

Jonah,
A Fun Fantasy
by Ralph Milton

(NOTE: GOD AND THE GUARDIAN
ANGEL ARE BOTH PLAYED BY
ALLISON USING TWO DIFFERENT
VOICES. GOD IS BIG AND
DECLAMATORY. THE G.A. IS
SQUEAKY AND COLLOQUIAL.

THERE ARE A COUPLE OF VOCAL
“SOUND-EFFECTS.” A SPLASH, A
GULP AND A BARF. EVERYBODY
SHOULD DO THESE MORE OR LESS
IN UNISON.

Duration: About 10 min.

Cast:

Narrator: Donald

God & Guardian Angel

Jonah: Ralph

BP: Linnea

Narr: Listen up folks. This is a parable –
written by an ancient story-teller, to help
the Hebrew people understand that the
God they worshipped was also the God of
the Ninevites whom they hated. Thi is the
story of Jonah –

Jonah: That's me.

Narr: Of God

God: (DECLAMATORY) I am the God of Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Rebecca, Jacob....

Narr: And of Jonah's guardian angel.

Guardian Angel: Well, there's no guardian angel in the Bible story, but a schmuk like Jonah really needs a guardian angel, right?

Narr: Yeah, This is the story of Jonah.

Jonah, son of Amittai!

Jonah: And the whale. Don't forget the whale.

Narr: This is the story of Jonah and the fish.

Jonah: The whale. The story of Jonah and the whale.

Narr: Shhh. Be quiet, Jonah. It was a fish. The bible distinctly says it was a big fish, and a whale is not a fish.

Jonah: So what is it then? It swims in the water. Things that swim in the water are fish.

Narr: Be quiet, Jonah. I'll tell you when it's your turn to talk.

Jonah: OK! OK! (LOOKS OFF INTO DISTANCE FEELING HURT)

Narr: Now the word of God came to Jonah – pay attention Jonah – The word of God came to Jonah saying ---

God: (DECLAMATORY) Arise! Go at once to Nineveh, that great city, and cry out against it. For their wickedness is come up before me!

Jonah: Who? Me?

God: Arise! Go forthwith to Nineveh, that great city and.....

Jonah: (INTERUPTING) Yeah, Yeah, I got it, but it's like ... I'm kinda, like, tied up right now and it's a great honor to be chosen as a prophet and all that, but like I've got a sore leg and like...

God: Jonah! Go to that great city of Nineveh and cry out against it, because...

Jonah: Well, like, couldn't you find somebody....

Guardian Angel: (STAGE WHISPER)

Do what God tells you Jonah. You don't have a choice.

Jonah: OK, so I'm going. I'm going already. (SINGS) I'm going off to Ninevah, Ninevah, Ninevor, tell them not to sin no more..

GA: Jonah, Ninevah is in the other direction.

Jonah: Who asked you? Hey! Hey you down there. Which way you going in that boat of yours.

Boat Person: Tarshish. We're headed for Tarshish which is about as way, back of beyond you'd ever want to go.

Jonah: Suits me just fine. A one-way ticket, please.

GA: Jonah, you're supposed to be going to Nineveh.

Jonah: And you're supposed to mind your own business.

GA: You have to do what God tells you to do!

Jonah: (MOCKING) You have to do what God tells you to do. Look, I know them Nenevites. They come over here and they beat up on us all the time. They're big and they're mean, and this God of yours wants me to stand on my hind legs in the middle of the city and preach at them and tell them how rotten they are. They'd cut me into pieces and have me for breakfast. I'm headed for Tarshish where God can't find me.

GA: You'll be sorry!

BP: All aboard! All aboard for Tarshish.

Jonah: Bye bye God. Bye bye Guardian angel.

GA: Oh, I'm coming with you. You should be pleased!

Jonah: (SARCASTICALLY) Oh, I'm delighted! Damn!

Narr: But God hurled a great wind against the sea, and such a mighty storm came up that the boat tossed around and threatened to break up.

BP: (TINY VOICE) Help.

Narr: And where was Jonah?

GA: Guess.

Narr: Jonah was way down in the hold,
sound asleep.

Jonah: (SNORING)

BP: Why are you down here snoring
away? Get up and pray to your god.

Jonah: (WAKING UP) Wha...pray to my
god...my God lives way over in
Jerusalem.

GA: Wrong, wrong, Jonah baby. God
doesn't say much, but guess what's
causing the mother of all storms out there.
Jonah? God?

GA: Bingo. Now get up like the nice man
said and tell the folks topside what a
schmok you are.

Jonah: OK, OK. Ahem. Well, all you nice
boat people, I guess I have to tell you
who's makin' all them waves...it's just
that the great God Yahweh is just a bit
PO'd with me...;

BP: Yah..who?

Jonah: No. Yahweh. The God of
Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and all them
guys.

BP: This Yahweh is just the god of the all
the Hebrew guys?

Jonah: Well, yeah. So?

BP: Then who's the god of the women and children and all the folks who aren't Hebrews? Like us?

Jonah: Well, ah...yeah...ah, no, ah...

GA: Tell them where God is sending you.

Jonah: Yeah, this God Yahweh is kind of soft headed...

GA: Soft hearted!!!)

Jonah: OK, soft hearted and wants me to go to Nineveh and preach at them, and tell them to repent, and stuff like that, and can you imagine what them Ninevites would do to a guy that comes into town telling them to get their act together and be nice? (MAKES THROAT SLITTING SIGN)

GA: Tell 'em to toss you overboard.

Jonah: What.....? , ahh...I guess I'd better disembark at this point, or you and your boat are toast.

BP. C'mon, we're miles from shore.

GA (INSISTING) Tell 'em to toss you overboard!

Jonah: I know that, I know that...Sheesh! A guy could drown out there.

GA: Tell 'em to toss you. Or you'll all drown!

Jonah: Eeeee! I may need a little encouragement. You're gonna hafta toss me.

BP: If you insist.

ALL: SPASH & GURGLE.

Narr: So the sailors tossed Jonah overboard, and the waves stopped and the water became smooth as glass. But Jonah didn't drown. God sent a very large fish – an extra large fish – a humongous fish big enough to swallow Jonah whole. Without chewing.

ALL: SOUND EFFECT: GULP.

Jonah: It's dark in here.

Narr: Jonah was all alone. Not even his guardian angel was with him.

Jonah: It smells like sardines in here.

Narr: And so -- in the belly of the fish Jonah suddenly got religion.

Jonah: (IN QUAVERING "RELIGIOUS" TONES) Oh God, I know you can hear me, even here in the belly of this fish, and you know I am in danger of being digested, and I know why you have had me thrown into the sea, and Oh God, my life is starting to drain out of me and I can feel those digestive juices working on my toes, and up my leg, and no....please fish, not that....and I promise, oh I promise, God, to do anything you tell me, anything, anything, only don't let me be digested by this fish because I promise to be a good boy...I really...

ALL: SOUND EFFECT: BARFING

Narr: And so Jonah was barfed up onto the beach.

GA: You need a shower, man, you smell like a dead fish.

Jonah: (ANGRILY) So what do you expect, idiot? I spend three days getting half digested in the guts of an overgrown guppy, and you want me to smell like a friggen petunia?

GOD: Jonah! Get up! Go to Nineveh, that great city, and proclaim unto them the message that I will give you. Go!”

Jonah: I’m going God. Look at me. See I’m going, just like you told me. I really planned to go all along, that trip to Tarshish ... I thought I’d take the scenic route, you know...but now I’m on my way. I really am. And no more fish, OK?

Narr: So Jonah went to Nineveh, that great city, three days journey across ... (SURPRISED) that was 60 miles.

That’s 96 kilometers.... Hey who wrote this story anyway, there were no cities that size way back then.

GA: Stick to the script. That’s what it says in the Bible.

Narr: Sorry. So Jonah went to the centre of the city and proclaimed God’s message.

Jonah: In forty days Nineveh will be overthrown! There!

GA: That's it?

Jonah: That's it.

GA: That's got to be the shortest sermon on record.

Jonah: Well, that's what God asked for.

And now we get to the fun part. I'm going to go sit up on top of that hill just outside the city, and watch God turn all these dirty Ninevites into mincemeat.

GA: Don't count on it!

Narr: When the people of Nineveh heard Jonah's message, they proclaimed a fast, they were sorry for their sins, even the King got converted, and everyone prayed to God and the whole city decided to lead a new kind of life.

Jonah: How do y'like that? Pretty good sermon, eh?

Narr: When God saw that the people of Nineveh had changed from their evil ways, God decided not to destroy them after all.

Jonah: What? What? After all the trouble I've gone to? I pay for expensive passage on a boat and I get tossed overboard, and I get half digested by a smelly fish and I preach an eloquent sermon to all those Ninevites and then you decided to let them off the hook. I shoulda known. I shoulda known. You're like what all them priests in the temple say, you're "slow to

anger and abounding in steadfast love”
and all that stuff. So I’m finished. I’m
done. I’m just going to sit here on this hill
and die. Just watch me.

Narr: Then God made a plant grow up, to
shade Jonah from the hot, desert sun.

Jonah: Nice plant. Nice shade. Feels nice
and cool.

Narr: But the next day God sent a worm
that ate the plant, and the whole thing
shriveled and died.

Jonah: What happened to the plant? God,
what’s up here? You take away my nice
shade plant and I’m sitting here in the hot
sun again. Well, I’m just going to die.

Right now. Just watch me.

GOD: Jonah, Jonah, you are angry about
the plant?

Jonah: Damn right I am. And I’m mad
enough to just die. Just watch me.

GOD: Jonah, you are angry about that
bush. You didn’t work for it. You don’t
take care of it. You didn’t help it grow. It
sprang up and shaded you for a day. And
then it died, and you are upset enough to
die? So if you are that concerned about a
simple plant, don’t you think I’d be
concerned about a whole city like
Nineveh, in which there are thousands of
people. I know, some of them are a bit
...y’know...slow. But all those people

Jonah, they are people I created just the way I created you.

Oh, and there's lots of cattle too.

Narr: And so ends the story of Jonah and the whale.

GA: It was a fish.

Narr: Sorry. So ends the story of Jonah and the fish.