4

Talent Turns Toxic

Key References: 2 Samuel 14:25-15:37; *Partiarchs and Prophets*, chap. 72, pp. 727-745; *The Bible Story* (1994), vol. 4, pp. 103-106; Our Beliefs, nos. 8, 7, 14.















powertext

"Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor: If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up" (Ecclesiastes 4:9, 10).

Sabbath

DO Do the activity on page 33.

powerpoint

We accomplish more by working with, rather than against, one another.

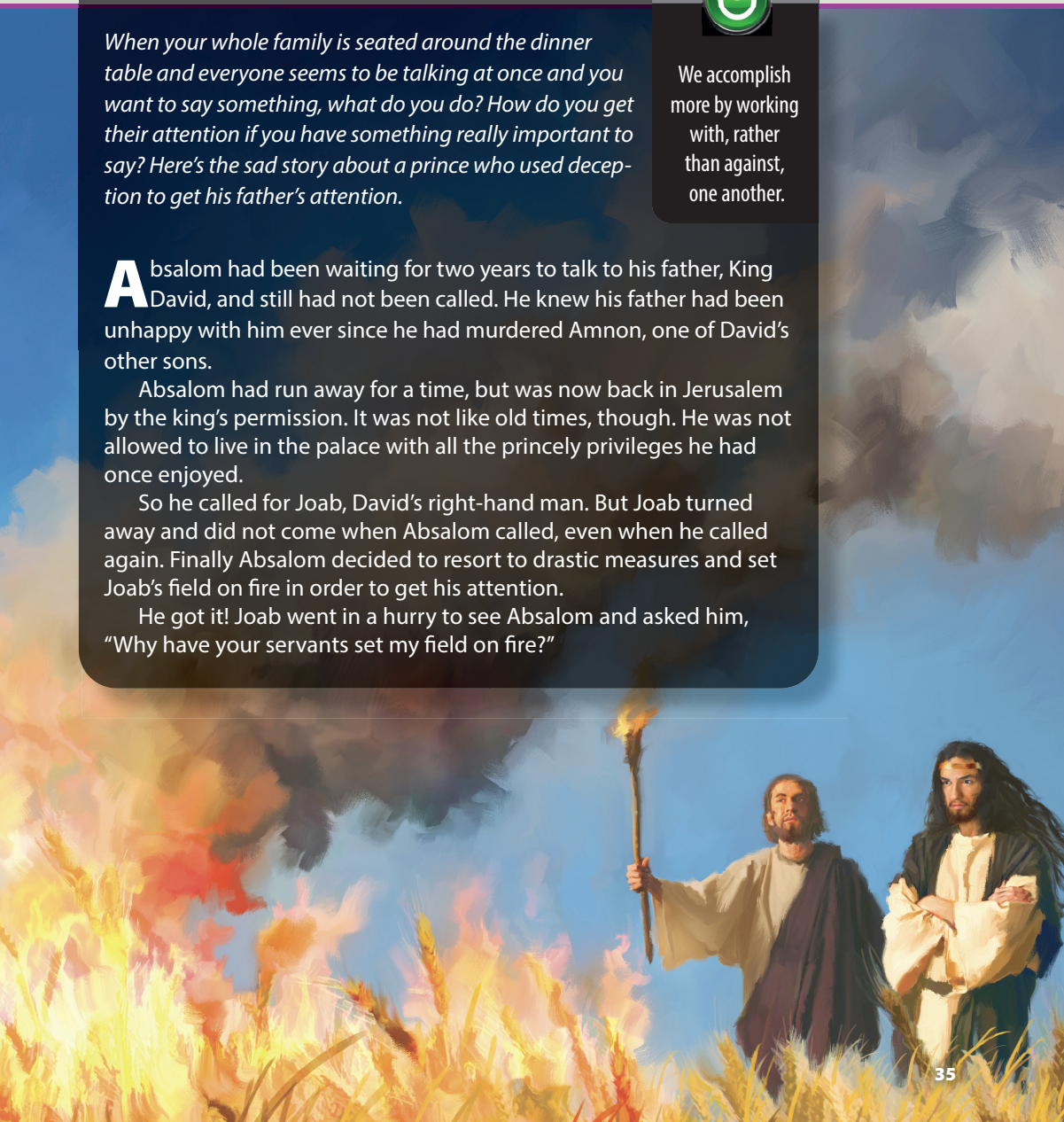
When your whole family is seated around the dinner table and everyone seems to be talking at once and you want to say something, what do you do? How do you get their attention if you have something really important to say? Here's the sad story about a prince who used deception to get his father's attention.

Absalom had been waiting for two years to talk to his father, King David, and still had not been called. He knew his father had been unhappy with him ever since he had murdered Amnon, one of David's other sons.

Absalom had run away for a time, but was now back in Jerusalem by the king's permission. It was not like old times, though. He was not allowed to live in the palace with all the princely privileges he had once enjoyed.

So he called for Joab, David's right-hand man. But Joab turned away and did not come when Absalom called, even when he called again. Finally Absalom decided to resort to drastic measures and set Joab's field on fire in order to get his attention.

He got it! Joab went in a hurry to see Absalom and asked him, "Why have your servants set my field on fire?"



4

Sunday

READ Read 2 Samuel 14:25, 26 and this week's lesson, "Talent Turns Toxic."

BUILD Think of a way to create 40 building blocks, each with one word from the memory verse written on it (number 40 is for the reference). Arrange them with the words in order so they form an altar, a gate, or a wall. Display your creation where you will see it often. Think about these words all week.

LEARN Begin to memorize the power text.

PRAY Ask God to use the talent He has given you to always do good for others.

Monday

READ Read 2 Samuel 14:27-33.

LIST Make a list of the things that Absalom did that show he knew the importance of planning and organization.

TALK Talk with a friend about how you could be more organized to accomplish some good things for God.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Ask God to give you the skills you need to work for Him.

Tuesday

READ Read 2 Samuel 15:1-37.

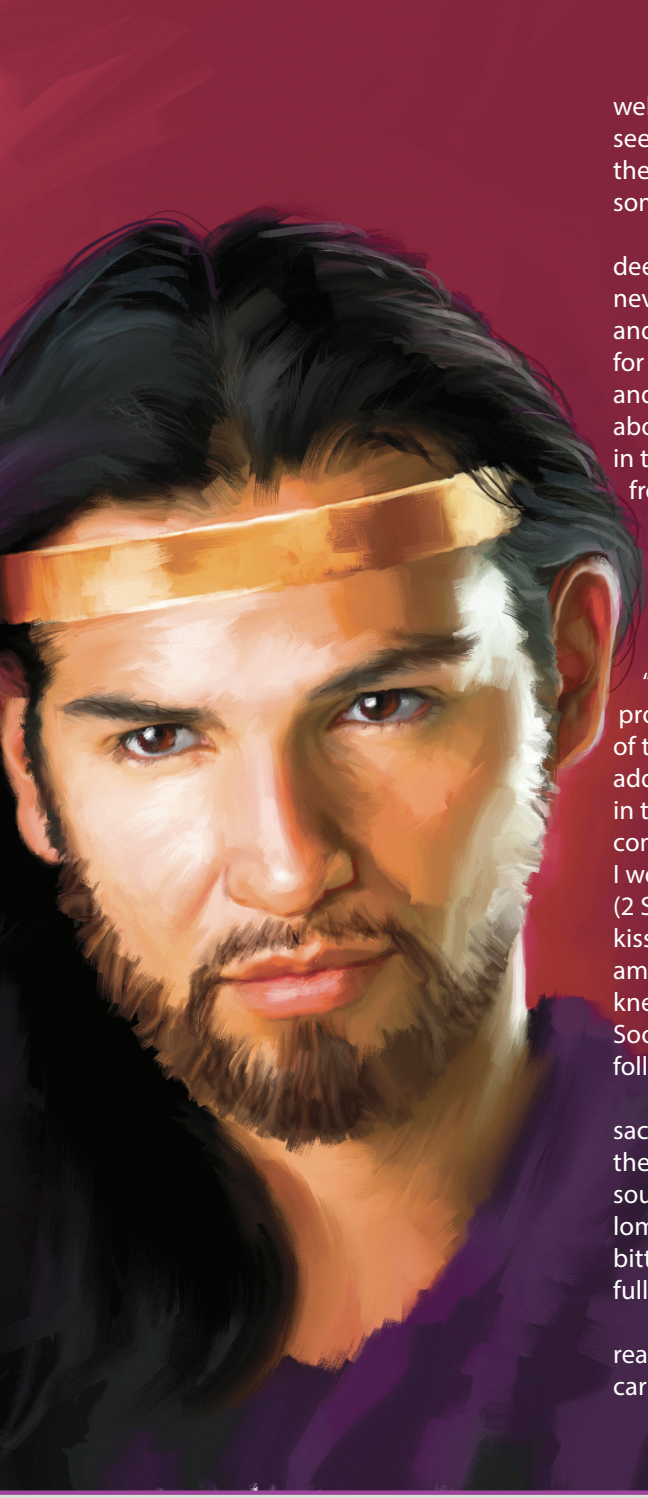
THINK Think about the gifts that God has given you. Use one of those gifts today to help someone else.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Ask God to keep you humble, especially if He has given you impressive gifts and talents.

"Look," Absalom said, "I sent word to you and said, 'Come here so I can send you to the king to ask, "Why have I come from Geshur? It would be better for me if I were still there!"' Now then, I want to see the king's face, and if I am guilty of anything, let him put me to death" (2 Samuel 14:31, 32).

Finally Absalom was able to appear before the king. He bowed before his father respectfully, and his father



welcomed him back. On the surface it seemed that everything was better in their relationship, but there were still some big problems.

Absalom had a root of bitterness held deep within his heart. He felt that he had never had the attention he deserved, and now he decided to go out and get it for himself. He hired a chariot and horses and 50 men to run before him as he rode about Jerusalem. He also began to stand in the gate, where people would come from all around the kingdom to bring their legal problems before the king.

"Where are you from?" Absalom would ask in a friendly voice. When they had talked for a while, Absalom would begin his campaign speech. "Look, your claims are valid and proper, but there is no representative of the king to hear you." Then he would add, "If only I were appointed judge in the land! Then everyone who has a complaint or case could come to me and I would see that they receive justice" (2 Samuel 15:3, 4). With that, he would kiss the person affectionately, a custom among men in those days. He really knew how to get people on his side! Soon many of the people were ready to follow him instead of David.

Pretending to go away for a religious sacrifice, Absalom sent spies throughout the land, saying, "As soon as you hear the sound of the trumpets, then say, 'Absalom is king in Hebron'" (verse 10). The bitter root in Absalom's heart was now a full-blown rebellion.

Word of Absalom's rebellion soon reached Jerusalem, where it was swiftly carried to David's servants.

4

Wednesday

READ Read 1 Corinthians 14:40.

FIND Look up the words "fitting" and "orderly" in a dictionary. Write two or three synonyms for each word.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Ask God to help you live your life in a fitting and orderly manner.

Thursday

READ Read Exodus 18:12-19, 24-26 to find out how Moses led 3 million people.

TALK Interview your pastor, youth pastor, Sabbath School leader, or church board chair. Ask them to explain how the verses above apply to your home church.

WRITE Compare a church building to a church family. Write a poem about it. (Example: The different groups of people in my church are like the different parts of the church building. The juniors are like the lights, brightening things up with their energy . . .)

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Thank God for the diversity of people and talents in your church.

Friday

READ Read 1 Corinthians 3:16, 17.

THINK Think about the different gifts and talents in your church from the poem you wrote yesterday. Which of the parts of the church building do you think you are most suited for? List two ways you can actively perform the responsibilities of that part of the building in the next week.

SAY Repeat the power text, Ecclesiastes 4:9, 10, from memory.

PRAY Ask God to give you opportunities to work with others to serve Him with the talents He has given you.

David knew it was time to run. More than 600 people, along with David, left Jerusalem that day, running for their lives. Some remained faithful, such as the Levites, and some rebelled, joining Absalom's forces.

Our world is the stage of the great cosmic conflict between God and Satan. Absalom's rebellion reminds us of Lucifer's rebellion against God. Much like Lucifer, Absalom was not satisfied with his royal status as a son of the king. He conspired to take his father's throne. Vain ambition rooted in selfishness led to rebellion against God's law and leadership, as well as against David's royal leadership. Absalom used his influence to question David's authority and to gradually lead people to disloyalty toward the king just as Lucifer had done in heaven. The great conflict between good and evil reveals significant lessons about God's character of love. In His





great love God did not destroy Lucifer but gave him time to regret his sin and return to God. During this time the entire universe could witness God's character of self-sacrificial love in contrast with Satan's pride and selfish ambition that led to his full-fledged rebellion against God. When Satan deceived the first human beings and sin entered into our world, God revealed His infinite love for the human race. He had a plan for our salvation. God promised to send His only Son into our world to save everyone who would believe in Him. All you have to do is accept God's amazing gift. His love will change your life!

PUZZLE 4

PUT ON LOVE

Instructions: Unscramble each word in boldface to reveal the complete Bible verse about the fellowship of the community of believers.

"Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with **acimnoopss, deiknnss, hiilmtuy, eeeglnnsst** and **aceeinpt.** Bear with each other and **efgiorv** one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these **eirstuv** put on **elov,** which binds them all **eeghortt** in **ceefprt intuy**" (Colossians 3:12-14).