

God. He would not have tempted Jesus if he had not thought there was a chance of succeeding; he did not know that there was, and could be, no sin in Him. Perhaps he even dared to think that Jesus, instead of being strengthened by the Holy Ghost, would be thrown off His guard by the gift He had received. Jesus had taken man's nature, and man is apt to be puffed up by spiritual gifts; but Jesus was in no such danger, for there was one part of man's nature which He had not taken—its sinfulness.

Jesus was tempted for forty days! We often find temptation hard and long; but our Lord endured more than He calls His servants to endure. He ate nothing all that time, but though He was afterwards hungry, His strength was miraculously kept up.

The three temptations that are mentioned were the last, and came at the end of the forty days. Jesus had overcome all hitherto; but now He was hungry,

all the kingdoms of the world, if He would worship him.

The last temptation was perhaps the most crafty of all. Jesus would not work a miracle at Satan's bidding, nor would He fall down and worship him; but now Satan found a text in the Word of God, and tempted Him with that. He quoted the words aright—the words of the 91st Psalm; but though the words were right, Satan's use of them was wrong and wicked. We are not wilfully to run into danger, trusting to God to preserve us: that is presumption, not faith; tempting God, rather than trusting Him. Jesus therefore would not cast Himself down. He answered Satan's text with another. Scripture, like all other gifts of God, may be misused. The text from Satan's lips was only the letter of Scripture misapplied: that which Jesus used was both the letter and the spirit.

<p>Know, and consider it in thine heart, that the Lord He is God.</p> <p><i>Deuteronomy iv. 39.</i></p>	<p>Stand still, and consider the wondrous works of God.</p> <p><i>Job xxxvii. 14.</i></p>	
<p>In the day of adversity, consider.</p> <p><i>Ecclesiastes vii. 14.</i></p>	<p>— CONSIDER. —</p>	<p>Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, Consider your ways.</p> <p><i>Haggai i. 7.</i></p>
<p>Consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself.</p> <p><i>Hebrews xii. 3.</i></p>	<p>Consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works.</p> <p><i>Hebrews x. 24.</i></p>	

and probably weak through fasting; Satan would therefore make a last attack, perhaps he might overcome now. Our cruel enemy has no pity; he never spares us; he will come upon us in our weakness, or when we are ill, or downhearted, as well as when he thinks us to be puffed up with pride.

Satan fits his temptation to our case. Jesus was hungry; so he tempted Him first with food. But he has temptations of various sorts; if one does not succeed, he tries another. Thus he did with our Lord. Jesus had come into the world, leaving all His greatness and glory, and now He was poor and low, for He took upon Him the form of a servant: did He not wish for greatness? Would He not like to rule over the world into which He had come? This was the next temptation. It was not Satan's to give; he was a liar when he said it was; but he did offer Jesus

Let us not be surprised if temptation comes. It will come; Satan will not let us alone. But, however painful it may be, it cannot overcome us, if we watch and pray. That is what Jesus bids us do: "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation." Probably Jesus suffered when He was tempted; though He could not fall, yet He might be pained. It is a bad sign if temptation does not pain us; if we hate sin, to be tempted to sin must be painful. But help is always ready; and our Helper is far mightier than our tempter.

God can forbid Satan to tempt us, and make him depart from us, and so give us rest. But let us not put off our armour. He will come again, when God lets him. He departed from Jesus only "for a season," until the time when he tempted Him again. He did tempt Him again.

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