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Running With God

Key References: 1 Kings 19:15-18; 2 Kings 2:1, 11; Matthew 17:1-5; *Prophets and Kings,* chap. 17, pp. 217-228; *The Bible Story* (1994), vol. 5, pp. 55-60; Our Beliefs, nos. 11, 17, 9



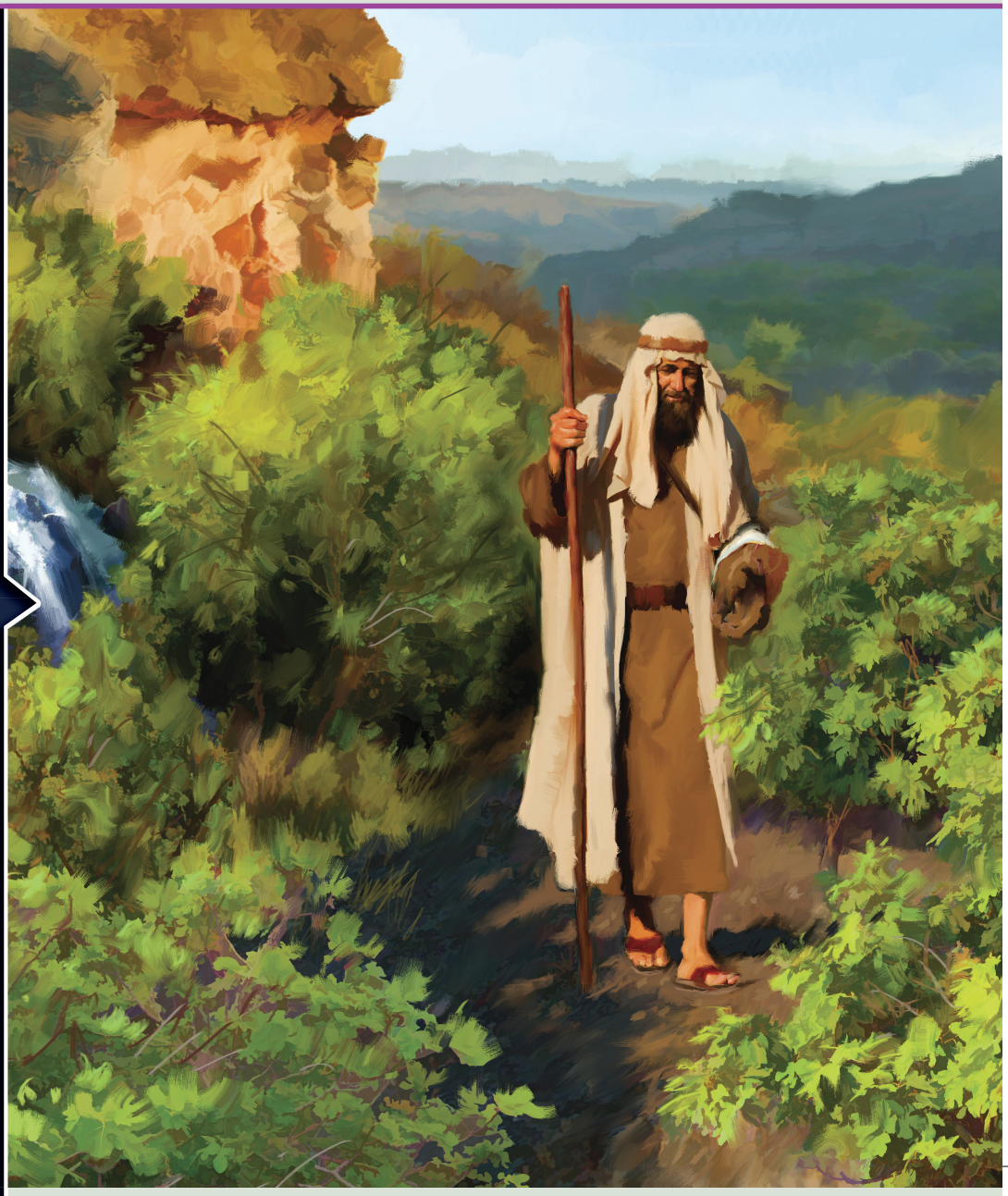












powertext

"The Lord makes firm the steps of the one who delights in him; though he may stumble, he will not fall, for the Lord upholds him with his hand" (Psalm 37:23, 24).

Sabbath

DO Do this week's activity on page 46.

powerpoint

God forgives our failures and helps us join Him in His work.

Have you ever felt that you had messed up so badly that things would never be the same again? Did you wonder if there was any hope for the future? Elijah ran from God, asked to die, but ended up going to heaven in special transportation sent just for him.

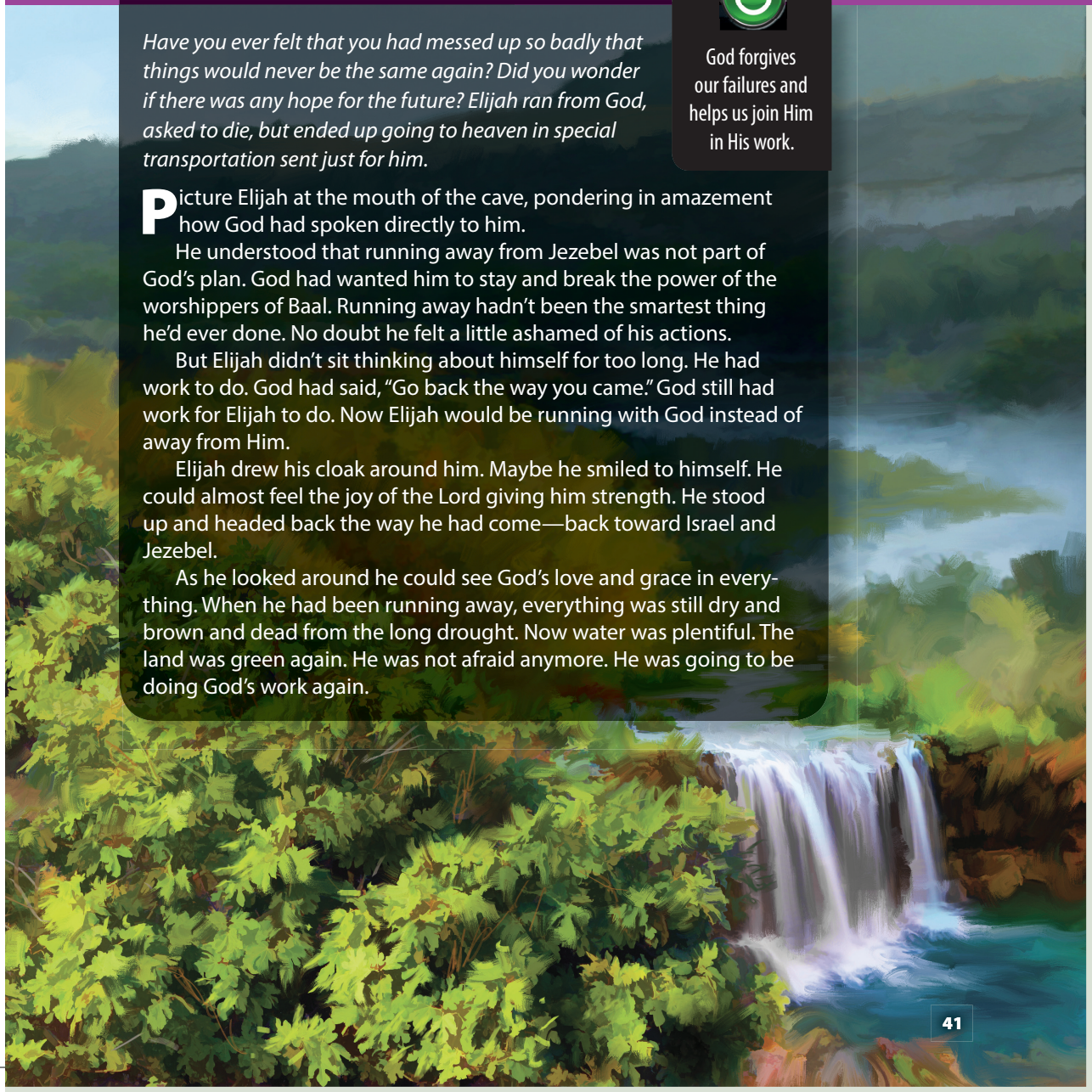
Picture Elijah at the mouth of the cave, pondering in amazement how God had spoken directly to him.

He understood that running away from Jezebel was not part of God's plan. God had wanted him to stay and break the power of the worshippers of Baal. Running away hadn't been the smartest thing he'd ever done. No doubt he felt a little ashamed of his actions.

But Elijah didn't sit thinking about himself for too long. He had work to do. God had said, "Go back the way you came." God still had work for Elijah to do. Now Elijah would be running with God instead of away from Him.

Elijah drew his cloak around him. Maybe he smiled to himself. He could almost feel the joy of the Lord giving him strength. He stood up and headed back the way he had come—back toward Israel and Jezebel.

As he looked around he could see God's love and grace in everything. When he had been running away, everything was still dry and brown and dead from the long drought. Now water was plentiful. The land was green again. He was not afraid anymore. He was going to be doing God's work again.



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Sunday

READ Read Psalm 37:23, 24 and this week's story, "Running With God."

MAKE Draw a pair of running shoes and write on them your power text, Psalm 37:23, 24.

LEARN Begin to learn the power text.

PRAY Pray that you will run with God, not away from Him.

Monday

READ Read 1 Kings 19:15-18.

THINK Elijah felt alone, but God had 7,000 faithful followers in Israel.

CONTACT Contact someone else you know who is a faithful follower of God. Try to find a way to encourage them in their walk with God.

PRAY Pray that God will be with you and with all your friends who are trying to trust and serve God.

Tuesday

READ Read 2 Kings 2:1, 11.

DISCOVER What do we know about how we will go to heaven when Jesus comes again? Find out in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18.

WRITE In your Bible study journal, write what you think are the similarities and the differences between your upcoming trip to heaven and Elijah's.

PRAY Ask God to prepare you to be among those who will be taken up into heaven without seeing death.

Elijah went back to work for God. He traveled around Israel teaching those he met about the true God. He shared his story of meeting God in the cave on Mount Horeb. He told about God's forgiveness, patience, and grace. He told about how God had given Him a second chance.

One of Elijah's special jobs was to reestablish three schools. They were called the schools of the prophets. Long before, the prophet Samuel had set them up to train people to understand and teach about God.

God also told Elijah to train Elisha to be a prophet after him. Together the two men continued to work for God, sharing His goodness with everyone they met.

Then God told Elijah that his work on earth was just about over and that He would be sending a chariot for him. Elijah, who had once run from God and the work God had given him, would travel with Him right up into heaven—to live with Him forever. One day while Elijah and Elisha were walking together,





the chariot of fire came and took Elijah to heaven.

But that was not the last we hear about Elijah and his work for God. Elijah went to heaven to be a representative of all the people who will be living on the earth when Jesus returns. Just like Elijah, those people—maybe you and me—will be changed and taken up to heaven without having to die. As the representative of those

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Wednesday

READ Read Matthew 17:1-5.

THINK What would you have asked Elijah if you were Peter, or James, or John?

SHARE Tell someone about the good news that this story reveals—there will be people who, like Elijah, will not die, but will be alive at Jesus' second coming.

PRAY Thank God for Elijah's example of faithfulness.

Thursday

READ Read Jonah 1 and 2.

THINK In what ways is Jonah's story similar and different from Elijah's?

WRITE In your Bible study journal, divide a page into two columns. In one column, write the similarities between the two stories, and in the other, the differences.

PRAY Thank God for His forgiveness and His grace.

Friday

READ Read Matthew 26:55, 56 with your family.

THINK How did the disciples act toward Jesus? How did they act similarly to the way Elijah and Jonah acted? How do people today run away from God?

ASK Ask an adult if they know a story of someone who ran from God, but later turned and ran with Him. Ask them to tell you the story.

SAY Repeat the power text by memory.

PRAY Praise God for helping those who stumble to find their way back to Him.

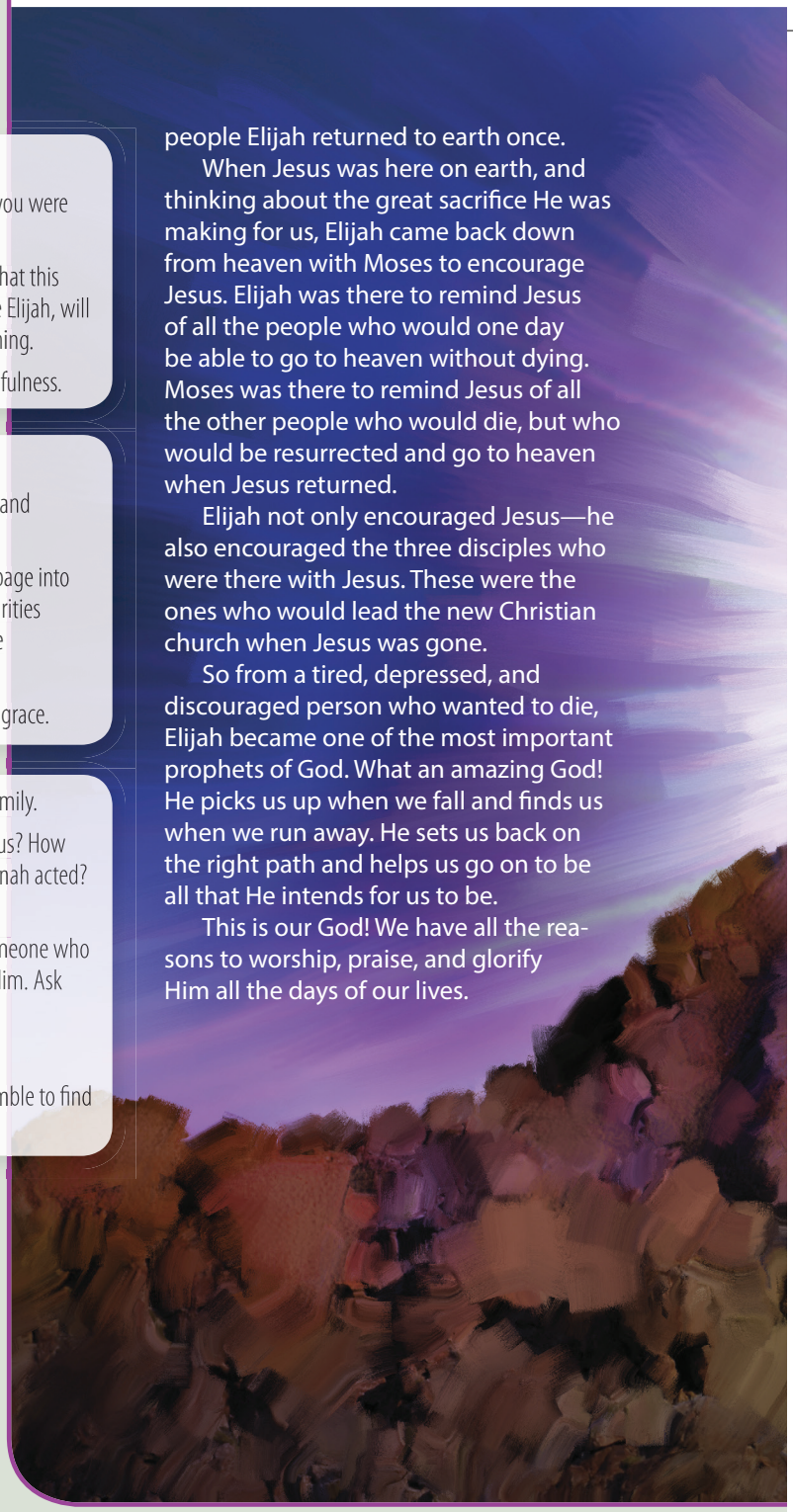
people Elijah returned to earth once.

When Jesus was here on earth, and thinking about the great sacrifice He was making for us, Elijah came back down from heaven with Moses to encourage Jesus. Elijah was there to remind Jesus of all the people who would one day be able to go to heaven without dying. Moses was there to remind Jesus of all the other people who would die, but who would be resurrected and go to heaven when Jesus returned.

Elijah not only encouraged Jesus—he also encouraged the three disciples who were there with Jesus. These were the ones who would lead the new Christian church when Jesus was gone.

So from a tired, depressed, and discouraged person who wanted to die, Elijah became one of the most important prophets of God. What an amazing God! He picks us up when we fall and finds us when we run away. He sets us back on the right path and helps us go on to be all that He intends for us to be.

This is our God! We have all the reasons to worship, praise, and glorify Him all the days of our lives.





PUZZLE

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PROTECTED FROM ABOVE

Instructions: Start at the word "Because" and read off the Bible verse by traveling across (forward or backward) or vertically (up or down). Not every word is used; do not use a word twice. Finish at the word "name."

says	me,'	"'Because	it	is
the	loves	he	him,	for
Lord,	I	will	protect	he
'I	him;	love	my	acknowledges
will	rescue	me,"	*name.*'"	you."