



Work for Peace and Justice

(based on Micah 4:1-8)

Many years ago, the people of Israel were sorrowful. They lived in difficult times when there was a lot of unfairness and fighting in the world.

The people were fed up. “What will happen?” they asked each other. “Will the fighting ever end? Will there ever be fairness in the world?”

Then someone came along who gave the people hope. It was the prophet Micah (MYE-kuh). Micah knew that God had a vital message for the people. It was an amazing vision filled with wonderful ideas.

“Listen!” exclaimed Micah. “One day all the people of the world will follow God’s loving ways. On that day, people will not need their weapons anymore. They will turn their spears and their swords into garden tools. There will be no more war. There will be no more fighting. The whole world will live in peace.”

“That sounds incredible!” exclaimed the people.

“When will it happen?” they asked Micah.

“We must make it happen,” replied Micah. “If we follow God’s ways, the world will change. God’s fairness and peace will spread everywhere.”

The people liked the sound of that. “We must start now,” they cried. “We must follow in God’s loving ways and help bring justice and peace to the world.”

The people found many different ways to do this. Some shared what they had with those who had nothing. Some people stood up for those who were being bullied. Some looked after children who had no parents. Some used kind words to solve problems.

God’s vision of peace and justice brought hope to the people. They tried hard to follow in God’s loving ways and bring God’s peace to the land. They hoped that one day God’s peace and fairness would spread all over the world.



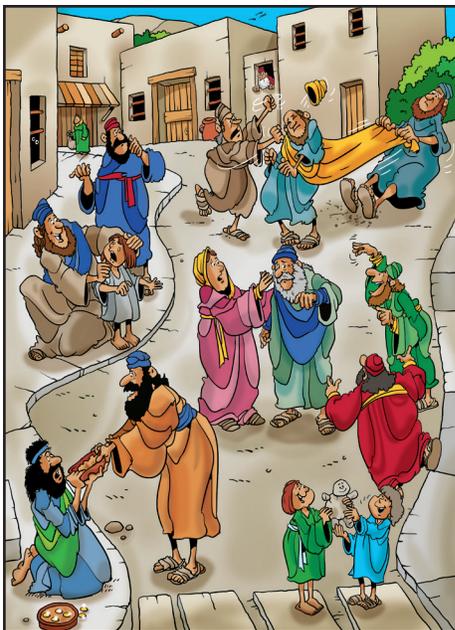
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Use one or more activities from each section to explore grace and gratitude with your children this week.

Recognizing God's Grace

- Read and enjoy the story with your children—imagine and wonder.
- Read *Tawny Scrawny Lion* by Kathryn Jackson (Golden Books, 2001) or watch the YouTube video “Tawny Scrawny Lion by Kathryn Jackson” (bit.ly/TawnyScrawnyLion, 6:51) to learn about kindness, justice, and mercy.
- Make a simple balance scale with a coat hanger, string, and two plastic cups. Let your children experiment by putting items in the cups to balance them.



Responding to God's Grace

- Fold a piece of paper in half lengthwise. Along the fold, draw half a person: head, body, arm, leg. Open the paper. Copy the mirror image of the shapes to the blank side to complete the person. On one side, write bullying actions, such as calling names or tripping someone. Make that side of the face sad. On the other side, write actions you could do to stand up for someone being bullied. Make that side of the face happy.
- Make a “Kind Words” list. Write kind words you could say. Use a different color for each thought.

Celebrating in Gratitude

- Find a flowerpot, some potting soil, and some small plants from the garden department of a store. Put the plants in the pot, remembering that garden tools are better than weapons. Take care of your new garden.
- Play the YouTube video “Song of Hope” (bit.ly/MayTheGod) and sing along to this song of peace and justice.
- Pray:
God, spread your peace and justice all over the world. Amen.