4

A Desperate Father

Key References: John 4:46-54; *The Desire of Ages*, chap. 20, pp. 196-200; *The Bible Story* (1994), vol. 7, pp. 153-156; Our Beliefs, nos. 22, 10, 11.



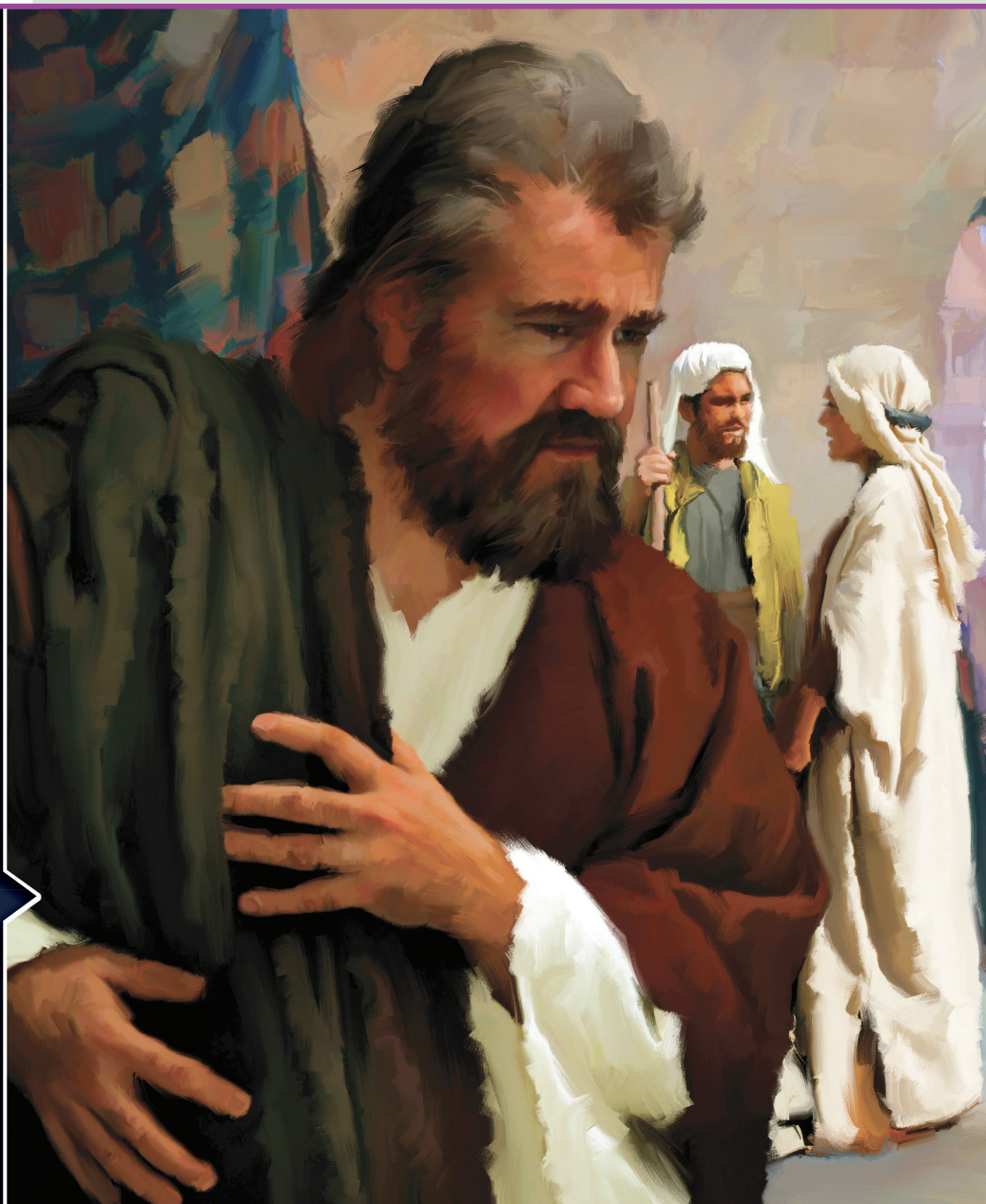












power**text**

"But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd. Then He said to His disciples, 'The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest'" (Matthew 9:36-38).

Sabbath

DO Do the activity on page 33.

power**point**

Jesus uses our service to help others trust Him.

Think of a time you made a request for something that you were hopeful you would get. The father in this story went to Jesus hopeful that the Great Healer might heal his son. Let's read about how Jesus' miraculous healing of the royal official's son strengthened the father's faith.

The news that Jesus was coming to Cana spread like wildfire across the town. Can you imagine how it must have been to have Jesus visit your town? Every sick person seized the news with hopeful expectation. The news reached even to the nearby city of Capernaum. There a noble Jewish man who was an officer for the Roman emperor received the news with a glimmer of hope. Immediately he thought of his son who was very ill. The physicians had given up hope that the boy would get well and live. They had come time after time to try their remedies on the young man, and time after time they had concluded that his sickness was incurable.

When the desperate father heard that Jesus was coming to Cana, his hope was rekindled once again. He knew he had to meet the Great Healer and invite Him to their home. Perhaps Jesus could help his son.

He set out on his journey to Cana. But when he finally found Jesus he remarked to his surprise that the Great Healer was only a plainly dressed man. The royal official grasped the small flicker of hope and approached Jesus with his request burning in his heart.

Jesus knew that there was no pain like the pain of a father being separated from his child by death. That was the pain His heavenly Father would experience when Jesus would hang dying on the cross. The heart of Jesus felt compassion for this royal official, and He longed to help.

Jesus also knew that the royal official had decided to test Him. He wanted to see if Jesus could heal his son. Only then would the royal official believe that He was God's promised Messiah.

4

Sunday

READ Read John 4:46-50 and this week's lesson, "A Desperate Father."

REVIEW Review the power text, Matthew 9:36-38.

ASK Ask an adult to share with you how they helped someone and as a result that person began to trust in God.

PRAY Ask God to show you how to be a "harvest worker."

Monday

READ Read John 4:51-54.

THINK How did the father's faith change after Jesus had filled his most urgent need?

FIND Volunteer in a community service agency or help a younger child in your neighborhood or at school.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Ask God to help you be of service to a child.

Tuesday

READ Read Numbers 27:16, 17; Matthew 9:35-38.

MAKE Draw a picture, or write a description of what a "weary and scattered," or a flock of sheep without a shepherd, or a plentiful harvest field would look like.

THINK What people might these descriptions represent?

DO What could you do to be a worker in that "field"? How could you serve them?

REVIEW Review the power text.

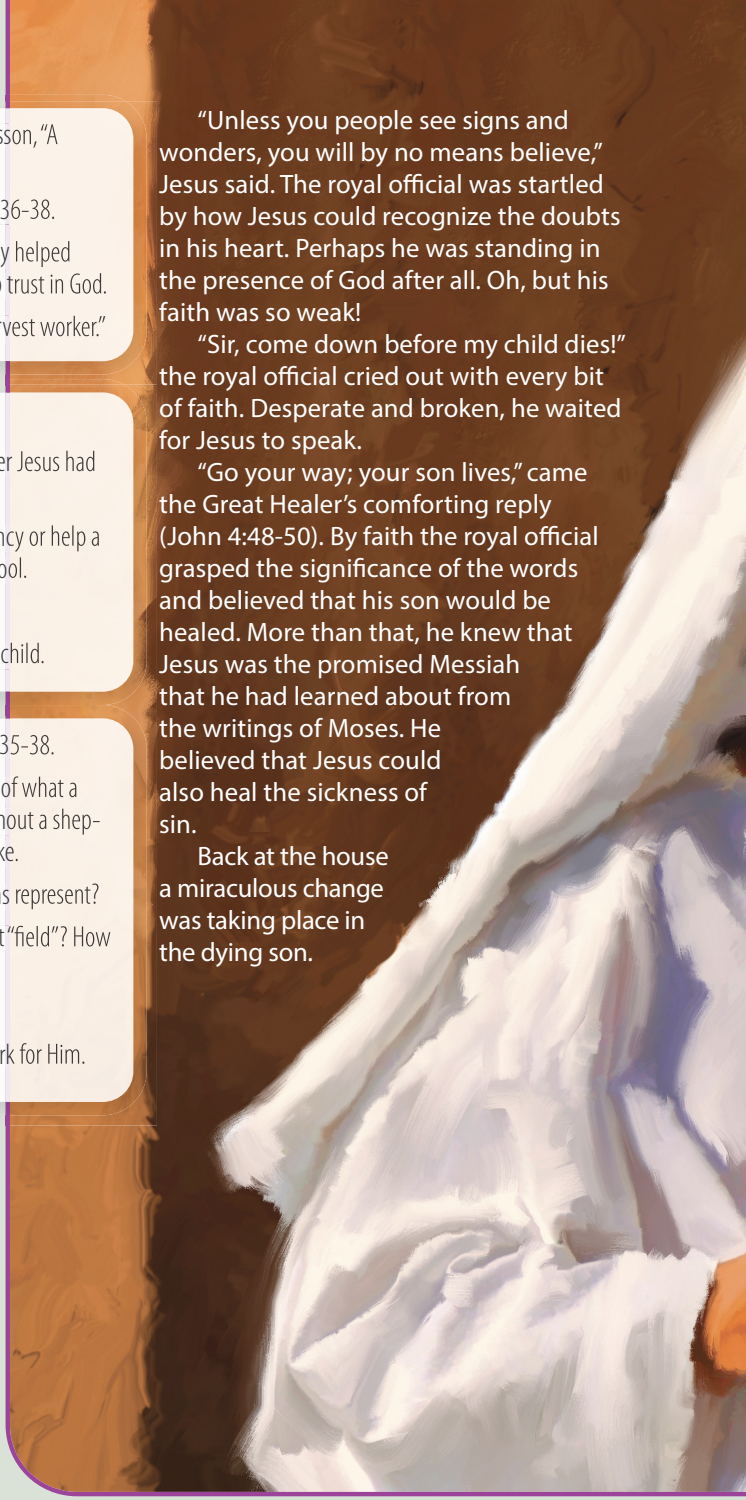
PRAY Thank Jesus for the opportunity to work for Him.

"Unless you people see signs and wonders, you will by no means believe," Jesus said. The royal official was startled by how Jesus could recognize the doubts in his heart. Perhaps he was standing in the presence of God after all. Oh, but his faith was so weak!

"Sir, come down before my child dies!" the royal official cried out with every bit of faith. Desperate and broken, he waited for Jesus to speak.

"Go your way; your son lives," came the Great Healer's comforting reply (John 4:48-50). By faith the royal official grasped the significance of the words and believed that his son would be healed. More than that, he knew that Jesus was the promised Messiah that he had learned about from the writings of Moses. He believed that Jesus could also heal the sickness of sin.

Back at the house a miraculous change was taking place in the dying son.





Wednesday

READ Read Matthew 21:22.

WRITE Write a diary entry for the official. Record his reactions and his observations. How do you think he felt?

THINK When has Jesus performed a miracle, whether big or small, in your life? How did you feel? How did that experience make a difference in your life? How does knowing that God takes care of you help your faith grow?

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Ask God to help you share what He has done for you that others may be encouraged to have faith in God.

Thursday

READ Read Luke 9:1-6.

TALK Talk with an adult about how to make a difference in your community. In what ways can you serve others? How will you depend on God while serving? How would your service help people place their trust in Jesus?

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Praise God for the opportunity to serve others.

Friday

READ Read Luke 10:2.

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

SAY Say the power text, Matthew 9:36-38, by memory.

PLAN With your family, make plans for a service project to help some people with various needs that you can fill.

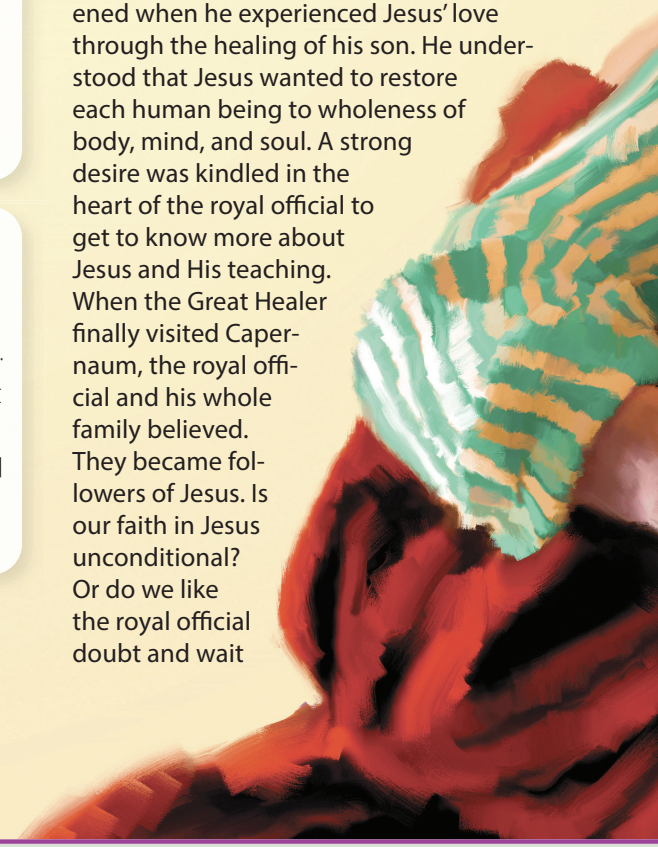
PRAY Praise God, expressing to Him your wholehearted gratitude for His care and provisions. Ask Him to bless your plans to serve others.

The servants noticed that he was getting his normal color back and that his fever was gone.

The next morning the servants ran off to meet their master and tell him the good news. They rejoiced as they told the father that his son was alive and well. When the father asked about the time when the boy recovered, the servants replied, "Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him." The royal official nodded. He knew that was the moment when Jesus had said, "Your son lives" (verses 52, 53).

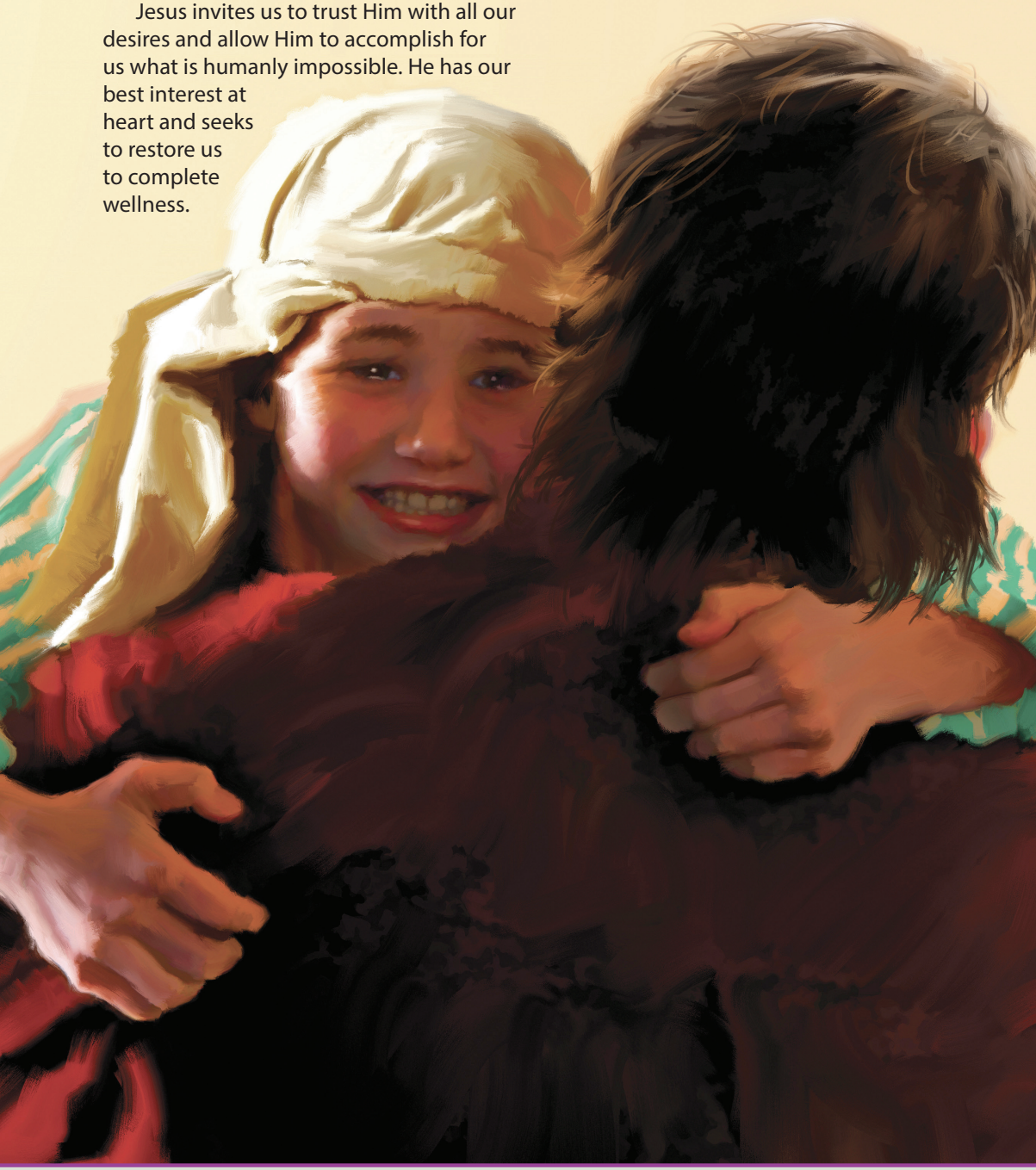
This miracle helped the royal official and his entire family to believe.

The royal official's faith was strengthened when he experienced Jesus' love through the healing of his son. He understood that Jesus wanted to restore each human being to wholeness of body, mind, and soul. A strong desire was kindled in the heart of the royal official to get to know more about Jesus and His teaching. When the Great Healer finally visited Capernaum, the royal official and his whole family believed. They became followers of Jesus. Is our faith in Jesus unconditional? Or do we like the royal official doubt and wait



for God to grant our request?

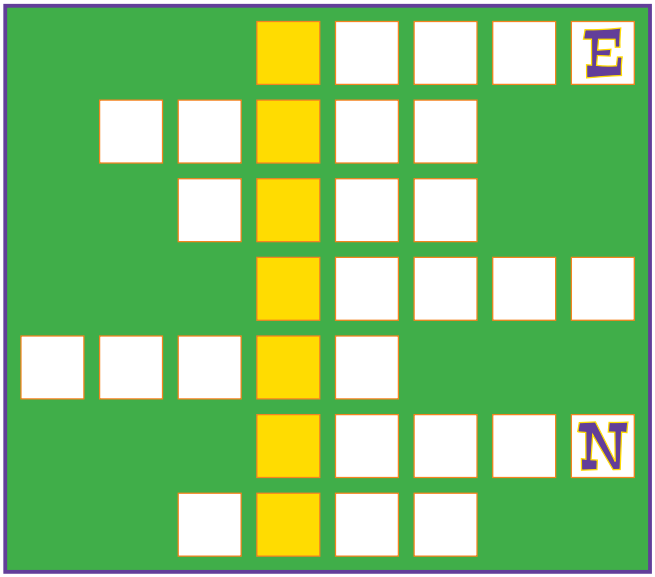
Jesus invites us to trust Him with all our desires and allow Him to accomplish for us what is humanly impossible. He has our best interest at heart and seeks to restore us to complete wellness.



PUZZLE 4

OUR WITNESS

Instructions: Unscramble the letters on the right and fit them in the squares to their left to reveal the secret word (reading down) in the yellow squares.



AEHRS

ECERH

YAPR

IISTV

CIMSU

ACELN

EHLP