**JONAH’S FISH LINE**

**By Rod**

*This sketch is based on Jonah Chapter 2 – his prayer from the inside of the fish – with reference to events either side in Chapters 1 and 3. Gabriel could either be visible on stage or simply heard from off stage. If on stage he needs a computer screen and a hands-free telephone.*

*CAST*

*Jonah Needs to be male*

*Gabriel Could be male or female (Gabrielle)*

*Stage is empty. Jonah comes flying on to stage covered in seaweed and fish, etc as if he has just been swallowed by a large fish. He is now inside the fish so is in darkness. He picks himself up, gropes around and then produces a mobile phone from his pocket. He starts to dial. The phone rings.*

Gabriel Hello, this is the Prophet Support Line. My name is Gabriel. How may I help you?

Jonah [Distressed] It’s me, Jonah. I need help.

G Jonah! It’s good to hear from you. Although you are rather faint. It’s not a very good line.

J I’m in the main.

G You’re on a train? Is that the train to Nineveh?

J No, not on the train. I’m in the main. The Spanish main. I’m in the sea.

G In the sea? What are you doing there? You’re supposed to be going to Nineveh. There’s no need to go by sea. Didn’t you use your satnav?

J I threw it away.

G You did what? Why?

J It was driving me crazy. It kept saying, “You are going in the wrong direction; make a U-turn. You are going in the wrong direction; make a U-turn.”

G I’m just bringing up your details on screen. Yes, I see you took a boat from Joppa bound for Spain. That really is in the wrong direction.

J Yes, I feel really guilty about that.

G Why’s that Jonah?

J Well, we hit a massive storm – and it was all my fault. I was running away from God and He was angry with me. Because I did this I endangered the lives of the whole ship’s company. They’re probably all dead now because of me.

G No Jonah, there you are wrong. Actually you did a good job.

J What! How come?

G Well, they’ve been on the line to us for the first time ever. God is really pleased with you for recruiting some new customers.

J How did that happen?

G Once you persuaded them to throw you overboard the storm stopped. So they then believed your story about running away from God and began to worship Him themselves.

J That’s jolly good for them I suppose – but I’m still in trouble. I need rescue. I got chucked into the sea in the middle of a raging storm and then I got swallowed by this great big fish. Can you please send a rescue party?

G There’s no need.

J What! You must be joking! Please don’t abandon me now. Tell God I’m really sorry for trying to run away from Him. I realise that’s impossible anyway; He’s the God of the whole world. Please ask Him to come and rescue me.

G There’s no need to send a rescue party because we already have.

J Oh! .. Great. When will it arrive?

G It’s already arrived.

J Oh, sorry. I couldn’t see it because I’m inside this great big fish.

G Look around you, Jonah, and you’ll see the rescue party.

J But, it’s pitch black.

G OK, *feel* around you.

J *[Feeling around him as if touching sides of fish’s belly]* All I can feel is slime – and the inside of a fish.

G That’s right.

J I can’t feel any rescue party.

G Oh yes you can.

J But all I can feel is this fish *[Realising]* …. Oh I get it; the rescue party is the fish.

G Well done, Jonah, go to the top of the class.

J That’s all very well – but how can I get out of here? It’s like being in a tomb. I feel as though I’m already in my grave.

G You know you said you were really sorry about running away from God?

J Yes, I am. I realise now just how powerful He is; He is the one true God.

G Powerful enough to raise someone from the dead?

J *[Thinking]* Well, yes, I guess so. *[More confidently]* I reckon He can do anything He wants to.

G So getting one of his followers out of a fish’s stomach shouldn’t be a problem…?

J Oh, I see what you’re driving at. Yes, I believe He can do even that.

G Are you sure?

J Absolutely, and you can tell Him that, if He gets me out of this smelly fish, I’ll follow Him wherever he wants me to go. In fact, I’ll do it gladly.

G Excellent. So now hang on Jonah. Get ready for a bumpy ride.

*[Jonah is ‘vomited forward on to the floor making lots of screaming noises*

*“Whoa”, etc. Slowly he gets up. His phone rings. He answers it.]*

J Hello.

G Hi there, Jonah, it’s Gabriel.

J Oh, hi.

G You should be on the shore now.

J Yes, I am. It’s quite a pretty beach actually. *[Excitedly]* It’s fantastic. What a feeling! I feel as though I have conquered death.

G That’s great to hear, Jonah. *[Slight pause]* Oh, and incidentally, Jonah, – just in case you were not too sure… After all it wouldn’t be too surprising if you had become rather disorientated…. The way to Nineveh is to the right.

J Nineveh?

G Yes, Nineveh.

J You mean God still wants me to go to that godless city with all its worthless idols?

G *[As if completing the sentence for him]* Where there are lots of people who need to hear about a powerful God who loves them and can set them free. Just as you were set free from your watery grave.

J *[Pause. Jonah is clearly thinking and deciding.]* And the way to Nineveh is to the right you say?

G To the right. You’ve got it.

J Okay, here I go. *[Glances and half turns to the left, but then turns purposefully to the right]* Nineveh – here I come! *[Exit to his right determinedly]*

*THE END*