



What Shall I Give?

(based on Micah 6:6–8)

God's people have always worshiped God, grateful for what God has given them. They praise, give thanks, pray, serve one another, and make offerings. For many, many years, God's people made offerings in the ways directed by God through the temple laws. They gave animals, grains, fruit, oil, and more to burn as offerings on altars of never-ending fires.

But sometimes the offerings became more important than worshiping God. People wondered, "How many goats or measures of grain are enough to please God? How many jars of oil or baskets of olives will get me closer to God?"

God realized that the people had lost their understanding of what was truly important, not showy ceremonies but a true relationship with God and with one another. So God gave a message to Micah, a prophet who spoke God's Word to the people.

Micah began by posing a question to the people, "What should I bring for an offering to God that shows how much I honor God?" Then he continued, perhaps with a twinkle in his eye, knowing that his words would shock the people, "Should I come with armloads of offerings? Should I even bring my youngest cows?"

The people must have thought, "What is Micah saying? That would be way more than would be required!"

Micah continued, "Will God be pleased with thousands of rams?"

"Who has thousands of rams? This is outrageous!" The people would have been stunned.

Micah had more to ask, "Would God like tens of thousands of rivers of oil?"

"Now that is just ridiculous!" the people thought.

Micah was exaggerating to help the people see that there could never be enough "stuff" to offer God—not armloads or thousands or even tens of thousands of offerings! Then he went one step further, and asked, "Should I give God my oldest child in order to forgive my wrongs?"

God's people must have been alarmed! What was Micah saying? Would their offerings never be enough for God? What should they do?

Micah said, "God has told you what is good; what God requires from you is just three things:

1. Do justice.
2. Love kindness.
3. Walk humbly with God."

The people knew that this meant to be fair and treat their neighbors right, to be loving and kind to all, and to spend time with God, for that is what God really wanted from them.

These things are still what is good and what God wants from us today!



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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.
- A *covenant* is an agreement with, or promise to, God.
- As you read and reflect on Micah 6:6–8, contemplate the ways in which we break covenant with God. What things has God done for us that we forget or ignore?
- Verse 8 of this passage is often thought of as a summary of the message of the prophets, and many regard it as a basic instruction on living faithfully with God and others. What would it mean if our communities heeded the prophet's call to “do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God”?



Responding to God's Grace

- Read, or ask a volunteer to read, Deuteronomy 6:4b–6 from the Bible. Ask: What word(s) stand out for you in this passage? Why? What did God ask of the people as their part of the covenant?
- Brainstorm some concrete ideas about what “doing justice” and “loving kindness” mean to you. Turn to Micah 6:8b. Rewrite the passage, using the ideas shared. (For example, what does God want us to do but to care about other people, help out with the mission project, and act out our faith in everything we do?)
- Imagine that one day you receive a mysterious-looking letter. You notice that in the top left-hand corner, where the address of the person who sent it usually is, are three letters: *G-O-D*. A bit nervously, you open the letter and read it. It says, “Dear friend, I have seen some things happening that really bother me, and I would like you to do something about it. I would like you to speak up about these things and spread my message to everyone you can. I know that I can count on you. Now here is my message . . .” Think for a minute about what message God would want you to deliver. What things do you think God is concerned about?

Celebrating in Gratitude

- Name some times when we don't follow God's way. How might we change those situations? Hand out paper. Fold the paper in half, like a card. On the front of the card, draw pictures of those situations when we aren't following God's way. On the inside of the card, draw a picture of how those situations could be changed.

- Pray this prayer each day this week:

*Thank you, God, for loving us and all people.
Help us to keep our covenant with you by
following your way. Amen.*