10

Adventure and Challenge

Key References: Numbers 13:31-33; 14; *Patriarchs and Prophets*, chap. 34, pp. 389-394; *The Bible Story* (1994), vol. 3, pp. 26-31; Our Beliefs nos. 17, 22, 7



Sabbath

DO Do the activity on page 75.

powertext

"Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love" (Ephesians 4:2).

power point

Serving others for God can be an adventure and a challenge.

When have you had to deal with difficult people? You want to help them, but they don't seem to want to help themselves. For any variety of reasons you may face challenges. Let's see how Joshua, Caleb, and Moses faced the challenges of leading a stubborn, unfaithful nation.

Palti stood in front of Joshua, pointed his finger in Joshua's face, and shouted, "We can't attack the Canaanites; they are stronger than we are. They're giants! Compared to them, we look like grasshoppers."

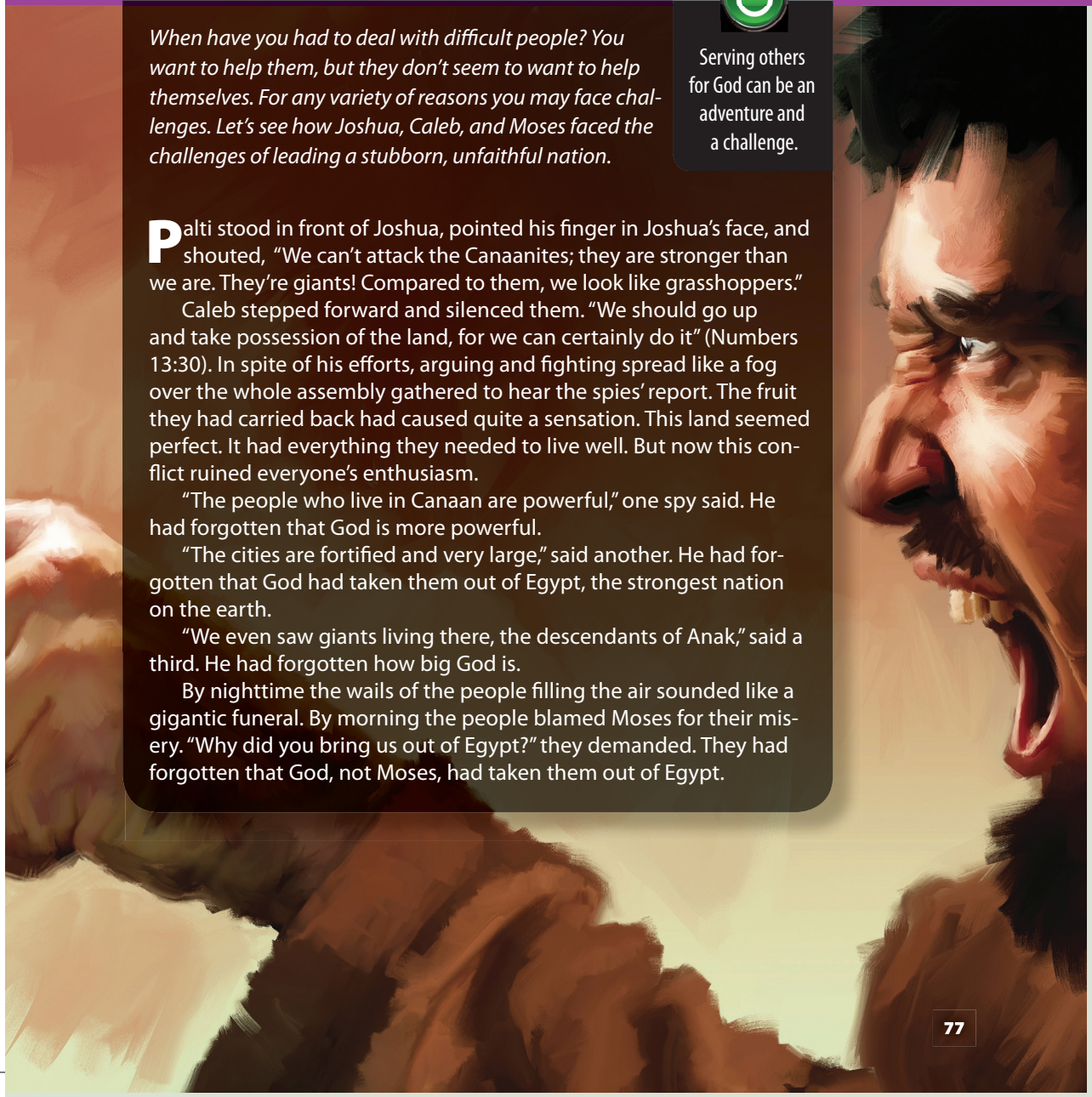
Caleb stepped forward and silenced them. "We should go up and take possession of the land, for we can certainly do it" (Numbers 13:30). In spite of his efforts, arguing and fighting spread like a fog over the whole assembly gathered to hear the spies' report. The fruit they had carried back had caused quite a sensation. This land seemed perfect. It had everything they needed to live well. But now this conflict ruined everyone's enthusiasm.

"The people who live in Canaan are powerful," one spy said. He had forgotten that God is more powerful.

"The cities are fortified and very large," said another. He had forgotten that God had taken them out of Egypt, the strongest nation on the earth.

"We even saw giants living there, the descendants of Anak," said a third. He had forgotten how big God is.

By nighttime the wails of the people filling the air sounded like a gigantic funeral. By morning the people blamed Moses for their misery. "Why did you bring us out of Egypt?" they demanded. They had forgotten that God, not Moses, had taken them out of Egypt.



10

Sunday

READ Read Numbers 13:31 and this week's story, "Adventure and Challenge."

PLAN Plan what you will do this week to be of service in a challenging situation as discussed in your lesson.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Pray that God will guide you to serve someone.

Monday

READ Read Numbers 13:32, 33.

THINK What did the spies mean by feeling like "grasshoppers"? In your Bible study journal, write how you could overcome feeling insignificant while working for God.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Pray for strength in your service to God.

Tuesday

READ Read Numbers 14:1-9.

DISCUSS With an adult, discuss how to handle being unfairly blamed for something you haven't done while maintaining a Christlike spirit.

ACT Serve someone this week, even though it may be challenging.

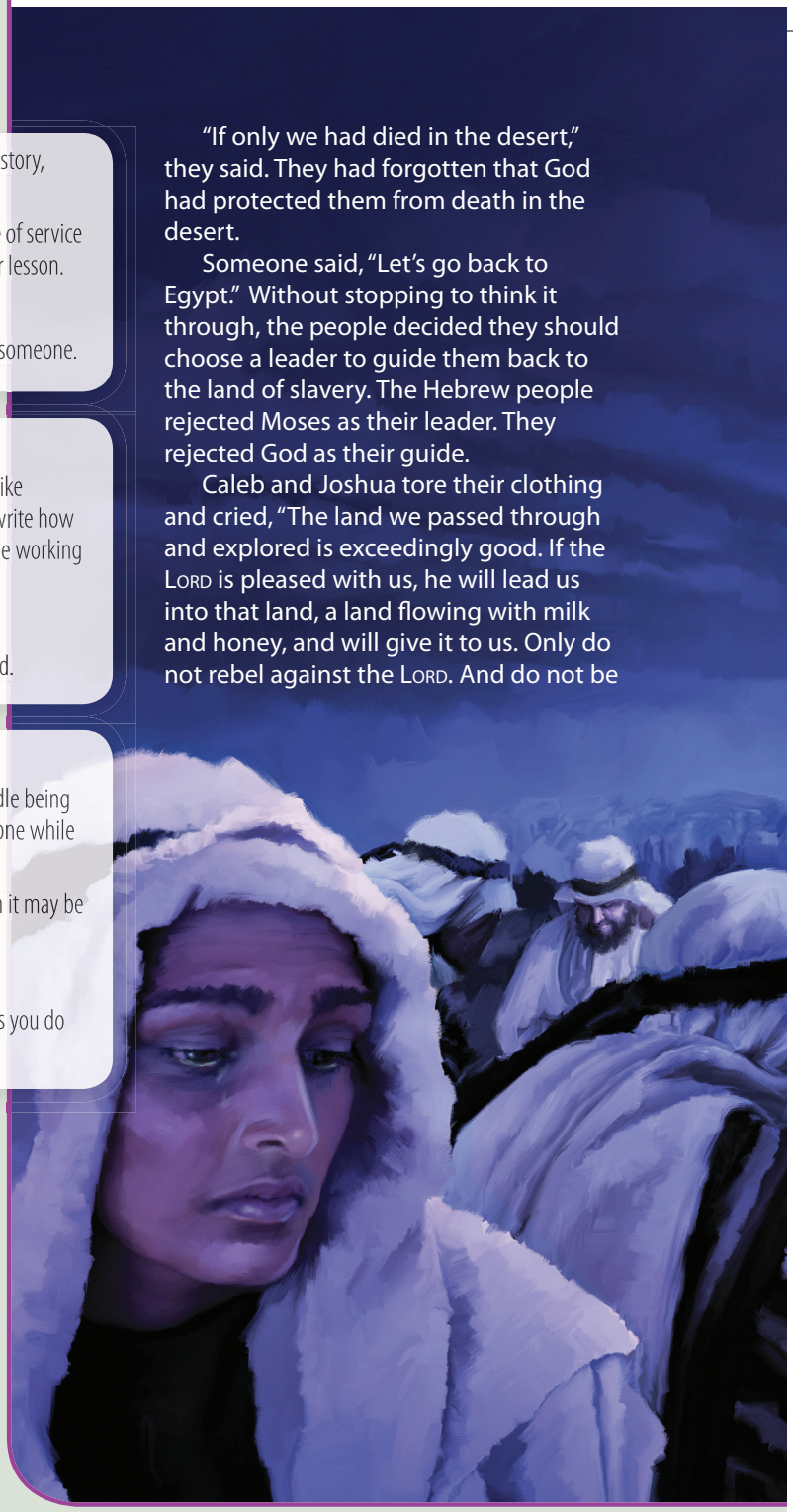
REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Pray that God will bless your efforts as you do your service adventure this week.

"If only we had died in the desert," they said. They had forgotten that God had protected them from death in the desert.

Someone said, "Let's go back to Egypt." Without stopping to think it through, the people decided they should choose a leader to guide them back to the land of slavery. The Hebrew people rejected Moses as their leader. They rejected God as their guide.

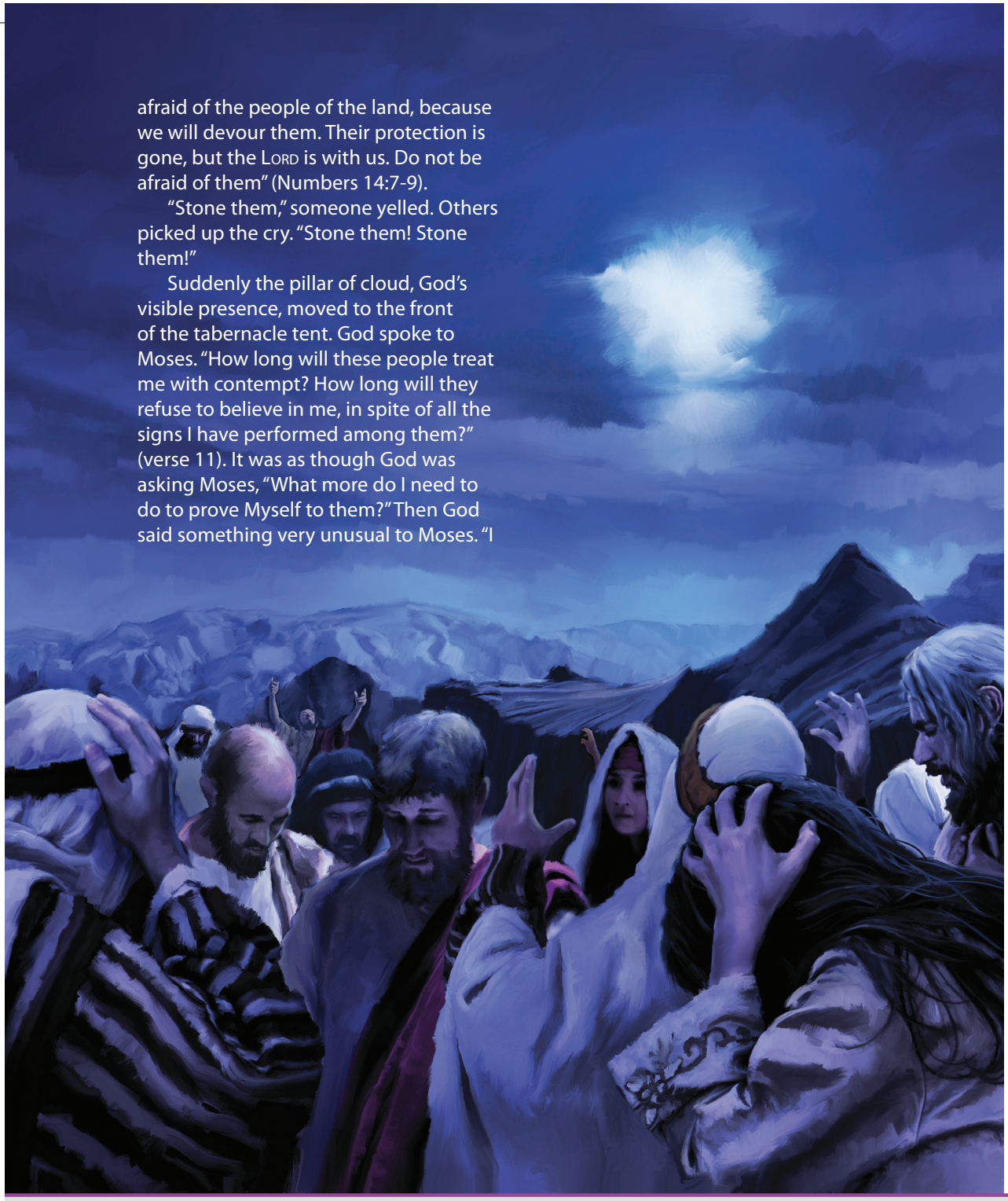
Caleb and Joshua tore their clothing and cried, "The land we passed through and explored is exceedingly good. If the LORD is pleased with us, he will lead us into that land, a land flowing with milk and honey, and will give it to us. Only do not rebel against the LORD. And do not be



afraid of the people of the land, because we will devour them. Their protection is gone, but the LORD is with us. Do not be afraid of them" (Numbers 14:7-9).

"Stone them," someone yelled. Others picked up the cry. "Stone them! Stone them!"

Suddenly the pillar of cloud, God's visible presence, moved to the front of the tabernacle tent. God spoke to Moses. "How long will these people treat me with contempt? How long will they refuse to believe in me, in spite of all the signs I have performed among them?" (verse 11). It was as though God was asking Moses, "What more do I need to do to prove Myself to them?" Then God said something very unusual to Moses. "I



10

Wednesday

READ Read Numbers 14:10-19.

THINK What reasons did Moses give God as to why He should not destroy the Israelites? What do these reasons reveal about Moses' understanding of God? Whom was Moses serving in this situation?

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Pray that you will have the compassion and long-suffering patience of Moses.

Thursday

READ Read Numbers 14:20-35.

DISCUSS Consider the words that God has spoken against the Israelites following their rebelious response. How do you understand God's justice in relation to His compassionate mercy?

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Pray that you will choose to obey God.

Friday

READ Read Numbers 14:36-45.

ACT Help younger children act out the story at worship. Or tell the story to your family in your own words.

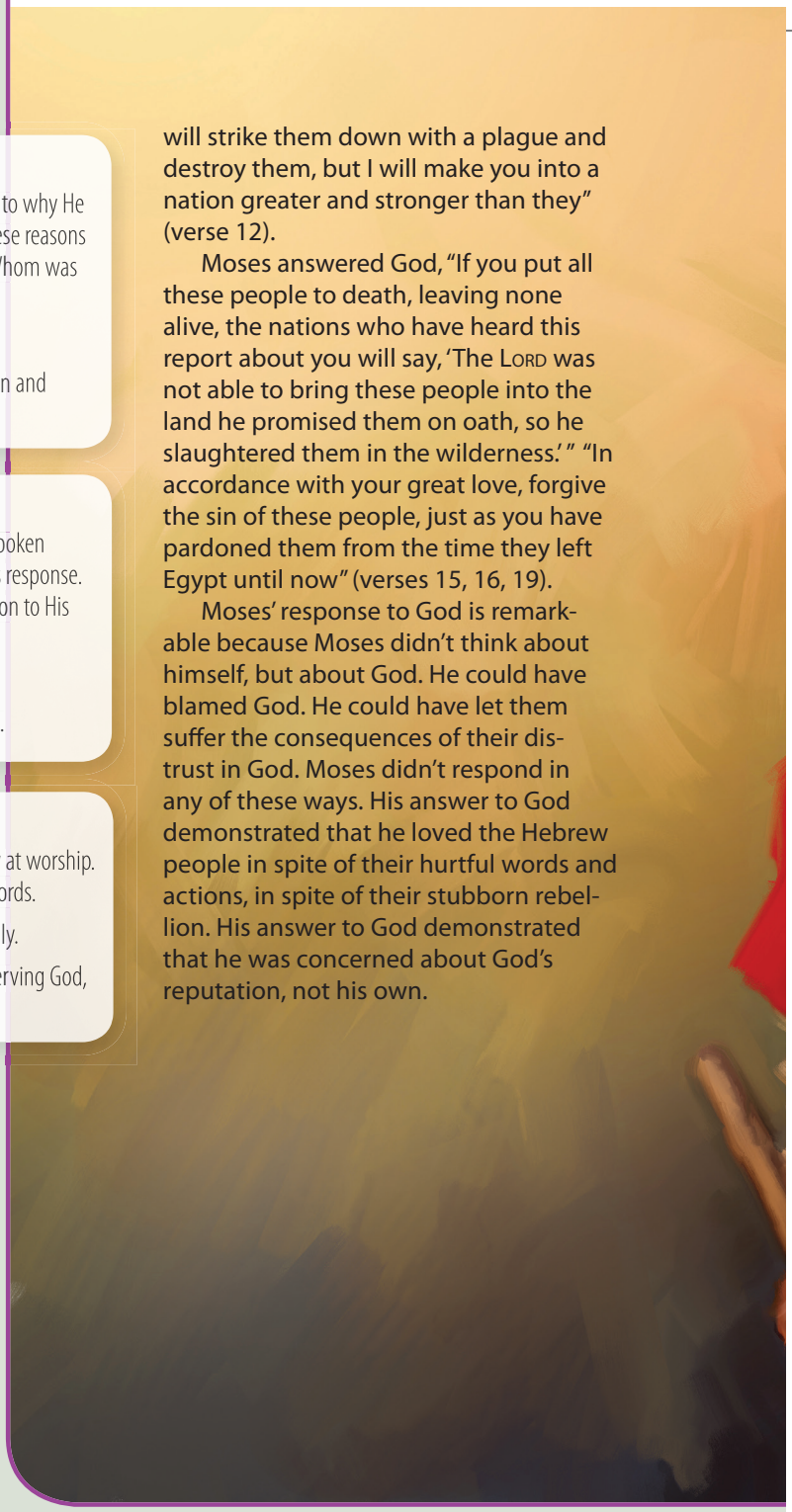
SHARE Share the power text with your family.

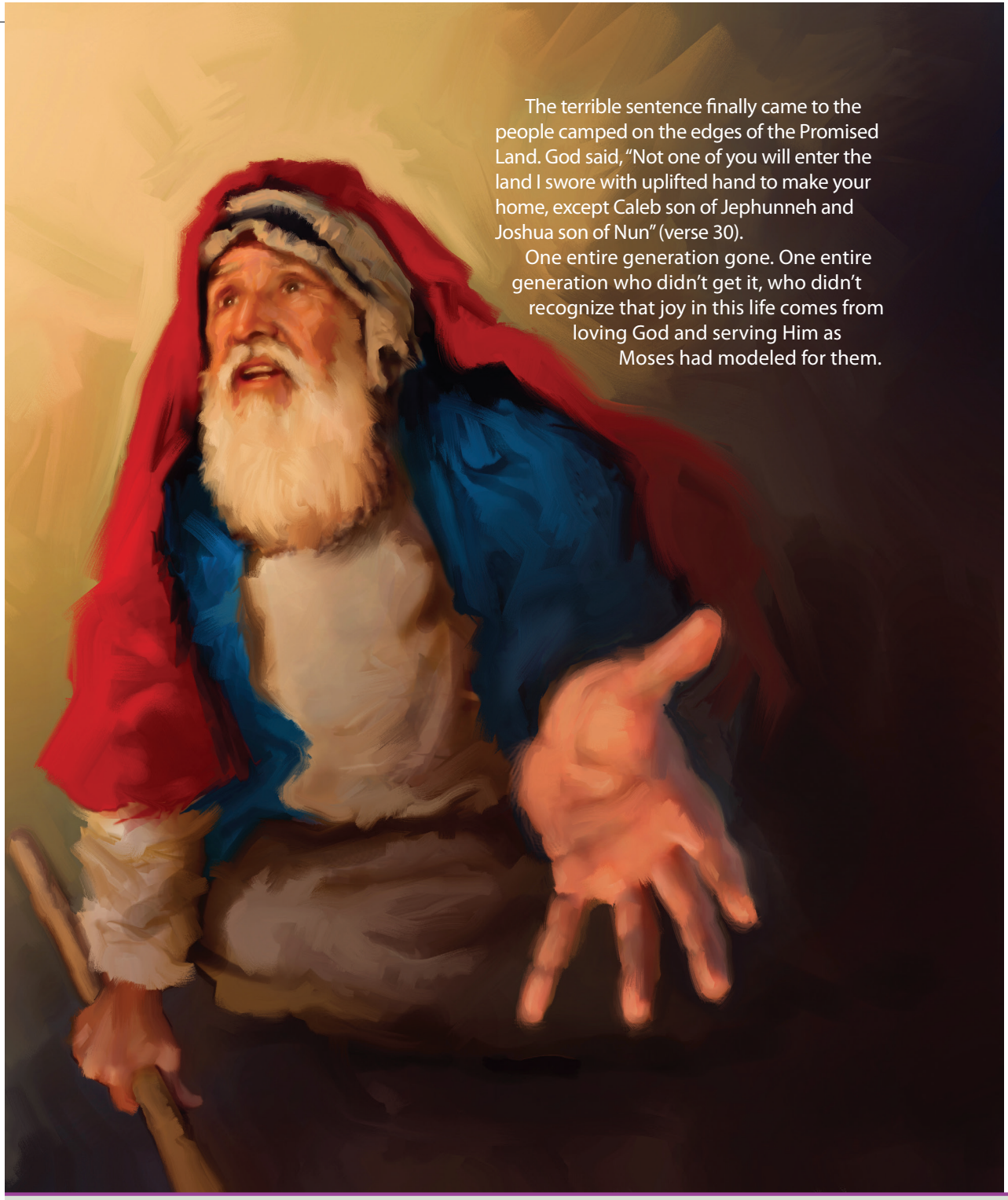
PRAY Pray that you will stay committed to serving God, no matter how difficult the situation.

will strike them down with a plague and destroy them, but I will make you into a nation greater and stronger than they" (verse 12).

Moses answered God, "If you put all these people to death, leaving none alive, the nations who have heard this report about you will say, 'The LORD was not able to bring these people into the land he promised them on oath, so he slaughtered them in the wilderness.' " "In accordance with your great love, forgive the sin of these people, just as you have pardoned them from the time they left Egypt until now" (verses 15, 16, 19).

Moses' response to God is remarkable because Moses didn't think about himself, but about God. He could have blamed God. He could have let them suffer the consequences of their distrust in God. Moses didn't respond in any of these ways. His answer to God demonstrated that he loved the Hebrew people in spite of their hurtful words and actions, in spite of their stubborn rebellion. His answer to God demonstrated that he was concerned about God's reputation, not his own.





The terrible sentence finally came to the people camped on the edges of the Promised Land. God said, "Not one of you will enter the land I swore with uplifted hand to make your home, except Caleb son of Jephunneh and Joshua son of Nun" (verse 30).

One entire generation gone. One entire generation who didn't get it, who didn't recognize that joy in this life comes from loving God and serving Him as Moses had modeled for them.

PUZZLE 10

WHISTLE WHILE YOU WORK

Instructions: Follow around clockwise, starting with the word that contains the open quote mark, and pick one word from each section on each pass to read out a Bible verse that gives us a good attitude. Not all the words are used.

