



UNIT: SPIRITUAL WARFARE

LESSON 1 | ANGELS AND DEMONS

WHAT WE WANT STUDENTS TO LEARN: That God's Word teaches that angels and demons exist, are less powerful than God, and are not meant to be worshipped or have dominion over God's people.

WHAT WE WANT STUDENTS TO DO WITH WHAT THEY'VE LEARNED: Be on alert for the spiritual battles happening around them, knowing what the Bible says about angels and demons so that they are not deceived.

SCRIPTURE FOCUS: Ephesians 6:10-13, 2 Corinthians 11:12-14, Matthew 4:1-11, 24:4-5, Romans 8:14-17, Hebrews 1:1-14, Revelation 12:7-9, 20:7-10, 1 Peter 5:8.

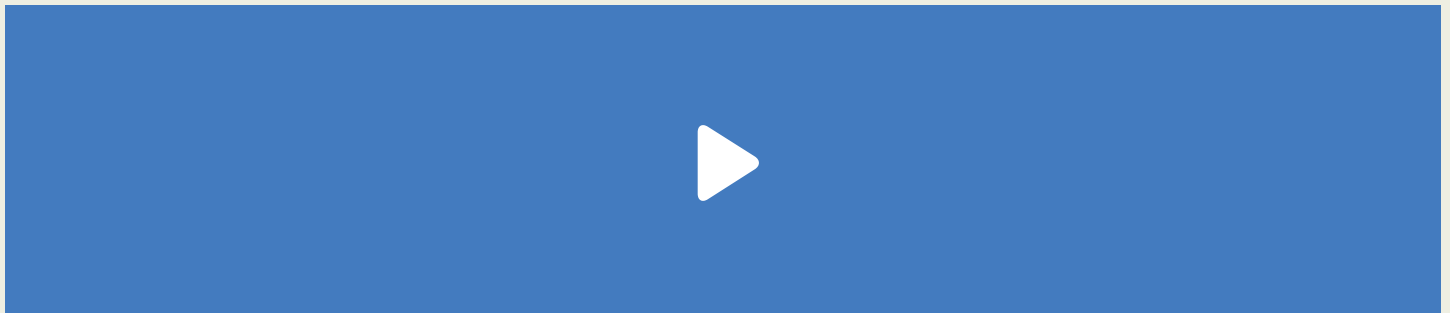
ANCHOR STATEMENT: Scripture is full of stories about angelic and demonic beings, but neither is meant to have dominion over God's people. We are not meant to worship angels or be subject to the schemes of demons.

OVERVIEW:

We see them in books, movies, and hear about them in songs. But what does the Bible really say about angels and demons? Not only will this lesson examine some misconceptions and compare them to biblical understanding, but it will also acknowledge the dangers of believing these beings are more powerful than God. Neither group should be worshipped, and neither are meant to have dominion over those who are co-heirs with Christ.

TEACHER PREP VIDEO:

Each *Anchored* lesson comes with a Teacher Prep Video. These short videos are designed to help you grasp the lesson's main point as you prepare to teach.



BIBLE BACKGROUND

The *Bible Background* is a focused, brief overview of some of the background info for the main passage you will be teaching.

- **WHAT DO WE MEAN BY "CONTEXT"?** In every YM360 Bible study lesson, you'll notice we make a point to encourage you to provide the context for the passages you study. By "context" we mean at the very least helping students know *who* wrote the book, *when* it was written, and *why* it was written.
- **WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?** When we teach the Bible without giving context, students don't get a "big picture" understanding of the story of the Bible. But this view is vital to grasping the story of God's plan of redemption for humankind. As you teach, use the *Bible Background* to help summarize the context.

THE DETAILS

Ephesians

- *Author:* The Apostle Paul wrote the letters to the Ephesians. Of course, we know Paul as the one-time chief enemy of the Church. After his miraculous conversion on the road to Damascus, Paul would go on to have a position of great importance in the early Church and beyond. He wrote 13 of the 27 books of the New Testament.
- *Time frame:* Ephesians was probably written by Paul from prison in the latter years of his life, sometime around 60 or 61 AD.
- *Purpose:* Paul had a very close relationship with the church in Ephesus. It seems as if the motivation for the letter was simply that the church would know how he was faring in his imprisonment. But, true to form, Paul couldn't help but teach. The letter covers general teaching on the work of Christ to redeem believers, unity among believers, and how believers are supposed to conduct themselves.

2 Corinthians

- *Author:* The Apostle Paul wrote 2 Corinthians to the Church in Corinth.
- *Time frame:* Paul wrote 2 Corinthians from Macedonia around 55 or 56 AD, a year or so after writing 1 Corinthians and a year before he wrote his letter to the Romans from Corinth.
- *Purpose:* According to the ESV Study Bible, the main theme of Paul's second letter to the Corinthians was "the relationship between suffering and the power of the Spirit in Paul's apostolic life, ministry, and message."

Hebrews

- *Author:* Originally, this letter to the Hebrews was entitled "The Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews." However, since the Reformation it's been widely recognized that Paul was probably not the writer. There's simply not enough textual or historical evidence to prove his authorship. Early historians suggested the author is perhaps Barnabas or Apollos, though there is no way to know for sure.
- *Time frame:* Hebrews was almost certainly written before the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple in 70 AD since the author does not mention or give any hint to this catastrophic happening.
- *Purpose:* Hebrews was written to address Jewish converts to Christianity and challenge them to hold fast to their newfound faith. Many of them were resorting back to old traditions and some were even considering merging with certain Jewish sects. Because of increased persecution of Jewish converts to Christianity, many of them were tempted to resort back to old rites and rituals purely to avoid the pain. The challenge from this Hebrew Christian writer to Hebrew converts was to hold fast to their Christian faith and not to slip back to their Hebrew roots.

1 Peter

- *Author:* 1 Peter was written by Peter, one of Jesus' most trusted disciples and one of the key leaders of the growing movement of Christ-followers.
- *Time frame:* 1 Peter was likely written between 54-68 AD.
- *Purpose:* 1 Peter was written to a people under persecution, likely under the reign of Nero. Peter calls the Church to persevere under trials because eternal life awaits them. He encourages them that God's promises to His people will endure and should be the basis of their hope.

THE SETTING

Within this lesson, students will see a variety of 'settings' where angels and demons go against one another in a spiritual battle of good and evil. Of particular note is the setting in Matthew when Jesus is tested in the desert by Satan. In this passage, we see that the goals and spiritual forces of evil are directly opposed to the goal of God. Once Jesus has overcome the temptations of Satan, He allows angels to minister to Him. In this, we also see the purpose and place of angels.

THE MAIN POINT

Angels and demons are constantly in a spiritual battle in our world. Though Satan tries to present himself as the light, he seeks to lead the world deeper into darkness with the help of his fellow fallen angels: the demons. On the other hand, God uses angels to enact His good will. The two parties are constantly at odds, but it's not always like what we see on television! Though this is a spiritual battle, the sides aren't even. Through His work on the Cross and His promise to end evil at the end of time, the ultimate winner is clear: Jesus Christ.

LESSON PLAN

The *Lesson Plan* contains three elements: an introductory activity called *The Lead In*; the Bible Study section called *The Main Event*; and an application-focused segment called *The Last Word*.

THE LEAD IN

- *Goal*: To introduce the topic of angels and demons as they are seen in modern media (as opposed to how they are seen in Scripture.)
- *Set-Up*: None needed.

FIRST, explain to your students that today, we will explore the topic of angels and demons. This topic can differ based on different Church doctrines, so the focus of our lesson today will simply be to address what Scripture says about angels and demons. (And it does talk about both!) **Ask your students:**

- **How have you seen angels and demons depicted on television, in songs, and through other forms of media?**
 - *Answers will vary.*

THEN, explain to students that there have been countless representations of angels and demons, both Christian and non-Christian. Explain to your students that what we will learn from God's Word about angels and demons will be different from our culture's understanding of these beings. Unlike what we've seen depicted in art, books, movies, and television shows... Scriptural descriptions of angels don't necessarily include halos and harps, and demons do not necessarily have horns and talons. But this doesn't mean that these spiritual forces are not at work in our world.

FINALLY, **say something like:**

- **As we dive into our first lesson on spiritual warfare, we will begin by gaining a deeper understanding of angels and demons to see how these spiritual beings work in our world.**

If there are no questions, transition into the Main Event.

THE MAIN EVENT

- *Goal*: To help students see how Scripture represents angels and demons and how God has power over all.
- *Set-Up*: Make sure students have a Bible or Bible App.

FIRST, read or have a student read Ephesians 6:10-13. **Ask:**

- **How is our current world described? What do you think that means?**
 - *Answer*: Our current world is described as "darkness." We live in a dark world under the power of the enemy. We are not in a place of rest but on a spiritual battlefield.

Explain to students that this passage refers to all of the evil things going on around us as though we are in the midst of a war. And in this war, our enemies have the power to overtake us if we do not clothe ourselves in the armor of God. According to Paul, there is evil at work in ways that we can't always see plainly. Explain that we must not underestimate the power of evil at work in the world seeking to oppose Jesus and those who follow Him.

- **Why can it be difficult for us to see spiritual forces of evil at work in the world?**
 - *Answers will vary.*

Say something like:

- **The Bible does not give a clear origin of demons, but it is believed that they are fallen angels who followed Lucifer (Satan) when he fell from Heaven. This account can be found in Ezekiel 28:12-17. Although we don't know their origin, we do see them at work in the world. They, just like Satan, attempt to draw people away from God by making sin and evil look good.**

THEN, read or have a student read 2 Corinthians 11:12-14. **Ask students:**

- **What are ways that Satan tries to make evil look good?**
 - *Answers will vary.*

Explain to students that Satan tries to make evil look good in ways like convincing us that we should just go with the crowd so we don't cause an issue or telling us to ignore the consequences of sin while pointing to the "good feelings" we might have while sinning. And if we have made ourselves more important than God, then we will fall for these lies easily.

Say something like:

- **Satan's deception is simple but effective against humanity. He identifies our sinful desires and reflects them back to us. He makes it easier, or more acceptable, to sin in the ways we want. Satan and his demons don't MAKE us sin; they essentially just offer us company while we do. Isaiah 14:12-20 gives us a symbolic narrative concerning Satan. This passage tells us that Satan, who is referred to as Day Star, set out to make himself the 'Most High,' which is a title belonging only to God. And Jesus warns us of this deception because we are weak and willing to believe.**

Read or have a student read Matthew 24:4-5. Explain to students that on our own, humanity is easily swayed and deceived. Especially when someone comes along claiming to be God and wants us to live out our fleshly desires. But, there was one man in the human race who was not deceived by Satan.

Read or have a student read Matthew 4:1-11. **Ask:**

- **What are some things that stood out to you in this passage?**
 - *Answers will vary.*
- **We see in verse 11 that after Jesus resists the Devil's temptations, a group of angels are ministering to Him. What does the word ministering mean?**
 - *Answer: To look after, care for, attend to, etc.*

THEN, **say something like:**

- **Even though Jesus is fully God and fully man at the same time, His humanity did suffer in the midst of this temptation. He was hungry, and His body ached for food. Temptation wasn't 'easier' for Him than it is for us. But if you read closely, Jesus understood that the best way to resist evil is to combat it with God's truth. When Jesus recited Scripture back to Satan in its proper context rather than Satan's distorted one, He silenced Satan. He knew that demons, and even the Devil himself, had no dominion over Him. And when Satan pressed Jesus to test the angels who are meant to minister or care for God's people, Jesus silenced Him with Scripture again.**

Explain to students that the Bible does not specifically talk about when angels were created, but we do know that they are created beings. They are completely different from God's other creations- including humans. **Say something like:**

- **Angels are servants to God and His people. Their power comes from God, and they are very aware of their place within the Kingdom. Throughout Scripture, we can see their service to people like Daniel, who needed to have the mouths of lions shut (Daniel 6:22). These angels, or messengers, are sent by God to give us His messages, and to be heard continually praising God. And while we also seek to praise God, we know that our goal is not to become like the angels and demons, but like the Son of God.**

Read or have a student read Psalm 8:4-6. **Say something like:**

- **There is a common misconception that humans become angels when they die. But we can see in Psalm 8:4-6 that humanity is distinctly different from heavenly beings or angels. Many get this misconception of**

humans becoming angels from Matthew 22:29-30, when Jesus says that His followers will become like angels. Jesus is not saying that we will BECOME angels, rather that our life will be similar to that of angels who do not take part in activities common to humanity (such as marriage).

NEXT, explain that Scripture tells us we are co-heirs with Christ. God's people are not looking to become like angels; we are looking to become like Christ!

Read or have a student read Romans 8:14-17 and Hebrews 1:1-14. **Ask:**

- **What are some differences between Jesus, the heir to the throne, and the angels?**
 - *Answers will vary.* Help students see that the angels are servants, who do not have dominion over Christ. They are not equal in power to Jesus, and they do not inherit WITH Jesus as we do.

THEN, explain to students that when we read about angels and demons in Scripture, it can be easy to get caught up in all the details of these encounters, and let our imaginations run wild. And thinking deeply about these things is fine, as long as we remember that angels and demons are lower than the people of God, and that just as we are not meant to worship angels as better than God, we are also not meant to be subject to the schemes of demons. Remind students of their Anchor Statement for this lesson:

SCRIPTURE IS FULL OF STORIES ABOUT ANGELIC AND DEMONIC BEINGS, BUT NEITHER IS MEANT TO HAVE DOMINION OVER GOD'S PEOPLE. WE ARE NOT MEANT TO WORSHIP ANGELS OR BE SUBJECT TO THE SCHEMES OF DEMONS.

NEXT, explain to students that you are going to read one narrative about angels and demons. Have the students turn in their Bibles to Revelation 12:7-9 and Revelation 20:7-10. Read or have a different student read each passage. **Ask the following questions:**

- **What were the results of the archangel Michael and the angels winning the battle over Satan and the demons in Revelation 12?**
 - *Answer:* Satan and the demons were kicked out of Heaven. They were thrown down to the Earth, where they could continue to cause problems for a season.
- **What happened to Satan and the demons in the final battle of Revelation 20?**
 - *Answer:* Satan and the demons were consumed by a fire that came down from Heaven, and Satan was thrown into the lake of fire to face God's judgment forever.

Explain to your students that God has laid out the final result of the spiritual warfare going on around us. By God's power and command, Satan and his demons will be destroyed in a lake of fire, never again able to deceive. As you close out your time with students, remind them that this lesson is only an introduction to the biblical representation of angels and demons. Encourage them to proceed with caution when using sources outside of Scripture to understand these beings. Remind them to always refer back to God's power over both angels and demons, and His promise of victory in the final battle of spiritual warfare.

FINALLY, ask if anyone has any thoughts or questions, then transition to the Last Word portion of your lesson.

THE LAST WORD

- *Goal:* To help students begin to seek to resist evil in the spiritual battle they face daily.
- *Set-Up:* None needed.

FIRST, explain to students that since spiritual warfare is all around us, we need to be alert. Read or have a student read 1 Peter 5:8. **Ask the following questions:**

- **What does it look like to be “sober-minded” and “watchful”?**

o Answer: Those who are sober-minded and watchful are on alert.

- **What does the lion example show us about how Satan seeks to attack people?**

o Answer: Like a lion, the Satan is on the prowl. He is looking for ways to have a sneak attack when we least expect it. He is studying his prey.

- **How can we watch out for temptation to follow Satan and fall into sin this week?**

o Answers will vary but might include staying close to God through prayer and Bible study, memorizing Scripture, etc.

FINALLY, tell students that in the next few weeks, you are going to keep exploring spiritual warfare. This is only the beginning. **Say something like:**

- **We have just started to explore spiritual warfare in the Bible. Next week, we will look at witchcraft and superstition to see if it is real and what the Bible has to say about it.**

If there are no more questions, close the lesson in prayer.

- Don't forget to remind students about their devotions this week. If you're posting them on Social Media or some other means of electronic distribution, make sure you inform students of when they will be receiving them.