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ΠΕΙΡΑΣΜΟΣ IN THE NEW TESTAMENT GOSPELS

A Thesis Presented to the Faculty
of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis
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in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Master of Sacred Theology

by

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
INTRODUCTION	1
Chapter	
I. THE BACKGROUND OF ΠΕΙΡΑΣΜΟΣ AND ITS USAGE IN THE GREEK BIBLE	2
Classical and Secular Literature	2
The Old Testament (Septuagint)	5
Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha	12
Judaism	15
Patristic Literature	19
The New Testament: <u>Acts</u> , the Epistles and the Apocalypse	23
II. ΠΕΙΡΑΣΜΟΣ IN THE NEW TESTAMENT	
GOSPELS	30
General Overview	30
The Temptation of Jesus	35
The Markan Account	35
The Matthaean Account	45
The Lukan Account	50
The Synoptic Temptation Story and Πειρασμο's	62
The Sixth Petition	66
The Gethsemane Warning	72
CONCLUSIONS	77
BIBLIOGRAPHY	78

INTRODUCTION

The idea of "temptation" in its religious use as a feared yet ever-present force has played some rather significant roles in most world religions. For Christianity its roots lie already in the New Testament, where it is presented by means of the expression *πειρασμός*. There is an hour of *πειρασμός* (Rev. 3:10), a day of *πειρασμός* (Heb. 3:8), a time of *πειρασμός* (Luke 8:13). The believers experience and will experience *πειρασμός* (1 Cor. 10:13; James 1:12; 1 Peter 1:6). The synoptic gospels show *πειρασμός* to be a vital factor in the thought and life of Jesus: he has his own *πειρασμοί* in the wilderness; in Gethsemane he warns his disciples against falling into *πειρασμός*; in teaching his hearers to pray he includes, "Lead us not into *πειρασμός*," thereby placing this expression into the daily use of the faithful. What, therefore, is the meaning of *πειρασμός*? What is the force and power behind it? Has the New Testament taken over older ideas connected with *πειρασμός* or has it contributed new meaning to the word? How does the substantive relate to its verb form *πειράσσω*? These and other questions will be answered in the following thesis.

Stamatis, Hellenic, 1931, pp. 201-2. Various situations are made from pre-Christian paganism.

J. A. A. Kennedy, Sources of New Testament Greek (Minneapolis: W. B. Eerdmans, 1925), p. 106.

CHAPTER I

THE BACKGROUND OF ΠΕΙΡΑΣΜΟΣ AND ITS USAGE IN THE GREEK BIBLE

Classical and Secular Literature

Πειρασμός and its related forms are not employed with great frequency in classical and secular Greek literature. It is definitely not a serious religious idea, nor is it a recurring theme in Graeco-Roman religion. Its verb form commonly used in the New Testament is *πειράσω*, which, according to Moulton and Milligan, is the later poetic and prose form of *πειράω*; the latter form is found only once in the New Testament, in Acts 26:21, but can be freely located in pre-Christian *Κοινή* literature.¹ It has been noted that *πειράσω* is not often used in the literature by the better authors, who instead prefer *πειράω*;² this could well explain the more frequent usage of *πειράσω* in the *Κοινή*.

All related forms of *πειράω* have as their basic general meaning "to attempt," usually with the idea of probation associated with it. Only very seldom is the word used in

¹James Hope Moulton and George Milligan, The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament (4th edition; London: Hodder and Stoughton, Limited, 1957), pp. 501-2. Various citations are made from pre-Christian papyri.

²H. A. A. Kennedy, Sources of New Testament Greek (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1895), p. 106.

a religious context, and it often expresses a certain hostile mood or attitude of the subject. Liddell-Scott gives the following as active voice meanings: "attempt," "endeavor," "try"; "make trial of (someone)," for the purpose of persuasion (Homer, Iliad 9:345); in a hostile sense, "make an attempt on" (Homer, Iliad 12:301; Odyssey 6:134); "make an attempt on" a woman's honor (Aristophanes, Plutus 150, 1067; Lysistrata 1:12; in this sense also Thucydides [6:56] uses πειράσις).³ Noting that πειράω occurs in the literature more frequently in the middle voice, Liddell-Scott cites the following meanings: "trying one's fortune," "have experience of (something)," "try the chances of war"; in the phrase πεπειραμένος σαφῶς οἶδα (Xenophon, Hiero 2:6) the word means "by experience."⁴ Strabo (first century B. C. to first century A. D.) uses πειράσσεισθαι in the sense of being afflicted (with scurvy of the gums and with lameness in the leg, "στομακάκκη τε καὶ σκελοτύρβη") (Geography 16.4.24).⁵ Seesemann gives as active voice meanings: "try," "strive," and "endeavor"; then "put to the test," especially in the hostile sense (in Herodotus, VI, 82); "lead into temptation" (post-Homer; an example here is Plutarch, Life of Brutus 10

³H. G. Liddell and R. Scott, A Greek-English Lexicon (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1958), p. 1355, πειράω.

⁴Ibid.

⁵The reference is made by Kennedy, op. cit., p. 107.

[I, 988B]: τοὺς φίλους ἐπὶ Καίσαρα πείραν.)⁶ The verb is used in the middle and passive voices more frequently, almost always as an expression of mistrust; Herodotus (484-425 B. C.) uses the phrase πειρηθῆναι τοῦ Θεοῦ, "putting God to the test" (VI, 86), and yet also employs the perfect middle for the sense of "to know from experience" (IV, 159).⁷ πειράξω, according to Seesemann, means "einen Versuch anstellen, jemanden versuchen, auf die Probe stellen," and although it is used by Homer and Appolonius of Rhodes, and later by Epictetus and Plutarch, the word occurs relatively seldom in this literature.⁸ "πείρα, seit Pindar belegt, bedeutet die angestellte Probe, der gemachte Versuch, die Erfahrung."⁹ The substantive of later New Testament usage, πειρασμός, is found in the pharmacological work of Dioscurides (first century A. D., De Materia Medica, 5), where πειρασμοί are "trials" or "experiments" made of drugs to see their effect in certain diseases.¹⁰ ἐκπειράξω ("ausfor-

⁶Heinrich Seesemann, "πείρα, etc.," Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1954), VI, 23.

⁷Ibid., pp. 23-4.

⁸Ibid., p. 23.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Moulton and Milligan, loc. cit., where it is noted that this is the only occurrence of πειρασμός outside Biblical Greek and literature founded upon it; two other sources, the Cyranides (p. 40, 24; probably 4th century A. D.) and Syntipas (p. 124, 18) are cited by Seesemann, op. cit., p. 24.

schen, ausproben, erproben") and ἀπειράστος ("was unversucht, unbekannt ist, d.h. womit noch kein Versuch gemacht ist") find only minimal usage.¹¹

πειράω and its related derivatives always imply a direction of the subject, who either provokes or is provoked by a certain challenge. The word signals the challenging predicament between subject and object, with imminent victory or failure hanging in the balance. It is "trial," in the sense of experimentation, with the outcome at first never certain. The versatility of the word is seen in that πειράω may be a simple attempt at doing some ordinary task, some everyday action, and yet it may be used to signify the hostile activity or intent of the subject, aimed at bringing ill consequences upon the object, harming him, or bringing him to a fall. The lack of the substantive in the earlier secular literature and the overall infrequency of the hostile sense indicate a later development of πειρασμός as a serious religious concept, appearing first in the Judeo-Christian traditions, and, as we shall see, beginning with the Septuagint.

The Old Testament (Septuagint)¹²

Two basic Old Testament sources for the development of

¹¹Seesemann, *op. cit.*, pp. 23-4.

¹²Hereafter, "Septuagint" will be abbreviated "LXX."

Temptation-ideas in Judeo-Christian traditions are the narrative of the Fall into Sin (Genesis 3) and the Story of Job. The striking fact is, however, that neither $\pi\epsilon\rho\alpha\lambda\acute{\iota}\omega$ nor $\pi\epsilon\rho\alpha\sigma\mu\acute{o}\varsigma$ (nor the respective Hebrew equivalents נִדְּו and נִדְּו) are anywhere employed in the two accounts!¹³ In Genesis 3 the Serpent is not a Tempter but rather a Beguiler, a Deceiver (v. 13); in Job, Satan is the Accuser (Job 1:9), the Adversary (יָצִיט). The later Christian ideas (i.e. of an Opponent of God striving to create apostasy among the ranks of the faithful) of temptation are present in both stories, but the lack of the respective words is significant. This indicates narrower usage of נִדְּו and נִדְּו and possible later continuing development of both concept and terminology in the Greek equivalents.

In the Old Testament the first person to be "tempted" was Abraham, and, significantly, not by Satan, who appears not at all in the Pentateuch and only twice outside of Job

¹³The lone possible occurrence is in Job 9:23, where the word in the textus receptus, נִדְּו , has caused some difficulty and is most probably not original. In any case, it cannot be translated with "temptation." The Targum variant is נִדְּו ; the LXX translates with $\kappa\alpha\tau\alpha\chi\epsilon\lambda\acute{\omega}\nu\tau\alpha\iota$, used more frequently to translate לִצְט or פִּיִּץ . B. Duhm ("Das Buch Hiob": Kurzer Hand-Commentar zum alten Testament [Leipzig: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1897], p. 54) and K. Budde ("Das Buch Hiob": Handkommentar zum alten Testament [Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1896], p. 45) accepted נִדְּו (from נִדְּו) and translated with "Verzweiflung"; A. Weiser ("Das Buch Hiob": Das Alte Testament Deutsch [Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1951], pp. 69, 75) allows נִדְּו to stand, but interprets rather than translates with "Angst."

(in Zech. 3:2 as "Accuser" and in 1 Chron. 21:1 as "Adversary"); it is rather God who tempts, or tests, Abraham. God proves Abraham, putting him to the test by asking him to offer up Isaac. The test was to determine Abraham's obedience to and trust in God (Gen. 22:12). This use of $\beth \delta \beth$ (LXX: $\pi\epsilon\iota\rho\acute{\alpha}\sigma\omega$) as "testing" becomes one of the ways in which God tests His people as a whole, never again so "testing" an individual. God "challenges" Israel during the Exodus by promising safety and health for their obedience (Ex. 15:25-6); to this end God continually tests His people: with the manna (Ex. 16:4), with the giving of the law (Ex. 20:20), during the forty years in the wilderness (Deut. 8:2), by sending false prophets (Deut. 13:3), by allowing heathen nations to live in Canaan (Judges 2:22; 3:1,4). Such testing is indicative of the special relationship which exists between God and His people, and those who remain faithful through such testing receive God's favor; thus the psalmist sings, " $\delta\omicron\kappa\iota\mu\alpha\sigma\acute{o}\nu\ \mu\epsilon,\ \kappa\acute{\upsilon}\rho\iota\epsilon,\ \kappa\alpha\iota\ \pi\epsilon\iota\rho\alpha\sigma\acute{o}\nu\ \mu\epsilon,\ \pi\acute{\upsilon}\rho\omega\sigma\omicron\nu\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\ \nu\epsilon\phi\rho\acute{o}\upsilon\varsigma\ \mu\omicron\upsilon\ \kappa\alpha\iota\ \tau\grave{\eta}\nu\ \kappa\alpha\rho\delta\acute{\iota}\alpha\nu\ \mu\omicron\upsilon$ ": Prove me, Lord, and try me; test my mind and my heart" (Ps. 25[26]:2).¹⁴ In vivid apocalyptic symbolism concerning the "time of the end" Daniel 12:10 presents the single Old Testament instance in which it is not expressly mentioned

¹⁴ $\delta\omicron\kappa\iota\mu\alpha\sigma\acute{o}\nu = \text{examine} = \beth \parallel \beth$; $\pi\upsilon\rho\acute{o}\omega = \text{refine} = \epsilon\eta \beth \gamma$.

that the men who are being tested are Israel and that God (although it is implied) is doing the testing.¹⁵ The substantive *πειρασμός* is used for God's action only three times, all in the Mosaic discourses in Deuteronomy, and all referring to the great tribulations (*πειρασμοί*) God sent upon the Egyptians in choosing His people and calling them out of Egypt (Deut. 4:34; 7:19; 29:2 [3]).

πειράσω is used also to describe man's testing of God, which in the Old Testament is by and large sinful. It is not man's prerogative to test God, for such testing questions God's faithfulness--and often His very existence. At times God allowed His people to "test" Him, as with Gideon and the fleece (Judges 6:39); Numbers 14:22 states that the ten plagues in Egypt were ten tests of God's promise to His people. Otherwise, Israel's testing of God, expressed by *πειράσω*, amounted to disobedience, thereby incurring God's displeasure: Ex. 17:2,7; Deut. 33:8; Psalm 77(78):41,56; 94(95):9; 105(106):14. In Isaiah 7:12 Ahaz refuses to put God to the test. In this area of man's testing God, the substantive *πειρασμός* is used in relation to only one event, the great testing at Massah (Ex. 17). There the Israelites questioned the very existence of God among them (v. 7),¹⁶ and this was considered

¹⁵ *πειρασθῶσι... πολλοί.*

¹⁶W. Bauer (Griechisches-Deutsches Wörterbuch zu den

by Moses the grave and hostile act of putting God to the test; he therefore named the place Massah (מַסָּה) after God had miraculously proven His faithfulness. The Septuagint then translates this name with Πειρασμός. This was the first time that Israel as a people had put her God to the test; this serious misdemeanor must not be forgotten. That the Old Testament throughout reserves the substantive מַסָּה only for reference to this event during the Exodus is noteworthy, especially since the LXX follows suit with Πειρασμός ;¹⁷ Israel is reminded of her sin in Deut. 6:16, 9:22, and Ps. 94(95):8.¹⁸

πειράσω is also used with respect to people testing other people, but never in a hostile sense: Solomon is

Schriften des neuen Testaments [Berlin: Alfred Töpelmann, 1958], p. 1270) sees the intent of the Israelites here as trying to discover whether God really notices sin and is able to punish it.

¹⁷As mentioned above, the word is used with God as the agent only in the Mosaic speeches in Deuteronomy, but not specifically in His direct dealing with Israel, rather in relation to His mighty acts of hostility against the Egyptians in freeing His people ("by war, by great terrors, by Πειρασμός," etc.). The single possible exception is in Eccl. 5:2, where most of the MSS. read ὅτι παραχίνεταί ἐν ὄπιον ἐν πλήθει Πειρασμοῦ; Grabe (A. D. 1709), however, suggests Περσπασμοῦ for Πειρασμοῦ, which Rahlfs accepts. Liddell-Scott (*op. cit.*, p. 1355), in citing the MSS. tradition, cites Πειρασμός for this passage; but Περσπασμός is by far the better translation for מַסָּה in the Hebrew text.

¹⁸The Hebrew text of Deut. 33:8 refers to the testing of God at Massah, but the LXX reads "whom you tested with a test" (ἐν Πειρά).

tested by the queen of Sheba (1 Kings 10:1; 2 Chron. 9:1); a steward tests Daniel and three other Israelites with vegetable diet (Daniel 1:12,14).¹⁹

$\pi\epsilon\iota\rho\acute{\alpha}\sigma\omega$ is also used simply in the sense of "attempt." Deut. 4:34 (God attempted to choose a nation for Himself); 1 Sam. 17:39 (David tries to walk in Saul's armor); Eccl. 2:1 ("I will make a test of pleasure"); Eccl. 7:24(23) ("all this I have tested by wisdom"). Also $\sigma\acute{\upsilon}\chi\grave{\alpha}$ $\pi\epsilon\tau\rho\alpha\nu$ $\epsilon\lambda\alpha\beta\epsilon\nu$, Deut. 28:56, could be translated "who wouldn't even make an attempt."

In conclusion to this brief Old Testament study, it can be seen that the verb $\pi\epsilon\iota\rho\acute{\alpha}\sigma\omega$ in the LXX is used to express the idea of testing. God puts men to the test; and it is His prerogative to test men, to determine or to re-establish their faithfulness to Him. It is not the prerogative of man to test God; however, to question thereby His faithfulness and existence among them; when men do this, they sin. God allows Himself to be tested by man, but on His own terms (ten plagues in Egypt) and only when infidelity is not involved (Gideon and the fleece). Secondly, the people whom God tests are His people, the Chosen Israel. Such testing is therefore a sign of God's special relation-

¹⁹ $\pi\epsilon\iota\rho\acute{\alpha}\sigma\omega$ is used once again in this realm, but erroneously; the LXX reads ἰῆπῆ for ἰῆπῆ in Psalm 34(35):16, but $\epsilon\pi\epsilon\iota\rho\alpha\sigma\alpha\nu$ hardly fits the context.

ship to them, and knowing this the psalmist without fear can say, "Prove me, O Lord, and try me; test my mind and my heart" (Psalm 25 26 :2). A third discovery of some importance is that a personal satanic Tempter who "tempts" people with the purpose of making them fall away from God is never attached to $\pi\epsilon\iota\rho\alpha\acute{\sigma}\omega$ or $\pi\epsilon\iota\rho\alpha\sigma\mu\acute{o}\varsigma$ in the LXX, nor to אָדו or אָד in the Hebrew text. A personal Tempter with a host of demonic powers to carry on "temptation," as is found in the later Christian traditions, is not to be found in the Old Testament.²⁰ Furthermore, a dualistic struggle between the forces of good and evil is

²⁰In Job אָדו is the "accuser" whose argument is with God, not with Job. He does not have as his primary purpose a mere tempting of Job, but instead aims to prove to God that Job is faithful to God only because He has prospered him (Job 1:9-11).

There are still two places in the later Old Testament literature to be reckoned with: Zech. 3:11 and 1 Chron. 21:1. In the former passage אָדו is clearly again "the Accuser," not a "Tempter." The latter passage supports the fact of an existing belief in devils, but this belief is not clarified in the least; to this reference von Rad writes:

Die Stelle 1 Chr 21,1 is aber insofern nicht ohne weiteres ausdeutbar, als der Zusammenhang gar nicht ursprünglich vom satan gehandelt hat, sondern erst sekundär dieser Begriff aus religiösen Bedenken als Korrektur in den Text gekommen ist. David war von Jahwe zu einer grossen Sünde, der Volkszählung, verführt worden; diesen anstössigen Gedanken hat der späte Chronist nicht mehr in seiner Kühnheit ertragen: statt Jahwe sagte er satan. (G. Von Rad, "διδάσκαλος", Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament [Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1935], II, 73).

distinctly foreign to the use of *πειρασμός* in the Greek Old Testament.²¹

Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha

In the literature of the intertestamental period one sees the constant preoccupation of the writers toward strengthening, edifying, and praising those who have remained faithful in Israel. It is the time of great persecution and calamity: Palestine is now being constantly overrun by the heathen powers from west, north, and south; the people of God are being liquidated, suppressed, and dispersed throughout the Empire. It is a time of great testing, as is reflected by a number of the occurrences of *πειράσω* and *πειρασμός*. Again, as in the Old Testament, *πειρασμός* is indicative of the special relationship of God to His faithful. The words are found only in Wisdom of Solomon, Sirach, and the four Maccabean books, none of which were written earlier than 180 B. C.²²

²¹Seeseman in his article on the *πειρα* words in Kittel's Wörterbuch makes no attempt to distinguish carefully between concept and terminology, or between early uses of the words in the Old Testament and later ideas attached to them. He too easily connects later (yes Christian) ideas of *πειράσω* and *πειρασμός* to Gen. 3:1-9 and Job, where the specific terms do not at all occur.

²²The earliest is Sirach, which Box and Oesterley date at 180-175 B. C., with its Greek translation at 132-116 (in R. H. Charles, The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913], I, 293).

Furthermore, Satan or a personal supernatural tempter is not connected with *πειράσω* or *πειρασμός*. The predominant meaning of the words is "test," "proving"; to "tempt" someone with the purpose of bringing about his downfall (especially in some spiritual or religious way) does not occur in this literature.

Wisdom 3:5 and 11:9 use *πειράσω* to mention God's testing of the righteous and of Israel, promising His favor upon those who remain faithful throughout the testing. Wisdom 1:2 and Sirach 18:23 give stern warnings against putting God to the test, against challenging Him to prove Himself. It is not man's prerogative to test God. Sirach uses *πειράσω* only once to express or refer to hostile testing, where the faithful are warned against the subtle testing and ruthless plotting of rulers (Sirach 13:11); elsewhere, wisdom tests men with her demands (Sirach 4:17), the wise man should test or prove his own soul (Sirach 37:27), and the ideal scribe tests good and evil (Sirach 39:4). Hostile testing is expressed in Wisdom 2:17, the testing of the righteous by the unrighteous with physical torture and death; 4 Maccabees 9:7 and 15:16 also employ *πειράσω* to

Holmes (in Charles, *ibid.*, I, 521) places Wisdom of Solomon at 50-30 B. C. (first part only) and 30 B. C.-10 A. D. (second part); but R. H. Pfeiffer (*The Apocrypha* [London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, Limited, n. d.], p. xxiv) dates it at 100-50 B. C. 1 Maccabees: 130-50 B. C. (Moffatt in Charles, *ibid.*, I, 129); 3 Maccabees: 100 B. C. (Emmet in Charles, *ibid.*, I, 158); 4 Maccabees: 63 B. C.-38 A. D. (Townshend in Charles, *ibid.*, vol. II, 654).

express a testing through suffering.

πειρασμός is used in Sirach 2:1 as a testing of the faithful by calamity, and Sirach 33(36):1 promises deliverance through the testing for those who fear God; elsewhere, wisdom gives man a testing (Sirach 4:17--the phrase is lacking in the Greek text) and friends put each other to the test (Sirach 6:7; 27:5,7). The remaining uses of the word are in 44:20 and 1 Maccabees 2:52, where Abraham is presented as an example for the pious in that he, being tested, was found faithful. Testament of Joseph 2:7 says that Joseph remained faithful through ten temptations.

The common usage (i.e., without religious connotation) of the words also prevails: for "attempt" (1 Macc. 12:10; 2 Macc. 2:35; 10:12; 11:19; 3 Macc. 1:25; 2:32; 4 Macc. 12:3; 8:1), for "experience" (Wisdom 18:25).

One is able to see from this brief overview that the Old Testament apocryphal and pseudepigraphal writings develop the Old Testament uses of *πειράσω* and *πειρασμός* in one direction only, in that of calamity and disaster as a testing of the faithful pious. This is a further reflection upon the earlier uses of the *πειρα*- words expressing the special relationship between God and His people. But Sirach 2:1, Wisdom 2:17, and 4 Macc. 9:7 and 15:16 attach and underscore the position of God's people in the world as a position of tension, tension caused on the one hand by their willingness to remain loyal to God and on the other

hand by the forces in the world striving to break down this loyalty. This, too, is a far cry from the picture of a cosmic dualistic struggle between the forces of good and the forces of evil;²³ depicted, rather, is the continuous predicament of the faithful trying to remain faithful during difficult years of persecution and suppression. There is, furthermore, no indication of a personal satanic Tempter with a host of supernatural demonic powers being attached to *πειράζω* and *πειρασμός*.

Judaism

In the Rabbinic literature "temptation" in the sense of "testing" is first of all a means which God employs to affirm His relationship to His faithful people and eventually to bring them honor and blessing. Strack-Billerbeck notes: "Der Zweck der Versuchung ist nach rabbin. Anschauung die Erhöhung des in der Versuchung Bewährten u. die Verherrlichung göttl. Gerechtigkeit."²⁴

²³The strongest cosmic-dualistic note in this literature is found in the first century A. D. writing, Assumption of Moses 10:1 (where Satan is vanquished at the appearance of God's kingdom "throughout all His creation"), and in the Testament of Dan 5 (late second century B. C.), the only place in all this literature which speaks of a battle between God and Satan. So Paul Volz, Die Eschatologie der jüdischen Gemeinde (second edition of Jüdische Eschatologie von Daniel bis Akiba [Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1903]; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr Paul Siebeck, 1934), p. 88.

²⁴Herman L. Strack and Paul Billerbeck, Kommentar zum neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrash (third unaltered

Gerade diese Entsprechung aber von Versuchung and Glauben hat im Judentum zu einer besonderen Betonung des Gedankens geführt, dass es vorzüglich der Gerechte, der Fromme, ist, der von Gott versucht wird.²⁵

By and large it is God who is the agent of the testing (by "agent" is meant here and throughout this thesis the one who puts the test or the *πειρασμός* into effect, the one who does the testing, or tempting), and such testing is seen by the rabbis to be done to show the believers' firmness of faith. Abraham becomes the prime example for the faithful, the prototype of true believers; so important a role does his testing take that he is depicted as having remained faithful in ten tests (Apocalypse of Abraham 5:3):

"Durch zehn Versuchungen wurde unser Vater Abraham versucht und bestand sie alle, um zu bekunden, wie gross die Liebe unseres Vaters Abraham (zu Gott) war."²⁶

That such temptations served to glorify Abraham is shown in Apoc. Abr. 13:13-14, where even the possibility of Abraham's fall through testing is rejected because of his piety and

edition; München: C. H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1961), I, 135; hereafter abbreviated "Strack-B."

²⁵Joachim Hans Korn, ΠΕΙΡΑΣΜΟΣ: Die Versuchung des Gläubigen in der griechischen Bibel (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer Verlag, 1937), p. 58.

²⁶Quoted by Seesemann, op. cit., p. 26. Also said of Abraham in Jub. 19:8 (cf. 17:17) and in Pirque Aboth 5:4. Strack-B. cites tractate Arakhin 15a as mentioning how the fathers tested God ten times in the wilderness.

steadfast faith.²⁷ Other Old Testament heroes are praised because of their faithfulness in being tested: Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Noah, Joseph, Levi, David, Isaiah, Hezekiah, Tobit, Tobias, and Job.²⁸ It is safe to say that these men are heroes for the very reason that they did remain faithful and steadfast throughout great testing. It then becomes a presupposition that God's people are and will be put to the test; yes, they are to expect it. For the constant tension between obedience and disobedience is the characteristic position of the people of God during their lifetimes in this world:

Jedenfalls spielt sich der Kampf zwischen beiden Trieben im Herzen des Menschen ab. Der Kampf selbst wird anschaulich geschildert. Sobald der Mensch ein Gebot üben oder ein gutes Werk vollbringen will in Übereinstimmung mit Gottes Willen, erhebt der böse Trieb als Verführer seine versucherische Stimme dagegen u. stellt dem Menschen vor, dass er grösseren Vorteil haben werde, wenn er das betreffende Gebot oder gute Werk nicht zur Ausführung bringe. Aber auch der gute Trieb schweigt nicht; mahnend und warnend weist er auf die Tora hin und fordert Gehorsam gegen Gottes Willen. Die Entscheidung ruht in des Menschen Hand.²⁹

It is also God's prerogative to test, and men are warned not to engage themselves in putting others or God to the test. David did not remain faithful in temptation be-

²⁷Korn, op. cit., p. 53.

²⁸Ibid., pp. 60-70.

²⁹Strack-B., IV, 470-1.

cause he brought it upon himself.³⁰

According to Seesemann the word *πειρασμός* is absent in Philo and Josephus.³¹ He also says the same about the Qumran literature, but Kuhn³² notes an occurrence of $\text{ל} \text{ו} \text{ל}$ in Hodayoth 2:14, in the phrase $\text{ל} \text{ו} \text{ל} \text{ל} \text{ל} \text{ל} \text{ל} \text{ל}$ $\text{ל} \text{ו} \text{ל}$, which Gaster³³ translates "a standard for them that love correction." Kuhn has also pointed out (Seesemann concurs) that in the Qumran material the situation of the faithful is that of constant "Angefochtensein," but that the ideas here present are dependent upon ideas from ancient Persian religion, whose "people of the truth and people of the lie" are represented in the scrolls by the "sons of light" seen over against the world, the "Herrschaftsbereich Belials," i.e., Satan.³⁴

In Judaism the main trends connected with testing are

³⁰Seesemann, loc. cit.

³¹Ibid. But Bauer, op. cit., notes the following occurrences of *πειρα*: Josephus Ant. Jud. 8,166 and Contra Apion 2,183; *πειράσω*: Jos. Bella Jud. 4,340; *πειράω*: Philo's De Sacrificiis Abelis et Caini 123; Jos. c. Apion 1,70; 2,283; *ἐκπειράσω*: Philo's Congressu quarendae Eruditionis gratia 170 and *ἀπειραστός*: Jos. Bella Jud. 5,364 and 7,262.

³²K. G. Kuhn, Konkordanz zu den Qumrantexten (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1960), p. 143.

³³T. Gaster, The Dead Sea Scriptures in English Translation (Garden City: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1956), p. 129.

³⁴K. G. Kuhn, "Πειρασμός - ἁμαρτία - σαβῶν im neuen Testament und die damit zusammenhängenden Vorstellungen," Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche, Vol. 49 (1952), 205-6.

the praise and glorification of those who remain faithful. It is God Who does the testing, but never as an act of judgment or hostility; along with such testing, He offers His rewards to those who remain faithful: ". . . Gott prüft die Armen: wenn sie nicht entarten in dieser Welt, so empfangen sie ihren Lohn in der Zukunft. . . . Gott erhebt keinen Menschen zur Herrschaft, es sei denn, dass er ihn zuvor geprüft u. erprobt hat; u. wenn er in seiner Versuchung besteht; dann erhebt er ihn zur Herrschaft."³⁵

Patristic Literature

In the literature of the apostolic fathers³⁶ the figure and force of a satanic Tempter is at last clearly present. This is, of course, due to the New Testament and to the role which the devil (Satan) and his hosts play in the faith of the earliest Christians. But *πειράσω* and *πειρασμός* are found in the hostile sense of "tempt" and "temptation" only when connected with the figure of the devil. Otherwise the words retain their usual common meaning of "test" and "testing," and even simply "to attempt"

³⁵From the Tanchuma mishphatim 94b, quoted in Strack-B., I, 136.

³⁶The Didache, Clement of Rome, Ignatius of Antioch, Polycarp of Smyrna (including the Martyrdom), Papias of Hierapolis, Epistle of Barnabas and Shepherd of Hermas.

to do something.³⁷ The later developed phase of temptation in a "mystical ascent of the soul" does not yet appear in this literature.³⁸ On the contrary, one notes a practical intent by which the fathers express their concern for the lives of the Christians, seeking to encourage them in the face of hardship and persecution, which are often explained as diabolic temptation toward apostasy. So the Shepherd of Hermas observes in Hermas Mandates XII, 5:1-4:

I said to him, "Sir, listen to a few words from me." "Say what you will," he said. "Sir," said I, "man desires to keep the commandments of God, and there is none that does not pray to the Lord that he may be made strong in his commandments, and submit to them. But the devil is hard, and oppresses them." "He cannot," said he, "oppress the servants of the Lord who hope in him with all their heart. The devil can wrestle with them, but he cannot throw them down. If then you 'resist him' he will be conquered and 'fly from you' in shame. But as many," said he, "as are empty fear the devil as though he had power. When a man fills very many pots with good wine, and among those pots a few are half empty, he comes to the pots, and does not consider those which are full, but he knows that they are full, but he looks at those which are half empty, fearing that they have gone sour and the flavour of the wine is spoilt. So also the devil comes to all

³⁷In the sense of "attempt": Martyrdom of Polycarp 13:2, 2 Clement 17:3, and Ignatius to the Magnesians 7:1; in the sense of "test": Hermas Similitudes VIII, 2:7; Didache 11:7, and 2 Clement 20:2. Didache 11:7 uses $\pi\epsilon\lambda\alpha\sigma\omega$ in the sense of "examine."

³⁸The first important author to name temptation as one of the steps in the mystical ascent was Origen in his Homily to Numbers 27; see Johannes Quasten, Patrology (Utrecht: Spectrum Publishers, 1953), II, 97-8.

the servants of God, tempting them; as many therefore, as are full of faith withstand him powerfully, and he departs from them, having no room by which to enter. Then, therefore, he comes to those who are half empty and finding room he enters into them, and does what he will in them, and they become his servants."³⁹

The role of the devil is that of the Opponent, the Adversary of the Christian community, "prowling around . . . seeking whom he may devour." There is as yet, however, no developed primitive demonology apparent in this literature (as in the writings of the ascetic desert monks, who were constantly being irritated by minor devils⁴⁰), as is seen by the use of the article with every occurrence of δαίβολος, the word occurring only once in the plural.⁴¹ It is the devil's purpose to break the righteous (Herm. Mand. XI, 3), setting his snares (Ig. Trall. 8:1), and tortures (Rom. 5:3) for the Christians, seeking to cause δειψυχία (Herm. Mand. IX, 9, 11) and unrighteous desires (Herm. Mand. XII, 2:12). The Christians are urged to turn away from the devil and never to be afraid of him (Herm. Mand. XII, 4:6; VII, 2-3; VI, 1; Eg. Eph. 10:3), for the devil is really powerless and will have no final victory (Herm. Mand. XI, 17; XII,

³⁹Kirsopp Lake, The Apostolic Fathers (London: William Heinemann, 1917), II, 134-5.

⁴⁰Cf. Helen Waddell, The Desert Fathers (University of Michigan Press: Ann Arbor Books, 1957), passim.

⁴¹In Polycarp's Letter to the Philippians 5:2; cf. E. J. Goodspeed, Index Patristicus sive Clavis Patrum Apostolicorum Operum (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1907), p. 50.

4:6; Similitudes VIII, 3:6), which victory belongs alone to the Christians (Herm. Sim. IX, 31:2; Mand. XII, 6:2,4). Everything unchristian is spoken of as being from the devil: "Whosoever does not confess the testimony of the Cross is of the devil: and whosoever perverts the oracles of the Lord for his own lusts and says that there is neither resurrection nor judgment--this man is the first-born of Satan." (Ig. Phil. 7:1) Ignatius, with his preoccupation with the power and authority of the bishop, says to the Smyrnaeans: "He who does anything without the knowledge of the bishop is serving the devil. (Ig. Phil. 9:1).

The word *πειρασμός* is used clearly in connection with the work of the devil in 2 Clement 18:2, where the writer says that he has "not yet escaped temptation, being still in the devices of the devil (*τοῖς ὀργανοῖς τοῦ διαβόλου*)." Its other occurrences are in Ig. Phil. 7:2; where *πειρασμός* is seen as false teaching, and Herm. Mand. 9:7, where *πειρασμός* in the life of a Christian is a factor which delays the answer of prayer. Didache 8:2 uses *πειρασμός* in its recitation of the Our Father.

The fact and necessity of testing and trial in the Christian life carries with it a promise of victory and blessing in the end: "We must undergo the testing (*πειρασμόν*) of the living God and in this life be trained, so that we may be crowned in the life which is to come"

(2 Clem. 20:2). The angel of repentance wants the shepherd to undergo trial (Herm. Sim. VII, 1), and later makes it clear that "All those . . . who wrestled with the devil and conquered him have been crowned" (VIII, 3:6). This practical concern for the lives of the Christians and the attempt to explain their hardships and persecution as *πειρασμός* is the underlying intent of the literature of the apostolic fathers. The writers see the Christian life as a life of tension between steadfast loyalty to God and apostasy. Testing (*πειράζω, πείρα*) is a necessary factor toward repentance and God's favor (Parables 7 and 8 or the Hermas Similitudes). *πειράζω* is thus not used in the hostile sense, but characterizes God's activity in nurturing His people.⁴² The hostile sense of "temptation" is expressed by *πειρασμός*, and is that activity carried on by the devil in seeking to cause apostasy and unfaithfulness within the Christian community (2 Clem. 18:2).

The New Testament: Acts, the Epistles and the Apocalypse

A striking difference between the previously reviewed literature and that of the New Testament is that, in the case of the latter, the hostile sense of the *πείρα* words becomes very prominent and occurs comparatively with much

⁴²The phrase "being tempted by the most wicked devil" occurs only in the Latin text of Herm. Sim. IX, 31:2: "temptatus a nequissimo diabolo."

greater frequency. The common meaning of "attempt" occurs only in Acts (πειράσω : 9:26; 16:7; 24:6; πειράω [in the middle voice] 26:21). In the literature outside the Gospels πειράσω is used as "test" or "examine" (where no hostility or sin is intended by the subject) only three times, in 2 Cor. 13:5 (Paul urging the Christians to examine themselves to see whether they are holding to the faith), in Hebrews 11:17 (in reference to God's testing Abraham) and in Rev. 2:2 (the Ephesian Christians have examined false apostles). πείρα occurs only twice, in Heb. 11:29 and 36 (and both times with λαμβάνειν),⁴³ the first meaning "attempt," the second in the sense of "experience." πειράσω as used elsewhere expresses the hostile (sinful) testing of God (a) by Israel in the wilderness (Heb. 3:9 refers to Massah; 1 Cor. 10:9 refers to Num. 21:5-6, where no πείρα -word occurs), (b) by Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 15:10, Peter's speech at the Jerusalem conference). πειράσω as Satan's sinister work is expressed in 1 Cor. 7:5, 1 Thess. 3:5⁴⁴ and Rev. 2:10, and is implied in Gal. 6:1, Heb. 2:18; 4:15, 1 Cor. 10:13, and James 1:13-14. Rev. 3:10 speaks of the "hour of trial which is coming on the whole world, to try those who dwell upon the earth"; this

⁴³The same combination appears in Deut. 28:56 (LXX).

⁴⁴In this passage Satan is called "the Tempter" (ὁ πειράσων).

bears hostile meaning for those who are not faithful to God.

The substantive *πειρασμός* is consistently used in a foreboding and hostile sense throughout this literature. The word is used once in reference to Israel's sinfulness at Massah (Heb. 3:8 = Exodus 17). *πειρασμός* is also used in Acts 20:19 to express the Jews' hostility against Paul; in 1 Tim. 6:9 where desire for riches brings one into *πειρασμός*; in 1 Peter 1:6 and 4:12 where the Christians are to rejoice at the imminent *πειρασμοί* they must endure; in 2 Peter 2:9, which assures that the Lord knows how to rescue the godly ἐκ *πειρασμοῦ*; in Rev. 3:10, which speaks of the sinister hour of trial destined for the ungodly; and in 1 Cor. 10:13, where God is not the originator of the Christians' *πειρασμοί*, but the One who sets limits to them and makes escape from them possible.

It has been suggested that Gal. 4:14 does not clearly fit into this category, but uses *πειρασμός* as a temptation for the Christians to reject Paul and his message because of "something in the apostle's physical condition."⁴⁵ Much more must be said than this, however. De Zwaan⁴⁶ had

⁴⁵E. Burton, The Epistle to the Galatians (International Critical Commentary) (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1920), p. 241.

⁴⁶J. de Zwaan, "Gal. 4:14 aus dem Neugriechischen erklärt," Zeitschrift für die neutestamentlichen Wissenschaft, X (1909), 246-50.

already suggested that τὸν πειρασμὸν be explained from modern Greek, which views the word as "eine volkstümliche Bezeichnung des Teufels":

Die Propaganda der παρεῖσακοι ψευδάδελφοί hat auch die Krankheit des Paulus verwertet. Er ist οὐχ ὡς ὑμεῖς, er hat einen πειρασμὸς ἐν τῇ σαρκί, das heist: "Paulus ist kein normaler Mensch, er hat einen Teufel im Leibe!"⁴⁷

Heinrich Schlier observes:

Der πειρασμὸς bestand darin, dass die Krankheit sie (the Christians) dazu drängte, Paulus und mit ihm Gott bzw. Christus selbst abzuweisen. Sie haben sie überwunden und den Boten des Heils in dem Kranken erkannt. Sie haben ihn nicht verachtet and nicht vertrieben, ja sie haben sogar ihre Furcht vor dem für sie dämonisch emphasis mine besessenen Kranken besiegt. Ἐκπτύω ist die apotropäische Geste, die man gegen die dämonischen Einflüsse von Kranken, vor allem von Epilptikern und Wahnsinnigen, aber auch von anderen Leidenden anwendet. Sie haben sich freigemacht von der Scheu vor Bezauberung und haben sogar in dem dämonisch Befallenen einen Engel Gottes erkannt, haben ihn als einen solchen, ja als Christus Jesus selbst aufgenommen. Sie haben damit den κύριος anerkannt, der in seinem Apostel, verborgen durch dessen ἀσθένεια τῆς σαρκός, zu ihnen kam.⁴⁸

It is interesting that both de Zwaan and Schlier suggest diabolic activity behind Paul's ἀσθένεια τῆς σαρκός in v. 13; this is, of course, in accord with 2 Cor. 12:7, where this ἀσθένεια is called σκόλοφ τῆ σαρκί, ἄγγελος σατανᾶ, the latter two words being an explanatory apposi-

⁴⁷Ibid., p. 247.

⁴⁸Heinrich Schlier, Der Brief an die Galater (third edition; Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1962), pp. 210-11.

tive. The result of this satanic activity is then a *πειρασμός* to cause the Galatians to reject Paul and thereby God and Jesus Christ. This is the work of Satan: to hinder the work of God's salvation among potential believers and to cause apostasy and unbelief among the faithful. To understand *ἀσθένεια τῆς σαρκός* to mean simply an unfortunate (or natural) physical handicap apart from the work of Satan is not to understand the hostile and sinister character of *πειρασμός*! Although we cannot pursue the matter more deeply in this thesis, we might well recall the majority of Paul's usages of *ἡ σὰρξ*, with its decidedly negative quality and its clear relationship to the natural depravity of man (Gal. 5:16; 19-21; Rom. 7:18), by which man by nature is subject to Satan's rule. In Gal. 4:13-14 the connection, then, of *ἀσθένεια τῆς σαρκός* with *πειρασμός*, in the context of a possible rejection of the Gospel message, seems to be no neutral idea but rather the hostile and sinister work of Satan. Furthermore, to suggest the precise nature of Paul's *ἀσθένεια τῆς σαρκός* would be folly. It definitely is for Paul a physical burden, and Schlier suggests the possibility of some form of epilepsy or attacks of hysteria,⁴⁹ but one must speak here without certainty.

James 1:13-14 has caused no little concern among exe-

⁴⁹Ibid., p. 211, footnote one.

getes in that it is the only New Testament passage which expressly refuses to name God as the agent of $\pi\epsilon\rho\acute{\alpha}\sigma\omega$, indeed $\pi\epsilon\rho\acute{\alpha}\sigma\epsilon\iota\ \delta\epsilon\ \alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\varsigma\ \omicron\upsilon\delta\acute{\epsilon}\nu\alpha$. Dibelius⁵⁰ sees here a traditional attempt to explain away God's "tempting"-activity, as 1 Chron. 21:1 does with 2 Sam. 24:1,⁵¹ and as Jubilees 17:16 does with Gen. 22:1; but the latter example is not used accurately by Dibelius (for God is challenged by Mastema but still does the "tempting" of Abraham). The predicament is solved, however, when one keeps in mind the usage of $\pi\epsilon\rho\alpha\sigma\mu\acute{o}\varsigma$: throughout the LXX Old Testament, in the New Testament and in post-New Testament literature it has a hostile or sinful connotation; in the Apocryphal and Pseudepigraphal literature (the words occurring only in Wisdom of Solomon, Sirach and the Maccabean books) the $\pi\epsilon\rho\alpha$ -words only seldom have hostile character, and when they do it is never with God as the agent. $\pi\epsilon\rho\alpha\sigma\mu\acute{o}\varsigma$, then, seen especially with its usually hostile character, is not God's activity over against the believers. Therefore, when we notice that the use of $\pi\epsilon\rho\acute{\alpha}\sigma\epsilon\iota$ and the respective discussion in James 1:13-14 is prompted in the first place by the statement in verse 12, $\text{Μακάριος ἄνθρωπος ὁς ὑπομένει πῆραςμόν$, and seen in the greater context

⁵⁰Martin Dibelius, *Der Brief des Jakobus* (second edition; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1956), p. 88.

⁵¹Cf. von Rad quotation, supra, p. 8, footnote one.

of verse 2, Πᾶσαν χαρὰν ἠγάσασθε, ἀδελφοί μου, ὅταν πειρασμοῖς περιπέσητε ποικίλοις, we realize that hostility and foreboding over against the faithful is being signalled by πειρασμός, and in this sense James must say περιῶξει δὲ αὐτὸς [God] οὐδένα .52

⁵²The phrase in verse 14, ἕκαστος δὲ περιῶζεται ὑπὸ τῆς ἰδίας ἐπιθυμίας συλλαβοῦσα τίκτει ἁμαρτίαν does not say that it is the ἐπιθυμία which does the tempting; rather ἐπιθυμία here is the means (or channel) through which the tempting occurs. This is supported by 1 Tim. 6:9, where "those who desire to be rich fall into a πειρασμόν." Cf. Mark 14:38, where ἡ σὰρξ ἡ σθενής is the means through which one falls into πειρασμός.

CHAPTER II

ΠΕΙΡΑΣΜΟΣ IN THE NEW TESTAMENT GOSPELS

General Overview

The *πειρα* -words occur twenty-six times in the New Testament Gospels, only twice in the Fourth Gospel (and one of these occurrences in John 8:6 is in the context of a pericope of doubtful authenticity). There are seven occurrences in the context of the Temptation of Jesus pericope: *πειράσω* in Matt 4:1; 4:3 (where the devil is called *ὁ πειράζων*), Mark 1:13 and Luke 4:2 and 13; *ἐκπειράσω* in Matt 4:7 and Luke 4:12; and *πειρασμός* in Luke 4:13. *πειρασμός* is used twice in the recitations of the Our Father, Matt. 6:13 and Luke 11:4, and four times in connection with the warning of Jesus to the disciples in Gethsemane, Matt. 26:41, Mark 14:38, and Luke 22:40, 46. These three pericopes will be treated in the following subdivisions of this chapter.

The remaining passages show as the most common usage of *πειράσω* the frequent attempts of Jesus' opponents to trap him theologically or politically: Mark 8:11 (Matt. 16:1; Luke 11:16), where Jesus is asked to prove himself by a sign from heaven;¹ Mark 12:15 (Matt. 22:18), where Jesus

¹The relation of this demand to that of the devil in the Temptation Story is evident.

recognizes the question concerning the paying of taxes to Caesar as putting him to the test (τί με πειράζετε); Mark 10:2 (Matt. 19:3), where the Pharisees question Jesus on divorce; Matt. 22:35, where a lawyer asks Jesus for the greatest commandment in the Law. ἔκπειράζω is used again in Luke 10:25, where a lawyer asks Jesus what he must do to inherit eternal life; this need not be seen as a hostile attempt to trap Jesus, but instead a test of Jesus' knowledge of the Law (N. B.: a lawyer asks the question) and of his ability in interpreting it.²

Two lone occurrences of πειρασμός are Luke 22:28, where Jesus says to the disciples, "You are the ones who have continued with me during my πειρασμοί," and Luke 8:13; in the parable of the Sower, where the fate of the seed on the rock is symbolic for those who apostatize ἐν καρῷ πειρασμοῦ. The sinister character of πειρασμός in the latter passage is suggested by the parallel accounts, where both Matthew and Mark read θλίψεως ἢ δωχμοῦ instead; perhaps Luke's variation is done for the benefit of his Gentile readers, for whom

²A. Plummer, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to St. Luke (International Critical Commentary) (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1902), p. 284:

Neither this question nor the one respecting the great commandment was calculated to place Jesus in a difficulty, but, rather, to test His ability as a teacher: the ἔκπειράζω . . . does not imply a sinister attempt to entrap Him.

"tribulation and persecution," especially at the hands of Rome, have caused serious "temptation" to apostasy.

The only two passages using $\pi\epsilon\lambda\acute{\alpha}\zeta\omega$ in the Fourth Gospel are 6:6, where Jesus tests Philip with the question concerning food for the five thousand who had followed him, and 8:6 (which occurs in a pericope omitted by most of the major MSS, and only marginally included in Nestle), where the scribes and Pharisees question Jesus in connection with the stoning of the adulteress.

$\pi\epsilon\lambda\acute{\alpha}\zeta\omega$ and $\pi\epsilon\lambda\epsilon\alpha\sigma\mu\acute{o}\varsigma$ in the New Testament Gospels have taken on a decidedly special character. The usage is exclusively theological, always having some connection with the message and meaning of Jesus, who is presenting himself (and whom the evangelists are presenting) as "the Christ." The simple sense of "attempt" does not appear at all. The evangelists report that the "opponents" of Jesus (i.e. Pharisees, Sadducees, Herodians, scribes, lawyers) question Jesus; but not only are they simply questioning him, they are also at the same time testing him,³ attempting to call forth an improper response either from him or from the people who observe the situation. This indicates a theological presupposition in the evangelists' reporting, which, by clearly setting Jesus' challengers

³Perhaps in this sense $\pi\epsilon\lambda\acute{\alpha}\zeta\omega$ is better translated with "tempt."

opposite him, interprets the questions as satanic hostility toward Jesus,⁴ the attempt to discredit him or to bring him to a fall. The evangelists say that this attempt is recognized by Jesus, who realizes their hypocrisy (Mark 12:15; Matt. 22:18 substitutes *πονηρίαν* for Mark's *ὑπόκρισιν*) and asks *τί με πειράζετε* (with Matthew adding *ὑποκριταί*). *πειράσω* occurs without hostile intent only once, and this in John 6:6, where Jesus tests Philip; whether the use of *πειράσω* here and the failure of Philip to answer the test question points to Philip's lack of faith⁵ or simply to his naivete⁶ is debatable.

πειρασμός, on the other hand, is used always with a note of foreboding and danger.

The Temptation of Jesus

The Markan Account

Mark 1:12-13 is the shortest of the synoptic accounts of the Temptation Story. Whether this records the first

⁴Matt. 16:1 and Luke 11:16 record the demand for a sign from heaven that Jesus prove himself; the evangelists' use of *πειράσω* recalls the devil's demands in the Temptation story.

⁵C. K. Barrett, The Gospel according to St. John (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1960), p. 228.

⁶Rudolph Bultman, Das Evangelium des Johannes (8th edition; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1962), p. 157.

hint of a Temptation story in the tradition or whether it is a summary of already existing and more detailed accounts is one problem; another is the seemingly more symbolic character of Mark's account in comparison to the others, pointing to Jesus' person and work rather than to an historical event in his life. This latter problem is more related to our subject and bears therefore some discussion.

The very conciseness of Mark's account raises two possibilities: either (1) the evangelist had no knowledge of a Temptation Story tradition which described a three-scene face-to-face confrontation with the devil (as in Matthew and Luke) or (2) he is not interested in recounting historically the full details of such an event in the life of Jesus. The vocabulary suggests theological purposes for the account, which can be seen without resorting to crass allegory. All three synoptics mention τὸ πνεῦμα as causing Jesus' journey into the wilderness, but Mark says that the Spirit "cast him out" into the wilderness; the ἐκβάλλει εἰς τὴν ἔρημον might suggest to the Jewish reader the casting out of the scapegoat on the Day of Atonement,⁷ but could on the other hand hint of God's

⁷Leviticus 16:21-22, 26. The combination of temptation motifs and Day of Atonement motifs in connection with Jesus' person and work are found further in the Christian tradition in the Epistle to the Hebrews (Heb. 2:18; 4:15; 13:11-12). Cf. also Eduard Meyer, Die Ursprung und Anfänge des Christentums (Stuttgart: J. C. Gotta'sche Buchhandlung

taking Israel out of Egypt and into the wilderness. The τεσσαράκοντα ἡμέρας recalls the wandering and period of testing of Israel in the wilderness: ἡ ἐρήμος is not the habitat of the devil in contrast to the holy city (as Lohmeyer suggests⁸), but rather the place of the defeat of the adversary⁹ (ὁ σατανᾶς in Mark, not ὁ διάβολος as in Matt. and Luke) and the place of the saving acts of God,¹⁰ as is seen in the report of the activity of John

Nachfolger, 1921), I, p. 94: "Hier (in der Wüste) hausen ihre Geschöpfe, die wilden Tiere und bösen Geister (Jes. 13, 21; 34, 14f), unter ihnen "Azazel, zu dem am Versöhnungstage der Sündenbock hinausgejagt wird (Lev. 16)."

⁸Ernst Lohmeyer, Das Evangelium des Markus (sixth edition; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1959), p. 27.

⁹Strack-B., IV, 939: "Der Todesengel hatte keine Gewalt über Israel" (in the wilderness wanderings during the Exodus).

¹⁰So Gerhard Kittel, "ἐρήμος," Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1935), II, 656:

Aus der Betonung des Heilscharakters der Wüstenzeit erwächst im Judentum die Neigung, ihr alles Grosse und Herrliche zuzuschreiben. Die Züge der Endzeit--zB dass die Israeliten Gott schauen; dass der Todesengel keine Gewalt hat udgl--werden schon in sie zurückgetragen, ebenso aber ihre Züge mit der messianischen Endzeit verbunden--zB der Mannasegen. So entstand der Glaube, dass jene entscheidende Heilszeit des Endes ihren Ausgang gleichfalls in der ἐρήμος haben: dass dort der Messias erscheinen werde. Dieser Glaube wirkte sich konkret dahin aus, dass revolutionär-messianische Bewegungen mit Vorliebe in die ἐρήμος, zogen (Ag. 21, 38); daher Matt. 24, 26: ἐὰν οὖν εἴπωσιν ὑμῖν· ἴδοὺ ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ ἐστίν, μὴ ἐξέλθητε. Daher aber auch die Flucht und Entrückung des "Weibes" in die ἐρήμος Apk. 12, 6.14. Die Gemeinde

the Baptizer (Mark 1:1-8). The final two phrases appear as opposites: καὶ ἦν μετὰ τῶν θηρίων καὶ οἱ ἄγγελοι διεκόνουν αὐτῷ. It is improbable that the mentioning of Jesus' living with the wild beasts signifies a re-establishment of Paradise and a presentation of Jesus as the Paradise-man, with whom the wild beasts live in peace and joy;¹¹ the text in no way suggests that this co-existence was a peaceful one. On the other hand, θηρία were frightening creatures, symbols of danger: four of the ten plagues in Egypt were swarms of θηρία, and during the Exodus the Israelites were promised God's protection from θηρία (Ex. 23:29); Job 5:22-3 and Psalm 91:13 promise deliverance from θηρία. So the mention of θηρία here deepens the danger and sinister character of Jesus' temptation;¹² the mention of the ἄγγελοι stands in

Jesu soll in der Wüste geborgen bleiben, bis Christus wiederkommt und dem Treiben des Satans ein Ende macht.

¹¹So Bultmann, Die Geschichte der synoptischen Tradition (fifth edition; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 1961), p. 271; J. Jeremias, "Ἄδύ," Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag 1949), I, 141; Erich Klostermann, Das Markusevangelium (Handbuch zum Neuen Testament) (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1936), p. 11; J. Schniewind, Das Evangelium nach Matthäus (Das Neue Testament Deutsch) (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1960), p. 30.

¹²Wilhelm Boussett, Die Religion des Judentums (Berlin: Verlage von Reuther und Reichard, 1906), pp. 289-90, states: Zum Reiche des Bösen gehören auch . . . die wilden Tiere, die ebenfalls in Zukunft den Heiligen unter-

contrast to the *Θηρία* and signifies the presence of God, as did the *ἄγγελος* of the Exodus (Ex. 14:19; 23:20-3).

These observations indicate that Mark is employing the Temptation Story tradition in his sources to suit his own purposes. The actual tempting of Jesus by Satan plays a secondary role, for there are no face-to-face confrontation scenes as in Matthew and Luke, and no final victory for Jesus. Furthermore, it is quite clear that in Mark the Temptation Story is inseparably linked together with the Baptism of Jesus,¹³ and also that these two pericopes in turn form a unit with verses 1-8.

A very interesting and provocative study relating to our subject is Ulrich Mauser's Christ in the Wilderness (London: Student Christian Movement Press, 1963). The author occupies himself with the significance of the wilderness theme in the Second Gospel. He explains Mark 1:1-13 as a literary and thematic unity, geographically bound together by *ἐρημος*, which is the scene for

worfen sein werden. "Gott wird durch euch unter den Völkern verherrlicht werden, und der Teufel wird vor euch fliehen, und die wilden Tiere werden euch fürchten, und die Engel werden sich eurer annehmen" Naphth. 8 vgl. Jss. 7 Benj. 5.

¹³So Vincent Taylor, The Gospel according to St. Mark (London: Macmillan & Co. Ltd., 1959), p. 158: "It is probable that (Mark) regarded 9-11 and 12f. as a single narrative, for no Markan pericope ends so abruptly as 9-11, and the action of the Spirit begun in 10 is continued in 12."

everything contained in these verses.¹⁴ Seen, then, as the Marcan Prologue, this thirteen-verse section begins, after the opening verse, with a prophetic quotation from the Old Testament; whatever follows is then to be regarded as the fulfillment of the prophecy. The quotation is comprised of three Old Testament sayings, verse 2 combining Ex. 23:20 and Mal. 3:1, verse 3 using Isa. 40:3. Mauser observes the following:

Ex. 23:20 and Isa. 40:3 are embedded in the wilderness tradition of the Old Testament. In Ex. 23:20 God promises to send his angel before the people on their way through the desert to the land of Canaan and in Isa. 40:3, which is quoted verbatim in Mark 1:3 with the slight modification just mentioned, the messenger announces the second exodus through the wilderness to the final delivery of God's people. In both instances the theme of the exodus is the dominant motif, and both vv. 2 and 3 in the first chapter of Mark refer to the wilderness theme, although the word *ἐρημος* only appears in v. 3. Thus three factors are brought to our attention at the outset of the second Gospel--the messenger, the Lord and the wilderness. It is clear, then, that the wilderness mentioned in the succeeding verses is not introduced in order to give geographical fixture to the record. Not the locality as such matters, but it is related because it is in accordance with the prophecy. This does not preclude that the Baptist actually appeared in the wilderness; but the conformity to the prophecy is the point that matters to Mark.

.....
 The wilderness in Mark 1:3 carries with it the full weight of a great religious tradition em-

¹⁴Pp. 77 ff. "The spirit theme, also, helps to knit the thirteen opening verses of the second Gospel into one whole, an observation which is made even more convincing by the fact that 'spirit of God' is a phrase otherwise only rarely used by Mark" (p.79).

bracing high hopes and promises as well as the deep shadows of judgment and despair, and this is imposed upon the succeeding verses, moulding them as counterparts of Israel's experience in the desert.¹⁵

The relation of Mark 1:1-13 to Israel's desert tradition cannot be denied. At the forefront of this tradition stands the Exodus, where God had acted on the plane of history to fulfill His promises to His people. In the ensuing history of this people, however, Israel, because of her sin and disobedience, lost her primary position among the peoples of the earth; nevertheless, she was still God's chosen One, and could still look forward to His grace and favor, to His future restoration of His people announced by His prophets. Mauser says:

The wilderness, according to prophetic teaching, was the place of Israel's original sonship; here God had loved his people. But, as they had fallen from their genuine filial love which they had enjoyed during their sojourn in the desert, a renewal of the exodus into the desert was necessary for the restoration of Israel's status as a son of God. In this second exodus, God's revelation in power and help would be achieved again, and the prophets visualized the renewed exodus into the wilderness as the beginning of God's eschatological act. John the Baptist announces the imminence of this final act of God which will be established through the work of the one who he prophesies.¹⁶

The Old Testament quotation in Mark 1:2-3 combines the

¹⁵Ulrich Mauser, Christ in the Wilderness (London: Student Christian Movement Press, 1963), pp. 81-2.

¹⁶Ibid., pp. 87-8.

first exodus act of God (Ex. 23:20) with the prophetic hopes for its renewal (Is. 40:3). What follows as Mark reports it in vv. 4-13 is at last the fulfillment of these prophetic hopes. "What was announced of old has now come to pass: in the desert the decisive event in the history of God and his people has begun to unfold itself."¹⁷

The significance of these observations for the Markan Temptation Story is great. First of all it falls within the greater context of the thirteen-verse Prologue, and must also be seen in the light of the opening prophetic words. Secondly, it clearly forms a unit with the account of Jesus' baptism, which really has no proper conclusion.¹⁸ In the Baptism story Jesus is declared to be God's beloved Son. Mauser observes:

Of all titles attributed to Jesus in the Second Gospel the term Son of God is the most significant one. The words of the heavenly voice are based on Old Testament words. Ps. 2:7 and Isa. 42:1 are used, but Taylor (p. 162) remarks rightly that it is not a quotation and echoes other Old Testament passages. At any rate, the great theme of sonship is introduced, whose vital connexion with the wilderness theology in the Old Testament has already been pointed out. In the wilderness, Israel is first designated to be the son of Yahweh (Ex. 4:22f.; Hosea 11:1; Jer. 2:2), and in the event of Israel's return to the desert her sonship will be renewed. In Jesus the old prophecy is fulfilled. Israel is, so to speak,

¹⁷Ibid., pp. 86-7.

¹⁸Taylor, loc. cit., Mauser, op. cit., pp. 96-7; cf. Lohmeyer, op. cit., p. 20.

concentrated in the person of Jesus.¹⁹

The "Temptation Story" in Mark, then, is an extension of the baptismal naming of Jesus; in fact, it explains more precisely that, in contrast to God's choosing of Israel in the Exodus, Jesus is now God's Chosen One, His Son. It is actually no "Temptation Story" at all,²⁰ but rather the final development of Mark's Prologue theme: the ancient prophecy is now being fulfilled--the new exodus has begun--God has sent His Chosen One--the long-awaited time of redemption has begun--the kingdom of God is at hand (Mark 1:15). In the wilderness this Chosen One of God confronts the Adversary (ὁ σατανᾶς), a confrontation not terminated at the end of the forty days (as in Matthew and Luke) but continuing throughout Jesus' entire ministry;²¹

¹⁹Mausser, op. cit., p. 96.

²⁰Martin Dibelius, Die Formgeschichte des Evangeliums (fourth edition; Tübingen: J. B. C. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1961), pp. 129, 274.

²¹J. Jeremias (Die Gleichnisse Jesu [sixth edition; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1962], pp. 122-3) is wrong when he says that Mark 3:27 refers to an actual experience in the life of Jesus, namely the Temptation; in Mark the "binding of the strong man" is part and parcel of Jesus' entire ministry. Jesus is the "stronger one" (ὁ ἰσχυρότερος) referred to by the Baptizer in Mark 1:7.

Concerning the phrase "binding of the strong man": this language recalls God's promise in Isaiah 49:25: λαμβάνων δε παρὰ ἰσχυόντος σωθήσεται ("the booty will be rescued from the strong one"); in the chapter concerning the Suffering Servant, 53:12: τῶν ἰσχυρῶν μεριεῖ σκόλα ("he will divide the spoil of the strong"). The opponents

it is an inevitable consequence of his election and commissioning as Son of God. We conclude with Mauser:

Jesus' baptism and wilderness sojourn are not merely the first acts of Jesus' public appearance. They are equally the foundation of his

of God's Servant are the ἰσχυροί, whose booty he divides. Test. Levi 18:12 speaks of the binding of Beliar by the priest of the Lord, whom Charles (*Ibid.*, II, 315) identifies as Messiah. Walter Grundmann ("ἰσχύω," Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament, III, 404) cites other examples in Jewish literature and tradition of God's redeeming His people from Beliar or from demonic powers; he then adds that the New Testament writers

. . . reden von einer satanischen Herrschaft, unter der die Menschen gebunden sind. In den verschiedenen Formen von Sünde und Krankheit und Besessenheit und Tod übt der Satan seine Herrschaft aus. Die Dämonen sind seine Werkzeuge. Sie sehen es als die Sendung des Christus an, dass er die satanischen Fesseln sprengt und die durch sie gebundenen Menschen befreit und den Sieg über den Satan erringt. In diesen Gedankenkreis gehört unser Jesuslogion hinein: er redet vom Satan als von einem ἰσχυρός, von einem Starken, der seine Herrschaft ausübt. Die σκῆπη (Matt. 12, 29 und Mk 3, 27) bzw τὰ ὑπαρχοντα (Lk 11, 21) und τὰ σκῶλα (v. 22) sind die vom Satan beherrschten Menschen. Die Sendung des Christus aber bedeutet: Der ἰσχυρότερος kommt, besiegt und bindet den ἰσχυρός, nachdem er in sein Haus eingedrungen ist, und raubt ihm seine Beute. So sind die Dämonenaustreibungen zu verstehen. In diesen Worten lüftet Jesus den Hintergrund seines Handelns. Und da wird sichtbar: Sein Handeln und Reden ist getragen von der Tatsache, dass er gegenüber dem "Starken", der die Herrschaft hat, der "Stärkere" ist, der den "Starken" überwunden hat und an Stelle der Satansherrschaft die Gottesherrschaft bringt. Jesu Vollmacht, die sich in Verkündigung und Wundertat erweist, ist die Macht der Gottesherrschaft und hat die satanische Macht überwunden. Dieses Logion enthält nun zweifellos ältestes Traditionsgut und steht noch vor der Gemeindeftheologie. Es muss von Jesus selbst herkommen.

whole ministry. Through them the stage of the ensuing drama is set--the stories of Jesus' ministry can now be told. In accordance with Old Testament prophecy and determined by the call of John the Baptist, it will be a story of Jesus' temptation in his confrontation with Satan and of help from God. . . . Now, after the presuppositions of the story are revealed, the Gospel can begin, Jesus can go into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God (1:14).²²

The Matthaean Account

The Matthaean account (Matt. 4:1-11) is, in contrast to the report in Mark, a Temptation Story. This can be seen immediately from the infinitive of purpose,

πειρασθῆναι, in the opening verse: Jesus is led by the Spirit into the wilderness in order to be tempted by the devil. In verse 2 the forty days are not the duration of his wilderness sojourn, but instead a period of fasting; thus the Exodus-character of the forty days (as presented in Mark) is removed by attaching them to an act of Jesus recalling Moses' fasting on Sinai (Ex. 34:28), by disconnecting them from the action of the Spirit and by an apparent suggestion that the recorded temptations took place after the forty days.²³ It is obvious that after the strenuous forty days of fasting the

²²Mauser, op. cit., p. 102.

²³A time element is introduced by the ^{εἰ} ὕστερον ἐπαίνασεν in v. 2, which seems to suggest that the events following in the pericope were also subsequent to the actual period of fasting.

Tempter²⁴ should suggest that Jesus alleviate his hunger and by doing so exercise his rights as υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ . An exhibition miracle²⁵ is thereby requested, namely, that Jesus turn stones into bread. In this same line follows the second "temptation"; it is a request for an exhibition miracle, that Jesus show by a fantastic leap from the temple pinnacle that God will protect His Son. The third "temptation," however, stands apart from the other two. It takes place once again outside Jerusalem on a high mountain from which "all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them" could be seen. No exhibition miracle is requested by the Tempter; instead he offers to Jesus the kingdoms of the world if Jesus will worship him.

Again, as in Mark, the Matthaean Temptation Story cannot be considered apart from the account of Jesus' baptism. However, there is a significant shift in emphasis. Mark 1:12-13 is basically an enlargement of the Baptismal proclamation of Jesus as υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ; i.e., Jesus is God's Chosen One with whom the new exodus begins; it is the proclamation that Jesus of Nazareth is υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ and also that the long-awaited and prophesied

24 ὁ πειράζων . This expression for the devil (or for Satan) was by the time of Matthew's writing already being used in the Church; cf. 1 Thess. 3:5.

25 The German term is "Schauwunder". In this context it refers to the nature of the miracle requested.

time of redemption has begun. Matt. 4:1-11 is also concerned with presenting Jesus as $\acute{\upsilon}\iota\omicron\varsigma\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$; but while Mark occupies himself with the election of the Son,²⁶ Matthew moves from election in the Baptism pericope to the other aspect of the Old Testament and Jewish concept of the Son of God: obedience to the God who elects.²⁷ In Matthew the Baptism story announces the election of the Son; the Temptation Story relates the Son's obedience. In the Baptism Story Jesus stands in the place of Old Israel, being called "Son" (of God) (cf. Ex. 4:22-3); in the Temptation Story Jesus in the wilderness remains obedient, in contrast to Old Israel's disobedience. This is made clear by the reaction of Jesus to the requests of "the Tempter." He answers every temptation with Old Testament quotations, each one different, yet each arising out of the context of the

²⁶Cf. supra, p. 43.

²⁷See Erminie Huntress, "'Son of God' in Jewish Writings Prior to the Christian Era," Journal of Biblical Literature, LIV (1935), 117-23. Also Oscar Cullmann, Die Christologie des Neuen Testaments (second edition; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1958), p. 281:

. . . der alttestamentlich-jüdische Begriff des Gottessohnes ist im wesentlichen nicht gekennzeichnet durch die Begabung mit einer besonderen Kraft, auch nicht durch eine Substanzbeziehung zu Gott auf Grund göttlicher Zeugung, sondern durch den Gedanken der Erwählung zur Mithilfe bei der Ausführung eines besonderen göttlichen Dienstauftrags, und durch den Gedanken des strikten Gehorsams dem erwählenden Gott gegenüber.

Jesus' Sonship and obedience are further connected in Hebrews 5:8.

First Commandment,²⁸ the very commandment broken by Israel at Mt. Sinai (Ex. 32). Thus to demand a miracle, then, means to be experimenting with God.²⁹

The Old Testament context which is here recalled by Jesus' replies to Satan is Deut. 6-8, a portion of the Deuteronomic discourses of Moses, the great Law-giver. It might be suggested that Matthew is here presenting Jesus as the Second Moses; this could well be so, especially when one remembers the parallel between Jesus' forty days of fasting in the desert (v. 2) and Moses' forty days of fasting on Sinai (Ex. 34:28). However, the more vivid emphasis is upon the role of Jesus as the obedient Son. Moses' laws in Deuteronomy were given to Old Israel, to the "Old" Son of God (Ex. 4:22-3), who proved to be disobedient; here Jesus as the obedient Son truly keeps the law of Moses, i.e. (for Matthew) the law of God.

It was just this obedience of Jesus as ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ which prevented him from performing exhibition miracles. A need of the early Christian community is evident here, a

²⁸Gunther Bornkamm, Jesus von Nazareth (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1956), p. 190, note 43. The observation that the First Commandment is employed in presenting Jesus as the obedient ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ . This quoting of the Old Testament was in no way a pedagogical exercise to teach the disciples the value of the Jewish Scriptures, with which as their guide they could overcome the evil one, as Jesus had done (as suggested by Plummer, op. cit., p. 115).

²⁹Bornkamm, op. cit., p. 122.

need for showing that Jesus stands apart from the wonder-workers and magicians of the day who proclaimed their divine commissioning with $\sigma\eta\mu\epsilon\iota\alpha\ \epsilon\kappa\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\ \omicron\upsilon\rho\alpha\nu\omicron\upsilon$. Jesus is no magician, and therefore performs no magic, and therefore also no exhibition miracles; the demands for such come from the devil, as the first two temptations show, and he who performs such magic serves the devil (third temptation).³⁰ The power for Jesus' miracles, which in most cases answer human need and never satanic desires for self-proof, comes not from demons but from God (Matt. 8; 12; 16).³¹

In Matt. 4:10 Jesus names the Tempter as $\sigma\alpha\tau\alpha\nu\alpha\varsigma$; thus Matthew combines $\delta\iota\acute{\alpha}\beta\omicron\lambda\omicron\varsigma$, $\omicron\ \pi\epsilon\iota\rho\acute{\alpha}\varsigma\omega\nu$, and $\sigma\alpha\tau\alpha\nu\alpha\varsigma$, the only time in the New Testament in which this is done in one concise pericope. Matthew also states that the devil left Jesus, without Luke's $\acute{\alpha}\chi\rho\iota\ \kappa\alpha\iota\rho\omicron\upsilon$. The mention of the $\acute{\alpha}\gamma\gamma\epsilon\lambda\omicron\iota$ coming to serve Jesus signifies

³⁰Cf. Bultmann, *op. cit.*, p. 273. J. M. Creed, The Gospel according to St. Luke (London: Macmillan & Co. Ltd., 1957), pp. 62-3, cites literature describing the feats of early magicians, among which were changing stones into bread (Pseudo-Clem. Hom. II:32) and flights through the air (Vercelli Acts of Peter xxxii, et al.).

³¹Ernst Lohmeyer, "Die Versuchung Jesu," Zeitschrift für systematische Theologie, 14. Jahrgang (1937), no. 4, p. 632: "The 'sign from heaven' is a characteristic of Jewish apocalyptic; but 'was eine geläufige Vorstellung jüdischen Glaubens ist, erscheint nun als eine satanische Eingebung.'"

divine strengthening after the forty days fasting and temptation ordeal,³² simply paralleling Mark, whose ἀγγελοί, however, stand in contrast to Θηρία and not to ὁ σαββόλος.

The Lukan Account

Luke 4:1-13 is also a real Temptation Story, and reports basically what Matthew includes, but with a few deviations.

The first of these occurs in the opening verse, where the Spirit does not cause Jesus' entry into the wilderness. However, Luke has retained the connection of this pericope to the Baptism story, in that "the Spirit" which appears at Jesus' baptism and "descends upon him" (Luke 3:22) is still very much with him.³³

Jesus is led by the Spirit not into the wilderness (εἰς with the accusative), but "in the wilderness" (ἐν with the dative).³⁴ The ἡμέρας τεσσαράκοντα is read most naturally with the Spirit's leading Jesus in the

³²Ibid., pp. 626-8.

³³This is stressed by Luke because he has inserted Jesus' genealogy between the two pericopes (3:23-38). Cf. E. Klostermann, Das Lukas-evangelium (Handbuch zum Neuen Testament) (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1929), p. 59.

³⁴εἰς with the accusative is, however, supported by the Koine tradition, the Caesarean texts (Θ) and various Latin and Syriac translations. These witnesses want the ἡμέρας τεσσαράκοντα to remain with πειραζόμενος ὑπὸ τοῦ σαββόλου.

wilderness, rather than with the "being tempted by the devil;³⁵ i.e. during this time he was being led by the Spirit.³⁶ Nevertheless, according to Luke, Jesus was tempted by the devil during these forty days (as in Mark), during which time he also fasted (as in Matthew); but it seems that the specific temptation scenes which follow in the text occurred also after the forty days (as in Matthew).

Jesus' opponent is ὁ διάβολος; ὁ πειράζων, and ὁ σατανᾶς are absent, although the latter does occur further on in Luke 10:18; 13:16; and 22:3, 31. The ministering angels are also absent, and after the temptations the devil leaves Jesus ἄχρι καιροῦ, "until an appointed time." It should also be noted that Luke alone uses the word πειρασμός (4:13): "and when the devil had ended every πειρασμόν he departed from him until an appointed time." The hostile attempts of the devil are here directly connected with the word πειρασμός.

The ἄχρι καιροῦ here has caused no little amount of discussion among commentators. Plummer long ago suggested that the words have no more significance than merely "until the next opportunity."³⁷ According to this view it is quite

³⁵So Klostermann, *loc. cit.*, and W. F. Arndt, *The Gospel according to St. Luke* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1956), p. 130. Arndt takes the ἐν in the phrase ἐν τῷ πνεύματι as instrumental.

³⁶The imperfect (ἤγετο) with present participle (πειραζόμενος) signifies continued action.

³⁷Plummer, *op. cit.*, p. 114.

natural to understand the disputes of Jesus with his opponents as satanic πειρασμοί, for example in Luke 11:16 where πειράξω is used in connection with the demand for a σημεῖον ἐξ οὐρανοῦ, which parallels the requests of Satan in the Temptation pericope.³⁸ However, J. Lagrange suggests that the phrase points definitely to the beginning of the Passion Story:

Dieu qui avait voulu que Jésus fût tenté au début de son ministère avait résolu de laisser Satan faire une suprême tentative à la fin, comme Luc semble l'insinuer (XXII, 53), sans parler des épreuves plus ordinaires (XXII, 28), après qu'il fut entré dans Juda (XXII, 3).³⁹

Heinz Schürmann reiterates Lagrange's proposal: "Der Evangelist Lukas urteilt . . . dass die eigentliche Stunde der Versuchung erst mit der Passion kommen sollte."⁴⁰

Certainly Jesus' suffering was his greatest πειρασμός, and we might note that it is at Jesus' agony in the Garden that Luke reports the appearance of an angel from heaven to strengthen Jesus (Luke 22:43; here Matthew and Mark do not mention the angel), after having omitted any such

³⁸Certainly John understands the devil to be behind Jesus' opponents' attacks upon Him, John 8:44. In W. F. Arndt and F. W. Gingrich, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Christian Literature (Chicago: U. of Chicago Press, 1957), p. 395, the phrase is rendered "for a while."

³⁹J. Lagrange, L'Évangile selon Saint Luc (Paris: Librairie Lecoffre, 1948), p. 133.

⁴⁰Heinz Schürmann, Das Gebet des Herrn (Freiburg: Herder, 1957), p. 93.

reference to an angel or angels in the Temptation episode itself.

But it is Hans Conzelmann who has carried this idea concerning ἄχρι καιροῦ to its logical conclusion. He links the phrase συντελέσας πάντα πειρασμούς concretely with the devil's departure from Jesus ἄχρι καιροῦ, taking the latter to mean the beginning of the Passion. This means that during the time between the Temptation Story and the Passion of Jesus, Satan's activity is suspended: ". . . where Jesus is from now on, there Satan is no more-- ἄχρι καιροῦ."⁴¹ Conzelmann observes:

The expression συντελέσας πάντα πειρασμών can scarcely be overemphasized. It really means that henceforth there will be no temptations in the life of Jesus. Thus his life as a whole is not regarded as a temptation either. It is not until the moment indicated by ἄχρι καιροῦ⁴² that temptation recurs. Luke xxii, 3 and the prompt reappearance of the πειρασμός motif in the farewell speeches in Luke show how important it is to emphasize this.⁴³

Conzelmann says this idea is exclusively Luke's idea. This is in accord with his own view of Luke's theology and with his reason for entitling his study Die Mitte der Zeit:

⁴¹Hans Conzelmann, The Theology of St. Luke, translated by Geoffrey Buswell (London: Faber and Faber, 1960), p. 28. This translation was made from the second edition of Die Mitte der Zeit: Studien zur Theologie des Lukas, 1957; the first edition was published in 1954.

⁴²The question is: Is there a particular moment indicated here? Note the lack of the definite article!

⁴³Ibid.

. . . a period free from Satan is now beginning, an epoch of a special kind in the centre of the whole course of redemptive history. What is now beginning therefore is not the last times, but the interval between the period of the Law, or of Israel, and the period of the Spirit, or of the Church.⁴⁴

Conzelmann can then argue:

Chapter xxii, v. 3 completes the circle of redemptive history, for Satan is now present again. Now the period of salvation, as it was described by Luke, and also by John, as a work of Satan, is beginning.⁴⁵

Of course, Luke 22:28, where Jesus says to his disciples, "You are those who have continued with me in my *παρασκευαίς*," presents the greatest problem for Conzelmann. He does not handle it convincingly. He points to 22:35-7, where Jesus reminds his disciples that he had sent them out without "purse, bag or sandals" and they still lacked nothing; but the time of their protection, says Conzelmann, is now over, and the "conflict is now starting, when they will need wallet and purse, when they will suffer want and have to face conflict."⁴⁶

Verse 28 does not mean "You are the heroes who have persevered", for nothing has yet happened, but "You have come with me to Jerusalem and now have had to face temptation with me" (and still do--N.B., Perfect). And in fact they are the ones who still continue. A typical eschatological

⁴⁴Ibid.

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 80.

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 81

prospect emerges from this temptation.⁴⁷

Conzelmann is suggesting that the period of temptation now beginning with Jesus' Passion is to continue throughout the life of the Church. He proposes, furthermore, that this is the key to the passages such as Luke 11:17-23 (the Beelzebul Controversy); such passages

. . . do not mean that there is a constant conflict with Satan during Jesus' ministry; they have a symbolic meaning and are meant primarily to be a comfort to the Church of Luke's time, which knows that since the Passion of Jesus it is again subject to the attacks of Satan.⁴⁸

In essence, then, Conzelmann would have to suggest that in Luke all the exorcism miracles of Jesus are to be understood in the same light, having "symbolic meaning" and meant to be "a comfort to the Church of Luke's time." It seems yet more "comforting," however, to recall the proclamatory message of the exorcism miracles, namely that it is Jesus himself who has entered the battlefield and in whose words and deeds God's victory over Satan has taken place.⁴⁹ In Jesus himself is to be found the stronger man who puts an end to the rule of Satan and takes his armor from him and divides his spoil (Luke 11:27). In Jesus has the rule of God arrived for the Church; the rule of Satan

⁴⁷Ibid., p. 83.

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 188.

⁴⁹So Bornkamm, op. cit., pp. 61-2; Grundmann, supra, in quotation in footnote 21 beginning on page 43.

is overcome. "But if it is by the finger of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you" (Luke 11:20). Again: "The Kingdom of God is not coming with signs to be observed; nor will they say, 'Lo, here it is!' or, 'There!' for behold, the Kingdom of God is in the midst of you."

It would be saying too much to propose that Luke does not understand the antagonistic reproaches and questions of Pharisees, Sadducees, scribes, etc. during this lifetime as satanic *πειρασμοί* for Jesus; the implications of Jesus' question in Luke 11:19 seem to suggest that the contrary is true. Conzelmann, however, has correctly understood and applied the always hostile and sinister character of the substantive *πειρασμός*.

Concerning the text itself once again, the Lukan arrangement differs in the order of the temptation scenes. In Matthew the episode on the high mountain is the third scene, while Luke places it second and concludes with the temple scene, which is in second place in Matthew's gospel. Bruno Violet asserts Luke's re-arrangement of the original order for psychologically climactic reasons: power over nature, then power over men, then power over God, the third achievement being the final fulfillment toward which the first two hint.⁵⁰ But McNeile can argue the same

⁵⁰Bruno Violet, "Der Aufbau der Versuchungsgeschichte

way for Matthew's order

Matthew arranges a psychological climax: the first temptation is to doubt the truth of the revelation just received, the second to test it, and the third to snatch prematurely at the Messiahship which it involves.⁵¹

Hirsch also observes:

Harnack und Ed. Meyer geben wegen der psychologisch feinen Steigerung der Ueberlieferung des Mt den Vorzug. Aus demselben Grunde sieht Bussmann in dem lukanischen Test das Ursprüngliche: ". . . Aber das bezeugt gerade die Reflexion eines Späteren, der darum kunstvoll anordnet--einfacher, unreflektierter ist die Sache bei L."⁵²

Loisy argues that each evangelist has his own "psychological" intent:

En faveur de l'ordre suivi par Matthieu l'on peut faire valoir la gradation logique des tentations; en faveur de Luc un certain avantage de localisation et la défense impliquée dans la réponse: "Tu ne tenteras pas le Seigneur ton Dieu," qui serait censée atteindre Satan lui-même, parce qu'il tente Dieu en voulant le faire tenter par Jesus. La consideration serait bien subtile, et l'ordre suivi par Matthieu doit être celui de la source.⁵³

It may be granted that certain psychological intentions in the texts seem obvious, but subjectivity plays too strong a role in such analyses, and the explanation for the divergent order of temptation scenes is to be sought elsewhere.

Jesu," Harnack-Ehrung, no editor named (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrich'sche Buchhandlung, 1921), pp. 19-20.

⁵¹A. H. McNeile, The Gospel according to St. Matthew (London: Macmillan & Co. Ltd., 1957), p. 37.

⁵²Selma Hirsch, Taufe, Versuchung und Verklärung (Berlin: Verlag Dr. Emil Ebering, 1932), p. 23.

⁵³Alfred Loisy, L'Évangile selon Luc (Paris: Emile Nourry, 1924), p. 149.

It is quite evident that Luke has attempted to give geographical precision to his pericope. He was no doubt troubled by the lack of geographical interest in his sources.⁵⁴ ἀπὸ τοῦ Ἰορδάνου is added in v. 1 both to connect what follows with the Baptism and also to clarify his sources, which most likely read ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἀνήχθη εἰς τὴν ἔρημον.⁵⁵ For Matthew's "holy city" as the scene of the temple pinnacle temptation, Luke specifically names Jerusalem. Furthermore, Luke was also troubled with the "high mountain apart" to which the devil took Jesus in Matthew's third temptation scene. Where in the desert could there be such a mountain from which "all the kingdoms of the world" could be seen? Luke solves the problem by not mentioning the mountain at all; instead, he says that the devil "took him up (ἀναγαγὼν) and showed him all the kingdoms of the world ἐν στιγμαῖ ἡ χρόνου."⁵⁶ Luke's

54Cf. Mauser, op. cit., pp. 81-2.

55M. Albertz (Die synoptischen Streitgespräche Berlin: Trowitzsch & Sohn, 1921, p. 165) accepts this phrase as the correct reading in Q. Luke would find it confusing, however, since Jesus was already in the wilderness, having been baptized by John (3:2-3, 21-2). Thus, according to Luke, is Jesus led by the Spirit in the wilderness, ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ (cf. supra, p. 50.)

56Creed, op. cit., p. 63, states that ἐν στιγμαῖ ἡ χρόνου "softens the realism and conveys the idea of a visionary experience." Lagrange, op. cit., p. 130, seems to be suggesting the same thing when he says concerning στιγμαῖ ἡ χρόνου: "une pigure, un point (cf. lat. punctum temporis), un instant rapide; expression bien choisie pour un spectacle enchanté qui passe en un instant sous les yeux."

placing of Matthew's third temptation in second position also suggests a geographical consciousness which feels too uncomfortable with two changes of location, i.e., desert to holy city to desert (Matthew's order); Luke keeps the first two scenes in the desert, and the third takes place then in Jerusalem.⁵⁷

Although geographical precision, however, is evident both here and throughout Luke's entire gospel, it is not necessarily the key to the understanding of his arrangement of this pericope. Instead, it seems that Luke has taken great pains actually to strengthen the early Christian apologetic and offensive against magic. It was Luke who reported the conflict with Simon the Magician (Acts 8:9-24), whose magic had led people to believe he had been sent from God. As mentioned above, it was felt necessary in the early Church clearly to separate the miracles of Jesus and his disciples from those of the contemporary wonder workers and magicians. Magic has its origin not from God, but from the devil. Luke sees in his sources the thrust against magic in the Temptation Story tradition, and tries to strengthen it in his own account. In the first temptation the devil requests that Jesus speak to a particular stone so that it become bread (εἰπὲ τῷ λίθῳ τούτῳ ἕνα

⁵⁷This may well explain Luke's omitting of the serving angels; for it is unlikely that they would appear openly in Jerusalem.

γένηται ἄρτος), which has more pronounced magical character than Matthew's εἶπε ἕνα οἷ λίθου οὗτος ἄρτος γένωνται. Furthermore, the very fact of Luke's geographical interest, which led him to place the mountain scene second and then remove all reference to the mountain, should cause us to look more closely at his explanation: "And when he had taken him up he showed to him all the kingdoms of the world in the flash of an instant" (v. 5). ἀναγαγὼν and ἐν στιγμήν χρόνου are definitely not meant to convey the visionary experience of a Jesus in ecstasy, but instead they report a fantastic display of the devil's magic.⁵⁸ And by placing this temptation second in order, Luke has shown the devil to be the power behind the magic of the contemporary wonder-workers, and gives examples of such magic both in preceding and following temptation scenes.⁵⁹ Jesus refuses to practice such magic, and will not grasp at riches and honor from the world by

⁵⁸So Loisy, *op. cit.*, p. 150:

Le caractère prestigieux et magique de la vision est figuré seulement dans l'addition: "en un seul instant." L'évangéliste entend que le démon n'a pu, d'un point quelconque, faire voir le monde à Jésus sans intervention de magie: en quoi l'artifice du diable a-t-il consisté, c'est une de ces choses que le diable sait et dont les hommes n'ont pas le secret. La vue des royaumes n'en est pas moins censée réelle.

Klostermann, *op. cit.*, p. 60, says that στιγμήν χρόνου indicates a "Zeitwunder."

⁵⁹Cf. *supra*, p. 49, footnote 30, concerning Creed's references to the feats of the early magicians.

serving Satan. Nor are the Christian wonder deeds magic, but miracles behind which stand the power of God, miracles meeting human need and bearing witness to the Christ (Acts 3:1-26; 9:32-35 and 36-43).

Luke has retained the presentation of Jesus as the obedient υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ, as is shown by Jesus' replies to the Tempter, all parallel to Matthew and taken from Q.⁶⁰ That Jesus is the Son of God and not just a son (υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ is without the article in both Matthew and Luke) is evident from its close connection to the Baptism pericope and from the grammatical construction: the predicate noun (υἱὸς) precedes the verb (ἐῖ) and can therefore be understood as definite.⁶¹ But by separating the first two temptations (Matthew's order) by inserting the third in between, Luke has de-emphasized Jesus' obedience as the Son (as in Matthew) in favor of presenting the obedient Jesus as the opponent of Satan (as in Mark). It is Luke who most creatively has sought to weave together the thoughts of his sources into one comprehensive Temptation Story; both in what he omits and in what he adds, Luke's careful consideration

⁶⁰The symbol "Q" is used in reference to the hypothetical collection of Jesus-sayings which, in the opinion of scholars today, served as a source for Matthew and Luke. Cf. B. N. Streeter, The Four Gospels (4th [revised] impression; London: Macmillan & Co., Ltd., 1930), p. 153.

⁶¹E. C. Colwell, "A Definite Rule for the Use of the Article in the Greek New Testament," Journal of Biblical Literature III (1933), 12 ff.

as he arranged his account is evident in every phrase.

The Synoptic Temptation Story and *Πειρασμός*

Our task is to study the use and meaning of the word *Πειρασμός* in the writings of the New Testament Gospels. This goal must be kept in mind as we treat the pericope of the Temptation of Jesus in the synoptic tradition. There are many related questions and problems which cannot be answered within the scope of this study. Among these are the following:

a) the question of form: is Q's temptation story (Matt. and Luke) a "schriftgelehrte Haggada" (because of its form as a disputation in three steps)?⁶² Or is it a Christian midrash on three passages in Deuteronomy?⁶³ Or is it a "Streitgespräch" of Satan with Jesus concerning the question of "Son of God"?⁶⁴

b) the question concerning the sources: that Mark's account is the earliest among the synoptics is relatively certain, but whether it preceded and influenced Q⁶⁵ or

⁶²Suggested by Bultmann, Geschichte der syn. Trad., p. 272.

⁶³F. C. Grant, An Introduction to New Testament Thought (New York: Abingdon Press, 1950), p. 208.

⁶⁴Albertz, op. cit., pp. 41-8: "Die Erzählung ist das am besten erzählte und tiefste Streitgespräch des Evangeliums" (p. 48).

⁶⁵Bultmann, ibid., p. 271.

whether the two existed as completely independent traditions⁶⁶ is still debatable.

c) the question concerning the coherency of the separate scenes: did the mountain temptation episode (third in Matt.; second in Luke; first in the Gospel to the Hebrews) have its own tradition, existing independently from the other two scenes,⁶⁷ or should we speak of three versions of the account of the temptation (which account existed originally in a separate form), rather than of three temptations?⁶⁸

d) the question of non-Christian parallels and influences: what role have non-Christian literature and religions played in the shaping of the early Christian Temptation Story tradition? Hercules at the decisive turning point in his life and the temptations of Buddha and Zarathustra are oft-cited parallels to Jesus' ordeal. Are there also here traces of an ancient "battle of the gods" tradition? Or of some type of dualism?⁶⁹

⁶⁶C. K. Barrett, The Holy Spirit and the Gospel Tradition (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1954), p. 46.

⁶⁷Hirsch, op. cit., pp. 23-4.

⁶⁸Jeremias, Die Gleichnisse Jesu, pp. 123-4: "Alle drei Fassungen (Wüste, Tempeltor, Berg) haben die Überwindung der Versuchung einer falschen Messiasahögnung zum Gegenstand" (p. 123).

⁶⁹Pertinent literature: K. F. Geldner, Die zoroastri- sche Religion (Das Avesta), in Religionsgeschichte

As said before, these problems cannot adequately be treated within the scope of this study. We must rather inquire concerning the ideas of *πειρασμός* in the synoptic account of the Temptation of Jesus and thereby remain within the limits of our subject. What, then, does this pericope contribute to our understanding of the word *πειρασμός* and its usage in the New Testament Gospels?

Obviously the originator of the temptation is the devil (or Satan); specifically, he is the originator of the temptation to be disobedient to God. It is, then, a temptation, and not merely a testing; it is Satan's hostile attempt to break Jesus' loyalty to God. Moreover, it is against Satan that Jesus' ministry is being directed; against the devil and his agents will the struggle be fought and the victory won. Thus no final victory is won at the Temptation, but the struggle continues throughout Jesus' ministry, as Mark and Luke already indicate. The Temptation pericopes, then, are not technical essays on the nature of temptation; instead they reflect the ideas of the

Lesebuch, edited by A. von Bertholet (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1926), I, 33. H. P. Houghton, "On the Temptations of Christ and Zarathustra," The Anglican Theological Review, XXVI (1944), 166-75. Albertz, op. cit., pp. 171-2. Cf. also L. Troje, "ΑΔΑΜ und ΖΩΗ," Sitzungsberichte der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften (Philosophische-Historische Klasse, 1916), XVII, pp. 51ff.

early Christian community concerning the person and work of Jesus: he is the obedient Son of God whose mission is to "bind the strong man" (Mark 3:27 and parallels), i.e., to overcome the power of the Adversary. This is not to say that the Temptation stories are extremely subtle theological, Christological treatises. But on the other hand, that we should argue that they record an ecstatic (inner) experience of Jesus, or that we should be led on a search for that particular temple pinnacle⁷⁰ would be to miss the significant purposes of the evangelists. To say, also, that the three temptations in Matthew and Luke are such in which basically every believer stands,⁷¹ loses the uniqueness of Jesus' temptation as recorded by the evangelists. That Jesus as the ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ was tempted toward disobedience and that each believer is also tempted toward disobedience are poles apart in the minds of the evangelists. However, that Satan, the Tempter, is Jesus' opponent and at the same time the opponent of the faithful is seen in the nature of the miracles requested and in the apologetic purposes of the writers. In this light, capitulation to Satan means disloyalty and disobedience, for Jesus as well as for the believers. The Temptation Story shows Jesus to be the

⁷⁰J. Jeremias, "Die Zinne des Tempels (Matt. 4,5; Luke 4,9)," Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins, LIX (1936), p. 195-208.

⁷¹Bultmann, ibid., p. 274.

Jews' activities against Paul, Acts 20:19) or employed without specifically naming but suggesting the opponents of Christianity in general (James 1:2, 12; 1 Peter 1:6; 4:12), the synoptics are one in presenting Satan (or the devil) as the ultimate power behind *πειρασμός*. Luke uses the word at the end of the Temptation Story (Luke 4:13) to describe the activity of Satan over against Jesus; Matt. 4:3 names the devil as *ὁ πειράζων*. The Temptation Story, however, at the beginning of Jesus' ministry more or less sets the tone for every *πειρασμός* which he will later encounter, suggesting immediately that such *πειρασμοί* are the work of Satan. Luke 8:13 shows this work of Satan to be directed also against the believers, some of whom are like the seed on the rock, which "believe for a while, but in a time of *πειρασμός* fall away."⁷⁵ The remaining uses of *πειρασμός* are found in the context of the Passion of Jesus, the hour of "the power of darkness" (Luke 22:53), which began when Satan entered into Judas Iscariot (Luke 22:3; cf. John 13:27). Against this background in the synoptics must *πειρασμός* in the sixth petition be seen. That this corresponds exactly to the

⁷⁵Cf. 1 Thess. 3:5, 1 Cor. 7:5, Gal. 6:1. "Das Bestreben des Satans bei solchem *πειρασμός* ist immer, den Gläubigen zum Abfall vom Glauben zu bringen"; so Kuhn, "*πειρασμός* - *μαρτύρια* - *σάραξ*;" im neuen Testament und die damit zusammenhängenden Vorstellungen," Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche, XIX (1952), p. 202.

thoughts of the original Aramaic is expressed by Kuhn: Das Vaterunser bittet um Verschonung vor der Versuchung des Teufels. . . ."76 Says Lohmeyer: "Versuchung ist hier nicht das Werk Gottes, sondern das Werk des Teufels. . . ."77 And Schürmann adds, "Fast scheint 'Versuchung' hier schon gleichbedeutend mit 'Abfall' zu sein."78 That Matthew saw *πειρασμός* as the hostile work of Satan is evident from his addition of a seventh petition, clearly as an explanatory enlargement of the sixth: "*ἀλλὰ ῥύσαι ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ τοῦ πονηροῦ*," making *πονηροῦ* parallel to *πειρασμόν*; / our case would be further supported if Matthew and Luke (or their sources) originally had the masculine gender in mind, but the neuter would also suffice.

But Jeremias thinks otherwise. He is of the opinion that the sixth petition must be seen in the light of some extra-canonical cryptic saying of Jesus, spoken just before his prayer in Gethsemane, warning the disciples

. . . dass keinem Jünger Jesu die Erprobung durch die Versuchung erspart bleibt; nur die Überwindung hat die Verheissung. Auch dieses Wort spricht dafür, dass die Schluss-bitte des Vater-Unsers nicht darum bittet, dass dem Beter die Versuchung erspart bleiben möge, sondern dass Got ihm helfen möge, sie zu übersinden.⁷⁹

⁷⁶Kuhn, Achtzehngebet und Vaterunser und der Reim, pp. 45-6.

⁷⁷E. Lohmeyer, Das Vater-Unser (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1960), p. 144.

⁷⁸Schürmann, op. cit., p. 91.

⁷⁹J. Jeremias, Das Vater-Unser im Lichte der neueren

But Jeremias has missed the point of *πειρασμός*; he does not see its present, sinister hostile character and the imminent danger caused by the satanic power behind it (cf. *supra*, pp. 67-68). He goes on to argue that *πειρασμός* must be seen here in the light of the terrible "Endversuchung" (which is standing right before the door) and the danger of apostasy in the End-time. But such reasoning too strongly separates the Eschaton from the here and now, and the Our Father is also a prayer of the here and now, in which the voices of the faithful are raised in accordance with the necessities of the moment.⁸⁰ That these

Forschung (Stuttgart: Calwer Verlag, 1962), p. 27.

⁸⁰Klostermann, Das Matthäusevangelium, pp. 58-9, rejects any eschatological connection to *πειρασμός* here. An interesting observation is made by Erich Graesser, "Das Problem der Parusieverzögerung in den synoptischen Evangelien und in der Apostelgeschichte," Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche, Beiheft 22 (1957), 103-4:

... *καὶ μὴ εἰσενέγκῃς ἡμᾶς εἰς πειρασμόν.*
 Die eschatologische Bezogenheit auf den *πειρασμός* der Endzeit ist nicht ausgeschlossen, scheint aber im jetzigen Zusammenhang wenig angezeigt. Sie wäre dann geradezu Bitte um Aufschub des Endes!! Denn das war allgemein verbreiteter Glaube, dass das Ende nicht kommen kann ohne den *πειρασμός*, die eschatologische Stunde der Versuchung durch die widergöttlichen Mächte. Man erhoffte allenfalls eine Verkürzung der Tage der Enddrangsale (vgl. Mc. 13:20). Aber man bittet nicht um den Aufschub! Darum legt sich für den *πειρασμός* der sechsten Bitte die Bedeutung von der Stunde der Versuchung, der Gefahr und Verfolgung nahe, die inhaltlich bestimmt ist durch all das, was zum Sündigen verleitet.

necessities are always necessities of every moment for every believer is the genius of the Our Father. It is Jeremias' wish to regard the Our Father in its entirety as a prayer concerning the future End-time; this had led him to his conclusions on the sixth petition. But this petition does not read, "Protect us from the future of the End-time," nor "Protect us from failure in every testing"; instead it reads "Lead us not into πειρασμόν!"

This petition expresses belief in the omnipresent hand of God. It also expresses the hope and the trust that it is God who leads each believer throughout his life. Recognizing this, the believers beseech God not to lead them into πειρασμός, where they will encounter hostility and evil (τὸ πονηρόν) from Satan (ὁ πονηρός in Matt. 13:19, John 17:15, Eph. 6:16, 1 John 2:13f., 5:18-19). This does not mean that a Christian cannot at the same time pray, "Prove me, O Lord, and try me; test my heart and my mind" (Psalm 25[26]:2) For God's testing of His people is really a sign of His grace, a sign of His desire to re-establish and to strengthen His relationship with them. Such testing should be as welcome for every Christian as is the grace which comes with it. But delivery into the hands of the Adversary can never be God's gracious act; instead it is His act of judgment (cf. Matt. 13:14-5 = Isaiah 6:9-10). Thus David, condemned for his sin, would rather receive his punishment at the hands of God than at the hands

of his enemies (2 Sam. 24:14; 1 Chron. 21:13). For with God there is always mercy, says the psalmist (Psalm 130:7), but with the Adversary none.

The sixth petition expresses the desire to remain under God's omnipotent and grace-giving hand, not to be given over into the hand of Satan, who by means of *πειρασμός* would break the loyalty and obedience of the faithful, hoping to bring about their apostasy and separation from God. This danger is, however, an ever-present danger for every Christian, indeed, a characteristic of the Christians existence in this world.⁸¹ To remain under God's leading, then, but safe from the *πειρασμός* of Satan, is the prayer of the believers.

The Gethsemane Warning

With the Passion of Jesus, a satanic kairos (Luke 4:13) has come. Jesus' words to his captors in the Garden are "This is your hour and the power of darkness" (Luke 22:53). The things now at hand comprise the supreme *πειρασμός* of Jesus life.⁸² Taylor states that in Mark the references to "the hour" (Luke 14:35, 41), the description of the Agony (Luke 14:33) and the sayings in Luke 14:34, 36 and

⁸¹Kuhn, "*Πειρασμός . . .*" in Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche, XIX, 202.

⁸²So Loisy, op. cit., p. 529; also Lagrange, op. cit., p. 133.

15:34 suggest the experience of Jesus to be a conflict with Satanic powers.⁸³ That Jesus tries to explain to his disciples the seriousness and imminent danger of "the hour" is diligently reported by all three synoptics in the words: "Watch and pray, so that you do not enter into temptation" (Matt. 26:31; Mark 14:38; Luke 22:40, 46). *πειρασμός* occurs only here in Mark, in the context of Satanic hostility, suggesting with this passage that such hostility is now to be directed not only against Jesus but also against his disciples.

Of what kind of *πειρασμός* is Jesus thinking with his warning as reported by the evangelists? It is certain that he is not warning against "den Peirasmos der Endzeit . . . , den Anbruch der eschatologischen Trübsal, den Angriff Satans auf die Heiligen Gottes, dessen Anbruch Jesus im Zusammenhang mit seinem Leiden erwartete," as Jeremias maintains.⁸⁴ Kümmel argues:

Mk 14, 38 . . . kann nicht als Beleg für die eschatologische Gegenwart der satanischen Endversuchung angeführt werden, weil *πειρασμός* hier entweder zeitlos gebraucht ist oder streng endzeitlich. . . .⁸⁵

⁸³Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 555. So also Kuhn (on Mark 14:38), *loc. cit.*

⁸⁴Die Gleichnisse Jesu, p. 52. Cf. Taylor, *loc. cit.*

⁸⁵W. G. Kümmel, *Verheissung und Erfüllung* (Zurich: Zwingli-Verlag, 1953), p. 118, footnote 75. But Kümmel's latter alternative is also not very likely; for Jesus

That Satan is the power behind *πειρασμός* in Jesus' warning and that the danger is imminent is clear, but what is the respective danger in which the disciples now stand?

As Bultmann suggests, the point of view from which the evangelists present the Passion Story is the belief of the Christian community that Jesus suffered and died as the Messiah.⁸⁶ But this belief in the post-Easter victory presupposes the pre-Easter struggle, for both Lord and Church. And at the heart of this struggle lay the skandalon of a crucified Messiah. Concerning the Markan account, Dibelius says:

Die hat ihren Höhepunkt in dem Gegensatz zwischen Jesu schmerzhafter Ergebung in Gottes Willen 14:36 und dem ahnungslosen Schlaf der Jünger, die von der "Stunde" nichts wissen.⁸⁷

Jesus was aware in the Garden of the imminence of "Satan's hour"; the disciples, however, were not. They had no idea of what was to come. They slept. Thus Jesus begs them,

γρηγορεῖτε καὶ προσεύχεσθε, ἵνα μὴ ἔλθῃτε εἰς

speaks of the End-time as coming without notice, as a thief in the night (Matt. 24:43); no one knows of that hour (Mark 13:32-3; Matt. 24:36), and it will come suddenly, so suddenly that there will be no more chance for apostasy through *πειρασμός*; all *πειρασμός* will have already have taken place beforehand.

⁸⁶Bultman, op. cit., p. 307.

⁸⁷Dibelius, Formgeschichte, p. 213.

πειρασμόν (Mark 14:38). The ἵνα may refer to both the purpose and the content of the disciples' praying. Their praying would be the necessary exercise for strength during the coming terrifying hours, hours during which their (false) messianic ideals would be shattered, their hopes and courage shaken, and their relationship to Jesus finally, seriously and radically brought into question. This was Satan's hour, however, and the refusal of the disciples to pray left them open to πειρασμός. The evangelists imply that the disciples' lethargy and failure to pray with their Lord eventually prevented them from meeting their obligations as his disciples. Because they did not "watch and pray," they did finally fall into πειρασμός; at the Arrest, "they all forsook him and fled" (Mark 14:50; Matt. 26:56).

But that the disciples merely fled from Jesus is only the beginning of the πειρασμός here. The deeper spiritual thrusts of πειρασμός are to be understood, the attempts of Satan to bring about the believers' apostasy. "Πειρασμός meint ja in Mark 14,38 wie im ganzen neuen Testament die Anfechtung des Gläubigen durch den Satan."⁸⁸ The purpose of πειρασμός, and of Satan through his πειρασμός, is to bring the believer to a fall, "ihn

⁸⁸K. G. Kuhn, "Jesus in Gethsemane," Evangelische Theologie, (1952-53), p. 283.

durch die Anfechtung zum Sündigen und damit zum Abfall vom Glauben zu bringen."⁸⁹ The greatest danger of *πειρασμός*, and therefore its ultimate intent, is the apostasy of the faithful, i.e., falling from the faith and thereby away from Christ. Satan's attempted *πειρασμός* against Jesus was to break his loyalty and obedience to God; thus Jesus' prayer in itself is a victory over the devil's *πειρασμός* when he says, "Not my will, but Thine be done" (Mark 14:36; Matt. 26:39; Luke 22:42). From Jesus' Gethsemane warning it is clear that the same Satanic attempts were to be made against the disciples, and they were therefore in imminent danger. They were in danger of *πειρασμός*, the hostile work of Satan. And for the disciples at this moment it meant the danger of taking offense at Jesus as the captive and crucified Messiah, the danger of apostasy, falling away from their Lord. This proved to be the case until the Easter and post-Easter appearances of the risen Christ.

⁸⁹Ibid.

CONCLUSIONS

Harnack once remarked concerning the use of *πειρασμός* in the sixth petition: "Die Schwerfälligkeit der Übersetzung zeigt, dass unsere Sprache ein dem *πειρασμός* entsprechendes Wort nicht besitzt."¹ The same is true today for the English language. As used in the New Testament Gospels, *πειρασμός* means more than "test," "attempt," or "experience," which words can be adequately expressed by the verb form *πειράσω*. *πειρασμός*, however, is never used to express such common terms, but rather to express "temptation"; however, even this equivalent is weak. *πειρασμός* always signals hostility and danger. In the synoptic Gospels (it does not occur in John) it is used to express Satan's work, which work brings with it the danger of apostasy, against which the believers are to pray, asking God to keep them free from it. The word is more consistently used to signify a present danger in which a given person stands, rather than as a strictly eschatological idea, i.e., an idea connected exclusively to the Eschaton or to the future End-time.

¹Adolf von Harnack, "Zwei Worte Jesu," Sitzungsberichte der königlich preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften (Berlin: Verlag der königlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1907), p. 947.

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