7

Growing Season

Key References: Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23; *Christ's Object Lessons*, chap. 2, pp. 33-61; *The Bible Story* (1994), vol. 8, pp. 103-105; Our Beliefs nos. 1, 11, 4















power**text**

"The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you—they are full of the Spirit and life" (John 6:63).

power**point**

God gives us His Word extravagantly.

Sabbath

DO Do the activity on page 60.

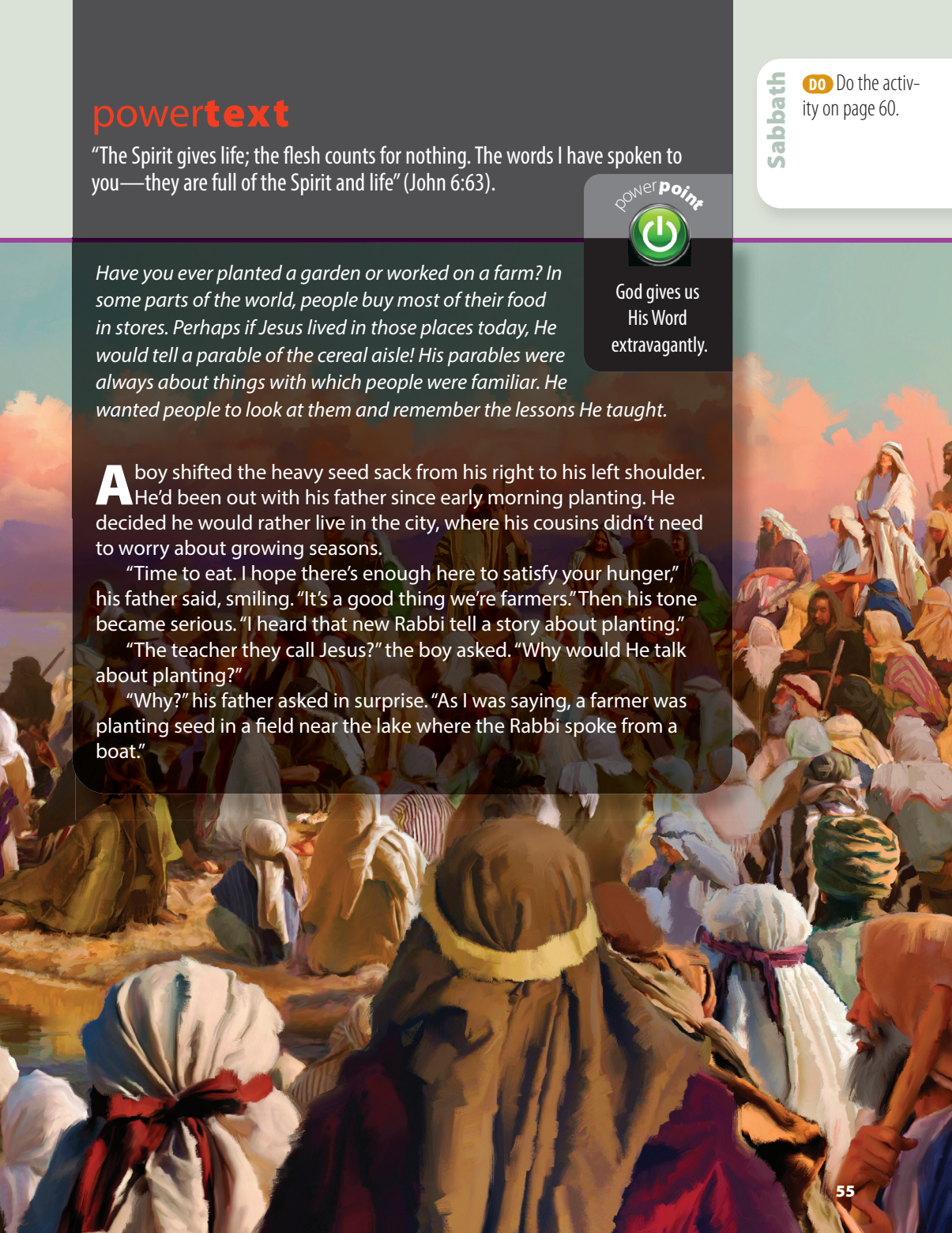
Have you ever planted a garden or worked on a farm? In some parts of the world, people buy most of their food in stores. Perhaps if Jesus lived in those places today, He would tell a parable of the cereal aisle! His parables were always about things with which people were familiar. He wanted people to look at them and remember the lessons He taught.

A boy shifted the heavy seed sack from his right to his left shoulder. He'd been out with his father since early morning planting. He decided he would rather live in the city, where his cousins didn't need to worry about growing seasons.

"Time to eat. I hope there's enough here to satisfy your hunger," his father said, smiling. "It's a good thing we're farmers." Then his tone became serious. "I heard that new Rabbi tell a story about planting."

"The teacher they call Jesus?" the boy asked. "Why would He talk about planting?"

"Why?" his father asked in surprise. "As I was saying, a farmer was planting seed in a field near the lake where the Rabbi spoke from a boat."



7

Sunday

READ Read Mark 4:1-20 and this week's lesson, "Growing Season."

CREATE Draw an open Bible and write on it the power text, John 6:33. Be sure to include the reference. Begin memorizing it.

PRAY Thank God for giving you everything you need to grow in Him.

Monday

READ Read Psalm 119:105.

COLLECT Gather seeds, a small piece of cotton, a small cup filled with dirt, and a plate or shallow pan.

DO Put a couple seeds on the piece of cotton, in the dirt, and on the plate. Keep them moist until Friday.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Thank God for giving His Word to you.

Tuesday

READ Read Matthew 13:3-9.

REMEMBER No matter how unpromising people may seem, God can make His Word productive in their lives.

SHARE Sow a seed today by telling someone about the treasures found in God's Word.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Thank God for scattering His Word everywhere.

"A boat?" the boy asked.

"Yes. It was a brilliant idea. The people crowded around the Rabbi trying to listen to Him. They nearly pushed Him into the lake. He climbed into a boat. Everyone thought, *That's it! He's leaving.* But instead He pushed off from shore, dropped anchor in shallow water, and began teaching." The father's eyes glowed as he remembered.

"So the Rabbi started telling a story about a farmer. Every head turned to look at the farmer



nearby. He was sowing the hillside above us.

"The Rabbi talked about planting. Planting. Just like we're doing right now. As the farmer arced his arm over the soil you could almost see the seeds flying."

The boy searched the basket for another fig.

"The Rabbi said, 'A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop—a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown' " (Matthew 13:3-8).

The boy looked at his father. His eyes still glowed. "I've thought a lot about this story," his father continued. "I don't think the Rabbi was really talking about planting."

"Then what do you think He was talking about?"

"I think He was talking about the kingdom of God."

"So you think Jesus compared God to a farmer?"



7

Wednesday

READ Read Luke 8:1-3.

IDENTIFY What was Jesus proclaiming as He traveled from place to place?

THINK How might the parable of the sower be the good news of the kingdom of God to you?

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Thank God for the good news He has given you.

Thursday

READ Read Luke 8:5-8.

COMPARE Compare Luke's account of the parable to Matthew's account. Matthew, as one of Jesus' 12 disciples, was probably present when Jesus told this parable. Luke, who never met Jesus, heard this story from someone else.

THINK Who is doing all the work in the parable of the sower? What is the job of the seeds?

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Ask God to help you grow.

Friday

READ Read Luke 8:11-15.

DO Check your seeds. Have they shown signs of sprouting? Carefully pry one seed open so you can see the beginning growth of the plant.

THINK What does the seed represent?

REMEMBER Everything needed to grow is built into the seed.

THINK How is the seed like God's Word in you?

REPEAT Share the power text by memory at family worship.

PRAY Thank God that His Word contains everything you need to grow and become more like Jesus.

"Yes. The Rabbi said, 'The kingdom of God is like a farmer sowing seed.' "

"So what is the seed?"

"I think the seed is God's Word."

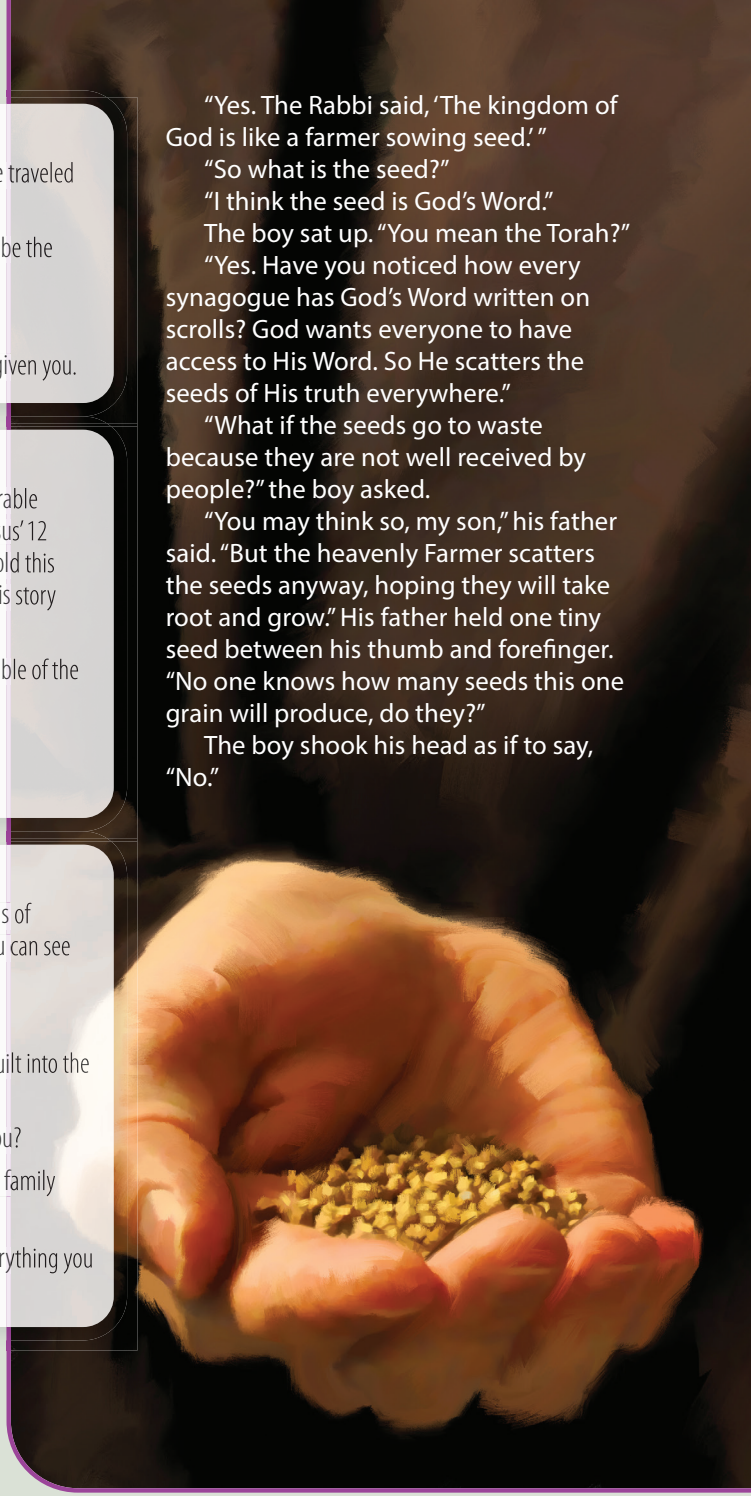
The boy sat up. "You mean the Torah?"

"Yes. Have you noticed how every synagogue has God's Word written on scrolls? God wants everyone to have access to His Word. So He scatters the seeds of His truth everywhere."

"What if the seeds go to waste because they are not well received by people?" the boy asked.

"You may think so, my son," his father said. "But the heavenly Farmer scatters the seeds anyway, hoping they will take root and grow." His father held one tiny seed between his thumb and forefinger. "No one knows how many seeds this one grain will produce, do they?"

The boy shook his head as if to say, "No."



"And imagine how many seeds will be produced from all the seeds in this sack."

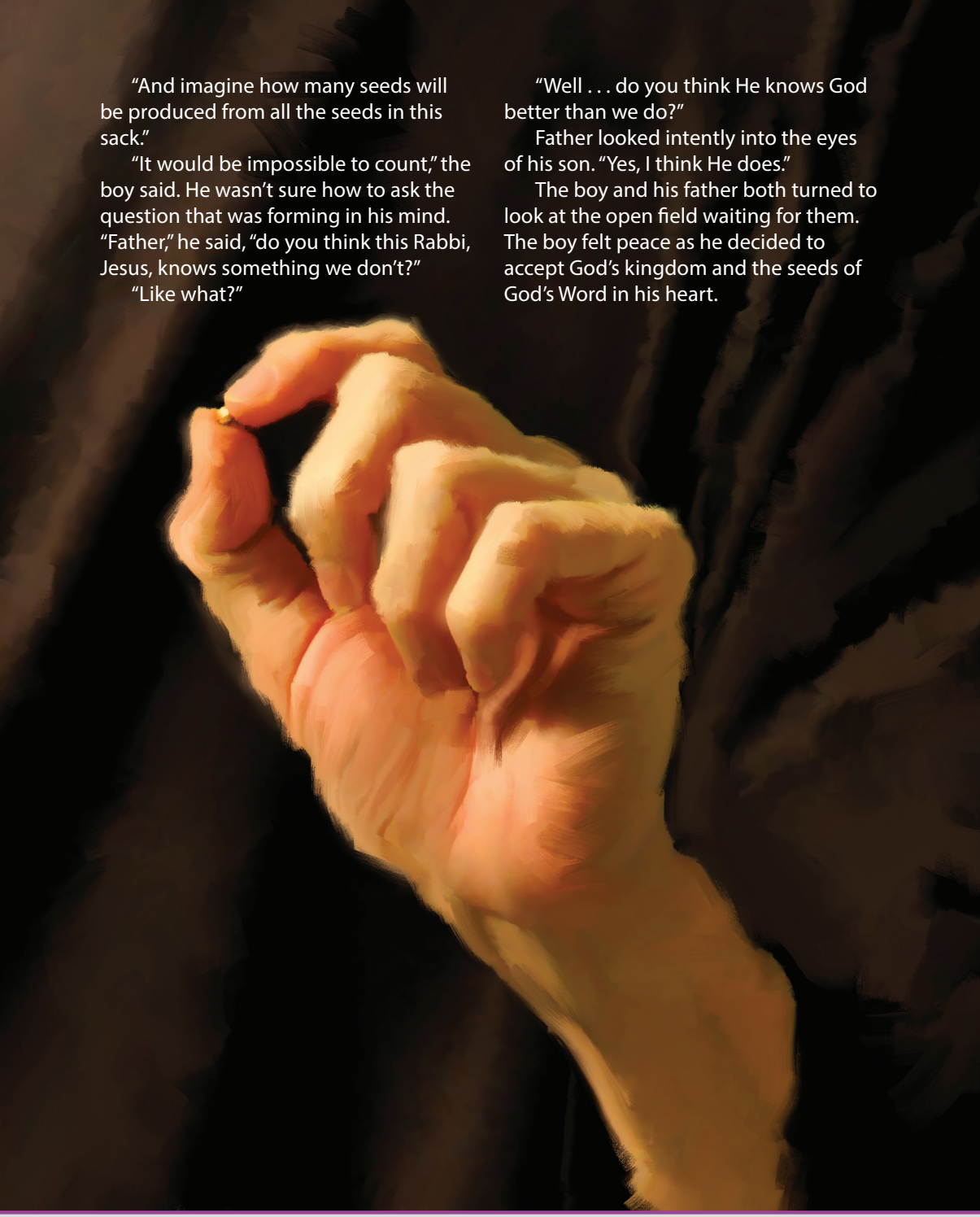
"It would be impossible to count," the boy said. He wasn't sure how to ask the question that was forming in his mind. "Father," he said, "do you think this Rabbi, Jesus, knows something we don't?"

"Like what?"

"Well . . . do you think He knows God better than we do?"

Father looked intently into the eyes of his son. "Yes, I think He does."

The boy and his father both turned to look at the open field waiting for them. The boy felt peace as he decided to accept God's kingdom and the seeds of God's Word in his heart.



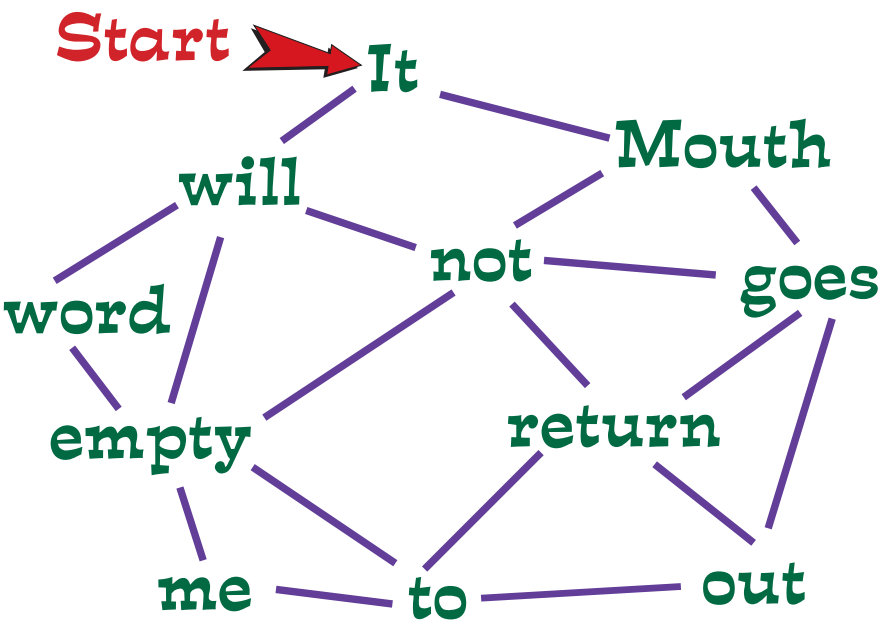
PUZZLE
7

HIS WORD

Consider the following verse:

"As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, so is my word that goes out from my mouth: ___ _____ ____ _____ ___ ___ _____, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it"
(Isaiah 55:10, 11).

Can you read the missing words to this verse by following the lines?



FINISHING A GOOD WORK

Can you spell out the missing word in this verse (which means "persistence" or "stick-to-itiveness") by starting after the colored square and counting off (going clockwise) every fifth square?

"Let _____ finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything" (James 1:4).

