



**ALL EXCEPT JONAH STOP POINTING AND SING (tune-HANOVER)**

Go, servants of God,  
 delight to proclaim  
 at home and abroad,  
 Christ's wonderful name.  
 Speak out for Christ Jesus,  
 and gladly recall,  
 that Christ lives forever,  
 and governs us all.

(Modeled on Charles Wesley. Tune: HANOVER).

**Narrator:** But Jonah set out to flee from the presence of Adonai. He went down to Joppa...

- **ALL EXCEPT JONAH point to "Joppa," following the narrator's cue. Joppa, obviously, is the opposite direction from "Nineveh."**
- **JONAH table gets up and starts circling anticlockwise round table.**  
 - and found a ship going to Tarshish. He paid his fare and went on board, to go away from the presence of Adonai.
- **JONAH finishes circling and sits down**

**Narrator:** But Adonai hurled a great wind upon the sea, and such a mighty storm that the ship threatened to break up.

- **SOUND EFFECTS: lift arms and make howling wind noise till piano ceases playing.**

**Narrator:** The mariners were afraid, and each cried to their own god.

- **MARINERS: Table 4 begins LOUD REPEATED entreaties with arm and body movements; other tables join in at five-second intervals, till Narrator cues all to stop:**
- 4: O Noble Apollo, save us!**
- 5: Anubis and Horus, help us!**
- 6: O Mercury, speed to save us!**
- 7: O blessed Venus, rescue us!**
- 8: O Jupiter, protect us!**
- 9: O Ashtoreth, Queen of Heaven, deliver us!**

**Narrator:** The mariners threw the ship's cargo into the sea, to lighten it. But Jonah had gone down into the hold and was fast asleep.

- **JONAH: put head down on folded arms on table, snoring**

**Narrator:** Then the captain came and found Jonah:

- **SOUND-EFFECTS: lift arms and make howling wind noise till piano ceases playing.**
- **SHIP'S CAPTAIN: Get up, move to Jonah's table.**

**Narrator:** The Captain said to Jonah:

- **SHIP'S CAPTAIN (unison, urgently):**  
**Get up Jonah, call on your god!**  
**Perhaps your god will spare us a thought,**  
**so that we do not perish.**

- **JONAH: wake up, sit silent with folded arms.**

Narrator: Then the mariners said to one another:

- **ALL MARINERS IN UNISON:**  
**Let us cast lots, to know on whose account  
 this calamity has come upon us.**

Narrator: So they cast lots, and the lot fell on Jonah.

- **MARINERS stand and chant in unison, getting louder and louder:**  
**Who's the jinx, the stinky sphinx?**  
**who's the guy with the evil eye?**  
**who's the schmuck who brings bad luck?**  
**Who? Who? Who?**  
**Nail the hoodoo, spike the heel,**  
**throw the dice and spin the wheel,**  
**and get the moaning groaner,**  
**Say who it is - ITS JONAH!!**

**It may be appropriate – and fun - to have the above chant repeated.**

Narrator: Then the mariners said to Jonah -

- **MARINERS remain standing, point at Jonah and say (unison):**  
**Jonah, Tell us why!**  
**Why has this calamity come upon us?**  
**What is your occupation?**  
**Where do you come from?**  
**And of what people are you?**
- **JONAH: Stand and face the mariners.**

Narrator: And Jonah replied:

- **JONAH: in unison:**  
**“I am a Hebrew.**  
**“I worship Adonai, the One true God.**  
**who made the sea and the dry land.”**
- **MARINERS (astonished, ad lib to each other and Jonah, 3 times) A Hebrew?**  
**Your god made the sea? AND the dry land? (His god made the sea!) etc.**

Narrator: Then they were even more afraid, and said:

- **MARINERS (unison):**  
**What shall we do to you,**  
**that the sea may quiet down for us?**

Narrator: Then Jonah said to them:

- **JONAH (unison):**

**Pick me up and throw me into the sea.**

- **MARINERS: O No! No! No!**

We couldn't possibly do that! **(Repeat this interchange once or twice)**

**Narrator:** Nevertheless the mariners rowed hard to bring the ship back to land -.

- **ALL EXCEPT JONAH SING**

**Row, row, row the boat, row the boat some more,  
panicky, panicky, panicky, panicky,  
till we reach the shore! (x2)**

**Narrator:** But they could not bring the ship back to land  
Indeed, the storm grew worse and worse.

- **SOUND EFFECTS: loud wind howling noises till piano stops.**

**Narrator:** Then the sailors cried out to Adonai:

- **MARINERS (standing, in supplication)**

**“Please, O Adonai God,  
Do not let us perish on account of this man’s life.”**

**Narrator:** So they picked Jonah up and threw him into the sea; and the sea ceased from its  
raging.

- **ALL SIT. JONAH huddles down on table.**
- **SOUND EFFECTS: wind noises getting softer till piano stops.**

**Narrator:** Then the mariners feared Adonai even more;  
they offered a sacrifice to Adonai-God and made vows.

- **MARINERS: in unison -**

**We praise you, Adonai, God of heaven.  
We will worship and serve you forever.**

- **ALL EXCEPT JONAH AND THE MARINERS:**

**So even when Jonah ran away, he couldn't help serving God!**

**Narrator:** Then Adonai provided a large fish to swallow up Jonah.

- **FISH TABLE: With your fish teeth, stand in circle round Jonah table, and reach up and over form a canopy over it.**

**Narrator:** And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.

[PAUSE]

Then Jonah prayed to Adonai from the belly of the fish, saying:

- **JONAH (Unison -from inside the fish)**

**I called to Adonai out of my distress,  
and Adonai answered me;  
out of the belly of death I cried,**

**and you heard my voice.  
Deliverance belongs to Adonai!**

**Narrator:** Then Adonai spoke to the fish, and it spewed Jonah out upon the dry land.

- **SOUND EFFECTS: loud spewing noises (aided by piano) as the FISH / BUSH: open their canopy-mouth and return to tables.**
- **Then ALL SING (tune-HANOVER):**  
**From God we may run,  
or anxiously hide;  
before we are done,  
Christ waits at our side  
again to befriend us,  
till chosen, we choose  
to go where God sends us,  
and spread the good news.**

**Narrator:** Then the word of Adonai came to Jonah a *second* time, saying, “Get up, go to Nineveh, that great city, and proclaim the message that I tell you.” So Jonah set out and went to Nineveh.

- **JONAH: Walk in line reluctantly out around part of room, then back to Worship Center, as piano plays traveling music.**
- **SOUND EFFECTS: stomp feet till Jonah reaches Worship Center.**

**Narrator:** Now Nineveh was an exceedingly large city, three days’ walk across. Jonah began to go into the city, going a day’s walk. And Jonah called out:

- **JONAH (*whispering*)**  
*Forty days more, and Nineveh shall be overthrown*
- **ALL (shout at random) Can’t hear! What did you say? Speak up! etc.**
- **JONAH (speaking, but covering mouth with hands):**  
Forty days more, and Nineveh shall be overthrown
- **ALL (louder) Can’t hear! SPEAK UP! Can’t hear, etc.**
- **JONAH (SHOUT in unison):**  
**Forty days more, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!!**
- **NINEVITES: turn to each other in consternation and dismay.**

**Narrator:** And the people of Nineveh believed God; they proclaimed a fast, and everyone, great and small, put on sackcloth.

- **NINEVITES: kneel at tables, and pray silently.**
- **SOUND EFFECTS: Wail and moan, or cry ad lib,  
“O Adonai, forgive us, do not destroy us” etc.**

**Narrator:** When the news reached the king of Nineveh, he rose from his throne, removed his robe, covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. Then he made a proclamation:

- **KING: Stand in circle round your table, face outwards, then declaim:**  
**Hear Ye! Hear Ye! Hear Ye, All the people of Nineveh:**  
**By the decree of the king and his nobles:**  
**No human being or animal shall feed,**  
**nor shall they drink water.**  
**People and animals shall be covered with sackcloth,**  
**and they shall cry mightily to God.**  
**All shall turn from their evil ways**  
**and from the violence that is in their hands.**  
**Who knows? God may relent,**  
**so that we do not perish.**

**Narrator:** When Adonai-God saw how they turned from their evil ways, Adonai's mind changed about the calamity promised to Nineveh; and Adonai did not do it.

- **ALL EXCEPT JONAH: cheers and loud applause!**
- **JONAH: stand in silence, arms akimbo, upset and angry.**

**Narrator:** But this was very displeasing to Jonah. He became angry and prayed to Adonai ,

- **JONAH: arms stretched out, look across room to opposite wall;**  
**declaim angrily and sarcastically:**  
**O Adonai! Is not this what I said,**  
**while I was still in my own country?**  
**That is why I fled to Tarshish at the beginning!**  
**for I KNEW that you are a gracious God, and merciful,**  
**slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love,**  
**and ready to relent from punishing!!**  
**And now, please take my life,**  
**for it is better for me to die than to live!!**

**Narrator:** And Adonai said,

- **ALL EXCEPT JONAH, in unison:**  
**“Is it right for you to be angry?”**

**Narrator:** But Jonah went out and sat down east of the city, waiting to see what would become of the city.

- **JONAH: go back to table, and sit, peering at Worship Center.**

**Narrator:** Then Adonai-God appointed a bush, and made it come up over Jonah, to give shade over his head; so Jonah was very happy about the bush.

- **BUSH: Go and stand in semi-circle round Jonah table, holding your leaves to give shade over Jonah.**
- **JONAH: Oohs, aahs, and other expressions of pleasure.**

**Narrator:** But that night God appointed a worm that attacked the bush, so that it withered.

- **Piano makes worm noises while BUSH drops leaves, and withers!**
- **JONAH: Ad lib: “Oh no!” etc.**

**Narrator:** When the sun rose, God prepared a sultry east wind, and the sun beat down on Jonah’s head,

- **SOUND EFFECTS: whistle and blow to suggest dry hot wind.**
- **JONAH: Feel the heat, fan brows, complain ad lib.**

**Narrator:** Then Jonah became faint and said

- **JONAH: (faint, but still complaining, unison)**  
It is better for me to die than to live. (X 3)
- **WILTED BUSH: return to tables**

**Narrator:** Then God said to Jonah:

- **ALL EXCEPT JONAH, unison:**  
Is it right for you to be angry about the bush?”
- **JONAH, unison:**  
Yes, angry enough to die.

**Narrator:** Then Adonai said

- **ALL EXCEPT JONAH, unison:**  
Jonah, Jonah, Jonah!  
You are concerned about the bush,  
for which you did not labor,  
and which you did not grow;  
it came into being in a night,  
and perished in a night.  
Should I not be concerned about Nineveh,  
that great city, in which there are more  
than a hundred and twenty thousand persons  
who do not know their right hand from their left –  
and also many animals?
- **ALL STAND FOR CLOSING SEQUENCE, as follows:**
- **JONAH:**  
So what does Jonah do?  
The story doesn’t say,  
but Nineveh is everywhere,  
and Jonah lives today.
- **ALL (including Jonah) SAY TOGETHER:**  
We praise you, Adonai, God of earth and heaven  
for you are a gracious God,  
slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love!

**And should we not be concerned about Nineveh,  
that great city,  
in which there are more  
than a hundred and twenty thousand persons  
who do not know their right hand from their left?**

- **JONAH: And also many animals.**

- **ALL SING (tune-HANOVER):**

**How gracious the God  
we gratefully serve,  
how quick to forgive,  
how steadfast in love,  
unswervingly patient,  
relentlessly true!  
Come, heal all creation  
and make all things new!!**

The End