

Jesus is Tempted

Jesus is Tempted	1
Scene Summary	1
Scripture	1
Players	2
Special Props	2
Script – Jesus is Tempted	3
Supplemental Information.....	4

Scene Summary

The story of Jesus' temptation is filled with wonder and mystery. We can picture the scenes of the story, but only in shadows within our imaginations. Jesus is alone in the desert...he is very hungry...then the devil comes...the first temptation of turning stones into bread...and Jesus wins!...then the second temptation of testing God...and Jesus wins!...the third temptation of unimaginable wealth...and Jesus wins!

Scripture

(Mat 4:1-11 NIV) Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. {2} After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. {3} The tempter came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread." {4} Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" {5} Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. {6} "If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down. For it is written: "He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.'" {7} Jesus answered him, "It is also written: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'" {8} Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. {9} "All this I will give you," he said, "if you will bow down and worship me." {10} Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'" {11} Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him.

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Players

- **Narrator** – The play’s “catechist” or teacher should be a good reader with a clear voice.
- **Jesus** – God’s One and Only Son. The main player of the story.
- **Satan** - The person playing this character should portray cunning and guile.

Special Props

- A white robe for Jesus.
- A black cape for Satan.

Script – Jesus is Tempted

Narrator: Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. The tempter came to him.

[Jesus is kneeling in prayer]

Satan: If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread.

Jesus: It is written: “Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.”

[Scene change to Jesus and Satan standing]

Narrator: Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple.

Satan: If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down. For it is written: “He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.”

Jesus: It is also written: “Do not put the Lord your God to the test.”

[Scene change to Jesus and Satan standing on chairs]

Narrator: Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor.

Satan: All this I will give you if you will bow down and worship me.

Jesus: Away from me, Satan! For it is written: “Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.”

Narrator: Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him.

The End

Supplemental Information

Although this play is short, the message it conveys is very powerful. Children, even at a young age, are able to understand the story's focus and obvious character contrasts between Jesus and Satan.

The story begins in the desert. Ask your students what a desert is like? Expect answers that include visions of dry and parched land, sun beaten sand, hard rocks, thorny cactus and plants with long spikes. The desert also has extreme temperatures, hot during the day and cold at night. The desert is a place to be alone, with very few visitors.

The topic of fasting would probably be foreign to your students, however the concept is simple to understand since the feeling of hunger is universal among humans. Fasting, like prayer, is an act of piety, is the aspect of doing without food before God and with a specific purpose in mind:

(Isa 58:6-9 NIV) "Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? {7} Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter-- when you see the naked, to clothe him, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood? {8} Then your light will break forth like the dawn, and your healing will quickly appear; then your righteousness will go before you, and the glory of the LORD will be your rear guard. {9} Then you will call, and the LORD will answer; you will cry for help, and he will say: "Here am I."

There are three scenes in this story that correspond to the three temptations. The first scene in the desert, there is the enticement to satisfy His hunger. Jesus overcomes this test against His body's hunger with God's word. The second scene is on a high point of the temple and the test concerns God's word, is it true? Jesus overcomes this temptation again with God's word. The third and final scene is on a high mountain where we can only imagine in time and space a vision of splendor that could be transferred to Jesus if He would only comply with Satan. Jesus wins again with God's word! "Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only."