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Purifying the Temple

Key References: 2 Chronicles 29; *Prophets and Kings*, chap. 28, pp. 331-339; *The Bible Story* (1994), vol. 5, pp. 127-132; Our Beliefs, nos. 12, 11, 21.



Sabbath

DO Do the activity on page 33.

powertext

"I rejoiced with those who said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the LORD'" (Psalm 122:1, NIV).

powerpoint

When we worship together, we reflect God's love to our church family.

Does your mom or dad ever get after you to clean your room? Is it a mess, with dirty clothes lying on the floor, piles of things you are "saving," schoolbooks stacked up, your bed unmade? If it is, you can relate to the condition of the Temple before a new king cleaned it up.

King Joash may have depended on his uncle Jehoiada too much. It's possible he never learned to do the right thing just because it was right, instead of just because his uncle told him to do it. We may never know. But what we do know is that after Jehoiada died, Joash was persuaded to allow the people to worship pagan gods instead of the God of heaven.

Things got so bad, in fact, that when Joash's own cousin, Zechariah, the son of Jehoiada, warned the people that God couldn't bless them while they turned against Him, the king approved the murder of Zechariah. How soon Joash had forgotten about how Uncle Jehoiada had saved his life and promoted him to the throne of Israel!

But, as was the custom, it was soon "payback time." After a serious defeat by the Syrian army, during which Joash was injured, the king was murdered in his own bed by two of his officials. This was done to avenge the death of Zechariah.

The worship of the true God continued to be neglected through four generations of kings. But finally Joash's great-great-great-grandson Hezekiah became king at the age of 25. His own father had smashed all the articles in the Temple that were used for worship and closed its

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Sunday

READ Read 2 Chronicles 29:1, 2 and this week's story, "Purifying the Temple."

LEARN Begin to learn the power text, Psalm 122:1.

PRAY Ask God to show you what it means to consecrate your life in service to Him.

Monday

READ Read 2 Chronicles 29:3–14.

THINK According to Deuteronomy 16:11, who makes up the family of God?

HELP Offer your help to participate in a church project.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Pray that you may get to know and support people in your church family.

Tuesday

READ Read 2 Chronicles 29:15–26.

EXAMINE What are some of the things presented in this passage that were purified by the priests and Levites?

THINK What areas of your life need to be purified by Jesus? What steps do you take to make sure that you allow God to clean and purify each area of your life?

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Thank God that you can worship Him at church.

doors. Then, he had set up altars on every street corner in Jerusalem so the people could worship idols. Hezekiah must have watched his father do these things. An uncomfortable distance must have been created between them since they didn't think alike; the father hated God, and the son quietly loved God. The country was in a mess.

Jerusalem was attacked again and again by hostile armies who killed the young men and captured the young women and children and took them away as hostages. These were horrifying years, and all because God's people had tried to copy the worship of those other countries rather than staying true to Him.

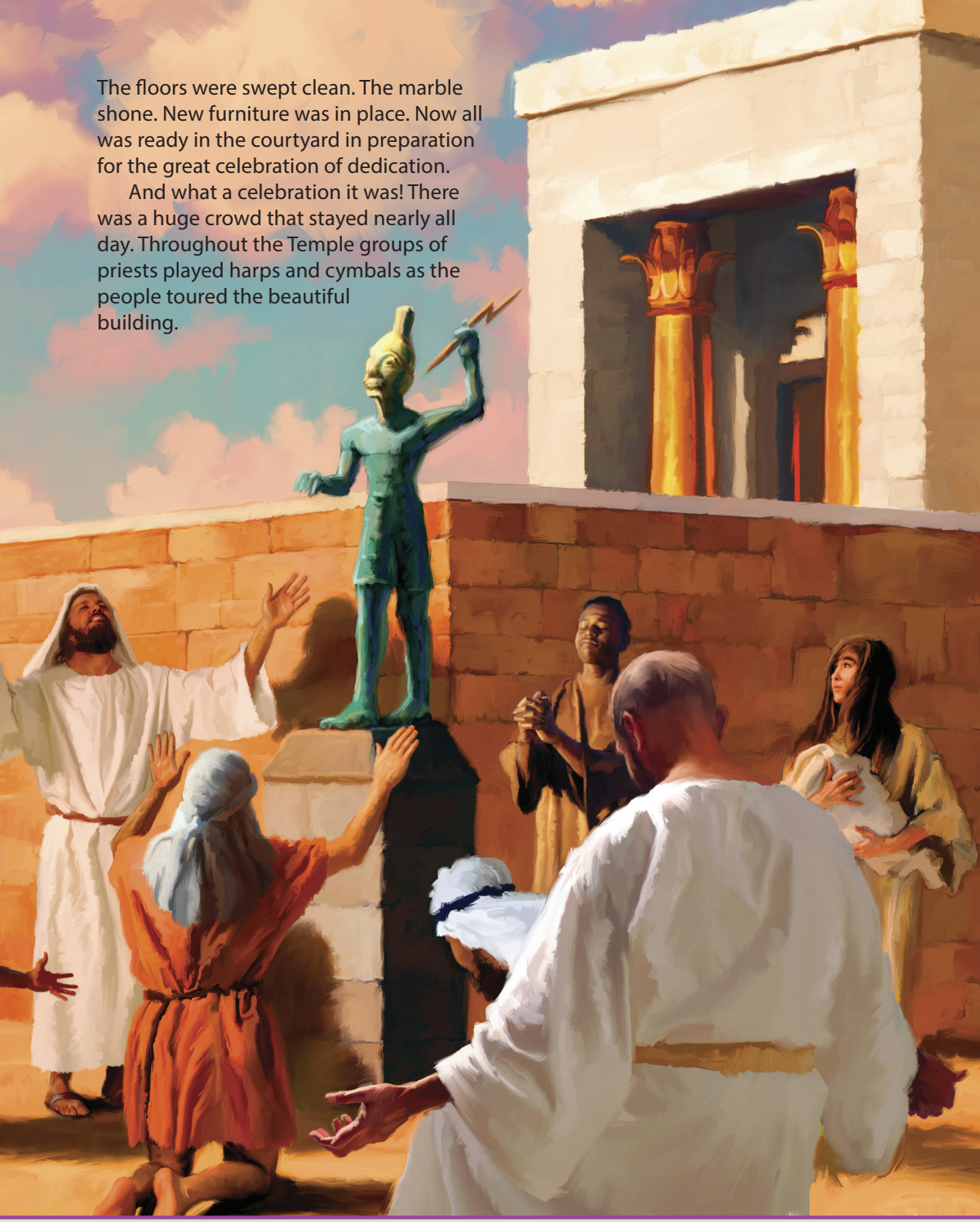
But finally King Hezekiah came to power. He determined to make things right again. The first thing he had to do was to ask the priests to rededicate themselves to the Lord's work.

"Listen to me, Levites!" Hezekiah called to the priests. "Consecrate yourselves now and consecrate the temple of the LORD, the God of your ancestors. Remove all defilement from the sanctuary" (2 Chronicles 29:5, NIV). Hezekiah and the priests determined to repair the Temple to show their love and respect for God. The Temple had been locked and unused for years. Everything that had been used for the worship of God was broken or stolen; things used for the worship of false gods lay strewn on the floor. But within two weeks the Temple was ready to be dedicated to God once more. The mess was gone.



The floors were swept clean. The marble shone. New furniture was in place. Now all was ready in the courtyard in preparation for the great celebration of dedication.

And what a celebration it was! There was a huge crowd that stayed nearly all day. Throughout the Temple groups of priests played harps and cymbals as the people toured the beautiful building.



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Wednesday

READ Read 2 Chronicles 29:27-36.

WRITE Create a church program that involves church members in the various aspects of the worship service. You may draw an illustration of how you view praising God with others in the church community.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Thank God for your church family.

Thursday

READ Read Psalm 9.

WRITE After reading the above text, write your own psalm of thanks to God for what He has done for you.

CLEAN Clean and/or reorganize something in your life that has needed it for some time: a closet, dresser drawers, school locker, etc. As you do so, think about the experience of King Hezekiah cleaning out the Temple. What area of your heart needs purifying?

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Ask God to help keep your life "clean" and pure.

Friday

READ Read Psalm 51:10.

ACT At family worship, act out the Bible story found in 2 Chronicles 29.

SING Sing your favorite worship song with your family.

THINK By purifying our bodies with a clean lifestyle, we make them a fit dwelling for the Spirit of God. What can you do to make your body healthier? What can you do to make your heart cleaner?

REPEAT Say the power text by memory.

PRAY Ask God to help keep your body clean and pure.

Then it was time for the great sacrificial offerings like those their ancestors had presented to God in the desert. Seven young bulls and seven rams were killed as the first offering. Then the priests placed their hands on the heads of seven male goats and symbolically transferred the sins of the people to the goats that were then sacrificed.

Finally seven male lambs were offered to the Lord. The lambs represented the Messiah, the Lamb of God, whose death would save them. The huge crowd began to sing praises to God. Some of the priests blew their trumpets along with the singing. Other instruments accompanied the singing as well. They continued this praise throughout the day until the entire offering was consumed. Then they brought their own offering, 600 bulls, 3,000 sheep, and 3,000 goats. They had a joyful celebration with their friends while worshipping God. The sense of peace that comes from honoring and praising God was felt once again in Jerusalem.



PUZZLE 4

ALL IN THE FAMILY

Instructions: Start at the letter just to the right (EAST) of number 1. Follow the compass directions and number of spaces, then start at the letter just to the EAST of number 2 and repeat the sequence. Repeat for numbers 3 through 5 and spell out a Bible verse.

From 1st letter, go 1 space E, 5 spaces S, 1 space W,
2 spaces E, 5 spaces N, 1 space E, 5 spaces S, 1 space E, 5 spaces N.
The last letter of each row (1-5) will continue the verse
on the following rows. This is repeated for each row 1-5.

^ NORTH

1 N O U A T
2 H E Y O H
3 R I N D C
4 H O F Y I
< WEST 5 S A T O T EAST >
Y W O R E
O B D F C
T S A E A
E N O O U
A P R F I

SOUTH v