Grandma's favorite read aloud Bible stories ©: Jonah part IV

Jonah 4:1- 4:11

Remember, Jonah did not like the people of Ninevah…. And it was even worse now that God had decided to save them.

He remembered all the bad things they did! So he went out of the city and found and place where he could see what would happen to them. And there he sat. Days passed by and it was getting hot outside and still nothing had happened! Jonah was mad! He was angry with God! He said, "I knew it! I knew You would forgive them! I know You, Lord and I know You are gracious and nice and You forgive people! I knew it when you told me the first time to come here! You are really slow to get angry and You are Loving ,too! You even changed your mind about punishing people it they stop being bad – just like you did me! BUT!!! Ninevah??! God! They were REALLY BAD! I am so upset, I just want to die!"

God listened to Jonah and said "Jonah. Is it alright for you to be angry about this?" But Jonah did not listen.

So God had another plan for Jonah.

Do you know what He did? He grew a big plant! He grew it right by Jonah so it would shade him and make him feel cooler. Jonah sat under it and was WAY cooler. He was really, really thankful for that plant.
Then God called a worm to come and eat the plant. Slowly the plant drooped over and withered up until it was completely dead on the ground. But God was not finished. He made it even hotter for Jonah! The sun beat down very hot on his head and God sent a hot wind to blow across his skin.

Then God watched.

Jonah felt like he was in a hot oven! He had never been so hot. He wished he were dead! He even said it!

The Jonah heard God one more time. "Jonah, why are you so angry? Why do you want to die? Is this the right attitude? Jonah shame on you! You were more upset by a plant than you were about those people I saved! And…you wanted ME to be like you! But Jonah…I did have the right attitude and you did not. I felt sorry and forgave the 120,000 people in Ninevah. Do you know why? Because until I sent you to talk to them, they didn't even know the difference between good and bad. Matter of fact, they were so bad at it, that it was like they couldn't even tell between their hands and their cows!!

The people of Ninevah were saved. They now believed in a powerful but loving God. Jonah couldn't forgive the people for all the bad things they had done, but God could. God showed Jonah that he should love others more than himself - and certainly more than a plant!