

Believe *His* Prophets

This Morning Watch Calendar
follows the
Believe His Prophets
2019
Daily Bible Reading Guide

AUGUST

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



AUGUST 1

Chapter: 1 Kings 2

Theme: Final Words to a Son

Study Verse: 1 Kings 2:2, 3

STATEMENT: The first part of this chapter is beautiful. If you memorize verses 2 and 3, you will find good advice to carry you through your life, no matter who you are. Unfortunately, David then reverted to the bloodthirsty king he had become, and gave Solomon advice on which enemies to kill—which Solomon followed. David even told Solomon to kill Shimei, because David himself had promised not to! What do you think God thought of some of this advice? Why is it that the same person can have such righteousness and unrighteousness all mixed up together?

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Lord, only You are truly just and perfect in all Your ways. Help me to be wise to choose the best parts of others to look up to and emulate, and help others to do the same with me. But let us all model ourselves only on You, not on each other.

AUGUST 2

Chapter: 1 Kings 3

Theme: God Grants Wisdom

Study Verse: 1 Kings 3:9

STATEMENT: This is a very interesting story of contrasts. First, notice verses 2 and 3. Are the people supposed to be sacrificing on pagan “high places”? Absolutely not. Yet, notice that God still comes to Solomon even there, and asks what gift he wants from God. Solomon has just enough wisdom to ask for more. God is very pleased, and says that Solomon was right not to ask for riches and long life, but He will grant those, too. And Solomon must have been convicted of the mistake he had made, because notice where he goes immediately when he wakes up—verse 15. God will meet us where we are, but He doesn’t expect us to stay there!

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: God of all wisdom, grant me some, too! I, too, am young and inexperienced and don’t know what You want me to do next. I will await Your guidance and follow as well as I can.

AUGUST 3

Chapter: 1 Kings 4

Theme: World Famous for Wisdom

Study Verse: 1 Kings 4:34

STATEMENT: Most of this chapter is interesting only for its historic value. The scribes kept very good records—imagine, to this day, 3,000 years later, we still know who Solomon’s officials were! The rest of the chapter shows how astonishing Solomon’s wisdom was to the whole known world of that time. People came from Africa, from the near east, perhaps even from the edges of Europe to hear Solomon. He wrote three books that we still have, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon, and likely more that we don’t have anymore. Don’t you wish you could visit the court of Solomon and listen in on one of those visits?

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Mighty One, Your plan all along was that all peoples would come to the brightness of Your light as exemplified in Israel. If only they had remained true to that plan! Help me to be a light for You, however small.

AUGUST 4

Chapter: 1 Kings 5

Theme: Solomon and Hiram

Study Verse: 1 Kings 5:4, 5

STATEMENT: For once, we are not reading of battles and wars. These two great kings made a covenant together for a high purpose: to build a temple for the Lord. Solomon had peace on every side and was now free to fulfill his father’s dream. Even though the words “forced labor” are used, and even though it meant the individuals didn’t have a choice of whether to work or not, no doubt there were many of those laborers who were honored to be a part of this great project.

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: My God and King, I may not labor to build You a house, but I do give all my efforts to building You a temple in my heart, and enthrone You there.

AUGUST 5

Chapter: 1 Kings 6

Theme: The Temple is Begun

Study Verse: 1 Kings 6:11-13

STATEMENT: Solomon's temple must have been so beautiful! It was destroyed long ago, and all we have now are artists' representations, based on the details given in this chapter. You can find pictures online, if you have access. Seven years they labored, and all cutting was done with great precision at the quarry, so that the great stones fit together at the building site like a massive, perfect puzzle. What a thing it would have been to see!

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Dear Father, I hope You are as honored to live in my faulty little heart as You were to "live in" that great temple, which of course couldn't really hold You any more than my heart can. Thank You so much for coming down to us!

AUGUST 6

Chapter: 1 Kings 7

Theme: Hiram the Craftsman

Study Verse: 1 Kings 7:14

STATEMENT: Now we learn the details of Solomon's palace, which he built after the temple. Then he brings a craftsman named Hiram to make two special pillars and all the furniture for the temple. This is not the same as King Hiram; in fact, in 1 Chronicles he is called Hiram. He is an Israelite, of the tribe of Naphtali. The details about him can encourage us all. Even if we are orphans, and perhaps living in a foreign city, the gifts God gives us can be given back, for the glory of God and the joy of all people.

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Great Giver of all good gifts, I know You have given me gifts, too. Help me to learn about them, develop them, and use them for Your glory and the joy of others.

AUGUST 7

Chapter: 1 Kings 8

Theme: Dedicating the New Temple

Study Verse: 1 Kings 8:27

STATEMENT: This is such a beautiful chapter that it's hard to choose one verse! (If you like another better, learn that.) At long last, the glorious temple is complete, and the king waits for the next time the month of the great Day of Atonement comes around. The people of all the land are called to Jerusalem, and they install the ark in its new home. Then Solomon prays a prayer that has inspired all humanity for all the centuries from then till now. And God declares His joy in His children by showing a thrilling sign of His presence and His delight in all their hard work and dedication. Don't you wish you could have been there? Don't you wish God's people would always stay this dedicated to peaceful and holy pursuits?

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: O Lord, the God of Israel and of my life, there is no God like you in heaven above or on earth beneath, keeping covenant and showing loving kindness to Your servants who walk before You with all their hearts—even me!

AUGUST 8

Chapter: 1 Kings 9

Theme: God's Answer

Study Verse: 1 Kings 9:3

STATEMENT: God responds personally to Solomon's prayer, as He did when the king was young. He repeats the same promises and warnings He has sent to the people of earth for thousands of years already: "Follow Me and be blessed; turn away, and it will cause you great sorrow and trouble." The first twenty years of Solomon's reign have been dedicated to the great task of building the temple—and also a kingly palace. Now we learn of some more building and rebuilding projects. The promises and warnings God gave then are still the same today. Do you live your life by them?

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Great Father, even though I am young, I have already learned that following You works out better than turning away. I know that following doesn't mean I won't have any trouble, but those troubles are easier because You are with me.

AUGUST 9

Chapter: 1 Kings 10

Theme: The Queen of Sheba

Study Verse: 1 Kings 10:9

STATEMENT: Solomon's fame as the wisest king ever continues to grow throughout the world. Now the Queen of Sheba comes in a train of royal array to find out if he really is so. She not only is impressed by his wisdom, she is much more impressed by his God. This has been God's plan from the beginning—that people will see Him in His people, and turn to Him. Matt. 12:42 implies that perhaps the queen was truly converted and will be in heaven. We don't know for sure where Sheba was, but probably either Arabia or Ethiopia. She was almost certainly a woman of color. She was definitely a woman of spirit and grace, recognizing the hand of the Creator when she saw it!

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Creator of the ends of the earth, You have been with all peoples in all times. Today, You even use means like social media to spread the word of Your love. Let me be a help in this essential matter.

AUGUST 10

Chapter: 1 Kings 11

Theme: Solomon's Apostasy

Study Verse: 1 Kings 11:4

STATEMENT: What a tragic ending to a story of faith and wisdom! Like his father before him, Solomon's downfall is in seeing women as objects he wants for his own collection, rather than persons in their own right. But he takes it to extremes—one thousand women kept in his harems! It would take nearly three years just to spend one day with each one. Worse than this, many were pagans who worshiped idols, even terrible, demonic gods like Chemosh and Molech, to whom children were sacrificed, and Solomon weakly went along with this false worship. If we only had this chapter, we might fear that Solomon ended his life without God, but we know from Ecclesiastes that he did turn back when he was old, thank God.

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Lord, I know that it is never too late to turn back to You, even if it's on a deathbed. But I don't want to waste a whole earthly life, just to turn to You at the end! I will follow You now and always.

AUGUST 11

Chapter: 1 Kings 12

Theme: Two Foolish Kings

Study Verse: 1 Kings 12:7

STATEMENT: Israel united as one kingdom lasted for just two reigns—David’s and Solomon’s. As soon as Solomon died, his son Rehoboam missed a chance to make friends of his people, keeping their loyalty and faith. He chose to be arrogant and cruel instead, and in so doing, lost all ten northern tribes to Jeroboam, the son of one of Solomon’s officials. Then Jeroboam made a foolish decision, too. Afraid that if the people went to Jerusalem to worship he would lose their loyalty, he not only created a new place to worship, he made two golden calves for them to bow down to! Didn’t he know his own history? From this moment, the people whom God had chosen to show His love to the world went farther and farther down the wrong path.

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Patient God, You have borne with us for thousands of years now. We turned against You in the garden, killed the prophets You sent us, and ultimately killed Your own Son! I don’t know why You keep on loving us, but I’m so glad!

AUGUST 12

Chapter: 1 Kings 13

Theme: Jeroboam is Warned

Study Verse: 1 Kings 13:2

STATEMENT: A man of God comes to Jeroboam to stop him instituting a new, idolatrous place of worship. He also prophesies of a king who will come far in the future and turn the people back to God. All of this is attested by amazing signs. At first, Jeroboam seems to be impressed. Then the man of God is deceived by another prophet. It’s a lesson to us not to turn from what we have heard God tell us to do, even if another person says he or she has heard God refute that. The second prophet seems to repent, but in the end, Jeroboam does not.

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: O Lord, I want to hear Your voice so clearly in my heart that I know when You have told me to do or not do something, and I can stand firm even when others try to tell me You told them something different.

AUGUST 13

Chapter: 1 Kings 14

Theme: Parallel Kingdoms

Study Verse: 1 Kings 14:13

STATEMENT: From now on, you must pay attention to whether a passage says “king of Israel” or “king of Judah.” 1 and 2 Kings and 1 and 2 Chronicles tell the stories of the northern and southern kingdoms side-by-side. The southern is called Judah because Benjamin, which is also in that kingdom, has become small and undistinguished. This chapter shows that neither king, north or south, is following God. In fact, Rehoboam is almost worse. How painful it must be for God, who keeps trying all kinds of ways to get their attention and turn them around.

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Great King, Yours are the only rules I want to follow. If I ever put another thing in Your place and make it into an idol, please rebuke me in some way I can recognize as You, and I will repent and turn back.

AUGUST 14

Chapter: 1 Kings 15

Theme: Finally, a Good King!

Study Verse: 1 Kings 15:11, 14

STATEMENT: This chapter briefly tells of several kings, both north and south. Most are evil, but in the middle, there is relief in the story of Asa, who, even though he doesn't remove the high places, does make important reforms, and is devoted to God all his life. He rules 41 years—the longest reign since David and Solomon, but there are still wars during his reign. More and more often, the wars are not even with so-called outsiders, but between the tribes. It's a good thing Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob can't see what their descendants are up to!

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Lord, Asa's story is a good example of the fact that a person can choose to follow You even if the only examples they've seen were bad ones. Help me to be that kind of example.

AUGUST 15

Chapter: 1 Kings 16

Theme: Growing Evil

Study Verse: 1 Kings 16:33

STATEMENT: What a grim chapter! During good King Asa's long reign, there is a procession of brief kingships in the north, all brawling and killing each other and outdoing each other in evil and in blasphemous idolatry. The shortest reign is only one week! This sorry list culminates in Ahab, who "did more to provoke the Lord...than all the kings...before him." We will learn much more about Ahab and his wicked wife, Jezebel. What do you think the surrounding nations are learning so far, from watching the people who are supposed to represent the God of heaven?

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Dear Father, help me to remember that people are learning about You from watching me, too. Help me to be sure what they see is love!

AUGUST 16

Chapter: 1 Kings 17

Theme: God Cares

Study Verse: 1 Kings 17:14

STATEMENT: We now begin a long series of much more detailed stories involving the prophet Elijah. Ahab and Jezebel have brought much evil to the land, and since they worship false gods that claim to control the weather, God decides to show them that's not true by sending a drought and naming in advance how long it will be. He chooses some amazing ways to take care of His prophet, and of other faithful souls. This story is just one small sample of God's care; we will learn later that there are 7,000 more faithful followers of God in Israel, and we can know He took care of them during the drought, too.

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Creator, I may never have been fed by a bird, but I know You care for me, and I'm sure there are miracles all around me that I never see. Thank You for Your love!

AUGUST 17

Chapter: 1 Kings 18

Theme: Elijah and Baal's Prophets

Study Verse: 1 Kings 18:37

STATEMENT: For three long years there has been no rain. People and animals have had a hard time, but God has cared for His own and brought them through. Now Elijah is sent to tell Ahab the drought is over. This is to make sure Ahab knows the whole thing is being orchestrated by God and Ahab's "gods" can do nothing about it. The confrontation on Mt. Carmel is powerful. 450 pagan prophets yell and scream and dance, and even cut themselves (their "gods" are supposedly impressed by people torturing themselves). Then Elijah says quietly, "Come near." He prays a simple prayer, and the drought is over.

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Truly, Lord, the more I know about the false gods of this world, the gladder I am that I know You! I trust You to care for me and to help me when I call, without having to do all kinds of extreme things to try to get You to notice or care for me.

AUGUST 18

Chapter: 1 Kings 19

Theme: Elijah's Faith Falters

Study Verse: 1 Kings 19:13

STATEMENT: We all have our weak moments. Even this powerful prophet of the Lord momentarily lost his trust that God had everything in hand. When he heard Jezebel was after him, he ran and ran and ran. Even the personal care of an angel was not enough to make him stop running. When he finally heard God's voice, he claimed he was the only faithful one left. He wasn't! At this point, apparently God decided Elijah needed some help. He sent him to find Elisha.

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Still, small Voice, remind me to hush my fears and worries and angers and self-pity and listen to You!

AUGUST 19

Chapter: 1 Kings 20

Theme: Two Wars

Study Verse: 1 Kings 20:28

STATEMENT: We can learn several interesting things from this chapter. First, did you notice that Ahab was fine with an enemy king taking his wives and children, but not with him taking his things? Yet, it is clear that God is still trying to reach Ahab, sending him messages and leading him to victory in some important battles, in ways to show He is God. He is also trying to reach the neighboring people, as in verse 28—He wants them to see He is God of everywhere, not just mountains! In heaven, we will meet people from these early centuries of the Bible who did learn to follow the true God, despite the mistakes of the Israelites.

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: God of mountains, valleys, and all the circumstances of my life, I will follow You wherever You lead me, and if I make mistakes, I will immediately turn to You for forgiveness and healing.

AUGUST 20

Chapter: 1 Kings 21

Theme: A Spoiled King

Study Verse: 1 Kings 21:3

STATEMENT: We can learn all we need to know about Ahab's true character (and Jezebel's too) in this story. Do you see how he throws a pouting tantrum because he can't get what he wants? Then Jezebel commits murder to give it to him! And still God tries to work with Ahab, sending him a warning by the prophet. And Ahab listens! When he wears sackcloth and humbles himself, he must really mean it, because the God who reads hearts says He won't send evil in Ahab's days.

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Merciful God, You are amazing! Humans do such horrible things, and still You try to save us from our selfishness and bring us back to the true selves You meant us to be.

AUGUST 21

Chapter: 1 Kings 22

Theme: Ahab and Jehoshaphat

Study Verse: 1 Kings 22:14

STATEMENT: We have spent several chapters in Israel, the northern kingdom, with little mention of Judah, the southern kingdom. Here, Asa's son, Jehoshaphat, joins forces with Israel's wicked king. Even though he has the sense to ask for a real prophet of God, and that prophet says the battle will go ill, Jehoshaphat still goes to battle with Ahab. He even dresses up like Ahab! He's lucky he didn't die, as Ahab did despite his deception. Aside from this, Jehoshaphat follows God as his father did, though he does not remove the high places.

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Lord, preserve me from joining forces with those who have only evil plans, and going against Your expressed will. I want to help lead my unbelieving friends to You, not the other way around!

AUGUST 22

Chapter: 2 Kings 1

Theme: An Angry King

Study Verse: 2 Kings 1:15

STATEMENT: King Ahaziah was badly injured in a fall. Instead of asking God for counsel, he sent to a pagan god. When God sent Elijah to rebuke him, Ahaziah not only did not repent, he sent companies of soldiers to intimidate Elijah—as if the prophet could somehow change God's answer! God's wrath against the first two companies didn't touch the king's heart, but it did touch the third captain's heart. God had mercy on the men—but not on Ahaziah. The message was the same as it had been before, and Ahaziah died. So far as we know, he did not repent and turn to God.

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Lord of hosts, don't ever let me get that rebellious! I want to follow You, and also to be unafraid of anything the world sends against me.

AUGUST 23

Chapter: 2 Kings 2

Theme: Elisha Takes Over the Ministry

Study Verse: 2 Kings 2:9

STATEMENT: Some time had passed, and Elijah's time of ministry was coming to an end. God had something astonishing in store for this faithful prophet, and He must have given some hint to Elisha, because all that day, Elisha stuck like glue to Elijah's side. When Elijah asked what blessing Elisha wanted, he asked for a double portion of the spirit of faithfulness and duty Elijah had shown. He did have the privilege of seeing his teacher taken to heaven, and the blessing passed to him. Now God had two men in heaven: Moses, representing those who die and will be resurrected, and Elijah, representing those who will go to heaven without dying when Jesus comes. Moses and Elijah are there now, still faithfully obeying God. They even got to encourage Jesus when He was here!

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Dear Father, let me be as faithful as Moses, Elijah, Elisha, and the rest of Your faithful servants.

AUGUST 24

Chapter: 2 Kings 3

Theme: Another War

Study Verse: 2 Kings 3:17

STATEMENT: As Jehoshaphat of Judah had unwisely allied with Ahab, so he now allied with Ahab's son, Jehoram. Possibly he was impressed because Jehoram at least had taken away the pillar of Baal, even if he didn't truly follow God. At any rate, God miraculously helps these kings win the war by sending water when they were afraid they and all their cattle would die. Sometimes when our lives seem arid and dry, God sends us spiritual water by means we know not, too.

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Merciful God, You send pools of refreshing when my spirit is dry and dusty. I will always trust You.

AUGUST 25

Chapter: 2 Kings 4

Theme: A Collection of Stories

Study Verse: 2 Kings 4:9

STATEMENT: The beautiful stories in this chapter are a nice relief from stories of ungodly kings and wars. They clearly take place over a period of several years. The main lesson we can learn from all these stories is that God always cares for His own. What more specific lessons can you learn from each individual story? For instance, in the first one, one lesson is that God can work with whatever we have that we dedicate to Him, no matter how small. Do you see others? Write down the other lessons you find.

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Dear Lord, Your eyes are always on the small, humble people, even if they live in the midst of troubled times. These, too, are troubled times, and I am small. Keep me humble and trusting.

AUGUST 26

Chapter: 2 Kings 5

Theme: Naaman

Study Verse: 2 Kings 5:13

STATEMENT: Here are some startling contrasts: a little girl taken from her family into slavery is an instrument of God in a foreign land; some pagan men listen to and obey the God of Israel; and a man who lives and works with the prophet himself is overtaken by greed! Why do you think Naaman was healed? Do you think you could be that kind and faithful if you were taken into slavery? Did you know that statistically, there are more enslaved people on the planet now than ever in history? Let's pray and work for those people to be set free, but until they are, let's pray that they may be faithful servants of God where they are.

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: God of freedom, this planet is in terrible turmoil. I know You warned us that it would be so, before You come again, but I still pray that Your presence may be felt everywhere, that those who love You will remain faithful no matter what, and that those who don't may perhaps be drawn to You.

AUGUST 27

Chapter: 2 Kings 6

Theme: A Better Way to Win a War

Study Verse: 2 Kings 6:16

STATEMENT: God and Elisha work for all the land (and even outside the borders), from helping an unknown young man get back his borrowed axe head, to counseling great kings. They also give us a good example of how to win over enemies and make them friends. Notice the question Elisha asks in verse 22. The answer is yes, of course they would and often do kill those they have taken captive! But Elisha shows lavish hospitality instead. What is the result? What do you think would happen if you acted that way toward unkind people?

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Dear Lord, help me to have that gift, of turning enemies into friends. If only all of us could do that, there would be no more enemies in the world!

AUGUST 28

Chapter: 2 Kings 7

Theme: Another Good Way to Win a War

Study Verse: 2 Kings 7:9

STATEMENT: This story begins in the end of chapter 6. The king of Aram laid siege to Samaria so that no food could get into the city. Conditions were horrifying. Then God sent a message through Elisha saying that food which had been terribly expensive would soon be cheap enough for all. The story of the four lepers is one of the best in the Old Testament. When they went to the Arameans' camp, knowing they might be killed, they were shocked to discover the camp deserted. At first, they just helped themselves to the food. Then they realized they were being selfish, and shared the news. Why do you think they did that, even though probably people had always treated them with contempt and fear?

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Father in heaven, when it comes to Your Good News, we are all just like the lepers—helpless people showing other helpless people where spiritual food can be found.

AUGUST 29

Chapter: 2 Kings 8

Theme: The Shunamite Woman Gets Her Land Back

Study Verse: 2 Kings 8:2

STATEMENT: The famine mentioned must have happened earlier. It is ending now, and the Shunamite woman, who showed her faith by obeying Elisha without question when he warned her to get her family out of Israel, comes back. We get a rare glimpse of the later life of one of the people who has received miracles from God. Even the wicked king is impressed with her, and she receives her family land back. The rest of the chapter shows several more wicked kings, both in Israel and in Judah after Jehoshaphat dies. His son even marries Ahab's daughter. How sorrowful God must have been!

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: My Lord, when You send instruction to me by the hand of one of Your men or women of God, let me humbly obey as the Shunamite woman and her family did.

AUGUST 30

Chapter: 2 Kings 9

Theme: Much Bloodshed

Study Verse: 2 Kings 9:3

STATEMENT: This is a grim chapter. It begins with Elisha sending one of the sons of the prophets to anoint a new king. But that king then takes matters into his own hands and assassinates kings and officials right and left to stabilize his kingdom. The fates of Jezebel and Ahab and his sons were prophesied by God well in advance, but it is a sorry tale when humans make these things come true. The most interesting part of the story is when the watchmen keep coming out to ask news of Jehu, and then turning to follow him. That tells you something about what they thought of their own evil king.

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Holy One, I wish so much evil were not done in this earth in Your name! I know You have better ways of dealing with evil if we will let You do it.

AUGUST 31

Chapter: 2 Kings 10

Theme: Final Judgment Against Ahab

Study Verse: 2 Kings 10:5

STATEMENT: This is another grim chapter. Jehu set out to accomplish what God had said and eradicate all the evil that had been growing and growing in Ahab and his descendants. But it meant a horrible amount of bloodshed. Worse, after all that zeal which he claimed was for God, destroying Baal worship and everything, Jehu did not follow God himself! He kept the golden calves, and continued to carry on the sins of Jeroboam—the first king after David and Solomon. So how was he different from Ahab and his generations?

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Lord, this seems like another example of Your using even wrong-headed people to do Your sovereign will. Ahab's acts were destroyed and judged...but the acts of the wicked kings of Israel and Judah are judged and destroyed now, too. I want to be Your child and never go through all this ugliness.