

Morning Watch Readings

2018

MARCH



AMBASSADORS AND YOUNG ADULTS

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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.



MARCH 1

CHAPTER: Mark 7

THEME: What Defiles?

STUDY VERSE: Mark 7:14, 15

STATEMENT: In order to understand this passage, we must understand Jewish ritual law. One rule is to pour water three times over the left hand, holding the pitcher in the right hand, then do the same with the opposite hands, all while saying the correct blessings!

Meanwhile, as long as one did all the rituals perfectly, it didn't matter whether one was loving or not. Why do you think Jesus had a problem with this? What is it that truly has power to defile us?

RESPONSE:

PRAYER: *Master, bring Your true purity into my heart and make me “clean indeed.” I am glad for Your health laws, and I do keep them, but I am even more glad for Your laws of love. Help me to keep those especially!*



MARCH 2

CHAPTER: Mark 8

THEME: Whom Do *You* Say Jesus Is?

STUDY VERSE: Mark 8:29

STATEMENT: It must have been so frustrating to feed thousands of people with a one-person lunch and then have the Pharisees demanding a sign! What did they call what they'd just seen? On top of that, the disciples misunderstand, too. Jesus brings it all down to the bottom line—Whom do we say He is? A speaker once said, “Jesus is *to you* exactly who you think He is. If you don't believe, that doesn't change His identity, but it keeps you from His blessing.” So...whom do *you* think He is?

RESPONSE:

PRAYER: *Christ, Living Messiah, Son of God, that's who I say You are! Be to me and in me all that You can be, I beseech You!*



MARCH 3

CHAPTER: Mark 9

THEME: Help My Unbelief

STUDY VERSE: Mark 9:24

STATEMENT: Just down from a high and holy mountaintop experience with God, Jesus and His three closest followers are confronted with a crisis. The father's prayers have not yet been answered, even by Jesus' followers, who have successfully cast out demons before, so we can understand his doubts and fears. He does exactly the right thing with them—gives them straight to Jesus. Have you handed your doubts and fears over to Him?

RESPONSE:

PRAYER: *Lord, I do believe! And I do also need help with my unbelief. You are the only one who can help and strengthen me, and I trust You to do it.*



MARCH 4

CHAPTER: Mark 10

THEME: The Blessing of Children

STUDY VERSE: Mark 10:15

STATEMENT: Each gospel contains a turning point after which Jesus' focus is toward Jerusalem. This is Mark's turning point chapter. We have the Pharisees arguing with Him and testing Him, the rich young ruler turning away from Him, and His sufferings foretold. But in the middle is a little gem of a story. We think of it as Jesus blessing the children, and so it is, but I have titled it the way I have because I believe the children, in their innocence and love, were a blessing to Jesus at this time, too. How can you bless Jesus' heart this week?

RESPONSE:

PRAYER: *Dear Jesus, I ask Your blessing every day, on my life, on my family, on those around me. Today, I also ask that I might bless You in some small way. Show me.*



MARCH 5

CHAPTER: Mark 11

THEME: “The Lord Has Need of It”

STUDY VERSE: Mark 11:3

STATEMENT: Have you ever thought about the family who owned the donkey? There has to be more to this story than we know; otherwise, the simple words, “The Lord has need of it” would not have had the power they did. These people must have known Jesus, and believed. Is there anything you have that the Lord has need of? What will You do if He asks for it?

RESPONSE:

PRAYER: *Hosanna, Son of David! Everything I have is Yours to do with as You please—I know it all came from You anyway. Show me what You need from me today.*



MARCH 6

CHAPTER: Mark 12

THEME: A Widow's Might

STUDY VERSE: Mark 12:43, 44

STATEMENT: If you had asked her, this widow would never have thought she was mighty! She would have said that all she had was a mite—a half-penny—but it was all God's, along with herself. Little did she know her story would be so mighty that it would be told for thousands of years! Little did she know that she, like the children, would be a blessing to Jesus during His difficult last week on earth. Do you have a mite that could be mighty for God?

RESPONSE:

PRAYER: *God, I am small, and I have little to offer to You. But I, and all that I have, are Yours. Make my mites do mighty work for Your people.*



MARCH 7

CHAPTER: Mark 13

THEME: Signs of the End

STUDY VERSE: Mark 13:31, 32

STATEMENT: It is interesting to compare this chapter with Matthew 24. Do you find any extra details that one disciple or the other adds to our understanding? Many people in the past two centuries or so have chosen one date or another as the day when the world will end. As I write this, another such day has come and gone three days ago. We can be safe from the confusion and ridicule this brings if we just remember Jesus' words here. Let's leave it to God to decide when the right day comes.

RESPONSE:

PRAYER: *Conquering Ruler, I know You will come to bring Your peace and love to all the earth. I wish it would be soon, but in the meantime, I just want to help spread Your message and tell everyone how much You love them.*



MARCH 8

CHAPTER: Mark 14

THEME: The Darkest Hours

STUDY VERSE: Mark 14:36

STATEMENT: Notice verse 34. We humans often use language that exaggerates: “I thought I would die!” Jesus didn’t do that. He really felt He might die, and Ellen White tells us He could have, if an angel hadn’t come to encourage Him in the garden. His greatest test and temptation were right here in the garden. Why should He go through a horrific form of execution for people who misunderstood or outright mocked Him? Much, much worse, why should He go through the torment we can never understand, of being separated from His Father? Only one reason: Love. How did Jesus arm Himself?

RESPONSE:

PRAYER: *Father, Thy will be done, now and always. I know I'll never be called upon to face anything even slightly like what Jesus faced for me, but in what I do face... Thy will be done.*



MARCH 9

CHAPTER: Mark 15

THEME: The Women

STUDY VERSE: Mark 15:47

STATEMENT: Have you ever tried to imagine what it was like for Mary to watch her Son tortured and killed? Many mothers through history have gone through that, but only one was mother to the One who saves all those sons and daughters. It must have been as torturous for Mary as for Jesus, on a human level. What do you think she was thinking? How might the women have bolstered each other's faith?

RESPONSE:

PRAYER: *Jesus, thank You for showing us how much You loved Your earthly family. I want to be there when Your mother meets You again in heaven...because You died for her, too!*



MARCH 10

CHAPTER: Mark 16

THEME: “And Peter”

STUDY VERSE: Mark 16:7

STATEMENT: This resurrection story contains a very interesting and heartwarming detail. Jesus told the angel to say, “Go tell His disciples *and Peter* that I’ll meet them in Galilee.” Why “and Peter”? Peter was a disciple, too, right? Jesus knew how terribly guilty and discouraged Peter felt about betraying his Lord on the night of the trial. He knew Peter feared that Jesus didn’t love him anymore. 1 Cor. 15:5 even hints that Jesus may have met privately with Peter. What did Jesus want Peter to know?

RESPONSE:

PRAYER: *My Savior, I have betrayed You sometimes, too. I have done things I shouldn't, and left undone things I knew You wanted me to do. I take comfort from the fact that You forgave Peter, and that, in fact, it was Peter that You told to forgive 70 times 7. I am so grateful!*



MARCH 11

CHAPTER: Luke 1

THEME: The Forerunner

STUDY VERSE: Luke 1:15, 16

STATEMENT: Luke tells us many more details about John the Baptist's birth and Jesus' birth and childhood than any other disciple. Here, he tells the story of Zacharias and Elizabeth. When the angel tells Zacharias that he will have a son, he doubts, and he is given nine months to think things over. Do you think he doubted God again after that?

RESPONSE:

PRAYER: *Great Creator, You are patient with us, always willing to teach us to trust You better, using whatever means You can find. Teach me to trust You the first time.*



MARCH 12

CHAPTER: Luke 2

THEME: Mary's Warnings

STUDY VERSE: Luke 2:19, 35

STATEMENT: Since we have it fresh in our minds how Jesus' death affected His mother, here is a good chance to consider how her faith was first built up by God, through angels, and even through her husband's faithfulness to her. List the things, both exciting and unnerving, that Mary had to ponder, according to this chapter. How do you think they helped her later?

RESPONSE:

PRAYER: *Mighty Father, Your hands hold up galaxies, yet You have time to tenderly nurture a young girl. You gave her an amazing and sometimes terrifying job to do for You, and she did it well. May I do as well at the jobs You give to me.*



MARCH 13

CHAPTER: Luke 3

THEME: Get Ready!

STUDY VERSE: Luke 3:4, 5

STATEMENT: Luke also gives us far more detail about the ministry of John the Baptist before Jesus began His. List the things he said to the people of his day to get them ready to meet Jesus at His first coming. Which of these things do you think would help people get ready now, for Jesus' second coming? How can you help to spread the word?

RESPONSE:

PRAYER: *Oh, Lord, in my heart, lay low the high, proud places, and raise up the low, depressed places. Make a highway inside me, for the King to come in and stay.*



MARCH 14

CHAPTER: Luke 4

THEME: No Honor at Home

STUDY VERSE: Luke 4:36

STATEMENT: Have you ever done something you were very proud of, in the presence of your friends and family? I hope they were proud of you and of your accomplishment. Can you imagine how it hurt Jesus, so soon after He began His public ministry, to have His own townspeople not only disagree and criticize, but actually try to kill Him?! It must have been comforting when others said what they did in our study verse.

RESPONSE:

PRAYER: *Lord Jesus, give me the strength, trust, and faith to face whatever mocking or criticism I may face for You, without falling apart or giving up. Let me please You, and not mind what others think.*



MARCH 15

CHAPTER: Luke 5

THEME: Healing

STUDY VERSE: Luke 5:12, 13

STATEMENT: In this chapter, filled with stories, is one of the moving moments of Jesus' ministry. So often, He was faced with unbelief and rejection. Yet here is a man "covered with leprosy" who simply believes that if Jesus wishes, He can heal him. And Jesus, I'm sure with a look of tender love, says that of course He wants to: "Be clean." And he is well. Is there something in your life you *know* Jesus could do for you? If there is a hesitation, is it in Jesus...or in you?

RESPONSE:

PRAYER: *Dear Lord, I know You don't always choose to answer just as we wish. But I also know You always do want to help. Teach me to trust You fully, to believe You can help me, and just to accept that help.*



MARCH 16

CHAPTER: Luke 6

THEME: A Strong Foundation

STUDY VERSE: Luke 6:46

STATEMENT: This last story goes well with the one we looked at yesterday: complete trust. Jesus doesn't say, "If you trust Me, there will be no storms." He says, "If you trust Me, the storms will not stop you." Are you built on the foundation of Jesus' love and perfect righteousness? How are you responding to the storms lately?

RESPONSE:

PRAYER: *Master Builder, You are the only foundation I need or want. When storms come, I will cling to You, and I will trust.*



MARCH 17

CHAPTER: Luke 7

THEME: Trust

STUDY VERSE: Luke 7:7b

STATEMENT: A pattern is beginning to show up. Again in this chapter, there are stories of trust. The centurion simply says, “Say the word, and it’s done.” Still in prison, John the Baptist’s trust falters, but he knows what to do—send to Jesus for reassurance, which he gets. The woman showers her love and trust on Jesus, and Jesus tells the story of the debtors whose debts are completely written off. Love and trust can’t live without each other. How trusting is your love for God?

RESPONSE:

PRAYER: *Gentle Savior, I do trust You—help my lack of trust! We humans tend to hold both trust and distrust together. Please build the one in me, and get rid of the other!*



MARCH 18

CHAPTER: Luke 8

THEME: Supporting Jesus

STUDY VERSE: Luke 8:1b-3

STATEMENT: Here is another chapter full of beautiful parables and healings. Some we have spent time on before. But at the beginning of the chapter is a gem that is often overlooked: Jesus was supported, financially and otherwise, by women. Wouldn't you have liked to be one of the people who helped Jesus to accomplish His mission? You can be. You can give your money, your time, and your talents to His cause.

RESPONSE:

PRAYER: *Jesus, just show me what You want me to do, and I will do it. I want to be a disciple, too. I want to help with Your work.*



MARCH 19

CHAPTER: Luke 9

THEME: Watershed Moment

STUDY VERSE: Luke 9:51

STATEMENT: Once again, we come to the watershed moment in Jesus' ministry. He has spent three years preaching, teaching, and healing. He has done all He can to prepare His disciples to carry on His work when He is gone. Now, as the King James Version states it, He "steadfastly sets His face toward Jerusalem." Why steadfastly? Suppose you knew that you had to go to the nearest large city in your area and be tortured and killed. Would you want to go? Would it take steadfastness to go anyway, if you knew it was God's will and would accomplish immeasurable good for generations to come?

RESPONSE:

PRAYER: *Oh, Jesus, I wish You hadn't had to go through all You did, for me! But I am glad You had the faith and courage to do it anyway! Let my love for You and my faith in You, small though they are, be a treasure to Your heart in return.*



MARCH 20

CHAPTER: Luke 10

THEME: The Core of the Gospel

STUDY VERSE: Luke 10:27, 28

STATEMENT: If you were to distill the teachings of the entire Bible into one short sentence, how would you put it? This lawyer, who has spent his life studying God's Word, has the heart of it; Jesus tells him, "You are right. Do this and you shall live." Then, being Jesus, He clarifies with a story. List some things you learn about how to love your neighbor from the story of the Good Samaritan.

RESPONSE:

PRAYER: *Good Teacher, I want to learn from Your example and pattern my life after Yours. Help me to show Your love to and accept it from everyone, even those outside my own family, group, clan, or church.*



MARCH 21

CHAPTER: Luke 11

THEME: Opposition

STUDY VERSE: Luke 11:28

STATEMENT: During the last weeks of His earthly life, we see Jesus facing stiffer and stiffer opposition—even blasphemy, as the leaders call Him a devil. He continues to love and to try to reach them, even through rebuke (which, you may have noticed in your own life, is sometimes a necessary part of love!) It's interesting that these stories are paired with Jesus' model prayer. What do you think learning to pray has to do with facing opposition?

RESPONSE:

PRAYER: *[Put the Lord's Prayer in your own words and pray it here.]*



MARCH 22

CHAPTER: Luke 12

THEME: Admonitions

STUDY VERSE: Luke 12:6, 7

STATEMENT: In this chapter, Jesus repeats some of His main teachings, sounding in some places much like the Sermon on the Mount. What are the important things here that you think He wanted to be sure to cement into the minds of His hearers before they couldn't hear Him anymore? What is your reaction to the tension between "Don't worry" in verses 22-34 with "Be ready and responsible" in verses 35-48? How can we do both?

RESPONSE:

PRAYER: *Dear God, I want to trust you as the birds and flowers do, and worry about nothing. I also want to be ready, with my lamp trimmed and burning and my responsibilities faithfully met. Help me to do both.*



MARCH 23

CHAPTER: Luke 13

THEME: Teachings

STUDY VERSE: Luke 13:30

STATEMENT: As He draws near His last days, Jesus is teaching some important truths, and one of them is that nobody can be saved just because they're a member of a certain group, like the Jews, or any particular church. We have to personally repent. To show that He is still longing for them to turn to Him, He tells the story of the fig tree. Someone might want to give up on the fig tree, but the gardener loves it and will keep working with it. So will God do with us. Have you seen "manure" in your life lately? Could it be God trying to teach you something?

RESPONSE:

PRAYER: *Great Gardener, don't give up on me! I know I might take a lot of digging and fertilizing sometimes, and I know I don't like it when You do that, but it means You love me, so keep on doing it and I will keep on trying to learn from You.*



MARCH 24

CHAPTER: Luke 14

THEME: Healing on Sabbath

STUDY VERSE: Luke 14:3

STATEMENT: Jesus has healed on the Sabbath many times before. It seems He makes a point of it sometimes. This time, He is very direct about it. Before doing anything, He asks the Pharisees whether it's lawful or not. Of course, they think of healing as work, but Jesus shows them the fallacy of their thinking and reiterates once again that He is Lord of the Sabbath, and it was made *for us*. Why do you think He associates Sabbath so closely with healing?

RESPONSE:

PRAYER: *Mighty Healer, Your Sabbath is a healing space in time, even when we aren't particularly sick or hurt. Help me to find ways to make that day a healing blessing to all around me.*



MARCH 25

CHAPTER: Luke 15

THEME: Chapter of the Lost Ones

STUDY VERSE: Luke 15:10

STATEMENT: These three stories show God's joy over recovering one who doesn't know they're lost (like the coin), one who knows they're lost but can't help themselves (like the sheep) and one who got lost deliberately and knows how to get home. Sometimes we humans think quite differently about the last category. "They deserve it!" we may say. But which story in this chapter shows the greatest joy of all?

RESPONSE:

PRAYER: *Father, I have sinned and don't deserve to be called Your child. But You love me anyway! I am overwhelmed, and oh so grateful.*



MARCH 26

CHAPTER: Luke 16

THEME: Riches and Wisdom

STUDY VERSE: Luke 16:10

STATEMENT: Money seems to make fools of people all the time. Neither the steward nor the master in this story act in very righteous ways. But Jesus uses it to say, if we're faithful in small things, God will give us greater things to steward for Him. How have you seen this principle at work in your life or the life of someone near you?

RESPONSE:

PRAYER: *Master of the Universe, You give us Your possessions, Your own creations, to take care of for You. Help me to remember all I have is Yours, not mine, to do with as pleases You.*



MARCH 27

CHAPTER: Luke 17

THEME: Jesus' Death is not the End

STUDY VERSE: Luke 17:24

STATEMENT: Once again, Jesus says he will be tortured and killed, but that's not the end—He'll come again, in power and great glory. There are frightening things that will happen first (some of them are happening now) but we can look up in hope and joy, expecting His coming very soon. Like the one grateful leper, we can be the ones who run to Him, filled with the joy of the final, forever reunion.

RESPONSE:

PRAYER: *Even so, come, Lord Jesus! Come soon! Help me to spread the news, so all those I know will greet You with joy.*



MARCH 28

CHAPTER: Luke 18

THEME: Humble Prayer

STUDY VERSE: Luke 18:17

STATEMENT: How many kinds of prayer can you find in this chapter? There is the persistent prayer in the first story, the humble prayer of the publican...The children's hovering around Jesus could be seen as a kind of prayer, couldn't it? How about the rich young ruler and blind Bartimaeus? Which kinds of prayer speak to you in your present circumstances?

RESPONSE:

PRAYER: *Dear Lord, I come to You as a child, simple and not that smart in the whole scheme of things. I lay my life before You and I ask for Your guidance. I also ask for... (add something specific that you want).*



MARCH 29

CHAPTER: Luke 19

THEME: Money Matters

STUDY VERSE: Luke 19:38

STATEMENT: It's interesting to compare the stories in this chapter and what they say about money. We begin with Zacchaeus and end with the traders inside the holy temple, with a parable between. Even the triumphal entry has to do with a family being willing to share what they have because "the Lord has need of it." List the principles about the use of money and other gifts that you learn in this chapter.

RESPONSE:

PRAYER: *Lord, whether I have money or don't have it, the best thing I can do with my life is give it in praise and hallelujah to You. Then I will be able to be wise about how to use the blessings You've given me.*



MARCH 30

CHAPTER: Luke 20

THEME: The Vineyard

STUDY VERSE: Luke 20:13

STATEMENT: In verse 19 we see that the leaders of the people knew the parable of the vineyard was about them. Do you know why they knew that? Look up Isaiah 5:1-7. This is a story the Pharisees knew very well. Now reread the story of the vineyard in Luke 20. Do you see what Jesus is telling them, especially in verse 16? Could God say that to us again today if we are not faithful in the work He gives us in His vineyard? How can we be faithful workers?

RESPONSE:

PRAYER: *Father, You have planted me and tended me with such tender care. Help me produce fruit, and help me to dedicate the fruit that grows in my life to You.*



MARCH 31

CHAPTER: Luke 21

THEME: Watch!

STUDY VERSE: Luke 21:36

STATEMENT: This is one of the places where the church leaders got the idea for the name, Morning Watch. Jesus tells His disciples again all about the signs, both of the destruction of Jerusalem and of the end of time on this old earth. He points out that it will come on *all* people, ready or not. So, He says, be ready! Keep watch! Because His desire is for every one of His children to be strong to stand before Him. It's hard to wait, isn't it?

RESPONSE:

PRAYER: *Jesus, I love You, I know You love me, and I've asked You to live in my heart, so that makes me ready. I'll keep watch, and I'll share the news with all I can!*

