

Morning Watch Readings

2018

NOVEMBER



This Morning Watch Calendar follows the

Believe
His Prophets

Daily Bible Reading Guide.

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

Daily chapter summary statements are provided.

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November 1

Chapter: Genesis 20
Theme: A Faithful King
Study Verse: Genesis 20:6

Statement: Here is the first serious sin of Abraham that we are told about. Like all of us, he was a sinner, of course, and no doubt made plenty of mistakes. But this time he lost his faith and lied, not believing God could protect him, and apparently not caring as much about Sarah as himself at that moment. Notice verse 6—God speaks, not to his friend, Abraham, but to a pagan king. And the king listens. What do you learn from this chapter?

Response:

Prayer: *Faithful God, I know sometimes I get scared and forget to trust You. I try to protect myself, sometimes in sinful ways. As You forgave Abraham, please forgive me. And thank You for Your faithfulness even to those who may not know You as well.*



November 2

Chapter: Genesis 21

Theme: A Kept Promise

Study Verse: Genesis 21:2

Statement: And some more sin... Now it's Sarah's turn to forget to trust God. It was her own idea to have her husband get another woman pregnant. In her mind, the baby would then be counted as hers because she thought she owned Hagar. Now that she has her own baby, she turns on Hagar. And again, God speaks to Hagar personally. This time He promises to care for her and her son away from Abraham's tents.

Response:

Prayer: *God who sees, You are faithful to us even when we are badly unfaithful to You! I am grateful for the way You continued to work through these faulty people—and through me.*



November 3

Chapter: Genesis 22

Theme: An Only Son Offered

Study Verse: Genesis 22:8

Statement: Here is one of the most shocking stories in the Bible. It is also a central one. In his willingness to give up the son he has waited for so long, Abraham foreshadows the Father in heaven who gave up His own beloved Son for us. God provided a ram for Abraham, and provided His own Son to save Abraham—and you. How does that make you feel? How do you think Isaac felt?

Response:

Prayer: *Lord, You are the Priest, the King, and the Sacrifice. We will never fully understand what You did for us in Your great plan of salvation. But we thank You on our knees!*



November 4

Chapter: Genesis 23

Theme: A Beloved Wife and Mother Dies

Study Verse: Genesis 23:2

Statement: Abraham and Sarah could have been together for as much as 100 years. We can't even imagine that now. They have had their ups and downs and made some bad mistakes, but God loved them and they loved each other. Abraham mourned for his wife and made a public ceremony of buying her a place for burial. Have you lost someone you love?

Response:

Prayer: *Faithful God, I am so glad I know You hold in Your heart all those we have lost, and we will see them again.*



November 5

Chapter: Genesis 24

Theme: A New Bride

Study Verse: Genesis 24:7

Statement: Isaac, too, was in mourning for his mother. At forty, he was of marriageable age in those days of longer lives. Abraham makes one of his wise decisions, sending back to his old homeland to find a godly bride. When she agrees, and comes to Isaac, she comforts him for the loss of his mother. This is a nice story. What is your favorite thing about it?

Response:

Prayer: *God of our ancestors, You care about every decision of our lives, but especially the vital one of choosing a lifelong mate. Guide me when I come to make that choice.*



November 6

Chapter: Genesis 25

Theme: Two Different Twins

Study Verse: Genesis 25:27

Statement: Abraham married again, had more sons, and died at 175. His two sons apparently got along at least sometimes, since they buried him together. Like Sarah, Rebekah was barren for a long time, but eventually she had twins, and she and Isaac made the mistake of playing favorites. There will be some painful consequences for this. What huge mistake does Esau make in this chapter? Why is it such a mistake?

Response:

Prayer: *God of the future, You have Your plans, and You are the only one wise enough to bring them to life. Help me learn from the mistakes of Bible characters and not meddle!*



November 7

Chapter: Genesis 26

Theme: The Covenant Repeated

Study Verse: Genesis 26:4

Statement: In verses 2-5, God repeats to Isaac all the same promises He made to Abraham. In the very next section of the chapter, Isaac makes the very same mistake his father made, lying about his wife to the king! Again, the king is more faithful than the supposed man of God. Eventually, as Isaac grew richer and more powerful, the king sent him away. Why do you think he did that?

Response:

Prayer: *Lord, keep me from making the same mistakes I see others make, or worse yet, the same mistakes I've made before. Help me to grow and learn every day.*



November 8

Chapter: Genesis 27

Theme: The Biggest Lie

Study Verse: Genesis 27:28

Statement: Unfortunately, the deception that has been nurtured in this family grows and produces its worst seed yet in this story. Rebekah used to love and comfort her husband. Now she plays favorites with her son instead...and because of her bad advice, she will never see Jacob alive again. Try imagining, perhaps even writing down, how this story might have been so much different if there had been no deception.

Response:

Prayer: *O great God, You work Your miracles even through the messes we make, but it would be so much better if we would just follow You from the beginning! Help me to do that, every day of my life.*



November 9

Chapter: Genesis 28

Theme: Exile, and Another Covenant

Study Verse: Genesis 28:3, 4

Statement: So, Jacob is sent away. As a lover of his home, this must have been so painful for him. Yet, as he went, God came to him and, yet again, repeats the covenant He has made with Jacob's father and grandfather. He even adds more detail; Jacob sees angels ascending and descending. Notice the bargain Jacob makes with God in verses 20-22. Remember that—we'll come back to it again.

Response:

Prayer: *God of the angel armies, remind me that every day, invisible to us, angels are constantly coming and going between You and us, bearing blessings.*



November 10

Chapter: Genesis 29

Theme: A Family Reunion

Study Verse: Genesis 29:20

Statement: The story of Jacob's meeting with Rachel is almost like Rebekah's story in reverse: he waters Rachel's sheep as Rebekah watered Eleazar's camels. It is clear from Jacob's reactions how thrilled and relieved he was to be in the company of relatives again after his lonely journey. But one of his relatives quickly becomes more special than the rest. Can you imagine working seven years to win your beloved?

Response:

Prayer: *Lord, how sad it is that when we deceive others, that deception often comes back to haunt us. As Jacob lied, so now he is lied to. And the consequences will be far-reaching. Help me to remember my small-seeming choices can be more far-reaching than I know.*



November 11

Chapter: Genesis 30

Theme: Family Battles

Study Verse: Genesis 30:26

Statement: Families can be difficult! This chapter shows both the divisions within Jacob's own family (his wives make the same mistakes Sarah did) and the divisions and conflict in the larger extended family. The years are passing, and Jacob is growing richer, but Laban doesn't want to let him go because he knows he is also benefiting by Jacob's blessings. Do you have family issues sometimes?

Response:

Prayer: *Father God, You gave us our families, and when we all listen to You, they are a great blessing. When we don't...not so much! Help me to be one of the faithful ones.*



November 12

Chapter: Genesis 31

Theme: A Human Covenant

Study Verse: Genesis 31:52

Statement: The family battles continue, and Jacob ends up deceiving Laban again and stealing away. But in the end, the whole family comes together in accord, and they make one of the most beautiful human covenants in the Bible. For once, there is a happy ending. How do you think they felt as they parted for the last time?

Response:

Prayer: *God of peace, You watch between me and those I am separate from. Help me to be faithful both to You and to those I love.*



November 13

Chapter: Genesis 32

Theme: A Wrestling Match

Study Verse: Genesis 32:28

Statement: Here is another of those central stories. First, Jacob shows his (justifiable) fear of the brother he so badly deceived. He prays, as you see in verse 9 and following, to “the God of my fathers” and begs for help, reminding God of his promises. Then Jacob has the watershed experience of his life. He wrestles with God...loses (of course)...and yet is told that he has won! His name is changed, but much more importantly, Jacob/Israel has changed forever. Have you had a wrestling match with God?

Response:

Prayer: *Lord, I sometimes try to wrestle You around to my way of thinking. Thank You for preventing that—and yet for considering me as having won, when all I have done is submitted to You.*



November 14

Chapter: Genesis 33

Theme: Brothers Reunited

Study Verse: Genesis 33:20

Statement: It's possible that Esau, too, was changed by Jacob's prayer. He did have those soldiers with him. Was he intending to attack his brother? Instead, they meet with love and joy. Meanwhile, remember the bargain Jacob made after his dream of the ladder? Remember how he called God the God of his fathers in the last chapter? In the last verse of this one, we see the true change: for the first time Jacob calls God the God of Israel—his God.

Response:

Prayer: *God of my fathers and mothers, bless me as I grow. If I have not already, bring me to the point where You are my God.*



November 15

Chapter: Genesis 34

Theme: More Treachery

Study Verse: Genesis 34:12

Statement: Still, the seeds of deception sowed in this family's generations are bearing more and more ugly fruit. Shechem makes a very bad choice, but later he does love Dinah. We have no idea what Dinah thought of him. Perhaps she was able to forgive his violence and learn to love him too; perhaps not. Her brothers were right to stand up for her, but they chose an ungodly way of doing it, and in so doing, caused tensions throughout the region.

Response:

Prayer: *My God, when I see evil done and am tempted to take revenge, please stop me and help me find positive ways of reconciling the people involved, instead.*



November 16

Chapter: Genesis 35

Theme: Many Changes

Study Verse: Genesis 35:2, 3

Statement: There is a lot in this chapter. The important attitude it shows is Jacob's new strength of faith. He returns to the place where, years ago, he saw the ladder and the angels, and again God renews His covenant with the family. Deborah, Jacob's mother's ancient nurse, who has to be many years over 100, dies, and Jacob tragically loses his beloved wife, Rachel, but gains a new son, Benjamin.

Response:

Prayer: *God of the ages, Your servants, the patriarchs, left altars to You wherever they went. The news spread that unlike pagan gods, You cared deeply for Your people. I want to be part of that heritage, spreading the news of Your love.*



November 17

Chapter: Genesis 36

Theme: Esau and his Descendants

Study Verse: Genesis 36:8, 9

Statement: For a brief time, the focus of the story turns to the other twin. It seems the brothers are getting along, since they agreeably separate so that the land will not be harmed in supporting them and their flocks. An interesting question: In the list of chiefs at the bottom of this chapter, two names are only female in the rest of the chapter: Timna and Oholibama. Is it possible that chiefs were sometimes women? We can ask when we go to heaven.

Response:

Prayer: *Lord, You gave us the earth and its animals to care for wisely, as well as caring for each other. It encourages me to see these two brothers making up and living near each other in peace, and also caring for the land and their flocks.*



November 18

Chapter: Genesis 37

Theme: More Family Chaos

Study Verse: Genesis 37:3

Statement: You would think Jacob would have learned of the dangers of playing favorites within a family, but he makes no secret of the fact that he loves Rachel's sons more than the children of his other wives. Joseph doesn't help himself by acting a little spoiled. What follows is a terrible story—not least because the brothers sell Joseph to their own relatives the Ishmaelites! But stay tuned...God has a plan!

Response:

Prayer: *Dear God, help me to remember that even when it seems that everything is going wrong, You are still with me, and You still have a plan.*



November 19

Chapter: Genesis 38

Theme: Judah's Sin

Study Verse: Genesis 38:26

Statement: Here we have another sad story—a kind of intermission in the story of Joseph in which his older brother Judah is dishonest, and also acts in adulterous ways. In the end, he sees the error of his ways, and the truth is, the story cannot be understood except in understanding the social and family customs of the time. You can learn more from the Bible Commentary, V. 1, pp. 434-6, where it says Judah had a complete reformation of character.

Response:

Prayer: *Faithful Lord, You keep on having patience with us! Perhaps in beginning to set things up for Jacob's family to move to Egypt later, You were also saving them from falling into ungodly Canaanite customs. Be sovereign over my life, too.*



November 20

Chapter: Genesis 39

Theme: The Lord was with Joseph

Study Verse: Genesis 39:3, 23

Statement: When Joseph was sold into slavery, he must have faced terrible temptation to give way to despair. He had been a rather spoiled son—how his life has changed! It is in disaster that our true characters shine out, and it turns out Joseph's character was sterling. Note the two study verses, from the beginning and end of the chapter. What do you see? From Joseph's point of view, has his life improved, or worsened? What is his response?

Response:

Prayer: *Master, make me capable of clinging to You and creating positive change out of even the disasters that come my way.*



November 21

Chapter: Genesis 40

Theme: Interpreting Dreams

Study Verse: Genesis 40:8

Statement: Joseph has risen so high in the chief jailer's regard that he is even put in charge of some high-caste prisoners from Pharaoh's court. They have strange dreams and are sure they must mean something. Have you ever had dreams you thought were important? Have you turned to godly people, as they turned to Joseph, to help you find the meaning God has put in the dreams for you?

Response:

Prayer: Great Interpreter, sometimes I need You to make sense of my ordinary life, let alone dreams! Thank You that You are always the One who understands, and can help me to understand, too.



November 22

Chapter: Genesis 41

Theme: Pharaoh Dreams

Study Verse: Genesis 41:16

Statement: The cupbearer promised to mention Joseph to Pharaoh, but he forgot all about it. Two long years passed, and Pharaoh had a dream no one could interpret. Finally, the cupbearer remembered. Joseph was hastily summoned. What did he tell Pharaoh? When people thank you for your help with something, do you remember to give God the credit?

Response:

Prayer: *Lord, You are the giver and the interpreter of dreams. Help me remember that all gifts come from You, and all credit is Yours as well.*



November 23

Chapter: Genesis 42

Theme: The Famine Begins

Study Verse: Genesis 42:21

Statement: When the prophesied famine began, Egypt, under Joseph, was ready. His own brothers were among those who were sent to buy grain. If it surprises you that they couldn't recognize him, look at pictures of Pharaonic and Hebrew costumes of the time, and remember that it had been over 20 years. How can you tell that guilt over their actions is still consuming them?

Response:

Prayer: *Mighty God, help me to confess and be restored right away when I do wrong, so that it won't eat me up for years to come.*



November 24

Chapter: Genesis 43

Theme: Brothers Together Again

Study Verse: Genesis 43:9

Statement: With great reluctance, Jacob allows Benjamin to accompany his brothers to Egypt the second time. This is a touching chapter, showing Joseph's deep emotions on seeing the younger brother he had missed for so long. What does he want to know about his brothers, and how does he go about finding it out?

Response:

Prayer: *Please, God, help me to keep good and loving relations with all my family. Use these Bible examples to show me how much pain is caused by family discord.*



November 25

Chapter: Genesis 44

Theme: Judah's Sacrifice

Study Verse: Genesis 44:33, 34

Statement: Here is another Bible story that foreshadows what Jesus will do for us centuries later. Judah was one of the worst offenders against Joseph, but his sin has eaten at his heart all these years. He gave his word to his father that he would personally see to it that Benjamin came back safely. To what lengths is he willing to go to see that this happens?

Response:

Prayer: *Oh, Lord, make me willing to give up my wishes, my convenience, even myself for the safety and security of others.*



November 26

Chapter: Genesis 45

Theme: Reconciliation!

Study Verse: Genesis 45:7

Statement: Forgiveness happens as soon as a wronged person chooses to let go of the desire for revenge, even in their heart, and forgives. But reconciliation can only happen if both parties are willing. Joseph has forgiven his brothers, especially now that he sees their change. But at first they are still afraid of him. What do you think brings them to reconciliation? Do you think they completely let go of their sin now?

Response:

Prayer: *Great Ruler, only You can bring healing and reconciliation even out of the worst events in our lives.*



November 27

Chapter: Genesis 46

Theme: A Fateful Move

Study Verse: Genesis 46:3, 4

Statement: Can you begin to imagine Jacob's feelings when he learns not only that his son is alive, but that his other sons have been deceiving him for years? It seems that Jacob might have been afraid to trust to this new turn of events, since God felt it necessary to confirm that going to Egypt was the right thing to do. Can you put yourself in Joseph's place when he sees his father again?

Response:

Prayer: *Dear God, it amazes me to think of the plans You had in place for these people, thousands of years ago. I know that You see even small events in my own life as part of Your greater plan.*



November 28

Chapter: Genesis 47

Theme: The Famine's Results

Study Verse: Genesis 47:12

Statement: In this chapter, reading thousands of years later, we can see the seeds of a future Jacob and his family could not have predicted.

What mattered to them at the time was that they were all together again, but Jacob still wanted to go home to the land God had promised him, even if it was after his death. Joseph promised he would go. And he did. They had no idea of the plans God was setting in motion. We'll read all about it over the next few months.

Response:

Prayer: *Yahweh, You are the One who is, the One who was, and the One who is to come. Yesterday, today, and tomorrow are the same to You. I rest content in that secure knowledge.*



November 29

Chapter: Genesis 48

Theme: Jacob's Blessing

Study Verse: Genesis 48:15, 16

Statement: Jacob, of all people, knew how important a parent's final blessing is. He had no doubt always regretted his behavior when his own father died. He is blessed to live to the point that Joseph's sons are young men, and has the opportunity to bless them. In a strange twist, he recognizes that God's plans for the two are opposite to what people expected, just as they had been for him and his brother, Esau. Ephraim and Manasseh don't cheat to get their blessings, though.

Response:

Prayer: *Lord of all blessing, I know Your blessing is on my life whether or not my parents' blessing is. [If they bless you, praise God for that; if they do not, ask for extra blessing and guidance from God.]*



November 30

Chapter: Genesis 49

Theme: A Chapter of Blessings

Study Verse: Genesis 49:2

Statement: This is an interesting chapter. The old custom of parents prophetically passing on blessings from God (the only One who could predict their futures) has died out in most places now. Because these blessings are in the Bible and because we know the Bible is ours to be used by God in our lives, many like to find blessings here that they feel apply to them. If you were going to choose a blessing here that particularly seems to fit you, which would it be?

Response:

Prayer: *Blessed Lord, only You can truly bless. I pray that You will make true in my life the things that You draw me toward in this chapter, and open my eyes and mind to recognize other blessings.*

