

Rabbinic Midrash Methodologies (Exegetical Rules)

Halakah Midrash (law texts) | Haggadah Midrash (narrative texts)

R. Ishmael b. Elisha (13)

Hillel (7)

R. Eliezer b. Jose Ha-Gelili (32)

Name (if applicable)
Transliterated Hebrew
[English translation]



Definition or Description

Scriptural
Example

<u>Name (if applicable)</u> Transliterated Hebrew [English translation]			Definition or Description	Scriptural Example
<i>Ribbuy</i> [extension]		1	The particles "et," "gam," and "af," which are superfluous, indicate that something which is not explicitly stated must be regarded as included in the passage under consideration, or that some teaching is implied thereby.	
<i>Mi'ut</i> [limitation]		2	The particles "ak," "ra?" and "min" indicate that something implied by the concept under consideration must be excluded in a specific case	
<i>Ribbuy ahar ribbuy</i> [extension after extension]		3	When one extension follows another it indicates that more must be regarded as implied.	
<i>Mi'ut ahar mi'ut</i> [limitation after limitation]		4	A double limitation indicates that more is to be omitted.	
<i>Kal wa-homer</i> [from light to heavy]	1	1	An argument from the less important to the more important (or vice versa), corresponding to the scholastic proof a fortiori	Exo. 6:12 2Ki 5:13
<i>Kal wa-homer meforash</i>		5	<i>Kal wa-homer</i> , <u>expressly</u> so characterized in the text	Luke 12:24
<i>Kal wa-homer satum</i>		6	<i>Kal wa-homer</i> , <u>implied, but not explicitly declared</u> in the text	Matt. 5:46?
<i>Gezerah shawah</i> [argument from analogy]	2	2	7 Biblical passages containing synonyms or homonyms are subject, however much they differ in other respects, to identical definitions and applications.	Lev. 1:15, 5:8
<i>Binyan ab mi-katub ehad</i>	3		Application of a provision found in <u>one passage only</u> to passages which are related to the first in content but do not contain the provision in question.	
<i>Binyan ab mi-shene ketubim</i>	4		Application of a provision found in a <u>generalization of two Biblical passages</u> to passages which are related to the former in content but do not contain the provision in question.	Exo. 21:26- 27
<i>Binyan ab</i>	3	8	<i>a combination of Hillel rules 3 and 4</i>	
<i>Derek kezarah</i>		9	Abbreviation is sometimes used in the text when the subject of discussion is self-explanatory.	
<i>Dabar shehu shanuy</i> [repeated expression]		10	Repetition implies a special meaning	
<i>Siddur she-nehlak</i>		11	Where in the text a clause or sentence not logically divisible is divided by the punctuation, the proper order and the division of the verses must be restored according to the logical connection.	
		12	Anything introduced as a comparison to illustrate and explain something else, itself receives in this way a better explanation and elucidation.	
<i>Kelal u-Perat</i> and <i>Perat u-kelal</i>	5	4	13 Definition of the general by the particular	
		5	Definition of the particular by the general	Deut. 22:13
<i>Kelal u-Perat u-kelal</i>		6	The general, the particular, and the general	Deut. 14:26
		7	The general which requires elucidation by the particular, and the particular which requires elucidation by the general.	
		8	The particular implied in the general and excepted from it for pedagogic purposes elucidates the general as well as the particular.	
		9	The particular implied in the general and excepted from it on account of the special regulation which corresponds in concept to the general, is thus isolated to decrease rather than to increase the rigidity of its application.	
		10	The particular implied in the general and excepted from it on account of some other special regulation which does not correspond in concept to the general, is thus isolated either to decrease or to increase the rigidity of its application.	
		11	The particular implied in the general and excepted from it on account of a new and reversed decision can be referred to the general only in case the passage under consideration makes an explicit reference to it.	
<i>Ka-yoze bo mi-makom aher</i>	6		Similarity in content to another Scriptural passage.	Mark 14:62
<i>Dabar ha-lamed me-'inyano</i>	7	12	Interpretation deduced from the context. (Ishmael #12 is amplified in certain particulars)	Exo. 20:15

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		14	Something important is compared with something unimportant to elucidate it and render it more readily intelligible.	
		13 15	When two Biblical passages contradict each other the contradiction in question must be solved by reference to a third passage.	
<i>Dabar meyuhad bi-mekomo</i>		16	An expression which occurs in only one passage can be explained only by the context.	
		17	A point which is not clearly explained in the main passage may be better elucidated in another passage.	
		18	A statement with regard to a part may imply the whole.	
		19	A statement concerning one thing may hold good with regard to another as well.	
		20	A statement concerning one thing may apply only to something else.	
		21	If one object is compared to two other objects, the best part of both the latter forms the tertium quid of comparison.	
		22	A passage may be supplemented and explained by a parallel passage.	
		23	A passage serves to elucidate and supplement its parallel passage.	
		24	When the specific implied in the general is especially excepted from the general, it serves to emphasize some property characterizing the specific.	
		25	The specific implied in the general is frequently excepted from the general to elucidate some other specific property, and to develop some special teaching concerning it.	
<i>Mashal</i> [parable]		26	A parable.	
<i>Mi-ma'al</i>		27	Interpretation through the preceding.	
<i>Mi-neged</i>		28	Interpretation through the opposite.	
<i>Gematria</i>		29	Interpretation according to the numerical value of the letters.	
<i>Notarikon</i>		30	Interpretation by dividing a word into two or more parts.	
[Postposition of the precedent]		31	Many phrases which follow must be regarded as properly preceding, and must be interpreted accordingly in exegesis.	
		32	Many portions of the Bible refer to an earlier period than do the sections which precede them, and vice versa.	

More NT examples of Hillel's 7 rules:

#1 (Inference a fortiori): Matt 12.11ff, Luke 12.24,28; 2 Cor 3.7-11; Heb 9.13ff; Luke 6.3-5; Rom 5.15,17;

Rom 11.24; I Cor 6.2f; I Cor 9.9; Heb 2.2ff; Heb 10.28f; Heb 12.24ff; John 10.31-38

#2 (Inference from similar words): Mark 2.23-28; Luke 6.1-5; Rom 4.3,7; Heb 7.1-28; Jas 2.21ff.

#3 (General principle from one verse): Mark 12.26; Jas 5.16ff.

#4 (General principle from two verses): Rom 4.1-25 (Abe and David); I Cor 9.9, 13 (from Deut 25.4 and 18.1-8)
Jas 2.22-26 (Abe and Rahab)

#5 (Inference from a general principle): Mark 12.28-34; Rom 13.9ff (from Lev 19.18).

#6 (Inference from an analogous passage): Gal 3.8-16 (Gen 12.3 & 22.18); Heb 4.7-9 (Josh 1.13-15 & Ps 95.7-11)
Heb 8.7-13 (Exod 19.5ff & Jer 31.31-34)

#7 (Interpretation from the context): Matt 19.4-8; Rom 4.10f; Gal 3.17; Heb 4.9f.; heb 11.1-13; Heb 11.35-40