Lesson 7.19 - The Final Judgement: Justice and Peace

Topic: Becoming Peacemakers
Subtopic: Justice and Peace
1A. God the Creator and Father
3G. Integrity, Honesty and Justice

Materials Needed:
Blackboard and Chalk
Exercise book
Optional: Newspapers

Class: Standard VII (Grade 7)

Objectives: **Knowledge:** Students will know that justice leads to peace. **Attitude:** Students would want to be just and fair.

References: Psalms 89:14; Romans 12:9
                 Matthew 25:31-46
Memory Verse: Psalms 89:14

Teacher Activities	Student Activities
Introduction: *Optional Worship.* Describe and unjust judge (See Teacher's Notes) and ask how students would feel about a person like that.	**Introduction:** Discuss thoughts and feelings about an unjust judge.
Bible Story: Have student readers read the scripture passages and discuss them. This is the parable of the Final Judgement and shows God's righteousness and justice.	**Bible Story:** Readers read Psalms 89:14, Romans 12:9 and Matthew 25:31-45. Students discuss each passage.
Application: Divide into small groups and discuss the parable. After small group discussion, bring everyone back together. Make sure the students understand that a just God will hold us all accountable for our actions. God's justice demands that we treat others fairly and with compassion.	**Application:** *Small Group Discussion.* • Think of examples of how peace and justice are related. • How do nations do the things suggested in this parable? Can you think of examples where your nation has helped others? • How do individuals do these things? *Journal.* Think about what God's justice means for you. Write a reflection.
Evaluation: Do you try to be fair in all your dealings with students? Are you just when dealing with others who come from different backgrounds that you?	**Evaluation:** Do students understand the connection between justice and peace? Do they understand how a loving God *must* be a just God?

Extension Activities: *More examples.* Discuss other examples of God's justice and His mercy. (Saving Noah's family and flooding the earth; Saving Lot but destroying Sodom and Gomorrah; Punishing Israel by having them go into captivity for 70 years but not letting the nation be completely destroyed) *Memory Verse:* Pass out the cards or papers with the words of the verse printed—one word per card. Have the people with the cards line up in the correct order for the verse. *Newspapers.* Look for stories in the news that show just or injust. Discuss them as a class.

Notes for Teacher

This lesson discusses the importance of justice in peacemaking. If people are treated unjustly there will be conflict. God's love and kindness demands justice. Because God is just and because we want peace, we must treat all people fairly with justice and kindness.

Key Points: God's justice demands that we treat others with compassion and fairness.

Introduction: Describe an unjust judge and ask students how they feel about someone like that. Here is one possible description.

> *Once there was a judge who was not only dishonest, but he was unfair. When people from his own tribe (or race) appeared before him, he gave them favored treatment over those who were different from him. If the person was wealthy and willing to pay a bribe, he got better treatment than someone who was poor and could not afford a bribe. The judge decided cases based on what he wanted and what would help him instead of following the laws and trying to be fair. What do you think of a judge like this? What do you think should happen to this judge?*

Bible Story: Have Readers read the scripture passages and then discuss each one after it is read.
Psalms 89:14
- What does this verse tell us about God's character? (He is righteous and just, loving and faithful or trustworthy)
- If God ignored the actions of the unjust judge we just talked about earlier, would that be loving, righteous or just? (No)
- Justice requires that if someone hurts someone else or is unfair or unjust, then that unfair person should be punished. We would not think God was loving if He ignored those who use their power to hurt and abuse others or to treat people unfairly.

Romans 12:9
- If justice requires punishment, why does God tell us to forgive? (God is going to punish all injustice and wickedness but He is giving them time to repent)

Matthew 25:31-40
- What is the scene for this story? (Heaven, the final judgement)
- What is happening? (Jesus is judging the nations)
- Which nations are called righteous? (Those who fed the hungry, gave a drink to the thirsty, took in the stranger, clothed the naked, cared for the sick and visited those in prison)

Matthew 25:41-46
- What happens to thse nations? (They are sent away to a place "prepared for the Devil and his angels"–a place of eternal punishment)
- What had they done that was so bad? (They did not do the things the righteous nations did –feed the hungry, cloth the naked and so on.)

God judges both nations and individuals. God is just and fair. He will not be swayed by what we say or think. He will judge based on what we do. When the time of judgement comes, there will be no more opportunity for mercy or forgiveness.

Application: Divide into small groups and let them discuss the following questions. Then come back together.
- How does injustice lead to conflict? Think of examples of how peace and justice are related.
- How do nations do the things suggested in this parable? Can you think of examples where your nation has helped others?
- How do individuals do these things? Give examples.

Come back together as a group and ask:
- Why difference does it make if God is just or not?

Make sure students understand that a just God will hold us all accountable for our actions. God's justice demands that we treat others with compassion and fairness. It also makes it possible for us to forgive because we know God will punish sin unless we repent and let Jesus' blood be the punishment for our sin.

Journal. What does God's justice mean for you? Write a reflection.