



GOD'S PATIENCE, MERCY, AND GRACE

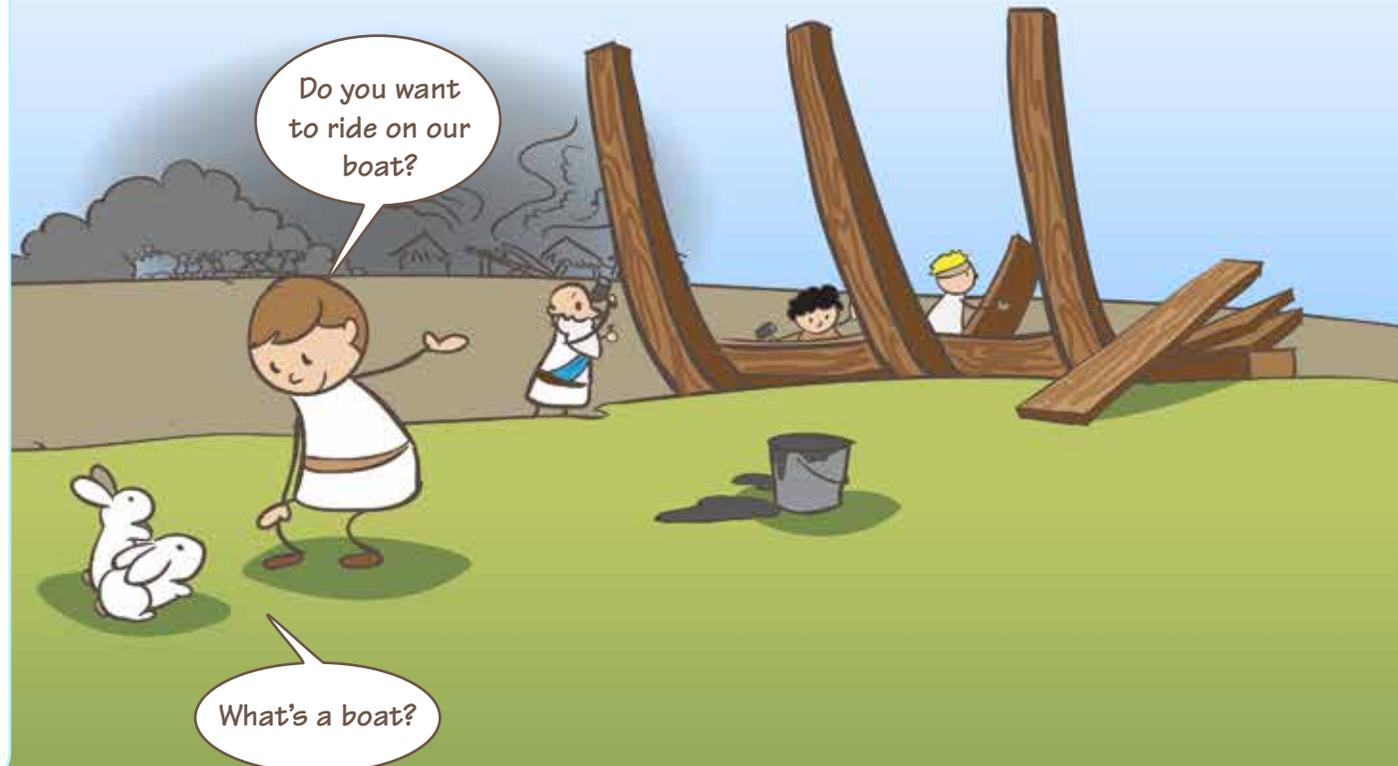
Besides being holy, righteous, and just, God is also patient, merciful, and gracious.

PATIENCE

The Hebrew word for God's patience is translated into English as longsuffering, slow to anger, patient in spirit, and forbearing. For example, when God saw that "the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually,"¹ and He was "sorry that He had made man on the earth,"² a period of 120 years passed while Noah built the Ark in their presence, before God brought the flood upon the earth.

1. Genesis 6:5 ESV.
2. Genesis 6:6 ESV.

YEARS 1 – 60 IN PREPERATION

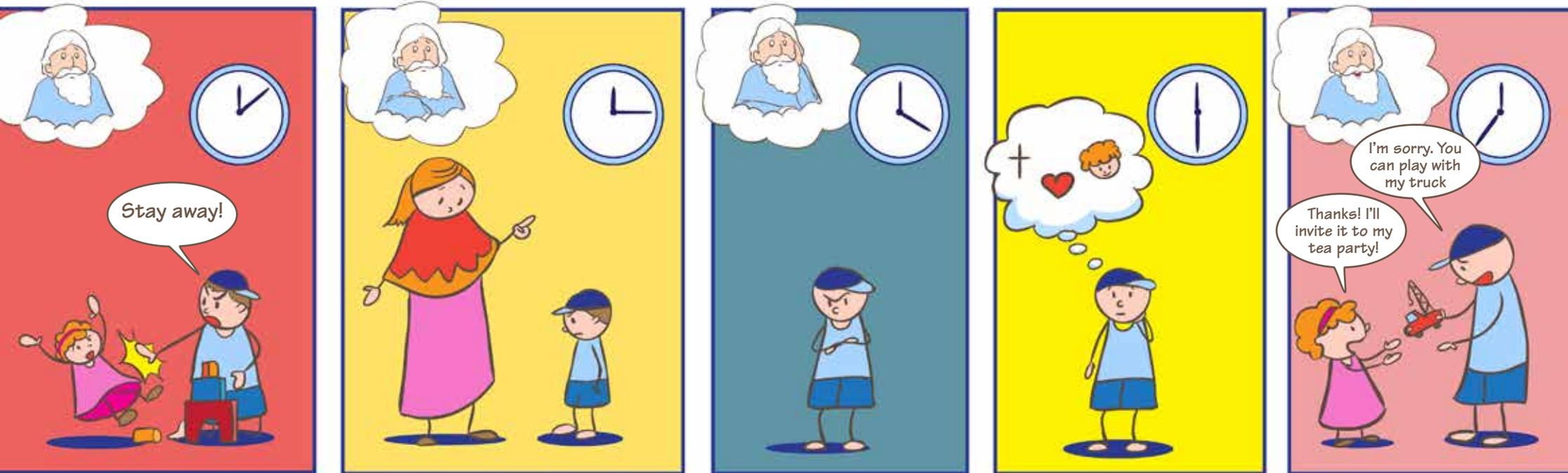


Noah was called a “preacher of righteousness,” so one can consider that he likely preached the judgment of the coming flood or that, at least, the Ark stood as a witness to what was coming. However, the people carried on in their wickedness, and God in time brought the judgment which was due them.

YEARS 61 – 120 IN PREPARATION



God, who is holy and righteous and judges sin, is also patient, and therefore doesn't pass immediate judgment. His patience shows His love as He gives people time to change and repent. His love, kindness, and patience help lead us to repentance.



The Lord is not slow to fulfill His promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance (2 Peter 3:9 ESV).

Do you presume on the riches of His kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance? (Romans 2:4 ESV).



JUDGEMENT

LOVE

PATIENCE

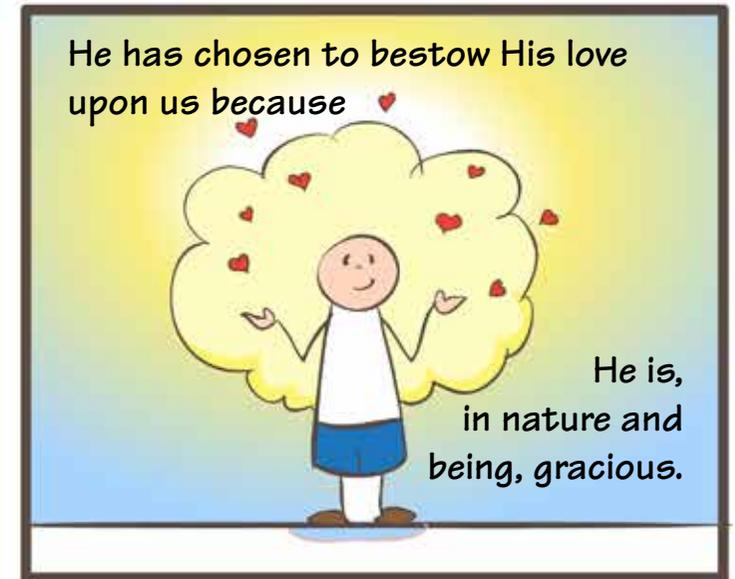
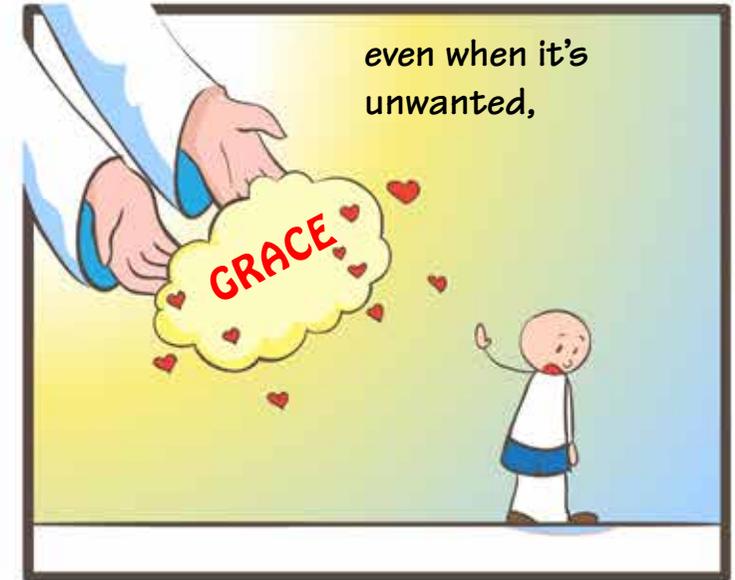
LONGSUFFERING

God loves the world, He loves humanity, and doesn't want anyone to perish, and so He patiently waits, giving people the opportunity to change, to repent. His patience doesn't contradict His righteousness or justice. Because He is longsuffering, He may grant a reprieve for a time, but a reprieve isn't necessarily a pardon for those who are unrepentant. Due to God's righteousness, judgment will eventually come.³

3. Nahum 1:3.

GRACE

God has chosen to freely give His favor and love to us, though we are unworthy of it, have no claim to it, and can in no way earn it. This unmerited favor is known as His grace.

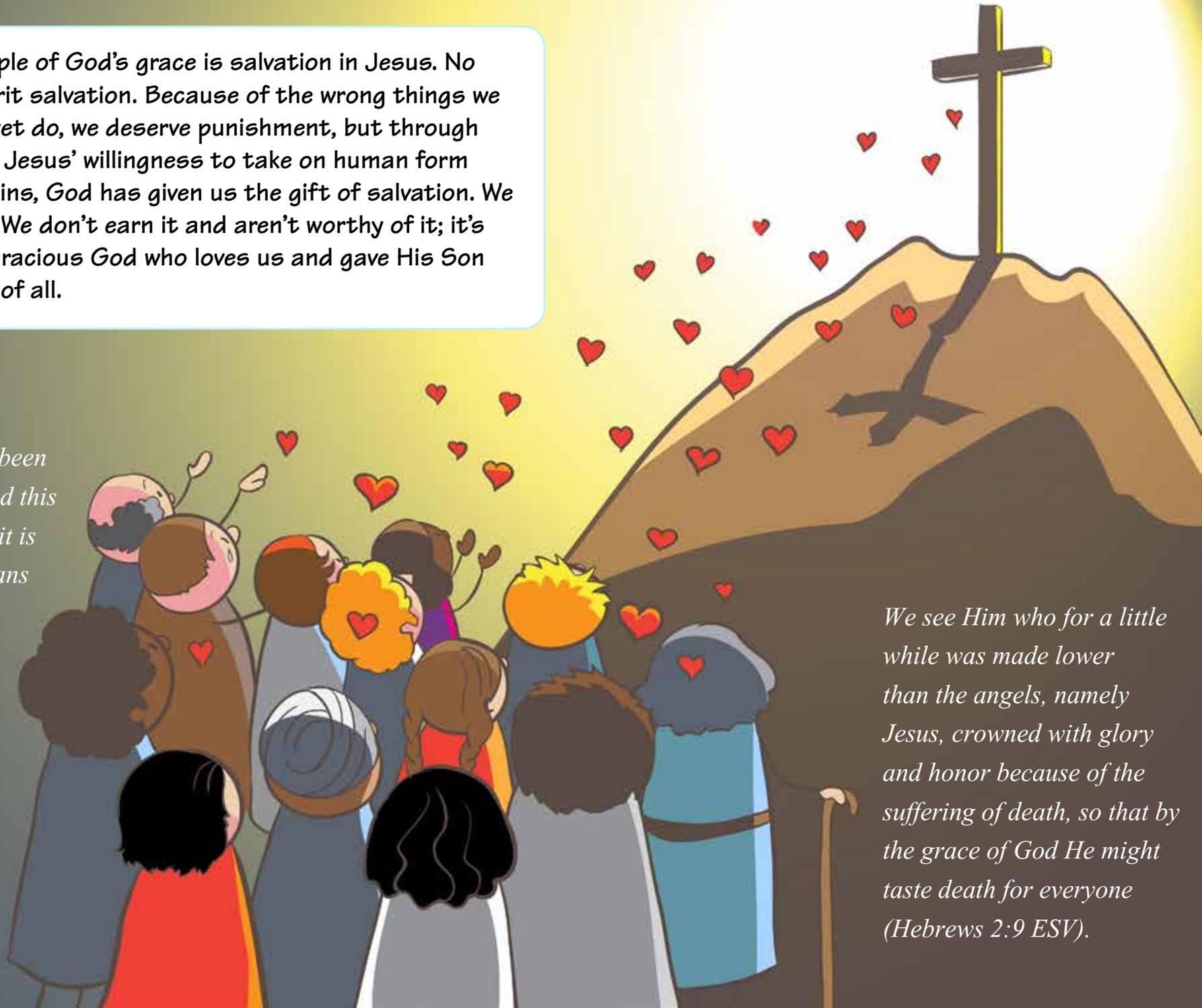


The Lord is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love (Psalm 145:8 ESV).

In Your great mercies You did not make an end of them or forsake them, for You are a gracious and merciful God (Nehemiah 9:31 ESV).

The foremost example of God's grace is salvation in Jesus. No one can earn or merit salvation. Because of the wrong things we have done and will yet do, we deserve punishment, but through God's love, through Jesus' willingness to take on human form and to die for our sins, God has given us the gift of salvation. We are saved by grace. We don't earn it and aren't worthy of it; it's given to us by the gracious God who loves us and gave His Son for the redemption of all.

For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God (Ephesians 2:8 ESV).



We see Him who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God He might taste death for everyone (Hebrews 2:9 ESV).

MERCY



God's mercy can be understood as God's love and goodness toward those in misery and distress, those in need

—even if they don't deserve it.



Because human beings are sinful and will bear the consequences of sin, we are in a pitiful state and in need of God's help.

LET ME HELP YOU.

God pities those in need.

He is compassionate and shows mercy,



both to those who love Him

and to those who don't love Him.

You, Lord, are good, and ready to forgive, and abundant in mercy to all those who call upon You (Psalm 86:5 NKJV).

Know that the Lord your God, He is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and mercy for a thousand generations with those who love Him and keep His commandments (Deuteronomy 7:9 NKJV).

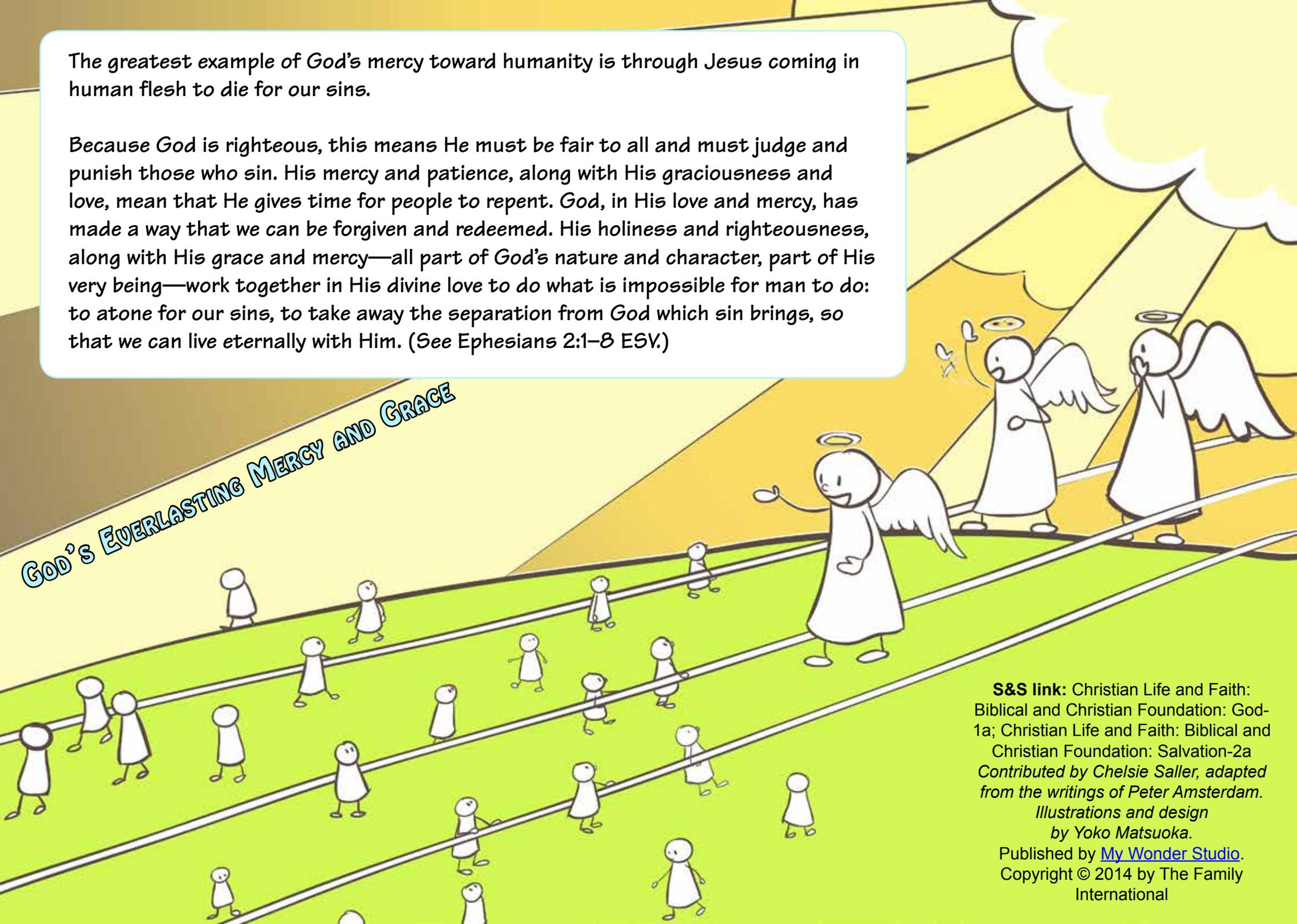
The Lord is good to all, and His mercy is over all that He has made (Psalm 145:9 ESV).

Love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return, and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, for He is kind to the ungrateful and the evil. Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful (Luke 6:35–36 ESV).

The greatest example of God's mercy toward humanity is through Jesus coming in human flesh to die for our sins.

Because God is righteous, this means He must be fair to all and must judge and punish those who sin. His mercy and patience, along with His graciousness and love, mean that He gives time for people to repent. God, in His love and mercy, has made a way that we can be forgiven and redeemed. His holiness and righteousness, along with His grace and mercy—all part of God's nature and character, part of His very being—work together in His divine love to do what is impossible for man to do: to atone for our sins, to take away the separation from God which sin brings, so that we can live eternally with Him. (See Ephesians 2:1–8 ESV.)

GOD'S EVERLASTING MERCY AND GRACE



S&S link: Christian Life and Faith: Biblical and Christian Foundation: God-1a; Christian Life and Faith: Biblical and Christian Foundation: Salvation-2a
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