

JESUS AND THE NEW COVENANT

UNIT ONE: THE WAY IS PREPARED

Lesson 10:

Jesus Wins His First Battle

CONTENT:

1. Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert where he remained all alone for 40 days without eating. At the end of this time, Satan tempted him 3 times.
2. The Enemy offered Jesus a different way to fulfil his mission: to avoid suffering, seek fame and power, and to look out for himself. But Jesus knew that his Father's will for him was to suffer; to serve rather than to be served; to trust and obey God. The Enemy also questioned his very identity ("If you are God's Son") but Jesus refused to doubt.
3. These temptations remind us of Adam's temptations. But whereas Adam gave in to them, Jesus remained faithful to the Father's will. He is known as the 'New Adam'.
4. During the 40 days of Lent, the people of God try to join Jesus in his desert experience by getting detached from worldly things and seeking God.
5. Just as the Enemy tempted Jesus he also tempts us. We can imitate Jesus by using the Word of God as a sword, and remaining faithful to God's will. We can also take the 'helmet of salvation', which means, we get our strength from Christ who has won the victory for us, too.



ASSIGNMENT: 1. Memorise the verse given & the verses quoted by Jesus.

2. Look for the answer to the 'Challenge'.

REFERENCES: Matthew 4:1-11. Ephesians 6:11,17. *Answer to Challenge*: Matthew 16:21-23 OR Mark 8:31-33. CCC 538-40.

MATERIALS NEEDED: Handouts; small prize for winner of starter competition.

I. STARTER:

- Today we are going to talk about battles and fighting. What weapons are used for fighting? Don't answer aloud, but write down as many as you can in 60 seconds. You can write weapons used in olden times or nowadays, in wars or in street fights.
[After a minute, see that all the students put down their pens and then ask each one to name one weapon on their list, without repeating those already named. A prize could be given to the one who gives the last name. E.g. Swords, boxing gloves, guns, bombs, knives, missiles, arrows, cannon balls, stones, spears, sticks, fists etc.]
- These weapons are used to harm a person's body. What if the aim is to destroy a person's soul? What weapons are used to do this? *[Words, thoughts, wrong ideas, temptations...]*
- Today we will look at a very important battle fought by Jesus against the Devil. We'll look at the weapons used by Jesus to fight the enemy. This will help us to win when we are attacked in the same way.

II. DEVELOPMENT:

1. *[Give out handouts and read the passage [1]. Ask the students to pay special attention to the kind of temptations the enemy used to attack Jesus. Ask the following questions after reading:]*
 - Where did this 'battle' take place? *(In the desert.)*
 - Who led Jesus there? *[The Holy Spirit]*
 - How long was Jesus there? *(40 days and nights)*
 - Why was he so hungry? *(Because he had fasted for 40 days.)*

- What weapon did Jesus use against the enemy? *[He used the Word of God. He was quoting from the book of Deuteronomy]*
- When do we, as Jesus' followers, try to re-live Jesus' experience? *[In the 40 days of Lent.]*
What do we do? *[We try to get detached from material things and to come closer to God. We do this by prayer, fasting and almsgiving (giving to the poor)]*
[Students fill in answer [2]]
- You may remember how Adam was also tempted by the Devil to disobey God. Did Jesus respond the same way as Adam? What is the difference in the way they responded? *[Adam gave in to the temptations. As a result, sin entered the world. But Jesus refused to give in, and so he is able to help us also to fight the enemy.]*
[Students fill in answer [3]]

1. In pictures of Jesus in the desert we usually see the Devil drawn as an evil-looking figure with horns and a tail. But Jesus probably just heard a voice in his head, just as we do. The temptations were most probably like thoughts, which are more difficult to fight. Jesus could also hear God's voice speaking to him. He was able to separate the voices and answer the devil clearly. Let's see if you can sort out the ideas and thoughts which came from the devil and those that came from God. *[Students do exercise [4] The answers are:]*

THE ENEMY'S WORDS:	GOD'S WORDS:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look out for yourself! • Avoid suffering! • Are you sure you are God's child? • Seek a name and fame! • You must prove you are great! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obeying God's word brings life!! • You don't have to prove who you are! • Be ready to suffer for God! • You are God's child.

2. *[Read [5]]* Saint Paul warned us about the devil's tricks and advised us to put on the armour of God.
 - What are the weapons he suggests we should use? *[The 'helmet of salvation' and the 'sword of the Spirit'.]*
 - What is this helmet of salvation? How do we put it on? *[A helmet protects the head of a soldier. When the enemy starts messing with your mind, telling you that you are weak, and a sinner, remember that Jesus has already won the victory for you. He has saved you. (Salvation means 'saving') It is by his power that you can also win the victory. So you just have to remember Jesus, and confidently ask for his strength.]*
 - What is the 'sword of the Spirit'? How do we use it? *[It is the Word of God. Just as Jesus answered the enemy by quoting scripture, we too should know God's Word, so that we can know God's will and his way of doing things. Then we can confidently defend ourselves.]*

III. REFLECTION & PRAYER:

- Think about your own life. God has a special mission for you too. If you want to be successful in this mission, you have to do things God's way and not the way that the enemy suggests to you. Look at the kind of thoughts the enemy put into Jesus' head. *[Read the words in exercise [4]]* Does he say the same kind of things to you? Write down on a slip of paper any temptation the enemy uses for you. This paper is only for you to read and destroy afterwards. *[Students reflect and write in silence]*
- Now fold up your paper and hold it in your hand. Ask Jesus, who has already won the victory over the devil, to help you to overcome your temptations.

HOME ASSIGNMENT:

1. Memorise the verse given ([5] in the handout) & the verses quoted by Jesus.
2. Look for the answer to the 'Challenge'. You will find the answer in the Gospel of St. Matthew.