

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=XcplHtZzQe8>

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
8

Background Scripture:
Esther 3; 5; 7
Print Passage:
Esther 7:1-10



Justice Always Wins!

.....
Queen Esther answered, “If I have found favor with you, Your Majesty, and if it pleases you, grant me my life—this is my petition. And spare my people—this is my request.” (Esther 7:3)
.....



Riley applied for his first job at Food King. He was available to work a few hours after school on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, and on weekends. Riley did not think he would be considered since his schedule was so tight. Besides, Riley, who is unsaved, knew that his neighbor Sean, a Christian, had also applied for a job at Food King, but did not get it.

Riley was surprised when his phone rang on the next day after his job interview. The Food King store manager called to tell Riley that he was hired!

Riley bragged to Sean, “Hey, man, I guess I just have good luck!”

Sean told him, “Luck, eh? You think that’s what it is? Getting hired has nothing to do with luck; it was God who helped you!”

Riley pushed back and asked Sean sarcastically, “God? Man, if it was God, then why didn’t *you* get the job? I don’t even think God knows me.”

Sean said, “Riley, God knows you all right. And I don’t know why I didn’t get the job, but I do know that God works behind the scenes in our lives and causes things to happen for a reason. When one opportunity doesn’t come through for me, I don’t get upset anymore; I just trust that God has something better. I didn’t get the job at Food King, but God blessed me with a job at Fresh Foods, making \$1.50 more per hour.”

Riley only worked at Food King for two weeks before the news broke that the Food King chain of stores had been bought by another company. The company would be closing the Food King where Riley worked early in the summer. The nearest Food King was more than one hundred miles away. Riley couldn’t believe it! Now, most of the part-time jobs for teens were filled. Riley texted Sean, writing, “I’ve been thinking; maybe ‘good luck’ doesn’t beat being blessed after all.”

Describe a time when God worked behind the scenes to work things out for your good.



Esther 7:1-10

1 So the king and Haman went to Queen Esther's banquet, **2** and as they were drinking wine on the second day, the king again asked, "Queen Esther, what is your petition? It will be given you. What is your request? Even up to half the kingdom, it will be granted." **3** Then Queen Esther answered, "If I have found favor with you, Your Majesty, and if it pleases you, grant me my life—this is my petition. And spare my people—this is my request. **4** For I and my people have been sold to be destroyed, killed and annihilated. If we had merely been sold as male and female slaves, I would have kept quiet, because no such distress would justify disturbing the king." **5** King Xerxes asked Queen Esther, "Who is he? Where is he—the man who has dared to do such a thing?" **6** Esther said, "An adversary and enemy! This vile Haman!" Then Haman was terrified before the king and queen. **7** The king got up in a rage, left his wine and went out into the palace garden. But Haman, realizing that the king had already decided his fate, stayed behind to beg Queen Esther for his life. **8** Just as the king returned from the palace garden to the banquet hall, Haman was falling on the couch where Esther was reclining. The king exclaimed, "Will he even molest the queen while she is with me in the house?" As soon as the word left the king's mouth, they covered Haman's face. **9** Then Harbona, one of the eunuchs attending the king, said, "A pole reaching to a height of fifty cubits stands by Haman's house. He had it set up for Mordecai, who spoke up to help the king." The king said, "Impale him on it!" **10** So they impaled Haman on the pole he had set up for Mordecai. Then the king's fury subsided.

Intersect

Haman, an evil man, was promoted to the position of prime minister during Xerxes's reign in Persia. Haman was also the enemy of Mordecai (Esther's cousin) and of all the Jewish people. Haman, because of his connection with the king, persuaded the king to pass a law to have all Jews murdered. Esther used her position as queen to intercede on behalf of the Jewish people. Haman had no idea that Esther was a Jew. Esther requested the king's favor. Esther realized the importance of having favor with the king in order to protect her people and herself.

Esther arranged to have two banquets and invited the king and Haman to both. During the festivities of the second banquet, the king asked Esther about her request. Without mentioning Haman's name, Esther exposed Haman's hatred and his plot to kill the Jews. When the king asked who had ordered the massacre, Esther pointed her finger at Haman!

The tables had been turned on Haman. While the king went outside to cool his head and process what he had just heard, Haman begged Esther (who was reclining on the couch) for mercy. When the king returned inside, however, he looked and thought that Haman was molesting his wife, the queen. Without seeking an explanation, the king ordered his servants to cover Haman's face and take him away! Haman (and his family) was hung on the same execution pole he had set up for Mordecai.

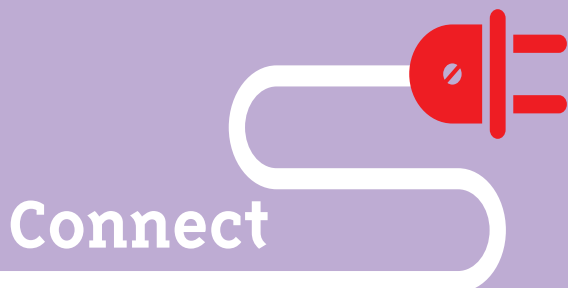
Inside Out

Sometimes in life, tough situations arise, and you just don't know what to do. Esther was in a situation like that. Her people were about to be wiped out because of one man's hatred. In that desperate situation, Esther turned to God for help—fasting, praying, and trusting God to do the impossible. God gave Esther everything she needed: a cousin, Mordecai, who challenged her to act, the faith to move forward, a community of Jews in Persia to pray with her, and a relationship with the king who said yes to her request. With God, we never face our problems alone. He gives us more help than we realize.



There's an App for That!

Esther may have been beautiful, but Mordecai challenged her with the thought that maybe there was a better reason for why God allowed her to be promoted to the position of queen—for the benefit of her people whose lives were suddenly in danger. Think about the blessings, positions, promotions, and opportunities God has allowed in your life. Most people are more interested in receiving a blessing than in being a blessing. Are you willing to let God use you to be a major blessing for someone else?



Connect

God was working behind the scenes in every chapter of Esther's life. While you may not understand what God is doing in your life, know that God cares about every detail of your life and nothing escapes His watchful eye. God is concerned about the big things and the little matters in your life.

Stepping Out!

This week, you are challenged to identify a current news story about a group of people who are facing a threat, crisis, or struggle. In a few words, describe a plan to improve or correct the situation.

Current Event: _____

Plan to Improve/Correct: _____

Media Mission

Visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3HeV1QSRedo> and watch the video entitled "Exposed: The Injustice of Immigration Detention." It is an introduction to the unseen suffering of families from all walks of life whose lives have been made difficult by immigration detention. After watching the video, consider sending an e-mail to your congressmen about the need for compassion within the United States immigration system.

