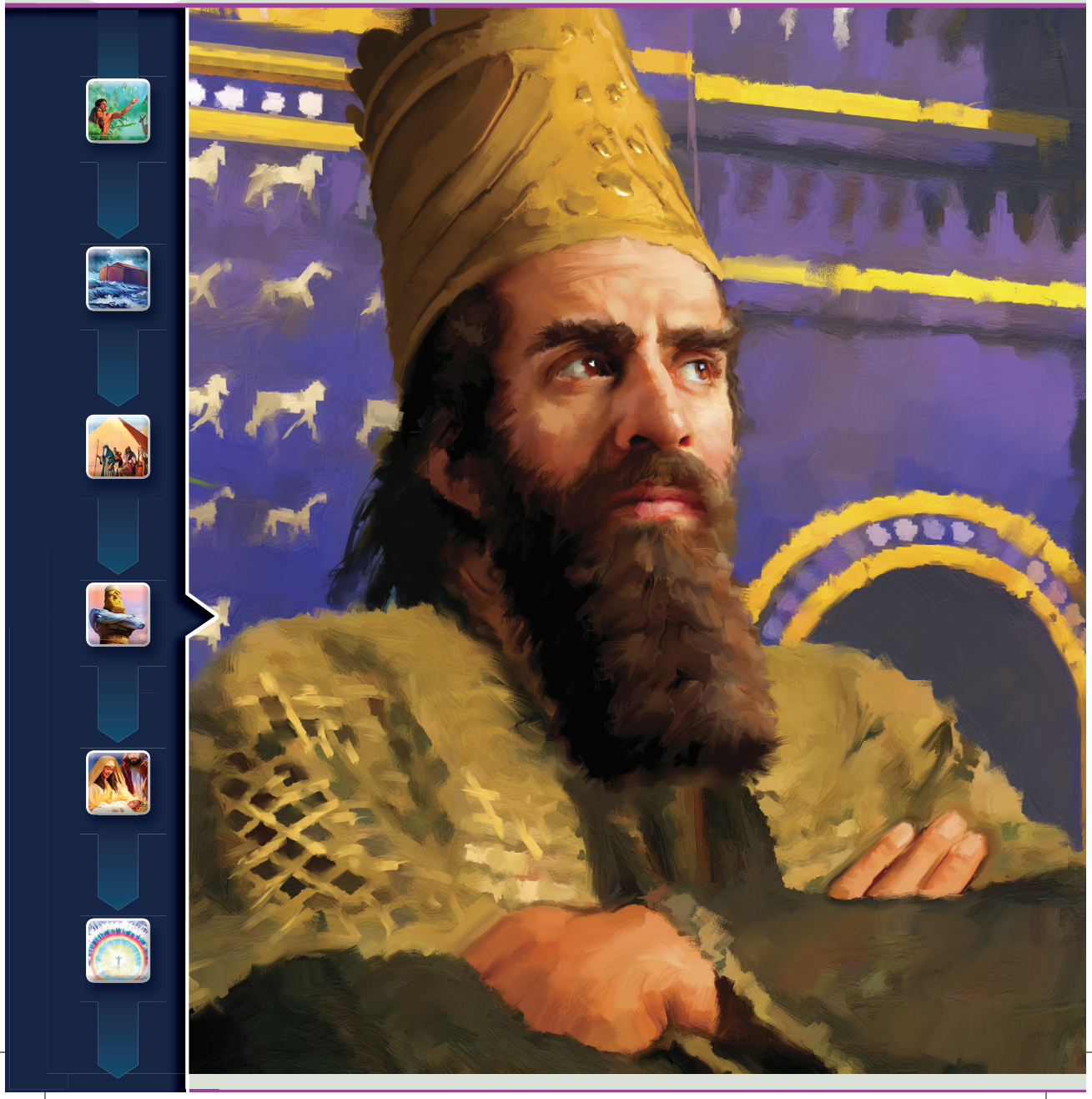
8

King on His Knees

Key References: Daniel 4; *Prophets and Kings*, chap. 42, pp. 514-521; *The Bible Story* (1994), vol. 6, pp. 44-48; Our Beliefs nos. 7, 18, 22



powertext

"When pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with humility comes wisdom" (Proverbs 11:2).

Have you ever met someone who thought he was really cool? What turned you off was probably the bragging. When someone says, "I'm pretty awesome," you probably wish they'd be knocked down to size.

Nebuchadnezzar was that kind of person. True, he was one of the greatest rulers the world has ever known. The Bible calls him "king of kings" (Ezekiel 26:7). He defeated the greatest armies on earth. His building projects made him the talk of the world. He was something special, and he knew it.

God had a plan for this mighty man, and that was for him to humble himself and praise the God of heaven. After Daniel interpreted Nebuchadnezzar's dream about the image, the king said, "Surely your God is the God of gods and the Lord of kings and a revealer of mysteries, for you were able to reveal this mystery" (Daniel 2:47). That was a step in the right direction, but it wasn't enough. Nebuchadnezzar couldn't stand the thought that his kingdom wouldn't last forever. That led to the golden image and eventually put Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in a hot furnace. When they were delivered, Nebuchadnezzar exclaimed, "Praise be to the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego," yet his heart wasn't changed (Daniel 3:28).

But God hadn't given up on the king. Nebuchadnezzar had another disturbing dream, and naturally he called for Daniel. The king had seen an enormous tree in the middle of the earth. It grew until its top touched the sky, and it was visible everywhere on earth. Its leaves were beautiful, it gave lots of fruit, and animals and birds found shelter in and under its branches. Then a holy messenger came down from heaven and commanded that the tree be cut down. Its branches and leaves were to be stripped. Its fruit was to be scattered. The

powerpoint

We praise God for the Holy Spirit's work in our lives.

Sabbath

DO Do the activity on page 61.

8

Sunday

READ Read Daniel 4:1-3 and this week's story, "King on His Knees."

MAKE Bring in a tree branch and attach to it the power text, Proverbs 11:2. Place it where you can see it often.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Pray that you will listen when God speaks.

Monday

READ Read Daniel 4:4-9 and Isaiah 30:21.

THINK What are some ways of communication?

SHARE Today, communicate to someone in a creative way the message of God's love.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Ask God to send the Holy Spirit and show you what He needs to change in your life.

Tuesday

READ Read Daniel 4:10-18.

CREATE Creatively illustrate Nebuchadnezzar's vision.

LIST In your Bible study journal, list other symbols God has used to communicate with people.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Pray for your country's leaders and other people in authority, that they will listen to the Holy Spirit.





animals would flee. But a stump would be left in the ground.

"Let him be drenched with the dew of heaven, and let him live with the animals among the plants of the earth," the messenger said. "Let his mind be changed from that of a man and let him be given the mind of an animal, till seven times pass by for him" (Daniel 4:15, 16).

Daniel knew this referred to the king. He had become strong, and his greatness had grown until it reached to far parts of the earth. But he did not acknowledge God.

"You will be driven away from people and will live with the wild animals," interpreted Daniel. "You will eat grass like the ox and be drenched with the dew of heaven" (verse 25). Seven years would pass before Nebuchadnezzar would acknowledge that God rules over earthly kingdoms and gives them to anyone He wishes. And then, like the stump left in the ground, Nebuchadnezzar would be restored.

"Therefore, Your Majesty, be pleased to accept my advice," said Daniel. "Renounce your sins by doing what is right, and your wickedness by being kind to the oppressed. It may be that then your prosperity will continue" (verse 27).

For a while the king took Daniel's advice, but his heart had not changed. A year after the dream Nebuchadnezzar took a walk on the roof of his palace and looked about at his magnificent city. "Is not this the great Babylon I have built as the royal residence, by my mighty power and for the glory of my majesty?" he bragged (verse 30).

8

Wednesday

READ Read Daniel 4:19-27.

THINK How did Daniel explain to the king the conditions for receiving God's forgiveness? (See verse 27.)

WALK Take a walk in a park and look at the trees. Compare Nebuchadnezzar's vision to Matthew 13:31, 32.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Thank God for the Holy Spirit's work in you.

Thursday

READ Read Daniel 4:28-33.

RESEARCH Learn about how amazingly God created the human brain or the universe.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Thank God for the abilities He has given you.

Friday

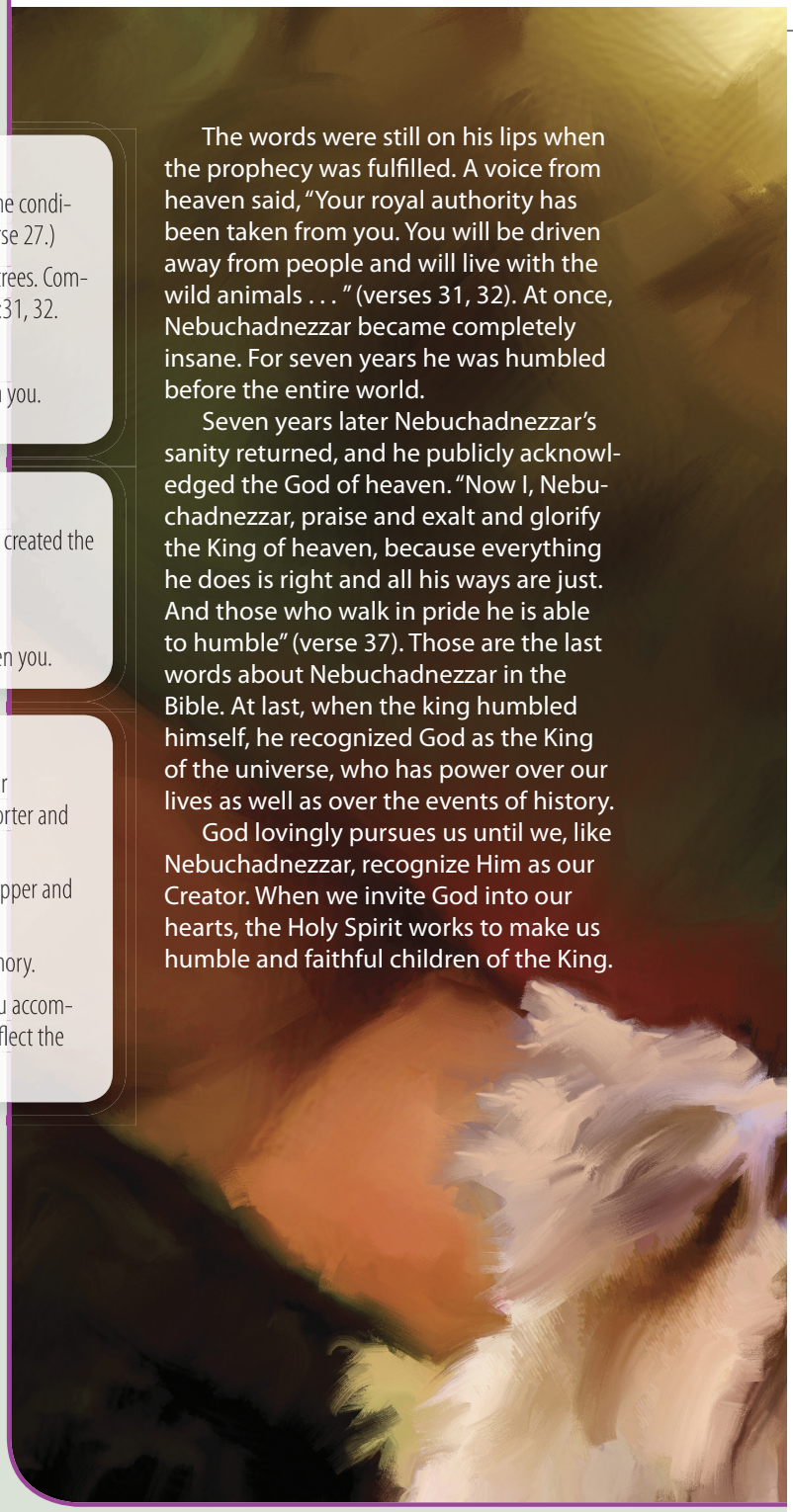
READ Read Daniel 4:34-37.

INTERVIEW With a friend or someone in your family, role-play an interview between a reporter and Nebuchadnezzar.

MAKE Make fruit salad for your family for supper and read Galatians 5:22, 23 to them.

REPEAT Say the power text aloud from memory.

PRAY Thank God for what He has helped you accomplish. Ask for His help so that your life may reflect the fruits of the Spirit.



The words were still on his lips when the prophecy was fulfilled. A voice from heaven said, "Your royal authority has been taken from you. You will be driven away from people and will live with the wild animals . . . " (verses 31, 32). At once, Nebuchadnezzar became completely insane. For seven years he was humbled before the entire world.

Seven years later Nebuchadnezzar's sanity returned, and he publicly acknowledged the God of heaven. "Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and exalt and glorify the King of heaven, because everything he does is right and all his ways are just. And those who walk in pride he is able to humble" (verse 37). Those are the last words about Nebuchadnezzar in the Bible. At last, when the king humbled himself, he recognized God as the King of the universe, who has power over our lives as well as over the events of history.

God lovingly pursues us until we, like Nebuchadnezzar, recognize Him as our Creator. When we invite God into our hearts, the Holy Spirit works to make us humble and faithful children of the King.



PUZZLE 8

GOOD GIFTS

Instructions: Find the starting place and go either clockwise or counterclockwise, skipping either 2, 3, 4, or 5 squares each time to spell out a Bible verse concerning one of God's great gifts to us. Hint: The verse is found in Luke 11.

If	heaven	gifts	you	give	to	then,	the	your
good								though
in								Holy
end								children,
give								you
Father								Spirit
him!								how
to								are
your								to
ask	how	will	who	know	more	those	evil,	much