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## **Jonah!**

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# **JONAH!**

A Musical

Book, Music and Lyrics by  
C. Michael Perry

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## CAST

The VOICE  
JONAH, A Prophet  
CAPTAINS 1-3  
Sailors (up to 9)  
COUNSELOR  
KING OF NINEVEH  
NINEVITES (up to 10)

## SONGS

#1 -- Arise, Jonah!	Voice
#2 -- Middle Of The World	Jonah & Sailors
#3 -- From The Deep	Jonah
#4 -- Arise, Jonah! (Rep)	Voice
#5 -- Nineveh City	Jonah
#6a -- Nineveh City (rep)	Jonah
#6b -- New Man	Jonah & Chorus
#7 -- Of You!	Jonah and Cast

# JONAH!

A Short Musical

## ACT ONE

**SCENE ONE:** *Low lighting. Bare stage. Props and scenery should be from found items. A residence in Joppa, ancient Phoenicia. A bed chamber. JONAH is sleeping and the song comes as a dream. We never see the VOICE. JONAH tosses and turns.*

### SONG 1 -- ARISE, JONAH

**VOICE:**

ARISE, JONAH  
PREPARE YOUR FACULTIES;  
AWAKE ABILITIES;  
(JONAH stirs)  
DO NOT BE ILL AT EASE.  
ARISE, JONAH  
MY CALLING TOUCHES YOU.  
THERE'S NOT ONE SUCH AS YOU  
WHO LOVES AS MUCH AS YOU.

THE SIN OF A MAN MAKES HIM DEPRAVED.  
BUT NINEVEH CAN BE SAVED.  
GO UNTO NINEVEH  
SO UNTO NINEVEH  
THERE'LL COME A PEACE THAT WILL REPLACE  
THE DARKENED PART OF EVERY HEART.  
LET LIGHT INCREASE AND EMBRACE  
AS DOUBTS DEPART.

*(JONAH is wrestling in his sleep.)*

ARISE, JONAH.  
GO UNTO NINEVEH  
SO UNTO NINEVEH

*(JONAH startles awake. The VOICE stops. The music lingers, then fades away.)*

**JONAH:** Nineveh?!

*(He shakes his head. Then looks up.)*

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Is this a test?

*(Imitates the VOICE.)*

"For the last sixty seconds you have been experiencing a Heavenly Vision. Believe it or...

*(He pauses, thinking.)*

I don't believe it. How can I not believe it? I don't BELIEVE it!!!

**[BLACKOUT]**

**SCENE TWO:** *Insistent, pulsing music. JONAH appears 'in one'.*

**SONG 2 -- THE MIDDLE OF THE WORLD**

**JONAH:**

GOTTA RUN -- GOTTA GO!

SOMEWHERE NO ONE WILL KNOW!

WHERE THE WATERS FLOW I'LL BE THERE,

LET HIM RAVE, LET HIM RANT;

TRY TO TELL ME I CAN'T.

GOD OF HEAVEN SHAN'T SEE ME THERE!

*(Music continues under. JONAH has walked onto a pier. Several 'ships' are outfitted and ready to depart.)*

**JONAH:** How far are you bound, Captains?

**CAP 1:** Syracuse!

**CAP 2:** Carthage!

**CAP 3:** Tarshish!

**JONAH:** *(To himself)* The end of the world.

*(To CAP 3)*

How much for a passage to Tarshish?

**CAP 3:** Five silver shekels and your back for the rigging.

**JONAH:** Done!

*(JONAH climbs aboard and places the money in the CAP 3's hand. He then pantomimes, with the other SAILORS, pulling on the ropes to help with the rigging.)*

WELCOME ME ACROSS THE SEA;

THE SEA THAT SITS IN THE MIDDLE OF THE WORLD.

I MUST BE LOST AT ANY COST;

BE HURLED ACROSS THE MIDDLE OF THE WORLD.

**SAILORS:**

BREEZE THAT BLOWS ONE WHERE ONE GOES

COME FILL OUR SAILS TODAY!

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ON THIS TRIP GOD BLESS OUR SHIP  
AND SPEED US ON OUR WAY.

**JONAH:**

WELCOME ME ACROSS THE SEA  
THE SEA THAT SITS IN THE MIDDLE  
OF THE WORLD.  
I MUST BE LOST AT ANY COST  
BE HURLED ACROSS THE MIDDLE  
OF THE WORLD.  
I'M NOT AFRAID OF THE CHOICE I'VE MADE  
I JUST CAN'T BE A PART OF THIS PLAN.  
IT ISN'T FAIR IF I LABOR THERE  
AND GOD SAVES EVERY MAN!  
I'VE BEEN TO NINEVEH A TIME OR TWO  
TO OFFER THE LORD'S SALVATION.  
I CAN'T SEE NINEVEH EMBRACE WHAT'S TRUE.  
THEY'RE A TRULY WICKED NATION.

THEY CAST ME OUT  
REVEILED AND SHOUTED ME DOWN.  
I GAVE THEM ALL.  
THEY SMILED AND CALLED ME A CLOWN.

GOD'S LOVE OR MERCY -  
THEY DON'T DESERVE IT!  
GOD'S LOVE OR MERCY;  
HOW COULD THEY SERVE IT?

**JONAH:**

SO, WELCOME ME ACROSS THE SEA  
THE SEA THAT SITS IN THE  
MIDDLE OF THE WORLD.  
I MUST BE LOST AT ANY COST  
BE HURLED ACROSS THE  
MIDDLE OF THE WORLD.  
THE MIDDLE OF THE WORLD --  
I'M LOST IN THE  
MIDDLE OF THE WORLD.

**SAILORS:**

BREEZE THAT BLOWS ONE  
WHERE ONE GOES  
COME FILL OUR SAILS TODAY!  
ON THIS TRIP  
GOD BLESS OUR SHIP  
AND SPEED US ON OUR WAY!  
CALM  
SEAS.  
SWIFT  
BREEZE.  
SAFE  
TRAVEL.  
FAIR  
LANDING.

**SAILORS:**

BREEZE THAT BLOWS ONE WHERE ONE GOES  
COME FILL OUR SAILS TODAY!  
  
ON THIS TRIP GOD BLESS OUR SHIP  
AND SPEED US ON OUR WAY.  
  
AND SPEED US  
ON OUR  
WAY!

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*(As the song ends lightning flashes and thunder crashes and the sounds of a great rain and wind rise up. The faces of all are crestfallen as the lights fade.)*

**SCENE THREE:** *As the scene reopens the men who were standing in despair are now seated in terrified determination, hanging on for their lives.*

**ONE:** How much longer?

**TWO:** Two days of tempest so far!

**THREE:** We've been nearly smashed on the rocks hourly!

**FOUR:** Whose god is angry?

**FIVE:** How can that mar sleep?

**CAP 3:** *(Jostling JONAH)* Hey, Hebrew -- how can you sleep through this? Wake up and hold your line!

**SIX:** I -know how to find out whose god is angry.

**TWO:** How?

**SIX:** Cast lots!

**CAP 3:** If we don't get out of this soon we'll have to ditch our cargo and that'll mean no profit or- this trip -- maybe even a big loss -- which means no pay.

**SIX:** Lots'

**ALL:** Yes, Lots! Cast them!

*(A SAILOR draws the bones out of his pocket. One by one each of the SAILORS throws the bones and all eyes fall on JONAH. He throws the bones and is marked the one.),*

**SIX:** It's him!

**FOUR:** The Hebrew.

**ONE:** Can you pray to your god, Hebrew, to take this storm from us?

**JONAH:** It is my God who seeks to stop me from reaching Tarshish.

**THREE:** Toss him overboard.

**OTHERS:** We can't do that? He'll die.

**THREE:** Better him than all of us!

**FOUR:** But ?

**JONAH:** You must -- to save yourselves and your ship.

**CAP 3:** You have paid for your passage. No one goes overboard.

**JONAH:** I only paid for my passage to try to escape my God.

**SIX:** Didn't work -- did it?

**ONE:** If we can't throw him overboard -- what do we do?

**CAP 3:** Row for your lives!

*(The wind howls as they row and the lights fade. In the darkness we hear a splash. The wind dies out. Strange clicks, pops and sputters fill the darkness.)*

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**SCENE FOUR:** *As the lights rise JONAH is paying on his back on the floor. The MEN surround him, standing still as if they were an enclosure of some sort [the whale's RIBS]. Throughout the scene the RIBS continue the noises intermittently. JONAH rouses himself awake.*

**JONAH:** Oh! -- What is that smell?

*(He crawls around sniffing everywhere. He can't find the source of the smell until he collapses and ends up sniffing his own arm.)*

Oh! -- That smell is me!!! I smell like puke!

*(Sounds like laughter come from the RIBS. JONAH stands and begins poking at his surroundings. He shrugs.)*

Okay, God -- where am I?

*(The -whale structure shifts and heaves.)*

Whoah! Am I in something alive? Did something eat me?

*(More sounds of laughter from the RIBS.)*

All right! Okay! If I could start a fire I'd have the largest set of baby-back ribs in the world!

*(The RIBS shut up.)*

Aha! I thought so!

**VOICE:** Jonah?

*(JONAH freezes -- stock still like a deer in the headlights.)*

**JONAH:** Y ... yes?

**VOICE:** How long can you tread water?

**JONAH:** I can't swim, Lord.

**VOICE:** Yes, I know.

**JONAH:** So, that's why I'm here?

**VOICE:** Yes.

**JONAH:** Where's here?

**VOICE:** The belly of a great fish.

**JONAH:** No wonder I smell like puke.

**VOICE:** Jonah?

**JONAH:** Yes, Lord?

**VOICE:** You ran from me.

**JONAH:** Yes, Lord.

**VOICE:** Don't you know you can't run from me?

**JONAH:** I do now, Lord.

**VOICE:** How far did you expect to go?

**JONAH:** To Tarshish?

**VOICE:** A Godless land but hardly away from me.

**JONAH:** I see that Lord.

**VOICE:** I heard your complaint against the Ninevites.

**JONAH:** I'm sure you did, Lord.

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**VOICE:** Always before, you have done what I have asked of you. So many missions. So much success.

Why can't you allow yourself to be successful in Nineveh?

**JONAH:** They don't deserve it, Lord.

**VOICE:** So you said. But judgment is mine, Jonah -- not yours.

*(JONAH is silent.)*

Jonah?

*(Silence.)*

Jonah?

**JONAH:** How long will I be here?

**VOICE:** As long as it takes.

**JONAH:** Lord?

*(Silence.)*

Lord?

*(Silence.)*

It's gonna be a long wait.

*(Lights fade.)*

**SCENE FIVE:** *As the lights come up again JONAH is on his back asleep but begins to roll from side to side as the RIBS tilt forward and backward indicating movement. A sharp jolt and JONAH is flung awake.*

**JONAH:** This is not fair, Lord!

*(The fish continues to buffet him around. He will receive the silent treatment from the VOICE today.)*

I know you're there!

*(Waits.)*

I'd like to go home now.

*(He walks upstage and the RIBS turn him around and send him back to where he was. He picks up something -- finds it disgusting -- and tosses it away. He looks to where it landed. A smile crosses his face. He plays a short game of hopscotch. He bends over to pick up the 'thing' and one of the RIBS kicks his rear end and he sprawls out, flat. He then lays out on his stomach, chin on hand ' elbow on floor.)*

Gee, I can't remember when I have had more fun!

**[BLACKOUT]**

**SCENE SIX** -- *JONAH on his knees. The fish is steady -- for the moment. The RIBS are quiet.*

**SONG 3 -- FROM THE DEEP**

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**JONAH:**

I CALL TO YOU, LORD. WILL YOU ANSWER ME?  
I CRY IN THE DARKNESS. WILL YOU HELP ME SEE?  
WITH YOUR BREAKERS AND YOUR BILLOWS WASHING OVER ME  
I FEEL I'M LOST, OR FAST ASLEEP.

THE WATERS THREATENED. THE DARK ENVELOPED ME.  
THE SEAWEED STRANGLER AND TOOK MY BREATH FROM ME.  
THE ROOTS OF MOUNTAINS HELD ME FAST,  
SO FAST I COULDN'T SEE.  
AND YET YOUR FACE MOVES ON THE DEEP.

SO, FROM THE DEEP, LORD, MY PRAYERS ASCEND.  
FROM THE DEEP, LORD, I SEEK AN END.  
IT WAS MY FOLLY THAT MADE THE HEAVENS WEEP.  
I PRAY TO YOU, LORD: TAKE ME FROM THE DEEP.

WORSHIPPING IDOLS, VAIN GLORY,  
THEIR STORY CANNOT FOLLOW TRUTH OR LEAD THE FIGHT.  
ONLY FROM YOU, LORD, COMES MERCY  
AND YOUR MERCY LEADS US BACK INTO THE LIGHT.

SO, FROM THE DEEP, LORD I OFFER PRAISE.  
FROM THE DEEP, LORD -- I SEEK THY WAYS.  
THE MOUNTAINS AHEAD ARE VAST AND STEEP.  
BUT I WILL CLIMB THEM AS YOU LEAD ME FROM THE DEEP.

*(The RIBS begin to move and shift, squirm and squeeze. JONAH is thrust to one end of their lines and they 'pop' him out. As the lights go bright, signifying JONAH's return to the light, JONAH looks up as he stands on his feet. He is beatific.)*

**[BLACKOUT]**

**5 more pages in ACT TWO**

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