

## Satan's Wiles

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Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. **And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said,** Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?—**Genesis 3:1**

The first words which Satan is ever recorded to have spoken must be words of interest, if it be only that they may serve as a key to unlock some of his later subtleties. And I observe at once a remarkable similarity between all the beginnings of Satan's words.

I hear him coming to the first Adam—"Yea, hath God said?" then I listen to him approaching the second Adam—"If thou be the son of God." And there is one feature characterising both. He begins with laying a doubt at the root. He questions; he unsettles. He does not assert error: he does not contradict truth; but he confounds both. He sets the mind at cavilling. He leaves a worm to gnaw at the core; and then he goes his way.

Just so I observe his dealing when he speaks to God about Job. He opens his mouth with the question—"Does Job fear God for nought?" So I at once take this general inference—that Satan makes his first entries, not by violent attack, but by secret sapping, and that he endeavours to confuse and cloud the mind which he is afterwards going to kill in the dark.

(Three Hundred Evangelistic Sermon Outlines by Aquilla Webb, New York: George H. Doran Company, 1924, e-book, 28, Text and Paragraph Structure Modified)