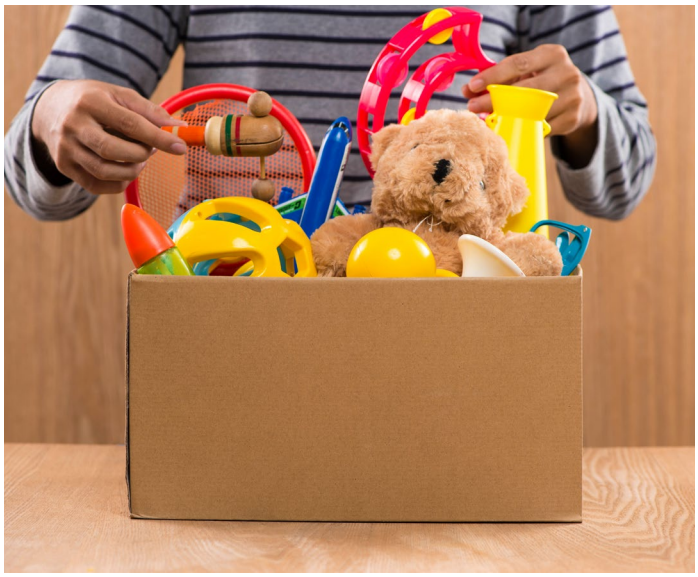
WEEK 52 • DECEMBER 30, 2023

Unnamed Country: No Time for Toys

Matthew 22:39—"And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' "

Rishon and his parents were moving from the big city to a small village on a mountainside to tell people about Jesus. Rishon had many toys, and his parents talked to him about giving some of them away. "You will be busy in our new home helping us tell others about Jesus," his father said. "You won't have much time to play."

Rishon liked the idea of giving his toys to other children, and the children were excited to receive them. Rishon was happy to see their joy; it felt good doing something kind for others.



Soon Rishon's family were settled in their new home. Rishon really was busy in his new home. His parents taught him his school lessons at home. When Rishon wasn't studying, he enjoyed worked in the family garden. As his hands pulled weeds, he memorized Bible verses.

The village children became Rishon's friends. They saw that he was a kind and gentle boy. They liked to visit Rishon in his house. Rishon played church with the children and introduced the children to Jesus. He told them about people who lived in Bible times like Adam and Eve, Noah and the ark, David and Goliath, and Daniel in the lions' den. He told them that Jesus died on the cross so everyone who believes in Him can live with Jesus forever. He showed them how to pray to Jesus. "Dear God," he said. "Thank you for being our very best Friend. Please give us a heart of love for You and for others. In Jesus' name, Amen."

The children told their parents the Bible stories that Rishon had taught them. Some of the parents asked Rishon's parents to teach them about Jesus.

Rishon doesn't miss the toys he gave away. He's learned that if God asks us to give up something, we can know that "whatever we are asked to surrender is only that which we are better off without" (Ellen G. White, Counsels on Stewardship, p. 300). He's also too busy telling his friends about Jesus.

We too can tell our neighbors about Jesus. When we put God first, people around us will see the difference in our life. And as we worship God with our tithes and Promise offerings, our hearts will disconnect from things of the world and connect with God and His eternal plan for us.