

THE WILDERNESS THEME IN THE GOSPELS

by

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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this thesis is to examine the wilderness terminology of the four canonical Gospels as a means toward understanding the peculiar views of the various evangelists toward the concept of the wilderness. For the purpose of this study, the wilderness terminology is restricted to the various forms of ἔρημος and ἐρημία.

The redaction critical approach is utilized to identify the evangelists' views on the concept of the wilderness. Since redaction criticism attempts to see how inherited traditions have been modified, the use of sources underlying the Gospels is stressed.

An investigation of the Gospel of Mark shows that Mark draws a sharp distinction between the meanings of the various terms of the wilderness terminology. Substantive ἔρημος occurs only in the Markan prologue (Mk 1:1-13), where it is used exclusively in connection with the fulfillment of the prophecy of Is 40:3. Substantive ἔρημος thus is primarily a theological, rather than a geographical concept. Outside the prologue Jesus is no longer in the ἔρημος but in the ἔρημος τόπος and in the ἐρημία.

The use of ἔρημος τόπος is a sign of Mark's redactional activity. This term is used to point out the contrast between populated and unpopulated areas. Ἐρημία is used only in Mk 8:4, where it has the connotation of warfare and

suffering. Both ἔρημος τόπος and ἐρημία should be viewed in the light of Mark's polemic against the hellenistic θεῖος ἄνθρωπος christology.

Although he uses Mark's three ways of referring to the wilderness, Matthew is not concerned with bringing out the different shades of meaning in these terms. For Matthew all wilderness terminology is potentially dangerous. In 24:26 Matthew warns against the danger of falling prey to a false messianic expectation associated with the wilderness. This anti-wilderness polemic is the key to Matthew's redactional activity insofar as the wilderness pericopae are concerned. For example, the anti-wilderness polemic provides a clue to Matthew's motive for reducing the powerful theological concept associated with Mark's use of ἡ ἔρημος (1:4) to an explicitly geographical reference (Mt 3:1). It also explains why Matthew reports that the ninety-nine sheep were left "on the hills" (Mt 18:12) rather than "in the wilderness" (Lk 15:4).

In the Gospel of Luke, no consistent concept of the wilderness can be found. The meaning Luke attaches to the wilderness is so ambiguous that even a city such as Bethsaida (Lk 9:10) can be referred to as a wilderness place (Lk 9:12). However, the use of the plural form of ἔρημος, peculiar to Luke, is very significant. The three occurrences of this term definitely indicate Luke's redactional activity. Consequently, the reference to the wilderness (plural) in

Lk 1:80 cannot be used to establish a historical connection between John the Baptist and the Qumran community.

In the Gospel of John, Jesus is never placed in a wilderness setting. The wilderness is mentioned in the course of the Johannine church-synagogue dialogue which concerns the relevance of the Mosaic messianic typology. However, John states very clearly that Jesus, as the Son of Man, rises above any messianic typology associated with the wilderness. Compared to Matthew's anti-wilderness polemic which is directed against specific religio-political events taking place in the wilderness, John's polemic is on a much more intellectual level. John is involved in a discussion of the value of the rabbinic messianic typology.

ABBREVIATIONS

AnglThR	Anglican Theological Review
ExposT	Expository Times
IB	Interpreter's Bible
ICC	International Critical Commentary
JBL	Journal of Biblical Studies
LXX	Septuagint
MSS	Manuscripts
MT	Masoretic Text
NovTest	Novum Testamentum
NTSt	New Testament Studies
RQu	Revue de Qumran
ThDNT	Theological Dictionary of the New Testament
ZNeutW	Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

I. THE PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THIS THESIS

The main purpose of this thesis is to examine the wilderness terminology of the Gospels as a means toward understanding the peculiar views of the various evangelists toward the concept of the wilderness. Both the geographical and theological aspects of the wilderness will be taken into account. Special attention will be given to the evangelists' reactions to contemporary or recent events and beliefs associated with the wilderness.

Although this study is concerned primarily with the wilderness theme in the four canonical Gospels, relevant references from other writings will also be considered. The rest of the New Testament writings, the Septuagint, the Apocrypha, the Pseudepigrapha, the Qumran literature and the writings of Josephus will be used to clarify references to the wilderness in the Gospels.

This thesis will deal only with the most basic terms of the wilderness terminology. In the Gospels these are ἔρημος and ἐρημία. Other terms such as ὄρος, for example, may also refer to the wilderness.¹ However, such terms have only a secondary or connotative meaning of wilderness; their primary or denotative meaning lies elsewhere.

In the Gospels, ἔρημος occurs in both its substantive and adjectival forms while ἐρημία is used only as a substantive. These terms are found thirty-four times in the Gospels:²

Mk 1:3,4,12,13,35,45; 6:31,32,35; 8:4
 Mt 3:1,3; 4:1; 11:7; 14:13,15; 15:33; 23:38; 24:26
 Lk 1:80; 3:2,4; 4:2,42; 5:16; 7:24; 8:29; 9:12; 15:4
 Jn 1:23; 3:14; 6:31,49; 11:54

Except Mt 23:38, all the above references to the wilderness are found in Nestle's³ text. The reference in Mt 23:38 is found in the apparatus as a variant reading.

II. THE METHOD OF INVESTIGATION

The redaction critical approach will be utilized to identify the evangelists' views of the concept of the wilderness. The term redaction criticism is used here in accordance with Dan O. Via's definition: "Redaction criticism is concerned with the interaction between inherited tradition and a later interpretive point of view."⁴ The three goals of redaction criticism which Via sets forth will be pursued insofar as they can be related to the wilderness theme.

Its goals are to understand why the items from the tradition were modified and connected as they were, to identify the theological motifs that were at work in composing a finished Gospel, and to elucidate the theological point of view which is expressed in and through the composition.⁵

Since redaction criticism attempts to see how inherited traditions have been modified, the use of sources

underlying the Gospels will be stressed. However, although various references to the wilderness will be assigned to definite sources, this certainly does not imply that the evangelists were merely collectors of traditional pericopae. It has been shown by such scholars as Marxsen⁶ and Conzelmann⁷ that the evangelists were authors in the true sense of the word. They not only collected but also edited the materials in accordance with their own interests.

Each Gospel will be treated in a separate chapter. The rationale behind the structure of each chapter is as follows. In Mark the variation in the form of the wilderness terminology is extremely important. Consequently, the chapter is divided into sections dealing with these various forms. In the Gospels of Matthew and John no stress is placed on such variations. However, the use of sources is significant. Therefore these two chapters are structured according to the use of sources. Finally, in the Gospel of Luke, the relationship between the Baptist and Jesus is important for the wilderness theme and the outline reflects this fact. However, any emphasis on the variation in the wilderness terminology or the use of sources is still subordinate to the overall stress on the use of redaction criticism.

III. THE WILDERNESS: A DEFINITION

In this thesis the word wilderness is not used merely

in its geographical sense or in its Old Testament context of Israel's wilderness sojourn. It is used in a much broader sense. It includes all the meanings of ἔρημος and ἐρημία. These Greek terms can be translated in a variety of ways depending on the context in which they occur. The Greek-English Lexicon by W. F. Arndt and F. W. Gingrich, for example, gives the following meanings: adjectival ἔρημος can mean abandoned, empty, desolate, lonely, deserted; substantive ἔρημος can mean desert, grassland, wilderness, steppe; substantive ἐρημία can mean uninhabited region, desert.

The word wilderness was chosen as the general translation for the ἔρημος-ἐρημία terminology because it seemed to be the most neutral term. The word desert, for example, was rejected because it brings to mind expansive sandy wastes. Wilderness, on the other hand, does not have such a specific meaning. It can refer to a variety of areas of a physically hostile nature to man, or to places which are characterized by an absence of human existence or activity. It can be used both as a geographical and theological concept. Because of this great flexibility, the use of this term should not prejudice the results of this investigation.

In referring to the wilderness theme of the Gospels, the term wilderness is used in this very inclusive way. The wilderness terminology includes the various forms of ἔρημος

and ἐρημία. Any pericope in which the wilderness terminology occurs will be referred to as a wilderness pericope.

The Greek terms ἔρημος and ἐρημία will be translated as wilderness in all quotations from the Gospels. The text of the Revised Standard Version, which is generally used in this thesis, will therefore be modified in places where it does not follow such a translation.

CHAPTER II

THE WILDERNESS THEME IN THE GOSPEL OF MARK

According to the Greek text of Nestle¹ there are ten references to the wilderness in Mark: 1:3,4,12,13,35,45; 6:31,32,35; 8:4. They occur in the following six pericopae:

John the Baptist² Mk 1:1-6
 The Temptation Mk 1:12-13
 Jesus Departs From Capernaum Mk 1:35-38
 The Healing of a Leper Mk 1:40-45
 The Feeding of the Five Thousand Mk 6:30-44
 The Feeding of the Four Thousand Mk 8:1-10

An examination of these pericopae shows that Mark uses three different terms for the wilderness. In John the Baptist and the Temptation the singular, substantive form of ἔρημος is used. In Jesus Departs From Capernaum, the Healing of a Leper, and the Feeding of the Five Thousand, the adjectival form of ἔρημος occurs. Finally, in the Feeding of the Four Thousand, the singular, substantive form of ἐρημία is found.

As the following discussion will show, this variation in the wilderness terminology is quite significant. In order to gain a comprehensive understanding of the wilderness theme in Mark, it is necessary to deal separately with Mark's use of ἔρημος, ἔρημος τόπος and ἐρημία.

I. THE BAPTIST AND JESUS IN THE "ΕΡΗΜΟΣ

John the Baptist (Mk 1:1-6) and the Temptation

(Mk 1:12-13) are the two Markan wilderness pericopae in which the singular, substantive use of ἔρημος occurs. Both are found in what is commonly referred to as the Markan Prologue (Mk 1:1-13)³.

Mauser⁴ has put forth a suggestive thesis with respect to the relationship between the prologue and the theme of the wilderness. Although there are many weaknesses in his argument, it still provides a good starting point for further discussion.

Mauser's View of the Unity of the Markan Prologue

The concept of the wilderness provides the basis for Mauser's main argument for the unity of Mk 1:1-13. He claims that this passage is "marked out as a unit by the locality which is the scene for everything contained in these verses, the locality being the wilderness."⁵

Mauser claims that both verses of the prophecy in Mk 1:2-3 refer to the wilderness theme. Mk 1:2 combines Ex 23:20: "Behold, I send my messenger before thy face"⁶ with Mal 3:1: "who shall prepare thy way."⁷ The wilderness motif of Mk 1:2 is suggested by the fact that in Ex 23:20 God promises that an angel will guide the people through the desert.⁸

The relationship of Mk 1:3 to the wilderness is clear. This verse is taken from the LXX version of Is 40:3, and repeats the word ἔρημος found there. The "one crying in the wilderness" introduces the wilderness theme which is

then picked up in Mk 1:4.

As Mauser points out, Mk 1:3 does not reproduce the LXX version of Is 40:3 exactly. At the end of the verse, the LXX rendering "the paths of God" is altered in Mk 1:3 to "his paths."⁹ Thus, a phrase, which in the LXX referred to God, is changed to refer to Christ in the source which Mark followed. Mauser therefore concludes that both the messenger and the Lord are introduced in this prophecy.¹⁰

Mauser goes on to show that "in the wilderness" (Mk 1:4) links the ministry of John the Baptist with the prophetic promises. However, according to Mauser, this is not simply a mechanical link. This cross reference gives the clue to the background for the understanding of both baptism and repentance in Mk 1:4. Mauser claims that the concept of repentance is rooted in the wilderness tradition of the Old Testament. Thus the act of going out into the wilderness is an act of repentance. Baptism, as a re-enactment of Israel's exodus into the wilderness, is also related to the wilderness tradition.¹¹

With respect to the wilderness reference in Mk 1:4, it should be pointed out that Mauser does not consider that Mark is primarily concerned with geographical interests.

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.¹²

Mauser is quick to add:

This does not preclude that the Baptist actually appeared in the wilderness.¹³

Although Mauser claims that Mark is not concerned with geographical interests, it is still of concern to Mark that the Jordan falls within the range of the wilderness.¹⁴ Mauser reasons that "Mark wants us to regard the Jordan baptisms as incidents in the wilderness."¹⁵

Mk 1:6 again alludes to the theme of the wilderness. Mauser shows that this description of John the Baptist stresses that he is a man of the wilderness. The clothing of camel's hair and the food of locusts and wild honey were peculiar to the wilderness nomad.¹⁶

Although it does not mention the wilderness directly, the account of the baptism of Jesus (Mk 1:9-11), does not breach the unity of the prologue, as Mauser views it. The Jordan is seen by Mark as part of the wilderness in general.

The last two verses of the prologue deal with the temptation of Jesus. After the baptism of Jesus, "The Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness" (Mk 1:12). Mauser interprets this verse as meaning that the Spirit "forces him to penetrate into the wilderness even more deeply."¹⁷ Jesus remains in the wilderness after the baptism to signify that he is the true penitent. At his baptism Jesus was "proclaimed to be the Son of God who represents the new Israel."¹⁸ The fact that Jesus stays in

the wilderness shows that his penitence was not completed at his baptism.

Mauser stresses that Mk 1:13 reports that Satan, the wild beasts and the angels were in the wilderness at the same time.

The dominant aspect of Jesus' stay in the wilderness is his temptation by the adversary of God and at the same time his sustenance by the servants of God.¹⁹

Finally, Mauser draws attention to the fact that Mk 1:12-13 does not report Jesus' victory over Satan. With respect to the forty days of verse 13, Mauser states that they should not be regarded "as a period passed forever once Christ starts his public ministry, but, as with Moses and Elijah, as the sounding of the keynote of his whole mission."²⁰ This leaves the way open for the interpretation that Jesus' whole ministry can be seen as a conflict with Satan.

Thus Jesus' way from the beginning of his ministry to Gethsemane is depicted in the Second Gospel as an uninterrupted confrontation with the devil's might. His way is, indeed, a way of temptation and the statement of the prologue is verified--he is driven by the spirit into the wilderness, tempted by Satan.²¹

Mauser concludes that the prologue provides the key to the whole Gospel. It sets the stage for the whole ministry of Jesus.

In accordance with the 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. To live in this condition is to live in the wilderness.²²

What are the major claims which Mauser has made with respect to the theme of the wilderness in the prologue? There seem to be three. First of all, Mauser claims that the concept of the wilderness provides the string on which the beads of the prologue are assembled. Secondly, he claims that the concept of the wilderness in the prologue is rooted in the Old Testament wilderness tradition. The prologue thus looks backward to the Old Testament. However, Mauser also claims that the prologue has a forward orientation. Therefore, his third claim is that the concept of the wilderness in the prologue plays a major part in setting the stage for the ministry of Jesus in general, and for the interpretation of the wilderness terminology in the rest of the Gospel in particular.

These three claims must now be tested. Let us begin with a closer look at the wilderness pericopae of John the Baptist and the Temptation.

The Baptist in the "ἔρημος"

What does Mark mean by "the wilderness" when he uses it in the context of John the Baptist in Mk 1:3 and 4? As Mauser has pointed out, "in the wilderness" of Mk 1:3 is taken verbatim from Is 40:3 (LXX). What is the meaning of ἔρημος in the LXX?

Funk²³ shows that singular ἔρημος is reserved for midbār in all strata of the LXX. In the Pentateuch ἔρημος

represents midbār 97 times, and usually refers to the wilderness of the sojourn. In the former prophets midbār with the definite article, is often applied to areas adjacent to, or in, Palestine proper, although it is also used to refer to the area of the sojourn. Funk goes on to show that in the latter Prophets and in the Hagiographa midbār with the definite article appears in mythological contexts. In such passages, Funk explains, it is neither possible nor necessary to determine location.

Which of these uses, if any, does Mark have in mind when he links verse 1:4 with 1:3 by using the identical phrase ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ? What does he mean when he writes that "John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness"?

Funk lists twelve New Testament passages in which ἡ ἐρημος refers to the wilderness of the sojourn.²⁴ None of these is found in the Gospel of Mark. Funk does say, however, that the localization of nominal ἐρημος as the wilderness of Judea, is appropriate to the majority of New Testament passages.²⁵ He explains that this use of the wilderness of Judea includes the lower Jordan valley and possibly even its eastern slopes. He finds the precedent for this usage in the LXX and in the Qumran literature.

Funk concludes that the wilderness of Judea, as defined above, had become the focal point for messianic and apocalyptic hopes. Jesus, John, the Qumran sect and other groups were all connected with this geographical area.

McCown suggests that "the wilderness" in the Gospel of Mark should be defined in a more limited way. He concludes that ἡ ἔρημος both in Mark and in the Sayings Source, is the Greek equivalent for the Hebrew ha-‘arābhāh or ‘arebhōth, which refers to the region at the head of the Dead Sea.²⁶ McCown adds that John therefore had established himself on the same site which Joshua and Israel had occupied before entering the Promised Land.²⁷

Was Mark really concerned with the precise localization of the wilderness? Mauser claims that this was not Mark's primary concern. Marxsen also states that the wilderness is not a geographical place in Mk 1:4.²⁸ However, whereas Mauser feels that the Jordan is part of the wilderness, Marxsen wants to differentiate between the two areas.

Marxsen makes the important observation that in Mk 1:5, "all" the country of Judea and people of Jerusalem come to John in order to be baptized, despite the fact that a move by John to the Jordan has not been mentioned.²⁹ Marxsen therefore asks, what can "in the wilderness" mean in 1:4?

In his explanation Marxsen follows the suggestion of K. L. Schmidt, that Mark has combined the tradition of a wilderness-preacher (especially 1:6) with the tradition of a Jordan-baptizer.³⁰ Mark finds ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ in Is 40:3 (LXX) and therefore reworks his tradition by repeating this phrase in 1:4. Marxsen concludes that ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ qualifies the

baptizer as the fulfiller of Old Testament prophecy.³¹

By the above interpretation, Marxsen is not trying to say "wie es war"³², but simply how Mark saw it. Marxsen admits that the actual wilderness often extends right to the banks of the Jordan, so that it actually would have been possible to baptize in the wilderness.³³ He doubts, however, that Mark was aware of this geographical fact.

Although the prophetic emphasis on the wilderness in Mk 1:3,4 does not preclude any geographical meaning, it does indicate that this is not Mark's primary concern. Mauser's claim that Mark definitely sees the Jordan baptisms as incidents in the wilderness, must therefore be questioned. Consequently, the view that the wilderness is the unifying element of the prologue is also doubtful.

With reference to Mk 1:3, Wink states that "because John was 'in the wilderness' the Isaiah citation becomes relevant."³⁴ R. E. Brown³⁵ shares that opinion. He states that in the LXX version of Is 40:3 "in the desert" modifies "voice" while in the MT version "in the desert" is a part of what is said. Brown concludes that the choice of the LXX rendering by the gospel writers points to the fact that John the Baptist was in the wilderness region.

As will be shown in the course of the discussion of the Gospels of Matthew, Luke and John, all the N.T. Gospels link the Baptist with the wilderness.³⁶ However, the possibility exists that all of the Gospels base this relationship

on theological, rather than historical reasons. Are there any extra-biblical sources which link the Baptist with the wilderness? From Scobie's³⁷ discussion of such sources the following picture emerges.

Josephus has a reference to John in his Antiquities (XVIII, 5, 2). In this passage John the Baptist is not directly connected with the wilderness; it is only mentioned that "John was sent as a prisoner to Machaerus."³⁸ On the basis of this evidence McCown³⁹ conjectures that John must have been active in the vicinity of Machaerus. Machaerus is situated on top of a mountain fifteen miles S.E. of the mouth of the Jordan. McCown claims that this location falls within the area known as ἡ ἔρημος . In this way he wants to prove that John was in the wilderness. Such circumstantial evidence, however, is not very convincing.

Scobie⁴⁰ mentions that there are two more references to John the Baptist in the Slavonic version of Josephus. The value of these passages, however, is very doubtful, since it seems quite certain that they were composed by a Christian author and not by Josephus. The writings of Josephus can therefore be used neither to prove nor to disprove that the Baptist was connected with the wilderness.

Scobie goes on to show that the writings of the early Christian authors and the Mandaean literature provide us with no independent and/or genuine historical tradition about the life of John the Baptist. We are therefore faced

with the conclusion that there is no extra-biblical evidence for the claim that John the Baptist was connected with the wilderness.

However, the Qumran Literature seems to provide an analogy for connecting John the Baptist with the wilderness. In the Manual of Discipline (IQS 8:13-16) it is stated:

When these things come to pass for the community in Israel, by these regulations shall they be separated from the midst of the men of error to go to the wilderness to prepare there the way of the Lord; as it is written, 'In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God.' This is the study of the law as he commanded through Moses, to do according to all that has been revealed from time to time, and as the prophets revealed by his Holy Spirit.⁴¹

McCasland, in commenting on the above passage which refers to Is 40:3, points out that both the early Christians and the Qumran community traced themselves back to the same prophetic source.⁴² The Qumran community took Is 40:3 very literally. They actually went to live in the wilderness. It is possible that John the Baptist acted similarly.

Although it is quite possible that the Baptist was active in the wilderness, it is hard to say whether Mark had any geographical interests in his use of ἔρημος. He was concerned primarily with showing the connection between the Old Testament prophecy of Is 40:3 and John the Baptist. In establishing this relationship Mark even seemed to be unconcerned about the inconsistencies created by such a treatment. For example, as Marxsen has pointed out, Mark leaves the

relationship between the wilderness and the Jordan rather unclear. Although it is impossible to prove that Mark was totally unconcerned with geographical accuracy, any use of Mk 1:1-6 for the purpose of pinpointing the location of the wilderness should be questioned.⁴³

Jesus in the "Ἐρημος"

In Mk 1:9 it is reported that "Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan." The wilderness is not mentioned with reference to Jesus' baptism. However, with the account of the Temptation (Mk 1:12-13), the use of ἔρημος is taken up again. Verse 12 states that "The Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness." On the basis of Mk 1:9 and 12 it is clear that Jesus went from a non-wilderness area, the Jordan, to the wilderness. Mark therefore distinguishes the Jordan from the wilderness.

Mauser, in an attempt to safeguard the unity of the prologue, interprets Mk 1:12 to mean that the Spirit "forces him to penetrate into the wilderness even more deeply."⁴⁴ Such an interpretation cannot be derived from the actual text, which states that Jesus was not just driven into the wilderness more deeply, but that he was driven into the wilderness. Thus, this passage provides further support for the contention that the wilderness does not provide the unifying element for the entire prologue. The baptism of Jesus takes

place in the Jordan, not in the wilderness.

The temptation of Jesus, on the other hand, does occur in the wilderness. Just as a voice cried "ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ" (1:3) and John the Baptist appeared "ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ" (1:4), so Jesus is portrayed to be "ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ" (1:13) during his temptation. As was pointed out previously, the prophecy of Is 40:3 is presented in Mk 1:3 in an altered form. It refers both to the messenger, John the Baptist, and to the Lord, Jesus. The phrase "in the wilderness" (1:13) thus links Jesus with the Old Testament prophecy.

There are many more points of contact between the Old Testament and the temptation account. Leaney has suggested that "the expulsion of Jesus into the desert was influenced by the story of the scapegoat in Lev. 16:7-10, 20-22."⁴⁵ The forty days (1:13) is probably an allusion to Moses⁴⁶ or perhaps to Israel's forty years in the wilderness.

Mauser feels that the "wild beasts" of Mk 1:13 should be explained in terms of the association of demons and wilderness animals in Is 13:21, 34:14 (LXX).⁴⁷ He also sees a connection between the function of the angels in Mk 1:13 and the angel in I Kings 19:5,7. He explains that "the angels have the same function of providing Jesus with nourishment in the barren waste."⁴⁸

Schweitzer even suggests that the entire temptation story is a literary product based on the Old Testament.

The whole wilderness episode is to be evaluated on the whole as a literary product that grew out of reasoning based on the Old Testament. As Moses had spent forty days in solitude before the giving of the Law (Ex 24:18), so Jesus also must have done this before he took up his office. And as the wilderness is thought to be the residence of the evil spirits, he must have been tempted by them.⁴⁹

Although all of the above allusions to the Old Testament need further investigation, it is possible to draw the general conclusion that the account of the temptation of Jesus refers back to the wilderness tradition of the Old Testament.

Does the account of the temptation also have a forward orientation? Mauser claims that it has. He argues that the forty days (1:13) should not be regarded "as a period passed for ever once Christ starts his public ministry."⁵⁰ Such an argument is unconvincing. The most obvious interpretation of Mk 1:13 seems to be that it refers to a closed period, even though the number forty may be symbolic.

It should also be pointed out that after the temptation, Jesus is reported as coming into Galilee (1:14), thus returning to his earlier location (1:9). The verb, ἤλθεν, in both verses 9 and 14, thus marks off the baptism and temptation of Jesus as an enclosed and completed unit.

Mauser's argument that the conflict between Jesus and Satan must be regarded as open-ended, is also inconclusive. An argument must not rest on silence alone. Mauser's attempt

to establish that the temptation is carried on in the rest of the Gospel, especially in Jesus' struggle with demons, is unconvincing.⁵¹ If Mark really wanted to show the continuity of the conflict, why did he change Jesus' adversary from Satan to the demons?

The Role of the Prologue in Mark's Gospel

Let us now evaluate Mauser's three claims. The first claim that the concept of the wilderness provides the string on which the beads of the prologue are assembled, has to be rejected in part, since Mark distinguishes between the Jordan and the wilderness. Jesus' baptism did not take place in the wilderness.

How then is the unity of the prologue created? For Mark, the prophecy in 1:3 links John the Baptist (the voice) with Jesus (the Lord). The close historical link between the Baptist and Jesus is beyond question. Bornkamm has stated with respect to Jesus: "His own baptism by John is one of the most certainly verified occurrences of his life."⁵² Wink also emphasizes this historical connection when he writes:

The conviction that John is 'the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ', and all of the Christian elaborations of it, are but the theological expression of a historical fact, that through John's mediation Jesus perceived the nearness of the kingdom and his own relation to its coming.⁵³

Although the concept of the wilderness provides a

link between John's activity in the wilderness (Mk 1:4) and Jesus' temptation in the wilderness (Mk 1:12-13), the unity of the prologue is primarily created by the unique relationship between John the Baptist and Jesus in their roles of messenger and Lord respectively.

Mauser's claim that the concept of the wilderness in the prologue plays a vital role in setting the stage for the ministry of Jesus, must also be rejected. It has already been shown that Mauser's two main arguments for the open-endedness of the prologue, that is, the forty days and the lack of a report of Jesus' victory over Satan, are not conclusive. To this can be added that there is a clear-cut change in the wilderness terminology between the prologue and the rest of the Gospel. In the prologue, Mark uses only the substantive form of ἔρημος, while in the rest of the Gospel he uses only the adjectival form of ἔρημος and the substantive form of ἐρημία.

It must be concluded that the prologue does not emphasize a forward look. It is not like an overture which presents all the themes which are to follow. This is quite obvious since the references to the past, such as the prophecy of Is 40:3, are much clearer than the alleged references to the future.

This brings us to Mauser's claim that the prologue has many points of contact with the Old Testament. This claim has been substantiated by the exegesis of the wilderness pericopae of John the Baptist and the Temptation.

What is the role of the prologue? With its explicit connection to Is 40:3, the prologue indicates that the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy; with its implicit connection to the rest of the Gospel, it indicates that the future is not simply an extension of the past. There is something new. With respect to the wilderness theme, this change is indicated by a new terminology. In the rest of the Gospel, Jesus is no longer in the ἔρημος but in the ἔρημος τόπος or the ἐρημία.

Therefore, we can conclude that Mark uses ἔρημος as a noun exclusively in connection with the fulfillment of the prophecy of Is 40:3. This passage itself sets the precedent for Mark as he shows the relationship of John the Baptist and Jesus to this prophecy in 1:4 and 12f. In showing this relationship, Mark stresses the theological rather than the geographical aspect of ἔρημος. What is significant to him is the continuity between the Old Testament prophecy and the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

II. JESUS IN THE ἔΡΗΜΟΣ ΤΟΠΟΣ

In the following pericopae Mark uses the adjectival form of ἔρημος modifying τόπος:

Jesus Departs From Capernaum 1:35-38
 The Healing of a Leper 1:40-45
 The Feeding of the Five Thousand 6:30-44

In these three wilderness pericopae the term ἔρημος τόπος occurs five times: 1:35,45; 6:31,32,35. What is the source and meaning of this term?

Jesus Departs From Capernaum

In the pericope, Jesus Departs From Capernaum (Mk 1:35-38), the phrase εἰς ἔρημον τόπον occurs in verse 35. In the previous pericope (Mk 1:32-34) there appears to be an emphasis on the great multitude of people in the urban setting. For example, "they brought to him all who were sick" (1:32); "the whole city was gathered" (1:33); "he healed many" (1:34).

In verse 35, in which the wilderness place is mentioned, there is a stark contrast. Jesus retires by himself to a wilderness place to pray. However, this solitude does not last long. In the next verse we read that his disciples searched for him and found him. They now tell him that "every one is searching for you" (1:37). As a result of this message, Jesus decides to "go on to the next towns" (1:38).

Thus both before and after verse 1:35, there is an emphasis on the multitudes of the urban setting, while in the wilderness place Jesus is all alone. The contrast, therefore, seems to be between a populated and an unpopulated area, rather than between a fertile and unfertile area.

It should also be pointed out that in Mk 1:13 Jesus is tempted by Satan in the wilderness. Now, only twenty

verses later, Jesus uses a wilderness place for prayer. This seems to suggest that while the ἔρημος is a place of temptation, the ἔρημος τόπος is a place where one can talk to God.

Is Mark following a source in his use of "wilderness place", or can the origin of this term be attributed to Mark himself? There seems to be a division of opinion among scholars as to whether 1:35 is traditional or redactional. Taylor and Marxsen hold the view that Mk 1:35 is basically traditional. Taylor⁵⁴ classifies Mk 1:35-39 as a story about Jesus. Marxsen⁵⁵ says that Mk 1:35-38 is a traditional pericope. Bultmann⁵⁶ and Mauser⁵⁷, on the other hand, claim that Mk 1:35 is an editorial section. The latter view is more convincing.

The Healing of a Leper

The second use of "wilderness place" in Mark is found in the final verse of the pericope of the Healing of a Leper (Mk 1:40-45). Here the contrast between the urban and rural setting is very obvious. Mark writes that the consequence of the healing of the leper was that "Jesus could no longer openly enter a town (πόλις), but was out in the wilderness places" (1:45). In this case the wilderness place is portrayed as a place of refuge.

Taylor and Bultmann agree that Mk 1:45 is the result of redactional work. Taylor⁵⁸ includes Mk 1:45 among the

summary statements of Mark. Bultmann classifies this verse among the "end formulations"⁵⁹ which reflect Mark's editorial work.

It is possible that in his formulation of 1:45, Mark was influenced by an Old Testament theme. Kittel⁶⁰ suggests, on the basis of I Kings 19:3f., that the wilderness was thought of as a place of refuge for the persecuted.

I Macc 2:31 also portrays the wilderness as a place of refuge.

And it was reported to the king's officers and to the troops that were in Jerusalem, the city of David, that men who had set at nought the king's command had gone down into hiding-places in the wilderness.⁶¹

The Feeding of the Five Thousand

In the story of the Feeding of the Five Thousand (Mk 6:30-44) the term "wilderness place" occurs three times (Mk 6:31,32,35). In verse 31 the wilderness place is described as a place of rest, away from the multitudes. When the twelve disciples returned from their mission of preaching, Jesus told them, "Come away by yourselves to a wilderness place, and rest a while" (Mk 6:31).

The account goes on to say that the disciples and Jesus went "to a wilderness place by themselves" (Mk 6:32). Again it is emphasized that they were alone. However, the crowds learned of their plan and "a great throng" (6:34) met them from "all the towns" (6:33). Thus the contrast

between the wilderness place where there is to be privacy and the towns with their great crowds is evident once again.

In Mk 6:35 the wilderness place is depicted as a place where there are no stores. The disciples tell Jesus that the people should leave the wilderness place and go to the towns to buy food.

Mk 6:31-32 is considered by Taylor⁶² as a "Markan construction." Bultmann calls Mk 6:30-33 an "editorial section."⁶³ With respect to Mk 6:31 Bultmann says, "the disciples' need for rest is used as the motive for finding an ἔρημος τόπος"⁶⁴, and with respect to 6:32 he says, "the naming of the ἔρημος τόπος does not necessarily make it a part of the original tradition."⁶⁵

Taylor⁶⁶ includes Mk 6:35 as part of a Miracle Story. Mauser,⁶⁷ however, makes the valid suggestion that while Mark found ἔρημος or ἐρημία in his tradition for Mk 6:35, he changed this to ἔρημος τόπος in order to conform to the terminology of 6:31 and 32. It is therefore probable that the three occurrences of ἔρημος τόπος in the pericope of the Feeding of the Five Thousand are due to the redactional activity of Mark.

The Use of "Ἐρημος Τόπος" in the LXX

It was pointed out that Mark used the LXX version of Is 40:3 in Mk 1:3. Consequently, his use of ἔρημος could be traced back to the LXX. Does Mark's use of ἔρημος

τόπος also depend on the LXX?

In the Codex Alexandrinus, the expression τόπον ἔρημον occurs in II Macc 8:35.⁶⁸ Most of the manuscripts, however, favor τρόπον ἔρημον. Moffatt⁶⁹ also prefers the latter reading in his translation. From the context of the passage, it does seem that τρόπον (way) is a much better reading than τόπον (place).

In the Codex Alexandrinus the phrase εἰς ἔρημον τόπον is found in Jer 13:24.⁷⁰ Codex Vaticanus and Codex Sinaiticus, on the other hand, omit τόπον. Brenton⁷¹ translates Jer 13:24 as: "So I scattered them as sticks carried by the wind into the wilderness." Here the wilderness is a place of punishment. Consequently, both from the point of view of meaning and vocabulary, this passage does not present a precedent for Mark's use of ἔρημος τόπος.

There is one passage in the LXX version of Jeremiah which, while not using the expression ἔρημος τόπος as such, may still throw light on the Markan usage. Brenton⁷² translates Jer 40:12⁷³ as follows:

Thus saith the Lord of hosts; There shall yet be in this place, that is desert (ἐν τῷ τόπῳ τούτῳ τῷ ἐρήμῳ) for want of man and beast, in all the cities thereof, resting-places for shepherds causing their flocks to lie down.

This passage defines the wilderness place in terms of the absence of man and beast. The wilderness place is an unpopulated area. This passage also links the wilderness place with the idea of rest. Both of these ideas are related

to the Markan concept of the wilderness place. Jer 40:12 (LXX) could therefore have been an influence on Mark's use. The stylistic difference between ἔρημος τόπος and ἐν τῷ τόπῳ τούτῳ τῷ ἐρήμῳ is not really very great. These two expressions differ only in their use of the attributive position for adjectives. The latter expression could be changed to ἐν τῷ ἐρήμῳ τόπῳ τούτῳ without a change in meaning.

Therefore, we must conclude that although the expression ἔρημος τόπος does not refer as clearly to the LXX as ἔρημος does, the possibility still exists that it too, has its origin in the LXX.

Conclusions

Can the phrase ἔρημος τόπος be attributed to Mark's redactional work? It has been shown that the occurrences of ἔρημος τόπος in Mk 1:45; 6:31,32,35 should definitely be viewed in this way. The occurrence in 1:35, on the other hand, may possibly go back to a pre-Markan tradition. However, the expression ἔρημος τόπος is not found in Q, M, L, the Gospel of John or in any of the New Testament writings other than the Gospels. The Gospels of Matthew and Luke use this expression only when they parallel the Markan source. All this indicates that the term ἔρημος τόπος should be attributed to Mark's redactional activity.

The theme which unites these passages sets forth

the wilderness place as an unpopulated area, in contrast to the crowded towns and cities. It is true that the multitudes from the cities and towns manage to disturb the peace of the wilderness places. This, however, is seen as an intrusion. It is not seen as an intrinsic condition of the wilderness place.

Mark thinks of the wilderness place as a place where solitude is possible. As a result it can be used as a place of prayer (1:35), as a place of refuge (1:45) and as a place of rest (6:31). Whereas the ἔρημος was a place of temptation, the ἔρημος τόπος ideally provides the possibility of rest for Jesus. Satan is not connected with the wilderness place.

The question which now follows is; why did Mark decide to use ἔρημος τόπος in addition to ἔρημος? The concepts of prayer, refuge and rest could also have been connected with ἔρημος. Mark's christology will clarify this point. However, before it is possible to deal with the relationship between the wilderness theme in its entirety and Markan christology, we must investigate ἐρημία, the third term in Mark's wilderness terminology.

III. JESUS IN THE Ἐρημία

Mark uses the noun ἐρημία only in the pericope of the Feeding of the Four Thousand (8:1-10). Since it is difficult to determine the meaning of a word from a single use (Mk 8:4), let us first of all see how ἐρημία is used in

writings other than the Gospel of Mark.

Non-Markan Usage of 'Ερημία

Funk⁷⁴ points out that ἔρημία is never used in the LXX to translate midbār, which is the most common term for the wilderness of the sojourn. As a matter of fact there is not a single occurrence of ἔρημία in the Pentateuch.

'Ερημία does occur in Ez 35:4,9; Is 60:12 and Baruch 4:33. In all of these passages it is used in the context of God's judgment upon various peoples, which results in their habitation becoming a desolation (ἔρημία).

In IV Maccabees 18:8 the ἔρημία is the home of the seducer: "No seducer of the desert, no deceivers in the field corrupted me."⁷⁵

In the New Testament ἔρημία occurs only three times in addition to Mk 8:4. In Mt 15:33 it occurs in the parallel passage to Mk 8:4, but no additional light is thrown on its meaning. In II Cor 11:26 ἔρημία occurs in the context of an account of Paul's sufferings as an apostle:

...on frequent journeys, in danger from rivers, danger from robbers, danger from my own people, danger from Gentiles, danger in the city, danger in the wilderness (ἔρημία), danger at sea, danger from false brethren.

In Heb 11:38 it occurs in the context of the suffering endured by the great Old Testament men of faith. Both in Corinthians and Hebrews the ἔρημία is a place where hardship and suffering are expected.

Finally let us turn to the use of ἐρημία in the writings of Josephus. Funk⁷⁶ has shown that Josephus reserves substantivized ἐρημία for the Sinai wilderness and other great deserts, and uses ἔρημος for the wilderness of the Jordan valley and Judea. Josephus often uses ἐρημία in contexts of war. For example, in Jewish War II, 259 (Antiquities XX, 168) Felix destroys the deceivers and impostors in the ἐρημία. In Jewish War II, 262 Felix attacks the Egyptian false prophet.

This brief survey of the use of ἐρημία in the LXX, the Intertestamental literature, the New Testament and the writings of Josephus indicates that the dominant characteristic of ἐρημία is that it is a place of desolation, suffering and warfare. It is a place conducive to the perpetration of violence.

The Feeding of the Four Thousand

Is the meaning of ἐρημία as defined above applicable to Mk 8:4? Mk 8:2 implies that the crowd has undergone great hardship in having gone without food for three days. The next verse points out that some of the people would faint in an attempt to return to their homes. Thus there is a definite stress on the hardships encountered in the setting of the ἐρημία in contrast to the pericope of the Feeding of the Five Thousand (Mk 6:30-44), where the physical hunger of the crowd is not an issue.

Many scholars claim that the Feeding of the Four Thousand and the Feeding of the Five Thousand refer to a single event. For example, Carrington states that the narrative of the Four Thousand "is commonly regarded as a secondary form of the Feeding of the Five Thousand."⁷⁷ Lohmeyer⁷⁸ maintains that the similarities in the two narratives indicate that we are not dealing with two distinct events, but with one event according to two sources.

The problem now is to delineate two sources which will account for the differences in the two narratives. Iersel⁷⁹ points out that many scholars hold the view that Mk 6:35-44 refers to a Feeding of Jews and Mk 8:1-10 to a Feeding of Gentiles. Danker⁸⁰ likewise is a strong advocate of the view that Mk 8:1-10 carries a strong Gentile accent. However, such an interpretation sheds no light on the fact that Mark uses ἄρτος τόπος in the Feeding of the Five Thousand and ἄρτια in the Feeding of the Four Thousand.

A theory which does illuminate this variation in the wilderness terminology is presented by H. Montefiore in his article "Revolt in the Desert."⁸¹ He claims that the basic tradition underlying the two feeding narratives is a thwarted messianic uprising in the wilderness. This explains the use of ἄρτια which has the connotation of violence and desolation. However, by supporting the view that "Mark probably includes two accounts of the same feeding miracle to show how Jesus gives spiritual food to both Jew and

Gentile",⁸² Montefiore fails to grasp Mark's reasoning behind the use of ἄρτος τόπος in the Feeding of the Five Thousand.

For a complete explanation we must investigate the relationship between the feeding narratives and the eucharistic tradition. In Mk 8:1-10 two distinct meals are indicated: a meal of bread (8:6) and a meal of fish (8:7). In Mk 6:30-44, on the other hand, these two meals are combined (Mk 6:41). Matthew must have recognized this seeming inconsistency in Mark, for as Iersel⁸³ points out, Matthew attempts to bring the Feeding of the Four Thousand into harmony with the Five Thousand by combining the bread and fish meal into one. Iersel also shows that there is a general redaction of the fish motif as Matthew and Luke bring out the eucharistic interpretation.

On this basis I suggest that on the one hand, there is a correlation between the peaceful setting of the ἄρτος τόπος and the eucharistic interpretation of the Feeding of the Five Thousand and on the other hand, there is a correlation between the violent setting suggested by the use of ἐρημία and the tradition of an abortive messianic uprising underlying the Feeding of the Four Thousand.

IV. THE WILDERNESS AND MARK'S CHRISTOLOGY

Weeden⁸⁴ has demonstrated quite convincingly that there are two opposing christologies in the Gospel of Mark;

a hellenistic θεῖος ἄνθρωπος christology which views the Messiah as a miracle worker who is the embodiment of God and Mark's own suffering christology. The Sitz im Leben for this conflict is found in Mark's own community.

Weeden suggests that in order to combat the θεῖος ἄνθρωπος christology, Mark presents Jesus as the advocate of his (i.e. Mark's) own position. Jesus thus becomes the proponent of the view that "authentic messiahship is suffering messiahship which culminates in the crucifixion."⁸⁵ The disciples, on the other hand, become "advocates of a θεῖος ἄνθρωπος christology which is pitted against the suffering messiahship of Jesus."⁸⁶

Since the heretics in the Markan community probably claimed that their position originated with the disciples themselves, Mark was forced to deal with their tradition which portrayed Jesus as a great θεῖος ἄνθρωπος. "He does this by placing most of their material in the first half of the Gospel prior to the Petrine confession."⁸⁷ Thus the first half of the Gospel is saturated with the wonder-working activities of Jesus in the role of a θεῖος ἄνθρωπος. Mark even intersperses his own summaries of the θεῖος ἄνθρωπος activity (1:32ff.; 3:7ff.; 6:53ff.).

Mark's christological polemic is intimately related to his use of the wilderness terminology. It is not merely a coincidence that the Markan wilderness pericopae are all found in the first half of the Gospel, prior to the Petrine

confession. In the second half of the Gospel, Mark's own suffering christology predominates, and it has no traditional connection with the wilderness. It is only the θεῖος ἀνὴρ christology with its emphasis on signs and wonders which was associated with the wilderness.⁸⁸ The references to ἔρημος τόπος and ἐρημία must be seen in this light.

It is doubtful, however, that the θεῖος ἀνὴρ tradition influenced the prologue. The "Son of God" in Mk 1:1 is not the θεῖος ἀνὴρ, for Perrin⁸⁹ has shown that Mark interprets the Son of God in terms of the Son of Man who must suffer. It is safe to conclude that Mark uses ἔρημος in order to show the relationship of John and Jesus to the prophecy of Is 40:3. "Ἐρημος is used only to lay stress on the continuity between the prophecy and the gospel; it is not necessary for the development of Mark's suffering christology.

Weeden indicates that Mark may not have been totally opposed to the presentation of Jesus as a miracle worker. "The very fact that he presents this picture at all in his Gospel, though it is for polemical reasons, indicates that such a presentation was not completely offensive to him."⁹⁰ However, "...he did not consider this characterization to be that attribute of Jesus which made him the messiah."⁹¹

Accordingly, while using the θεῖος ἀνὴρ tradition, Mark re-interprets it. I suggest that the use of ἔρημος τόπος is a re-interpretation of a tradition which used

ἔρημος or even ἐρημία. Mark felt obligated to deal with the ἔρημος-ἐρημία tradition. However, in order to avoid giving it the same importance which he attached to the use of ἔρημος in the prologue, and also in order to guard against the strong messianic and apocalyptic connotation of ἡ ἔρημος, Mark turned to the use of ἔρημος τόπος.

The significance of the use of ἐρημία in the Feeding of the Four Thousand remains somewhat of a mystery. However, I would like to present one possible explanation. As was suggested earlier, this pericope was originally concerned with a thwarted messianic revolt in the wilderness. The use of ἐρημία was appropriate to this pericope since ἐρημία implies suffering and warfare. By placing this pericope almost immediately before the Petrine confession, thereby at the end of the θεῖος ἀνὴρ christology, Mark may be showing very subtly that the θεῖος ἀνὴρ christology is doomed to failure, for Jesus himself refused to be associated with a messianic uprising.

Mark's use of the wilderness terminology can be summed up as follows. He uses ἔρημος exclusively to tie together Old Testament prophecy and the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. He uses ἔρημος τόπος and ἐρημία in the course of his polemic against the θεῖος ἀνὴρ christology.

CHAPTER III

THE WILDERNESS THEME IN THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW

There are nine references to the wilderness in the Gospel of Matthew: 3:1,3; 4:1; 11:7; 14:13,15; 15:33; 23:38; 24:26. Six (3:1,3; 4:1; 14:13,15; 15:33) are derived from Mark. They occur in the following pericopae:

John the Baptist Mt 3:1-6
 The Temptation Mt 4:1-11
 The Feeding of the Five Thousand Mt 14:13-21
 The Feeding of the Four Thousand Mt 15:32-39

The remaining three references (11:7; 23:38; 24:26) occur in the context of the following Q wilderness pericopae:

Jesus' Words About John Mt 11:7-19
 The Lament Over Jerusalem Mt 23:37-39
 The Day of the Son of Man Mt 24:26-28

I. THE KEY TO MATTHEW'S WILDERNESS THEME

The key to the interpretation of Matthew's wilderness theme is found in Mt 24:26. This verse must be seen in the context of Mt 24:23-28.

23 Then if any one says to you, 'Lo here is the Christ!' or 'There he is!' do not believe it.
 24 For false Christs and false prophets will arise and show great signs and wonders, so as to lead astray, if possible, even the elect.
 25 Lo, I have told you beforehand. 26 So, if they say to you, 'Lo, he is in the wilderness,' do not go out; if they say, 'Lo, he is in the inner rooms,' do not believe it. 27 For as the lightning comes from the east and shines as far as the west, so will be the coming of the Son of man. 28 Wherever the body is, there the eagles will be gathered together.

Before turning to an exegesis of this passage, let us determine whether the sentence "Lo, he is in the wilderness" in Mt 24:26 is dependent upon a definite source or can be attributed to Matthew's redactional activity.

Harnack claims that Mt 24:26-28,37-41 is parallel to Lk 17:23,24,37,26,27,34,35, and that all of these verses belong to Q.¹ Referring to Mt 24:26, Harnack contends that although it is difficult to determine whether Luke has abbreviated or Matthew amplified, the former alternative is more probable.² In any case, Harnack assigns the reference to the wilderness in Mt 24:26 to Q.

Taylor appears to agree. In discussing Mk 13:21 he writes, "21 is a genuine saying of Jesus attested by a parallel version in Q (Lk 17:23 = Mt 24:26)."³

Streeter writes, "the Apocalyptic chapter, Mt 24, is simply Mk 13 ingeniously expanded with material from Q."⁴ He points to the fact that Mark and Q overlap in Mt 24. Streeter also states that Mt 24:26-28 and 37-39 are fragments of Lk 17:22-37.⁵

While all three scholars agree that Mt 24:26 belongs to Q, they do not present any convincing arguments that the specific reference to the wilderness in Mt 24:26 belongs to Q. Since Lk 17:23, the parallel passage to Mt 24:26, does not have the reference to the wilderness, it cannot be taken for granted that it belongs to Q merely because it occurs in the general context of Q. H. K. McArthur makes a good point

when he questions the assertion "that it is possible to distinguish L or M material from Q material reported only by Luke or Matthew."⁶ Any decision about assigning the reference to the wilderness in Mt 24:26 to Q, M, or Matthew's redactional activity must therefore be based on very sound evidence.

Although Kilpatrick also claims that Mt 24:26 is derived from Q,⁷ he proposes a method of investigation which facilitates showing that the reference to the wilderness does not belong to Q.⁸ He shows that the doublet, Mt 24:23 and 26, is one among many doublets which arose out of overlapping sources. Mt 24:23 is taken from Mk 13:21 and Mt 24:26 from Q. He then contends:

While overlapping provides part of the reason for the appearance of these doublets, it does not always provide a complete explanation. It would be easy for an author like the evangelist, skilled in selection and conflation, to remove repetition, unless there were good grounds for their retention. These grounds may be found either in the evangelist's purpose or in previous handling of the material such as we would expect to find in homiletic and liturgical custom.⁹

However, Kilpatrick does not apply this line of reasoning to Mt 24:23 and 26. Therefore, let us see how Matthew's overall purpose or homiletic factors are involved in the use of this doublet.

Bultmann has suggested that Mt 24:23 and 26 are variants of a single saying, the only real difference being that the latter speaks of the Son of Man and not the kingdom.¹⁰ This difference in emphasis could have been reason

enough for the retention of the doublet. However, there also seem to be other factors involved. As will be seen later,¹¹ Matthew never adds wilderness terminology to a non-wilderness pericope of Mark. In his use of Q material, on the other hand, Matthew is not as particular. This helps to suggest why Matthew did not add his anti-wilderness polemic to Mt 24:23, a verse which parallels Mk 13:21, but to Mt 24:26, a verse which comes from Q.

By placing the elements of the doublet side by side, Matthew succeeds in projecting the wilderness theme of 24:26 back to the previous two verses. Weeden¹² maintains that the use of the terms signs and wonders (σημεῖα and τέρατα), in combination in the New Testament, signifies a reference to θεῖος ἀνὴρ activity. The synoptic occurrences of these terms are Mk 13:22 and its Matthean parallel (24:24). Weeden has suggested that the "pretenders"¹³ in Mk 13 may actually be Mark's opponents who propogate a θεῖος ἀνὴρ christology. It is doubtful that Matthew is carrying on a specific polemic against such a christology. However, he does want to insure that the "false prophets" who "show great signs and wonders" (Mt 24:24) are seen in relationship to events in the wilderness (Mt 24:26).

It was noted previously that in Lk 17:23-24, the parallel passage to Mt 24:26-28, the reference to the wilderness is lacking. Did Luke delete this from an original Q version which contained this reference? No convincing

reasons for such an omission can be found. An expansion of Q by Matthew, on the other hand, is quite probable. As will be shown, the anti-wilderness polemic so clearly stated in Mt 24:26, is implied in many other parts of the Gospel. It is therefore reasonable to conclude that Matthew expanded Q, rather than that Luke abbreviated it.

In that case, the anti-wilderness polemic of Mt 24:26 is to be attributed to the redactional activity of Matthew. However, it is difficult to say whether the actual wording of this expansion, "Lo, he is in the wilderness" belongs to a written or oral source M or was composed by Matthew himself. We must take McArthur's warning seriously when he questions the assertion "that it is possible to distinguish L and M material from the editorial activity of Luke or Matthew."¹⁴ It is likely, however, that the warning "Lo, he is in the wilderness" found its way into the Q pericope through the redactional activity of Matthew, and that it points to an anti-wilderness polemic.

Let us now investigate the possibility of determining the main characteristics of this anti-wilderness polemic. From the context of Mt 24:23-28, it is clear that Matthew is warning against a false messianic expectation connected with the wilderness. What is the historical background which prompted such a polemic? The writings of Josephus give part of the answer. He writes in his Jewish War II, 258-260, that at the time of Felix some false prophets were guilty

of insurrection in the wilderness.

Deceivers and impostors, under the pretence of divine inspiration fostering revolutionary changes, they persuaded the multitude to act like madmen, and led them out into the desert (εἰς τὴν ἔρημιάν) under the belief that God would there give them tokens of deliverance.¹⁵

Josephus also relates how Felix had to deal with the Egyptian false prophet who "collected a following of about thirty thousand dupes, and led them by a circuitous route from the desert (ἐκ τῆς ἔρημίας) to the mount called the mount of Olives" (Jewish War II, 261-263). In Jewish War VI, 351-355, Josephus reports that after Titus had captured Jerusalem, the rebels asked "to retire to the desert (εἰς τὴν ἔρημον) and to leave the city to him." Josephus also reports that the Sicarii were involved with the messianic hopes in the wilderness.

Jonathan, an arrant scoundrel, by trade a weaver, having taken refuge in that town (Cyrene), won the ear of not a few of the indignant class, and led them forth into the desert (εἰς τὴν ἔρημον), promising them a display of signs and apparitions. Jewish War VII, 437-438.

Passages such as these clearly indicate that the wilderness (ἔρημος and ἔρημία) was the place where false prophets promised to "show great signs and wonders, so as to lead astray, if possible, even the elect" (Mt 24:24). Matthew is quite justified in his warning.

Funk shows that the warning in Mt 24:26 is "certainly anti-Zealot and possibly anti-Essene."¹⁶ He claims that "the allusions in the opening lines of the War Scroll (IQM i.2-3)

to the exiles of the desert who will open the final war, when the exiles of the desert of the peoples return to the desert of Jerusalem, are very suggestive in this connection."¹⁷

W. D. Davies¹⁸ suggests that the warning against false Christs is certainly not anti-Gnostic but may be directed against the expectation of Messianic figures in Qumran. He supports the view that the use of ταμεία (inner rooms) in Mt 24:26 may be a reference to the caves in the area surrounding Qumran.

However, although it may not be possible to pinpoint the exact group of people whom Matthew had in mind when he issued his warning, it is reasonable to suppose that the problem of false messianic wilderness expectations was an urgent one in Matthew's community. The conclusion which Mauser draws with respect to Mt 24:26 is certainly correct.

The Messiah was expected to begin his work in the wilderness and the saying warns the Christian congregation against the danger of falling a prey to any Messianic hopes apart from the expectation of the final and completely unmistakable revelation of the Son of man (24:27). Apparently, Matthew had reasons to include this saying in the apocalyptic discourse. The Palestinian congregations to which his Gospel is addressed were surrounded by a Judaism in which the fervency of Messianic hopes was undiminished. This hope and the wilderness were, however, so much tied together that Matthew in rejecting the former also was constrained to speak out against speculations arising from the concept of the wilderness.¹⁹

Even though Mauser recognizes the importance of Mt 24:26 for the interpretation of the wilderness theme in the Gospel of Matthew, he does not systematically apply this

insight to all of the wilderness passages in this Gospel. Therefore, let us see in detail how the polemic expressed in Mt 24:26 has influenced Matthew's use of Mark and Q.

II. MATTHEW'S REDACTION OF THE MARKAN WILDERNESS PERICOPAE

Six of Matthew's nine references to the wilderness are dependent on Mark: Mt 3:3 = Mk 1:3, Mt 3:1 = Mk 1:4, Mt 4:1 = Mk 1:12, Mt 14:13 = Mk 6:32, Mt 14:15 = Mk 6:35, Mt 15:33 = Mk 8:4. Three times Matthew reduces the number of references in a Markan wilderness pericope which he parallels. In the pericope of the Temptation, Matthew has one reference to Mark's two; in the Feeding of the Five Thousand, Matthew parallels two out of Mark's three references; in the Healing of a Leper, Matthew omits Mark's only reference. The Markan wilderness pericope, Jesus Departs From Capernaum, is omitted altogether by Matthew. Let us now investigate Matthew's redaction of Mark in more detail.

John the Baptist

Matthew parallels both of the references to the wilderness contained in Mark's pericope of John the Baptist, but he reverses the order. Further, whereas Mark writes that John appeared "in the wilderness" (Mk 1:4), Matthew says that he preached "in the wilderness of Judea" (3:1). Why does Matthew add "Judea"? McCown²⁰ claims that the addition of "Judea" shows Matthew's lack of geographical feeling. It is a falsification of Mark's "in the wilderness." He also

claims that it can be ruled out that John the Baptist lived in the wilderness of Judea.²¹ According to McCown it appears that Matthew was mistaken about the scene of John's ministry. Funk²², on the other hand, has shown that the wilderness of Judea may very well have included the area in which John the Baptist was active. However, this type of discussion really bypasses the salient point of Mt 3:1. The expansion of the Markan source here must be regarded in view of Matthew's polemic against the wilderness.

From a study of Josephus and the Qumran literature it is clear that "the wilderness"²³ is a powerful theological concept connected with various messianic expectations and even religio-political uprisings. Matthew, as shown earlier, wanted to warn against such false expectations concerning the wilderness. When Matthew came to the theologically loaded phrase "in the wilderness" of Mk 1:3 and 4, he changed this to the more neutral and explicitly geographical term "in the wilderness of Judea." John the Baptist was not a religio-political fanatic "in the wilderness", but a preacher of repentance who happened to be "in the wilderness of Judea."

This interpretation also explains Matthew's reversal of Mark's two references to the wilderness. Stendahl²⁴ points out that Mt 3:3 is unique insofar as it is the only formula quotation with synoptic parallels, and that the text is exactly the same in all Synoptic Gospels (Mk 1:3 =

Mt 3:3 = Lk 3:4). He also points out that this quotation from Is 40:3 received its form through a new christological interpretation, whereby the LXX's τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν was replaced by αὐτοῦ, referring to Christ. Because of the fixed form of this quotation, Matthew would be very reluctant to make changes. Therefore, instead of changing the prophetic quotation, Matthew simply reversed Mark's order and thereby defined the meaning of "wilderness" before giving the quotation. Matthew thus explains that because John was in the wilderness of Judea, the prophecy of Is 40:3 was fulfilled. Mark, on the other hand, showed that because of Is 40:3, John had to be in the wilderness. Mark thus sees the wilderness as a theological concept, while Matthew looks at the wilderness of Judea as a geographical location. This change in emphasis is due to Matthew's polemic against the negative meaning which is implicit for him in the wilderness.

The Temptation

In his account of the temptation of Jesus, Matthew follows the Markan source in saying that the Spirit caused Jesus to go "into the wilderness" (Mt 4:1 = Mk 1:12). Matthew sees no need to qualify this reference to the wilderness since it is seen as a place of temptation in this Markan wilderness pericope. Matthew's general polemic against the wilderness is served very well by a passage which sees the wilderness as a place where Jesus must encounter the devil and win.

As was pointed out in the last chapter, the references to the wilderness in Mk 1:12 and 13 have lost all geographical emphasis. Matthew, however, wants to show that the wilderness is an actual place. He accomplishes this purpose in two ways. Firstly, whereas Mk 1:12 states that Jesus was driven "out into the wilderness", the parallel passage, Mt 4:1, states that Jesus "was led up...into the wilderness." Mauser²⁵ points out that the expression "led up" reflects the knowledge of the mountainous plateau of the Judean desert. Thus Mt 4:1 is more geographically oriented than Mk 1:13.²⁶

Secondly, Matthew gives a geographical connotation to the wilderness by creating a parallel between the wilderness on the one hand, and "the holy city" (4:5) and "a very high mountain" (4:8) on the other. Marxsen²⁷ shows that εἰς τὴν ἁγίαν πόλιν (4:5) and εἰς ὄρος ὑψηλὸν λίαν (4:8) are parallel to εἰς τὴν ἔρημον (4:1). Since the city and mountain are geographical places, the wilderness must also be geographical by virtue of association.

Matthew's version of the temptation of Jesus serves his anti-wilderness polemic remarkably well.

The Feeding of the Five Thousand

In the pericope of the Feeding of the Five Thousand Mark has three references to the wilderness (Mk 6:31,32,35). Matthew parallels Mark only in the use of the last two. Matthew keeps only those references to the wilderness which

are absolutely essential to the setting. The story requires a setting away from human habitation in order to emphasize the fact that no food was available for the crowds. In this way the miraculous nature of the feeding is accentuated.

Matthew omits the saying of Jesus: "Come away by yourselves to a wilderness place, and rest a while" (Mk 6:31). By deleting this saying, Matthew safeguards against any type of speculation with respect to eschatological rest in the wilderness. This omission of the Markan text can be explained once again in terms of Matthew's anti-wilderness polemic.

Although Matthew is unable to omit Mark's next two references to the wilderness because of their importance to the setting, he succeeds in omitting a number of details which may have pointed to the conclusion that this story originally dealt with an attempted revolt in the wilderness.²⁸

Montefiore has argued that the Return of the Twelve and the Feeding of the Five Thousand should be regarded as a unified narrative "in as much as both introduction and feeding story contain pointers to an attempted revolt in the desert, the significance of which Mark does not seem to have fully realized."²⁹

Although, Mark may not have realized the original significance of this story, it seems that Matthew had grasped it. This is evident by the fact that Matthew omits seven of the details which point to the original setting of

this story and also makes one very significant alteration. Montefiore writes that it is impossible to know whether these omissions and alteration are due to Matthew's "misunderstanding of Mark or to deliberate obfuscation."³⁰

From the perspective that Matthew engages in an anti-wilderness polemic, it appears that Matthew deliberately changed Mark's account in order that Jesus could not be implicated with a religio-political revolt in the wilderness. To clarify this point, let us see how Matthew deals with seven of the clues in Mark which suggest a revolt in the wilderness.

1. Montefiore claims that the phrase "many were coming and going (Mk 6:31)" suggests that the people "were engaged in preparations for a Messianic uprising."³¹ Matthew omits this verse.

2. Montefiore suggests that συνέδραμον in Mk 6:33 "is a vivid word which suggests something more than a mere concourse."³² It suggests a widespread and concerted movement. Matthew, on the other hand, states simply that "they followed him" (Mt 14:13).

3. In Mk 6:34a "the phrase 'sheep without a shepherd' means according to Old Testament usage, not a congregation without a leader, but 'an army without a general, a nation without a national leader'."³³ In other words, the crowd wanted a leader for a Messianic movement. Matthew omits this phrase in his account of the Feeding of the Five Thousand and places it in another context (Mt 9:36).

4. Montefiore explains that Mk 6:34b, "he began to

teach them many things", means that "Jesus had to explain to the mob why he could not accede to their wish."³⁴ Since Matthew had left out the phrase "sheep without a shepherd", Jesus did not have to explain anything. Matthew attributes a different activity to Jesus. Mt 14:14 states that he "healed their sick."

5. Mt 14:19 omits the reference to the "green" grass of Mk 6:39. This omission can be explained in terms of Matthew's anti-wilderness polemic. Montefiore writes:

In the desert the grass would have been green only at Passover time. It was at this time of the year that the Messiah was expected to manifest himself. This then would have been the season of the year for a Messianic uprising."³⁵

6. Montefiore shows that the references to "companies" and "groups by hundreds and by fifties" in Mk 6:39-40 suggest a military operation. Matthew omits these phrases in his account.

7. Montefiore points out that Mk 6:44 emphasizes that the multitude consisted of men. He concludes that it is hard to imagine that five thousand men would follow their leader unless they wished to initiate a revolt. Matthew has obscured Mark's emphasis. He reports that there were "five thousand men, besides women and children" (Mt 14:21). By mentioning the women and children, Matthew denies that this could have been an attempted messianic uprising. However, the women and children fit in very well with Matthew's claim that Jesus was involved in healing on this

occasion (Mt 14:14).

Could it be merely a coincidence that Matthew omits or alters these seven clues? No; these changes are too compatible with Matthew's polemic against the wilderness which is stated so unequivocally in Mt 24:26. Matthew's attempt to obscure these clues, confirms that he saw this account as a "thwarted attempt at a Messianic uprising."³⁶

The Feeding of the Four Thousand

In the Feeding of the Four Thousand (Mk 8:1-10 = Mt 15:32-39) Matthew parallels Mark's use of ἐρημία . Iersel³⁷ has noted that Matthew attempts to bring the Feeding of the Four Thousand into harmony with the Five Thousand by combining the bread and fish meal into one. By emphasizing the eucharistic interpretation of the feeding, Matthew may have endeavored to reduce the possibility of any political interpretation of this pericope.

The setting of this narrative demands a place in which food is normally unavailable, thereby enhancing the miraculous nature of the feeding. The wilderness provides a suitable setting, and so Matthew retains the reference to it in his account. However, since Matthew's anti-wilderness polemic is not furthered by this pericope it is strange that he does not omit this account. After all, he would not really be deleting valuable tradition, since his account of the Feeding of the Five Thousand is so very similar. We must therefore conclude that the Feeding of the Four Thousand

presents us with an exegetical problem.

Omissions of Markan Wilderness Pericopae

Do Matthew's omissions of Markan wilderness pericopae serve his purpose of warning against false messianic wilderness hopes? Mk 1:35 reports that Jesus "went out to a wilderness place, and there he prayed." Mk 1:45 reports that Jesus "could no longer openly enter a town" and therefore withdrew to "wilderness places." Matthew omits both of these references to the wilderness. As was noted in the last chapter, both Markan passages, especially the latter, reveal a great amount of redactional activity on the part of Mark. But to argue that Matthew deleted these verses because he felt that they were part of the Markan framework rather than an essential part of the tradition about Jesus, would be to assume an awareness on Matthew's part for which we have no evidence.

A more reasonable explanation for these omissions can be formulated in terms of Matthew's anti-wilderness polemic. From Mt 24:26 we know that Matthew warns against going out into the wilderness. The fact that Mark portrays Jesus as withdrawing to wilderness places, could therefore provide a dangerous precedent. Since these two verses do not provide very important traditions about Jesus, Matthew feels justified in deleting them from his Gospel.

III. MATTHEW'S REDACTION OF Q

We have already seen how Matthew edited the Q pericope of the Day of the Son of Man (Mt 24:26-28) in order to bring out his own anti-wilderness polemic. Let us now see how he used other pericopae from Q also relevant to the wilderness theme.

Jesus' Words About John

Jesus' Words About John (Mt 11:7-19 = Lk 7:24-35) is definitely a Q wilderness pericope. It is not found in Mark and the accounts in Matthew and Luke agree quite closely, not only with respect to the wilderness terminology but also with respect to other details.

Jesus is reported as saying "What did you go out into the wilderness to behold? A reed shaken by the wind?" (Mt 11:7). Why did Matthew take over this saying of Jesus without toning down the reference to "the wilderness"? The answer to this question is quite simple. Matthew did not have to blunt this saying because it supports his anti-wilderness polemic. The questions are rhetorical. The implied answer is no! The people went out not to see a reed shaken by the wind but to see "more than a prophet" (Mt 11:9). Jesus now explains that John the Baptist is this prophet. In effect, Jesus is saying, "Don't go out into the wilderness to search for the prophet for he has come!" This fits in well with Matthew's ideas. As a result, he can retain this

passage as it stands in Q.

The Lament Over Jerusalem

The last occurrence of the wilderness terminology to be considered is found in the pericope of the Lament Over Jerusalem (Mt 23:37-39 = Lk 13:34-35). Lk 13:35 reads "Behold, your house is forsaken!" Some MSS of Matthew contain the same text as Luke, while others add ἔρημος. "Behold, your house is forsaken and desolate (ἔρημος)." Nestle³⁸ includes the reference to the wilderness as a variant reading in the apparatus. However, on the basis of the manuscript evidence presented by The Greek New Testament³⁹, a good case is made for including the reference in the text, rather than the apparatus.

While it is generally recognized that this pericope stems from Q⁴⁰, the source of the word ἔρημος is not clear. A. B. Bruce⁴¹ holds that ἔρημος is not necessary to the meaning of Mt 23:38. This verse says that the house is forsaken and what will happen to it is left to the imagination. Bruce therefore does not believe that the omission of ἔρημος in some of the MSS is an assimilation to Lk 13:35. He favors the view that ἔρημος is simply an explanatory gloss.

It is quite possible that Q did not contain the word ἔρημος and that Luke preserves the more original text. Moreover, the insertion of ἔρημος into Mt 23:38 could easily have been the work of Matthew himself.

A. B. Bruce⁴² claims that the "house" in Mt 23:38

refers to the city. Schlatter⁴³ interprets it as referring to the temple. W. C. Allen explains that "ὁ οἶκος may mean either the city or the temple."⁴⁴ He says that the two meanings are combined in Mt 23:38. It should be pointed out that the context of this verse suggests that the temple is referred to, for in Mt 24:1 we read that "Jesus left the temple." A good case can thus be made for the interpretation that Matthew is referring to the temple in this verse. Matthew is saying, "Behold, your temple is forsaken and wilderness-like."

Mt 23:38 may also be an ironic comment on the false messianic hopes connected with the temple. Matthew, looking back at the destruction of the city and temple in A. D. 70, may be implying that just as the many messianic hopes connected with the wilderness have come to naught, so the temple has now become wilderness-like. Here is your destroyed temple; here is your wilderness hope. This interpretation becomes quite plausible in the light of Mt 24:26. In this verse Matthew not only warns against going out into the wilderness but also against the "inner rooms (τοῖς ταμείοις)."

The term τοῖς ταμείοις occurs only in this one verse in the entire New Testament. Arndt and Gingrich⁴⁵ translate ταμεῖον as "hidden, secret room." It is possible that the inner rooms could refer to the temple. However, as Davies⁴⁶ has pointed out, they could also refer to the caves in the area surrounding Qumran. We may conclude that there

is a good possibility that Matthew himself added ἔρημος to the Q saying reported in Mt 23:38 in order to give a warning against the messianic hopes associated with the temple and/or the Qumran community.

The Lost Sheep

We have now discussed all of the references to the wilderness which Matthew has used in the context of Q. However, although it does not contain a direct reference to the wilderness, the parable of the Lost Sheep is also relevant to the study of Matthew's anti-wilderness polemic.

The parable of the Lost Sheep is found in Mt 18:10-14 and Lk 15:3-7. For the purpose of this discussion we are mainly interested in Mt 18:12 and Lk 15:4. In Lk 15:4 it is reported that the ninety-nine sheep are left "in the wilderness (ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ)" while in Mt 18:12 they are left "on the hills (ἐπὶ τὰ ὄρη)." What is the basis for this variation? Why does Matthew not use the wilderness terminology in this parable?

Moulton and Milligan⁴⁷ claim that ὄρος does not only refer to mountain but also has the meaning of desert in the papyri. If this were true for Matthew, then Matthew would actually be using the wilderness terminology in Mt 18:12. However, Mauser⁴⁸ has demonstrated that no parallel between wilderness and mountain can be established in the Gospel of Matthew. We must therefore look elsewhere for an explanation

of this variation between Matthew and Luke.

Streeter holds that the accounts of the parable of the Lost Sheep in Matthew and Luke are not derived from the same source. He claims "that the supposition that they were derived from Q postulates too large an amount of editorial manipulation of that source."⁴⁹ He therefore concludes that Mt 18:12-14 can be assigned to M.⁵⁰ B. T. D. Smith⁵¹ shares this opinion.

Other scholars, however, feel that both Matthew's and Luke's accounts are based on Q. Lührmann⁵² holds that Mt 18:10-14 and Lk 15:3-7 originate with Q. He explains the differences in terms of the fact that Matthew interprets this parable in the sense of a "church-rule."⁵³ Kilpatrick⁵⁴ agrees that Mt 18:10-14 can be explained in terms of the use of a single source, Q.

Harnack⁵⁵ holds that Mt 18:12-13 and Lk 15:4-7 originate with Q. He claims that Luke has replaced the special (ὄρος) by the more general (ἐρημος) term in Lk 15:4. However, Harnack also leaves open the possibility that "ἐπὶ τὰ ὄρη and ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ might be regarded as translation-variants, if it were probable from other passages that St. Luke had knowledge of the Aramaic original of Q."⁵⁶

An explanation in terms of translation-variants is not suggested by Harnack alone. Antoine Guillaumont⁵⁷ claims that Mt 18:12-13, Lk 15:3-6 and Logion 107 of the Gospel of Thomas are all independent translations of the

same Aramaic source. Matthew Black ⁵⁸ claims that an Aramaic source in addition to Q may lie behind the parable of the Lost Sheep. Jeremias mentions that, "verbal comparison between Luke 15:4-7 and Mt 18:12-14 reveals a number of translational variants (e.g. ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ in Lk 15:4 corresponds to ἐπὶ τὰ ὄρη in Mt 18:12 as the translation of b'ṭura, 'in the hill-country')." ⁵⁹ This explanation based on translation-variants is quite convincing since ṭura has the twofold meaning of mountain and open country, in contrast to inhabited places, in Palestinian Syriac. ⁶⁰

With respect to the word ṭura, Bussby's ⁶¹ hypothesis should be mentioned. Bussby claims that no shepherd would leave his ninety-nine sheep unattended in the desert or on the mountains in order to search for one stray sheep. He suggests that the shepherd left most of his sheep in the safety of a walled compound and then went off to look for the missing one.

Bussby bases this interpretation on the hypothesis that Jesus did not mean to say ṭura but dura. He says that dura is the Aramaic root which is used to describe the forming of a circle in which cattle are placed. The misunderstanding between ṭura and dura was created by the fact that Galileans found it difficult to pronounce an initial 'd' and therefore often changed it to a 't'. Consequently, Jesus' followers understood ṭura instead of dura and the latter found its way into the tradition of the parable of

the Lost Sheep.

The Gospel of Thomas may give support for Bussby's hypothesis. Logion 107 reads:

Jesus said: The Kingdom is like a shepherd who had a hundred sheep. One of them went astray, which was the largest. He left behind the ninety-nine, he sought for the one until he found it. Having tired himself out, he said to the sheep: I love thee more than ninety-nine.⁶²

This text is silent on the question of where the ninety-nine sheep were left. The editor of this logion may have noticed the problem involved in leaving the sheep on the mountain or in the wilderness and accordingly omitted any reference to location.

However, all of these interpretations do not come to grips with the actual problem. Even if Bussby is right, the fact still remains that Matthew and Luke or those who translated the parable into Greek, found *tura* in their tradition. If various traditions of the parable of the Lost Sheep existed, then it must still be explained why Matthew chose the one he did. If the explanation in terms of translation-variants is correct, then the question of why Matthew decided upon a different translation than Luke still remains.

Funk points out that the parable of the Lost Sheep could be read "as a commentary on the ministry of Jesus which attempts to justify his rejection of messianic groups dwelling in the wilderness and his movement into the villages and towns."⁶³ Funk realizes, however, that this

interpretation applies to Luke better than to Matthew, for in Matthew this parable is addressed to the disciples in contrast to Luke where it is addressed to Jesus' opponents who are criticizing him for associating with sinners.

Funk is correct when he suggests that different interpretations must be given to the accounts of the parable in Matthew and Luke. As was pointed out previously, Lührmann claims that Mt 18:10-14 must be interpreted as a church-rule. Jeremias comes to a similar conclusion. He states that the parable of the Lost Sheep in Matthew is "an ecclesiological allegory."⁶⁴ The shepherd is the leader of the Christian community and the lost sheep is an erring member.

On the basis of Mt 18:13 it must be concluded that the ninety-nine "that never went astray" are the righteous. If Mt 18:12 would have read "leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness" then this verse would have been open to the interpretation that the righteous ones in the wilderness are the true Christians. Such an interpretation would have been in direct conflict with Mt 24:26 which contains a warning against going out into the wilderness. The ones who go out into the wilderness are not the righteous but the misinformed. Consequently, it is on the basis of Matthew's anti-wilderness polemic that the sheep are left "on the hills" rather than "in the wilderness."

IV. THE ROLE OF MATTHEW'S ANTI-WILDERNESS POLEMIC

The foregoing discussion shows that with respect to the wilderness theme, Matthew probably edits Q to a greater extent than he edits Mark. The clearest statement of Matthew's anti-wilderness polemic is found in the context of Q. Matthew does not refrain from inserting references to the wilderness into Q pericopae. In using the Markan source, on the other hand, Matthew never inserts but merely deletes references to the wilderness.

However, with the possible exception of the Markan pericope of the Feeding of the Four Thousand, Matthew modifies all of the references to the wilderness in his sources which are incompatible with his anti-wilderness polemic. He does not seem to be interested in the different shades of meaning which Mark attaches to ἔρημος and ἔρημος τόπος. To Matthew any word relating to the wilderness is potentially dangerous.

The fact that Matthew is so consistent in the application of his anti-wilderness polemic must indicate that the expectation of a wonder-working Messiah in the wilderness posed a real threat to orthodox teaching in Matthew's community. Any theory dealing with the place of authorship of the Gospel of Matthew must come to terms with this conclusion.

CHAPTER IV

THE WILDERNESS THEME IN THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

There are ten references to the wilderness in the Gospel of Luke: 1:80; 3:2,4; 4:2,42; 5:16; 7:24; 8:29; 9:12; 15:4. They occur in the following nine pericopae:

The Birth of the Baptist Lk 1:57-80
 John the Baptist Lk 3:1-6
 The Temptation Lk 4:1-13
 Jesus Departs From Capernaum Lk 4:42-43
 The Healing of a Leper Lk 5:12-16
 Jesus' Words About John Lk 7:24-35
 The Gerasene Demoniac Lk 8:26-39
 The Feeding of the Five Thousand Lk 9:10-17
 The Lost Sheep Lk 15:3-7

In his use of the wilderness terminology Luke differs from the other gospel writers in one major respect. He is the only one to use the plural of substantive ἔρημος (1:80; 5:16; 8:29).

I. THE BAPTIST AND THE WILDERNESS

The Gospel of Luke contains the following three narratives about John the Baptist which include the wilderness terminology: The Birth of the Baptist (1:57-80); John the Baptist (3:1-6); Jesus' Words About John (7:24-35). What is the role of the wilderness in these passages?

The Birth of the Baptist

The first reference to the wilderness in the Gospel of Luke is in the last verse of the account of the Birth of

the Baptist (1:57-80). This verse occurs in the context of L¹ and should be regarded as a "summary statement on John's history from childhood to manhood."²

And the child grew and became strong in spirit,
and he was in the wilderness till the day of
his manifestation to Israel. Lk 1:80

In this verse ἔρημος occurs in the plural. Scobie³ suggests that the use of the plural implies free movement on the part of John the Baptist. Plummer makes a similar observation. He suggests that the name of the wilderness is not given in Lk 1:80 "because the point is, not that he (John the Baptist) lived in any particular desert, but that he lived in desert places and not in towns and villages."⁴ By the use of the plural of ἔρημος Luke seems to indicate that John the Baptist did not spend his formative years in any one place and that all of the places were in the wilderness.

It is also significant that Lk 1:80 states that "he was in the wilderness till (ἕως) the day of his manifestation." This indicates that John did not spend his entire life in the wilderness. From the day of his manifestation he was active elsewhere.

John the Baptist

What is Luke's intention in 1:80 when he points to the day of John the Baptist's manifestation? As Mauser⁵ and Gilmour⁶ claim, 1:80 probably anticipates 3:1-6:

...the word of God came to John the son of Zechariah in the wilderness; and he went into all the region about the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. Lk 3:2b-3

According to the above passage it seems that John the Baptist's day of manifestation occurred in the wilderness when the word of God came to him, and that he then left the wilderness and went into the region about the Jordan. Such an interpretation is also favored by Marxsen⁷, who says that Luke separates the call of John, which occurred in the wilderness (3:2), from the activity of John which takes place in the region about the Jordan (3:3).

The above interpretation, however, seems to be in conflict with Lk 3:4b, where the prophecy from Is 40:3 is quoted. According to this passage, John wants to be "the voice of one crying in the wilderness." Funk⁸ suggests a way around this discrepancy. He claims that the lower Jordan valley was a part of the wilderness. Thus "the wilderness" (3:2) and "the region about the Jordan" could refer to the same area. Although this may be correct, it appears that Luke is not aware of such an identification.

McCown has suggested that the expression "all the region about the Jordan" in Lk 3:3 and Mt 3:5 stems from "πᾶσα ἡ περίχωρος τοῦ Ἰορδάνου"⁹ which refers to "the circumscribed and limited region at the head of the Dead Sea."¹⁰ However, McCown admits that this phrase has been misunderstood by both Luke and Matthew. He concludes that

Luke is consistent in differentiating between the wilderness where John was reared and received his call, and the region about the Jordan where he preached. McCown suggests that in this way Luke managed to link John with the wilderness tradition and also to answer the question, "How did John get an audience in the wilderness?"¹¹ On the basis of these arguments, it seems quite probable that Luke drew a clear distinction between John's preparation in the wilderness and his activity in the region about the Jordan, even if this meant being slightly inconsistent in the light of Is 40:3.

It was noted that the use of the plural of ἔρημος in Lk 1:80 gave rise to the impression that John was very elusive as he roamed about the wildernesses. This impression is reinforced by Lk 3:3. It should be noted that Mt 3:5, the parallel passage to Lk 3:3, uses the phrase "all the region about the Jordan" as a "source of John's multitudinous audience."¹² Wink¹³ points out that Matthew implies in this verse that John was active in a fixed spot and that all the people came to him. Lk 3:3 presents a very different picture. Instead of having all the people from the region about the Jordan come to him, John the Baptist goes there himself. As McCown has pointed out, this may reflect an attempt by Luke to explain the quandary of John's finding hearers in the wilderness.¹⁴ However, the fact remains, that through this change John is portrayed as moving around freely. Conzelmann¹⁵

suggests that Lk 3:3 supports the idea that John engaged in itinerant preaching.

Jesus' Words About John

Whereas the foregoing references to the wilderness occurred in the context of L (i.e. Lk 1:80) and in the Markan source (i.e. Lk 3:2,4), the reference to the wilderness in Lk 7:24 is dependent upon Q. In the Q pericope, Jesus' Words About John (Lk 7:24-35 = Mt 11:7-19), Jesus is reported as having said:

What did you go out into the wilderness to behold? A reed shaken by the wind? Lk 7:24

Wink¹⁶ uses the above passage to argue that John is associated more with the wilderness than with the Jordan since Jesus himself identifies John with the wilderness. McCown¹⁷, on the other hand, says that Lk 7:24ff. makes it clear that the wilderness was in the Jordan Valley. He points out that reeds would not be associated with the waterless wilderness of Judea. He concludes; "Clearly Jesus' mental picture of John places him by the river."¹⁸

Depending on one's point of view, Lk 7:24 can easily be used to argue for or against John the Baptist's association with the wilderness rather than the Jordan. Therefore, this Q reference to the wilderness should not be used as a deciding factor in determining the place of John's activity.

II. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE BAPTIST AND JESUS

Marxsen¹⁹ points out that the ministry of John is clearly differentiated from that of Jesus, since Luke inserts a report of the imprisonment of John (3:19-20) between the preaching of John and the baptism of Jesus. Jesus' baptism thus occurs after John's imprisonment. While Mk 1:9 and Mt 3:13 report that Jesus was baptized by John, Luke fails to indicate by whom Jesus was baptized. This shows that according to Luke, John's role in the baptism of Jesus was insignificant. Accordingly, Marxsen concludes that at the time of Jesus' baptism, the story of John had really come to an end. According to Luke, John had no place in the kingdom.

The imprisonment of John is not the only passage indicating the separation between John and Jesus. Between the account of the baptism (3:21-22) and the temptation of Jesus (4:1-13), Luke inserts the genealogy of Jesus. Although Luke did not mention John in the baptism of Jesus, he may still have feared that by implication, John would become associated with the story. In order to make absolutely clear that John and Jesus should be viewed separately, Luke inserted the genealogy between the accounts of the ministries of John and Jesus.

Conzelmann also contends strongly that Luke draws a sharp distinction between Jesus and John. He writes: "In the pre-Lucan tradition John is understood from the standpoint

of the dawn of the new eschatological age."²⁰ However, in the Gospel of Luke:

John no longer marks the arrival of the new aeon, but the division between two epochs in the one continuous story, such as is described in Lk 16:16. The eschatological events do not break out after John, but a new stage in the process of salvation is reached, John himself still belonging to the earlier of the two epochs which meet at this point.²¹

Conzelmann then proceeds to demonstrate that Luke uses geographical factors to make this distinction between Jesus and John clear. He points out, "According to Luke, after his Baptism Jesus has no more contact with the Jordan or even with its surroundings."²² Conzelmann concludes that "the Jordan is the region of the Baptist, the region of the old era, whereas the ministry of Jesus lies elsewhere."²³ Conzelmann adds, "Thus the locality of the Baptist becomes remarkably vague. Luke can associate him neither with Judea nor with Galilee, for these are both areas of Jesus' activity."²⁴

Although there is some truth to this geographical analysis, Conzelmann does tend to minimize some discrepancies. He fails to note that Luke not only uses geographical factors to distinguish between Jesus and John, but also to establish a similarity. For example, it will be shown that in the pericope of the Temptation (4:1-13), Luke uses the wilderness for the latter purpose.

III. JESUS AND THE WILDERNESS

In the following six pericopae the wilderness is mentioned in the course of the travels or teaching of Jesus:

The Temptation Lk 4:1-13
 Jesus Departs From Capernaum Lk 4:42-43
 The Healing of a Leper Lk 5:12-16
 The Gerasene Demoniac Lk 8:26-39
 The Feeding of the Five Thousand Lk 9:10-17
 The Lost Sheep Lk 15:3-7

The Temptation

Conzelmann claims that an attempt to locate the wilderness in the pericope of the Temptation (4:1-13) is pointless, since it "forms an episode between the Jordan and Galilee, symbolizing the separation."²⁵ He also points out that Lk 4:13 implies that the temptation is finished. From this fact he concludes that Luke believes that "a period free from Satan is now beginning, an epoch of a special kind in the centre of the whole course of redemptive history."²⁶

Although Conzelmann makes a significant point in showing that Luke uses the wilderness episode to separate two periods in an ongoing Heilsgeschichte, it must also be stressed that Jesus' stay in the wilderness provides a point of contact with the story of John the Baptist. Luke is the only evangelist who makes quite clear that John was raised and called in the wilderness and subsequently began his active ministry in the region about the

Jordan. Jesus' career is portrayed in a similar way. He spends some time in the wilderness (Lk 4:2) and immediately thereafter launches upon an active career in Galilee (Lk 4:14). It is not surprising that both Jesus and John are associated with the wilderness, since the prophecy of Is 40:3 is given in its christological form in Lk 3:4.

Jesus Departs From Capernaum

The pericope, Jesus Departs From Capernaum (4:42-43) is based on the Markan source. However, whereas Mk 1:35 states that Jesus went to a wilderness place to pray, Lk 4:42 simply states that Jesus went to a wilderness place. This omission is very peculiar since Luke tends to stress prayer. For example, the Widow and the Judge (Lk 18:1-8) and the Pharisee and Tax-Collector (Lk 18:10-14) are two parables in L which stress prayer. In the pericope of the Baptism of Jesus, Luke is the only synoptic evangelist who mentions that the Spirit came upon Jesus while he was praying (Lk 3:21-22).

However, even though the omission of the reference to prayer is difficult to explain, the fact remains that the wilderness place in Lk 4:42 is a point between Capernaum and "the other cities" (4:43), not a place of retreat as in Mark.

The Healing of a Leper

Let us now see how Luke utilizes the wilderness

terminology in the Markan summary statement at the end of the pericope of the Healing of a Leper (Mk 1:40-45 = Lk 5:12-16). Whereas in the pericope, Jesus Departs From Capernaum, Luke omits Mark's reference to prayer, here in the pericope of the Healing of a Leper, Luke adds such a reference to Mark's account. Although the reason for this change is not clear, Luke has simply transferred the praying from Mk 1:35 to Mk 1:45.

Significantly, the plural of ἔρημος occurs in Lk 5:16. Plummer grasps the real meaning of this verse when he paraphrases it as follows: "But He, on His part, in contrast to the multitudes who came to see Him, was in retirement in the deserts, and in prayer."²⁷ By using the plural of ἔρημος, Luke circumvents the problem of geographical locality, but still indicates that Jesus sought the solitude of the wilderness for prayer.

The Gerasene Demoniac

The source for Lk 8:26-39 is the Markan pericope of the Gerasene Demoniac (5:1-20). In following this source Luke makes only one major addition. Between Mk 5:8 and 9, Luke inserts the following explanatory note:

For many a time it had seized him; he was kept under guard, and bound with chains and fetters, but he broke the bonds and was driven by the demon into the wilderness (εἰς τὰς ἐρήμους).
Lk 8:29

Since this verse has no parallel in Mark or Matthew

and appears to be an explanatory note, it can be assigned to the redactional activity of Luke. It is doubtful that it belongs to a written or oral source L.

What is the function of the wilderness in this verse? Luke says that the demon drove the man into the wilderness. Plummer²⁸ points out that the wilderness was regarded to be the home of evil spirits. Perhaps Lk 8:29 reflects such a view. Since the demon's home was the wilderness, he would naturally want to drive the man there. The use of the plural of ἔρημος indicates that Luke is not thinking of a particular wilderness. Luke merely intends to show that the wilderness in general is associated with demons. Matthew, on the other hand, goes a step further. He implies that the messianic groups in the wilderness are evil insofar as they mislead the people by proclaiming a false messianic hope.

Although Luke makes it quite clear in 8:29 that the wilderness is associated with demons, to interpret all the wilderness pericopae in the Gospel of Luke in terms of this sole criterion is not justifiable. For example, in Lk 5:16 where Jesus prays in the wilderness, or in Lk 7:24 where Jesus is portrayed as linking John the Baptist with the wilderness, there are no signs that the wilderness is an evil place. This fact indicates that the Gospel of Luke does not present a unified wilderness concept.

The Feeding of the Five Thousand

While generally following the Markan source in the Feeding of the Five Thousand (Mk 6:30-44 = Lk 9:10-17), Luke parallels only one of its three uses of the wilderness terminology. Luke omits Mk 6:31 and 32, that is, the two references to the wilderness place which occur in Mark's introduction to the feeding. Luke thus eliminates Mark's emphasis on the wilderness setting of the feeding. Jesus and his disciples are not portrayed as withdrawing to a wilderness place, but "apart to a city called Bethsaida" (Lk 9:10). However, in the actual narrative of the Feeding of the Five Thousand, Luke parallels Mark insofar as the disciples advise Jesus to send the crowd away, as there is no food available to them in the wilderness place (Lk 9:12).

How could Luke claim in the same context that Jesus and the disciples "withdrew apart to a city called Bethsaida" (9:10) and "we are here in a wilderness place" (9:12)? How could he portray Bethsaida as a wilderness place? The observation that Luke "obviously has no accurate conception of the geography of Palestine"²⁹ offers no solution in this case. It would be difficult to confuse any city with the wilderness.

This identification was problematic to later copyists. Some of the MSS reflect attempts to improve Lk 9:10, in order to bring it in line with the reference to the wilderness place in Lk 9:12. Conzelmann points out that

"D at least improves this into a village, evidently following v. 12, according to which there is no 'city' in the vicinity. The original text of Codex Sinaiticus goes further: τόπον ἔρημον ."³⁰

Did Luke have theological reasons which prompted him to substitute Bethsaida for Mark's wilderness place? This does not seem likely since Luke does not hesitate to parallel Mark's account of Jesus' retreat into the wilderness in 5:16 (Mk 1:45).

As was pointed out previously, Matthew deleted the seven references in Mark's account of the Feeding of the Five Thousand which pointed to a possible revolt in the wilderness. Does Luke do the same? No; although Luke omits five out of the seven references, the two which he retains are quite significant. He follows Mark in saying that there were five thousand men (Lk 9:14, Mk 6:44) and that they sat down "in companies, about fifty each" (Lk 9:14). Therefore it cannot be demonstrated that Luke is involved in an anti-wilderness polemic in this passage.

The solution to the problem of the juxtaposition of "city" and "wilderness" is to be found in Luke's departure from Mark's outline. Between 9:17 and 18, Luke omits Mk 6:45-8:26. This Markan section both begins (6:45) and ends (8:22) with narratives localized in Bethsaida. Although Luke omits Mk 6:45-8:26 he still wants to keep the reference to Bethsaida. He accomplishes this by taking Jesus and his disciples to

Bethsaida before the Feeding of the Five Thousand instead of after as is the case in Mk 6:45. Gilmour points out that although this change "involves the crowds that followed Jesus in a journey of ten miles and more, and overlooks the fact that the succeeding narrative was originally localized 'in a lonely place' (Lk 9:12)"³¹ it does provide a good transition, thus masking the omission of Mk 6:45-8:26 between Lk 9:17 and 18.

The Lost Sheep

Luke's version of the parable of the Lost Sheep states:

What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness (ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ), and go after the one which is lost, until he finds it? (Lk 15:4)

In the previous chapter it was pointed out that there is some disagreement among scholars as to whether the parable of the Lost Sheep which is found in both Luke and Matthew stems from a single source Q or from a double tradition. If the latter is true, then it could be argued that the parable of the Lost Sheep in Luke is merely one of the many parables of L. However, for the purpose of this study, it is not necessary to pursue the problem of the source of this parable any further, since Luke does not seem to place great importance on the use of the wilderness terminology in this passage. In contrast to Matthew, Luke does not seem to

view this parable allegorically. Jeremias³² shows that Luke rather than Matthew has preserved the original situation for this parable. For Luke, the meaning of this parable seems to be, "there is joy in the heart of God when one of the very least is saved."³³

Funk's³⁴ suggestion that this parable was seen as a commentary on Jesus' rejection of messianic groups dwelling in the wilderness, may have been true for some Christians in the first century. It is very questionable, however, whether Luke viewed it in this way, since no anti-wilderness polemic of this kind is evident in the remainder of his Gospel.³⁵

IV. AN INDICATOR OF LUKE'S REDACTIONAL ACTIVITY

In the four Gospels, the plural, substantive form of ἔρηνος occurs only in Lk 1:80, 5:16 and 8:29. Let us now take a closer look at these three verses.

Although the first two chapters of Luke are generally assigned to L, Lk 1:80 should not be assigned to this source. Lk 1:80 is a transitional statement which links the tradition of John's birth (Lk 1:1-79) with the day of his manifestation to Israel, told in 3:2ff. Lk 1:80 thus bridges L tradition (i.e. Lk 1:1-79) with Markan tradition (i.e. Lk 3:2ff.). This transitional verse should be assigned to Luke's redactional activity.

Although Lk 5:16 is dependent on Mk 1:45, it does

betray Luke's redactional activity. Luke not only adds that Jesus prayed but even changes the wilderness terminology from ἐπ' ἐρήμοις τόποις (Mk 1:45) to ἐν ταῖς ἐρήμοις.

Since Lk 8:29 is an explanatory note which should be assigned to the redactional activity of Luke, then all the verses in which the plural, substantive form of ἔρημος occurs are highly redactional in character. This points to the conclusion that Luke himself naturally uses the plural.

Why does Luke prefer the plural in his redactional passages? It was noted previously that the plural makes the wilderness a very indefinite locality. In this way Luke is not bound by geographical factors. For example, in 1:80 Luke may be using the plural in order to indicate that John did not spend his childhood in any one place.

With reference to Lk 1:80, Pryke states that "this childhood reference to the desert as his schooling has given scope to all kinds of speculation, especially in relation to his conjectural adoption by the Essenes, id est [sic] the Qumran sectarians."³⁶ For example, Leaney states that the phrase "was in the deserts" (Lk 1:80), "may half indicate, half conceal that John was adopted by Essenes."³⁷ Brownlee also favors such a view when he states, "He may even have been reared by Essenes, for Luke represents John as having gone out into the desert as a mere boy (Lk 1:80)."³⁸

However, since it has been shown that Lk 1:80 is redactional in character, all speculation about John being

at Qumran is futile. Lk 1:80 is used as preparation for 3:2ff. Gilmour may therefore be right when he comments upon Lk 1:80:

That John's youth was spent in the wilderness--i.e., in sparsely settled districts rather than in deserts--may be Luke's deduction from the traditional scene of the Baptist's ministry.³⁹

With respect to John's relationship with Qumran, McCasland's study of "The Way"⁴⁰ is significant. By a comparison of passages such as Is 40:3, Lk 1:76, Acts 9:2; 19:9,23; 22:4; 24:14,22 to passages from the Manual of Discipline (IQS) McCasland comes to the following conclusion.

We conclude therefore that the Way (ἡ ὁδός, 𐤆𐤏𐤓𐤕) as a designation of Christianity was derived from Isa 40:3 and that it is an abbreviated form of "the way of the Lord"; that the idiom 𐤆𐤏𐤓𐤕 was used in a similar sense by Qumran as a designation of its life; that the Christians probably derived the idiom ultimately from Qumran; and that the agent of the transmission was John the Baptist.⁴¹

McCasland's first two conclusions seem to rest upon good evidence. On the other hand, the last two conclusions--i.e., that the Christians derived the idiom from Qumran and that John the Baptist was the agent of the transmission--seem to be founded upon pure speculation. However, even if they were true, it would still be necessary to show that Luke was aware of these facts. We must therefore conclude that the reference to the wilderness (plural) in Lk 1:80 does not establish a connection between John the Baptist and the Essenes.

V. THE WILDERNESS AND LUKE'S CHRISTOLOGY

In the three instances where Luke uses the plural form of substantive ἔρημος there seems to be a consistent use of the wilderness as a designation for a very elusive locality. However, in general, Luke's treatment of the wilderness pericopae from Mark and Q does not indicate that he has a strong, consistent concept of the wilderness. This has been demonstrated by an exegesis of the wilderness passages which Luke includes in his Gospel.

Luke's omission of references to the wilderness from his sources also does not provide a clue for a general view. Luke omits the Markan wilderness pericope of the Feeding of the Four Thousand (Mk 8:1-10). However, this omission is simply a consequence of the fact that Mk 6:45-8:26 has no parallel in the Gospel of Luke. Likewise, the lack of stress on the wilderness setting in the Feeding of the Five Thousand must be seen in relationship to Luke's great omission.⁴² Although the reason for the great omission is hard to grasp, it is certainly not based on an attempt to delete a few references to the wilderness.

What could be the reason for Luke's rather neutral or even positive view toward the concept of the wilderness? Perhaps Luke's christological view can give an answer to this question. Weeden⁴³ maintains that Luke was favorably

inclined to the θεῖος ἄνθρωπος type of christology. Consequently, he presented Jesus and also the apostles as θεῖοι ἄνδρες. A messiah who worked signs and wonders in the wilderness, while offensive to Matthew, would therefore be theologically acceptable to Luke. We must conclude that Luke either supported the type of religio-political messianic hopes associated with the wilderness against which Matthew reacted or, more likely, that he was not aware of them. For Luke the wilderness was not a theologically dangerous concept as it was for Matthew.

CHAPTER V

THE WILDERNESS THEME IN THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

There are only five references to the wilderness in the Gospel of John. In contrast to the synoptic gospel writers¹, John is very consistent in his use of wilderness terminology. He uses only the singular, substantive form of ἔρημος.

In Jn 1:23, ἡ ἔρημος occurs in the general context of the Testimony of John (1:19-37).² This specific usage is based on the text of the prophecy of Is 40:3.

In Jn 3:14; 6:31 and 49, ἡ ἔρημος refers to the wilderness of the sojourn.³ These three references occur in the following two narratives:

Nicodemus and the New Birth⁴ Jn 3:1-21
 Jesus as the Bread of Life⁵ Jn 6:1-71

The final reference to the wilderness occurs in Jn 11:54. Here Jesus is represented as going to a town near the wilderness in order to escape from his enemies who were plotting to kill him as a reaction to the popularity he gained through the raising of Lazarus.

I. THE WILDERNESS THEME IN THE SIGNS SOURCE

We have seen that the use of sources plays an important role in the wilderness theme of the Synoptic Gospels. Let us now see if this is also an important factor in the

Gospel of John.

Judging on the basis of a comparison between the wilderness theme in John and the synoptics, it must be concluded that Gardner-Smith⁶ is right in suggesting that the author of the Gospel of John did not use the Synoptic Gospels as sources. John's use of a signs source, on the other hand, is relevant to this study. Let us turn to R. T. Fortna's book, The Gospel of Signs, to see how this source may have influenced John's view of the wilderness.

The Baptist Tradition

Of the five references to the wilderness in the Gospel of John, Fortna includes only Jn 1:23 in his reconstructed text of the Gospel of Signs. However, even this one reference is not one of the passages belonging beyond all doubt to the signs source. In his reconstructed text, Fortna places Jn 1:23 in parentheses. The parentheses draw attention to "words or phrases which are not certainly to be assigned to the source."⁷

Fortna leaves open the possibility that Jn 1:23 could derive from the signs source or from an independent Baptist tradition.⁸ He points out that all the other Old Testament citations in the signs source are found in the passion narrative.⁹ He also shows that Jn 1:23, in contrast to the Synoptic Gospels, puts the prophecy from Is 40:3 on the lips of the Baptist.¹⁰ Fortna explains that this is

not necessarily to be attributed to John's redactional activity. The portrayal of the Baptist as claiming the role of "the voice of one crying in the wilderness" (Jn 1:23), is consistent with the Baptist's role as a witness in the signs source. Although Fortna is unable to decide whether Jn 1:23 derives from the signs source or from an independent Baptist tradition, he does conclude that this verse should not be explained in terms of dependence upon the Synoptic Gospels¹¹ or in terms of John's work.

The role of the Baptist as a witness is not only stressed by Fortna but also by other scholars. Dodd¹² claims that John is concerned with presenting the Baptist in the character of a witness. He goes on to say that in view of the Manual of Discipline "it is by no means unlikely that the Baptist should have deliberately set himself to fill the role of the Voice."¹³ Dodd concludes that the Baptist may have used Is 40:3 to define his own mission. Consequently, the Gospel of John may be closer to the actual facts about the mission of the Baptist than the Synoptic Gospels which do not put Is 40:3 on the lips of the Baptist.

Wink¹⁴ also sees the Baptist in the role of a witness in the fourth Gospel. It is the Baptist's function "to witness that Jesus is the Christ."¹⁵ Wink concludes that "the Fourth Evangelist holds up before the church the representation of John as a 'type' of the ideal Christian evangelist."¹⁶

Accordingly, it seems reasonable to conclude that the emphasis of Jn 1:23 is on the role of the Baptist as a witness, not on the wilderness. Marxsen¹⁷ even goes so far as to claim that the fourth evangelist is not aware of the wilderness tradition concerning the Baptist, even though he refers to Is 40:3 in Jn 1:23. He bases this view on the fact that Jn 3:23 reports that the Baptist also baptized in populated places such as Aenon near Salim. Additionally, Jn 1:28 reports that the Baptist baptized in "Bethany beyond the Jordan." The image of John's locale is of cities and not of the wilderness. This view is supported by the absence of a description of John's dress and food which would associate him with the wilderness. Such a description is given by Mark (1:6) and Matthew (3:4). We must conclude that the signs source, and therefore the Gospel of John, does not stress the wilderness locale in the tradition of John the Baptist. This is in direct contrast to the Synoptic Gospels where the concept of the wilderness is of paramount importance to the Baptist tradition.

Signs and the Wilderness

The account of the Baptist is not the sole tradition in which the theme of the wilderness is less prominent in the signs source than in the Synoptic Gospels. In the account of the Feeding of the Five Thousand all the Synoptic Gospels include references to the wilderness. The account

of the feeding of the multitude in the signs source (Jn 6:1-14)¹⁸, on the other hand, makes no reference to the wilderness.

How can this de-emphasis of the wilderness terminology in the signs source be explained? Does the signs source reflect a tradition which is not aware of the wilderness theme, or does it delete the wilderness terminology for polemic reasons? The latter view is more probable.

Fortna writes; "as a textbook for potential Jewish converts the Gospel of Signs sought to prove one thing, and one thing only: that Jesus was the Messiah in whom men should believe."¹⁹ However, from other sources we know that various types of messianic expectations were prevalent in the first century. Since we are concerned with the signs source let us examine the messianic view which combined the concept of messianic signs with the wilderness.

The Gospel of Matthew speaks out against such a view. In Mt 24:24-26 we read:

24 For false Christs and false prophets will arise and show great signs and wonders, so as to lead astray, if possible, even the elect. 25 Lo, I have told you beforehand. 26 So, if they say to you, 'Lo, he is in the wilderness,' do not go out;

This passage clearly speaks out against a messianic hope which sought messianic signs in the wilderness. From the writings of Josephus we see that some of the messianic pretenders who promised that God would perform signs in the wilderness, did not act solely out of religious motives but

also out of political ones.

Deceivers and impostors, under the pretence of divine inspiration fostering revolutionary changes, they persuaded the multitude to act like madmen, and led them out into the desert under the belief that God would there give them tokens²⁰ (σημεῖα ²¹ signs) of deliverance. Jewish War II, 259

Jonathan, an arrant scoundrel, by trade a weaver, having taken refuge in that town, won the ear of not a few of the indignant class, and led them forth into the desert, promising them a display of signs (σημεῖα) and apparitions. Jewish War VII, 438

From Matthew's warning against, and Josephus' description of the messianic wilderness hope, it is evident why the author of the signs source would have been persuaded to minimize the theme of the wilderness. The combination of signs and the wilderness location suggested a very politically oriented type of messianic movement. The author of the signs source could hardly minimize the concept of the signs since his main aim was to establish that the signs proved Jesus to be the true Messiah. However, he could minimize the concept of the wilderness, as it played no vital part in his argument. Thus by divorcing the signs from the wilderness, the Gospel of Signs could avoid the danger of appearing to advocate a political messianism. After all, the Gospel of Signs was designed to promote faith, not political revolution. Such an explanation is much more reasonable than the view that the author of the Gospel of Signs was not aware of the wilderness tradition. The Gospel of Matthew and Josephus clearly indicate that a religio-

political messianism associated with the wilderness was no secret.

We can therefore conclude that there is probably an intentional minimizing of the wilderness theme in this source, and that only one out of the five references to the wilderness originate in the signs source.

II. A JOHANNINE NOTE OF ITINERARY

Let us now investigate for what purposes the wilderness terminology is introduced in the rest of the Gospel of John. Before turning to the three passages²³ in which the wilderness terminology occurs in the context of the Mosaic typology which shows the relationship between Moses and the Messiah, let us consider Jn 11:54.

Jesus therefore no longer went about openly among the Jews, but went from there to the country near the wilderness, to a town called Ephraim; and there he stayed with the disciples.

At a first glance, this Johannine note of itinerary bears a strong resemblance to the summary statement in Mk 1:45. Both Jn 11:54 and Mk 1:45 imply that Jesus could no longer openly work in a certain locale and therefore was forced to seek refuge elsewhere. However, any similarity ends when we consider the place of refuge. In Mark, Jesus seeks refuge in the wilderness places, while in the Gospel of John he seeks refuge near the wilderness. In the case of Mk 1:45 it has been shown that this reference to the wilderness reflects Mark's redactional activity. Fortna is of the

opinion that Jn 11:54 can also be seen as a redactional statement. He claims that in various passages including Jn 11:54 John "provides his own quite artificial itinerary."²⁴ If this were true, what could have been John's logic behind including this reference to the wilderness?

R. E. Brown²⁵ points out that the town of Ephraim cannot be located with any degree of certainty. W. F. Albright²⁶, however, argues that the Ephraim of John was Ain Sāmīeh, a town literally on the edge of the wilderness. Since the Gospel of John never places Jesus in the wilderness, it could be argued that John wanted to make quite clear that Jesus was not in the wilderness when he was in Ephraim. He therefore points out that although Ephraim is near the wilderness, it should not be thought of as being in the wilderness. However tempting such an interpretation may be, it must be rejected for it presupposes too great a geographical knowledge on the part of John. Also the mere mentioning of the wilderness is a problem. Let us therefore investigate the view that Jn 11:54 rests on traditional material.

Karl Kundsinn²⁷ has suggested that the geographical notes in the Gospel of John rest on specific traditions of the Palestinian Christian communities. In the case of Jn 11:54 this thesis seems to be verified. Dodd²⁸ points out that the town of Ephraim is mentioned only once in the entire New Testament. He rules out the possibility that Ephraim

has any mysterious or symbolic meaning. He then shows that "an author writing at Ephesus late in the first century would scarcely be aware, or interested in, an obscure Palestinian town."²⁹ Dodd therefore concludes that Jn 11:54 rests on traditional information.

Kundsin's and Dodd's views are very convincing. The reference to the wilderness in Jn 11:54 may be a traditional explanatory note for the purpose of pinpointing the geographical location of an obscure Palestinian town. Consequently it is unwarranted to search for explicit clues to John's view of the wilderness in this passage. We can say only that this passage does not violate John's portrayal of Jesus, namely that Jesus is never active in the wilderness. Ephraim is near the wilderness; not in the wilderness.

III. THE WILDERNESS AND THE MOSAIC TYPOLOGY

Let us now see how John uses the wilderness in the context of the Mosaic typology. Fortna³⁰ points out that the parallels between Jesus and Moses in the signs source are not clear. However, in the Gospel of John as a whole, the Mosaic typology plays a major role.

The Johannine Church-Synagogue Dialogue

Meeks shows very convincingly that "the Johannine traditions were shaped, at least in part, by interaction between a Christian community and a hostile Jewish community whose piety accorded very great importance to Moses

and the Sinai theophany" and "that the Johannine church had drawn members from that Jewish group."³¹

J. L. Martyn comes even closer to the basic issues confronting the Johannine church when he writes:

We have seen that the Johannine church-synagogue conversation has at least three foci: the technical question of Jesus' messiahship; the correct interpretation of his signs; the relationship between him and the towering figure of Judaism, Moses.³²

Since it seems to be well established that the Mosaic typology plays an important polemical role in the Gospel of John, and since the wilderness is a part of this tradition, it would be helpful to establish how the Jews generally viewed the relationship between Moses and the Messiah. Martyn feels that "the earliest Rabbinic passage explicitly referring to the Mosaic typology is attributed reliably to Rabbi Akiba (active A.D. 90-135)."³³

How long do the days of the Messiah last? Rabbi Akiba said: Forty years. Just as the Israelites spent forty years in the wilderness, so will he (the Messiah) draw them forth and cause them to go in the wilderness and will make them eat leaves and straw (Tanchuma 'Ekeb 7).³⁴

Martyn quotes a second passage which, although stemming from a later time, also reflects the Rabbinic view concerning the Mosaic typology.

Rabbi Berekiah said in the name of Rabbi Isaac: As the first redeemer was, so shall the latter Redeemer be. What is stated of the former redeemer? And Moses took his wife and his sons, and set them upon an ass (Ex 4:20). Similarly will it be with the latter Redeemer, as it is stated, Lowly and riding upon an ass (Zech 9:9).

As the former redeemer caused manna to descend, as it is stated, Behold, I will cause to rain bread from heaven for you (Ex 26:4), so will the latter Redeemer cause manna to descend, as it is stated. May he be as a rich cornfield in the land (Ps 72:16). As the former redeemer made a well to rise, so will the latter Redeemer bring up water, as it is stated, And a fountain shall come forth of the house of the Lord, and shall water the valley of Shittim (Joel 4:18) (Qoheleth Rabba 1,8).³⁵

These two passages indicate that the Rabbinic view of the relationship between Moses and the Messiah had two foci. Both Moses and the Messiah were associated with the wilderness and the Messiah was to repeat Moses' three great signs. He was to ride upon an ass, cause manna to descend and bring up water. As we turn to the three remaining wilderness passages in the Gospel of John, let us keep in mind the Rabbinic view of the Mosaic typology and also the religious-political messianic view centering around the giving of signs in the wilderness, alluded to in Mt 24:26 and in the writings of Josephus.

The Lifting Up in the Wilderness

Jn 3:14 states:

And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of man be lifted up,

Meeks³⁶ points out that this verse presents a clear case of the use of typology. This is indicated by the form " καθώς ... οὕτως" The comparison is between an action in which Moses was involved and an action in which Jesus was to be involved. This action is concerned with a "lifting up." Bernard³⁷ explains that the "lifting up" in the Gospel

of John is always applied to the lifting up of Jesus on the cross. R. E. Brown claims that the "lifting up" refers to more than just the cross.

The first step in the ascent is when Jesus is lifted up on the cross; the second step is when he is raised up from death; the final step is when he is lifted up to heaven.³⁸

Although it is undetermined whether the "lifting up" refers only to the cross or also to the resurrection and ascension, it is certain that it is "the act of 'lifting up' that is the tertium comparationis"³⁹ in Jn 3:14. Conversely, it is also clear that "in the wilderness" is not the tertium comparationis. Therefore, Mauser⁴⁰ is right when he shows that for John the salient point in Jn 3:14 is the "lifting up"; that this happened "in the wilderness" is incidental.

On the basis of Jn 3:14 we must conclude that John introduces at least one major change into the Rabbinic scheme of the Mosaic typology; he minimizes the role of the wilderness.

The Sign of the Manna and the Wilderness

Let us now consider the last two wilderness passages which deal with the Mosaic typology. They should be studied together because they both deal with the sign of the manna. The statement "our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness" (Jn 6:31) is once put on the lips of the people, and the saying "Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness" (Jn 6:49) is once attributed to Jesus. Both these verses occur in the

discourse following the Feeding of the Five Thousand. As was noted previously, Fortna assigns Jn 6:1-14, (that is, the narrative of the Feeding of the Five Thousand), to the signs source. Significantly, the Feeding of the Five Thousand has a different setting in the Gospel of Mark than in the Gospel of John. Mk 6:31,32,35 indicates that the feeding occurred in a wilderness place, while Jn 6:3 provides a setting in the hills. Which is the actual setting?

Montefiore⁴¹ has shown that behind the story of the Feeding of the Five Thousand there lies the tradition of a thwarted messianic revolt in the wilderness. This tradition has been greatly reduced in the accounts of Matthew and Luke. However, Montefiore points out that especially in Mark's account, but also in John's, this tradition can still be detected.⁴² The wilderness setting is indispensable to this underlying tradition and therefore we must conclude that the Markan account of the Feeding of the Five Thousand has retained the original setting.

Who changed the setting from the wilderness to the hills, the author of the signs source or John? It was noted previously that the author of the signs source may have minimized the role of the wilderness as a reaction to the political, messianic pretenders who promised signs in the wilderness. Accordingly it is quite probable that the omission of the wilderness theme in the Feeding of the Five Thousand is due to such a polemic.

Let us now take a closer look at the sign of the

manna. From Jn 6:30 we see that the Jews (Jn 6:52) wanted to see a sign which would prove that Jesus was the Messiah. They suggested the sign of the manna. As was pointed out previously, a Rabbinic theory existed which claimed that just as the former redeemer caused manna to descend, so the latter redeemer would cause manna to descend. R. E. Brown⁴³ suggests that the providing of the manna was commonly regarded as the greatest of Moses' miracles. The Jews thus wanted to see the greatest sign. Jesus was to establish his messianic claim in accordance with Mosaic typology.

John portrays Jesus as refusing to be judged strictly according to this typology. He weakens the role of Moses by pointing out that it was not Moses but the Father who gave the bread from heaven (6:32). He also states that "I am the bread of life" (6:35). This last statement implies that Moses was not the bread of life.

The superiority of Jesus over Moses is stated even more clearly in Jn 6:49-50.

49 Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness
and they died. 50 This is the bread which comes
down from heaven, that a man may eat of it and
not die.

The above passage shows quite clearly that the manna associated with Moses was inferior to Jesus who was the bread of life. The people who ate the manna died. The people who taste of the bread of life will live. The point of comparison centers around the manna and the bread, not around the wilderness. John is not interested in an exact typological

relationship between the former redeemer, Moses, and the latter redeemer, the Messiah. This is clearly pointed out by the fact that there is no geographical stress on the wilderness as the setting for the performance of the signs by Jesus. As a matter of fact, John never places Jesus in a wilderness setting.

What function does the Mosaic typology perform in the Gospel of John? Meeks answers this question when he writes that in the Gospel of John the Mosaic traditions are presented in such a way

(1) that Jesus fulfills for the believer those functions elsewhere attributed to Moses and
 (2) that the Christian claims that he does this in a superior and exclusive way, so that Moses is now stripped of those functions and made merely a 'witness' to Jesus (like John the Baptist). Therefore one who had formerly accounted himself a 'disciple of Moses' would now have to decide whether he would become instead a 'disciple of Jesus.' If he did not, then from the viewpoint of this gospel he had in fact deserted the real Moses, for Moses only wrote of Jesus and true belief in Moses led to belief in Jesus.⁴⁴

The above conclusions are supported remarkably well by Jn 3:14; 6:31 and 49.

IV. THE WILDERNESS AND THE SON OF MAN

It is significant that in discussing the lifting up of the serpent in the wilderness (Jn 3:14) and the sign of the manna in the wilderness (Jn 6:31,49) John does not compare Moses with the Messiah but with the Son of Man.

Bernard⁴⁵ shows that the expression "lifted up" is

always found with the title Son of Man. Therefore John not only minimizes the allusions to the wilderness but also deviates from the Rabbinic typology which compared Moses with the Messiah. In order to consistently reflect Rabbinic thought, Jn 3:14 would have to read:

And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Messiah be lifted up in the wilderness.

However, by substituting Son of Man for Messiah and deleting the comparison to the wilderness, John clearly shows that he is not in agreement with Rabbinic teaching. After all, he could not be, knowing that Jesus was not crucified in the wilderness. Additionally, in the preceding verse, Jn 3:13, the superiority of the Son of Man over Moses is implied. Meeks is therefore correct in his observation that "the main thrust of the passage is that what takes place through Jesus is parallel to, but far superior to that which was enacted by Moses."⁴⁶

In the passage which discusses the sign of the manna in the wilderness, the Messiah is not mentioned. However, at the end of the account there are two references to the Son of Man (Jn 6:53,62).

Martyn contends that this movement from Jesus as the Mosaic Prophet-Messiah to Jesus as the Son of Man is very significant. It not only occurs in the two passages discussed above, but also in "the drama of the man born blind (Jn 9)" and in "the near-arrest of Jesus as he teaches in

the temple (Jn 7-8)."⁴⁷ Martyn concludes that:

...John never allows the identification of Jesus as the Mosaic Prophet-Messiah to occupy center stage without causing it shortly thereafter to be replaced by another motif. Furthermore, this other motif always has to do with the Son of Man. Beyond the negative point of John's categorical denial that the messianic issue is midrashic lies his positive concern to lead his reader to a direct confrontation with Jesus as the Son of Man.⁴⁸

We therefore conclude that John deals only with Mosaic typology for polemical reasons. In the course of his discussion with the Jews whose messianism expresses itself in terms of Mosaic typology, John makes a few incidental references to the fact that the Mosaic signs occurred in the wilderness. However, he makes it clear that a typological relationship in terms of the wilderness should not be made between Moses and Jesus. Jesus essentially fulfills the functions expected of the Mosaic latter redeemer but as the Son of Man, Jesus rises above the political and religious messianic hopes associated with the wilderness.

CHAPTER VI

A COMPARISON OF THE GOSPEL WRITERS' CONCEPTS
OF THE WILDERNESS

Now that we have investigated the wilderness theme in each of the Gospels, let us draw some conclusions regarding the similarities and differences in their respective concepts of the wilderness. The most obvious similarity lies in the tradition concerning John the Baptist. Mark, Q, and the Gospel of Signs associate the Baptist with the wilderness. The Gospels of Matthew and Luke reflect the accounts of Mark and Q while the Gospel of John uses the account of the Gospel of Signs. Thus all four Gospels report a tradition linking John the Baptist with the wilderness.

However, the concept of the wilderness in the Baptist tradition is not stressed equally in all the Gospels. In the Gospel of Mark it is primarily a theological concept which emphasizes the fulfillment of the prophecy of Is 40:3. Matthew, in accordance with his anti-wilderness polemic, reduces this powerful theological concept to an explicitly geographical reference. Luke also tones down the theological emphasis in the relationship between John the Baptist and the wilderness. In order to clarify a possible ambiguity in Mark as to how John the Baptist could find an audience in the wilderness, Luke reports that the Baptist

was in the wilderness until the day of his manifestation to Israel (Lk 1:80) and that afterwards he was active in the region about the Jordan (Lk 3:3). In the Gospel of John we find a similar emphasis. Although the Baptist is linked with the wilderness through the prophecy of Is 40:3, the author of the Gospel of John then places him in cities (Jn 1:28; 3:23). The emphasis is on the Baptist's role as a witness, not on the wilderness.

It is quite significant that although the gospel writers differ in their interpretation of the Baptist's relationship with the wilderness, they all report such an association on the basis of the prophecy of Is 40:3. This indicates that a very strong exegetical tradition existed which interpreted Is 40:3 as pointing to John the Baptist.

Is 40:3 also is given a christological interpretation. The "Lord" whose way is being prepared in Mk 1:3, Mt 3:3, Lk 3:4 and Jn 1:23, is Jesus. Mark shows that just as the voice (1:3) was in the wilderness (ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ) so John the Baptist (1:4) and Jesus (1:13) were in it. Mark feels so strongly about the theological significance of Is 40:3 that he uses substantive ἔρημος exclusively in connection with the fulfillment of this prophecy. The precedent for the use of substantive ἔρημος in Mk 1:3, 4, 12, 13 is set in Is 40:3 (LXX).

In the rest of the Gospel of Mark, neither Jesus nor anyone else is in τῇ ἐρήμῳ. Only ἔρημος τόπος and

ἐρημία occur outside of the Markan prologue (1:1-13). The use of ἔρημος τόπος is a sign of Mark's redactional activity. This term is used to point out the contrast between populated and unpopulated areas. The wilderness place (ἔρημος τόπος), in contrast to the inhabited areas, is a place of prayer (Mk 1:35), refuge (1:45), and rest (Mk 6:31). In contrast to substantive ἔρημος, ἔρημος τόπος is not related to Old Testament prophecy.

Ἐρημία is used only in Mark 8:4, where it has the connotation of warfare and suffering. The use of both ἔρημος τόπος and ἐρημία must be seen in the light of Mark's polemic against the hellenistic θεῖος ἀνὴρ christology. It seems that Mark felt obligated to deal with the wilderness theme in the course of this polemic. However, in order to avoid attaching the same importance to the wilderness in this case as in his prologue, Mark uses ἔρημος τόπος and ἐρημία instead of ἔρημος. The variation in Mark's wilderness terminology is therefore quite significant.

Although he uses Mark's three different ways of referring to the wilderness, Matthew is not concerned with bringing out the different shades of meaning in these terms. For Matthew all wilderness terminology is potentially dangerous. With the possible exception of 15:33 all references to the wilderness in the Gospel of Matthew must be viewed in the light of Matthew's anti-wilderness polemic, stated most clearly in 24:26. Here Matthew warns against

the danger of falling prey to a false messianic expectation associated with the wilderness. Although it is difficult to determine whether this polemic is directed toward the Zealots, the Essenes or a specific religio-political uprising associated with the wilderness, the conclusion that a false messianic wilderness expectation posed a real threat to the church in Matthew's community is inescapable.

Whereas Mark carries on a polemic against a θεῖος ἄνθρωπος christology, Luke seems to be in sympathy with such a view. At least there is no indication that Luke attempts to discredit any messianic hopes associated with the wilderness. Of all the Gospels, Luke emphasizes the parallel between the Baptist's and Jesus' preparation in the wilderness the most strongly.

Luke does not seem to grasp Mark's intention in the use of ἔρημος τόπος. Mark uses this term to point out the contrast between populated and unpopulated places. Luke, on the other hand, implies that a city such as Bethsaida (9:10) can be a wilderness place (9:12). However, Luke does introduce a new term into the wilderness terminology. He is the only gospel writer to use the plural of substantive ἔρημος. Through the use of this term Luke gives the impression that the wilderness is a very indefinite locality. It may be that Luke is simply masking his lack of geographical knowledge in this way. Even if we cannot be certain as to Luke's intention in the use of this term, we can be

certain that the occurrences of the plural of substantive ἔρημος in Lk 1:80, 5:16 and 8:29 betray Luke's redactional activity.

In contrast to the Gospel of Luke, in which no consistent concept of the wilderness can be found, the Gospel of John presents a definite polemic against the wilderness. In this Gospel, Jesus is never placed in a wilderness setting. The wilderness is mentioned in the course of the Johannine church-synagogue dialogue concerning the relevance of the Mosaic typology which shows the relationship between the former and latter redeemer. However, it is made very clear that Jesus, as the Son of Man, rises above any messianic typology associated with the wilderness. The Gospel of Signs, which John uses as a source, also seems to divorce the performing of signs from the concept of the wilderness.

The Gospels of Matthew and John thus carry on definite polemics against the wilderness. However, these polemics are of different orders. Matthew seems to be reacting against specific religio-political events which are taking place in the wilderness. There is the implication of a very real, imminent threat. The polemic in the Gospel of John, on the other hand, seems to be on a much more intellectual level. John is involved in a discussion of the value of rabbinic messianic typology.

This study shows that the role of the wilderness in the

messianic expectations of the gospel writers' contemporaries should not be underestimated. As far as Mark, Matthew and John are concerned, there existed false expectations and beliefs associated with the wilderness which posed a real threat to their teaching. In the view of Mark, Matthew and John, Luke may even have been the proponent of a false wilderness concept.

Chapter I Introduction

¹Moulton and Milligan (The Vocabulary of the Greek New Testament, 1930, p. 459) state that ὅρος is used in the papyri to refer to the desert.

²See Appendix for the Greek text of these references to the wilderness.

³E. Nestle, et al., Novum Testamentum Graece, 1963.

⁴N. Perrin, What is Redaction Criticism? 1969, p. vi.

⁵Ibid., pp. vi f.

⁶W. Marxsen, Der Evangelist Markus, 1959.

⁷H. Conzelmann, The Theology of St. Luke, 1961.

Chapter II The Wilderness Theme in the Gospel of Mark

¹E. Nestle, et al., Novum Testamentum Graece, 1963.

²The titles and textual divisions for the pericopae of the Synoptic Gospels will be taken from B. H. Throckmorton, ed., Gospel Parallels, 1967.

³For example, Vincent Taylor has shown that "The first thirteen verses of the Gospel form a closely connected section which serves as an introduction to the whole." The Gospel According to St. Mark, 1952, p. 151.

⁴U. Mauser, Christ in the Wilderness, 1963. See pp. 77-102 for a discussion of the prologue.

⁵Ibid., p. 77.

⁶Ibid., p. 80. Mauser shows that this is taken verbatim from Exodus in the LXX rendering.

⁷Ibid., p. 81. Mauser shows that this originates in the Hebrew version of Malachi.

⁸Although the wilderness is not explicitly mentioned in Ex 23:20, a good case can be made that it is assumed.

⁹Mauser, p. 80.

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹For Mauser's discussion of the meaning of John's baptism and repentance see pp. 87-89.

¹²Ibid., p. 81.

¹³Ibid., pp. 81-82.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 82.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 77.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 83.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 98.

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 101.

- ²⁰Ibid., p. 99.
- ²¹Ibid., p. 132.
- ²²Ibid., p. 102.
- ²³R. W. Funk, "The Wilderness," JBL, 78(1959), pp. 206-208.
- ²⁴Ibid., p. 210.
- ²⁵Ibid., p. 214.
- ²⁶C. C. McCown, "The Scene of John's Ministry and its Relation to the Purpose and Outcome of His Mission," JBL, 59(1940), p. 122.
- ²⁷Ibid., p. 127.
- ²⁸W. Marxsen, Der Evangelist Markus, 1959, p. 22.
- ²⁹Ibid., p. 20.
- ³⁰Ibid.
- ³¹Ibid., p. 22.
- ³²Ibid., p. 25. Marxsen is not passing judgement on the actual historical facts.
- ³³Ibid., p. 28.
- ³⁴W. Wink, John the Baptist in the Gospel Tradition, 1968, p. 5.
- ³⁵R. E. Brown, The Gospel According to John, Anchor Bible, 1966, p. 43.
- ³⁶Mk 1:3,4; Mt 3:1,3; Lk 3:2,4; Jn 1:23.
- ³⁷C. H. H. Scobie, John the Baptist, 1964, pp. 13-31.
- ³⁸Ibid., p. 18.
- ³⁹C. C. McCown, "The Scene of John's Ministry and its Relation to the Purpose and Outcome of His Mission," p. 115.
- ⁴⁰C. H. H. Scobie, p. 22.
- ⁴¹S. V. McCasland, "The Way," JBL, 77(1958), p. 224.

⁴²Ibid., p. 228.

⁴³One of the conclusions presented by C.C. McCown in his article "The Scene of John's Ministry and its Relation to the Purpose and Outcome of His Mission," JBL, 59(1940), p. 115, must therefore be rejected. McCown has argued that since Mk 1:5 reports that all the country of Judea and all the people of Jerusalem went out to see John, the natural inference is that his activities must have centered around that part of the Jordan which is nearest Judea and Jerusalem. This would pinpoint John's activity on the lower reaches of the Jordan near the Dead Sea.

⁴⁴U. Mauser, p. 98.

⁴⁵Ibid. Personal suggestion made to Mauser by Leaney.

⁴⁶Ex 24:18; 34:28; Deut 9:9,18.

⁴⁷U. Mauser, p. 101.

⁴⁸Ibid.

⁴⁹A. Schweitzer, The Psychiatric Study of Jesus, 1948, p. 66.

⁵⁰U. Mauser, p. 99.

⁵¹Ibid., p. 131.

⁵²G. Bornkamm, Jesus of Nazareth, 1960, p. 54.

⁵³W. Wink, p. 113.

⁵⁴V. Taylor, p. 81.

⁵⁵W. Marxsen, p. 37.

⁵⁶R. Bultmann, The History of Synoptic Tradition, 1968, p. 155.

⁵⁷U. Mauser, p. 104.

⁵⁸V. Taylor, p. 85.

⁵⁹R. Bultmann, p. 341.

⁶⁰G. Kittel, "ἑρμῆς, ἑρμῖα, ἑρμῶω, ἑρῆμωσις," ThDNT, III, pp. 657 f.

⁶¹R. H. Charles, ed., The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the O. T., 1913.

- ⁶²V. Taylor, p. 83.
- ⁶³R. Bultmann, p. 244.
- ⁶⁴Ibid., p. 340.
- ⁶⁵Ibid.
- ⁶⁶V. Taylor, p. 80.
- ⁶⁷U. Mauser, p. 105.
- ⁶⁸Hatch and Redpath, A Concordance to the Septuagint, 1897.
- ⁶⁹R. H. Charles.
- ⁷⁰A. Rahlfs, Septuaginta, 1965.
- ⁷¹L. L. Brenton, The Septuagint Version of the Old Testament.
- ⁷²Ibid.
- ⁷³Hebrew Old Testament, Jer 33:12.
- ⁷⁴R. W. Funk, p. 213.
- ⁷⁵R. H. Charles.
- ⁷⁶R. W. Funk, p. 213.
- ⁷⁷P. Carrington, According to Mark, 1960, p. 161.
- ⁷⁸E. Lohmeyer, Das Evangelium des Markus, 1959, p. 153.
- ⁷⁹Van B. Iersel, "Die wunderbare Speisung und das Abendmahl in der synoptischen Tradition," NovTest, 7(1964-65), p. 183.
- ⁸⁰F. W. Danker, "Mark 8:3," JBL, 82(1963), pp. 215 f.
- ⁸¹H. Montefiore, "Revolt in the Desert," NTSt, 8(1961-62), pp. 135-141.
- ⁸²Ibid., p. 139.
- ⁸³Van B. Iersel, p. 193.
- ⁸⁴T. Weeden, "The Heresy that Necessitated Mark's Gospel," ZNeutW, 5(1968), pp. 145-158.
- ⁸⁵Ibid., p. 147.

⁸⁶Ibid., p. 150.

⁸⁷Ibid., p. 155.

⁸⁸For a discussion of the relationship between the wilderness and signs and wonders, see the discussion of the signs source in Chapter V.

⁸⁹N. Perrin, "The Literary Gattung 'Gospel'- Some Observations," ExposT, 82(1971), p. 5.

⁹⁰T. Weeden, p. 156.

⁹¹Ibid.

Chapter III The Wilderness Theme in the Gospel of Matthew

- ¹A. Harnack, The Sayings of Jesus, 1908, p. 145.
- ²Ibid., p. 106.
- ³V. Taylor, The Gospel According to St. Mark, 1952, p. 515.
- ⁴B. H. Streeter, The Four Gospels, 1924, p. 264.
- ⁵Ibid., p. 265.
- ⁶H. K. McArthur, "The Burden of Proof in Historical Jesus Research," ExposT, 82(1971), p. 118.
- ⁷G. D. Kilpatrick, The Origins of the Gospel According to St. Matthew, 1946, p. 91.
- ⁸Ibid., p. 92.
- ⁹Ibid.
- ¹⁰R. Bultmann, The History of the Synoptic Tradition, 1968, p. 122.
- ¹¹Refer to the section in this chapter dealing with Matthew's redaction of the Markan wilderness pericopae.
- ¹²T. Weeden, "The Heresy that Necessitated Mark's Gospel," ZNeutW, 5(1968), p. 152.
- ¹³Ibid.
- ¹⁴H. K. McArthur, p. 118.
- ¹⁵Unless indicated otherwise, all quotations from the writings of Josephus will be taken from the collection of his works in the Loeb Classical Library, 1965.
- ¹⁶R. W. Funk, "The Wilderness," JBL, 78(1959), p. 211.
- ¹⁷Ibid.
- ¹⁸W. D. Davies, The Setting of the Sermon on the Mount, 1964, p. 202.
- ¹⁹U. Mauser, Christ in the Wilderness, 1963, p. 146.

²⁰C. C. McCown, "Gospel Geography, Fiction, Fact, and Truth," JBL, 60(1941), p. 10.

²¹C. C. McCown, "The Scene of John's Ministry and its Relation to the Purpose and Outcome of His Mission," JBL, 59(1940), p. 114.

²²R. W. Funk, p. 214.

²³Josephus uses both ἔρημος and ἐρημία for his wilderness terminology in the passages which were referred to earlier in this chapter. Matthew, however, does not draw a clear distinction in his use of the wilderness terminology. Therefore it is possible to refer simply to "the wilderness."

²⁴K. Stendahl, The School of St. Matthew, 1968, pp. 47 f.

²⁵U. Mauser, p. 28.

²⁶Funk, p. 212, makes the suggestion that "led up" (ἀνέχθη), may refer to Jesus' passage from the river up unto the valley floor. However, I feel that Mauser's suggestion is more realistic.

²⁷W. Marxsen, Der Evangelist Markus, 1959, p. 28.

²⁸This interpretation has been suggested by H. Montefiore, "Revolt in the Desert," NTSt, 8(1961-62), pp. 135-141.

²⁹Ibid., p. 135.

³⁰Ibid., p. 138.

³¹Ibid., p. 135.

³²Ibid., p. 136.

³³Ibid.

³⁴Ibid.

³⁵Ibid.

³⁶Ibid., p. 139.

³⁷Van B. Iersel, "Die wunderbare Speisung und das Abendmahl in der synoptischen Tradition," NovTest, 7(1964-65), p. 193.

³⁸E. Nestle, et al., Novum Testamentum Graece, 1963.

³⁹Aland, et al., The Greek New Testament, 1966.

⁴⁰Both A. Harnack (p. 143) and B. H. Streeter (p. 197) agree that Mt 23:37-39 = Lk 13:34-35 belongs to Q.

⁴¹A. B. Bruce, "The Synoptic Gospels," Expositor's Greek Testament, 1967, I, p. 286.

⁴²Ibid.

⁴³D. A. Schlatter, Der Evangelist Matthäus, 1959, p. 690.

⁴⁴W. C. Allen, The Gospel According to S. Mark, 1912, p. 251.

⁴⁵Arndt and Gingrich, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, 1957

⁴⁶Davies, p. 202.

⁴⁷Moulton and Milligan, The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament, 1930.

⁴⁸U. Mauser, p. 145.

⁴⁹B. H. Streeter, pp. 243 f.

⁵⁰Ibid., p. 265.

⁵¹B. T. D. Smith, The Parables of the Synoptic Gospels, 1937, pp. 187-191.

⁵²D. Lührmann, Die Redaktion der Logienquelle, 1969, p. 114.

⁵³"Gemeinderegel" Ibid., p. 115.

⁵⁴G. D. Kilpatrick, p. 29.

⁵⁵A. Harnack, pp. 143, 315-316.

⁵⁶Ibid., p. 92.

⁵⁷Antoine Guillaumont, "Sémitismes dans les Logia de Jésus retrouvés à Nag-Hamâdi," Journal Asiatique, 246(1958), p. 120, cited by E. P. Sanders, The Tendencies of the Synoptic Tradition, 1969, p. 41.

⁵⁸M. Black, An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts, 1967, p. 184.

⁵⁹J. Jeremias, The Parables of Jesus, 1963, p. 133.

⁶⁰M. Black, p. 133.

⁶¹F. Bussby, "Did a Shepherd Leave his Sheep upon the Mountains or in the Desert?" AnglThR, 45(1963), pp. 93-94.

⁶²A. Guillaumont, et al., The Gospel According to Thomas, 1959.

⁶³R. W. Funk, p. 213.

⁶⁴J. Jeremias, p. 90.

Chapter IV The Wilderness Theme in the Gospel of Luke

¹B. H. Streeter, The Four Gospels, 1924, p. 199.
Streeter shows that the first two chapters of the Gospel of Luke are peculiar to Luke.

²A. B. Bruce, "The Synoptic Gospels," Expositor's Greek Testament, 1967, I, p. 470.

³C. H. H. Scobie, John the Baptist, 1964, p. 43.

⁴A. Plummer, The Gospel According to S. Luke, 1922, p. 44.

⁵U. Mauser, Christ in the Wilderness, 1963, p. 147.

⁶S. M. Gilmour, "The Gospel According to St. Luke," IB, VIII, p. 48.

⁷W. Marxsen, Der Evangelist Markus, 1959, p. 28.

⁸R. W. Funk, "The Wilderness," JBL, 78(1959), p. 208.

⁹C. C. McCown, "The Scene of John's Ministry and Its Relation to the Purpose and Outcome of His Mission," JBL, 59(1940), p. 116.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 120.

¹¹Ibid., p. 114.

¹²Ibid., p. 119.

¹³W. Wink, John the Baptist in the Gospel Tradition, 1968, p. 49.

¹⁴C. C. McCown, p. 117.

¹⁵H. Conzelmann, The Theology of St. Luke, 1961, p. 19.

¹⁶W. Wink, p. 49.

¹⁷C. C. McCown, p. 115.

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹W. Marxsen, p. 31.

²⁰H. Conzelmann, p. 22.

- ²¹Ibid., pp. 22 f.
- ²²Ibid., p. 19.
- ²³Ibid., p. 20
- ²⁴Ibid.
- ²⁵Ibid., p. 27.
- ²⁶Ibid., p. 28.
- ²⁷A. Plummer, p. 151.
- ²⁸Ibid., p. 230.
- ²⁹W. G. Kümmel, Introduction to the New Testament, 1966, p. 99.
- ³⁰H. Conzelmann, p. 51.
- ³¹S. M. Gilmour, VIII, p. 166.
- ³²J. Jeremias, The Parables of Jesus, 1963, p. 40.
- ³³Ibid.
- ³⁴R. W. Funk, p. 213.
- ³⁵It is true that in Acts 21:38, Luke does connect a revolt by four thousand men of the Assassins with the wilderness. However, this revolt is not portrayed as a messianic revolt, and even if it were, it would still be questionable if this concept could be read back into the Gospel of Luke.
- ³⁶J. Pryke, "John the Baptist and the Qumran Community," RQu, 4(1964), p. 483.
- ³⁷A. R. C. Leaney, A Commentary on the Gospel According to St. Luke, 1958, p. 91.
- ³⁸K. Stendahl, ed., The Scrolls and the New Testament, 1957, p. 35.
- ³⁹S. M. Gilmour, VIII, p. 48.
- ⁴⁰S. V. McCasland, "The Way," JBL, 77(1958), pp. 222-230.
- ⁴¹Ibid., p. 230.

⁴²Mk 6:45- 8:26 is commonly known as Luke's great omission.

⁴³T. Weeden, "The Heresy that Necessitated Mark's Gospel,"
ZNeutW, 5(1968), p. 152.

Chapter V The Wilderness Theme in the Gospel of John

¹Mark and Matthew use the singular, substantive and adjectival forms of ἔρημος plus ἐρημία. Luke uses the singular and plural substantive forms of ἔρημος and the adjectival form of ἔρημος.

²C. H. Dodd has suggested this general heading for Jn 1:19-37. See Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel, 1963, p. 251.

³R. W. Funk, "The Wilderness," JBL, 78(1959), p. 210. Funk points out that there are only twelve instances in the N.T. where ἡ ἔρημος refers to the wilderness of the sojourn: Acts 7:30,36,38,42,44; 13:18; ICor 10:5; Heb 3:8,17; Jn 3:14; 6:31,49.

⁴W. F. Howard presents a good argument for the unity of Jn 3:1-21. See "The Gospel According to St. John," IB, VIII, p. 503.

⁵Ibid., VIII, p. 552.

⁶For a discussion of the relationship between the synoptics and John, see P. Gardner-Smith, Saint John and the Synoptic Gospels, 1938.

⁷R. T. Fortna, The Gospel of Signs, 1970, p. 235.

⁸Ibid., p. 172.

⁹Ibid., p. 229.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 172.

¹¹J. H. Bernard points out that while the synoptic authors quote Is 40:3 from the LXX, John seems to reproduce it from memory from the Hebrew. See The Gospel According to St. John, ICC, 1928, p. 38.

¹²C. H. Dodd, pp. 252 f.

¹³Ibid., p. 253.

¹⁴W. Wink, John the Baptist in the Gospel Tradition, 1968, p. 111.

¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶Ibid.

- ¹⁷W. Marxsen, Der Evangelist Markus, 1959, p. 20.
- ¹⁸R. T. Fortna, pp. 237 f.
- ¹⁹Ibid., p. 234.
- ²⁰This passage is also reflected in Antiquities XX, 168, where the reference to the signs is still clearer but the reference to the revolutionary motives is missing:
Moreover, impostors and deceivers called upon the mob to follow them into the desert. For they said that they would show them unmistakable marvels and signs (σημεῖα) that would be wrought in harmony with God's design.
- ²¹Josephus, The Loeb Classical Library, 1965.
- ²²Ibid.
- ²³Jn 3:14; 6:31,49.
- ²⁴R. T. Fortna, p. 152.
- ²⁵See R. E. Brown, The Gospel According to John, Anchor Bible, 1966, p. 441, for the various views concerning the identification of Ephraim.
- ²⁶W. F. Albright, Annual of the American Schools of Oriental Research, 4(1922-23), pp. 124-133, cited by R. E. Brown, p. 441.
- ²⁷K. Kundsinn, Topologische Überlieferungsstoffe im Johannes-Evangelium, 1925, pp. 49-50.
- ²⁸C. H. Dodd, pp. 242 f.
- ²⁹Ibid., p. 243.
- ³⁰R. T. Fortna, p. 232, points only to a possible parallel of Jn 6:5 with Num 11:13.
- ³¹W. A. Meeks, p. 318.
- ³²J. L. Martyn, History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel, 1968, p. 91.
- ³³Ibid., p. 98.
- ³⁴J. L. Martyn, p. 98, citing Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament, IV, p. 865.

³⁵J. L. Martyn, pp. 98 f., citing H. Freedman and M. Simon, eds., Midrash Rabbah, 1939, VIII, p. 33.

³⁶W. A. Meeks, pp. 291 f.

³⁷J. H. Bernard, p. 113.

³⁸R. E. Brown, p. 146.

³⁹W. A. Meeks, p. 292.

⁴⁰U. Mauser, Christ in the Wilderness, 1963, p. 76.

⁴¹H. Montefiore, "Revolt in the Desert," NTSt, 8(1961-62), pp. 135-141.

⁴²Ibid., p. 139. Montefiore points out that Jn 6:15 confirms Mark in the important point that "Jesus actually perceives that the multitude were about to come and take him by force to make him Messiah."

⁴³R. E. Brown, p. 262.

⁴⁴W. A. Meeks, p. 319.

⁴⁵The expression "lifted up" also occurs in Jn 8:28 and 12:32-34 and in each case it is connected to the Son of Man. J. H. Bernard, p. 113.

⁴⁶W. A. Meeks, p. 292.

⁴⁷For a discussion of these four passages see J. L. Martyn, pp. 120-135.

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 125.

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APPENDIX

THE WILDERNESS TERMINOLOGY OF THE GOSPELS

I. THE WILDERNESS TERMINOLOGY OF THE GOSPEL OF MARK AND ITS MATTHEAN AND LUKAN PARALLELS

John the Baptist

Mk 1:3	ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ	Mt 3:3	ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ	Lk 3:4	ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ
Mk 1:4	ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ	Mt 3:1	ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ τῆς Ἰουδαίας	Lk 3:2	ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ

The Temptation

Mk 1:12	εἰς τὴν ἐρημον	Mt 4:1	εἰς τὴν ἐρημον		
Mk 1:13	ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ			Lk 4:2	ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ

Jesus Departs From Capernaum

Mk 1:35	εἰς ἔρημον τόπον			Lk 4:42	εἰς ἔρημον τόπον
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The Healing of a Leper

Mk 1:45	ἐπ' ἐρήμοις τόποις			Lk 5:16*	
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The Feeding of the Five Thousand

Mk 6:31	εἰς ἔρημον τόπον				
Mk 6:32	εἰς ἔρημον τόπον	Mt 14:13	εἰς ἔρημον τόπον		
Mk 6:35	ἔρημός ἐστὶν ὁ τόπος	Mt 14:15	ἔρημός ἐστὶν ὁ τόπος	Lk 9:12	ἐν ἐρήμῳ τόπῳ

The Feeding of the Four Thousand

Mk 8:4	ἐπ' ἐρημίας	Mt 15:33	ἐν ἐρημία
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*Although Lk 5:16 parallels Mk 1:45 in referring to the theme of the wilderness, the specific form of the wilderness terminology in Lk 5:16 must be attributed to Luke's redactional activity.

II. THE WILDERNESS TERMINOLOGY OF Q

Jesus' Words About John

Mt 11:7 εἰς τὴν ἔρημον

Lk 7:24 εἰς τὴν ἔρημον

The Lost Sheep

(Mt 18:12 ἐπὶ τὰ ὄρη)

Lk 15:4* ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ

*It is not absolutely certain whether this reference can be assigned to Q.

III. THE WILDERNESS TERMINOLOGY ATTRIBUTABLE TO MATTHEW'S REDACTIONAL ACTIVITY

The Lament Over Jerusalem

Mt 23:38 ὁ οἶκος ὑμῶν ἔρημος

The Day of the Son of Man

Mt 24:26 ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ

IV. THE WILDERNESS TERMINOLOGY ATTRIBUTABLE TO LUKE'S REDACTIONAL ACTIVITY

The Birth of the Baptist

Lk 1:80 ἐν ταῖς ἐρήμοις

The Healing of a Leper

Lk 5:16 ἐν ταῖς ἐρήμοις

The Gerasene Demoniac

Lk 8:29 εἰς τὰς ἐρήμους

V. THE WILDERNESS TERMINOLOGY OF THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

The Testimony of John

Jn 1:23* ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ

The Lifting Up

Jn 3:14 ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ

The Sign of the Manna

Jn 6:31 ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ

Jn 6:49 ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ

A Note of Itinerary

Jn 11:54 ἐγγὺς τῆς ἐρήμου

*This reference to the wilderness probably originates from the Gospel of Signs.