Believe His Prophets

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

March

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





MARCH 1

Chapter: Numbers 23
Theme: Blessing What God Blesses
Study Verse: Numbers 23:8

STATEMENT: Poor Balak! He pays a lot of money for a prophet to curse the Israelites, and he gets blessings instead! People in those days had much more belief than most people today in what was said by a person they perceived to have power. Still today, in many parts of the world, there are people seen as having power in their words. Indeed, we do all have more power than we realize in our words. But God makes it crystal clear that His words have the real power, and nothing people can do will stop that.

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Dear Lord, remind me that my words have power of life or death in them, too. I can make people (and myself) happy or miserable by what I say. I choose life! May my words be only under Your love and authority, bringing light to all.

MARCH 2

Chapter: Numbers 24
Theme: Balak Fails
Study Verse: Numbers 24:5, 6

STATEMENT: Balak was very angry by the time he had taken the time and trouble to take Balaam to three different high places and all he had done was pronounce greater and greater blessings on God's people. Balaam finished by warning Balak of future trouble on his own people. Think about this: Had the Israelites in any way deserved the beautiful blessings God made Balaam pronounce over them? Why do you think God blessed them anyway? You can read these blessings and prayerfully claim them for yourself, too. You are a child of God, just as much as an Israelite—even more so, if you choose to obey!

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Lord, I ask that my life be like a garden by a river, bringing forth beauty and the fruit of love to all those who pass by.

MARCH 3

Chapter: Numbers 25
Theme: Faith Adultery
Study Verse: Numbers 25:13

STATEMENT: In the Bible, the imagery of marriage is often used as a symbol of the relationship between God and His people. In a faithful marriage, each partner considers the other's needs and wishes before his or her own. When the Israelites bowed down before idols, it was like a married person committing adultery. In this sad story, a man deliberately sins right in front of everyone, right while they're in the middle of being punished for faithless idol worship! Why do you think God (and Phineas, one of the priests) were so angry? Why did God promise Phineas a covenant of peace?

RESPONSE:

PRAYER: My one and only God, please keep me completely faithful to You. I don't want to bow before the gods of this world. Help me to see when faithlessness is tempting me and turn away quickly.

MARCH 4

Chapter: Numbers 26
Theme: Counting a New Generation
Study Verse: Numbers 26:65

STATEMENT: It's very interesting to compare these numbers with those in Numbers 1 when they did the first census, right after the tabernacle was finished. Some tribes are bigger now, and some are smaller. Perhaps those who are smaller had more members involved in the various plagues for disobedience. 40 years had passed, and every member of the older generation who rebelled against God had now died, except for two. Who were the two, and do you remember why they were still alive?

RESPONSE:

PRAYER: Great Leader, You have faithfully led me all the years of my life, and You will lead me until death. I choose to be faithful, not rebellious. I will follow You through good times and bad, doing my best not to complain and murmur when things are difficult, and praising You in all things.

MARCH 5

Chapter: Numbers 27
Theme: Women's Inheritance
Study Verse: Numbers 27:18, 19

STATEMENT: Zelophehad can't be the only man with only daughters, but his five have the courage to step up and speak respectfully for themselves. Moses listens, and takes their request to God, and God not only upholds their claim, but makes it law that a woman can inherit in her own right. Then, since it's almost time to go into the long-promised land, God tells Moses to designate Joshua as his successor. What an awesome responsibility! Joshua, having traveled with this crowd his whole adult life, knows what he's getting into better than Moses did when he began. But he says yes to God.

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Lord, when You lay Your hand on me and send me to an area of responsibility that You have planned for me, I want to be faithful to that calling, never giving in to feelings of inadequacy or coveting someone else's call instead.

MARCH 6

Chapter: Numbers 28
Theme: Reminders
Study Verse: Numbers 28:1, 2

STATEMENT: As they get closer to the time to enter the Promised Land, God sends reminders of what He has taught them before through Moses and Aaron (who is now dead; his son, Eleazar is now high priest). He lays out a summary of sacrificial responsibilities, including Sabbath reminders. Since we no longer have sacrifices because of Jesus, what principles can you find that will help you in your daily worship of God?

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Almighty God, You have sacrificed Your own Son for me, and so I no longer have the shadow service of offering animals. But I still want to offer my heart, my life, my mind, my all to You every morning and evening. Keep me faithful.

MARCH 7

Chapter: Numbers 29
Theme: Trumpets and Atonement
Study Verse: Numbers 29:1

STATEMENT: The Feast of Trumpets, which was a warning of what was coming up in 10 days, and the most solemn day of all, the Day of Atonement, were so important they got their own longer chapter of instructions. These fall ceremonies pointed to the Great Lamb of God, Jesus Himself, who died to take our places as sinners so we can have His place in heaven. What things can you find in this chapter that remind you of Jesus?

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Dear Jesus, always and ever my Friend, how can I possibly thank You for what You did for me, and what You do for me every day? Help me never to take Your sacrifice for granted, but to hold it in my heart as a solemn and astonishing thing, as the people of those days thought of Yom Kippur.

MARCH 8

Chapter: Numbers 30
Theme: Keeping Your Word
Study Verse: Numbers 30:1, 2

STATEMENT: Don't promise it if you're not going to do it. That's basically the instruction of this chapter. To be clear, this is binding on both men and women. In those days, men had a lot of power over women, though we can know by reading Genesis that this was not God's plan. So, God gave women the safety of knowing that if their fathers or husbands annulled their vows, the women would not be held responsible for that; the men would. Do you keep your promises?

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Great Maker, You always do what You say You will do. If I live within You and Your love, I will always do what I say I will do.

MARCH 9

Chapter: Numbers 31
Theme: Vengeance on Midian
Study Verse: Numbers 31:54

STATEMENT: This is an ugly story. Sin always causes more sin, and enough death and destruction that you'd think we humans would learn to follow God's ways instead. This chapter details the vengeance on the people of Midian who had been the leaders in the idolatrous rebellion of the Israelites. The only good thing that can be said is that in the end, the warriors shared their bounty with God, in gratitude for saving the soldiers' lives.

RESPONSE:

PRAYER: O God, how You must weep as You watch our sinful actions and their consequences! Please help me to always follow Your ways of love and not bring sorrow through my sin.

MARCH 10

Chapter: Numbers 32
Theme: Gad and Reuben's Inheritance
Study Verse: Numbers 32:18

STATEMENT: The people are very near to the Jordan now, almost ready to go across and possess the land God has promised them. The tribes of Gad and Reuben see that the land on the east of the Jordan is beautiful and fruitful, and they want to stay there. At first Moses is angry, because he thinks they are shirking their duty, but they explain that they will help the other tribes gain their inheritance before claiming their own. Can you think of a time when you put off something you wanted until you helped another person with their own goals?

RESPONSE:

PRAYER: Jesus, in a way this is what You have done. You set aside Your glory in heaven and came to battle with Satan on our behalf, so that we could be at Your side. Help me to be that generous, too.

MARCH 11

Chapter: Numbers 33
Theme: Looking Back, Looking Forward
Study Verse: Numbers 33:53

STATEMENT: The first part of this chapter summarizes 40 years of wandering. If you can find a map of the wanderings, it's fun to look at it while reading this chapter. Then God gives them their instructions for crossing over. Before possessing the land in peace, they must drive out all those who have agrantly refused to worship the God of heaven and insisted on worshiping idols instead. This is true of us, too. What kinds of things does God drive out of our hearts before He can fully possess us?

RESPONSE:

PRAYER: Dear Father, shine Your light into every tiny corner of my heart. Drive out everything that causes darkness and possess me fully.

MARCH 12

Chapter: Numbers 34
Theme: Dividing Up the Land
Study Verse: Numbers 34:2

STATEMENT: Before they even enter in, God has His plans all set. They did not have maps like ours, let alone GPS or other technology, so it must have been difficult to determine where the boundaries should be. The twelve spies (38 years earlier) had checked the land out, but they couldn't have gone all over in great detail. So, God lays it out for them, explaining where the boundaries will be, and how to apportion the land fairly among all the tribes, also clarifying the land on the other side of the Jordan, where Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh have their portions.

RESPONSE:

PRAYER: God, once again You show that You are a God of order. If you cared for the details of their lives, You must care for the details of mine. Please lay out my life and apportion my duties and life calling and show me what You want me to do.

MARCH 13

Chapter: Numbers 35
Theme: Refuge and a Fair Trial
Study Verse: Numbers 35:12

STATEMENT: The Israelites lived in a violent world. Life was cheap. Many of the laws of God re ect this reality; He didn't try to take them to a perfect lifestyle right away but took them where He found them and tried to teach them love and justice. For example, He didn't get rid of slavery or polygamy right away, but He made them treat people with more justice than those around them. In the same way, God seeks to be sure people who are accused of crime have a fair trial before being sentenced, or simply killed in vengeance. Notice that the cities of refuge are also cities of the priests.

RESPONSE:

PRAYER: Lord, You intended us to have godly priests, not just to watch over our spiritual lives, but also to care for us in justice when we are in trouble. I thank You when I see that spirit in action among the spiritual leaders I know.

MARCH 14

Chapter: Numbers 36
Theme: Clarifying Laws of Inheritance
Study Verse: Numbers 36:8

STATEMENT: One of the ways the Israelites were ahead of many nations around them was that women could inherit land. This raised some complications. Would that land go to their husbands' tribes when they married? God shows His fairness and compassion in His answer. The goal of all these laws, not just this one, was that land would ultimately stay within tribes and not be sold away from them any longer than until the next Year of Jubilee. What do you think would be different now if we had always lived by these laws of God?

RESPONSE:

PRAYER: Great Father, we are all one family, and You have always tried to teach us that. Help me to find ways to live out that truth among my family, friends, and community.

MARCH 15

Chapter: Deuteronomy 1
Theme: Retelling the Stories, Part 1
Study Verse: Deuteronomy 1:8

STATEMENT: With the end of Numbers, we end the laws Moses expounded as they camped across the Jordan from Jericho. The book of Deuteronomy is a collection of speeches Moses made during the two months they camped here, preparing to enter the Promised Land. He knew he was about to die, leaving the leadership of the people to Joshua. He knew why, too—his rebellious disobedience of striking the rock and taking credit. Moses longed to finally get through to the people that they were God's, God was leading them, and they must learn to obey from their hearts! He begins by retelling them the stories of their people, going all the way back to Father Abraham.

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: My Leader, I began in You and I will end in You. I want to live every day of my life in You. It helps me to repeat the stories of how You have led in my life this far.

MARCH 16

Chapter: Deuteronomy 2
Theme: Retelling the Stories, Part 2
Study Verse: Deuteronomy 2:7

STATEMENT: In the first four chapters of Deuteronomy, Moses tells the people the stories of their wanderings so far. People love to tell and retell their family stories. Just think of what it's like when your family gets together, especially if they've been apart a long time. All the old aunties and uncles start telling the same old stories, don't they? And there are always new stories, too. So, it was for the Israelites. Remember that these are the younger people, the second generation, who were children when they left Egypt or have been born in the meantime. How do you think they liked hearing the stories?

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Father of all, keep me in mind of the old stories: those of Your people through history, those of my family, those of my own life. Help me to remember the good and only to remember mistakes enough so that I don't repeat them, but not to dwell on them.

MARCH 17

Chapter: Deuteronomy 3
Theme: Moses' Own Story
Study Verse: Deuteronomy 3:27

STATEMENT: Here, at the end of the chapter in verses 23-28, is where we learn more detail about Moses and his own regret. He begs God to let him go over with the people. It must be so hard for him, to have led them faithfully all this way, for 40 years, and not to be allowed to go in. But he submits humbly, and God does give him a view of the Promised Land. What he doesn't know is that God has a surprise for him. Do you know what it is?

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Dear God, keep me faithful, and help me to submit humbly when I do make mistakes and must face the consequences.

MARCH 18

Chapter: Deuteronomy 4
Theme: Keep the Law!
Study Verse: Deuteronomy 4:9

STATEMENT: While Moses is thinking of his own regrets, he reminds the people urgently to keep and treasure the laws and regulations God has given them. He urges them to keep these laws close to their heart and teach them to their children. And he repeats his own sorrow, that he can't go into the land with them. Did you remember God's secret that He had planned for Moses? Moses was taken up to heaven! He's there right now. He even came to see Jesus while Jesus was on earth. So we can be pretty sure he doesn't regret missing out on Canaan.

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Father, keep my heart diligently. Help me to remember You and follow Your ways and love as You loved. Someday, I want to meet Moses!

MARCH 19

Chapter: Deuteronomy 5
Theme: The Ten Commandments Again
Study Verse: Deuteronomy 5:15

STATEMENT: Now, for 22 chapters, Moses will repeat to the people all the laws he has already taught them. He knows they tend to forget, and besides, they didn't write things down the way we do today; most of them couldn't read, so they had to learn it all by heart. Compare the Ten Commandments here to the ones in Exodus 20. There is one difference. Can you find it? What new insight does it give you into the meaning of the Sabbath?

RESPONSE:

PRAYER: Great Lawgiver, You created the laws of physics that hold the worlds in place, and You give us the laws that hold our hearts in place. Help me to remember that some around me are still in slavery to the devil, and help me to use Your gift of Sabbath peace to reach some of them.

MARCH 20

Chapter: Deuteronomy 6
Theme: The Great Prayer
Study Verse: Deuteronomy 6:4-6

STATEMENT: Here is the heart of the Old Testament law. These verses are known as the Sh'ma, the greatest prayer of the Jews. People who think the Old Testament is about salvation by works and only the New Testament brought about salvation by faith are missing this point. Yahweh is our God, Yahweh is one, and we are to love God with all our being! That's the whole responsibility of humans. No amount of sacrifices or rigid obedience will do one thing to bring us close to God. Only God's love saves us, and only our love back to Him closes that deal and brings us to Him and to heaven.

RESPONSE:

PRAYER: Yahweh, the One who is and was and is to be, I love You! Help me to love You more and more, every day of my life.

MARCH 21

Chapter: Deuteronomy 7
Theme: Blessings of Obedience
Study Verse: Deuteronomy 7:8

STATEMENT: The blessings of God are almost too rich to describe, but Moses tries. It's not that doing right makes God "pay us back" by making good things happen to us. Those who think that lose their faith when bad things happen even though they are obedient. It's that living in the light of God's love makes life so much better that you can't even explain it. Yes, good things and great blessings come to those who obey. But when bad things happen, those who are close to God get through anyway, and they have peace in their hearts even when they are full of unanswerable questions. They might not understand, but they know God does.

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Dear Father, I am so happy when good things happen and all is well in my life. I know that some of it is because I choose to follow You. But even when it seems that everything is dark and confusing, I am so glad I know and trust You—otherwise, I don't know what I would do!

MARCH 22

Chapter: Deuteronomy 8
Theme: Watch Out!
Study Verse: Deuteronomy 8:6

STATEMENT: Of course, there is also a danger when things go well. We humans are all too likely to be proud of ourselves. Either we take credit for all that goes well, thinking it was our own doing, or we preen ourselves on our obedience, giving God the credit in word, but inwardly thinking He's only giving us what we've earned by being so "good." Moses reminds the people strongly, the Canaanites once knew God, and lost His favor and their land by constant, rebellious disobedience, and the same thing could happen to Israel. So watch out!

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Dear Jesus, help me to just walk humbly with You, not thinking too much about either obedience or disobedience, not doing right because I think I'll be rewarded, just walking with You and loving You, just because You loved me first.

MARCH 23

Chapter: Deuteronomy 9
Theme: Rebukes
Study Verse: Deuteronomy 9:6

STATEMENT: Moses continues to tell the stories of their travels—not just travels in distance and time, but travels in spirit, far from God and His love. Lest they ever think God has rewarded them by giving them this new land, he reminds them they are not entering because of any great righteousness, but because the people's God is dispossessing are entirely given up to wickedness.

RESPONSE:

PRAYER: Master, help me to follow You faithfully no matter what those around me do, and never to rebel.

MARCH 24

Chapter: Deuteronomy 10
Theme: A God of Love
Study Verse: Deuteronomy 10:12, 13

STATEMENT: After finishing the story of idolatry and rebellion at Sinai, Moses brings everything down to the heart of the matter: what is it that God requires, after all? Just love. This God who created heaven and earth, but still cares for the lowliest widow or orphan, simply desires us to love Him back. Is that so much to ask?

RESPONSE:

PRAYER: Lord, I do love You! I wish I could love as You love, without partiality or wavering or conditions. Help me to love You more and more, and to pour out that love all around me.

MARCH 25

Chapter: Deuteronomy 11
Theme: Blessings of Obedience
Study Verse: Deuteronomy 11:8

STATEMENT: Once again (and not for the last time in this book), Moses impresses upon the people the great blessings that come from living in love with God and following His ways. The blessings, sometimes temporal and often not, are endless and rich. We are not moving to possess a land, so what teachings can we gain from these chapters? What life are you looking forward to entering, and how can the blessings of obedience guide you?

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Dear Lord, as I look forward to _____, help me to love, trust, obey, and follow You in all my ways. Show me how Your love and power can help me in new endeavors.

MARCH 26

Chapter: Deuteronomy 12
Theme: Sanctuary Laws
Study Verse: Deuteronomy 12:5

STATEMENT: For the first time, God lets the people know that in their new land, there will be one special place for their worship. For many years, the wilderness tabernacle will be there, but eventually a temple will be built (and rebuilt, over the centuries). This is a good example of the kinds of rules that (unlike universal laws like the Ten Commandments) are not forever; Jesus specifically says in John 4:21 that the time will come when the special place, Jerusalem, will be obsolete. Where is God's temple now? If you need a hint, look up Jer. 31:33 and 1 Cor. 3:16.

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: King of the universe, live in my heart. Remake it any way You like—it belongs fully to You.

MARCH 27

Chapter: Deuteronomy 13
Theme: The Most Important Thing
Study Verse: Deuteronomy 13:4

STATEMENT: One reason God chooses one place for the people to worship is that there was such a huge temptation all around them to worship other idols all over the place. In this chapter, Moses explains how serious God is about keeping idolatry, sorcery, and false prophets far from them. Are there things in your life that you are tempted to put ahead of God?

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Dear God, keep my eyes on You alone! Don't let me stray, or let any of the things I like become things I love more than You!

MARCH 28

Chapter: Deuteronomy 14
Theme: Clean Meat and Tithe
Study Verse: Deuteronomy 14:2

STATEMENT: Moses repeats God's teaching about what animals may and may not be eaten. The people did not have access to any of the scientific knowledge we have now about why certain meats are worse for us; they only needed to obey. Then he reminds them of tithe. For them, it wasn't money; it was 10% of their crops or animals or other products. But they might exchange it for money to make travel easier. Notice the use the tithe was to be put to, besides supporting the priests and Levites, in verses 26-29. Why do you think God asked this?

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Father of us all, help me to generously and freely share the blessings You give me with those around me who may be in need, as well as with the ministers of God who are working for You instead of working for money.

MARCH 29

Chapter: Deuteronomy 15
Theme: The Cycle of Years
Study Verse: Deuteronomy 15:7, 8

STATEMENT: Moses repeats the cycle of years, with a sabbatical year every seventh year and a Year of Jubilee every 40 years, when all debts are forgiven and all sold land returns to its original owners. Notice how many times in this chapter God makes it clear that one big reason for this system is to be sure the poor and vulnerable will be cared for.

RESPONSE:

PRAYER: Dear Lord, You are so kind and generous to us! Today, circumstances are much different, but help me to find ways to follow these principles wherever I may live.

MARCH 30

Chapter: Deuteronomy 16
Theme: The Three Feasts
Study Verse: Deuteronomy 16:11

STATEMENT: Moses repeats part of the cycle and purpose of the Feasts God gave His people: Passover, Weeks (Pentecost), and Booths. He says these, of all the Feasts, are the three when everyone must go to "the place God chooses" (we know that would eventually be Jerusalem, but they didn't know that yet) and celebrate together. The other Feasts may be celebrated at home. Can you think of any reasons God chose these three for celebrating together as a people?

RESPONSE:

PRAYER: Jesus, You passed over our sins and gave Yourself for us; You sent Your Holy Spirit at Pentecost, and You have been ingathering souls always, to take us home to the Great Feast of Booths in heaven. I can't wait!

MARCH 31

Chapter: Deuteronomy 17

Theme: Justice

Study Verse: Deuteronomy 17:19

STATEMENT: Here, Moses sets out what God has taught him about laws and how to administer them. In particular, he repeats several times that care must be taken to be sure a person is truly guilty before sentencing them. He also hints at a future when the people will demand a king—and get one, despite the problems that will cause. God makes a strong resolution in verses 18-20 which, if only it had been kept, would have been a huge safeguard to Israel and her kings. What is it?

RESPONSE: _____

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PRAYER: King of heaven, I only want to obey You. I respect those human leaders you have set over me, and will always obey them unless they ask something that is against Your law.