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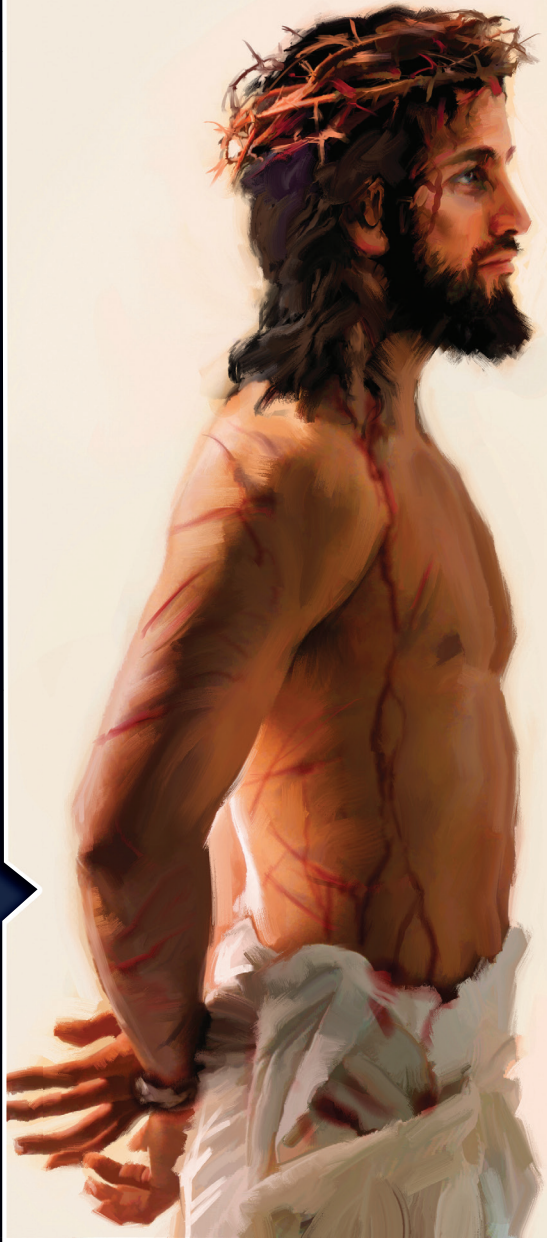
Simon's Unexpected Cross

Key References: Luke 23:26; *The Desire of Ages,* chap. 78, pp. 741, 742; *The Bible Story* (1994), vol. 9, pp. 101-104; Our Beliefs nos. 14, 11, 17







Sabbath

DO Do the activity on page 18.

powertext

"Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ" (Galatians 6:2).

powerpoint

We show our love for Jesus when we support others in our community.

Have you ever been persuaded to do something that you think will be awful and then afterward you were really glad that you did it? That was just the situation Simon found himself in.

With a look of surprise and shock, Barabbas makes his way through the crowds. He has been released. But how could the crowd choose him over Jesus? One look at Jesus' face tells anyone that He is innocent.

Jesus is exhausted. It has been more than 12 hours since He ate the Passover supper with His disciples. From His arrest in Gethsemane to this, His last trial, no one has given Him anything to drink. Twice He has been beaten with a leather whip, the pieces of bone and metal tearing into His flesh. Each time enough lashes struck Jesus' body to injure Him but not kill Him. He would live long enough to be nailed to a cross.

"Crucify Him," the crowd roars. The words hit Pilate's ear. "Crucify Him."

Pilate calls for a bowl and a pitcher of water. With the mob



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Sunday

READ Read Isaiah 53:1-5 and this week's lesson, "Simon's Unexpected Cross."

WRITE Cut out a cross from paper and write on it the power text, Galatians 6:2. Begin to memorize it.

PRAY Ask God to help you carry someone's burden.

Monday

READ Read Luke 23:26.

THINK When were you asked to do something tough for someone who needed help? What did you learn?

WRITE Write your experience in the Bible study journal.*

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Ask God to show you those who need your help.

Tuesday

READ Read Matthew 27:32.

THINK Envision an imaginary meeting with Simon after Jesus' death. How do you think his feelings would have changed when he heard Jesus was alive again?

SHARE Do something to help carry someone's burden (i.e., help a classmate who is struggling in school, do the household chores cheerfully, give a word of encouragement).

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Pray for sympathy and understanding for those needing help in your community.

*NOTE: Your Bible study journal is found at the back of your Bible study guide. If you need additional space, use a notebook or open a file on your computer. Writing out your thoughts and ideas when you study the Bible helps you gain a deeper understanding of God's Word.

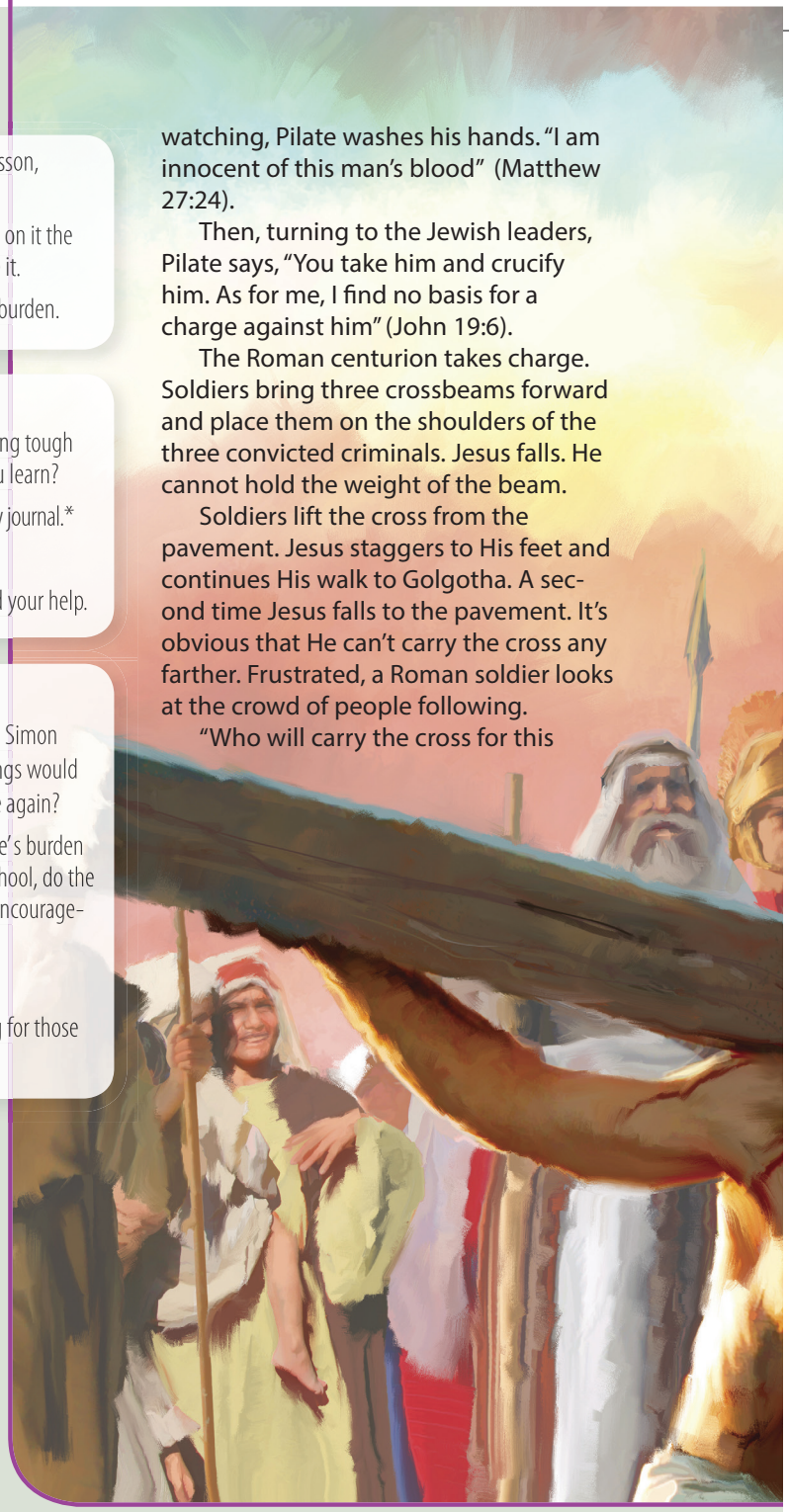
watching, Pilate washes his hands. "I am innocent of this man's blood" (Matthew 27:24).

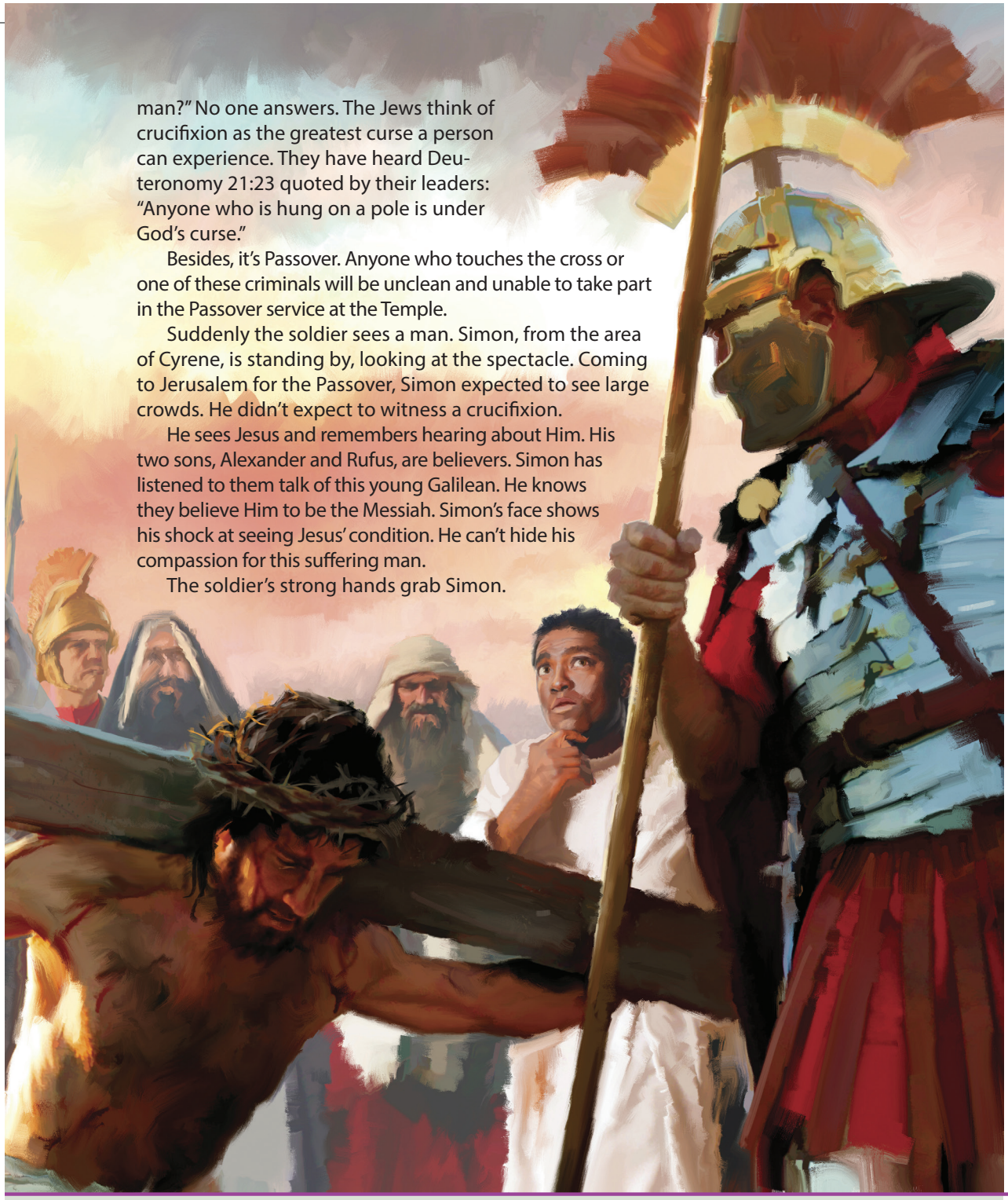
Then, turning to the Jewish leaders, Pilate says, "You take him and crucify him. As for me, I find no basis for a charge against him" (John 19:6).

The Roman centurion takes charge. Soldiers bring three crossbeams forward and place them on the shoulders of the three convicted criminals. Jesus falls. He cannot hold the weight of the beam.

Soldiers lift the cross from the pavement. Jesus staggers to His feet and continues His walk to Golgotha. A second time Jesus falls to the pavement. It's obvious that He can't carry the cross any farther. Frustrated, a Roman soldier looks at the crowd of people following.

"Who will carry the cross for this





man?" No one answers. The Jews think of crucifixion as the greatest curse a person can experience. They have heard Deuteronomy 21:23 quoted by their leaders: "Anyone who is hung on a pole is under God's curse."

Besides, it's Passover. Anyone who touches the cross or one of these criminals will be unclean and unable to take part in the Passover service at the Temple.

Suddenly the soldier sees a man. Simon, from the area of Cyrene, is standing by, looking at the spectacle. Coming to Jerusalem for the Passover, Simon expected to see large crowds. He didn't expect to witness a crucifixion.

He sees Jesus and remembers hearing about Him. His two sons, Alexander and Rufus, are believers. Simon has listened to them talk of this young Galilean. He knows they believe Him to be the Messiah. Simon's face shows his shock at seeing Jesus' condition. He can't hide his compassion for this suffering man.

The soldier's strong hands grab Simon.

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Wednesday

READ Read Mark 15:21.

EXPERIENCE Set this week's power text to music or rhyme. Plan to teach it to your family on Friday evening.

THINK Why couldn't Simon go to the Passover after carrying Jesus' cross? See Deuteronomy 21:22, 23 and Galatians 3:13.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Pray for a caring heart toward the unlovable.

Thursday

READ Read Acts 11:20 and 13:1.

REFLECT What kind of people were the early Christians? How could you have the same burden for souls?

CARE Reach out to someone who is struggling with spiritual burdens. Pray with that person.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Pray for those who are worried and troubled.

Friday

READ Read Luke 23:26 with your family.

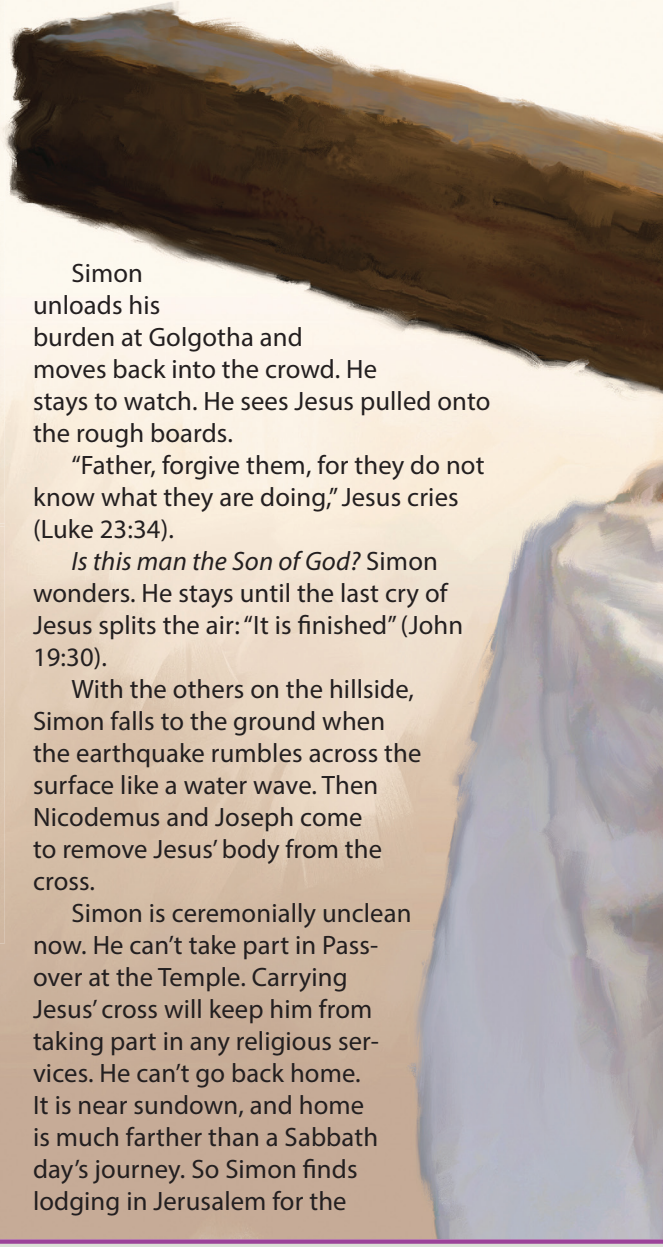
TEACH Teach them the song or rhyme you made up on Wednesday.

THINK Using a concordance, look up the Bible passages that mention carrying other people's burdens or helping them. What can you learn from these passages about nurturing positive relationships with others?

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Pray that you will be able to support one another better.

"Here," he says, shoving Simon forward. "Carry the beam." The soldiers lift the beam onto Simon's shoulders. He begins walking. Jesus staggers to His feet and follows.



Simon unloads his burden at Golgotha and moves back into the crowd. He stays to watch. He sees Jesus pulled onto the rough boards.

"Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing," Jesus cries (Luke 23:34).

Is this man the Son of God? Simon wonders. He stays until the last cry of Jesus splits the air: "It is finished" (John 19:30).

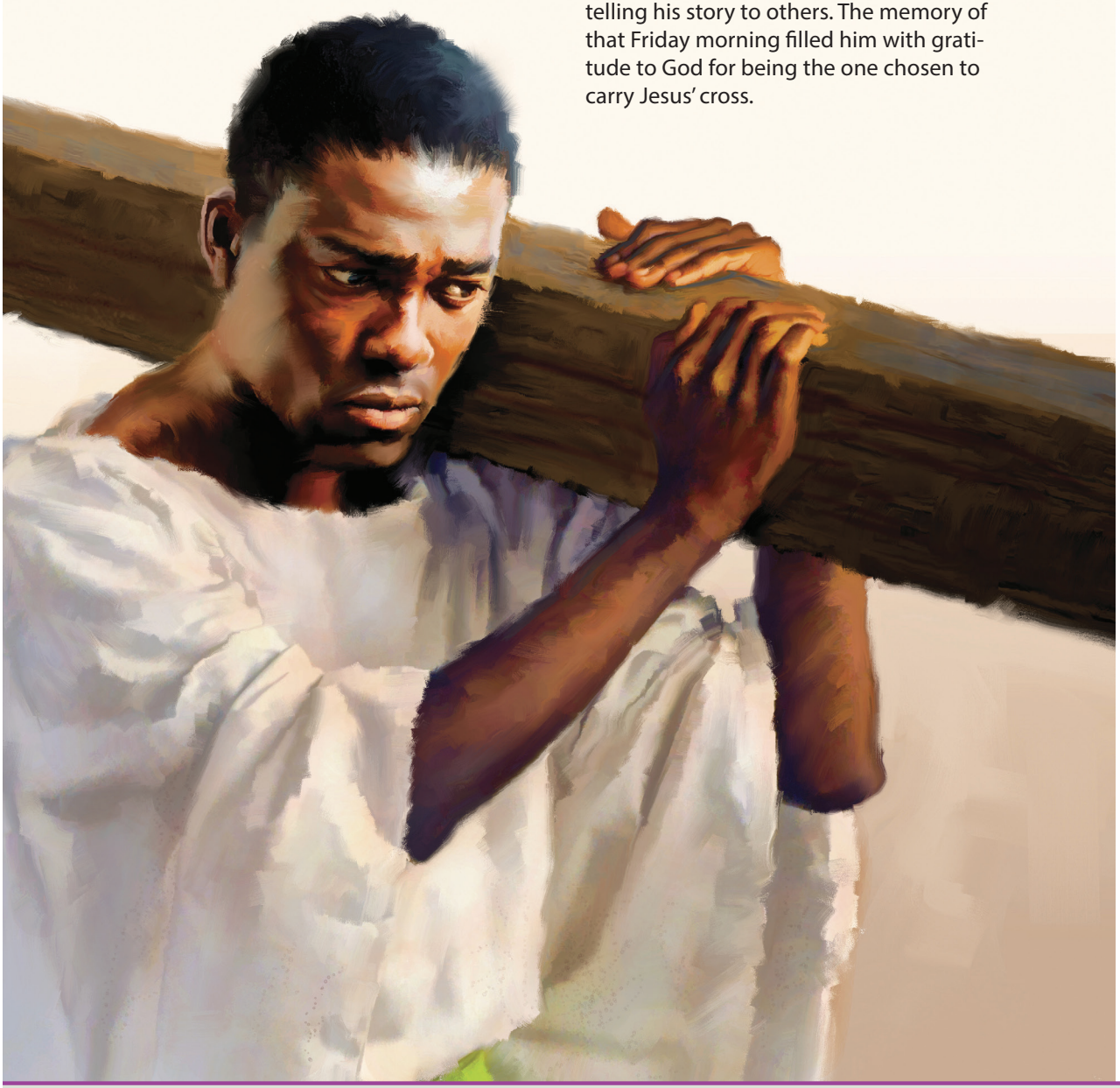
With the others on the hillside, Simon falls to the ground when the earthquake rumbles across the surface like a water wave. Then Nicodemus and Joseph come to remove Jesus' body from the cross.

Simon is ceremonially unclean now. He can't take part in Passover at the Temple. Carrying Jesus' cross will keep him from taking part in any religious services. He can't go back home. It is near sundown, and home is much farther than a Sabbath day's journey. So Simon finds lodging in Jerusalem for the

night. He listens as people talk about the events of this day.

It seems that everyone is talking about Jesus. Simon wonders how his sons will react to this sad news.

Little did Simon know that after Jesus' resurrection, when he would study the Scriptures concerning the Messiah, he would become a believer like his sons. Then Simon would never get tired of telling his story to others. The memory of that Friday morning filled him with gratitude to God for being the one chosen to carry Jesus' cross.

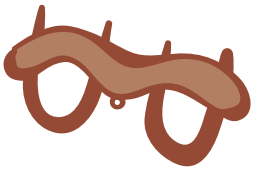


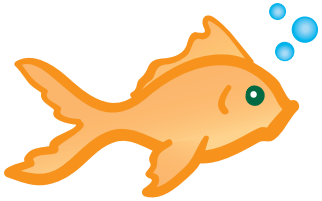
PUZZLE
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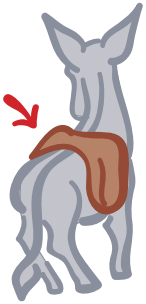
COME, FOLLOW ME

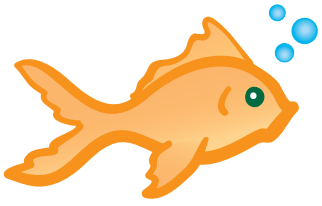
Instructions: Find the next Bible verse after this one by reading the rebus phonetically.

"Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls."

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