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In Pursuit of Peace

Key References: 2 Samuel 19; *Patriarchs and Prophets*, chap. 72, p. 745; Our Beliefs, nos. 14, 11, 7.










Sabbath

DO Do the activity on page 47.

power**text**

"Peacemakers who sow in peace reap a harvest of righteousness" (James 3:18).

power**point**

We reflect God's grace by solving conflicts peacefully.

Is there a peacemaker in your family? Someone who steps in when people are having a great debate and things begin to get unpleasant? After Absalom's death King David found himself in a situation in which he had to be the peacemaker, and it wasn't easy.

With the rebellion over, David thought about returning home to his palace in Jerusalem. But there was still plenty to worry about first. The Bible says, "Throughout the tribes of Israel, all the people were arguing among themselves" (2 Samuel 19:9). Some unhappy Israelites still sympathized with the rebels.

How can God bless us if we don't get along? the king mused. *We can't call ourselves followers of God and hate one another.* David paced back and forth in his chambers and prayed.

Then the king had a brilliant but risky idea. "I want to put Amasa [AM-a-sa] in charge of all my soldiers," he announced. David knew that Amasa was a good man at heart. If entrusted with responsibility, he would rise to the occasion and be loyal to his king. Amasa was much too valuable to be put away and shunned.



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Sunday

READ Read 2 Samuel 19:1-8 and this week's lesson, "In Pursuit of Peace."

CREATE Create a picture of sowing and reaping and include this week's power text in the picture, along with the reference.

LEARN Begin to memorize the power text.

PRAY Ask God to help you be a peacemaker.

Monday

READ Read 2 Samuel 19:9-30.

THINK Try to remember a victory celebration that was ruined by someone's bad attitude about the victory. How did it make you feel? Was Joab justified in his rebuke of David's response to their victory? Why or why not?

THINK Think of a situation in which you should have reacted more as David did toward Shimei. If this situation still exists, contact the person involved this week and try to solve the problem by being forgiving.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Ask God to help you reconcile your relationships that need healing.

Tuesday

READ Read 2 Samuel 19:31-43.

THINK It had not been unusual for David to deal harshly with his enemies. Why did he react so kindly in this case?

WRITE Explain in your own words why it is not a sign of weakness to forgive others.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Ask God to help you always have a forgiving spirit toward others.

David was right. Kindness did win the heart of his former enemy, and Amasa gained many supporters for the king.

Finally David decided it was time to move back to Jerusalem. The journey began, and his long caravan soon reached the east shore of the Jordan River. *Who was that person coming across the river? Could it be Shimei [SHIM-ee-i], that troublemaker?* Sure enough, it was Shimei, the one who had cursed the king when he was running from Absalom [AB-sah-lum]. He jumped off



his horse, bowed down to the ground, and pleaded, "May my lord not hold me guilty. Do not remember how your servant did wrong on the day my lord the king left Jerusalem. May the king put it out of his mind. For I your servant know that I have sinned, but today I have come here as the first from the tribes of Joseph to come down and meet my lord the king."

"Shouldn't Shimei be put to death for this?" asked Abishai, son of Zeruiah [zuh-Roo-yah]. "He cursed the LORD's anointed."

"Should anyone be put to death in Israel today?" asked David in reply. "Don't I know that today I am king over Israel?"

As king, David could have had Shimei executed immediately. Instead he held out his hand to Shimei and said, "You shall not die" (verses 19-23).

Later David resolved a bitter argument between two important people. Ziba [ZY-buh] had accused Mephibosheth [me-FIB-o-sheth] of disloyalty to the king, and as a result he was given his master's inheritance. When David returned to Jerusalem, however, he listened to Mephibosheth's side of the story; he claimed to be innocent and wrongly accused by his servant. The king sought to find a solution to their conflict, and as a result he divided the land equally between them.



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Wednesday

READ Read Matthew 5:9. What promise do peacemakers have from God?

FIND Look for information on the peacemaking negotiations that are going on between two nations.

THINK How are the issues that those nations or people face similar to those of two teenagers who dislike one another? How are they different?

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Ask God to help you develop traits in your character that make you a peacemaker.

Thursday

READ Read Matthew 18:21, 22.

THINK Think about the mathematics involved in the verses above (check the margin in NIV). Do you think Jesus meant that if a person has hurt you 70 times seven plus one, you no longer have to forgive them? Explain your answer.

ACT Act out the Bible story at family worship tonight.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Ask God to help you have a forgiving spirit.

Friday

READ Read Jeremiah 33:8.

THINK A clean slate is a familiar way of describing how it feels when you've been forgiven of something. Think of other word images and symbols that help represent what forgiveness means to you.

CREATE Sketch, draw, or paint your own illustration of something that reminds you of the meaning of forgiveness. Place it in your room where it will serve as a reminder of God's forgiveness in your life.

SAY Repeat the power text, James 3:18, by memory.

PRAY Thank God that He forgives you every time you ask Him. Praise Him, for His mercy knows no limit.



David's influence continued to spread throughout the nation, until unity was largely restored. Although he made many mistakes, he also learned to be a peacemaker. He knew that doing one's best to get along with others is an important part of following God and leading His people.

Within the Godhead the relationship between the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit is characterized by unity. The relationship between husband and wife is also built on unity of purpose and action. God's desire for us is to live



and work together in unity. This can be accomplished—by the power of God—only when the members of the church relate to each other with Christian love and respect. It is a great blessing to pursue peace with one another and to build harmonious relationships that lead to unity.

PUZZLE 6

BLESSED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS

Instructions: Fit these peacemaking words in the grid below.

AGREEMENT
BLESSED
FORGIVE
PEACE
RECONCILE
RESTORE
STRATEGIC

