

[THE LORD] Do you have the right to be angry?

*[Jonah angrily stomps to a different corner.]*

[NARRATOR] Jonah left the city. He sat down at a place east of it. The Lord God sent a vine and made it grow over Jonah to give him more shade for his head. Jonah was happy he had the vine. But before sunrise the next day, God sent a worm. It chewed the vine so much that it dried up. The sun beat down on Jonah's head. It made him very weak.

*[The Vine hovers over Jonah and then slowly collapses to the floor.]*

[THE LORD] Do you have any right to be angry about what happened to the vine?

[JONAH] I do. I'm angry enough to die.

[THE LORD] You've been concerned about this vine, but you did not take care of it. Nineveh has more than 120,000 people. They can't tell right from wrong. So shouldn't I show concern for that city?

THE END



READERS' THEATRE  
**JONAH AND THE NINEVITES**  
Jonah 1-4 (NIRV)

*This Readers' Theatre Script is a compilation of scripture quotes from Jonah 1-4. The quotes are taken directly from the New International Reader's Version.*

Teacher assigns roles and places everyone for the scene. Nonreaders and younger students often prefer to dress up and act out each sentence as the teacher and assistant read. Older, more proficient readers, may want to read the parts.

Teacher Tip: Challenge children to act out the silent parts such as the fish, the vine, and the Ninevites.

1. NARRATOR: Teacher or child
2. JONAH: Child (optional prop: beard)
3. THE SAILORS: Group of children
4. THE HUGE FISH: Group of children encircling Jonah or fish may be created using a tent or table covered with cloth
5. THE LORD: Child
6. KING OF NINEVEH: Child (optional props: throne, crown, sackcloth)
7. THE VINE: Child (optional prop: a toy worm)
8. THE NINEVITES: Remaining children or may be the children that are acting as the sailors (optional costume: sackcloth)

Scene

**Jonah stands with the Lord.**

**The Sailors** sit in a boat formation, holding hands.

**The King of Nineveh** sits in a chair in a corner.

**The Ninevites** sit on floor surrounding **The King of Nineveh**.

**The Huge Fish** and **the Vine** are offstage at the opening of the scene.

[THE LORD] Go to the great city of Nineveh. Preach against it. The sins of its people have come to my attention.

*[Jonah hears the Lord. Then Jonah joins Sailors and holds hands.]*

[NARRATOR] But Jonah ran away from the Lord. He sailed for Tarshish. But the Lord sent a strong wind over the Mediterranean Sea. A wild storm came up. It was so wild that the ship was in danger of breaking apart. The sea was getting rougher and rougher. They were afraid.

*[The Sailors rock back and forth as if sailing on rough sea.]*

[SAILORS] Jonah, what should we do to you to make the sea calm down?

[JONAH] Pick me up and throw me into the sea. Then it will become calm. I know it's my fault that this terrible storm has come on you.

[NARRATOR] They took Jonah and threw him overboard. And the stormy sea became calm. But the Lord sent a huge fish to swallow Jonah. And Jonah was inside the fish for three days and three nights.

*[The Sailors place Jonah outside the boat formation. Jonah sits on the floor and is surrounded by the Huge Fish. Jonah kneels and folds his hands in prayer in the center of the Huge Fish.]*

[JONAH] I called for help, and You listened to my cry. The deep waters were all around me. I will sing a song of thanks. I will do what I have promised. Lord, You are the one who saves.

[NARRATOR] And the Lord gave the fish a command. And it spit Jonah up onto dry land.

*[The Huge Fish releases Jonah.]*

[THE LORD] Go to the great city of Nineveh. Announce to its people the message I give you.

*[Jonah walks to King of Nineveh and Ninevites.]*

[JONAH] In 40 days, Nineveh will be destroyed.

[NARRATOR] The people of Nineveh believed God's warning. They decided not to eat any food for a while. All of them put on sackcloth. The King of Nineveh got up from his throne. He took his royal robes off and dressed himself in sackcloth. He sat down in the dust.

*[King of Nineveh leaves chair to sit on floor with Ninevites.]*

[KING OF NINEVEH] All of you must cry out to God with all your hearts. Stop doing what is evil. Who knows? God might take pity on us. He might turn away from His burning anger. Then we won't die.

*[King of Nineveh and Ninevites bow heads and fold hands in prayer.]*

[NARRATOR] God saw what they did. They stopped doing what was evil. So He took pity on them. He didn't destroy them as He had said He would. Jonah became angry.

[JONAH] Lord, that's why I was so quick to run away to Tarshish. I knew You are slow to get angry. You are full of love. You are a God who takes pity on people.