

ABSTRACT

HERMENEUTICS AS POETICS: THE CASE OF *MIDRASH HAĞADOL*

Gilad Shapira

One of the fascinating characteristics of Midrash is its dual nature as both poetic and hermeneutic. Late Midrash has been shown to accentuate the literary, rather than the exegetical dimension of given genres (e.g. the Mashal, the retold biblical narrative). This paper addresses the place of hermeneutics in a seminal work of Late Midrash – *Midrash HaGadol* (Aden, Yemen, 14th century): This discussion is centered on the hermeneutical expression, ‘*zehu sheamar hakatuv*’ (this is what Scripture said) and the way it functions to create bundles of textual units around thematic focuses, and it indicates their components. Based on that, the paper argues that the function of hermeneutics in *Midrash Hagadol* is primarily poetic.