

# 9 — The Forces of Evil

## *Objectives*

By the end of this lesson students will be able to ...

- recognize that the Evil One is very much alive roaming the earth, seeing whom he can tempt.
- show that it is difficult to recognize the many guises which he assumes.
- state that God created the invisible world of angels, but some angels were cast out by God because they tried to become greater than God.
- understand that the origin of evil is outside of people; however, people ultimately choose good or evil.

## *For the Catechist*

While some Christians see the direct activity of demons behind every evil, it is not likely that your students are exposed to this kind of thought. More likely you will need to convince them of the reality of the devil. Discussing how some people seem to manipulate others without being detected can help lay the groundwork for your discussion of temptation by an unseen power. If we can manipulate one another, we can surely be manipulated by stronger forces.

Help the students realize that no one thing or person can force us to respond to evil. We alone are free to make choices and are, therefore, entirely responsible for the choices we make. The devil can tempt us, but we ultimately choose either the good or the evil. To say that "the devil made us do it" is not true. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, we are empowered to ward off these assaults. We are encouraged to "*resist the devil, and he will free from you. Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you*" (James 4:7-8). Help the students realize that by claiming the power of the divine life, they can fight the enemy and overcome evil in their lives and in the world.

## *Materials Needed*

*Opening Prayer:* Vespers folders

*Introduction:* Easel or wall pad, markers

*Guided Reading:* student text, chalkboard or large paper, pens and pencils

*Vespers:* Folders, prayer sheets, tape or glue, scissors

*Activity A:* "Journal," and Journal folders and pens or pencils

*Activity B:* newspapers, magazines, brochures, pamphlets, scissors, tape or glue, 9" x 12" construction paper, markers

*Activity C:* Unit Review, game show props

*Closing Prayer:* Vespers folders

## **1. Opening Prayer**

- Gather around the icon corner and pray Psalm 140 (141) from their Vespers folder.

## 2. Review

Review the main points of the previous lesson

- Evil uses seductive ways to make people disobey and want more.
- Our first parents chose to not trust God and disobey Him
- As a result of their sin, pain, suffering, and death came upon man and woman.
- The story of Cain and Abel reflects the continuing of sin throughout history.

## 3. Introduction

- Ask the students if they have ever been manipulated by someone else. Let them share the techniques that "made them" do what someone else wanted and make a list of the techniques. [Possible answers: *"I won't be your friend."* *"Everyone else is doing it."*]
- Tell the students today's lesson talks about the ways the devil gets us to do what he wants rather than what we know God asks of us.

## 4. Guided Reading, Pages 43-44

- Read aloud the first column of this page.
- Continue reading "Source of Evil" and make a list of words referring to the evil one. Ask for any other words they might have heard.
- Discuss: Is the Evil One teaching us how to accept watching someone's suffering, pain, and death and even enjoy it? [Encourage everyone to give one example—through video games; with movies and television shows.]

## Guided Reading, Pages 44

- Divide the students into 3 groups—one reads about the angels, the other about the fallen angels, and the third about "Our World."
- Have them come together to share their information.
- Discuss ways they have found that help them to make the right choice even when all their friends might be ready to choose to do something wrong.

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## Background Reading (Evil Influence—Satan)

"Another theme in these primitive stories is the introduction of sin by an evil influence from outside human nature. The serpent tempts Adam and Eve through lies and deception, telling them that, if they ignore God's warning, they 'will be like gods' (Gen 3:5). Revelations 12:9 identifies the serpent with the devil, who is 'a liar by nature—a liar and the father of lies' (Jn 8:44). Humanity was created good, destined for union with God and for the love and help of one another. Our impulse towards evil comes from the outside, from that personal evil spirit we call Satan. St. Paul observed, 'Our battle is not against human forces but against the principalities and powers, the rulers of this world of darkness, the evil spirits in the regions above' (Eph 6:12 NAB).

"The existence of the devil as the source of evil does not remove our own responsibility for our actions. Yet, we cannot do what is evil without some deception. We must believe it to be for our benefit, at least in the short run. When we decide to do wrong, we make this deception a form of 'self-deception,' the condition for all sin. We become followers of the 'evil one' rather than of Christ, the Light of the world. We become ourselves 'people of the lie'" (LLI 27-28).

## 5. Ancient Wisdom for Today

Ask for a volunteer to read aloud the quote on this page. Have the students write their answers and then share them with the class.

[Suggestions: The Evil One is the cause of temptation; we can pray to ask for God's help; yes, God can give us the strength to deal with and overcome our problems.]

## 6. Icon Study

Have the students read the commentary on the story of Cain and Abel and answer the question.

## 7. Vespers

- Have the students read the information about Stichera aloud.
- Distribute the Vespers folder.
- Give each student one copy of this Stichera (see page 78 in this instructional manual).
- Ask the students to tape or glue this Stichera onto the top of the next page in their folder.

## 8. Activity A: My Personal Journal

Distribute Worksheet A along with pens or pencils. Have the students complete the worksheet in silence (or you can play religious music if available) and place it in their folder. Plan accordingly, but they should need no more than 5 minutes to complete the journal entry.

## 9. Activity B: Evil in the World

- Have the students make a poster using headlines that announce evil in the world.
- Ask them to choose one of the stories and present it to the class by stating all the choices the person had. Emphasize how this evil could have been avoided in most cases.
- Suggest that the students pray for people to make the right choices

## 10. Activity C: Unit Review

- Divide the class in two teams based on age, height or alphabetical order.
- Using the format of a popular game show, Jeopardy!, quiz the teams using the questions on the review worksheet (p. 80). Use props (buzzers) and posters to simulate your "game show."

## 11. Summary

Review the lesson. Ask if they are any further comments or questions about today's topics.

## 12. Closing Prayer

- Gather around the icon corner and pray the Stichera from their Vespers folder.

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## Background Reading (Spread of Evil)

"The spread of evil derives from creation's loss of purpose or direction resulting from man's disobedience. Dominion over the created world was entrusted to man, who was made in God's own image and likeness. Man chose instead to be controlled by the world and forfeited his freedom. Maximus the Confessor interprets Adam and Eve's 'garments of skin' (Gn 3:21) as a change in humanity's situation involving a greater dependence upon the animal side of existence. Mankind's purpose to lead creation to God was thwarted by succumbing to the desires of material sensation. The world became a prison of constant temptation, through which the 'prince of this world' brings death as the inheritance of the Fall. Individual sin could be seen as a consequence of mortality, which makes man anxious about what he should eat or drink (cf. Mt 6:31). In baptism parents can transmit immortal life to their mortal child as a weapon to fight sin" (LLI 28-29).

## HYMNS OF THE VESPERS

Verse: Strong is the love of the Lord for us, eternally will His truth endure.

**Hymn** (tone 6): Adam was driven from paradise for eating. \* He sat across from it, waiting and mourning in a pitiful voice: \* "Alas, what wretchedness has befallen me? \* I transgressed one commandment of my Lord \* and was thereby denied all kinds of good things. \* Therefore, most holy paradise \* which was planted for me and closed on account of me, \* implore Him Who made you \* that I may contemplate again the flowers of your garden." \* Then the Savior cried out to him, saying, \* "I do not desire the loss of My creation, \* but that it be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth; \* for he who comes to Me I shall not cast out!"

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, \* and to the Holy Spirit.

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## *My Personal Journal*

*Think about the first time you heard about the devil. How was this Evil One described to you? Who gave you the description – your parents? Write what you remember about your view of the devil when you were younger. You might want to draw a picture the way you saw this Evil One.*

*Compare this first impression you had of the devil to what you learned about the Evil One today in class.*

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*What are some questions you can ask yourself to recognize whether the choice you are making is to follow God or to follow the Evil One?*

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## Unit Review

### Lesson 6:

- 1) In the Old Testament, of what do the prophets remind the Israelites? (*The prophets remind the Israelites of their covenant with God—to follow the Commandments.*)
- 2) Who is one of the greatest prophets who tells us that the death and destruction of the world is the result of our not working with God to create His Kingdom? (*Isaiah*)
- 3) How has the world become broken and shattered even though it was created good? (*The world has become broken and shattered through humanity’s sinfulness and disobedience.*)

### Lesson 7:

- 4) In what book of the Old Testament do we read about the Fall of Adam and Eve? (*Genesis 3*)
- 5) How did Adam and Eve separate themselves from God? (*They disobeyed Him; they did not trust Him; they refused His companionship.*)
- 6) How does the story of Adam and Eve show us the importance of each choice that we make? (*Through Adam's and Eve’s choice to disobey God, they allowed sin to enter the world. Our bad choices let sin continue in the world.*)

### Lesson 8:

- 7) How were Adam and Eve convinced by the Evil One to disobey God? (*The serpent convinced them to distrust God and to want more.*)
- 8) What was the immediate reaction of Adam and Eve when they realized God knew they disobeyed? (*They experienced confusion and disorder; they blamed others.*)
- 9) What is the result of Adam and Eve's sin? (*Pain, suffering, and death*)
- 10) Who are Cain and Abel? (*The sons of Adam and Eve*)
- 11) How does their story reflect the continuing of sin throughout history? (*This story shows that humans continue to sin, to separate themselves from God.*)

### Lesson 9:

- 12) From where is the origin of evil in relationship to people? (*From outside of people—from the Evil One*)
- 13) Why does evil still exist in the world today? (*People continue to make bad choices that allow evil to exist.*)