

Morning Watch Readings

2018
APRIL



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.

youth.adventist.org



April 1

Chapter: Luke 22

Theme: A New Covenant

Study Verse: Luke 22:19, 20

Statement: Jesus speaks of a “new covenant.” But what’s new about it? From the very first day of Eden, God created humans to love each other and Him. He walked with them in the garden. When they sinned, He promised to send a Redeemer to save them. Moses, Joshua, and all the prophets repeated that God only desires love. The only thing new about this covenant—and this is a big thing—is that it’s about to be fulfilled once and for all. It is no longer a promise for what must have seemed a dim and distant future. Just hours later, Jesus would say, “It is done.” Hallelujah!

Response:

Prayer: *One and only Lamb of God, now it can seem like the dim and distant past! Help me to remember that Your covenant is new every morning. It is always now. Live it out in me.*



April 2

Chapter: Luke 23

Theme: Undying Grace

Study Verse: Luke 23:34

Statement: It is so hard to read this story! As we watch Jesus mocked, ridiculed, beaten, then crucified, it's just hard to take, especially when we know it should have been us, not Him. But always, always, in the darkest hours in the Bible and outside of it, God's grace shines so brightly. "Father, forgive them—they have no idea what they're doing." He said that for you and me. Amazing...

Response:

Prayer: *Lord of Grace, I do not deserve Your love. Yet You love me just the same. I sometimes do evil knowing full well what I am doing. Yet You forgive me. Oh, teach me to be like You—to live in grace and to offer it to others, as You do.*



April 3

Chapter: Luke 24

Theme: It Had to Be

Study Verse: Luke 24:25-27

Statement: At last, the ugliness is over and the joy begins—joy such as Jesus' disciples could not have imagined! They thought they were happy being with Him before—what will it be like now, now that He is no longer just a Galilean carpenter, but is the King of Glory? What a walk those two disciples had! They were so excited they forgot to eat their supper! Don't you wish they'd written down just what He told them?

Response:

Prayer: *Great Teacher, You still show us Yourself in the words of all the Bible. Show me today, and every day, that it's all about You.*



April 4

Chapter: John 1

Theme: The Word

Study Verse: John 1:1-5

Statement: The gospel of John is different from the other gospels. As it begins, it's almost like another creation story. To understand what John is saying here, it helps to know the Greeks of his time had a belief in something they called "Logos," or Word, which was the intermediary between humanity and the gods (they thought there were lots of them). John said, "The Logos is a real Person, he really is God, and I've met Him!" Try to imagine what you would have thought if you'd been a Greek of that time, reading these words.

Response:

Prayer: *Living Word of the Father, thank You so much for coming to us as a human person, to help us understand. You are the intermediary between heaven and earth. Help me to be a small intermediary pointing others to You.*



April 5

Chapter: John 2

Theme: Water = Wine?!

Study Verse: John 2:11

Statement: Use your imagination on this story. You are a servant, run off your feet because there's a wedding in the house. The wine runs out, and one of the guests says to fill up the giant water jars. You may shake your head, but you're just a servant, so you obey. Then you dip some out for the master of the banquet...and it's wine?? How do you feel? What do you think? Most important, what does it mean to the real *you*, now, today?

Response:

Prayer: *Son of God, I have seen You turn things around in unexpected and miraculous ways in my own life. I know You can make ordinary everyday life into something special that helps everyone around me.*



April 6

Chapter: John 3

Theme: Born Two Times

Study Verse: John 3:18

Statement: One of the things that are different about John's gospel is the way he spends time on conversations like this. Nicodemus may not (yet) have the courage of his convictions, but he was definitely interested, and under the conviction of the Holy Spirit about this new Teacher. Try to hear Jesus' words as if you've never heard them before. You have to be born all over again? Really? What does that mean to you?

Response:

Prayer: *Rabbi, You are the Teacher sent from God. No one could do the things You do unless God was with Him. Show me the true newness of life that You offer. Make it true to me.*



April 7

Chapter: John 4

Theme: They Believed

Study Verse: John 4: 40, 41

Statement: Again, another whole chapter on one conversation, and with a woman, at that. In Jesus' society, and in some societies today, women were considered less important than men. Certainly a public personality would not sit and talk with one like this. Yet a whole town was converted because of this conversation. Can you find the declaration Jesus made to her, that He rarely, if ever, told anyone else in so many words?

Response:

Prayer: *Messiah, You are the One who was to come, and the One who is, and the One who is yet to be. You are the only One I need at the foundation and center of my life. Teach me to worship You in spirit and in truth.*



April 8

Chapter: John 5

Theme: Healed!

Study Verse: John 5:8, 9

Statement: How long is the longest you have ever been sick? Are you, perhaps, even one of those among us who are sick all the time? It gets long, doesn't it? It seems endless, even when it's not. Do you ever start to feel as if it might be your own fault? It actually was something about the way this man had lived his life that made him sick. But Jesus loved him just the same. He healed him with eagerness. He will do the same for your soul, even if not for your body.

Response:

Prayer: *Master Physician, heal me! If it is Your will, heal my body (or the body of one I love, who is ill). Even if not, I know we will all be well in the end, and in the meantime, heal our souls. We want to walk with You.*



April 9

Chapter: John 6

Theme: Bread from Heaven

Study Verse: John 6:46, 47

Statement: Just as John is different in other ways, it is different in its watershed moment, too. In this gospel, it doesn't so much speak of Jesus as "setting His face for Jerusalem" as it does of people beginning to turn from Him. He is telling the truth in ways that people don't want to hear. They want Him to miraculously feed them so they don't have to work. He wants to feed their souls. Notice verse 66. How do you think this made Jesus feel? Do you see His response in verse 67?

Response:

Prayer: *No, Lord, I don't want to leave You! Where else would I go? Only You have the words of life. Feed me Your bread, so that Your truth will become part of my bones, and I will live Your life.*



April 10

Chapter: John 7

Theme: Living Water

Study Verse: John 7:37-39a

Statement: Every day of the fall Feast of Tabernacles, a priest would go to the Pool of Siloam, draw a pitcher of water, and pour it into the temple's cleansing basin. (You can find more about this online by looking up Jewish Libation Ceremony.) On the last day, it was a very joyful and exciting, torch-lit ceremony. It was at the moment that the priest poured the water that Jesus stood and called out the words in our Study Verse. What do you think the reaction was? What would you have done, if you had been there?

Response:

Prayer: *Water of Life, You are present in me through Your Holy Spirit, whom You promised to those who love You. Please let me drink freely of You, and let the love pour forth to all I meet.*



April 11

Chapter: John 8

Theme: Light of Life

Study Verse: John 8:12

Statement: In John, there are seven great “I Am” statements of Jesus. Here is one of them: “I am the light of the world.” This whole chapter is one long debate between the teachers of the people (who were teaching mostly falsehood) and Jesus, who was no longer keeping any secrets, but was openly calling Himself sent by and equal to God. You can imagine the consternation and confusion, as the people listened and tried to decide which side to believe. If you had been there, which of Jesus’ words in this chapter would help you to believe in Him?

Response:

Prayer: *Lord of Light, brighten my heart. Brighten my life. Make it shine forth with Your love and goodness, so that people will know I have You in residence in my heart.*



April 12

Chapter: John 9

Theme: Blindness and Sight

Study Verse: John 9:25

Statement: Again, John gives much more detail to a healing story than any other gospel. This one is quite a drama. The man is healed, the priests and rulers get into it, even his parents come into the picture. Jesus comes back to reaffirm the man's faith. You and your friends could make a play out of this chapter if you wish. Who is really blind here, the man, or the Pharisees? Explain your answer.

Response:

Prayer: *All-Seeing One, You see the blind spots in my heart. Heal them, and show me how to see as You do, how to love and heal as You do.*



April 13

Chapter: John 10

Theme: The Gate and the Shepherd

Study Verse: John 10:9, 10

Statement: This chapter has two more “I Am” statements in it, and taken together, they are kind of strange. How can Jesus be both a gate and a shepherd? Have you ever seen people trying to get to God by a different path than through Jesus' way of self-sacrificing love? What happens? It's easier to imagine Him as Shepherd. He leads us and cares for us as a shepherd does. Do you have shepherds in your area? What are some things you can learn about God from watching them work?

Response:

Prayer: *Good Shepherd, You carry me when I fall, come and find me when I stray, feed and water and shelter me...how can I ever thank You enough? Show me how to show others the one true gate to happiness.*



April 14

Chapter: John 11

Theme: Resurrection and Life

Study Verse: John 11:25

Statement: Here is one of the greatest “I Am” statements, and for many, one of the hardest to believe. Even Lazarus died again. What does it mean that believers live even if they die? One of the most interesting things about this story is that this time, Martha is the one who shows the strongest faith. Mary only weeps and rebukes Jesus. Martha does those things, too, but what does she say to Him after that?

Response:

Prayer: *Lord of Life, I know that You will raise all who love You in the last day. Let me live my life for you now, and if I die before You come, let me live again in Your last triumphant day.*



April 15

Chapter: John 12

Theme: Walking in Light

Study Verse: John 12:36

Statement: John gives more detail to the story of the perfume on Jesus' feet, which we have seen in another gospel. What details mean the most to you? You can see as these chapters go on that the controversy is heating up about Jesus and His fate. The priests want to kill him (and Lazarus, too) and the people are torn one way and the other. Jesus begs them to walk in the light while they have it. It's easy for us to look back and say they should have believed. But if a man came walking through your town claiming to be Messiah, what would make you believe? What evidence do you see in this chapter that Jesus is who He says He is?

Response:

Prayer: *Son of Man, You are my Brother. I still can't believe You humbled Yourself that way! Help me to walk in the light, and to be a little light to those around me, too, pointing them to Your great Light of Love.*



April 16

Chapter: John 13

Theme: Servant Leader

Study Verse: John 13:1

Statement: What a touching statement this chapter begins with. He loved us in the beginning, and He loves us to the end. In this case, it is speaking of His love for His disciples, including Judas, whom He was still trying to convince to turn back, right up to this last meal together. Have you ever tried to imagine what it would feel like to have *Jesus* kneel down before you, take your feet in His hands, and wash them gently? What a shocking story! He loves you that much. Do you love Him that much in return?

Response:

Prayer: *Humble Master, You have given us an example that is impossible to fulfill, but simple to imitate. Like a little child, help me to imitate You and love others as a servant.*



April 17

Chapter: John 14

Theme: Last Words

Study Verse: John 14:6, 7

Statement: All the other gospels say that after the Last Supper, on the way to Gethsemane, “they spoke of many things.” Only John writes it all down. During these next three chapters, let's try to figure out what Jesus felt were the most important things He could say in His last hours with His beloved disciples. Here, He promises peace, a clear path to His Father, and the presence of the Holy Spirit. How have you found these things in your own life?

Response:

Prayer: *Way, Truth, and Life, You are all I need. You give me Your unexpected and indescribable peace, You give me Your Spirit, and You lead me to the Father. What more can I ask?*



April 18

Chapter: John 15

Theme: The Vine

Study Verse: John 15:12, 13

Statement: Another “I Am” statement: “I am the Vine.” This time Jesus adds, “And My Father is the vine dresser.” Do you have grapevines in your area? Have you seen people work with them? It takes a lot of patience and training to grow delicious, healthy grapes. If you are a branch, what is your job? What is the vine’s job? What is the vine dresser’s job? What would happen if the branch tried to take over any of those other jobs?

Response:

Prayer: *Rooted Source of my life, I rely entirely on You to bring me nourishment and growth and fruit. I won't try to prune myself (or worse yet, prune anyone else!) I'll leave that work to You, and just stick tight and grow!*



April 19

Chapter: John 16

Theme: Warned in Advance

Study Verse: John 16:33

Statement: In this chapter, Jesus explains why He has taken the time to teach all these things to the disciples. He knows hard times are coming—first for Him, as He is arrested, “tried” (in a silly excuse for a trial), and executed, then for His followers, as the authorities begin to come after them. When our trials come, Jesus wants us to know in advance that He is there, that He is giving us peace, and that the Holy Spirit will teach us everything we need to know, do, and say. Have you had trials that these truths have helped you through? Tell someone else about them.

Response:

Prayer: *Jesus, giver of all peace, keep me safe. Keep me in Your arms and in Your truth. I will trust You, no matter what.*



April 20

Chapter: John 17

Theme: Jesus Prays for *You!*

Study Verse: John 17:20, 21

Statement: It is the last night of Jesus' earthly life, and He knows it. He will soon have the prayer session the other gospels tell us about, where He sweats like drops of blood, and begs to have the cup pass from Him. But first, He had to pray for you. That's right, for you and me. Do you see us there in the Study Verse? He was about to die, and He was thinking of us! What is the one thing Jesus asks for, over and over, for all of His children for all time? How are we doing on accepting God's attempts to answer that prayer request in us?

Response:

Prayer: *Father God, I know You want us to be in unity with Jesus, You, and each other. I know that unity doesn't mean uniformity. I also know it's always more complicated than it seems. Just help us love as You love, and let everything else fall into place.*



April 21

Chapter: John 18

Theme: An Other-Wordly Kingdom

Study Verse: John 18:37

Statement: As always, John gives more details than others have. One of these details is Jesus' conversation with Pilate. Being Who He is, Jesus is still trying to reach out to everyone He can. You can almost see Him hoping against hope that even Pilate will listen, will be “on the side of truth” (NIV) and turn to Jesus. Wow, can you imagine how this story could have changed if Pilate had turned to Jesus? What is the most important thing in this chapter for you personally?

Response:

Prayer: *King of the Jews and King of my heart, I am on the side of truth. I listen to You, and I accept Your mission to testify to truth in this world.*



April 22

Chapter: John 19

Theme: The One They Pierced

Study Verse: John 19:35

Statement: Having more details only makes this story even harder to read. Try not to read it in a hurry, even if you've read it a hundred times before. Try to be present to Jesus, His pain, and His triumph. Note Pilate, without actual commitment, trying to prevent the death, then giving in. Watch the soldiers gambling and the women weeping. Hear Jesus say, "It is finished," and know that He has completed His ordeal for your soul. With His friends, lay Him away and wait.

Response:

Prayer: *Father, as much pain as we feel when we read about this, as much more pain as His friends felt when Jesus died...we can't even begin to imagine **Your** pain, as You watched the children You had made in Your own image kill Your only begotten Son!*



April 23

Chapter: John 20

Theme: A Doubter Convinced

Study Verse: John 20:28, 29

Statement: Here is another story only John tells. Poor Thomas has taken a lot of criticism over the centuries. But really—if somebody came and told *you* that your dead friend had come back to life, would you believe it? It's not the kind of thing a person *should* believe easily. (Of course, in this case, Jesus had said *how* many times that He would be raised again the third day?) The real point of the story, though, is twofold: Jesus cared enough to give Thomas the proof he required, and Thomas made a 180 degree turn to full believer.

Response:

Prayer: *Lord, I hope I am not slow to believe You—but when I am, I hope I am quick to turn around and say, “My Lord and my God!”*



April 24

Chapter: John 21

Theme: Jumping In

Study Verse: John 21:7

Statement: This is one of my favorite verses in the Bible. Poor Peter! He had been on a roller coaster of grief and guilt and joy in a very short time. The second he realized this was Jesus they saw on shore, he dove in and swam straight there. It's a sad fact of human nature that sometimes it's only after we fall that we *really* give ourselves to God without reservation. That happened to Peter. In the rest of this story, Jesus reinstates Peter, and even gives him a new job—feed the lambs—that is, new or childlike believers. Now, would you have trusted the old Peter with that task?

Response:

Prayer: *Master, You know that I love You. I am as bad at living it out as Peter was, but I do love You, and I do want to do whatever task You think I am fit for. Walk with me and show me how, please.*



April 25

Chapter: Acts 1

Theme: Jesus *Will* Be Back!

Study Verse: Acts 1:11

Statement: How different everything must have been for the followers of Jesus, after His death and resurrection! Don't you wish we had more stories, like the ones from before? Did He still teach or heal, or did He only appear to His own followers now? The stories we do have are pretty exciting, and this is the best of all. No matter how difficult it gets down here, no matter how tempted we are to give up, fearing that it's all our imagination, we always have this to come back to: *This same Jesus* will come back *the same way*. Period. Exclamation point! Even so, come, Lord Jesus!

Response:

Prayer: *Oh, hurry, Jesus! I so want to see You, to hug You, to hear Your voice, to live with You where all is love! Hurry—please!!*



April 26

Chapter: Acts 2

Theme: All Hands on Deck!

Study Verse: Acts 2:21

Statement: Did you ever pay close attention to that quote from Joel 2, which Peter shared with those who came to see what all the commotion was? Who is left out of those who will be empowered by the Spirit to spread the Good News all over the world? Ummm....*nobody!* Young, old, male, female, God wants all hands on deck! That very day, 120 believers shared the news about Jesus' resurrection in dozens of different languages, and *3,000 souls* were saved! Ask God what your part in the excitement is.

Response:

Prayer: *Lord God, I am only [fill in the blank] but I love You. These hands, this mouth, this heart, all these gifts and talents You've given me, they're Yours to do with as You wish.*



April 27

Chapter: Acts 3

Theme: Peter Makes Someone Else Jump

Study Verse: Acts 3:8

Statement: There are churches where someone jumping for joy and praising God would be frowned upon. But this man is too thrilled to care. Peter is really on fire now. He knows who the Messiah really is, and what His mission really is, and he wants the world to know it. In important ways, Peter is the same—bold, direct, excitable. But in other important ways, he is different. Note especially his kindness in verse 17. The old Peter would have scolded, if not called down fire from heaven. Not this new Peter. He, like God, is not willing that any should perish, and he wants them to understand.

Response:

Prayer: *Father, I may not be called to heal people like Peter, but I am excited for You, and I want everyone to know who You really are and how much You love them.*



April 28

Chapter: Acts 4

Theme: A Whole New World

Study Verse: Acts 4:32, 33

Statement: The last verses of this chapter are often quoted as an ideal of how God's church is meant to be—everyone got along, everyone shared, everyone loved each other and worked together even though they had different tastes, different styles, and different gifts. And so it is. But the first half of the chapter is also characteristic of churches that are working together for God—they get in trouble. Peter and John's reward for healing the crippled man was to be arrested. Yet they just kept praying, and “spoke the word of God boldly.”

Response:

Prayer: *God of unity, help me to get along and love people different from me, and to help others do the same. Let us work together for You no matter what opposition we face.*



April 29

Chapter: Acts 5

Theme: A Chapter of Drama

Study Verse: Acts 5:42

Statement: What a lot happens in this chapter! Ups, downs, arrests, miracles, even beatings! Not to mention the story of Ananias and Sapphira (who, by the way, did not get in trouble for not giving all the money, but for lying and saying they had). Yet the followers just kept working. One fascinating detail in this chapter is the way Gamaliel defended the new believers. This man was one of the most famous Jewish wise men ever, and there is a lot of material about him, but this is the only time he enters the biblical narrative, except for being listed as Paul's teacher. Some traditions say he eventually accepted Jesus as the Messiah. What we know is that on this occasion, his calm words saved lives.

Response:

Prayer: *God of wisdom, let my words be a calm influence when people around me are getting heated. Even those who don't agree can be kind.*



April 30

Chapter: Acts 6

Theme: The Growing Church

Study Verse: Acts 6:7

Statement: This chapter shows the beginning of this overwhelming, astonishing movement, growing by thousands every week, becoming an organized church. There are only 12 apostles (see Acts 1 for the voted replacement of Judas) and around 100+ core believers who had the Upper Room experience. All the thousands of new believers are called to share their story and tell their friends, but these few dozen are most likely the heart of the organization, and it is time to delegate some authority. It would be interesting to compare what the tasks of these first deacons were with the tasks of the deacons in your church. How are they similar and different?

Response:

Prayer: *Jesus, of course You are the only Head of the church. Under You, we all have our roles to play. Help me keep focused on You so that I know what my role is, and keep paying attention as it changes with my growth.*

