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wickedness and sorrow. It is that time during which  
the Woman has a place of safety given her in the wilder-  
ness. There was a day of temptation in the wilderness  
for forty ycars ; there is an “ hour of temptation ” over  
all the earth for forty-two months.  
Three years and a half is a period of persecution  
which has often been noticed before. Such was the dura-  
tion of the persecution of Antiochus Epiphanes. Such  
was the duration also of that by Nero. It began in  
the middle of November, 64, and\* ended at Nero’s  
death, June 9th, a.p. 68 (M. Stuart).  
  
6. ‘‘ And he opened his mouth for blasphemy against God, to  
blaspheme His name, and His tabernacle, those that tabernacle  
in the heaven.”  
  
The expression before us is a very strong one. ‘“‘ He  
opened his mouth for blasphemy.” We sometimes say  
of the thoroughly profane— He never opens his lips  
without an oath.” But in such cases the offender prob-  
ably does it from habit, and without thought. Here  
it is of set purpose, the result of enmity. He cannot  
smite God, but he can speak against Him ; and that he  
does with all his heart, and at all times. The Dragon  
hates Michael his conqueror, and the hatred he feels  
expresses itself freely through the Dragon’s son, who is  
of his father’s spirit.  
Men will be prepared for blasphemy against God in  
the latter day. It will spring out of a false and im-  
pious theory concerning the origin of evil. It will be  
held and taught, that evil arises not from defect of the  
creature, but of the Creator. That matter is the cause  
of sin; and that evil is defilement from without, not  
wickedness from within. The works of creation, it  
will be believed, contain more or less of evil. ‘‘ The  
taking away of animal life is sinful. But God has so