

TEMPTATIONS OF JESUS

Written by Ted Swartz

Characters: Satan, Jesus, Hector (Satan's assistant)

Scripture text: Matthew 4:1-11

Props: table, map of the world, helmets and goggles, silver serving set with rocks, chair

Length: 7 minutes

Setting: Three different settings: restaurant, airplane doorway, board room

SATAN: Come in, come in, you look hungry.

(Silence.)

SATAN: I can tell. How many days in the ... where were you?

(Again silence.)

SATAN: Ah, the wilderness, that's right. Such a good word—wilderness.
And how many days? Forty, wasn't it? —a long time—40 days...

JESUS: What do you want?

SATAN: Just here to help, Jesus. That's what we do. We specialize in human comforts. We're here to ease your hunger, fill that hole in your belly—Hector! *(Snaps his fingers, HECTOR arrives to serve from the silver serving set dressed in tux, with towel over his arm; sweeps the lid off.)* Ahhh, bon appetit. Wait! *(HECTOR freezes; SATAN motions him back, gestures, then finishes the presentation with a garnish.)* Go ahead, "take and eat".

HECTOR: "Take and eat." *(A look to HECTOR, he does the motion again.)*

JESUS: Those are rocks.

SATAN: Oh, rocks—rocks? Not to a creative thinker like you.

HECTOR: He's right boss, they're rocks.

SATAN: (To HECTOR.) I know they're rocks. (Back to JESUS.) But you, you Jesus—could make them anything, couldn't you ... Say loaves of bread, a spinach salad, a nice rice and beans dish ... lentils ... manna?

HECTOR: Peanut butter cookies.

SATAN: Peanut butt ... (HECTOR nods aggressively.) ... I could, but it seems ... tacky for me to do something you could do ... No?

HECTOR: No?

JESUS: No.

HECTOR: Peanut butter cookies?

SATAN: Hector, next slide!

(They are now all three in an open door of an airplane, ala sky diving. Helmets and goggles are on. They need to shout to be heard over the sound of the airplane. If there isn't a sound effect, simply shout to imply the sound.)

SATAN: Wow!!! Look at that view! Isn't this great!! Ever been in an airplane before?

(Silence.)

SATAN: Hector, isn't this great?!!

HECTOR: Yea great.

SATAN: Jesus, tell me that view isn't breathtaking!!

JESUS: *(Looks at him.)*

SATAN: Exactly! Breathtaking. Are you ready?! We're jumping! Oh, the first 1500 feet are amazing!

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JESUS: I don't think so.

SATAN: Come on Jesus—you da man! On three, one...

JESUS: Tell him to stop pushing.

SATAN: Hector.

HECTOR: What?!

SATAN: The pushing!

HECTOR: I am pushing!

SATAN: Well stop it! On three!

HECTOR: Three!!!! *(Begins to push again.)*

SATAN: Hector!!!

HECTOR: Right!

SATAN: Here we go!!

JESUS: I don't have a parachute!!

SATAN: I know!! Hector, on three, one...

HECTOR: Boss, he doesn't have a parachute!

SATAN: On three!

HECTOR: Three!! *(Starts to push.)*

SATAN: Hector!

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JESUS: I don't have a parachute!!

HECTOR Three!!!!

SATAN: Hector! Jesus, you don't have a parachute. How did that happen?

JESUS: Honesty's never been your strong suit.

SATAN: Thank you. Jesus, you know you could jump—

JESUS: I'm not jumping!

SATAN: That's no fun. Wouldn't God take care of you?

JESUS: Yes.

SATAN: Aren't you his favorite? ... OK then ... Hector!

HECTOR: Right.

SATAN: All those angels, just looking for something to do.

JESUS: Doesn't work that way—you don't get to decide when I need help.

(Abruptly the airplane noise stops, SATAN takes off his helmet.)

SATAN: We'll see. Hector, next slide!

(Scene changes to a boardroom.)

SATAN: Friend, you are on the cusp, such a good word, ... say it with me ...
cusp, cusp.

HECTOR: Cusp ...

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SATAN: Cusp ... and you're on it. On the cusp of greatness. You look like a man with potential, a man who knows how to get what he wants. *(The table has the maps on it, etc.)* Let me show you.

(HECTOR moves to a position to push JESUS again.)

SATAN: Hector!

HECTOR: Right.

SATAN: Now that—that is a kingdom! All of this can be yours, yours and no one else's ... sound good? Yes, of course it does. But wait! There's more. How can there be more you ask ... *(Waits.)* ... work with me here ... how can there be more...

HECTOR: How can there be more?

SATAN: Not you!

JESUS: How can there be more?

SATAN: Glad you asked. Because there's always more. More you want, more you need, more you can have—that's what makes this world so great. This man needs some refreshment ... *(Snaps his fingers; HECTOR whisks in a plate and puts it in front of JESUS—it's rocks again. JESUS taps it.)*

SATAN: Hector, we're finished with that section.

HECTOR: Right. *(Takes it away.)*

SATAN: Sorry about that, help today ... Hector, you're fired! I love that ... where were we?

JESUS: More.

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****PURCHASE REQUIRED FOR PERFORMANCE AND DUPLICATION****

SATAN: Oh, you are attentive; I like a man who pays attention. Yes, more—
Jesus, you could have all of this and more. How, you might ask?...
All I'll need is a signature, here, here, and here. Think of the good
you could do, if you had all of this...

JESUS: No.

SATAN: Here?

(JESUS just looks at him.)

SATAN: Did I mention—you could have it all? ... What kind of king do you
want to be Jesus? ... This is where the fun is.

(JESUS stands and moves toward SATAN.)

SATAN: OK. OK. We're going—*(Pause as he turns.)* We're not done here...

JESUS: What would it serve to gain it all and lose your soul—you should
know that. We'll be seeing you...

THE END

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