

Reader's Theater Script

God Sends Jonah

Characters: Narrator, the Lord, Jonah, the Men, the Captain

PART 1 JONAH 1:1–3

Narrator: ¹ Now the word of the Lord came to Jonah the son of Amittai, saying,

The Lord: ² “Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry out against it; for their wickedness has come up before Me.”

Narrator: ³ But Jonah arose to flee to Tarshish from the presence of the Lord. He went down to Joppa, and found a ship going to Tarshish; so he paid the fare, and went down into it, to go with them to Tarshish from the presence of the Lord.

PART 2 JONAH 1:4–17

Narrator: ⁴ But the LORD sent out a great wind on the sea, and there was a mighty tempest on the sea, so that the ship was about to be broken up. ⁵ Then the mariners were afraid; and every man cried out to his god, and threw the cargo that was in the ship into the sea, to lighten the load. But Jonah had gone down into the lowest parts of the ship, had lain down, and was fast asleep. ⁶ So the captain came to him, and said to him,

The Captain: “What do you mean, sleeper? Arise, call on your God; perhaps your God will consider us, so that we may not perish.”

Narrator: ⁷ And they said to one another,

The Men: “Come, let us cast lots, that we may know for whose cause this trouble has come upon us.”

Narrator: So they cast lots, and the lot fell on Jonah. ⁸ Then they said to him,

The Men: “Please tell us! For whose cause is this trouble upon us? What is your occupation? And where do you come from? What is your country? And of what people are you?”

Narrator: ⁹ So he said to them,

Jonah: “I am a Hebrew; and I fear the Lord, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the dry land.”

Narrator: ¹⁰ Then the men were exceedingly afraid, and said to him,

The Men: “Why have you done this?”

Narrator: For the men knew that he fled from the presence of the Lord, because he had told them.

¹¹ Then they said to him,

The Men: “What shall we do to you that the sea may be calm for us?”

Narrator: —for the sea was growing more tempestuous. ¹² And he said to them,

Jonah: “Pick me up and throw me into the sea; then the sea will become calm for you. For I know that this great tempest is because of me.”

Narrator: ¹³ Nevertheless the men rowed hard to return to land, but they could not, for the sea continued to grow more tempestuous against them. ¹⁴ Therefore they cried out to the Lord and said,

The Men: “We pray, O Lord, please do not let us perish for this man’s life, and do not charge us with innocent blood; for You, O Lord, have done as it pleased You.”

Narrator: ¹⁵ So they picked up Jonah and threw him into the sea, and the sea ceased from its raging. ¹⁶ Then the men feared the Lord exceedingly, and offered a sacrifice to the Lord and took vows. ¹⁷ Now the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.

PART 3 JONAH 2:1, 2:10

Narrator: ¹ Then Jonah prayed to the Lord his God from the fish’s belly. ¹⁰ So the Lord spoke to the fish, and it vomited Jonah onto dry land.

PART 4 JONAH 3:1–5, 3:10

Narrator: ¹ Now the word of the Lord came to Jonah the second time, saying,

THE LORD: ² “Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and preach to it the message that I tell you.”

Narrator: ³ So Jonah arose and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the Lord. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly great city, a three-day journey in extent. ⁴ And Jonah began to enter the city on the first day’s walk. Then he cried out and said,

Jonah: “Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!”

Narrator: ⁵ So the people of Nineveh believed God, proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest to the least of them. ¹⁰ Then God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God relented from the disaster that He had said He would bring upon them, and He did not do it.