



Which of these three do you think was a neighbour to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?"
The expert in the law replied,
“THE ONE WHO HAD MERCY ON HIM.” Jesus told him, **“GO AND DO LIKEWISE.”**

–LUKE 10:36, 37



CHILDREN'S STORY
& CHILDREN'S RESOURCES

JUNE 18 WORLD REFUGEE SABBATH ADRA.org/WorldRefugeeSabbath

The New Student

Kyrah looked toward the door of the classroom as it opened, and a boy about her age walked through the door. Beside him was a woman who held his hand. Kyrah's teacher, Mrs. Sojka, looked toward the door with a smile. She was in the middle of a math lesson, but didn't seem bothered to stop and give attention to the new guests in her room. Mrs. Sojka walked over to her guests and exchanged a few words with the woman, then gently placed her hand on the boy, giving him a warm smile.

She held his hand and led him to the front of the class. "Third grade, I would like to introduce you to your new classmate, Symon." Kyrah recognized the look of fear and uncertainty on Symon's face. She had that same look on her face a month ago when she joined the class. It had taken her a while to make a friend at her new school, but some of her classmates finally warmed up to her, and she could even say she had a friend or two. She was determined to be Symon's friend so he didn't have a similar experience. As Symon took his seat and Mrs. Sojka returned to teaching her math lesson, Kyrah thought about welcoming Symon.

During their first break for a snack, Kyrah walked over to Symon and introduced herself. "Hi, my name is Kyrah. May I sit beside you?" She pointed to the empty chair beside him.

Symon nodded.

"You're Symon, right?"

He nodded again.

"Are you new to the area?" Kyrah sat down in the empty chair.

Symon nodded.

"It's okay to talk, Symon. I'm new to the area too. My family moved here five weeks ago. My dad has a job here now. Did you move because your dad got a job in the area, too?"

Symon shook his head.

"Oh, then why did you move?"

Symon was silent.

Kyrah began eating the pierogi from yesterday's dinner that her mom had packed for her to take to school. Symon looked around at the other students, many of whom were looking curiously at him



Children's Story, continued

as they ate. Kyrrah stared at him waiting for an answer to her question.

"We had to leave." Symon spoke, finally. "It wasn't safe for my family anymore."

When Symon looked back at Kyrrah, he noticed another girl standing beside her.

"This is Olena," Kyrrah introduced her friend, who had joined them just as Symon shared his answer.

"Are you a refugee?" Kyrrah asked Symon. She remembered that just a couple weeks ago in Sabbath School, her teacher had talked to the children in her class about people who had to leave their home because of persecution, violence, or war. She had even mentioned that there may be some of these people moving to their country. Kyrrah learned that even children were among these groups of people forced to leave their home and country.

"What's a refugee?" Olena looked at Kyrrah.

"It's someone who has to leave their country because of all the bad things that are happening," Kyrrah chimed in.

They both stared at Symon, waiting for him to answer Kyrrah's question.

"I guess," he said, seeming almost like he was going to cry.

"I'm sorry," Kyrrah said. After church on the day that Kyrrah had learned about refugees, she had spoken to her parents about what she learned in Sabbath School. Her mom told her that many refugees leave home in a hurry, and are not able to take much with them, except for a few items that they need. Kyrrah thought about how fortunate she was that when her family moved, they were able to take everything they owned. Well, except the fir tree she had planted in her backyard when she was younger with the help of her grandmother. She wondered what Symon and his family had been able to take with them in their move.

When Kyrrah went home that afternoon after school, she told her parents about Symon. Kyrrah's parents often reminded her that the meaning of her name was friendly. Ever since she learned that, Kyrrah made it her goal to be kind and friendly to everyone she met. She immediately started thinking about how she could help Symon to feel more at home in a new place.



Children's Story, continued

Have you ever moved to a new place? A new school? A new country? How did you feel? It can be challenging to adjust to moving, where we often have to leave friends and family behind. Sometimes we may even move to a place with a culture that is different from the one we are familiar with, and we have to adapt to a new way of living, new foods, or a new language. When you moved, was there someone who helped you or befriended you so that you felt welcome? How can you befriend or help someone new to your school or church so that they feel welcome?

Romans 15:7 (ESV) tells us, "Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God." When we show others kindness, especially those going through challenging situations, we are following the command that Christ has given us, to welcome one another for God's glory. Let us pray for Jesus to show us how we can be welcoming to those who are far away from home, and experiencing hard times both here in our country and around the world.

Sabbath School Resources to Help Children Learn More About Refugees

Videos

What is it Like to Have no Home? (Kids, refugees, questions)

Lubna and Pebble (read by Wendy Meddour)

Syrian Creative Havens (Nizar Ali Badr)

Sabbath School Teachers' Resources & Storytime Books for Parents

Counting Kindness: Ten Ways to Welcome Refugee Children
by Hollis Kurman

Lubna and Pebble
by Wendy Meddour

Stepping Stones: A Refugee Family's Journey
by Margriet Ruurs

