

SCENE 1

Purple cloth draped over puppet stage.

Theo One day, God asked a man called Jonah to go to a place called Nineveh and tell the people living there to stop being bad.

Jonah up

Jonah No! I won't go! *Ohhhh*, no I won't!

Audience *Oh, yes you will!*

Jonah Oh, no I won't!

Audience *Oh, yes you will!*

Jonah But if I tell them to stop being bad, then God won't need to punish them. And those wicked people of Nineveh *really* deserve to be punished.

Theo So instead of obeying God, Jonah tried to run away from him.

Jonah down

SCENE 2

Blue cloth draped over puppet stage. Turquoise cloth on top of blue.

Theo Jonah got on a ship that was sailing away from Nineveh.

Jonah up

Jonah Ha! That's settled. I'll *never* go to Nineveh. Oh, no I won't!

Audience *Oh, yes you will!*

Jonah Oh, no I won't!

Audience *Oh, yes you will!*

Theo Jonah thought that he could run away and hide from God. The God who made the whole universe ... the God who made Jonah himself ... Jonah thought that he could hide from the almighty, creator God!

Jonah God won't find me, and I won't do what he wants. Oh, no I won't!

Audience *Oh, yes you will!*

Jonah Oh, no I won't!

Audience *Oh, yes you will!*

Theo Jonah couldn't hide from God. Soon, God sent a very bad storm. All the ship's sailors were scared.

Turquoise cloth ripples like a storm.

Sailor up

Sailor Jonah, wake up! Get up and pray to your god. Maybe he can help us.

Jonah My God is the Lord of heaven and earth. He made the universe. He made the sea and everything in it. This storm is my fault, because I'm trying to run away from him.

Sailor Pray to him! Ask him to stop the storm! Ask him to save us!

Jonah He'll stop the storm if you throw me into the sea.

Sailor We can't do that! We don't want to hurt you

Jonah It's the only way to save yourselves. And it's the right thing to do.

Sailor and Jonah down

Turquoise cloth still again

Theo So the sailors threw Jonah into the sea, and straight away the storm stopped, just as Jonah had said it would. And then the sailors knew how awesome God really is, and they worshipped him.

SCENE 3

Blue cloth draped over puppet stage.

Jonah up

Theo When Jonah fell into the sea, God sent an enormous fish to rescue him.

Fish slides across table in front of Jonah. Stops in middle of table.

Jonah drops down and appears out of the front of the table, from under the cloth.

Jonah God has saved me! Lord God, you are truly great. I'll never let you down again. Oh, no I won't.

Audience *Oh, yes you will!*

Jonah Oh, no I won't!

Audience *Oh, yes you will!*

Theo Jonah was inside that fish, thinking about things and praying to God, for three days and three nights. Then the fish spat him out onto dry land.

Fish and Jonah disappear.

SCENE 4

Red cloth on table.

Theo This time, Jonah obeyed God. He went to Nineveh and he told the people there to stop being bad. He spent three days talking to all the people, until even the King of Nineveh had heard God's message.

Jonah and King up

Jonah You must all say sorry to God and stop being so bad. Or it will be the end for Nineveh.

King You're right! We must all say sorry to God, and ask him to forgive us. We need to stop being bad and start obeying God.

Jonah and King down

Theo God knew that the King really meant it, and that all the people were truly sorry. He forgave them because he loved them all so much.

SCENE 5

Yellow cloth draped over puppet stage.

Theo Jonah climbed up to the top of a hill and stared down at Nineveh.

Jonah up

Jonah Those wicked people of Nineveh deserved to be punished, and now look what's happened! They've said sorry, and God's forgiven them. It's just not right. Oh, no it isn't!

Audience *Oh, yes it is!*

Jonah Oh, no it isn't!

Audience *Oh, yes it is!*

Jonah Oh, no it isn't! God should punish people when they're bad.

Theo But God loves everyone so much that he doesn't want to punish us. He always wants to give us another chance. And

he wanted to give Jonah another chance, too. So he tried to help Jonah to understand.

Jonah I'm so cross! And I'm so hot in this sun.

Theo God sent a leafy plant to grow over Jonah's head, to give him shade.

Green cloth held over Jonah's head.

Theo But the next morning, God sent a worm to eat the plant.

Caterpillar 'eats' cloth, which disappears.

Jonah Oh, it's just all so unfair! Why did the plant have to die? I'm so angry, I could burst!

Theo Now Jonah was really making no sense. He was angry about a plant dying, which had only grown the day before. But he didn't care about all the people and animals of Nineveh, who would have died if they hadn't listened to God and stopped being bad.

But God cared about them. God loved them so much that he sent Jonah to them when they messed up, to give them chance to say sorry and try again.

God loves everyone so much that he sent Jesus to die on the cross, so that we can have chance to say sorry and try again whenever we mess up.

And maybe, if we listen carefully, we'll hear him sending us to other people, to tell them the good news about Jesus, too.