

On April 1st

READING: 1Samuel 11-13

Synopsis: *The Ammonites move against Jabesh-Gilead. They appeal to Saul and are rescued, Saul confirmed king./ Samuel testifies as to his integrity, thunder and rain comes out of season, Samuel exhorts the people./ Jonathan smites a Philistine garrison, Saul grows impatient and offers a sacrifice rather than wait for Samuel and is reproved.*

STUDY TIME

Saul's Great Weakness

1Sam. 13:11-13 demonstrate a great weakness, a character flaw that Saul began to show.

Vs. 11: "And Samuel said, " _____? And Saul said, _____ I saw that the people were scattered from me, and _____ camest not _____,"

1. The Demand. All Samuel demanded of Saul, was for Saul to admit what he had done. It is of no use to ask a rebellious person 'why' they did some wrong deed, it is necessary to only get them to admit it.
2. The Defense. Saul immediately began to 'explain' his action, even though he was not asked, "why?" He blamed it on the people being scattered, on the Philistines threatening, and on Samuel for not being exactly on time, and he 'forced himself' to disobey the instructions God had given him through Samuel. (see 1Sam. 10:8 "Saul was to wait for instructions.)
3. The Duty. Our duty is to faithfully obey God's Word. When we don't, we demonstrate, as did Saul, that we are not trustworthy. If we, or our children, attempt to explain 'why' a rule was broken, mark it down. There is no repentance there, merely an attempt to get out of trouble.

Today Is: "April Fool's Day!" Dating back to the Roman Empire, this is a day to play harmless tricks on people. It's also 'Tatting Day' and "Have Fun at Work Day'.



On April 2nd

READING: 1Samuel 14-15

SYNOPSIS: *Aided by terror and an earthquake, Jonathan miraculously smote a Philistine garrison/ Saul, sent to destroy the Amalekites, spared King Agag and the best of the spoil. God rejects him due to his incomplete obedience.*

STUDY TIME

The Disintegration of a King

Saul, through his own choices, continued to visibly disintegrate in his walk and in his work. Note 1Sam. 14:3: “And Ahiah, the son of Ahitub, _____ brother, the son of Phinehas, the son of _____, the Lord’s priest in _____, wearing an ephod.” See also vs. 24: “And the men of Israel were distressed that day: for Saul had adjured the people, saying, Cursed be the man that eateth any food until evening, that ___ may be avenged upon _____ enemies. So none of the people tasted any food.” Then, see vs. 35: “And Saul built an altar unto the Lord: the same was the _____ altar that he build unto the Lord.”

1. Hesitation to Conflict. Saul cuts a ridiculous figure here. He hesitates to go to war, calling a man he had appointed priest whose family had already been put out of the priesthood. Understandably, God would not answer Saul, and He finally went to battle only when it became obvious the opportunity was about to pass him by.
2. Selfishness in his Curse. Note also that Saul was no longer concerned with fighting the Lord’s battles. Now he was obsessed with self. He who had once been so humble, now was obsessed with self, demanding that ‘I’ be avenged on ‘mine’ enemies.
3. Carelessness in Consecration. Vs. 35 contains a fascinating note. Saul had evidently reigned quite a while in Israel, and yet this is the 1st altar he built, although God had already given him notable victories. God is unchanging. Let’s make sure we are also, regarding faith and practice.

TODAY IS: “National PBJ Day!” The peanut butter and jelly sandwich is the favorite of American kids. (of all ages!) Why not observe the day wisely, and enjoy the favorite sandwich of the young?



On April 28th

READING: 2Kings 1-2

SYNOPSIS: *Elijah calls down fire to destroy the wicked king Ahaziah's soldiers./ Elijah taken to heaven in a whirlwind, Elijah inherits his mantle, divides Jordan, and mocked, Elisha curses them and God calls forth female bears to destroy the mockers.*

STUDY TIME

The Mocking Children (2Kings 2:23-24)

Note 2Kings 2:23: "And he went up from thence to _____: and as he was going up by the way, there came forth little children out of the city, and _____ him..." In vs. 24 we see: "And he turned back, and looked on them, and _____ them in the name of the Lord, And there came forth _____ she-bears out of the wood, and tare _____ children of them."

1. The Place. Elisha was headed to Bethel. (the House of God) Originally the place where Jacob had met the Lord, Jereboam had placed a golden idol there, and people still worshipped the golden calf.
2. The People. These were not tiny tots, but children above the age of accountability, who obviously followed the example of their idolatrous parents. When they were confronted with the man of God, they mocked at this 'old-fashioned' preacher and mocked him. By doing so, they mocked God.
3. The Punishment. It is noted that Elisha first looked on them. Perhaps he was giving them an opportunity to repent, but then, seeing their rebellious mockery continued, he cursed them in the name of the Lord. It is not said that Elisha sent the bears to kill them, God evidently did that. In all of nature, no animal is so fierce as a female bear that is irritated. How many parents even today, mock at the things of God and see their own children crippled and killed by alcohol, drugs, and STD's, due to their dereliction of duty?

TODAY IS: "Arbor Day!" It is also: "Great Poetry Reading Day!" As you probably know, 'arbor' is Latin for 'tree'. This day is dedicated to tree planting. (Est. 18,000,000 per year are planted on Arbor Day) This is also a day to read a great poem like: "The Road Not Taken" by Frost, or some other of literature's most neglected category.



On April 5th

READING: 1Samuel 21-24

SYNOPSIS: *David flees to the priest and receives the hallowed bread for himself and his men, and the sword of Goliath. He pretends to be mad at Gath./ Doeg accuses Ahimelech to Saul and at his order kills 85 priests./Saul pursues after David who cuts off the skirt of his robe and protests his innocence.*

STUDY TIME

David in the Wilderness (1Sam. 22:1-5)

See 1Sam.22:1: "David therefore, departed thence, and escaped to the cave _____: and when his _____ and all his _____ house heard it, they went down thither to him. See 1Sam. 22:3: "And David went thence to _____ of _____: and he said unto the king of _____, Let my father and my mother, I pray thee, come forth, and be with you, till I know what God will do for me."

1. David's Escape. David went toward his home. The cave of Adullam is in Judah, about 20 miles southwest of Jerusalem. This was David's old territory here, and he felt secure on this ground.
2. His Esteem. Such esteem did people have for David, that they made him a captain over all that gathered to him. They were the discontented, the debtors, and all that were in danger. He agreed to take responsibility for them and to keep them safe in the wilderness.
3. Sanctuary Established. David was most concerned for his Mother and Father. He brought them to the king of Moab, who agreed to keep them. This was a logical place to bring them since Jesse's grandmother had been Ruth, the Moabite daughter of Naomi. God always provides a sanctuary for His people, and always takes care of His own.

TODAY IS: "Go For Broke Day!" This is a day to cast caution to the wind and put it all on the line. Give your best in athletics, work, sports, or whatever you do.



On April 30th

READING: 2Kings 5-7

SYNOPSIS: *Namaan the leper is cured/Elisha causes an iron axe head to swim, the Syrian army is stricken with blindness, captured, and paroled/ Ben-hadad besieges Samaria, but God causes them to flee in terror, leaving all their supplies behind.*

STUDY TIME

The Cleansing of Naaman (2Kings 5:10-14)

(2Kings 5:13) And his servants came near, and spake unto him, and said, My father, if the prophet had bid thee do some _____ thing, wouldest thou not have done it? How much rather then, when he saith to thee, _____, and be _____?”

1. The Resentment. (vs. 11-12) Simple faith is always the avenue through which God works. Sometimes however, as in this case, people are offended that they must humble themselves in order to display such faith.
2. The Resolve. (vs.13) The servants of Naaman helped him to see that faith is simply believing and doing what is commanded. God never asks us to do anything too difficult, He only asks us to believe.
3. The Reward. (vs.14) The hardest thing Naaman had to do was to humble himself. When he did so, God rewarded him. Do you have simple faith? If you do, your faith will cause you to simply believe the Bible’s principles and precepts, and practice them.

TODAY IS: “National Honesty Day!” This is good for any day, but especially today, be totally honest with others. M. Hirsh Goldberg, former press secretary to the governor of Maryland created this day in the early 1990’s. It is no surprise that there are no congressional records of proclamations concerning this day.



On April 3rd

READING: 1Samuel 16-17

SYNOPSIS: *Samuel is sent to Bethlehem and anoints David. Saul sends for David to play and quiet the evil spirit./ Goliath challenges Israel. David slays Goliath and is noticed by Saul.*

STUDY TIME

God Called and God Prepared
(1Samuel 16:13)

“Then Samuel took the _____, and _____ him in the midst of his _____: and the _____ came upon David from that day forward. So Samuel rose up, and went to Ramah.”

1. The Picture. When someone was anointed, as David was by Samuel, oil was poured on their head. This oil was a picture of the Holy Spirit. This same thing had been done to Saul when he was chosen to be King. It is interesting to note that he was anointed in the midst of his brethren. Why, that being the case, did they find it so strange that he would be the one to challenge Goliath in chap. 17? Could it be they were jealous?
2. The Power. The Bible says the Holy Spirit came on David from that day forward. Without the power of the Holy Spirit, we can do nothing. It was the power of God that would enable David to defeat Goliath, and eventually rise and rule as King over Israel.
3. The Principle. This principle of power concerns you and me and the local Church also. The Holy Spirit came one time for all time upon the local Church at Pentecost. We don’t need to seek special power from God now, we just have to utilize the power He has given us already.

TODAY IS: “TWEED DAY!” Although it’s not worn much in the south, tweed is a warm, comfortable fabric. If you have something tweed, wear it today. If not, it’s a good excuse to go and buy something.



On April 4th

READING: 1Samuel 18-20

SYNOPSIS: *Jonathan loves David, but Saul seeks to entrap and kill him./ Jonathan discloses his father's purpose to kill David. Saul rages and David flees to Samuel./David consults with Jonathan and their covenant is renewed./ Saul, angered at David's absence, rages at Jonathan and attempts to kill his own son.*

STUDY TIME

Jealousy
(1Sam. 18:8)

“And Saul was very _____, and the saying _____ him; and he said, They have ascribed unto David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed but thousands: and what can he have _____ but the _____?”

1. Anger. When you are jealous of another, as Saul was of David, then you cannot rejoice when they receive recognition. Instead, you compare your own treatment with theirs and are full of envy. As God's people, we ought to rejoice in another's blessing. When jealousy controls us however, we are merely envious of another's blessing.
2. Attention. In vs. 9 the Bible says that Saul 'eyed' David from that day and forward. David became a malevolent enemy in the mind of Saul. Saul ascribed to David all kinds of motives that David never had. When we imagine evil in someone else, our imagination is always larger than life.
3. Attack. In vs. 10-11 we see how jealousy erupts into destructive anger. Saul cast the javelin in his hand at David, seeking to kill him not once, but twice. Jealousy causes many problems, the greatest of which is that friends are imagined to be enemies, and are attacked when they ought to be merely loved. Are you jealous of another? May God help you to turn that jealousy to love so you seek their help, rather than their hurt.

TODAY IS: “World Rat Day!” James Kitlock and Robyn Arthur created this day in 2002 as a day to give recognition to the pet rat!



On April 29th

READING: 2Kings 3-4

SYNOPSIS: *Jehoram's evil reign over Israel. Moab rebels but is defeated/Elisha augments the widow's oil and raises the dead son of the Shunamite woman to life.*

STUDY TIME

A Great Woman
(2Kings 4:8)

“And it fell on a day, that Elisha passed to Shunem, where was a _____; and she _____ him to eat bread. And so it was, that as oft as he passed by, he _____ in _____ to eat bread.”

1. Conduct. What conduct determines when a person is 'great' in the sight of God? It is not necessarily that one is a doer of 'great deeds', but rather that one has a 'great motive' in doing the deeds.
2. Constraint. (vs.8) To constrain someone carries the idea of almost forcing them to do something. No doubt, knowing how hard times were, this great woman had to constrain Elisha and his servant to eat with herself and her husband, time after time. Finally however, it turned into a habit.
3. Construction. (vs. 9-10) These were not wealthy folks. However, they did what they could for God by being kind to God's man. They couldn't put him up in a palace, but made what has become known as 'a prophet's chamber' where Elisha and Gehazi could have some privacy and rest. The woman was amply rewarded for her investment in Elisha's ministry. It is a lesson to be learned, you cannot out give God, and you give to God by caring for his men.

TODAY IS: “Greenery Day!” Begun in 1989 as an observance of Japanese Emperor Hirohito's birthday, this is a day to plant, care for, and enjoy some green thing.



On April 6th

READING: 1Samuel 25-27

SYNOPSIS: *Samuel dies, Nabal refuses to supply David. Abigail intercedes and Nabal dies./Saul comes to Hachilah pursuing David. David prevents Abishai from killing Saul but takes his spear and cruse./ Saul, hearing David had fled to Gath seeks him no more. David begs Ziklag to live in.*

STUDY TIME

Nabal

(1Sam. 25:10-11)

“And Nabal answered David’s servants, and said, Who is David? And who is the son of Jesse? There be many servants now a days that break away every man from his master. Shall ___ take ___ bread, and ___ water, and ___ flesh that ___ have killed for ___ shearers, and give it unto men, whom ___ know not whence they be?”

1. Not Helpful. The name “Nabal” comes from the Hebrew word for “fool”. It is indeed a fool that refuses help to others. Nabal seems to have been obsessed with himself alone, and never had a thought of reaching out to others. Like the rich ‘fool’ of Luke 12:20, he imagined all his wealth was for his use alone.
2. Not Happy. Stingy people are never happy people. Even his wife was to say of him, “...as his name is, so is he...” (1Sam. 25:25) In addition, when he heard how she had supplied David’s forces against his will, the Bible assures us that he was most unhappy with what she had done.
3. Not Healthy. Stingy people are not healthy people. When Nabal was told what Abigail had done, it seems evident from vs. 37 that his temper got so out of hand that he had a stroke. Ten days later, he died. Stinginess and greed are two of the most destructive elements to our health.

TODAY IS: “National Tartan Day!” Tartan patterns celebrate Scottish heritage. Congress declared April 6th to be National Tartan Day in 1998. Did you know our Declaration of Independence was modeled after the Scottish Declaration of Independence signed April 6, 1320?



On April 27th

READING: 1Kings 20-22

SYNOPSIS: *Ben-hadad and the Syrians besiege Samaria. God grants victory, but Ahab allows the Syrian king to go free, which angers God./ Ahab covets Naboth’s vineyard. Elijah denounces judgments against Ahab and Jezebel./ Ahab is slain. Jehoshaphat good reign over Judah, and Ahaziah’s evil reign over Israel.*

STUDY TIME

Evil Alliances (1Kings 22:4)

“And he said unto Jehoshaphat, Wilt thou go with me to battle to Ramoth-gilead? An Jehoshaphat said to the king of Israel, ___ am as ___ art, ___ as ___ as ___, my ___ as thy ___.”

1. Serious. It is a serious business to make an alliance. Proverbs 6:3 advises, “...make sure thy friend.” In any kind of partnership, make certain that you are allied with someone you can count on.
2. Sympathetic. Many times we ally ourselves with folks we imagine is like us, or whom we desire to be like us, but really is not. I think that is just what Jehoshaphat did in this case. He was attracted to Ahab, and identified with him, even though Ahab was the last person he should have been associated with. Again, 1Tim. 5:22 enjoins us, “Lay hand suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men’s sins: keep thyself pure.”
3. Separation. Biblical separation means to ‘come out from among them and be ye separate.’ Of course we are to love all people, to witness to all people, to isolate ourselves from no one. However, we cannot enter into any kind of alliance with those who are given over to evil. This is a lesson Jehoshaphat learned the hard way. It cost a lot, in fact, it almost cost him his life.

TODAY IS: “Tell a Story Day!” This day, a day to tell stories, is observed in Scotland and England on Oct. 27th.



On April 26th

READING: 1Kings 18-19

SYNOPSIS: *Elijah meets Obadiah and has a contest with the prophets of Baal. Elijah obtains rain by prayer./ Elijah flees from Jezebel and is comforted by an angel. God sends him to anoint Hazael, Jehu, and Elisha. Elisha follows him*

STUDY TIME

1Kings 18:21

Between Two Opinions

“And Elijah came unto all the _____, and said, _____ between two _____? If the Lord be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people _____ him _____.”

1. Halting. In this passage, Elijah asked the people how long they were planning to ‘halt’ between two opinions. The implication is that progress had ceased for the Lord. When people keep one part of their loyalty for the Lord, and yet another part for worldliness, carnality, and idolatry, they can not go forward, for these entities are going in opposite directions.
2. Hesitancy. Today we see many Christians who likewise ‘halt’ between two opinions. They know what the Bible says to do, and yet they hesitate to embrace Biblical principles and precepts with their whole heart. They keep, as it were, one foot in the Kingdom, and the other in the world. We must realize, no progress can be made in such a case.
3. Harm. The only thing such folks can look forward to is harm, but eventually you have to move one way or the other. You see, God is continuing to move toward righteousness, and the other direction is worldliness and carnality. If you don’t decide soon which way you’re going to go, all you will do is fall, and that won’t do you any good at all.

TODAY IS: “National Pretzel Day!” Probably the world’s oldest snack, pretzels were baked in France as far back as 610 AD. Do you know how to celebrate pretzel day? I thought so, have at it!



On April 7th

READING: 1Samuel 28-31

SYNOPSIS: *Saul seeks advice from a witch at Endor. David, marching with the Philistines and pretending to be on their side, is spared from fighting against Israel through the jealousy of the Philistine princes./ The Amalekites spoil Ziklag but David recovers all/ Saul and his sons are slain, but their bodies are recovered by the men of Jabesh-gilead.*

STUDY TIME

1Sam. 31:12-13

The Judgment on Saul

“All the valiant men arose, and went all night, and took the body of Saul, and the bodies of his sons from the wall of Bethshan, and came to Jabesh, and _____ them there. And they took their _____, and _____ them under a tree at Jabesh, and fasted seven days.”

1. Caught. Judgment finally caught up with Saul. This man would never admit he was wrong, and never would seek true repentance, finally was caught by the enemies. Truly, even a child of God may run for a long time, but eventually the day will come, when you are caught by the justice of God.
2. Killed. As Samuel had prophesied, Saul and his three sons were killed that day. Saul fell on his own sword and committed suicide, although we see in the opening of second Samuel that an Amalakit actually delivered the final blow.
3. Cremated. God’s people have always buried their dead. Usually, it is only the heathen who burned their dead. In this case however, so mutilated and decomposed were the bodies of Saul and his sons, that they were burnt and then buried. Fire always speaks of judgment, and judgment had fallen on the man who would not repent.

TODAY IS: “World Health Day!” Sponsored by the World Health Organization (WHO) this day is dedicated to focusing on a different theme each year emphasizing world health problems.



On April 8th

READING: 2Samuel 1-3

SYNOPSIS: *An Amalekite brings word of Saul's death. David laments Saul and Jonathan./ David goes up to Hebron but Abner makes Ish-bosheth king over Israel. Asahel is slain./ Six sons are born to David. Abner revolts to David but is killed by Joab.*

STUDY TIME

2Samuel 3:1

War!

“Now there was _____ between the house of _____ and the house of _____: but _____ waxed stronger and stronger, and the house of _____ waxed weaker and weaker.”

1. Certain War. Two factions diametrically opposed to each other, cannot continue to coexist. Abraham Lincoln, paraphrasing a principle from the Bible said, “A house divided against itself cannot stand.” “This nation cannot continue to exist half slave and half free.” No indeed, when two differing philosophies make contact, be certain that warfare will erupt.
2. Civil War. After Saul's death, many folks wanted and expected that the new ruler would come from Saul's house. They were willing to fight to ensure that this would happen. However, David had been anointed to be king, and his servants were equally willing to do all that was necessary to put him on the throne. Thus, civil war erupted in Israel.
3. Spiritual War. In our bodies, our carnal nature wars against the spirit that has been born again inside of us. The two cannot coexist without conflict. This is why we feel torn between doing what we know we should do, and what we feel we want to do. Who will win such a way? Why, the side we choose to let win. As in the case of Israel's civil war, if we choose to follow God and His word, the house of the flesh will get weaker and weaker, while the house of the spirit will get stronger and stronger. The winner is up to you.

TODAY IS: “Draw a Picture of a Bird Day!” In 1943, 7 year old Dorrie Cooper visited her uncle in the hospital. He drew her a picture of a bird, and she hung it in her room. She was prompted to draw many pictures of birds herself, giving rise to this day.



On April 25th

READING: 1Kings 15-17

SYNOPSIS: *Abijam and Nadab, and Baasha each have wicked reigns, Asa and Jehoshaphat good reigns over Israel and Judah./ Jehu prophesies against Baasha. Omri builds Samaria. Ahab's wickedness is described/ Elijah prophesies against Ahab and is sent to Cherith, then Zaraphath. He raises her son to life.*

STUDY TIME

He Will Provide

(1Kings 17:6)

“And the ravens brought him _____ and _____ in the _____, and _____ and _____ in the _____, and he drank of the _____.”

1. Who? Who does God provide for? Well, He most certainly makes the rain to fall on the unjust as well as the just, but He always provides especially for His children. Do God's children ever find themselves forsaken? Not according to the Scripture. (Read Ps. 37:25)
2. What? God is only obligated to give us bread and water. Notice however, that the ravens were commanded to bring not only bread, but also flesh to Elijah twice a day. As far as drink is concerned, what could be better than ‘Adam's Ale?’
3. Where? This question has always intrigued me. Where did the ravens get the food they brought? Obviously, it was not scrap food, for the bread was obviously prepared for someone else. I heard a preacher say one time that the ravens probably had entered into the kitchen of King Ahab himself, and brought food from his own table to the prophet Elijah. That certainly would be just like God, wouldn't it?

TODAY IS: “Penguin Awareness Day!” Penguin Awareness Day and World Penguin Day are excellent opportunities to learn about our friends from the 'deep south'. (Penguins only live in Antarctica) Today, many will dress up in black and white, and imitate a penguin!



On April 24th

READING: 1Kings 13-14

SYNOPSIS: *Jereboam's hand withers and is healed; his stubbornness. A disobedient prophet slain by a lion./ Jereboam's wife given heavy tidings, Rheoboam's wicked reign over Judah, succeeded by Abijam. Shishak spoils Jerusalem.*

STUDY TIME

1Kings 13:18

'Taint Necessarily So

"He said unto him, I am a _____ also as thou art; and an _____ spake unto me by the _____, saying, Bring him back with thee into thine house, that he may eat bread and drink water. But he _____ unto him."

1. Preachers. There are preachers who truly proclaim the word of God, and there are others who do not. In this story, an old prophet claimed to have a new word from the Lord that differed from what another prophet knew to be true. So convincing was he, that he persuaded the 1st prophet to disregard what he knew to be the Word of God, and come home with him.
2. Punishment. God doesn't change, and therefore His Word doesn't change. In spite of those who try to persuade us to use new versions of God's Word, (which are actually perversions) we need to obey what we have always known to be God's Word. Otherwise, punishment awaits us just as it did the man in this story. In vs. 21-24 we read that the man died because of his disobedience.
3. Pretenders. Any one claiming to have a new Word from the Lord, or even a new interpretation of God's Word is a pretender. There is nothing new under the sun. We don't need a new Word; we just need to obey the one we already have.

TODAY IS: "Pig in a Blanket Day!"

Probably started by a restaurant association, this is a great day to wrap a sausage in a pancake and 'chow down!' (An alternative is a hot dog in biscuit dough)



On April 9th

READING: 2Samuel 4-7

SYNOPSIS: *Ishbosheth murdered,/David anointed king over Israel, takes Zion and has 11 sons born to him. He smites the Philistines/Uzzah dies as the ark is brought up, Michael, David's wife is barren./ Nathan approves David's plan to build a house to God, God appoints his successor to build it.*

STUDY TIME

2Sam. 6:20-23

The Critical Wife

"Then David returned to bless his household. And Michal, the daughter of Saul came out to meet David, and said, How _____ was the _____ to day, who uncovered himself in the eyes of the _____ of his servants, as one of the vain fellows shamelessly uncovereth himself! And David said unto Michal, It was _____..." "And I will yet be _____ than thus, and will be _____ in mine own sight.." "Therefore Michal the daughter of Saul had no _____ unto the day of her death."

1. Sarcasm. Michal used sarcasm to criticize her husband. He had taken off his kingly robes and appeared in common dress before the Lord, and she was greatly offended. A true daughter of Saul, all she cared about were appearances.
2. Spirituality. David's defense was simply, "It was before the Lord." Rather than be influenced by Michal, he maintained he would even be more base in his own sight. While Michal displayed only sarcasm and a desire for selfish prestige, while David displayed true spirituality.
3. Severity. Whether David divorced her, or whether she simply remained barren is a subject of debate. In any case, God couldn't trust her to be the Mother of a king's child.

TODAY IS: "Winston Churchill Day!" This former prime minister of Great Britain was the 1st of only 6 people to be granted the status of 'honorary American citizens.' Today, we remember this great leader of World War II.



On April 22nd

READING: 1Kings 9-10

SYNOPSIS: *God's covenant with Solomon, mutual presents of Solomon and Hiram, Solomon's yearly sacrifices./ The Queen of Sheba meets Solomon*

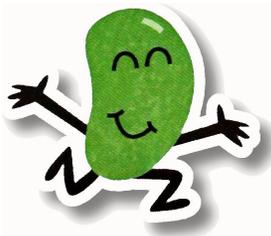
STUDY TIME

Solomon and Sheba
1Kings 10:6-9

(vs.7) "Howbeit I believed not the words, until I came, and mine _____
_____ : and, behold, the _____ was not told me: thy
_____ and _____ exceedeth the fame which I heard."

1. The Testimony of Wisdom. Solomon had been an ordinary man, but when the Lord appeared to him, he asked for wisdom and an understanding heart. God gave him wisdom indeed, so much so that he was able to answer even the hard questions posed by the Queen of Sheba. We don't have the answers folks are looking for, but we also know where to find them, they come from God and are available in the Bible.
2. The Testimony of Wealth. No doubt this Queen thought she would impress Solomon with her wealth, but gold and silver was as plentiful as water in his Kingdom. Just think, our Father owns the cattle on a thousand hills, the wealth in every mine. One day, when we learn to be more trustworthy, perhaps He will give us control of more of His wealth also, as He did Solomon.
3. The Testimony of Witness. In vs. 9, the Queen of Sheba obviously had been witnessed to by Solomon. It appears as if she herself had become a believer, after she saw and heard Solomon's testimony. Never discount your personal testimony either, for it is the greatest tool you have to reach a lost world for Christ.

TODAY IS: "National Jelly Bean Day!" Jelly beans date back to the 1860;s when advertisements promoted sending jelly beans to Union troops in the Civil War. Do you know how to celebrate this day? I thought you did!



On April 11th

READING: 2Samuel 12-13

SYNOPSIS: *Nathan's parable, David confesses and is forgiven, Solomon born/Amnon defiles Tamar and is slain. Absalom flees to Talmai.*

STUDY TIME

2Sam. 12:5-6

Four-fold Retribution

"And David's anger was greatly kindled against the man; and he said to Nathan, As the Lord liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die: And he shall restore the lamb _____, because he did this thing, and because he had no _____."

1. The Parable. So backslidden was David by this time, that Nathan the prophet had to be very careful in making David face his sin. Oriental kings were capable of murder, David had already proven this by killing Uriah. What guarantee did Nathan have that David would let him live? So, he told him a parable sure to touch his shepherd's heart, how a man had stolen his neighbor's female lamb and consumed it.
2. The Prophecy. David pronounced his own punishment when he said the man would have to suffer fourfold, for the lamb he had stolen from his neighbor. 1. The child born of the adulterous union would die. 2. So poor a father had David been that his son Amnon would defile his own half-sister, Tamar. 3. Absalom, her brother, would kill Amnon in vengeance. 4. Absalom would try and kill his own father and take the kingdom from him.
3. The Punishment. God did not cause these things to happen, but He allowed them to happen, so David could experience how serious his sin was. Remember, repentance does not mean we don't have to experience punishment. As for salvation, punishment still falls, it just falls on Jesus instead of us.

TODAY IS: Barbershop Quartet Day! The Society for the Preservation and Encouragement of Barbershop Quartets was founded on this day in 1938 in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Today is a great day to find some good 4part harmony to listen to.



On April 12th

READING: 2Samuel 14-15

SYNOPSIS: *Joab plots to bring Absalom home./ Absalom conspires against David and steals the hearts of the people.*

STUDY TIME

The Secret Agent
2Sam. 15:32-37

(vs.34) “But if thou _____ to the city, and say unto _____, I will be thy _____, O king; as I have been thy father’s _____, hitherto, so will I now also be thy _____: then mayest thou for me _____ the counsel of Ahithophel.”

1. Friends. Friends like Hushai are hard to come by, but should most certainly be valued. Hushai was totally loyal to David and longed to be with him. Yet, at David’s word, he returned as a secret agent to Jerusalem, and took his life in his hands, daring to play a dangerous role as a ‘double agent’, pretending to be on Absalom’s side, yet actually taking secret intelligence to David.
2. Furthering. In one sense, this picture’s us a little, doesn’t it? Consider that we would actually rather be at home with the Lord, and yet the Lord has kept us in this world for a while. We are in the world, yet not to be of the world. We are agents for Him. The difference is, of course, we are not secret agents, but are and ought to be, quite open about our allegiance.
3. Future. Hushai looked to the future, to the time when he could be restored to the physical presence of his friend, the king. So we look forward to that time also. Oh, what a home coming that will be when we get to enter the gates of the King of Kings, to be always and forever in the presence of our dearest friend.

TODAY IS: “BIG Wind Day!” April 12th is observed as the time when the highest wind velocity other than a tornado or like storm was recorded. It was April 12, 1934, that the staff of Mount Washington Observatory measured the wind at 232 m.p.h.



On April 21st

READING: 1Kings 8

SYNOPSIS: *The dedication of the Temple; Solomon’s blessing, prayer, and sacrifice of peace offerings.*

STUDY TIME

The Permanence of the Law
1Kings 8:9

“There was nothing in the ark save the _____, which Moses put there at _____, when the Lord made a covenant with the children of Israel, when they came out of the land of Egypt.”

1. The Commandments in the Ark. When the ark of the covenant was put into the Temple Solomon built, the tablets of the law were still there inside. These tablets had replaced those God had originally given Moses, for he broke them when he came down from the mountain and found the children of Israel had corrupted themselves.
2. The Conspicuous Absence. Some have thought the Ark also contained a pot of manna and Aaron’s rod that budded. Indeed, when reading Heb. 9:4, this is what appears to be so. However, the pot of manna and Aaron’s rod were placed in the holiest place, not the Ark itself, which would have been too small to hold these things unless for instance, the rod had been cut in pieces.
3. The Continuing and Abiding. The law, Jesus said, would not have one jot or one tittle pass away until all was fulfilled. The Ten Commandments are primarily, the moral law of God. The “Thou shalt’s” and the “Thou shalt not’s” are still in force just as much as they ever were. This is pictured by the Words of God, written in stone, and continuing to be in the Ark of the Covenant.

TODAY IS: “Kindergarten Day!” Born on this day in 1837, Fredrich Froebel started the 1st “Kindergarten” or “Child’s Garden” in Germany. Celebrate today by pulling out some old pictures of you or your children in their Kindergarten years.



On April 10th

READING: 2Samuel 8-11

SYNOPSIS: *David subdues the Philistines, Moab, and smites Hadadezer and the Syrians./ David sends for Mephibosheth and restores to him all that was Saul's./ David's messengers are shamefully treated, the Ammonites are overcome and the Syrians are defeated/ Joab besieges Rabbah. David's adultery. He kills Uriah and takes Bathsheba to wife.*

STUDY TIME

What Was He Thinking?

2Sam. 11:14-27

(vs. 27) "And when the mourning was past, David sent and fetched her to his house, and she became _____, and _____. But the thing that David had done _____ the Lord."

1. The Excuses. We can come up with all sorts of justification for our sin, can't we? If we go over our excuses long enough and often enough, we can even deceive ourselves into believing them.
2. The Example. I think David might have done this very thing. He knew that adultery was wrong, but after it was committed he sent Uriah out to die so that the sin might be covered up. The evidence of vs. 24-25 seems conclusively to state that David probably justified his behavior by saying, "Uriah was in the Lord's hands. He could have saved him if He chose, so the fault is not mine." Perhaps he added to himself that if his sin was known, it would weaken the faith of many, so he 'must' cover it up.
3. The Execution. Well, we can cover up our sin, but that doesn't mean our sin is covered. We can justify ourselves and remain unjustified. So it was with David. He had displeased the Lord greatly, and now awaited the execution of His fierce wrath. What was he thinking?

TODAY IS: "National Siblings Day!"

After the tragic death of her brother and sister, Claudia A. Evert began this day in which to cherish your siblings. Send a card, write a note, just do something nice. You will never know how much you love your siblings, until they are gone.



On April 23rd

READING: 1Kings 11-12

SYNOPSIS: *Solomon's wives draw him into idolatry. God threatens him. Solomon succeeded by Rehoboam. Rehoboam refuses counsel by the older men. Israel revolts and Jeroboam rules over 10 tribes.*

STUDY TIME

Where Was Solomon's Wisdom?

1Kings 11:3-4

"And he had _____ wives, princesses, and _____ concubines: and his wives _____. For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his _____ turned away his heart after _____; and his heart was not perfect with the Lord his God, as was the heart of David his father."

1. The Principle. God brought Eve to Adam, and the teaching of the Bible is clear. God intends for one man to have one wife for all of his life. God never approved of polygamy, but men did it anyway.
2. The Problem. Solomon had an insatiable appetite for women. We make much of his wisdom, but where was it when he married so many, and then took hundreds more as his concubines? Was it that Solomon was 'showing off' in this manner, or had he so indulged the flesh that he was not addicted to women?
3. The Power. Women exercise an enormous influence over their men. Solomon had long ago left seeking God's will when he sought feminine companionship, and now these idol worshipping women turned even his heart away from the Lord. The only conclusion we can make is, wisdom is only wisdom when it is made use of. Solomon had the ability to be wise, but refused to use his God given wisdom.

TODAY IS: "National Zucchini Bread Day!" Zucchini makes such a bountiful crop we have to invent things to do with it. Thus, zucchini bread was invented.



On April 20th

READING: 1Kings 7

SYNOPSIS: *Building of Solomon's house, of the house for Pharaoh's daughter, Hiram's works.*

STUDY TIME

Building Houses

1Kings 13:1

“But Solomon was building his _____ house _____ years, and he finished all his house.”

1. Contrast. When you contrast the building of God's House with the building of Solomon's house, you see Solomon took thirteen years to build his own house, but only seven years to build God's House. (compare with 1Kings 6:38)
2. Confusion. A discrepancy has been imagined here. Why in the 1st part of 1Kings 6:38 does it say it was in the eleventh year the House of God was finished, and later on in the verse it says it was the seventh year? The number eleven refers to the year of Solomon's reign, and the number seven to the actual construction time. (see 1Kings 6:1 to see that it was in the fourth year of his reign that construction started.)
3. Construction. Seven is the number of Divine completion and perfection. (God rested on the 7th day of creation because it was complete and perfect.) In his own house, Solomon no doubt had several changes of mind, several changes of plan, and delays of every sort. Yet, so prepared had David been in laying up the great store of building materials, that the House of God could be constructed in record time. As we labor to build the local Church, let us remember that although it seems to take a lot of time to get new members and to get the work going as it should, just as it did in Solomon's day, it will take no more time than God allows. Keep on building, your labor is not in vain!

TODAY IS: “Volunteer Recognition Day!”
This is the day to recognize and perhaps send a note of appreciation to those folks who volunteer in hospitals, Churches, prisons, rescue missions, and so many other areas to help.



On April 13th

READING: 2Samuel 16-17

SYNOPSIS: *Ziba, by false accusation, obtains his master's inheritance. Shimei curses David. Ahitophel's counsel./ Hushai overthrows Ahitophel's counsel who then hangs himself. Secret intelligence sent to David.*

STUDY TIME

2Sam. 17:1-24

Counsel

(see especially 2Sam. 17:14) “And Absalom and all the men of Israel said, The counsel of _____ the _____ is _____ than the counsel of _____, to the intent that the _____ might bring _____ upon _____.”

1. Seeking. It is not wrong to seek counsel. In fact, the Bible advises us that there is safety in a multitude of counselors. (Prov. 11:14, 24:6) No indeed, a second opinion can reinforce the initial advice we receive and we can be assured then that we are on the right course. However, sometimes people reject counsel because it is not what they want to hear and seek other counsel that is more appealing. This is what Absalom and his men did.
2. Satisfying. Absalom was afraid of his father. Although he wanted David dead so he could have the Kingdom, he really didn't like the advice of Ahithophel who advised an attack. When Hushai was sought out and counseled prudence, that was more appealing to Absalom and all his cohorts. So, that is the advice they followed.
3. Serious. Sometimes today, Church members will reject advice from their own Pastor and seek advice elsewhere until they can find the advice they want to hear. This can, as it was in the case of Absalom, be disastrous. Make sure the counsel you are receiving is Scriptural, and then heed it. Once a man, told he had cancer, sought a second opinion, then a third and so on until he found a doctor who told him he was really all right. That made him happy, until that is, he died of cancer.

TODAY IS: Scrabble Day! Invented in 1938 by Alfred Mosher Butts, this remains one of the most popular of family games.



On April 14th

READING: 2Samuel 18-19

SYNOPSIS: *David views his armies and asks that Absalom be treated gently. Joab kills Absalom and David mourns him./ Joab convinces David to cease mourning and the King is brought back.*

STUDY TIME

2Sam. 18:5-17

(see 2Sam.18:14-15) “Then said Joab, I may not tarry thus with thee. And he took _____ in his hand, and _____ them through the _____ of Absalom, while he was yet alive in the midst of the oak. And _____ young men that bare Joab’s armour compassed about and _____ Absalom and _____ him.”

1. Decree. We must be award that David had made a decree that no one should harm Absalom. (vs.5) Probably, David intended to capture the young man and exile him once and for all. David always displayed mercy, a recognizable quality of those who have known mercy.
2. Delivered. God allowed however, the young rebel to be caught by his head in a tree. We suppose it was the hair of which he was so proud that got so entangled in the oak that he was caught, pulled off his mule, and left hanging in the tree. At any rate, he was now stationary and helpless. Someday, sin will catch up with you, and leave you in terrible straits.
3. Dispatched. Joab, hearing that Absalom was there, took three darts, (short spears) and went to the oak. There he thrust them into Absalom’s chest. The young armour bearers with him were thus emboldened and surrounded and killed Absalom. Although a good deed many inspire someone else to imitate it, a bad deed always emboldens others to do even worse things. Joab was content, for he had not killed Absalom, his armour bearers had done so. But, his enemy was dead, and he was satisfied.

TODAY IS: “National Pecan Day!” April is pecan month, and what better day than today could there be to enjoy a slice of pecan pie? Why wait until Thanksgiving? Enjoy some today.



On April 19th

READING: 1Kings 4-6

SYNOPSIS: *Solomon’s princes, his daily provision, his wisdom is described./ Hiram furnishes timber for the Temple. Solomon’s workmen/ The building of the Temple, God’s promised concerning it.*

STUDY TIME

1Kings 5:1-12

(See 1Kings 5:10-11) “So _____ gave Solomon _____ and _____ trees according to all his desire. And _____ gave _____ measures of wheat for food to his household, and _____ measures of pure oil: thus gave Solomon to Hiram year by year.”

1. The Purpose. Now that David was dead, an embassy of condolence was sent to Solomon. Solomon then related how he purposed to build the Temple that David was forbidden to construct. This passage also gives us insight that the reason David was forbidden was not for any fault in him, but because his attention had to be given to the enemies surrounding Israel. Now that peace was at hand, Solomon could proceed. (vs. 2-5)
2. The Professionals. Solomon knew his own people did not have the expertise that was needed to assemble the lumber for such an enterprise, so he sought out the best men available. We ought also to remember that when it comes to the building of God’s House, we ought to do our best to furnish the very best.
3. The Payment. The men of Solomon would work along side of Hiram’s professionals, and Hiram would be well compensated. In today’s measures, the payment would amount to 13,480 bushels of grain and 120,000 gallons of oil. This was paid yearly by Solomon.

TODAY IS: “National Garlic Day!” As both a medicine and a vegetable, garlic has been in use for thousands of years. Spice up your life with a little garlic today.



On April 18th.

READING: 1Kings 2-3

SYNOPSIS: *David dies and Solomon succeeds him. Adonijah is slain, Joab is slain. Shimei is put to death./ Solomon marries Pharaoh's daughter, Solomon chooses wisdom and he judges between two harlots.*

STUDY TIME

1Kings 2:1-10

The Last Commands

(See vs. 2) "I go the way of _____: be thou _____ therefore, and shew thyself a _____: And keep the charge of the _____ thy _____, to _____ in his _____, to _____ his _____, and his _____ and his _____, and his _____ as it is written in the law of Moses, that thou mayest _____ in all that thou doest..."

1. Reality. David knew his time was short. It is appointed to each of us once to die and then to go into eternity. It is good to reflect on our own mortality and ask, "Have I finished my course?" "Have I kept the faith?" David exhorted his son to be manly, do the right thing, and follow the Lord.
2. Retribution. As far as Joab and Shimei were concerned, David had not been able to execute these men for their crimes. Joab had murdered Abner and Amasa, and was worthy of death. Shimei had cursed David when he fled. Although David had let Shimei live when he repented, he, like Joab, were dangerous enemies and needed to be taken care of.
3. Reward. The family of Barzillai was to be rewarded. Reward had been refused by the wealthy old man, but David had been kind to his family for the provision made as he fled from Absalom. The love and kindness of David was to be continued through his son.

TODAY IS: "International Juggler's Day!"

James Reid, a juggler, designated this day as World Juggling Day and National Juggling day in the mid 1980's. Besides juggling for entertainment, perhaps we should laud those multi-taskers who juggle so much at work.



On April 15th

READING: 2Samuel 20-22

SYNOPSIS: *Sheba revolts and is killed. Amasa is slain. David's great officers noted./Seven of Saul's sons hanged. David buries the bones of Saul and Jonathan/ David's psalm of thanksgiving for deliverance and manifold blessings.*

STUDY TIME

When David Didn't Seek the Lord

2Sam. 21: 14: "And the _____ of _____ and _____ his son buried they in the country of _____ in Zelah, in the sepulchre of _____ his faith: and they performed all that the king commanded. And after that, _____ was intreated for the land."

1. Incompleteness. (see vs. 1-2) The Bible tells us in this chapter that David enquired of the Lord why there was a famine. However, when he found out why, he did not seek the remedy from God. Rather, he went to the Gibeonites, and asked them what they wanted him to do to rectify things.
2. Infractions. In this passage we will see several infractions of the law David committed besides not seeking God's will. First, he set aside the law which said the sons were not to be put to death for the sins of the fathers. (Deut. 24:16) He also ignored the law which said the dead should not be left hanging on a tree after sundown. (Deut. 21:22-23) David also did not keep his promise to Saul concerning his descendants. (1Sam. 24:20-22)
3. Inference. We can understand that any of us can fall into sin, regardless of who we are. David only sought God after he recognized his error and made what amends he could. Only then was God entreated for the land.

TODAY IS: "Titanic Remembrance Day!"

On April 15, 1912, the ship Titanic hit an iceberg and went down in the icy waters of the North Atlantic, killing 1500 passengers and crew members.



On April 16th

READING: 2Samuel 23-24

SYNOPSIS: *David professes faith in God's promises, his mighty men are catalogued/ David numbers the people and has 3 plagues offered. David chooses 3 days pestilence and intercedes to God for the people.*

STUDY TIME

2Sam. 23:8-11, 18-19

The Mightiest of the Mighty

(vs.8-11) “These be the names of the mighty men whom David had: The Tachmonite that sat in the seat, chief among the captains; the same was _____ the _____;...” “And after him was _____ the son of Dodo the Alohite...” And after him was _____ the son of Agee the Hararite.” (vs.18-19) And _____, the brother of _____, the son of _____, was chief among three. And he lifted up his spear against three hundred and slew them, and had the name among the three. Was he not _____ of three? Therefore he was their captain, howbeit he attained not unto the first three.”

1. The Designations. David's 30 mighty men were designated as the best warriors in the world. Some space is given to lauding their great deeds.
2. The Desires. The loyalty and ability of these three men is beyond question. As we look in vs. 14-17, David merely expressed a longing for a drink from the will of Bethlehem, his home town, and these men hazarded their lives to get it for him. All they wanted was to serve their king.
3. The Declaration. It is interesting that in vs. 18-19 Abishai, the brother of Joab is mentioned as being the chief of the three, even though he did not attain unto their mighty deeds. Abishai was a mighty man indeed, but he was held in even more esteem than the mightiest of the mighty. Could it be his strength and courage was balanced with more intelligence? This son of Zeruiah, David's older sister, come to be despised by David, along with Joab, for insubordination in the death of Abner and Amasa. (2Sam. 3:30 and 2Sam. 20:6-10)

TODAY IS: “National Librarian Day!” How about a thank you to one of the most helpful people in the world?



On April 17th

READING: 1Kings 1

SYNOPSIS: *Abishag cherishes David, Adonijah tries to usurp the kingdom, Solomon appointed king, Adonijah flees to the altar.*

STUDY TIME

Adonijah's Attempt

1Kings 1:1-40

(see vs. 5) “Then _____ the son of _____ exalted _____, saying, ___ will be _____: and he prepared him chariots and horsemen, and fifty men to run before him.”

1. The Plight. David was, as we are told, “old and well stricken in years.” Truly, the older we get the more the years ‘strike’ us, don't they? David now was so old as to almost be helpless. It was then Adonijah made his move.
2. The Plot. Adonijah exalted himself. He supposed as the oldest surviving son that he would be in line for the throne. David had already made it plain that Solomon was to be king, (1Chron. 28:5) Evidently many people thought Solomon was too young, Adonijah included. Nathan the prophet, and Bathsheba started a plot of their own to ensure that Solomon would sit on the throne.
3. The Pronouncement. David made it clear that his word was still law. He named Solomon to be king. Truly we see here borne out the principle, “For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased: and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.” (Luke 14:11)

TODAY IS: “DYNGUS DAY!” Not as well known in the south, this is a Polish holiday always celebrated the Monday after Easter. It is a day dedicated to fun and frolic. One of the most common ways of observing it is to squirt someone with a water gun.

