

# Doing Justly

Micah

## **MEMORY VERSE**

MICAH 6:8

“He has shown you, O man, what is good; And what does the LORD require of you But to do justly, To love mercy, And to walk humbly with your God?”

## **WHAT YOU WILL NEED:**

A lamp and baby powder.

One copy of the “God’s Scale” template, scissors, poster board and paper fasteners.

A sheet of black construction paper, a white sheet of regular copy paper and a couple of sheets of a light color card stock or construction paper for each child, markers, scissors and glue stick.

## **ATTENTION GETTER!**

### **God’s Promises**

You will need a lamp with a light bulb that is easily exposed and baby powder. In Micah 5:2 we read about a promise of a coming Messiah that would be born in the city of Bethlehem 700 years before it happens. Can you think of whom we serve and worship who was born in Bethlehem? God’s Word is always true.

Before class, practice the following experiment to make sure it goes well during the class. Plug in the lamp, remove the lampshade, and turn on the light. Wait until the bulb is hot, but be careful around the children. Next, sprinkle a tiny bit of baby powder just above the bulb. The powder will be carried upward by the rising warm air current.

When class begins ask your class, “Who can tell me what a promise is?” Tell them that a promise is an agreement to do or not to do

something. Next, tell them that you are going to make a promise to them. Tell them that you are going to make powder fly up in the air without blowing it or throwing it. Ask, “Who believes that I will keep my promise?” Sprinkle a bit of baby powder just above the bulb. As the children watch the powder rise, say, “I kept my promise. I did not have to blow on the powder to get it to rise up. The bulb made the air hot, and because hot air rises, it leaves room for the cooler air to come in underneath it. The powder was carried up with the warmer air.”

Explain to the class that God always keeps His promises. In fact there are over 300 prophecies that were made concerning Jesus in the Old Testament and all of them (except the ones talking about His Second Coming) have been fulfilled perfectly.

## **LESSON TIME!**

The book of Micah was written by Micah the prophet. He was born in the country village of Moresheth Gath in the lowlands of Judah, near the region of Philistia. Isaiah prophesied about the same time that Micah did. Micah’s name means, “Who is like the Lord?” There are many similarities between passages in Isaiah and Micah (Micah 4:1-5, Isaiah 2:2-4). Micah preached between 750 BC and 687 BC, during the reigns of kings Jothan, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. Micah was God’s messenger to the oppressed of Judah in the south.

In this book, we see God’s anger and His mercy to the people. Even in His anger we see His mercy, an attribute He gives so freely to us also. God pleads with Israel and Judah to turn to Him away from their sin. Then using the Assyrians as the rod of His anger, He ends with promises of future glory under the Messiah and His righteous reign.

Today we are going to primarily deal with a question we all ask ourselves at some time, “Just what is it that the Lord requires of me?” Did you know that the Israelites asked the same question?

Let us see what the Lord tells us about what brings Him pleasure. God wants justice, mercy and humility in our lives.

### MICAH 6:6-8

With what shall I come before the LORD, And bow myself before the High God? Shall I come before Him with burnt offerings, With calves a year old?

Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, Ten thousand rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, The fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?

He has shown you, O man, what is good; And what does the LORD require of you But to do justly, To love mercy, And to walk humbly with your God?

What is it that the Lord wants from us? Have you ever considered that question? In verses 3-5, Micah speaks in the name of the Lord, and in verses 6-7, he lets the congregation of Israel speak through the prophet to God because they recognize themselves as guilty before the Lord.

They want to know what they can do to repair the bond of fellowship that had been broken by their sin. God had chastened them with the purpose of causing them to turn from their sin so He could bless them. Discipline is always for our benefit and restoration of fellowship with God.

The people wanted peace with God no matter what. They asked what it was they could do to be reconciled to God and again be in His favor. They acknowledged that God is the most high God. They began to see God in a different light; they realized more and more His holiness and did not think lightly of Him.

Thinking to bow before Him (vs. 6) shows their reverence for Him. The people ask if it is burnt offerings that will please God. It is interesting that they offer to bring burnt offerings but there is no reference to sin offerings, through which broken fellowship could be restored. Perhaps the people still had not come to the full knowledge of their sin, but still believed that they had a right standing in themselves or in what they could do to try to please God.

As burnt offerings, they would bring calves and rams because they were regarded as the best. Realizing that these sacrifices might not be sufficient, the people would offer the best thing of all, the first-born son, as a sacrifice for their sin. “Now, the law claimed the first-born of man and animal for the Lord. The first-born animals were sacrificed. The sacrifice of children was forbidden on pain of death. This verse does not teach that human sacrifice was common in Israel; it merely reveals the futility of such a practice” (Scofield).

## God’s Scale

Use this activity to illustrate one of the points of today’s lesson. All of our sins weigh us down and we can never please God ourselves. Sometimes we think that doing religious things will make us right before God, but that is not so. You will need a copy of the “scale” template included with the curriculum, scissors, poster board and paper fasteners.

Cut out the scale from the template. Cut the horizontal bar of the scale to make the bar movable. Glue the vertical stand and bar to the poster board. Next, cut the two baskets to include the small circles at the top. Using three paper fasteners attach the horizontal bar to the vertical bar. Next, attach the two baskets to the horizontal bar. What this should produce is a scale with movable parts. The horizontal bar will tilt to either side and the two baskets will move accordingly. You can make this at home before class.

Explain to the class that our sins weigh us down and we are found lacking. Have the class think of various sins (lying, cheating, stealing, etc.). Write them on small pieces of paper and glue or tape them to one of the baskets. Show that the basket moves down with each sin. Next, think of religious things that some people like to do (go to church, live a moral life, etc.). Tape these to the other basket, but don't move the basket at all. Explain to the class that doing "good" things have no effect on canceling out our sin. Next take out the enclosed picture of Jesus and tape or glue Him over the "good" things. Now tip the scale the other way so that the sin becomes light. Explain that this is what Jesus does for us. He is the only way to the Father, not doing good things.

So what is it that the Lord requires of us? Verse 8 tells us the answer to the question, "He has shown you, O man what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?" God seeks certain characteristics of true worship from His people. God desires us to do righteousness and exercise love. Let us look at the words do, justly, mercy, humble, and walk. **God wants justice, mercy and humility in our lives.**

Do is defined as "to perform, achieve; cause to bring about; make ready for some object or purpose; to act or behave."

JUSTLY is defined as "conformable to divine or human laws; upright; impartial; faithful; exact; regular; fair."

MERCY is defined as "the disposition to forgive, spare, or pity; clemency; forbearance; compassion."

HUMBLE is defined as "having a proper estimate of one's self; modest; meek; submissive; lowly; obscure; not viewing self as better than others."

WALK is defined as “to advance by alternate steps; pursue a certain course of life or action; course of life or action.”

In summary, God is pleased when we act or behave in an upright, impartial, faithful, and fair manner: forgiving, showing compassion, forbearing, pursuing meekness, showing modesty, and submitting to each other. This is what truly pleases, or gives pleasure to the Lord.

This is the most costly sacrifice we can give to the Lord, for it means that we must die to ourselves. We must die to our desires, dreams, our will, and love others selflessly. God does not demand religious activities from us, but He loves it when we “present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God which is our reasonable service” (Romans 12:1).

Our obedience is also pleasing to God. “And Samuel said, ‘Has the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams’” (1 Samuel 15:22). Without these things in our lives, sacrificing anything as worship to the Lord is a dead thing and God receives no pleasure in it.

How can I do all these things to please God? It is by simply giving our lives to Jesus, to receive His sacrifice on the cross for our sins and believing in Him. Then He helps us to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly before Him. If you have never asked Jesus into your heart, right now is the perfect time. If you have asked Christ into your heart before, but are trying to please Him in all the wrong ways, just ask Him to forgive you and rededicate your life to Him. Either way, you can never lose. God loves you very much. **God wants justice, mercy and humility in our lives.**

## Prophecy Scratcher

Use this craft to witness to a friend about Jesus. You will need a sheet of black construction paper, a white sheet of regular copy paper and a couple of sheets of a light color card stock or construction paper for each child, markers, scissors and glue stick.

Out of the cardstock have each child cut out letters to make the word, "Bethlehem." For the younger students you may need to help them or obtain pre-cut letters to give to them. Once they have cut out all of the letters have them glue the word onto the black construction paper. IMPORTANT – make sure that they leave enough room to cover the word "Bethlehem" with the white copy paper. Next, glue the white copy paper over the word "Bethlehem." Also make sure to leave enough room to write a sentence at the bottom.

With a marker write, "Where did God tell His people that Jesus would be born 700 years before it happened?" Write this at the bottom of the craft. Then explain to the children that they can use this with a family member or friend to tell them about Jesus. They can see if they can answer that question. They may or may not be able to. Then you can give them a pencil or crayon and have them color over the white on the page. The name "Bethlehem" will make an impression on the paper. You can then tell them that there are over 300 prophecies in the Bible about Jesus that have all come true. For more information on this one you can look up Micah 5:2.

## PRAYER

Lead the children in a prayer of commitment to be obedient and show justice, mercy and humility in our lives. If there are any children who have not yet responded to the gospel, give them opportunity to do so.

