

Believe *His* Prophets

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

JULY

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



JULY 1

Chapter: 1 Samuel 26

Theme: David Spares Saul Again

Study Verse: 1 Samuel 26:23

STATEMENT: Once again, David finds Saul, this time not in a vulnerable position where he would be easy to assail. He is asleep in the center of his armed camp, yet “a deep sleep from the Lord” holds all the soldiers and the king while David and one aide creep into camp. The aide thinks David should kill the king, ending his fugitive life, but David knows it would end something far more important—his integrity. He takes Saul’s spear and water jug, and again pleads with the king to understand that he wants to be friends. Again, Saul seems to repent. If you were David, would you trust him?

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Dear Jesus, You instructed us to be “wise as serpents and harmless as doves.” David trusted you, not this unstable king. Yet he still loved and respected Saul. Help me to be like that.

JULY 2

Chapter: 1 Samuel 27

Theme: David Leaves the Country

Study Verse: 1 Samuel 27:4

STATEMENT: Weary of constant running and hiding, David left Israel and lived among the Philistines for nearly a year and a half. During this time, he and his men raided many of the people his Israelite ancestors had neglected to conquer. The Philistine king, Achish, thought that David would now be hated by his own countrymen and would be faithful to the Philistines instead. He didn’t recognize that David answered to a higher authority.

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Lord, I don’t know whether David did right in choosing to live among his people’s tormentors, but I do know that we sometimes have to make a life among people who don’t honor You. Help me to stay true no matter what.

JULY 3

Chapter: 1 Samuel 28

Theme: Saul and the Spirit Medium

Study Verse: 1 Samuel 28:6

STATEMENT: Saul, back when he was a good king, had removed those who claimed to speak with the spirits of the dead. But now, when he is frightened and wants reassurance from God, he can't find it; God does not answer. There never comes a moment when God ceases loving us or grieving over us, but there can come a moment when we no longer really want His will, but just want Him to agree with us. At that point He can't speak to us anymore. When Saul doesn't hear from God, he seeks out a secret sorcerer, going against his own laws. Since the dead are asleep until Jesus comes, who do you think she "brought up," and why did she scream?

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: O Lord, how it must hurt You when someone who used to follow You turns away completely to His own way! Maybe this message through the woman might have been one last warning to Saul, if only he had listened. But his fear did not turn to trust. Please don't let me ever be like that!

JULY 4

Chapter: 1 Samuel 29

Theme: David and the Philistines

Study Verse: 1 Samuel 29:9

STATEMENT: David had become "bodyguard for life" to King Achish. He was even willing to go with him to battle against his own people, though we don't know what he actually would have done besides protect the king. The rest of the Philistines didn't trust him to fight the Israelites, so the king sent him back. Notice the words he uses to David. Like Joseph, David had been a light for God in the enemy territory. Achish, too, could have turned to the true God. But he didn't, at least not that we know of. Perhaps God saved David from raising his sword against his own people. We do know he arrived home to a disaster—tune in tomorrow!

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Lord, it can be hard to know who one's friends are. Sometimes people who make no claim to love You treat us better than those who do. Thank You for saving David from what could have been a serious detour early in his life with You.

JULY 5

Chapter: 1 Samuel 30

Theme: David Rescues His Family

Study Verse: 1 Samuel 30:6

STATEMENT: When they got back to Ziklag, it turned out the Amalekites had burned the city and stolen all their families! Everyone was distraught, and so was David, but what did he do about it? Even now, David doesn't rush off to do what seems right; he asks God first. Then he and his men pursue and rescue all their families. David also shows, once again, the mercy that he will is becoming famous for, by not only sharing the spoils with those who had been too exhausted to go the whole way but making it law in Israel that those who go to battle share equally with those who take care of the home front.

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: God of the angel armies, those women and children must have been so joyful and relieved when they were rescued! I pray You will always care for those I love, too.

JULY 6

Chapter: 1 Samuel 31

Theme: The Tragedy of Saul Comes to an End

Study Verse: 1 Samuel 31:6

STATEMENT: After years and years of unstable rule, and of chasing and trying to destroy the man God had chosen to take his place, Saul finally died in battle—the very battle that David was supposed to join but didn't. All three of his sons, plus his armor bearer, died with him. Heaven must have mourned for the ending of the man whose life had begun with such promise. When someone dies, those who remain always mourn, but it's worse when we have had a painful relationship with them, and worst of all if it seems they died without God. Try to imagine the mixed-up feelings of the brave men who came to claim and bury the bodies of Saul and his sons. How do you think David will react?

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: O merciful Lord, You never go against our choices, but You try to the day of our deaths to bring us back to You if we stray. You must have mourned for one who had once been Your son. I will be faithful, so You never mourn like that for me.

JULY 7

Chapter: 2 Samuel 1
Theme: David's Grief
Study Verse: 2 Samuel 1:12

STATEMENT: The second book of Samuel begins a new story—the story of Israel's second king. David had just rested with his family after rescuing them from the Amalekites when one came to him from the battle he had been sent away from. When he learned that Saul and his sons were dead, David was distraught. Do you think he might have wondered if he could have saved them if he'd been there? Despite all the trouble Saul had given David, he still mourned deeply, not only for the Lord's anointed, but even more for his beloved friend, Jonathan. He wrote one of his most beautiful songs in honor of them. You could try setting it to music, if you like.

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Loving Father, You love us all, no matter what. You must have grieved even over Your covering cherub, Lucifer, when he turned finally against You. Help me to be that loving, even toward someone who harms me or wishes me evil.

JULY 8

Chapter: 2 Samuel 2
Theme: David's Reign Begins
Study Verse: 2 Samuel 2:5, 6

STATEMENT: Now at last, David is king. He and all his followers come to live in the cities of Hebron, and he is officially anointed. But of course, it's not that easy. One of Saul's generals anoints a different king, and some of the people follow him instead. Eventually, it leads to civil war, and yet more death and bloodshed. King David must have sometimes longed for the simple days of his boyhood as a shepherd.

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: King of the Ages, You work with us where we are, but it must be difficult for You sometimes. Not difficult as in hard to do, but difficult for You to watch, You who love all people and want us to love each other, watching us fighting each other to this day. Please bless me as a peacemaker, not a contributor toward violence of word or deed.

JULY 9

Chapter: 2 Samuel 3
Theme: A Kingdom United
Study Verse: 2 Samuel 3:18

STATEMENT: Abner had fought against having David as king for a long time. But when he was treated unjustly by the ones he fought for, he vowed to turn to David and help to unite his kingdom. He ended up giving his life to make this happen, and David, still as tenderhearted in some ways as when he was young, mourned for his loss. It helped him with the Israelites, and they all began to realize what a blessing David would be as king, in place of never knowing what Saul would do from one day to the next.

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Dear God, may I let my light shine as David did, so people know I stand for You and stand against violence against anyone.

JULY 10

Chapter: 2 Samuel 4
Theme: David's Anger
Study Verse: 2 Samuel 4:10

STATEMENT: Once again, someone makes the mistake of thinking David will thank him for killing someone they considered an enemy. He had stood for Saul many times, despite Saul's enmity; he killed the one who claimed to have killed Saul (though that was actually a lie—he thought David would reward him); and now someone kills Ishbosheth, who had tried to hold the kingdom from David, and thinks he will be rewarded. David was too bloodthirsty—God will make this clear to him later in his life—but he did make it clear where he stood. He did not want people killing others in his name. David trusted God to maintain his crown, no one else.

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Lord most high, You have made it clear that only You can judge hearts and only You will decide people's ultimate fates. I don't kill, but I am sometimes tempted to "kill" someone with hateful words, especially if I think they have done wrong. Help me to leave the judging entirely to You.

JULY 11

Chapter: 2 Samuel 5

Theme: David Unites the Kingdom

Study Verse: 2 Samuel 5:12

STATEMENT: Already, the tribes of Israel, all descendants of one man, Jacob, who was named Israel by God, had been dividing into two kingdoms. In this chapter, they reunite again under David, but this reunion will only last through two kings. Verses 12 and 13 of this chapter exemplify the split that was also beginning within David's soul. On the one hand, he was "a man after God's own heart," one who didn't act without asking God, and who recognized that God had made him king, not for David's glory, but for the people's sake. On the other hand, he was now beginning to collect women like possessions, just as the pagan kings did. What do you think will happen if David continues to indulge this weakness?

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: One true God, You created us male and female, in the image of Your Godhead. Yet we poison and twist Your creation of the unity of marriage in so many ways. When my time comes, please lead me to the one mate with whom we two will be one, and able to help each other be more like You.

JULY 12

Chapter: 2 Samuel 6

Theme: Bringing the Ark Home

Study Verse: 2 Samuel 6:2

STATEMENT: For 20 years, the Ark of the Covenant has stayed at Abinadab's house. Finally, David wants to bring it to its permanent home at Jerusalem, now called the City of David. But one of the family who has cared for it gets arrogant and touches the ark, for which he dies. Frightened, David leaves it partway, until it becomes clear that blessings follow the ark. Then he goes to bring it the rest of the way home. He was so excited about this that he danced in joy before God. Notice the consequences to the one who criticizes that joyful dance. Today, are there those who wish us not to show too much undignified joy before the Lord?

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Lord of hosts, what a thrill it must have been to bring the ark home at last! I want to feel that joyful about meeting Your presence at my church.

JULY 13

Chapter: 2 Samuel 7

Theme: A Home for the Ark

Study Verse: 2 Samuel 7:24

STATEMENT: David, with the best of intentions, wants to build a temple for the ark that's at least as good as his own palace. God appreciates the idea but tells the prophet that David has too much blood on his hands. And besides, God doesn't need a physical house to dwell in. David, as is his custom, humbly submits to God's decree and offers a prayer of joy and faith and supplication. You can read his prayer and put your own name and your own requests in place of his. What do you wish God to establish for you?

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: O Yahweh Adonai, You have established for Yourself Your child [put your own name here] as Your own child forever, and You, O Adonai, have become my God. May all You want for me come to pass.

JULY 14

Chapter: 2 Samuel 8

Theme: King David

Study Verse: 2 Samuel 8:15

STATEMENT: David had victory on every side, and clearly God blessed him. But you can also see things in these chapters which show that he is becoming corrupted by power like other kings, killing cruelly, and even maiming horses. David lived in a violent time, with different ideas of life and death than ours, and he was doing what he thought was right, but if God already thought he had shed too much blood to build a temple, what do you think God thought of some of the things this chapter describes him doing?

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Father, help me to conquer the evils You want me to conquer, but help me to have mercy toward human beings, who are all Your children.

JULY 15

Chapter: 2 Samuel 9

Theme: David and Mephibosheth

Study Verse: 2 Samuel 9:1

STATEMENT: Do you remember Mephibosheth? The beginning of his story was in 2 Samuel 4. His nurse dropped him during a flight for their lives, and his legs never healed properly. Now that David is king, he wishes he had his best friend at his side. So, he seeks out members of Saul's and Jonathan's family and treats them as he wishes he could treat Jonathan. At first Mephibosheth thinks David will kill him as the descendant of the king he replaced. How do you think he felt when David said the words in verse 7?

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Merciful God, let me, too, show mercy and kindness even to those who have been unkind to me, and to their family.

JULY 16

Chapter: 2 Samuel 10

Theme: David's Men Insulted

Study Verse: 2 Samuel 10:12

STATEMENT: This story shows some of the misunderstandings that can occur when world leaders expect the worst of each other. Ammon and Aram were not used to kings like David, who actually set out to show kindness to people different from himself, without ulterior motives. They assumed ulterior motives where there were none, responded by "doing unto them before they could do unto us," and precipitated war and defeat. What lesson can we learn for our interpersonal relationships?

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Dear Father, help me to show kindness to everyone, and not to assume people are secretly against me and end up causing trouble where there was none.

JULY 17

Chapter: 2 Samuel 11
Theme: David's Great Sin
Study Verse: 2 Samuel 11:11

STATEMENT: Remember David's weakness where women were concerned? He thinks of them as pretty objects he wants to possess, rather than as human children of God. David is about to perpetrate one of his worst sins, although the many people he has killed, even in "fair battles," is also sinful and clearly displeased God. As a king with ever-growing power, David is beginning to think he should have whatever he sees and wants. His abduction of Bathsheba was bad enough, but his deliberate attempt, first to cover it up, then to get her husband killed, only compounds the evil. David was in extreme danger. What he does next will show his true character.

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Lord, we all sin, and we are all much worse than we think we are. Trying to cover up our sins makes them worse; please help me not to do that. Help me turn to You before the sin, not after it!

JULY 18

Chapter: 2 Samuel 12
Theme: David is Confronted
Study Verse: 2 Samuel 12:7

STATEMENT: Nathan was a brave prophet, like many before and after him. Prophets have always taken their lives in their hands when they speak truth to power...and often they have paid with their lives. David's sin is as bad as any Saul ever committed. But now we can see the crucial difference between the two men. David sees the truth, accepts the truth, and humbly repents. He is not the only one who faces terrible consequences. Bathsheba loses her child, and the child loses the chance to live. What great sorrow our selfish choices can cause!

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: O Lord, I, too, have let You down so many times. Thank You for Your endless patience and forgiveness. Cleanse me from the unrighteousness so it does not happen again.

JULY 19

Chapter: 2 Samuel 13
Theme: A Terrible Family Sin
Study Verse: 2 Samuel 13:21

STATEMENT: The sins of the fathers continue to be passed down the generations. One of David's sons by one wife thinks he is in love with one of the daughters of another wife. You can clearly see in this story that it was not true love (which would never rape a loved one!) It was the same kind of lust for possession that David had shown. And you'll notice David was deceived, but when he learned what had happened, he "was very angry" but he didn't do anything. And so more lives were ruined and lost.

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: O God, it is hard to even read about the things humans do to each other! How can You bear it? Please come soon and end all this!

JULY 20

Chapter: 2 Samuel 14
Theme: More Counsel for David
Study Verse: 2 Samuel 14:14

STATEMENT: David's general, Joab, tries to create a situation something like the story Nathan told about the man who had one lamb. His hope is that David will reconcile with Absalom, who is now exiled and trying to steal the kingdom from his father. Verse 14 is particularly moving. Even in those bloody, violent times, some people recognized that God was not like that, but would try all things that might reconcile someone who had strayed from Him. Sometimes, David exemplified that love of God—but sometimes he did not.

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Dear Jesus, help me to exemplify Your love and mercy and desire to reconcile with anyone who is in conflict with me, no matter who started the conflict.

JULY 21

Chapter: 2 Samuel 15

Theme: Absalom's Rebellion, Part 1

Study Verse: 2 Samuel 15:25

STATEMENT: In politics in any age, it's all too common for someone who wants to be leader to tell people he is on their side and understands them and will give them all they want...only to get them to follow him. Whether he will keep all his promises is another matter. Absalom does all this to steal the people's hearts from his own father! Wise people, like Ittai in verse 21 and Hushai in 32, know that Absalom is not trustworthy and follow David faithfully. But clearly a confrontation is coming. Contrary to all his years of experience, David doesn't want to fight his own son. So he leaves. But he prays, sets a friend to get him information, and waits on God to make things clear.

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: O God, the worst thing of all is battle and temptation within a family. Help me to be a bringer of peace, not conflict, to my family.

JULY 22

Chapter: 2 Samuel 16

Theme: Absalom's Rebellion, Part 2

Study Verse: 2 Samuel 16:12

STATEMENT: For the next several chapters, we will see stories of the confusion and pain caused by Absalom's rebellion. In this chapter, Ziba lies about Mephibosheth for his own gain, and a man curses David for taking Saul's kingdom. Someone who wasn't aware of the inside story, of God choosing David to replace Saul, might think David had taken the kingdom by force. Besides, David is so discouraged by Absalom's actions that he fears it might be true—perhaps God has turned away from him and will take the kingdom. So he returns tolerance for the cursing and leaves the outcome in God's hands.

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Dear Lord, help me to be as patient as David was, forgiving cursing or mockery or whatever I have to face, and leaving the outcome in Your hands.

JULY 23

Chapter: 2 Samuel 17

Theme: Absalom's Rebellion, Part 3

Study Verse: 2 Samuel 17:16

STATEMENT: In Absalom's court, where he's set himself up to be king, he has two advisors. One is Ahithophel, who is a follower of Absalom, and the other is Hushai, who is really a friend of David's. Hushai, by the grace of God (see v. 14) is able to overturn the advice of Ahithophel. Then he secretly gets word to David to get across the Jordan to safety. The chapter ends with the heartwarming story of three men who bring food and supplies to the hungry and weary people who are following their true king into the wilderness. David is old now, and life in the wilderness wasn't easy even when he was young.

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Provider God, You bring us "food in the wilderness," both physically providing for us, and refreshing our spirits with Your love and truth.

JULY 24

Chapter: 2 Samuel 18

Theme: Absalom's Rebellion, Finale

Study Verse: 2 Samuel 18:33

STATEMENT: The whole reason David has fled is because the last thing he wants is war with his own son. But it becomes clear that Absalom must be stopped. So he organizes his army and sends it in three groups. But he gives each strict instructions—"Please, deal gently with Absalom, for my sake." When Absalom gets caught up in tree branches because of the mane of hair he's so proud of, and General Joab says he should be killed, one man refuses. But Joab kills Absalom. When David learns of it, he is shattered, and weeps for his son. He would rather have died, himself.

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Merciful God, You were with David at this sorrowful time. You, too, lost Your Son, and You are always with those who lose loved ones.

JULY 25

Chapter: 2 Samuel 19
Theme: Kingdom Restored
Study Verse: 2 Samuel 19:14

STATEMENT: David’s grief over his son was so great that it put a pall on all the people who had fought to give him the victory. When you are king, president, or prime minister, you must put your personal feelings aside. So David did that, and just as when he was young, he managed to bring the hearts of all the people back to him “as one.” The priests come to escort him back to Jerusalem. Shimei has the courage to come forward and confess to the king concerning his earlier cursing, probably assuming he’ll be killed. Perhaps a younger David would have done it, but the old David has learned mercy.

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: God of restoration, You brought David back to his throne even in the midst of sorrow, and You promised to restore to us all we have lost in our own great human rebellion. I choose to be faithful and worship at Your throne and no other.

JULY 26

Chapter: 2 Samuel 20
Theme: Another Revolt
Study Verse: 2 Samuel 20:19

STATEMENT: Still, David’s kingship is disputed. A man from the northern tribes, Sheba, turns away the northern people after himself instead of David. Again, David has to put down a rebellion with the help of his general, Joab. There are some ugly scenes in this chapter. But it would have been much uglier, had it not been for the wisdom of one woman, and the willingness of Joab to listen to her. It’s very interesting, given the fact that women were not valued very much in that time. Also, David’s earlier action in shutting away the concubines as if they were widows could have been an act of kindness. They had been through a lot; now they would not have to worry again.

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Holy One, You put up with a lot from us humans. Still today, we have wars upon wars. I wish You would hurry up and come, and put an end to all of it!

JULY 27

Chapter: 2 Samuel 21
Theme: The Gibeonites
Study Verse: 2 Samuel 21:3

STATEMENT: Another terrible story, though in the end it shows David's mercy again. Saul had broken a treaty with the Gibeonites, and David wanted to make friends with them again. We can be pretty sure the way he chose to do it was not what God had in mind! When one of the mothers of the murdered men guarded their bodies day and night, David was sorry for her, and took their bodies as well as the bones of Saul and Jonathan, which had never been buried since the time they were killed, and gave them all a decent burial.

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: O Lord, why do we have to be so cruel to each other? Help me to be loving and merciful, never seeking revenge for evil, whether great or small.

JULY 28

Chapter: 2 Samuel 22
Theme: A Song of David
Study Verse: 2 Samuel 22:4

STATEMENT: This beautiful song is out of place, chronologically, if David wrote it on being delivered from Saul. That was years ago. But it is a wonderful work, full of praise and thanksgiving to God for rescue. Which parts do you like best? What circumstances in your life has God delivered you from, making things come out better?

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Mighty God, You have been with me all my life, whether I am aware of You or not (most of the time, I'm not!) I thank You for Your care and praise You as David did.

JULY 29

Chapter: 2 Samuel 23

Theme: David's Legacy

Study Verse: 2 Samuel 23:3, 4

STATEMENT: When he was very old, David wrote this, one of the most beautiful of all his beautiful songs. Try to learn all of 3 and 4 by heart, or even the whole psalm. Think of the times in your life when you have been grateful for God's covenant, or when the words of someone in authority over you were like "the light of the morning," or "sunshine after rain." What do you think David was most grateful for, in what you have learned of his life? At the end of this chapter is appended a list of some of David's most famous "mighty men."

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Spirit of the Lord, speak by me, and let Your word be always on my tongue. When I am old, let me look back on a life spent with You.

JULY 30

Chapter: 2 Samuel 24

Theme: A Fateful Census

Study Verse: 2 Samuel 24:10

STATEMENT: God has on various occasions told one leader or another to number the people. But David was apparently seeking to build up his own glory by seeing how many soldiers he could command. Even Joab counseled against it, but if David's great strength was that he was willing to repent when he had done wrong, one of his great weaknesses was not listening before that and stopping! He sometimes did, as with Abigail, Nabal's wife, but not this time. Great trouble came, not just on him, but on his people because of his stubbornness.

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Father, don't let me be stubborn! Help me listen to counsel and change my mind when I need to. That's hard, but dealing with the aftermath when I don't...is harder!

JULY 31

Chapter: 1 Kings 1

Theme: From David to Solomon

Study Verse: 1 Kings 1:48

STATEMENT: And so we come to the end of David's life. He has tried to follow God, but he has also made many mistakes, especially in so much killing, and in a weakness for possessing women like toys. Added to his failures is a lack of strong fathering. We have seen several of his sons, over the course of 2 Samuel, show the result of indulgent parenting, and here we see it again. One of David's sons decides, all on his own, that he will be king next, and doesn't even wait for his father to die. Nathan puts a stop to it, and David restates his promise to Bathsheba that her son, Solomon will be the next king. In fact, unlike most kings, David has Solomon anointed while he is still alive to see it.

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Heavenly Father, earthly parents make many mistakes. Even the godly ones who are doing their best are not perfect, and there are also those who don't care, and don't try to do right. Help me to rest in You as my only perfect Parent, and let my earthly parents rest in You as well.