

Believe *His* Prophets

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

MAY

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



MAY 1

Chapter: Joshua 14

Theme: Caleb's Faithfulness

Study Verse: Joshua 14:18

STATEMENT: Caleb was now 85 years old. Forty years earlier, he and Joshua had been the only two spies who had faith that God could help the Israelites take Canaan. At the time, Moses promised him that because of his faith, the land he had visited would be his. Despite his age, Caleb now made a point of asking Joshua for the land where the giant sons of Anak were. What do you think the Israelites thought when they saw an 85-year-old man follow God and drive out giants from his new city, which their parents had been too afraid of, years ago?

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Father, there are giants around me, too. Giants of temptation and sin and trouble. I trust You to drive them out before me and help me to possess my whole heart for You.

MAY 2

Chapter: Joshua 15

Theme: Caleb's Daughter

Study Verse: Joshua 15:19

STATEMENT: Again, the scribes have preserved for us clear records of the boundaries and the cities taken, this time the southern areas. (As we will see in Judges, there is still much territory unconquered.) In the middle of the chapter is a family story. Like her father, Achsah had faith. Her new husband and she were given the arid and semi-arid land of the Negev, so she came to her father and asked for springs, too. He granted her request. How many times do you suppose we don't have what we hope for because we don't ask?

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Dear Lord, give me springs of refreshing—the water of Your Spirit. Help me to live Your abundant life even if things seem dry and dusty around me.

MAY 3

Chapter: Joshua 16

Theme: Incomplete

Study Verse: Joshua 16:10

STATEMENT: Joseph would have been thrilled to see that his descendants were finally back in their home country after hundreds of years in Egypt and then 40 in the wilderness. But if you compare the last verse of this chapter with the last verse of chapter 15 you'll notice something. God has strictly instructed that they are to drive out all idolatrous nations. He knows the Israelites are far too ready to start worshiping idols themselves. But they are not finishing the job. And there will be trouble later!

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Dear Father, thank you very much for being so kind to us. Help us remember that You know the end from the beginning so you know that we need to focus on you. Please help us to worship you, and you alone.

MAY 4

Chapter: Joshua 17

Theme: Some Daughters of Joseph

Study Verse: Joshua 17:4

STATEMENT: Among Joseph's descendants, through his elder son, Manasseh, were five sisters. We've read about them before. Like Caleb's daughter, Achsah, they are not too timid to come forward for something important, and they remind Joshua that Moses promised them land of their own. Really, it was God who made it, if you remember (see Numbers 27:7). Of course, Joshua keeps that promise. Is there anything you need to speak up about?

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: My Father, You make such wonderful provision for us. But You have also said that we could be more blessed if we asked more. Help me to find the line between asking for what I need, and being selfish or greedy, which I never want to do.

MAY 5

Chapter: Joshua 18

Theme: Still Not Finished!

Study Verse: Joshua 18:3

STATEMENT: There are still seven tribes who have not taken up their inheritance. For all their lives, these people have lived and traveled together in one huge group. It's a little scary to take your families and tents and go off into an unknown land and make a new life. But Joshua points out that was the whole purpose of their journey, and it's God's will that they settle this land. What are you putting off taking up responsibility for?

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: O Lord, I do procrastinate! Especially when things are scary or unknown. Help me to take these admonitions to heart, and take up what You have sent me to do, in Your strength, not my own.

MAY 6

Chapter: Joshua 19

Theme: Dividing the Land

Study Verse: Joshua 19:9

STATEMENT: This chapter details the division of the land among all the tribes of Israel. It can seem rather boring to read, but it wouldn't have been boring if you'd been there. Just imagine—their entire lives, these people had been raised to believe that someday they would possess the land God had promised. Now that “someday” was here at last! Verse 9 is interesting—it shows the people working together for the good of all. One tribe had too much, so they shared with another tribe. Bear in mind that although the land is now apportioned, the actual conquest is not yet done.

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: My Lord, I, too, have been promised a new land all my life. I have watched and waited for Your Kingdom, and my parents and their parents before them. How I long for that day when I will receive my “little corner of glory land!”

MAY 7

Chapter: Joshua 20

Theme: Cities of Safety

Study Verse: Joshua 20:2

STATEMENT: It is time to set aside the six cities God has talked about for years, where someone who has accidentally killed someone (or who is accused wrongly) can flee for justice and safety. Isn't that just like God, to think of the rights of even someone others might think was not worth caring about? Have you made serious mistakes you wish you could find refuge from? There is always refuge in God.

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Dear Jesus, You are my refuge and strength. If I have made mistakes, I ask Your forgiveness, and if others around me have made mistakes, I ask to be able to see them with Your eyes of mercy.

MAY 8

Chapter: Joshua 21

Theme: The Levites

Study Verse: Joshua 21:45

STATEMENT: Remember that God said the Levites were not to get one area of the country for themselves. They were to be God's ministers, living scattered throughout all the tribes so they could help wherever they were needed. They also each took turns to go to Shiloh where the tabernacle was and do their duty there. At long last, all the tribes had their apportioned new land. God had kept all His promises to them. Would they keep their promises to Him? Would they cast out all idolatry? Or would they settle, live together, and ultimately worship the same idols?

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Great Promise-Keeper, You are the only One who can be completely trusted. Even when I do my best, I can't keep my promises without Your help. Thank You so much that I can trust You to help me do that!

MAY 9

Chapter: Joshua 22

Theme: Conflict Resolution

Study Verse: Joshua 22:34

STATEMENT: Finally, the tribes who had chosen land on the other side of the river, but stayed on this side to help all the rest of the tribes gain their inheritance, could go home. The story that happened next is an excellent example of people working through a misunderstanding. What did the eastern tribes do? Why did the western tribes think it was wrong? What was the explanation and the final resolution? It's nice to see the people acting rightly, even when they have initially misunderstood each other, isn't it?

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Dear God, sometimes I've seen people misunderstand each other like this. Help me, when such things happen, to work toward understanding, helping everyone hear each other out so that we can come to consensus.

MAY 10

Chapter: Joshua 23

Theme: Joshua's Farewell Address, Part 1

Study Verse: Joshua 23:8

STATEMENT: Joshua is now 110 years old. Like Moses, he has spent his life in the service of God and his people. He has finished the long task God gave them, settling the people in their original homeland. Before he dies, Joshua wants to remind the people of the promises and faithfulness of God. In this chapter, what reminders and warnings does he give? Do any of them, in principle, apply to your life?

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Faithful God, You have led me, too. You have given me strong and kind leaders like Moses and Joshua. I thank You for them. You have kept Your promises to me. Help me be faithful in return.

MAY 11

Chapter: Joshua 24

Theme: Joshua's Farewell Address, Part 2

Study Verse: Joshua 24:31

STATEMENT: Joshua called all the elders to him and told the old story again of God's leading. He challenged the people to obey, and even used reverse psychology on them: "You won't obey!" "Yes, we will, we will!" They meant it—then. The people were about to be left without the leaders they had depended on for so long. They were all in their new land, and they were here for a very important reason. Do you know what it was? As we read on in the Old Testament, we'll learn whether they will live up to their destiny or not.

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Lord, I admit it; sometimes I obey better when my leaders are watching. Like the Israelites, I obey when they are around. But help me to have my own relationship with You, and obey when no one is looking!

MAY 12

Chapter: Judges 1

Theme: Fighting or Compromising

Study Verse: Judges 1:1

STATEMENT: Although the land is laid out, much conquest is yet undone. Some of the tribes set out to fulfill their instructions. Some don't. It may be a good idea to realize here that as we read Judges, we will come to some of the darkest stories in the Bible. This book will show the depths to which the human spirit can sink when it refuses, time after time, to steadfastly obey God. In your life, there are enemies of falsehood, or selfishness, or unlovingness to battle in God's strength. Are you conquering them in the blood of Christ, or are you compromising?

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Dear God, make me fully a conqueror in You. Help me to help those around me, too, to want to follow You.

MAY 13

Chapter: Judges 2:

Theme: A Rebuke

Study Verse: Judges 2:4

STATEMENT: This chapter is confusing, chronologically speaking. The story of Joshua's death is repeated in the middle. Then it goes on to the next generation, people who grew up after Joshua was gone. And it seems that the angel's rebuke in the early part of the chapter might be for that generation, though there were also those of the earlier generations who had compromised with idolatry. Here, the tragedy of the book of Judges, the tragedy of humanity in general, begins to show despair. "The sons of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord and served the Baals." Notice verse 4: whenever they are rebuked (even for centuries to come) they always weep and say they're sorry. But most of them do not change. Eventually, they will even stop being sorry.

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: O Lord, don't let it happen to me! Help me to obey faithfully, and when I don't, help me to repent immediately. Don't let my heart become hardened against You.

MAY 14

Chapter: Judges 3

Theme: Idolatry Leads to Servitude

Study Verse: Judges 3:9

STATEMENT: As God warned, when the people worshiped the idols of the nations around them, those nations took them over. So began a long, long string of back-and-forth allegiance. In this chapter alone, three times Israel is taken over by other nations, doesn't like it, calls to God, and God sends a rescuer. The people promise to obey this time, but they don't. So the cycle continues. These rescuers come to be called judges, which is where the book gets its name.

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Jesus, when I look around me, I see people serving things that are not You. Help me to see clearly which of those things are also temptations to me. I turn from them to You.

MAY 15

Chapter: Judges 4

Theme: Deborah's Victory

Study Verse: Judges 4:4

STATEMENT: Judges had now become something like public officers. Besides rescuing the people from conquest, they also worked as judges in everyday disputes. At this time, the judge was a woman. When Israel was taken over by yet another neighboring king, Barak had the wisdom not only to go to the presiding judge to seek God's will, but to tell her he wouldn't even go to battle without her. To him, she was the sign that God was with him. So she went, but it was two women who saved the day for the Israelites this time.

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Mighty Lawgiver and Judge, I trust You to show me the right way. I also trust those You have set in wisdom over me, and I ask that I, too, will grow in wisdom and good judgment.

MAY 16

Chapter: Judges 5

Theme: Deborah's Song

Study Verse: Judges 5:3

STATEMENT: Perhaps one reason this story is given in more detail than many others is because the leaders in question gave God all the glory. We are indebted to some anonymous record keeper for saving the lyrics of this song of victory. What do you think verses 4 and 5 are referring to? Can you find passages in this song which apply, in principle, to your life? Try using the song as a template to write a song of praise to God from you.

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Lord of Israel, Lord of my life, I praise You for the victories You accomplish for me. I will remember that it is in Your strength that I live and move and have my being.

MAY 17

Chapter: Judges 6

Theme: God and Gideon

Study Verse: Judges 6:14

STATEMENT: Now we come to a more detailed story, one we love. It stands as an example of all the times the people fell to their enemies and God sent a deliverer. Note the steps: first, the fall, followed by oppression. Finally, in verse 6, the cry to God. (You'd think God would get tired of answering!) In the next few verses, God patiently reminds them why they are in this situation. Then God sends an angel to call Gideon. The rest of the chapter details the back-and-forth exchanges between God and His reluctant prophet. What parts do you most relate to? Have you ever asked, "Why, God?"

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Patient Lord, You keep on trying! You forgive us when we stray, and give us Your strength to do what You ask.

May 18

Chapter: Judges 7

Theme: 300 Good Men

Study Verse: Judges 7:2

STATEMENT: Here is one of our favorite Bible stories. Have you heard it since childhood? It seems like a great thing that 20,000 soldiers gather to fight Midian. And it is; they were bravely and faithfully answering a call. But God wanted it to be obvious that His was the power that saved the country. So He went through two steps to thin down the crowds. And even then, the remaining 300 went to war armed with pitchers, trumpets, and torches! What principles in this story apply to your lives?

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Lord of Hosts, You have the victory over all the enemies of my heart. Help me to carry Your torch, and trumpet Your goodness everywhere I go.

MAY 19

Chapter: Judges 8

Theme: Unhelpful People

Study Verse: Judges 8:23

STATEMENT: Apparently, the original 20,000 volunteers did not include the ones in the first half of this chapter! They wouldn't even help Gideon complete the conquest of the remnants of Midian they were pursuing. But when he was successful, then they all wanted him to be king! What was his response? So far, Gideon was being faithful. Unfortunately, the end of the chapter shows several ways in which his faithfulness failed. How many can you find?

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Dear God, for a while Gideon was able to hold out against pride and arrogance. But then he went astray. Help me to stay faithful no matter what, and to remain humble even if people want to praise me.

MAY 20

Chapter: Judges 9

Theme: Ongoing Confusion

Study Verse: Judges 9:16, 17

STATEMENT: This chapter shows the continuing and growing confusion and violence developing in Israel. Now that judges are seen as having power, suddenly people want to be judges—and they want to call themselves “kings.” Let's look at one particular detail, shown in verse 23. Throughout the Old Testament, especially in these early books, God is given the credit for both good and evil. God doesn't send evil. He is sovereign, and could stop evil spirits from entering us, but He does not interfere with our wills. The fact is, when people choose evil continually, they take themselves out of God's control, which opens them up to evil.

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Master of the universe, I do ask You to keep me from evil, but I also choose to always keep myself within Your will so that You can keep me safe.

MAY 21

Chapter: Judges 10

Theme: God Loses Patience

Study Verse: Judges 10:16

STATEMENT: Again...again...again...the people rebel and serve idols, they are conquered, they cry out, God delivers them...they do it again... You'd be sick of it, too, wouldn't you? This time, God says forget it, go ask your false gods. What do you think He was trying to accomplish? Did it work? Notice the tenderness in verse 16. God still loves His children. He "can't bear their misery" (NASB). They turned back in earnest this time. Bear in mind that each of these stories takes many years, and in each case there are honest conversions—individuals and families who do turn to God and stay. We'll meet them in heaven.

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Great Father, You keep on trying and trying! You are trying today, amid the confusion of our modern world. You are calling for everyone to listen to You. I'm listening, Lord.

MAY 22

Chapter: Judges 11

Theme: A Battle Between Gods

Study Verse: Judges 11:24

STATEMENT: Remember when we asked for what purpose the people had been put in this land? God's plan was that they would be a light to the Gentiles; that they would spread the love and service of the true God. For once, in this chapter, a righteous judge makes a clear distinction between a false god and the true One. He points out that Chemosh, the Ammonites' idol, if he was a real god, must have given the people their land. The God of Israel, on the other hand, gave His people their land. Jephthah hoped this would make the Ammonites realize which God was greater. Perhaps some of them did. But in general they did not.

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Lord, show me if there are ever times when I can gently ask someone if the things they believe are working for them. Let my life be an example of what a loving, trusting relationship with You can be.

MAY 23

Chapter: Judges 12

Theme: Strife within the Tribes

Study Verse: Judges 12:3

STATEMENT: Even among themselves, the Israelites were warlike and vengeful. Ephraimites became angry because they didn't get in on the battle with the Ammonites, so they went up in battle against their own brothers, the Gileadites. They even used their regional accents against each other! We still see such things happen in the world today, where one group of people will decide another group of people should be killed, and set out to massacre them. How are the Israelites doing, so far, in spreading the truth about the God of heaven? How are we doing, today?

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: One Lord, One Father, please, please help us to see that we are all brothers and sisters! Help me to spread the love and acceptance, and bring Your kingdom closer.

MAY 24

Chapter: Judges 13

Theme: Samson's Birth

Study Verse: Judges 13:24

STATEMENT: Here is the beginning of a tragic story. This time, instead of just another judge, God prepared from the beginning to send a man with special powers from heaven to deliver the people from the Philistines. As we read these chapters, just try to imagine how different the story would have been if Samson had actually chosen to follow God from the beginning of his life, rather than thinking only about himself and what he wanted. What promises did the angel make to Samson's parents?

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Dear God, this story reminds me that even when You bless a person with great blessings, everything depends on that person choosing to be faithful to You. I choose You!

MAY 25

Chapter: Judges 14

Theme: Spoiled Samson

Study Verse: Judges 14:3

STATEMENT: It appears that Manoah and his wife were so thrilled to have this special baby that they didn't raise him with discipline. They must have given in to his every demand when he was little, because now that he is grown up, he still thinks he should have anything he wants. When Manoah tries to reason with Samson, he won't listen—the woman “looks good,” and that's all that matters. And Manoah gives in. What does this tell you about Samson and his family life? Later, when his wife begged and coaxed and cried for her way, Samson was not prepared to stand for principle. He, too, gave in without much pressure.

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: O Lord, how terrible it is when we fuss and cry to have our own ways, like a lot of big babies! Please help me not to be like that, but to humbly submit to You and accept Your will even when I am disappointed.

MAY 26

Chapter: Judges 15

Theme: Samson's Revenge

Study Verse: Judges 15:19

STATEMENT: The sad story of Samson continues. When his wife is taken from him and given to someone else, he is so angry that he takes vengeance on the whole people of the Philistines. God did raise him up as judge to deliver the people from the Philistines, but just imagine how much better the story would be if Samson were really dedicated to God and not to himself. Still, as we see in verse 19, God is patient and helps Samson.

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Mighty One, please help me to be sure that both my motives and my actions are pure in Your sight.

Chapter: Judges 16**Theme: Samson's End****Study Verse: Judges 16:28**

STATEMENT: Of course we can't see very much of Samson's life in these few chapters. But it really doesn't look as if he ever got over being so self-centered. One of his great weaknesses was for women, and it was his undoing. When Delilah begged and pleaded and cried, he finally gave in and told her his true secret. (You'd think he would have realized how foolish that was, by the way she had betrayed him all the other times!) Blinded and imprisoned, he had time to think, and at the end of his life, he did reach out to God, but note his motivation—he wanted revenge for his eyes. The story of Samson is the story of God working through a weak and faulty person.

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Dear Lord, I must admit I am glad You still work with and through faulty people, because I am a faulty person. But please help me to be faithfully submitted throughout my life, so I don't have to learn things the hardest way, as Samson did!

Chapter: Judges 17**Theme: Micah Buys His Own Priest****Study Verse: Judges 17:6**

STATEMENT: Here is a dysfunctional family! Micah steals from his mother, but when he confesses and gives the money back (which is good), she gives it to him to create idols with! So he does, and then he hires a priest to be his very own. Was this the plan God laid out and Moses and Joshua repeated, and repeated, and repeated? No! All three, Micah, his mother, and the young Levite, are in the wrong. Yet Micah thinks now God will bless him.

RESPONSE: _____
x _____

PRAYER: Dear Heavenly Father, I am so happy that you love us enough to forgive us. Please help me to always know that you will only honor what you tell us to do. Help me not to be deceived when it seems like I am blessed for doing something wrong. Please help me to be obedient to everything that you say to do.

MAY 29

Chapter: Judges 18

Theme: The Priest Gets Traded

Study Verse: Judges 18:31

STATEMENT: The tribe of Dan had been allotted land between the mountains and the sea, but they had been unable to conquer the inhabitants and had gone back into the mountains (see chapter 1:34-36). Now they were trying to find other land to take. They came across Micah and his priest, and the priest gave them words, supposedly from the Lord, that they wanted to hear. So when they conquered Laish (very sad words in 27-8) they took the priest with them and Micah was left without. What a betrayal of all God's plans for the people to have a united priesthood serving Him!

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Dear God, there are pastors I like better than others. I might even call a pastor "my pastor." But I don't mean anyone belongs to me! We are all serving You only.

MAY 30

Chapter: Judges 19

Theme: Total Lawlessness

Study Verse: Judges 19:1a

STATEMENT: As we have read Judges, we have seen the people sinking deeper and deeper into sin and darkness. This chapter is one of the most horrifying in the Bible, and just shows how terrible humans will become if they do not cling to God and his ways. When this man gave his concubine (whom he considered his possession) to evil men to abuse all night, then found her lying on the doorstep in the morning, all he said was, "Get up; let's go." His discovery that she was dead made him angry on his own behalf, not hers. How God must have wept!

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: O Lord, how can You stand it? People are so evil, and they haven't gotten any better in the centuries since this story. We still have whole groups of humans who try to murder other whole groups of humans, when we are all Your children! Please come quickly! And in the meantime, make me a small light for Your great love.

MAY 31

Chapter: Judges 20

Theme: Intertribal War

Study Verse: Judges 20:26

STATEMENT: Finally, the people of Israel are shocked enough to go to God at Mizpah. All the tribes gather except Benjamin, who not only refuse to come, but instead go to war against the other tribes. At first, the tribes are fairly presumptuous, assuming they'll win, but after two days losing, they finally submit themselves to God in earnest, fasting, praying, and offering sacrifices. The third time they go up, they win, but God must still be weeping. What a way to have "justice" among brothers! They will yet regret it.

RESPONSE: _____

PRAYER: Dear Jesus, give me Your strength and Your love to be merciful among my brothers and sisters, whether of my own family or in the wider family of God.