3

Blinded

Key References: Acts 9:1-19; *The Acts of the Apostles*, chap. 12, pp. 112-122; *The Bible Story* (1994), vol. 10, pp. 42-46; Our Beliefs nos. 10, 13, 22.



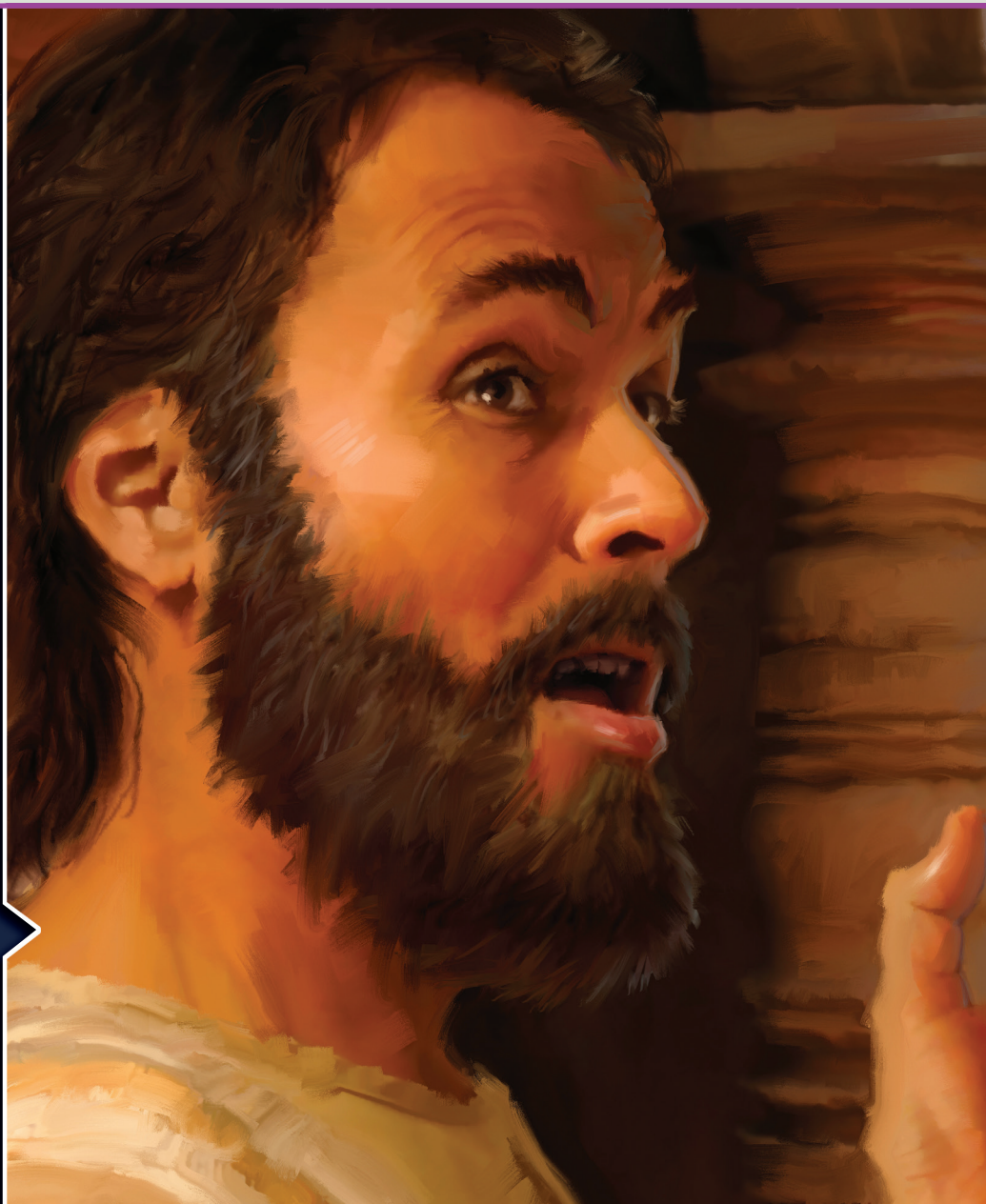












Sabbath

DO Do the activity on page 32.

power**text**

"For this is what the Lord has commanded us: 'I have made you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth'" (Acts 13:47).

power**point**

We build community when we use our God-given talents to share with others His love.

Can you think of something that has happened to you that has changed your whole life? It could be the death of a loved one, a divorce in your family, a parent's new job, or a new baby joining your family. How would your life have been different if that event had not occurred? Today we'll hear how one event changed not only one man's life, but the history of the entire Christian church.

Saul had joined the efforts of the priests with strong determination in his heart. A zealous Pharisee himself, he had sought to put an end to the spreading of the gospel by persecuting the followers of Jesus. He had even asked the high priest for letters of permission to go as far north as Damascus to search for Jesus' followers. His intent was to bring them back to Jerusalem and throw them into prison. With the letters of permission from the high priest granted, Saul and his attendants were now making preparations for the journey.

The next morning they left. In addition to Saul's servants, a company of soldiers went with him. It would take several days to get to Damascus. Saul made use of every mile. He and the soldiers searched for believers in Jesus at all the synagogues in towns along the way.



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Sunday

READ Read Acts 9:1, 2 and this week's story, "Blinded."

WRITE Get a nonpermanent marker and along with the reference, write the power text on your mirror/window. Start memorizing it.

PRAY Ask God to help you treat kindly those who don't believe as you do.

Monday

READ Read Acts 9:3, 4.

THINK Why do you think God stopped Saul in the way that He did? What did the light represent?

WRITE In your Bible study journal, write about how God talks to you.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Pray, asking God to give you an open heart so that He doesn't have to do dramatic things to get your attention.

Tuesday

READ Read Acts 9:5.

THINK Why do you think Saul asked that question?

REFLECT How would you react if you came to realize that you were persecuting God's true followers? What are ways you could build up the community of believers?

REVIEW Review the power text.

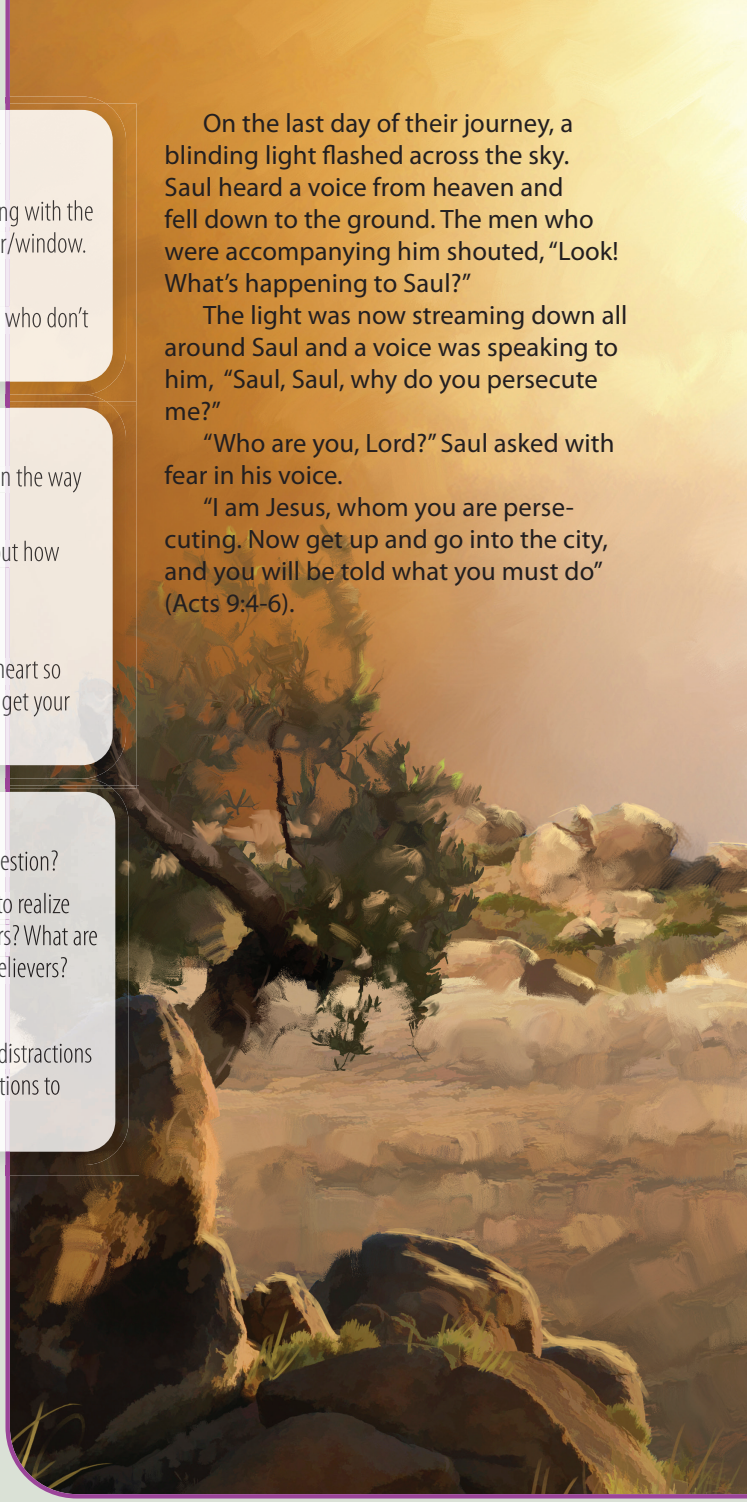
PRAY Ask God to help you block out all the distractions that keep you from hearing His loving instructions to you.

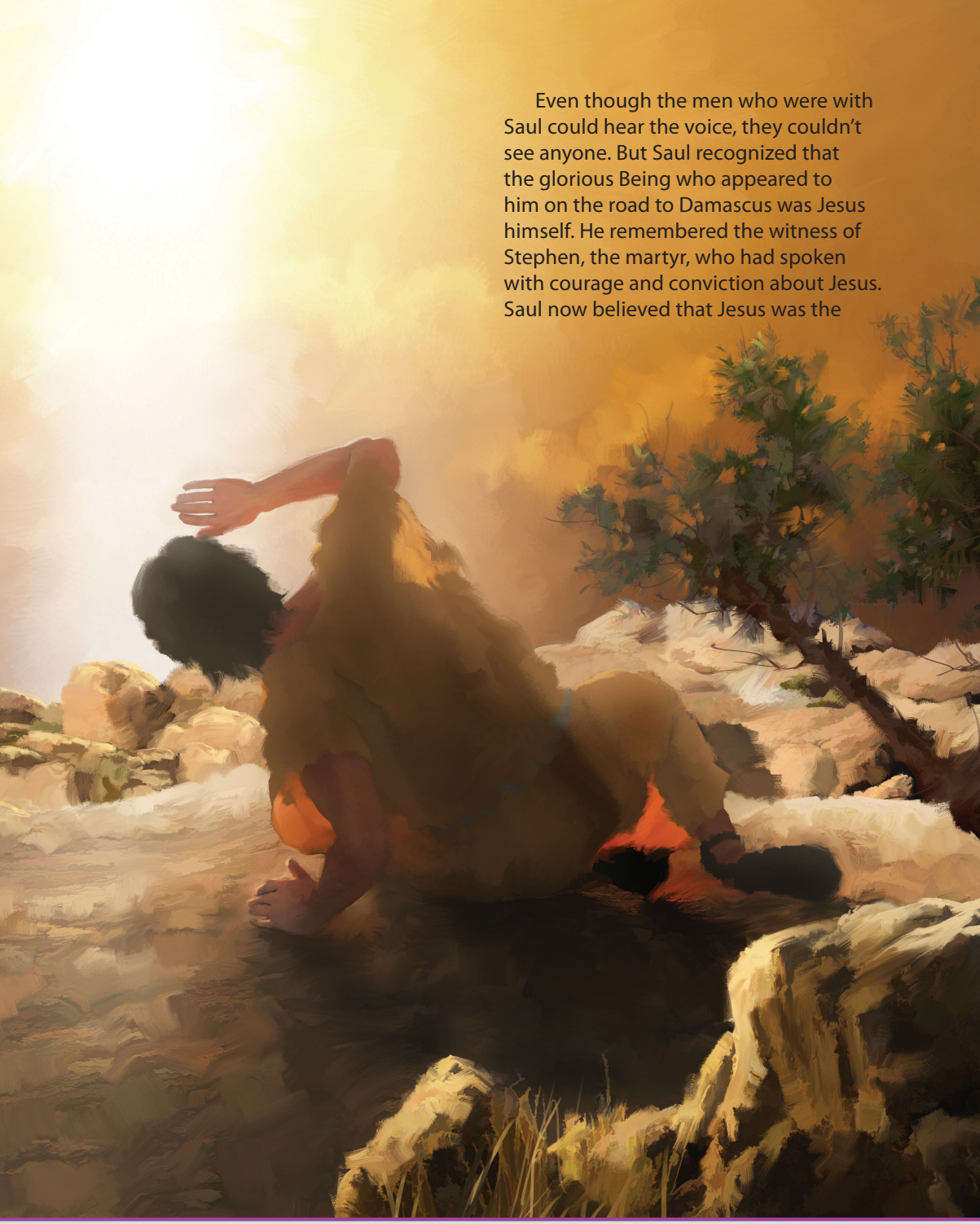
On the last day of their journey, a blinding light flashed across the sky. Saul heard a voice from heaven and fell down to the ground. The men who were accompanying him shouted, "Look! What's happening to Saul?"

The light was now streaming down all around Saul and a voice was speaking to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?"

"Who are you, Lord?" Saul asked with fear in his voice.

"I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do" (Acts 9:4-6).





Even though the men who were with Saul could hear the voice, they couldn't see anyone. But Saul recognized that the glorious Being who appeared to him on the road to Damascus was Jesus himself. He remembered the witness of Stephen, the martyr, who had spoken with courage and conviction about Jesus. Saul now believed that Jesus was the

3

Wednesday

READ Read Acts 9:6-9.

THINK What would you have done in Saul's position if you were blinded and told to go to a place you could not see and wait until you received further instructions about what you should do next?

ASK Ask an adult to tell you how he/she acted when faced with a critical decision that involved waiting.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Ask for a deeper understanding of who Jesus is.

Thursday

READ Read Acts 9:10-12.

TELL Serve someone today by using your God-given talents to share who Jesus is and what He means to you.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Ask God to help you trust Him, no matter whom He sends you to serve.

Friday

READ Read the rest of the story in Acts 9:13-19.

THINK What is a gift that God has given you? How are you using it to serve His children?

DISCUSS With an adult, discuss how Ananias also served God and told others about His love.

IMAGINE How would you react if you were asked to serve someone you thought was planning to kill you?

SAY Repeat the power text aloud by memory.

PRAY Ask God to help you use your gifts to share His love with His children to whom He is sending you today.

promised Messiah who had come into the world to redeem us.

Jesus continued speaking to Saul:

"Now get up and stand on your feet. I have appeared to you to appoint you as a servant and as a witness of what you have seen and will see of me. I will rescue you from your own people and from the Gentiles. I am sending you to them to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me" (Acts 26:16-18).

Saul struggled to his feet, realizing he could not see. Rushing to his side, the servants helped him stand. They led the blinded Saul down through the green, fertile land he had been admiring just moments before but couldn't see now. He was headed straight for the very people he had come to murder. But now he was coming to join his gifts and talents with, not against, theirs as together they



would serve God and tell others about His love.

Arriving in Damascus, Saul prayed and fasted for three days. As a result of his earnest prayers the heart of Saul was transformed by God's grace and he became a believer fully consecrated to the service of Christ, his Master.

During those days Jesus spoke in a vision to a disciple named Ananias and asked him to meet with Saul and pray for him that he may regain his sight. Ananias was afraid. He had heard about Saul's zeal to persecute Jesus' followers. Yet Jesus reassured him that Saul's conversion was sincere.

"Go!" Jesus said to him. "This man is my chosen instrument to proclaim my name to the Gentiles and their kings and to the people of Israel. I will show him how much he must suffer for my name."

Obedient to the instructions received from the heavenly messenger, Ananias went to meet Saul. As he placed his hands on him, Ananias said, "Brother Saul, the Lord—Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here—has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit" (Acts 9:10-17).

As soon as he finished speaking Saul's eyes were opened and he could see. Saul's conversion story tells of God's amazing power to change lives. This account also beautifully illustrates God's desire to cooperate with anyone who is willing to reach out to others for Jesus.



PUZZLE 3

FOR HIS GLORY

Start at the first "E" and read every other letter to reveal the Bible verse that tells us to use our gifts for His glory. The Xs in the turn-around circle are only placeholders and are not part of the verse.

S E M A R C O H F O S F U Y O
O I U
U N D I L T U S O V H A S R
I S E
E C W A H R A G T S E D V O
E G R
U W O A Y R T D F S I O G F
E H T
A S V L E U R F E H C T E I
I A V
X V E T R H E E S R O S T A D S E F X
O X

PUZZLE 4

WORKING TOGETHER

Start at "How" and end with "in unity" by drawing three straight connected lines without lifting the pen/pencil to find the verse that tells us the benefits of working together. Identify the verse by reading in order the words through which the lines go.

How	good	and	people	God's
good	good	live	live	when
and	together	and	pleasant	is
in unity	in unity	pleasant	pleasant	it