2

More Pigeons Than Prayer

Key References: John 2:13-25; *The Desire of Ages*, chap. 16, pp. 154-166; *The Bible Story* (1994), vol. 7, pp. 134-138; Our Beliefs nos. 12, 3, 4















Sabbath

DO Do the activity on page 19.

power**text**

"'It is written,' he said to them, '"My house will be called a house of prayer," but you are making it "a den of robbers"'" (Matthew 21:13).

power**point**

Showing respect and reverence in God's house is one way we respond to His love.

Can you remember a time you came into a room and were shocked at what you saw? Whether it was a good surprise or a bad surprise, it was definitely not what you had expected to find there. Imagine this surprise.

A young temple worker forked more straw into the sheep pen. He didn't think he'd ever get the job done. Lambs crowded against his legs. Passover meant a lot more work for him.

A temple priest called anxiously for him to come and help. The lunch his mother had packed would have to wait. With the last of the straw in place, the young worker left the holding pen and walked to the vendor's courtyard. Looking around, he found that the temple was more like a marketplace than a place to worship God. As he came closer, the noise grew until the sounds were deafening. Making his way through the crowd, the boy observed the scene that unfolded before his eyes. After traveling for days, people were forced to pay the last of their money to buy overpriced birds and animals for their sacrifices.

The boy's father had taught him that the priests were to assist the needy. Instead, what he saw was that the priests and merchants cheated people to get the greatest profit possible from selling animals for the sacrifices. Day after day he watched. Gradually, bitter disappointment settled in his heart. He did not see this as true worship.

A shout of "Hurry up!" brought him back to reality.

Arriving at the booth where he'd been called, the boy was asked to take the shekels for the pigeons and doves. He did not remember ever seeing this many poor people in Jerusalem for Passover.

Everything became a blur as the young worker took money and handed out birds for the poor people's sacrifice. Sweat trickled down his back as he struggled to keep up with the demands of the buyers.

2

Sunday

READ Read Jeremiah 7:11 and this week's story, "More Pigeons Than Prayer."

CREATE Draw a lamb and write on it the power text. Don't forget to include the reference.

PRAY Ask God to accept your heartfelt worship.

Monday

READ Read John 2:13-15.

TELL Tell the story to a younger child, describing what Jesus saw as He walked into the temple.

SHARE Share with someone the joy of being part of a church community.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Praise Jesus for His presence in your life.

Tuesday

READ Read John 2:16.

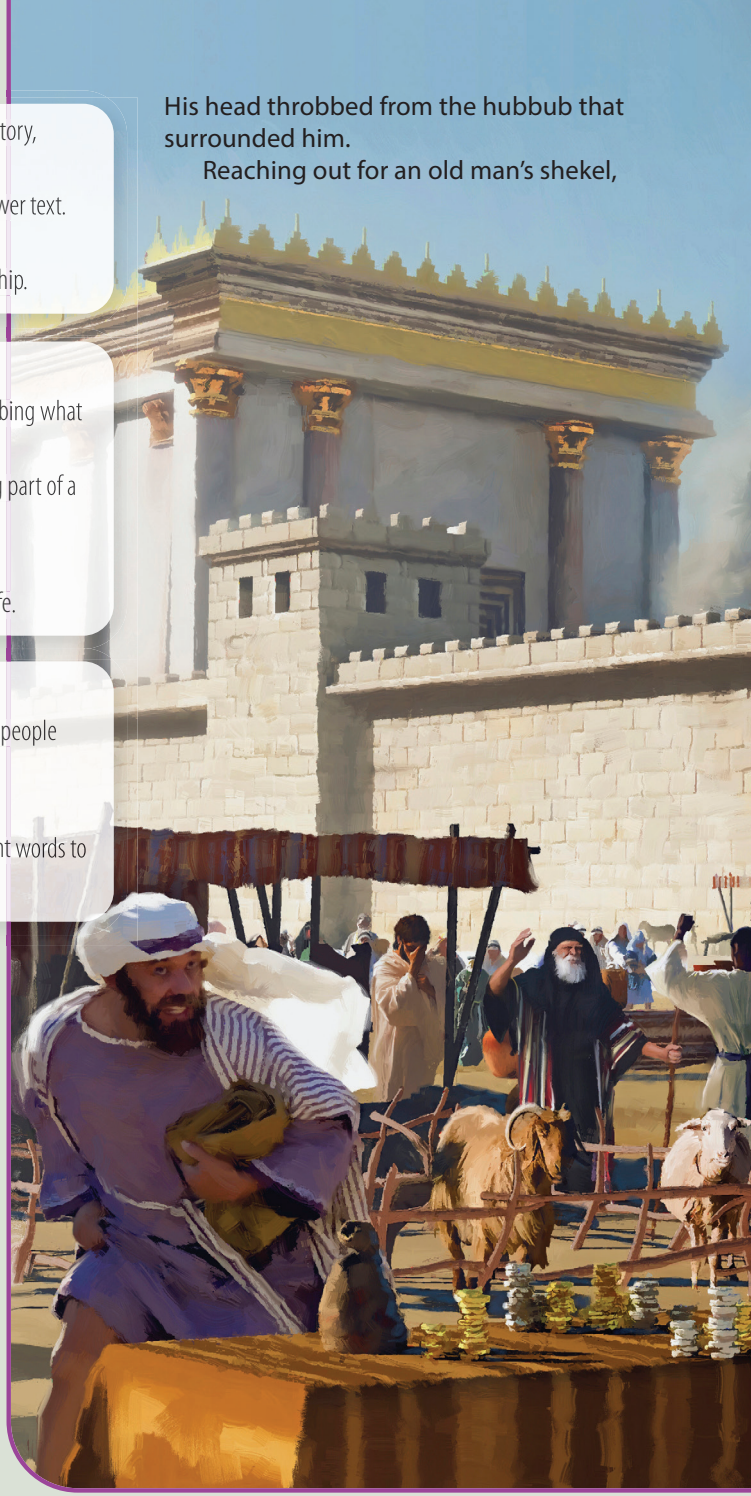
THINK Why do you think Jesus spoke to the people who sold doves? Why did He raise His voice?

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Ask the Holy Spirit to give you the right words to say at the right time and in the right way.

His head throbbed from the hubbub that surrounded him.

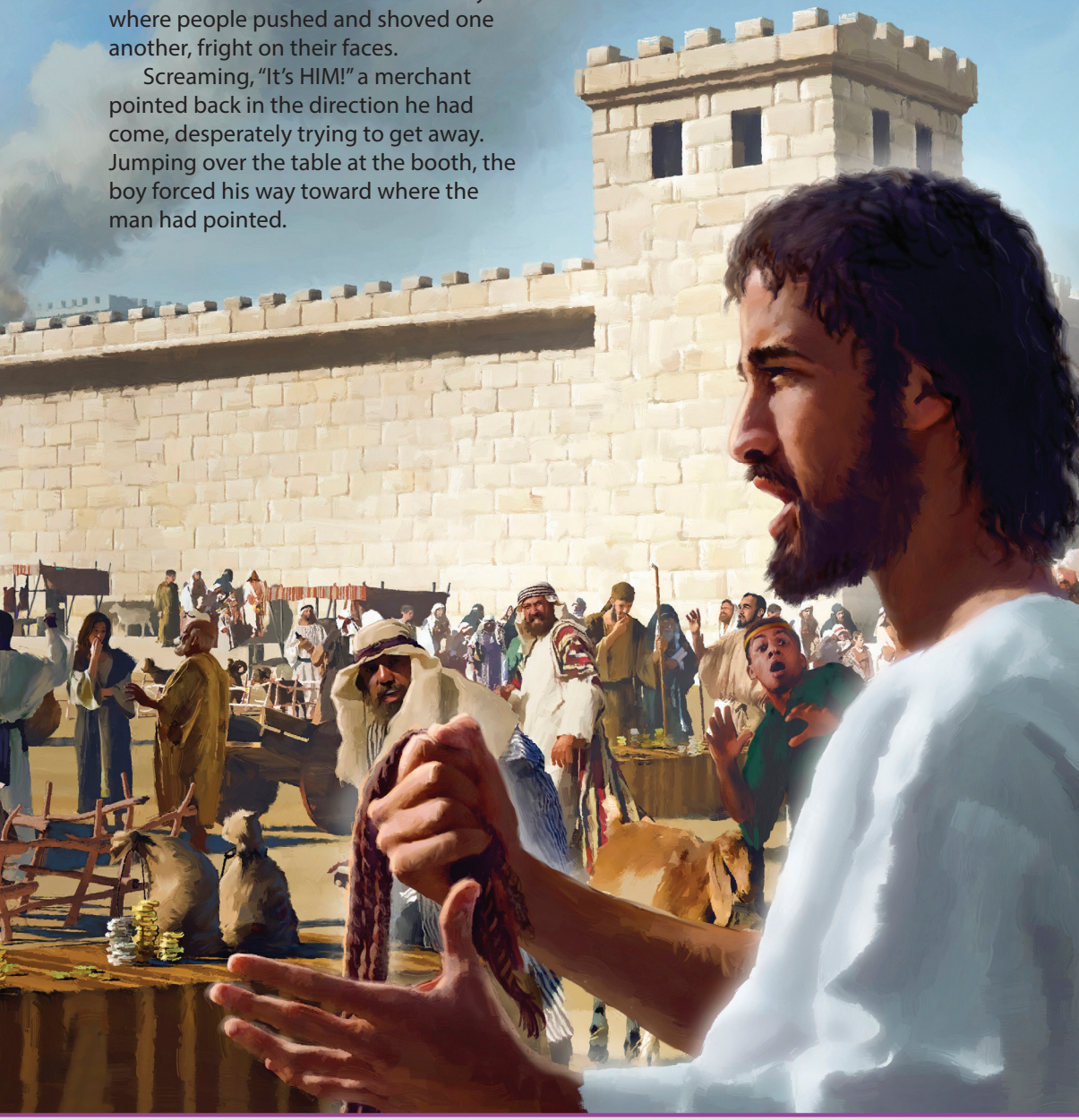
Reaching out for an old man's shekel,



the boy heard the wail. Curious, he turned to look in the same direction as the old man had looked. Shocked by the scene, he let his mouth drop open. The mass confusion was worse now. Everywhere people pushed and shoved one another, fright on their faces.

Screaming, "It's HIM!" a merchant pointed back in the direction he had come, desperately trying to get away. Jumping over the table at the booth, the boy forced his way toward where the man had pointed.

All at once the worker saw the answer to his question. Instead of flashing swords, shields, and Roman uniforms, there was a man with a whip.



Wednesday

READ Read John 2:17.

RESEARCH This verse appears in the Old Testament too. Try to find where it appears by using verse notes or the index in a Bible, or use a concordance. If necessary, ask an adult for help. Look for the key words *zeal* and *consume*. Write down the reference. Be ready to share it in class on Sabbath.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Thank God for the guidance He offers in His Word.

Thursday

READ Read John 2:18.

THINK What does the word *authority* mean? Why did the Jews ask for a sign of Jesus' authority?

WRITE In your Bible study journal, list three or four people you know who have "authority" of some kind. Beside each name, write what authority they have.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Tell God that you accept His authority in your life.

Friday

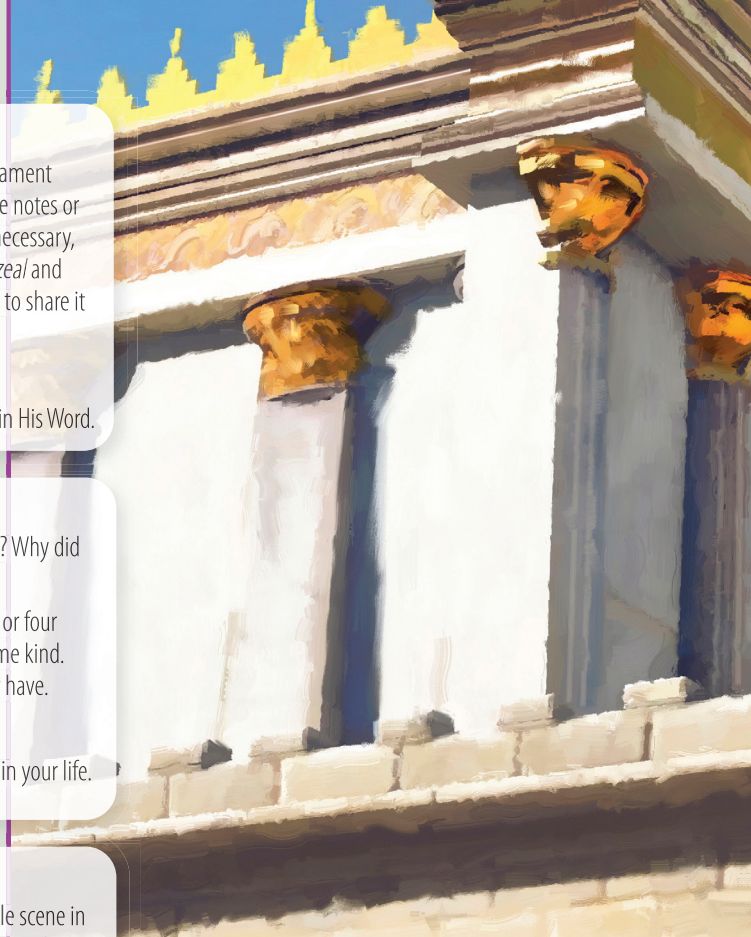
READ Read John 2:19-22.

CREATE With a younger child, create a temple scene in a box. Think of things you have around the house that you could use to add to the scene (i.e., sticks for making a table, tiny aluminum foil coins, toy animals, paper cutouts).

DISCUSS Discuss with your family how you can create a special worship place in your home.

REPEAT Share the power text with someone.

PRAY Ask God to give you a better understanding of how to worship Him.



The stranger was speaking. "Get these out of here!" He commanded. "Stop turning my Father's house into a market!" (John 2:16).

Finally the crowd hushed. The animals stopped their bawling. The stranger seated Himself with children on His lap and at His feet.

The young temple worker crept closer, wanting to learn more about this man. Turning to a woman standing beside him, he asked who this stranger was.

She had heard that His name was Jesus. Somebody else said He was from Nazareth.



Jesus spoke words of comfort to the believers who gathered around Him. He told them of God's goodness and assured them of His love.

The young temple worker felt peace as Jesus' loving words refreshed his soul like sweet melody. His joy found expression in heartfelt praise to God.

Jesus wanted them to understand His deep sorrow because His Father's House was turned into a marketplace and many faithful worshipers were mistreated by the religious leaders.

The boy's eyes met Jesus' gentle gaze. That kind look made him feel as if Jesus were telling him, "Don't let the example of the priests turn you away from God."