

# The *Praktikos*

Evagrius of Pontus

**6. THERE are eight principal kinds of [tempting-] thoughts (*logismoi*), that contain within themselves every [tempting-] thought:**

first, that of gluttony;

and with it, that of sexual immorality;

third, that of love of money;

fourth, that of sadness;

fifth, that of anger;

sixth that of *acedia*;

seventh, that of vainglory;

eighth, that of pride.

We cannot [control] whether these [tempting-thoughts] can agitate the soul or not; but whether they remain [in us] or not, and whether they arouse the passions or not – that we can [control].

**12. THE** demon of *acedia*, which is also called the noonday demon (**Ps 90.6**), is the most burdensome of all the demons. It besets the monk at about the fourth hour (10 am) of the morning, encircling his soul until about the eighth hour (2 pm).

[1] First it makes the sun appear to slow down or stop , so the day seems to be fifty hours long.

[2] Then it forces the monk to keep looking out the window and rush from his cell to observe the sun in order to see how much

longer it is to the ninth [hour, *i.e.* 3 pm], and to look about in every directions in case any of the brothers are there.

[3] Then it assails him with hatred of his place, his way of life and the work of his hands; that love has departed from the brethren and there is *no one to console* him (*cf. Lam 1.17, 21*).

[4] If anyone has recently caused the monk grief the demon adds this as well to amplify his hatred [of these things]

[5] It makes him desire other places where he can easily find all that he needs and practice an easier, more convenient craft After all, pleasing the Lord is not dependent on geography, the demon adds; God is to be worshipped everywhere.

[6] It joins to this the remembrance of the monk's family and his previous way of life, and suggests to him that he still has a long time to live, raising up before his eyes a vision of how burdensome the ascetic life is.

So, it employs, as they say, every [possible] means to move the monk to abandon his cell and give up the race.

No other demon follows on immediately after this one but after its struggle the soul receives in turn a peaceful condition and unspeakable joy