

Jonah

By Kathy Applebee

CHARACTERS: Voice of God (VOG), Narrators 1 & 2, ship's captain and 2-5 sailors (one sailor can do all the odd numbered sailor lines and one the even numbered lines to decrease number of parts); A, B and King can double with other parts as desired.

PROPS: Leafy plant to shade Jonah, possibly a whale to swallow him, a ship, waves

RUN TIME: 9 minutes, additional time needed if songs are added.

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Jonah 1-4, John 3:16, 2 Peter 3

Jonah runs away

VOG: Jonah, go to the great city of Nineveh and preach against it, because its wickedness has come up before me.

NARR 1: But Jonah ran away from the LORD.

NARR2: He went down to Joppa, where he found a ship bound for the port of Tarhish.

NARR: He paid the fare, he went aboard.

NARR 2: Then God sent a great wind on the sea.

SONG: Master the Tempest is raging (first verse only, substitute "Jonah" for "Master").

SAILOR 1: Captain, this is such a violent storm the ship is threatening to break up.

SAILOR 2: Aye. All the sailors are afraid.

CAPTAIN: Throw the cargo into the sea to lighten the ship.

NARR: Jonah had gone below deck, where he lay down and fell into a deep sleep.

CAPTAIN: Jonah! How can you sleep? Get up and call on your god! Maybe he will take notice of us so that we will not perish.

SAILOR 1: Let us cast lots to find out who is responsible for this calamity.

NARR 2: The lot fell on Jonah.

SAILOR 2: Tell us, who is responsible for making all this trouble for us?

SAILOR 1: What kind of work do you do?

SAILOR 3: Where do you come from?

SAILOR 4: What is your country?

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SAILOR 5: From what people are you?

JONAH: I am a Hebrew and I worship the LORD, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the dry land.

SAILOR 2: (*terrified*) What have you done?

SAILOR 3: You already told us you are running away from the LORD.

SAILOR: The sea is getting rougher and rougher.

SAILOR 5: What should we do to you to make the sea calm down for us?

JONAH: Pick me up and throw me into the sea and it will become calm. I know that it is my fault that this great storm has come upon you.

CAPTAIN: Nay, we cannot kill you. Men, do your best to row back to land.

SAILOR 3: Captain, the sea grows even wilder than before.

CAPTAIN: Please, LORD, do not let us die for taking this man's life. Do not hold us accountable for killing an innocent man, for you, LORD, have done as you pleased.

NARR 1: They took Jonah and threw him overboard, and the raging sea grew calm.

NARR 2: At this the men greatly feared the LORD.

CAPTAIN: We will sacrifice to the LORD and make vows to him.

SONG: Modified stanza 3 of Master the Tempest is Raging (see end of script)

NARR 2: The LORD provided a huge fish to swallow Jonah

NARR 1: Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.

Jonah's Prayer

JONAH: In my distress I called to the LORD,

ALL: and he answered me.

JONAH: From deep in the realm of the dead I called for help,

ALL: God listened to my cry.

JONAH: Though God hurled me into the depths,

ALL: into the very heart of the seas,

JONAH: the currents swirled about me;

ALL: the waves and breakers swept over me.

JONAH: I have been banished from God's sight;

ALL: Jonah, you will look again toward God's holy temple.

JONAH: The engulfing waters threatened me,

ALL: the deep surrounded you

JONAH: seaweed was wrapped around my head.

ALL: To the roots of the mountains you sank down; the earth beneath barred you in forever.

JONAH: But you, LORD my God, brought my life up from the pit.

ALL: Our God is a God who saves

JONAH: When my life was ebbing away, I remembered you, LORD, my prayer rose to you, to your holy temple.

ALL: Those who cling to worthless idols turn away from God's love for them.

JONAH: But I, with shouts of grateful praise, will sacrifice to you. What I have vowed I will make good.

ALL: Salvation comes from the LORD.

NARR 1: The LORD commanded the fish, and it vomited Jonah onto dry land.

SONG: *Love Lifted Me* (<http://nethymnal.org/htm/l/liftedme.htm>)

Second chances

VOG: Go to the great city of Nineveh and proclaim to it the message I give you.

NARR 1: Jonah obeyed the word of the LORD and went to Nineveh.

NARR 2: Nineveh was a very large city; it took three days to go through it.

JONAH: Forty more days and Nineveh will be overthrown.

NARR 1: The Ninevites believed God.

NARR 2: A fast was proclaimed, and all of them, from the greatest to the least, put on sackcloth.

NARR 1: Even the king of Nineveh rose from his throne, took off his royal robes, covered himself with sackcloth and sat down in the dust.

A: By the decree of the king and his nobles: do not let people or animals, herds or flocks, taste anything; do not let them eat or drink.

B: Let all people and even all animals be covered with sackcloth to show that we mourn and submit to God

A: Let everyone call urgently on God.

B: Let them give up their evil ways and their violence.

KING: Who knows? God may yet relent and with compassion turn from his fierce anger so that we will not perish.

VOG: Jonah, look! Seethe people of Nineveh have turned from their evil ways? I will relent and not destroy them.

JONAH: (*angrily*) This seems wrong! They are evil people and have done much wrong to Israel.

NARR 2: Jonah prayed to the LORD.

JONAH: Isn't this what I said, LORD, when I was still at home? That is what I tried to stop from happening by fleeing to Tarshish. I knew that you are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abounding in love, a God who relents from sending calamity. Now, LORD, take away my life, for it is better for me to die than to live.

VOG: Is it right for you to be angry?

NARR 1: Jonah sat down at a place east of the city where he made himself a shelter and waited to see what would happen to the city.

NARR 2: The Lord provided a leafy plant, making it grow, give shade for his head to ease his discomfort.

JONAH: How wonderful to have the shade from this plant.

NARR 1: At dawn the next day God provided a worm, which chewed the plant so that it withered.

NARR 2: When the sun rose, God provided a scorching east wind

NARR 1: The sun blazed on Jonah's head so that he grew faint.

JONAH: It would be better for me to die than to live.

VOG: Is it right for you to be angry about the plant?

JONAH: It is and I'm so angry I wish I were dead.

VOG: You have been concerned about this plant, though you did not tend it or make it grow. It sprang up overnight and died overnight. And should I not have concern for the great city of Nineveh, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand people who cannot tell their right hand from their left—and also many animals?

God's will today

NARR 2: The Lord is patient, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

NARR 1: For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

NARR 2: But the day of the Lord will come like a thief.

NARR 1: The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything done in it will be laid bare.

NARR 2: Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be?

NARR 1: You ought to live holy and godly lives.

NARR 2: In keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells.

NARR 1 & 2: Share that news with others, even your enemies.

Director's notes

FKRL 4.6

NOTE: To make an awesome Voice of God see <http://marcscottvoiceover.com/how-to-make-lion-sounds-with-a-trash-can/> How the Lion King's voice was done using an empty metal trash can.

Modified stanza 3(from <http://www.cyberhymnal.org/htm/m/a/mastertt.htm>)

*Thank God, the terror is over,
The elements sweetly rest;
Earth's sun in the calm sea is mirrored,
And heaven's within my breast;
Jehovah is such a great God
Leave us alone no more;
And with joy we shall make the blest harbor,
And rest on the blissful shore.*

http://www.ckelst.com/Parodies/p_JonahBeGood.htm An interesting parody of Johnny Be Good – Jonah Be Good. Permission is given to perform. Contact mfischer@ckelst.com for recording rights.

ApologetiX Classics series: Party – features a Parody of Mony, Mony entitled Jonah, Jonah