

3.3

READING THROUGH THE BIBLE IN 3 YEARS AND 3 MONTHS

**MORNING WATCH
FOR YOUTH AND
YOUNG ADULTS**

AUGUST 2020



Chapter: Proverbs 31

Theme: Lemuel’s sayings

Study Verse: Proverbs 31:30-31

Statement: This chapter has two sections: some advice from Lemuel’s mother, and the quintessential description of the worthy woman. People who believe women should be subservient beings have not carefully read this description; this woman is a merchant in her own right and is known in the city gates; that is, in the legal courts of the town. Naturally, all this counsel is also wise for men. What draws you most?

Response: _____

Prayer: *God of heaven, make me as diligent and wise as this woman who exemplifies all the wisdom preceding in the book of Proverbs. Whether I am male or female, let me be like the ideal woman that represents wisdom, and not like the fallen woman who represents evil.*

Chapter: Ecclesiastes 1

Theme: Nothing really matters...

Study Verse: Ecclesiastes 1:13

Statement: Solomon was one of the wisest people who ever lived...but it didn't do him much good when he turned away from God's rules for healthy life. In this opening chapter, he expresses his feeling that all his wisdom is useless, and it doesn't really matter what a person does. Do you agree?

Response: _____

Prayer: *Dear Lord, when I get depressed and think nothing matters, remind me that You are the beginning and end of all wisdom and happiness—that truly nothing matters if You are not at the center.*

Chapter: Ecclesiastes 2
Theme: Pleasure, labor, wisdom
Study Verse: Ecclesiastes 2:13

Statement: Solomon tries pleasing himself in any way he likes, without caring what it does to others. Then he tries labor, but still for his own glorification, you'll note. He decides wisdom is much better than folly, but even that will end in death. What counsel would you give if you could talk to Solomon?

Response: _____

Prayer: *King of wisdom, help me remember, as Solomon seems to have forgotten, that the purpose of labor and wisdom is for others, not the self. Then things won't seem so useless.*

Chapter: Ecclesiastes 3

Theme: A time for everything

Study Verse: Ecclesiastes 3:12

Statement: Finally, Solomon begins to see true wisdom. He sees that different things happen in their time, and that wisdom is a gift from God, to be used for righteousness.

Response: _____

Prayer: *Dear God, thank You for putting the desire for eternity in my heart. Help me to find hints of that desire in people who don't know You yet, and to use wisdom in encouraging them to seek You.*

Chapter: Ecclesiastes 4

Theme: The evils of oppression

Study Verse: Ecclesiastes 4:13

Statement: Solomon himself was sometimes an oppressive ruler, but late in his life he began to see the evils of this way of being. He also saw the benefits of people working together—see vs. 9-12.

Response: _____

Prayer: *Lord, I have no power over anyone—or do I? Are there ways I oppress or put down others? Help me to carry my weight in my relationships.*

Chapter: Ecclesiastes 5

Theme: Attitudes toward God and others

Study Verse: Ecclesiastes 5:1

Statement: Solomon sees that human wisdom is nothing compared to God’s wisdom, and he counsels humility before God. We need to pay our vows to God, and work to relieve oppression and injustice. He also warns against love of money. Which passage appeals to you?

Response: _____

Prayer: *Lord, let me find the work You have for me to do, and find joy and fulfillment in it. Let me share with those in harder circumstances and work against injustice.*

Chapter: Ecclesiastes 6

Theme: Futility again

Study Verse: Ecclesiastes 6:8

Statement: Solomon seems to have fallen back into depression. Nothing matters...How would you answer the questions he asks in v. 8? Have you or your friends ever felt hopeless like this? What helped you?

Response: _____

Prayer: *Dear God, it is true that we don't know what is ahead, or always know what is good for us. But You do! Help us to remember that we don't have to depend on our own faulty wisdom, but on Yours.*

Chapter: Ecclesiastes 7

Theme: Wisdom versus folly

Study Verse: Ecclesiastes 7:20

Statement: Solomon’s attitude has changed. In the first chapters, he was claiming great wisdom; here, in v. 23, he admits his wisdom falls short. He still thinks things look pretty dark, but he also sees God’s hand in all. Can you?

Response: _____

Prayer: *Mighty One, You are present at all times, even in our dark and hopeless moments. Help me to be patient of spirit, and to trust you.*

Chapter: Ecclesiastes 8

Theme: God’s wisdom

Study Verse: Ecclesiastes 8:1

Statement: It seems that Solomon is beginning to accept that God’s wisdom might be higher than his, and that no matter how smart he is, he can never understand all God understands. Do you think he is beginning to trust, or only to resign himself? What is the difference?

Response: _____

Prayer: *Holy God, I lean on Your perfect authority. No matter what mistakes humans make, or how hard it is for me to understand what is going on, I trust You!*

Chapter: Ecclesiastes 9

Theme: Do your best and leave the rest to God

Study Verse: Ecclesiastes 9:10

Statement: It seems that Solomon is beginning to reach true trust. He still August think everything on earth is pointless—we all die—but he does see that we are in the hand of God, and that wisdom is better than strength and can solve grave issues. Why do you think it is important to strive for godly wisdom whether anyone else heeds it or not?

Response: _____

Prayer: *King of the universe, August I do the good I know, help the people I can, and not mind one way or the other whether people notice and admire me.*

Chapter: Ecclesiastes 10

Theme: Folly in high places

Study Verse: Ecclesiastes 10:17

Statement: There are many foolish things listed here. Some are done by common people, some by the king himself. Why do you think it comes down to wise words and temperance (eating appropriately rather than gluttony)?

Response: _____

Prayer: *Lord, You give all good things, and You want us to be moderate and not excessive. August I be temperate and cheerful no matter what.*

Chapter: Ecclesiastes 11

Theme: Generosity and careful planning

Study Verse: Ecclesiastes 11:1

Statement: Here, Solomon begins to speak of generosity, diligence, and humility. We don't really know how things work, so we should just do our jobs and share with others. What do you think it means to cast your bread on the waters and find it after many days?

Response: _____

Prayer: *Lord, August I be generous and faithful, without expecting a return. But when blessings follow, help me be aware and grateful.*

Chapter: Ecclesiastes 12

Theme: Remember God in your youth

Study Verse: Ecclesiastes 12:1

Statement: At the end of it all, Solomon wishes he'd held onto the faith he had as a boy. He learned a very great deal in his long life, but he learned most of it the hard way. He has shared some of the results with us in this book, and it inspires us to cling to God *now*, and not have to come back in ashes of repentance later!

Response: _____

Prayer: *Dear Father, keep me in Your hand. Please don't let me go astray. I know that You will always accept me back if I do...but I don't want all the pain in the meantime! I choose You now!*

Chapter: Song of Solomon 1

Theme: The Courtship

Study Verse: Song of Solomon 1:4

Statement: This little book has two layers. It is often seen as a picture of the love of Christ for His church; it is also a love song showing that God is truly glorified in human love. Start a double list today: in one column list your insights into God’s love for you, in the other list insights into the beauty of true human love.

Response: _____

Prayer: *Lord, we will indeed rejoice in You and be glad, seeing Your great love as much sweeter than fresh wine. We also ask for Your blessing on our human relationships.*

Chapter: Song of Solomon 2

Theme: Declarations of love

Study Verse: Song of Solomon 2:4

Statement: The first half of this chapter is the bride’s descriptions of her lover; the second half his descriptions of her. Continue your list. In what ways has God spread his banners over you, and what are some of the “little foxes” which try to ruin your relationship?

Response: _____

Prayer: *Jesus, lover of my soul, I am Yours and You are mine. I will follow and “come along” when You call me.*

Chapter: Song of Solomon 3

Theme: Seeking and finding

Study Verse: Song of Solomon 3:1

Statement: All relationships have rough spots. This includes our relationship with God—not on His side, but on ours. Have you sometimes felt you were seeking Him and not finding him? The bride asks for help. Have you? Continue your list. Mark the insight that means the most to you.

Response: _____

Prayer: *Dear God, I seek Your face at all times. All too rarely, it seems, You are as obvious to me as Solomon’s wedding cavalcade. Let me follow You faithfully even when I can’t see You.*

Chapter: Song of Solomon 4

Theme: The groom’s love for his bride

Study Verse: Song of Solomon 4:7

Statement: Some of these endearments are funny to us today, but the fact is, human language is not sufficient to the task of describing even human love, let alone God’s love. Continue your list, and try hard to imagine that to Jesus, you are as beautiful in soul as Solomon saw his bride. How can v 7 be true of you?

Response: _____

Prayer: *Jesus, only in Your perfection can I be seen as perfect. Thank You SO MUCH for Your robe of righteousness that covers and changes me so that You see me as “altogether beautiful” with “no blemish”!*

Chapter: Song of Solomon 5
Theme: Separated but searching
Study Verse: Song of Solomon 5:16

Statement: This chapter tells of a painful incident when the bride feels abandoned, goes after her beloved, and is harmed. Have there been times when your spiritual life felt like this? Continue your list and remind yourself of the insights that will most help at these times.

Response: _____

Prayer: *My God, I know You never, never abandon me. But human eyes and hearts are weak, and sometimes I fear You have. Then I go looking for You in all the wrong places, and only get hurt. Rescue me!*

Chapter: Song of Solomon 6

Theme: Mutual delight

Study Verse: Song of Solomon 6:3

Statement: Isn't it amazing that as beautiful as we see God (and He's infinitely more beautiful than we can imagine!) He sees *us* as beautiful? It can be hard to believe, but when we are living securely inside God's love, we are viewed as God views Christ. Continue your list and write a prayer poem to Jesus.

Response: _____

Prayer: *My Father and my Friend, I admit it; my faith is too weak to see as You see. Help me learn to do so, and especially to see the people around me as beloved by You, and beautiful to You.*

Chapter: Song of Solomon 7

Theme: Bridegroom’s admiration for bride

Study Verse: Song of Solomon 7:10

Statement: The groom is overflowing with love for his bride. God is overflowing with love for us. Why would God’s desire be for us? Continue your list and see if you can name some “choice fruits” (v 13) which God has “saved up for you.”

Response: _____

Prayer: *Great King, I cannot imagine why Your desire is for me. I can only bow in humble gratitude and beg You to make me really live as You see me.*

Chapter: Song of Solomon 8

Theme: Peril followed by security

Study Verse: Song of Solomon 8:7

Statement: The center and theme of the whole book is found in this final chapter. It describes both the troubles and opposition true love faces, and the power that love has over everything else. Finish your list, and circle the greatest characteristics of love that you have found in this book. Thank God for them.

Response: _____

Prayer: *Mighty God, Your love is far stronger than death. You even went to Your own death to secure it! August I give my life for love and count it well worth the cost.*

Chapter: Isaiah 1

Theme: God’s indictment and promises

Study Verse: Isaiah 1:18

Statement: Much of Isaiah will be especially full of human rebellion and God’s rebukes. But God *always* ends with promises. He pleads for His people to come back to Him so that He can heal them. He begins here: “Please! Come! Let’s talk!” *Important:* Notice how God defines righteousness in vs 16-17. In the previous verses, He has said church-going is not only insufficient, it’s actually evil if it is mixed with injustice and indifference.

Response: _____

Prayer: *King of my heart, I repent of any and all rebellion. Show me my sins and reason with me over them. Turn me from them and cleanse me.*

Chapter: Isaiah 2

Theme: God’s eternal reign is coming

Study Verse: Isaiah 2:2

Statement: Here at the beginning, having laid out the basic problem and begged for a hearing from His children, God makes His final and most important promise: no matter what happens in between, GOD WILL REIGN. He will reign forever and rule in justice. We can take heart in that knowledge, no matter how dark it seems in the meantime.

Response: _____

Prayer: *King of all kings, Ruler of all worlds, Creator of the universe, You are my King! Even so, come, Lord Jesus!*

Chapter: Isaiah 3
Theme: Judgment
Study Verse: Isaiah 3:13-14

Statement: Again, God defines righteousness. Make a list of all the things in this chapter that He rebukes. If you wish, you could also make a list of the promised consequences. Don't confuse the two.

Response: _____

Prayer: *Lord, let me be a part of the solution, not part of the problem. Show me something I can do for someone in trouble today.*

Chapter: Isaiah 4

Theme: After judgment, cleansing

Study Verse: Isaiah 4:2

Statement: This is an early mention of a “remnant,” “he who is left in Zion and remains in Jerusalem,” (meaning left in God’s house and among God’s people, not in any particular city.) The evil is washed away and safety and protection remain. God grant that we can be in that remnant!

Response: _____

Prayer: *Dear Lord, take away my reproach. Let me not make the mistake of trying to cling to any human or any human institution for that. I want to live in Your shelter from the rain and heat of life.*

Chapter: Isaiah 5

Theme: The vineyard; the beginning of woes

Study Verse: Isaiah 5:1

Statement: Jesus referred to this parable in Mark 12. Then He added some chapters to it. His additions tell the story of this time we're reading about, when prophets such as Isaiah tried to turn people's attention to God but they killed them. God's anguish is shown in the rest of this chapter. You can hear the tears in His cries as He foretells the ruin of those people who refuse Him.

Response: _____

Prayer: *O Lord, plant Your vineyard in me. Keep me walled and watched and watered, and let me produce good fruit for You.*

Chapter: Isaiah 6

Theme: The call

Study Verse: Isaiah 6:8

Statement: This book is not in chronological order; here we have Isaiah’s call from God to be a prophet. It is one of the most dramatic recorded. Use your imagination to picture the scene. What would your response have been? What *is* your response to God’s call on your life?

Response: _____

Prayer: *Great God, Your holiness is overpowering and even frightening. Thank You for making clear that Your true nature is gentle and forgiving. Here I am; send me!*

Chapter: Isaiah 7

Theme: War, trials, and...Immanuel!

Study Verse: Isaiah 7:14

Statement: Here is a historic interlude. Judah faces earthly enemies and is promised God’s intervention. But the promise is not for them alone. What does God promise that will change the entire world?

Response: _____

Prayer: *God Who is with us always, oh, how can I thank You? Despite trials and wars and difficulties without and within, You are with me. I choose to stay with You, too!*

Chapter: Isaiah 8

Theme: Surrounded by wars

Study Verse: Isaiah 8:17

Statement: Judah is surrounded by wars and destruction. Other countries are taken. God says it *will* be hard and ugly, but not to fear what others fear, only to trust in Him even when He can't be seen. Notice in v 19 and following that this is not only an earthly war, but a spiritual one, too. What safety do we have?

Response: _____

Prayer: *Lord, when all around me seems to be falling apart, when even my own friends are seeking help from other voices than Yours, I will not leave You. I will trust Your voice alone.*

Chapter: Isaiah 9

Theme: The Prince of Peace

Study Verse: Isaiah 9:2

Statement: Ah! Right in the middle of all that despair, the promise above all promises! There will be no more gloom! No more oppression, whether physical, mental, or emotional. People will rejoice as at a good harvest. The Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Prince of Peace...*will dwell among US!*

Response: _____

Prayer: *Master, the world is dark. Sometimes I feel like giving up. But unlike those people of long ago, I know You have already come to our world! I will live with You now, and trust and wait quietly for Your return.*

Chapter: Isaiah 10
Theme: Injustice will be ended
Study Verse: Isaiah 10:1-2

Statement: Even evil can be used by God for justice. Notice that this chapter, again, is full of God’s definition of righteousness as care for the vulnerable. God will end it, and then, after v 20...a remnant will return. Those who lorded it over their fellow beings will be cut down, and those who are humble will be safe.

Response: _____

Prayer: *Mighty God, open my eyes to see the plight of those around me who may be worse off than I am, especially if they don’t know You. Show me ways to help.*