

Jonah and the Whale (The Light of God's Love)

(Mateo enters holding a book. Then Maria enters)

Maria: Hello Mateo. What are you reading?

Mateo: I'm reading the story of Jonah and the whale.

Maria: That's one of my favorite stories in the Bible.

Mateo: Jonah was very silly to try to run from God. Didn't he know that God could find him wherever he went?

Maria: Yes, he was foolish to try to get away from God. All God was asking him was to go to the people of Ninevah and tell them about Him.

Mateo: Then what did he do? He got on a boat going the opposite direction.

Maria: Yes but God had a plan to get him back on the right path.

Mateo: Really? I haven't read about that yet. I'm reading the part where Jonah was in the boat, and there was a big storm, and it was very dark and windy, and everyone was afraid the boat was gonna sink.

Maria: Then Jonah told them that God was mad at him because he didn't want to obey God. Then he asked them to throw him in the sea. When they did that, the storm stopped.

Mateo: Well Jonah must have been a really good swimmer if he could swim all the way to Ninevah!

Maria: No, silly, it was a whale that took him to Ninevah.

Mateo: Are you telling me that the whale carried him on his back all the way to Ninevah?

Maria: No, he went there in the belly of the whale.

Mateo: How did he get inside the whale?

Maria: The whale swallowed him.

Mateo: You're telling me that the whale ate Jonah for lunch?

Maria: I happen to know that the whale didn't do it to eat Jonah. He did it to rescue him.

Mateo : What?

Maria: Really. He was just swimming along, and when he saw Jonah, God told him to swallow Jonah to keep him from drowning.

Mateo: You mean God built a little room inside the whale for Jonah?

Maria: No, are you kidding? It was dark and wet and oh, boy, there must have been an awfully bad smell inside that whale!

Mateo: That's not exactly the best way to travel. And I doubt Jonah had a flashlight either.

Maria: Mateo, flashlights hadn't been invented yet.

Mateo: Well. wasn't Jonah afraid of the dark?

Maria: I'm sure he was scared at the beginning, but then he started praying to God, and after that it didn't seem dark anymore.

Mateo: Maybe God sent him a flashlight so he wouldn't be afraid,

Maria: Not exactly. God helped Jonah remember that He loved him a lot and that He would take care of him.

Mateo: He remembered that God loved him and he wasn't afraid anymore. Hey, isn't there a verse in the Bible that says that?

Maria: Yes, in the book of John it says "Perfect love casts out fear." The love of God is like a light that shines in our hearts.

Mateo: Then Jonah didn't have a flashlight, he had the light of God with him.

Maria: And like a flashlight makes it not dark, the light of God cast out Jonah's fear. Do you know what happened next?

Mateo: No, what happened?

Maria: After three days God told the whale to spit Jonah out on the beach, and the whale vomited him up.

Mateo: [Yuck!] It seems to me that the whale was more obedient to God than Jonah was.

Maria: You're right. He certainly was.

Mateo: And then Jonah decided to do what God asked him to, go to Ninevah and preach the message of God.

Maria: But this time he could tell them how God rescued him from the sea using the whale. And after that all the people in Ninevah believed in God.

Mateo: Wow! That's fantastic! Do you think I could do the same thing Jonah did?

Maria: If you mean get swallowed by a whale and live to tell about it, I don't think so!

Mateo: I know that! I mean, could I tell all my friends about Jesus and then they could believe in Him also.

Maria: Yes, you could tell them that Jesus loves them, and then the light of God's love could shine in their hearts.

Mateo: And the next time they were afraid of the dark, they could remember that God loves them and His love would cast out their fear.

Maria: Let's go tell all our friends!

Mateo: Yes, let's go!