**JONAH THE MOANER**

**By Rod**

*Based on the book of Jonah*

*CAST*

*Narrator*

*God*

*Jonah*

*A Crew, Fish, Ninevite*

*B Crew, Fish, Ninevite*

*C Crew, Fish, Ninevite*

*D Prop deliverer, scrum half, miner, waiter, vinecutter, buzzer operator.*

*PROPS*

*Profit/loss graph*

*Pole (e.g. broom handle}*

*Lightning stick*

*Cereal packet*

*Rugby ball*

*Miner’s hat + torch*

*3 pairs sunglasses + medallions etc*

*Soapbox*

*Chair under pulpit*

*Vine on string fed up to pulpit*

*Garden lopper (+ worm’s eye?)*

*Pianist to play Minute Waltz*

*Buzzer*

*Bucket marked ‘God’s’*

Now then here’s a little story *Enter Jonah*

About Jonah, prophet of God; *Holds up graph - upward trend*

But in truth more loss than prophet *Rotates graph 90˚ - show loss*

And his actions – remarkably odd. *Discards graph to D*

When God said, “Go to Nineveh! *God rises in pulkpit. Points stage right*

Assyrians are being a pain.”

Instead of travelling eastwards *Jonah looks right*

Jonah set his sights West - for Spain. *Jonah ‘scans’ then goes left*

He boarded a ship for Tarshish *ABC form ship. B holds pole as mast*

At a nearby port, called Joppa. *A welcomes. A,C hold pole as rail*

But God kicked up a mighty storm; *Boat moves across stage*

By all accounts – a real woppa. *God throws ‘lightning’*

It shook the boat to breaking point; *A&C move pole up and down a lot*

Shook the crew up good and proper. *B worried. Jo asleep*

They started crying to their gods, *B prays – hands together or arms*

“We’re going to come a cropper.” *stretched upwards*

But Jonah said, “It’s all my fault, *Jo points to self*

For from the Lord I’m on the run. *Points to God*

And if you throw me in the Salt, *Points to sea*

Waves will calm, and out come the Sun.” *Indicates calm water+ sunbathing*

The crew feared God, and thought Jo odd, *Crew look to God, think Jo nuts*

But, reluctantly, did his wish. *B pushes Jo over pole when in downward phase*

Immediately the surfing stopped, *Boat moves gently. D takes pole*

And Jo became breakfast for a fish. *& gives cereal packet to C. C now mouth of fish. BC form body and tail.*

 *When see Jo, discard cereal and ‘eat Jo*

So it was that boyyo Jonah *Jo now kneels below Fish*

Had this to add to all his ails, *ABC form rugby front row above Jo*

As well as falling out with God,

He spent three days and nights in Wales. *D delivers rugby ball as scrum half*

Inside the fish he prayed to God. *Jo prays on knees towards God*

Yes, his failings did he admit.

Which goes to show there can be light *D returns with helmet and torch*

Inside the darkest mid-Wales pit. *Enters ‘scrum’ as if mining*

Jonah’s prayers were full of moans; *Jo cries exaggeratedly*

Much too much for the fish to stand. *Fish looks unwell*

He felt so ill he spewed Jo up, *Fish vomits*

And so our prophet hit dry land. *ABC throw Jo towards God*

“Right”, said God, “go eastward now, *God points to right*

To Nineveh, just like I said.”

“Okay,” said Jo. “It is your will; *Jo indicates agreement*

That’s why you spared me from the dead.” *& points back*

“With you beside me, I’ve no fear.” *Looks confident*

And so to Nineveh he went, *Heads right does loop in front*

Where his arrival caused a stir – *Meets townspeople [A,B,C] +sunglasses and ‘bling’*

It could have been the fishy scent. *They sniff the air & look at each other*

“Is that ‘Midnight in Paris’, Jo, *One person [B] approaches Jo*

A new perfume from Christian Dior?”

“No, it’s three fifteen in Wales; *Jo points at watch, then back towards* Bristol Channel Number Four.” *Sea. People hold noses etc*

He told them of their dreadful sin, *D brings on soapbox. Jo stands on*

And then waited for their wrath. *Holds head as if awaiting attack*

But ‘stead of doing Jonah in *People look chastened*

They rushed away to don sackcloth. *People rush to side. Remove bling-*

 *Put on piano*

Sackcloth became the latest thing *They return*

For all the Ninevites to wear. *C parades as if on catwalk*

No more Bling for man, beast nor king, *Look/hold bling. Shake heads*

And they rubbed ashes in their hair. *Rub hair*

They cried to God, they did not eat, *They implore God, pray, beat breasts*

And from their evil did repent. *etc*

God heard their cries; He saw their change, *God cups ear towards them*

And from His anger did relent. *Gives them ‘thumbs up’.*

So Jonah’s preaching saved the town, *People dance happily*

But our prophet wasn’t happy, *Jo not happy*

How could God forgive Ninevites? *Wanders to stage left under pulpit*

He wanted judgement – short and snappy. *Picks up lightning & stabs at ABC*

So Jonah went on sit down strike, *Jo sits down sulkily[chair beneath pulpit]*

And had a good old-fashioned whine. *D as waiter with tray gives Jo glass*

No, not a Bordeaux Thirty-four; *Offers bottle. Jo refuses*

He moaned - till God made grow a vine. *God pulls up vine*

Jonah was happy ‘bout the vine. *Jo smiles*

“This vine’s divine, it shades my head.” *Shades eyes from sun*

But God replied, “It’s also mine – *God directs worm[F]*

For all the worms to eat and shred.” *D operates lopper. God lets vine fall*

No wine from the vine. And no shade – *Holds up empty glass*

So Jo got heated on his head. *Shades head. Looks hot*

And lots of whine from Jonah now. *Shakes head*

Mainly, “I wish that I were dead.” E.g. *Knife through heart action*

“Why should you whine about the vine?” *God leans over & points to vine*

Said God to his prophet Jonah.

“You see the vine is only mine;

It’s not you that is the owner.”

“And Nineveh is mine as well; *Points to people of Nineveh*

And I love the people in it. *ABC still happy*

Better for me that they repent.

Consider, for just a minute: *Piano plays ‘Minute waltz’. ABC draw in Jo to form line as panel.*

 *D enters with buzzer*

You started with hesitation, *Jo says “Er” [BUZZER]*

And a Spanish deviation, *Jo goes to left.C holds him back [BUZZER]*

Some repetition of errors – *Jo repeats previous 2 actions [BUZZER]*

But still you’ve saved a nation.” *ABC happy. Embrace Jo*

So moaner Jonah teaches us *Jo steps forward*

That there is none beyond God’s pale. *D holds bucket with ‘GOD’S’ on it*

And if we’re slow to go to them, *Jo looks reluctant*

Watch out – ‘cos God may send a whale! *ABC form fish again. Rush upon congregation and eat a suitable candidate*