

suggested by the necessities or even the passions of the moment, but were never intended to be taught as doctrine. In like manner the exaltation, by sectarians, of one special doctrine at the cost of essential principles of the faith led at times by way of reaction to an apparent repudiation of the implied heresy; whilst the synagogue, through its interpreters, recognised the true nature of this apparent repudiation and continued to give the objectionable doctrine its proper place and proportion among the accepted teachings of Judaism.¹ Some test or tests as to the real theological value of a Talmudic saying will therefore, always be necessary in making use of the old Rabbinic literature as a source of theology. The Jewish liturgy, which was from earliest times jealously guarded against

¹ See Weiss *דברי חיים* 1: 277 and Joel's *Blicke*, 2: 170, seq. As an illustration we refer here to the well-known objection to the explanation of certain laws (Lev. 22: 2 and Deut. 22: 1 and 7) on the mere principle of mercy, "for he (who does so) declares the attributes (or the laws dictated by such attributes) of the Holy One, blessed be he, mercy, whilst they are only commands" *מפני שטענה של הקב"ה רומזים ואין צורך להם*. See *Mishnah Berachoth*, 5: 1; *Megillah*, 4: 1; *Jer. Berachoth*, 9: c and B. T. *Berachoth*, 33: b, text and commentaries. Cf. also Bacher, *Ag. Am.*, 3: 128. All these authorities, however, were set aside by the synagogue which continued the tradition of Pseudo-Jonathan to Lev. 22: 2 (see Berliner, *Targum*, 2: 113) and never hesitated to explain such laws on the principle of mercy. See *Gen. R.*, 75: 11; *Deut. R.*, 6: 1; *Tan. B.*, 3: 11 a. Cf. also *Gen. R.*, 33: 2, where with reference to Pa. 145: 2 the words occur *שהן מדיתי' היא מידתם*. As to mediæval authorities for the *paivan* Kalir, see Buber's note to *P. K.*, 98: b. Cf. also Nachmanides' Commentary to Deut., 22: 1 and 7, and the reference there to Malmonides. See also *ילקוט יצחק* by Isaac Zaler, Warsaw, 1895, 3: 10 a and b and 5: 41 b and 41 a.