



## ■ Whisperings of the demons

# How People Quarrel\*

## The Complicity of the Evil Spirits

**O**nce, St. Niphon of Constantiana was observing how the demons tempted people by whispering various devilries in their ears.

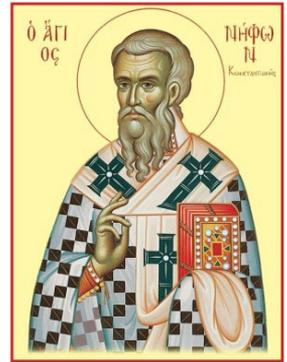
They, however, having their minds scattered on worldly cares, **were not aware of the demonic activity**. Therefore they accepted the bad thoughts and entertained them as if they were their own. Thus, some were excited into anger, others to slander and censure, and others to arguments, disputes and resentments.

The servant of God, who was observing all these things, sadly said:

“Oh, the malicious ones! They became masters and now order people around! And they, thinking that everything comes from their own discretion, quickly and indiscreetly carry out all the commands of the demons. That is why we should always examine our thoughts well, and then proceed to actions.”

And he related the following:

“Once I saw a man working. In a moment a **dark creature** came, stooped down to his ear, and for a long time was whispering something to him. Further down another man was working. Suddenly, the first worker dropped what he was doing, ran threateningly toward his colleague, and started to insult him. Then, **another dark creature** approached the second worker and



started also whispering something to him, provoking him to quarrel. Thus, **while one demon was whispering insults in the ear of the aggressor, the other demon was doing the same to the second worker**, because it was also a demon that was inciting him to fight back.”

Seeing this, Niphon was shaken and said:

“Oh, the deceiving and rotten demons! Look how they sow hatred among the people! And those fools, without losing a moment do whatever they are told.



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\* *An Ascetic Bishop: Stories, Sermons, and Prayers of St. Nephon*, translated by Jeannie E. Gentithes and Archimandrite Ignatios Apostolopoulos. (Presented here with some modifications to the translation.)