

How to translate the Word into your own experience

In the Midrashic tradition, "doing" the word starts with translating it into your own breath. So to read the Bible using the Midrash method, especially when integrated with the four ways of knowing, you must move from being a "spectator" of the text to a "participant" in it. This isn't about extracting data, it's about relevance realization.

Here is a checklist to guide you through a Midrashic engagement with any passage.

Phase 1: Preparation (The Perspectival Shift)

Before reading, you must acknowledge the "lens" you are bringing to the text.

- Clear the Mirror: Am I reading this to "prove a point" (Propositional) or to "be changed" (Participatory)?
- Identify the "Ache": What is the current "Meaning Crisis" or "Void" in my life that I am bringing to this encounter?
- Adopt the "Second Naivety": Can I set aside my Sunday School familiarity and look at these words as if for the first time?

Phase 2: Engagement (The Procedural Work)

This is the "technical" side of Midrash—finding the gaps in the text.

- Identify the "White Fire": Midrashists say the "black fire" is the ink, but the "white fire" is the space between the words. Where is the text silent? (e.g., *What was Isaac thinking while walking up the mountain?*)
- Etymological Archaeology: Pick one key noun or verb. Look up its root. Does the root word suggest a more visceral, physical, or "grippy" meaning than the English translation?
- The "Multi-Lens" Check:
 - Literal: What is happening?
 - Allusive: What other parts of the "Arena" (the Bible/History) does this echo?
 - Inquisitive: What is the "hidden" or "psychological" meaning?
 - Sacred: How does this point to the "Pulse of the Infinite"?

Phase 3: Participation (The Agent-Arena Realignment)

This is where the text moves from the page into your living experience.

- Co-Identification: Which character in this story represents my current "Agent" state? Am I the lost sheep, the prodigal son or the elder brother with the log in his eye?

- The "Grip" Test: Which sentence makes me uncomfortable, bored, or defensive? (In Midrash, boredom is a signal that your relevance realization is blocked. Defense is a signal that a "truth" is threatening your ego-narrative).
- Enter the Gap: Write or speak a "response" to the text. If the prophet left a sentence unfinished in your life, how would you finish it today?

Phase 4: Integration (The Living Translation)

- Draft a "Living Version": Re-write the passage using your own metaphors, just as we did with Psalm 23.
- The "Fruition" Check: Does this reading lead to a Metanoia (a change of mind) or just a new "fact" in my head?
- The "Religio" Connection: How does this reading bind me more deeply to my community, my work, and the Source?

Summary

Step	Mode of Knowing	Aim
Prepare	Perspectival	To change how you look
Dig	Propositional	To find the 'white fire' gaps
Wrestle	Participatory	To co-identify with the text
Act	Procedural	To translate the text into action