101, and Gruber's rebuttal, *Rashi's Commentary on Psalms 1–89,* 257 n. 30.

29. Saenz-Badillos, *Mahberet,* 17*.

Menahem's influence on Rashi is certainly evident in Rashi's adaptation of Menahem's terminology when treating doubled questions in biblical literature. Rashi calls this type of structure כפל התמיהות, "interrogative doubling," in which we may detect an echo of Menahem's observation.[30] For example, in his commentary on Job 27:10, Rashi displays his cognizance that the verse is a doubled interrogative that continues the rhetorical question initiated in v. 9. The two verses together read: הַצַעֲקָתוֹ יִשְׁמַע אֵל כִּי־תָבוֹא עָלָיו צָרָה: אִם־עַל־שַׁדַּי יִתְעַנָּג יִקְרָא אֱלוֹהַּ בְּכָל־עֵת: "Will God hear his cry, when trouble comes upon him? Will he seek the favor of Shaddai,[31] call upon God at all times?" Rashi comments:

> כפל התמיהה היא, ככל התמיהות הכפולות, שהן דרך הראשונה בה״א והשנייה באם, כמו הירוצון בסלע סוסים, אם יחרוש בבקרים?!; היש בלשוני עולה ואם חכי לא יבין הוות!?‏ . . .[32]

This is an (instance of) interrogative doubling, like all doubled interrogatives where the first (stich) begins with an (interrogative) *he* and the second (stich) begins with the word *'im*. It is like the case of: *Can horses gallop*

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on a rock!? Can it be plowed with oxen!? [33] (Amos 6:12); *Is there injustice on
my tongue!? Can my palate not discern evil!?* (Job 6:30) . . . [34]

Thus, in this one comment, Rashi has demonstrated his understanding of
(at least this one specific type of) biblical parallelism for no fewer than
three Scriptural references.

Adding these examples to the others already cited leads to the conclu-
sion that, outside the Torah at least, Rashi considers this "interrogative
doubling" to be a feature of biblical rhetoric.[35] However, it is important
not to draw conclusions beyond the stated evidence: while Rashi surely
understood the *structure* of these interrogative doublings, it is not as clear
that he would conclude, in the manner of R. Abraham ibn Ezra, the lead-
ing Spanish exegete of the next generation, that the text "repeated the

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33. Cf. the slight emendation (redividing בבקרים into בבקר ים) adopted by NJPS:
"Can one plow the sea with oxen?" This emendation originates with J.D. Michae-
lis, *Deutsche Übersetzung des Alten Testaments* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ru-
precht, 1772); cited in Shalom Paul, *Amos* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress Press,
1991), 218 n. 5. For an argument in favor of the MT, see Meir Weiss, *The Book of
Amos* (Publication of the Perry Foundation for Biblical Research in the Hebrew
University of Jerusalem; 2 vols.; Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1992), 1:208; 2:386 (He-
brew).

34. Rashi's comment on Jer 23:24 is essentially equivalent, although he doesn't
necessarily describe what we mean by parallelism: **אם יסתר איש:** זהו כפל תמיהה
האלהי מקרוב, כדרך כל תמיהות הכפולות, "**If a man hides:** this is a doubling of the ques-
tion *Am I only a God near at hand* (v. 23, which begins with an interrogative *he*), as in
the case of all of the doubled interrogatives." Rashi's comment on Jer 14:22 is also
relevant. There, in addition to providing yet other biblical examples of the rhetori-
cal structure, he describes it in a fashion similar to his comment on Job 27:10:
כל תמיהה הכפולה—הראשונה בה״א והשנייה באם, "all interrogative doublings—the
first stich begins with *he* and the second with *im*." See also Rashi on Hab 3:8.

35. It remains to be seen why Rashi would refrain from applying the principle
to verses in the Torah that exhibit the same interrogative form (e.g., Gen 17:17;
24:21; 27:21; 37:32; Exod 16:4; 17:7; Num 11:12, 22–23; 13:18–20). It is of course pos-
sible that these commentaries were already completed and transmitted before Ra-
shi gained his knowledge of parallelism, and he never managed to revise them (or
credit them to his grandson explicitly; see above). It is relevant yet again to recall
Rashbam's celebrated comment on Gen 37:2, in which he claims that Rashi ex-
pressed the wish to revise his commentaries in the light of הפשטות המתחדשים
בכל יום, "newly innovated *peshat* interpretations" (i.e., including Rashbam's *own*
commentaries). It is also the case that Rashi's Torah commentary was meant to
serve a broader purpose, so that specific rhetorical observations did not always
concern him. Once again see Greenstein, "Sensitivity to Language in Rashi's Com-
mentary on the Torah," 54, 67.

same idea in different words."[36] But Rashi's popularization of Menahem's (at least occasional) observation of parallelism in biblical composition made the refinement of that idea possible by commentators of the succeeding generations.[37] Moreover, Rashi's introduction of the technical terminology of כפל into the discourse of northern French rabbinic exegesis, however it may be used in his own various biblical commentaries, gave that term currency for later exegetes.[38]

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36. See, e.g., Ibn Ezra's commentary on Num 23:7; Kugel, *Idea,* 174–176 has noted this and other texts. See also the commentary of Radak on such passages as Pss 2:3; 3:3; etc.

37. We will not take up the issue of כפל terminology found in various anonymous commentaries from the northern French school which have been erroneously attributed to Rashi. As noted earlier, commentaries commonly printed in Rabbinic Bibles on Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles were not authored by Rashi; see above, p. 19 n. 14. For one example of a comment on parallelism that was later attributed to Rashi, see "pseudo-Rashi" on Neh 3:20. There, the commentator addresses the biblical word הֶחֱרָה, whose meaning he finds elusive (NJPS translates: "After him, Baruch son of Zaccai *zealously* repaired a second stretch . . ."). Using a technical phrase פתרונו לפי עניינו, apparently originating in the *Mahberet* of Menahem ibn Saruk, he comments: הֶחֱרָה: פתרונו לפי ענינו, וכפל לשון הוא על החזיק, "[this word's] explanation is according to its context; it is a term parallel to **repaired.**" Rashi uses the phrase פתרונו לפי ענינו (and its variants) elsewhere in his commentaries, for similar exegetical purposes, e.g., 2 Sam 17:20 (glossing the word מיכל); 2 Kings 17:9 (ויחפאו); Ezek 21:20 (אבחת חרב); Mic 1:10 (התפלשי). The anonymous northern French commentator likewise employs the expression at Neh 5:18 (ברורות). On the expression פתרונו לפי ענינו, see Harris, "Literary Hermeneutic," 283 and nn. 8, 14 there.

38. Kugel, *Idea,* 176–177, discusses midrashic antecedents of the כפל terminology in Song Rab. 1.66 and Lev. Rab. 10.12. He also mentions Menahem ibn Saruk's use of such expressions as הכפיל הענין פעמים ("the matter is twice doubled"), albeit not to indicate what we would call parallelism.

4

Rabbi Joseph Kara

Contrary to what might be expected, the commentaries of Rabbi Joseph Kara do not seem to reflect an awareness of parallelism. Although he knew Rashi and his commentaries, and presumably was also conversant with the *Mahberet* of Menahem ibn Saruk, the terminology of כפל is poorly represented in his writings. That is not to say that the root כ־פ־ל is altogether absent from Kara's commentaries. For example, at Josh 22:22 (אֵל אֱלֹהִים ה׳ אֵל אֱלֹהִים ה׳ הוּא יֹדֵעַ וְיִשְׂרָאֵל הוּא יֵדָע אִם־בְּמֶרֶד וְאִם־בְּמַעַל בַּה׳ אַל־תּוֹשִׁיעֵנוּ הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה, "God, the LORD God! God, the LORD God! He knows, and Israel too shall know! If we acted in rebellion or in treachery against the LORD, do not vindicate us this day!"), he observes the repetition of the phrase אל אלהים ה׳ with the following comment:

> **אל אלהים:** פתרון: אלהי האלהים הוא ה׳. ולמה נכפל כאן שני פעמים **אל אלהים ה׳**? זה פתרונו: **אל אלהים ה׳ הוא יודע** שלא **במרד** עשינו זאת, וגם **ישראל . . . ידע אם במרד ואם במעל;** וכן במקום אחר, כשעתיד לכפול שני דברים, כופל שני תיבות לפניו, כמו: אנוכי אנוכי הוא מוחה פשעיך למעני וחטאתיך לא אזכור, שפתרונו: אנוכי הוא ש־מוחה פשעיך, ו־אנוכי ש־למעני חטאותיך לא אזכור; אף כאן: השם הוא יודע שלא **במרד,** והשם הוא יודע שלא **במעל.**

> **God, God (the LORD):** (its) explanation (is): the God of Gods is the LORD. And why is (the phrase) **God, God (the LORD)** stated here twice? This is its explanation: **God, God, the LORD**—*he knows* that we have not done this **in rebellion,** and also **Israel will know (that we have not done this) in rebellion or in treachery;** and similarly in another place, when (God) is about to state two propositions, (Scripture) doubles two words before it,[1] as in *it is I, I who—for my own sake—wipe away your transgressions and re-*

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1. I.e., the intial word that is shared is expressed twice. The comment is one of syntax as much as substance: the repetition of the subject in the sentence is to indicate that two distinct propositions are to follow.

member your sins no more (Isa 43:25), the explanation of which is: *I am the One who wipes away your transgressions,* and *I am the One for whose own sake I remember your sins no more.* Even so (is this observation true) here (in Josh 22:22): God is the One who knows that **not in rebellion** (did they act), and God is the One who knows that **not in treachery** (did they act).[2]

Thus, there are two different explanations here: Kara first glosses the repetition in the phrase of two words for "God" (אל and אלהים)—he wants to take the conjunction אל אלהים as a construct, "(the LORD is) the God of Gods." Second, he wants to explain why the whole phrase (אל אלהים ה׳) is stated twice. To be clear, for Kara the repetition of these words is meant to indicate that there will follow two propositions (and not one) that will share this same noun phrase. In this example, Kara is using the root כ-פ-ל in a manner somewhat analogous to Rashi's use of כפל in most of the latter's Torah commentary. However, as is obvious, in this instance of repetition we find not parallelism but some of the doublings and ellipses that are sometimes characteristic of parallelism.[3]

A better case for determining Kara's lack of understanding of parallelism may be found in his commentary on Judg 5:24–26:

תבורך מנשים יעל אשת חבר הקיני מנשים באהל תבורך: מקרא זה מן המקראות שסתומין מתחילתן משני דברים, ולעולם פתרונן בצידיהן, כמו כאן שהוא אומר: **תבורך מנשים יעל:** ולא פירש הכתוב בתחילתו מפני מה מברכה? ואף כשהוא אומר אחריו: **מנשים באהל תבורך,** סתם שלא פירש מפני מה הוא מברכה מכל הנשים שבאהל. והא לך פתרונו בצדו: מפני מה **תבורך מנשים?** לפי ש**מים שאל חלב נתנה**—ליישנו, כדי שתהא חוטפתו שנת תרדמה ותתקע היתד ברקתו. ומפני מה **מנשים באהל תבורך?** שכל הנשים שהיו שכונות באהל לא באת תשועה על ידן על יד אהל, וזאת באת תשועה לישראל על ידי ששלחה ידה ליתד האהל, דכתיב: **ידה ליתד תשלחנה וימינה להלמות עמלים;** כמו שאומר למעלה: ותקח יעל אשת חבר את יתד האהל וגו׳.

May Yael, Wife of Hever the Kenite, be the most blessed of women, more than women of the tent may she be blessed: This passage is of the variety of (Scriptural) passages that are elliptical in their beginnings with

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2. Kara is thus explaining that because there are two statements of which "God" is the subject (as he understands it, השם הוא יודע שלא במרד, והשם הוא יודע שלא במעל), the repetition "God, God" at the beginning of the sentence sets up the anticipation of two acts of which God is the subject. This text from Kara is cited, along with others, in Poznanski, *Eliezer of Beaugency,* xxxiv.

3. For other instances where Kara uses the root כ-פ-ל, but in which he expresses no awareness of the parallelistic structures that may be found in the verses, see his commentary on Isa 51:19; 65:11–12. Additionally, Kara uses the verb כפל in the context of narrative repetition in Judg 13:12.

respect to two matters,[4] but their explanation always follows immedi-
ately,[5] as in the present instance when Scripture says: **May the most
blessed of women be Yael,** and the verse does not make explicit at its be-
ginning on account of what should she be blessed? And even when it
says afterwards: **more than women of the tent may she be blessed,** it re-
mains elliptical in that it did not make explicit on account of what it
blesses her more than all (other) women of the tent. But here you have its
explanation following immediately. On account of what should she **be
the most blessed of women**? On account of **water he requested; milk
did she give,** i.e., in order to make him drowsy, so that a sleep of deep
slumber would overcome him, so that she could drive the peg into his
temple. And on account of what should she **be blessed more than** (all
other) **women of the tent**? Because of the fact that all women who
dwelled in tents—salvation did not come at their hands, by means of a
tent.[6] But as for her (i.e., Yael)—salvation did come to Israel (at her hands)
when she sent forth her hand to the peg of the tent, as it is written: **her
hand to the peg did she send forth, her right-hand for the workmen's
hammer;** this is what was related in an earlier passage: *and Yael wife of
Hever took the peg of the tent, etc.* (Judg 4:21).

It is clear that Kara perceives that he is in the presence of a pattern, or
a even a trope. However, he apparently is unaware of the particular type
of parallelistic structure here, nor does he articulate any general observa-
tion about parallelism elsewhere in his commentaries. Nonetheless, he
goes about interpreting the form, using the tools he has developed for in-
terpreting passages in a contextual, literary fashion.[7]

In his study of Kara's writings, Gershon Brin devotes a few para-
graphs to the subject of Kara's awareness of biblical parallelism. He points
to a number of instances (Job 12:17; 3:2) in the Job commentary attributed

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4. Even though Kara is articulating a general rule about verses that are "ellip-
ses" in the way this one is, he immediately alerts the reader to the two specific "el-
lipses" presupposed by this verse. First, what was Yael's merit that she should be
blessed? Second, why should she be blessed more than other, tent-dwelling
women?

5. Literally, "at their sides."

6. The sense of the Hebrew (על ידן על יד אהל) is somewhat obscure here, and
there may be some sort of marginal gloss or dittography that has worked its way
into the commentary here.

7. See again Kara's explanation of his general approach to *peshat* exegesis in his
commentary on 1 Sam 1:17 (above, chapter 2). For other examples from Kara's
commentary that highlight that exegete's fine sense of the literariness of biblical
texts, see my article: "Structure and Composition in Isa 1–12: A Twelfth Century
Rabbinic Perspective," in *As Those Who Are Taught: The Reception of Isaiah from the
LXX to the SBL* (SBL Seminar Series; eds. Claire Mathews McGinnis and Patricia
Tull; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, forthcoming).

to Kara where the exegete employs the כפל terminology.[8] There is a history of scholarly debate about the nature of this Job commentary and Kara's association with it, dating back to the *Wissenschaft* period, and no consensus has been reached about its attribution to Kara.[9] In an appendix to his edition of the commentary attributed to Joseph Kara, Ahrend indicates more than ten occurrences of the word כפל.[10] However, Sara Japhet has convincingly demonstrated that this commentary is compilatory in nature: although it does contain interpretations by Kara, it cannot be ascribed solely to him.[11] Thus, it is difficult to establish that these specific instances should be credited to Kara.[12] Moreover, in the introduction she wrote to the edition of Rabbi Samuel ben Meir's commentary on Qoheleth, Japhet had already determined that Kara had not grasped the notion of parallelism.[13] There, having undertaken a systematic review of commentaries universally regarded as "authentic (Kara) compositions," and not finding in them any use of the כפל terminology or awareness of biblical parallelism,

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8. Brin, *Studies in the Exegesis of R. Joseph Kara,* 63–64. Similarly, Poznanski also refers to this commentary (on Job 3:11, 25; 4:18; 5:1, 22; 39:8, 12) in his discussion of Kara's use of the term כפל; see Poznanski, *Eliezer of Beaugency,* xxxv.

9. Cf. Moshe Ahrend, *Le Commentaire sur Job de Rabbi Yoseph Kara* . (Hildesheim: Gerstenberg, 1978); and *idem,* "The Commentary of Rabbi Joseph Kara on Job and Its Relationship to Rashi's Commentary," in *Studies in Bible and Exegesis: Arie Toeg in Memoriam* (eds. U. Simon and M. Goshen-Gottstein; Ramat Gan: 1980), 183–208 (Hebrew). Again, see my forthcoming article, "The Rashbam Authorship Controversy Redux" and Lockshin, "'Rashbam' on Job: A Reconsideration."

10. Moshe Ahrend, *Rabbi Joseph Kara's Commentary on Job* (Jerusalem: Mossad Harav Kook, 1988), 169 (Hebrew).

11. See Sara Japhet, "The Nature and Distribution of Medieval Compilatory Commentaries in the Light of Rabbi Joseph Kara's Commentary on the Book of Job," in *The Midrashic Imagination: Jewish Exegesis, Thought and History* (ed. Michael Fishbane; Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993), 98–130; and *idem,* "The Nature and Distribution of Medieval Compilatory Commentaries in the Light of Rabbi Joseph Kara's Commentary on the Book of Job," in *Studies in Bible and Exegesis, Volume III: Moshe Goshen-Gottstein—In Memoriam* (eds. M. Bar-Asher, D. Dimant, M. Garsiel, and Y. Maori; Ramat Gan: Bar Ilan University Press, 1993) (Hebrew), 195–216. See also Japhet, *Commentary of Rashbam on Job,* 36–48.

12. To sound but one note of caution, however: Since many of the commentaries of Kara that have survived, and are generally regarded as his, are on prose texts, there is comparatively little material in which to tease out some observations of parallelism. To the extent that the comments to Job attributed to Kara are actually his, it is *possible* that the terminology of כפל in reference to parallelistic structures is attested. This being said, it is nonetheless significant that Kara's commentary on Isaiah—a book, to be sure, whose compositions frequently employ parallelistic structure—does not feature the כפל terminology to call attention to parallelism.

13. Japhet and Salters, *Commentary of Rashbam on Qoheleth,* 28–32.

she concludes: "'parallelismus membrorum' was not one of the exegetical principles of Kara."[14] Thus, while Kara advanced the contextual study of Scripture (*peshat*) in many other ways, in this particular case he seems not to have attained even the level of understanding eventually achieved by Rashi. Within the northern French group of rabbinic exegetes of the Bible, it was apparently left to R. Samuel ben Meir, Rashbam, to develop sensitivity to the phenomenon of biblical parallelism into a full-fledged hermeneutic principle.

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14. Japhet and Salters, *Commentary of Rashbam on Qoheleth*, 31.

5

Rabbi Samuel ben Meir
(Rashbam)

Rabbi Samuel ben Meir, the grandson of Rashi, made many advances in the understanding of the literary dimensions of biblical composition. To take a notable example, his attention to the proleptic nature of biblical narrative is well documented.[1] As we have already seen in our discussion of the influence he had on Rashi, Rashbam also made strides in understanding the essential character of biblical poetry. In his commentary on Deut 31:19, Rashbam explicitly makes a connection between form and genre in determining the presence of poetry within the larger compositional framework. Responding to the Mosaic call for the Israelites to "write down this poem" (וְעַתָּה כִּתְבוּ לָכֶם אֶת־הַשִּׁירָה הַזֹּאת), Rashbam comments: סדור דברים קרוי שירה, "(Any specific) patterning of words may be called 'poetry'." While nowhere in his extant commentaries does he connect "poetry" in the abstract with specific instances of parallelism, we

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1. See Elazar Touitou, "Concerning the Methodology of R. Samuel Ben Meir in His Commentary to the Pentateuch," *Tarbiz* 48:3–4 (1979): 248–273 (Hebrew); *idem,* "Rashbam's Exegetical Method in the Light of the Contemporary Historical Situation," in *Studies in Rabbinical Literature, Bible, and Jewish History: Dedicated to Professor E. Z. Melammed* (eds. Y. D. Gilat, H. Y. Levin, Ts. M. Rabinowitz; Ramat Gan: Bar Ilan University, 1982), 48–74 (Hebrew); Nahum Sarna, "The Anticipatory Use of Information as a Literary Feature of the Genesis Narrative," in *The Creation of Sacred Literature* (ed. R. E. Friedman; Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1981), 76–82; Morris B. Berger, "The Torah Commentary of Rabbi Samuel Ben Meir" (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1982), 50–53; Martin I. Lockshin, ed., *Rabbi Samuel Ben Meir's Commentary on Genesis: An Annotated Translation* (Jewish Studies 5; Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press, 1989), 400–421.

shall see that in general he tends to call attention to parallelistic structure in texts that modern scholarship considers to be poetic in character.

Indeed, attention to parallelism in biblical composition is one of the prominent features of Rashbam's hermeneutic.[2] Occasionally his interpretation of a biblical text is predicated upon his understanding of parallelism, even when he does not invoke technical terminology to describe it. An example of this may be found in his commentary on Exod 25:4:

ותולעת שני: צמר הצבוע בצבע אדום קרוי תולעת. והצבע קרוי שני. כדכתיב: אנשי חיל מתולעים, מלובשים בגדים צבועים. וכן: האמונים עלי תולע, בגד צבוע. וכן מוכיח: אם יהיו חטאיכם כשנים, כשלג ילבינו; אם יאדימו כתולע, כצמר יהיו. השני והשלג סם של צבעים—זה אדום וזה לבן. אבל [התולע]³ והצמר שניהם צמר, אלא שהתולע צמר צבוע והצמר הוא לבן בלא צבע.

Crimson cloth: Wool that is dyed with red dye is called תולעת ("cloth"). And the dye is called שני ("crimson"). This is as it is written: *the men of war are clothed in crimson* (Nah 2:4).[4] So, too (is it written): *they who were reared in crimson* (Lam 4:5).[5] So, too (does the following verse) prove (my interpretation): *Be your sins like crimson [*כשנים*], like snow they shall whiten; be they red like crimson-dyed wool [*כתולע*], like fleece shall they be* (Isa 1:18). The crimson [השני] and the snow [השלג] are the ingredients in the dyes—one is red and the other white, but the crimson-dyed wool [התולע] and the fleece [הצמר] are both wool, only that the crimson-dyed wool is dyed, whereas fleece is white, without dye.[6]

Rashbam's analysis of the prooftext from Isaiah demonstrates that he is interpreting according to its parallelistic structure. He aligns שני to-

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2. For a selection of references to Rashbam's attention to parallelism in the Torah commentary, see Melammed, *Bible Commentators,* 465–466. For examples culled from his other extant commentaries, again, see Japhet and Salters, *Commentary of Rashbam on Qoheleth,* 23–32, 51–55; Japhet, *Commentary of Rashbam on Job,* 170–200.

3. This is Rosin's emendation of the ms; see David Rosin, ed., *The Torah Commentary of Rashbam* (Breslau: Solomon Schtottlaender, 1881), 123 (Hebrew).

4. Rashbam relates the word translated "clothed in crimson" (מתולעים) to the expression תולעת שני in Exod 25:4. His citation of Nah 2:4 is apt, since the parallel phrase to his prooftext (אנשי חיל מתולעים, "men of war clothed in crimson") is מגן גבוריהו מאדם, "the shield of his warriors is reddened."

5. This is the translation in Adele Berlin, *Lamentations: A Commentary* (OTL; Louisville, London: Westminster/John Knox Press, 2002), 99; see also her comment on the verse, 106–107.

6. Rashbam seems to vacilate to a certain degree on the nature of the "snow-like" fleece: is it white because it is naturally white fleece that has been dyed even whiter (השני והשלג סם של צבעים)? Or is it simply naturally white, undyed fleece (הצמר הוא לבן בלא צבע).

gether with שלג, both of them in his perspective being ingredients that give the dyes their distinctive colors (in this case, respectively, red and white); similarly, he sets תולע in alignment with צמר, understanding them to each be the wool (either crimson-dyed or naturally white) referred to in the verse. Thus, his comment enables us to see that he implicitly analyzes Isa 1:18 as containing two clauses in chiastic parallelistic structure; discerning this structure aids him in determining the precise meaning of the words in Exod 25:4.

However, to indicate the presence of parallelism, Rashbam will generally employ expressions using the root כ־פ־ל.[7] Sara Japhet, in the aforementioned introduction to the edition of Rashbam's commentary on Qoheleth, explored Rashbam's use of כ־פ־ל with the aim of helping to establish his authorship of that exegetical work. She concluded:

> No fixed, unified terminology is applied in the description of parallelism, but the most common phrases are those constructed with כפל = double. By this very definition, a major premise is expressed: that the two parts of one verse, or two consecutive verses, have the same contents and thus each one can be interpreted by the other.[8]

A case in point is Rashbam's commentary on Deut 32:23 (אַסְפֶּה עָלֵימוֹ רָעוֹת חִצַּי אֲכַלֶּה־בָּם, "I will use up on them evils, my arrows will I finish against them"). That this verse is in parallelistic structure is immediately seen by Rashbam:

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7. Sara Japhet, "The Commentary of R. Samuel Ben Meir to Ecclesiastes," *Tarbiz* 44:1–4 (1974), 72–94 (Hebrew); see esp. 86–87, where Japhet discusses the various forms of the root כ־פ־ל that Rashbam employs to describe parallelism. In the comprehensive introduction to her edition of Rashbam's Job commentary, Japhet convincingly presents the evidence for Rashbam's pervasive reliance on parallelism as an exegetical tool, and summarizes: רשב״ם ראה בתופעת התקבולת עיקרון כולל, הנוגע לספר איוב כולו, ואכן, ברוח זו הוא מפרש מאות פסוקים בספר איוב, "Rashbam saw in the phenomenon of parallelism a general principle, which permeates the entire book of Job and, indeed, in light of this he explicates hundreds of verses in the book of Job"; Japhet, *Commentary of Rashbam on Job,* 175. Japhet had articulated this already in an earlier publication: "Tradition and Innovation in the Commentary of Rabbi Samuel ben Meir (Rashbam) on Job: The Hymn to Wisdom (Job 28)," in *Tehillah le-Moshe: Biblical and Judaic Studies in Honor of Moshe Greenberg* (eds. M. Cogan, B. L. Eichler, and J. H. Tigay; Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1997), 115*–142*; see esp. 123*–126* (Hebrew). To be sure, Rashbam occasionally employs other terminology to call attention to parallelism; see Japhet, *Commentary of Rashbam on Job,* 178–183; 186–187, where she discusses his use of the term מוסב על, "is predicated upon" or "is connected to," both with and without additional use of the term כפל, to describe parallelism.

8. Japhet and Salters, *Commentary of Rashbam on Qoheleth,* 51.

אספה עלימו רעות . . . אכלה ⁹. . . : כן דרך המקראות לכפול לשונם. כלומר: כל מיני רעות שיש בידי להזיק, כולם אשים בהם.

I will use up on them evils . . . will I finish . . . : It is indeed the way of Scripture to double its language.[10] To paraphrase: all manner of evils that are in my power to cause injury, all of them will I set against them.

Although it is true in this case that Rashbam articulates the significance of the structure as a rhetorical device (כן דרך המקראות), his fundamental interest is semantic. He uses the relatively clear meaning of the term אכלה to illuminate the more obscure word אספה: the elusive verb אספה means "to use up (the whole arsenal of weapons)" just as the more common אכלה means "to use up (all of the arrows)." This understanding of Rashbam's philological intent is reinforced through reference to his comment on Gen 18:23 (הַאַף תִּסְפֶּה צַדִּיק עִם־רָשָׁע). There, the identification of the two words in his mind is even clearer:

תספה: תכלה, כדכתיב: אספה עלימו רעות חיצי¹¹ אכלה בם. אכלה כפל לשון של אספה.

Will you use up [תספה]: i.e., will you finish off [תכלה], as it is written (Deut 32:23): *I will use up on them evils, my arrows will I finish against them.* אכלה is the synonymous parallel of אספה.

Indeed, occasionally Rashbam took his grandfather (and other commentators) to task when the principle of parallelism was neglected. Consider his rejection of Rashi's commentary on Gen 49:9. Whereas Rashi had understood the words מִטֶּרֶף בְּנִי עָלִיתָ as a reference to Judah's role in selling Joseph into slavery,[12] Rashbam feels that such an interpretation does

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9. In his presentation of the *incipit* in the critical edition he published, Rosin has filled out the verse according to the MT; in doing so, as I hope my presentation makes clear, he obscures the exegetical effect of Rashbam's observation. I have left the citation as Rosin indicated the manuscript—which has been lost since World War II—actually read. See Rosin, *The Torah Commentary of Rashbam,* 228.

10. Rashbam makes virtually the same observation (דרך המקראות לכפול את דבריהם, "it is the way of Scripture to double its words") in his commentary on Gen 49:3.

11. This, according to Rosin, is the spelling in the manuscript; see Rosin, *The Torah Commentary of Rashbam,* 16.

12. Here is the relevant part of Rashi's commentary: **מטרף:** ממה שחשדתיך ב־טרף טרף יוסף חיה רעה אכלתהו. וזהו יהודה שנמשל לאריה, "**From the prey** (lit. 'tearing'): [I (Jacob) employ this language] since I had suspected you (in the incident of) *torn, torn is Joseph; a wild animal has devoured him* (Gen 37:33). And this (indeed alludes to) Judah, who is compared to a lion" (here, in Gen 49:9). This comment of Rashi's is an example of what Nehama Leibowitz calls his proclivity towards עומק פשוטו, that is, a "deeper understanding of the literary context," achieved, if necessary,

not suit the context. Instead, understanding the word בני as a vocative ("O my son") and so parallel to "Judah," he sees in the verse a prophecy of the tribe of Judah's future destiny:

מטרף בני עלית: אתה יהודה **בני,** לאחר ש**עלית** מלטרוף טרף באומות ותכרע ותשכב בעירך, לא יבוא אויב להחרידך ולהקימך ממקומך. זהו עיקר פשוטו; **בני** כפילו של **יהודה.** והמפרשו במכירת יוסף לא ידע בשיטה של פסוק ולא בחילוק טעמים כלל.

> **From the prey, O my son, you have arisen:** You, Judah, **my son,** once you will have **arisen** from preying, preying among the nations, and you will settle and dwell (lit. "crouch and lie down") in your city, there shall not come an enemy to trouble you and to cause you to rise up from your place. This is the primary contextual understanding; **O my son** is parallel to **Judah.** And one who interprets (this passage) with regard to the sale of Joseph does not understand the *modus* of Scripture,[13] nor the way the cantillation marks divide the phrases,[14] at all.

To be sure, Martin Lockshin cautions that Rashbam may not entirely be rejecting Rashi in this instance, but is specifically dismissing midrashic readings[15] that are predicated on reading the words מטרף בני as a construct noun phrase ("from the prey <u>of</u> my son") and not as a prepositional phrase plus vocative ("from the prey, O my son").[16] According to

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through reliance on midrashic readings. See Nehama Leibowitz, *The Study of Biblical Exegetes and Methods for Teaching: The Book of Genesis* (Jerusalem: World Zionist Organization—Department for Torah Education and Culture, 1975), 207–208 (Hebrew); see also Leibowitz and Ahrend, *Rashi's Commentary on the Torah,* 331–408; 457–493. In this case, by reading our verse in light of such midrashim as *Gen. Rab.* 95.2 and *Midr. Tanh. Vayigash* 2, Rashi understands the reference as follows: Judah is a lion—predatory, aggressive—and where has the Torah presented him in this capacity? In his role in the removal of Joseph and the deception of Jacob. Note that to further his reading, Rashi has reversed the scriptural order of the clauses in his citation of Gen 37:33: first, he refers to טרף טרף יוסף in order to establish the connection of that phrase with the verse upon which he is commenting (Gen 49:9), and only then does he adduce חיה רעה אכלתהו, which he (by means of the midrashic readings cited above) understands to allude to Judah.

13. This term is perhaps related to another of Rashbam's technical expressions, דרך המקראות, "the way of Scripture." Both of these point to the way in which the attentive reader can come to understand the *contextual* meaning of Scripture.

14. In other words, the cantillation mark under the word מטרף is the disjunctive accent, *tiphah.* Thus, the biblical phrase cannot be understood as "the prey *of* my son," but rather "the prey, O my son."

15. See, e.g., *Gen. Rab.* 98.9.

16. See Lockshin, *Rabbi Samuel Ben Meir's Commentary on Genesis,* 359 n. 1. Among traditional supercommentators, Eliyahu Mizrahi and Siftei Hakhamim

Lockshin's reasoning, Rashi offers a third interpretation, situated, as it were, between the midrash on the one hand and Rashbam on the other: "from the tearing (incident, when I suspected you), O my son." Thus, again according to Lockshin, Rashi also parses the word בני as a vocative, but that does not prevent him, in Rashbam's estimation, from (mis)interpreting the verse as referring to the sale of Joseph by his brothers.[17] In any event, Rashi has not articulated the presence of parallelism in the verse. By contrast, this is precisely what Rashbam has accomplished. Rashbam's use of the כפל terminology makes it abundantly clear that he has interpreted the passage on the basis of his understanding of its parallelistic structure.[18]

Rashbam sometimes uses the language of כפל merely to indicate synonymous meanings of difficult or elusive words: For example, in Gen 20:13, Rashbam is faced with what may be considered a theological dilemma. In explaining to Abimelech why he has told him that Sarah is his sister and not his wife, Abraham extemporizes with the following admission:

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understand Rashi in a similar fashion; Leibowitz, *The Study of Biblical Exegetes and Methods for Teaching,* 208, likewise seeks to defend Rashi against the vituperative criticism of his grandson. Lockshin (*ibid.*) also raises the possibility that Rashbam may be reacting to Christian exegesis. Lockshin sees the strongest argument that Rashbam could not be disputing with Rashi from the next lemma of Rashi (ד״ה בני עלית)—proof that Rashi was not ignoring the disjunctive accent (טפחא) marking the word מטרף (personal communication).

17. Despite the attempts of Lockshin and the others to distance Rashi from the midrashic interpretation, it seems simpler to accept Rashbam's criticism at face value.

18. See also Rashbam's commentary on Deut 32:10:

יסבבנהו: במלאכיו ששמרום, כדכתיב: [חונה מלאך ה׳ סביב ליראיו ויחלצם. וכן ייסד הפייטן] לנו: מלאכיך סביב יחנה. והמפרשו בהיקף עננים אינו [אלא טועה]. כי לפי הפשט אין הענן אלא לעמוד ענן לפניהם, כדכתיב: [וה׳] הולך לפניהם [יומם] בעמוד ענן לנחותם הדרך. ועוד כי: **יצרנהו** כפילו של **יסובבנהו.**

He encircled him: i.e., with his angels who guarded them, as it is written: *the angel of the* LORD *encamped around His revered ones, and saved them* (Ps 34:8). And so did the poet establish for us: "your angels encamp round about' [an excerpt from a liturgical poem entitled אמרתך צרופה, by R. Shimon b. Yitzhak—Rosin, *The Torah Commentary of Rashbam,* 227 n.]. And one who interprets this with regard to encircling clouds is surely mistaken. For according to the contextual interpretation the cloud is a pillar of cloud before them, as it is written: *The* LORD *went before them by day in a pillar of cloud, to guide them on the way* (Exod 13:21). Moreover [with regard again to Deut 32:10] (my interpretation is correct) because **He guarded them** is parallel to **He encircled him.**

וַיְהִי כַּאֲשֶׁר הִתְעוּ אֹתִי אֱלֹהִים מִבֵּית אָבִי וָאֹמַר לָהּ זֶה חַסְדֵּךְ אֲשֶׁר תַּעֲשִׂי עִמָּדִי אֶל כָּל־הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר נָבוֹא שָׁמָּה אִמְרִי־לִי אָחִי הוּא:

> So when God made me wander from my father's house, I said to her, "Let this be the kindness that you shall do me: whatever place we come to, say there of me: 'He is my brother.'"

The problem of course is with the expression כַּאֲשֶׁר הִתְעוּ אֹתִי, for which we have supplied the NJPS translation "when God made me wander." Often, the sense of the verb הִתְעוּ is "to lead astray,"[19] and God would not normally be perceived as leading Abraham astray![20] Yet it is precisely this sense that is rendered by Targum Onkelos,[21] and Rashbam must find a way to present a better contextual interpretation. To do this, he relies on his understanding of parallelistic structure in biblical composition:

כאשר התעו אותי: הגלני ממקומי, שנאמר: לך לך מארצך. וזהו שכתוב: ארמי אובד אבי, משום שהוגלה משם. כי **התעו אותי** ו־אובד אבי כפל לשון הוא, כדכתיב: תעיתי כשה אובד, צאן אובדות היו עמי רועיהם התעום.

> **When (God) made me wander:** When he exiled me from my place, as it is written: *go forth from your land* (Gen 12:1). This is the meaning of the verse: *a wandering Aramean was my father* (Deut 26:5); (this is so) since he was exiled from there.[22] Moreover, **made me wander** and *a wanderer was my father* are synonymous phrases, as is proven by the verses: *I wandered like a sheep that was lost* (Ps 119:176) and *lost sheep were my people, their shepherds caused them to wander away* (Jer 50:6).

Rashbam is not employing the language of כפל to observe parallelism in the text of Gen 20:13. Rather, he uses the כפל לשון formula to refer to synonymy, and the synonymy of תעה and אבד he derives from the "synonymous" parallelism of Jer 50:6 and the use of synonymous terms in Ps 119:176.[23] Thus, it is possible for him to make the philological assertion in

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19. See, e.g., 2 Kings 21:9; Isa 3:12; Jer 23:13.

20. See Lockshin, *Rashbam on Genesis,* 83 n. 1.

21. . . . . והוה כד טעו עממיא בתר עובדי ידהון יתי קריב יי לדחלתיה מבית אבא, "and it happened when the peoples went astray after the work of their hands that the Lord brought me close to his worship from my father's house . . ." See also Gen. Rab. 52.10 (cited in Lockshin, *ibid.*). It may be that Onkelos translates the verb הטעו twice; first, in describing how "the people went astray" (כד טעו), and second, in Abraham's acknowledgment that "the Lord brought me close" (קריב).

22. Rashbam interprets the verse in the same way in his commentary on Deut 26:5.

23. For the relationship between "parallel pairs" and terms in sequence and construct, see Yitzhak Avishur, *Stylistic Studies of Word-Pairs in Biblical and Ancient Semitic Literatures* (AOAT 210; Neukirchen-Vlyun: Neukirchener Verlag, 1984).

Gen 20:13 that התעו means "to cause to wander" and not "to lead astray." To be sure, Rashi intuits the same exegetical observation in his comment on the verse, but does not do so by means of כפל terminology.

Likewise, in his commentary on Gen 49:5, Rashbam employs the terminology of כפל to explain the notoriously difficult word מְכֵרֹתֵיהֶם.[24] Here Rashbam knows that the verse is parallelistic in structure, and relies on that understanding in order to infer the meaning of the word in question:

> **מכרותיהם:** אחותיהם. כפל לשון של **שמעון ולוי אחים.** כלומר: שמעון ולוי אחים היו לרעה. **כלי חמס** היתה אחותם.

> (The word) **מכרותיהם** means "their brotherliness" (i.e., in violence). It is synonymously parallel to the phrase **Simeon and Levi are brothers.** In other words, Simeon and Levi were brothers with regard to the evil (they did); **instruments of violence** was their brotherliness.

While in the remainder of his comment on the verse, Rashbam turns to the similar sounding noun מכורותיך in Ezek 16:3 to help clarify the elusive term מכרותיהם in Gen 49:5, and indeed finally relies on a translation of the word into Old French to make his point,[25] it is clearly his understanding of the parallelistic structure of the poem that enables Rashbam to make his philological observation.[26]

Another case in point for Rashbam's reliance on his understanding of parallelism to make a philological observation is found in the way he uses the כפל terminology to explain the somewhat elusive language of Gen 49:23 (וַיְמָרֲרֻהוּ וָרֹבּוּ וַיִּשְׂטְמֻהוּ בַּעֲלֵי חִצִּים). The verse may be translated, literally: "They became embittered at him and shot; they assailed him, did the archers."[27] We might say that there is synonymous parallelism in the

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24. KJV: "their habitations"; NJPS: "Their weapons"; RSV: "their swords."

25. In Rashbam's transliteration into Hebrew letters, the word is represented as לור פרנטייש; Rosin, *The Torah Commentary of Rashbam,* 70 n. 10, notes that this is the equivalent of *lor parenteis,* i.e., "their relationship." Rashbam's comment may underlie the translation of SB: "their ties-of-kinship." See Everett Fox, *The Schocken Bible: Volume I: The Five Books of Moses* (New York: Schocken Books, 1995).

26. See also Rashbam's commentary on Gen 49:11: again, when he observes the parallelism present in the verse, it is for the purpose, apparently, of explaining the difficult term ולשרקה. Menahem had earlier arrived at the same interpretation; see Saenz-Badillos, *Mahberet,* 390*. Similarly, one may consider Rashbam's comment on Gen 49:26: in a comment notable for its departure from midrashic tradition, he relies on his understanding of parallelism to interpret הורי as "mountains" and not "parents." It is likely that the verse is an example of "Janus parallelism"; see Gary Rendsburg, "Janus Parallelism in Gen. 49:26," *JBL* 99 (1980): 291–93.

27. SB renders: "Bitterly they shot at him, the archers assailed him."

verse, and that the term בַּעֲלֵי חִצִּים is a "double-duty" descriptive phrase, serving both stichs.[28] However, Rashbam concentrates on the meaning of the verb וָרֹבּוּ and wants to make sure his readers understand that it is derived from the geminate root ר־ב־ב and not from ר־י־ב meaning "to quarrel."[29] He writes:

. . . ‏**ורבו** כפל לשון של **חצים** שבפסוק, כמו יסובו עלי(ו) רביו, חציו

(The word) ורבו ("they shot") is in synonymous parallelism with חצים ("arrows") in this verse. It is like (the verse) *his arrows (רביו) surrounded me* (Job 16:13), in which רביו is equivalent to חציו (i.e., both terms mean "his arrows") . . .

The point of the comment, of course, is that the verb ורבו means "to shoot arrows." But surely Rashbam knew that ורבו is a verb and חצים is a noun! Why then write that "they shot" and "arrows" are "parallel"?[30] We might have expected him to use the term מוסב על—a device he invokes frequently to indicate that one part of a verse "is predicated" upon another. Here, Rashbam indicates that the subject of the verb ורבו is חצים (בעלי), which appears only at the verse's end. But by employing the term כפל לשון, Rashbam explains that one only understands the full force of the verb ורבו by reading to the end of the second stich of the poetic line.[31]

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28. Hence the translation of NJPS: "Archers bitterly assailed him; They shot at him and harried him."

29. His full comment on this verse makes the grammatical and, hence, philological point clear. He also clarifies the meaning of the verb by offering the Old French equivalent *saeterent*, meaning "they shoot (arrows)." See Lockshin, *Rashbam on Genesis*, 378 n. 3.

30. One should not read his comment as a suggestion to emend ורבו to רביו, since such emendations are not found in his works, nor in Rashi's. Frederick Greenspahn has argued that some of Rashi's comments may be seen as implied textual emendations. See Frederick E. Greenspahn, "Biblical Scholars, Medieval and Modern," in *Judaic Perspectives on Ancient Israel* (eds. Jacob Neusner, Baruch Levine, and Ernest S. Frerichs; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987), 245–58; see p. 248 and p. 255 n. 38. There, Greenspahn cites as examples Rashi's comment on Job 14:24 (the comment to which he refers is actually found on Job 15:24) and on "1 Chronicles 20:33" (*sic*); the latter commentary is, in any event, erroneously attributed to Rashi. Greenspahn's interpretation of the evidence is open to challenge, and we may be chary of accepting his conclusions.

31. This is not one of the classifications of noun-verb parallelism discussed by Daniel Grossberg, "Noun/Verb Parallelism: Syntactic or Asyntactic," *JBL* 99 (1980): 481–488. Grossberg describes three distinct patterns: I. Construct + Genitive/Construct + Finite Verb; II. Infinitive or Participle/Finite Verb; III. Preposi-

While Rashbam never developed specific terminology to describe all of the various types of parallelism studied by scholars since Lowth, through his exegetical treatment of different biblical texts it is clear that he understood different types to exist.[32] In addition to the instances of synonymous parallelism that we have already seen, Japhet points to Rashbam's comment on Qoheleth 4:13 (טוֹב יֶלֶד מִסְכֵּן וְחָכָם מִמֶּלֶךְ זָקֵן וּכְסִיל, "Better a poor but wise youth than an old but foolish king") as a case where the exegete expresses his awareness of what Lowth and later scholars would come to call antithetical parallelism. The relevant portion of Rashbam's commentary on that verse is as follows:

מסכן: ואיני יכול לפותרו כמו חכם, לעשותו כפל מלה ושם דבר של חכם, כמו המסוכן תרומה; הלאל יסכן גבר. לפי שיש בו תחת מסכן טיפחה, להפליגו מן וחכם. ילד מוסב על זקן, מסכן מוסב על ממלך, וחכם מוסב על וכסיל.

. . . **poor (מסכן):** I cannot interpret it as "wise," to see it as a parallel term and a denomination of a "wise man," as in *He who wisely chooses wood* (Isa 40:20)[33] or *Can a man wisely-serve God?* (Job 22:2),[34] because there is a *tipha* accent under מסכן to separate it from וחכם. "Youth" is predicated upon "old"; "poor" is predicated upon "than a king"; "and wise" is predicated upon "and foolish."

As Sara Japhet notes, according to Rashbam's comment, "the colon "better is a poor and wise youth' is antithetically parallel to "than an old and foolish king'; therefore the word מסכן cannot be explained as "wise'—

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tion + Noun/Preposition + Finite Verb. Additionally, he includes a fourth "catch all" category ("other usage"); however, none of the examples that Rashbam adduces are similar to those cited by Grossberg. See below, p. 71 n. 61, where we consider the possibility of noun/verb parallelism in the case of Job 29:14.

32. See Japhet and Salters, *Commentary of Rashbam on Qoheleth,* 52.

33. This is a notoriously difficult verse to translate. I have rendered the phrase according to Rashi's and Kara's commentary *ad loc.*, since it is likely that Rashbam would have known their interpretations. For Rashbam, the sense is derived by the phrase חרש חכם ("a wise craftsman"), which in this verse is parallel to המסוכן תרומה.

34. In understanding the connection between ס־כ־ן and "wisdom" in Job 22:2, Rashbam may be influenced by the close proximity of the word משכיל, "wise man," in the second stich of the line. He also may have understood the word as explained by his grandfather; Rashi's second explanation of Job 22:2 suggests the connection between the root ס־כ־ן and "learning/teaching": וגם הראשון יתכן להיות נפתר לשון למוד, "even the first occurrence (of the word יסכן) in this verse is perhaps to be explained according to the sense of teaching." Note, however, that both השכיל and הסכן can mean "to benefit."

as he would have wished to do, in view of other passages, but as an antith-esis to "king'."[35] Thus, even though Rashbam's use of the term כפל in this comment does not pertain specifically to the parallelism in the verse, he does evince an understanding of the structure in his effort to find the con-textual meaning of the word מסכן.

However, for at least one specific type of parallelistic structure, stair-case parallelism, Rashbam endeavored to describe the phenomenon in so many words.[36] In his commentary on Gen 49:22 (בֵּן פֹּרָת יוֹסֵף בֵּן פֹּרָת עֲלֵי־ עָיִן בָּנוֹת צָעֲדָה עֲלֵי־שׁוּר), Rashbam shows an awareness of the staircase par-allelism exhibited in the verse:

בן פורת יוסף, בן פורת עלי עין: הרי פסוק זה דוגמא לחצאים בראש המקרא [שאינו משלים דבורו בראש המקרא][37] אלא שמזכיר במי הוא מדבר, וחוזר וכופל חצי ראש המקרא, ומסיים דבורו . . .[38]

Joseph is a fruitful bough, a fruitful bough by a spring, its branches run over a wall:[39] this verse is an example of (a pattern in which) the first line is divided into halves, such that the first half is not completed in the first stich, but rather the first stich ends by (briefly) mentioning the sub-ject of the line, and then the second stich repeats the first half-line and completes its intent.[40]

In his full comment on this passage, Rashbam goes on to cite additional examples of the same pattern in Exod 15:6; Pss 92:10; 93:3; 94:3[41]; and

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35. See Japhet and Salters, *Commentary of Rashbam on Qoheleth,* 52 n. 138.

36. For modern studies of the phenomenon, see p. 39 n. 12, above, and Edward L. Greenstein, "Two Variations of Grammatical Parallelism in Canaanite Poetry and Their Psycholinguistic Background," *JANES* 6 (1974): 87–105; *idem,* "One More Step on the Staircase," *UF* 9 (1977): 77–88.

37. This is Rosin's reconstruction of the manuscript; see Rosin, *The Torah Com-mentary of Rashbam,* 74 n. 13.

38. Amira Meir cites this reference, among others, in her article, "The Exegesis of Rashbam on the Poetry of the Torah," *Bet Mikra* 42:1 (1997), 34–44 (Hebrew). For a critique of this article, see Yair Haas, "'Kefel Lashon' as an Exegetical Principle and the Awareness of Poetry as a Literary Genre in the Commentaries of Rash-bam," *Bet Mikra* 47:3 (2002): 281–83 (Hebrew).

39. Contrast NJPS: "Joseph is a wild ass, A wild ass by a spring—Wild colts on a hillside."

40. For a slightly different translation, cf. Lockshin, *The Commentary of Rashbam on Genesis,* 375.

41. Rashbam's commentary on Psalms has not survived; see Rosin, *The Torah Commentary of Rashbam,* xix.

Qoh 1:2.[42] From this number of citations, we may conclude that Rashbam sees staircase parallelism as a regular feature of biblical composition.[43]

While we have already had occasion to refer to Rashbam's commentary on Exod 15:6 when we examined his influence on the development in Rashi's understanding of the phenomenon, let us look more closely at the similar explanation of this literary feature that he proffers in his comment on Qoh 1:2:[44]

הבל הבלים אמר [קהלת]: עדיין לא אמר רק תחילת מלה. וכופל לשונו לומר לכלול ולפרש דברו שהכל הבל. מקרא זה דוגמא לא לנו ה׳[45] לא לנו. נשאו

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42. See also his brief comment on Exod 15:11: מי כמוך נאדר ה׳ מי כמוך באלים מי כמוך באלים ה׳ מי כמוך נאדר, בקודש: גם זה מן הכפולים שפירשתי אצל ימינך ה׳ נאדרי בכח, "**Who is like you among the mighty, O LORD?:** This, too, is among the parallel verses I explained (in my commentary on) *Your right hand, O LORD, is mighty in power* (Exod 15:6)." In his full comment on Gen 49:22, in addition to the staircase parallelism present in the verse, Rashbam also employs the כפל terminology to observe synonymous parallelism between עלי שור and עלי עין. See Lockshin, *The Commentary of Rashbam on Genesis*, 377 n. 1.

43. In at least one circumstance, Rashbam finds the pattern in a prose context, where modern scholarship would not be so likely to discover it. In his commentary on Exod 4:9, he examines the verse . . . והיו המים אשר תקח מן היאר והיו לדם ביבשת; translated literally, the verse may be rendered " . . . and they shall become, the waters that you take from the river and they shall become blood on the dry land." In noticing the repetition, Rashbam comments: והיו המים וגו׳: כפילות, כעין נשאו נהרות ה׳ נשאו נהרות קולם, עד מתי רשעים ה׳ יעלוזו, "**and they shall become, the waters, etc.:** (This verse is cast in) parallelistic structure, of the variety (found in) *the rivers have lifted up, O LORD, the rivers have lifted up their voice* (Ps 93:3); *how long will the wicked, O LORD . . . exult* (Ps 94:3)." Through his use of the כפל terminology, and through his citation of the very texts in which he had elsewhere found staircase parallelism, Rashbam allows for no doubt that he considers the pattern to be likewise found in this verse.

44. While it is clear that Rashbam considers Qoh 1:2 an instance of staircase parallelism, Edward L. Greenstein, "Two Variations"; "One More Step," would exclude the text from that categorization since it only contains two cola. As Greenstein observes, there are about twice as many instances of the "staircase" in the far smaller corpus of Ugaritic poetry as there are in the much larger biblical corpus, and in each case the structure has three or four lines. However, Watson *does* consider Qoh 1:2 to be an instance of staircase parallelism; cf. Wilfred G. E. Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry* (JSOTSup 26; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), 151 n. 106. Loewenstamm describes the pattern as "expanded colon"; cf. Loewenstamm, "The Expanded Colon," 176–196. However, from Rashbam's perspective, the second colon does not expand the first; the first colon is cut short, and the second is complete. Watson specifically rejects Loewenstamm's terminology (*ibid.,* 150 n. 102).

45. Cf. Japhet and Salters, *Commentary of Rashbam on Qoheleth,* 91 n. 4, where the authors point out that the manuscript reading for the Tetragrammaton is actually

נהרות ה׳ נשאו נהרות. כי הנה אויביך ה׳ כי הנה אויביך. שפותח תחילה במלה
ומזכיר את השם מחמת שהוא להוט להזכיר את השם ומזכירו בתוך מילתו.
ואחרי כן מתחיל בה לפרשה. וכן עתה מזכיר שם קהלת בתחילת המלה. ואחרי
כן מתחיל בה וגומרה.

> **Vanity of vanities, says [Qoheleth]:** as yet he has only said the beginning
> of a statement. He then repeats his language to state [both] generally and
> explicitly that everything is vanity. This verse follows the pattern of *Not
> to us, O LORD, not to us* (Ps 115:1); *The rivers have lifted up, O LORD, the rivers
> have lifted up [their voice]* (Ps 93:3); *For lo, thy enemies, O LORD, for lo, thy ene-
> mies* (Ps 92:10). [In each of these the author] first opens with a statement
> and then mentions the Name (because he is eager to mention the Name)
> and so he mentions it within his statement. Afterwards he begins it
> [again] in order to express it explicitly. So here too, he mentions the name
> of Qoheleth at the beginning of the statement and afterwards he begins it
> again and completes it.[46]

One may observe in this longer formulation of the rule an exegetical
element missing from the ones in Rashbam's Torah commentary. Not only
does Rashbam observe the phenomenon of staircase parallelism, he also
characterizes it as a rhetorical device. He articulates why the author re-
sorts to the feature in this case and what the literary implications are ("He
then repeats his language to state [both] generally and explicitly"; "be-
cause he is eager to mention the Name"; "he begins it [again] in order to
express it explicitly").[47] Thus, in this case, Rashbam's motive is not exclu-
sively philological. He is clearly interested in pointing out the rhetorical
purpose as well as deriving exegetical meaning from it.[48] One can hardly
gainsay the judgment of Sara Japhet: "(Rashbam's) recognition of 'stair[case]

"two Yods followed by a vertical uneven line." I have adopted the more conven-
tional presentation of the divine name here.

46. For a slightly different translation, see Japhet and Salters, *Commentary of
Rashbam on Qoheleth,* 90–92.

47. The same tendency is also seen, for example, in his commentary on Job 13:2
(כאשר סיים מלתו כופל לומר תחלת דברו, כדי להחזיק דבריו), "since he finished his state-
ment, he doubles it, restating the beginning of his expression in order to under-
score his words") and Job 15:2–3 (מלה כפולה, שאינו רוצה להרבות מלים), "the expres-
sion is doubled, since he does not [perhaps better: שהינו?] wish to multiply his
words"); these are not cases of staircase parallelism. I have cited the texts from
Japhet, *Commentary of Rashbam on Job,* 372, 376.

48. Of course, it is always possible that the very rhetorical elements of this com-
ment are to be attributed to a disciple of Rashbam, and not to the master himself;
the same might be claimed regarding the comments on Job in the previous foot-
note. Rashbam, to be sure, rarely offers rhetorical explanations of the literary
forms and structures to which he calls attention. Indeed, in the other examples of
staircase parallelism, Rashbam contents himself merely to point out the structure

parallelism' as one of the forms of biblical poetry, its clear and accurate description and its understanding in terms of 'form' alone, rank among Rashbam's well-attested achievements."[49]

In our discussion of Rashi's commentaries, we noted his awareness of the structure of interrogative doubling under the rubric כפל התמיהות. Although Rashbam apparently did not make use of the exact term כפל התמיהות (but see below), he was equally aware of the interrogative doubling structure. We may find evidence of Rashbam's understanding of this in his commentary on Job 40:27.[50] In this biblical text, God replies to Job out of the tempest in one of a series of rhetorical questions: הֲיַרְבֶּה אֵלֶיךָ תַּחֲנוּנִים אִם־יְדַבֵּר אֵלֶיךָ רַכּוֹת, "Will (Leviathan) multiply to you supplications? / Will he speak to you soft words?" Here, Rashbam explains that the entire second stich is but a reiteration of the sense of the first:

הירבה אליך תחנונים: אם ירבה לך תחנונים לבקש על נפשו שתניחהו. **אם ידבר:** כפל לשון.

Will he multiply to you supplications: will he multiply to you supplications to seek his life, that you should let him go? **Will he speak . . . :** (it is a) parallel expression."

Job 40:31 evinces a similar interrogative structure: הֲתְמַלֵּא בְשֻׂכּוֹת עוֹרוֹ וּבְצִלְצַל דָּגִים רֹאשׁוֹ, "Can you fill, with darts, his skin? / (Can you fill), with fish-spears, his head?" In this example, Rashbam briefly notes the "double duty" nature of the verb התמלא with his remark: כפל לשון. The book of Job

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and not to tease out its rhetorical function. I am grateful to Martin Lockshin for discussing this possibility with me (personal communication).

49. Japhet and Salters, *Commentary of Rashbam on Qoheleth,* 24. See also Lockshin, *The Commentary of Rashbam on Genesis,* 376 n. 1.

50. Since the Wissenschaft era, it has been known that the text of the commentary attributed to Rashi from Job 40:26 onward (in the printed editions) was, in actuality, the work of Rashbam. Sara Japhet has reviewed and advanced the Wissenschaft evidence; see Sara Japhet, "The Commentary of Rashbam on Job: On the History of its Discovery," *Tarbiz* 66:1 (1997): 5–39 (see esp. 8–11) (Hebrew); *idem,* "The Commentary of Rabbi Samuel ben Meir (Rashbam) on the Book of *Job,*" in *Rashi et la culture juive en France du Nord au moyen âge* (eds. G. Dahan, G. Nahon, and E. Nicolas; Paris and Leuven: E. Peeters, 1997), 163–175; *idem, Commentary of Rashbam on Job,* 16–19. Although many contemporary "traditional" reprintings of the Rabbinic Bible continue incorrectly to attribute this portion of the Job commentary to Rashi, the correct distinction between Rashi and Rashbam on Job is at last found in Shoshana, *The Book of Job with the Commentaries of Rashi, Rabbenu Jacob b. Meir Tam, and a Disciple of Rashi,* 260–278; see p. 260 n. 11 (Hebrew). In any event, we now have Japhet's critical edition of Rashbam's commentary on Job, and can cite the text from that edition.

is replete with rhetorical questions of the same type as these two and with a similar, interrogative parallelistic structure. Indeed, Rashbam makes several observations about these in his commentary on Job.[51] We will limit our examination of this type to one additional example.

In our analysis of Rashi's comment on Job 27:10, we saw that Rashi understood what he termed כפל התמיהות to be present in the verse.[52] It is therefore not altogether surprising that we find in Rashbam's commentary on Job 27:9–10 a similar observation:

> **הצעקתו ישמע אל:** לשון תמוה: אם ישמע הק׳ צעקתו של חנף כאשר תבא עליו רעה, אם על שדי יתענג שתהיה תפילתו מקובלת ונשמעת לפניו ואם יקרא אלוה בכל עת צרתו שיהא נענה, כן הוא המעשה שלא יהא תפלתו נשמעת ומקובלת, ולא תועיל לו קריאתו. שני מקראות הללו תמוהים . . .

> **Will God hear his cry:** This is the interrogative formula: Will the Holy One hear the cry of the blasphemous (see v. 8) when evil comes to him; when he seeks the favor of Shaddai (see v. 10), will his prayer be received and heard before Him? And if he calls to God whenever he is in trouble (see v. 10), will he be answered? This is the matter, i.e., that his prayer will not be heard or received; indeed, his calling out (to God) will not avail him. Both of these verses are interrogative . . . [53]

In contradistinction to Rashi's treatment of this verse, which simply identified the interrogative parallelism as one of a type represented by other, similarly structured verses, Rashbam's goes to greater lengths both to work out for his reader exactly how the parallelism functions in the immediate context as well as to articulate the purpose of the parallelism in the rhetoric of the passage. Indeed, in the continuation of his comment, Rashbam casts his exegetical net a bit wider and demonstrates how the passage under consideration is in fact a rhetorical response to an earlier text.[54]

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51. See e.g., Rashbam on Job 6:5–6; 21:4; 40:2, 25. As is to be expected, Rashbam makes dozens of observations regarding other types of parallelism throughout his commentary on Job.

52. See our discussion above, pp. 45–46.

53. Note how Rashbam paraphrases and reworks 27:8–10 in order to make his exegesis of the verses clearer. For the development of this exegetical style in the work of R. Eliezer of Beaugency, see Harris, "Literary Hermeneutic," 130–142.

54. The continuation of Rashbam's comment is not really germane in a discussion of parallelism, yet it contains nonetheless a brilliant intertextual insight:

> שני מקראות הללו תמוהים ומוסבים על אותן שני מקראות האמורים במענה של אליפז למעלה שנאמר כי אז על שדי תתענג וגר, תעתיר אליו וישמעך וגר. הצעקתו ישמע אל מוסב על תעתיר אליו וישמעך. שאם תרחיק עולה מאהלך וכל פשע ורשע

An additional feature connected to parallelism that was observed by Rashbam is that which is occasioned by ellipsis, or what was termed by Cyrus Gordon, regarding Ugaritic poetry, as the "ballast variant."[55] Wilfred Watson defines this type of ellipsis in the following way:

> In essence it is as follows: the two cola of a couplet in parallelism must balance. If some component of the first colon is missing from the second, then at least one of the components in this second colon must be longer.[56]

Sara Japhet has shown that Rashbam displays an awareness of this aspect of parallelism throughout his commentary on Job.[57] Consider the following example. Job 29 features Job's reminiscences of his bygone days,

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תסיר מידך אז תהיה תפילתך מקובלת. אם על שדי יתעוג מוסב על כי אז על שדי תתעוג וגו׳.

Both of these passages are interrogative, and they are predicated upon the very two verses related in the response of Eliphaz above (Job 22:26–27): *When you seek the favor of Shaddai [and lift up your face to God], You will pray to Him and He will listen to you [and you will pay your vows]. Will God hear his cry* corresponds to *you will pray to Him and He will listen to you.* For if you place falsehood far from your tent (see Job 11:14), and all crime and wickedness you turn away from your hand, then will your prayer be received. *When he seeks the favor of Shaddai* (Job 27:10) corresponds to *When you seek the favor of Shaddai* (Job 22:26).

I have cited this text in "The Rashbam Authorship Controversy Redux" (forthcoming).

55. Cyrus H. Gordon, *Ugaritic Textbook* (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1965), 135. Cf. the more complete characterization by Stephen A. Geller, who terms the phenomenon "deletion-compensation," in his *Parallelism in Early Biblical Poetry* (HSM 20; Missoula: Scholars Press, 1979), 299–319. See our discussion immediately below.

56. Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry,* 343. Watson discusses this further on 343–348; see also 174–176; 303–306. For an extended discussion on the role of ellipsis in biblical parallelism, see Edward L. Greenstein, "How Does Parallelism Mean?" in *A Sense of Text: The Art of Language in the Study of Biblical Literature: Papers from a Symposium at the Dropsie College for Hebrew and Cognate Learning, May 11, 1982 (*A Jewish Quarterly Review Supplement: 1982; Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1983),41–70; for "balance," see Edward L. Greenstein, "Aspects of Biblical Poetry," *Jewish Book Annual* 44 (1986–1987): 33–42.

57. See Japhet, *Commentary of Rashbam on Job,* 187–191, where she employs the term תקבולת חסרה. See in particular, p. 188 n. 66, in which Japhet considers the relationship between Rashbam's understanding with ibn Ezra's observations regarding "double-duty" words. Rashbam does not possess the terminology for deletion phenomena that Ibn Ezra (משרת בעבור אחר\מושך את עצמו ואחר עמו) or Radak (עומד במקום שנים) employ. See Melammed, *Bible Commentators,* 569–572, 844–847; and Israel Hagay, "Gapping as an Exegetical Method in the Exegeses of Rabbi Abra-

before the miseries that so drastically altered his life began. Beginning in v. 12 and continuing until v. 17, Job recalls his many acts of justice, particularly on behalf of individuals who would typically have been exploited by stronger parties. In v. 14, Job articulates the source of his concern for the weak: צֶדֶק לָבַשְׁתִּי וַיִּלְבָּשֵׁנִי כִּמְעִיל וְצָנִיף מִשְׁפָּטִי. NJPS offers the following translation: "I clothed myself in righteousness and it robed me; Justice was my cloak and turban." Thus, the translators understand the second stich as a stative clause: "as a cloak and a turban was my justice."[58] In contrast with these approaches, Rashbam intuits what Stephen A. Geller calls "deletion with compensation" to be in operation here—even if he does not indicate its presence in specific, technical terminology.[59] He comments: **כמעיל וצניף:** לבשתי משפט וכופל מלתו, "**As a cloak and a turban:** 'I clothed myself in justice,' thus casting his expression in parallel structure." Rashbam's comment yields a significantly different English translation: "I clothed myself in righteousness and it clothed me; (I clothed myself in) justice, like a robe and a scarf." In other words, Rashbam understands the verb לבשתי to be understood in the second stich as well, even though it does not actually appear there. Moreover, his observation of the "ballast variant" in operation here may also indicate his cognizance of what has been called "noun-verb parallelism."[60] For if the verb לבשתי functions for both stichs of the verse, as Rashbam indicates, and if צדק in the first stich is parallel to משפטי in the second, then the remaining elements standing in parallel structure are ואלבשני\כמעיל וצניף—a transitive verb in the first clause and two nouns in the second.[61]

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ham ibn Ezra and Rabbi David Kimhi" (D.H.L. Diss., Jewish Theological Seminary, 1983) (Hebrew).

58. Cf. the similar, if slightly more literal, KJV and RSV translations.

59. Geller's formulation is helpful: "An essential feature of all replacement formulae is compensation, that is, compensatory lengthening . . . A grammatical element having been deleted from the A Line, its approximate number of syllables should be replaced in the B Line to maintain the general syllable symmetry which most couplets display." See Geller, *Parallelism in Early Biblical Poetry*, 299.

60. See Grossberg, "Noun/Verb Parallelism," 481–488.

61. It should be admitted that Job 29:14 does not fit any of the first three of Grossberg's categories, although it could be placed in his fourth category ("IV: Other Usage"). However, it may equally be true that the "verb-noun" parallelism to which I have called attention is not significant: the first colon contains two verbal phrases; the second, one verbal phrase ("[I have worn] justice, like a robe and a scarf"). The "compensation" in the second colon takes the form of expanding the verbal phrase with an adverbial prepositional phrase. For additional examples of noun/verb parallelism, see Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry*, 157–158. The other examples of the ballast variant that Japhet discusses regarding Rashbam's commen-

It is possible or even likely that Rashbam wrote commentaries on all of the books in the Bible. However, most no longer survive.[62] His extant biblical commentaries, aside from the Torah commentary, are all on books (Job, Song of Songs and Qoheleth) that feature a preponderance of poetry.[63] Thus, it is difficult at first blush to determine whether his great attention in those exegetical works to poetic structure, expressed through his expansive use of the כפל terminology, is due to his own heightened sensitivity or simply to the nature of the books in question. It is all the more noteworthy, therefore, that in his Torah commentary, Rashbam tends to use the terminology of כפל specifically in the places where modern scholarship understands the compositions in question to be poetic in character.[64] For example, the first extended poem in the book of Genesis is

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tary on Job are on Job 5:15; 32:3 (which also contains Rashbam's reference to the ballast variant at play in 1 Sam 2:3); 9:20; 12:14–15; 12:12.

62. Some of these are cited in later medieval works; see, e.g., Urbach, *Arugat Habosem,* index, s.v. Samuel b. Meir.

63. This is not the place to take up the question of authorship of the commentary on Song of Songs attributed to Rashbam; see again Harris, "The Rashbam Authorship Controversy Redux," and Lockshin, "'Rashbam' on Job: A Reconsideration," cited above. Rashbam's Song of Songs commentary was first published from Hamburg MS 32 in: Adolph Jellinek, ed., *Commentar zu Kohelet und dem Hohen Liede von R. Samuel ben Meir* (Leipzig: Leopold Schnauss, 1855) (Hebrew). Rashbam's authorship is demonstrated convincingly by Yaakov Thompson, who studied the manuscript thoroughly; see "The Commentary of Samuel Ben Meir on the Song of Songs" (D.H.L. thesis, Jewish Theological Seminary, 1988). Additional manuscript copies of this commentary were discovered subsequent to Thompson's work; see Barry Walfish, "An Annotated Bibliography of Medieval Jewish Commentaries on the Song of Songs," in *The Bible in the Light of Its Interpreters: Sarah Kamin Memorial Volume* (ed. Sara Japhet; Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1994), 518–571 (541). These manuscripts will be employed in the critical edition to be published by Sara Japhet. In any event, the Song of Songs commentary uses the כפל terminology extensively; for now, see the following passages in Thompson's edition: 2:1 (p. 320); 2:7 (p. 325, twice); 2:9 (p. 329); 4:6 (p. 352); 4:8 (p. 354); 4:10 (p. 355); 4:12 (p. 357); 5:5 (p. 363); 7:13 (p. 382); 8:5 (p. 392).

64. To be sure, occasionally Rashbam used the כפל terminology to observe various literary features in texts generally construed as prose; see Haas, "'Kefel Lashon' as an Exegetical Principle," 281, n. 3. In addition to his comment on Exod 4:9, noted above, Rashbam employed the term in his comment on Gen 36:24 (with reference to 2 Sam 13:20) and Exod 1:22, although not to denote what we would call parallelism; on Exod 14:11; Num 3:9, he uses it to point out mere word repetition. Only in his comment on Exod 6:3 does Rashbam use the term in a prose context and in an analogous way to his use of the term with regard to poetic texts. In God's revelation to Moses of the Divine Name, Rashbam considers that the second

chapter 49; Rashbam employs the term כפל, or its derivatives, nine times in explicating that chapter alone (on vv. 3, 5, 9, 11, 22 [2x], 23, 24, 26). Likewise, we have already seen the attention paid by Rashbam to the parallelistic poetic structure found in the Song at the Sea in Exod 15; Rashbam refers to that structure, using the term כפל, five times in his commentary on the chapter (on vv. 2 [2x], 6, 11, 16). Finally, Rashbam invokes the term several times in his explication of the poem beginning האזינו (Deut 32), recognized by scholars for its antiquity and parallelistic poetic structure (on Deut 32:5, 10, 23).[65] The same is true of his other three extant commentaries: Rashbam's use of the many variants of the כפל formulas are witness to his sensitivity to the poetic character of those books. Sara Japhet's observation about Rashbam's understanding of parallelism is an appropriate conclusion to our own discussion: "One should not wonder, then, that Rashbam took pains to notice cases of parallelism in his commentary on the poetic parts of the Pentateuch, in his commentary on Qoheleth, and most extensively of all, in his commentary on Job. Parallelism, and the varied but consistent terminology connected with it, are an integral part of Rashbam's exegesis."[66]

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stich of the verse (ושמי ה׳ לא נודעתי להם) is parallel to the first (וארא אל אברהם אל יצחק ואל יעקב באל שדי). However, the line between prose and poetry is not so neatly drawn, and it may be that God's speech ought to be considered the kind of "heightened prose" that may approximate poetic language.

65. Rashbam's comment on Deut 32:23 is particularly noteworthy for its general character: כן דרך המקראות לכפול לשונם, "thus the way of Scripture is to cast its language in parallel structure." See also on Gen 49:3; Num 23:7.

66. Japhet and Salters, *Commentary of Rashbam on Qoheleth,* 31.

6

Rabbi Eliezer of Beaugency

Following in the footsteps of Rashbam, Rabbi Eliezer of Beaugency, who was probably his student, also indicates the presence of parallelism through recourse to the כפל terminology. While most of his exegetical works have not survived, commentaries are extant on Isaiah, Ezekiel, and the Twelve Prophets. This affords us ample material in which to investigate his approach to parallelism in prophetic poetry. As we shall see, Eliezer consistently identifies parallelism as a rhetorical phenomenon that does not necessarily express in its repetitions a distinctively new semantic sense. Additionally, we shall see that he relies on his understanding of the device for both philological and purely rhetorical purposes. While in the main we will examine passages in which Eliezer employs the term כפל to remark on the presence of parallelistic composition, let us first turn to an instance in which he considers structural repetitions in a text, but using the technical term מוסב, "is predicated upon" or "harkens back to," instead.

In his commentary on Isa 3:8, Eliezer makes a general observation about the role of parallelism in biblical poetics.[1] In this verse, the prophet announces the fall of Judah and Jerusalem virtually as a *fait accompli*: "Ah, Jeru- כִּי כָשְׁלָה יְרוּשָׁלַם וִיהוּדָה נָפָל כִּי־לְשׁוֹנָם וּמַעַלְלֵיהֶם אֶל־ה׳ לַמְרוֹת עֲנֵי כְבוֹדוֹ, salem has stumbled, And Judah has fallen, because their speech and their deeds are against the LORD, to rebel against the presence of His majesty."

An earlier version of my treatment of Eliezer's understanding of parallelism may be found in "Literary Hermeneutic," 265–279.

1. Poznanski, *Eliezer of Beaugency,* cliii, cites this text with little comment. A different explanation of Eliezer's comment is found in my dissertation; see Harris, "Literary Hermeneutic," 246; see also 156.

Eliezer first paraphrases the verse in order to indicate its meaning.[2] Then he steps back from the canvas, as it were, to survey the structure through which he was able to arrive at his explanation:

וכשלה ונפלה, לפי ש**לשונם ומעלליהם אל ה׳** בגלוי ובעזות ו**למרות** את פיו להכעיסו ל**עיני כבודו** השוכן בתוכם בפרהסיא.

כי כשלה ירושלם על **כי לשונם** מוסב, ואינו טעם לשלמעלה. אלא **כי לשונם ומעלליהם** הוא עיקר הטעם. וכן דרך כל המקרא ברוב מקומות: כשהוא רוצה ליתן טעם לדבריו, חוזר עליהם ונותן בהם טעם.

And She (i.e., Jerusalem) **shall stumble and fall,** since **their speech and their deeds are against the LORD,** openly and brazenly, **to rebel** against his word, to vex him **in the presence of His majesty,** which dwells among them publicly.

(The phrase beginning) **For Jerusalem has stumbled** is predicated upon (the phrase beginning) **for their speech;** it (i.e., the first stich) is not the cause of what precedes it. Rather **for their speech and their deeds [are against the LORD]** is the primary cause (i.e., that Jerusalem has fallen).[3] And this is the convention of Scripture in most places: when it wants to provide a reason for what it says, it repeats the words and (in so doing) gives their reason.[4]

Thus, Eliezer shows that the second stich provides the reason for which the judgment of the first stich is decreed.[5] Moreover, though each clause may begin with the identical Hebrew particle כי, Eliezer demonstrates that there is morphological, but not semantic, equivalence between them.[6] In this case, it is precisely Eliezer's understanding of what some

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2. Again, this is Eliezer's typical style in explaining a verse. See Harris, "Literary Hermeneutic," 130–142.

3. In other words, the fall is the consequence of the rebellion.

4. Essentially, this last sentence may be understood to mean, "repetition is a device used by Scripture when it wants to emphasize a particular point." What Eliezer seems to be saying is that the phrase "for their speech and their deeds are against the LORD" and "to rebel against the presence of His majesty" are synonymous, repeated because they are the explanation for the preceding statement. I am grateful to Edward L. Greenstein for helping to clarify Eliezer's intent in this comment (personal communication).

5. See the similar, recent conclusion of Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1–39: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 19; New York: Doubleday, 2000), 199: "The state of civil disorder is then explained as a manifestation of moral disorder with particular reference to the arrogant and irreligious attitude of the leadership."

6. I have thus adopted the NJPS translation of the exclamatory "ah!" for the first כי, and have rendered "because," for the כי at the beginning of the second stich.

would call the syntactic parallelism[7] between the verse's two stichs that
enables him to determine the meaning of the verse.

In turning his attention to the subject of parallelism, Eliezer, like his
teacher Rashbam and his contemporary Joseph Bekhor Shor, expresses
himself simply and tersely. A typical example of Eliezer's sensitivity to
parallelistic structure, this time using the term כפל, is his commentary on
the second part of Isa 54:14. The prophet promises his Israelite listeners di-
vine protection: רַחֲקִי מֵעֹשֶׁק כִּי־לֹא תִירָאִי וּמִמְּחִתָּה כִּי לֹא־תִקְרַב אֵלָיִךְ "you shall
be removed far from oppression; indeed, you shall not fear / (you shall be
removed far) from ruin; indeed it shall not come near you." Eliezer com-
ments briefly: **וממחתה** מוסב על **רחקי** וכפל על **מעשק**, "(the phrase beginning)
from ruin harkens back to (the verb) **shall be removed far,** and it is paral-
lel to (the phrase beginning) **from oppression.**" Thus we see that Eliezer
explains the function of the "double duty" verb (רחקי), which serves both
halves of the couplet: it is complemented in the second colon by ממחתה as
it is in the first colon by מעשק. In so doing, he also demonstrates his aware-
ness of the parallelism operating in the verse, or in any event, a "dou-
bling" of sense and syntactic structure.[8] In either case, this is characteristic
of one type of the trope that moderns call parallelism, even if Eliezer's ob-
servation here has, *pace* Kugel, an ultimately *philological* motive.[9]

One of the ways in which Eliezer takes note of parallelistic structure in
a verse is by using the phrase וכל המקרא כפול. This is the way in which he
treats the parallelism in Isa 25:7, although here, in addition to employing
this phrase, he also interprets specific constituent elements of the verse.
The text reads: וּבִלַּע בָּהָר הַזֶּה פְּנֵי־הַלּוֹט הַלּוֹט עַל־כָּל־הָעַמִּים וְהַמַּסֵּכָה הַנְּסוּכָה עַל־
כָּל־הַגּוֹיִם, "and He will destroy on this mount the face of the veil that veils
over all the peoples and the covering that is spread over all the nations."
Eliezer comments: וכל המקרא כפול: **ליטה** ו־**מסכה** אחד הן, "this entire verse is
constructed in parallel form: veiling and covering have the same mean-
ing" (lit. "are one"). To substantiate this assertion, he relies on the parallel
structure in Isa 29:10 as a prooftext. Thus, Eliezer's identification of the

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7. See Berlin, *The Dynamics of Biblical Parallelism,* 53–63.

8. In other words, it is not like an instance where Rashi interprets A and B to
mean different things, whereas Ibn Ezra or Radak will say A and B have the *same*
sense = כפל הענין. Yet in his explanation of the relationship between the two stichs
of the line, Eliezer is only a step away from understanding that the deep structure
of the B colon is the same as that of the A colon. Although this is not one of the
verses Poznanski cites (*Eliezer of Beaugency,* cxliv), it might be an example of what
he considers mere indication of synonyms (i.e., מחתה is synonymous with עשק).
However, especially in light of Eliezer's attention to the double duty verb, it is
clear that he is aware of the parallelism at play in the verse.

9. Cf. Kugel, *Idea,* 179.

parallelistic structure of the verse enables him to explain a difficult word. Again, although his philological motive—to interpret the hapax לוט—is plain, Eliezer also manifests his understanding of the parallelism in the verse.

Eliezer also employs the expression וכל המקרא כפול at Isa 10:22. The verse occurs in the midst of a prophecy concerning the "remnant of Israel" that will survive the destruction ordained by God: כִּי אִם־יִהְיֶה עַמְּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל כְּחוֹל הַיָּם שְׁאָר יָשׁוּב בּוֹ כִּלָּיוֹן חָרוּץ שׁוֹטֵף צְדָקָה, "even if your people, O Israel, should be as the sands of the sea, a remnant of it shall return; decimation (is) decreed; it will sweep (you) away (to) righteousness."[10] Here is his comment:

> ואם כליון ושטף יהא חרוץ ופסק עליך לשפות חילך ולהגלותך, יהא שוטף אתך
> לצדקה, להצטדק ולשוב. וכל המקרא כפול.

> And if decimation and flood-death will be decreed and destined for you, i.e., to destroy your host and exile you, it will sweep you away towards righteousness, so that you will become righteous and will repent. The entire verse is in parallel structure.

The philological implication of this observation is clear. First, what he seems to be saying is that the two clauses of v. 22b are constructed as a pair (כליון חרוץ // שוטף צדקה). Second, the sense of the A and B lines is directly correspondent (i.e., "vast decimation will lead the survivors to turn to righteous behavior"); the second clause is parallel to the first. Thus, Eliezer sees elements of the two propositions in both halves of the verse. Were we to render the verse entirely according to his comment, the translation would look something like this: כִּי אִם־יִהְיֶה עַמְּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל כְּחוֹל הַיָּם שְׁאָר יָשׁוּב בּוֹ כִּלָּיוֹן חָרוּץ שׁוֹטֵף צְדָקָה, "Even if your people, O Israel, should be destined to be swept away as the sands are swept away by the sea, it shall be destroyed; but a remnant of it shall return. Even if your people, O Israel, should be destined for destruction and exile, it will sweep you towards righteous repentance." The inclusion of the phrase וכל המקרא כפול at the end of his comment is no mere rhetorical observation, but is the key to the verse's meaning, for him. In this instance, Eliezer is using parallelism as an essential hermeneutical tool.

In his commentary on Isa 19:5, Eliezer likewise assumes the overall parallel structure of the verse, but without using the expression וכל

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10. The various translations struggle particularly with the rendering of the second part of this verse; cf. NJPS: "Destruction is decreed; Retribution comes like a flood!"; and RSV: "Destruction is decreed, overflowing with righteousness." I have translated it here, roughly, according to Eliezer's paraphrase; I will follow this, below, with a translation more fully based on his comment.

kupf trenv. Here, in considering the two halves of the verse (וְנִשְּׁתוּ־מַיִם מֵהַיָּם וְנָהָר יֶחֱרַב וְיָבֵשׁ), he writes: וכפל לשון הוא זה על זה, "the language of the (couplet) is parallel, one line (parallel) to the other." Moreover, he cleverly refers to the manifestation of the word אזלו in Job 14:11 (אָזְלוּ־מַיִם מִנִּי־יָם וְנָהָר יֶחֱרַב וְיָבֵשׁ) to deduce the meaning of the vocable ונשתו here in Isaiah. Thus, again, Eliezer is not simply noting the parallelism for its own sake; he is using the parallelism of the couplet towards a philological end: to define the uncommon verb נָשַׁת, which means "to be dried up" just like חרב and יבש.[11]

Sometimes, Eliezer shows an awareness of a verse's parallel structure, but he identifies it differently from the way we might. For instance, in Isa 24, the prophet proclaims the "Day of the LORD" (see v. 21). In verse 12, he describes part of the great destruction that day will entail: נִשְׁאַר בָּעִיר שַׁמָּה וּשְׁאִיָּה יֻכַּת־שָׁעַר, "Remaining in the town—desolation! And (with) ruin has it been battered, the gate." As I have translated, we would most likely analyze the verse as an ABB'A' chiasm, with שמה and שאיה parallel in the "center position," and נשאר בעיר and יכת שער, which contain the "action" of the verse, also corresponding.[12] Eliezer, however, analyzes the constituent parts of the verse differently from our presentation: נמצא **נשאר** ו־**שאייה** כפל; ו־**שמה** ו־**יוכת שער** כפל, "we find that (the terms) **remaining** and **ruin** are parallel; and (the phrases) **desolation** and **the gate has been battered** are parallel." Thus, Eliezer's comment would yield a translation as follows: "Remaining in the town—desolation; ruined [in the town]—the battered gate." In the preceding verses, the parallel terms follow a consistent order

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11. Relying on a familiar word to illuminate an unfamiliar or misunderstood word is a method much in vogue in the northern French school, and Eliezer doubtless learned it from his master. For example Rashbam deduces the meaning of וילאו למצא הפתח in Gen 19:11:

פירושו: לא יכלו עוד למצוא הפתח, לא בקשו הפתח. וכן: ונלאו מצרים לשתות מים מן היאור, לא יכלו לשתות מאחר שהיו דם . . . ובכמה מקומות לשון נלאו מכופל לא יכלו.

Its explanation: they were no longer able to find the door; they could not look for the door. And similar (to this is the verse): *the Egyptians were unable to drink water from the Nile* (Exod 7:21), (meaning) they could not drink it since (the water) had turned into blood . . . In several places, the expression "they were unable' (נלאו) is seconded by "they could not' (לא יכלו)."

Rashbam goes on to cite Jer 20:9 and Isa 16:12. Eliezer, in his commentary on the latter passage, also glosses the expression כי נלאה with the words ולא יוכל (in this case, relying on the end of the verse), thus providing yet another connection between Eliezer and Rashbam.

12. This is, for example, how Adele Berlin has analyzed it; see Berlin, *The Dynamics of Biblical Parallelism,* 119; 145 n. 11.

(ABA'B'); Eliezer may be looking for the same pattern here. In any event, there is no question that in Eliezer's eyes the governing principle of the verse's structure is parallelism.

The preceding example should not be taken as an indication that Eliezer does not understand the nature of chiasm as an occasional feature of parallelism. His commentary on such verses as Isa 60:16 makes clear that he does. The prophet announces to the Israelites that, in spite of their suffering in the past from the torment of the nations, there will be a reversal of fortunes and they will gain the upper hand: וְיָנַקְתְּ חֲלֵב גּוֹיִם וְשֹׁד מְלָכִים תִּינָקִי, "you shall suck the milk of the nations, the breast of kings shall you suck." The parallelism of this verse is clearly chiastic, and this is precisely how Eliezer understands it. He comments: וְ**שֹׁד** מלשון שדים; כפל **על חלב גוים**, "the word *shod* is (derived) from the word meaning breasts (*shadayim*);[13] it is parallel to (the phrase) **the milk of the nations.**"

In his commentary on Isa 58:3, his sensitivity to parallel structure yet again yields a pertinent philological observation. He doesn't comment on the manifest parallelism in the first part of the verse (לָמָּה צַּמְנוּ וְלֹא רָאִיתָ עִנִּינוּ נַפְשֵׁנוּ וְלֹא תֵדָע, "why when we fasted did you not see, (why) when we afflicted ourselves, did you not pay heed?"); apparently this was too obvious to mention. However, he does interpret the second part of the sentence (הֵן בְּיוֹם צֹמְכֶם תִּמְצְאוּ־חֵפֶץ וְכָל־עַצְּבֵיכֶם תִּנְגֹּשׂוּ), where it is not so obvious, as being in parallel structure. Consider the NJPS translation of the verse: "because on your fast day you see to your business and oppress all your laborers."[14] Eliezer takes a different tack. Early in his comment, Eliezer identifies the word עצביכם as bearing the meaning of מעשיכם, "your affairs." Thus, he interprets the couplet:

ונמצא **וכל עצביכם** כפל על **ביום צומכם,** ו־**תנגשו** כפל על **תמצאו** חפץ.

> . . . and we find that **and (in) all your affairs** is parallel to **on the day of your fast,** and **you oppress** is parallel to **you see to your business.**

That Eliezer interprets the word חפץ as "business" is apparent from the end of his comment, in which he refers the reader to the same meaning the word carries later in the immediate context, in Isa 58:13. There it is clear

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13. Eliezer presumably makes this comment so that his reader will not understand the glossed term as the Hebrew homonym שד, meaning "havoc, ruin." Indeed, this latter meaning is more typical of Isaiah, being found in addition to our passage's continuation (60:18: לא ישמע עוד חמס בארצך, שד ושבר בגבוליך) many times (e.g. Isa 16:4; 22:4; 51:19; 59:7).

14. Compare KJV ("Behold, in the day of your fast ye find pleasure, and exact all your labours") and RSV ("Behold, in the day of your fast you seek your own pleasure, and oppress all your workers").

that חפץ is contrasted with the very things the prophet would prohibit on the Sabbath:

ולשון ממצוא חפצך יוכיח למטה על תמצאו חפץ, שהן מקדשים צום למצוא חפציהם.

> The language of *from doing business* proves later on (i.e., in Isa 58:13) that **you see to your business** (here, in Isa 58:3) refers to (the people) proclaiming a fast in order to do business.

It is also apparent that Eliezer understands the deletion of a double-duty preposition at the head of the second stich, viz., ‎. . . . ‎ו(ב)כל עצביכם, carried over from the first stich (ביום צמכם).[15] Thus, in accord with Eliezer's comment, the verse may be translated: "On the day of your fast, you see to your business; / In all of your affairs, you oppress."[16]

For Eliezer, attention to parallelistic structure is best understood with regard to his overall goal of ascertaining the meaning of biblical texts, and of turning biblical composition that is often laconic and allusive into prose more intelligible for the reader.[17] In this pursuit, literary context is the key factor. Indeed, Eliezer considers there to be no greater exegetical principle than determining meaning according to context: פתרונו לפי עניינו.[18] In fact, he asserts this principle in attempting to interpret the famous *crux interpretum* (the vocable ובדמשק) found in Amos 3:12:

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15. Neglect of this double-duty preposition is what led the translations to err.

16. The paraphrastic marginal note in the manuscript at this point, even though it does not register the parallelism, nevertheless reflects Eliezer's understanding of the word חפץ: הן ביום צומכם וביום עצבכם תמצאו חפצכם חפצכם לנגש, "behold on the day of your fast and on your business day, you will find your affairs (will be) to oppress." Ehrlich also understands the stich in this way: ואני אומר שהשם הזה שם דבר ולא תאר, והיחיד עֶצֶב, ומשמעו מלאכה שנעשית בעצבון "and I maintain that this word is a noun and not an adjective, the singular being עֶצֶב, and its sense is 'the work that is done through painful effort'"; see Arnold B. Ehrlich, *Mikra ki-Pheschutô* (3 vols.; The Library of Biblical Studies; ed. Harry M. Orlinsky; New York: Ktav Publishing House, Inc., 1969) 3:142 (Hebrew).

17. See Harris, "Literary Hermeneutic," 131–142.

18. There are a variety of formulations that Eliezer and other exegetes use to express the way in which context is to be exploited for determining meaning (פתרונו לפי עניינו, עניינו יורה עליו, ונראת המלה לפי עניינה, etc.). See Harris, "Literary Hermeneutic," 280–301. As in the כפל terminology used to indicate parallelism, the origins also of these expressions about the importance of context are to be found in Menaham's Mahberet; see especially Saenz-Badillos, *Mahberet,* 16*, lines 10–16; also see 17*, lines 7ff; 19*, lines 7–10, and throughout. Again, it is likely that Menahem is indebted to R. Saadia Gaon.

כֹּה אָמַר ה' כַּאֲשֶׁר יַצִּיל הָרֹעֶה מִפִּי הָאֲרִי שְׁתֵּי כְרָעַיִם אוֹ בְדַל־אֹזֶן כֵּן יִנָּצְלוּ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל הַיֹּשְׁבִים בְּשֹׁמְרוֹן בִּפְאַת מִטָּה וּבִדְמֶשֶׁק עָרֶשׂ:

Thus said the LORD: As a shepherd rescues from the lion's jaws Two shank bones or the tip of an ear, So shall the Israelites escape Who dwell in Samaria—With the leg of a bed or the head of a couch (NJPS).

The question is, of course, how does one go about interpreting the hapax legomenon דמשק? Faced with this difficulty, Eliezer avers: ואין לך מדה בתורה יותר מדבר הלמד מעניינו, "you have no rule in (interpreting) Torah greater than 'a matter learned from its context.'"[19] In this instance the meaning of the phrase בפאת מטה ובדמשק ערש has eluded the commentator's precise grasp. Let us examine how Eliezer relies on his understanding of parallelism in order to explain this difficult expression:

ועל כרחך ממה ש־**מטה** ו־**ערש** כפולים זה על זה, שהרי **פאת** דבוק ל־**מטה** ו־**בדמשק** דבוק ל־**ערש,** ודביקותם וכפולן יוכיח עליהן.

You are compelled to understand that since **bed** and **couch** are parallel to one another, and since **edge** is in construct relationship with **bed**, and **leg/head** (i.e., the elusive term דמשק)[20] is in construct relationship to **couch,** that their construct relationship and their parallelism demonstrate their meaning (i.e., that דמשק must mean something similar to פאת).

In this comment, Eliezer deduces that the elusive דמשק and the more common פאה, "edge," both refer to similar parts of a "bed" or "couch." Thus, it is not simply that the two terms, דמשק and פאת, are synonyms. Rather, we see that it is *precisely* Eliezer's understanding of the parallelism evidenced in the verse that enables him to offer his contextual interpretation.[21] The fact that his observation of the parallelism is bound up with his

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19. This exegetical principle is found both in the introduction to the *Sifra,* the so-called "Thirteen Rules of Rabbi Ishmael," as well as in the "Thirty-two Rules of Rabbi Eliezer son of Rabbi Yosi the Galilean." See Harris, "Literary Hermeneutic," 280 and the bibliography cited there.

20. I have translated דמשק as "head/leg," since Eliezer does not specify to *which* "edge" of the bed he thinks the word refers. Modern scholarship has offered a myriad of solutions to this problematic text; for a survey, see Paul, *Amos,* 121–122. An ingenious proposal, offered by Moshe Held (as recalled by Edward L. Greenstein), is to understand the vocable דמשק as a conflation of two words in a double reading: שק + דם; the latter word being a mistaken reading of the original paleo-Hebrew ש(א)ר. Thus, the phrase would have been either *וברא)ש(א) ערש ש or *ובשק ערש, one of these being a marginal note on an ancient copy of the book of Amos that later worked its way into the main text. This suggestion was inspired by J. Reider, "דמשק in Amos 3:12," *JBL* 67 (1948), 245–248.

21. As I have discussed ("Literary Hermeneutic," 94 n. 123; 274 n. 42), according to the commentary on Amos attributed to R. Joseph Kara, Rashbam had also un-

philological analysis, does not detract from the fact that his interpretation rests upon a rhetorical understanding of the verse's parallelism.

In his commentary on Isa 48:9, Eliezer similarly relies on the parallel structure of part of the verse in order to determine the meaning of an elusive term. The verse reads: לְמַעַן שְׁמִי אַאֲרִיךְ אַפִּי וּתְהִלָּתִי אֶחֱטָם־לָךְ לְבִלְתִּי הַכְרִיתֶךָ, "for the sake of my name I will be patient [literally, "elongate the nose"]; and (for the sake of)[22] my glory will I show patience [literally, "extend the nose"],[23] that I may not destroy you." Eliezer explains: לפי ענינו אחטם (אחטם) כפל, "According to its sense, *(show patience)* is parallel to *I will be patient.*" This comment is a perfect case of Eliezer using his understanding of parallelism to make a contextual interpretation.[24]

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derstood the parallelism operating in the verse: וּבדמשק ערש כפול הוא על בפאת מטה . . . כך פירש רבינו שמואל, "the **head of a couch** is parallel to **the edge of a bed** . . . thus explained our Rabbi Samuel." Assuming this citation to be authentic, this would be an additional point of contact between Rashbam and Eliezer. Ibn Ezra and Radak also interpret ובדמשק ערש in terms corresponding to בפאת מטה, and both use the term כפול to indicate the parallelism.

22. So Ibn Ezra: גם **למען** מושך אחר, וכן הוא: ולמען תהלתי . . . , "Also **for the sake of** is 'double-duty' (lit. 'pulls another [with it]'), and thus it (should be read): for the sake of my glory."

23. This may perhaps be considered an example of wordplay. While many of the medievals have made the connection between the biblical Hebrew expression אאריך אפי and rabbinic Hebrew חוטם for "nose," none of them seem to have suggested this verse as an example of paronomasia. Thus, Ibn Ezra writes: אין לו חבר, (אחטם) "(אחטם) is a *hapax legomenon,* but in rabbinic Hebrew (it carries the meaning of) 'nose'; and this is its meaning (here): 'I will lengthen my nose' (אפי) (i.e., 'I will be patient') / indeed, I will lengthen my nose' (חוטם) (i.e., 'I will be patient')." See also Rashi: לשון חוטם אסתום חוטמי מצאת עשן נחירי ומקצוף עליך, שהכועס יוצא עשן מנחיריו, כמו דאת אמר: עלה עשן באפו, "the language of חוטם means: I will stop up my nose so that smoke will not escape my nostrils and so that there will be no anger against you, for one who is angered has smoke escape from his nostrils, as Scripture says: *smoke went up from his nostrils* (Ps 18:9)"; also see Radak: יקרא חוטם **אחטם:** כמו אאריך אפי, כי האף, "**I will show patience:** this phrase is like *I will elongate the nose* (Isa 48:9), for 'nose' (אף) is also called 'nose' (חוטם)." The latter reading agrees with Ibn Ezra's. On wordplay in medieval exegesis, see Robert A. Harris, "*Lashon Nofel ʿAl Lashon*: Northern French Rabbinic Sensitivity to Wordplay in Biblical Composition," *World Congress of Jewish Studies* 13 (2001) (Hebrew). Online: <http://www.jewish-studies.org/English/fset.html>.

24. Another of Poznanski's examples is Eliezer's commentary on Isa 49:6: **נצורי:** לשון ונצר משרשיו יפרה: כפל על שבטי, "(the word) נצורי has the sense of *and a scion from his roots shall sprout* (Isa 11:1); it is parallel to *the tribes of . . .*" I have already dealt with this passage ("Literary Hermeneutic," 110) in the comparison of Eliezer and Rashbam, and have demonstrated its use not merely as an indicator of syno-

We may also consider in this regard Eliezer's commentary on Isa 49:23. In assuring the Israelites that they will triumph over their enemies, Isaiah describes one aspect of the Divine promise: אַפַּיִם אֶרֶץ יִשְׁתַּחֲווּ לָךְ וַעֲפַר רַגְלַיִךְ יְלַחֵכוּ, "face to the ground shall they bow down to you, the dust at your feet shall they lick." Almost in passing, Eliezer notes the parallelism in the middle section of the verse: ו־**עפר רגליך ילחכו** כפל על **ישתחוו לך**, "**the dust at your feet shall they lick** doubles the sense of . . . **shall they bow down to you.**" This example would show a purely rhetorical, rather than a philological, intent, were it not for the continuation of Eliezer's comment: וכן כל לחיכת עפר שבמקרא, "and so is every instance of 'licking dust' in the Bible (a hyperbolic, figurative expression for 'prostration')."[25] Thus, for Eliezer, the parallelism of the verse proves that "licking dust" is not to be taken literally, but as a hyperbolic figure.

Occasionally, Eliezer will consider the parallelism of a verse in its entirety, without referring to particular words or phrases; this he generally does by using the expression כל המקרא כפול, "(this) entire verse is in parallel (structure)." By way of example, let us look at Isa 26:8. There, in a Psalm-like chapter filled with expressions of devotion to God, the prophet includes this passage within the "song to be sung in the land of Judah" (see 26:1): אַף אֹרַח מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ ה' קִוִּינוּךָ לְשִׁמְךָ וּלְזִכְרְךָ תַּאֲוַת־נָפֶשׁ, "even in[26] the path of your judgments, O LORD, we yearn for you; (we yearn for) the mention of your name—a delight to the soul!" After explaining the meaning of the words and phrases of the passage, Eliezer defines the parallel structure of the entire verse with the expression: וכל המקרא כפול. As we have seen, while Eliezer often applies his awareness of parallelism to his own philological ends, in this particular instance, he indicates the presence of parallelism for its own sake. As other examples show, the more rhetorical as opposed to the more semantic function of parallelism can be discerned in certain comments of Eliezer precisely because they *contrast* in their discourse with his more semantic or exegetical remarks on parallelism.[27]

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nymity, but of parallelism. Another example that likewise can be shown to be an indicator of Eliezer's awareness of parallelism is his commentary on Isa 9:19 (**ויגזר**
(ו־יאכל כפולין**.**

25. Eliezer goes on to cite Mic 7:17 and Ps 72:9 as additional examples of this figurative expression.

26. See Radak: אף **בדרך** משפטיך ה'. Ibn Ezra supplies a prepositional *lamed*: ויחסר אות למ״ד, כאילו אמר **לאורח** משפטיך.

27. In addition to the notations of parallelism that we have cited above and below, Eliezer makes both rhetorical observations as well as ones which are more philologically oriented. Additional rhetorical types of comments about parallelism, that do not appreciably add to our understanding of the *meaning* of the text, can be found in Eliezer's commentary on the following verses: Isa 10:14 (**ותמצא**

In light of the preceding examples, we may safely conclude that Eliezer has inherited, from his teacher Rashbam, the *general* use of the term כפל to indicate that a verse is constructed of two or more parts that double each other in sense, akin to what many modern scholars would identify as parallelism. While in some instances, Eliezer clearly applies his understanding of parallelism for exegetical purposes, in others the main point of his comment is simply to remark on the phenomenon of parallelism.

תקשיח (63:17 ;(**וכגלגל** כפל על **כמוץ** (17:13 ;(**כקן ידי, וכאסוף בצים עזובות** כפולין זה על זה **תתענו** כפל על(). Comments that emphasize the philological import of the parallelism, although not to the exclusion of the rhetorical aspect, can be found at Isa 16:11 וכפל הוא: **על ישועות** ו־**ארץ** פתרונו, ומוסב (19–26:18 ;(**למואב** . . . וכפל הוא על **קיר חרש**) **אילי** (61:3 ;(**לתועבה:** כפל על **לבול עץ** (44:19 ;(על **ישועות בל נעשה ארץ, ובל יפלו ישבי תבל** **הצדק** כפל על **מטע ה׳** (64:8 ;(עד מאד: לגמרי, כפל על לעד). In his commentary on Isa 10:15, we see an additional aspect of Eliezer's critical acumen at work. He not only points out the parallelism in the verse, but he also notices the text-critical problem of the superfluous *waw*. He writes: ועוד מה כפל הוא **לא עץ על מרימיו,** שצריך כפל ככפל. On this latter point, see Nutt's n. 7 **כהניף שבט** ו־**כהרים מטה.** ועוד **ויו** של **ואת** מה טיבה? *ad loc.*, in reference to the Kennicott variants.

7

Rabbi Joseph Bekhor Shor

The final exegete whose approach to parallelism we will consider is R. Joseph Bekhor Shor. Recently, it has been argued that the surviving commentaries of Bekhor Shor do not exemplify any advance beyond Rashbam and R. Eliezer of Beaugency in the understanding of parallelism, and that Bekhor Shor demonstrated only a bare awareness of parallelism in his commentary on the Torah. Amira Meir, in a study of the exegesis of Bekhor Shor on Pentateuchal poetry, claims "not to have been able to find in the commentaries of R. [Joseph] Bekhor Shor to any poetic verses in the Torah, any discussion of their poetic quality or character, except for two verses. . . ."[1] Meir cites Bekhor Shor's commentary on Gen 49:22 and

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1. Amira Meir, "The Exegesis of R. Joseph Bekhor Shor on the Poetry of the Torah," *Bet Mikra* 43:3–4 (1998): 263–276 (Hebrew). The citation is found on p. 276: לא מצאתי בפירושיו של ר׳ בכור שור לפסוקי השירה שבתורה, דיון בתכונותיה או באפיוניה של שירה זאת, פרט לשני פסוקים . . . . Meir's article, as well as the one on Rashbam's exegesis cited above, are based on her doctoral thesis, "Medieval Jewish Interpretation of Pentateuchal Poetry" (Ph.D. diss., McGill University, 1994) (Hebrew). This thesis examines the treatment of biblical poetry by six medieval Jewish exegetes, among whom are Rashbam and Bekhor Shor. Meir characterizes the passages in the Torah that many today regard as poetry or verse (cf., e.g., Geller, *Parallelism in Early Biblical Poetry*; or O'Connor, *Hebrew Verse Structure*) as what appears to be a category unto itself—"Pentateuchal poetry." However, she does not make clear how this poetry is in any way different from other biblical Hebrew poetry. In addition, she assesses the exegetes' explication of poetic texts in terms of "qualities we associate with poetry—parallelism, structure, metaphor, and syntax" (abstract); elsewhere she includes in this catalog meter and rhyme (p. 80). Not finding attention to these qualities in their commentaries, she concludes that, while Rashbam and Bekhor Shor "did discuss some poetic features," none of the exegetes whom she has studied have "differentiated systematically between Pentateuchal prose and poetry or treated them in substantially different ways" (abstract; see also 80,

Exod 15:6, and points out—correctly—that his acknowledgment of the parallelism there is chiefly a recapitulation of Rashbam's observation. Since Bekhor Shor's commentary on these two passages form the basis of Meir's judgment, let us begin our study of Bekhor Shor by re-examining them. However, even though we essentially agree about the significance of these two specific comments, we will differ with Meir's assessment of Bekhor Shor's overall understanding of parallelism.

Note first how Bekhor Shor has internalized Rashbam's understanding of staircase parallelism in Gen 49:22:

> **בן פורת יוסף, בן פורת עלי עין:** דרך הפסוק להתחיל דברו ואינו גומרו, ואחר כך מתחיל וגומר, כמו: נשאו נהרות ה׳, ולא פירש מה נשאו נהרות, ואחר כך מפרש נשאו נהרות קולם . . .

> **A fruitful bough is Joseph, a fruitful bough by a spring:** it is the way of this (type of) verse to begin its statement without completing it; afterwards it begins it again and (then) completes it. It is similar to: *the rivers have lifted up, O LORD* (Ps 93:3), where (the text) does not say what the rivers lifted up; but afterwards it makes it explicit: *the rivers have lifted up their voice . . .*

A comparison with Rashbam's commentary on the verse (cited above) reveals the essential similarity between the two. Bekhor Shor reworks the rule that Rashbam articulated,[2] and cites one of the very passages to which Rashbam had referred.

Bekhor Shor's indebtedness to Rashbam's observation of staircase parallelism is likewise seen in his commentary on Exod 15:6:

> וזה מן הפסוקים שכפולים דבריהם, ומפרשים באחרונה, כמו נשאו נהרות ה׳ . . .

> This is one of those verses whose expressions are doubled and which are afterwards[3] made explicit, like: *the rivers have lifted up, O LORD . . .* (Ps 93:3)

104, 166–167). Although I shall not endeavor to discuss every item in her catalog, in the present study I believe I have amply demonstrated the attention of the exegetes to parallelism. Moreover, readers of northern French rabbinic exegesis may also notice in it an increasing attention to metaphors found in biblical literature; their comments are often accompanied by variations of the verb דמה as a technical indicator of their awareness of the presence of metaphor and other types of figurative language.

2. For clarity's sake, here again are the relevant texts, presented side-by-side for comparison. Bekhor Shor: דרך הפסוק להתחיל דברו ואינו גומרו, ואחר כך מתחיל וגומר ... ולא פירש מה ...; Rashbam: הרי פסוק זה דוגמא לחצאים בראש המקרא שאינו משלים דבורו ראש המקרא אלא שמזכיר במי הוא מדבר, וחוזר וכופל חצי ראש המקרא, ומסיים דבורו. For my translation of Rashbam's comment, see p. 65.

3. I.e., by the end of the stich.

Here again, Bekhor Shor has, as it were, abbreviated Rashbam's comment,[4] and cited one of Rashbam's prime examples.

Indeed, Bekhor Shor's reliance on Rashbam (without attribution!) may be seen as something of a habit. In at least one other passage, Gen 49:3, Bekhor Shor appears to abbreviate Rashbam's observation, without appreciably improving upon it. Rashbam had introduced his comment with the remark דרך המקראות לכפול את דבריהם, "it is the way of Scripture to double its expressions," while Bekhor Shor simply remarked on the same verse וכפל מלה הוא, "the composition is in parallel structure." While it is true that in order to demonstrate the status of אוני, "might," as a parallel term for כחי, "vigor," Bekhor Shor cites a different biblical prooftext from Rashbam's (Isa 40:29 vs. Hos 12:9 and Job 20:10), his exegesis of the verse is essentially a briefer recapitulation of Rashbam's.

While Meir has claimed that the number of Bekhor Shor's observations on the subject of parallelism is few, she appears to have overlooked several other comments of Bekhor Shor that shed light on his understanding of the phenomenon. On no fewer than four occasions, Bekhor Shor explains a passage according to its parallelism, while Rashbam fails to comment explicitly on the rhetorical structure.

The poetic oracles of Balaam provide an opportunity for Bekhor Shor to take note of synonymous parallelism. Following Balak's three failed attempts to arrange for Balaam to curse Israel, the prophet offers one final vision before departing. In Num 24:17, he declares to the king: אֶרְאֶנּוּ וְלֹא עַתָּה אֲשׁוּרֶנּוּ וְלֹא קָרוֹב דָּרַךְ כּוֹכָב מִיַּעֲקֹב וְקָם שֵׁבֶט מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל . . . , "I see it, but not now, I behold it, but not soon; There goes forth a star from Jacob, there arises a meteor from Israel. . . ."[5] Early in his comment, Bekhor Shor notes the parallelism between the terms אראנו and אשורנו. He writes: **אשורנו:** אני שר ורואה אותו אבל לא יהיה קרוב, וכפל מלה הוא; "**I behold:** I behold and see it, but it will not happen soon; this is a composition in parallel structure." While it is true that Rashbam does not comment on the parallelism here, he had already effectively noted the relationship between the verbs ראה and שור in his comment on Num 23:9 (albeit without the כפל terminology):

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4. Here is the relevant portion of Rashbam's comment: חציו הראשון אינו מסיים דברו עד שיבא חציו האחרון, וכופלו ומשלים דברו, אך בחציו הראשון מזכיר במי הוא מדבר. A thirteenth-century tosafistic compilation, the *Hadar Zekenim,* approximately one generation removed from Bekhor Shor, likewise echoes Rashbam in its formulation: . . . וזה מן הפסוקים שנכפלו דבריהם קודם שמפרש, "this is one of the verses whose words are doubled before they are made explicit (i.e., in the second line)." Cited in Jacob Gellis, ed. *Sefer Tosafot Hashalem* (10 vols.; Jerusalem: Tosafot Hashalem Enterprise, 1982–1995), 7:223 (Hebrew).

5. This is essentially the rendering of SB: "I see it, but not now, I behold it, but not soon: There goes forth a star from Yaakov, there arises a meteor from Israel, it smashes the pate of Moav, the crown of all the Children of Shet."

כי מראש צרים אראנו ומגבעות אשורנו: . . . שהרי מראש צורים שאני עומד עכשיו אני רואה אותם, ומראש הגבעה אני רואה כי לבדם הם . . . , "Indeed from the top of mountains do I see him, and from hills do I behold him: . . . for from the tops of mountains upon which I stand now I see them, and from the top of the hill I see that they are alone. . . ." In rendering both אראנו and אשורנו with the gloss אני רואה ("I see"), Rashbam clearly takes the two as parallel terms.[6]

However, a more compelling selection from Bekhor Shor's comment on Num 24:17 concerns his comparison of the words שבט and כוכב. Here is the relevant portion of the gloss:

> **וקם שבט:** . . . ויש לפרש לשון מקל ורצועה וממשלה, אך לפי שהוא כפל מלה על **דרך כוכב,** יש לפרש לשון 'כוכב'.

> **There arises a meteor:** One generally interprets (the word) as referring to a staff or a strap[7] or (organ of) government. However, since it is in parallel structure with regard to **there goes forth a star,** one must interpret it as referring to the language of "celestial bodies" (lit. "a star").

What is significant about this comment is that it is *precisely* Bekhor Shor's comprehension of parallelism ("since it is in parallel structure . . .") that leads him to interpret contrarily to what otherwise would have been his sense of the contextual understanding of the verse.[8]

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6. Martin Lockshin has suggested (private communication, July 1, 2001) that Rashbam's recognition of the parallelism between אראנו and אשורנו could also be argued from part of his comment on Gen 49:22 (in a most creative, practically midrashic interpretation of the phrase **בנות** מצרים **צעדה** כל אחת (בנות צעדה עלי שור ואחת **עלי שור:** לשון ראייה. כפל לשון **של עלי עין,** כמו ומגבעות אשורנו, "**the daughters** of Egypt **marched,** each one of them, **to behold:** this is the language of 'seeing.' It is parallel language to **upwards from the eye,** as in *and from hills do I behold them* (Num 23:9)."

7. The Hebrew word רצועה generally means "strap." If so, then the meaning here would follow the first term, מקל, "staff." However, Bekhor Shor may have in mind a synonym for ממשלה, "government," i.e., the following term in the list. See, e.g., *Lev. Rab.* 28: הותרה הרצועה, לית דין ולית דיין, "where there is no fear of punishment (lit. 'the strap has been relaxed'), there is neither judgment nor judge."

8. Contrast the rendering of the RSV: "a star shall come forth out of Jacob, and a *scepter* shall rise out of Israel." Cf. also NJPS: "A star rises from Jacob, A scepter comes forth from Israel." Note that already in rabbinic Hebrew, the word שָׁבִיט refers to a meteor or comet; see *b. Ber.* 58b. There are two remaining comments in which Bekhor Shor takes note of parallelism in a poetic context. The first is Deut 32:9: **כי חלק ה' עמו:** מכל אומות לקחם לחלקו. **ויעקב חבל נחלתו:** כפל מלה, לפי שדרך לחלוק קרקע על ידי חבלים, "**Indeed, the portion of the LORD is His people:** from all of the nations, He took them as His own portion. **Jacob is His roped-off inheritance:** This expression is in parallelistic structure, for it is the way to apportion land by (mark-

Each of the immediately preceding examples was found in a poetic context. While, as stated, Bekhor Shor had arrived at his observations of the parallelism in these verses independently, his particular insight reflected more or less the same type of insight achieved by previous northern French rabbinic exegetes. However, examination of a different range of passages will indicate a noticeable advance in his understanding of the phenomenon, beyond that of his predecessors. Not only does Bekhor Shor comprehend the observation about parallelism that Rashbam elucidated in poetic contexts (and that R. Eliezer of Beaugency had expanded to prophetic poetry); he applies it as well to prose and legal contexts.[9]

Bekhor Shor's comment on Deut 14:8 provides a case in point. In his lengthy comment on the verse, the exegete observes synonymous parallelism in this legal text. In a listing of forbidden animals, the Torah reviews the taboo against swine:[10] וְאֶת־הַחֲזִיר כִּי־מַפְרִיס פַּרְסָה הוּא וְלֹא גֵרָה טָמֵא הוּא לָכֶם מִבְּשָׂרָם לֹא תֹאכֵלוּ וּבְנִבְלָתָם לֹא תִגָּעוּ, "And the pig—even though it has a hoof, it does not bring-up cud—it is impure for you; from their flesh you may not eat, and their carcasses you may not touch." The verse appears to legislate two distinct prohibitions, against both eating swine's flesh and touching a swine's carcass. Basing himself both on his reading of relevant rabbinic texts[11] and, as well, on his intuitive sense of the parallel structure of the verse, Bekhor Shor prefers to read one prohibition only:

מבשרם לא תאכלו: אם נשחטו או ננחרו. **ובנבלתם לא תגעו:** אם מתו מיתת עצמן לא תגעו לאכול, כמו: בכל קדש לא תגע [ואל המקדש לא תבוא]. דאמרינן במסכת מכות: "מה מקדש [דבר] שיש בו נטילת נשמה"—על הנכנס

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ing it off) with ropes." The second instance is the parallelism between ילדך and **ותשכח אל מחוללך:** כפל מלה הוא, **מחוללך** שברא אותך, כמו: Deut 32:18 in מחוללך, חוללה ידו נחש בריח, וכן: הן בעון חוללתי, "**You forgot the God who brought you forth:** This expression is in parallel structure; (the word) מחוללך means 'who created you.' This may be compared to: *His hand formed the Elusive Serpent* (Job 26:13); and likewise: *Indeed I was born in iniquity* (Ps 51:7)."

9. On the parallelistic structure of legal texts in Biblical and ancient Near Eastern literature, see Baruch J. Schwartz, *The Holiness Legislation: Studies in the Priestly Code* (Publication of the Perry Foundation for Biblical Research in the Hebrew University of Jerusalem; Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1999), 13 (see also the bibliography cited there in n. 7) (Hebrew); Edward L. Greenstein, "Direct Discourse and Parallelism," in *Studies in Bible and Exegesis, Volume V: Presented to Uriel Simon* (eds. M. Garsiel, S. Vargon, A. Frisch, and J. Kugel; Ramat Gan: Bar-Ilan University Press, 2000), 33–40 (see esp. 35–36) (Hebrew).

10. See also Lev 11:7–8.

11. There are other, contradictory rabbinic traditions; see Rashi on the parallel verse in Lev 11:8 and *b. Roš. Haš.* 16b.

בטומאה, שיש כרת בדבר¹²—"אף קדש שיש בו נטילת נשמה"—כרת כגון שאכלה אותו בטומאה ואמרין שהוא אזהרה לאוכל, ואפקיה לאכילה בלשון נגיעה.

והכא נמי אפקיה אכילה בלשון נגיעה, וכפל מלה הוא. ודרך הפסוק לשנות לשון כשהוא כופל דבריו, כגון: האזינו השמים . . . ותשמע הארץ, ו"שמעה" ו"האזנה" אחת היא, ומשום שכפל שינה הלשון. וכן **בשרם** ו־**בנבלתם** אחת היא, ומשום שכפל שינה הלשון. וכן **תאכלו** ו־**תגעו** אחד, אלא מפני הכפל שינה. וכן בחוה כתיב: [ומפרי העץ] . . . לא תאכלו ולא תגעו בו] פן תמותון, אף על פי שלא צוה עליהם אלא שלא לאכול, אלמא לפי הפשט נראה ש"לא תגעו"—לאכול משמע. הרי לך מדברי רבותינו מ־בכל קדש לא תגע, ש"נגיעה" קורא "אכילה". וכאן לפי הפשט תדע שהרי לא תמצא "לא תגעו" אלא אחר "לא תאכלו", אלמא הוא כפל ל"לא תאכלו". ועוד אי על נגיעה לוקה, אכילה למה הוצרכה לאסור?

From their flesh you may not eat: whether slaughtered or stabbed.[13] **And their carcasses do not touch:** If they died of their own accord, do not touch them to eat them, as in (the rabbinic explanation of): *she shall not touch any consecrated thing [nor may she enter the Sanctuary]* (Lev 12:4). As the classical rabbis have taught in tractate Makkot (14b): "just as the [infraction mentioned in regard to the] Sanctuary is one which may bring the loss of life"—i.e., one who enters in a state of ritual impurity, for the extirpation penalty may be applied for that act—"so too [the infraction mentioned in regard to] a consecrated thing is one which may bring the loss of life"—i.e., the extirpation penalty may be applied. For example, if she ate the meat while ritually impure.[14] So we then say that (this verse) is an admonition against one who would eat, and Scripture has chosen to express the idea of "eating" with the language of "touching."[15]

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12. Bekhor Shor intersperses his own explanatory comments in his citation of the Talmudic passage.

13. Bekhor Shor may be implicitly relying on such midrashic teachings as found in *Lev. Rab.* 22.7: ר׳ עקיבא אמר: הרי זה אסור מכלל התר, לפי שהיו ישראל נוחרין במדבר ואוכלין לא בא הכתוב ואסרו להם כן אלא בשחיטה, "Rabbi Akiba said: This (verse, i.e., Lev 17:3) constitutes a prohibition that qualifies a generalized permission. Since Israel used to stab (beasts) in the desert [i.e., they were permitted to slaughter animals for food any which way], the verse comes to forbid them [when they enter the Land of Israel] any means other than (kosher) slaughter." See Mordecai Margulies, ed., *Midrash Wayyikra Rabbah* (3 vols.; New York and Jerusalem: The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1993), 3:516 (Hebrew). See also *b. Hul.* 17a.

14. I.e., as opposed to merely touching it.

15. In this case in *b. Mak.* 14b, Resh Lakish has taught that God has expressed the prohibition of eating hallowed meat in terms of touching it, and the warning against eating is expressed in the juxtaposition of the terms "Sanctuary" (מקדש) and "hallowed thing" (קדש). In affirming the view of Resh Lakish, the sugya concludes: ואי בנגיעה מי איכא נטילת נשמה?! אלא באכילה, "Moreover, if one were to take the verse literally, as an admonition against the mere *touching* of the meat, is there

So, too, here the text refers to "eating," calling it "touching." Indeed,
(the verse is) a composition in parallel structure. The way of Scripture is
to change its wording when it casts itself in parallelistic structure. An ex-
ample of this is: *Give ear, O heavens . . . May it hear, the earth . . .* (Deut
32:1).[16] And in this case "giving ear" and "hearing" have the same sense,
but on account of the parallelism, Scripture changes its wording. Here,
their flesh and **their carcasses** are the same thing, but on account of the
parallelism, Scripture changes its wording. Thus **you may not eat** and
you may not touch are the same, but on account of the parallelism, Scrip-
ture changes its wording. And also with regard to Eve it is written: *and
from the fruit of the tree . . . you may not eat, nor may you touch it, lest you die*
(Gen 3:3)—even though God had only commanded them not to eat from
it. We see that, according to the context, "you shall not touch" means
"you shall not eat." Thus you have learned from the words of our Sages
that with regard to *she shall not touch any consecrated thing* (Lev 12:4),
Scripture calls "eating"—"touching."[17] Here, too, according to contextual
interpretation, you know that since you don't find (the expression) "you

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any instance in which a person merely touching the meat incurs the extirpation
penalty?! It can therefore only mean 'touching'—in order to eat." This pericope en-
ables Bekhor Shor to continue and conclude as he does about the verse in question,
Deut 14:8. Nevo, *The Commentary of Rabbi Joseph Bekhor Shor,* 334 n. 5, directs the
reader also to *b. Yebam.* 75a; *b. Zebah.* 33b.

16. Contrast Bekhor Shor's actual comment on the verse, in which he does not
point out the parallelism but rather finds significance in the textual order of the
covenantal witnesses "heavens" and "earth," and the verbs with which each is ad-
dressed:

האזינו השמים ואדברה, ותשמע הארץ: דרך ארץ הוא שאמר לאותו שרחוק ממנו לשון
''האזינה'', שיטה אוזן לשמוע, לפי שהוא רחוק, אבל לקרוב אינו צריך לומר ''האזינה''
אלא שישמע. ולפיכך שהיפך ישעיה ואמר: שמעו שמים והאזיני ארץ כי ה׳ דיבר, ולפי
שהקב״ה מדבר ששכינתו בשמים, והם קרובים, אמר לשון ''שמיעה'' לשמים ולארץ
שהיא רחוקה לשון ''האזינה''.

Give ear O heavens that I may speak; May it hear, the earth: It is fitting that he
addressed the one who was far off in the language of "giving ear," so that it
would incline its ear to hear, since it was far off. But to the one who was close he
did not need to say "give ear," rather that it should "hear." And therefore did
Isaiah reverse the order, and said: *hear O heavens and give ear, O earth! For the LORD
has spoken* (Isa 1:2). And since the Holy One, Blessed be He, is speaking via the
Shekhinah, which is in heaven and thus close by, he uses the language of "hear-
ing" for heaven and for earth, which is far off, the language of "giving ear." (see
Tanh. Haazinu 2)

For a discussion of this midrash as a foil to distinguish between *peshat* and *derash*
in medieval exegesis, see Greenstein, "Medieval Bible Commentaries," 218–219.

17. In other words, when Scripture wants to prohibit "eating," it may employ
the term "touching."

shall not touch" except following (the command) "you shall not eat," so we see that it is a parallel expression of "you shall not eat." Moreover, if for merely touching, he is flogged, why then would Scripture need to have prohibited also "eating"?!

Thus, both from rabbinic tradition and from the parallelistic structure of the verse, Bekhor Shor concludes that the biblical phrase "and their carcasses you may not touch" does not constitute a distinct prohibition. Rather the final clause only enhances his understanding of the first clause: one may not even touch the flesh of the dead animal *in order to eat it.* What is striking about this comment is not only the understanding of synonymous parallelism displayed therein, but also that Bekhor Shor made it in a legal context, a composition whose poetic structure is not often recognized.[18] Of course, we may say that Bekhor Shor has inappropriately stretched the concept of synonymous parallelism to solve the problem he perceives in a verse whose contextual meaning seems to contradict the Halakha (in this case, that there are impure things that one should not even touch, let alone eat, whereas the Halakha does not admit that). However, it remains the case that Bekhor Shor could claim that he is merely applying the lesson about poetic parallelism he learned from his teacher to a legal text.

Two other cases in which Bekhor Shor's indebtedness to Rashbam is evident, and which are reminiscent of Rashbam's explanation of staircase parallelism, were already observed by Poznanski.[19] The first is found in Bekhor Shor's comment on Num 17:28 (כֹּל הַקָּרֵב הַקָּרֵב אֶל־מִשְׁכַּן ה׳ יָמוּת הַאִם תַּמְנוּ לִגְוֹעַ, "Every one who approaches, who approaches towards the Tabernacle of the LORD, shall die. Are we all to perish?"). Note that it, too, comes in a prose context, with legal overtones:

כל הקרב הקרב אל משכן: כפל הכתוב דברו ולבסוף פירש, כמו: נשאו נהרות ה׳, ולא פירש מה נשאו, ולבסוף פירש נשאו נהרות קולם. וכן **כל הקרב,** ולא פירש היכן קרב. וכפל פירוש **הקרב אל משכן ה׳.**

Anyone who approaches, approaches towards the Tabernacle: the verse doubles its expression and makes the meaning explicit at the end, like: *the rivers have lifted up, O LORD* (Ps 93:3), but it did not make explicit what they lifted up, and at the end it made it explicit [that] *the rivers have lifted up their voice.* Similarly [with regard to the phrase] **anyone who approaches,** [Scripture] did not make explicit where he approached. It thus

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18. Another example of an exegete pointing out parallelism in a prose context is found in Rashbam's commentary on Job 32:3; see Japhet, *Commentary of Rashbam on Job,* 418. Japhet discusses the significance of this observation in her introduction to this edition, 189–190.

19. Poznanski, *Eliezer of Beaugency,* lxiv.

doubled the explanatory [phrase] **approaches towards the Tabernacle of the LORD.**

Again, while it may well be that Bekhor Shor's interpretation of Num 17:28 constitutes a misapplication of Rashbam's observation, his comment clearly betrays the latter's influence.

The second case adduced by Poznanski is found in an explicitly legal context, Deut 17:5. The verse, it may be remembered, appears in the context of the prosecution of apostate Israelites:

וְהוֹצֵאתָ אֶת־הָאִישׁ הַהוּא אוֹ אֶת־הָאִשָּׁה הַהִוא אֲשֶׁר עָשׂוּ אֶת־הַדָּבָר הָרָע הַזֶּה
אֶל־שְׁעָרֶיךָ אֶת־הָאִישׁ אוֹ אֶת־הָאִשָּׁה וּסְקַלְתָּם בָּאֲבָנִים וָמֵתוּ:

Then you shall take out that man or that woman who did this evil thing, to your gates, whether the man or the woman; and you shall stone them with stones, so that they die.

Bekhor Shor's problem is the Torah's virtual repetition of the phrase אֶת־הָאִישׁ ("that man or that woman") with אֶת־הָאִישׁ הַהוּא אוֹ אֶת־הָאִשָּׁה הַהִוא אוֹ אֶת־הָאִשָּׁה ("whether the man or the woman"). He comments:

את האיש או את האשה:[20] כפל מלה הוא, ואורחיה דקרא דכתיב החידה:[21]
והוצאת את האיש ההוא . . . אל שעריך, ולא פירש[22] למה כפל **את האיש או
את האשה.** [כמו]: נשאו נהרות ה׳, ולא פירש מה נשאו, וכפל ופירש: נשאו
נהרות קולם.

Whether the man or the woman: It is a parallel expression, and it (follows) the way of Scripture, as though it were written in a riddle: **and you shall take out that man . . . to your gates,** and it does not make explicit why it doubled **the man or the woman.** [This example is like]: *the rivers have lifted up, O LORD* (Ps 93:3), and it did not make explicit what they had lifted up; thus it doubled and made explicit: *the rivers have lifted up their voice.*

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20. Nevo, *The Commentary of Rabbi Joseph Bekhor Shor, ad. loc.,* misrepresents MS Munich 52 by indicating what he believes to be an ellipsis in the *incipit,* thus: את האיש . . . או את האשה. In making this "correction," Nevo obscures the flow of Bekhor Shor's comment, which is directed towards the *second* occurrence of the phrase in question, not the first, as Nevo would have it. Similarly, in the body of the comment, he brackets additional words, thus: "והוצאת את האיש ההוא [או את האשה ההיא] . . . אל שעריך". However, in this case it does not impede Bekhor Shor's intent.

21. Nevo would delete the word החידה, as it is difficult to make sense of the reading of the manuscript in this context. I prefer, along with Edward L. Greenstein (private communication, August 2002), to emend the ה to a ב, thus reading דכתיב בחידה, "as it is written in a riddle."

22. In the ms., this word is abbreviated, simply, פי׳.

Thus, Bekhor Shor is saying that the text of Deut 17:5 is written in a "riddle-like" fashion, similar to the staircase pattern. The verse first gives the law concerning the man (וְהוֹצֵאתָ אֶת־הָאִישׁ הַהוּא), and then the reader may wonder, "is that also the case for the woman?" Then the verse goes on to answer the reader's question, by giving the same law for the woman (אוֹ אֶת־הָאִשָּׁה הַהִוא . . .). In Bekhor Shor's mind, this structure is analogous to staircase parallelism, and so he cites Ps 93:3 as a similar case. First, the verse states "the rivers have lifted up" (without an immediate direct object) and the reader may wonder, "what did they lift up?" As if responding to the reader's curiosity, the verse then continues, "the waters have lifted up their voice." Here, too, the influence of Rashbam on Bekhor Shor is evident. Moreover, the expression אורחיה דקרא is but the Aramaic equivalent of Rashbam's oft-used expression to denote general observations about biblical poetics, דרך המקראות, "it is the way of Scripture."[23]

Yet another example of Bekhor Shor remarking on the parallel structure of a verse in a legal context is found in his comment on Exod 23:2. Here the exegete is troubled by the apparently redundant nature of the verse: לֹא־תִהְיֶה אַחֲרֵי־רַבִּים לְרָעֹת וְלֹא־תַעֲנֶה עַל־רִב לִנְטֹת אַחֲרֵי רַבִּים לְהַטֹּת, "You shall not be after the many to do wrong, neither shall you respond about a case, turning aside after the many to pervert (justice)." Compare the two parts of Bekhor Shor's comment on the verse:

לא תהיה אחרי רבים לרעות: אף על גב שדין לילך אחרי רבים, אם נראה בעיניך שאינם מכוונים יפה, לא תהיה אחריהם, מוטב להיות אחרי המיעוט ותתבטל, כי מכל מקום המעשה יעשה ברבים.

ולא תענה על רב: לא תלמד סניגוריא על דברי הרבים, לנטות אחרי הרבים להטות הדין. וכמו כפל מילה הוא: אלא לעולם אמור סברתך, שמא יחזרו לומר כדבריך, ויצא הדין לאמיתו.

You shall not be after the many to do wrong: Even though the rule is to follow the majority, if it appears to you that they are not properly disposed, don't follow them; it is better to be with the minority and let (your opinion) be nullified, for in any event the deed will be done according to the majority.

 Neither shall you respond about a case: Don't defend the words of the majority, to turn aside after the majority to pervert the decision. And this is similar to a composition in parallel structure: (it means) you should always state your opinion; perhaps they will return (i.e., from fol-

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23. See e.g., Rashbam's comment on Gen 1:1. Bekhor Shor employs the expression אורחיה דקרא also on Deut 32:14; see also his use of the equivalent idiom דרך הכתוב on Lev 26:18.

lowing their previously held opinion) to agree with your words, and the case shall be decided according to its truth.[24]

It may be said that Bekhor Shor is hedging his bet in this case! He writes וכמו כפל מילה הוא, "this is *similar* to a composition in parallel structure"—"similar," but not quite the same. It is likely the ambiguous language of the verse that has led him to suggest that the (somewhat) parallel expressions are employed for greater emphasis: "*nonetheless* you should always state your opinion, and your words may have the desired effect of influencing others."[25]

Bekhor Shor also discovers parallelism in an example of direct discourse found in a specifically narrative context. The passage in question is Exod 19:3.[26] As Israel is encamped in front of Mount Sinai, Moses receives God's instruction: כֹּה תֹאמַר לְבֵית יַעֲקֹב וְתַגֵּיד לִבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, "Thus shall you say to the house of Jacob and declare to the children of Israel." Bekhor Shor was heir to an exegetical tradition that had explicated each stich of the verse as referring to a different group of Israelites. For example, Rashi had based his interpretation on the Mekhilta, which had referred each clause of Exod 19:3 as a separate address to males and females.[27] However, Bekhor Shor implicitly rejects an explanation of this nature, and explicitly interprets the verse according to its parallelistic structure:

כה תאמר לבית יעקב: לפי הפשט כפל מלה היא.

> **Thus shall you say to the house of Jacob:** According to the *peshat,* this is a composition in parallel structure.

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24. Bekhor Shor's comment here is clearly influenced by Rashi's own sense of the meaning of the passage. See Martin I. Lockshin, ed., *Rashbam's Commentary on Exodus: An Annotated Translation* (BJS 310; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1997), 276–277 nn. 6 and 7.

25. See Bekhor Shor's comment on the repetition of the phrase לא תרדה בו בפרך, "You shall not rule over him ruthlessly," in Lev 25:43, 46: שנה הכתוב להזהיר טפי על דבר זה, "the phrase is repeated in order to more effectively warn about this matter."

26. Greenstein, "Direct Discourse and Parallelism," 36, cites this very passage as an example of parallelistic structure, within direct discourse. According to Greenstein, the use of parallelism in characters' discourse is an ancient convention.

27. Horowitz-Rabin, *Mekhilta,* 207: כה תאמר לבית יעקב: אלו הנשים. ותגד לבני ישראל: אלו האנשים. Ibn Ezra's exegesis of this verse is something of a curiosity. In his earlier commentary, composed in Italy (הפירוש הקצר), he recognized the parallel structure of the verse and interpreted accordingly (כדי [הנביאים] ידברו בכפל להעמיד הדברים בלב, והוא דרך צחות). However, in his later commentary, composed in France (הפירוש הארוך), he adopted an understanding that he had earlier eschewed, and explained each clause as referring distinctly to two separate, generationally-based groups.

Thus here again we see Bekhor Shor's capacity to discern parallelism, not only in overtly poetic texts and in parallelistic legal passages, but also in direct discourse found in narrative contexts.

8

Conclusion

This study began with the intention to demonstrate the sensitivity of the northern French rabbinic exegetes to the presence of parallelism in biblical composition. I have documented their awareness of the structure, and have shown that by their use of various formulations employing the word כפל, which became for them a technical term, these exegetes advanced their *peshat* methodology that sought to provide a contextual explanation of biblical texts. Although they did not consistently rely on their awareness of parallelism to distinguish between prose and poetic composition, they did so occasionally, and more often used their understanding for philological purposes.

In a sense, I took as one of my points of departure the judgment of James Kugel that the twelfth-century rabbinic commentators did not fully appreciate the implications of the parallelistic principle for the evaluation of biblical composition. Kugel has written (of Radak): "like Rashbam and others, he does not distinguish between paralleling and repeating. Furthermore, like Ibn Ezra, he speaks of 'repetition' in the same way when it is individual words, rather than verse-halves, that are involved."[1] I have sought to demonstrate a contrasting view. In my opinion, the problem that

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1. Kugel, *Idea,* 177. Kugel overstates his negative evaluation of Radak: while taking him to task for ignoring the parallelism in Exod 15, Deut 32 "and in those other songs of the Torah," Kugel overlooks the fact that Radak's Torah commentary apparently ends at Genesis. There is no evidence that Radak ever composed a commentary on the entire Torah. See Frank Talmage, *David Kimhi: The Man and His Commentaries* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975), 58–59, 189; and Cohen, "The Qimhi Family," in *HBOT,* 396. However, Radak's formulation to indicate the presence of synonymous parallelism (כפל הענין במלות שונות, and the like) is found approximately 150 times in his Psalms commentary alone!

Kugel identifies may not be so much conceptual as technical: these medieval commentators had not developed as sophisticated a technical terminology as some moderns have. However, in their repeated, if not systematic, invocation of the כפל terminology, both for semantic and for rhetorical purposes, the northern French exegetes surveyed here absolutely demonstrate their understanding of parallelism. This awareness is expressed primarily in biblical poetry, but is also occasionally found in narrative and legal texts.

However, even taking into account all of the references to parallelism employing the technical terminology of כפל reviewed in the present study, it is freely admitted that the northern French rabbinic exegetes did not examine most biblical poetic compositions in terms of their parallelistic form (as have modern scholars since Lowth); rather, they called attention to the structure only on occasion and without a discernible consistency. Moreover, especially since they did not write treatises on the *ars poetica,* as did their Jewish contemporaries in the Islamic world and their descendants during the Italian Renaissance, it is well-nigh impossible to determine what they thought of poetry in the abstract and why they were not more consistently attentive to the phenomenon of parallelism in their biblical commentaries. Nevertheless, the fact that they expressed themselves in terms of כפל לשון and the like, both for instances of "mere repetition" as well as "authentic parallelism,"[2] ought not deter us from concluding that at least most of them some of the time, and some of them most of the time (!), did in fact understand the nature of biblical parallelism.

The larger question that must be addressed is: what became of the knowledge of parallelism gained by the northern French rabbinic exegetes? Whereas Kugel has clearly traced the path of awareness of parallelism from what he considers to be its rudimentary beginnings by such medievals as Ibn Ezra and Radak through its more fully realized understanding by Renaissance scholars such as Azariah de Rossi[3]—and ultimately on to Lowth—why did the scholarship of the northern French school seem to leave no trace?

The primary answer to this question must be found within the broader context of the decline of contextual exegesis in the history of the

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2. See Greenstein's discussion of repetition versus parallelism as competing terms, and the sources he cites, in Greenstein, "How Does Parallelism Mean," 41–70; see esp. 43–44.

3. However, along the way he misses Nahmanides' recognition of the parallelistic principle, and its application for philological purposes. See, e.g., Nahmanides' comment on Gen 14:19: there he cites several verses exhibiting parallelistic structure (Deut 32:6; Ps 139:13) in order to establish the equivalence between עושה and קונה, found in Melchizedek's blessing of Abraham.

northern French Jewish community. The understanding of parallelism as a distinguishing trope of biblical poetics being but a part of the achievement of the northern French school in its development of *peshat* methodology, there is little need to isolate parallelism specifically, and we may consider the question within the context of the decline of *peshat* in Europe in general.

Among scholars addressing the question, Avraham Grossman has succinctly characterized the decline of *peshat*:

> The school of literal exegesis did not flourish for long; it disappeared almost as rapidly as it had developed. Its influence outside the borders of medieval France was limited, with the exception of Rashi, who left his imprint even on exegetical literature written in Spain. This limited influence is not surprising. The vigorous exegetical activity of Spanish scholars at the time centered on the philological approach; the needs of Spanish Jews in this area were largely fulfilled by such commentators as Abraham ibn Ezra, the Provençal David Qimhi, and others. Rashi was renowned primarily thanks to his commentary on the Talmud and the support that he provided for the kabbalists . . . [who] were then locked in a struggle with the rationalists over the character of Spanish Jewry; preferring traditional methods of exegesis, which revolved around rabbinic midrash, they found Rashi's approach particularly appropriate.[4]

Having thus described the poor reception of most of French rabbinic biblical scholarship in Spain and the Mediterranean world, Grossman goes on to point out the relative lack of influence of the northern French school in Germany. However, even in northern France itself there was a decline in interest in contextual exegesis as the twelfth century drew to a close; biblical scholarship in thirteenth-century northern France is greatly characterized by tosafistic, compilatory commentaries that evince a preference, over *peshat*, for casuistry, numerology and homiletics (and, indeed, for addressing exegetical questions to Rashi's Torah commentary in place of the biblical text, thus giving rise to the phenomenon of supercommentaries).[5] Thus, a decline in attention to parallelism and biblical poetry is best seen within the decline of *peshat* biblical scholarship as a whole.[6]

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4. Grossman, "Literal Exegesis" in *HBOT*, 370; see also *The Early Sages of France*, 505–506.

5. While there are many individual editions of tosafistic biblical commentaries, the collection and publishing of the various sources is still ongoing. See Gellis, *Sefer Tosafot Hashalem.* On compilatory commentaries, see Japhet, "The Nature and Distribution of Medieval Compilatory Commentaries," 98–130.

6. Although my present investigation is decidedly focused on twelfth-century exegesis, I hope to return to the attention to parallelism in (mostly anonymous and

Grossman ascribes the decline to three factors: the decline of the twelfth-century renaissance; the deterioration of the northern European Jewish community; and the (reputed) preference of Jews for midrash over *peshat.* I will address the third factor first, in order to take issue with it. Grossman concludes his essay by asserting the following:

> Interpretation based on *peshat* was well liked by intellectuals but did not endear itself to the masses. It was considered "dry and lifeless' compared with Rashi's commentaries, which presented many rabbinic *midrashim* in lucid, concise and readily understandable language, much more to the liking of ordinary people.[7]

It is my impression that this reasoning is widely accepted; however, Grossman, at least, adduces no specific evidence to bolster his assertion. Why *peshat* methodology as an intellectual enterprise should be considered beyond the reach of "ordinary people" while equally challenging approaches to learning and literature (e.g., kabbalistic or talmudic studies, to name but two) were undertaken robustly (or, at least, publicly extolled) by the masses throughout the ages, is not made clear. Even Rashbam's much heralded appeal to what might be labelled "the intelligentsia," in his commentary on Gen 37:2 (. . . ישכילו ויבינו אוהבי שכל, "let the lovers of reason become enlightened and understand . . ."), would not have been enough to disqualify any interested reader from understanding and profiting by the achievements of his commentaries. That contextual biblical scholarship effectively ended in the thirteenth century is an undeniable fact of Jewish history; that the reason it did so was its lack of appeal, caused by intellectual over-sophistication and "dry and lifeless" quality, has yet to be demonstrated.

The first of the two remaining factors to which Grossman ascribes the decline of *peshat* was the decline of the twelfth-century European renaissance.[8] Both among Christians and Jews, the nature of reading and learn-

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compilatory) thirteenth-century commentary, and the use of the כפל terminology, in some future study. For now, see Poznanski's discussion of the anonymous and tosafistic exegetical literature, *Eliezer of Beaugency,* lxxvi–cxiv; Sara Japhet, "The Commentary of Hazzekuni on the Torah: The Nature of the Composition and Its Purpose," in *Jubilee Volume for Rabbi Mordecai Breuer* (ed. Moshe Bar-Asher; Jerusalem: Akademon, 1992), 91–111 (Hebrew).

7. Grossman, "Literal Exegesis" in *HBOT,* 371; *The Early Sages of France,* 506.

8. The term was popularized by Charles H. Haskins in *The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 1927). It has been maintained by the academy ever since. For recent scholarship, see Robert L. Benson, Giles Constable, and Carol D. Lanham, eds., *Renaissance and Renewal in the Twelfth Century* (Medieval Academy Reprints for Teaching 26; Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991). For a unique approach to the interaction of Jews and Chris-

ing changed in significant ways during the late eleventh and twelfth centuries. However, while it is true that the intensity in learning characterized by this (as any) "renaissance" was not maintained beyond a few generations, and that, inevitably, periods of retrenchment and consolidation typically follow, it is not at all clear that the achievements of the renaissance would be, as inevitably or necessarily, forgotten or even suppressed. Merely to consider the foundation of the European university system in the thirteenth century and the continued rise in the culture of the great cathedral schools within Christian society is enough to discount any supposition of ineluctability with regard to the decline of *peshat.*

On the other hand, the remaining reason offered by Grossman is much more to the point, and ought not to be overlooked or underestimated: "the political and social status of the Jews in Europe gradually deteriorated, as evidenced by the anti-Jewish measures of Pope Innocent III at the beginning of the thirteenth century."[9] Indeed, Innocent III was, by far, not the only source of anti-Jewish measures during this period. The thirteenth century was the century of disputations; increased legal and social disabilities; the "trials" of the Talmud and associated book-burnings; blood libels, pogroms and, ultimately, the expulsion of the Jews from Western Europe and the consequent destruction of its Jewish community. We may safely assume that the burnings of "the Talmud," which doubtless included all types of non-biblical, rabbinic manuscripts—including the biblical commentaries of the northern French school—were particularly damaging to the maintenance and development of that school's literary and intellectual achievements.[10] Whereas Rashi's almost immediate, widespread popularity insured the copying of his commentaries all over the Jewish world during the relative safety of the twelfth century that enabled more and more copies of his works to circulate, the decline in status and safety for Jews two to four generations later, when most of the northern French contextual school were producing their exegetical works, surely was instrumental if not decisive in causing most of their works to be lost and subsequently forgotten.[11] These works were, in the main, redis-

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tians during this period, see Anna Sapir Abulafia, *Christians and Jews in the Twelfth-Century Renaissance* (London: Routledge, 1995).

9. Grossman, "Literal Exegesis," 371.

10. See above, chapter 2 n. 17.

11. As mentioned towards the beginning of our study, with the exception of hundreds (!) of manuscript copies of Rashi's commentaries (and subsequent incunabula and other important, early editions), the surviving number of medieval manuscripts of northern French biblical commentaries is astonishingly low. The writings of R. Eliezer of Beaugency and R. Joseph Bekhor Shor essentially survive in lone copies of but small portions of their exegetical *oeuvre*; even more tragi-

covered and published by *Wissenschaft* scholars working in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.[12]

As has been amply demonstrated in the course of this study, the study of Jewish medieval biblical scholarship has itself experienced a renaissance in recent years, with research taking place particularly in Israeli and American universities. Moreover, the inclusion of the great northern French *peshat* commentaries (of Joseph Kara, Rashbam, Eliezer of Beaugency and Joseph Bekhor Shor) in the magnificent *Mikraot Gedolot Haketer* has insured the availability for study of their works by the Hebrew-reading public. It is my hope that the present study will give further impetus to the recovery of these rabbinic masters of *peshat* from their long-dormant state.

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cally, the only extant copy of the bulk of Rashbam's Torah commentary disappeared during World War II. Of late, R. Joseph Kara has fared somewhat better: a number of important fragments of his exegetical works have been discovered in the so-called "Italian Geniza." See Avraham Grossman, "The Italian Genizah and R. Joseph Kara's Commentary on the Bible," in *The Sarah Kamin Memorial Volume,* 335–48; see also Mauro Perani, "The 'Italian Geniza': An Updated Report on Fifteen Years of Research," *European Association for Jewish Studies Newsletter* 2 (1996): 15–22.

12. See Harris, "Literary Hermeneutic," 6–7; see there also Appendices I–III on 318–324.

Postscript
The Question of the Influence of Jewish Methodological Approaches on Contemporary Christian Biblical Exegetes

The Jewish reading public was essentially cut off from the achievements of the northern French school for almost 700 years. Beyond Rashi's infrequent and imprecise attention to parallelism (and other features of biblical composition), Jewish knowledge of poetics was gained through access to medieval Judeo-Islamic or Judeo-Italian Renaissance scholarship. Nevertheless, whatever lack of impact northern French *peshat* scholarship may have had on subsequent Jewish readers, there remains the question of how the northern French rabbinic exegetes' specific consideration of biblical parallelism may have influenced the contemporary Christian scholarly community.[1]

In general, there was a close ideational and exegetical connection between the northern French rabbinic exegetes and the contemporary Christian schoolmen at the Cathedral School of St. Victor, as scholars since Beryl Smalley have demonstrated.[2] However, in addition to the general af-

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1. For the history of biblical poetry and the Church, see the chapter of that title by Kugel, *Idea,* 135–170; significant excerpts from patristic literature are translated and discussed; see in particular the selection from the commentary of Theodore of Mopsuestia on Hos 5:9 cited on p. 157. Kugel concludes that while "the Church Fathers here and there discoursed on parallelism *per se* . . . in the end, Christian exegesis failed to understand the essence of parallelism" (140).

finity between rabbinic *peshat* and Christian *ad litteram*, we may ask whether there is a Jewish legacy, specifically with regard to parallelism, to be found among Latin exegetical works.[3]

Preliminary evidence may be offered. At the beginning of this study we noted that the definition of parallelism ultimately adopted by Lowth was remarkably similar in essence to the formula employed by Ibn Ezra and particularly Radak. The latter's pithy observation, כפל הענין במלות שונות, "the substance is doubled with different words," is found innumerable times in his biblical commentaries. Yet Radak, as we know, did not develop an understanding of parallelism independently: his knowledge and his use of the כפל terminology had precedents in both the Spanish as well as the northern European Jewish cultural milieu.[4]

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2. Smalley, *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages.* This remains the definitive work on medieval Christian exegesis, although her discussion of "the Jewish sources" (149–156), based on material provided her by L. Rabinowitz (see p. 149 n. 1), may be safely disregarded, as it has been superseded by more recent scholarship. For a more recent essay and a thorough, up-to-date bibliography, see Rainer Berndt, "The School of St. Victor in Paris," *HBOT,* 467–95.

3. There are a number of studies that have taken up the question of Jewish influence on Christian exegetical writings during the twelfth century renaissance. To name but a few: Rainer Berndt, "L'influence de Rashi sur l'exegese d'Andre de Saint-Victor," in *Rashi Studies* (ed. Zvi Arie Steinfeld; Jerusalem: Bar-Ilan University Press, 1993), vii–xiv; Gilbert Dahan, *Les Intellectuels chrétiens et les Juifs au moyen âge* (Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1990); Aryeh Grabois, "The Hebraica Veritas and Jewish-Christian Intellectual Relations in the Twelfth Century," *Speculum* 50 (1975): 613–34; Sarah Kamin, "Affinities between Jewish and Christian Exegesis in Twelfth-Century Northern France," *World Congress of Jewish Studies* 9 (1988), 141–155; repr. in *Jews and Christians Interpret the Bible* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1991), 12*–26*; Rebecca Moore, *Jews and Christians in the Life and Thought of Hugh of St. Victor* (South Florida Studies in the History of Judaism 138; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998); Grover A. Zinn, "History and Interpretation: 'Hebrew Truth,' Judaism, and the Victorine Exegetical Tradition," in *Jews and Christians: Exploring the Past, Present and Future* (eds. James H. Charlesworth, Frank X. Blisard, Jeffrey S. Siker; New York: Crossroad, 1990), 100–135.

4. Radak's understanding of parallelism must surely be indebted to some degree to his teachers (principally his father, Joseph, and older brother, Moses); in addition, his well-known reliance on Ibn Ezra and Rashi hardly needs to be documented. For the role of his teachers and textual sources in the development of Radak's exegesis, see Talmage, *Radak: The Man and His Commentaries,* 5–14; 72–73; 77–78. Talmage is of the opinion that "the exegetical trends which were gaining momentum and thrust in northern France did not seem to be well-known to Radak"; p. 73, w/nn. 157, 159. In an as-yet-unpublished article, "Possible Influence of Rabbi Eliezer of Beaugency on the Biblical Commentaries of Rabbi David

Moreover, almost an exact Latin rendering of the formula adopted by Radak is found in the biblical commentaries of the contemporary Christian Hebraist, Andrew of St. Victor.[5] Andrew's comment on Isa 5:12 is one such instance. In this prophecy, Isaiah had castigated the Israelites "who rise early in the morning pursuing liquor, who tarry late into the evening till wine inflames them!" (5:11). Such people, claims the prophet, do not see what God is planning: וְאֵת פֹּעַל ה׳ לֹא יַבִּיטוּ וּמַעֲשֵׂה יָדָיו לֹא רָאוּ, "they do not regard the deeds of the LORD, nor the work of His hands do they see."[6] In his commentary on Isa 5:12, Andrew observes the parallelism in the verse: "Vel repetitio est eiusdem sensus per alia uerba que frequens est in hebreo," "This is the repetition of the same sense by other words, which is frequent in Hebrew."[7] In this comment, Andrew not only calls attention to the presence of parallelism in the verse, but also notes it as a common structure in the Hebrew Bible. Moreover, as do Jewish medieval exegetes on occasion, Andrew does not primarily draw exegetical conclusions from the insight expressed in this gloss; he is content with making merely a rhetorical observation.

Kimhi," I revisit the question of a northern French role in Radak's exegesis, and discuss otherwise unattested affinities between the two exegetes.

5. On Andrew's work as an exegete, see Smalley, *Study of the Bible,* 112–186. For more recent scholarship, see Frans A. Van Liere, ed., *Andrew of St. Victor: Commentary on Samuel and Kings* (Turnhout: Brepols, n.d.). See also the following editions, each of which contains an introductory essay: Michael Alan Signer, ed., *Andreae de Sancto Victore Opera: Expositionem in Ezechielem* (Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis 53e; Turnhout: Brepols, 1991); Charles Lohr and Rainer Berndt, eds., *Andreae de Sancto Victore Opera: Expositionem super Heptateuchum* (Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis 53; Turnhout: Brepols, 1986); Mark A. Zier, ed., *Andreae de Sancto Victore Opera: Expositionem super Danielem* (Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis 53f; Turnhout: Brepols, 1990). Also see Angelo Penna, "Andrea di S. Vittore: Il suo commento a Giona," *Biblica* 36:3 (1955): 305–331.

6. Despite his designation as a "Christian Hebraist," Andrew commented on the *Latin* text of Isaiah: *et opus Domini non respicitis nec opera manuum eius consideratis,* "the work of the Lord they do not respect, nor the works of his hands do they consider." See Berndt, "The School of St. Victor in Paris," *HBOT,* 480–482. On Andrew as a "Hebraist" who as yet could not truly function independently as a Hebrew reader, see Avrom Saltman, "Pseudo-Jerome in the Commentary of Andrew of St. Victor on Samuel," *HTR* 67:3 (1974): 195–253; William McKane, *Selected Christian Hebraists* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 50–57; Signer, *Expositionem In Ezechielem,* xxi–xxvii.

7. I am grateful to my good friend, Frans van Liere, for calling my attention to this source; see Rainer Berndt, *Andre de Saint-Victor, Exegete et theologien* (Bibliotheca Victorina 2; Paris: Brepols, 1991), 211.

Another instance we may consider is Andrew's commentary on Hos 13:14.[8] This verse prophesies God's ultimate promise of redemption: מיד שאול אפדם, ממות אגאלם, "from the clutches of Sheol will I save them; from death will I redeem them."[9] Again, Andrew notices the parallelism in the two prophetic lines: "Quod sequitur, **de morte redimam eos,** idem est cum precedenti more scripture que uerbis aliis solet idem repetere," "What follows, **from death will I redeem them,** is the same as the preceding (phrase), in the way of Scripture which often repeats the same in different words." The similarity to the previous comment is striking: Andrew both calls attention to the synonymous parallelism in the verse, and also notes how this specific occurrence is but an example of an overall tendency in Scripture.

Further investigation may well prove that examples such as the preceding comments by Andrew are to be accounted for more by the familiarity of medieval Christian exegetes with the occasional patristic observations of parallelism—such as those cited by Kugel[10]—than with any contemporary Jewish influence. Kugel's study does not engage Victorine scholarship and the other exegesis produced during the twelfth-century renaissance; he moves directly from Christian exegetical literature of late antiquity and the early Middle Ages to the writers of the Italian Renaissance and of later periods. His explicit assumption is that the High Middle Ages would not be a fruitful avenue for inquiry into the Christian scholarly awareness of parallelism: "By the tenth century, indeed well before it, the main lines of approach for future Christian exegetes had been drawn . . . This basic set of assumptions did not change until the [Italian] Renaissance."[11] Again, this judgment may be correct, and the examples of Victorine exegesis examined here may essentially be the product of coincidence. On the other hand, it may be that future research may uncover a sufficient number of contemporary comments, comparable in both content and formulation, to establish a truer understanding of contacts between the Jewish and Christian scholarly communities of twelfth-century northern France.

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8. Again, I am indebted to Frans van Liere, for providing this text, taken from MS Salamanca Univ. 2061, fol 179v.

9. Alternatively, the verse has been taken as a rhetorical question: "Shall I ransom them from the power of Sheol? Shall I redeem them from Death?" (RSV). The Vulgate's rendering is: *de manu mortis liberabo eos de morte redimam eos,* "from the hand of death will I liberate them; from death will I redeem them."

10. Kugel, *Idea,* 156–170.

11. Kugel, *Idea,* 170.

Appendix
Manuscripts and Editions Used in Preparing This Study

In preparing this study, I have relied on the best available editions for all "initial readings" of the commentaries cited. Wherever possible, these include the excellent, recently published volumes of the Rabbinic Bible by the Bar Ilan University Press:

Cohen, Menachem, ed. *Mikra'ot Gedolot "Haketer": A Revised and Augmented Scientific Edition of "Mikraot Gedolot" Based on the Aleppo Codex and Early Medieval Mss.* Ramat Gan: Bar Ilan University, 1992–2003 (Hebrew). To date, volumes are available on: Genesis; Joshua,Judges; Samuel; Kings; Isaiah; Ezekiel; Psalms.

Especially where there have been discrepancies among the various printed editions, or where I have suspected some difficulty in the version presented by the editions, I have supplemented my use of the Bar Ilan edition by consulting as well other editions and microfiche and/or photocopies of manuscripts of the various exegetical works, as follows:

Rashi

As has been demonstrated above, the text of Rashi's commentary is replete with difficulties, and state of the art modern scholarship on the subject has yet to determine that any one version is decisively superior to any other. As noted earlier,[1] Avraham Grossman has stressed the importance of MS Leipzig 1 in reconstructing a more accurate text of Rashi's

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1. See chapter 3, n. 9.

commentary, and I have referred to this manuscript for certain texts. In addition, I have made extensive use of the following:

Berliner, Abraham, ed. *Rashi: The Commentary of Solomon B. Isaac on the Torah.* First ed., Berlin, 1866; Second ed., Frankfurt, 1905 (Hebrew).

Gruber, Mayer I., ed. *Rashi's Commentary on Psalms 1–89 (Books I–III), with English Translation, Introduction and Notes.* South Florida Studies in the History of Judaism 161. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998.[2]

Mayani, Betsal'el, Shemu'el Yaakobovits, Chaim S. Segal, and She'ar-Yashuv Qohen, eds. *Pentateuch, with Rashi Hashalem.* Five Volumes. Jerusalem: Ariel United Israel Institutes, 1986–1998 (Hebrew).

Shoshana, Avraham, ed. *The Book of Job with the Commentaries of Rashi, Rabbenu Jacob b. Meir Tam, and a Disciple of Rashi.* Jerusalem: Ofeq Institute, Friedberg Library, 5760 [2000] (Hebrew).

Rabbi Joseph Kara

Ahrend, Moshe. *Rabbi Joseph Kara's Commentary on Job.* Jerusalem: Mossad Harav Kook, 1988 (Hebrew).

Eppenstein, Shimon, ed. *Rabbi Joseph Kara's Commentaries on Former Prophets.* Jerusalem: Mossad Harav Kook, 1972 (Hebrew).

Rashbam

Japhet, Sara. *The Commentary of Rabbi Samuel Ben Meir (Rashbam) on the Book of Job.* Publications of the Perry Foundation for Biblical Research in the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, 2000 (Hebrew).

Idem and Robert Salters. *The Commentary of R. Samuel Ben Meir (Rashbam) on Qoheleth.* Jerusalem: The Magnes Press; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1985 (Hebrew).

Rosin, David, ed. *The Torah Commentary of Rashbam.* Breslau: Solomon Schottlaender, 1881 (Hebrew).

Thompson, Yaakov. "The Commentary of Samuel Ben Meir on the Song of Songs." D.H.L. diss., Jewish Theological Seminary. New York, 1988.

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2. Again, as mentioned in the introduction, the reader is reminded to now consult Gruber's complete and monumental edition of Rashi on Psalms (Brill, 2004). See above, chapter 1, n. 33.

Rabbi Eliezer of Beaugency

Nutt, John W., ed. *Commentaries on the Latter Prophets by R. Eliezer of Beaugency: Isaiah.* London, Paris and Frankfurt: Joseph Baer and Co., 1879 (Hebrew).

Poznanski, Samuel, ed. *Commentary on Ezekiel and the Twelve Minor Prophets by Eliezer of Beaugency.* Warsaw: Mikize Nirdamim, 1913 (Hebrew).

Oxford Bodleian OMS 625 (= Neubauer 1465); photocopy provided by the Oxford Bodleian library.

Rabbi Joseph Bekhor Shor

Gad, Hayim, ed. *Rabbi Joseph Bekhor Shor: Commentary on the Torah.* Jerusalem: n.p., 1983 (Hebrew).

Nevo, Yehoshafat, ed. *The Commentary of Rabbi Joseph Bekhor Shor on the Torah.* Jerusalem: Mossad Harav Kook, 1994 (Hebrew).

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Avishur, Yitzhak. "The Doubled and Tripled Interrogative Patterns in the Bible and Ugaritic and Their Derivatives." Pages 421–464 in *Zer Li-Gevurot: The Zalman Shazar Jubilee Volume.* Edited by B. Z.Luria. Jerusalem: Kiryat Sefer Ltd, 1973.

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Baron, Salo Wittmayer. *A Social and Religious History of the Jews.* 18 vols. New York: Columbia University Press; Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1965.

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Index of Texts Cited

General Index