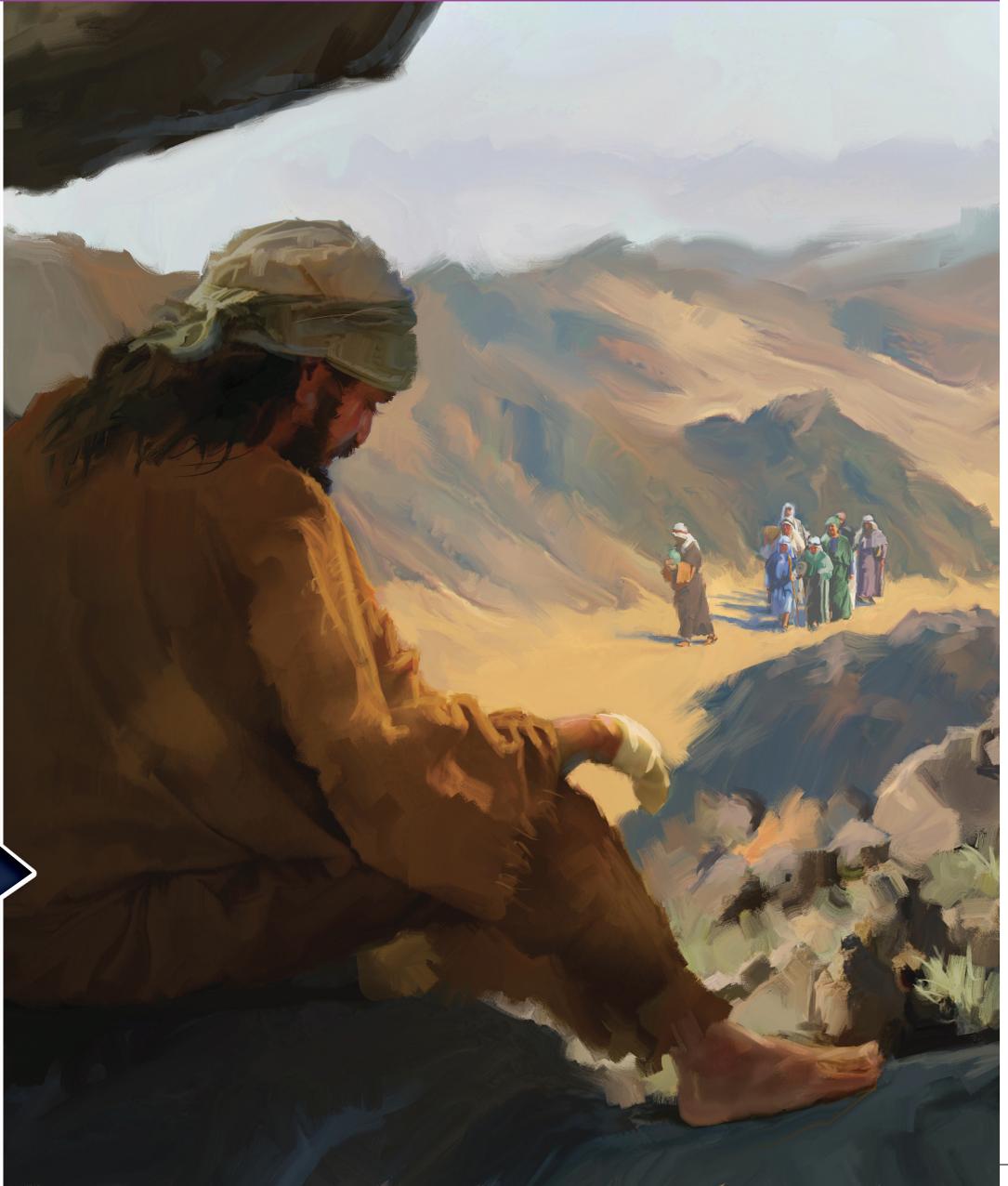


6

Touching the Untouchable

Key References: Mark 1:40-45; Matthew 8:2-4; Luke 5:12-16; *The Desire of Ages*, chap. 27, pp. 262-266; *The Bible Story* (1994), vol. 8, pp. 37, 38; Our Beliefs nos. 4, 22, 11



powertext

“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God” (2 Corinthians 1:3, 4).

Have you ever had the measles or chicken pox and were so sick that you thought you would never get well? Maybe no one came to see you for fear that they might catch whatever you had. Maybe you went to a hospital for a long time. Can you imagine what it would be like if you were so sick that you could NEVER go home again?

It was a face everybody turned from in horror: deformed appearance and very little expression in the dull, unblinking, sand-crust-ed eyes. The man had nothing to live for. This was the face of a man with leprosy.

From the day he was forced to leave his wife and children because of his illness, people ran away when he warned them by shouting “Unclean! Unclean!” This was the rule God had given to Moses, and everyone followed it. He didn’t wonder about the rule. The truth was, he didn’t want anyone else to get this terrible disease.

Through the years this man had caught glimpses of his family from a distance, but he couldn’t hug them. He had almost forgotten how wonderful a warm and loving hug could feel—almost, but not quite.

From time to time he heard rumors of someone called “Jesus” who was supposedly going from town to town healing people. It seemed too good to be true, and too outrageous to be believed, as most rumors were. And yet, in his desperate situation, the leper chose to believe. What could it hurt to believe in a good rumor?

Finally, one day, the leper’s chance came. He pulled his rags over his face and crept behind a large rock, watching from a distance as Jesus and His close friends moved slowly down the dusty trail into town. Soon they were close enough to the leper that he knew he had to make his move or lose his chance forever. He jumped up and hurried toward Jesus, waving his hands in the air and shouting to get the attention of the miracle worker.

He skidded to a stop and knelt down right in front of Him. He didn’t

Sabbath

Do Do the activity on page 47.



Showing compassion to others is one way to serve God.

6

Sunday

READ Read 1 Peter 3:8 and this week's story, "Touching the Untouchable."

MAKE Use old newspapers or magazines to find pictures of people in distress or trouble. Cut out the pictures and use them to make a collage, leaving room at the top or bottom to write the power text. Place it where you will see it often.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Ask God to help you see others who need help.

Monday

READ Read 1 Peter 3:9.

FIND Find the word "compassionate" in a dictionary. Check the words below that are related to this word:

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> charitable | <input type="checkbox"/> popular | <input type="checkbox"/> humane |
| <input type="checkbox"/> cruel | <input type="checkbox"/> merciful | <input type="checkbox"/> appreciated |
| <input type="checkbox"/> honest | <input type="checkbox"/> selfish | <input type="checkbox"/> sympathetic |
| <input type="checkbox"/> angry | | |

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Ask God to give you a compassionate heart.

Tuesday

READ Read Mark 1:40–45.

WRITE In your Bible study journal, write about a situation that seems impossible for you to solve. Write a simple prayer to God, similar to that of the leper: "Lord, if You are willing, . . ."

THINK Even though Jesus often disagreed with the religious leaders of His day, He told the healed leper to show himself to the priest. Why do you think He did this?

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Pray the prayer that you have written in your Bible study journal, believing that God has the best in store for you.

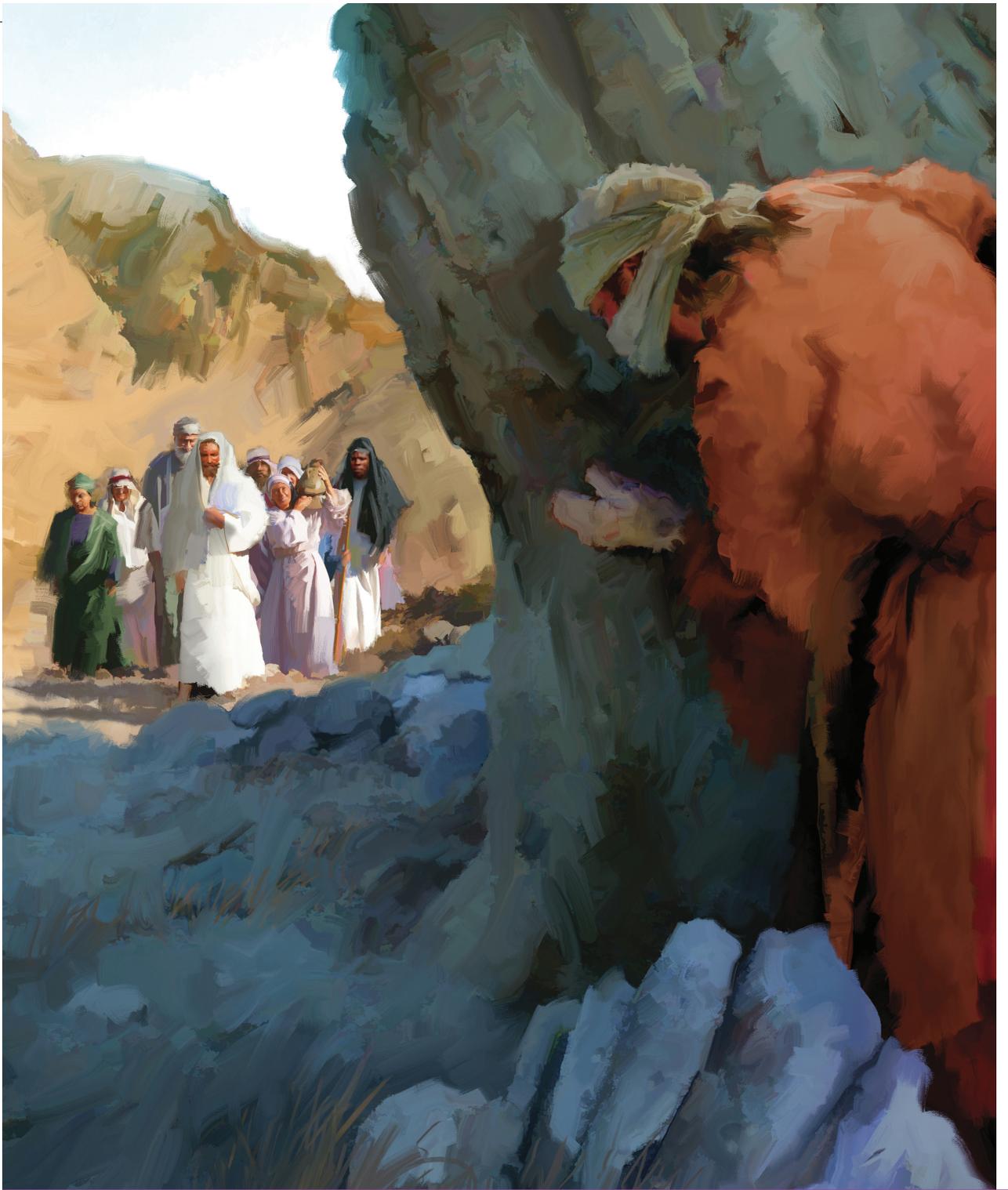
dare look into Jesus' eyes. He just said very humbly with his face to the ground, "If you are willing, you can make me clean" (Mark 1:40).

As the man knelt there with his face to the scorching sand, he sensed the heat rising to his head. But his face, which could not feel anything, felt no pain. Suddenly, however, the man did feel something, something he had wanted to feel for so long. Somebody touched him! He was aware of a warm hand on his back.

The man began to remember how good the hugs of his family and friends had felt so long ago. He held his breath. Surely Jesus was more powerful than the disease, for Jesus was not afraid to touch him. Did this mean Jesus would heal him? The leper's heart raced with hope.

Jesus said gently, "I am willing. Be clean!" (verse 41).

All of a sudden the man started to feel that the sand was hot on his face.



6

Wednesday

READ Read Luke 5:12-16.

WRITE Why do you think that the news about this miracle spread everywhere? Write your answer in the Bible study journal.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Pray for wisdom about the best way to help others.

Thursday

READ Read Philippians 2:1-5 and Romans 12:15.

PHONE Phone a friend and ask what they think it means to “rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn” (Romans 12:15).

LIST List five specific things that you and a friend can do to live out the principle of this text.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Ask God for compassion to serve others.

Friday

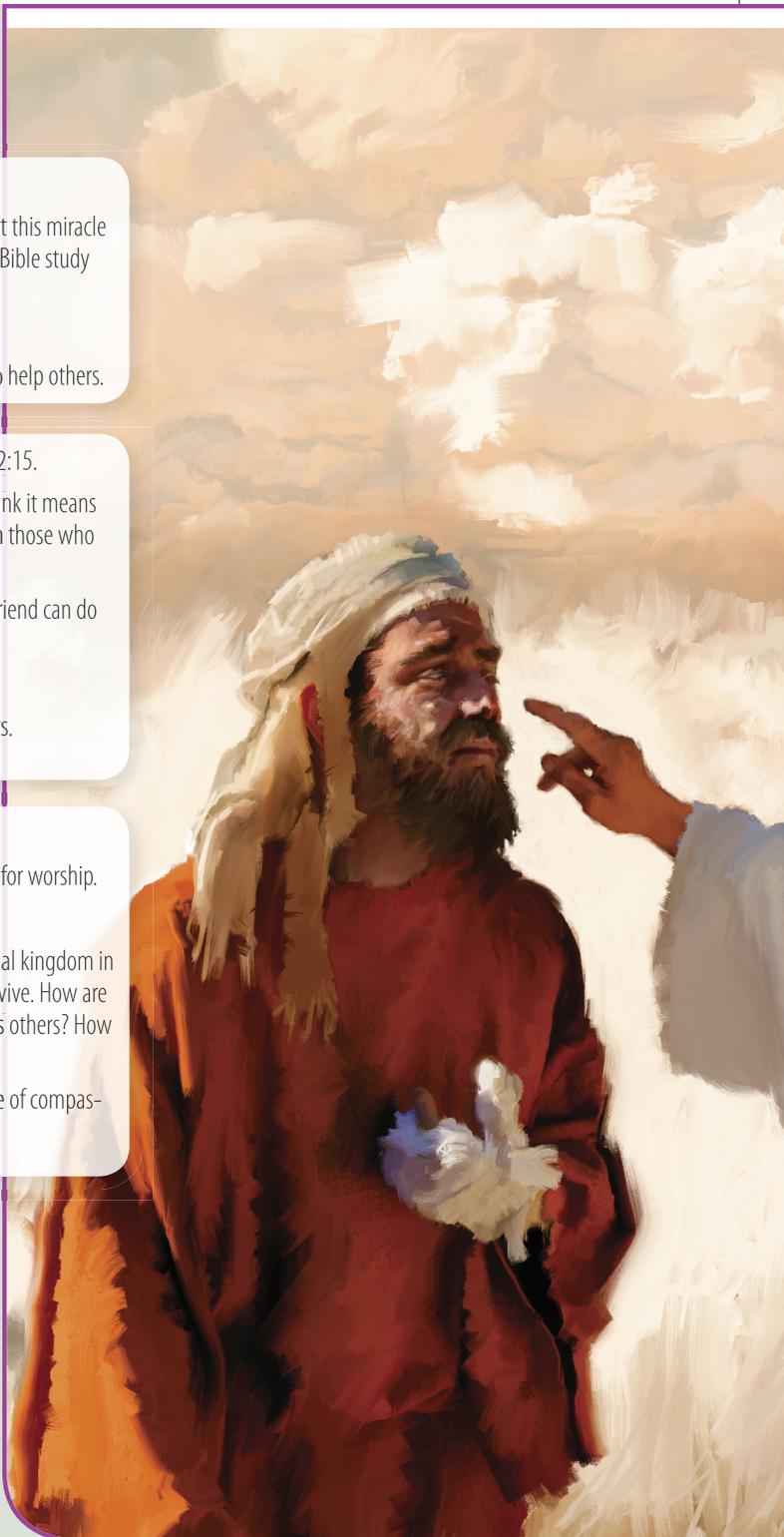
READ Read Matthew 8:2-4 with your family.

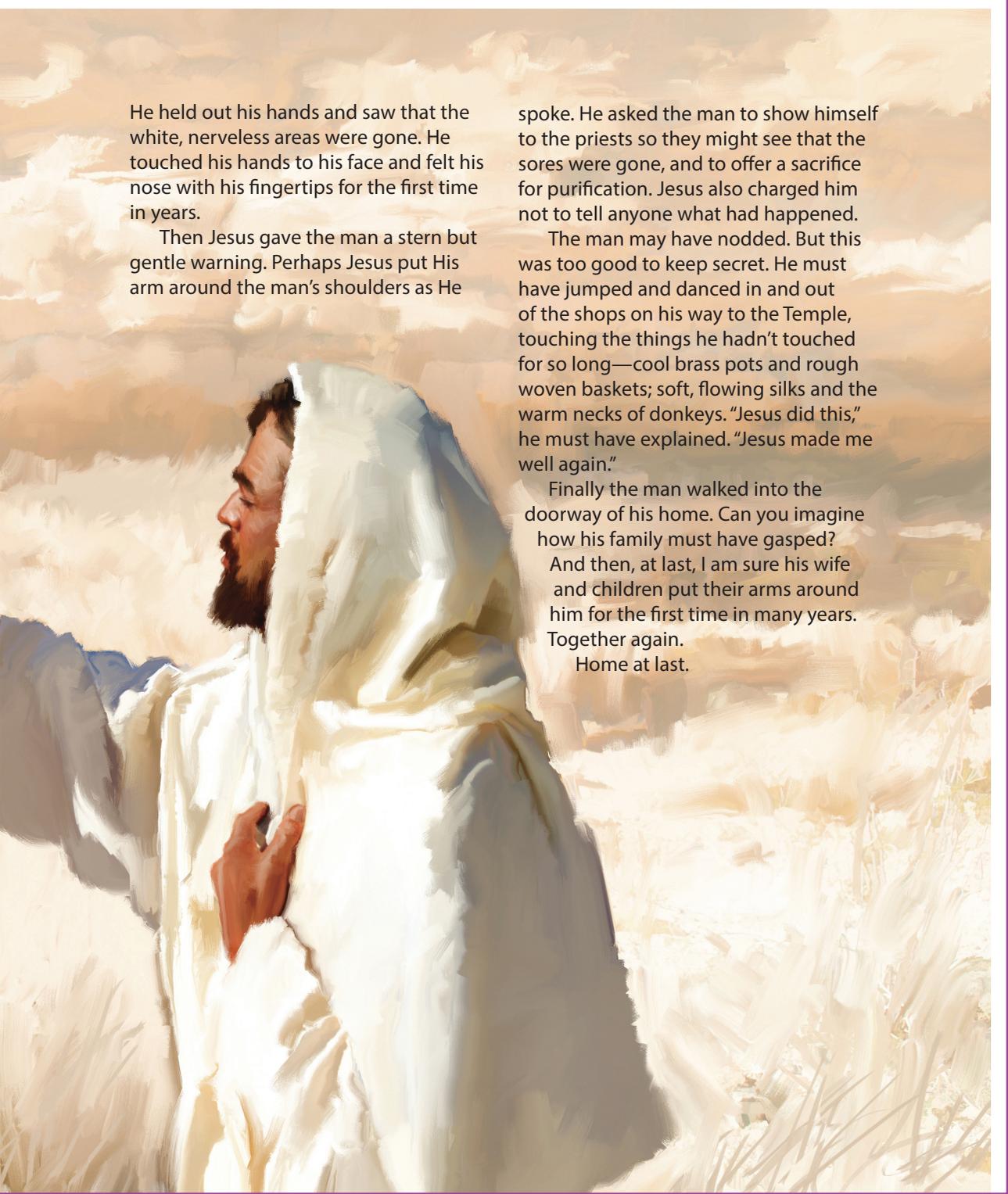
ACT Act out the Bible story with your family for worship.

REPEAT Repeat the power text by memory.

THINK Think of two examples from the animal kingdom in which different species help each other to survive. How are these two situations like a Christian who helps others? How are they different?

PRAY Thank Jesus for His wonderful example of compassion to others.





He held out his hands and saw that the white, nerveless areas were gone. He touched his hands to his face and felt his nose with his fingertips for the first time in years.

Then Jesus gave the man a stern but gentle warning. Perhaps Jesus put His arm around the man's shoulders as He

spoke. He asked the man to show himself to the priests so they might see that the sores were gone, and to offer a sacrifice for purification. Jesus also charged him not to tell anyone what had happened.

The man may have nodded. But this was too good to keep secret. He must have jumped and danced in and out of the shops on his way to the Temple, touching the things he hadn't touched for so long—cool brass pots and rough woven baskets; soft, flowing silks and the warm necks of donkeys. "Jesus did this," he must have explained. "Jesus made me well again."

Finally the man walked into the doorway of his home. Can you imagine how his family must have gasped?

And then, at last, I am sure his wife and children put their arms around him for the first time in many years. Together again.

Home at last.

LOVE ONE ANOTHER

Instructions: Fill in a letter in the Bible verse from its corresponding shape below. If a letter has two or more symbols, the letter is in the intersection of both or all shapes. Use each letter once. **Clues:** Found in Genesis. Relates to an event surrounding brothers.

