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THE TEMPTATIONS OF JESUS IN EARLY CHRISTIANITY

JEFFREY B. GIBSON





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The Temptations of Jesus in Early Christianity

Jeffrey B. Gibson

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PREFACE

The origins of this present work, a revised version of my Oxford DPhil thesis begun under the supervision of the late G.B. Caird, date back to my undergraduate days at Oxford and lay particularly in an assignment given me by John Muddiman, then my New Testament tutor (and subsequently my second thesis advisor), to see what I could make of the question of the occasion of the Epistle to the Hebrews. At the time of the assignment I had never read the Epistle, let alone any of the secondary literature dealing with it or the discussions of its background in the standard New Testament 'Introductions'. So I had no predispositions toward a particular answer on the question at hand nor any knowledge of what scholarship had argued on this matter. All I knew was that, because of the silence of the Epistle itself on the matter of why it was written and the absence of any reliable external information or tradition which might provide clues in this regard, an attempt at determining what had been the occasion of the Epistle would involve a process of inference, working backwards from those passages that seemed to speak, if only indirectly, of the situation in which the Epistle's readers found themselves, to the situation itself. So, primed and ready to discover or be struck by just such passages, I began to read the work. I did not have to read long before they began to appear.

I found from the beginning of the second chapter onwards, and then piled closely one upon another, passages which seemed worthy of note: verses speaking of the possibility of the readers 'drifting away' (παραρρέω) through disobedience (παρακοή) to what had been revealed to them of God's ways in his Son (2.1, cf. 3-5; 3.12-13; 4.1-2) as well as of the necessity of holding fast (κατέχω/κρατέω) and remaining steadfast in faithfulness to an 'assurance' (ὑπόστασις), a 'confidence' (παρρησία), a 'hope' (ἐλπίς) and an original 'confession' (ὁμολογία) to which they had some time ago committed themselves even though a present crisis, a painful and trying 'time of need', seemed to throw doubt on the validity of these things (3.6, 14-15; 4.14).

Then I came to Heb. 4.15—a passage which, along with 2.17, not only says that *because* of their ‘confidence’ and their faithfulness the readers of Hebrews were, at the time of the Epistle’s writing, undergoing temptations (πειρασμοί), but which has as a basic assumption the conviction that these temptations were in essence the same as those which both the author and readers of Hebrews knew the earthly Jesus to have experienced. And I paused. Bells were ringing. What came to mind as I read this verse and its counterpart was a particular passage from John Howard Yoder’s *The Politics of Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972), which I had only recently (and, as I later thought, serendipitously) read:

Being human, Jesus must have been subject somehow or other to the testings of pride, envy, anger, sloth, avarice, gluttony, and lust. But it does not enter into the concerns of the Gospel writer to give us any information about any struggles he may have had with their attraction. The one temptation the man Jesus faced—and faced again and again—as a constitutive element of his public ministry, was the temptation to exercise social responsibility, in the interest of justified revolution, through the use of available violent methods. Social withdrawal was no temptation for him; that option... was excluded at the outset. Any alliance with the Sadducean establishment in the exercise of *conservative* social responsibility... was likewise excluded at the outset. We understand Jesus only if we can empathize with... the self-evident, axiomatic, sweeping rejection of both quietism and establishment responsibility, and the difficult, constantly reopened, genuinely attractive option of the crusade (*Politics of Jesus*, p. 98).

Accepting without question the truth of Yoder’s dual thesis—that within the Early Church there was a unified conception of the nature and content of Jesus’ temptations, and that this conception centered in the idea that the only point over which Jesus was ever thought to have been tempted was whether he was going to be a warrior king who would liberate his people from oppression through violence—I placed this alongside Heb. 4.17 and came up with a sort of exegetical syllogism:

The author of Hebrews viewed the temptations of Jesus as the epitome of what his readers were undergoing.

The author of Hebrews knew that Jesus’ temptations involved whether or not, in the name of God and in pursuit of God’s purposes, Jesus would engage in or advocate a holy war against his people Israel’s oppressors.

Therefore, the temptations that the readers of Hebrews faced were, likewise, to join with theocratically motivated, violent revolutionary forces to defeat Israel’s enemies.

Having reached this conclusion, naturally the next step was to ask *when* within the first century CE, and *in what particular historical circumstances*, would Christians have found themselves faced with, let alone be attracted to, such an option? Josephus and his *Jewish War*, which I had also recently been reading, provided the answer: *during the years 66–70 CE in the revolt and subsequent war of the Jews against Rome*. Here erupts a particular cause—the establishment of God’s sovereignty in Zion—to which any Christian, let alone the readers of Hebrews, would be mightily drawn. Here Christians were caught up in a moving appeal, at times enforced with less than salutary means of persuasion, to band together with their religious compatriots in active service to their ancestral faith. Here, especially in the initial stages of the war (which saw such things as the unexpected rout at the foot of the Temple and the eventual defeat of the legions of the Roman Legate, Cestius Gallus, the appointment and installation of a new High Priest untainted by collaboration with Rome, and the purification and rededication of the Temple), insurgent Jewish nationalists, using treachery and violence, had seemingly begun to achieve the very thing which the Sons of the Covenant had been promised and for which all pious Jews had long hoped: the liberation of Israel. And given the successes enjoyed by these nationalists in their military campaigns against the superior might of Rome, here, too, was apparent proof that the means and methods these men employed to attain their ends actually enjoyed divine approval.

Surely, I concluded, the revolt against Rome was the historical background against which Hebrews was written, and the probability of its readers being caught up in the revolt’s allurements, with all it seemed to promise them, was to be perceived as the occasion that prompted Hebrews’ author to take pen in hand. After all, I thought, did not the author’s exhortations to hold on to what he and his readers had been taught were God’s ways (3.12; 6.4-6, 11-12), to side with the Christian’s new High Priest (4.14; 10.19-25), to rally round their better altar (13.10), and to move outside the ‘camp’ of Israel (Jerusalem) (13.13), come more brilliantly and vibrantly alive under this particular assumption as to when and why the Epistle was written than under any other? And did not his apparent repudiations of the current Jewish high priesthood and sacrificial practices (e.g. 9.11-14; 10.1-18) have an especial fit with the ideology of the revolt, where these institutions, used as buttresses of, and symbols for, its revolutionary program, turned the Temple into a hotbed

of revolutionary nationalism, a 'den of robbers', instead of a house of prayer for all nations?

And so, in the white heat of an enthusiasm brought on by the certainty that I and I alone had found the key to an interpretative door which generations of scholars had failed to unlock, I placed my views on paper.

My tutor, however, quickly pulled me up short when I presented my thesis to him. Not only did he point out, by drawing my attention to the work of Alexander Nairne (especially his *The Epistle of Priesthood* [Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1913] and *The Epistle to the Hebrews* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1921]), that my reconstruction of the occasion of the Hebrews was hardly original or new; he also noted that however interesting and provocative my contention might be, it was both fundamentally unsubstantiated and logically flawed. I had begged the question, assuming as true the very thing I needed to make my case, namely, that there was indeed within the early Church a unified conception of the nature and content of Jesus' temptations. It may very well have been so, though he doubted it. After all, when one looks at Gospel temptation stories and takes into account all of the variations that are displayed there, not only intratextually but among parallel reports of the same temptation story, regarding the circumstances and occasions in which Jesus' temptations are said to occur and the interlocutors who initiate them, is there not at least a *prima facie* case for the perception in the early church that Jesus underwent many types of temptations involving a gamut of concerns? But in any event, he noted, until I demonstrated through analysis and solid exegesis the truth of my assumption, I had no secure grounds either for using it as a major premise in my larger argument or for appealing to it as evidence supporting the conclusion about Hebrews that I had drawn.

I accepted these remarks as they were intended—as a challenge rather than as a rebuke, and I became determined to prove, when circumstances afforded themselves, both Yoder and myself correct. What follows is a contribution towards doing so.

The present work would never have seen completion without the help of many others. Thanks are due especially to Paul Griffiths, Trevor Williams, Richard Pervo, Robert Jewett, Don Wendland, Richard Stegner, Ed Sanders, Lincoln Hurst, Colin Brown, Robert Morgan, and, of course, to John Muddiman, not only for generously giving of their

limited time to read the work and offer extensive comments on its various drafts, but for their continued encouragement, especially during the many times when I was less than enthused about continuing the project.

I must also express my gratitude to the Trustees of the Hall-Houghton Studentship in the Greek New Testament, Oxford, for electing me to the Studentship in 1982 and for providing me with funds for maintenance and research. I hope what they find here justifies the confidence they once placed in me so long ago.

Thanks are also due to Keith Burton for his patience in instructing me in the ways and means of word processing and the intricacies of the electronic *TLG*, to Denny Laub and David Himrod for supplying me with books, to Mdm. Angélique von Rosenberg for her able assistance in guiding me through the German literature, and to C. Rowland and D.R. Catchpole, my DPhil thesis examiners, for pointing out to me in a lively and rewarding discussion where I might anticipate critical attack should the thesis ever be published unaltered. And my editor at Sheffield Academic Press, Webb Mealy, deserves special commendation for his hard work in preparing this study for publication.

Much of what constitutes Chapter 2 has already appeared as 'Jesus' Wilderness Temptation according to Mark', *JSNT* 53 (1994), pp. 3-34. A large portion of an earlier draft of Chapter 5 was published as 'Jesus' Refusal to Produce a "Sign" (Mk 8.11-13)', *JSNT* 38 (1990), pp. 37-66. I wish to thank the editors of that journal, C.M. Tuckett and Francis Watson, for their comments and suggestions on matters of presentation and argumentation, many of which have been incorporated into the present work.

I should like to dedicate this book to two men, both of whom have in their respective ways been my guiding lights: my father, Regis E. Gibson, whose continuing refrain, until a particularly debilitating stroke took away his ability to make it, was 'How long does it take to write a thesis?' He prompted me more (and in more ways) than he knows. And to George Bradford Caird, late Dean Ireland's Professor of Biblical Interpretation at the University of Oxford, sorely missed, under whom the work which forms the basis of this book was begun. I regret not having completed it before his passing. Flights of angels sing thee to thy rest.

ABBREVIATIONS

ASV	American Standard Version
ATR	<i>Anglican Theological Review</i>
BAGD	W. Bauer, W.F. Arndt, F.W. Gingrich and F.W. Danker, <i>Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature</i>
BDF	F. Blass, A. Debrunner and R.W. Funk, <i>A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature</i>
<i>Bib</i>	<i>Biblica</i>
<i>BibRes</i>	<i>Biblical Research</i>
<i>BibSac</i>	<i>Bibliotheca Sacra</i>
<i>BT</i>	<i>The Bible Translator</i>
<i>BJRL</i>	<i>Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester</i>
<i>BR</i>	<i>Bible Review</i>
<i>BTB</i>	<i>Biblical Theology Bulletin</i>
<i>BZ</i>	<i>Biblische Zeitschrift</i>
<i>Cath</i>	<i>Catholica</i>
<i>CBQ</i>	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
<i>CBrugTomL</i>	<i>Collationes brugenses</i>
<i>Con</i>	<i>Concilium</i>
<i>CrQ</i>	<i>Crozier Quarterly</i>
<i>EDNT</i>	<i>Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament</i>
<i>EstBib</i>	<i>Estudia Biblica</i>
<i>ETL</i>	<i>Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses</i>
<i>EvQ</i>	<i>Evangelical Quarterly</i>
<i>EvT</i>	<i>Evangelische Theologie</i>
<i>ExpTim</i>	<i>Expository Times</i>
GKC	<i>Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar</i> , ed. E. Kautzch, trans. A.E. Cowley
HNT	Handbuch zum Neuen Testament
HTR	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
HUCA	<i>Hebrew Union College Annual</i>
<i>IB</i>	<i>Interpreter's Bible</i>
<i>IDB</i>	<i>Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible</i>
<i>IDBSup</i>	<i>Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, Supplementary Volume</i>
<i>Int</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>
<i>ISBE</i>	<i>International Standard Bible Encyclopedia</i> , rev. edn
JB	Jerusalem Bible

<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
<i>JBLMS</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i> , Monograph Series
<i>JBR</i>	<i>Journal of Bible and Religion</i>
<i>JETS</i>	<i>Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society</i>
<i>JJS</i>	<i>Journal of Jewish Studies</i>
<i>JQR</i>	<i>Jewish Quarterly Review</i>
<i>JR</i>	<i>Journal of Religion</i>
<i>JSNT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</i>
<i>JSNTSup</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</i> , Supplement Series
<i>JTS</i>	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
<i>KJV</i>	King James ('Authorized') Version
<i>LB</i>	<i>Linguistica Biblica</i>
<i>LCL</i>	Loeb Classical Library
<i>NAB</i>	New American Bible
<i>NASB</i>	New American Standard Bible
<i>NEB</i>	New English Bible
<i>NIDNTT</i>	<i>New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology</i>
<i>NIV</i>	New International Version
<i>NovT</i>	<i>Novum Testamentum</i>
<i>NovTSup</i>	<i>Novum Testamentum</i> Supplements
<i>NTS</i>	<i>New Testament Studies</i>
<i>OTP</i>	J.H. Charlesworth (ed.), <i>The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha</i> (2 vols.)
<i>RB</i>	<i>Revue Biblique</i>
<i>RevExp</i>	<i>Review and Expositor</i>
<i>RNT</i>	Regensberger Neues Testament
<i>RSV</i>	Revised Standard Version
<i>RTR</i>	<i>Reformed Theological Review</i>
<i>RV</i>	Revised Version
<i>SBLMS</i>	Society of Biblical Literature Monograph Series
<i>SBLSP</i>	Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers
<i>SE</i>	<i>Studia Evangelica</i> I, II, III (= TU 73 [1959], 87 [1964], 88 [1964], etc.)
<i>SJT</i>	<i>Scottish Journal of Theology</i>
<i>StBib</i>	<i>Studia Biblica</i>
<i>Str-B</i>	H. Strack and P. Billerbeck, <i>Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch</i>
<i>TDNT</i>	<i>Theological Dictionary of the New Testament</i>
<i>TEV</i>	Today's English Version (The Good News Bible)
<i>THAT</i>	<i>Theologisches Handwörterbuch zum Alten Testament</i>
<i>THKNT</i>	Theologischer Handkommentar zum Neuen Testament
<i>ThWAT</i>	<i>Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Alten Testament</i>
<i>TLG</i>	<i>Thesaurus Linguae Graecae</i>
<i>TLZ</i>	<i>Theologische Literaturzeitung</i>
<i>TS</i>	<i>Theological Studies</i>

<i>TZ</i>	<i>Theologische Zeitschrift</i>
<i>USQR</i>	<i>Union Seminary Quarterly Review</i>
<i>VC</i>	<i>Vigiliae Christianae</i>
<i>VD</i>	<i>Verbum Domine</i>
<i>VT</i>	<i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
<i>ZNW</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>
<i>ZST</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für systematische Theologie</i>
<i>ZTK</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche</i>

INTRODUCTION

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.

The Pharisees came and began to argue with him, seeking from him a 'sign' from heaven, tempting him.

And... a lawyer stood up to 'put him to the test'...

But knowing their hypocrisy, he said to them, 'Why do you tempt me?'

According to the Synoptic tradition an important (indeed, perhaps the most characteristic) feature of Jesus' life lay in the experience which the ancient Greek speaking world termed *πειρασμός*, 'temptation'. This is clear if only from the frequency with which reports concerning Jesus' subjection to such an experience appear in the tradition. We find notices, for instance, in Luke and Matthew and Mark that Jesus underwent 'temptation' in the wilderness immediately after his Baptism,¹ on account of a demand made by his opponents for a 'sign from heaven',² in the challenge about paying taxes to the Roman Emperor,³ and before his arrest in Gethsemane.⁴ Mark and Matthew both note that Jesus was 'tempted' when confronted with the so-called 'Confession' of Peter at Caesarea Philippi⁵ and in the question of the Pharisees concerning the legitimacy of divorce.⁶ Matthew reports that a Pharisee's question concerning the 'greatest' of the commandments of the Mosaic Law was an occasion of 'temptation' for Jesus,⁷ and Luke recounts that Jesus was 'tempted' by a lawyer's demand to know Jesus' idea of the requirements for inheriting eternal life.⁸ Moreover, Luke records that Jesus

1. See Mt. 4.2; Mk 1.13; Lk. 4.2, 13.

2. See Mt. 16.1-14; Mk 8.11-13; Lk. 11.16, 29-32.

3. See Mt. 22.17-18; Mk 12.15; Lk. 20.23 A D.

4. See Mt. 26.36-46, cf. v. 41; Mk 14.32-42, cp. v. 38; Lk. 22.40-46, cp. v. 46.

5. See Mk 8.27-33; Mt. 16.13-23.

6. See Mk 10.2; Mt. 19.3.

7. Mt. 21.35.

8. Lk. 10.25.

himself designated the course of his ministry specifically as a series of 'temptations'.⁹

But it is not only in the Synoptic tradition that Jesus' life is viewed as one typified by continued subjection to experiences of *πειρασμός*. A 'Johannine' tradition found at Jn 7.53–8.11 in D E (F) G K M U G II 28 700 892 *al* (but also after Lk. 21.38 in *f*¹³)—a story of Jesus being 'tempted' by a question on the legitimacy of stoning a woman caught in the act of adultery—evinces this perception, as does a story found partially preserved in *Egerton Papyrus 2* (Fragment 2 recto).¹⁰ And this is especially the case in the Epistle to the Hebrews. For as such important texts as Heb. 2.17–18 and 4.15 show, the author of that Epistle works from a fundamental historical and theological understanding which holds 'temptation' to have been *the* essential and defining characteristic of Jesus' earthly existence.¹¹

Given this, it seems clear that there was a widespread—perhaps universal—discernment within the early Church that the life of Jesus was primarily a life under 'temptation'.

But what, according to the literary witness, was the early Church's understanding of *the nature and content* of these experiences? Further, was it variform or uniform? Did the early Church—or even any given evangelist—hold the view that Jesus was 'tempted' in a variety of ways over a full range of issues? Or was their position in this regard that his 'temptations' were always of one type and involving only one particular concern?

These are no idle questions. Their answer, especially if the latter possibility is the case, has important ramifications. Would not proof of a uniform conception of the nature and content of Jesus *πειρασμοί* lead us to a new or clearer view of how the early Church perceived the exigencies of its Lord's mission and message? Would it not provide us with fresh or deeper insights into such prominent New Testament themes as Sonship, obedience, faithfulness or discipleship? And would it

9. Lk. 22.28.

10. On the questions of the date, authorship and canonicity of the pericope *de Adultera*, see R.E. Brown, *The Gospel according to John (i–xii)* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1966), pp. 335–36. For the text of *Egerton Papyrus 2* Fragment 2 recto—a fragment of a story concerning Jesus being 'tempted' by a question on the legitimacy of paying taxes to the Emperor—as well as for a discussion of such questions as its date and its literary relationship to the Synoptic Tradition's versions of the Tax Question 'temptation', see below, Chapter 9.

11. On this, see H. Seesemann, 'πειρα, κτλ.', *TDNT*, VI, p. 33.

not open up new possibilities for establishing the occasion of those New Testament writings, such as the Gospel of Mark or even the Epistle to the Hebrews, where notice of, and appeal to, the example of Jesus in 'temptation' appears as a prominent feature?¹²

12. The reconstruction of the occasion of the Epistle to the Hebrews is complicated by two facts. First, there is a conspicuous absence of any authoritative external tradition speaking reliably on the question of the epistle's origins; secondly, the epistle itself says nothing directly in this regard. The task of establishing the epistle's occasion is, therefore, of necessity a matter of (a) selecting those passages in the epistle which seem to be specifically addressed to the contingencies of the situation in which the epistle's readers found themselves, then (b) quarrying from them by inference the information about the readers' situation which they hold, and then finally (c) coordinating the information thus gained into a hypothesis which seems best to account for it. So the question that presses upon us is: of all the many and varied passages in the epistle addressed to the situation of its readers that hold promise for furnishing information vital to establishing the epistle's occasion, *which should be selected to be quarried?*

A strong case can be made for those passages which deal with Jesus' 'temptations', i.e., Heb. 2.18 and 4.15. Being paraenetic in form, they are addressed directly to the situation in which the readers of the epistle were involved, and, more significantly, they presuppose an exact parallelism between what they relate about Jesus on the one hand and what they have to say about the epistle's readers on the other (on this, see F. Laub, *Bekennnis und Auslegung: Die Paranetische Funktion der Christologie im Hebraerbrief* [Regensburg: Pustet, 1980], pp. 109-12). Indeed, the very reason that the references to Jesus' experiences of being 'tempted' are employed in the epistle is that in the mind of Hebrews' author these experiences are thought to be not only analogous to, but identical with, those which his readers were undergoing. Accordingly, discovering the occasion of the Epistle to the Hebrews is a matter of unpacking the particular conception of the content of Jesus' 'temptations' that the author of the Epistle had in mind.

Unfortunately, however, the author of Hebrews does not make explicit his conception of the content of Jesus' 'temptations'. He states directly nothing in relation to precisely how, or over what issue, he thought Jesus to have been 'tempted'. (The statement in Heb. 2.18 that Jesus *πέπονθεν αὐτὸς πειρασθεῖς* indicates that Jesus' 'temptations' were thought by both Hebrews' author and readers alike as something which came upon Jesus in his sufferings. But which sufferings are in view are not, here at least, immediately apparent.) Therefore, by virtue of the fact of its author's silence—a silence due, surely, to the fact that the author could assume that his readers shared his particular conception of the content of Jesus' 'temptations' and not to the author or his readers having no such conception—the very passages which could lead to establishing the reader's situation are prevented from doing so.

But if the early Church held and maintained a consistent and unified view of the nature and content of Jesus' 'temptations', the silence of the author of Hebrews

There are, therefore, compelling reasons for determining whether or not this fact can indeed be established. The remaining question is, then, How would one go about demonstrating that it was so? Surely, determining whether or not the early Church's view of the nature and content of Jesus' temptations was uniform involves taking the following steps:

1. investigating the extant accounts portraying Jesus as subject to *πειρασμός* that from a source-critical or literary point of view are the oldest of these accounts and independent of one another, and determining what they each have to say regarding the issue at hand;
2. moving on, with the same goal in mind, to an investigation of those 'temptation' stories which are adaptations of the more original accounts;
3. comparing the results of the second step with those of the first.

If all three steps are carried out, then several things will have been determined: *first*, just what the early Church understood as the particular concern(s) over which Jesus had been 'tempted'; *secondly*, how frequently or infrequently any particular conception of the content of those 'temptations' was entertained; and, *thirdly*, which (if any) of the earlier conceptions—whatever they might have been—about the nature and content of Jesus' 'temptations' were preserved relatively intact, and which were substantially altered as stories of Jesus' subjection to *πειρασμός* were passed on and adapted in the tradition.

The present study represents a contribution towards the attainment of these goals. In the following pages I shall be concerned with carrying out only the first of the three investigative steps outlined above. The material that qualifies as this step's appropriate subject matter is, I believe, *in*

concerning his conception of the content of Jesus' 'temptations' may not be, to put it colloquially, as 'deafening' as it might otherwise seem; and rather than being disqualified as ultimately useless for determining the Epistle's occasion, the passages in Hebrews which deal with Jesus' 'temptations' may in the end prove immensely helpful. For if the Church's view of the nature and content of Jesus' 'temptations' was unified, then we would have good reason to assume both that the author of Hebrews had this view in mind when he refers to the fact that Jesus was 'tempted' and that the readers of the epistle would have thought along these lines when the example of Jesus under 'temptation' was brought before them, both author and readers having no other view of the content of Jesus' 'temptations' available to them to draw upon or inform their imaginations.

itself sufficiently extensive, and the tasks at hand in examining it sufficiently engaging, that to go beyond it to the ‘secondary’ material and carry out steps two and three would prove too ambitious within the confines of a single study.

Accordingly, it is necessary for me to note which of the various ‘temptation’ stories I regard as literarily independent and, from a source-critical point of view, the oldest and most original—and which, therefore, will stand as the ‘touchstones’ of my analysis. These are the following.¹³

1. The Markan account of Jesus’ ‘temptation’ in the wilderness (Mk 1.9-13).¹⁴

13. As should be evident from my lists of ‘primary’ and ‘secondary’ ‘temptation’ traditions, I assume here, when dealing with the Synoptic manifestations of ‘temptation of Jesus’ traditions, the solution to the Synoptic Problem generally known as ‘a modified Two-Source hypothesis’. Despite spirited challenges made to this solution by W.R. Farmer (*The Synoptic Problem* [Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1964]; *idem*, ‘A “Skeleton in the Closet” of Gospel Research’, *BR* 9 [1961], pp. 18-42) and more recently by E.P. Sanders and M. Davies (*Studying the Synoptic Gospels* [London: SCM Press, 1989], pp. 51-122) and M.D. Goulder (*Luke: A New Paradigm* [JSNTSup, 20; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993]), I am still persuaded that the authors of the Gospels of Matthew and Luke, while making use of material peculiar to themselves, each independently knew and used both the Gospel of Mark as well as another common source which can be reconstructed out of the text of Matthew and Luke as the postulated collection of material known as ‘Q’.

On the Synoptic Problem itself and the variety of solutions that have been advanced in attempts to solve it, see W.G. Kümmel, *Introduction to the New Testament* (London: SCM Press, 1975), pp. 38-80. For a full description and defence of the ‘modified Two Source hypothesis’, see J.A. Fitzmyer, ‘The Priority of Mark and the “Q” Source in Luke’, in *Jesus and Man’s Hope* (ed. D.G. Miller; 2 vols.; Pittsburgh: Pickwick Press, 1971), I, pp. 131-70, now reprinted in Fitzmyer, *To Advance the Gospel* (New York: Crossroads, 1981), pp. 3-40. See also Fitzmyer’s elaboration of this position, with special attention to Luke’s dependence on Mark and Q in his *The Gospel according to Luke, 1-9* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1981), pp. 63-106. For the classic statement of the ‘Two Document Hypothesis’—the hypothesis of which my position regarding the solution of the Synoptic Problem is a modification, see B.H. Streeter, *The Four Gospels* (London: Macmillan, 1924).

14. On this as the proper extent of the Markan version of the tradition of Jesus’ Wilderness ‘temptation’, see below, pp. 24-31.

2. The Markan account of Jesus' experience of being 'tempted' when confronted with a demand for a "sign" from heaven' (Mk 8.1-13).¹⁵
3. The Markan account of Jesus' experience of being 'tempted' at Caesarea Philippi (Mk 8.27-33).
4. The Markan account of Jesus being 'tempted' when asked about the legitimacy of divorce (Mk 10.1-12).
5. The Markan account of Jesus being 'tempted' when asked about the legitimacy of paying taxes to the Roman Emperor (Mk 12.13-17).
6. The Markan account of Jesus in Gethsemane (Mk 14.32-42).
7. The 'Q' version of the tradition of Jesus' 'temptation' in the wilderness (Mt. 4.1-11//Lk. 4.1-13).
8. The 'Q' version of the tradition of the demand for a 'sign' (Mt. 12.38-39//Lk. 11.16, 29).¹⁶
9. The Lukan account of Jesus' experience of being 'tempted' when confronted with a question on the requirements of inheriting eternal life (Lk. 10.25-26), which I take to be derived from Q.
10. The Lukan report of Jesus' testimony that his ministry was conducted in the face of 'temptations' (Lk. 22.28).
11. The 'Johannine' story of Jesus' being 'tempted' when confronted with the question on stoning a woman caught in the act of adultery (Jn 7.53-8.11).

The versions of the various narrative traditions concerned with Jesus' 'temptations' which I consider to be secondary to, and literary adaptations of, older, more original traditions—and which, therefore, I will not investigate here—are the following:

1. The Matthean version of the tradition of Jesus' 'temptation' in the wilderness (Mt. 4.1-11).
2. The Lukan version of Jesus' 'temptation' in the wilderness (Lk. 4.1-13).

15. On this as the proper extent of the Markan version of the 'sign' demand tradition, see below, pp. 124-27.

16. As we will see, the Q account of the Demand for a 'sign' actually extends beyond Mt. 12.38-39//Lk. 11.16, 29 and includes not only Mt. 12.40-41//Lk. 11.30-32 but much of Mt. 12.22-37//Lk. 11.14-28 as well. This, along with the fact that the Q account is a "temptation" tradition', will be shown below in Chapters 4 and 5.

3. The Matthean version of the account of Jesus' 'temptation' in the demand for a "sign" from heaven' (Mt. 16.1-2a, 4).
4. The Lukan version of the account of Jesus' 'temptation' in the demand for a "sign" from heaven' (Lk. 11.16, 29-32).
5. The Matthean version of the account of Jesus' 'temptation' when faced with Peter's 'confession' at Caesarea Philippi (Mt. 16.13-23).
6. The Matthean version of the account of Jesus' 'temptation' in the question on the legitimacy of divorce (Mt. 19.1-12).
7. The Matthean and Lukan accounts of Jesus' 'temptation' by the question concerning the legitimacy of paying taxes to Caesar (Mt. 22.15-22; Lk. 20.20-26 A D).
8. The Matthean account of Jesus' being 'tempted' when confronted with the question of the 'greatest commandment' (Mt. 23.34-40).
9. The Matthean version of the tradition of Jesus' 'temptation' in Gethsemane (Mt. 26.36-46).
10. The Lukan account of Jesus in Gethsemane (Lk. 22.40-46).
11. The *Egerton Papyrus* account of Jesus being 'tempted' by the question on the legitimacy of paying taxes to Caesar (Fragment 2 recto).

As the reader turns to the table of contents or moves through the text of this study, two things will stand out. First, I have devoted a disproportionate amount of space to my analysis and discussion of the Markan versions of the traditions of Jesus' Wilderness and 'Demand for a Sign' 'temptations' relative to that given over to the versions of the other 'temptation' traditions examined here. The main reason for this is that here in particular, certainly more so than with any of the other versions of the 'temptation' traditions I investigate, my conclusions on what is being said are not only *new* but, as we will see, *in diametrical opposition to what has previously been advanced by others on these matters*. When one finds oneself not only arguing *for* a view which seems never (or only rarely and without much fervour) to have been put forward, but also arguing *against* virtually all other interpretations, let alone 'standard' and widely accepted ones, a lengthy discussion is inevitable.

Secondly, I have provided a tradition history of each of the versions of the 'temptation' traditions I investigate. At first glance, this might seem puzzling. Why, if I am principally trying to determine what a given *canonical* text has to say regarding the nature and content of the

‘temptation’ experience it recounts, should I be at all concerned with determining whether or not that text had a *Vorlage*, let alone trying to outline it if it existed, or establish whether and to what extent it has been redacted? The answer lies in the fact that if we are to ascertain whether or not there was within the early Church a unitary view of Jesus’ *πειρασμοί*, then we must know not only what evidence the ‘primary’ traditions provide on this matter *when compared with one another*, but also in what way these traditions *individually within themselves*, that is, within their own respective ‘trajectories’, serve to confirm or disconfirm the likelihood of a unitary view. Tracing the history of the development of each ‘primary’ tradition is, therefore, a necessity.

I trust my efforts will be seen as worthwhile.

Chapter 1

THE TRADITION OF JESUS' WILDERNESS TEMPTATION: THE ACCOUNTS AND THEIR RELATIONSHIP

The tradition that at the beginning of his ministry Jesus experienced temptation during a sojourn in the wilderness is recounted by each of the three Synoptic evangelists. Critical scholarship has demonstrated that the Markan version of this tradition is not only more primitive than that of both Matthew and Luke, but is to some extent their literary source.¹ In light of this it might be thought that an investigation of the tradition of Jesus' Wilderness temptation that seeks, as I do here, to examine the development of that tradition in early Christianity involves then only a comparison of the accounts in Matthew and Luke with the account in Mark. But matters are not this simple. For literary and source-critical studies of the three Synoptic versions of the Wilderness temptation tradition also reveal that the Matthean and Lukan versions of that tradition were not dependent upon Mark alone, but upon another, non-Markan version of that tradition as well, a version that most likely came from the Synoptic source Q.² Accordingly, any sound investigation of

1. On this, see for instance, R. Bultmann, *The History of the Synoptic Tradition* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1963), pp. 254-56; R. Schnackenburg, 'Der Sinn der Versuchung Jesu bei den Synoptikern', *TQ* 132 (1952), pp. 297-326, esp. pp. 300-305; P. Pokorny, 'The Temptation Stories and their Intention', *NTS* 20 (1973-74), pp. 115-27, esp. pp. 115-17; J.A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel according to Luke, 1-9* (New York: Doubleday, 1981), pp. 506-507; R.H. Gundry, *Matthew: A Commentary on his Literary and Theological Art* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), pp. 53-54; V. Taylor, *The Gospel according to St Mark* (London: Macmillan, 1955), pp. 162-63.

2. Bultmann, *History*, p. 256; Schnackenburg, 'Der Sinn', p. 305; Pokorny, 'The Temptation Stories', p. 117; Fitzmyer, *Luke 1-9*, p. 507; Gundry, *Matthew*, p. 54; Taylor, *Mark*, p. 163; P. Hoffmann, 'Die Versuchungsgeschichte in der Logienquelle: Zur Auseinandersetzung der Judenchristen mit dem politischen Messianismus', *BZ* 13 (1969), pp. 207-23, esp. p. 207; E. Lohmeyer, 'Die

the Wilderness temptation tradition must begin with the question of the relationship between the Markan and Q versions of that tradition before it can proceed any further. And this, of course, involves a comparison of texts. But what precisely is the text of Mark's version of the tradition? Where in the Gospel does it actually begin and end? And what is the text of the Q version of this tradition? What was its original extent and wording? It with these questions that my study of the tradition of Jesus' Wilderness temptation begins.

The Extent of Mark's Version of the Wilderness Temptation

It is generally assumed that Mark's Wilderness temptation story is limited to vv. 12-13 of the first chapter of his Gospel. This stands out, for instance, when one turns to the commentaries. There these verses are regularly treated separately from Mk 1.9-11 on the one hand and Mk 1.14-15 on the other.³ It is also clear from the fact that traditionally editors of critical editions of the Greek text of Mark have placed breaks before and after these verses, signaling a judgment that these verses are not integrally part of what comes before or after them,⁴ and that

Versuchung Jesu', *ZStH* 14 (1937), pp. 619-50 reprinted in *Urchristliche Mystik* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1958), pp. 83-122; E. Best, *The Temptation and the Passion: The Markan Soteriology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965), p. 3; M. Dibelius, *From Tradition to Gospel* (New York: Charles Scribners' Sons, 1933), p. 275; B. Easton, *The Gospel according to St Luke* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1926), pp. 48-49; A. Harnack, *The Sayings of Jesus: The Second Source of St Matthew and St Luke* (London: Williams & Norgate, 1908), p. 44; P. Ketter, *Die Versuchung Jesu nach dem Berichte der Synoptiker* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1918); H. Mahnke, *Der Versuchungsgeschichte im Rahmen der synoptische Evangelien* (Frankfurt: Lang, 1978), pp. 183-90; I.H. Marshall, *Commentary on Luke* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978), p. 166; A. Polag, *Fragmenta Q: Textheft zur Logienquelle* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1979), pp. 30-32; S. Schultz, *Q, Die Spruchquelle der Evangelisten* (Zürich: Theologische Verlag, 1972), p. 177; B. Weiss, *Die Quellen des Lukasevangeliums* (Stuttgart: J.G. Cotta, 1907), p. 102.

3. Cf., e.g., Taylor, *Mark*, p. 162; W.L. Lane, *The Gospel according to Mark* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974), p. 53.

4. This is the case in, e.g., the editions of Westcott and Hort, A. Souter, Tischendorf, J.M.S. Baljon (*Novum Testamentum Graece* [Gronigen: J.B. Woltes, 1898]), C. Wordsworth (*The New Testament of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ in the Original Greek* [London: Rivingtons, 1881]), R.G.V. Tasker, Nestle-Aland²⁶, and UBS³. Mk 1.9-11 and 12-13 are, however, placed together as a unit by

translators of Mark frequently render Mk 1.12-13 as a paragraph.⁵

Now, I think that the assumption is correct with regard to where in Mark the Wilderness temptation story *ends*. With Mk 1.14-15 there is a radical shift in scene and perspective from that which precedes these verses. Jesus is in Galilee, not the wilderness. He is presented in action, and not, as in vv. 12 and 13, being acted upon. Moreover, the phrase with which these verses begin (μετὰ δὲ τὸ παραδοθῆναι, κτλ.) is disjunctive.⁶ So, given these and other considerations,⁷ it seems certain that in Mark there is a clear break in the Gospel's narrative line between Mk 1.13 and Mk 1.14-15.

But is this assumption correct with regard to where in Mark the story *begins*? To my mind several considerations make it certain that it is not, and that, quite to the contrary, the Markan account of Jesus' Wilderness temptation should be seen as beginning at Mk 1.9 and including within its compass the account of Jesus' Baptism (Mk 1.9-11).⁸ These considerations are the following: first, that despite any impression they might give to the contrary Mk 1.9-11 and Mk 1.12-13 are not individual pericopae, let alone ones that have a secondary literary connection with one another; secondly, the notable extent to which Mk 1.12-13 and Mk 1.9-11 are related to one another in terms of vocabulary and narrative style; and thirdly, the meaning καὶ εὐθὺς bears at Mk 1.12.

The Formal Unity of Mark 1.9-13

While Mark's account of Jesus' Baptism is often read as a self-contained and well rounded narrative, literary (narrative) criticism and form-critical

F.H.A. Scrivener (*Novum Testamentum* [New York: Henry Holt, 1887]) and A. Merk (*Novum Testamentum Graece et Latine* [Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1951]).

5. See, for instance, the KJV, RV, NAS, RSV, JB, NEB, NAB, TEV, NIV, Goodspeed, and the translation of the Gospel of Mark by D. Rhoads and D. Mitchie in their *Mark as Story* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1982), pp. 7-34, esp. p. 8.

6. On this, W. Marxsen, *Mark the Evangelist* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1969), pp. 38-39; K.L. Schmidt, *Der Rahmen der Geschichte Jesu* (Berlin: Trowitzsch & Sohn, 1919), p. 34.

7. For instance, the fact that Mk 1.14-15 is quite different form-critically from what most immediately precedes it. On this, see F. Mussner, 'Gottesherrschaft und Sendung Jesu nach Markus 1,14f.', in Mussner (ed.), *Prasentia Salutis* (Düsseldorf: Patmos, 1967), pp. 81-98, esp. pp. 90-91.

8. That 'The Baptism of Jesus' is adequate as a name for Mk 1.9-11 is doubtful since so much more than Jesus' baptism is described there. But I use it here since it is these verses' conventional designation.

analysis of the account show it to be neither a literary whole nor an example of any formal literary category. As a story Mk 1.9-11 is deficient. It has no real ending.⁹ As a pericope, it defies formal classification. To be sure, classification has been attempted. But the fact that Bultmann calls it a 'faith-legend',¹⁰ while Dibelius calls it a 'Myth',¹¹ and Taylor names it a 'Story about Jesus'¹² only indicates that it has no discernible or discoverable form. For on the one hand, none of the designations used by these form critics actually indicates a narrative form.¹³ And, on the other, the fact that so many form critics can describe the material in Mk 1.9-11 in so many varying ways means that the structure of the material is neither evident nor recognizable.¹⁴

By form-critical and literary-critical standards, Mk 1.12-13 is, like Mk 1.9-11, also both truncated and categorically indefinable. As a story, it is too brief, even by Markan criteria, to be aesthetically satisfying.

9. Taylor, *Mark*, p. 158.

10. Bultmann, *History*, p. 248.

11. Dibelius, *Formation*, p. 271.

12. Taylor, *Mark*, p. 158.

13. Taylor, *Mark*, p. 158. See also Taylor's note on the 'form', or, rather, the lack of it, of 'Stories about Jesus' at pp. 80-81.

14. In his major study of these verses, F. Lentzen-Deis (*Die Taufe Jesu nach den Synoptikern: Literarkritische und gattungsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen* [Frankfort am Main: Knecht, 1970]) has classified Mk 1.9-11 as a *Deute-Vision*, an 'interpretative vision'. The form has the following elements: (a) angels are seen and they make a proclamation consisting of a title attributed to the recipient of the revelation; (b) a justification of the title.

There are, however, several difficulties with this view. While Lentzen-Deis has made an admirable case for the existence of this particular literary form, he has not shown that it was known or used in the first century CE. His exemplars of the *Deute-Vision* are primarily two texts from the Neophiti Targum on Genesis (*Targ. Neof. Gen.* 22.10; 28.12). They are, therefore, relatively late, at least in their present form. So the assumption that the tradition embodied within them dates back to Mark's time, let alone that it would have been known to and used by Mark, is somewhat precarious. Moreover, despite some formal similarities of Mk 1.9-11 with the Targumic texts, there seems to be too little in common between the Markan story and the *Deute-Vision* stories, whatever their date might be, to assume literary dependence of the former on the latter. Substantial components of Mk 1.9-11—the opening of the heavens, the descent of the Spirit like a dove—are without parallel, while the vision of the angels, a key element of the *Deute-Vision*, does not figure in the verses from Mark. On this, see L. Sabourin, *The Gospel according to St Matthew* (Bombay: St Paul Publications, 1982), pp. 282-84.

More important, it is incomplete in that it leaves the identity of its protagonist unspecified.¹⁵ Formally, it is unclassifiable. Dibelius says as much when he declares that it is a 'note' mentioning but not elaborating Jesus' temptation, a piece of tradition that gave occasion to Matthew and Luke to narrate a dialogue between Jesus and Satan in their respective parallels to Mk 1.12-13.¹⁶ Bultmann thinks that it may belong either to the category of 'nature myth of the kind that tells of Marduk's fight with the dragon of chaos or that of "Temptations of Holy Men" who are put to the test (by evil) and emerge victorious', but he prescinds from making a decision one way or the other on the grounds that Mk 1.12-13 is 'rudimentary'.¹⁷ So he, too, if only tacitly, acknowledges that the material has no recognizable structure, or that what structure it may have does not resemble that of any fixed literary type. And Taylor follows suit in labeling Mk 1.12-13 another 'Story about Jesus'.¹⁸

When, however, we read Mk 1.9-12 as the preface to Mk 1.12-13, or, conversely, Mk 1.12-13 as the continuation of the narrative line begun in Mk 1.9-12, the result is a well rounded narrative that is not only aesthetically pleasing and rhetorically complete. It also names its protagonist, and has a clear beginning, middle and end. Moreover, the narrative is also one whose form is strikingly parallel to that of the stories in biblical and non-biblical traditions dealing with religious figures who, like Jesus, are put to the test.¹⁹

15. The story consistently refers to its protagonist only by means of the third person masculine pronoun, recounting that 'he', not 'Jesus', was driven into the wilderness, was tempted by Satan, was 'with' the 'wild beasts', and was served by angels (αὐτόν, αὐτόν, αὐτόν, αὐτόν respectively).

16. Dibelius, *Formation*, p. 274.

17. Bultmann, *History*, p. 253.

18. Taylor, *Mark*, p. 81.

19. On this, see H.A. Kelly, 'The Devil in the Desert', *CBQ* 26 (1964), pp. 190-220, esp. pp. 198-202. See also, M.E. Andrews, 'PEIRASMOS—A Study in Form Criticism', *ATR* 24 (1942), pp. 229-44.

Among the Biblical traditions concerning the temptations of holy men by Evil, to which Mk 1.9-13 finds material and formal parallels, are Job 1-2, Sir. 44.19-20, *Jub.* 17.1-18.13; 19.1-9, *Apoc. Abr.* 12.1-14.14, and *b. Sanh.* 89b.

Among the non-biblical traditions of the temptations of holy men by evil to which Mk 1.9-13 is parallel in form and substance, see the story of the temptation of Buddha by Mara (Canto 11 of *The Legend of Buddha Shakyamuni*) and the story of Zarathustra's confrontation with Angra Mainyu (*Vendidad* 19.5-10).

The Verbal and Stylistic Similarities of Mark 1.9-11 and Mark 1.12-13
 Mk 1.12-13 and 9-11 are related to one another in terms of vocabulary and narrative style. Both sets of verses are rife with what J.M. Robinson terms 'cosmic language'.²⁰ The absolute τὸ πνεῦμα of v. 10, which is, notably, rare in Mark,²¹ also appears in v. 12. A description of the action of the Spirit upon Jesus is a prominent feature of both sets of verses. Indeed, the action of the Spirit mentioned in v. 12 is that which was begun in v. 10.²² The object of the verb in v. 12, αὐτόν, refers to the subject of the verb in v. 10, Ἰησοῦς, and derives its sense from that referent. The sentence structure evident in vv. 10 and 11a—(καί) + subject + verb (a structure which, incidentally, does not represent Mark's usual style²³)—is repeated in v. 12. All this indicates that Mk 1.9-11 and Mk 1.12-13 are to be regarded not as separate and unrelated pericopes, but as complementary and necessary narrative elements of a single story.

The Link Provided by καὶ εὐθύς at Mark 1.12

Mk 1.12 begins with the expression καὶ εὐθύς. In Mark's Gospel this expression—'and immediately'—is sometimes found employed with a purely stylistic function, as a verbal link indicating only a literary and not an essential or intrinsic connection between the material which it joins.²⁴

Despite their differences, what all of these traditions have in common with one another is that they are each set out according to a basic structure of (1) the call/commission of the holy man or an announcement by heavenly powers of whom the holy man is 'thought to be'; (2) a notice or depiction of his submission to temptation.

On the similarity between the story of Buddha's temptation and that of Jesus in the Markan temptation story, see J. Aufhauser, *Buddha und Jesus* (Kl. Texte, 157; Bonn: A. Marcus & E. Weber, 1926), pp. 24-29. On the similarities between Zarathustra's temptation and the Markan temptation story, see H.P. Houghton, 'On the Temptations of Christ and Zarathustra', *ATR* 26 (1944-45), pp. 166-75.

20. J.M. Robinson, *The Problem of History in Mark* (London: SCM Press, 1957), pp. 26, 28.

21. Taylor, *Mark*, p. 160.

22. Lane, *Mark*, 59.

23. M. Zerwick, *Untersuchungen zum Markus-Stil: Ein Beitrag zur stilistischen Durcharbeitung des Neuen Testaments* (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1937), pp. 75-81.

24. J. Sundwall, *Die Zusammensetzung des Markusevangeliums* (Acta Academiae Abensis, Humanitiora, IX; Åbo: Åbo Akademi, 1934), pp. 1-86, esp. pp. 7-8; D. Daube, *The Sudden in the Scripture* (Leiden: Brill, 1964), pp. 46-60.

But in other instances, including Mk 1.12, its function is to signify a temporal or, more precisely, an inferential link, emphasizing a more radical and necessary connection between the material that precedes and follows it.²⁵ Accordingly, appearing at the beginning of Mk 1.12, the expression καὶ εὐθύς has the effect of presenting Jesus' Wilderness temptation as the corollary and consequence of something which transpired in an immediately antecedent experience. And since in the present context this experience is Jesus' Baptism, then in Mark's Gospel, Jesus' Wilderness temptation is not presented as something separate or distinct from that experience, or portrayed as an event only sequentially but not essentially related to it. On the contrary, the temptation is united with it. With καὶ εὐθύς, Mk 1.12-13 appears as the inescapable conclusion of, and the organic sequel to, Mk 1.9-11.²⁶

In view of these considerations, it is inadmissible to assume that in his Gospel Mark's story of Jesus' Wilderness temptation is, or was intended by Mark to be seen as, limited only to Mk 1.12-13. Rather, given all that I have noted above, it seems clear that the story begins at least at Mk 1.9 and that vv. 9-13 are to be taken together as a single unit, a narrative whole.²⁷

25. Daube, *The Sudden*, p. 47; Marksen, *Mark*, p. 38; A. Stock, *The Method and Message of Mark* (Wilmington: Michael Glazier, 1989), p. 55.

26. Taylor, *Mark*, pp. 158, 163; Lane, *Mark*, p. 59; E.J. Pryke, *Redactional Style in the Markan Gospel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), pp. 91-92; J.D. Kingsbury, *The Christology of Mark's Gospel* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983), p. 63.

If, as many have argued, the appearance here of καὶ εὐθύς is due to Mark, then there can be no doubt that, at least as far as Mark was concerned, Mk 1.12-13 and Mk 1.9-11 belong together as a narrative unit. For on these grounds he actually took pains to ensure that his readers would see the one set of verses as belonging structurally and thematically with the other. There is some doubt, however, whether the phrase is redactional. On this, see below, p. 45.

27. Taylor, *Mark*, pp. 158, 162-63; Robinson, *Problem of History*, pp. 26-28; C.R. Kazmierski, *Jesus, The Son of God: A Study of the Markan Tradition and its Redaction by the Evangelist* (Wurzburg: Echter Verlag, 1979), pp. 63-64; J. Gnllka, *Das Evangelium nach Markus, I* (Zürich: Benzinger, 1978), p. 56; R.A. Guelich, *Mark 1-8:26* (Dallas: Word Books, 1989), pp. 5, 37.

There is one more consideration which, at first glance, seems to lend additional credence to this view: if we assume that in the Gospel of Mark Mk 1.9-11 is a pericope that is complete in and of itself and therefore separate from, rather than an integral part of, what follows it (i.e. Mk 1.12-13), then we must also assume that in recording these verses *as such* Mark has violated his own peculiar literary and

Just how, if in any way at all, this affects the exegesis of Mark's version of this temptation tradition is a question that certainly must be addressed. But since at the moment we are still concerned with the issue of the relationship of the two primary versions of the Wilderness temptation tradition, I will forestall attempting to do this until I deal with another issue, namely, determining the full extent and original text of the Q version of the tradition.

The Extent of the Q Version of the Wilderness Temptation

The extent of the main body of the Q version of the tradition of Jesus' Wilderness temptation is not disputed. Its basic profile is clear: (a) a notice of the temptation's instigation, setting, perpetrator and duration (Mt. 4.1-2//Lk. 4.1-2) followed by (b) a relatively lengthy tripartite dialogue between Jesus and the Devil (ὁ διάβολος) in which the Devil confronts Jesus in the wilderness, then on the wing of the Temple, and then on a mountain from which Jesus can see all the Kingdoms of the world and their glory, and then petitions him to procure bread from stones, to throw himself down from a dangerous height, to acknowledge the Devil as ruler of the kingdoms of the world (Mt. 4.3-10//Lk. 4.3-12), and then (c) a conclusion noting the Devil's departure (Mt. 4.11//Lk. 4.13). What is in question, however, in determining the full extent of the Q version of the tradition of Jesus' Wilderness temptation, is whether or not that version was, as in Mark, immediately preceded by, and included material dealing with, Jesus' Baptism. Scholars are divided on this issue. Those who believe that it was so preceded, B.H. Streeter,²⁸

narrative techniques of ending stories—especially stories he has taken up from the tradition—with some sense of closure (Mk 16.8 notwithstanding. But see N.R. Peterson, 'When is the End not the End? Literary Reflections on the Ending of Mark's Narrative', *Int* 34 [1980] pp. 151-66). As Taylor has noted (*Mark*, p. 158), no other Markan pericope ends as abruptly as does Mk 1.9-11. On the other hand, if we assume that Mk 1.9-11 is only the first part of a larger pericope, one which ends at v. 13, then no such problem arises. The narrative line begun in vv. 9-11 then ends in a more characteristically Markan way (Taylor, *Mark*, p. 80). But the validity of the consideration is dependent upon granting Mark more responsibility for the composition of Mk 1.9-11 and 12-13 than is usually thought to be warranted. On the various scholarly proposals for what is traditional and what is redactional in these verses, see below.

28. Streeter, 'The Original Extent of Q', in W. Sanday (ed.), *Oxford Studies in the Synoptic Problem* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1911), pp. 184-208, esp. p. 187;

A. Harnack,²⁹ and others,³⁰ are convinced of this fact by the following considerations:

First, in Mt. 3.13-17//Lk. 3.21-22 there are several agreements between Matthew and Luke against Mark (see below). These agreements seem to give grounds for positing a Q *Vorlage* for Mt. 3.13-17//Lk. 3.21-22.

Secondly, in its use of historic presents in narrative (cf. Mt. 3.13//Lk. 3.21) Mt. 3.13-17//Lk. 3.21-22 is stylistically uncharacteristic of either Matthew or Luke. It is, however, of a piece in this regard with Mt. 4.1-11//Lk. 4.1-13 (cf. Mt. 4.5//Lk. 4.9; Mt. 4.8b//Lk. 4.5; Mt. 4.11//Lk. 4.13).³¹

Thirdly, accepting the originality of the 'Western' reading of Lk. 3.22 (σὺ εἶ ὁ υἱὸς μου, ἐγὼ σήμερον γεγέννηκά σε), Luke renders the wording of the heavenly voice differently from what he found in Mark (σὺ εἶ ὁ υἱὸς μου ὁ ἀγαπητός, ἐν σοὶ εὐδόκησα). This cannot be explained by the supposition that Luke intentionally, and on his own authority, altered the tradition which lay before him in Mark, for 'he could not but have found the version [he uses] inconvenient, after what he had narrated in chapters i. and ii';³² rather it is to be allowed, for on the hypothesis that a Baptismal voice worded wholly according to

idem, *The Four Gospels* (London: Macmillan, 1924), p. 188.

29. *The Sayings of Jesus: The Second Source of St Matthew and St Luke* (London: Williams & Norgate, 1908), pp. 310-13.

30. J.D. Crossan, *In Fragments: The Aphorisms of Jesus* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1983), p. 342; W. Grundmann, *Das Evangelium nach Lukas* (THKNT, 3; Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 10th edn, 1984), pp. 106-107; P. Hoffmann, *Studien zur Theologie der Logienquelle* (Münster: Aschendorf, 1975), p. 4; A.M. Hunter, *The Works and Words of Jesus* (London: SCM Press, 1950), p. 132; U. Luz, 'Q4', *SBLSP* (1984), p. 376; I.H. Marshall, *Commentary on Luke* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978), p. 152; A. Polag, *Fragmenta Q: Texttheft zur Logienquelle* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1979), pp. 30-31; W. Schmithals, *Das Evangelium nach Lukas* (Zürich: Theologischer Verlag, 1980), p. 54; H. Schurmann, *Das Lukasevangelium* (Freiburg: Herder & Herder, 1969), pp. 197, 218; E. Schweizer, 'υἱός', *TDNT*, VIII, p. 377 n. 314; *idem*, *The Good News according to Matthew* (Atlanta: John Knox, 1975), p. 58; P. Vassiliadis, 'The Nature and Extent of the Q Document', *NovT* 20 (1978), p. 73.

31. W.C. Allen, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to S. Matthew* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1909), p. 31, cp. pp. xx, lxxxvi; *idem*, 'The Book of Sayings Used by the Editor of the First Gospel', in *Oxford Studies in the Synoptic Problem*, p. 274.

32. Harnack, *Sayings*, p. 313.

Ps. 2.7 existed in Q, it makes sense that Luke, knowing it, felt compelled, as was his usual practice when dealing with overlaps of Mark and Q, to use it in preference to the Markan text.³³

Finally, in the Q version of the tradition of Jesus' Wilderness temptation the presupposition and ground of that temptation is that Jesus has been declared and commissioned to be υἱός τοῦ θεοῦ (cf. Mt. 4.3//Lk. 4.3; Mt. 4.5//Lk. 4.9).³⁴ This makes it likely that some account of this event would have preceded the story of the Wilderness temptation.³⁵

But those who do not believe that Q contained an account of Jesus' Baptism³⁶ point out (1) that the Matthew–Luke agreements against Mark in Mt. 3.13–17//Lk. 3.21–22 are either too slight in extent to posit a Q *Vorlage*,³⁷ or readily explainable as redactional,³⁸ (2) that the use of the historic present in Mt. 3.13//Lk. 3.21, though unusual, is still redactional,³⁹ (3) that the Western text of Lk. 3.22, even if the original reading

of Luke, scarcely proves anything about Q,⁴⁰ and (4) that the title 'Son of God' in Mt. 4.1–11//Lk. 4.1–13 does not require an explanatory narrative any more than does the title 'Son of Man', which is by far

33. Harnack, *Sayings*, p. 313; Streeter, 'Original Extent of Q', p. 187.

34. This is apparent in the Devil's couching his address to Jesus as υἱός τοῦ θεοῦ within the phrase εἰ...εἰ, which, as we will see below in Chapter 3, p. 98, is an acknowledgment that Jesus has been called to the office of 'Son'.

35. Marshall, *Luke*, p. 152; Schmithals, *Lukas*, p. 54; Schurmann, *Lukasevangelium*, p. 197; Schweizer, 'υἱός', p. 377; *idem*, *Matthew*, p. 58; G.S. Stanton, 'On the Christology of Q', in B. Lindars and S. Smalley (eds.), *Christ and the Spirit: Essays in Honour of C.F.D. Moule* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), p. 35; D.R. Catchpole, 'The Beginning of Q', *NTS* 38 (1992), pp. 205–221, esp. p. 218.

36. B.S. Easton, *The Gospel according to St Luke* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1926), pp. xiii, xviii; Fitzmyer, *Luke 1–9*, p. 479; J.C. Hawkins, *Horae Synopticae* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1909), p. 109; J.S. Kloppenborg, *The Formation of Q: Trajectories in Ancient Wisdom Collections* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987), pp. 84–85; W.L. Knox, *The Sources of the Synoptic Gospels* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1957), II, p. 4; T.W. Manson, *The Sayings of Jesus* (London: SCM Press, 1937), p. 41.

37. Fitzmyer, *Luke 1–9*, p. 479; G.O. Williams, 'The Baptism in Luke's Gospel', *JTS* 45 (1944), pp. 31–38.

38. Kloppenborg, *Formation of Q*, pp. 85–86 n. 157.

39. Gundry, *Matthew*, p. 49.

40. Kloppenborg, *Formation of Q*, p. 85; Vassiliadis, 'Nature and Extent of Q', p. 69.

the more common title for Jesus in Q.⁴¹

To my mind, it is clear that the respective critiques of the arguments from the use of the historic present and the existence of the Western text of Lk. 3.22 are sound. But the view that the extent of Matthew–Luke agreements is slight seems hardly justifiable. On the contrary, the extent of the agreement is actually fairly broad. Both Matthew and Luke use a participial form of ‘to baptize’ against Mark’s finite form of the verb. Both use a form ἀνοίγω in their respective parallels to Mk 1.10 and agree in saying ‘the heavens were opened’ (ἠνεώχθησαν [αὐτῷ] οἱ οὐρανοί, Mt. 3.15; ἀνεψχθῆναι τὸν οὐρανόν, Lk. 3.21) over against Mark’s ‘He saw the heavens torn asunder’ (σχιζόμενους). Both have ἐπ’ αὐτόν in the description of the Spirit’s descent upon Jesus against Mark’s use of εἰς αὐτόν. And both place καταβαίνω before ὡς (ὡσεὶ) περιστεράν instead of after this phrase as Mark does.⁴² Nor is the view that these agreements are only redactional ultimately convincing. Only some of them can be explained away in this manner.

Similarly, the argument for the existence in Q of a narrative explaining why Jesus is called ‘Son of God’ in Mt. 4.1-11//Lk. 4.1-13 cannot be dismissed on the grounds that we find no narrative in Q grounding its ‘Son of Man’ Christology. *Why should we?* According to Q the office of ‘Son of Man’ is not something to which Jesus was appointed. It is something Jesus by himself assumes. But the office of ‘Son of God’ comes to Jesus from outside himself and is something to which he is called.

So in the end, the case for an account of Jesus’ Baptism in Q is strong. But what then did it look like? A full reconstruction is beyond our grasp. But certainly it contained four elements: (1) a notice of Jesus coming to be baptized, (2) a notice of the heavens opening using the verb ἀνοίγω, (3) a description of the Spirit descending ‘upon’ Jesus which used the preposition ἐπ’, and (4) a notice of God declaring Jesus υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ.⁴³ Moreover, the wording of this last element almost certainly contained the pronoun μοῦ and possibly also the phrase ὁ ἀγαπητός.⁴⁴

41. Kloppenborg, *Formation of Q*, p. 85.

42. Cf. Jacobson, ‘Wisdom Christology’, p. 35; Schurmann, *Lukasevangelium*, I, p. 197 n. 70; Marshall, *Luke*, p. 152.

43. Stanton, ‘Christology of Q’, p. 35.

44. M. Albertz, *Die synoptischen Streitgespräche: Ein Beitrag zur Formgeschichte des Urchristentums* (Berlin: Trowitzsch & Sohn, 1921), p. 165. See

To establish the remainder of the text of the Q version of the tradition of Jesus' Wilderness temptation, it is necessary to do three things: first, identify and eliminate from Mt. 4.1-11 and Lk. 4.1-13 respectively the elements presently within these texts which are taken over from Mk 1.9-13; second, to compare with one another the 'stripped down' versions of Mt. 4.1-11 and Lk. 4.1-13, outlining the manner in which these texts now diverge from one another; and then, third, to examine these divergencies in light of the editorial tendencies, stylistic and linguistic habits, and theological phrases known to be peculiar to each evangelist.

This work has already been undertaken by a number of scholars including A. Harnack,⁴⁵ S. Schulz,⁴⁶ P. Hoffmann,⁴⁷ A. Polag,⁴⁸ D. Zeller,⁴⁹ W. Schenk,⁵⁰ and most recently by L. Vaage.⁵¹ A comparison and correlation of their endeavors (which in the end differ from one another only slightly)⁵² reveals that the text of the Q account of Jesus' Wilderness temptation (excluding the verses recounting Jesus' Baptism) most probably ran along the following lines:

ὁ Ἰησοῦς δὲ ἀνήχθη ὑπὸ τοῦ πνεύματος ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ πειρασθῆναι
ὑπὸ τοῦ διαβόλου. καὶ νηστεύσας ἡμέρας τεσσαράκοντα καὶ
νύκτας τεσσαράκοντα, ὕστερον ἐπέινασεν.

εἶπεν δὲ αὐτῷ ὁ διάβολος· εἰ υἱὸς εἶ τοῦ θεοῦ,
εἰπὲ ἵνα οἱ λίθοι οὗτοι ἄρτοι γένωνται.
καὶ ἀποκριθεὶς εἶπεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς·
γέγραπται ὅτι οὐκ ἐπ' ἄρτων μόνων ζήσεται ὁ ἄνθρωπος.

also P.G. Bretcher, *The Temptation of Jesus in Matthew* (DTh thesis, Concordia Seminary, St Louis; 1966), pp. 162-82. While both Albertz and Bretcher agree in seeing the heavenly voice addressing Jesus as ὁ υἱὸς ὁ ἀγαπητός, they differ with respect to the question of whether the 'Baptismal word' itself was cast, as in Mk 1.11, in terms of a direct address to Jesus (σὺ εἶ) or, as in Mt 3.17, as a public proclamation (οὗτός ἐστιν). Bretcher opts for the latter view because he sees the Old Testament root of the heavenly voice to be not the Ps. 2 but Exod. 4.22.

45. Harnack, *Sayings of Jesus*, pp. 41-48.

46. Schulz, *Q*, pp. 177-81.

47. 'Versuchungsgeschichte', pp. 208-209.

48. Polag, *Fragmenta Q*, pp. 30-32.

49. 'Versuchungsgeschichte Jesu', pp. 61-62.

50. *Synopse zur Redenquelle der Evangelisten: Q Synopse und Reconstruction in deutscher Übersetzung mit kurzen Erläuterungen* (Düsseldorf: Patmos Verlag, 1981).

51. 'Q 4', in *SBLSP* (1984), pp. 346-73.

52. For a notation of the main differences, see Vaage, 'Q 4', *passim*.

τότε παραλαμβάνει αὐτὸν ὁ διάβολος εἰς Ἱερουσαλήμ καὶ ἔστησεν αὐτὸν ἐπὶ τὸ πτερύγιον τοῦ ἱεροῦ
καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ· εἰ υἱὸς εἶ τοῦ θεοῦ,
βάλε σεαυτὸν κάτω· γέγραπται γὰρ ὅτι τοῖς ἀγγέλοις αὐτοῦ
ἐντελεῖται περὶ σοῦ καὶ ἐπὶ χειρῶν ἀροῦσιν σε, μήποτε προσκώψῃς
πρὸς λίθον τὸν πόδα σου.
καὶ ἀποκριθεὶς εἶπεν [ἔφη] αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς·
[πάλιν] γέγραπται· οὐκ ἐκπειράσεις κύριον τὸν θεόν σου.

καὶ πάλιν παραλαμβάνει αὐτὸν ὁ διάβολος εἰς ὄρος ὑψηλὸν καὶ
δείκνυσιν αὐτῷ πάσας τὰς βασιλείας τοῦ κόσμου καὶ τὴν δόξαν
αὐτῶν καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ·
ταῦτά σοι πάντα δώσω, ἐὰν προσκυνήσῃς μοι.
καὶ ἀποκριθεὶς εἶπεν αὐτῷ [λέγει αὐτῷ] ὁ Ἰησοῦς.
γέγραπται· κύριον τὸν θεόν σου προσκυνήσεις καὶ αὐτῷ μόνῳ
λατρεύσεις.

The Relationship between the Two Versions of the Tradition

A comparison of the Q version of the tradition of Jesus' Wilderness temptation with that of Mark shows that they have four points in common: (1) Jesus' possession by the Holy Spirit, (2) the influence of a demonic figure, (3) the naming of the scene of the events as ἡ ἔρημος, and (4) the giving of the duration of the experience as forty days. There is, then, between the two versions not some small similarity in detail, but a degree of overlap sufficient to justify the assertion that Mk 1.9-13 and the Q story of Jesus' Wilderness temptation are in some way connected. But in what way? There are three possibilities: first, the Q story is drawn from Mark; second, the Markan story is drawn from Q; and, third, both versions are dependent on a common tradition or represent independent, overlapping traditions.

The first possibility, though supported by Wellhausen,⁵³ and to some extent by Bultmann,⁵⁴ is not very plausible. To accept it involves holding improbable views on the date of Q, not to mention that of Mark. And even should it be the case, we would still be left with the question of the

53. J. Wellhausen, *Einleitung in die drei ersten Evangelisten* (Berlin: Druck & Verlag von George Reimer, 1905), pp. 73-74.

54. *History*, pp. 253-54. See also A. Fridrichsen, 'Le problème du miracle dans le Christianisme primitif' (dissertation, Paris, 1925), pp. 89-90, 123 n. 30, who thinks that Q's third (mountain) incident of temptation derives from the Markan version of the Wilderness temptation tradition, albeit a mutilated version of it.

origin, source and tradition history of the material in the Q story which is evidently non-Markan.

The second possibility has several arguments in its favour. First, Mark's version of the tradition of Jesus' Wilderness temptation is brief, at least compared to the Q account, and reads as though it were a mere fragment or a summary of a longer account.⁵⁵ Secondly, the thematic background of the Markan version is the same as that of Q, Deuteronomy 6–8.⁵⁶ Thirdly, there appears to be a trace of the Q version of the tradition in Mark's account: Mt. 4.6/Lk. 4.10-11 and its quotation of Psalm 91, which speaks of the lion, adder and dragon (i.e. θηρία; cf. Ps. 91.13), stands behind the reference in Mk 1.13 to Jesus' being with 'wild beasts'.⁵⁷

None of these arguments, however, stands up to scrutiny. As I will show below, the view that Mark's version of the Wilderness temptation tradition reads like a fragment of, or a brief summary based on, a longer version of the temptation story and not like an account complete in and of itself is highly questionable. Not only does this view assume without proof, and through a dubious process of thinking, that the Markan version is too spare to be anything but a fragment or an epitome, but it also does not take Mark seriously enough on his own terms.⁵⁸ The fact that the thematic background of the Markan version of the tradition is, like that of the Q account, Deuteronomy 6–8 is by no means certain,⁵⁹ and even should this be the case,⁶⁰ it need hardly imply that in this instance Mark was drawing on Q. The thematic overlap could just as easily be explained by Mark and Q *independently* drawing on a common source

55. Streeter, 'St Mark's Knowledge of Q', in *Oxford Studies in the Synoptic Problem*, pp. 167-83, esp. p. 168; J. Weiss, *Das Markusevangelium* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1912), p. 75. See also J. Dupont, 'L'arrière-fond biblique du récit des tentations de Jésus', *NTS* 3 (1956–57), pp. 287-304, esp. pp. 298-99; A. Feuillet, 'L'épisode de la tentation d'après l'Évangile selon Saint Marc (1,12-13)', *EstBib* 19 (1960), pp. 49-73.

56. On Deut. 6–8 as the background to the Q version of Jesus' Wilderness temptation, see below, pp. 85-87.

57. Dupont, 'L'arrière-fond', pp. 288, 294-95. B.W. Bacon, *The Gospel of Mark: Its Composition and Date* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1925), pp. 156-57.

58. On this, see below, pp. 52-53.

59. Cf. Pokorny, 'The Temptation Stories', pp. 117, 120-22.

60. As will be seen below, I assume it actually is.