



# Bodleian Libraries

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

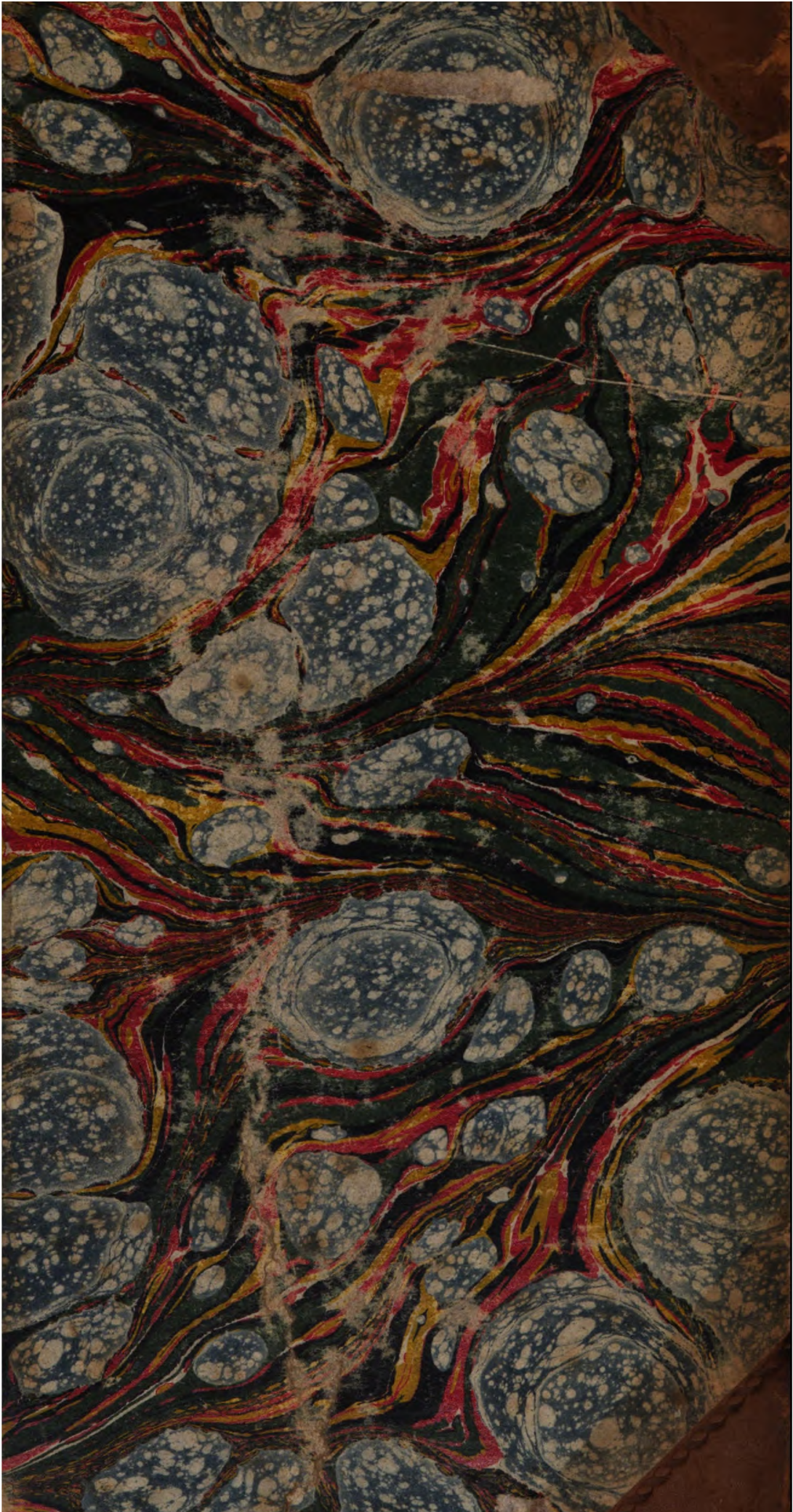
This book is part of the collection held by the Bodleian Libraries and scanned by Google, Inc. for the Google Books Library Project.

For more information see:

<http://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/dbooks>



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 2.0 UK: England & Wales (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0) licence.





600011697U

29

541.



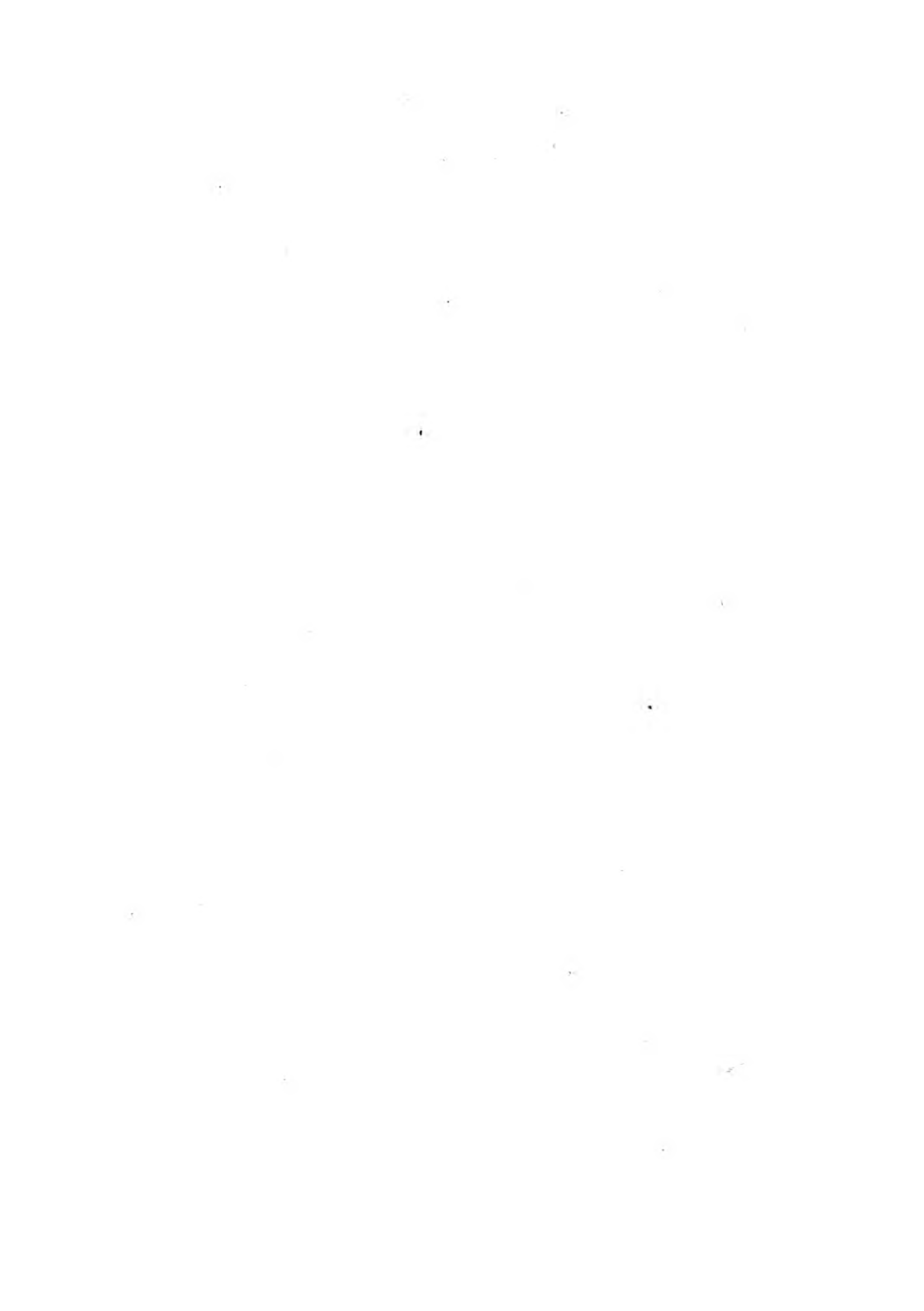




600011697U

29

541.





**SERMONS**  
ON OUR  
**LORD'S TEMPTATION, &c.,**  
BY THE  
REV. WM. KIRBY, F. R., & L. S., &c. &c.





TO  
**W. F. F. MIDDLETON, ESQ.,**  
AND THE HONOURABLE  
**MRS. MIDDLETON;**

AS A SLIGHT TESTIMONY  
OF HIS SENSE OF THEIR KINDNESS TO HIMSELF,  
AND OF THE  
BENEVOLENT INTEREST THEY TAKE  
IN THE WELFARE,  
AND THE  
LIBERAL AND PERSONAL ATTENTION THEY  
PAY TO THE WANTS,

OF  
**His Poor Parishioners,**  
**THESE SERMONS**  
ARE GRATEFULLY INSCRIBED

*By Their devoted Friend and Servant.*

THE AUTHOR AND EDITOR.



## P R E F A C E .

**S**OME years ago I happened to meet with a posthumous volume by the pious and learned Lancelot Andrews, Bishop of Winchester in the reign of James the First, which, amongst other Sermons, contained seven *On our Lord's Temptation*. Afterwards being desirous of preparing a course of Lent Sermons, I thought it might answer my purpose, and be profitable to my congregation, if I followed the lead and example of the good Bishop, by considering, in all its lights and bearings, that great and interesting transaction; and moreover if I

made such use of his materials, as their nature, and the differences of time and taste, rendered advisable. Accordingly some parts I omitted; others I altered or gave a new turn to; some I expanded; others I retrenched; and frequently, when it seemed requisite, added original matter.

My object was so to mix *Things new and old*, as might render what I wrote most edifying and useful to my hearers, and at the same time most forcibly seize their attention by an air of *novelty*, literally the result of the *antiquity* of the foundation upon which my superstructure was built.

As these Sermons were composed for a country congregation, I have, for the most part, endeavoured to be as plain and practical as possible; yet when the subject seemed to demand it, I have admitted higher speculations, and a more ornamented style: and in preparing the work for the press I have endeavoured to

rub off all its rusticity, and render it as fit, as the time would allow, for the eye of the public.

My motive for this publication—besides the desire, I trust no illaudable one, which I had long felt to shew, that while I had devoted so much of my time and thoughts to the study God's *works*, I had not been wholly negligent of his *word*, or of my higher duties—was an inclination to try whether the general reader might not be interested, as well as profited by bringing forward, in a dress better suited to the taste of the times, than that with which their authors invested them, some of the rich and recondite stores to be derived from the works of our old divines, especially of that great and eminent Theologian, to whom I have been so much indebted on the present occasion. A republication of his sermons, on account of the great quaintness, prolixity, and the other peculiarities that distinguish

them, and were then in vogue, instead of edifying, would either weary the general reader, or provoke his ridicule : but it seemed to me, that, were these defects removed, his great sense ; his unaffected piety ; the learning, and knowledge of scripture and antiquity, he every where manifests ; his copious and perspicacious explanations of various difficult texts, and the soundness and orthodoxy of his doctrines, would render any Sermons into which they were transfused, very pleasing as well as useful acquisitions to the Sermon-reading public.

I could have wished that this work had been published before the commencement of Lent, as that, however, for reasons with which it is not necessary to trouble the reader, *could not* be accomplished, I did not like to delay the publication till another return of that season. Indeed the subject on which it treats is so universally important, interesting, and edify-

ing, that it can at no time be deemed unseasonable.

My original intention was to publish solely the Sermons on the *Temptation*, but, for the use of my congregation, having put into a modern dress, with some addition, our pious Bishop's celebrated Sermon upon the *Passion*, I thought, since it relates to the evil spirit's *final* attack upon our Saviour, it would form an appropriate conclusion to the work.





## SERMON I.

---

MATTHEW, iv. 1.

*“ Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.”*

**N**O subject can be more proper for our meditation, during the season into which we have this day entered\*, than the great conflict of the Captain of our salvation with the author of our fall, and the glorious victory that he then achieved. I shall, therefore, in the present and some following discourses, endeavour to explain to you all the material circumstances and consequences, as far as they have been related by the Evangelists, of this most remark-

\* N. B. These Sermons were preached in *Lent*.

able event, and to deduce from them such practical instruction as seems the natural result of a due consideration of them.

Our Blessed Lord by his *Nativity* took upon him the nature of his creature man, by his *Circumcision* he further took upon himself the condition and obligations of a servant. By the *first* he was *enabled* to perform the great work of our redemption, by the *second* he *bound* himself to perform it. For the merciful object of all that he became, of all that he did, and of all that he suffered, was to rescue man, the favoured creature of his hands, from a ruin that knows no limit, to restore him to his original perfection, and to open to him more than his original prospects. In order to the effectual fulfilment of this merciful purpose, it was originally decreed and declared by God, that the head of that old serpent, by whom this favoured creature of God was violated and corrupted, should be bruised by the seed of the woman. *For this purpose*, we are also assured by the beloved apostle, *the Son of God* (who

was also the seed of the woman) *was manifested that he might destroy the works of the devil\**.

When God made man, he took him out of the world, and placed him in Paradise a type of the Church, in which he was to be nurtured and prepared for a higher and final state of glory and happiness; and it was a part of the Divine Economy, that the candidate for that state should first be *tried* whether he would preserve his allegiance to his Great Benefactor inviolate. With this view, when by a deed of gift every fruit produced in the garden which the Lord had planted, was placed at his disposal for his free use and enjoyment, one tree only, as a trial of his faith, was interdicted to him, and a spirit, fallen from his primitive state, and from a servant become an enemy to God, was permitted to *tempt* him to disobey the Divine Command. The fatal issue of this trial, and the deterioration of character which it produced in man, we all too sadly feel when we look into our own bosoms, and find there a

\* 1 John, iii. 8.

seed plot sown with seeds of evil ready to germinate if at all encouraged; and learn by experience, that in spite of our best care, some will come up amongst the plants raised and fostered by Divine Grace, and trouble us by their efforts to overgrow and choke them: and these we often find it extremely difficult to eradicate or keep under.

Thus did the power of evil get a footing in God's creation, and the adversary-serpent reared aloft his crest in the full expectation that he had seduced Adam and *all* his descendants into *irretrievable* ruin. How bitter must have been his disappointment when it was pronounced upon him, *I will put enmity between thy seed and her seed, it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel\**. When he found that the prey was thus to be snatched from the mighty hunter, and the human nature, which he had conquered and reckoned as his lawful captive, be delivered† from his dominion, his rage must have known no bound. In order to

\* Genesis, iii. 15.    † Isaiah, xlix. 25.

the full accomplishment of this prophecy, it was necessary that the promised seed, the conqueror of sin and satan, should prevail where the first man had failed, and shew himself superior to all the wiles and arts of the evil spirit. It was for this reason that as soon as he was baptized, *Jesus was led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.*

To those who followed John the Baptist our Saviour puts this question,—*What went ye out into the wilderness to see*, intimating that it was no ordinary spectacle, not to see *A reed shaken by the wind*, but *a prophet and more than a prophet\**, that could have power to allure men from the busy world into the solitary wilderness. So it may be observed with regard to the event recorded in the text, if there was ever any thing in the wilderness worthy the going out to behold, it was now, when the Prince of light and life, and the chief power of darkness and death were there to have their mysterious and mighty conflict and struggle

\* Matthew, xi. 7, &c.

for the victory. A conflict upon whose issue and event depended the final happiness and salvation of the whole race and progeny of Adam. If any matter be worthy of our deepest attention surely it is this, to behold this combat between that old and mighty adversary of ours, who goeth about like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour, and the great Captain of our salvation, the lion of the tribe of Judah ; to see *our King of old\** enter the lists with our cruel taskmaster and tyrant that he may set us free from his merciless yoke. If *any* spectacle be worthy of our most earnest and undivided attention, surely it is *this*.

Was even no advantage to be derived to ourselves from the victory of the worthier, yet would it be a sight meriting our particular notice were it only to learn how two such mighty and accomplished champions manage their weapons and arms both in attack and defence. More particularly, as the same adversary assaults us all, by seeing the mode of his attack

\* Psalm, lxxiv. 12.

and of our Saviour's defence, we may be instructed how to arm ourselves and use our armour so as to ward off his blows. We may rest assured, that if the evil spirit ventured to tempt the holy Jesus, he will with far greater boldness and confidence of success assail us. If he sought to overthrow us in Christ, much more will he do it in ourselves : it is indispensable for us therefore to acquire some knowledge of our enemy and his arms ; of his strength and stratagems. We are told that his darts are fiery, and if with attentive eyes we behold this great combat, we may learn his manner of casting them, and how our Blessed Pattern wards them off and defends himself, and thus be instructed how we may best comport ourselves in our own warfare. Let us all therefore, in heart and spirit, go out into the wilderness to witness this great and interesting spectacle.

*Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.* These words describe our Saviour's entry upon the theatre of his temptation, and they consist of the following important heads.



I. The two champions who are about to commence their conflict—*Christ and the Devil*.

II. The leader under whose guidance Jesus is stated to enter the lists—*the Holy Spirit*.

III. The object of this action of the Holy Spirit upon his will—*that he might be tempted*.

IV. The time at which this took place, intimated by the particle—*then*.

V. And finally the scene of the transaction—*the wilderness*. All these I shall successively consider.

I. I begin with the two champions between whom the combat is to take place, *Christ* and *Satan*, the *Saviour* and the *Destroyer*. The one, *the desire of all nations*; the long foretold and long expected Seed of the woman, who, by abolishing his power over the bodies and souls of men, was to bruise the serpent's head, and thus repair the evil that was wrought at the fall. The other the *Great Enemy* of all mankind, who first seduced them from their allegiance to God, and thus introduced sin and evil, misery and ruin into the creation, and was the author of eternal death. The former in

his higher nature, the *Son of God*, and the *Creator of the Universe*; and in his lower, the *Son of Man*, of like passions and wants with ourselves: subject to hunger and thirst, to the extremities of cold and heat, to poverty, and affliction and grief; to weariness and pain, and in a word to death: and in consequence of all these weaknesses incident to humanity, he was necessarily exposed to temptations as well as ourselves. The latter was in his nature a powerful spirit, occupying originally one of the most exalted thrones amongst the angels of God; from which state of bliss he fell by *pride*, (which we are told was *the condemnation of the devil\**,) and by aspiring to be higher; and in his fall involved legions of other angels whom he had corrupted and seduced. Deprived of the favour of God and doomed to the bitter pains of eternal death, his great object, ever since his apostacy, has been to reduce others to the same state of hopeless misery, which he himself has justly inherited. As he is the enemy of all holiness and happiness, he is called *Satan* or

\* 1 Timothy, iii. 6.

the *Adversary*; as he calumniates the servants of God to their Maker, as in the case of Job, and in general of all the sons of men, hence he is named the *Devil*, which means the *Accuser*; and as he became incarnate, as it were, by assuming the body of an animal to effect his baleful purpose, he is therefore also call the *Serpent*. And under these names or characters we know that he is always engaged; he is ever *fighting* with us as our *adversary*; he is ever either *accusing us* to God, or *accusing God* to us, misrepresenting him to us as a hard taskmaster, requiring of us more than we can perform, and as an enemy to all pleasure and satisfaction. Thus it was, that at first he wrought the fall, persuading the woman when he had engendered in her breast conceit of her own excellence, that God's easy command was a hardship and injury, and that height, and happiness, and wisdom were only to be attained by the breach of it. He attacks us as a *serpent*, when he makes any of God's creatures his instruments to tempt us from our duty. Thus we see the opposite characters of these two

champions that have taken the field against each other.—The one the light, and glory, and happiness of the world, and the other the parent of all its darkness, sin, and misery.

II. We are next to consider the *Leader* under whose guidance our Lord is represented to enter the lists—*The Holy Spirit of God*. He is the divine author of all spiritual life and strength, through whose effectual aid alone, we are able to conquer the great enemy of our salvation, and are therefore described as fighting with the *Sword of the Spirit*\*. From these words, *He was led by the Spirit*, we may draw much useful instruction to ourselves in our own individual warfare. Hence we may learn, that the state of man, when born anew in Baptism, is far from a state of indolence and inactivity, but that to *grow in grace*, and to *go on unto perfection*†, is the duty of all who are made partakers in that ordinance of the Spirit of Grace. We must not only have a spirit that will strive to mortify

\* Ephesians, vi. 17. † 2 Peter, iii. 18. Hebrews, vi. 1.

*the cody of sin* in us, but one that will revive and excite us; that will move us, and urge us onward. We are not to sit still laying our whole burthen upon Christ, without using any efforts of own; but we must *Arise and be doing\**, *For the Kingdom of God is not in word, but in Power†*.

Again from hence we learn, that though we must be disposed to action, such action must not be solely of and from ourselves, we must not move in the direction to which our natural wills and inclinations impell us, which is into the world and after the world, and not into the wilderness; but we must go where we are led by the Spirit of God. For having in our baptism given ourselves up to God; as we are no longer at our own disposal, so ought we to be no longer under our own direction. Before our calling we were gentiles, led into divers errors and *serviug divers lusts‡*, and so, to use the Psalmist's words, *We wandered up and down, and were not satisfied§*. But now,

\* 1 Chronicles, xxii. 16. † 1 Corinthians, iv. 20. ‡ Titus, iii. 3. § Psalm, lix. 15.

having become *the sons of God*, we must be *led by the Spirit of God*\*—the *final* fruit of which will be the full accomplishment of every desire of our heart.

III. We come next to the object of the Spirit's guidance, that he led our Lord to be *tempted*. Hence we learn that his temptation came not by chance, nor, as Job speaks, *out of the dust*†, nor even from the evil spirit except as the instrument. He had no power not only over Job's person, but even over his goods, without God's permission, nor could he touch the swine of the profane Gergesenes till leave was given him‡. Hence we may nourish our faith with this comfortable reflection—that when we are tempted the Holy Spirit does not stand by as an unconcerned spectator; but, if we do not let go our confidence, takes us by the hand, and seconds and directs all our exertions. He makes plain a path for us, and will not suffer us to be tempted above what we can bear§. If the world seduces us, if the flesh

\* Romans, viii. 14. † Job, v. 6. ‡ Matthew, viii. 31, 32.

§ 1 Corinthians, x. 13.

allures us, if the devil assaults us, provided we strive against them, he causes all to work for our good ; in consequence of their attacks we become more wary and more constantly upon our guard ; and, even Hell itself, by the fear it excites in our minds, becomes to us an occasion of escaping it. So that temptations, whether we consider them as rods in the hand of our Heavenly Father to chastise us for our sins ; as sieves to try and sift us ; as fans to winnow us, as it were, and blow away all our chaff ; or as fires to purify us and separate our dross from us : or whether they be sent to buffet us that we may keep in due subjection our bodily appetites ; or to instruct us, that we may know our own strength, or that patience may have its perfect work in us, and finally that the mouth of the accuser may be stopped when he says, as of old, *Doth Job fear God for naught\** : whatever be the ends which our various trials and temptations are intended to serve, we may comfort ourselves with this reflection, that

\* Job, i 9.

Satan hath not the rod or chain in his own hands, to smite us or drag us according to his own malevolent will; but that the Holy Ghost orders all as may best promote the glory of God and our own eternal welfare.

We may further observe that in our blessed Lord's temptation there are some circumstances which teach us how to exercise our faith, and others which we may imitate in our practice. Since the Son of God submitted to undergo temptations we may now with more confidence regard them as sanctified and as marks of Divine favour rather than of anger, and thereby be induced to have a firmer *faith* in God's power to enable us to stand under them. Again as temptations got their dominant force by the fall of Adam, so since the serpent's head has been bruised by the Seed of the woman, they have lost much of their power and force. With a crushed head he has no longer his ancient strength, and as his strength is weakened by the complete victory which was the fruit of our Lord's temptation, so is ours increased.



With respect to our *practice* we may also learn two things from this great conflict—we learn first to shew compassion to those that fall. For Christ having experienced how powerfully we are tempted, in consequence both of the feebleness of our fallen nature, and of the strength of our assailant, is thereby moved to lay aside strictness and severity with us, and to put on bowels of compassion. So that now, as the Apostle argues, *We have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities ; but was in all points tempted like as we are yet without sin\**. How infinitely more does it behove us, who have been tempted and often have fallen, to look upon the defects and slips of our brethren with an eye of pity and mercy.

Again, hence we learn how to act when we ourselves are tempted. Our Lord hath taught us by his example that faith in God will enable us to conquer all our spiritual enemies. It should surely be a source of infinite comfort

\* Hebrews, iv. 15.

to us to reflect that Christ, who before us hath conquered every temptation, is ever at hand to help us, and will be to the end of the world. When he takes the sword and shield at the same time with us, and stands by our side to assist us in our conflict, what can really hurt us? Do we fear because we behold the enemy approaching? Let us call aloud for aid to our strong helper, and we shall fully find, *That God will arise and his enemies shall be scattered, and they also that hate him shall flee before him\**. Are they just ready to attack us? Let us say—*Save me O God, for the waters are come in even unto my soul†*. Do we feel ourselves feeble and dispirited, and even wounded by him that besets us in our path? If faith springs up within us, and we earnestly cry unto God—*Bring forth the spear and stop the way against them that persecute me, say unto my soul, I am thy Salvation‡*, the victory, though so long doubtful, will still be our own.

\* Psalm, lxxviii. 1. † Psalm, lxix. 1. ‡ Psalm, xxxv. 3.

IV. We are next to reflect upon the *time* at which this great conflict took place, expressed by the adverb *then*. This word refers us to what had just taken place, the Baptism of Jesus, and to those remarkable attestations to him, as the Messiah, the opening of the heavens, the descent of the Holy Spirit upon him, and the voice pronouncing of him, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased\**. It is supposed, that in consequence of what then took place, Satan discovered what he before was ignorant of, that Jesus was the promised Messiah; and that he immediately determined, if possible, to seduce him into sin. We may likewise observe, that when God empowers any of his servants with a larger portion of grace, he permits the evil spirit to put it to the trial by more violent attacks. To our blessed master and pattern the Spirit was given without measure†, and therefore he was permitted to be tempted in proportion to his powers of resistance, and more than falls to the lot of the best of the sons of Adam.

\* Matthew, iii. 17. † John, iii. 34.

We may observe here, by the way, that the Spirit was bestowed in fullness upon our Lord at his *Baptism*, which affords a powerful argument against those that would separate Regeneration from that Holy Ordinance, or that dispute its necessity.

Our Saviour at the time when this event took place, as we learn from St. Luke, was thirty years of age, but yet previously we read of no attempt of the devil to subvert him, but as soon as he was commissioned and prepared to undertake the great work of our salvation, he immediately sets himself to do his utmost to hinder it. The more glorious and merciful the work, the more vehemently, and earnestly, and vigorously will he endeavour to defeat, and nullify it. Was it declared of Jesus that he should be *anointed with the oil of gladness above the rest of mankind*\*? The devil brings it about first, that *his visage shall be marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men*†. Was he baptized with the

\* Psalm, xlv. 7. † Isaiah, lii. 14.

Holy Ghost? He took care that he should also be baptized with the fire of affliction. Was it foretold that he should be crowned with glory and honour, and reign a king for ever and ever? This unholy spirit first causes his head to be surrounded with a crown of thorns, and himself to be treated as a slave and criminal, and to suffer the torment of a shameful and painful death.

V. We are lastly to turn our attention to the scene or stage on which the two champions are to engage—*The wilderness*. And this was chosen for many reasons. God after he had delivered his chosen people from the Egyptian tyrant and his taskmasters, led them about in the *wilderness* (of Sinai) for forty years, feeding them, not with the bread of man, but, as the Psalmist calls it, with *Angel's food\**, the manna which fell from heaven, and by the water that miraculously flowed from the rock; and during all this time they were exposed to various trials and temptations, in most of which,

\* Psalm, lxxviii. 25.

instead of conquering, they fell. In the *wilderness* also the law of God was given which they broke and forsook. Therefore in the *wilderness* (of Judea) was Christ to be tempted and tried, that where they were beaten he might conquer, and that there he might receive the law of God, to *keep* it, which they could not do. There also for forty days, answering to forty years, *a day for a year\**; his only meat and drink was to do the will of him that sent him. Besides these reasons, the *wilderness* might probably be selected on account of its total seclusion from the world, and all its business, and cares and vain shews, and pleasures, which tend to distract the most collected minds from meditation. The forty days that preceded the final and most powerful of our Lord's temptations, were doubtless passed in the most abstracted meditation on spiritual things, and in receiving that instruction from above, since, as man, we know that *Jesus increased in wisdom†*, that was necessary to

\* Ezekiel, iv. 6. † Luke, ii. 52.

qualify him for the great work that he had undertaken.

Further, the *wilderness* might also be selected, because, in this secluded spot, he must be without all *human* help, *of the people there was none with him*\*. As in his last extremities there was no mortal hand to succour him, so in this his first conflict for us, his first labour of love, there was no man to minister to him and support him : *His own arm brought salvation unto him, and with him there was no helper*†. From the scene of this great transaction we may derive a most useful lesson, since we are thus taught that no place is *privileged* from temptation. Monks and Hermits of old fondly thought that, by forsaking the world and society, they should escape from the snares of the evil spirit, but had they duly reflected upon this history, they would have changed their sentiments. Our Saviour retired only for a *season*, and to prepare himself for his High Duties, and then returned to active

\* Isaiah, lxiii. 3.    † Ibid, 5.

life, but they retired *for ever*, as if there was *merit* in such seclusion, and forsook all those important duties, attention to which principally distinguishes the true disciple of Jesus. It must not, however, be forgotten, that *occasional* retirement from the world, from its business and pleasures, is extremely serviceable to our spiritual interests, and that a sinner can scarcely be recovered from the snares of Satan, unless he abjures the idle and loose companions with whom he has hitherto associated. Yet it is most true that temptations meet us in deserts and solitudes as well as in public places ; in the valley as well as on the mountain ; in the country as well as in the city. They beset us when we are fasting as well as when we are full ; in our hours of leisure, as well as when we are immersed in business ; our very prayers and acts of devotion are not free from them : and even to the house of God and his altar they follow us. It behoves us therefore always to stand upon our guard, for we can retire to no place where Satan will not pursue us ; and even if this were in our power, still we should not



be free, for we always carry a tempter about with us, and in us, from which we cannot escape, unless we could leave our heart and flesh behind us.

Let us therefore no longer think of *escaping* from temptations, for they are *common to man*\* and belong to his nature: but take up this our cross, and follow our master and pattern, at all times doing our best to resist and overcome them; then when our adversary sees that he gains no ground upon us, but on the contrary that we grow stronger in the Lord, and in the power of his might; he will flee from us and we shall become the care of God and his Angels, who encamp about those that fear him and deliver them. Which that they may effectually do to us, He of his infinite mercy grant through Jesus Christ our Lord.

\* 1 Corinthians, x. 13.

## SERMON II.

---

MATTHEW, iv. 2, 3.

*“ And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungered. And when the tempter came to him he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.”*

**I**T may seem strange that being about to present himself to mankind as Prophet, Priest, and King, our Saviour should make his *first* progress into the *wilderness*, and begin his kingdom and ministry in solitude and with a long and rigorous *fast*. This was altogether contrary to the course and custom of the world: which when royal or great personages enter upon their office and dignity, commonly cele-

brates such events with much shew and solemnity, and with the shouts and acclamations of admiring multitudes. Thus when Solomon was anointed king over Israel, they blew the trumpet before him, and all the people said—*God save King Solomon, and all the people came up after him, and the people piped with pipes, and rejoiced with great joy, so that the earth rent with the sound of them\**. How happens it then that Christ, who was a greater than Solomon†, when at his baptism he publicly entered into his ministry, did not go from the Jordan to Jerusalem, the holy city, and there celebrate his inauguration with regal pomp, and festivity : but on the contrary retired into the wilderness where his sole companions were the wild beasts, who could hail their king only by terrific roarings, and where instead of feasting and mirth, he devoted himself for the long period of forty days and forty nights to the most rigorous abstinence ?

\* 1 Kings, i. 39, 40. † Matthew, xii. 42.

For this different mode of proceeding a very good reason may be assigned. Christ was not now to enter into his kingdom of *Glory*; he was first to fight our battles and subdue all our spiritual enemies, and for this great conflict his best preparation was a course of spiritual exercise, of meditation, prayer, and fasting. In the church of God it has ever been the custom, that an extraordinary *fast* should precede any new and important institution. Moses, we know, before the receiving of the tables of the law upon mount Sinai, twice *fasted* forty days and forty nights\*. The prophet Elijah likewise, who was the restorer of the law, went forty days and forty nights in the strength of the food provided for him by an angel in the wilderness†. We learn also from the New Testament, that *fasting*, as well as prayer, was ordinarily had recourse to upon public ordinations of candidates for the gospel ministry. For when the Holy Ghost said, *Separate me Barnabas and Saul, for the work whereunto I*

\* Exodus, xxiv. 18. xxxv. 28.      † 1 Kings, xix. 8

*have called them*, it is further related, that, *When they had fasted and prayed they laid their hands upon them\**. It was customary likewise, and this good custom is still continued, that God should be supplicated by *fasting* and prayer, when his people were engaged in necessary war. Thus Jehosaphat, when the Moabites and Ammonites came against him, proclaimed a *fast*†.—His people also are commanded by God himself to sanctify a public *fast*, that they may prevail with him to drive away the locusts, or those enemies whom the locusts symbolized‡.

And not only are fasting and prayer prescribed and of use upon *public* occasions, and such as regard the welfare of the *whole body* ecclesiastical or civil, they are equally serviceable to *individuals* in running the race that is set before them, whether at their entrance into their particular state and calling, or to enable them more effectually to detect and resist the wiles of the devil and the lusts of the flesh. By diminish-

\* Acts, xiii. 2, 3. † 2 Chronicles, xx. 3. ‡ Joel, ii. 15.

ing the *quantity* of our food, or lowering its *quality*, we lessen the power of our bodily appetites, and get a habit of mastering them ; and in proportion as we thus abstract from the body, we add to the soul, we increase its aptitude and appetite, and, as it were, tune it for high and heavenly meditations, and spiritualize its affections ; so that it is thus made a fitter instrument for the action of Divine Grace, by the powerful influence of which we shall be enabled to form such resolutions, and proceed in such a course of action, that we may walk blameless, *perfecting holiness in the fear of God*\*. Thus also we shall be empowered to resist with more effect the open assaults or secret allurements of the devil : for it is by the dominant lusts and appetites of the body that he most commonly betrays us into sin. *This kind goeth not out, but by prayer and fasting*†, said our Saviour of spiritual possession of a peculiar description, and there are some sins, wrought in us by the *admitted* agency of unclean spirits, that can

\* 2 Corinthians, vii. 1.      † Matthew, xvii. 21.

scarcely otherwise be mastered and cast out. If it be further inquired why the precise number of *forty* days was set apart for our Lord's time of fasting and prayer preparatory to his temptation: it may be observed that the number *forty* has often been thus signalized, and devoted to periods either of trial and punishment, or of self-denial and penitence preparatory to some extraordinary communication with the Deity. Three times *forty* years the long-suffering of God waited in the time of Noah when the ark was preparing\*; *forty* days warning was given to the Ninevites†; *forty* days and nights the rain was upon the earth when it was destroyed by the deluge‡; *forty* years the Israelites wandered in the wilderness§, and *forty* days and nights Moses and Elijah fasted, as was lately observed. But the reason why this precise number or its multiple was selected is no where revealed, we shall therefore do well not to inquire too curiously into it.

\* Genesis, vi. 3. 1 Peter, iii. 20. † Jonah, iii. 4.

‡ Genesis, vii. 12. § Numbers, xiv. 33. xxxii. 13.

You are all aware that the season into which we have now entered is observed by our Church in remembrance of our Blessed Master's fast of forty days and forty nights, and she recommends it to her children during that period to exercise self-denial more or less for the furtherance of their spiritual welfare, and to give them a habit of self-conquest, that they may thus be enabled to walk more steadily, and with fewer aberrations, in the narrow path that leadeth unto life. *For this cause I keep my body under and bring it into subjection, saith the Apostle, lest, while I preach to others, I myself should be a castaway.\** But though self-denial is a duty strongly recommended, and strictly enjoined in scripture,† yet our Church would by no means have its members believe that the keeping of Lent for *forty* days is of *Divine* authority. Her object is merely prudential, that she may thus weaken our attachment to sensual gratifications, and that we may, in a degree, strive to copy the example of our Bless-

\* 1 Corinthians, ix. 27. † Matthew, xvi. 24.



ed Master. At first only a fast of forty *hours* appears to have been strictly observed in remembrance of that which he endured for forty compleat days,—this afterwards was increased to forty, fifty, and even seventy days\*. Our own Church, besides the motives above stated, in adopting *forty* days, had chiefly in view the encouragement of our fisheries by an increased consumption of fish. Every Christian must on this head consider and judge for himself, always remembering the *end* for which fasting is recommended, and the reward promised to it when practised from right motives†; and that self-denial and vigilance are *prescribed* Christian *duties* to be attended to, more or less, at all seasons, and by all persons, and more especially during this of Lent in obedience to the Church, which has power in this respect over her children‡. *Be sober, therefore my Brethren, be vigilant, as the apostle advises; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour. Whom resist stedfast in the Faith§.*

\* Bingham's *Antiq.* b. xxii. c. 1. † Matthew, vi. 18.

‡ Matthew, xviii. 17. 18. Acts, xxi. 25. § 1 Peter, v. 8.

When our Saviour had accomplished his fast, we are told, *He was afterwards an hungred*. His frame before this, it is probable, had been supernaturally supported, under the privation of material food, by the *hidden manna*,\* so that he was enabled to attend upon spiritual and devotional exercises, without that oppressive sense of hunger and emptiness that must otherwise have overwhelmed him. At the same time, by this long and uninterrupted course of abstinence, his whole man must have been spiritualized; even the material body must have been cleansed from all earthly dross, and in a state to pay perfect obedience to the governing part as guided by the Spirit of God. We are not informed how his time was passed in the wilderness previously to the *recorded* attacks of the tempter, but we may conclude, in general, that it was chiefly spent in meditation and prayer. And this is the way in which we shall most profitably employ ourselves in all our times of abstinence and retirement.—With-

\* Revelations, ii. 17.

out *meditation* we cannot digest and turn to nutriment the spiritual food of God's word, and without *prayer* we in vain expect his grace. *Ask, and it shall be given you, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you. And, If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him\**.

Having considered the duration of our Saviour's Fast, let us next turn our attention to the approach of the tempter, and the kind and order of his temptations: but before I treat of them particularly, it may be useful to consider the following circumstances: viz. the name by which the devil is here distinguished; his approach, and our Saviour's state when he made his first attack. With regard to the *name* here given to the devil,—the *Tempter*:—We may observe that he is so called by way of eminence, as the principal and original tempter, and because his object was to tempt and try our Sa-

\* Luke, xi. 9, 13.

viour to the uttermost : under every disguise, and by every art and allurements that he thought might be powerful to subvert his faith, and the constancy of his adherence to God. It may be also, that he came not in his own personal deformity, but assumed the appearance and bearing, as he is sometimes said to do, of an angel of light\*. But he was known by his great opponent under every disguise, who was fully prepared for every possible attack, secret or open. We may here observe, with St. James : *Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God ; for God cannot be tempted with evil : neither tempteth he any man*†. Yet in our daily devotions we are taught to say,—*Lead us not into temptation.* We must, therefore, mark the difference between the real temptations of the devil, and those, that are called such, from God. The former truly *tempts* us, that he may cause us to sin : but God *tries* us, whether we are sincerely his servants, or only so in name. This last kind of temptation is for our good, that

\* 2 Corinthians, xi. 14.

† James, i. 13.

our *tribulation may work patience, and patience experience, and experience hope\**. It gives us a true knowledge of ourselves, discovering our weak points, putting us upon our guard against them, and shewing also where we are strongest. On the contrary, the object of the temptations of the devil is to act upon the corruption of our nature, in order to discover where we are most assailable, that by attacking us there, he may work our overthrow. God tries us, as gold and silver are tried, that he may purify us; while the devil's aim is to drive out every grain of precious metal and make us all dross.

As to the *coming* of the evil spirit to Christ, we may observe, that he doubtless came under the most alluring form that he could assume, as the great prototype of hypocrisy, with the word of God in his mouth, while his heart was on fire with a whole hell of malice and hatred, to God and man. He tempts us usually in two shapes:—at one time in the guise of an

\* Romans, v. 3, 4.

angel of light, that he may *allure* us into sin ; at another clothed with terrors, threatening us with pains, penalties and violence, that by acting upon our fears he may *drive* us into it.

We are next to consider the *time* he chose to begin his attack upon our Saviour ;—namely, *when he had fasted forty days and forty nights and was afterwards an hungered.* In this we see both his audacity and his cunning. Notwithstanding that Jesus was fresh from his Baptism, in which the Holy Spirit had visibly descended upon him ; and he was proclaimed to be the Son of God by an audible voice from Heaven ; that he was even now in the exercise of the highest devotional aspirations, and was prepared by the most rigid mortification of his bodily appetites ; notwithstanding all this with a presumption that has no parallel, he had the assurance to flatter himself that he could work his fall. His cunning he shewed in making his attempt, when the great object of his fear and malice, after so long a fast, was faint and dying with the extremity of hunger and thirst. He probably fancied that he should prevail up-

on him, like Esau, to part with his birthright for a mess of pottage. We all know with what difficulty the cravings of extreme hunger and thirst are withstood, and what a high degree of self-government is requisite to enable us to abstain from food when under their influence. Our artful enemy therefore could not have chosen a moment seemingly more favourable for his purpose than this. We may here observe, that no difficulty can discourage the evil spirit or prevent his attempts upon us; neither the extraordinary grace of God, nor our own most earnest prayers, nor the most self-subduing mortification will restrain him from assaulting us, though they will excellently well fortify us against him. All this, so far from disheartening the children of God, should increase their confidence, since *greater is He that is in us, than he that is in the world\**. It should however remind us of the Apostle's caution, *let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall†*. As he is ever vigilant to come upon us when

\* 1 John, iv. 4.      † 1 Corinthians, x. 12.

we are off our guard, so ought we to watch constantly that such a vantage-ground may not be afforded him.

We may further observe, that our adversary, the old serpent, is subtle and cunning, as well as bold, for however eager his desire for our ruin, he is not precipitate in his attacks, but watches for the fittest time to accomplish it. When he tempted Eve, it was in the absence of her husband, probably when she was near the fatal tree and under the influence of appetite. And as he is wary in choosing his time, so also is he most cunning and artful in skilfully adapting his means to the end he has in view : carefully noting and suiting the various dispositions of men. He hath baits of every description : nicely according with the passions and tempers of those he means to attempt. For men inclined by their natural or habitual temperament to voluptuousness, he hath baits that excite *the Lust of the flesh*, that by alluring them into the extremes of profligacy, luxury, and intemperance, he may work their utter ruin. Again does he perceive any tendency in them to dote too



fondly upon the wealth, possessions, and vanities of the world, he soon supplies fuel, and strives to blow up this desire into so fierce a flame, that it may envelope and finally consume the whole man, thus become the slave of *the Lust of the eyes*. Lastly if in another he marks any swellings of pride, a lofty eye, and haughty demeanour, if only as it were in their seed-bed, he will endeavour to blow up this inflated bubble till it burst, placing within the reach of him who nourishes it, every thing that ministers to *the pride of life*. Puffing up some with the pride of birth, others with the pride of wealth, others with the pride of office and power, others with the pride of learning; and others again with spiritual pride and a high opinion of their own merits. If by any of these means he cannot accomplish his purpose, and cause men to apostatize in heart from their God; he then strives to intimidate them, either by exposing them to persecution and the malice of unbelievers; or to the slander of evil tongues and the contempt of the world, and so often *overbears* those whom he cannot *seduce*.

I shall now consider the recorded temptations themselves with which the devil assailed our Saviour. I say *recorded*, because we read in St. Luke's Gospel, *that he was forty days tempted of the devil\**: but since the temptations of the forty days are not written, they were not necessary to be known, I shall therefore not amuse you with conjectures concerning their nature. Those that are written, as the devil's last resource, were probably what he regarded as the most powerful and most likely to succeed. They were *three* in number. As man fell by a *threefold* temptation:—for it is said of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil:—that *it was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise†*: so Christ conquered when assailed by a triple temptation, each individual one corresponding in its nature to one of these characters, since *the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life*, under which the beloved Apostle classes *all that is in the world‡*, had each their separate

\* Luke, iv. 2. † Genesis, iii. 6. ‡ 1 John, ii. 16.

bait, as will be seen hereafter. The evil spirit taking advantage of our Blessed Master's state of craving hunger after so long an abstinence from food, first tempts him to a want of faith in God's power, and to distrust of his providence : saying to him, *If thou be the Son of God command that these stones be made bread.* In this we see the fraudulent art and cunning of the adversary. His first arrow is spent against that which is the life and foundation of all religion—*Faith.*—As if he had said to our Saviour. You imagined that you heard a voice proclaiming you the Beloved Son of God. But are you really so, and was it not rather a delusion? You are dying for want of food, would God, if you were really his beloved Son, have permitted you to be reduced to so wretched a condition?

Here we may observe that the devil's first and principal aim in his temptations, is to overthrow our faith in God's word and providential care of us; because if faith be once overthrown, disobedience will quickly and necessarily follow. He pursued this course with Eve. God's word to our first parents was—*In*

*the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die\**. But what said the tempter—*Ye shall not surely die*†. Eve believing the devil rather than her maker, lost her faith in God's word, and immediately became disobedient to his law. And so it happens with us all. No sooner, at the suggestion of the tempter, have we made shipwreck of our faith, than he sets us upon converting *stones* into *bread*: or in other words building the fabric of our short-lived happiness, wholly out of this miserable world of vanity and sin, instead of seeking that which is durable and commensurate with the heart's whole desire, from Him who can alone bestow it; and in our progress we are often tempted to have recourse, that we may gain our ends more speedily, to what God's law has forbidden. But though the evil spirit persuades us to believe that we can: do we ever derive any *real* happiness from the world independently of the world's Maker? Experience, would we but listen to it, would soon convince us, that what

\* Genesis, ii. 17. † ib. iii. 4.

is of the earth, can be but earthly, and that the devil's promised bread, will in the end, as the wise man speaks, only fill our mouth with *gravel*\*.

To christians dispirited by affliction, much comfort may be derived from a due meditation upon this part of the transaction under our consideration. The devil's aim was to make our Saviour doubt whether he really was what the heavenly voice declared him to be, because he was in a state of suffering. But this was no sound argument, being contrary to universal experience. In the course of God's providence things frequently happen in this world contrary to *apparent* desert, so that those who evidently merit the most either by their corporeal, mental, or spiritual qualities, often receive less from the world, than those that apparently deserve the smallest share of its good things. *The race we know, is not always to the swift ; nor the battle to the strong ; neither yet bread to the wise ; nor yet riches to men of understanding ; nor*

\* Proverbs, xx. 17.

*yet favour to men of skill\**: and in reading the Scriptures, we find that most of those who were the acknowledged objects of Almighty favour and care, were in some part of their lives exposed to heavy afflictions and calamities. Abraham, the father of the faithful, was summoned by God to leave his country and his kindred, and sojourn, like a banished man, in a strange land, for the remainder of his days. Jacob, his grandson, says of his whole life, *Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been*†. The patience of Job was tried by the severest afflictions, both personal, and with regard to his family and worldly possessions, that could befall any individual; and those excellent men, of whom it is said that *The world was not worthy, were stoned, were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword, they wandered about in sheep-skins and goat-skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented*‡. Instead therefore of imagining that we are forsaken of God, when we are reduced to any great straits

\* Ecclesiastes, ix. 11. † Genesis, xlvii. 9.

‡ Hebrews, xi. 37, 38.

or extremity, or any calamity befalls us, and letting go our trust in his providential care of us; we should, on the contrary, thereby be convinced that we are objects of his peculiar attention and love; that his design by these afflictions and visitations, is to make us feel experimentally that we are strangers and pilgrims in this world of constant change, that we may thus be induced more and more to look forward into another and unchangeable scene, and more to fix our affections on those heavenly and eternal joys which are laid up in store for those that prefer God to the world. We may further observe on this part of the temptation, that the devil here pretends to put the mission of Jesus to the proof, by asking of him a *sign*.—If you are, as you assert, the Messiah, shew that you possess the miraculous powers that are to accompany that office, and save yourself from death by converting these stones into bread; hoping that, by this proposal, he might urge our Saviour to a use of that power for private ends, which was given for the good of all mankind. So the High Priests,

and Rulers of the Jews, when at the instigation of the evil spirit they had caused our Saviour to be crucified, cried out to him—*If thou be the Son of God come down from the cross* ; promising then to believe him\*. When Christ fed the five thousand by multiplying seven barley loaves and two small fishes ; and when after being taken dead from the cross and buried, he rose again from the dead ; he performed a much greater miracle than either the Devil or the Jewish rulers demanded, and of the same kind. But he would not by impatience to prove himself what he knew he was, when his claim was questioned by wicked spirits and wicked men, follow their lead ; but wait God's time, who, in full faith, he believed would deliver him from every enemy, and enable him to accomplish the great and merciful work that he had undertaken.

I ought now, in the next place, to consider how our Saviour baffled this first attack of his and our enemy, and rendered harmless his

\* Matthew, xxvii. 40. compare Mark, xv. 32.



fiery dart, but as this will supply matter for a separate discourse, I shall defer my observations upon it to another opportunity.

Let this mind be in us my brethren that was in Christ Jesus. Let us not be in haste when we are tempted, nor distrust the power and kind intentions of God in the most severe of our afflictions; but cast all our care on Him who careth for us, and who will, if we wait for him, in his own good time deliver us, and place us finally in unassailable security in a kingdom that cannot be shaken.

## SERMON III.

---

MATTHEW, iv. 4.

*“ But he answered and said, It is written, man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.”*

**I** have already explained to you the nature of the *first* fiery dart that the grand adversary shot at our Lord ; endeavouring to undermine his *Faith*, and tempting him to a distrust of Divine Providence, to impatience under suffering, and to the premature exercise of his miraculous powers, and that not for the edification of *others*, but for his *own individual* relief. *If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.*

We are next to consider the answer by which the Holy Jesus confounded the enemy, and sent him to other frauds and stratagems, from which he might hope, judging from his general experience of the sons of Adam, for better success.

But what was the answer? *It is written, man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.* In considering attentively these words, we find *three* things remarkable in them.

I. The quiver, if I may so speak, from which our great champion drew his arrow, the *Holy Scriptures*, indicated by the phrase, *It is written.*

II. The *outward* means of life and grace implied in the words—*Man shall not live by bread alone.*

III. The blessing and grace of God, without the co-operation and inward working of which, the outward means cannot convey life, either natural or spiritual, intimated in the phrase—*but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.*

I. *In Christ are hid*, as the apostle informs us, *all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge\**. —Yet in his conflict with the evil spirit he placed no confidence in himself and his own wisdom, but selected all his weapons from the armoury of God,—from the written word, *the Scriptures of truth*. This was the *sharp two-edged sword which went out of his mouth†*, which his opponent was unable to withstand, being by it effectually put to silence and at last to flight. We are apt too often to trust, more than we ought, to our own strength and wisdom; and to feel confident that they will avail to deliver us from the enemies of our faith, in the hour of trial and temptation. But alas! in this case it will be with us, as it was with St. Peter, if we depend solely upon them. These dim sparks will stand us in no stead, and we shall come off with defeat and disgrace. Our best arms we shall find in the word of God, and our best arguments those derived from thence.

\* Colossians, ii. 3.    † Revelation, i. 16.

Whatever be the sin to which the devil may tempt us, the shield of Faith, thence derived, will enable us to repel his attack. Does he suggest to us, as he did to Eve,—eat the forbidden fruit, indulge thy appetites to the full, for thou shalt not surely die, but live in the enjoyment of heavenly wisdom and happiness. Say we to him,—It is written,—*If ye live after the flesh ye shall die, but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body ye shall live\**. Finding this snare unsuccessful; if he again whispers to us. Open thine eyes and behold the scene around thee, how beautiful, how glorious, how complete is every thing; how fitted to answer thy utmost capacity of enjoyment! What need is there to look beyond it for happiness? How goodly, magnificent and desirable are the various works of human art and skill! How is the beauty and dignity of the person improved, by the magnificence or elegance of apparel! How striking the grand and stately edifices erected by the science and

\* Roman, viii. 13.

skill of the architect, and what a privilege to pass thy life where every thing ministers to the pleasures derived from sight! How delightful wilt thou find it to join the crowd of the gay and happy, whose only business is to amuse their eyes with spectacles and shews, and their ears with harmonious sounds! He then insinuates, in vain wilt thou languish for these delights of the eye and ear, unless, leaving the toiling crowd who live by their daily labour, and even those who have *neither poverty nor riches*, thou makest it the first aim of thy life to accumulate wealth and possessions; for these will purchase for thee every thing that thine eye beholdeth, or thy soul lusteth after; but to secure them thou must pursue them through right and through wrong, *with all thy heart, and with all thy mind, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength*, they must be unto thee as it were a God. For in them alone is the power to procure for thee the full gratification of the *lust of the eyes*. Are such suggestions in action upon our minds? Let us reply to the tempter; *It is written*, (and God gave the word

by him who experienced to the full all the good that worldly things can bestow.)—*Vanity of vanities, vanity of vanities, all is vanity. All things are full of labour—the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing\**. And again—*take heed and beware of covetousness, for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth†*. And, *no covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ or of God‡*.

Lastly, if discovering latent sparks of *pride* in our hearts, he strives to blow them up into a flame, and to fill us with a high conceit of ourselves, either on account of our beauty, strength, or other *personal* advantages; our wealth, birth, or power, or other fortuitous circumstances relating to *station*; our supposed superior abilities, and other *mental* distinctions, as learning, knowledge, and wisdom; or even our *spiritual* attainments, as faith, and holiness, and their fruits: whispering in our secret ear, how before other men art thou in these endowments,

\* Ecclesiastes, i. 2, 8. † Luke, xii. 15. ‡ Ephesians, v. 5.

despise therefore the vulgar crowd, and set a proper value upon thyself. Or if he suggests to us, How delightful is it to command other men, and to be as much above them in power, as we think we are in merit! thus urging us to the race of ambition, and through right and wrong, to exalt ourselves and depress others; or if he tempts us to fancy, in our spiritual pride, that we are not as other men are, and to separate ourselves from them in worship, or otherwise, as not worthy to associate with us: under these and similar temptations, let us again meet him with an—*It is written,—When pride cometh then cometh shame. And before honour is humility\**. And, thus saith the Lord, *let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches. But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord†*. And by another prophet,—*I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebel-*

\* Proverbs, xi. 2. xv. 33. † Jeremiah, ix. 23, 24.



*lions people, which walketh in a way that is not good, after their own thoughts—which say stand by thyself, come not near to me, for I am holier than thou\*.*

Thus may we, and thus alone, quench every fiery dart that the adversary can cast at us; but how can we be fitted for this warfare, unless we make ourselves well acquainted with the armoury from which we must choose our weapons? If we know not the Scriptures; if we seldom or never look into the Sacred Volume that contains the charter of our salvation; if, when read to us, we hear it without reverence and attention: how shall we, when tempted, be able to repel the attack of our spiritual enemy with a powerful—*It is written?* Ignorance of the word of God is not only the parent of error in *doctrine*, but likewise of error in *practice*. If we neglect to acquaint ourselves with the law of God, we shall too often take the world for our lawgiver, and regard its maxims, customs, and vain fashions, as the only criterions

\* Isaiah, lxxv. 2, 5.

of right and wrong : and thus shall often be induced to *Follow a multitude to do evil*\*. It is only by acquainting ourselves with God, as revealed in his word, that we can find help to work out our salvation. Here alone can we find *The whole armour of God, that we may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil*. Hence we may be supplied *with the Girdle of Truth—the Breast-plate of Righteousness—the Shield of Faith—the Helmet of Salvation—and the Sword of the Spirit*†.

II. The *external* means of life and grace, are the second thing contained in our Lord's answer, implied in the words—*Man shall not live by bread alone*. The life of man is two-fold—the life of the *body*, by which we live to *this* world and its concerns, and the life of the *spirit*, by which we live to the *next* world and its concerns. And this, in the opinion of many divines, is intimated by the account of the creation of man given in the second chapter of Genesis. For there it is stated, that

\* Exodus, xxiii. 2. † Ephesians, vi. 13.—17.

when the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, *he breathed into his nostrils the breath of lives\**, for so it is in the original, and not *life* in the singular : and it has been collected from the works of the fathers, by a great Divine, that Adam at his creation received by the same insufflation, the principle both of his natural and spiritual life†.

The life of the *body* we know must be supported by *food*, or an outward and visible substance, which conveys by appointed channels and by certain processes, which it undergoes within us, an invisible power and virtue by which the corporeal life is continued and maintains its action upon the body, to keep it in health and vigour ; the outward and visible food however, is not the life itself, it is the medium only by which it is conveyed. The *food* is from the *earth*, but the *life* is from *God*.

Again with respect to the spiritual life, or the life of the *soul*, this also requires constant support and nourishment to maintain it in a

\* Genesis, iii. 7. † See Bp. Bull's *Works*, iii. 1124—

state of health and vigour : and the food which God hath appointed to minister to this spiritual life consists of an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace, in the due use of which this last is conveyed. The several means of grace form the *external* part, and the grace conveyed in and by them, the *internal*. But of all the means of grace, none is so properly the food of the soul, as that which, as to its outward part, consist of the food of the body. Before man fell from righteousness, the external means of life, both bodily, and spiritual, were different from what they have since been. Previously to that sad event, the most delicious of all natural productions, fruits, were the appropriate bodily food of the new created pair\*; and the nutriment of the soul was similar, the fruit namely of the sacramental tree of life. But when the woman was persuaded by the tempter to disobey the divine command, and, with a rash hand, to take of the fruit of the tree of death, and to eat thereof; seducing her

\* Genesis, ii. 16.

husband to partake with her in her crime. Then was it said unto them by their judge, *Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life. Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee, and thou shalt eat the herb of the field, in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread\**. *Bread*, which is prepared from the seed of an herb of the field, was then substituted for the fruits of Paradise, and became instead of them, the principal staff of his bodily life. What then was appointed *sacramentally* to nourish his spiritual part? We read that immediately after the Divine sentence had been pronounced upon the respective offenders, after the fall, that, *unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins and clothed them†*. Can it be imagined that beasts had been *slain* merely to furnish their *skins*? Is it not more rational and more accordant with the general tenor of Scripture to suppose, that the beasts themselves were to be offered in sacrifice

\* Genesis, iii. 17, 18, 19. † Ib. 21.

to represent the vicarious sacrifice of the promised seed, in due time to be manifested; and that the clothing of the penitent offenders with their skins was to signify that their nakedness, their acquired imperfections and actual transgressions, were to be covered by his merits, as well as atoned for by his blood. This is rendered all but certain by the accepted sacrifice of Abel, in which an atonement was made for sin by the shedding of the blood of an innocent animal\*, as likewise by that of Noah†.

In all sacrifices it was customary for the worshippers to be partakers together of the sacrifice. This we find was the case with the heathen world in St. Paul's time, who advises his Corinthian converts, for the sake of their weaker brethren, not to eat *those things that had been offered in sacrifice to idols*‡: and this custom was most probably derived from the original command and institution of God, after the flood, delivered by Noah to his sons, and from them derived to all nations. The Jews

\* Genesis, iv. 4. † Ib. viii. 20. ‡ 1 Cor. viii. 10.

also were commanded to observe the same rite, not only with respect to the passover, which was more peculiarly commemorative and eucharistical, but with respect to many of their sacrifices\*. Now that this feast upon a sacrifice was of a sacramental nature, and like the eucharist, not only a setting forth of Christ's death, prospective indeed, and till his first coming, but also to the faithful participant who looked beyond the outward sign to the thing signified, a spiritual participation of its benefits—seems to follow from the parallel which the Apostle draws between the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and the Jewish and Heathen Sacrifices. For speaking of that Holy Ordinance, he compares it both with the Jewish sacrificial feasts, and those of the Heathen. *Behold*, says he, *Israel after the flesh ; are not they which eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar ?* And again with respect to Heathen sacrifices, he says—*Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils ; ye cannot be*

\* Leviticus, vii. 11.—34. xvii. 3.—9. Deut. xii. 27.

*partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils\**. From which we may conclude that the things originally were of a similar signification and efficacy, the one being retrospective, and the other prospective, though the Heathens had perverted the rites delivered to them from their ancestor Noah, and sacrificed to demons, and not to God : and therefore had lost the sacrament and its inward and spiritual grace, though they preserved the outward sign or symbol of it. The sacrifice, namely, and the feast upon the sacrifice†.

The outward means both of bodily and spiritual life in Scripture, are often designated by the common term—*bread*. As the main article of food, it is usually put for all those things by which the *bodily* life is either supported and preserved, or rendered comfortable and safe. It is also used to signify the food that supports the *spiritual* life of the soul. As when our Saviour says of himself—*I am the bread of life,*

\* 1 Corinthians, x. 18.—21.

† This Sermon was written before Mr. Benson and Mr. Davison had given to the public their sentiments *On the Origin of Sacrifice*. The author at first intended to reply



*he that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst\**. So that in its largest sense, the word *bread* may be said to stand for all the *outward* means of life, both bodily and spiritual, and in this large sense it is to be understood here, when Christ says—*Man shall not live by bread alone*. That is—there is something besides the *outward* means necessary to life, though these are the ordinary channels by which that invisible something is conveyed. The devil's aim was to make him believe the contrary. You must die unless you have food, therefore why not turn these stones into bread, which you certainly have the power to do if you are the Son of God? Trust therefore no longer to vain hopes that God will supply your wants in this extremity.

And so he usually proceeds with us when he tempts us to any sin. He seduces us to think that it is the *bread*, without which we cannot

to their arguments in a note to this passage, but as the subject grew upon him, he found it would require a distinct treatise, which he has begun to prepare for publication.

\* John, vi. 35.

*live*, and so drives us on to the accomplishment of unlawful desires, and to let go our trust in God's Providence. With regard to spiritual things and the means of grace, his object is either to make us neglect them altogether, or to make us rest in them ; as if the mere act of receiving them or using them were all that is necessary to render them *bread* to our souls, and to support our spiritual life, without any spiritual affections or trust in God to bless them to us, and to work in them. The worship of God public and private ; the hearing or reading of his word ; the receiving of his sacraments, is indeed eating the *bread of life* if they be accompanied by repentance, faith in God and Christ, a trust in his providence and promise, and charity towards our fellow christians and fellow men,—but without some sparks of such dispositions, a mere *outward* use of them will not convert them into the bread of life to us. “The wicked,” says the xxixth Article of our church, speaking of the Eucharist, “and such as be void of a lively faith, although they do carnally and visibly press with their teeth

the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ; yet in no wise are they partakers of Christ; but rather to their condemnation, do eat and drink the sign or sacrament of so great a thing.”

We know indeed that as bread, or the outward means of life expressed by that word, is necessary to our *bodily* life, on account of the Blessing and gift of God in it and by it; so the outward means of grace, on account of God's institution, and his blessing and virtue conveyed in them and by them to the soul, are *ordinarily* necessary to our *spiritual* life. But we must always keep it in mind, that they are *nothing* in *themselves*; all their virtue being derived from his blessing and ordinance.

III. This brings me to the *third* thing remarkable in the passage under consideration. This *Blessing*, namely, and grace of God, without the effectual co-operation and inward working of which the outward means cannot convey life, either natural or spiritual. *Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.*

When *God created the heavens and the earth, and the earth was without form, and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep*\*.—What was it that reduced this chaos of matter to order, and out of darkness, and the shadow of death brought forth Light and Life? It was the *Word* of God, for God said, *Let there be light: and there was light*. And by the same word were the waters separated from the dry land; the sun became a light to rule the day, and the moon and the stars to govern the night: the earth was clothed with verdure, decked with trees and plants, and peopled with animals; and lastly that word was spoken. *Let us make man in our image, and after our likeness*†. Thus the first forms, operations, powers, and virtues of all created things were given them by the *Word* of God; and the same word, by whose mysterious energy they were at first spoken into being, still upholds them in their several natures and essences, for, *By Him*, as the Apostle speaks, *all things consist*‡. What then of good can there be in any

\* Genesis, i. 1, 2. † Ib. 26. ‡ Colossians, i. 17.

created being that does not flow from the uncreated Word and Wisdom of God? If we receive light and warmth from the sun; if we breathe and are refreshed by the air; if our food conveys that which supports our bodily life; if in the Sacraments and other means of Grace, our soul is recruited and revived with spiritual blessings; if from any other creature or thing we derive any other benefit, it is not from the creature we derive it, but from God, upon whose word and will the giving or the withholding of it entirely depends. He hath instituted the means, and by the law of nature and by his written law commands us to use them, but not so as to look at *them* only, and forget *Him* who works in and by them, who can also work without them, as well as with them.

But as man is a compound being, made up of two distinct natures, a body and a soul, and the latter is affected and acted upon principally through the former; it was most consistent with this plan of Divine Wisdom, that an outward and visible sign should be employed to

convey an inward and spiritual grace both to the one and to the other. Yet God, though he binds us to the use of the means, does not bind himself never to dispense with it, thus often proving that man doth not live by bread alone, but his Almighty word and will. Thus at the first creation, *light* was before the *sun*, the ordinary instrument of light. Moses, Elijah, and our Saviour were supported without food for forty days and nights, the Israelites were sustained for forty years in the wilderness without the bread of man, by manna rained down from heaven. In fact all miracles, which are an interruption of the common course of nature, are a departure from the ordinary modes of conveying blessings, affecting purposes, or the like, and a recurrence to God's own immediate agency.

We say with respect to the means of grace that they are *generally* necessary to salvation, and this on account of their Divine institution, but doubtless, though we are *bound* to use them, and the *wilful* neglect of them, is destructive of salvation, yet God, in many cases,

conveys grace to the soul without them. Thus when Christians reside amongst Heathens, or where they cannot be had, those that seek God in the sincerity of their hearts, will be found of him, and be fed with the *hidden manna*, though they do not receive the *outward sign*. And even in countries, where the outward means are celebrated, we may charitably conclude there are numbers that sincerely strive to please God, who from the prejudices of education, and many other causes, knowing the truth only partially, and with a considerable admixture of error, believe that the inward and spiritual grace does not depend upon the reception of the outward sign ; to the souls of such good Samaritans, we may also charitably conclude that God communicates a portion of his grace, approving their uprightness while he pities their blindness. Where indeed the neglect of the means of grace arises from wilfulness and obstinacy ; from an undue love of the world and irreligion ; or from the reign of sin in the heart ; then, indeed, it becomes a grievous crime, and such persons can expect neither

mercy nor grace, till turning to God with a true and penitent heart, they seek him in his house and in his ordinances.

But to draw towards a conclusion—Christ we see could not be tempted to distrust Providence, and to have recourse to unlawful means of relief, though reduced to the greatest extremity, and when his trial was ended, Angels were sent to minister unto him. Let this be an encouragement to us to follow his example, should we at any time be placed in circumstances of peculiar difficulty and distress, especially if we be called to suffer for righteousness sake. Let us then possess our soul in patience, remembering that he that loves us, is now trying us like as silver is tried, in the fiery furnace of affliction, let us say with the three children : *Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us\**, and if it be for his glory, and our own real good, he will deliver us ; but if not, we will not have recourse to unlawful means, but wait his time, and submit to his will whether for

\* Daniel, iii. 17.



present good or evil. But if instead of this we be tempted in the time of trial *to turn stones into bread*, to satisfy our present need, or in other words, to have recourse to unlawful or dishonest means for our support, we shall find in the end that our bread is bread of deceit, which, instead of God's Blessing, will bring upon us his anger and judgments. *Bread of deceit*, says the wise king, *is sweet to a man*, that is, it satisfies for the present his appetite, *but afterwards his mouth shall be filled with gravel\**. The Lord in the end will cause him to know by sad experience that there is no real nutriment in the bread that he has eaten, it was made out of *stones*, and shall turn to *gravel*, for there can be no happiness or true enjoyment derived from the transgression of God's laws. But those that hold fast their faith, will in the end find—that *The Blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich and he addeth no sorrow with it†*.

Let us then, my brethren, no longer, *Spend our money for that which is not bread, nor our*

\* Proverbs, xx. 17. † Ib. x. 22.

*labour for that which satisfieth not\**; but, if we long to find true happiness and everlasting peace, let us go to the Word of God, even that Eternal Word, which was made flesh and dwelt among us, became a sacrifice and propitiation for our sins, and is the sole support of our spiritual life. Let us go to him in faith, for he is the true bread that came down from heaven, and if we hunger and thirst after righteousness, he shall feed us with the *Hidden Manna*, and cause us to *drink of the pure water of life which proceedeth out of the throne of God and of the Lamb*†. That we may all by faith and love attain to this blessedness, God of his infinite mercy grant through the same Jesus Christ our Lord.

\* Isaiah, lv. 2.      † Revelation, xxii. 1.

## SERMON IV.

---

MATTHEW, iv. 5, 6.

*“ Then the devil taketh him up into the Holy City, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple. And saith unto him, if thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down; for it is written, He shall give his Angels charge concerning thee, and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.”*

**W**hen I last addressed you from this place, I endeavoured to explain to you the meaning, both as to the *letter*, and the *spirit*, of that portion of the word of Life, which our Saviour selected to parry and render harmless the first dart thrown at him by his and our adversary ;

and truly the unshaken firmness with which he withstood and defeated the fraudulent and artful attack of the tempter, aided by the almost irresistible cravings of hunger and thirst after so protracted a fast, might, one would have expected, have convinced him, that every art and effort he could employ would be vain and fruitless. An enemy so signally foiled and beaten, seldom has heart and courage to fight immediately another battle. But it was not so with the evil spirit: when he beheld his first temptation fail, without delay he has recourse to another. When God, for the trial of his faith and patience, let him loose against Job, to deprive him of his property and his children, and he found that he could not thus prevail against that holy patriarch; instead of being baffled by his defeat, he asked permission to attack his *person*, which being granted, he smote him with sore boils from the sole of his foot to his crown, and then set his wife and his friends upon him, so as to deprive him, as he afterwards did our Lord, of every earthly stay.

This should teach us not to lay aside our armour, and sink into sleep, or reckless repose, because we have gained *one* victory over him, and have escaped once safe and unharmed out of temptation, for we may rest assured he will not so let us off, and give up the conflict; on the contrary, he will watch for a favourable opportunity to assail us from some other quarter and where we least expect him. *Watch and pray*, is our Saviour's advice and direction, *that ye enter not into temptation\**. Without due vigilance and constant addresses to the throne of grace, we shall never turn aside the fiery darts of our enemy, and repel his attacks: but we are assured if we *resist* him, that *he will flee from us†*; if we fall, therefore, it can only be from our own culpable negligence and self-confidence. Though he undertakes a great deal, yet his undertakings will always prove above his strength if they are duly met and courageously combated. *Because greater is he that is in us, than he that is in the world‡*.

\* Matthew, xxvi. 41. † James, iv. 7. ‡ John, iv. 4.

Not only is the devil undismayed by being baffled and beaten, but even out of the very weapon by which he was beaten, will he often fabricate a new one to assault us with. Out of the very scripture with which Christ rebutted and nullified his first temptation, he immediately makes a fresh fireball to throw at him. He had experienced the strength and constancy of his trust in God, and his entire dependence upon his Providence, therefore he now attempts to seduce him into a presumptuous and vain-glorious confidence. At first he tempted him to *distrust* and *want of faith*; he now turns round and tempts him to *too much trust* and an *unwarranted faith*. And so he often does with us. At one time his object is to urge us, through vexation, bitterness of spirit, and a distrust of God's power and goodness, to have recourse to unlawful means of effecting our deliverance, as though we were wholly forsaken; at another he strives to inflate us with such conceit of our own holiness, and of God's love to us, as may cause us to fancy that we may neglect the use of ordinary and instituted

means, under the vain idea that we are such favourites with the Almighty, that he will go out of the common course of his Providence to succour *us*; now, he seduces us to think that we are forsaken of God, and that if we trust in him he will finally fail us; then, that we are so dear in his eyes and such darlings, that if we wilfully and causelessly throw ourselves into any danger, he will deliver us. To day he puts us in fear, as St. Augustin speaks, that God will not be with us even where he *has* promised, to-morrow he will persuade us to hope that he will be with us where he has *not* promised.

But to proceed to the consideration of the temptation itself. In it three things are remarkable.

I. The *theatre* or *station* which the devil selected as best adapted to answer his purpose.

II. The *temptation* with which he now assailed our Saviour, and the *argument* he used to carry his point.

III. And lastly our Saviour's *reply*. The *first* two of these circumstance shall be the subject of the present discourse.

I. Let us first then consider the *theatre* or *station* selected by the tempter. *Then the devil taketh him up into the Holy City, and setteth him upon a pinnacle of the temple.*

*The waste, solitary, and howling wilderness\**, where the hum of busy man was replaced by the roar of wild beasts; where there was no water to quench the thirst, nor food to satisfy the hunger of those that passed through it; was a scene well suited to a temptation, the object of which was to entice our Saviour to *distrust* his God, and to urge him to such means of relief, as would indicate want of faith in his Providence, and which were therefore both unlawful. But when the tempter wished to puff him up with presumption and spiritual pride, the *wilderness* was no longer a place suited to his purpose. It was not elevated enough to overlook or be seen by the world, and it was without inhabitants to witness the wonders that are expected by him who presumes on God's favour and extraordinary inter-

\* Deuteronomy, xxxii. 10.



position. When a man is groaning under the cross, when he is suffering bodily pain and sickness, or mental sorrow and affliction; the temptation from hunger is fitter than this of presumption, and the devil then strives to overthrow him in the *wilderness*. As long as Noah was in the ark, struggling with a world of fluctuating waters, with the whole earth and its inhabitants overwhelmed with merited destruction, he had in him no presumptuous thoughts; but when he was delivered and placed in safety by the mercy of God, and was sitting under the vine in his vineyard, he was overcome therewith\*. David also, when he was persecuted by Saul, and finding no rest to the sole of his feet, was *tossed up and down as the locust*†, had no leisure for high thoughts, but afterwards when God had exalted him to a throne, and turned all his sorrows into joy, and given him rest from all his labours, he was tempted to presumption. *In my prosperity I said, I shall never be moved. Lord, by thy*

\* Genesis, ix. 20, 21, † Psalm, cix, 23.

*favour thou hast made my mountain to stand strong\**. Then, when he fancied himself in this *immoveable* state of favour with God, he went upon the roof of his palace, and fell from too much confidence in himself. *Thou didst hide thy face*, he complains, *and I was troubled*†, at length he begins to discover that he is indeed a sinful man, beset with numerous temptations and liable to fall from grace, unless by the exercise of constant watchfulness and earnest prayer he may be enabled, *having done all, to stand*‡.

The *wilderness* then we see is no fit place in which to tempt a man to *presumption* with any prospect of success, but the *pinnacle* was exactly suited to such a purpose. It was a stage upon which the actor could show off to a whole city. And here we may observe that the transition from one to the other was not immediate, certain intermediate steps contributed to increase the fitness of the place. From the wilderness Christ is taken to the city, to the holy city of God, from whence he is

\* Psalms, xxx. 6, 7. † *Ib.* ‡ Ephesians, vi, 13.

transported to the temple, and then placed aloft upon the pinnacle.

What a change did our Blessed Lord now experience! After having so long sojourned in the seclusion of the wilderness where he was a stranger to the face and voice of man, to be suddenly transported within the walls of a populous city, whose streets were paced by busy and noisy crowds, was a shifting of the scene well calculated to produce a strong and marvellous effect upon the mind of the most calm and self-possessed of men; but when, besides this, we consider the long fast, and subsequent hunger of our Saviour, we may readily conceive the powerful desire he must feel to return to human society, and to have all his wants supplied by the ordinary means of life. When we reflect further that it was to the *Holy City* that the tempter brought him, for he led him not to *Cesarea*, though a most magnificent city, the residence of the Roman governor, but to *Jerusalem*, the city dignified by the residence of a greater than he, where was that august and holy temple, whose sanctuary was

the presence chamber of the most High God in which he was to be approached and worshipped by his creature man.

And here it should not be overlooked that although those who at this time sat in Moses' seat, the Scribes and Pharisees, the Jewish Priests and Rulers, and all the instituted instructors of the people, were become corrupt and degenerate to an extraordinary degree—corrupt in their morals, corrupt in their doctrine—yet still Jerusalem was the *Holy City*, and church of God. Though *they were dumb dogs*, as the prophet speaks, *that could not bark\**, or rather dogs that barked *against* the truth; and *blind leaders of the blind*, as our Saviour calls them†, yet, as they *sat in Moses' seat*, they were truly ministers of God, by whose ministrations, used in faith, his pardon, grace and blessing were conveyed to his people, so that they were instruments of salvation to others, although without repentance, they themselves would be *castaways*‡. Even Caiaphas, the High Priest who condemn-

\* Isaiah, lvi. 10.                    † Matthew, xv. 14.

‡ Ib, xxiii. 2—5.

ed our Saviour, had the gift of prophecy in virtue of his office, for we read in St. John, when the chief priests and pharisees had gathered a council against Jesus, and the High Priest said,—*It is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, that the whole nation perish not* : and it is added, *this spake he, not of himself, but being High Priest that year he prophesied\**.

Had the enthusiastic, and often self-conceited, and self-willed spirits that in our days *go out*† from the church, forsake its ordinances and communion, and make innumerable schisms and divisions amongst us, often upon the slightest and most unfounded objections against her ministry, not making due allowances for the common frailty of human nature; had they lived in those times and under the Jewish dispensation, with much more colour of reason and truth they might have separated themselves from men whose character was so notoriously corrupt and wicked, and refused their ministrations. Yet in so doing

\* John, xi. 49—51. † 1 John, ii. 19. Jude, 19.

we see they would have left the *Holy City*, and the temple and ordinances of God; have cut themselves off from the ordinary means of grace, and even from Christ and his Apostles, who as long as its temple stood and the ordinances were open to them, used the ministry of the Jewish Church. God has his own times for removing his candlestick from Apostate Churches, and nothing but *sinful* terms of communion, such as *idolatry*, on which account we were justified in separating from the church of Rome, can justify our deserting the ministrations of the church of Christ established amongst us.

Through the Holy City our Saviour is conveyed by the evil spirit to the temple. The sanctity of this sacred building, as well as the magnificence of its structure, the fraudulent demon probably considered as well calculated to produce a strong sensation in the mind of one who had been engaged in abstracted devotional exercises, and in spiritual conflicts, in which he had been uniformly victorious. He might expect that he would claim some personal merit,

and regard himself as a peculiar favourite of the Great Being to whose temple, after so long an absence, he was again restored; and he might flatter himself that spiritual pride and ill-grounded confidence would now be engendered in his mind, and that he would thus be prepared to make the experiment that he next meant to propose to him.

It may not perhaps be irrelevant to observe in this place, lest it should prove a stumbling block to weak minds, that the devil should be permitted to transport our Blessed Saviour from one place to another according to his pleasure, that he was set in *our* place and stead; and therefore, though as God he was the Lord of heaven and earth, to whom the devil and all his evil angels were altogether subject, so that without his permission they could do nothing\*; yet he was necessarily exposed as we are, in his human nature, to all his power and malice, so that he might be thoroughly tried and sifted. Previously to his death for our sins, he was still more vilely treated and haled about

\* Mark, v. 13.

by the devil's ministers and agents, from Annas to Caiaphas; from Caiaphas to Pilate; from Pilate to Herod; and from Herod back again to Pilate; and finally from him to Golgotha to his painful and ignominious death on the cross, and in the company of thieves and outcasts. These things are indeed astonishing and passing wonder, and should excite within us the deepest reverence and the warmest love to him, who out of his infinite mercy and love towards *us*, otherwise lost creatures, was pleased to submit to be led about by the devil, and to undergo such crosses, pains, and indignities, for *our* sake.

When Satan took our Saviour to the temple, he is stated to have placed him upon one of its *pinnacles*. It is not agreed amongst Commentators what part of the temple is meant by this word. It properly signifies a *wing*, and is supposed by some to mean a wing or appendage of the temple, particularly one called the king's portico, mentioned by Josephus, as one of the most memorable works under the sun, which was so high, and looked down so deep a valley, that the very act of looking down from it



would make the strongest head dizzy\*. But others, perhaps with more probability, suppose that the summit or central elevation of the temple itself was here meant, which was so lofty as to be a most conspicuous object at a very considerable distance from the city†.

Here then, where he could be seen by every eye, did the evil spirit place Jesus, and, here upon the very summit of the temple of God he assails him by his second temptation, in which he hopes to make his fall as conspicuous as the station he had selected. People in high and exalted stations, as their virtues are seen by all, so are their foibles, frailties, and vices; and as by the former they are instruments of extensive good, so by the latter they often produce an overflow of evil and ungodliness.

II. The *temptation* with which the grand adversary next endeavoured to seduce our Saviour from the straight path of duty, and the *argument* he used to render it more powerful, are now to be considered. *If thou be the Son*

\* Josephi *Antiq. Jud.* b. xv. c. 14. † *Ib.*

*of God, cast thyself down; for it is written, He shall give his Angels charge concerning thee, and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.*

He introduces his proposal with the same question as before. *If thou be the Son of God.* Thus making one style of address answer two opposite purposes,—in the one case to drive him to despair, in the other to inflate him with presumption. Our Saviour's firmness on the former occasion, had probably strengthened the conviction of the tempter, that he was indeed, as he had been proclaimed, the true Messiah; he was now therefore endeavouring to come round him by flattery, and the better to accomplish his purpose, had recourse to the very weapon with which he himself had been foiled and defeated in his late assault. He comes to Christ with—*It is written*—in his mouth. As if he would say, I will now try you with the word of God itself, and what was meant for the salvation of man, I will convert into a weapon for his destruction. From the devil's quoting

scripture upon this occasion we learn two things—that this bad spirit is acquainted with scripture,—and that he can employ it to answer his purpose. And the same is the case often with his servants. It is not a knowledge merely of the *letter* of the divine word that renders a man mighty in the scriptures, but the *rightly dividing the word of truth*\*. There are many who know the *letter* well, who are total strangers to the *spirit* of the Bible; that make the use of it, like the tempter on the present occasion, to turn men from the truth as it is in Jesus, from meekness, humility, and mutual love; and in its stead to puff them up with spiritual pride, as if they alone were God's *elect*, and their brother christians, who believe in the same Saviour and trust in the same promises, were *reprobates* and *outcasts*; to allure men into immorality and unclean living, by depreciating good works, *which God hath pre-ordained that we should walk in them*†, and teaching them to neglect and contemn the or-

\* 2 Timothy, ii. 15.      † Ephesians, ii. 10.

dinary means of grace, which he hath instituted that we should live by them.

But let us consider more particularly the devil's advice, *If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down.* As if he would say—here is a glorious opportunity for proving yourself the Messiah before the whole world—do not think of descending like a common man, from the pinnacle by the stairs that lead to it, but remember the words of the Psalmist—*He shall give his angels charge concerning thee, and in their hands shall they bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone*—therefore cast thyself down, thus shalt thou be acknowledged at once by all, and hailed universally as the true Messiah. But although the evil spirit appeared now under the mask of an angel of light with the word of God in his mouth, still the wicked purpose of his heart remained unchanged, which was to seduce our Saviour into the sin of vain-glory and presumption. Yet how artfully did he conceal the bait, which he had prepared! The scripture that he quoted was really a prophecy relating to the Messiah,

and a promise that he should be the peculiar care of the angels of God, under every circumstance of his life. He had refuted the devil in the former temptation, by a passage of scripture declaring that the ordinary means of life and grace were nothing without the word and power of God working in and by them : and had himself been supported in the wilderness for forty days and forty nights without food, by the blessing of God working independently of these ordinary means. There could not therefore be a temptation better adapted to the circumstances in which our Saviour was now placed, and more nicely calculated to blind his reason and judgment, and make him hope for a second deliverance without employing ordinary means, and which seemingly was promised to him by the word of God itself. But let us strip off the sheeps clothing from this ravening wolf; let us divest this arch-hypocrite of the semblance of the angel of light, and we shall see the blackness and malignity of his purpose. God's promises are all to those who strive to keep his commandments, who desire and endeavour to

walk in the path that he hath chalked out, that with a humble and obedient spirit seek him in his house and ordinances. But they are not to those, who, because they *fancy* themselves vessels of mercy and objects of his peculiar favour, presume they may with safety break his commandments and neglect the ordinary means of life and grace, when at hand, and to be had: plainly proving that neither the fear nor the love of God rules in their hearts. The promise to the Messiah, in the words the devil quotes, was on account of his *holiness*, because the love of God, it was foreseen, would be his ruling principle of action. Therefore it is written in the same Psalm,—*Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the most High thy habitation, there shall no evil befall thee;* and again,—*Because he hath set his love upon me therefore will I deliver him\**. The whole Psalm relates to dangers and troubles not of his own seeking, or into which he should rashly thrust himself, from which he was to be de-

\* Psalm, xci 9, 14.

livered by the ministration of the angelic hosts; but those to which, by the divine permission, he should be exposed in the regular course of his ministry. It is remarkable that this very Psalm, to which the devil had the assurance to appeal, contains a prophecy of this conflict of Christ with that wicked spirit, and of his victory over him, and final triumph. Thus it is said, *Surely he shall deliver from the snare of the fowler.* And,—*Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder: the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet\**. The evil spirit knew very well that the above was the true meaning of the passage which he quoted, but he thought, if he could render Jesus vain of the favour and protection of God, he might urge him to rush presumptuously into unnecessary danger under the unwarranted expectation that the divine favour would secure him from the destruction that must otherwise be the inevitable consequence of so rash an act, and thus place him high in the opinion of the people. He was

\* Psalm, xci. 3, 13.

aware likewise, that in the common course of God's providence, the rash and presumptuous are near destruction ; and therefore he flattered himself, if he succeeded and could prevail with our Saviour to make the experiment and cast himself down, that he would infallibly be dashed to pieces and destroyed.

It is probable that our Saviour derived both comfort and resolution from that very scripture, which the devil employed to lure him to destruction. For he was surely well aware that the angels of God had really *a charge concerning him, to keep him in all his ways* : and for that very reason he was in no haste to deliver himself: for if he stood firm he was secure of their aid to set him in safety, by whatever dangers he might be surrounded. He knew also that, in the end, he should be proved to be the true Messiah, the Son of God, to the conviction of all gainsayers, without having recourse, that he might receive glory from men, to any presumptuous acts to prove it.

We likewise may comfort ourselves from the consideration of this scripture, which Satan



brought forward with a very different and contrary view, in all our tribulations and straits ; for though this text, in its highest and *primary* sense, belongs to Christ, yet, in a lower and *secondary* sense, it belongs to his members. The Lord also giveth his angels charge concerning *them* to keep them in all their ways. For we read, that, *The Angel of the Lord encampeth round them that fear him and delivereth them\**. And they are described to us as *Ministering spirits sent forth to minister to them that shall be heirs of salvation†*. We may therefore stand secure and firm in faith, be the troubles, or difficulties, or distresses to which at any time we are exposed what they may, that the host of God is about us, and if we have not recourse to unlawful means to deliver ourselves, if we do not rashly and presumptuously neglect or forsake those ordinary means which God places in our power and within our reach, they will defend us when attacked, and when we are even ready to fall

\* Psalm, xxxiv. 7. compare 2 Kings, vi. 17. † Heb. i. 14.

will support us, and prevent our dashing our feet against any stone of stumbling, or rock of offence, that evil men or evil spirits may place in our path.

Whatever, therefore, be our state, whether we stand upon a lofty pinnacle, and are exalted above the rest of mankind, or whether we are depressed and abased to the lowest station ; let us possess our souls in patience and faith, so shall we best escape all the spiritual dangers to which we may be exposed, either in prosperity or adversity.—Which God of his infinite mercy grant to us all, through the merits and mediation of Him, who in our stead, and for us, and for our salvation fought this battle, and in it, as in every thing else, *has set us an example that we may follow his steps.*

## SERMON V.

---

MATTHEW, iv. 7.

*“ Jesus said unto him, It is written again,  
Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.”*

**Y**ou have seen how the adversary of God and man came against our Saviour with a weapon stolen from the armoury of God, which he endeavoured to persuade him was the sword of the Spirit to which he ought to yield; and you are now to learn with what admirable wisdom and discernment the great friend and restorer of the lost race of Adam, in a moment, saw through the fallacy and detected the perverse misapplication of scripture with which Satan sought to baffle and overthrow him.

It was not by sifting and examining the passage and its context, which had been urged as warranting an expectation that Christ might cast himself down from the pinnacle with the certainty of being borne up and saved from harm by the Holy Angels, though, as we shall see, even thus, he might have been confuted and driven back, but it was by bringing forward another more plain and direct text of Scripture, in which we are expressly commanded *Not to tempt the Lord our God\**.

It is the way with seducing spirits, and those that are aiming to subvert our faith, to refer us to passages that are hard to be understood, and seem capable of more senses than one; or which on account of their being clothed in figurative language, admit not of a literal interpretation: but we see that our Saviour goes at once to the *plain* declarations of the word of God, concerning the meaning of which there can be no doubt, and which, admitting of no reply, are best fitted to stop the mouths of

\* Deuteronomy, vi. 16.

gainsayers. We should strive to copy his example in this, as well as in every other respect: and if our principles are endeavoured to be shaken and subverted by designing and artful persons, we should never attempt to puzzle ourselves with the more mysterious passages of the bible, but attend principally to those, which, as the prophet speaks, *He may run that readeth\**; the meaning of which cannot be mistaken or controverted. St. Peter, speaking of the epistles of his beloved brother Paul, upon which, *misinterpreted*, enthusiasts generally ground their delusive arguments, thus instructs those to whom he writes, *In which, says he, are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable, wrest, as they do the other scriptures, to their own destruction†.*

The best way to ascertain the true sense of Scripture, is to interpret the more obscure and mysterious passages by those that are more plain, *comparing*, as the Apostle advises, *spiri-*

\* Habakkuk, ii. 2. † 2 Peter, iii. 16.

*tual things with spiritual\**; for passages often occur in the bible, which, taken by themselves, will seem to say one thing, when if we read and compare them with the context, they will say another; that is, their *real* meaning will be found quite different from their *apparent* one.

Let us now see, whether Satan, on this occasion, had not recourse to this very method of misinterpretation of an insulated text. The entire passage which supplied him with his quotation stands thus. *For he shall give his angels charge over thee to keep thee in all thy ways: they shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone*†. The words, *to keep thee in all thy ways*, as not making for his purpose, the devil omitted. But this produces a most material difference in the sense of the words, for to keep a person *in his ways*, and hold him up so as he shall not stumble or fall, affords no promise or prospect of angelic help to a person who goes *out* of his *way*, to follow his private fancies, or who rushes

\* 1 Corinthians, ii. 13. † Psalms, xci. 11, 12.

into danger unnecessarily because he conceives himself to be a favourite of the Almighty : it is, on the contrary, a prediction that while he holds on stedfastly in his way, that is in the *right* way, he shall be supported by angels, and meet with no accident or occurrence that shall finally prevail to overthrow him.

Our Saviour might thus have refuted the adversary if he had chosen, but as the evil spirit is a spirit who will *cavil* where he cannot *answer*, he chose to stop his mouth at once with an, *It is written*, that could not be controverted, and, which effectually put him to silence, *Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.*

It will not be unprofitable, if, in the further consideration of this precept, I notice the different ways by which men may be said to transgress this command and tempt God. It was originally delivered upon the following occasion. After the manna was rained down from heaven for the support of the Israelites in the wilderness, they came to a place where there was no *water*, and here, forgetful of all that the Lord had done and was doing for them;

of the destruction of their enemies in the Red Sea; of the miraculous food by which they were at that very time daily supported; of the presence of God even then visibly manifested to them in the pillar of a cloud by day, and by night in a pillar of fire, instead of exercising their faith in him, and calling upon him by supplication and prayer to deliver them from their present distress, they chode with Moses demanding that he would give them water, murmured against him and reviled him because he had brought them out of Egypt, and were most ungratefully ready to rebel against, and stone their greatest earthly benefactor. It was upon this occasion that he smote the rock with his wonder-working rod, and water flowed from it\*; this water, which appears to have accompanied them in all their wanderings in the wilderness, and the manna, were types of the eucharistical body and blood of Christ, by partaking of which true believers are supported in their pilgrimage through the wilderness of this world towards

\* Exodus, xviii. 1—6.



the heavenly Canaan. *They did all eat the same spiritual meat*, saith St. Paul, speaking of Israel in the wilderness, *and did all drink the same spiritual drink, for they drank of that spiritual rock that followed them, and that rock was Christ\**. The place where this apostacy from faith occurred, was afterwards called *Mas-sah* or *Temptation*†. This was the event that gave occasion for the precept here alledged by our Saviour. *Ye shall not tempt the Lord your God as you tempted him in Massah*‡, says Moses. Now the tempting of God of which the Israelites were guilty, besides their ungrateful distrust of the power and mercy, so often manifested for them, was, to use the Psalmist's expression, that, *they limited the holy one of Israel*§; that they wanted to confine him to deliver them exactly in their own way, according to their own narrow and worldly notions, so that when, that he might purify their spirits and exercise their faith, he tried them with a brief scarcity of the necessaries of life, instead of putting

\* 1 Corinthians, x. 3, 4.      † Exodus, xvii. 7.

‡ Deuteronomy, vi. 17.      § Psalms, lxxviii. 41.

these visitations to their appropriate use, they instantly became discontented and rebellious, turbulently calling for an *immediate* relief of their wants, or they were ready to turn their backs upon their God and seek again the flesh-pots of Egypt.

Let us now consider this precept in its largest sense, as including the various ways in which men usually tempt God. These may all be reduced to *two*. We may tempt God with respect to the *body*, and our necessary support from the things of *this* world: and we may tempt him with respect to the *soul*, and things that relate to our *spiritual* welfare and our interests in *another* world.

I. The ways in which we are liable to tempt God, with regard to the things of *this* world are numerous. The wants of life are various, and these frail bodies of ours require constant attention and care to preserve them in life and health. And we have not only ourselves to supply with the necessaries, and if possible with such comforts and conveniencies of life, as are suited to our condition, but we have often

many others to provide for, who look up to us for support, as the various members of our household—our wives, children, and servants. These wants of human life necessarily generate in the best regulated minds some anxiety, and in the lower ranks of society call for constant labour and diligence to procure them, and oftentimes considerable doubts must perplex their minds as to their ability to accomplish this. A man looks at his own frame, and finding himself blessed with strength and health, enjoys being actively engaged in the support of his family, and thus properly and happily fulfils his duty as a member of society. But he knows that strength and health are not in his own hands, and that sufficient employment is not at his own will. The conviction that these may be interrupted, in spite of all the care and good conduct that he can contribute, tends to convince him that he must not rely wholly upon himself, that he must not only look out of himself to *man*, but that his faith must carry him beyond and above all visible things, even to that *Almighty Being* of whom he has been told from

his youth, that although he hath established his *throne in the heavens\**, and *dwelleth in the light which no man can approach unto*†, yet that he does not disdain to attend to and dispose of all things here below; that it is he alone that maketh him strong to labour, that his blessing must prosper his labours to render them productive; and that he turneth the hearts of all men, to fulfil the good pleasure of his will. He has further been instructed that, if he hath faith in this Great Being, is reconciled to him by the blood of his Son, and strive to shew forth love both towards God and towards man, he will never either forsake him or fail him, but cause all things to work together for his final good. It is this faith, duly exercised, that enables him to overcome, and banish, the doubts that sometimes perplex his honest heart, as to the means by which, if sickness or other misfortunes overtake him, he shall provide for the wants of his family. It will very likely happen, that, to try him and exercise his faith

\* Psalms, ciii. 19.

† 1 Timothy, vi. 16.

and patience, his Heavenly Father may place him in difficult circumstances, so that he shall discover no prospect of deliverance from any quarter. When things are in this apparently hopeless state with them, the tempter will often endeavour to persuade men either to let go their faith in God's providence, to take their cause out of his hands, and to endeavour to effect their deliverance by doing what he hath forbidden, by walking in the hidden paths of dishonesty and fraud: or else to become discontented and rebellious, and to chide with their governors, as the Israelites did with Moses and Aaron in the wilderness, because they do not work miracles for them to deliver them from the difficulties which have overtaken them, not in consequence of the misconduct of the ruling powers, or of their inattention to their welfare and interests, but from *the will of God*, and generally as a merited punishment for their want of faith in him, and distrust of his providence. This is one mode of tempting God with regard to the supply of our bodily wants.

Another is, when, though we are *able* to work, and we can have employment, we are not *willing*, and so neglect our opportunities, and throw ourselves upon the public, either out of laziness and idleness, or because we value our time and labour too highly, and will not agree to wages according to the times. This is rashly throwing ourselves upon God's Providence out of the way of our duty, when the path he has appointed is open to us. *If any will not work, saith the Apostle, neither should he eat\**, and again, *Having food and raiment let us be therewith content†*.

Others tempt God out of vanity and vain-glory, and some from mere audacity, when people run unnecessary hazards, and that they may give the spectators a high idea of their superior courage and dexterity, expose themselves to imminent danger, and sometimes merely for gain and to win an idle wager; they then tempt God to leave them to the consequences of their own folly and rashness. Such

\* 2 Thessalonians, iii. 10.    † 1 Timothy, vi. 8.

persons are often met in the midst of their presumption, and made striking and fearful examples, that God will not be tempted with impunity.

Again we tempt God, when in sickness, instead of having recourse to those, who both by education and experience, are qualified to be under God, the means of curing us, we either refuse all help and medicine, or apply to ignorant pretenders, who though they profess to know a great deal, and to work strange wonders, really know nothing, can do us no good, and whose only object is to pick the pockets of those that apply to them.

From all that has been here stated with regard to our bodily wants, it must appear in general, that if when we can have the *ordinary* means of life, and comfortable subsistence, we despise or neglect them, and trust to *extraordinary* ones, or have recourse to *unlawful* ones, we tempt God, and may expect that he will leave us to eat the fruit of our own foolish and misplaced confidence, or bring upon us the punishment due to our misdemeanors. But when the exi-

gency of the case requires it, when no *means* of relief are at hand to succour us, when we are, as it were, in the *wilderness*, where there is neither bread nor water, then if we have any faith in his power, shall God cause the manna to fall down from heaven for us, and the water to gush forth from the hard rock : or to speak without a figure, when we are in straits from which there are no ordinary means of relief, if our faith fail not, and we seek to him, God shall so order circumstances, that contrary to all expectation, we shall in the end be extricated from all our difficulties. When we seem to be most deserted of God, and most removed from the care of his providence, then often is he the nearest to us, and our deliverance at the very door. In the case before us, we may observe that there were steps down from the pinnacle into the temple, by which our Saviour could have descended; but if there were not, and he had been left by the evil spirit on that dangerous eminence, God would certainly have interposed to set him in safety, because in that case there would have been no ordinary means of escape and delivery.



But though it is necessary to insist so strongly upon the use of those means of support, or relief that God may have placed within our reach ; yet we must above all things beware of *trusting* solely in *them*, without looking up to *Him*. We should never forget that, without his blessing and concurrence, our own endeavours, and all the outward means to which we may have recourse, are vain and unprofitable. When we trust in means independently of God, we become like those of whom the prophet speaks, *Who sacrifice unto their net, and burn incense to their drag, because by them their portion is fat, and their meat plenteous\**. Indeed all idolatry and apostacy from God, has its root in this lamentable misplacement of our trust and heart.

II. I shall next proceed, as I proposed, to consider how we may tempt God, with regard to the welfare of our *souls*, and our interests in *another world*.

The wants of the *soul*, and its appetites, are symbolized in Scripture by those of the *body*.

\* Habakkuk, i. 16.

There is a *hunger* and *thirst* of the soul ; there is a *nakedness* of the soul, there is a *sickness* of the soul, and the soul wants a *shelter* and a *house of home*, in which when storms are abroad and prevalent, it may repose in peace and safety.

The *food* of the soul is that by which its spiritual life, or life unto God, is supported and maintained in health and vigour. Like the life of the body, this of the soul, unless it duly receives its appropriate nutriment, must decay, and in the end, if its wants be wholly neglected and left without any supply of spiritual food, (the man having become wilfully and obdurately indifferent, and dead to his best interests,) it must perish : and thus, as is the case with reprobates and apostates, the body may be alive unto the world when the soul is dead unto God. Its appropriate nutriment is conveyed to the soul in the ministry of the word and sacraments. The spiritual life is *ordinarily* first conveyed to it in the Sacrament of *Baptism* then the Holy Spirit, by which it is quickened and made alive to the concerns of another world, is

first given to it. For according to our Blessed Lord's express declaration,—*Except a man be born of water and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God*\*. And we learn from his Apostle, that,—*According to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost*†. The completion and seal, as it was called, of Baptism, is *confirmation*, or the imposition of the hands of the Bishop upon such as have been baptized. Thus when the Samaritans were converted by the preaching of Philip, we are told that the Apostolic College deputed *Peter and John, who when they were come down prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: (for as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) Then they laid their hands on them and they received the Holy Ghost*‡. The life thus conveyed and completed is to re-

\* John, iii. 5.

† Titus, iii. 5.

‡ Acts, viii. 14—17. In the primitive Church it appears that confirmation was usually administered as soon after baptism as it could be had, and even to infants. See Bingham's *Antiq.* b. xii. c. 1.

ceive its further nutriment and growth from the other means of grace, particularly prayer, the reading or hearing of the word, and the partaking of the holy sacrament of the Lord's supper.

The new born babe, we know, is at first endowed with a very limited use of its organs, limbs, or understanding, but it gradually acquires new powers both of body and mind, till it attains to manhood. At first its appropriate food is the milk of its mother; but as it increases in stature it becomes capable of digesting stronger and more substantial food. The same is the course of the babe in *grace*, it does not attain its full stature at once, but grows gradually. *Till we all come*, observes the Apostle, *in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ\**. It first requires to be fed with the *milk* of the word. *I have fed you with milk*, says St. Paul to his Corinthians, *and not with*

\* Ephesians, iv. 13.

*meat : for hitherto ye were not able to bear it\**. The *milk* of the word signifies the first or fundamental principles of the oracles of God ; *repentance*, namely, *from dead works, and faith towards God, the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of the resurrection of the dead and of eternal judgment†*. Or the general doctrine and initiatory ordinances of our religion. By *strong meat*, were signified the higher, and more mysterious and peculiar doctrines and ordinances of the gospel.

The food of the soul may generally be said to be truth and grace. *Truth* we derive from the word of God read or preached to us, and prayer and the Sacraments, duly used, are the means by which we receive *grace*, and thus, *we grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ‡*, who is *the way, the truth and the life§*. But since, in order to render our bodily food nutritious to us, we must feel an *appetite* for it, otherwise it will do us little or no good, so is it with regard to the

\* 1 Corinthians, iii. 2. † Heb. vi. 1, 2. ‡ 2 Peter, iii. 18.  
§ John, xiv. 6

food of the soul. We may hear the word, repeat our prayers, receive the sacrament, and be partakers of the other ordinances of religion, without feeling any real interest in them or desire for them, or without any lively faith in God to bless them to us. In this case they will not turn to spiritual nourishment; this will ever be in exact proportion to our appetite for them and faith in them. *As new born babes,* the Apostle enjoins his converts, *desire the sincere milk of the word that ye may grow thereby\**. From which it follows, that our growth and profit depend upon our *desire* or *hunger* for spiritual food.

It often happens in the course of human affairs, that individuals who have been made members of Christ by baptism, are afterwards so neglected in their education, and misdirected in their conduct, by those who ought to have taught and guided them better, that the principle of spiritual life is so choked and overborne from the very first dawnings of reason, that

\* 1 Peter, ii. 2.

like a seed buried too deep in the soil, it cannot come up and take any growth till the obstacles to it are removed. There seem to be cases, in which the spiritual life is almost, as it were, *suspended*; it is in being, but is dormant. But sometimes when awakening circumstances occur, the obstacles to its growth are removed, instruction in righteousness, the true nutriment of the soul, has its place and due effect, and the fruit of the spirit begins to grow and shoot forth where before it appeared to be dead and extinct, thus verifying the doctrine of the divine Psalmist, *When my father and mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up\**; and shewing also the necessity and advantage of instilling into the youthful mind those lessons of heavenly wisdom and uncorrupted truth that teach and induce men to attend to and obey the motions and workings of that internal principle of spiritual life before explained, so that it may gradually obtain the mastery over all their evil and corrupt affections, and finally

\* Psalms, xxvii. 10.

make them *meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light*\*.

Let us now inquire when we may be said to tempt God with regard to the spiritual life of the soul and its nutriment. In the first place, you tempt God in this respect, when you neglect to train up your children in the way that they should go. *These things which I command thee this day, saith the Lord, shall be in thine heart, and thou shalt teach them diligently to thy children*†. You would account that man a very hard-hearted parent that should take no pains to procure for his little ones *the meat which perisheth*, so that they should be famished and die through his cruel negligence. What then shall we say of him who has no care upon his mind to provide for his children *the meat that endureth unto eternal life*‡—that neither instructs them himself, nor sends them where they may be instructed, in what they must believe, and what they must do to be saved. One would hope that there are few

\* Colossians, i. 12. † Deuteronomy, vi. 6, 7. ‡ John, vi. 27.



parents who in most things do not know the difference between good and evil, right and wrong, and cannot point it out to their children; that do not know that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners; that *we are reconciled to God by the blood of his cross*; and that we must *repent and be converted* in order to have *our sins blotted out*: and this they can explain to them according to their best ability; and they can have no difficulty in teaching them, or causing them to be taught, the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and the Ten Commandments. They can also correct them when guilty of lying or any wilful faults. This is what most parents can do themselves, and they have a promise and prediction, the result of the experience of the wisest of mere men, that if they are diligent to train up their children *in the way that they should go, when they are old they will not depart from it\**. But what helps, in the present day, are furnished to the poor, to assist them in bringing up their children *in the nurture*

\* Proverbs, xxii. 6.

*and admonition of the Lord\**! Almost every village has now either a weekly or a Sunday school, to which its poor inhabitants may send their children with little or no expence. If therefore they are careless and negligent as to their education and religious instruction they are left without excuse; thus they *tempt* God to leave them to reap the fatal consequences of their own folly and indifference to their childrens best interests; for without a miracle, which they have no reason to expect, their poor children, for want of necessary attention and instruction, are furnished with no means of resisting the temptations they will inevitably meet with, but must become the easy prey of evil spirits and evil men.

In the next place we tempt God when we refuse or neglect to have recourse to those means which he has instituted in order by them to convey to us that grace which is so constantly necessary for the support and due progress of our spiritual life, and trust to be saved upon

\* Ephesians, vi. 4.

terms that are not in his covenant, and to which he has bound himself by no *promise*. Those who habitually neglect the worship of God, in his house of prayer and in their closet, who neither hear nor read his word, and turn their back upon his sacraments are in this predicament : and are surely enslaved by as dangerous a delusion of the evil spirit, as if they had been persuaded by him to cast themselves down from a pernicious height under the idea that God would not suffer them to be destroyed.

Again, there is a *nakedness* of the soul, when it stands uncovered before God and uncleansed from sin. In this state of native deformity he can have no pleasure in it, but in his infinite mercy he has provided a robe to cover it and a fountain to cleanse it. For he hath set forth his Son, not only as a propitiation for our sins, but *that we might be made the righteousness of God in him\**, and *the blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin†* both original and actual. *Blessed is he*, exclaims the Psalmist, *whose*

\* 2 Corinthians, v. 21. † 1 John, i. 7.

*transgression is forgiven and whose sin is covered\**. The soul is also naked when it brings not forth the fruits of the spirit, and derives little or no moral strength from the use of God's ordinances, because *faith* is not applied to them.

We tempt God in this view, then, when we either trust for salvation to our own righteousness or supposed merits, without a lively faith in God's mercies in Christ: or when we idly hope to reap the benefit of Christ's atonement without striving to imitate his example, and to shew forth, in our degree, the lovely graces of a Christian life and conversation. In both these cases also we are seeking for salvation, in a way of our own devising, out of God's way.

The *sickness* of the soul is sin, and those that live in habitual sin of any kind, run the risk of having their spiritual life destroyed by a dangerous disease. God has appointed means for our cure. *Confess your faults one to another, the sixth Apostle, and pray for one another that ye may be healed*†. From which we see that sin

\* Psalms, xxxii, 1. † James, v. 16.

is a *sickness* that often requires the counsel and advice of *others*, especially of the ministers of Christ, to whom is *given* and *committed* the *ministry* and *word* of *reconciliation*\*, if we would be *healed* of it. To *confess* our sins is going half way towards *forsaking* them. *He that covereth his sins shall not prosper*, saith the wise man, *but he that confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy*†. Confession of sin is a part of the daily service of our Church, and if we sincerely and *penitently* join in this service, we shall receive the benefit of God's effectual pardon, pronounced in the absolution that follows it by his own ambassador, commissioned, amongst other ends, for that very purpose‡.

We *tempt* God then under this head, when we are so far from confessing our sins, that we take every possible pains to hide and conceal them ; when also we despise the persons of God's ministers, and turn a deaf ear to their entreaties and warnings. Thus indeed we escape or

\* 2 Corinthians, v. 18, 19. † Proverbs, xxviii. 13.

‡ 2 Corinthians, v. 20.

despise the advice and reproof of man for our good, which would lead us to repentance and conversion, but we fall into the hands of the living God, *who spieth out all our ways*, and who will in the end cause us to eat the bitter fruits of all our evil deeds and practices.

The spiritual *house* to which the soul is to flee for refuge and shelter from the calamities and storms that threaten it in this transitory and mutable world, is the *church of God*, of which Christ, the rock of ages, *is the chief cornerstone*, and which is *built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets*\*. As Noah was saved in the *ark* from perishing in the waters by which the old world was destroyed, so, if we continue faithful members of Christ's church, shall *we* be saved from the destruction which shall overtake the world that now is, from that *day of the Lord which shall come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens shall pass away with great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and all the works that are therein shall be burnt up*†.

\* Ephesians, ii. 20.

† 2 Peter, iii. 10.

Those *tempt* God, in the view I am now taking, very grievously, who merely to satisfy their own private humours, and to gratify their *itching ears*, desert the Church of Christ established amongst us, *to heap unto themselves teachers* who mostly know not *what they say nor whereof they affirm*, so that having *turned away their ears from the truth, they are turned unto fables\**, are led to believe not the Gospel of Christ, but the inventions and fictions of ignorant and uninstructed, and at the same time confident, and conceited men—who say, *We are they that ought to speak, our lips are our own, who is Lord over us†?* When *the blind lead the blind*, it is no wonder if *both fall into the ditch‡*. These persons, being, as it were, placed upon a pinnacle of the temple, instead of descending to worship God in his house, cast themselves down, in the fond and vain hope, that as they are God's peculiar favourites, he will still make them his care and keep them in safety; when all the while they

\* 1 Timothy, i. 7. 2 Timothy, iii. 3, 4. † Psalms, xii. 4.

‡ Matthew, xv. 14.

are wanderers from his ways, being deluded by their own ignorance, emptiness, and self-opinion, of which those who lie in wait to deceive, make their advantage.

And now, my brethren, let us, induced by the various considerations I have suggested, endeavour to keep our minds always in a *sober* state, neither depressed by distrust, nor inflated by presumption. Let us place our whole confidence and faith in God, and devoutly have constant recourse to those means which he has appointed. Thus shall we never *tempt* our God to forsake us, but shall ever receive such seasonable supplies of Grace as will enable us to withstand every attempt of the enemy of our souls, and finally bring us to everlasting life, through Jesus Christ our only Saviour and Redeemer.



## SERMON VI.

---

MATTHEW, iv. 8, 9.

*“ Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high Mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them : and saith unto him, all these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.”*

**W**ould you not expect, that the prince of the powers of darkness, must have been convinced by the result of the two temptations with which he had already assailed the great *Prince of the powers of light*, that his attempt must infallibly end in confusion and defeat? But no, Satan still was unwilling to relinquish

the pernicious dominion that he had acquired over the souls of the descendants of Adam ; and though he felt that his throne already began to totter, yet was he determined to make one more effort, and that of a nature which he judged most likely to answer his malignant purpose. In his former temptations he had made our Saviour no offer of *personal* advantage, to seduce him from the path of duty, he had solely availed himself of the circumstances in which he was placed ; but being foiled in every attempt, as a last resource, he now has recourse to an effort and an offer which he thinks cannot be resisted, for he had probably found by experience that ambition and the love of power and splendor had succeeded the best of any of the gilded baits with which he had tempted the eyes and appetites of the most exalted and noble spirits amongst mankind. Thus he acts with the sons of men in general. He makes the best bargain in his power, and if he can prevail with them to do his work for little or nothing, he will not add a mite to their wages. Like Pharaoh of old, who was a type

of him, he will sometimes only find them with straw, at other times, when he thinks he has got them compleatly at his disposal, he will even demand his tale of bricks without it: and when he promises *most*, he never keeps his word with his subjects, so that when they expect to eat the most delicious fruits of Paradise, in their mouths, like the fabled apples of Sodom, they become dust and ashes, gall and bitterness.

There are three things that principally deserve attention in the temptation we are now to consider.

I. The *place* which the tempter choose for it. *An exceeding high mountain.*

II. The *scene* which he there shewed to our Saviour. *All the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them.*

III. The *offer* of the tempter. *All these things will I give thee.*

IV. The *condition* which he annexed to this vast gift. *If thou wilt fall down and worship me.*

I. To begin with the *first* of the circumstances here enumerated.—The *place* which the

devil chose for this temptation, an exceeding high mountain. *Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain.* When Moses was about to die, God caused him to ascend a lofty mountain, from which he shewed him that good land which the children of Israel, under his successor Joshua, both in name and office a type of our Saviour, were about to inherit\*. Whether Satan, in the present instance, had the presumption to imitate this proceeding of the Almighty we are not informed, but it seems not improbable, when the two cases are considered with attention, that he might have such a design. Perhaps the blasphemous inference he meant to insinuate was this. God, from a mountain, shewed Moses the land of Canaan, which he would not suffer him to set his foot in ; thus exciting in him a strong desire to enjoy that fertile and beautiful country merely to disappoint it. I also shew you from a mountain all the glories of this goodly world, not to disappoint you, but to give you full

\* Deuteronomy, xxxiv. 1—4.

possession of what your eyes must convince you is so desirable. But he did not suggest, what our Saviour well knew, that in the vision of the land of Canaan, which God exhibited to Moses from the summit of Pisgah on mount Nebo, there was placed before him a symbolical representation, inasmuch as the earthly Canaan was a type of the heavenly, of that more glorious inheritance and land of higher promise, to which God was about to remove him; so that this was to him a foretaste and earnest of that happiness in a better country which he was soon, through the mercy of God, to enjoy, and that without fear of change. While the devil's object was to seduce our Saviour into the commission of a deadly sin which would deprive him of all title to that glorious, universal, and everlasting kingdom, to inherit which in due time he was sent into the world.

What mountain it was that the tempter chose upon this occasion is not stated by the Evangelists, it is only described as being exceedingly high. Whether he carried Jesus to mount Nebo, and placed him on the top of Pisgah, or

whether the mountain was nearer to Jerusalem cannot be known. There is a very lofty mountain, between that city and Jericho, called Quarantana, which tradition asserts to have been the spot\*: but this is a matter of little importance. A high mountain was doubtless chosen because from it there would be a very extensive horizon and a boundless prospect.

II. And this brings us to consider, in the second place, the *scene* which the devil exhibited to our Saviour from the height to which he had transported him. *All the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them.* There are two interpretations of these words. Some contend, that by them is merely signified, that the devil pointed to all the countries that he could *see* from the eminence on which he stood, and then directed our Saviour's attention to those that were situated beyond them on all sides. But this interpretation cannot at all be made to agree with the expression, that the evil spirit *shewed* him all these kingdoms and the *glory*

\* Maundrell quoted in Bp. Porteus's *Lectures*, i. 92. 3rd. Edition.

of them. How he could be said to *shew* him what was not within the range of his vision, I cannot understand: as for such as he *could* see, part of Arabia, the country of Ammon and Moab, and a part of Judea,—these except Jerusalem and her august temple, were mostly without any striking magnificence and glory, and all tributaries to the Roman Power. The more common interpretation therefore appears to me the true one. That the devil was empowered to place before our Saviour, in a vision, all the most powerful kingdoms and empires of the earth, or at least the principal one, at that time, the Roman\*, with every concomitant of splendor and pleasure that unbounded wealth and sway, usually place within the reach of the masters of the world, and this, in order most effectually and powerfully to excite his desire and the lust of conquest and dominion.

This interpretation receives some confirmation from God's exhibition to Moses, from the summit of Pisgah, to which I have before called

\* See Lightfoot's *Harmony of the Evangelists* on verse 8th.

your attention. For we read that from this eminence, *The Lord shewed him all the land of Gilead unto Dan, and all Naphtali, and the land of Ephraim and Manasseh, and all the land of Judah unto the utmost sea, and the south and the plain of the valley of Jericho, the city of palm trees unto Zoar\**. Now the whole of the promised land could not have been seen *naturally* from this station, but *God shewed it him*, that is either in a vision, or by some physical action, either on his organs of sight†, or the atmosphere, caused it to appear to him.

But to proceed—The object of the evil spirit was now to lead his heart astray by his eye, that he might lust immoderately for what he saw. What the Almighty shewed to the Jewish Lawgiver was not the works of *man*, nor the glories of *his* fabrication; these to the prophet, just ready to bid a final adieu to them, would have imparted no pleasure; but they were his

\* Deuteronomy, xxxiv. 1—3. † I have lately seen an account of a person in the Isle of France, that from some peculiarity in his organs of vision, could see ships approaching the Island two or three days before other people.



own glorious works exhibited by a fertile and diversified country. Lebanon cloathed with his eternal forests and mighty cedars. The fruitful valleys amid the lesser hills and eminences. Jordan in all his glory fertilizing the country through which he flowed. Sion, that holy hill, on which the city and temple of the king of kings were to be erected, and where, in distant ages, the Messiah was to preach the word of truth, and to be offered up an atonement for the sins of the whole world; and from whence those were to go forth who should carry the glad tidings of the gospel to every nation under heaven. *How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things\*!*

The devil, on the contrary, had no design, or desire to direct Christ's attention to the *works of God*, which reflect, as from a mirror, an image of his glory, and duly considered lead the mind to the worship of the Creator: but to fix his ardent gaze upon *the works of man*, and

\* Romans, x. 15. comp. Isaiah, lii. 7.

all those fading splendors, and that transitory magnificence, with which the throne of the possessors of powerful and extensive kingdoms and empires is usually surrounded and rendered glorious. On one side, would the tempter give him a rapid glance at the ancient and primitive monarchies of the eastern world, of Parthia and India, and shew him the kings of those vast regions, renowned far and wide for their unbounded wealth, sitting upon their lofty and glorious thrones, decked with dazzling gems and gold, and surrounded by multitudes of their subjects and vassals with their faces prone to the earth, and in a posture of adoration. Then in an instant, desiring him to look round on the other side, he would bid him fix his chief attention on the mighty empire of the west, and her vast and splendid metropolis proudly seated on her seven boasted hills, eternal and imperial Rome, that great city, which, as the prophet-apostle describes her, *was clothed in fine linen, and purple and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls\**. In the midst

\* Revelations, xvii. 4.

of her, he would point out to him her imperial master, the prince of the kings of the earth, and adored as a demi-god, sitting in his triumphal chariot, celebrating his victories over the conquered nations of the globe, followed by a long array of jubilant soldiers, and the countless myriads of a shouting populace, with captive kings and princes and their weeping subjects, now reduced to hopeless slavery, walking in his train\*. After shewing the *personal* glory of the mighty ones of the earth, he would doubtless exhibit to him the splendor, beauty and magnificence that made their palaces and buildings, and the residence and presence-chamber of their glory stupendous monuments of the science, art and skill of the builders that erected them, and the wonder of all succeeding ages. He would include in the sudden vision the

\* It may be objected that no Roman triumph was celebrated at the time of this event, but as the evil spirit exhibited to our Saviour the *glories* of the kingdoms of the world, which must be by a scenical representation in a vision, and the triumph was one of the principal and most exciting of Roman glories, the Author trusts he is justified in introducing it.

theatres and amphitheatres, and other places appropriated to their public spectacles and shews ; and also the sumptuous entertainments, and the varied delights for the eye and the ear, with which every sense of the masters of the world was regaled and sated, whether they reposed in their gardens of pleasure, which seemed to rival Eden itself, or in their golden halls of joy\*.

In fact, in this visionary scene was probably represented to our Saviour, every thing that could allure the sense, every thing that could delight the eye, every thing that could elevate the imagination to thoughts of pride, height, and ambition. So that it may be said that all temptations were included in this one. Here was what spoke to *the lust of the flesh* ; here was what spoke to *the lust of the eyes* ; here was what spoke to *the pride of life*. In this was concentrated all the power, and fraud, and poison of that old serpent the devil, who called the

\* The palaces of the Roman Emperors were of wonderful magnificence ; Nero's was called the Golden Palace. *Universal History*, 2nd. Edition, xiii. 15.

attention of Eve to a tree representing *all that is in the world*; and overwhelmed her at once by this triple temptation: *So that she put forth her hand, and took of the fruit and did eat: and gave to her husband and he did eat\**.

When Satan had thus placed within the range of our Saviour's eye all that he thought was calculated to excite every appetite to which he knew there was an avenue by means of that organ; for he had full experience, that by nothing are the sons of men so soon led astray as by the *eye*, and that by nothing are the wanton, and evil, and covetous, and proud desires of the heart so soon put in action—for Achans' eye had led him to covet the consecrated things†; David's eye had allured him to covet his neighbours wife‡; Ahabs' eye had led him to covet his neighbours land§; and Job was obliged to make a covenant with his eyes||, to enable him to walk warily, and having done all, to stand.—When he had thus, as he supposed, excited

\* Genesis, iii. 6. † Joshua, vii. 21. ‡ 2 Samuel, xi. 2—4. § 2 Chronicles, xii. 2—9. || Job, xxx. 1.

a whole host of appetites, he comes to what I next proposed to consider.

III. His offer. *All these things will I give thee.* However vast, nay infinite all these things may seem. However beyond measure high, and glorious, and goodly, and pleasant, and desireable,—All shall be thine. And this is a far greater gift than I ever before offered to any son of Adam. Neither the Egyptians when under Shishak\*, they overran a vast portion of the earth†; nor the Babylonians in the height of Nebuchadnezzar's *golden‡* glory; nor the empire of the Medes and Persians; nor that of the Grecian king Alexander, who with astonishing rapidity possessed himself, as was foretold by the prophet Daniel§, of the throne of that empire, and rode on *conquering and to conquer*; nor even the haughty emperors who

\* Probably the Sesostris or Sesonchosis of Profane History. See Champollion's *Seventh letter from Egypt*, quoted in the *Literary Gazette*. February, 28th, 1829.

† For an account of this conqueror, see *Universal History*, 1. 284.—Ed. 1779.

‡ Thou art this head of *gold*. Daniel, ii. 38. § *Ib.* vi. 3—7, 20, 21.

now rule the largest portion of the known world, Rome's mighty masters clad in purple, who have trod down the earth and subdued it, and broken it in pieces\* ; not any one, nor all of these great monarchies have possessed an empire so extensive as I will give to thee, *for all kings shall bow down unto thee, and all nations shall serve thee* ; thou shalt reign sole master of the whole terrestrial globe, and all the glories and pleasures of the earth, shall be at thy sole disposal.

This was probably the evil spirit's vast offer: and since he is not permitted to tempt any one *above that he is able to bear*†, and this was the greatest and most magnificent offer ever made to any descendant of Adam, we may conclude that he who was thus *permitted* to be tempted, was more than man.

But an objection, and seemingly a weighty one, may be urged against the statement here made of the vastness of this gilded bait, composed of worldly power, glory, and pleasure,

\* Daniel, ii. 40.

† 1 Corinthians, x. 13.

with which in this temptation, I suppose, the faith and senses of our Saviour to be assailed : for if we turn to the account of the transaction given by St. Luke, we read that the devil shewed him all the kingdoms of the world *in a moment of time*\*. If however this expression be interpreted strictly, it will contradict St. Matthew's account, that he shewed him *all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them*, which must occupy more than a *moment*, even if by the term *world* Palestine, as some suppose, alone was meant. We must therefore understand by the word *moment* or *point*, a very short and rapid survey, though occupying more than a *literal* moment, and sufficient to convey to the spectator such an idea of the kingdoms of the world, and their glory, as may excite in his mind a strong desire to possess and enjoy what he saw. As a flash of lightning, when it enlightens the world in the *night*, brings out, as it were, every thing from darkness into distinct vision, so that in a *moment* the whole face of

\* Luke, iv. 5.



nature is seen in glory, and the eye just glances over the lovely prospect, when it is again veiled in the darkness, till a second flash darting from one end of the heaven to the other reveals to the beholder, according to his situation, the same or a different scene. So we may imagine that the kingdoms of the world, each exhibiting its appropriate glories, might successively and distinctly be shewn to our Saviour, so that his eye, though it could *dwell* upon no single object, might take in the whole of the scene, and there might be caused in his mind that strong excitement and eager desire which it was the devil's aim to produce by so sudden and glorious a spectacle. But whether the exhibition was successive or simultaneous, still I must contend that one part of the passage must be so understood as not contradict the other. It must further be observed, that as Messiah was in due time *to inherit all nations\**, it is by no means improbable that Satan should tempt him to a premature occupation of his inheritance, unac-

\* Psalms; lxxxii. 8.

accompanied by any intermediate state of suffering.

A moral reason may be assigned for the use of an expression, indicating a very transient glimpse of this spectacle; one intention of it may have been to impress upon the mind the short, the momentary duration, compared with eternity, of the possession of all worldly domination and glory, and to inculcate that lesson afterwards delivered by our Lord to his disciples, *What is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul\**.

But to return to our immediate subject. It may be asked—Had the devil really all the power that he claims, for St. Luke relates that he said, *All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them; for that is delivered unto me, and to whomsoever I will I give it†?* Has God then delivered up the earth to the disposal of the evil spirit? Is it not written—*Promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. But God is the*

\* Matthew, xvi. 26.      † Luke, iv. 6.

*judge, he putteth down one and setteth up another\**? And again—*The Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will†*? God most certainly has not given up his power over the earth, and the disposal thereof according to the decree of his all-wise providence, into the hands and subject to the absolute direction of the evil spirit. Independently of his will, nothing is or can be done here below. But that the devil has a *kingdom* upon earth, and a numberless host of subjects that submit to his dominion and obey his laws, must be clear to every one who observes the course of the world and reads the Scriptures. So we are told, that, *He is a king over the children of pride‡*, and *the ruler of the darkness of this world§*. Wherever idolatry and the worship of false gods, wherever important errors in doctrine, by which the light of truth and of the gospel is greatly obscured, so as to lead men into dangerous mistakes as to the nature of the Covenant of Grace, and its

\* Psalms, lxxv. 6, 7. † Daniel, iv. 32. ‡ Job, xli. 34.  
§ Ephesians, vi. 12.

fruits ; wherever such principles and forms of Religion, naturally producing an overflow of immorality, are established and rendered paramount, there Satan may be said to *reign* more or less. Again when unprincipled and wicked men are set in high stations, and are placed upon a throne that *frameth mischief by a law*\* ; and when the truth is by them discouraged, persecuted, and endeavoured to be put out ; these are princes raised and crowned by Satan, with the permission indeed of God—when for the punishment of sinful nations, he decrees to remove their candlestick out of its place†—they are instruments to do his evil work, and they reign in his kingdom.

This kingdom of Satan upon earth was first founded when Adam fell ; but it did not rise in strength and external shew till Cain slew his brother Abel, and went out *from the Presence*, or Church, of the *Lord*‡ : and there was a distinction made between the children of Seth, called by the name of the *Lord*§,

\* Psalms, xciv. 26. † Revelation, ii. 5. ‡ Genesis, iv. 16  
§ Genesis, iv. 26.

or his people and sons; and the children and posterity of Cain, who are called the *sons of men*\*. Then the devil's *kingdom* was openly established, and a false worship set up. And the *glory* of the devil's kingdom consists entirely in the inventions and works of men, every thing that contributes to the false pleasures and delights; the vain pomp and glory; and the mad pride and ambition of carnal, worldly, and wicked men.

If we consult the fourth chapter of Genesis we shall find that all those arts and inventions that relate to this world only, and which when they are *abused* cause us to set up our *rest* in *this* world, and to forget the next, were produced in the line of *Cain*. That unhappy Apostate built the first *city*†, by which probably was meant a place surrounded by some kind of defence. The unceasing dread of vengeance which haunted his evil conscience, probably urged him to this invention. Lamech, Cain's grandson, forgetful of the original sacred law of

\* Genesis, vi. 2. † Ib. iv. 17.

marriage, or not instructed in it, set the first example of polygamy by marrying two wives\* : and to his three sons are we indebted for those arts and inventions that most embellish life, and are most subservient to all our purposes and wants. The eldest, Jabel, *was the father of such as dwell in tents, and such as have cattle*†, being thus the inventor of that art that led at last to the erection of houses for man to dwell in ; the word here rendered *cattle*, means as well *possessions* of any kind ; he may therefore be regarded not only as the first, who to *sheep*, of which Abel kept a flock, added other kinds of cattle, but also as the first who began to collect and accumulate the good things of this world, above what the ordinary wants of life required ; and so have first given rise to any broad distinction of rich and poor. His brother Jubal, *was the father of all that handle the harp and the organ*‡ ; he was therefore the first inventor of those arts that serve for relaxation and amusement, and probably added poetry to

\* Genesis, iv. 19. † Genesis, iv. 20. ‡ Genesis, iv 21. He was probably the Pagan Apollo.

music, for those that handled the harp and the organ, originally sung to them the songs and hymns they had composed. Lamech's third son Tubal-Cain, *was the instructor of every artificer in brass and iron\**, thus introducing the knowledge of the most useful metals, and the method of fabricating them into tools and arms†.

I mention not this remarkable circumstance, that we are indebted to Cain's apostate race for those inventions that led to our most useful arts, the basis of all our comforts ; of individual wealth and distinction ; of our most delightful amusements and occupations ; of all our splendour and magnificence ; I mention it not to depreciate these inventions, which are of the highest importance to us in our present state, and which were adopted by the order of God himself into his worship and service ; but to shew that they are works which constitute that glory, which may be denominated *the glory of this world*, and which when *trusted* in as the

\* Genesis, iv. 22. He was evidently the Pagan Vulcan.

† Some kind of knife however must have been used by Abel, when he slew his victims for sacrifice.

*sole* good that we seek, or are at all anxious about, are *abused* to destruction; and it is to the *undue* and *excessive* love and pursuit of these, that is to be attributed the great majority of those crimes of which men are guilty towards their God or towards each other.

The glory here spoken of, it is not improbable, was by the descendants of Cain cast round their worship, now become corrupt and applied to false objects and not to the true God: it was therefore called in to render more alluring the service and worship of *the prince of the power of the air*\*; under whose influence it was set up and established. And under this view, and in an apostate and idolatrous world, it was a gift of which Satan had the disposal, to give to such of his servants as he pleased. This then was the kingdom, and this the glory, that glory which had its origin in the inventions of apostate men, that the old serpent offered to Jesus, thus endeavouring, if I may so speak, to make an *Antichrist* of Christ himself.

\* Ephesians, ii. 2.



IV. We are now to consider in the last place, the *condition* which the tempter annexes to this great offer, contained in the words—*If thou wilt fall down and worship me.* Here the evil spirit appears at once with his true face and form, and in his proper lineaments and colours. What he aims at in all his temptations is to undermine, and, either by implication or directly, to banish from the hearts of men the fear, the love, and the knowledge of God; to supplant his *reasonable service*; and to set up himself in that sanctuary which belongs to God alone, so that he either shares with God in the worship that is paid, or excludes him entirely; and when he has prevailed with men to set up in their hearts and temples false objects of worship, either to mix creature-worship with the worship of God; or solely to worship creatures, or their symbols and images; he often so besots their benighted minds, and renders them so bigotted to their faith of lies, and their rites of abomination, that they conceive the mad idea and blood-thirsty purpose of compelling other men by pains and penalties, and often by fire and sword,

to conform to them,—thus seducing them from the observance of the two great Commandments both of the Law and the Gospel, the love of God and the love of our neighbour. Thus he wrought in the various idolatrous and polytheistic religions that prevailed, with few exceptions, over all the globe before our Lord's advent, *when darkness covered the earth, and gross darkness the people\**: and thus also subsequently to that happy event, when *the love of the many began to wax cold*†, he gave birth to those two baleful corruptions of religion, which, like a dark cloud, obscured and almost extinguished the light of gospel truth, both in the east and the west: the Mahometan and Papal superstitions, which arose at nearly the same period, *though each in different sort and manner*, to lay waste the Church of Christ. In all totally false religions, which we are taught by scripture, are originally set up at the suggestion of the evil spirit, for it is he which deceiveth the whole world‡, and is the father

\* Isaiah, lx. 2. † Matthew, xxiv. 12. ‡ Revelations xii. 9.

of lies, and in those where the truth is corrupted, and as it were, neutralized by an admixture of fundamental error, there Satan in a greater or less degree, is worshipped in the place of God: as he is also wherever the spirit of love is replaced by a spirit of mutual ill-will and mutual injury. *By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, saith our Lord, if ye have love one to another\**, but whose disciples can we be but the evil spirits, if we hate, *and bite and devour one another†*? Love brings people together, and unites them by one spirit into one body, hatred separates them into sects and parties. *To contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints‡*, is indeed a Christian duty, but this should be done in a Christian spirit. *In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves§*, as advises the most zealous amongst the apostles.

These are some of the ways by which, with regard to their religion, the devil always has tempted and still tempts mankind to worship

\* John, xiii. 35. † Galatians, v. 15. ‡ Jude, 3.

§ 2 Timothy, ii. 25.

himself with or instead of their God; in many cases they do it in ignorance, because they have been brought up in it, and they think it their duty: for these we may pray in the words of our Saviour, *Father forgive them for they know not what they do\**: but where a man falls down and worships this world's god for some beggarly portion of this world's goods, where earthly power and glory are the sole objects that bind him to a false, or even a true religion, where his heart is full of malignant passions, heightened into fury against those that differ from him, that man has purchased his share of the world, and of its glory with his *soul*.

Our Blessed Master, when put to the trial, refused the whole world and all its glories, which the devil we see was permitted to offer him, when set against his soul and our salvation: and surely we ought all, in our degree, to strive to follow his great and generous example. We are not and cannot be tempted as

\* Luke, xxiii. 34.

he was, but our God to try us, permits the evil spirit to make us such offers, as, if we are not greatly wanting to ourselves, and put our trust in God, we shall be enabled to withstand. If we strive to eradicate from our hearts, as much as we can, all the seeds of pride, every fond conceit of ourselves, we shall not listen when he endeavours to lead us into false doctrine, or urges us to separate from our brethren on account of trivial differences or forms. If we cleanse our hearts from an overweening fondness for the glory and good things of this world, we shall turn a deaf ear when he whispers to us, that these are the chief good of life, and that we ought to set our best affections upon them, and look up to them as the only sources of happiness. By persuading men to overvalue these things, he virtually dethrones God in their hearts, and sets himself up in his place; and thus, likewise, he often misleads them into crooked and dishonest modes of procuring what they deem so indispensably necessary to their happiness. But, alas! though these things possess such power over our minds, such a strong

hold on our affections, they *never* fulfil the promise that by them the tempter makes to us: they neither enliven the mind with true joy, nor correspond, in the delight they impart, to the warmth which they are loved and pursued. We sigh for a happiness which we cannot overtake, and feel a void in our hearts that nothing here below can fill.

But let us look up to our Great Exemplar, and observe how little he was affected by all those good things which men usually desire so eagerly, and for which they contend so earnestly. The world and all its glories, we see, were placed at his disposal, and as we are told that *in all things he was tempted like as we are\**, we may conclude that he felt some appetite for these things, that he was really *tempted* by them; but he sustained the conflict gloriously. He refused the world and every thing it had to offer him, and firmly stood his ground against every temptation that could excite him to pride and ambition; to the love of magnificence and

\* Hebrews, iv. 15.

splendor ; of wealth and possessions ; of pleasure and enjoyment. And to reward his unexampled self-control and magnanimity, the world that he refused, and all its real glory, by a divine decree is submitted to his power and dominion, for he is king of kings, and lord of lords ; and the day shall come, when the kingdoms of this world shall become altogether the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ, and if we strive in this respect, to walk as he walked, if we steadily resist the open attacks, and beware of the secret snares of our vile enemy, we shall reign together with Christ in glory, and instead of an *earthly*, shall be made partakers of an *heavenly* Kingdom, and be admitted citizens of *a city that hath foundations, whose maker and builder is God\**. Which that we may all finally do, He of his infinite mercy grant, through the same Jesus Christ our Lord.

\* Hebrews, xi. 10.

## SERMON VII.

---

MATTHEW, iv. 10, 11.

*“ Then Jesus said unto him, Get thee hence Satan : for it is written, Thou shalt worship the LORD thy GOD, and Him only shalt thou serve. Then the devil leaveth him, and behold angels came and ministered unto him.”*

**I**N my last discourse, I cast up for you the large amount of the tempter's offer to Christ in his concluding temptation. The empire of the world, namely, and the full participation and enjoyment of those sublunary glories which the various inventions and arts of *man* have produced, and of which a dominion so extensive would give him the complete investiture and entire disposal. But our Saviour saw clearly



into his drift, and weighed, in an unerring balance, the amount and worth of this seemingly most magnificent and liberal offer. He placed in one scale the world and its glory, and in the other, for a counterpoise, he placed the SOUL: and immediately the world, and all its vain pomp and transitory glory, became as nothing; as empty and worthless as a vision of the night.

When the age of man was extended to nearly a thousand years, as in the case of the antediluvian patriarchs, yet even then the enjoyment of the world, if rested in as the *chief* good, though for so long a period, and at the outset of life seemingly so endless, was nothing, a mere passing shadow, compared with eternal existence, an existence, whether in weal or woe, that *never, never, never* ends. God in his mercy and wisdom, seeing how prone men were, in consequence of so prolonged a period, to give themselves up to carnal delights, and to let loose the reins to every appetite, gradually shortened the term of human life. How brief then, how infinitely brief in the comparison

with eternity, is the little space of three-score years and ten, or four-score years, which now comprehends the duration of mortals! To enjoy the *world*, and the *whole world*, and *all its glory*, for that *short* period; and then to spend *eternity* in *outer darkness*; to be preyed upon by the worm that never dies; to feel the fury of unquenchable fire. Who will not own that, this duly considered, the exchange of the soul for the whole world is a *miserable* bargain, and that it is sold, as it were, for *nothing*? And who will not see, that one soul, which will exist for the ages of eternity, is really of more worth and value, than this entire perishable globe, and all the *material* beings it contains; nay than the whole solar system, or all the *material* systems of the universe?

All this, which *we* so seldom see or think of, our Blessed Saviour, whose spiritual eye was clear and purged from all delusions of the flesh and of the mind, saw at once; the whole and entire malignity of the evil spirit was apparent to him, and with all the calm dignity which is consistant with a holy indignation, he manifes-

ted his sense of that malignity and his power over him, saying—*Get thee hence Satan, for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve.*

In the text the following circumstances are remarkable.

I. The *authority* which Jesus now assumes over the devil, implied in that indignant command, *Get thee hence Satan.*

II. A *double duty towards God*, altogether inconsistent with the condition proposed by the tempter of falling down and worshipping him, *to worship him and to serve him only.*

III. The *final delivery of our Blessed Master*, after his threefold victory, *from the presence and machinations of this bad spirit*, and the appearance and ministry of the *holy angels* to relieve, recruit, and console him after the long and arduous trials to which he had been subjected.

I. We see that Jesus now assumes *authority* over the evil spirit, and dismisses him with an indignant *command*. In the former temptations, he scarcely makes it appear whether he

was aware that it was that spirit who had so fraudulently and artfully attempted to subvert his faith in the *first*, and to excite him to presumption and spiritual pride in the *second*. With so much coolness and calmness does he rebut him, and defeat his insidious attempts, without alluding in the least to his character as the tempter and original seducer of mankind. These temptations, as they regarded *himself* solely in the character of *Messiah*, did not excite him to any degree of warmth or indignation. But when the honour and worship of his *Father* were concerned, as in the temptation we have last considered, *the fire kindles*, and at last he speaks with his tongue, in terms which shew his heart was moved within him, at the impious proposal; and he authoritatively commands from his presence the adversary of God and man, who had thus presumed to tempt him from his allegiance to the Supreme Being, and lets him at once see that he both knew him, and had irresistible power and authority over him. At the same time though his heart was hot within him, he brings against

him no railing accusation, but rebukes him with calm and majestic dignity, commanding him to be gone, and remember that God alone is to be worshipped and served.

We may observe in our Blessed Master's whole behaviour, upon every occasion, a degree of patience under affront, provocation, insult, and indignity of every kind, that shewed an entire self-possession, and imperturbable equanimity that were wonderful and super-human. We never see his temper lose its calmness; even when he upbraids the Scribes and Pharisees with their crimes and hypocrisy\*, he does it in a way that shews no tumult in his spirit, no turbulent emotion; and the terms that he employs are such as were best calculated to answer his purpose—if possible to rouse them, by foretelling the inevitable consequences of their wickedness, and of the crimes they committed under the mask of religion; and to deter others from following their example.

\* Matthew, xxiii. 13, to the end.

How contrasted, in this particular, was his conduct, with that of even *the very best and holiest* of the sons of men. Moses, who is recorded to have been the *meekest* of men\*, yet sinned through *anger*†. Job, who was equally noted for his *patience* under affliction, could not bear the injudicious reflections of his friends. St. Paul and St. Barnabas, those two eminent and glorious vessels of grace, by whose ministry a large portion of the world was converted to the faith and practice of the gospel, had so sharp a contention that they parted asunder one from the other‡. All these, and other failings of righteous men are recorded in Scripture—to shew, in the first place, that *there is no man that sinneth not*§, Christ alone was without sin; another probable reason was that *men* might thereby be induced to make due allowance for the infirmities and frailties of *men*, and to judge themselves rather than their neighbours; a third reason might be, that the servants of God, when they are so unhappy as

\* Numbers, xii. 3. † Ib xx. 10—12. ‡ Acts, xv. 39.

§ 1 Kings, viii. 46.

to fall into *sin*, might not at the same time fall into *despair*, to which the tempter will endeavour to drive them, but being encouraged by God's mercy shewn in raising up others, be induced thereby to look up to him with confidence for help to enter again into the paths of righteousness: and that sinners of every description might thereby be induced to return to God by a sincere repentance, since they see, by scripture examples, that there are no sins so deadly as not to be capable of pardon, and which are not *recorded* to have been pardoned.

Our Blessed Master *left us an example that we should follow his steps\**, and we ought all to endeavour to imitate him in that self-possession which so wonderfully fitted him to act with effect upon the minds of men, and to take advantage of circumstances so as to turn them to his purpose, and to the good of souls. And God grant to us all, and especially to those who most need it, *the ornament and blessing of a meek and quiet spirit†*.

\* 1 Peter, ii. 21.      † Ib. iii. 4.

II. The next thing remarkable in the text, is a *double* duty towards God, quite inconsistent with the condition upon which the devil offers his gifts. *It is written, Thou shalt worship the LORD thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve.*

We are told, concerning the colonists whom the King of Assyria,—after he had conquered the children of Israel, and carried them into captivity,—had placed in Samaria, and the territory of the ten tribes, that, *they feared the Lord, and served their own Gods\**. And this is what the evil spirit often aims at, to cause us to satisfy ourselves with a kind of half-religion, to make us *profess* to worship God, while our *hearts* are far from him. This happens, when for forms sake merely, and to be reputed religious, we go to God's house, hear his word, join in his ordinances, receive his sacraments, while our *whole affections* are given some idol of this world, which the devil has set up before us, and persuaded us to fall down

\* 2 Kings, xvii. 38.



and worship in conjunction with the Lord our God. Thus to him we render only the fruit of our lips, while the latter possesses all our heart and services. Our Saviour has expressly told us, *Ye cannot serve God and Mammon\**; intimating that our attention and regard to the things of this world must be subordinate to the fear and love of God. We may *desire* these things, and *labour* for these things, and *possess* these things without *sin*; provided that desire is regulated by our duty to God. We are to offer up upon his altar the first fruit of our affections. He himself, as a kind father, in the words of the wise man, thus addresses the children of his love, *My son give me thy heart†*, and we are taught as soon as we can speak, *To love the Lord our God, with all our heart, with all our mind, with all our soul, and with all our strength*, but if we endeavour to render him this, his due, and led by this love, strive to keep his commandments‡, the world and the things thereof will be *sanctified* to us, we shall

\* Matthew, vi. 24. † Proverbs, xxiii. 26. ‡ John, xiv. 21.

*use* them, and not *abuse* them\*, we shall enjoy them during the time they are lent to us, and not *worship* them, and the devil in them, by doing his work and serving him: and as we do not place our *first* happiness in them, if God sees fit to take them from us, we shall not murmur nor lose our happiness, but under every affliction cry out with the divine Psalmist; *Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee. My flesh and my heart faileth, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever*†.

But to be more particular. I must observe that a twofold duty is included in these words, —To *worship* God *only*, and to *serve* him *only*. First, we must *worship* God *only*. This relates especially to our religious approaches to him, both in public and private. The offences of the sons of Adam, in this respect, against their Almighty Creator, are numerous and flagrant. Some worship him not at all, but instead thereof, worship his and their own great enemy, the

\* 1 Corinthians, vii. 31. † Psalms, lxxiii. 26.

devil, under various names and forms; and their besotted heart, under his influence, persuades them to fall down before stocks and stones, and other idols, which can neither see, nor hear, nor speak, nor move. Others worship the heavenly bodies and the elements. Others again, as the Mahometans and Socinians, or Unitarians, who believe in one supreme God, worship him only in the *unity* of his *essence*, denying all distinction of *persons* in his Godhead; thus rejecting the only doctrine that affords solid grounds of hope and comfort for *sinner*s; the incarnation of the Son of God, the atonement and satisfaction made by him for the sins of the whole world; and the gift of the Divine Spirit to renew and rectify our fallen nature, to be the principle of our spiritual life, our comfort in affliction, our support in danger, and our guide through the valley of the shadow of death, to the regions of eternal life and light. Others that profess to believe *these* great truths, as the Roman Catholics, have diminished and almost nullified their efficacy by presuming to add to them their own inventions, and to place

their own traditions upon the same level with the word of God, which they have shut up from the generality of the members of their church; rendering a large portion of that honour, worship, and affection that are due to God only, to angels and dead men and women; and instead of putting their whole trust and confidence in God, and looking solely to the merits of Christ for justification and final acceptance, adding to them the supposed merits of sinful men, as if any one could do more than his duty\*, and redeem his brother†, in any degree, by any good actions he has to spare: turning people also from works of righteousness and christian charity, and instead, causing them to put faith in the imagined efficacy of the bones and other relics of those they account as saints, and in pilgrimages to places of supposed sanctity; in penances and self-tormentings and similar vanities, borrowed from the Pagans, as atoning for sin, effecting miraculous cures, and conveying some blessing or benefit to those

\* Luke, xvii. 10.

† Psalms, xlix. 7.

who seek to them : being guilty finally of the grossest idolatry in bowing down and worshipping the images of our Saviour, of the Virgin Mary, and of the numerous *saints*, some of them deserving a *contrary* appellation, who fill their calendar.

These are the principal ways observable amongst men of departing from, or corrupting by human inventions the true worship of God. And even amongst those that fall down before the true God *only*, and worship him *rightly* in his several relations of Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier, there are many that err deeply by not worshipping him in a right *spirit*. Many, in whose hearts the love of this world is predominant, worship him with a very low degree of *Faith*, and join the public assemblies of his people merely out of *form*. Now *without faith*, we are expressly assured, *it is impossible to please God\**, and consequently to worship him aright. Others worship him without *Humility*. These have either a high opinion of

\* Hebrews, xi. 6.

themselves on account of their supposed merits and good works, or, as has been before observed, they regard themselves as the favourites and *elect* of God, and despise their less confident brethren as reprobates. Of this description, usually, are those who misled by a fond and overweening self-esteem, and wishing to stand apart in worship from those whom they thus look down upon as profane persons, *separate themselves\** from the body of Christian people, who assemble in the Christian Church under their regularly ordained and duly authorized ministers, either to *take this honour unto themselves†* and become preachers, or to attend the conventicle of some other schismatic. Others again worship God without *Fear*, and this is a body, if we may judge from appearance, far too numerous in our religious assemblies; these inconsiderate men address the Great Creator of heaven and earth, on whom their all depends—who can crush them to atoms in a moment, and who has the entire disposal of body and

\* Jude, 19. † Hebrews, v. 4.

soul, both with regard to their temporal and eternal welfare—with the same indifference, and with as little reverence, as if he were a man, their equal, or their own familiar friend : and amongst enthusiasts and seceders from the church, this indecent familiarity is often carried to the most disgusting extreme. Others, lastly, worship God without *Love*. These persons are often so oppressed with the sense of his more awful attributes, of his Justice, Righteousness, and Holiness ; and of the vengeance denounced by him against sin, and impenitent sinners, that in looking at him as a *Judge* surrounded with terrors, they lose sight of him as a kind and merciful *Father*, whose very essence is LOVE\*, and *who willeth not that ANY should perish, but that all should come to repentance, and to the knowledge of the truth and be SAVED*†. *Who so loved the world that he gave his Only Begotten Son, to the end that all that believe in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life*‡. As a good child goes to

\* 1 John, iv. 8. † 2 Peter, iii. 9. 1 Timothy, ii. 4.

‡ John, iii. 16.

a good and kind *father*, so should we approach our God—with a due, but not overwhelming sense of his power and authority over us, and likewise of his fatherly good-will and loving-kindness towards us, and of his *desire* to make us happy both here and hereafter. Then shall we go before him, whether in our closet or in his house, with a godly fear and reverence on account of the first, and with a filial love and hearty affection on account of the second : and then will he most certainly hear us, and forgive us our sins, and answer our prayers, and prosper us in our path, and lead us by the hand, holding us up and guiding us, till he finally bring us to himself.

You may learn, from what has been here stated, how you may worship your God acceptably. In the first place, that your approach to the Great Father of the spirits of all flesh, since you are sinners and cannot stand in your own righteousness, must be made through the alone Mediator, between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, who hath said, *I am the way, and the truth, and the life, no man cometh un-*



*to the Father but by me\**. That you must with a humble and contrite spirit, with love chastened by reverence and filial fear, in full faith approach the throne of grace, and make known your requests unto God, for pardon, peace, and spiritual strength; and for any worldly blessings of which you and yours may stand in need; at the same time with a thankful heart acknowledging those favours that you have already received. Thus shall ye worship the Lord your God with *holy* worship, and thus shall ye *worship none other but him*.

This is the *first* part of the duty included in the words on this occasion quoted by our Saviour, which enjoins the *alone* and right worship of God, the *second* is like unto it, and enjoins his *alone* service. *Him only shalt thou serve*. Those that *worship* God aright must go further, and endeavour to *serve* him aright. These are the two great branches of the christian tree, Worship and Service; and it is astonishing with what persevering indus-

\* John, xiv. 6.

try and assiduity, that he may render the man imperfect in his duty towards his Maker, the devil directs his efforts either against the one or against the other, making some men trust to the *worship* without the service, and others to the *service* without the worship, but neither can exist independently of the other, for those only are God's true *worshippers* that also serve him; and those only are his true *servants* that also worship him. There can be no *living* faith without works, and no *good* works without faith, whoever separate these two, lead men into a deadly and soul-destroying error.

You have just heard in how many ways men worship God and his enemy at the same time, let us next see how they endeavour to reconcile the *service* of these two opposite masters. But I must first guard you against misinterpreting what I have said above. When we are enjoined to serve God only, the words are not to be understood so *strictly*, as if we were thereby forbidden to serve any one else. But the precept means that we are to serve God *first*, and corresponds with that injunction of

our Saviour's, *Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness\**. All other services are to be subordinate to the service of God; that is to say, in obeying the commands of our *other* lawful masters, we are to be careful in the first place that we do not break any of *his* laws. And with this caution upon our spirits, when we render due service to *them*, we are said, in scripture, to serve *him*. Thus the Apostle admonishes *servants*, in words which every servant ought to remember. *Servants*, says he, *be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ. Not with eye-service, as men-pleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; with good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men†*. When *subjects* also, in the fear of God, obey their prince, and those that are in authority under him, when *Christians* hearken to the spiritual admonitions of their *pastors*; when *inferiors* are

\* Matthew, vi. 33. † Ephesians, vi. 5,—7.

respectful to their *superiors*; and men in general endeavour to serve and help each other —at the same time, if they do this from a right motive, they are serving God. In fact a very considerable part of the right service of God consists in the due discharge of these relative duties. And it is here, as much as any where, that in these last days, the evil spirit aims at persuading Christians to mix his service with that of their God. From him and from his agents is derived that spirit of insubordination; that want of respect and reverence for our governors and superiors in Church and State; that discontent with the order of things that God hath established amongst us, and with the dispensations of his providence, that mark the present eventful and fearful times\*. Such times Saint Peter foresaw, and foretold, when he describes as one of the characters of those false teachers that should *privily bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought*

\* When this Sermon was preached the times answered the character here ascribed to them, better than they do now.

*them, that they should despise government—and speak evil of dignities\*.*

The most effectual way of serving God only, is always to keep our minds awake to this important truth, that the doing of *one* part of our duty will not excuse or atone for our neglect of *another*; nor will our *keeping one* commandment save us harmless if we wilfully *break another*. *Whoever*, says the Apostle James, *shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all*†. Whatever be the law of God that we live in the *habitual* breach of, we despise the authority of him who made it, we must therefore strive to render our service, however *imperfect, universal*, and with the good Psalmist, *have respect unto all the commandments*‡ of our God. For when we indulge in any sinful habit, we are so far the devil's servants, and do not serve the Lord our God only.

III. Nothing now remains but to consider the last member of my text, the final delivery

\* 2 Peter, ii. 1, 10. † James, ii. 10. ‡ Psalms, cxix. 6.

of our Blessed Lord and Master from the presence and machinations of the evil spirit, and the appearance and ministry of the Holy Angels to relieve, recruit, and console him after the various and arduous trials and temptations to which he had so long been subjected. Every art of the tempter had now been tried; every weapon of his malice had now been shot, his quiver had been emptied of all its fiery darts; and nothing was now left for him, but the shame and disgrace of his defeat. No wonder, then, that he hastens to make his escape from the scene of his discomfiture, and the person of his conqueror; but doubtless he departs in rage and fury, that all his devices and designs against the posterity of Adam, through their Great High Priest and Captain, had so completely failed. We learn from Saint Luke that he departed from him *for a season\**, determined, we may be sure, if he could not tempt him to sin, that he would take the first favourable opportunity to set his agents upon him, and bring him

\* Luke, iv. 13.

to an early and a shameful death ; thus wreaking his *malice* upon him whom he could not seduce, and thus he most effectually wrought the downfall of his own kingdom. It was a tradition amongst the primitive christians, that Satan was ignorant that the death of the Messiah was the appointed mean in the Divine Councils, to restore the lost race of Adam to the favour of Heaven, and this appears consistent with probability ; for it cannot be supposed, that had he been at all aware of this, he would have instigated wicked men to an act which was eventfully to bruise his own head, and deliver mankind from his yoke.

The devil had no sooner left our Saviour, than he began immediately to gather the blessed fruits of the resolute stand that he had made against every device of the tempter : for lo ! Angels came and ministered unto him. These glorious Beings were doubtless witnesses to this great conflict between their King and ours, and the prince of evil spirits and evil men : for although they did not presume to take any part in it, since it was to be solely

our Lord's victory, his *own arm alone was to bring salvation unto him\**, yet the battle, we may conclude, was in their presence: and as kings and conquerors are received with acclamations by their subjects when they have achieved any important victory or conquest, and are met with congratulations by their princes and nobles: so the hosts of angels and archangels would now surround their victorious king, and hail him as the mighty conqueror of that fallen spirit who was once one of the highest and mightiest of the angelic hosts: and install him into his dominion as king of kings, and lord of lords: a dominion the first foundations of which were laid by this glorious victory over him who claimed the world as his kingdom. It may be that, upon this occasion, they would use the prophetic words of the Psalmist, which relate solely Christ as the conqueror of sin and Satan. *Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty. And in thy majesty ride prosperously, because of truth,*

\* Isaiah, lix. 16.



*and meekness, and righteousness, and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things. Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever : the scepter of thy kingdom is a right scepter. Thou lovest righteousness and hatest wickedness : therefore God, thy God hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows\*.*

The same benevolent and exalted spirits will sing their songs of triumph and gratulation over every faithful follower of Christ, that hath withstood the temptations of the devil. And not only this, but they will help him in the conflict, and though unseen, they will minister unto him, recruiting his wearied spirit, and whispering to him—*Blessed is the man that endureth temptation : for when he is tried he shall receive the crown of life†.*

\* Psalms, xlv. 3,—7. † James, i. 12

## SERMON VIII.

---

### FOR GOOD FRIDAY.

LAMENTATIONS, i. 12.

*“ Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by?  
Behold, and see, if there be any sorrow like  
unto my sorrow, which is done unto me,  
wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the  
day of his fierce anger.*

**A**T the very first hearing of these words, every one will immediately perceive that they are the words of some person in the greatest extremities of sorrow and distress, and yet at the same time beheld by all that passed by him without pity or regard. To be afflicted so as no one ever was before, and in such affliction

to meet with no pity from others, what sorrow can, indeed, be like unto *this* sorrow? The afflictions that usually befall the sons of men are such as are common to our nature, there are none so great that others have not felt the like, and this always ministers somewhat to our comfort, what afflictions soever it may please God to lay upon us. And in the heaviest of our troubles, in the deepest of our sorrows, it is a kind of relief to meet with some regard. If we cannot be delivered from them, yet we wish to be pitied, to find that there are some who wish us well, and are disposed to administer every alleviation that our sad case can admit.

But this afflicted one, who here complains so movingly, meets with consolation from none of these sources, he seems to be the outcast both of heaven and earth. Similar expressions concerning some unknown person caused the Ethiopian Eunuch to ask Philip, *Of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself or some other man\**? And you may well ask the same

\* Acts, viii. 34.

question, and may I, by the grace of God, beginning at this Scripture, preach unto you JESUS! For it is of *him* the prophet speaks, or rather he speaks by the prophet. To *him* these words are applied and appropriated by all the ancient writers: and to take them strictly as they stand, they cannot well be applied to any other; for who but he can say with propriety, that no sorrow was ever like unto his sorrow? None, indeed, ever equalled it, or even came near it. This then is the *spirit* of the words; yet, according to the *letter*, they are certainly spoken by Jeremiah in the person of his own people then reduced to great misery, and of the holy city Jerusalem, then laid waste and utterly desolate, by the devouring sword of Nebuchadnezzar.

The various events that befel the patriarchs, prophets, and people of God, *happened unto them*, as the apostle speaks, *for ensamples; and they are written for our admonition\**. Many of them were *types* of the Son of God, and their

\* 1 Corinthians, x. 11.

sufferings *figures* of his great vicarious suffering. Thus the offering of Isaac, the selling of Joseph into Egypt, the calling of Israel out of the same country, the complaint of David,—*My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me,* and this of Jeremiah in my text, are all applicable to *him*: so that he may assume them to himself, and the Church ascribe them to him, with the most perfect fitness and propriety, since he was that great person whose actions and sufferings the holy spirit expressly *meant* to prefigure and point to by these events and speeches.

Be these words then to us, as they were to the primitive Church, the speech of the Son of God, suspended, as on this day, upon his cross, and addressed to such careless worldlings, as pass by this pitiable spectacle without taking any notice of it, as if they had no concern in it. *It is nothing to you, all ye that pass by? Behold, and see, if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger.*

This speech contains two distinct circumstances.

I. *First*, the unparalleled *greatness* of the sufferings of the person who utters it.

II. And *secondly*, the *cause* of those sufferings. To each of these, I claim your earnest attention.

I. To begin with the *first*. We are called upon to behold and see the unparalleled greatness of our Lord's sufferings, in these most affecting words. *Is it nothing to you all ye that pass by? Behold, and see, if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow.* That they may reckon this no common and trivial matter of light concern, to be attended to or let alone as may suit their convenience, our Saviour addresses all Christians this day from his *cross*. He addresses all those that go to and fro about their *own* business, without so much as vouchsafing even on this day of his passion, to think of *him* and look towards *him*. *O all ye that pass by the way, behold and see!* Wherever you are going, whatever your business, however urgent, yet stop and look upon me, for no

business can be of so much consequence to you as this.

But we that are now assembled, have stayed all our other business, and are here before God to have Jesus Christ upon his cross set before us, we are *ready to behold and see*. But what is it we are to behold and see? His *sorrow*.— And sorrow nature herself inclines us to behold, since we ourselves are in the body, and liable to sorrow, both from bodily and mental suffering. Therefore every good eye will turn and look upon them that are in distress, much more upon him whose sorrow was greater than any sorrow, *whose visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men\**.

But he calls to us, not only to *behold* his sorrow, we must also *see* or consider it. We are not to look at it merely with our bodily eyes, and, going our way, immediately forget what manner of sorrow it was; but behold it with the eye of our minds, the eye of faith,

\* Isaiah, lii. 14.

consider it attentively, and lay it up in our memories so as never to be forgotten. All sorrow arises either from what we *feel* or what we *lose*; and accordingly he suffered the excess of pain in his *body*, unutterable agony in his *soul*; and at the same time was bereaved of every *comfort*, and every stay.

Our eye will soon tell us that scarcely any place was left in his body where he might be smitten and was not. He was spit upon and buffeted; his *skin* and *flesh* were rent by the whip and the scourge; his *hands* and *feet* were transfixed by the nails; his *head* and *temples* were wounded by the thorns; his *side* and very *heart* by the point of the spear. Every part and every sense was laden with whatever the wit or malice of man or devil could invent. His blessed body was given as it were an anvil to be beat upon by pitiless and barbarian hands, till it was reduced to the sad condition complained of in the text, till his exceeded all other sorrows. Pilate himself thought the spectacle he exhibited so woful, that it would be sufficient to move the heart and excite the compassion.



and compunction of the most unrelenting of his enemies, and incline them to mercy ; but he was mistaken.

This will convey some idea of the pangs he suffered in *body* ; let us next consider the anguish of his *soul*. For saith the wise man, *The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity, but a wounded spirit who can bear\* ? Now is my soul troubled*, we read in St. John† ; *He was in an agony*, saith St. Luke‡ ; *His soul was exceeding sorrowful even unto death*, we are told by the other Evangelists§. Here was *trouble, anguish, agony, and deadly sorrow*. How deadly we may judge from his sweat in the garden. No violence being offered to him, no man touching or being near him, in the open air in a sharp night, upon the cold earth, to break out into a sweat, and that sweat as it were great drops of blood, making way through his garments and falling to the ground||. Who ever felt any sorrow like the sorrow that occasioned this ? The fire of unutterable agony was kindled in

\* Proverbs, xviii. 14. † John, xii. 27. ‡ xxii. 4.  
§ Matthew, xxvi. 38. Mark, xiv. 34. || Luke, xxii. 44.

his frame, and caused that bloody sweat to break forth from him. What his sufferings were at that hour we neither know nor can conceive, but may close this account of the sorrows of his soul with the petition of the ancient Greek Church.

*By thine unknown sorrows and torments have mercy upon us and deliver us.*

Having considered those sorrows of our Lord which were derived from what we *feel*, we next turn to those which arose from what we *lose*. And here his sorrow is still pre-eminent above that of all other men. You have heard how great were the torments he endured in his *body*, how beyond expression the agonies of his *soul*: to render these complete, nothing was wanting, but for him to meet with no one to *comfort*, or even to *regard* him. Our Blessed Lord on this day, was like a tree which the lightning of heaven hath blasted, and stripped of all its honours, leaf and branch. He was in the first place stripped of all *human* help and comfort. His own people, the Jews, with whom he had conversed all his life—healing them, teaching

them, feeding them, doing them all the good that was in his power—it is they who cry out, *Not this man, but Barabbas. Away with him, crucify him, his blood be upon us, and upon our children.* It is they who treat him with the most shameful indignity and contumely; who in the midst of all his sorrows and torments shake their heads at him and barbarously deride him. Such was their regard. These, however, were but *withered* leaves; yet even of those that were most nearly connected with him, that were most likely to adhere to him, and afford him some shade and consolation—I mean his disciples—one betrayed and *sold* him; another denied and *forsook* him; and *all* forsook him and *fled*. But *man at his best estate, is altogether vanity*, and not to be depended upon as a sole source of consolation, *earthly* stays, in themselves, are really no stay. The only solid, and effectual, and enduring comfort that lightens our troubles and mitigates our sorrows, is that which comes from *above*: of this also was he bereaved in the day of his calamity; and this gave rise to the most mournful of

all his complainings. Not only that his friends on *earth*, but that his Father in *heaven*, had forsaken him; so that neither heaven nor earth, appeared to yield him any comfort or regard; made evident by that fearful cry, which moved all the powers of nature.—*My God! my God! Why hast thou forsaken me?* Was there then ever any sorrow like unto his sorrow?

If you go on to take a view of the *person* of him who was thus wounded and afflicted, you will then be fully convinced that none ever was. Behold the *man!* saith Pilate. A man he was, as we are; and were he but a man, nay not a man, but some poor dumb animal, we should feel our bowels yearn upon him to see him so ruthlessly handled. He was a *just* man, *Have thou nothing to do with that just man,* said Pilate's wife: and this is a degree higher, for though we pity the punishment even of *malefactors* themselves, yet we always feel the deepest compassion towards *innocent* sufferers. Now among the innocent, the more *noble* the person, the more affecting the sight; and he, whose sufferings we are now considering, was

descended, according to the flesh, from an illustrious race, he was of the royal house and lineage of David. I say according to the *flesh*, because we are not yet arrived at the summit of his dignity; for, according to the *spirit*, he was more, infinitely more, the Only Begotten SON of the Most High GOD, his essential WORD and WISDOM. When we are arrived at this, all words forsake us, and every tongue becometh speechless.

This sorrow then, we must acknowledge, is far above all that ever was, or can be. It is high, and we cannot attain unto it. Men may hear it with indifference, but principalities and powers stand abashed at it.

II. Having thus endeavoured to give you some, although a faint, idea of the depth, and height, and whole magnitude of our Blessed Master's sufferings and sorrows; I shall now proceed in the *second* place to consider the *cause* of them. Without the knowledge of the cause of our Lord's passion, it will make but a short-lived impression upon us. We may feel pity for him that he should suffer such things,

and be pensive and weep over him for a time, and then forget all as having no relation to ourselves. But *is* all this nothing to us? Have *we* no concern at all in it, but merely to hear it as a tale that is told, and then forget it? Far, far otherwise, for when we examine into the *cause* of it, we find *ourselves* at the bottom of all, that *we* are principally concerned in it, and that so nearly, and in so many ways, that we cannot avoid having some regard of it.

We see what was *done* to him, let us now then ask, who was the *doer* of it? Who, you say, but the powers of darkness that instigated the Jews to it; Judas who betrayed him; Pilate who condemned him; blood-thirsty Caia-phas; the barbarous priests; the infatuated people. These, certainly, were the doers of this deed of darkness. But my text mentions none of these, we look a great deal too low, if we do not rise above *them*. The Prophet says, *Wherewith the LORD hath afflicted me. God* it was that did it, and although Christ says, *This is your hour, and the power of darkness\**;

\* Luke, xxii. 53.

yet the day, the scripture declares, was the day of *God's* anger, they were only his *instruments*, and wrought his will. Some God afflicts in *anger*, others in *mercy*; this was in his anger, his *fierce* anger, an anger fiercer than that with which, in this life, he visits the sins of the sons of men.

The cause then of our Lord's sorrows was God's *anger*. What is it that occasions God's anger? It is sin and wickedness. *He is angry with the wicked every day\**, as the Psalmist declares; and grievous *sin* stirs up in him grievous *anger*. But in Christ there was not only no grievous sin, but no sin at all. And yet the prophet assures us, that he was smitten of God, and that *in the day of his fierce anger*. When we read this, we are disposed to plead as Abraham did; *Far be it from the Lord of all the earth to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked, and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from him, shall not the judge of all the earth do right†?* What cause then could move God

\* Psalms, vii. 11. † Genesis, xviii. 25.

to be thus angry with his own Son, that Son of whom by a voice from heaven he testified, that *in him he was well pleased*? How then could his wrath wax hot against him to do all this unto him? We can no otherwise reconcile these contradictions, than by saying, as the angel said to Daniel,—*The Messiah shall be cut off, but not for himself*\*. Not for himself, but for some *others, their* persons he took upon himself, and what was due to *them, he* suffered: so that though without sin himself, yet if he voluntarily take upon himself the persons and offences of others; if he engage to become a surety and sacrifice for them, and to suffer the penalty that they ought to have suffered, the Lord may justly let loose against him that fierceness of anger which would have fallen upon them. We are not however, to suppose even when the vengeance was come upon him to the uttermost, that he was really an object of Divine Anger—No—He was still the *beloved* Son of his Almighty Father. But

\* Daniel, ix. 26.



as that vengeance fell upon him, in full measure, that was due to sin and sinners, whom he represented, and whose place he voluntarily occupied; therefore God's *anger*, the cause being put for the effect, is said to afflict him with these unparalleled sorrows.

But it may be asked who are these others whose persons and offences he took upon himself? This question the evangelical prophet immediately answers for us. *Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows:—he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed.—The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all\**. Yes, of us all, even of those that pass by without regarding him, that hide as it were their faces from him and esteem him not. In short it is *we* ourselves, who for our numerous and grievous offences, that had grown up to heaven and cried against us for vengeance, for our sins that were as red as scarlet, it is *we*

\* Isaiah, liii. 4—6.

that must have suffered these pains and torments, these sorrows, this anguish in body, soul, and spirit, from the fierceness of the anger of God, had not he stepped between the blow and us, and received it upon himself. We then are the *principals*, who were at the bottom of all that was as on this day done to him; Pilate, Caiaphas, and the rest were only *instruments*. It is not he who executes the sentence, it is not the Judge who condemns, but is his *sin* that causes the death of the criminal; and they were *our* sins that were the murderers of the Son of God; WE occasioned his bloody sweat; WE betrayed him; WE smote him with scourges; WE spit upon him; WE crowned him with thorns; WE cried out, crucify him, crucify him, WE condemned him; WE laid him upon his cross; WE drove the nails into his hands and feet, and the spear into his side; WE mocked and derided him in the midst of his agony; WE brought down the fierceness of God's anger upon him; WE deprived him of all comfort both from earth and heaven; and finally, WE occasioned him to send forth that bitter cry, *My God, my God,*

*why hast thou forsaken me?* OUR sins did it all, and therefore WE: and this brings the text home to ourselves, even into our bosoms, and applies it most powerfully to me who speak, and to you who hear, in the words of Nathan to David. *Thou art the man*, even thou on account of whose wickedness, God, in his fierce anger, has thus afflicted him.

But what could move him, to leave the bosom of his father's love, to give up that unspeakable glory and happiness that he had with him before the world was, thus to become our surety, to take upon himself our debt, and danger, and misery? And what were we that he should so regard us? Verily, any merit considered, altogether unworthy of the least regard, conceived and born in sin\*, and defiled by our actual transgressions of the law of God. His enemies†, by nature the children of wrath‡, and as such exposed to everlasting ruin. In this miserable and hopeless condition, he saw us, and had compassion upon us, and loved us, and so loved

\* Psalms, li. 5. † Romans, v. 10. ‡ Ephesians, ii. 3.

us that he loved not himself in comparison, for he undertook our redemption at his own expence, and the price he paid for us was his own life. And is *this* nothing to you, all ye that pass by, ye careless people that are at ease, is this nothing to you? Will ye not now behold, will ye not now see and consider? Was ever *love* like *his* love which he manifested to *us*, in the day when the Lord afflicted him in his fierce anger?

The inestimable blessings and benefits, which by this act of ALMIGHTY LOVE were placed within the reach of every one of you, even of the poorest and most despised Lazarus, as well as of the highest prince and potentate, may be thus briefly declared. By his *stripes* you were *healed*; by his *sweat* you were *refreshed*; by his *condemnation* you were *forgiven*; through his *forsaking* you received *grace*; and through his *death* you were made *alive*; this day, to *him* the day of the fierceness of God's *anger*, is to *us* the day of the fullness of God's favour,—a day of salvation. And it not only delivers us from the wrath that hung over us for our sins,

but gives that to us to which we had no right and title. For *not as the offence, so is the free gift\**. We are not restored to the same estate that we lost in Adam, but to one infinitely better. Sin deprived us of an *earthly* paradise, but the death of Christ has purchased for us the kingdom of *heaven*. And his blood is not only the blood of *remission* to atone for our sins, but the blood of the *covenant*, also to entail upon us, and give us a sure title to a heavenly inheritance.

Was there then even any mercy and love like this? Can the eye by all it can see, the ear by all it can hear, the heart by all it can conceive, bring before the mind any thing that can be like or second to it? Is this also, nothing to us? Is this not worthy of our regard? Surely, it ought for ever to be laid up in our memory, for ever to be cherished in our hearts, for ever to influence our lives and actions.

Thus have we beheld and seen in this sad spectacle, not so much indeed as we might, but

\* Romans, v. 15.

as much as our time would allow us. Let us now look at them all together, Observe—the pains of his body, the sorrows of his soul; see him bereaved of every comfort, forsaken of earth and heaven; consider his dignity and Godhead. Add to this the cause of his bitter sufferings, the fierce anger of the Lord visiting our sins upon his person, which his love, his exceeding great love, that passeth knowledge induced him to take upon himself, and both to suffer for us what we had deserved, and to procure for us what we could never deserve. Taking ours, and giving us his—our punishment, his inheritance and glory. Surely, then, his complaint is just. Is it nothing to you? Have you no concern in it? Do you reap no benefit from it, that you pass by without beholding or considering it? Will then nothing move you? Neither pity for my sorrows, nor reverence for my person, nor fear of God's wrath, nor remorse for your sins, nor the love which I manifest towards you, nor the benefits I confer upon you? Surely here is enough to move any one, whose heart is capable of the

least feeling or gratitude, especially when we reflect that the whole of what he requires of us is to behold and consider, to look upon him with the eye of faith and be healed. And amidst all the sorrows of his bitter passion, this seems to be the greatest of all, and that which most deeply affected and afflicted him, that men should so lightly regard him, as if he had done and suffered nothing on their account. All creation seemed to feel that awful and mysterious hour. The sun withdrew his light, the earth quaked, the very rocks were rent asunder : sinful men alone were unmoved at it, they alone pass by, as if it was nothing to them.

If however neither pity, nor gratitude, nor duty, nor remorse ; nor his love, nor his bounty, can prevail with us to look upon him, to behold and meditate upon his sorrows and sufferings ; yet let our own *danger* prevail with us to do it. For unless we look upon him with the eye of faith, *the wrath of God abideth on us\**, *we are yet in our sins*†. If we pass by

\* John, iii. 36.

† 1 Corinthians, xv. 17.

his cross and regard it not, we are lost for ever ; if we carelessly overlook his sufferings, if we are insensible of the worth and value of his blood, if we treat it as *an unholy thing\**, we must expect that he will condemn us as our judge, since we refused to regard him as our Saviour. *I determined not to know any thing amongst you, says his zealous Apostle, but Jesus Christ, and him crucified†.* This in his estimation was of more worth than all other knowledge whatever. *God forbid, says he again, that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ‡.* *We preach* he declares, *Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness, but unto them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God§.* A crucified Saviour was always before him. Him he beheld and saw, upon Him he meditated, in Him he gloried, Him he preached, through Him he prayed, in Him he was strong to fight the good fight of faith, through

\* Hebrews, x. 29.

† 1 Corinthians, ii. 2.

‡ Galatians, vi. 14.

§ 1 Corinthians, i. 23.



Him he overcame, through Him he finished his course, through Him he kept the faith, for Him, and through Him he died, and by Him there was laid up for him, *a crown of righteousness*, an everlasting glory *that fadeth not away*\*. Such was the fruit in him of meditating upon the cross of Christ. The same steps in us, will in our degree, and according to our measure of grace, produce similar effects; if we endeavour, as he did, to set the Lord always before us, we shall go from strength to strength, and from glory to glory; *the power of Christ will rest upon us*†; then will *he dwell in our hearts by faith, that being rooted and grounded in love, we may be able to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge*‡,

Let us all then, my brethren, meditate upon a crucified Saviour, and upon all that he did and suffered for us. Let us go to him whenever he calls us, especially let us meet him at

\* 2 Timothy, iv. 8. 1 Peter, i. 4. † 2 Corinthians, xii. 9.

‡ Ephesians, iii. 17—19.

his holy table, and there behold represented to us in a lively manner, his body broken, and his blood poured out for us. Let us partake of that life-giving ordinance, and not refuse and turn away, when we hear him command—*Take, eat, this is my body which was broken for you, this is my blood which was shed for you, do this in remembrance of me.*

Grant to us grace, O Lord! in faith to use thy holy ordinances, that therein we may receive thy blessing, and finally, through the cross of thy dear Son Jesus Christ, attain unto everlasting Life. Amen.

THE END.

An INTRODUCTION to ENTOMOLOGY :

OR,

Elements of the Natural History

OF

INSECTS.

By WILLIAM KIRBY, M. A. F. R. S. and L. S.

And WILLIAM SPENCE, ESQ. F. L. S.

A New Edition, in 4 thick vols. 8vo. with Plates, a new  
Scientific Index, and Portraits of the Authors.

---

MONOGRAPHIA APUM ANGLIÆ :

OR,

An attempt to divide into their Natural Genera and  
Families such Species of the

LINNEAN GENUS APIS

As have been discovered in England,

By WILLIAM KIRBY, M. A. F. R. S. and L. S.

In two volumes 8vo., with Plates. Price 1l. 1s.



