Believe His Prophets

This Morning Watch Calendar
follows the
Believe His Prophets
2021
Daily Bible Reading Guide

April

Each chapter has a study verse to be used as the Youth Morning Watch verse of the day

A chapter Summary Statement is provided each day





APRIL 1

Chapter: Deuteronomy 18
Theme: Promise of a New Prophet
Study Verse: Deuteronomy 18:15

STATEMENT: After completing the restatement of the Levites' portions, Moses passes on God's command forbidding witchcraft, divination and sorcery. There are all kinds of "magical" methods the nations around them use to try to discern the wills of their gods—even burning their own children as sacrifices! It never works, because idols don't even have wills. But the devil loves to use these methods to deceive people. Instead of all this, God promises that He will make His will known through calling prophets to speak for Him. Also embedded in this promise is the greatest promise of allthe promise of the Messiah who will speak for God more clearly than any other human could.

RESPONSE: _____

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PRAYER: Messiah, I am so grateful that You came to show us the way. Even the words of true prophets are not always completely clear. They are humans trying to understand and pass on things of God. But You are God! I can understand You better!

APRIL 2

Chapter: Deuteronomy 19
Theme: Love Your Neighbor
Study Verse: Deuteronomy 19:14

STATEMENT: This chapter is about loving and respecting each other. First it enlarges on the details about the cities of refuge, and who has the right to flee there after accidentally killing someone. It speaks again of justice—being careful to investigate accusations thoroughly, so the innocent will not be condemned. It even speaks of respecting each other's boundaries. Are there psychological ways we can disrespect each other's boundaries, besides geographical ones?

RESPONSE: _____

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PRAYER: Dear Father, help me to always remember that my neighbor, no matter what he or she looks like or acts like or believes, is also Your child, and to respect them accordingly.

APRIL 3

Chapter: Deuteronomy 20
Theme: Laws of Warfare
Study Verse: Deuteronomy 20:3

STATEMENT: This is an interesting chapter. Moses tells the people that the first law of warfare is that the battle is not theirs, but God's, so they shouldn't be afraid. Then he shows the mercy God has: people with new homes and lands, or new marriages, or even people who are too afraid, don't have to go. Then, God says the first thing to do is not to attack, but to try to make peace! Only if that fails are they allowed to go to war. What kind of spiritual warfare might be waged against you, and what courage can you take from this chapter?

RESPONSE:

PRAYER: Lord of Hosts, Your angels do Your bidding, and I want to do the same. Help me to make peace with people who act as enemies toward me.

APRIL 4

Chapter: Deuteronomy 21
Theme: Mercy
Study Verse: Deuteronomy 21:8

STATEMENT: The people are to sacrifice for a sin, even if they don't know who committed it. Also, though God allows the practice of capturing people in battle, He insists on mercy toward them, too. Women must be allowed to mourn their families, and must be treated with mercy, not sold or mistreated. No doubt, God looked with sorrow on these practices, anyway. Jesus later taught that it was never God's will for men to have more than one wife or to divorce. God makes allowances for hard human hearts, but there are always consequences.

RESPONSE:

PRAYER: God, I pray for all around me who may have sinned even though I don't know it. You are the One who sees hearts, and it is Your will that we pray and submit ourselves to You in all circumstances.

APRIL 5

Chapter: Deuteronomy 22
Theme: More Neighborly Love
Study Verse: Deuteronomy 22:1

STATEMENT: Moses now lists quite a few smaller details, all of which go to show that we are to love our neighbors as ourselves. If you lost
a pet, wouldn't you want whoever found it to care for it and get it back to you? Even someone who finds something like money should attempt to find its owner. Animals in the wild are to be treated kindly, too. Humans are not to hunt or gather to the point of extinction. We haven't done so well with that, have we?

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Lord, let me be part of the solution, not part of the problem. Help me to treat not only other people, but also all of Your creation with care and concern.

APRIL 6

Chapter: Deuteronomy 23
Theme: Various Regulations
Study Verse: Deuteronomy 23:23

STATEMENT: There are several interesting bits in this wide-ranging chapter. Verse 7 said not to despise even people who have been cruel to you. Verse 15 says never to send back runaway slaves. (Some so-called Christians in the United States during the 19th century must have missed that one.) Verse 19 says not to charge interest to a countryman. Does this mean that now that we are all declared one by Jesus (Galatians 3:28), we shouldn't charge anyone interest? Finally, in verses 24, 25, God says picking a snack from neighbor's fields is not stealing; actually harvesting is stealing. What do you think of these things?

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Dear Lord, the more I read the more I think the Golden Rule really is the basis for everything. Help me treat others as I would like to be treated.

APRIL 7

Chapter: Deuteronomy 24
Theme: Treatment of the Poor
Study Verse: Deuteronomy 24:13, 17

STATEMENT: Again, this chapter is full of a variety of things. Divorce can only be because of "indecency", people must be merciful about how they do loans, and so on. Notice that much of the instruction concerns treatment of the poor and vulnerable. A man might give his cloak for a pledge, but you shouldn't keep it overnight. You shouldn't take a widow's or orphan's at all, and we are all supposed to leave the edges of our gardens and fields so that those who have no gardens or fields of their own may gather food and retain their self-respect. Is this practiced in your region? If not, how could you do something like it?

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Dear Jesus, may I always share Your blessings with those who have a harder time than I do.

APRIL 8

Chapter: Deuteronomy 25
Theme: Various Laws
Study Verse: Deuteronomy 25:15

STATEMENT: Moses is trying to remind the people of all the things God has taught them throughout their 40 years together. Most of it is simply based on love of God and love of the fellow human. If we all did everything with that attitude, no doubt we'd still make mistakes, but they would be far less grievous than they are now. This particular set of instructions is more about justice and fairness than anything else. Today, there are laws about accurate scales. But manufacturers put less and less in packages, and then sell them for just as much or more. Do you think this follows the spirit of these laws of God?

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: God of heaven and earth, Your eyes are always on Your children. You see when someone cheats or tricks another. You see the motives of the heart and know when someone makes a mistake but meant it in love. I am glad You are the Judge!

APRIL 9

Chapter: Deuteronomy 26
Theme: First Fruits
Study Verse: Deuteronomy 26:15

STATEMENT: In each season, the people were to give their first crops to God, but this is a very special first fruits—the very first crops they will raise in their new home. As you read through the ceremonies in this chapter, change the words to make them relevant to your situation. Where has God brought you from and to? How has He blessed you? Does your faithful tithe bless the poor and the alien residents in your land, as well as the ministers of the church?

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Father of all humankind, thank You for bringing me this far in my life. Please open my eyes to see people as You see them. Help me to be generous and kind to all.

APRIL 10

Chapter: Deuteronomy 27
Theme: Strong Words
Study Verse: Deuteronomy 27:9, 10

STATEMENT: Moses is getting ready to leave the people to go on to Canaan without him. He gives instructions about creating standing stones with the law written on them. He reminds them that serving God is the foundation of all life. Then he gives a list of curses. Notice the subjects God chooses as most important: idolatry, deception for gain, unkindness to those who need it most, and morality. Do you see other subjects referenced here?

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Dear Lord, I am a child of the Lord my God. I will obey the Lord my God and do Your commandments and Your statutes which I learn from Your word.

APRIL 11

Chapter: Deuteronomy 28
Theme: Blessings and Curses
Study Verse: Deuteronomy 28:9

STATEMENT: Imagine the scene. Deuteronomy is much too long to have all been delivered in one speech, but it seems as if these last few chapters could be one speech. Moses stands on a high place before the people, his eyes fiery, his face beseeching. He has led two generations of these people, and they fall away from God and their best intentions so easily! Now he must leave them, and he begs them to be faithful. In a mighty voice he chants the blessings that come with a life in God, and the curses that turning away from God bring on people. What are your favorite parts of this chapter?

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Mighty God, You have led us with an outstretched hand and with patience and love that wouldn't give up on us. I will keep my eyes on You, and I will obey from love and gratitude.

APRIL 12

Chapter: Deuteronomy 29
Theme: Your Covenant with God
Study Verse: Deuteronomy 29:14, 15

STATEMENT: Moses reminds the people of their covenants, both with Moab and (more importantly) with God. He reminds them of the tender care God has taken of them. In verses 10 and 11 he makes it clear that God's covenant is with every single individual, young or old. Then, in verses 14 and 15—did you catch it? He makes a covenant with "those who are not with us here today." That's you and me! Have you accepted your covenant with God?

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: My Lord and my God, I hereby give my heart and my life to you. I will love You with all my heart, mind, soul, and strength and follow where You lead, to the end of my days.

APRIL 13

Chapter: Deuteronomy 30
Theme: Apostasy and Restoration
Study Verse: Deuteronomy 30:19

STATEMENT: Unfortunately, chapter 29 also included God's sure knowledge that His people would turn away from Him—more than once. They would think they prospered by their own hand, rather than giving God credit. So in chapter 30, Moses promises restoration that would come after the people—these people, and also their later descendants—would repent and turn back to God. This is a very touching chapter.
Read it all carefully and prayerfully. Where do you fit into the narrative?

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—I choose life!!

APRIL 14

Chapter: Deuteronomy 31
Theme: Final Instructions
Study Verse: Deuteronomy 31:6

STATEMENT: Moses is coming to the end of all he has to say to his people. He tells the people again that he will not be going with them. He officially hands over the job of leading the people to Joshua, who has been with him all the way from Egypt. Then God gives him special instructions. Write a song, and teach it to the people. What do you think that would have done for those who were saying their final goodbyes to the old leader they'd given so much trouble?

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Gentle Lord, I am glad You were with Moses all the way, and You still had a big surprise for him. Help me to be as faithful in whatever you call me to do as Moses was.

APRIL 15

Chapter: Deuteronomy 32
Theme: The Song of Moses
Study Verse: Deuteronomy 32:3, 4

STATEMENT: This is a beautiful song, combinning praise and love of God with rebukes and warnings for those who stray. We have another song-like writing of Moses, too: Psalm 90, which he may have written some years earlier, since it speaks of a human lifespan as 80 years. He began his third 40-year career at 80! In Revelation 15:3 we are told that the redeemed in heaven will sing "the song of Moses and of the Lamb." Can you see parts in this chapter and in Psalm 90 that you think might be part of that fi victory song?

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Lamb of God, You are the Victor, always and forever. You carry me like a mother eagle, and help me not to fall. I am so grateful for You!

APRIL 16

Chapter: Deuteronomy 33
Theme: Final Blessings
Study Verse: Deuteronomy 33:2

STATEMENT: At last, Moses comes to the end of all he can say to the people. I am sure their eyes are all dimmed by tears as he raises his strong, wrinkled hands and blesses them all, tribe by tribe, and at last, as one whole people. Some people today like to fi blessings in the blessings to the tribes that seem to apply to their own lives. Do you see any blessings in this chapter that particularly seem meant for you? You could write them down and keep them to remind you—you are God's child, and you are blessed.

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Eternal God, You have shone forth on me like beams of sunlight, or sometimes crashed like thunder (when I've needed it). Always, You have held me in Your everlasting arms.

APRIL 17

Chapter: Deuteronomy 34
Theme: Goodbye, Servant of God
Study Verse: Deuteronomy 34:10

STATEMENT: And so, Moses, 120 years old but still strong and healthy, climbed the mountain. The people wept as they watched him go farther and farther from them. They knew they had made his life miserable in many ways, but they loved him and knew he had always loved them. It was his life and his patience that taught them about God, more than anything he wrote or spoke. Someone added this chapter to the end of the book Moses wrote. Joshua took over the leadership, beginning with 30 days of mourning.

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Faithful and Holy One, I am so glad Moses got to go live with You! I think of the old servants of God that I have known, who have gone to sleep in You, and I wait for the day they will arise and live with You, too. Someday, I want to meet that man of God.

APRIL 18

Chapter: Joshua 1:
Theme: Strong and Courageous
Study Verse: Joshua 1:9

STATEMENT: Joshua was in charge now. Apparently he was pretty nervous about fi Moses' shoes, because God had to reassure him over and over. How many times can you fi the words "be strong and courageous" in this chapter? Have you ever had to be reminded to be strong and courageous? Can you do that by yourself? What reason did God give Joshua each time He said those words?

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Dear Lord, I do get scared and nervous and worried. I try to be strong, and it doesn't work very well. But when I remember that You are with me, and all that strength and courage comes from You—then I do better!

APRIL 19

Chapter: Joshua 2
Theme: Rahab and the Spies
Study Verse: Joshua 2:12

STATEMENT: 40 years earlier, Joshua himself had been among the twelve spies who checked out the land. He and his friend, Caleb, had said, "Let's go! God can give it to us!" We know how that story ended. Now, Joshua sends two new spies. They almost get caught, but a faithful woman named Rahab saves their lives. She has clearly been paying attention, and knows that the God of these people is much stronger than the gods she was raised to worship. She asks for their help. What happens?

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: God of Rahab, You show that even when people don't know very much, if they turn to You, You can help them. Thank You for people like Rahab.

APRIL 20

Chapter: Joshua 3
Theme: Crossing Jordan
Study Verse: Joshua 3:5

STATEMENT: These people have heard stories all their lives of the crossing of the Red Sea during the escape from Egypt. Some of them were children when it happened, and remember it. But remembering something from childhood is not the same thing as experiencing it as an adult. God did a miracle again, but a little differently. This time it was the priests and the ark of God that God used as the instrument of opening a way in the sea. How do you think they felt when, after spending a lifetime wandering all over the place, the finally crossed into the Promised Land?

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Dear Jesus, it's almost like the way we'll feel when we finally stop wandering in this world and go home with You. I can't wait for that day! Come soon, please!

APRIL 21

Chapter: Joshua 4
Theme: Memorial Stones
Study Verse: Joshua 4:24

STATEMENT: This is a lovely story. Once all the people had crossed, with the priests and the ark still in the middle, God had one representative from each tribe go get a stone from the middle of the river. They set these up as a permanent memorial on the riverbank, so that they could always point to them and say, "This is where we crossed; those stones used to be out there in the deepest water!" Verse 9 says they were still there when this book was written—don't you wish they still were there now? What would you like to memorialize in your life?

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: God who never forgets, I wonder what You like best when You look over the years of my life so far? Help me to live so that Your memories of me are good ones.

APRIL 22

Chapter: Joshua 5
Theme: In a New Land
Study Verse: Joshua 5:12

STATEMENT: The people nearby were full of awe when they heard what God had done for Israel. This was a sign to them that they, too, could come and follow God if they chose. Now that they were in the new land, the people had several things to do: they circumcised all the men and boys, took time for healing, kept the first Passover in their new land, and…they ate food grown in the Promised Land and that day, the manna stopped. What an event that must have been! How do you think they felt?

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Lord, Your care for us is constant. Sometimes we begin to take for granted what You provide, or even get bored with it and wish for something new. I'll bet those people were sorry to see manna go, even if they were tired of it. Help me always be thankful for all blessings.

APRIL 23

Chapter: Joshua 6
Theme: Joshua, God, and Jericho
Study Verse: Joshua 6:16

STATEMENT: At the end of the last chapter and the beginning of this one, Joshua had an encounter with God. Just like Moses many years before, Joshua was told to take off his shoes in humility before God. Like Moses, he covenanted to obey. Jericho was the first result of this. The people didn't go to war or besiege the city. God took it down with His own power. And He didn't forget Rahab and her family. Many others could have been saved, too, if they had committed themselves to God.

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Dear God, I know this is the beginning of a long series of battles, in most of which the people did things their own way instead of Yours. As I read on, help me to fi the positive lessons in every story, and to keep my eyes on You.

APRIL 24

Chapter: Joshua 7
Theme: Achan's Secret
Study Verse: Joshua 7:6

STATEMENT: God had said that Jericho was entirely to be devoted to Him alone. But one man had seen something rich and beautiful, and coveted it. He allowed that sin to grow into the sin of theft—not just from a person, but from God! And because of it, a whole nation was brought down, and lost an easy battle for a small town. What kind of insights can you find in this story for contemporary times?

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Almighty One, Your eyes miss nothing. You don't want any to die, and You must weep when so many people die because they simply would not let go of their sin. Don't let me be like that!

APRIL 25

Chapter: Joshua 8
Theme: True Conquest
Study Verse: Joshua 8:30

STATEMENT: The first half of this chapter is an ugly one. Throughout the conquest of Canaan, we will see the consequences of entrenched sin. The people in the land had insisted on following their own demonic gods instead of the one true God. On the other hand, the Israelites continually disobey, too. But read closely the last verses, from 30 to the end. Isn't this a beautiful picture of God's people, humble for now, setting up a new place of worship in a new land promised for centuries to their father Abraham? The true conquest is always in the heart.

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Lord, You are my Conqueror. You are King of my heart. Write Your law there, and raise an altar uncut by human hands, and live there forever at the center of my being.

APRIL 26

Chapter: Joshua 9
Theme: Deception
Study Verse: Joshua 9:14

STATEMENT: All the tribes around Jericho were now frightened of Israel and their God. They had several possible choices. They could fight back. (Most of them gathered to do this.) They could surrender to the God of Israel. Just think how the story would have changed! That would have been a smart move, but nobody but a few individuals like Rahab did that. Or…they could lie. Gibeon chose that. The Israelites, notice, didn't ask God's advice. Maybe the Gibeonites thought it was a good bargain, to be servants forever instead of fighting and dying. What do you think?

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: O Lord, remind me not just to do what I think You would do, but to ask You!

APRIL 27

Chapter: Joshua 10
Theme: God Fights for the People
Study Verse: Joshua 10:14

STATEMENT: The Gibeonites were now in trouble with their neighbors for making peace with Israel. Other kings went against them in war, and they called to Joshua for help. This time, Joshua asked God, and God said to go. But the Israelites didn't do that much fighting—God gave them the victory. There were two supernatural interventions in nature that day. What were they?

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Jesus, please help me to remember to let You fight my battles! That's the hardest thing. Either I try to fight Satan in my own strength, or I give in. Neither works. Remind me that You're right there…and a lot stronger!

APRIL 28

Chapter: Joshua 11
Theme: Hard Hearts and Long Wars
Study Verse: Joshua 11:23

STATEMENT: King after king rose against Israel, (these were what we would call clan chieftains, not kings of whole countries) and all of them fell before the people of God. There's a hint as to why in verse 20. Just like Pharaoh before them (and like clay in hot sun), the people's hearts only got harder in the presence of God's light, rather than softening like wax. At last, after years of war, the northern part of the Promised Land was conquered. The people had enough land to settle down and be at rest.

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Master of heaven's armies, how You must weep when people choose to fi ht against You instead of surrendering to Your love. May my heart always be as soft as wax in Your presence.

APRIL 29

Chapter: Joshua 12
Theme: Battle Records
Study Verse: Joshua 12:1

STATEMENT: Scribes 3,000 or more years ago wrote down records like the ones in this chapter. It lists all the chieftains Israel conquered, and gives the borders of the lands they now held. It is because of records like these that we have maps today. Look at a map of the Old Testament tribes and see if you can trace the boundaries given in this chapter. Some of the tribes were now settled at last in the land God had promised Abraham hundreds of years earlier. What do you think it felt like?

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Holy One, You have placed me where I am to be a light to those around me. How am I doing? Do I let my light shine in the ways You want me to? Show me if there is something else You wish me to do.

APRIL 30

Chapter: Joshua 13
Theme: Not Finished Yet
Study Verse: Joshua 13:1

STATEMENT: Joshua was getting old (though not as old as Moses had been). God pointed out that there was still much to be done. He listed the lands He still wanted to have godly people living in. The people were getting complacent, settling down and leaving some idolaters around, not realizing they would give them a lot of trouble later. Again, the scribe lists the different lands that were allotted to each tribe, and reminds the people that Levi doesn't get a whole land of their own, but God is their inheritance. They are live scattered all through God's people, to do His work wherever they are needed.

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Dear Lord, as You and I work together to conquer the unknown territories inside my heart (unknown to me, that is), help me to be thorough and not give up when I feel I'm "good enough."