

## A comparative study of Jewish commentaries and patristic literature on the book of Ruth

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### Abstract:

This dissertation deals with two exegetical traditions, that of the early Jewish and the patristic schools. The research work for this project urges the need to analyze both Jewish and Patristic literature in which specific types of hermeneutics are found. The title of the thesis ("compared study of patristic and Jewish exegesis") indicates the goal and the scope of this study. These two different hermeneutical approaches from a specific period of time will be compared with each other illustrated by their interpretation of the book of Ruth. The thesis discusses how the process of interpretation was affected by the interpreters' society in which they lived. This work in turn shows the relationship between the cultural variants of the exegetes and the biblical interpretation. Both methodologies represented by Jewish and patristic exegesis were applicable and social relevant. They maintained the interest of community and fulfilled the need of their generation. Referring to early Jewish exegesis, the interpretations upheld the position of Ruth as a heir of the Davidic dynasty. They advocated the importance of Boaz's and Ruth's virtue as a good illustration of morality in Judaism. Early Christian exegetes were also interested in the basic values of the social community. They maintained the important social value of marriage as an example of the emphasis on virtue. They also paid much emphasis on teaching morality. Concerning the doctrine and value of Judaism, the sage upheld the principle of monotheism and the legitimacy of Davidic dynasty. In turn, patristic fathers urged for the introduction of the gospel through the salvation of Jesus Christ in the process of interpretation. From our investigation, we can formulate the thesis that both early Jewish and Christian exegetes did not explain the text for its inherent meaning, but rather used the text for their own purposes. Normally, the main task and mission of an exegete should be to find the meaning inherent in the text. We clearly indicated that both exegetical schools of interpreters did not find meaning in the text of the book of Ruth, but rather read in some agendas and issues into the text from outside, from the exegetes themselves and their surrounding backgrounds. They tend to meet the requirement of the social and political expectations of their reader community. Interpretation was used as a tool for this purpose. They conducted an application rather than explanation. This thesis can be explained by the fact that the meaning of a text depends on the value and pre-set agenda of the exegete who interprets it. Both the text and its interpreters are part of a specific historical, political, social and cultural environment, which imposed influence on them.

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Since there are few commentaries on the Book of Ruth or even references to the book in Patristic and early medieval literature, one may wonder why Claudius of Turin chose to write a commentary on it. I believe that its composition must be seen as part of a plan to write commentaries on the first twelve books of the Bible, from Genesis to II Kings. Augustine had proposed a. However in an earlier study Hablitzel had examined the relationship between the commentaries on Samuel and Kings. by these two authors 27. I. Jewish Commentaries II. Patristic III. Medieval IV. Modern Catholic V. Non-Catholic. In order to get on the main lines of Jewish interpretation it is necessary to turn to the Holy Land. Farrar, in his "Life of Christ", says that it has been suggested that when Christ visited the Temple, at twelve years of age, there may have been present among the doctors Jonathan ben Uzziel, once thought the author of the Yonathan Targum, and the venerable teachers Hillel and Shammai, the hands-on of the Mishna. The rabbis comforted their countrymen by teaching that the study of the Law (Oral as well as Written) took the place of the sacrifices. Next to the Bible the Babylonian Talmud is the great religious book of orthodox Jews, though the Palestinian Talmud is more highly prized by modern scholars. Book Description: What do Jews think scripture is? How do the People of the Book conceive of the Book of Books? Arabic language, thought, and literature, as well as Islamic religion and politics, represented a significant challenge for the Jewish communities who came under Islamic rule and whose social and cultural structures had been forged in the classical rabbinic age. The study of the Pentateuch among Jews in the two centuries following the appearance of modern Pentateuchal criticism had no choice but to cope with the fact that the systematic study of the Torah had become an academic enterprise carried out exclusively by Christian scholars and that its results were diametrically opposed to the tradition of Jewish learning.<sup>1</sup> Severe challenges to traditional. JEWISH COMMENTARIES ON THE BIBLE (Though these are not Christian, they are extremely helpful to understand how the Jewish people interpret and understand their own Scriptures.) On-line Scriptures with Commentary by Rashi. Rashi was a 12th century Jewish scholar who commented on Scripture and has had a large impact on Christian writers. Patristic quotations and study of the bible. Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture (multi-volume set; I have linked to the individual volume of Romans to get you started) (P-though quoting Catholic Fathers) InterVarsity Press. Excellent resource for the comments of the early Christians verse-by-verse through the Bible.