

# Theology on the Web.org.uk

*Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible*

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

[PayPal](#)

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

---

A table of contents for *The Evangelical Quarterly* can be found here:

[https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles\\_evangelical\\_quarterly.php](https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_evangelical_quarterly.php)

## Midrash and "Magnet" words in the New Testament

by Robert W. Thurston

*Mr. Thurston, by training and profession a statistician, has devoted the major part of his time for several years now to the study of certain problems in New Testament criticism, and has contributed articles in this field to The Expository Times and the Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society. Taking his cue from a remark by E. G. Selwyn, that the occurrence of a key-word in a messianic testimonium (like "stone" in Ps. 118: 22) could act as a "magnet" drawing other OT texts containing the same word into the testimonium pattern, Mr. Thurston considers the "magnet" effect of certain words in Is. 66: 1 f., quoted as a testimonium by Stephen in Acts 7: 49 f.*

MANY writers have described various sections of the NT as midrashic.<sup>1</sup> Some examples in the gospels and Acts are Matt. 4: 1-11; 24: 32; Mark 14: 62; John 6; Acts 7.<sup>2</sup> Examples in the epistles include Rom. 4: 1-25; 1 Cor. 1: 18-24; 9: 8-12; 10: 1-13; 2 Cor. 3: 7-18; Gal. 3: 6-24; 4: 21-31; Eph. 4: 8-14; Heb. 3: 7-4: 11; 7: 1-10; 10: 28.<sup>3</sup> The Epistle to the Hebrews as a whole has also been called a midrash.<sup>4</sup> Less frequently there have been attempts to explain how various midrashic passages are related, and how this

<sup>1</sup> It is not the purpose of this article to propose a precise definition of the terms midrash and midrashic. For a discussion of this problem see Le Déaut, "Apropos a Definition of Midrash," *Int.* 25 (1971) pp. 259-82, and Wright, "The Literary Genre Midrash," *CBQ* 28 (1966) pp. 105-38, 417-57. In this article the term midrash will be used rather loosely. We will be considering many NT passages which comment upon the OT; such passages are "midrashic" in at least the etymological sense of the word, regardless how much they may differ from the halakhic or haggadic midrash. We need some term by which to refer to such passages, and "midrash" seems a logical choice.

Some writers use this term in a different sense. For example S. Sandmel (*The First Christian Century in Judaism and Christianity* [New York: Oxford, 1967] p. 188) speaks of the gospels as a midrash on the life of Jesus. But in this article the term will be restricted to passages which comment upon the OT.

<sup>2</sup> Le Déaut, "Apropos a Definition of Midrash."

<sup>3</sup> Wright, "The Literary Genre Midrash."

<sup>4</sup> G. Zuntz (*The Text of the Epistles* [London: Oxford, 1953] p. 286) calls Hebrews "a midrash in rhetorical Greek prose." F. F. Bruce (*The Epistle to the Hebrews* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964] p. xvii) quotes Zuntz's statement with approval.

body of Christian midrash developed.<sup>5</sup> This is also the objective of the present article, especially with respect to a particular class of NT passages described below.

#### I. METHODOLOGY

The methodology of this article will be based largely on a characteristic of Christian midrash which has been observed by E. G. Selwyn.<sup>6</sup> In commenting on 1 Pet. 2: 6-8, Selwyn has shown:

1. That this passage and the related passages in Rom. 9: 33 and 1 Cor. 1: 23 are midrashic.
2. That Ps. 118: 22 was the focal point of this midrash.
3. That the word *stone* in Ps. 118: 22 acted as a "magnet" to draw to it Is. 8: 14 and 28: 16, which contain the same word.<sup>7</sup>

This article will attempt to demonstrate that a similar process underlies several midrashic passages in the NT. In analyzing each portion of midrash, therefore, we will search for words which, to use Selwyn's terminology, acted as "magnets". From these clues we will then attempt to determine which OT passages were the focal point of each line of midrashic development, and why.

There is no one necessary starting point for this type of analysis, but for convenience we will begin with a consideration of the elements common to Hebrews and Stephen's defence in Acts 7. There are several reasons for this choice:

<sup>5</sup> Notably R. Harris (*Testimonies* [2 vols.; Cambridge: University, 1916-20]), although Harris seldom uses the word midrash. Harris adduced evidence of a pre-canonical Book of Testimonies, originally compiled by Matthew. C. H. Dodd (*According to the Scriptures* [New York: Scribners, 1953]) follows Harris in some respects, but concludes that the testimonies were originally transmitted orally. B. Lindars (*New Testament Apologetic* [Philadelphia: Westminster, 1961]) generally follows Dodd rather than Harris.

Dodd lists 15 sections of the OT which were used as testimonies. But he does not explain why these particular passages were selected, nor what relationship exists between them. It is primarily in this respect that the objective of this present article exceeds the scope of Harris and Dodd.

<sup>6</sup> E. G. Selwyn, *The First Epistle General of Peter* (London: Macmillan, 1947) p. 270.

<sup>7</sup> Many other writers have observed examples of this phenomenon in the NT, but without using the term "magnet". This is especially true of passages containing the word "stone". For example F. C. Sygne (*Hebrews and the Scriptures* [London: SPCK, 1959] p. 18) concludes that Heb. 2 is based on a primitive collection of "stone" passages. Similarly Harris (*Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 87) concludes that the primitive Book of Testimonies contained OT passages grouped under several headings, one of which was "Christ the Stone". This section of the Book of Testimonies included Is. 28: 16, Ps. 118: 22 and Is. 8: 14 (*Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 18).

A few examples of this phenomenon have been observed which involve words other than "stone". One such word is "rest" in Heb. 4. A. B. Davidson (*The Epistle to the Hebrews* [Edinburgh: Clark, 1882] pp. 97-101) notes that the word "rest" in Ps. 95: 11 apparently caused the author to think of Gen 2: 2, which contains the same word. Other examples of magnet words will be noted later in this article.

1. Both Hebrews and Acts 7 are midrashic.
2. Numerous similarities have been noted between Hebrews and Acts 7, which suggests to some writers that a common system of theological thought underlies both.<sup>8</sup> Although this article does not fully share this conclusion, there do appear to be many similarities between Hebrews and Acts 7.
3. Both Hebrews and Acts 7 contain a substantial volume of material, more than is found in many other midrashic passages in the NT.

These considerations suggest at least the possibility that we may find a common body of midrash underlying both of these portions of the NT, which will then make it easier for us to identify those words which acted as "magnets".<sup>9</sup>

## II. THESIS

Based on the type of analysis described above, this article will attempt to demonstrate:

1. That many midrashic passages in the NT are interrelated and constitute a single system of midrashic thought.
2. That this midrashic system resulted from a polemic exchange concerning the temple cult in Jerusalem; it was this special circumstance which gave rise to the use of "magnet" words.
3. That this polemic exchange began during Jesus' ministry and continued in Jerusalem after the Resurrection.
4. That much of the Epistle to the Hebrews appears to be based upon this midrash.

<sup>8</sup> This view is developed at considerable length by W. Manson (*The Epistle to the Hebrews* [London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1951]), a view adopted in part by F. F. Bruce (*The Epistle to the Hebrews*, p. xxxv). Similarly, W. Beyschlag (*New Testament Theology* [Eng. trans., Edinburgh: Clark, 1895] p. 284) sees the author of Hebrews as Stephen's theological successor. J. V. Brown ("The Authorship and Circumstances of 'Hebrews'—Again!" *BS* 80 (1923) pp. 505-38) and C. Spicq (*L'Épître aux Hébreux* [Paris: J. Gabalda, 1952] pp. 202-3) also see significant similarities between Stephen and Hebrews.

In contrast, H. Montefiore (*The Epistle to the Hebrews* [New York: Harper & Row, 1964] p. 137) and M. H. Scharlemann (*Stephen: A Singular Saint* [Rome: Pontifical Bible Institute, 1968] pp. 165-175) believe that the similarities between Hebrews and Acts 7 are frequently exaggerated.

<sup>9</sup> The validity of this approach should be relatively unaffected by the critical difficulties surrounding Acts 7. E. F. Scott (*Varieties of New Testament Religion* [New York: Scribners, 1943] p. 128) considers Acts 7 an outline of Stephen's teaching, even though he concludes that it cannot be Stephen's speech at his trial. Scott also states that this chapter "may possibly be the very earliest piece of Christian literature which has survived."

On the other hand E. Haenchen (*The Acts of the Apostles* [Eng. trans., Philadelphia: Westminster, 1971] p. 229) believes that Acts 7: 35, 37, 39-43 are Lucan additions to an earlier document. And yet even under this hypothesis the methodology of this article should be valid; Haenchen's conclusions would simply affect the date that we assign to the origin of certain midrashic elements.

A corollary of this thesis concerns the authenticity of several NT passages. This article will consider several quotations attributed to Jesus or Stephen, the historicity of which is denied by many or most NT critics. In each case we will find that the thesis of this article provides a historical framework within which these quotations are plausible.

### III. HEBREWS AND ACTS 7

As noted above, some writers have observed similarities between the theology of Stephen's address and Hebrews. For our purposes, however, we shall be more concerned with the similarities between words and phrases. The following list of similarities is not exhaustive, but includes many of the more obvious points.<sup>10</sup>

1. Hebrews refers to the "tabernacle not made with hands" (Heb. 9: 11, 24); Stephen says that God "dwelleth not in temples made with hands" (Acts 7: 48). Hebrews also refers to "the works of thy hands" (1: 10), and Stephen to "the works of their own hands" (Acts 7: 41).

2. Stephen quotes Is. 66: 1: "Heaven is my throne and earth is my footstool" (Acts 7: 49). Hebrews refers repeatedly to God's throne and footstool (Heb. 1: 8, 13; 4: 16; 8: 1; 10: 13; 12: 2).

3. Both speak of Moses as having made the tabernacle after the pattern which he had seen (Acts 7: 44; Heb. 8: 5).

4. Both refer implicitly to God as a Master Builder (Acts 7: 49; Heb. 3: 11, 18; 4: 1-11).

5. Stephen refers to Joseph as "governor over Egypt and all his house" (Acts 7: 10). Hebrews refers to Christ as a "son over his own house" (Heb. 3: 6).

6. Stephen uses two phrases which refer to the building of a house (7: 47, 49), as does Hebrews (3: 3, 4).

7. Both Stephen and Hebrews refer to the "house of Israel" (Acts 7: 42; Heb. 8: 8). Although common in the OT, this expression is rare elsewhere in the NT.<sup>11</sup>

8. Hebrews repeatedly refers to Christ as having "sat down on the right hand of God" (1: 3; 8: 1; 10: 12; 12: 2); Stephen, at the end of his address, sees Christ at the right hand of God (Acts 7: 55, 56).

9. Stephen uses the names "Egypt" and "Egyptian" fifteen times, a remarkable number for such a short address.<sup>12</sup> Similarly, Hebrews uses these words five times,<sup>13</sup> compared with only one such occurrence in all the other epistles combined (Jude 5).

<sup>10</sup> F. F. Bruce (*The Epistle to the Hebrews*, p. 76 n. 27; p. 133 n. 1; p. 295 n. 82; pp. 314-318; p. 322 n. 198) notes several other parallels besides those noted in this article.

<sup>11</sup> Matt 10: 6; 15: 24; Acts 2: 36.

<sup>12</sup> Acts 7: 9, 10 (twice), 11, 12, 15, 17, 22, 24, 28, 34 (twice), 36, 39, 40.

<sup>13</sup> Heb. 3: 16; 8: 9; 11: 26, 27, 29.

10. Both refer to Moses trembling (Acts 7: 32; Heb. 12: 21).
11. Both refer to the Law of Moses as having been given by angels (Acts 7: 53; Heb. 2: 2).
12. Stephen applies to Jesus the prophecy by Moses that God will raise up a prophet "of your brethren" (Acts 7: 37). Hebrews says that Jesus "was not ashamed to call them brethren" (Heb. 2: 11).
13. There seem to be many parallels between the statements about Jesus in Heb. 2 and Stephen's statements about Moses, especially in Acts 7: 35, 36. The message of each was authenticated by signs and wonders (Acts 7: 36; Heb. 2: 4). Each was sent as a ruler and deliverer (Acts 7: 35; Heb. 2: 8, 15). Each came to his "brethren" (Acts 7: 23, 25), who were in bondage (Acts 7: 6; Heb. 2: 15), to set them free (Acts 7: 25, 34; Heb. 2: 15). Furthermore, this section of Hebrews begins and ends with implicit or explicit comparisons between Jesus and Moses. Heb. 2: 2, 3 compares the Law of Moses with the word spoken by the Lord; Heb. 3: 16 explicitly compares Jesus and Moses.<sup>14</sup>
14. Hebrews says that the OT heroes of the faith "received not the promise" (Heb. 11: 39). Stephen makes somewhat similar comments about Abraham and the patriarchs (Acts 7: 5, 17). More specifically, both show Abraham and his sons as *heirs* to the *promise, sojourning in a strange land* (Acts 7: 5, 6; Heb. 11: 8, 9). Both recall that God's promise was sealed with an oath (Acts 7: 17; Heb. 6: 13-19).
15. Both show God's displeasure with Israel's sacrifices and offerings (Acts 7: 42; Heb. 10: 5 ff.).
16. Both refer to God's word as "living" (Acts 7: 38; Heb. 4: 12).

The existence of so many points of similarity shows that there is something more involved here than coincidence. And since many of these are similarities of words and phrases, it is reasonable to consider whether some of these are what Selwyn has called magnet words. But for our purposes it is also important to note that almost all of these points of similarity can be grouped under two headings. The first seven points all relate to houses, buildings, builders, furniture, and things made with or without hands. Points 9-14, as well as 3 and 5, refer to Moses and the patriarchs, and especially to their sojourning in and exodus from Egypt. The following sections of this article will consider why these two subjects were so important in the early church.

(a) *The Builders*. As noted above, many of the similarities between Hebrews and Acts 7 relate to the subjects of buildings and builders. This seems especially significant when we recall that Selwyn has shown the existence of a Christian midrash on a similar subject, the stone which the builders rejected.

<sup>14</sup> Even though these comparisons are contrasts rather than similarities. See note 38 below.

But neither Hebrews nor Stephen refers to Ps. 118: 22, nor to the word "stone", the magnet word of 1 Pet. 2: 6-8. Instead, in Hebrews we find such words and phrases as "throne", "footstool", "house", "build", "God's rest", and "made with hands". All of these phrases or their equivalent appear in Is. 66: 1, 2, a passage quoted or alluded to several times in the NT.<sup>15</sup> This suggests that a midrash may have developed around this passage, with the key words of the passage becoming magnet words to attract other verses. Specific examples are *throne* (Heb. 1: 8; Ps. 45: 6), *heaven, earth* and *God's hands* (Heb. 1: 10; Ps. 102: 25), *footstool* (Heb. 1: 13; 8: 1; 10: 12; Ps. 110: 1), possibly *God's hands*<sup>16</sup> (Heb. 2: 7; Ps. 8: 6), *house* (Heb. 3: 2; Num. 12: 7), *God's rest* (Heb. 3: 11; Ps. 95: 11; also Heb. 4: 4; Gen. 2: 2). The word *build* does not act as a magnet word, but Heb. 3: 1-6 reads like a midrash on the words *house* and *build*.<sup>17</sup> Heb. 3: 7-4: 11 reads like an extended midrash on God's rest.<sup>18</sup> In fact, the first four chapters of Hebrews may be viewed as primarily a midrash on the key words of Is. 66: 1, 2.

Admittedly, the statement that we "can" view these chapters in such a way does not prove that such was actually in the mind of the writer. We must consider the possibility that the relationships noted in the preceding paragraph are strictly accidental. If we were to pick an OT passage at random, it would not be surprising to find some NT passages which contain some of the same words.

But the relationship shown above is too strong to suggest mere coincidence. We have shown that *all* of the significant words and phrases of Is. 66: 1, 2a—heaven, throne, earth, footstool, house, build, (God's) rest, my hand has made—have parallels in Heb. 1-4. This similarity of words and phrases would be readily explainable if Heb. 1-4 and Is. 66: 1, 2 discussed the same subject, but this is not the case. Is. 66: 1, 2 is concerned with the temple; Heb. 1-4 shows the superiority of Jesus Christ to angels and to Moses.

Of course, if the words we are considering were very common, they might somewhere appear together regardless of the subject being

<sup>15</sup> Matt. 5: 35; 22: 44; 23: 22; Mark 12: 36; Luke 20: 43; Acts 2: 35; perhaps Acts 17: 24.

<sup>16</sup> Although this phrase is found in 1: 10, it is absent from most MSS at 2: 7. However, this latter verse is a quotation from Ps. 8: 5, 6, and in this passage the phrase "works of thy hands" appears in both the Hebrew and the LXX. The OT citations in Heb. 2 are commonly believed to have been taken from a primitive collection of texts, not directly from the OT. (See notes 5, 24.) If so, the phrase "works of thy hands" may have appeared in this source document, even if it was originally absent from Heb. 2: 7.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. L. Gaston, *No Stone on Another* (Leiden: Brill, 1970) p. 198.

<sup>18</sup> The word "rest" is used as a magnet word in Heb. 4: 4, 5. A different midrash on this word appears in Pseudo-Barnabas 12, where God's rest is viewed as a future millennial rest. This contrasts with Hebrews, where God's rest is available to believers "today" (Heb. 3: 7; 4: 7).

discussed. But not all of these words are common. I am unable to find references to God's rest anywhere in the NT except Hebrews 3 and 4. I find references to the Lord's footstool in no epistle except Hebrews.<sup>19</sup> The word *throne* is also rare in other epistles.<sup>20</sup> Even references to things made with or without hands are comparatively infrequent,<sup>21</sup> and I find no place in the NT, except Hebrews, where phrases of this type are applied to the heavens and the earth.<sup>22</sup> And while neither the word *build* nor the word *house* is rare, I find only two other places in the epistles where these words (or roughly synonymous words) are used together (2 Cor. 5: 1; 1 Pet. 2: 5).

Furthermore, we have seen that all of these words except "build" occur in quotations from the OT, further suggesting that magnet words are somehow involved. In fact, only two short passages in Heb. 1-4 contain explicit OT references *not* fitting into this pattern: Heb. 1: 5-7 and Heb. 2: 12-13. If I may anticipate an argument, this article will show that these two sections are also compatible with the theory.

We should note, however, that most of the key words of Is. 66: 1, 2 appear together earlier in the OT, in 2 Samuel and some related passages. David had desired to build the Lord a "house" (2 Sam. 7: 2, 5), or as he said elsewhere, a "footstool" or a "resting place" (1 Chr. 28: 2; cf. Ps. 99: 5; 132: 7, 8). But God replied through Nathan that *He* would build *David* a house and a throne (2 Sam. 7: 11, 16); *He* would give *David* rest (7: 11). And speaking through David, He also promised that *He* would provide a footstool (Ps. 110: 1; cf. Matt. 21: 43, 44). We may see a similar contrast in Is. 66: 1, 2 between the phrase "what house will *ye* build", and "all these things (i.e., a throne, footstool, house, and resting place) *my* hand has made". In a sense, then, we may think of Is. 66:1, 2 as a midrash on 2 Sam. 7.

Although several of these words appear in both 2 Sam. 7 and Is. 66: 1, 2, we find in Heb. 1-4 certain words and phrases which appear only in the latter passage. Specific examples are the reference to the Lord's footstool (1: 13) and to things made by the hand of God (1: 10). This suggests that these chapters of Hebrews allude to Is. 66: 1, 2, not simply to 2 Sam. 7. And yet Hebrews does refer directly to 2 Sam. 7 also, in Heb. 1: 5. In this verse the word "son" from 2 Sam. 7: 14 becomes a magnet word attracting to it Ps. 2: 7,<sup>23</sup>

<sup>19</sup> There may be an allusion to Ps. 110: 1 in 1 Cor. 15: 25, but the word *footstool* does not appear.

<sup>20</sup> Although the word appears in Col. 1: 16, it does not refer to God's throne. Such references are common in Revelation, however.

<sup>21</sup> In the epistles, such references occur in 2 Cor. 5: 1, Eph. 2: 11; Col. 2: 11.

<sup>22</sup> Although somewhat similar language occurs in 2 Cor. 5: 1.

<sup>23</sup> Concerning the use of Ps. 2: 7 in a pesher on 2 Sam. 7, see D. Goldsmith, "Acts 13: 33-37; a Pesher on II Samuel 7" *JBL* 87 (1968) pp. 321-4.



to show that Christ is the "son" referred to in 2 Sam 7. Similarly, the reference to Christ as a "son" in Heb. 3: 6 may be viewed as an additional midrash on this word.<sup>24</sup> And the quotation from Ps. 45: 6, 7 (Heb. 1: 8, 9) may be a midrash on 2 Sam. 7: 16, or the parallel passage in 1 Chr. 17: 12, again for the purpose of showing that these passages refer to Christ.<sup>25</sup> We may conclude, therefore, that Heb. 1-4 is a midrash on both Is 66: 1, 2 and 2 Sam. 7.<sup>26</sup>

We noted earlier that Ps. 110: 1 seems to have been drawn into the midrash by the magnet word "footstool". If we conflate Is. 66: 1 and Ps. 110: 1, we see Christ *seated* at the *right hand* of God's *throne* in *heaven*. We find precisely this idea in Heb. 8: 1, with similar thoughts in 1: 3 and 12: 2.<sup>27</sup> This may suggest that "right hand" became another key phrase as the midrash developed. But this conclusion is suggested even more strongly by Acts 2: 25-36. This passage contains a direct quotation from Ps. 110: 1 (2: 34, 35), together with two other references to "right hand" (2: 25, 33). Quite clearly, Peter quotes Ps. 16: 10 because he relates it to Christ's resurrection, but his reason for beginning the quotation at Ps 16: 8 may relate to its use of the phrase "right hand". To a limited extent, then, it appears that this phrase became another magnet in the developing midrash.<sup>28</sup>

We noted above that both 2 Sam. 7 and Is. 66: 1, 2 are concerned with the temple. David desired to build the Lord a "house", a "footstool", or a "resting place". But Is. 66: 1, 2 shows that a temple can never truly be any of these things. Similarly, Stephen quotes Is. 66: 1, 2 to show that God does not dwell in temples made with hands (Acts 7: 47-50). In contrast, Heb. 1-4 contains no explicit references to the temple. But such references may be implicit in the statements that we are Christ's house (3: 6), that his enemies will become his footstool (1: 3, 13), and that unbelievers cannot enter God's rest (3: 7-4: 11). The connection with the temple becomes stronger when we recall that Hebrews equates Christ with the "son"

<sup>24</sup> Referring to the opening verses of Hebrews, Synge (*Hebrews and the Scriptures*, p. 6) says that the author "is in all probability using a Testimony-Book collection of 'Son' passages." He also shows (following B. P. W. Stather-Hunt) that Gen. 1: 1, alluded to in Heb. 1: 2, is a Son passage.

<sup>25</sup> Some writers see a difference between 2 Sam. and 1 Chr. at this point. Cf. Scharlemann, *Stephen: A Singular Saint*, p. 124.

<sup>26</sup> This is another point of similarity between Hebrews and Acts 7. M. Simon (*St. Stephen and the Hellenists in the Primitive Church* [London: Longman, Green, 1958] p. 52, pp. 80-82) agrees with H. J. Schoeps in seeing allusions to 2 Sam. 7 in Acts 7. Stephen explicitly quotes Is. 66: 1, 2.

<sup>27</sup> Synge (*Hebrews and the Scriptures*, p. 25) treats this expression not as a conflation of Is. 66: 1 and Ps. 110: 1, but as an allusion to Zech. 6: 13. The two points of view are not inconsistent. I would suggest that the author conflated Is. 66: 1 and Ps. 110: 1 as a commentary on Zech. 6: 13.

<sup>28</sup> The phrase "right hand" also appears as a magnet in Barnabas 11: 13, 14, where Ps. 110: 1 is quoted in conjunction with Is. 45: 1.

of 2 Sam. 7: 14 (Heb. 1:5), since it was this "son" who was to build God's house (2 Sam 7: 13).<sup>29</sup> This may explain the significance of Heb. 1: 10, which portrays the Son as the Master Builder, and 3: 6, which states that we are his house.<sup>30</sup> For these reasons, then, I would suggest that the subject of the temple is implicit in Heb. 1-4.

And yet the *explicit* subject of these chapters relates to the name and person of Jesus Christ and his superiority to angels and to Moses. The explanation for this seems to be that this section of Hebrews was based on a previously existing document which had been written for a different purpose. This conclusion has been previously deduced from other evidence.<sup>31</sup> But although this earlier document is usually viewed as a compilation of messianic proof-texts,<sup>32</sup> the evidence adduced in this article suggests that it was originally a midrash on the temple. The author of Hebrews then uses this document to show the superiority of Jesus to angels and to Moses. For this purpose the author quotes in Heb. 1: 5, 6 two passages whose subject is angels. Unlike the "Son" passages, these "angel" passages contain none of the magnet words of the midrash on the temple. This suggests that they were taken from a different source, and are here introduced as a contrast to the statements about the Son.

(b) *Out of Egypt.* The previous section considered those similarities between Hebrews and Acts 7 which concern builders and buildings. But we saw another group of similarities: statements which refer to Moses, the patriarchs and Egypt. There is no clear statement to tell us how these subjects are related to the midrash on Is. 66: 1, 2, but there are certain clues which may help us answer this question.

Perhaps the most unusual of the similarities between Hebrews and Stephen is the fact that both refer to Moses "trembling". This thought does not seem to be based on any explicit statement in the OT. When the law was given on Mt. Sinai, we are told, "the whole mount quaked" (Ex. 19: 18) and "all the people that was in the camp trembled" (Ex. 19: 16). But no mention is made of Moses individually.

However, we have seen that Is. 66: 1, 2 underlies both Hebrews and Stephen's defence, and the latter verse (66: 2) refers to "him that trembleth at my word". This phrase is repeated in Is. 66: 5. In the

<sup>29</sup> A similar thought may be implicit in the reference to Jesus as high priest. Syngé (*Hebrews and the Scriptures*, pp. 19-22) sees in this an implicit reference to Jesus the son of Jehozadak as a type of Jesus the Son of God. Of the former Jesus, Zechariah said (6: 12) "he shall build the temple of the LORD."

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Is 66: 2 and Heb. 3: 4, where God is said to have built "all things."

<sup>31</sup> Montefiore, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, p. 43; Syngé, *Hebrews and the Scriptures*, p. 3.

<sup>32</sup> A view which is implicit in the use of the term "testimonies" in reference to this document.

absence of any other OT reference to Moses trembling, it is reasonable to consider the possibility that Stephen and Hebrews are alluding to this phrase in Is. 66.

Several additional facts confirm this conclusion. First, the statement in Heb. 12: 21 and that in Acts 7: 32 refer to two different events in Moses' life: the former to God's appearance in the burning bush, and the latter to the giving of the law on Mt. Sinai. The common element between these is that in each case Moses is said to have trembled when God spoke to him. Similarly in Is. 66: 2, 5, God speaks of "him that trembleth at my word".<sup>33</sup>

Second, the person addressed in Is. 66: 5 was hated by his "brethren". We have noted above that Stephen refers repeatedly to Moses appearing to his "brethren", and that Hebrews makes a similar statement about Christ. In fact, we may note that Heb. 2: 11-17 reads like a midrash on the word "brethren".<sup>34</sup> Furthermore, so far as I can determine, Heb. 2: 11 and Is. 66: 5 are almost the only two verses in the Bible which include both the words "brethren" and "ashamed".<sup>35</sup> This further suggests that Heb. 2: 11-17 is a midrash on Is. 66: 5, centred around the words "brethren" and "ashamed".

Finally, the person addressed in Is. 66: 5 was spurned by his brethren. Stephen twice makes similar statements about Moses (Acts 7: 27, 39). All of this seems to indicate that Acts 7 and Hebrews constitute a midrash on more of Is. 66 than just the first two verses; it extends to 66: 5.

It seems somewhat strange that Stephen would seek to prove that Is. 66: 5 alludes to Moses, and even more strange that this would be a major source of conflict between Stephen and his accusers. But when we view the situation from the viewpoint of Stephen's accusers, rather than from Stephen's own viewpoint, a possible explanation suggests itself. His accusers felt that Stephen had sought to "change the customs which Moses delivered" (Acts 6: 14). Furthermore, they may have felt that Stephen was spiritually "turning back to Egypt" (cf. Acts 7: 39) by his use of the Alexandrian

<sup>33</sup> We may also note that the word "quake" in Heb. 12: 21 becomes a magnet word in 12: 26, attracting Hag. 2: 6. In fact Heb. 12: 26 reads like a midrash on the phrase "him that trembleth at My word."

<sup>34</sup> There is also evidence that the word "brethren" was used as a magnet by the early church. Harris (*Testimonies*, vol. 2, p. 50) cites a case where Gregory of Nyssa joined two verses, each containing this word.

<sup>35</sup> Although "brother" and "shame" occur in Obadiah 10.

LXX.<sup>36</sup> This would remind them of the murmuring against Moses in the wilderness (Num. 11: 5, 18, 20; Acts 7: 39, 40), an event which they could interpret as prophetic of a future rebellion by Stephen and his associates. And since Stephen made use of Is. 66, an effective Jewish rebuttal would be a demonstration that this passage predicts the future glory of Moses and the shame of those who rebel. The Jews could do this by proving that Is. 66: 5 alludes to Moses.

If this hypothesis is correct, Stephen accepts, at least for the sake of argument, the view that Is. 66: 5 alludes to Moses. But Stephen goes on to show that Moses predicted the coming of a prophet "of your brethren, like unto me", implying that Jesus was that prophet. At this point perhaps both Stephen and his hearers recalled the longer quotation which had been cited by Peter a short time earlier: "And it shall be that every soul that does not heed that prophet shall be utterly destroyed from among the people" (Acts 3: 23; Deut. 18: 19). In this longer quotation Moses prophesies the destruction of those who rebel not against Moses himself, but against the coming prophet. Thus Stephen would have once again turned the argument back against his accusers, and away from himself.

This would have made it necessary for Stephen to show that Moses was a type of Christ and that those who rebelled against Moses were therefore types of those who would later rebel against Christ. This may explain Acts 7: 22, where Stephen says that Moses "was instructed in all the wisdom of Egypt". Stephen seems to be pointing out that it was Moses, not those who rebelled, who had been educated in Egypt. Therefore Stephen's acceptance of Alexandrian wisdom did not constitute a point of similarity between him and those who rebelled against Moses.<sup>37</sup>

36 L. W. Barnard ("St. Stephen and Early Alexandrian Christianity", *NTS* 7 [1960], pp. 31-45) sees an Alexandrian milieu in Acts 7. His view has not been generally accepted. For example Gaston (*No Stone on Another*, p. 160 n. 4) observes that there is "not a hint of allegorical interpretation in Acts 7."

But it is at least true that Stephen quotes the LXX, including in Acts 7: 39-43 a text which is quite different from the Hebrew. Haenchen (*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 229) argues that Stephen would not have used such a text in his defence before the High Council, and that therefore this must be a Lucan addition. But an alternative explanation could be that Stephen's use of this and other LXX texts was one of the issues in his trial. Stephen seems to have debated with a rather heterogeneous group (Acts 6: 9); if he attempted to debate the Alexandrians on their own terms, his arguments may have further alienated the Hebrews.

37 The extent to which Egypt became associated with rebellion against the temple and the law, in the minds of the Jews of Jerusalem, may be suggested by Acts 21: 26-38. When Paul was charged with teaching against the Jewish nation, law and temple, he was at once suspected of being an Egyptian. (Although it was the Roman commander who asked Paul "are you not the Egyptian?" [21: 38] his question must have been based on his prior investigation of the charges [21: 33].)

Similarly, the parallels between Jesus and Moses in Hebrews 2 may be viewed as further evidence that Jesus was the prophet "like unto me" whose coming Moses had prophesied.<sup>38</sup>

This may also explain the significance of Heb. 11: 24-27, which states that Moses "esteemed the reproach incurred by God's Anointed greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt". Moses had been God's Anointed and as such had suffered reproach, just as Jesus Christ had. Therefore, Moses was a type of Christ. Similarly, the statement that Moses "forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king" may allude to Jesus' return from Egypt (Matt. 2: 13-15). In this connection note that Matt. 2: 15 applies to Jesus the verse "out of Egypt have I called my son", a verse which, in its primary meaning, had referred to the Exodus.<sup>39</sup>

#### IV. OTHER SECTIONS OF HEBREWS

(a) *Hebrews 8-10*. Our consideration of the midrash on Is. 66 has centred primarily on chapters 1-4 of Hebrews. In contrast, chapters 8-10 contain somewhat fewer of the magnet words of this midrash,<sup>40</sup> but they have other points of similarity with Stephen's address, and especially Acts 7: 42-44. In Heb. 8-10 the two primary subjects are sacrifices and the tabernacle (Heb. 8: 2-5; 9: 1-28, 10: 1-21); these subjects appear in close proximity to a quotation from Ex. 25: 40 (Heb. 8: 5). Hebrews goes on to say that this first covenant was replaced by a new covenant (Heb. 8: 7-13) because of the Jews' failure to keep the first (Heb. 8: 8, 9).

These basic elements appear in Acts 7: 42-44 as well. Stephen reminds his hearers that their fathers had rejected the sacrifices and the tabernacle which Moses had given them, although God Himself had shown Moses the pattern for the tabernacle. And later

<sup>38</sup> Scharlemann (*Stephen: A Singular Saint*, p. 169) says, "Even the thought of a prophet like Moses, strictly speaking, is not contained in Hebrews." This is true, "strictly speaking", but does not negate the point made here. We noted earlier that the author of Hebrews sometimes uses his source material to prove a different point from that which appeared in the source document itself. Cf. E. L. Allen, "Jesus and Moses in the New Testament" (*ExpT* 67 (1955-56), pp. 104ff. Allen suggests that Hebrews refutes "a Christology that comes near to equating Jesus with Moses," which had its roots in Deut. 18: 15.

It appears then that the *implicit parallels* between Jesus and Moses in Heb. 2 are from a source document which taught a Jesus-Moses Christology. The *explicit contrast* between Jesus and Moses in Heb. 3 is a corrective to an extreme development of that Christology.

<sup>39</sup> Harris (*Testimonies*, vol. 1, p. 126) sees Matt 2: 15 as one of the testimonies used by the early church, but sees "Israel" as the key word of Hos. 11: 1. It seems more probable that this verse was drawn into the Christian midrash by the magnet words "Egypt" and "Son".

<sup>40</sup> Although Heb. 8: 1-10 contains the words throne, heavens, build, house, right hand and Egypt. Also, 9: 11 includes the phrase "made with hands," and 10: 12, 13 alludes to Ps. 110: 1.

in his address Stephen accuses the hearers themselves of rejecting Moses' law (Acts 7: 51-53). There appears to be a connection between these points and the charges against Stephen: Stephen had been accused of rejecting the law and the sanctuary. Stephen seems to reply that it is not he but his accusers and their fathers who are guilty of these charges.

Both Hebrews and Stephen speak of the tabernacle rather than the temple as the sanctuary ordained by God.<sup>41</sup> Stephen seems to contrast the tabernacle, which was built according to God's command, with the temple, which was built by man's request.<sup>42</sup> Stephen recalls that the Jews had rejected the tabernacle of God for the tabernacle of Moloch (Acts 7: 43); perhaps he also sees the building of Solomon's temple as a rejection of the tabernacle (Acts 7: 47).<sup>43</sup>

(b) *Hebrews 5-7*. Although Hebrews 1-4 and 8-10 contain many similarities to the address of Stephen, the three chapters between these two sections have no obvious parallel in Acts 7. Except for a parenthetical exhortation in 5: 11-6: 20,<sup>44</sup> these chapters discuss the Melchizedekian priesthood of Christ, a subject not discussed elsewhere in Hebrews. Nor is it alluded to in Acts 7.

Not only does this section have little connection with Stephen's defence, it also contains few of the magnet words which are frequent in Heb. 1-4 and occasional in 8-10. The introduction (4: 14-16) and summary (8: 1) both allude to Ps. 110: 1, but the main body of this section contains none of the magnet words except *son* in 5: 5-8 and 7: 28.

And yet there is evidence of an indirect connection between this section and the midrash on Is. 66 and 2 Sam 7. The argument of this section is based upon two OT passages, Ps. 2: 7 and 110: 4 (Heb. 5: 5, 6), and each of these passages can be plausibly connected with the midrash on Is. 66 and 2 Sam. 7. Ps 2: 7 is quoted only twice elsewhere in the NT, Acts 13: 33 and Heb. 1: 5, both of which are related to

<sup>41</sup> Heb. 8: 5, 6; 9: 1, 2; Acts 7: 44, 45. Many writers have noted contrasts between Stephen and Hebrews at this point. Cf. Gaston, *No Stone on Another*, p. 160. But we have noted previously that the existence of such contrasts does not disprove the existence of parallels regarding the same subject. Cf. note 38 above.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. Scharlemann, *Stephen: A Singular Saint*, pp. 119-20, and Simon, *St. Stephen and the Hellenists in the Primitive Church*, p. 52. Scharlemann and Simon see radical opposition to the temple in Stephen's address.

<sup>43</sup> F. F. Bruce (*The Book of Acts* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1954] p. 159) notes a contrast between the "bivouac" which (according to Stephen) David desired, and the "house" which Solomon built. But if this was Stephen's position, he seems to have ignored 1 Chr. 28: 11, 12.

<sup>44</sup> This is how the structure of Heb. 5:7 is viewed by W. Leonard (*The Authorship of the Epistle to the Hebrews*, pp. 156-7, 225-6). Many other writers view chapters 5-7 as consisting of two sections: Christ's high priesthood (4: 14-6: 20) and the order of Melchizedek (7: 1-28). This is essentially the view of F. F. Bruce (*The Epistle to the Hebrews*, pp. 84-5, 133-4).

2 Sam. 7.<sup>45</sup> Ps. 110: 4 appears in close proximity to Ps. 110: 1, a verse which we have viewed as part of the midrash on Is. 66. This suggests that Heb. 5-7 may constitute a further and later development of this midrash, beyond that which we find in Acts 7 and Heb. 1-4.

#### V. PETRINE EPISTLES AND SERMONS

(a) *1 Peter 2: 6-8*. There are several indications that this midrash on the stone, like the midrash on Is. 66: 1, 2, refers implicitly to the temple.<sup>46</sup> In *1 Peter* this midrash appears in connection with a discussion of the "spiritual house" made up of believers. Furthermore, in Ps. 118: 22 the primary reference is to the cornerstone of the temple.

Matt. 21: 42 quotes Jesus as having referred to this verse during the week before his crucifixion, when he preached in the temple.<sup>47</sup> From the accounts in the synoptic gospels it appears that these teachings were largely concerned with the temple itself. Christ's first act after entering the city was the purification of the temple (Matt. 21: 12, 13; Mark 11: 15-17; Luke 19: 45-46). Later, he quotes Ps. 110: 1 (Matt. 22: 44; Mark 12: 36; Luke 20: 42), which as indicated earlier, may have become part of the temple midrash by means of the magnet word *footstool*. Jesus criticizes the Jews' attitude toward the temple and the gifts of the temple (Matt. 23: 16-21). He says that the scribes and Pharisees "build" the tombs of the prophets, which may suggest that they are the builders referred to in Ps. 118: 22 (Matt. 23: 29). He reminds them that they had shed the blood of Zacharias "between the temple and the altar" (Matt. 23: 35). His disciples show him the buildings of the temple; he then tells them that not one stone will be left standing on another (Matt. 24: 1; Mark 13: 1, 2; Luke 21: 5, 6). A few days later, at Christ's trial, he is charged with threatening to destroy the temple (Matt. 26: 61; 27: 40; Mark 14: 58; 15-29). At first Christ does not answer; when he does, it is by stating "you shall see the Son of Man

<sup>45</sup> For the connection between Acts 13: 33 and 2 Sam. 7 see Goldsmith, "Acts 13: 33-37; a Peshet on II Samuel 7".

<sup>46</sup> Notwithstanding the statement by Gaston (*No Stone on Another*, p. 222) that the entire midrash on the stone "has nothing to do with the temple." Like Lindars (*New Testament Apologetic*, pp. 169-86), Gaston sees the stone passages as part of the passion apologetic, which is clearly valid. But we have attempted to demonstrate above that the midrash in Is. 66 originally concerned the temple, although it was later used to prove that Jesus is the Christ. It is scarcely incredible that an identical transition should have taken place with regard to the midrash on Ps. 118: 22.

<sup>47</sup> Gaston (*No Stone on Another*, p. 216) concludes that the stone passages "are in no way genuine sayings of Jesus," because they are part of the passion apologetic. But see note 46 above.

sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven". We have seen earlier that this statement about sitting on the right hand of God was part of the midrash on the temple. All of these considerations suggest that the temple, and Christ's comments about the temple, were a primary issue during this week. It is in this context that we must read Christ's reference to "the stone which the builders rejected".

But the issue during this week involved not only the temple, but more specifically the *stones* of the temple. As Christ approached the city and wept over Jerusalem, he stated that not one *stone* would be left standing upon another (Luke 19: 41-45). And as he left the temple, after referring to the "*stone* which the builders rejected" (Matt. 21: 42; Mark 12: 10), some people admired the *stones* of the temple (Mark 13: 1; Luke 21: 5). Christ then told them again that not one *stone* would be left standing upon another (Matt. 24: 2; Luke 21: 6).

All of this suggests that the midrash on Ps. 118: 22, including the use of the word *stone*, relates implicitly to the temple, as we found that the midrash on Is. 66: 1, 2 does. Furthermore, each midrash refers implicitly or explicitly to *builders*. This suggests the possibility of a connection between the two, with the word *build* or *builders* perhaps acting as the magnet word.

But there is a difficulty at this point. In Heb. 1-4 Christ is portrayed as a Master Builder; in the midrash on Ps. 118: 22 he is the stone which the builders rejected. Hence the word *build* in Heb. 1-4 and the word *builders* in 1 Pet. 2:7 are used in almost opposite senses. It seems unlikely that either could be a magnet word in the same sense at the other magnet words we have considered. We should also note that Hebrews nowhere quotes Ps. 118: 22; Is. 8: 14 or 28: 16, although Heb. 1-4 contains a very extended midrash on Is. 66: 1, 2.

When we consider Ps 118: 22 from the viewpoint of the rulers of the temple, a possible solution to the difficulty suggests itself. During Jesus' ministry he had made statements which they must have considered derogatory to the temple. He had shown his disdain for the temple by telling Peter (Matt. 16: 18), "You are a Stone, and on this Rock I will build my church", an apparent allusion to the temple.<sup>8</sup> The statement implied that a living Rock and living Stones

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Gaston, *No Stone on Another*, p. 198. Many other writers deny the authenticity of Matt. 16: 13-18 (cf. K. L. Carroll, "Thou Art Peter," *NovT* 6 (1963), pp. 268-76). But Gaston (p. 229) has shown that the concept of the community as the temple runs from Qumran through the Jerusalem church to the later epistles. This concept is very near to the concept of a living Rock (or rocks) replacing the stones of the temple.



would replace the stones of the temple.<sup>49</sup> From the Jewish viewpoint, this Jesus of Nazareth, the carpenter, had forsaken the stone temple and had threatened to build a spiritual temple on a living Rock. They would certainly search their scriptures to see what was written about this. And by typological interpretation they would find it in Ps. 118: 22: "the *stone* (the temple stone) which the builders (Jesus the carpenter and his followers) rejected is become the head of the corner". Thus Jesus' quotation of this verse in Matt. 21: 42 can be viewed as a response to an earlier Jewish use of the verse. This would explain the seemingly contradictory use of *build* in Heb. 1-4 and *builders* in 1 Pet. 2: 7.

There is further evidence that some Jewish leaders used Ps. 118 to prove the centrality of the temple in Jewish worship. When Hegesippus describes the death of James the Just, he tells us that the scribes and Pharisees placed James on the pinnacle of the temple, to urge the people not to follow Jesus as if he were the Christ.<sup>50</sup> After placing James on the pinnacle, they called to him, asking "which is the gate of Jesus?" This question might seem strange to us. But whatever it meant, clearly it was intended as a leading question. The Jewish leaders believed that by answering, James would refute the Christian position. And when we read Ps. 118: 20 we can perhaps see the answer they were looking for. In its primary meaning, Ps. 118 had referred to the temple. In 118: 20 this psalm had referred to the gate of the temple as "the gate of the LORD, into which the righteous shall enter". And since the Christians called Jesus Lord, the Jews might argue, the gate of the Lord was the gate of Jesus. Therefore, when they asked James "which is the gate of Jesus?" they may have expected him to answer "the temple gate".<sup>51</sup> But instead James answered with part of the Christian midrash on the temple, as Jesus had at his trial (Matt. 26: 64): "Why do ye ask me concerning Jesus the Son of Man? And he sits

<sup>49</sup> It is often said that there are three possible interpretations of Matt. 16: 18. The church was to be built either (1) on Christ, or (2) on Peter, or (3) on Peter's confession. A fourth view, slightly different from the first or second, has much to commend it. According to W. A. Wordsworth ("The Rock and the Stones," *THE EVANGELICAL QUARTERLY*, 20 [1948], p. 12) "Peter was plainly the first foundation stone to be laid upon the Eternal Rock-foundation which lay beneath the New Covenant."

The statement in this article that Christ would replace the stones of the temple with a living Rock, or living stones, is compatible with any of these interpretations except the third. If we accept that interpretation we must rephrase this statement to say that Christ would replace the physical stones of the temple with a non-material Rock.

<sup>50</sup> Eusebius, *H. E.* ii. 23.

<sup>51</sup> Eusebius states that the crowd shouted "Hosanna to the Son of David," a reference to Ps. 118: 26 (cf. Matt. 21: 9). Furthermore, Hegesippus refers to James the Just as a "stumblingblock," another apparent allusion to the midrash on Ps. 118: 22 (cf. 1 Pet. 2: 8).

on the right hand of the great power, and is about to come on the clouds of heaven." It seems, then, that the polemic exchange between Christians and Jews concerning the temple continued in Jerusalem for some time, perhaps even until the death of James the Just.

This hypothesis may explain why the word *stone* became a magnet to attract Is. 8: 14 and 28: 16. The Jews would probably have argued that the word *stone* in Ps. 118: 22 could not refer to a person, but Is. 8: 14 refutes this objection. This verse speaks of a *stone* and says "he shall be for a sanctuary". Is. 28: 16 also speaks of a *stone*, but adds an additional concept, the necessity of belief.

(b) *Acts*. The Book of Acts records three sermons by Peter prior to the death of Stephen (Acts 2: 14-36; 3: 12-26; 4: 8-12). Each of these contains some elements in common with the midrashic passages which we have considered previously. The first of these quotes Ps. 110: 1 (2: 34, 35), and several times uses the phrase *right hand* (2: 25, 33). We have previously related both of these to the midrash on Is. 66. Also, Acts 2: 19, 22 refers to "wonders and signs", which we noted is one of the points of similarity between Hebrews and Acts 7.

Peter's second sermon quotes Deut. 18: 15, 18, 19 (Acts 3: 22, 23), as does Stephen (Acts 7: 37). We noted earlier that Heb. 2 expresses a similar thought by showing parallels between Jesus and Moses.

Peter's address before the high priest and others (Acts 4: 8-12) contains none of the key words of Is. 66: 1-5. But it does quote Ps. 118: 22 (4: 11).

Each of these speeches was given by Peter in Jerusalem to hearers who were primarily Jewish. A few chapters later in Acts (10: 34-43) Peter preaches a sermon to a group of primarily Gentile hearers (10: 45) in Caesarea (10: 34). In contrast to the earlier addresses, this one contains none of the magnet words of the midrash on Is. 66, Ps. 110: 1, or Ps. 118: 22.<sup>52</sup>

#### VI. THE ORIGIN OF MAGNET WORDS

The clearest, most numerous examples of magnet words that we have found have been those words which are common to 2 Sam. 7 and Is. 66: 1, 2, and this fact seems to suggest how the use of magnet words originated. Some early Christian must have observed that Is. 66: 1, 2 and 2 Sam. 7 contained many of the same words, and that this fact was the key to a fuller understanding of the passage in Isaiah. But some of the Jews may have objected to this method of interpretation, arguing that many OT books besides 2 Samuel contained such words as *throne*, *house*, *build* and *rest*. Such a

<sup>52</sup> Concerning this change in the speeches in Acts cf. Foakes-Jackson and K. Lake, *The Beginnings of Christianity* (vol. 2, London: Macmillan, 1926) p. 98.

disagreement would have made it necessary for both sides to see how other OT passages used these words. Similarly, according to the hypothesis proposed above, a disagreement developed concerning the interpretation of *stone* in Ps. 118: 22. It would be natural to resolve this problem by the same method of interpretation which had been effective in the case of Is. 66.

It is true that the Jews themselves, according to the hypothesis proposed above, made use of a similar method in their interpretation of Is. 66: 5. But this may have been a parody on the Christian method of interpretation, or a proof by *reductio ad absurdum*. The Jewish argument may have been along the following lines: "The Christians base their interpretation of Isaiah on the assumption that Isaiah must be referring to 2 Sam. 7, because both passages contain some of the same words. But if the Christians are going to be consistent they should not stop after the phrase 'all these things hath my hand made'. Instead, they should continue down to the phrase 'him that trembleth at my word' (Is. 66: 2). Essentially the same phrase occurs in Is. 66: 5, and this latter verse contains words and phrases which are applicable to Moses. Therefore, Isaiah (66: 5) is prophesying the shame of those who rebel against Moses." We have seen earlier how the Christians apparently answered this argument.

Both the midrash on Is. 66 and 2 Sam. 7 and the one on Ps. 118 seem to have begun at a very early date.<sup>53</sup> Matthew records two occasions on which Jesus alluded to Is. 66: 1 (5: 34, 35; 23: 22), and all the synoptic gospels record references to Ps. 110: 1.<sup>54</sup> The synoptic gospels also record references to Ps. 118: 22,<sup>55</sup> and in two of them the word *stone* becomes a magnet word, attracting Dan. 2: 34.<sup>56</sup> All of these accounts are consistent with the hypothesis proposed above concerning the origin of magnet words.

*Fridley, Minnesota*

<sup>53</sup> Dodd (*According to the Scriptures*, p. 108) concludes that the selection of *testimonia* began "at a very early stage indeed, often demonstrably earlier than the epistles of Paul." In fact, the midrash on 2 Sam. 7 has roots in the Qumran literature (4QFlor). Of this text, Gaston (*No Stone on Another*, p. 164) observes "the text is not a *florilegium* but a commentary on one specific text, 2 Sam. 7." But the commentary contains no allusions to Is. 66, nor any clear examples of magnet words.

<sup>54</sup> Matt. 22: 44; Mark 12: 36; Luke 20: 43.

<sup>55</sup> Matt. 21: 42; Mark 12: 10; Luke 20: 17, 18.

<sup>56</sup> Matt. 21: 44; Luke 20: 18.