

The Temptation of Jesus

**Story for Children's Service
at St Nicolas**

[Luke 4, 1-13]

5 March 2023

**St Nicolas Church,
Forest Hill with Shotover**



The Temptation of Jesus

NARRATOR, JESUS (several people together), the VOICE of the Devil (more than one person)

(NARRATOR in the Pulpit, JESUS (more than one person ideally) in the Chancel, the DEVIL in the congregation).

After his baptism, and before he called his special friends to follow him, Jesus walked alone into the harsh desert. The hot winds blew the sand into his face and the sun beat down on him. For forty days and forty nights he ate nothing at all, fasting and praying, offering his whole life to God.

At the end of that time, he was gripped with a terrible hunger. Suddenly he heard a voice behind him, soft and persuasive.

VOICE 1: Is it true that you haven't had any food for forty days?

VOICE 2: You must be so hungry!

VOICE 3: But there is nothing to eat in this desert.

VOICE 4: If you really are the Son of God, you could turn those rocks into loaves of bread!

VOICE 5: Go on, you know you can do it! Just think of the smell of all that lovely fresh bread!

Jesus knew that it was God's enemy, the devil, who was tempting him to use his great powers selfishly.

JESUS: No! The scriptures say, 'People must have more than bread for their life: they must feed on every word of God!'

The wind whistled all around him in the great emptiness, and Jesus walked on alone. But soon the devil returned again. This time he took him to the top of a very tall mountain.

VOICE 1: Look around you. Here are all the nations of the world!

VOICE 2: The great cities!

VOICE 3: The towering castles!

VOICE 4: The mighty armies!

VOICE 5: Everything that you can see belongs to me! But I will give it all to you, if you will only kneel down and worship me.

JESUS: No! The scriptures say, 'You must worship the Lord your God and serve no one else!'

Again the devil left him, like a shadow fleeing before the brightness of the sun, but he had not finished his temptations yet. As Jesus lay alone in the merciless heat, hungry and exhausted, the devil returned one more time.

VOICE 1: Look, where we are now!

VOICE 2: I have brought you to Jerusalem, the Holy City!

VOICE 3: We are on the highest point of the temple. Don't look down – it's a very long way.

VOICE 4: If you really are the Son of God, you could jump off and you wouldn't hurt yourself at all. No-one else could do that! You would be famous.

VOICE 5: You know what the scriptures say: 'He orders his angels to protect you, and they will hold you with their hands, to keep you from striking your foot on a stone!'

JESUS: No! I will not do it! The scriptures also say, 'Do not test the Lord your God!'

For the moment, the devil had no more temptations to offer, so he went away and left Jesus alone. But he was waiting in secret for the next opportunity.