CHAP. IV. **1—11.**] TEMPTATION OF JESUS. Mark i. 12, 13: Luke iv. 1–13.

**1. led up of (by) the spirit**] The  
Spirit carried Him away, (see Acts viii. 39,)  
“*driveth him,*” Mark i. 12. Had St. Luke’s  
“*was led in* (thus literally) *the Spirit*”  
been our *only* account, we might have supposed  
what took place to have been done  
*in a vision*: but the expressions in the  
two other Evangelists entirely preclude  
this. The *desert* here spoken of may either  
be the traditional place of the Temptation  
near Jericho (thence called *Quarantaria*:  
it is described in “The Land and the Book,”  
p. 617, as a high and precipitous mountain,  
with its side facin the plain perpendicular, and apparently as high as the rock of  
Gibraltar, and with caverns midway below, hewn in the rock), or as scripture  
parallelism between Moses, Elias, and our  
Lord, leads one to think, the *Arabian  
desert of Sinai*.

**to be tempted**] The  
express *purpose* of His being *led up*. Hence  
it is evident that our Lord this time wes  
not ‘led up’ of his own will and design:  
but, as a part of the conflict with the  
Power of Darkness, He was *brought* to the  
Temptation. As He had been subject to his earthly parents at Nazareth, so now He is subject, in the outset of his official course, to His Heavenly Parent, and is by His will thus carried up to be tempted.  
In reverently considering the nature and  
end of this temptation, we may observe,  
(1) That the whole is *undoubtedly an objective historical narrative*, recording an  
actual conflict between our Redeemer and  
the Power of Evil. (2) That it is undetermined by the *letter* of the sacred text,  
whether the Tempter appeared *in a bodily  
shape*, or, *as a spirit*, was permitted to  
exert a certain power, as in ver. 5, and  
ver. 8, over the person of our Lord, even  
as the Holy Spirit did in ver.1. If the  
latter were the case, the words spoken at  
the various of the temptation, were  
suggested by this Evil Power to the soul  
of our Redeemer. But (3) such an interpretation, while it cannot justly be accused  
of unreality by any who do not reject belief in the spiritual world, hardly meets  
the expressions of the text, “*came* (approached) *to him,*” ver. 9, and “*leaveth  
him*” ver. 11. Nor do the two members  
of ver. 11 correspond to one another in this  
case, for the angels must have been visible  
and corporeal, as in the parallel case at  
Gethsemane, Luke xxii. 43.

**2. when he had fasted**] Not in the wider ecclesiastical sense of the word, but its strict  
meaning, of *abstaining from all food whatever*; Luke, ver.2. Similarly Moses, Exod. xxxiv. 28; and Elijah, 1 Kings xix. 8.

**he was afterward an hungred**] Then probably *not during the time itself*. The period of the fast, as in the case of Moses, was  
Spent in a spiritual ecstasy, during which the  
wants of the natural body were suspended.

**3. when the tempter came**] From  
the words of both St. Mark and St. Luke,  
it appears that our Lord was tempted *also  
during the forty days*. Whether the words  
of St. Mark, “*he was with the wild beasts,*”  
allude to *one kind* of temptation, is uncertain: see note on Mark i. 13.—The words “*came to him*” need not be understood of  
the *first* approach, but the first *recorded*—  
‘at a certain time the tempter approaching, &c’

**If thou be**] “thinking to beguile Him with his flattery,” Chrys. Or,  
as Euthymius, “thinking that He would  
be irritated by this address, as being  
reproached with not being the Son of God.”  
At all events, there is no *doubt* expressed,  
as some think.

**Son of God**] Our Lord  
does not give way to the temptation, so as  
to meet him with an open declaration, ‘I  
am the Son of God:’ thus indeed He might  
have asserted his lordship over him, but  
not have been *his Conqueror for us*. The  
first word which He uses against him,  
reaches far deeper: ‘*Man* shall not live,’  
&c. “This, like the other text, is taken  
from the history of Israel’s temptation in  
the wilderness: for Israel represents, in a  
foreshadowing type, the Son of Man, the  
servant of God Righteousness, the one  
that was *to come*, in whom alone that nature which in all men has degenerated into  
sin, ‘*fulfils all righteousness*’ Adam  
stood not,—Israel according to the flesh  
stood not,—when the Lord their God  
tempted them: but rather, after Satan’s  
likeness, tempted their God: but now the