

self had to be "put to the proof," as the word for "tempt" literally means.

Two leading views are taken of the mode of Christ's temptation. (1) It is a literal narrative of objective facts. Satan really appeared in a visible and tangible form, and placed Christ actually in the circumstances mentioned. Of course it is admitted that the display of all the kingdoms of the world was not literal, but it was rhetorical, with a suitable basis of reality on which to build the word picture. (2) It describes, in dramatic language, a real but internal experience. Satan whispered his suggestions to the mind of Jesus. He was carried in imagination to the pinnacle of the temple, and in vision saw all the kingdoms of the world. Both views are full of difficulties but the first seems to accord best with the unartificial style of the Evangelist.

How could any suggestion of evil be a temptation to Christ? There was nothing in him which responded to it. We are unable to answer this question for: (1) the psychology of divine-human nature is beyond our philosophy; (2) we are assured that it was not on the best authority, that of the Holy Spirit who led him into it and who understood his nature thoroughly (Heb. 4: 15: 13) the evil cannot have originated in his pure and holy mind; (4) he was not tempted to do anything sinful in itself but to do or get, what he had a right to do or obtain, by wrong means. To procure food, to trust God's providence, to desire a world-wide empire, were not wrong, but to do these things after the devil's fashion would have been sin. This kind of temptation is the only one that could have been used with any prospect of success.

The devil — "The Slanderer," that is what the name means. He is the prince of evil spirits. He took the form of a serpent when tempting Eve, but we do not know what form he assumed to Christ. He could not have concealed his real nature from him. "The Christian" doctrine of the devil, as revealed in the word of God, is, that he is a created being of a higher order than man, who has fallen away from God (Jude 6); that he is related to sin as its primeval and seductive originator (John 3: 8: 44); that he is an adversary, accuser and a tempter of God's people (Gen. 3: Rev. 12: 9; Matt. 4: 1; 13: 39; John 14: 30); that he stands to the Redeemer in the relation of a conquered enemy (John 12: 31; Rev. 12: 9); and in relation to the redeemed as an enemy absolutely vincible (1 Pet. 5: 8, 9; Jas. 4: 7); that he nevertheless continues to rage and persecute on earth (Rev. 2: 10; 3: 9); and is finally related to universal heathenism and the world, as well as to apostate Judaism as a patron, prince and father (John 8: 44; 14: 30; Eph. 2: 2; 6: 11, 12); and that together with everything anti-Christian, he shall be delivered up to eternal punishment." (Butler.)

Fasted—Luke says, "he did eat nothing." Shewing that the fasting was real, not figurative, and also that it was absolute. The added words, "forty nights," also shew that the

time is to be reckoned literally, and not as an indefinite period. Compare Ex. 34: 28; Deut. 9: 9; 1 Kings 19: 8. He was too much absorbed in his spiritual conflict to feel hunger. He afterwards hungered (R. V.)—Luke seems to say that the temptation was going on all this time. The three given in our lesson may have been the three last and hardest. "Upborne and upholden above the common needs of the animal life by the great tides of spiritual gladness; in the strength of that recent baptism, in the solemn joy of that salutation and recognition from his Father, he found and felt no need these forty days. As a slighter incident of the same kind, he forgets hunger and thirst, or rather feels them no more, by the well of Samaria, in the joy of winning a lost soul (John 4: 31-34.)" (Trench.)

3. The tempter—the first instance of the use of this word as meaning "one who solicits to sin," a sense which it does not have in the classic writers. (Alford) 1 Thess. 3: 5. **If thou art** (R. V.)—does not imply any doubt of the fact that he was the Son of God, but was intended as an irritating taunt. (Compare ch. 27: 40.) "What is it worth to you if you can't keep yourself from starving," is the underlying suggestion. **The Son of God**—lit. "If a Son, thou art, of God," as the Voice declared (3: 7,) you have the right and power to do this. **Command that these stones be made bread**—"Speak, in order that these stones may become loaves." Exercise the creative power by which you made all things at first. John 1: 3; Ps. 33: 9. The stones were in the shape of the loaves generally used in Palestine, and looked not unlike them. The temptation was to use his miraculous power to satisfy his personal wants, and so shew distrust of his Father's care. Since he had voluntarily undertaken to become a man he must submit to all human wants without any other relief than other men have. He made water into wine and fed thousands miraculously but this was to relieve others, not himself. **Man shall not live by bread alone**—Deut. 8: 3. Jesus repels the attack of Satan in every case by the sword of the Spirit (Eph. 6: 17.) He speaks and acts from the standpoint of his humanity all through the ordeal. Man needs something more than food. He needs an obedient and submissive heart. To eat food obtained by wrong means is to die spiritually; to starve rather than do wrong is to live forever. **But by every word**—i. e. by cheerfully submitting to every appointment of God. A Son's duty is filial trust in his Father's paternal love.

II. THE SECOND TEMPTATION. 5. Taketh him up—the verb implies taking him with him by constraint. - He is led by Satan's will, not by his own choice. Luke makes this the second temptation. The order is a matter of little consequence. Satan may not have been visible to others, or he may have seemed to them like a human companion, as they travelled to Jerusalem and entered the