The Interpretation of Scripture in Early Judaism and Christianity

Studies in Language and Tradition

Edited by Craig A. Evans

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Johannine community among the Samaritans. The story itself, if we accept that it existed in some version prior to the compilation of John’s Gospel, could have had its origin within the strategies of proclamation and persuasion used among Samaritans by early followers of Jesus. Its inclusion in John’s Gospel may then have functioned to recognize and authorize the presence of Samaritan Christians within the Johannine community. The effectiveness of this story within such a setting of engagement would have been strengthened by recognizing that the primary agent of Samaritan adherence to Johannine Christianity is narrated here through the medium of this distinctive ancestor of the Samaritans, Rachel.

To conclude, in investigating here how Gen. 29:1-14 informs the story of the Samaritan woman, we have attended to the narrative setting of Jn 4:4-42 in conjunction with how the content of the narrative is constructed and how a character other than Jesus is portrayed. This change of perspective has permitted an understanding first of how the figure of the unnamed Samaritan woman corresponds to Rachel, the mother of the Samaritans. It has, moreover, assisted in understanding how this dialogue between the woman of Samaria and Jesus would have particular rhetorical uses within the life of the Johannine community in relation to the interests of Samaritans. The story of the woman of Samaria thus serves as an example of how the Scriptures of Israel contribute to the narrative and rhetorical strategies of the Johannine community, evident in the Fourth Gospel.


*INTERPRETIVE CITATION* IN THE EPISTLE OF BARNABAS AND THE EARLY CHRISTIAN ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE TEMPLE MOUNT*

Yaron Z. Eliav

Midrash is a literary product of the encounter between readers and a text they consider sacred. Gary Porton defines it as follows:

[A] type of literature, oral or written, which has its starting point in a fixed canonical text, considered the revealed word of God by the midrashist and his audience, and in which the original verse is explicitly cited or clearly alluded to.

The midrash takes many forms and variations. Sometimes it confines itself to a few specific words in the text: interpreting them, playing linguistic games with them and reshaping them; at other times it goes off into general ideas for which the verse serves only as background scenery. Some homiletical interpretations remain close to the original ideas of the text; others depart far from them and imbue the verses with new meaning. The common denominator of all these variations is the great importance that the readers ascribe to the written text, using it as a starting point for their literary activity.

* This paper is based on a chapter from my PhD Dissertation (see below n. 12). Earlier versions of it were presented at the Antiquity Graduate Seminar at the Hebrew University (1997), and at the “Scripture in Early Judaism and Christianity” session at the SBL conference, Orlando, 1998. I am grateful to the members of both groups for their insightful comments and judicious criticism, from which I have benefited immensely.

There is no midrash without a sacred ‘base text’, but can there be a midrash without the explicit expression of the interpreter’s ideas? The particular type of midrash discussed here acts minimalistically on the verses, and is therefore hard to locate or define. I call it ‘Interpretive Citation’, and define it as midrash without homily, that is, a literary practice that makes use of biblical verses, but keeps its ideas hidden and does not present them explicitly. At first glance, it seems to be an innocent citation of verses, but careful inspection reveals that the citation cloaks midrashic activity. This midrashic method is well attested in Second Temple Jewish texts, such as the Qumran literature or the Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum, where some scholars speak of the ‘Rewritten Bible’. It is also well known in the texts constituting the New Testament, mainly the letters of Paul. Here I would like to present an example from an early Christian text dating to the end of the first century CE.


ELIÁV ‘Interpretive Citation’ in the Epistle of Barnabas

The Barnabas Epistle 11.2-3: An Early Christian Midrash

The first part of ch. 11, as noted by the author in its opening passage, deals with the Jews’ refusal to accept the privilege of baptism—an atonement for sin—and the judgment that was passed on them as a result. As was customary in many texts in those days, after the topic was presented, the rest of the chapter was constructed as a mosaic of verses quoted from the Scriptures. At first glance it seems as though the author has not intervened in the course of the verses, and that he has allowed the scriptural authors to express their ideas, merely separating the various passages, generally by adding the conjunction xi. A closer look at the first set of verses, however—that in sections 2-3 of the Barnabas text, which, as many scholars have noticed, constitutes a separate unit—shows that much more than simple citation is involved here. Barnabas, or whoever was before him (see below, n. 18), is very active, albeit surreptitiously, in his presentation of the verses—not only choosing and collecting them from various places in the Scriptures and assembling them together in one text, but also excluding parts of the verses and modifying some of the words. All this leads to an essential change in meaning, perhaps even to a reversal of the scriptural sense. This is the ‘Interpretive Citation’. Let us see how this process works.

3. All the references in the body of the paper are to Chapter 11 of the Lake Edition (vol. I, pp. 378-80), unless otherwise noted.

4. The author does not give the other side of the coin, and he does not reveal the Jewish way of life without baptism, writing only ἀλλ’ ἔστω γὰρ ὁ Ἰουδαῖος ἑαυτὸν ἐνθρανοΜένειν, without specifying the object of the construction. See J.C. Paget, The Epistle of Barnabas: Outlook and Background (WUNT, 2.64; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1994), p. 154 and nn. 262-63.

5. E.g. K. Westph, Tradition und Theologie des Barnabasbriefes (AKG, 42; Berlin/New York: W. de Gruyter, 1971), p. 39, which says about the relation between sections 2-3 and the rest of the chapter, ‘nicht zusammengehören können’. (Du e.g., E. Windisch, Der Barnabasbrief (HNT, Ergänzungsbuch: Die Apostolischen Väter, 3; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1920), pp. 366-67; Westph, Tradition, p. 39; Paget, Epistle. These scholars as well as all others I have read on this topic claim that this is a citation of a different version of the scriptural text, whether by Barnabas himself or by some source that he drew upon. It is especially strange that Windisch, who carefully analyzed all the changes that Barnabas introduced into the text under discussion, and the tendentiousness that led him to make these changes, nevertheless calls Barnabas’s version, ‘Zwischen ohne jeden Kommentar’.

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2. For a short summary and updated bibliography of research on midrash, see
Porton, 'Midrash', pp. 818-22. For a short summary of hermeneutic methods in
early Christianity, see R.P.C. Hanson, 'Biblical Exegesis in the Early Church', in
P.R. Ackroyd and C.F. Evans (eds.), The Cambridge History of the Bible, 1
(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), pp. 412-26; W. Horbury, Old Testa-
ment Interpretation in the Writings of the Church Fathers', in M.J. Mulder (ed.), Mikra
727-87; P.M. Young, Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture
(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997). For a focus on Barnabas, see A.P.
O'Hagan, Early Christian Exegesis Exemplified from the Epistle of Barnabas',
Atheist 11 (1963), pp. 33-40. None of these summaries point to the midrashic method
discussed here. Nevertheless, scholars dealing with biblical attestations in the vari-
ous writings of the Second Temple period (Pseudepigrapha, Quaran, letters of Paul
etc.) have mentioned this phenomenon, although using other terms to define it. See,
e.g., G. Vermes, Scripture and Tradition in Judaism: Hayyag: Studies (SPB, 4;
Stanley, Paul and the Language of Scripture: Citation Technique in the Pauline
Epistles and Contemporary Literature (SNTSMS, 74; Cambridge: Cambridge Uni-
versity Press, 1992) (I owe this last reference to Professor Richard Hays); J.J.
Murphy, Pseudo-Phil.: Rewriting the Bible (New York: Oxford University Press,
1993); G.J. Brooke, 'Shared Intertextual Interpretations in the Dead Sea Scrolls and
Use and Interpretation of the Bible in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls (STJ, 28;
Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1998), pp. 35-57. The limited scope of this paper does not facili-
tate a full range discussion on the thematic definitions of 'quotations' as opposed to
'translations(midrash)', issues debated broadly among scholars. Comprehensive bib-
liographical references can be found in the above articles.

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The passage made of sections 2–3, which is the important one for our purpose, is composed of two consecutive verses from Jeremiah and two from Isaiah, as follows:

Jeremiah 2:12-13
a: ἐξερήτησιν ὀφθαλμον καὶ ἐπὶ τοὺς πλεῖον ἐκδόθης· καὶ γῆ,
b: ὥστε δύο καὶ ποιομένη ἑκάτερον ὁ λαὸς αὐτοῦ ἐμὲ ἐγκατέλειψεν πνεύμα
γάλας καὶ ἐκατοντάκις ἄραξεν· (Βαρναβᾶς θεοτόκου).

Isaiah 16:1-2
ε: μὴ πάρει ἐμὸς ἵνα ἅμα ὃς διὸς ὁ λεγόν μου Σιναί (Σαίου).
γ: ἐπίπεδη γῆς δέ παντοῖο νοούσι διεοικημένον εὐθείᾳ ἐνθισμένον.

7. It is the change that drew the attention of most scholars—"Zion" substituting for 'Sinai' and having no parallel in any version of the Scriptures—which does not seem to me an original version of Barnabas. A close analysis of the context of the passage clarifies that the mountain symbolizes Israel's 'death pits'. It therefore must undergo the same process as the people of Israel did. Just as they, due to their mistaken choice, were sentenced to destruction, so too the mountain needs to be transformed from 'bloom to doom'. Indeed Mount Sinai is a desolate mountain, but then it always has been. How, then, can it represent such a transformation? Moreover, if the mountain in question is Mount Sinai, what is the logic of the next scene, cited from Isaiah, and portraying the flocks taken from their nest? Nevertheless, one who insists may be able to find some explanation; see, for example, the interpretations cited by Paget, Epistle, p. 155 n. 265. Most intriguing is the attempt to link Mt Sinai here with the famous saying by Paul which draws a parallel between Jerusalem and Mt Sinai (Gal. 4:23). However, the mere resemblance between these two sources is the common use of the name Sinai; Galatians draws the image of slavery, whereas Barnabas depicts destruction. Undoubtedly, Sinai was occasionally used as a literary motif in Christian texts, but, as argued above, it is not compatible with the context here, and the author has nothing to gain by such a change. It seems to me that the structure of Barnabas's 'homily' and the development of its themes, as presented here, leads to the conclusion that Barnabas was using the two verses from Isaiah to depict a scene of destruction. I thus agree with Hafte (cited by Paget, Epistle, p. 155 n. 265), who 150 years ago already claimed that this change was 'Schreibfehler'; this conclusion was reiterated recently by Klaus Wengst when he wrote, 'Die Einsatz von "Zion" durch "Sinai" ist wohl unbewusstes Versehen'. See K. Wengst, Schriften des Urchristentums: Didakische Barnabasbrief, zweiter Kleinesbrief, Schriften an Dionys (Munich: Kösel, 1984), p. 127 n. 118. Perhaps the conversion of Mt Zion into a Christian symbol in the fourth century, which relocated it on the south-western hill of Jerusalem (where it is shown today), far away from its original site, disqualified "Zion" from being a symbol for the Jewish destruction. This could have caused its replacement with a phonetically similar name.

Comparing these Barnabas 'verses' with other versions of the Scriptures reveals considerable differences. In the second half of the first verse from Jeremiah (α), the verb ἐφραίμων appears in the imperative (ἐφραίμων), in contrast to the Septuagint, where it appears in the indicative mood of the first aorist (ἐφραίμων). Moreover, in the Barnabas version the subject of the imperative contains the word 'earth' (γῆ), which does not appear in the Septuagint at all. These changes formulate a dramatic imperative opening ('Ἐξερήτησις ῑπαρχον... ἐφραίμων ἤ γῆ'), that reminds the reader of the famous addresses of Isaiah and Micah, 'Hear O heavens and listen O earth'. In addition, there is the phrase ἐπιστυνχάνειποταυ at the end of the second verse from Jeremiah (β), which is much more extreme and blatant than the λόγος συνεργαμένος in the Septuagint, and is intended to create a contrast with the πνεύμα γάλας in the first half of the verse. The tension that is created between the two limbs—the 'living spring' in the first limb, which here represents baptism, and the 'death pit' in the second limb—is meant to serve Barnabas's argument about baptism. These cannot be variants from lost versions of the Bible: their distance from the wordings that appear in the other textual witnesses of the Scriptures, on the one hand, and the way they are adapted to the line being presented by Barnabas, on the other, lead me to conclude that this is a new formulation, based on the scriptural text but used for its own ends.

The two verses from Isaiah at the end of the passage make this conclusion even clearer. Although these verses are obscure in all the versions, including the Masoretic text and the Septuagint, Barnabas's use of them is transparent and sharp. His aim here is apparently to develop the motif of death with which he concluded the last verse from Jeremiah. For this purpose he introduces two scenes borrowed from Isaiah, that present the reality of the death of Israel. In the first verse (c) the author leaves out the first half of the original verse, thus reversing its meaning. Not only is it no longer a neutral description of a path, as in the Masoretic text ('from Sela, by way of the desert, to the mount of daughter Zion'), but it is not even a clause denoting fear with the character of threat, focused on the future, as in the Septuagint ('Ἀποστείλατα...μή...'). In Barnabas's text it is a rhetorical question about a present situation that serves as a concrete description of the Jews' death pits: 'Isn't my holy mountain Zion, [see n. 7] a desolate rock?' This is a

8. Isa. 1.2. See also Mic. 1.2. All biblical translations are from the NRSV.
9. As Professor Richard Hays rightly indicated there, the potential weakness
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scene of destruction. Calling Zion here ‘my holy mountain’ has no support in any version of the biblical text, and it therefore reflects Barnabas’s wording (more on that below). The next scene, too, which is based on the second verse in Isaiah (d) and describes fledgling birds taken from their nest, is a famous image of destruction incorporated into the New Testament as well, in Jesus’ lamentation on Jerusalem.\(^\text{10}\)

It thus becomes clear that the author, by incorporating the verses in this way, creates a coherent unit with internal thematic development and lucid expression of ideas that are distant from those in the scriptural source. The main purpose of the passage is to assert that the Jews’ refusal to accept baptism means death (b). A dramatic opening precedes this assertion (a), and two scenes concretely expressing the idea of death follow it (c and d). This is a midrash without exegesis, comprising only the words of the scriptural text, whose ideas can be discerned only by the way the interpreter shapes the verses.

The third part of this passage (c) reveals the status of the Temple Mount in the author’s view. First there is the terminology: as previously men-

of my reconstruction of Barnabas’s ideas lies in this rhetorical question being set forth with the negative particle μη, which usually denotes a suggestive question expecting the answer ‘no’. This rule applies in classical Greek. It also applies in koine, and although the usage of μη has amplified considerably, and in many instances displaced οὐ, in regard to independent clauses beginning with μη when the verb is in the indicative mode, the classical meaning has usually retained. See, e.g., H.M. Smyth, Greek Grammar (rev. by G.M. Messing; Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1976), pp. 598-99, §2650; E.A. Sophocles, Greek Lexicon of the Roman and Byzantine Periods, II (New York: F. Ungar, 1957), p. 756, s.v. 2-3; J.H. Moulton, A Grammar of New Testament Greek, III (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clarke, 1963), pp. 281-83. Here, however, we must heed the fact that Barnabas was not using his own wording but rather, apart from his ‘midrashic’ modifications, was quoting from the Scriptures, where μη originally appeared. The question arises whether ancient authors, in applying the ‘Interpretive Citation’ method, would also rectify the language, and emend it to the correct form of classical Greek. This issue requires further investigation. In the passage discussed here, it is hard to imagine how such a classical suggestive question (‘is my holy mountain a desolated rock?’), for which a negative answer is expected (‘no, the mountain is not desolate’), would fit into the layout of ideas presented by Barnabas. I would therefore consider the possibility that since the author found μη in the verse he wanted to use, and since the distinctions between μη and οὐ were already blurred in his world, he left the verse as he found it, in its original wording.

\(^{10}\) Mt. 23.37; Lk. 13.34.
scene of destruction. Calling Zion here 'my holy mountain' has no support in any version of the biblical text, and it therefore reflects Barnabas's wording (more on that below). The next scene, too, which is based on the second verse in Isaiah (d) and describes fledgling birds taken from their nest, is a famous image of destruction incorporated into the New Testament as well, in Jesus' lamentation on Jerusalem.10

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tioned, Barnabas labels the mountain τὸ ὄρος τὸ θεὸν µου. Robert Kraft's question of why a Christian should call Mount Zion 'the holy mountain'11 is very difficult to answer, unless this was a customary name for this entity among the Jews in those days. Elsewhere I have discussed at length that, in contrast to what might be expected of people for whom the Scriptures served as a religious foundation and a source of ideas, the Temple Mount had no special significance for the Jews at the time of the Second Temple.12 Even though Mt Zion is frequently alluded to in the Bible under a variety of names (e.g. 'the holy mountain', 'the mountain of the house of God'), and was considered a sacred cosmic place during the time of the First Temple, this approach did not prevail in the Second Temple period. The Jews at this later age did indeed recognize the appellation 'Mount Zion' and the ideas that were associated with it in the Scriptures, and they even mentioned them from time to time (especially in early writings such as the letter of Aristaeus, the book of Enoch and the book of Jubilees), but they did not bestow any real significance in their worldview on the mountain of the Temple.

Numerous writings preserved from that period, both in Palestine and in the Diaspora, reveal that there were two places of great importance in Jewish consciousness during the Second Temple period: Jerusalem and the Temple. These two appear hundreds, or perhaps even thousands, of times in texts of that period, and they influenced many varied layers of Jewish perception. They were religiously important and had a prime place in the liturgy, yet they were also linked to social aspects of Jewish life and played a considerable role in the Jews' national and international politics. In contrast, the Temple Mount is not mentioned at all. The phrase 'the Temple Mount' does not appear in any of the writings that have been preserved from the Second Temple period, except for

11. R.A. Kraft, 'Barnabas' Isaiah Text and the "Testimony Book" Hypothesis', JBL 79 (1960), pp. 336-50 (347). His second argument, that Mt Zion is often called 'the holy mountain' in the Scriptures (p. 348, end of n. 87), is misleading. In all the verses he cites there, 'the holy mountain' stands by itself, without any connection to Mt Zion, although such a connection does appear in several verses, e.g., Joel 4:17. Also see the following note.

one source that happens to quote a verse from the Scriptures which mentions it. To be sure, a number of sources do suggest that the holiness of the Temple extended to the courtyards around it, although to a lesser degree. The view that can be deduced from these sources (especially the Temple Scroll at Qumran, but also Josephus and Philo) is that the area around the Temple protected the Temple at its center, and therefore a certain degree of “holiness” (e.g., bodily purity, exclusion of various people) was required there as a preparation for entering the Temple. But these areas around the Temple did not have independent status; they were considered an organic part of the whole Temple complex, whose raison d’être was to serve the Temple. If the Temple no longer existed, they would cease to have value.

Only towards the end of the Second Temple period, and even more so after the destruction of the Temple in 70 CE, does the Temple Mount begin to function as an element of independent value in the Jewish world. The seeds of this phenomenon can be found in the writings of Josephus Flavius, in the Third Sybil and even in ancient traditions that were incorporated into the New Testament. The climax of this process can be seen in rabbinic literature, where “the Temple Mount” is a common and habitual phrase with considerable status, sometimes even substituting for the Temple itself.

13. I.e. 1 Macc. 4:46, which mentions τὸ ὄρος τοῦ οἴκου. Literary analysis of this source reveals that the imagery and vocabulary rely, among other sources, on the famous description of the destruction in Mic. 3:10-12, and this holds true for the term “the Temple Mount” as well. The term’s absence from other places in the book of Macabees and from all other writings of the period which frequently deal with Jerusalem and the Temple only emphasizes its detachment and meaningfulness in that one particular instance. For a comprehensive analysis of this source see Eliav, ‘A “Mount without a Temple”’, pp. 29–33.


16. E.g., Joel 4:17; Ps. 2:6, “Zion, my holy mountain”, which the Septuagint translates literally.


This evolving perception of the Temple Mount as an independent entity is also revealed in Barnabas’s terminology. The fact that he calls the mountain ‘the holy mountain’ without any substantive reason—since an alternative name, ‘Mount Zion’, was already present in the scriptural verse—and without any connection to the content of the verse, suggests that this was the customary name of the place in his day. The author used this name merely to clarify to which place he referred. It is as if he were saying, ‘Mount Zion, which you call “the holy mountain of God”, is now desolate’. This does not refute the likelihood that the phrase ‘the holy mountain’ was taken from the Scriptures, but the fact that it is used precisely here, in a description of the Temple Mount’s desolation, indicates the process by which there is now a new significant place in Jewish consciousness, in addition to the city of Jerusalem and the Temple—namely, the area called τὸ ὄρος τοῦ οἴκου. This cultural process can also be seen in the author’s use of the term ‘desolation’ (ἐρήμωσις). The motif of desolation, too, is obviously taken from the Scriptures. Chapter 9 of Daniel, for example, one of the key scriptural chapters for early Christians (whose influence can be discerned already in the Gospels) uses the adjective ‘desolate’ for Jerusalem as a thread running through its entire length. Many other writers of the Second Temple period use this motif to describe the destruction of Jerusalem, whether referring to the ruins which occurred in the past, the upheaval which they confront in the present, or the fate which they anticipate for the future. The author of Barnabas thus makes use of this ancient term and image, but for a new purpose. In contrast to the other writings of the Second Temple period, Barnabas does not apply the word ‘desolation’ to Jerusalem or the Temple, as neither of these places is present in the scene of destruction depicted here. The motif of desolation is used to describe ‘the holy mountain’ alone. This is a new conception exposed in Barnabas.

Yet even more important than the terminology is the theological aspect. As mentioned, the Temple Mount is perceived in this ancient
one source that happens to quote a verse from the Scriptures which mentions it. To be sure, a number of sources do suggest that the holiness of the Temple extended to the courtyards around it, although to a lesser degree. The view that can be deduced from these sources (especially the Temple Scroll at Qumran, but also Josephus and Philo) is that the area around the Temple protected the Temple at its center, and therefore a certain degree of "holiness" (e.g. bodily purity, exclusion of various people) was required there as a preparation for entering the Temple. But these areas around the Temple did not have independent status; they were considered an organic part of the whole Temple complex, whose raison d'être was to serve the Temple. If the Temple no longer existed, they would cease to have value.

Only towards the end of the Second Temple period, and even more so after the destruction of the Temple in 70 CE, does the Temple Mount begin to function as an element of independent value in the Jewish world. The seeds of this phenomenon can be found in the writings of Josephus Flavious, in the Third Sybil and even in ancient traditions that were incorporated into the New Testament. The climax of this process can be seen in rabbinic literature, where 'the Temple Mount' is a common and habitual phrase with considerable status, sometimes even substituting for the Temple itself. 15

13. I.e. 1 Mac. 4:46, which mentions το δύνα του οίκου. Literary analysis of this reference reveals that the imagery and vocabulary differ, among other sources, on the famous description of the destruction in Mic. 3:10-12, and this holds true for the term 'the Temple Mount' as well. The term's absence from other places in the book of Maccabees and from all other writings of the period which frequently deal with Jerusalem and the Temple only emphasizes its detachment and meaningfulness in that one particular instance. For a comprehensive analysis of this source see Eliav, 'A "Mount without a Temple"', pp. 29-33.


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Christian homily as a 'wasteland' (μετά το άνθρωπος), and the author considers it a manifestation of the 'death pit' (βόηθος θανάτου) that the Jews brought upon themselves by rejecting the living spring of Christian baptism. This desolation of the Temple Mount also plays a central role in the Jewish worldview of the time, making its best-known appearance in the famous legend of Rabbi Akiva, who laughed when he saw a jackal coming out of the ruins of the Temple Mount. This midrashic legend, which is based on the verse 'Because of Mount Zion, which lies desolate; jackals prowl over it' (Lam. 5:18), makes use of precisely the same two motifs that appear in Barnabas—'desolation' and 'Mount Zion'—to refer to the Temple Mount.19

If my interpretation is correct, we are thus granted one of the most ancient examples of the Christian view concerning the desolation and ruin of the Temple Mount, a view which uses precisely the same motifs as the Jewish description, yet gives them its own meaning. Finally, none of these ideas are expressed explicitly, and they can be ascertained only in the slight changes the author introduces in citing the verses. This is a citation that deviates from the original meaning of the quoted material—a citation that is a midrash.

18. I deliberately avoided the lengthy discussion of Barnabas's sources and of the hypothesis of a 'Book of Testimonies' (testimonia) from which he took his citations. This issue, which was the central concern of most students of the text, prevented them, in my opinion, from looking at the text from other angles, such as the one presented here. For a summary of their approach, see Krafft, 'Barnabas' Isaiah Text', pp. 356-80; Pagen, Epistle, esp. pp. 78-98, although actually his entire book is based on it. From the standpoint of the present study it makes no difference if Barnabas interpreted the verses himself or found the interpretation in some other book.