

Our Sabbath Scripture Stories



FAMILIES RECLAIMING SUNDAY

Read aloud: 1 Kings 3:5, 7-12

Romans 8:28-30

Gospel: Matthew 13:44-52

Vincent was once again busy with his new hamster and the exclusive cage he had gotten him. The cage had wheels, and tubes, and tunnels, and a maze. It was big and colorful. What a great set-up!

“Come on, Holy!” Vincent told him. “Run through the tunnel!”

“Vincent, tell me again! Why did you decide to name your hamster ‘Holy’?” Mary Clare asked her brother.

“That’s easy, Sis!” Vincent remarked. “The only kind of cheese he likes is the kind with holes in it!”

Mary Clare stood there stunned, and just shook her head at her brother’s logic.

Dad gathered everyone together again for the Gospel reading this Sunday morning. Sitting next to him were three picture cards. Each one was different. On one was a treasure chest; one showed a round, white, shiny object; and the last had a fishing net.

“I can only guess what these might be about!” Vincent quipped to his dad.

Mr. Pauline began reading from the Gospel of Matthew. Soon the pictures were beginning to make sense.

“So Family,” Mr. Pauline began. “Look at my great artwork here! I have drawn three pictures.”

“Michaelangelo couldn’t have done better, Dear!” Mom laughed.

Dad had to laugh too. He then continued. “Jesus tells us three times in our Gospel today what heaven is like, doesn’t He?”

The kids all nodded as Dad picked up the first picture. “On this picture, we have a treasure chest. Now, why would Jesus tell us heaven is like a treasure chest?”

“I know!” Lucy answered. “It’s because heaven has all sorts of rich things, and perfect treasure things, and the finest things!”

“Exactly, Lucy!” Dad smiled. “And the treasure is unlimited!”

Then Dad picked up the picture with the round, white, shiny object drawn on it. “Who can tell me what this might be?”

As a joke, Vincent took the picture and turned it this way and that way. From all angles, it still looked the same. Laughing, he said, "Could it possibly be the pearl Jesus talks about today?"

"Absolutely right, Vincent!" Dad answered. "It is a pearl! Now, why would Jesus tell us heaven is like this pearl?"

"I think it's because pearls are so valuable," Mary Clare offered. "And you really have to go and search for pearls!"

"Correct!" Dad exclaimed.

Then lastly, Dad picked up the picture of the fishing net.

"Here, family, we have a fishing net," Dad told them. "Which one of you can tell me why Jesus says that heaven is like a fishing net?"

Some of the smaller Paulines looked at each other.

Finally, Peter spoke up.

"It's because heaven is for the faithful." Peter answered. "The vast sea is the world, and the net represents the Church. The net gathers up people, and then Jesus comes and judges the good people from the bad people. Only the good people gain entrance into heaven!"

"Perfect, Peter!" Mr. Pauline told his son. "Heaven is God's loving reward for leading a good life."

"And Holy, the hamster, can show us how!" Vincent shouted as he leaped up.

"Huh?" everyone said.

"Sure!" Vincent replied. "Holy and his new maze! Don't you see?"

Whatever Vincent's explanation was going to be, you knew it was going to be priceless!

Vincent stood up by his hamster cage and began. To the family's delight, he spoke in his false "broadcasters" voice. "You see, heaven is like the maze of life ... a journey if you will." Vincent swept his arms over Holy, the hamster's, maze.

"Some go directly there," Vincent reminded them. "Yet others come upon roadblocks," Vincent said as he pointed to an end-trap. "They come to a halt in life."

Then, with added glee in his voice, he said, "But with repentance and re-direction, you will reach your reward!" Vincent motioned to the exit. Summing up, he added, "Ah yes ... the maze of life is full of life's lessons ... full of footprints ... full of joys ... full of right steps, and wrong steps ... full of ... full of ..."

And, referring to his hokey demonstration, Peter laughed. "I know what you're full of, Vincent!"

