

Chapter 12

The Conscience of Israel

Indeed the Lord God does nothing without revealing his plan to his servants, the prophets.

Amos 3:7

For the Parents:

In chapter 12 your child learned to:

- Identify the messages of selected prophets
- Choose actions that promote peace and justice
- Interpret images of peace proclaimed by the prophets

The foremost exercise of conscience that the prophetic writings represent is the declaration that incalculable evil arose from the worship of strange gods by the people of the covenant. One effect of the preaching of the prophets was the Israel eventually began to believe not only that other gods were inferior to Yahweh but that other gods did not even exist. The God of Israel began to be perceived as God of all, and the light which will “break forth” from God’s People began to be understood as a source of hope for the whole world to see.

In the writings of the prophets we see for the first time that gestures of piety, such as fasting and offering sacrifice, are disqualified as genuine religious expressions if they are not accompanied by acts of justice and mercy. We also see God so identified with the cause of the poor that concrete acts of love for neighbor become expressions of devotions to God.

With Your Child:

1. Talk with family members about how you can begin to make things right for those who are rejected, ignored, or treated badly either in school, at home, or in your neighborhood.
2. Read about Saint Joan of Arc on the Review and Explore page.