

# Devotional Calendar

April  
2020

Unit II.  
God Promises a  
Just Kingdom

5



**Meditate:** Psalm 98

**Listen:** “Lord, We Rejoice” by Darwin Hobbs

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IGzrygt-DUc>

**Pray:** Express to the Mighty God that You Rejoice in Him

12



**Meditate:** Isaiah 53:4-12

**Listen:** “Celebrate (He Lives)” by Fred Hammond

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XcpIHtZzQe8>

**Pray:** Thank the Living God for All that He Has Done for You

19



**Meditate:** Luke 19:11-26

**Listen:** “Celebrate the King” by Ricky Dillard

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4BFt7M7KUwE>

**Pray:** Express to God that He Is the King of Your Life

26



**Meditate:** Isaiah 42:1-9

**Listen:** “Your Spirit” by Tasha Cobbs Leonard (featuring Kierra Sheard)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BZT8jqsc8lQ>

**Pray:** Ask the Lord to Bring Justice across Our Nation by His Spirit

## How to Do a Devotional

Daily devotionals are important to help you grow in your relationship with God. Pray, meditate, and read the Word of God, and you will grow spiritually. Devote ten minutes at the beginning of your day to clear your mind and heart and prepare to receive God. Daily devotions will prepare you for any obstacles that may come your way. Take time each morning to hear from God. Even Jesus used time in the morning to be with God. “Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed” (Mark 1:35, NIV).

LESSON

6

Background Scripture:

Isaiah 42

Print Passage:

Isaiah 42:1-9

# Are You the Right One to Lead?

[God said,] “Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on him, and he will bring justice to the nations.” (Isaiah 42:1)



Sam truly has a servant’s heart. He is always willing to offer a helping hand, run an errand, and serve wherever needed. When the members of the Faith Baptist youth ministry were invited to submit proposals for the annual People-centered Service project, Sam said he had the perfect idea! The winning idea would receive up to twenty-five hundred dollars in funding support from the church, as needed. Although several good ideas were submitted, Sam’s proposal was the winner.

His plan included five months with teams of four teens, for up to three hours, on two Saturdays a month for one purpose—to serve others. Sam called it “Mission: 5,4,3,2,1.” They would provide ministry on behalf of Faith Baptist seniors and provide outdoor services, such as grass cutting, weed pulling, car washing, and other light, outdoor chores. Sam encouraged youth and young adults to get involved in this service project that would connect three major age groups within the church.

The project was so popular that nearly all the teens (and several young adults), for a total of fifty people, signed up to volunteer. Sam led a meeting of all who wanted to serve, matching each team with advisors from the men’s ministry. Volunteers signed up for specific tasks according to their abilities and availability. Sam set up a spreadsheet to organize the teams schedule for April through August to serve senior citizens who had work for them to do. Sam had medical waivers, parental permission forms, and a statement of agreement that no volunteer was to accept any kind of payment or tip for their services. “Mission: 5,4,3,2,1” is a ministry of volunteers serving and bringing glory to God.

Sam designed small yard signs with the church logo that read “Faith Baptist: Loving and Serving Together.” Sam was so proud of his church family and their willingness to commit to this service project without seeking a reward for their work!

**Share instances when you have served without seeking a reward for your work.**

# Inspect



## Isaiah 42:1-9

**1** “Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on him, and he will bring justice to the nations. **2** He will not shout or cry out, or raise his voice in the streets. **3** A bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out. In faithfulness he will bring forth justice; **4** he will not falter or be discouraged till he establishes justice on earth. In his teaching the islands will put their hope.” **5** This is what God the LORD says—the Creator of the heavens, who stretches them out, who spreads out the earth with all that springs from it, who gives breath to its people, and life to those who walk on it: **6** “I, the LORD, have called you in righteousness; I will take hold of your hand. I will keep you and will make you to be a covenant for the people and a light for the Gentiles, **7** to open eyes that are blind, to free captives from prison and to release from the dungeon those who sit in darkness. **8** I am the LORD; that is my name! I will not yield my glory to another or my praise to idols. **9** See, the former things have taken place, and new things I declare; before they spring into being I announce them to you.”



## Intersect

Isaiah 42:1-9 is considered as one of four “servant songs” found in the book of Isaiah. Several times through his prophetic message to Israel, Isaiah refers to the people as God’s servant. Because of sin and rebellion, the nation failed to accomplish its original mission of bringing the world to a saving knowledge of God. Instead, Jesus accepted the assignment to complete God’s mission on earth.

Several passages in Isaiah have been designated as “servant songs” because they describe the ministry, suffering, and praise of the Servant of the Lord, who is Jesus, the Messiah. The Servant Songs are located in 49:1-13; 50:4-11; 52:13-53:12. In today’s lesson text, Isaiah introduced the Servant of the Song—the Messiah, whom God has chosen and in whom God delights. Verses 1-9 are fulfilled in Matthew 12:18-21 and Philipians 2:7.

Isaiah 42 tells us not only about God, but also about the Servant’s relationship to God, what the Servant of the Lord would be like, and what He would be assigned to do. The “former things” represent the things that were predicted and fulfilled, and the “new things” refer to Christ’s coming and redemption of humans.

Through Jesus, every believer has the privilege of becoming one of God’s servants—fulfilling God’s mission, being the light of the world, and reflecting God’s righteousness. As servants, we must reflect the true character of a servant: gentleness, encouragement, justice, and truth.

## Inside Out

God made a covenant with the people of Israel; they were to be His servants, showing His righteousness to the world. Israel disobeyed God repeatedly, so God promised to send His Son, the Messiah, to accomplish His purpose on earth. Many expected the Messiah to come as a king, to deliver Israel from her oppressors—but Jesus, the Messiah, “did not come to be served, but to serve” (Mark 10:45). As followers of Jesus, we too must serve others just as Jesus did. God is looking for real servants—can He count on you?



## There's an App for That!

Many young people take an inactive role at church because they do not think anyone expects much from them. But Sam came up with a service project and showed that teens can be excellent examples of Christian service and leadership. In 1 Timothy 4:12, Paul encouraged Timothy with these words: “Don’t let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity.” God has a work for your hands to do. Are you ready and willing to let Him use you?



God sent Jesus to serve and bless the world. We cannot repay Him for what He has done for us, but we can show our gratitude by joining the great work of serving and blessing others, even in small ways. Ask God to open your eyes and show you how your life can make a difference to others.

## Stepping Out!

From the time you were born, someone has been serving God on your behalf—taking care of you, teaching you, feeding you, clothing you, and making sure your needs were met. Sometimes, it is easy to take for granted the people who make the biggest sacrifices for us. This week, take a moment to send a heartfelt text message or note to the person in your life who has done the most for you.



## Media Mission

Visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZMjT3RsJLBY> and watch the video “Jesus vs. Justice.” Do you agree that Jesus was a social activist? As God’s servants, do we have a duty to respond to the world’s real problems? Share your thoughts in a social-media post.



**INJUSTICE  
WILL BE  
PUNISHED**

by Sonya Franklin Burney

## And while we may be discouraged by the failures of our justice system, we cannot give up hope and stop fighting for equality and justice on earth. For when man’s justice falls short, God’s justice never fails.

**WHAT IS JUSTICE? A DICTIONARY MIGHT DEFINE JUSTICE AS FAIR, IMPARTIAL BEHAVIOR OR TREATMENT.** But in today’s world, many have come to doubt whether true justice really exists anymore.

The claim of the United States Constitution is that “All men are created equal, endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights.” This bold statement suggests that every person should be able to live his or her life under the same rules and pursue his or her undeniable right to “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness,” regardless of ethnicity, socioeconomic class, religious affiliation, race, color, or gender.

Every human soul has been created by God, in the image of God. Therefore, every person deserves to be treated with dignity and fairness. And yet, because of the presence of evil and hatred, millions in every generation have suffered the indignity of injustice based on the very color or creed God gave them, or because of some other feature or difference within them that they cannot change or control.

In our times, it is no secret that American jails and prisons are filled with an overwhelming number of African Americans. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) has published a Criminal Justice Fact Sheet that tells a sad story of racial disparity rooted in injustice. Statistics confirm that African Americans are sent to jail or prison five times more often than white Americans. Although African Americans represent nearly 13 percent of the United States population, black children represent 32 percent of children who are arrested, 42 percent of children who are detained, and 52 percent of children whose cases are sent to criminal court.

Philosophers claim that “justice is blind.” However, injustice seems to have both eyes wide open, especially when the news is continually filled with story after story of the over-policing, unlawful arrests, and shootings and/or killings of innocent people in our community. The stories become so familiar that even though we are outraged, we are not surprised. And while we may be discouraged by the failures of our justice system, we cannot give up hope and stop fighting for equality and justice on earth—for when man’s justice falls short, God’s justice never fails.

Queen Esther rose to power as the Jewish wife of the king of Persia. God promoted her and then used her to promote justice among the Jews in Persia who were living under the threat of genocide (mass killing)—the scheme of Haman, one of the king’s advisors. Haman held a short temper and a deep hatred for the Jews, and made plans to execute all the Jews in the kingdom. Some say that the more things change, the more they remain the same. Haman’s plan for the Persian Jews was inspired by the same demonic spirit that drove the German dictator, Adolph Hitler, to start World War II and the Holocaust, a five-year, mass-murder campaign against more than six million European Jews. When Esther’s uncle, Mordecai, warned her of Haman’s plan, she knew she had to do something to save her people. Feeling confident that the king would support his evil plan, Haman ordered the construction of a hangman’s gallows on which Mordecai was to be executed. But God had raised up Esther and put her in position to intervene, so that all of Haman’s plans would be defeated!

Esther prayed and fasted for three days before God, then she approached the king, revealing her Jewish ancestry, and claiming the Jewish people as her own. The result was that justice prevailed—the Jews were spared, Mordecai was honored by the king, and Haman was killed instead on the very gallows that he intended for Mordecai’s destruction. Proverbs 26:27a reads, “Whoever digs a pit will fall into it.” This is similar to the popular saying that “the ditch you dig for someone else may very well be your own.”

God is a God of justice, compassion, and mercy. In Psalm 82:3 and other places throughout Scripture, we are assured that God fights for those who cannot fight for themselves. More specifically, God stands with vulnerable people, defending “the weak, the fatherless, the poor, and the oppressed.” He moves and intervenes powerfully in human affairs to promote justice and to demonstrate His love and compassion for suffering people. We are commanded “to act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly” (Micah 6:8). Our duty as Christians is not to wither in despair, nor is it to sit back and wonder why God is not working more quickly. Our Christian duty is to stand and speak up as Esther did, so that our resources—our hands, our hearts, our eyes, our feet, and our voices—might join with God in the fight for justice in our world.