

**GRASPING FOR MUCH-NEEDED GRACE:
20 Days of Nonpartisan Prayer in a Polarized Political Season
Vermont Conference (UCC) Prayer Initiative
Fall 2020**

Day 14 (Wednesday, October 28) “And No One Shall Make Them Afraid”

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Scripture Focus ... *but they shall all sit under their own vines and under their own fig trees, and no one shall make them afraid; Micah 4:4, NRSV*

Reflection

I should probably be embarrassed to admit this, since it seems to be fairly widely known, but until I saw the musical *Hamilton*, I did not know that George Washington was fond of this verse from the book of the prophet Micah. It was his go-to Scripture!

Thanks to Disney+, I saw *Hamilton* (on my laptop!) in July. I couldn't wait to see and hear for myself if all the accolades were true. Spoiler alert: they were! I laughed. I cried. I learned a lot!

I was surprised to hear words from Micah in one of the songs. In “One Last Time”, Washington sings his farewell to the nation as he steps down from the presidency. The song quotes verse 4, then Washington adds his desire to enjoy time under his own vine and fig tree. But it is more than a vision of retirement relaxation at Washington's beloved Mount Vernon. It is a fervent hope that the nation that he and others shaped, the nation that he and others dearly loved, would know prosperity and peace.

After watching *Hamilton* I discovered that Washington often invoked the image of vines and fig trees. There are nearly 50 examples in his correspondence. That vision of security and stability sustained him and he used it as an encouragement to others.

The prophet Micah held up God's promise of safety and peace to a people with little experience of it. It is, of course, a peace that would come only after swords were fashioned into ploughshares (verse 3). In the early days of our nation, George Washington was inspired by that promise. As we cast our ballots, may we, too, cling to the promise. May we pray for the day when violence and oppression are a distant memory, a day when all will live in safety, a day when no one shall be afraid.

Prayer

Holy One, we long to rest in your promise and live in your peace. Give us courage to help create a society in which no one shall be afraid. Amen.

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