

The wrong way to Nineveh (The story of Jonah)

CAST: Narrator, Jonah, God, sailors, fish, people of Nineveh.

PROPS: Sign post with Nineveh and Tarshish arrows, a tent done up like a whale's mouth (or drawn on big paper or something to represent the whale's mouth), flashlight, tall potted plant (optional), umbrella, worm (stuffed sock with eyes, drawing or something to represent worm), costumes (towels, robes, head ties... etc).

Narrator:

There once was a man named Jonah. One day God spoke to Jonah.

God:

Jonah! The people of Nineveh are being very selfish. I don't like it. Go to Nineveh and tell the people there to repent and change. Or I will destroy them!

Narrator:

Jonah, not wanting to face the teasing of the people, went to the seaside and hopped on the first boat going completely the other direction.

[Jonah starts walking. Up comes sign with 2 arrows pointing opposite directions. One arrow says, To Nineveh. Other arrow says, To Tarshish. Jonah goes to Tarshish.]

Narrator:

But Jonah should have known better. When you're dealing with God, you can run, but you can't hide. God sent a nasty storm which tossed around the ship Jonah was on very badly. The sailors were very scared.

Sailor #1:

Oh my gosh! This is awful!

Sailor #2:

This is the worst storm ever! Let's throw everything overboard so we don't sink!

Sailor #3:

Hey wait, where's that new passenger? You know the one. Find him so that we may draw lots and see who is to blame for this storm.

Narrator:

And so the captain looked and found Jonah sleeping below decks.

Captain:

Get up! How can you sleep? Can't you feel we are going to be killed by this mighty storm? Go above to see for yourself.

Narrator:

Jonah goes above and everyone draws lots. Jonah gets the short stick.

Sailor #1:

What have you done to make God so angry?

Jonah:

I have fled from the Lord my God and now He is extending His wrath on me!

Sailor #2:

What should we do to make God happy and get the storm to stop?

Jonah:

You'll just have to throw me overboard. It's the only way.

Narrator:

The sailors were sad about this idea. They tried throwing other things off the ship instead. But the storm didn't stop. They then knew they had to throw Jonah into the sea. They pick him up and throw him overboard.

[Sailors pretend to throw Jonah overboard.]

Narrator:

But God sent a big fish that gulped Jonah right down into its tummy.

(Jonah gets into fish's mouth)

Jonah was safe down there (although he didn't like the rotten fish smell) for three days and three nights. While he was in the fish's tummy with not much else to do, Jonah prayed to God:

Jonah:

God? I'm sorry I ran away from you. I should have listened to you. I did not want to face the people and so I ran. I will listen to you from now on.

Narrator:

Right then, the fish opened its mouth and spat Jonah back out onto dry land. As you might expect, God spoke to Jonah again:

God:

Jonah. Get up and go to Nineveh, and tell the people of that city to repent and change their ways. Or I will destroy them!

Narrator:

This time Jonah did as he was told and went to Nineveh. It was a long way. When he got there, he did what he was told.

(Everyone but Jonah stands opposite of Jonah and listens.)

Jonah:

Nineveh listen to me! In forty days, Nineveh will be destroyed if you don't all repent!

Narrator:

It worked. The people of Nineveh said they were sorry. When God saw all this, God decided not to destroy the city after all. But this new decision made Jonah really mad. God had changed His mind. Jonah felt this made him look bad. He went and sat outside the city and pouted.

[Jonah goes and sits down under the potted plant prop and pouts.]

Narrator:

God continued to look after Jonah. God made a big plant grow up over him. It was kind of like a pumpkin plant, with great wide shady leaves like umbrellas.

(A child holds up a flashlight and points it at Jonah. Another child holds up an umbrella over Jonah)

Jonah liked it and felt quite comfy and safe in the shade of the plant God sent.

But the next morning, God sent along a worm. This worm chewed up the plant and killed it.

(Another child makes worm climb umbrella and pretends to eat it.)

The day became hot, and Jonah thought he would die from the heat without the shade of his friend, the green plant.

(The child holding up the umbrella removes it. The flashlight shines in Jonah's face.)

Jonah:

I'm so sad. My shade is gone. God, why?! I don't understand!

Narrator:

Then God gave Jonah a serious talking to. He told him he should repent. The way Jonah felt about the plant was sort of like how God felt about all the people of Nineveh. He liked them all very much. If they all showed how sorry they were, God was happy. The people of Nineveh had learned the lesson God wanted them to learn and Jonah should learn his lesson too.

THE END