

then He had not been the perfect man. Satan tries to introduce into His heart a desire which was not in the word of God. He succeeded in insinuating a lust into the heart of Adam ; he fails with Jesus, though He was forty days exposed to his presence and power. Jesus had to know by experience what it was to have working at Him, without a single support, without a friend, in solitary dreariness (save indeed the wild beasts) with the devil ! Thus He measured the power of Satan. The strong man was there, putting forth all his weapons, but the stronger than he overcame : Jesus binds the strong man. He was abstracted from human condition for forty days, not like Moses to be only with God, but as the one who was always with God, to be exposed to Satan. None other man needs to be abstracted in order to be tempted, he has only to go on along with men. In this case, this extraordinary separation was to be with the devil. To be with God He did not need anything out of His every-day path, for it was His natural place ; but to be with Satan, He needed it. Others are strangers to God, and at home with Satan. He, in the most adverse things, is a stranger to Satan, and dwells in the bosom of the Father. But He emptied Himself as God to become a servant as man, and there He waits in dependence on the word of Him whom He served. The living Father had sent Him, and He lived by the Father. He was as man under His authority, and His meat was to do His will.