3

From Prophet to Prisoner

Key References: Matthew 11:1-15; Luke 7:18-28; *The Desire of Ages,* chap. 22, pp. 214-225; *The Bible Story* (1994), vol. 8, pp. 22-24; Our Beliefs, nos. 3, 4, 10















power**text**

"This is the one about whom it is written: 'I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you'" (Matthew 11:10).

power**point**

We can come to God with our doubts, and He will understand and answer.

Have you ever waited to hear from a friend who had moved to another city? Perhaps you heard about them from others, but waited anxiously to hear from them personally. Did you begin to doubt their friendship?

John lay flat on a cold, hard slab of stone. The only sounds were the pitter-patter of mice feet and the grinding of his own thoughts. Suddenly he sat up. Someone was coming. Was it news? Would he be summoned somewhere? As the footsteps approached, he heard the voice of a good friend, one of his disciples. His heart slowly slid back from his throat to its normal resting place.

"What news do you have for me, friend?" he asked softly. His voice sounded raspy and strange from not being used for so long. "What news is there from the outside world? More important, what news do you bring me of Jesus?"

His friend looked in through the barred window. "Jesus is teaching and preaching in the towns of Galilee, Rabbi. Shall we confront Him? Isn't He trying to take over your work? Please, tell me what to do, and I'll do it."

Sabbath

DO Do this week's activity on page 32.

3

Sunday

READ Read Matthew 11:1-5 and this week's story, "From Prophet to Prisoner."

ILLUSTRATE Ask your family to help you make a wall hanging with the power text on it. Hang it where the whole family can enjoy it.

LEARN Begin to learn the power text, Matthew 11:10.

PRAY Ask God to show you what He wants to teach you this week.

Monday

READ Read Matthew 11:6-10.

WRITE Picture that you are one of John's disciples who sees and hears all that Jesus does that day. In your Bible study journal, write a short report for John on what you saw Jesus do and heard Him say.

PRAY Ask God to show you what He is doing for you today.

Tuesday

READ Read Matthew 11:11-15.

THINK Why do you think that though Jesus viewed John the Baptist as the greatest prophet who ever lived He said that the least person who enters the kingdom of God would be greater than John?

JOURNAL Start keeping a record throughout this week of how God answers your prayers, guides your decision-making, and shows His love through your everyday life.

PRAY Practice beginning each prayer with thanks and praise for what God does for you.



"No, no," John replied slowly. "Haven't you heard what I've said about this Man? He is the one of whom I spoke when I said that 'after me comes the one more powerful than I, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie' [Mark 1:7]. Don't you understand?" He stopped for a moment to rest his weary voice.

"Go and find Jesus. Ask Him this question: 'Are You the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?' Bring His response to me. Then we will know if He is the Messiah."

With that, John motioned for his disciple to leave, slowly lowering himself back down onto the stone slab.

The disciple quickly related all that John had said to the other disciples who were waiting. They set out immediately for Galilee.

As they neared the town where Jesus was, it seemed that everyone they met had a smile on their face. The whole town was talking about Jesus. They found the town crowded with people, including many blind, crippled, and deaf from surrounding towns. All were crowding in to get a glimpse of Jesus, to see His face,



to hear His words, and to receive healing from His hands.

John's disciples jostled their way in to the center of town where Jesus was busy at work. "Excuse me, Rabbi, but we have come from John the Baptist. He has sent us to ask You, 'Are You the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?' "

Jesus didn't reply. He simply kept on doing what He was doing. A man with a skin disease known as leprosy approached. Jesus held out His hand to him.

"Lord," the man said, "if you are willing, you can make me clean."

"Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. 'I am willing,' he said. 'Be clean!' " (Matthew 8:2, 3).

The man, finding himself free of the disease that had tormented him for so many years, shouted and jumped for joy. "Glory to the Lord!" he cried.

John's disciples thought that perhaps Jesus had not heard their question. So they repeated it. "Rabbi, John has sent us to ask You, 'Are You the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?' " Still Jesus did not reply. So John's disciples sat down and waited.

All day people came to Jesus to be healed and to listen to His simple yet powerful words. The sun began to sink toward the horizon, and still Jesus worked and taught.

Then, when John's disciples were just about ready to give up and return to John

3

Wednesday

READ Read Luke 7:18-28.

DISCUSS With a friend, discuss how Jesus' miracles affected John's disciples as well as John, who wanted to know whether Jesus was the Messiah.

ROLE-PLAY Role-play the conversation that John and his disciples may have had when they returned with an account of Jesus' ministry. Plan to present it in family worship on Friday or in class on Sabbath.

Thursday

READ Read 1 John 5:14.

THINK Think about a time God surprised you by answering a difficult prayer.

DESCRIBE If you could describe this experience through your senses (create a metaphor for it), what did it look, smell, sound, feel, and taste like? (For example: the experience smelled like the air after rain, felt like floating down a quiet river in an inner tube, tasted like a ripe mango.)

PRAY When you experience God's goodness in response to your prayers, remember to express your gratitude and praise to Him.

Friday

LOOK Find and read the following passages: Psalm 91:4; 1 Corinthians 1:8, 9; 10:13.

COMPARE In your Bible study journal, compare these verses with your own experience of God's faithfulness. Do we have any reason to doubt God's faithfulness?

SHARE Share the verse you like most with your family at worship or at Sabbath School tomorrow.

ROLE-PLAY During worship tonight, role-play with your family the conversation that might have taken place between John and his disciples.

without an answer, Jesus stopped and came toward them. "Go back and report to John what you hear and see: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor" (Matthew 11:4, 5).

With that, Jesus turned and walked away into the dusk. John's disciples stood



quietly for a moment. Such a powerful yet simple Man. He reminded them of John. They headed out of town to find a place to rest for the night.

The next morning John's disciples set out early. They were anxious to relate to John all that they had seen and heard, and the words that Jesus had given them. Once again John heard the sound of footsteps. He sat up as his loyal friend and disciple came to the bars again. "Well, what words do you bring me from Jesus?" John asked, anxious for the report.

As his friend related to him all that he had seen and heard, John relaxed. "This is the One," he said softly. "Go now and follow Him."



PUZZLE 3

TRUE FRIENDSHIP

Instructions: If we obey Jesus' teachings, we are His friends and He is our friend—a true friend who will never desert us. To read a Bible verse that confirms His true friendship (even if we have doubts), slide the letters in the top row into the block in the same column (one letter for each block). The first column has been done for you.

I Y N	I E O N	E L U V	F E V E	O A R E	R V R	W S E	W A I	I L K Y	E L L O	L U
N										
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