

**THE VOICE OF  
THE DEVIL**

By

**G. Campbell Morgan D.D.**

CONTENTS

I. "Yea, Hath God Said?"

II. "Doth Job Fear God for Nought?"

III. "To Thee Will I Give All This Authority ... If ..."

IV. "Submit!" "Resist!"

## CHAPTER I

Scripture Lesson: Genesis 3:1-8

"Yea, hath God said?"



HAT is the voice of the devil. We are living in an hour in which we are very conscious that in this world of ours, and in the midst of all its affairs, hell is let loose. I resolutely use that phrase, and say hell is let loose, for hell can have no power, save under the government of God; just as Satan could not touch Job until he had asked permission, just as it is true that when he desired to have the disciples to sift them as wheat, he obtained them by asking. It is always so. That is a tremendous truth, at which we may often be puzzled; but our confidence is in God, and in the assurance that when He allows the forces of hell to be loosed, there is a reason for it, and a meaning in it. It is so in the days in which we are living.



he existence of evil, spiritual principalities is granted by all those who accept the Biblical revelation. Words we have doubtless often quoted recently to ourselves, occurring in Paul's letter to the Ephesians, are true. "Our wrestling is not against flesh and blood." That is to say that such conflict is not final. Behind it there is something else, "But against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places." This fact of the existence of the principalities of evil is assumed and revealed throughout the Bible; and at the head of this empire of evil is one, named variously, named Satan. We are very conscious of his power and of his deeds. It is an interesting thing to remark in hurried passing, when we open our Bible, we do not find him in the first two chapters. He does not appear. And it is equally arresting that we do not find him in the last two chapters. He is not there at the beginning or end of the Bible, though, as Browning had it, "a wide compass first be fetched."



hen Paul wrote to the Corinthians, he said, "We are not ignorant of his devices." That is a suggestive word rightly understood, "devices" which might correctly be rendered, his mental activities, his conceptions, his purpose, his thinking. We are not ignorant, said Paul, of these things. Sometimes we are inclined to say, if Paul was not, we are. Yet it is not so. As we are men and women of faith, and followers of the Lord Jesus Christ, and believers in the Biblical revelation, we can say we are not ignorant of his mental activity, of the conceptions that underlie that activity, and of the purpose that inspires that activity. Paul had what we have, the Biblical history, with its revelation of this personality, and the story of Jesus with the supreme revelation of this personality through His ministry. Paul had these things. So have we, and so we can say, we are not ignorant of his devices.



n a memorable occasion, which Matthew records for us, Jesus uttered something which had another application, but which I venture to suggest had a wider application than the Lord then made use of, " For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned." That is a tremendous statement, one that would bear thinking about, and illustrating in various ways. It is true that words are the expression of the inner thinking, and consequently they form the basis of judgment of the inner thinking. That is true of God. By His words He is justified, and by His words He might be condemned. Of course that is unthinkable; and that is why the Word became flesh. It was the revelation of God.



t is equally true of man, and it is equally true of the devil. When Paul wrote, "We are not ignorant of his devices " a n d I claim we stand with Paul how shall we find out about him ? That leads us to this very simple, almost childish conclusion, the result of our knowledge of the Bible. In the process of all this literature, of the process of the story it has to tell, the voice of the devil is only heard three times. His deeds are recorded all through the record, but his voice, that which gives expression to the deepest truth concerning his personality, is only heard three times ; three references to the speech of Satan in all the Bible. One is found in this third chapter of Genesis. We find him speaking again when we get to the book of Job. We never find him chronicled as speaking again until in the wilderness he confronted the God-man in the hour of temptation. Just three occasions through the Bible in which the voice of the devil is heard, uttering words which are supreme revelations of his devices, and of another fact concerning him, to which Paul made reference in another letter, "the wiles of the devil." His devices, and his wiles ; that is his conceptions, his purpose ; and his tricks, the methods he adopts, Paul did not say we are not ignorant of his wiles, because we never know what they will be; but we do know the revelation that is given to us of them.



o I am asking you to stay with the devil for a little while! We are in a world in which we are confronting him everywhere. I ask you to stay and listen to him. Take these three occasions. To summarise ; he is first heard slandering God to man. That is our present subject. When we hear his speech again in Job, he is heard slandering man to God. When we hear him speak again, he is facing the God-man in the wilderness.



onfining ourselves to the first, in the story we know so well, we have the account of what he said upon this occasion, and the phrase of my text introduces the whole story of the fall of man, to use again without any apology, the old theological formula. It is the story of how man fell. We are at the source of all the rivers of sin and sorrow and desolation and damnation that have blasted and cursed human history. We are right at the beginning, and the voice of Satan is heard.



o summarise on the whole story, what did Satan do? First, he questioned the goodness of God. Secondly, he denied the severity of God. Finally, he slandered the motive of God. Here is the voice of Satan, and we are confronted with evil, with hell, with Satan. Here we are at the very beginnings, and we listen to his voice.



He first questioned the goodness of God. Notice that is only a phrase I read, "Yea, hath God said?" See what he is doing. It is an interrogative method of directing attention to something. That is what Satan is here doing. He is trying to direct attention to the fact that God is not good, that His action is not good, that God is unkind in withholding certain things. At the very beginning we are in the presence of something false. "Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of any tree?" No, God has said nothing of the kind. He had said, "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat," save one. There is the suggestion that has in it the element of untruth; and that is equally so in the reply of the woman. She also was inaccurate; accurate so far, as she said, "Of the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat." But inaccurate when she said, "But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die." God had not said, "neither shall ye touch it;" They might not eat of it, but here is an over-emphasis of something God had said. So a lie that is half a truth is uttered in reply, and we are in the presence of the fact that the very genesis of evil in the history of man is born of the fact that the devil suggested that God was not good, was not kind. God had said nothing of the kind. He had definitely marked the limits of human freedom by the sacramental tree in the garden.



Someone may say to me, Do you really believe the story of the tree? Yes, if I believe the story of a garden. Then they may say, Do you believe the story of a garden? With what else would you start history? A city? Every city comes out of a garden. We cannot find anything in London, nothing existing in London that has not come finally out of the earth, out of the garden. We must begin in a garden. What is the sacramental symbol then? Not a ledger! Oh, it may be to some of you! The sacramental symbol is a tree, necessarily so. I do not want to stop to argue that. But the point is this. God had set there a sacramental symbol in a tree. I would not say an apple tree. It is wonderful how people have said it was an apple tree. How do you know it was not an orange? It was a tree that bore fruit, and it is called not an apple tree, but "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil." It was a sacramental symbol, and God said, No, you must not take that. That marks your limitation. That indicates sovereignty over you; and the devil entered by saying, "Yea, hath God said " that?



That is where evil always begins, and that lies at the back of the objection to law, that law limits realisation, that if we can break away from law, then we shall be free. So we have the idea of escape and emancipation from all law. That is what we have here. That is what we have in the

world to-day. Lying at the back of all devilishness against which we are gathered in solemn dedication and endeavour is the idea that the God of the Bible is not good, is not kind-I mean good in that sense -and the first element of Satan's word limits the goodness of God.



hen, when we take the rest of the story, we see that he denies the severity of God. Yes, has God said you shall die? You will not. God does not mean that. You won't die. Instead of dying you will be as God is. You will be like God. You will know good and evil. He denied the severity of God. He declared that the wages of sin is not death. Again we are in the presence of the fact that the whole of this conception is based upon an untruth. Of course it may be almost a grotesque question how far this great prince of the power of evil believed what he said himself. Oh, he does not believe it. He knows he is lying. He knows God had not said anything that was unjust and unkind. He knew God was severe, and that His law would brook no breaking. But he was lying, and that is what Jesus meant when He said he was "a liar from the beginning." It is perfectly true. Here we have it. The wages of sin is not death. Satan was degrading man by suggesting that death was to be treated as physical only; and the moment this fruit was taken, men would still be walking about, still thinking, still knowing. Death, that is not death. What Satan strove to hide is the deeper truth of the spiritual essence of human nature, and the fact that death is not the separation of the soul from the body ultimately, but the separation of the soul from God; and in the day that man ate, he died, he lost his fellowship. That is why, when God came walking in the garden in the cool, or wind, or as I prefer to translate mach in the spirit of the day, came walking for communion, man was afraid.



f what was he afraid? He had lost touch with God. He had lost communion with God. He was harbouring wrong thinking about God, and consequently he became afraid of God; he died.



ut this is always the outcome of the first fact. If we deny the goodness of God, we will inevitably deny His severity ; and to deny the severity of God is surely to deny the ultimate goodness of God. If we could be persuaded that God can tolerate evil with all its blighting, blasting effect, we could not believe in His goodness. We can only believe in His goodness as we believe in His severity. Yet here it is. This is the beginning of the whole process of evil. Goodness is misinterpreted as to its method, and people say, Oh, God, is too good to punish, too good to be severe; and that means that God is not good at all. There is the lie on which this whole movement started.



inally, and with equal brevity, the motive of God was challenged. A suggestion was made that the action of God had at its heart and centre the selfishness of God; that man was being kept out of his kingdom by the law of God. That is the point at which man rebels against the government of God, or else he denies the fact of Go! altogether. All the story of the centuries is just the story of

the fact that man has accepted these false views of God, has listened to the voice of the devil, as it questioned the goodness of God, denied His severity, and slandered His motive.

**T**

his is the first occasion upon which we hear the voice of Satan, and to-day we are facing the results of his calumny, the results of his slander upon God, which humanity listened to, took to, accepted, and rebelled against the government. And the issue has been the denial of God, or else denial of the revelation of God that has been granted to man in Christ.

**T**

o me it is of value to stop thus and think. I began by saying hell is let loose. We are face to face with the forces of evil as we never were in our lives before. We saw something of it twenty-five years ago, but we have never seen anything quite like this. We ask, Whence comes this madness, this iniquity of the human race ? We find it in this fact, that man has accepted the views of Satan, has yielded to them, and has brought about all the sorrow and trouble that result from such acceptance. Let us realise that; and in these days when we are massed together as an empire against these things, let us wonderingly say, in spite of all our failure, God does seem in His overruling to have made us the custodians, for the moment, of the things of truth and righteousness and order.

## CHAPTER II

Scripture Lesson: Job 1:1-12

"Doth Job fear God for naught?" Job 1:9



PREFACED the previous message of this series by drawing attention to the fact that the devil is heard speaking three times, and three times only in the course of the Biblical literature. The first occasion occupied our attention therein when in the garden he said to humanity. "Yea, hath God said?" That was the voice of Satan. Again we hear the voice of Satan, and interestingly enough, perhaps having no very vital value, but the fact remains, again what he says takes the question form, the form that insinuates and suggests an idea to the mind of those to whom the question is addressed: "Doth Job fear God for nought?" It is a question.



We saw, I think, on that first occasion, when the speech of the devil is recorded, and the voice of Satan is heard in Genesis, his whole business was that of slandering God to man, attempting to break down man's confidence in God, suggesting that God was not good, that He was not severe, and that He was selfish. Now we have an entire change. We no longer hear the devil slandering God to man; but, -amazing fact, we hear the devil slandering man to God. "Doth Job fear God for nought?"



It is well to remember concerning whom the question was asked; Job, a very remarkable personality, about whom we know practically nothing, except what is revealed in the story, and certain brief references to him found in the New Testament. The book is dateless. The book is regionless. It may be objected that we are told distinctly that Job was a man of the land of Uz. That is perfectly true, but kindly tell me where Uz was. What do we know about Uz? There are references to Uz elsewhere, but there is no connection between this, and those references. It was an unknown land, but therein dwelt this man named Job; and we know a good deal about him both in the opening declaration of the writer of the book, and the actual words of God which repeat the statements made about him in the opening sentences.



What do we read? He "was perfect and upright." He was a man who "feared God, and eschewed evil." It is a wonderful description which might occupy our attention for the whole time of our diet of worship. I leave it with you. Notice only this. "Perfect and upright," that is, morally blameless, which does not mean sinlessness necessarily, but moral blamelessness. Then that remarkable declaration following, he "feared God, and eschewed evil," that is, turned aside from it, declined it whenever it approached him. Why? He feared God, and consequently there are the secrets of his

life. He feared God and eschewed evil ; and the results were that it could be written of him that he was perfect, and that he was upright ; that he was characterised by moral blamelessness.



ow it is a very interesting story, because probably he was a man entirely outside the Hebrew nation. I do not think he belonged to the Hebrew nation. It is interesting to go through the book, and we do not find those speakers, Eliphaz, Bildad, Zophar, and Elihu use the great Hebrew word for God, Jehovah. The writer does, in 'opening his story, once use the name, and once in the course of the book the great name passes the lips of Job ; but the book is not distinctively Hebrew. In my judgment this man was not a Hebrew at all. That makes the story all the more interesting and arresting. He was outside, as Melchisedek was. He was not a Jew, was not a Hebrew. He was outside the Hebrew economy when he met with Ahraham. He was high priest, he was king of Salem, and of righteousness; but he was not in the Hebrew economy. It is interesting to get these illustrations of the fact that God had these people outside those known as the people of the covenant, the Hebrew people. In New Testament times, Peter said, God is no Respector of persons, but in every nation he that fears God and eschews evil is accepted of Him.



e must stop here and see this man. He believed in God, and a man who not only believed in Him intellectually, but believed in Him with submission to Him of his own personality. He feared God, and that belief in God, and fear of God revealed to this man not only the true nature of evil, he eschewed it, he refused it. Whenever his soul was assaulted by evil he declined to listen to its voice or attend to its suggestions. See this man, against whom the assaults of evil were directed. Of that man, of such a man the devil said to God, "Doth Job fear God for nought?" He was a man victorious over evil, therefore the object of Satan's enmity, of him, he said, "Doth Job fear God for nought?" That was the suggestion made to God.



ne can hardly ponder this alone without seeing the blasphemy of it, that he should dare to make any suggestion to God about a man; but he did. That was the man, the type of man, about whom he asked this question. There are two things in our meditation to occupy our attention; first, the dark and sinister foreground of Satan; and then the luminous background of God. The man is there. I see his soul constituting a battle-ground, and the opponents are Satan and God. Satan is here talking to God about a man; slandering him; and God is seen, understanding, and answering.



hat is all; those are the two things very briefly. First of all, the dark foreground. Satan is seen revealed in his speech to God in this introductory question, and in all he said afterwards. We see this remarkable fact that he admits the goodness of God to that man. He does not only admit it, he declares it. He has seen it. He has been watching. God said to him, " Hast thou considered?" Yes, he had considered him, and he had seen as he had watched this man, the greatest man of the East, who feared God and eschewed evil, he had seen that God was caring for him; and he owns it, he

declares it. That is a very arresting fact. He saw the hedge about Job. He saw the blessing resting upon the work of Job's hands. He saw the increase of Job's substance. He saw Job was surrounded by prosperity of the most remarkable kind; and he saw it all as coming to Job from God. "Hast not Thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath, on every side? Thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land." Yes, he saw the goodness of God, and admitted it.



hen he slandered the man, and he did it in the very simple way revealed, which is nevertheless a profound revelation. He declared that the goodness of God was the reason of Job's fidelity. You have been good to him ; that is why he is faithful to You ; that is why he lives this life of moral uprightness and religious relationship. He simply does it because you have been good to him. That was the devil's account of man, of a trusting soul, of a God-fearing man. He said, Let that cease, let those things by which Thou hast surrounded him be destroyed, and his fidelity will cease. In other words, the devil declared that selfishness is the inspiration of life and religion. That is what the devil said to God about this man.



f course the lie is patent. The outcome of relation to God is blessing. God had blessed him, but the relation was not the result' of the blessing. He did not fear God, and obey Him, and eschew evil, because He had blessed him; but because he feared God, and eschewed evil, God blessed him. There is a difference between those two things. It is a question of cause and effect. There was the effect, God had blessed him abundantly; but the reason for fear antedated the reception of His blessings, and continued through it. That is what evil never understands about faith, about men and women of faith. This great story of the Old Testament has been set to many a modern song. Suffer me a simple illustration. There is a dear old lady in a village, going regularly to Church, and some cynics say she does because they give away blankets at Christmas! The same thing, the same damnable philosophy, the same lying declaration. We have heard about "rice Christians" in China. That is exactly what we are confronted with here; the devil's false estimate, I will not say of humanity, but of humanity living by faith in God.



t was a revelation of ignorance. Oh, the longer I live the more I think the devil is the biggest fool in the universe of God! You say to me he seems to be pretty clever. Many fools are clever, but they remain fools! He is a fool, an utter lunatic. There are lines some of my friends have often heard me quote from John Milton's Paradise Lost. He puts into the mouth of Lucifer, speech which harmonises with all the revelation of the Bible. Here is the story of the fall of Lucifer, son of the morning, the innermost secret of it all, the action of the devil that produced his own fall, and inspires him through the ages. Here are Milton's words, attributed to Satan,

"To reign is worth ambition, though in hell;  
Better to reign in hell, than serve in heaven."

**I** submit to you there are no lines in literature, with which I am familiar, that more reveal the heart and essence of sin than that. I started by saying he was a fool and a lunatic. There is no truth in what he says. He does not reign in hell. God reigns in hell, and over hell, employing all its myrmidons at times for the carrying out of His far-flung plans and purpose; but He reigns.

**V**ery well, says God in effect, go ahead, do what you like. Deal with the things that mark my goodness. Take away his property. Go ahead. Try it out, only there is a limit. On himself thou shalt not lay thine hand. And the devil goes out-Oh, the drama of it-and he does all he can do. He destroys the cattle, and the children. He brings desolation, but he cannot touch Job.

**I**t does not end there. He went back there, the liar, the fool, and under Divine permission of God he goes back and tries again. Job is still true. Touch him, says the devil. You would not let me touch him ; but let me touch him, and he will curse You. All right, go ahead, but there is a limit to that. Observe the limit, says God. And he went out and tried, and failed.

**T**hat is the devil's estimate of humanity living by faith. It is not of humanity generally; but here is a man who feared God and eschewed evil, and lived by faith. Of him the devil said, This is all he is doing it for; and the whole majestic movement of the drama proves that he was a fool and a lunatic. God compelled him to work out his own evil purposes, and so permitted this man to endure suffering, and to co-operate with God in giving the lie to Satan's lie. That is the dark and sinister foreground. When he came with the sons of God, and presented himself before the Throne of the Most High, God said, "Hast thou considered?" A tremendous word that-" considered." It does not mean seen, or glanced at. Have you taken time to be watching him? Oh yes, he had been watching him. "Hast thou considered?" He had considered, and he had considered very fully, but not accurately nor adequately. He had not seen the deepest movement of the soul's trust in God, and he said, It is all for what he can get. That is the attitude of evil towards men and women of faith everywhere.

**B**ut I turn for a few concluding moments to the other side, the bright and glorious background of the story, that is, God. Mark it well, if I put it in a brief sentence. If Satan has deceived men about God, and he did; he cannot deceive God about man. He has lied in the presence of humanity, and humanity has listened to his lie, and has fallen and wandered, and brought upon itself all the cycles of history, devastation and misery and wrong. We are in the midst of it to-day, all because humanity has listened to the devil's thought about God. But he cannot deceive God. He can make his suggestion in the Divine presence. Words are in my mind, from the New Testament, "The Lord

knoweth them that are His." It does not merely mean their names are inscribed in a great roll; but He knows all about them, the deepest thing about them. If the devil has considered, God knows. That goes beyond all the consideration of the intellect; the eternal knowledge of God. "The Lord knoweth them that are His."



hat a wonderful word Isaiah uttered, with its infinite sweep, and its personal finality. Let me quote it to you. " For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, Whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." God's two dwelling-places; eternity, and the soul of the trusting man. God knows His servant Job. The devil could not deceive Him. God may, and He does, call men of faith-He called upon Job-to pass through affliction in the interest of truth; but all such affliction is under His control. Satan is always limited, and Job said later on, in the midst of his appalling situation, "When He hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." That was the language of the soul who knew God, who was able to look upon all the disasters that could come to him, and see the fires were God's action, trying; and he said, "I shall come forth as gold."



o from this second occasion when we hear the voice of Satan, we become conscious of its real meaning. The devil's estimate of man is that of man as fallen, degraded humanity. He does not take account of the fact that this man who does belong to a sinning race, has listened to his slander upon God, yet believes in God. Satan does not take into account the fact that there are deeper depths. It may be true of a man without faith, that such a man may be sycophant, may be religious for what he can get out of it. It is a mistaken evil estimate of the man of faith; and it is never true of the man who realises himself in relationship with God. Yes, we know He puts the hedge round about us. He confers blessings unqualified upon us, so that we have turned the thought into an almost doggerel verse, which is nevertheless full of meaning.



"Count your many blessings, name them one by one." I like singing it, although we cannot do it. The Bible tells you, you cannot do it. They are too many. But in recognition of the fact, we are surrounded; but we are not following Him because of His blessings. Nay rather, with the man in a later chapter, this very man Job, "Though He slay me, yet will I wait for Him" ; and with another man of a later time,

"For though the fig tree shall not blossom,  
Neither shall fruit be in the vines;  
The labour of the olive shall fail,  
And the fields shall yield no meat;  
The flock shall be cut off from the fold,  
And there shall be no herd in the stalls;

Yet will I rejoice in the Lord,  
I will joy in the God of my salvation."



o let us understand the devices of Satan. We see them to be absolutely false; a lie in both cases. Yet on the basis of those lies infinite ruin has been done, and is being done. But as for us, our sure trust is in God.

## CHAPTER III

Scripture Lesson: Matthew 4:1-11

"To thee will I give all this authority ... if ..."



E come now to a consideration of the third and last occasion upon which the voice of the devil is heard in the chronicles of Holy Writ. I read the lesson from Matthew, but have taken the text from Luke, because I believe that Matthew records the true order of the temptations. Luke puts them in another order, which he did for a certain purpose, that of the delineation of our Lord from the standpoint from which he wrote. I believe we get the true order of the temptations that our Lord confronted in the wilderness in Matthew. The first was physical bread. The second was spiritual, - trust in God. This third was vocational. There we have the true order of human personality. The first, the basis, is physical, but the essential is spiritual, and the ultimate is always vocational.



I t is a great temptation to stay there for a length of time. I do not propose to do so, but it is well to remember that this order is so in every case. The first fact is the physical. If I meet you, I meet you physically. I shake hands with you, - well, I may do! That is physical. After a little while I get nearer to you, and I am touching the essential fact of your personality, which is spiritual. Then the ultimate meaning of every human life is not being, but purpose. "To this end have I been born, and to this end am I come into the world," said Jesus upon one occasion ; His physical being, and His spiritual being, creating t e mystery and wonder and glory of His personality; but there was a purpose in it. It is always so.



S o here we get the devil's temptations proceeding along the threefold line of the personality of our Lord; the first, bread ; the second, trust in God ; and thirdly, the vocational purpose of His being, the purpose of His coming into the world.



I took my text from Luke because in this third phase of the temptation story he used another word than the one Matthew used. I am not suggesting that Matthew was wrong, because the two words have the same implication. In Matthew we read, "He shewed Him all the kingdoms of the world," the kosmos. Luke does not say that. He said he shewed Him "all the kingdoms of the economy." Our word economy is a transliteration of the Greek word oikoumene. That was the word Luke used here. Now the word kosmos for world was often used in the same way, but I think Luke interprets the extent of the vision very largely granted to our Lord by the use of that particular word economy. We will come back to a consideration of the word a little more particularly later.



nce more we hear the voice of the devil, and never again do we hear that voice. We shall find him after this, more clearly seen than ever before, but he never speaks. For the last time here in Holy Scripture the voice of the devil is heard. What is he doing now? He is seen, arrestingly enough, confronted by the God-man, and confronting the God-man. First he slandered God to man when he spoke. Then he slandered man to God when he spoke. Now we see him confronting the God-man, and hear him speaking. That is our present subject.



f course the whole story is necessary in some ways, his temptation in the realm of bread, and of trust in God. But I am supremely interested in this final phase of the temptation when he confronted the God-man, and offered Him-forgive the phrase, I know no better-a short cut to His goal as an alternative to the taking of the way to that goal for which He had come into the world, which was within the will and covenant of His Father. Quite simply there are three things I want us to do ; first of all to note a little more carefully than we have done in these introductory sentences the historic occasion ; secondly to consider the bid he made that day ; and of course that leading us thirdly to the answer of the God-man to the bid of Satan.



ow I am going to express my deep conviction, which I do not think is shared by everyone, but it is worthy of consideration. To put it very bluntly, I think if the devil could have escaped that hour he would have done so. I think he was compelled to confront the God-man. Consider the story as it is recorded in Matthew, Mark, and Luke, and in each case notice with what particular care the evangelists speak of the way by which Jesus came to confront the devil. For instance, here we read that He "was led by the Spirit in the wilderness," led of the Spirit to be tempted. In another evangelist we read Jesus was driven forth into the wilderness to be tempted. I never look back at that, and consider it carefully without believing that Satan was compelled to that hour, and to come forth at last to the full and final unveiling of his devilishness, confronting the Godman. If his devices are known, to quote from Paul, we are not ignorant of his devices; Paul did not say that his wiles were known. The devices are conceptions, purposes, and plans. His wiles are his methods. We are not ignorant of his devices, because we have a revelation of them. Paul had it from the Old Testament Scriptures, and the devil's purpose is perfectly patent, but not the wiles of Satan.



hereas I have said that we do not know the wiles of Satan, that is a statement that applies to the details, not to general principles ; because we do, in the light of this whole story of the temptation, know not only his purposes, but we know his wiles, that is, his methods. We remember how Paul said, "Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil." The word wiles means his methods. Another word is faltering on my lips, which expresses it, the tricks of the devil. Now to go back; we know his purposes. We are not ignorant of his purposes, nor of his wiles. It is well that we should remember in this story of the temptation of our Lord that every avenue of the devil's approach to the soul of man is revealed. We are all

familiar with Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress. I wonder how many of my younger friends are familiar with his Holy War. I think it is a far greater book even than his Pilgrim's Progress. There he describes the attacks of evil on Mansoul, always under the military figure. It is a marvellous book. Get that idea, because, my brethren, in the last analysis any attack upon humanity is an attack upon individuals. We speak of humanity in the mass, and we are warranted in doing so. And yet humanity in the mass is but the sum totality of individual souls; and Satan's method must always be with the individual; just as the method of the Gospel is with the individual. You cannot evangelise a nation save as you evangelise men and women who make up the nation. The approach of God and the devil to man, to humanity, must be through individuals. The devil has only three avenues of approach, and they are all revealed here in the wilderness. One is, as we have said, the physical. The second is the spiritual; and the third is the vocational. If I may again put that in very simple form, if the devil wishes to ruin a man he will probably begin with the physical in some form or another. I need not elaborate that. Then, if peradventure the man attacked in the physical fails, he is weakened in the essential part of his nature, which is the spiritual. If he is victorious, then the next line of attack is against the essential, the spiritual; and at last the devil will attack every human soul, and attempt to spoil the purpose of being, attack the vocational.



I repeat, if we want to know what the wiles of the devil are, the methods of the devil, whereas there are no details here, they are differentiated a myriadfold. In essence there is no one in this Hall this morning tempted of the devil except along one of those three lines ; bread, trust, purpose.



So we stand here in the presence of the occasion when the devil was driven to face one Man, one human Being, representative of humanity, God's humanity; and he came to Him confronting humanity as the offspring of God. Now it is interesting to notice that when Luke introduces Him with a genealogy, he does not give the genealogy of Jesus according to the law. Matthew gives us that through His father by adoption. Luke gives us His genealogy through His mother, through Mary. The lines are identical up to a certain point, and then they divide. We have seen in Luke, when he has traced this line back through David to Abraham, he goes to the beginning, and says, "Who was the son of Adam, who was the son of God." Do not miss that. In that sense humanity is, as the Greek poets said, and Paul quoted, "offspring of God." Here is Man, offspring of God, human, Son of God; God's "second Man," as Paul called Him, God's "last Adam" as Paul also called Him; He is confronting evil, and evil is confronting Him. As we look at that Man in the wilderness, fainting there, and alone in the desert, as we look at Him there after forty days, the physical side of His nature weakened by the strength of hunger-I state that carefully-and all His spiritual nature put to the test by reason of the circumstances in which He found Himself; and all the purpose of His coming into the world in front of Him, as it had been made known to Him, and known by Him had been ratified in the baptism that had just preceded this, "Thou art My beloved Son; in Thee I am well pleased" ; in the hour when He had chosen to be numbered with transgressors in John's baptism; in that very hour He is seen representing humanity. He is the custodian in His own personality of all the highways to man's personality, the only highways along which Satan can travel.



ow we are not considering, save by passing reference, the advance of the devil along the avenues of the physical, or of the spiritual; but of the vocational. What did Satan offer Jesus, our blessed Lord? What did Satan offer this Man, this Son of God, standing as representative Man? He offered Him the kingdoms of this world, or as Luke says, "the kingdoms of the economy." That phrase, the kingdoms of the economy, was in current use as representing the Roman empire. Do not forget this fact, that at that period the Roman empire had mastered the whole known world. Jesus was born into this world in the period described in history as the period of the Pax Romana. That simply means the Roman peace, which peace consisted of a condition in which the human race was subdued, subject, subjugated, bludgeoned into submission.



hat was the power of the Roman empire. It exercised all authority and power and rule. It put it all down, and everything was subject to Rome. That was the economy. It had its divisions. What were the kingdoms of the economy at that time? Greece, Pergamos, Bithynia, Bosphorus, Syria, Pontus, Egypt, Judaea. Those were the kingdoms of the economy, and in some mystic way which we cannot explain, the devil made these glories flash before the eyes and mind of Jesus. He pointed to them, the kingdoms of the economy; and he made this strange declaration. He said, All these are delivered to me. That was true, only be very careful. These were not delivered unto the devil by God. They had been delivered unto him by man. Man had yielded to him, and consequently these kingdoms had all passed under the mastery of the devil. There was no question about that. Just as there is no question that vast numbers of humanity to-day, the vast majority in the world to-day, are subjected to the government of the devil. So then. He said, They have been delivered to me. They had been delivered to him by man, not by God.



ow, he said, all these so delivered to me, I will give Thee. Of course we are in the presence of the devil's lie. He was a liar, as we have seen from the beginning. I will give Thee. I make no hesitation in saying that this prince of the empire of darkness had no intention of yielding them to Jesus. He had no intention of resigning in favour of the Lordship of this Man that he was tempting. But it was his offer. I will give them to Thee.



He had no ability to offer them. He has constantly been offering them. History is the account of how the devil has been offering them at different times; and men have arisen who have sought after hegemony, the government of the world. I need not trouble you with details. You know enough of history to know the truth of my statement. He offered them to Alexander, and he was apparently successful. But there came a moment when he visited Diogenes the philosopher, and asked what more he could do, for he had conquered the world. Diogenes replied, "Go, learn to be wise, talk not of conquest. Conquer thine own soul, and stand out of my sunlight." That is one of the greatest

utterances from a philosopher. When Alexander thought he had mastered everything, he had not done so.



he devil offered the kingdoms of the world to Tiberius; and it did appear at this time he had gained the world. He owned then, and he was governing everything. It was the period of the Pax Romana, but already it was crumbling, breaking up, falling away.



He offered them to Napoleon, and there was a period when it looked as though he was going to come into possession, but you know he did not.



He has offered them to Adolf Hitler, and he is proceeding upon the assumption that he can gain them and govern them. He is being fooled by the devil. He will never gain them, and the whole thing will crumble. Will crumble? I wonder how you are feeling this morning. Don't you begin to see it crumbling in the very restlessness of the forces of evil; evidences of the trembling and weakness of evil? I do. However, be it as it may, I go back upon this dogmatic assertion, the offer is made by the prince of evil, the offer of the kingdoms of the world to a man again, and it is a lie. Never has the suggestion been fulfilled. It may have been apparently, for a while, but never finally.



Now once more, how did our Lord answer this? In a most remarkable way. It was at this moment in the story of the temptation that we find our Lord spoke with direct, dogmatic, terrific authority. If He had seemed almost to argue with the devil on the first two occasions, when quoting Scripture as to the fact of bread, by quoting, Man does not live by bread alone; and as to the fact that man must be conditioned by trust, and not tempt God; He did not do that now. He said, "Get thee hence, Satan." It was the last blasphemy, the most unutterable revelation of evil that Satan made when he attempted to deflect the perfect personality, God's Man, from the appointed pathway that He must travel along and gain possession of the kingdoms of the world. Our Lord dismissed him with that terrific word, "Get thee hence, Satan." And more, "For it is written." Then our Lord revealed the whole philosophy of life, physical, spiritual, vocational, as He uttered, or quoted-for He was quoting-these words, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve." Notice Satan did not say a word about service. He said, If thou wilt worship me. He did not admit that there was involved in the fact of worship, service. But if you worship you serve. Whatever, or whomsoever to whom you bow the knee in worship, you will serve. It is true. May I be allowed with reluctant reverence to say, if Jesus had bowed the knee and worshipped Satan for a passing moment, what would have been the result? He would have served Satan, He would have been committed to the empire of evil, He would have been confederate with the powers of darkness. Satan did not name that, but only worship. Jesus revealed the whole process and meaning, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve." Whatever you worship you serve. If you worship the devil you will serve the devil.



ake some passing illustration. If you worship gold you will serve gold. If you worship fame, you will serve fame. And if you worship God you will serve God. The application of that tremendous word is discovered through all history. Man is so constituted that he is made to worship God; and consequently to serve Him. Wherever man has turned from his loyalty to God, and worshipped any other god, or gods, man, or men, ideas, or supposed truths, he has become the bonds slave of the thing to which he has yielded.



ere He stands, God's Man, our Master, our Lord, our Saviour in all the glorious dignity of His perfect manhood, having resisted Satan as he sought to ride along the avenue of bread ; and along the avenue of the spiritual, His trust in God; and now He rebutted once more and for ever the attack of evil as it came up against the purpose of being, and the purpose of life. He declared the whole philosophy of life for Himself, and for all men in that tremendous declaration, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve."



ll that is happening to-day is not the central conflict between good and evil, between God and the devil. That central conflict has been fought and won, and the victory was with good, not evil, and that goodness in Man. Yes, but the conflict is not over. If the real central conflict was fought and won in the wilderness, and ultimately on Calvary, the progressive conflict has gone on, and we are in the midst of the terrific force of it today. It has been fought and won at the centre, and the ultimate cannot be open to question. Of the issue there can be no doubt. We are in the process to-day of part of the processional conflict; but behind all there is this wilderness story ; and that erect, regal dignity and glory of the God-man, finally vindicated and triumphant in the mystery of His Cross. By that life, by that victory, by that Cross we follow on; and if it be so that we have fellowship in His sufferings, and are called upon-almost unexplainable word-to make up that which is behindhand, that which follows after, in the sufferings of Christ, we count it all joy if we are privileged to be sharers in that travail through which at last the Kingdom comes.



o the voice of Satan is silenced. The conflict goes on; but the last victory is with our Lord and Master.

## CHAPTER IV

Scripture Lesson: Ephesians 6:10-19a

"Submit!" "Resist!"



HIS is a case in which if the difference is very slight apparently, and perhaps not vital, I prefer the rendering of the Authorised Version. Instead of "Be subject therefore," it reads, "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." It may properly be said, they mean the same thing. I know, and yet there is a slight difference. "Be subject" to His authority is correct, but that, assumes a relationship already created. But "Submit" begins at the beginning, and runs on. Begin right, submit; and then continue to submit; that is all. That is why I adopt the Authorised Version rendering. There is something sharp, clear, and definite about it. "Submit."



he two outstanding words in the text are "Submit," "Resist." "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." This is the fourth Sunday morning that we have spent with the devil. In three we have listened to him, to the only three occasions that the Bible records, when his voice has been heard; first in the garden, slandering God to man; then in the history of Job, slandering man to God; and finally in the wilderness confronting the God-man, and making a final bid against the plans and purposes of God in His Son.



ow we come to a practical and personal application, although that has not been absent from any of our meditations. We are agreed as to the actuality of Satan, and of those spiritual forces surrounding us in life. I am not proposing to argue for the truth of the Biblical revelation in that matter. We speak of our enemies as the world, the flesh, and the devil. I am inclined to think if we have the victory over the devil, the other two can be dealt with at once. So the question comes, as we saw in our last meditation, in the last analysis the whole question does become individual. There is a sense in which humanity cannot be dealt with in the aggregate, but one by one. Hence the greatness of Bunyan's Holy War, depicting the conflict between Mansoul and the devil.



o we come now to ask the question, if we are surrounded by such forces of evil as Paul described in the paragraph I read in Ephesians, how are we going to stand up? Notice Paul is very particular in the use of the word stand. "Stand . . . withstand . . . having done all to stand." Pick those words out, and look at the context. Well how is it going to be done? In other words, how are we individually, personally, how am I to put the matter in the singular number-how am I to fight against this force, and these forces of evil which are in existence? That is our inquiry, and to that we come.



Let us start by doing that which we have already done, recognise the reality of these forces against us, and the truth of the Biblical revelation of Satan. We have been considering his devices. We have considered in broad outline his wiles, and we must accept this reality. I cannot help thinking to-day of that little poem that was written by Vernon Charlesworth in the old days. It is very pertinent. It has in it a touch of satire which is well worth while. He wrote:



"Men don't believe in a devil now,  
As their fathers used to do;  
They reject one creed because it's old  
For another because it's new.



There's not a print of his cloven foot,  
Nor a fiery dart from his bow  
To be found in the earth or air today!  
At least-they declare it is so!



But who is it mixes the fatal draught,  
That palsies heart and brain,  
And loads the bier of each passing year,  
With its hundred thousand slain?



But who blights the bloom of the land to-day,  
With the fiery breath of hell?  
If it isn't the devil that does the work,  
Who does? Won't somebody tell?



Who dogs the steps of the toiling saint?  
Who spreads the net for his feet?  
Who sows the tares in the world's broad field?  
Where the Saviour sows His wheat?

**I**f the devil is voted not to be,  
Is the verdict therefore true?  
Someone is surely doing the work  
The devil was thought to do.  
They may say, the devil has never lived,  
They may say the devil is gone,  
But simple people would like to know  
Who carries the business on?"

**D**oggerel, if you like. I call it a very profound little poem. We start believing that he is, and that he is still in the business. We stand with the Biblical revelation. We stand with James in my text; with Paul who described him as "an angel of light " ; with Peter who described him as " a roaring lion, going about, seeking whom he may devour." With Jesus, Who called him the " prince of this world."

**N**ow we are the Lord's. Our Master confronted Satan in the wilderness, and was victorious over him; but we are in the fight. How are we going to fight so as to win? How are we going to fight so that we shall not be defeated by this vast host of evil, and this tremendous intelligence-prostituted intelligence-but intelligence nevertheless? How are we going to fight? My message is to those who are in the fight, and everything is in the text. There is no need to stay with it long. I am not going to. All I want to do is to emphasise it, shall I say, to underscore it ; to call my own soul to the attention of what it says; and then to go out to be obedient to the revelation. Everything is in the verse. Any sermon, if sermon it is, is an application of the message of the text. "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."

**T**he conflict against evil is so real that there must be a definite plan of campaign. Desultory warfare is useless ; and unless we have a plan of campaign, we shall be defeated. I am thinking individually. The whole thing is there. I have said it twice already. I say it again : "Submit." "Resist."

**S**ubmit, that is, put yourselves under control. There was a man who once said, "I am a man under authority, and I have soldiers under me." That was a revelation of a real philosophy of life. Under authority, and therefore in authority; and the authority to which we yield ourselves is the very authority we ourselves shall be able to exercise over others. That has a wider application, but

it applies right here. The first thing is submit, and submit to God; and having submitted, then the fight is on; resist, resist the devil.



A few words about those two words. First of all, a question arises, Why are we so often beaten? I confine myself to Christian people, those who are His, those who are enlisted, and who desire to follow the Lord; and this arch-enemy of the human soul gets a victory over us. There are two or three reasons perhaps.



O f course, people are beaten by the powers of evil when there is neither submission nor resistance, when there is no recognition of the authority of God, and no fight put up against evil. Necessarily they are beaten, they are defeated.



B ut on the other hand, there are two other reasons that may be given for defeat. Where there is resistance without submission we are doomed to be defeated. What do you mean by that? says someone. I mean this, if I go out and make up my mind I am going to fight the devil in my own soul, and life, and force, I am going to fight, and I arrange everything, and put up a fight, I shall be beaten. It is a sort of banal remark to make; the devil is older than I am, and wiser than I am ; he is cleverer than I am! If I go out to fight in my own strength, I am doomed to defeat. That is where the uselessness of all pledges comes in. Forgive me if you do not agree with me. I do not like pledges. I do not believe in pledges. I am asked to sign a pledge not to do this, that, or the other. Oh yes, you may put in, with the help of God; hut it constantly means, fighting alone. I remember someone in America wrote to me, asking me to sign a pledge not to swear again. I have often wondered why he sent it to me. I wrote to him and told him I could not sign that, and added this that I believed if a man had a swear in him, he had better get it out! The Divine method will make a man independent of profane language for the expression of his thinking. These pledges may have their value, and I do not want to be hypercritical; but you will be beaten if it is nothing more than a pledge you have made. Unless there has been submission, resistance is of no value.



O n the other hand there are those who are beaten because they submit, and then fail to resist. Yes, they submit. They are quite sincere. They will give themselves to Christ. They will obey the voice of the evangelist, and come out on the Lord's side. They mean it, and then they go forth, and expect everything is done, and they are not to know the power of evil in its suggestiveness. It is a great mistake. My brother, if you have recently given yourself to Christ, you know the power of evil more poignantly and acutely than you ever did before. The devil is not concerned with the people who lie asleep in his arms, but with the people who are awake, and who have started out in this great crusade. If you simply submit, and are not prepared to gird yourself for the war, to put on the whole panoply of God and fight, you will be beaten. It is the connection of those two words that is so important if we are to be victorious. Submit first; resist, secondly; and they must be kept

together. Neither to submit nor resist is of course to be the fool and plaything of the devil. To submit without offering resistance is to be beaten. To resist without having first submitted is to be defeated. We must have the two.



o when we speak of the practice of resistance, we begin by insisting upon the necessity for submission. The practice of resistance begins with the act of submission, and the attitude of submission must be constantly maintained.



ut I ask the question, To whom are we to submit? We are to submit to Christ, to God in Christ. We are to submit to Him. What does that mean? We are to submit to One Who knows the foe as we cannot know him; to One Who knows us as we do not know ourselves; and to One Who knows the whole field; to One Who could look on, in the days of His flesh, with curious, and marvellous, and astounding majesty, to the consummation of the age, and in every case, if we watch and listen to Him, when He is referring to that consummation, it is always in tones of triumph, never of suggested or supposed or possible defeat. Always He sees the whole field. He sees all the processes, all the battles, all the darkness; and He sees the ultimate. I am asked to submit therefore to the great Captain of my salvation, Who knows the foe as I cannot, Who understands me as I cannot know myself; and Who knows the whole field.



ubmit to Him, and submit to Him for what? For guidance, for strength, for love. Submit to Him for indication of how to fight this next battle. Submit to Him; first of all in an act of complete surrender, and then in an attitude that maintains that first act of surrender, in a constant surrender.



hat means enquiry. That means that before I undertake any mission, before I do any work, before I commit myself to any position; knowing that our conflict is against the spiritual hosts of wickedness, I had better go to my Lord, and find out if it is His will, for if that is where He wants me to be, He will show me how to strike the blow in the act of resistance.



y brethren, if we take that and look at it in its application to life, it has an application which is physical, and a mental, and spiritual application also.



hysical. I need not enter into that now, but to that young man, that lass who is starting out on a life of devotion to Jesus Christ, do not forget that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost; and

do not forget that the first approach of the devil is always through the physical, as we saw in the temptation story, always. Then let your life be in harmony with that tremendous fact. There were two books published many years ago now; one written by a great statesman and politician in America, the other by a French saint. The book of the latter, Charles Wagner was called *The Simple Life*. The book of the former, Theodore Roosevelt, the American statesman, was called *The Strenuous Life*. It is an interesting fact that came to my knowledge, the writer of *The Simple Life* went to stay with the author of *The Strenuous Life*, and they talked all one day, and found out they were not contrary, that they were co-related; that to live the simple life was to be armed for the strenuous life; and to live the strenuous life it is necessary that we reduce the things of the body to simplicity. Resist, and resist in the realm of the physical.

**I**n the realm of the mental. If I am going to fight this enemy, I need to keep my mind occupied. Sang one,

**W**ant of occupation is not rest,  
A mind quite vacant is a mind distressed."

**A**nd our Lord gave us a definite parabolic commentary on that truth in the parable of the empty house from which the evil spirit had been exorcised, the house swept and garnished and made beautiful and left empty. What happened? Said Jesus, Seven other spirits worse than the first entered, and the last state of that house was more terrific than before the deliverance came. Yes, I am talking now of the mental. The mind must be kept occupied, constantly, healthily, easily. Healthily? Oh how easy it is to occupy our minds and our thinking by reading that which in itself is impure. Now if we are going to fight the devil we have to keep our minds healthily occupied. We have to choose our friends carefully by their habits and by their conversation. There are friendships that we cannot form, or having formed must break with, if we are to put up this fight successfully.

**B**ut of course the central thing is the spiritual. For that we need supremely to keep near to God. We cannot keep near to God except through Jesus Christ. If we try to keep near to God apart from Him we are in the presence of a great mysterious abstraction that we cannot understand ultimately. No man by searching can find out God unto perfection; but God has revealed Himself in Christ, and it is the cultivation of that knowledge of God, known in Christ day by day, hour by hour. Of course that means study of His Word, and the great and holy exercises of prayer, and work according to His will. All these things must be carefully watched, and in watching them we are fighting evil and Satan.



nother thing, a simple thing in that connection. What are we to do ? Give the devil a wide berth. I will not stop there because I am quite sure you will think about it. Do not play on the edge of danger. Once I heard our friend Dr. John Hutton say something in my hearing, " God will not suffer you to be tempted above you are able to bear, but with the temptation will make a way of escape." And said Dr. Hutton, " Young people will find the way of escape is the King's highway, and a good pair of legs, and a long hard run." Do not go as near as you can to danger. Give the devil a wide berth. Do not see how near you can go to the things of the world, and the flesh and the devil, and remain unsmirched and unscathed. The wider the berth the better. Remember courage is shown by a pair of heels running along the King's highway.



ow what does all this mean? There may be some here not conscious of being beaten by the devil. Let that person, that man, woman, youth, maiden, make this consideration supreme at once. Submit and resist. Do not let pride that you have not been dragged to the depths weaken you. Listen, "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." I maintain to get the real force of that is to read it thus, Let him that most assuredly standeth take heed lest he fall.



ut to those who have fallen; my friend, if you are following the Lord Jesus, there is a definite conflict ahead of you. The victory may be completely yours; and you have only these two things to remember, and remembering you can win. "Submit," "Resist." Submit to God, and resist the devil.



o we begin our fight by yielding ourselves to the authority of our Lord, which is the authority of God.



" Make me a captive, Lord,  
And then I shall be free;  
Force me to render up my sword,  
And I shall conqueror be.  
I sink in life's alarms  
When by myself I stand;  
Imprison me within Thine arms,  
And strong shall be my hand.

My heart is weak and poor  
Until it master find;  
It has no spring of action sure,-  
It varies with the wind.  
It cannot freely move  
Till Thou hast wrought its chain;  
Enslave it with Thy matchless love  
And deathless it shall reign.

My power is faint and low  
Till I have learned to serve;  
It wants the needed fire to glow;  
It wants the breeze to nerve;  
It cannot drive the world  
Until itself be driven ;  
Its flag can only be unfurled  
When Thou shalt breathe from heaven.

My will is not my own  
Till Thou hast made it Thine;  
If it would reach a monarch's throne  
It must its crown resign;  
It only stands unbent  
Amid the clashing strife,  
When on Thy bosom it has leant,  
And found in Thee its life.

Submit! Resist!