

teemit For CHILDREN

Bible Lesson Quarterly Year 3 - 2nd Quarter - "GIVE US A KING"

This Quarter we are going to look at stories about the Kings of Israel. For our Bible lessons we are going to use the King James Version of the Bible, just like the boys and girls used to use to learn to read from in the pioneer days. There will be some texts to look up for each day and you should practice your memory verse until you can say it without looking. Don't forget to learn the text too.

Weekly Bible Lesson #1: "WE WANT A KING"

MEMORY VERSE: "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms:" Deuteronomy 33:27

Sunday

Text: Deuteronomy 4:7-9 "What nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh them, as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon him for? And what nation is there so great, that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day? Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life: but teach them thy sons, and thy sons' sons."

From the day Israel was called out of Egypt and they became a Nation at Mount Sinai, they had a special privilege that no other people on earth ever had. They had God for their King! Their Laws and Judgments that were to rule their Nation came from Heaven, not from the ideas of selfish men.

Always a Priest or Prophet served them as a Supreme Judge and as needed they

would get answers in hard cases straight from the Throne of God. Now for those who love the Lord and His Truth; that would be the most wonderful blessing possible.

But ever since man sinned in the Garden of Eden, most people would rather do their own ideas and follow their own selfish ways, rather than God's wise and good plan. Israel kept looking around them and saw the other nations with their boastful and proud kings and they began to want to be like those other nations.

Samuel, who had served the Lord all his life since he was a little boy, was now the judge and prophet of Israel. He obeyed and listened to God faithfully and did right when he judged the people. He would not allow the rich to take advantage of the poor. He would not allow the widows and orphans to be harmed.

But Samuel was getting old, and his sons were not always careful to do right as he had always been. 1 Sam 8:3 "And his sons walked not in his ways, but turned aside after lucre,

and took bribes, and perverted judgment.” One day the people sent a group to talk to the old prophet of God. “We want to have a king like the other nations”, they demanded.

Thought - When God called out the Advent people, it was His plan to instruct them directly also, and so he gave them a prophetic messenger. Do you know who this was?

Monday

Text: 1 Samuel 8:7,8 “And the LORD said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them. According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt even unto this day, wherewith they have forsaken me, and served other gods, so do they also unto thee.”

Samuel felt very badly when this demand was made. He felt he had faithfully served the people all his life and they did not appreciate it at all. He also knew it was a terrible insult to the Lord!

Samuel knew just what to do when he had a problem, he prayed to the Lord to know how to handle the situation. The Lord answered him and explained that it was really Himself, the God of Israel, who the people were rejecting when they wanted to be like the heathen nations around them. It is strange that even though the people could easily see what terrible things often happened in those heathen nations around them because of their kings, they just blinded their eyes to the facts and insisted on having their own way.

When Satan wants to lead people to go in ways that God does not want them to go in, he seems to be able to give them a fantasy picture, so that they think everything will be perfect, if they just have this thing or go in this way. There can be signs all around them that this is not at all wise and it doesn't work

out that way, but they won't see it.

God knew this, and so He told Samuel to give them what they wanted- but first to tell them plainly what having a King would do to them as a nation. These people truly did not know how good they had things.

They had more freedom than any other nation. They did not have to worry that their ruler was going to change all of a sudden into a tyrant. They did not have to pay huge taxes to support the pomp and luxury of a royal family and army. They had to support the sanctuary and priests but this was largely voluntary and not as great a burden as taxes imposed by royal law and force would be.

So Samuel obeyed God and told the people plainly that a king would take much of their freedom away. He would take away for himself the best of everything. Their children would have to work as slaves and servants for the king and their sons die in the army fighting battles whenever the king felt like it.

Samuel went on to tell them, the King will take your fields and vineyards and your best animals, and you will later be sorry you ever asked for a king! The day would come when they would weep and cry in sorrow for what the King would be doing to them, and here is the scary part- God said when they cried to Him about this, He would not listen to them!

Thought – God is always more fair and kind than men are, when they get into places of power. There was never even one king that did not do wickedly at least part of the time.

Tuesday

Text: 1 Samuel 8:19, 20 “Nevertheless the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel; and they said, Nay; but we will have a king over us; That we also may be like all the nations; and that our king may judge us, and go out before us, and fight our battles.”

The Hebrews demanded a king of Samuel,

like the nations around them. By wanting a cruel monarch instead of the wise and mild government of God himself, by his prophets, they showed a great want of faith in God to raise them up rulers to lead and govern them.

The children of Israel being the special people of God, their government was different from all the nations around them. God had given them statutes and laws, and had chosen their rulers for them; and these leaders the people were to obey in the Lord. In all cases of difficulty and great perplexity, God was to be inquired of.

Their demand for a king was a rebellious departure from God, their special leader. He knew that a king would not be best for his chosen people. They would give to a human king the honor which was due to God alone. And if they had a king whose heart was lifted up and not right with God, he would lead them away from God, and cause them to rebel against Him.

The Lord knew that no one could have the place of king, and receive the honors usually given to a king, without becoming exalted, and his ways seeming right in his own eyes, while at the same time he was sinning against God. At the word of a king, innocent people would suffer, while wicked ones would be exalted, unless he continually trusted in God, and received wisdom from him.

God later showed his displeasure to Israel for their demand. At the word of Samuel, God sent a terrible rainstorm, right in the time of their wheat harvest, a time when it was never known to rain in Israel. Then some of the people were frightened and sorry and asked Samuel to pray for them, that they be not destroyed.

Samuel told them to remember to always obey God and then all would be well for them. But if they did wickedly, they would be destroyed, both they and their king!

Thought – Instead of the true laws of God, which never change, the people would have to obey a man, who, if he had a headache one day, might fly into a temper and execute

someone!

Wednesday

Text: 1 Samuel 9:1, 2 “Now there was a man of Benjamin, whose name was Kish, the son of Abiel, the son of Zeror, the son of Bechorath, the son of Aphiah, a Benjamite, a mighty man of power. And he had a son, whose name was Saul, a choice young man, and a goodly: and there was not among the children of Israel a goodlier person than he: from his shoulders and upward he was higher than any of the people.”

Saul’s Father had lost his donkeys. He sent Saul, with his servant, to find them. They searched high and low and did not find any donkeys. Finally they had gone so far from home that they were not far from the house of Samuel, the prophet, called in those days, the ‘seer’.

Saul said he thought they had better go home, as his father would be more worried about them, than the donkeys. The servant told him that they should go and ask Samuel where the animals were. He had a silver coin to offer the man of God, so they decided to do it.

When they arrived, they found out that Samuel had ordered a special feast. He had been told that God was sending the man, who was to be king, to him. Samuel was watching at the gate when Saul arrived.

“Where is the seer?” Saul asked. “I am the seer.” Samuel said, “Come with me to the feast and tomorrow I will tell you what you want to know. As for the donkeys they are already found.”

Then he told Saul that he and his father’s house were the desire of all Israel. Saul was humble and said it could not be, for his father was from the smallest tribe, and the least family. But Samuel took him and gave him the most important place and he ate with Samuel that day.

The next day Samuel called him early, and told him to go his way and he went with

him. He sent the servant on ahead and then Samuel took a bottle of oil and anointed Saul.

He told him certain things that would happen on the way home. First he would meet some men, who would give him two loaves of bread. Then he would meet some prophets singing and prophesying. At that time God would send His Holy Spirit to Saul and he would become a new man. It was what Jesus called being born again.

Thought – Even though God knew it was not best for Israel to have a king, He let them have their own way and did His best to give them a good one.

Thursday

Text: 1 Samuel 10:24, 25 “And Samuel said to all the people, See ye him whom the LORD hath chosen, that there is none like him among all the people? And all the people shouted, and said, God save the king. Then Samuel told the people the manner of the kingdom, and wrote it in a book, and laid it up before the LORD. And Samuel sent all the people away, every man to his house.”

Samuel called all the people to come to a meeting at Mizpeh. When they came, he told them God would show them who He had chosen to be their king. They cast lots, first for the tribe, then the family, and then the person. Saul was the one chosen.

But where was the new king? Samuel asked the Lord, and He said, “He is hiding in the baggage.” So they went and found him and declared him king. Though some of the men followed Saul, many did not want him for a king, even after God had plainly shown he had chosen him. So the people went home.

Now it wasn't long after this, that a wicked Ammonite made war against the city of Jabeshgilead. They wanted to surrender and make peace, but he wanted all of them to have their right eyes gouged out.

When word came to Saul about this ter-

rible thing, the Spirit of the Lord came to him and he sent word for all the men to gather to make war with this wicked army. The men of the city pretended to prepare to surrender. Suddenly the army of Saul attacked and the Ammonites were beaten and scattered.

Now there were people who were very pleased to have Saul as a king and they said that those who didn't want him should be killed. But Saul refused and gave the glory for the victory to God. Everyone was very happy.

Thought – If only Saul had remained humble, things might have been good for him and Israel.

Friday

Text: 1 Samuel 13:13, 14 “And Samuel said to Saul, Thou hast done foolishly: thou hast not kept the commandment of the LORD thy God, which he commanded thee: for now would the LORD have established thy kingdom upon Israel for ever. But now thy kingdom shall not continue: the LORD hath sought him a man after his own heart, and the LORD hath commanded him to be captain over his people, because thou hast not kept that which the LORD commanded thee.”

Saul reigned for two years and gathered an army of three thousand men. Two thousand he kept with himself, and one thousand he sent with his son, Jonathan in another place. Now Jonathan went out and attacked the Philistines where he was, and defeated them.

Saul knew that was a bad idea, and soon the whole hordes of these enemies would attack Israel. He sent messages and blew the trumpets for all the men of Israel to come to the battle.

But no longer did Israel think that having a king was the answer. They were afraid that God would not fight for them, and if He

didn't, what good was a King? Those who followed Saul were afraid and many other were hiding in caves.

The people were now sorry that they had chosen a king. They had greater courage and confidence while they had God-fearing rulers to instruct and lead them; for they got counsel direct from God, and it was like being led by God himself. Now, they realized that they were commanded by an erring king, who could not save them in their distress. Saul waited anxiously for Samuel to come right away and offer sacrifices and bless them, so God would fight for Israel, he thought.

More and more men of war went slinking away. Saul was worried. But God was testing Saul, so he delayed Samuel from getting there.

Saul did not have respect or understand-

ing of the excellence and terrible majesty of God. He had not a sacred regard for His appointed ordinances. When Samuel did not come, he went ahead himself, to offer the sacrifices, which only the Priest of God was to offer. This was a terrible sin in the sight of God. It also caused the people to think these sacred services were not all that important after all.

No sooner had he done this when Samuel showed up. He told Saul he had done a great wrong. Instead of repenting, Saul made excuses. Now Samuel told him that if he had waited and not done this, God would have set up his kingdom forever, but now God would take the kingdom away, and give it to someone else.

Thought - It did not take long for the king, that the people wanted so much, to get so proud, he thought he could do whatever he wanted to do. = ^ .. ^ =

Weekly Bible Lesson #2: "SAUL'S LAST CHANCE!"

MEMORY VERSE: "Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry." 1 Samuel 15:22, 23

Sunday

Text: 1 Samuel 14:1 "Now it came to pass upon a day, that Jonathan the son of Saul said unto the young man that bare his armour, Come, and let us go over to the Philistines' garrison, that is on the other side. But he told not his father."

Saul had committed a terrible sin against God by offering the sacrifices himself, even while he was wearing his armor and dressed for war! Now the Philistines were coming up against Israel and it looked that they would destroy Israel.

The situation was about as bad as it could be, because the Philistines had taken away all the men who could work with metal in Israel, so there was no one who could make weapons. Only the King himself and the

Prince, Jonathan even had a sword and spear!

God wanted to help His people but He knew if He fought for Israel through king Saul, the king and the people of Israel would take all the credit to themselves and become even more proud and boastful.

But Jonathan was a true man of God. He trusted in the Lord and knew that God can deliver whether by many or by few. He was not boastful and rash though, and so he prayed carefully to the Lord and asked if it was God's will for he and his armor-bearer to go and attack the Philistine headquarters.

His armor-bearer agreed with him and Jonathan asked a sign of God to show him whether to attack the camp or not. The two men would go to a place where they could be seen and then if the Philistines told them

to come up to them, they would know that God would give the camp into their hands.

1 Samuel 14:12 “And the men of the garrison answered Jonathan and his armourbearer, and said, Come up to us, and we will shew you a thing. And Jonathan said unto his armourbearer, Come up after me: for the LORD hath delivered them into the hand of Israel.”

So up they went, and when they got to the top they began to slay the Philistines right and left! How could just two men do this? This is the answer:

Thought - “God sent angels to protect Jonathan and his armor-bearer, and to shield them from the instruments of death in the hands of their enemies. Angels of God fought by the side of Jonathan, and the Philistines fell all around him. Great fear seized the host of the Philistines in the field and in the garrison; and the spoilers that had been divided into separate companies, and sent in different directions, ready for their work of slaughter, were terribly afraid. The earth trembled beneath them, as though a great multitude with horsemen and chariots were upon the ground, prepared for battle. Jonathan and his armor-bearer, and even the Philistine host, knew that the Lord was working for the deliverance of the Hebrews. The Philistines became perplexed. It seemed to them that there were men of Israel among them, fighting against them; and they fought against one another, and slaughtered their own armies. “{1SP 358}

Monday

Text: 1 Samuel 14:16, 17 “And the watchmen of Saul in Gibeah of Benjamin looked; and, behold, the multitude melted away, and they went on beating down one another. Then said Saul unto the people that were with him, Number now, and see who is gone from us. And when they had numbered, behold, Jonathan and his armourbearer were not there.”

It was a while before Saul, and the 600 men he had left in his army, were aware that something wonderful was happening. The watchmen reported that something was going on among the Philistines and there was a lot of noise, the Philistines were decreasing and no one knew why.

It had happened that the Lord caused the earth to tremble as if a great army with horses and chariots were coming to the attack. The Philistines were terrified as God made them afraid and when God makes someone afraid-they are really scared! They saw their fellow soldiers and it looked to them that it was an Israelite soldier and they fought and killed their own men!

Saul demanded the rolls be checked to see if anyone was missing from his army. Only Jonathan and his armor-bearer were missing. Saul asked the High Priest to ask God what they should do, but before the answer came the noise became so great that they knew the Philistines were being slaughtered and the Lord was working for Israel.

Now Saul and his army got into the battle too, and many of Israel who had hidden in the caves and some, who had even joined the Philistines out of fear, began to fight and chase the enemy also. Soon what was left of the Philistines were running away and Israel was chasing them and cutting them down as they ran.

Now God had worked through the only man available that would not exalt himself and become proud, and that was Jonathan. But Saul was proud and eager to take the credit for this wonderful victory to himself. As his men hastened after the enemy, Saul did a very foolish thing. He shouted out a vow that no one was to eat anything or drink anything until the sun went down, so HE could be avenged of HIS enemies!

What a selfish and foolish vow to make! Here the men were fighting with all their might and running under a hot sun and they were told they must not eat or drink anything or they would be killed!! This was not at all needed and was only Saul’s way to get

some credit back to himself instead of honoring God and those God had chosen to work through.

Thought – Nothing is more foolish than the proud, selfish heart of a man that does not honor God!

Tuesday

Text: 1 Samuel 14:24 “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 I may be avenged on mine enemies. So none of the people tasted any food.”

By now, Jonathan and his armor-bearer were with the other soldiers, and all were going after the fleeing enemies. They came to a wood and there were broken bee’s nests on the ground, perhaps knocked down as the Philistines crashed through the wood running for their very lives. Honey was lying around and Jonathan, who had not heard his father’s foolish vow, took the end of his rod and dipped it in the honey and ate some for strength.

The other men would not touch it although they were fainting with hunger. Then one of them told Jonathan about the vow and so he did not eat any more. Now if Saul had not been so foolish, his men would have had a better chance to defeat all the Philistines, because they could have eaten the honey and their strength would come back greatly and they could have gone on to the battle. As it was, they were weary and fainting, and soon the Philistines got ahead of them.

1 Samuel 14:29,30 Then said Jonathan, My father hath troubled the land: see, I pray you, how mine eyes have been enlightened, because I tasted a little of this honey. How much more, if haply the people had eaten freely to day of the spoil of their enemies which they found? for had there not been now a much greater slaughter among the Philistines?

Thought – God had wanted His people to have the honey to strengthen them, but Saul in his foolish pride spoiled it all and brought defeat even when God was working to bring victory! This is a good example of the results of wanting a human king.

Wednesday

Text: 1 Samuel 14:37-39 “And Saul asked counsel of God, Shall I go down after the Philistines? wilt thou deliver them into the hand of Israel? But he answered him not that day. And Saul said, Draw ye near hither, all the chief of the people: and know and see wherein this sin hath been this day. For, as the LORD liveth, which saveth Israel, though it be in Jonathan my son, he shall surely die. But there was not a man among all the people that answered him.”

As soon as the sun was set the men, very hungry and fainting, grabbed some of the animals and killed them and began to eat without draining them of blood and cooking them properly. Of course Saul blamed this sin on the people, but it was himself who caused it. This was a sin brought about by Saul’s foolish vow. Quickly this was corrected and proper means set up to properly bleed the animals and the men had their feast.

Now Saul, still eager for glory for himself, wanted to go after the Philistines and fight all night. The men said they would go along with it, but the Priest wanted to ask the Lord first. But when Saul asked the Lord, He would not reply to him.

Now Saul decided there was sin in the camp. He was right, the sin was in himself! But Saul decided it was because someone had broken his foolish vow. So he had lots cast and the lot fell on Jonathan.

1 Samuel 14:43-45 Then Saul said to Jonathan, Tell me what thou hast done. And Jonathan told him, and said, I did but taste a little honey with the end of the rod that was in mine hand, and, lo, I must die. And

Saul answered, God do so and more also: for thou shalt surely die, Jonathan. And the people said unto Saul, Shall Jonathan die, who hath wrought this great salvation in Israel? God forbid: as the LORD liveth, there shall not one hair of his head fall to the ground; for he hath wrought with God this day. So the people rescued Jonathan, that he died not.

Notice the foolish pride of Saul, he was willing to kill his own son, the very one that God had worked through to deliver Israel, just for the sake of an unwise and hasty vow. He was not fit to rule the nation anymore and the people soon suffered greatly under the king they had wanted so badly. So the battle came to an end and the men went home.

Thought – Even though Saul had been blessed by the Holy Spirit and God had been with him, once he started to be proud and disobedient, the Holy Spirit left him and an evil spirit took over.

Thursday

Text: 1 Samuel 15:1-3 “Samuel also said unto Saul, The LORD sent me to anoint thee to be king over his people, over Israel: now therefore hearken thou unto the voice of the words of the LORD. Thus saith the LORD of hosts, I remember that which Amalek did to Israel, how he laid wait for him in the way, when he came up from Egypt. Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass.”

Our God is amazingly patient and gives us chance after chance to show whether or not we will obey Him so He can bless us. So it was with Saul. God was going to give the foolish king one final test.

He sent Samuel to Saul to remind him who had made him king and who was the real Ruler of Israel. Then Samuel told Saul

to go and attack and wipe out the nation of Amalek. Now this nation had in a most wicked way, set them-selves to fight against God and had pledged themselves to destroy God’s people and to blot the very name of the God of heaven from the earth.

God wanted them destroyed and chose to have Israel, the very people Amalek had vowed to blot out, do the job. It was to be an object lesson for all the other nations, a warning of judgment for all who should live in such bold defiance of God. They were not to take anything for themselves from the Amalekites, but destroy it all.

Saul was happy to go out and attack this nation, but again, instead of honoring and obeying God, he decided to get some honor and glory to himself as well. So he ordered the best of the animals, and also the richly dressed and haughty king, Agag, to be saved alive and brought back to Israel.

Now by doing this, the real lesson God wanted to teach was made blurry and not clear. To the other nations, it looked like Israel was doing just like the rest of them did, attacking other nations to get benefit for them-selves. They did not recognize the lesson that God had wanted to teach, that the destruction of the Amalekites was a judgment from Heaven upon them. Again, Saul’s eagerness to exalt himself brought dishonor to the Name of God.

Thought – Of all the Amalekites, the cruel king Agag, deserved to die more than any of the rest, but Saul wanted to show off by bringing him back a captive.

Friday

Text: 1 Samuel 15:16-19 “Then Samuel said unto Saul, Stay, and I will tell thee what the LORD hath said to me this night. And he said unto him, Say on. And Samuel said, When thou wast little in thine own sight, wast thou not made the head of the tribes of Israel, and the LORD anointed thee king over Israel? And the LORD sent thee on a

journey, and said, Go and utterly destroy the sinners the Amalekites, and fight against them until they be consumed. Wherefore then didst thou not obey the voice of the LORD, but didst fly upon the spoil, and didst evil in the sight of the LORD?"

As Saul marched home, after disobeying the instructions of God, he was met by the prophet Samuel. Boldly he walks up to the prophet and says, "Blessed be thou of the LORD: I have performed the commandment of the LORD."

Samuel was not fooled, God had already told him all that was going on. "So why do I hear all this baaa-ing and moo-ing?" he asked the king.

Saul was quick to find an excuse; he blames the people. "The people wanted to bring the best animals back to use for sacrifices to God." Saul protested. Saul here uttered a falsehood. The people had obeyed his directions; but in order to shield himself, he was willing the people should bear the sin of his disobedience.

God had declared that the Amalekites were cursed and everything they had was cursed. Imagine what an insult to the Lord that would be, to bring back a cursed thing to offer to God as a sacrifice to point to the pure and holy Saviour! To even suggest it was a terrible sin.

Samuel pointed out to Saul that before he had become so proud, he was willing to obey God, but now he had disobeyed and rebelled, therefore his family would not continue as kings in Israel.

Samuel then told Saul the words of our memory verse, 1 Samuel 15:22,23 And Samuel said, "Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to

obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king."

Now Saul made a half-way confession, still blaming the people, and he begged Samuel to come and eat with him as if everything was still OK. But Samuel would not dishonor God by doing this. He told Saul, "I will not return with thee: for thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, and the LORD hath rejected thee from being king over Israel."

As Samuel turned to walk away from Saul, the rebellious king grabbed his mantle and tried to pull him back. The mantle ripped and Samuel turned and said, "The LORD hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day, and hath given it to a neighbour of thine, that is better than thou."

Now Saul was worried, he admitted he had sinned and begged Samuel to honor him and come and worship the Lord with him. Samuel did go and worship the Lord, and afterward called the wicked king Agag before him. Then Samuel the prophet slew Agag himself. Then Samuel went home to his house in Ramah.

1 Samuel 15:35 And Samuel came no more to see Saul until the day of his death: nevertheless Samuel mourned for Saul: and the LORD repented that he had made Saul king over Israel.

Thought - It is so important to remember, that what God wants from us is loving obedience. Great and fancy offerings or great works that we do, claiming that it is 'for God', are not acceptable to Him and even are disgusting to God, if we are not willing to humbly obey Him. = ^ .. ^ =

Weekly Bible Lesson #3: "THE SHEPHERD BOY"

MEMORY VERSE: "...For the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart." 1 Samuel 16:7

Sunday

Text: 1 Samuel 16:1 "And the LORD said unto Samuel, How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? fill thine horn with oil, and go, I will send thee to Jesse the Bethlehemite: for I have provided me a king among his sons."

Samuel felt very badly about Saul and he wept and mourned for him. Finally, the Lord spoke to him and said, "How long are you going to mourn for Saul?" And He told him to take some anointing oil and go to Bethlehem area to the house of Jesse because He had chosen a new king from among his son's.

Now Samuel asked the Lord, "How can I do this? If Saul finds out, he would kill me!"

How very sad! So soon the man that had been a humble follower of the Lord, had become so proud and wicked that he would stoop to slay the very prophet who had anointed him.

So God told Samuel to take a young cow with him and say he had come to make a sacrifice to the Lord, and to invite Jesse and his sons to attend the feast. So Samuel took the animal and traveled to Bethlehem.

When he got there the people came out and were worried. You see they knew that often a Prophet of God is called to tell someone about their sins and correct wrongdoing. So they asked, "Are you coming peaceably?"

He said yes, he had come to make a sacrifice and feast to the Lord and he invited Jesse and his sons.

Thought - Although we often feel sad and mourn about the past, we must leave it behind us and go forward to do right in the future. If we have done wrong in the past- it

is important to repent, confess and make right what we can, and seek to learn the lessons God would have us remember from past mistakes but not give into despair. "Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before". Philippians 3:13

Monday

Text: 1 Samuel 16:6, 7 "And it came to pass, when they were come, that he looked on Eliab, and said, Surely the LORD'S anointed is before him. But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart."

Now Samuel asked to see all of Jesse's sons and they came up one by one and he looked them over. The oldest son was such a noble looking young man that Samuel was sure he was the one the Lord had chosen. But No, God said he had rejected him and told Samuel the words of our memory verse.

God knew the oldest son, Eliab did not fear the Lord. His heart was not right with God. He would make a proud, exacting ruler.

One by one the sons passed before Samuel and for each one God said to the Prophet, "No, not this one." Then after seven sons had been rejected, Samuel was confused, none of them were right, but God had said to anoint one of the sons of Jesse!

Turning to Jesse he asked him if these were all of his sons. "Oh," said Jesse, "there is just the youngest one and he keeps the sheep." I guess he was quite sure Samuel would not be interested in the shepherd boy.

Quickly Samuel replied, "Send and fetch him: for we will not sit down till he come hither." So a messenger was sent to bring David in from the fields and when the boy stood before Samuel God said, "This is the right one."

"Now he was ruddy, and withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to. And the LORD said, Arise, anoint him: for this is he. Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren: and the Spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward."

David was not extremely tall; but his face was beautiful, expressive of humility, honesty, and true courage. The angel of God signified to Samuel that David was the one for him to anoint, for he was God's chosen. From that time the Lord gave David a prudent and understanding heart.

Thought – It is always important to remember, that it is not always the handsome or beautiful people or the ones with the nicest clothes that are the ones the Lord uses. Sadly sometimes these ones are too caught up with their own selves and have no room for God in their hearts. Remember Lucifer's heart was turned to stony pride, because of his beauty.

Tuesday

Text: 1 Samuel 16:16 "Let our lord now command thy servants, which are before thee, to seek out a man, who is a cunning player on an harp: and it shall come to pass, when the evil spirit from God is upon thee, that he shall play with his hand, and thou shalt be well."

Now we begin to see the wonderful way that God worked to take a shepherd boy from the fields of Bethlehem and prepare him to be king of Israel. Saul realized when Samuel didn't come any more to instruct him, that the Lord truly had rejected him as king of Israel. As he thought about this, he became angry and jealous inside because he knew

that somewhere, someone else had been chosen to be king after him, and he didn't like it one bit!

Now if Saul would have TRULY repented before God and humbled his heart and sought the Lord with ALL his heart, he could have been forgiven and have been saved. But although the Holy Spirit tried to bring him to repentance, he stubbornly resisted.

The Bible uses a strange expression here; it says "an evil spirit from God" troubled Saul. Would God send an evil spirit to someone? Not directly, but because Saul resisted the Holy Spirit and allowed hateful angry thoughts to rule his mind, the good angels would back away and leave him and the evil angels would take over.

His servants, at times dared not approach him, for he seemed like an insane man, violent and abusive. He often seemed filled with remorse. He was melancholy, and often afraid when there was no danger. This disqualified him for being ruler. He was always full of anxiety; and when in his gloomy moods, he wished not to be disturbed, and at times would suffer none to approach him.

His servants suggested that if he listened to lovely sacred music, it would help. And guess who they suggested Saul should get to play this music for him?

That's right, David the shepherd boy, who had spent long hours playing his harp and making up lovely psalms while he was caring for his father's sheep on the hills of Bethlehem.

Saul sent for David and sure enough the music did help. Do you know why? It is because the evil angels do not like to hear Praises to God, and if we sing true sacred hymns, they will often leave. Now you must remember though, that there is a kind of so called 'Christian' music these days that has a heavy beat and it actually calls evil angels to come as they love it! It must be true sacred music, quiet and beautiful, with words from the Bible and other great truths to drive them away.

Saul soon loved the boy David and made

him his armor bearer and he sang and played for the king.

Thought – This is the way that God caused David to be able to learn all about what it was to be a king. Day by day he saw what went on in the court and he saw the mistakes of Saul and learned that only by relying on the Lord could a man hope to be a just and true king.

Wednesday

Text: 1 Samuel 17:2-4 “And Saul and the men of Israel were gathered together, and pitched by the valley of Elah, and set the battle in array against the Philistines. And the Philistines stood on a mountain on the one side, and Israel stood on a mountain on the other side: and there was a valley between them. And there went out a champion out of the camp of the Philistines, named Goliath, of Gath, whose height was six cubits and a span.”

Now the Philistines came to attack Israel again and Saul went off to war with his army. David was back with his father’s sheep, glad to be away from all the confusion and stress of the king’s palace.

One day David’s father sent for him and asked him to go to where his older brothers were with Saul’s army, and take them some food and a gift for the captain. So David set out and this is how he came to see the mighty giant Goliath challenging Israel and saw how everyone was afraid of him.

It was so sad that they had no faith in God and so could not stand against the enemies of the Lord. Now we told the story of David & Goliath in our TEMKIT lesson 2-2 #2, so we won’t tell it again here, but we are so plainly taught that it is our faith, obedience and trust in God that makes all the difference. No enemy can stand against God!

But it wasn’t long after this that Saul came to the conclusion that David was his enemy! It happened as he was riding home from a

victory and the women of the city came out with a cheer-leading group to celebrate and they sang, “Saul has killed his thousands and David his ten-thousands”.

Now they didn’t mean any harm, but Saul immediately allowed his jealousy to surge up and the evil spirits crowded in because of his dark and angry thoughts. Saul had the hunch that this was the man God had chosen for king.

Soon after, Saul was moody and he asked again for David to come and play music for him, then as he pretended to be soothed by the sweet melodies, suddenly he seized his spear and flung it at David, only the protection of God spared the young man’s life and he fled away from the angry king.

Thought – Always remember, if you allow angry, jealous, rebellious thoughts and doubts to come into your mind and you don’t reject them right way in the power of Jesus, then evil angels will crowd around and lead you into wrong. To overcome this, just as soon as a wrong thought comes along, call out to the Lord and say, “I refuse to have these wrong thoughts. I choose to have Jesus in control of my thoughts!” And then think on a Bible promise or a sweet, precious hymn-song, and the dark angels will flee from you.

Thursday

Text: 1 Samuel 18:12-15 “And Saul was afraid of David, because the LORD was with him, and was departed from Saul. Therefore Saul removed him from him, and made him his captain over a thousand; and he went out and came in before the people. And David behaved himself wisely in all his ways; and the LORD was with him. Wherefore when Saul saw that he behaved himself very wisely, he was afraid of him.”

Saul made David a captain in his army, hoping that he would get killed in battle. But God was with David and he just got more victories. One day Saul promised David he could marry his oldest daughter if he would

go out and kill a bunch of Philistines.

It was a trick. Saul hoped the Philistines would kill David. But they didn't and when David came back, Saul broke his promise and gave his daughter to another man.

But Saul's youngest daughter loved David and wanted to marry him. Saul agreed as he hoped to use her to trap David and get him killed.

He sent for David and told him he could marry Michal, his youngest daughter. But David said, "I am just a poor man, how could I pay a dowry for a princess?" Again the crafty Saul sent him out to kill Philistines; all the while hoping to have him killed himself. Soon David was back and he told the king he had killed twice as many as the king wanted. So Saul gave Michal to David for a wife and he became the king's son-in-law.

Thought – Over and over Saul plotted and schemed but every time it failed and David became wiser and Saul more afraid of him.

Friday

Text: 1 Samuel 19:1-2 "And Saul spake to Jonathan his son, and to all his servants, that they should kill David. But Jonathan Saul's son delighted much in David: and Jonathan told David, saying, Saul my father seeketh to kill thee: now therefore, I pray thee, take heed to thyself until the morning, and abide in a secret place, and hide thyself:"

Jonathan and David became close friends and one day as Jonathan was saying something good about David to Saul, his father, the king flew into a rage and ordered all to kill David on sight! Jonathan hurried to warn David and he fled into the fields and hid until

Jonathan could bring word.

Jonathan pleaded with his father for David and finally Saul agreed and said he would not kill David. So David came home, but peace did not last long. Again David had a wonderful victory and again Saul grew jealous and tried to pin him to the wall with his spear. David fled home and his wife put some pillows into his bed in the shape of a man while David slipped out the window and fled away.

Soon the guards of Saul burst into the house. "Where is David!" they demanded.

"He is sick"; Michal told them. So they headed for David's room where they saw this form in the bed all covered up and they carried the bed to the king. When he uncovered the shape, hoping to murder David in his bed, he was very angry at the trick played on him.

Now David began his long years of fleeing before the wrath of an insane king. One of the first places he went was to a school of the prophets. Saul sent his men there to get him, but when they came into that place, the Spirit of the Lord took over and they prophesied and sang hymns. Saul sent more men, but the same thing happened.

Finally Saul went himself, and he was overcome by the Spirit of God and took off his kingly robes and prophesied and lay down peacefully for a day and a night. But David knew it would not last, so he fled away in the night.

Thought - How many chances God gave to Saul that he could have repented and stopped his wicked jealous hatred of David. But although he would be impressed for a while, he soon let the evil thoughts return and once he did that, the evil angels controlled him fully. = ^ .. ^ =

Weekly Bible Lesson #4: "RUNNING AND HIDING"

MEMORY VERSE: "Deliver my soul, O LORD, from lying lips, and from a deceitful tongue." Psalm 120:2

Sunday

Text: 1 Samuel 20:1,2 "And David fled from Naioth in Ramah, and came and said before Jonathan, What have I done? what is mine iniquity? and what is my sin before thy father, that he seeketh my life? And he said unto him, God forbid; thou shalt not die: behold, my father will do nothing either great or small, but that he will shew it me: and why should my father hide this thing from me? it is not so."

After the Lord had delayed Saul from taking David at the house of Samuel the prophet, David went to his dear friend Jonathan to tell him of the problem with the king. Jonathan could hardly believe that his father would really kill David, so he asked David what he could do to help him.

David asked Jonathan to give him permission to be away from the yearly sacrifice and feast, which the king always held once a year on the following day. David knew the king would expect him to be there, but he was afraid that indeed Saul would kill him if he showed up at the palace.

Jonathan did not think so, but he agreed to test the king in the way David had said. They made arrangements that David would hide in the field and Jonathan would come out with a little servant boy. He would shoot some arrows into the field and ask the boy to run and find them. If he told the boy the arrows were this side of him, then David would know it was OK, and he could return to the palace with Jonathan.

But if Saul was angry and showed he did indeed intend to kill David, then Jonathan would say to the boy, "The arrows are beyond thee!" and David would know to flee away and hide from the angry king.

The first day of the feast, Saul noticed

that David's place was empty, but he did not pay too much attention as he thought David was just delayed. The next day when the place was still empty, he demanded of his son, Jonathan, why David was not there.

When Jonathan explained that David had asked his permission to attend a feast at his home in Bethlehem, Saul flew into a rage against his own son.

Yelling out that he was certainly going to kill David, he told his son off angrily. When poor Jonathan tried to ask his father why he would want to kill David, who had been only a help to him, the king was so insanely mad he threw his spear at his own son intending to kill him!

Out in the field Jonathan gave the signal to warn David to flee the wrath of the king. When the little boy was sent back to the palace with the arrows, David came to talk for a moment with his dear friend. They promised each other to always be kind to each other's families, and then David left to flee away into hiding.

Thought - Jonathan knew that God had chosen David to be king of Israel, and even though Jonathan was the crown prince, he was not jealous of David.

Monday

Text: 1 Samuel 21:1,2 "Then came David to Nob to Ahimelech the priest: and Ahimelech was afraid at the meeting of David, and said unto him, Why art thou alone, and no man with thee? And David said unto Ahimelech the priest, The king hath commanded me a business, and hath said unto me, Let no man know any thing of the business whereabout I send thee, and what

I have commanded thee: and I have appointed my servants to such and such a place.”

Lying always leads to trouble. Even if we really think we have to lie, this is just a trick of Satan. There may be times it is best to say nothing, but never is it good to lie.

Sad to say, David, who had shown so much faith and courage in the Lord, allowed his eyes of faith to become cloudy at this time of fleeing from the wrath of the king. Maybe David was tempted to think that God had forgotten His promise that he was to be the next king. It seemed if this was true, why was he now having to run for his life? He was tempted to doubt, and so made his own plans without asking God what was best.

Having no food or weapons with him, he headed for Nob and the city of the priests, where the Sanctuary was set up. Ahimelech, the high priest was worried when he saw David. He asked why he was alone with only a few servants and not with the army as usual.

Now if David had been remembering to trust the Lord, he would have told Ahimelech the truth. Then the Priest would have known how to protect himself from Saul's anger. But David made up a lie and told the man of God that he had been sent on a secret errand by the king and there was no time to get the army ready.

David asked if he and his few servants could have some bread to take with them. The priest agreed to give him some of the holy bread from the sanctuary. David asked for a sword and the priest gave him the sword of Goliath, which had been kept wrapped up in the sanctuary.

The poor priest was completely fooled by David's lie and so was left in a place where he was heading for a serious problem. Now a certain man of the servants of Saul was there that day, ...and his name was Doeg, an Edomite, the chiefest of the herdmen that belonged to Saul. 1Sa 21:7. This man saw what had happened and he determined when he got the chance to tell King Saul.

Thought – There is never an excuse to sin, if we keep our trust in God, and determine to obey Him, He will help us in all our problems.

Tuesday

Text: 1 Samuel 21:10,11 “And David arose, and fled that day for fear of Saul, and went to Achish the king of Gath. And the servants of Achish said unto him, Is not this David the king of the land? did they not sing one to another of him in dances, saying, Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands?”

Now David quickly makes another error because he was failing to trust in God. He decided he would be safer to go and stay with God's enemies, the Philistines. So he headed to Gath and went in to see Achish, the king. He was going to ask if he could stay there in his country away from Saul.

Again his plans failed miserably, someone recognized him as the youth who had killed their champion, Goliath. Now David felt he better use some more lies, and so distorting his face, he began to run around in the King's court, slobbering and acting as if he were in some kind of a fit of madness.

Achish was disgusted. “I don't need any mad-men in here!” he shouted, “get him out of here”. So David was running again and this time he headed for a large cave, called Adullum, which he knew of in the wilderness.

Soon his family and friends heard about it and came to join him. His family was afraid that in Saul's blind hatred for David, he might harm them as well. Also many others that had problems came to join him until he had a band of four-hundred men living in the wilderness with him.

David knew his mother and father were old, and camping in the wilderness was hard for them, so he made arrangements with the king of Moab for them to live in his land.

Saul soon learned that David had escaped

and he was angry and determined to find out who had helped him. Who should come up to the King to tell, but Doeg, the Edomite cattle-man. He told Saul that the Priest Ahimelech had helped David by giving him food and a sword.

Saul in his rage sent for Ahimelech and the priests of the city of Nob and asked them why they had helped his enemy, David? Poor Ahimelech, he did not know what was going on. Because David had lied to him, he thought there was no problem between Saul and David. Now Saul declared that all the city of the priests was to be destroyed and the men killed- but the men of his army would not dare to hurt the priests of God.

Then he ordered the evil Doeg to do it, and that man killed ninety priests and went and destroyed the city of Nob. What a sad result from a lie! How wicked Saul had become- to even slay the ministers of the sanctuary!

One man escaped, one of the sons of Ahimelech the son of Ahitub, named Abiathar, escaped, and fled after David. He told him the terrible deed ordered by Saul and carried out by Doeg. David told the young priest to remain with him so he could protect him from Saul.

Thought – How sorrowful David felt when the results of his lie came to his ears!

Wednesday

Text: 1 Samuel 23:1,2 “Then they told David, saying, Behold, the Philistines fight against Keilah, and they rob the threshingfloors. Therefore David enquired of the LORD, saying, Shall I go and smite these Philistines? And the LORD said unto David, Go, and smite the Philistines, and save Keilah.”

The Philistines came to attack one of the outer areas of Israel again, not far from where David and his men were staying. So David asked the Lord if he should go and fight against them or not. He had learned a les-

son about running off on his own ideas and wanted the guidance of the Lord.

How did David ask the Lord? Well, the son of Ahimelech, the high priest who had been killed by Doeg, was now the Priest of God’s sanctuary. He was with David and he had the special breastplate of the Lord. This breastplate had two special stones, one at the left and the other at the right. When the priest would inquire of the Lord to know what to do, if the answer was ‘yes’ the stone on the right would shine, if the answer was ‘no’ the stone on the left would have a darkness around it. In this way, the Lord would guide those who asked Him.

The Lord said for David to go and rescue the people of Keilah and God would help him. David and his men attacked the cruel Philistines and drove them away from the people of Keilah.

Now David and his men were resting in the city, when the word came that Saul found out where he was and was coming to capture him. Now you would think that those people of that town would have been glad to stand up for David after he had helped them so much. But David wasn’t so sure.

He asked the Priest to ask the Lord if Saul would come and if the people would turn him over to Saul to be killed. God told him they would do it, so David left and hid in the woods in the wilderness. Sometimes people are so unthankful that they won’t even help someone who has done so much for them. We must be careful to remember always how much Jesus has done for us to rescue us from Satan and death.

Thought – We need God’s guidance today also. We may not have a priest with a breastplate to help us learn God’s will, but if we truly choose to obey Him in all ways, He has promised to direct our paths.

Thursday

Text: 1 Samuel 23:16, 17 “And Jonathan Saul’s son arose, and went to David into the wood, and strengthened his hand

in God. And he said unto him, Fear not: for the hand of Saul my father shall not find thee; and thou shalt be king over Israel, and I shall be next unto thee; and that also Saul my father knoweth."

Saul didn't catch David at Keilah, but soon someone came and told Saul where David was hiding and he went after him there in the woods. Jonathan secretly went to see David to encourage his friend.

When Saul was spending all his time and army trying to catch David, it was a good chance for his real enemies, the Philistines to start invading Israel, and so they did. Soon a messenger came to Saul where he had David and his men surrounded, to tell him that the country was being over-run by the Philistines.

Saul had to turn back from chasing David to go fight to rescue his country. Sadly he did not stop trying to destroy David. As soon as the Philistines had been driven out, a messenger came telling Saul where David was now hiding and off he went again to capture and kill him.

He came to a place where there were some large caves that were often used by shepherds to keep their sheep in at night. Saul was hot and tired and the caves were cool, so he went in to rest himself.

Little did he know that David and his men were hiding in that very cave. David's men urged him to destroy Saul. But David would not do this. Quietly David sneaked out while Saul was resting and cut off a piece of the skirt of his robe. When Saul got up he left the cave.

No sooner had he left than David came out also and called to Saul. He asked him why he believed the lie that David was trying to do him harm. He showed him the skirt of his robe and told him how he could have easily killed him in the cave but he did not. He asked for God to judge him and deliver him from the jealous rage of the king.

When Saul heard this, he was very surprised. "Is this your voice, my son David?"

he asked. "Thou art more righteous than I: for thou hast rewarded me good, whereas I have rewarded thee evil."

Then Saul went home, but David knew it wouldn't last long and so he and his men found a new place to hide away.

Thought – David knew that God would make him king in His own good time. David would not harm Saul himself, because God had anointed him, but neither would he obey Saul or trust him. He stayed hiding in the wilderness.

Friday

Text: 1 Samuel 25:2,3 "And there was a man in Maon, whose possessions were in Carmel; and the man was very great, and he had three thousand sheep, and a thousand goats: and he was shearing his sheep in Carmel. Now the name of the man was Nabal; and the name of his wife Abigail: and she was a woman of good understanding, and of a beautiful countenance: but the man was churlish and evil in his doings; and he was of the house of Caleb."

It was around this time that the faithful prophet, Samuel died and all Israel mourned for him. David knew that Saul would be even more his enemy now, so he found a place in the wilderness of Carmel where he and his men stayed.

Now this area was used by a man called Nabal to graze his flocks of sheep. While his shepherds were doing this during the year, often David and his men would see them and often he helped the shepherds protect their flocks. It was natural for the one-time shepherd boy to take an interest in the care of sheep.

When it came time for the shearing of the sheep, it was the custom to hold a great feast and at this time to be generous to all who had been helpful and also remember the poor and needy. So naturally, David, who needed some food for his men, sent down some mes-

sengers to ask for help from the very rich man.

But when they did ask, Nabal, whose name means a fool, refused to give them anything at all. Now this was very unkind and selfish and his servants were worried that David and his men might decide to take revenge.

They went to Abigail, Nabal's sensible wife, and told her how David had often helped them, and never stolen from them at all. She realized what needed to be done and sent men to get ready a lovely feast and went to bring the gift to David.

It was just in time! David and his men were coming to take revenge. This was not a good thing to do, and David was very glad afterwards that he did not do it. Abigail gave him her gifts and he turned back with a thankful heart.

But God was looking at the selfish Nabal. He got roaring drunk and the next day when his wife told him what had nearly happened, he was so afraid he fell down in a stroke and died after ten days.

Thought - Do you remember the story that Jesus told about a foolish rich man? It was a lot like this selfish Nabal. = ^ .. ^ =

Weekly Bible Lesson #5: "SAUL AND THE WITCH"

MEMORY VERSE: "And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep, and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead?" Isaiah 8:19

Sunday

Text: 1 Samuel 26:7,8 "So David and Abishai came to the people by night: and, behold, Saul lay sleeping within the trench, and his spear stuck in the ground at his bolster: but Abner and the people lay round about him. Then said Abishai to David, God hath delivered thine enemy into thine hand this day: now therefore let me smite him, I pray thee, with the spear even to the earth at once, and I will not smite him the second time."

After David had spared his life and it was proven that Saul was wrong in trying to kill David, you would think that he would stop chasing David. But no way, it was not long before he was out in the hills where the wild goats lived; trying to hunt down the one he knew God had chosen for the next king.

Saul came to a place and he and his army camped and settled down to sleep. Now if you know anything about armies, they never go to sleep without leave some to stay awake and guard. But God caused it to be that all

of the men fell asleep, the king, the captain and all the soldiers.

David looked down into the valley to see if it was really Saul come out against him again and he saw it was. "Who will come with me and we will sneak down into their camp?" he asked his men and one of them said he would come.

Soon there they were in the middle of the camp and there was king Saul sound asleep with his spear stuck in the ground beside him and all his whole army fast asleep.

David's friend Abishai wanted to kill Saul, David said no, but he took his spear and his water pot and then he went back up into the mountain area. When he was a long ways away, he started to yell to Abner, the captain of the king's army. He asked Abner why he was not guarding the king better. Then he told them that he had been there in the camp and taken away the king's spear and water pot from beside his pillow!

Now again Saul was forced to see he was doing wrong and he seemed to repent as David asked him why he was trying to kill him. Saul admitted for the time that he was

wrong and then he returned back to his palace.

Thought - Even the strongest men are helpless when God fights against them!

Monday

Text: 1 Samuel 27:1,2 “And David said in his heart, I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul: there is nothing better for me than that I should speedily escape into the land of the Philistines; and Saul shall despair of me, to seek me any more in any coast of Israel: so shall I escape out of his hand. And David arose, and he passed over with the six hundred men that were with him unto Achish, the son of Maach, king of Gath.”

Time after time God had shown David that He was well able to protect him from Saul, but one day David allowed self-pity and doubts to rise up in his mind and he did not drive them out right away. This was the time he should have prayed or took his harp and sang praises to God to drive away the evil spirits that were tricking him into doubting God.

Instead, David gave into to making his own plans again without talking to God about it. You see, one of the first things the devil does when he brings doubts like this, is he makes us feel like we don't want to pray! Of course! Because he knows when we pray - he is out of there!

So David headed off to go and stay with the Lord's enemies in Gath. When Saul heard David was gone he stopped hunting him and David asked king Achish to give him a city out in the country for he and his men to dwell in and he did this and gave him Ziklag.

Now David did some very dishonest things, he would go out and attack the friends of the Philistines, which were the enemies of Israel and he would get the King to think he was attacking his own people. Really what David had done was to trade the protection

of God for the protection of God's enemy. Not a good trade at all.

David stayed in enemy country for a year and 4 months and the day came when Achish was going to attack Israel. Now David was in a bad spot. The king expected him to come and help him attack the Lord's people! Lying always gets us into trouble.

David and his men showed up at the gathering of the army for the battle and the king was intending to have him go with them. But the other captains did not want this to happen. "In the middle of the battle he will attack us!" they said. So David and his men turned back.

Thought - This is a very important lesson to learn; any time we have thoughts of doubt, feeling sorry for our selves, or thinking 'Why does this have to happen to me?' we need to push those thoughts out right away! Call out to the Lord in prayer and ask Him to take such evil thoughts out of our minds and give us the mind of Jesus. Singing true hymns to the Lord also drives the dark angels away.

Tuesday

Text: 1 Samuel 30:1-3 “And it came to pass, when David and his men were come to Ziklag on the third day, that the Amalekites had invaded the south, and Ziklag, and smitten Ziklag, and burned it with fire; And had taken the women captives, that were therein: they slew not any, either great or small, but carried them away, and went on their way. So David and his men came to the city, and, behold, it was burned with fire; and their wives, and their sons, and their daughters, were taken captives.”

God cannot bless and protect his people when they lie and cheat and don't trust in Him. While David and his men were away a roving band of Amalekites that had escaped being killed by King Saul, attacked David's city and burned it to the ground. They took

all the wives and children and supplies and ran off with them.

When David's men saw this they wept and were so upset because of David's unwise doings, they were about to stone him. But it was at this time that David realized his wrongdoing and repented and asked the Lord what they should do. He got the High Priest to bring the Ephod and ask God if they could get their families back.

God said they should go after the Amalikites and they would get all back again. They did chase after the raiders and they caught up with them when they were having a big, drunken party. They soon overcame them all and got back all their belongings, their families and even more stuff from the raiders.

After the battle was over, David and his men determined to trust in the Lord and David sent presents to his friends, the elders of Israel, so that they would know he did not fight against them.

Thought – Proverbs 3:5, 6 says, "Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." No doubt Solomon learned the truth of this from his father David!

Wednesday

Text: 1 Samuel 28:5,6 "And when Saul saw the host of the Philistines, he was afraid, and his heart greatly trembled. And when Saul enquired of the LORD, the LORD answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets."

Poor, stubborn king Saul. He had heard that the Philistines were coming up to attack Israel with a huge army. He also was doubly afraid because he was sure that David would fight with them and attack him too. Samuel was dead and he could not get help from him. The shadows of doom gathered dark about Saul and he was afraid and wanted to talk to the Lord and ask for help.

He longed for help and guidance. But it was in vain that he sought counsel from God. "The Lord answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets."

The Lord never turned away a soul that came to Him in sincerity and humility. Why did he turn Saul away unanswered? The king had by his own act cut off the benefits of all the methods of inquiring of God. He had rejected the counsel of Samuel the prophet; he had exiled David, the chosen of God; he had slain the priests of the Lord. Could he expect to be answered by God?

He had sinned away the Holy Spirit, and could he be answered by dreams and revelations from the Lord? Saul did not turn to God with humility and repentance. It was not pardon for sin that he wanted. He just wanted God to rescue him from his enemies.

He was not sorry for his sins, he was only sorry for the mess he was now in. By his own stubbornness and rebellion he had cut himself off from God. There could be no return but by the way of repentance; but the proud monarch, in his despair, determined to seek help from another source.

He soon showed that his rebellion against the Lord had not stopped at all. In fact he should have known better than what he decided to do; God's people know that dead people don't come back as ghosts!

Thought – We must always remember that Ecclesiastes 9:5 tells us plainly the dead don't know anything. We should stay away from anyone who claims to talk to the dead and not read or watch any stories about ghosts or witches.

Thursday

Text: 1 Samuel 28:7,8 "Then said Saul unto his servants, Seek me a woman that hath a familiar spirit, that I may go to her, and enquire of her. And his servants said to him, Behold, there is a woman that hath a familiar spirit at Endor. And Saul disguised himself, and put on other raiment, and he

went, and two men with him, and they came to the woman by night: and he said, I pray thee, divine unto me by the familiar spirit, and bring me him up, whom I shall name unto thee.”

Saul decided to go and see a witch! Now when Samuel had been alive, Saul had followed the orders of the Lord and had all the people who claimed to be witches and wizards executed. You see, this is not just another religion like people today want to tell us. People who do this are controlled and used by Satan whether they know it or not. Satan works through them to ensnare and trick other people.

Saul’s men told him that they had found out there was a witch living in a cave in Endor and so Saul and two men with him, disguised himself and went to ask the witch to help him. I want you to notice the foolishness of a person that refuses to follow the Lord. Saul was going to ask someone for help whom he thought had special powers and yet he thought he could fool that person by a disguise!

Off they went into the darkness of night. It reminds us of Judas, where the Bible says that he went out and it was night. Saul went into darkness because he would not admit he needed to return to the light.

What bondage is so terrible as that of him who is given over to the control of the worst of tyrants—himself! Trust in God and obedience to His will were the only conditions upon which Saul could be king of Israel. Had he followed these conditions, his kingdom would have been safe; God would have been his guide and his shield.

God had been patient with Saul; he still could have repented and been accepted. But now when he turned from God to get help from a servant of Satan, he had cut the last tie that bound him to his Maker. He placed himself fully under the control of that demon power which for years had been tormenting him. Satan was laughing and the angels wept as Saul trudged the path to

Endor.

When he got there he asked the witch to bring him up the spirit of Samuel. As the witch began her spells, the evil spirit she worked for told her it was King Saul. She was very afraid, but Saul told her that she would not be harmed if she would do what he wanted and bring up Samuel.

Thought – How mixed up sin makes people to be! Saul would not listen to Samuel while he was alive and now he wanted to talk to him when asleep in the grave. Romans 1:22 “Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.”

Friday

Text: 1 Samuel 28:13,14 “And the king said unto her, Be not afraid: for what sawest thou? And the woman said unto Saul, I saw gods ascending out of the earth. And he said unto her, What form is he of? And she said, An old man cometh up; and he is covered with a mantle. And Saul perceived that it was Samuel, and he stooped with his face to the ground, and bowed himself.”

Now there are many people who will try to tell you that this really was Samuel that came up, because the Bible calls it Samuel. But the Bible does not contradict itself and if God would not speak himself to the rebellious Saul, it is certain he would not raise the dead to speak to him! Always remember that Satan’s angels can appear like a dead person, but Satan cannot raise the dead.

The witch said she saw ‘gods ascending out of the earth’. When Saul asked what it looked like, she said, ‘An old man with a mantle’. Right away Saul was sure it was Samuel. Now Satan had the foolish king right where he wanted him. He gave him a message that was so depressing that Saul was brought to despair and fainted away.

Read the words in 1 Samuel 28:16-19, and see how they would take away any hope at all from the heart of the king. They also make God to sound like a revengeful tyrant.

God was not Saul's enemy, if he would have come back to God and repented, God would have saved him out of his trouble.

The evil spirit told Saul that the next day he and all his sons would 'be with me'. As Saul was so faint from hunger the witch prepared food for him and begged him to eat something. So he did and went sadly on his way.

The next day the battle was fought and the dejected attitude of the King did not help the men of Israel to have any courage. Soon they were fleeing before the Philistines and all of Saul's sons in the battle with him, were killed.

Saul was wounded by an arrow and now as he saw the battle lost, he begged his armor bearer to kill him. He would not do this

and so finally Saul fell on his own sword and killed himself. You see when once the evil spirits have control in the life of a person that once was a servant of God, they often hurry them on to suicide, before they do get a chance to repent and return to God.

So the Philistines did not kill Saul, he died from despair cause by the message of a witch!

Thought - If we look further in the Bible we see clearly who this was Saul got the message from; "So Saul died for his transgression which he committed against the LORD, even against the word of the LORD, which he kept not, and also for asking counsel of one that had a familiar spirit, to enquire of it;" 1 Chronicles 10:13. = ^ .. ^ =

Weekly Bible Lesson #6: "KING DAVID"

MEMORY VERSE: "Lying lips are abomination to the LORD: but they that deal truly are his delight." Proverbs 12:22

Sunday

Text: 2 Samuel 1:4 "And David said unto him, How went the matter? I pray thee, tell me. And he answered, That the people are fled from the battle, and many of the people also are fallen and dead; and Saul and Jonathan his son are dead also."

David and his men returned from rescuing their wives and families and they worked to restore their homes at Ziklag. They were anxiously awaiting news from the battle between the Philistines and Israel.

Soon a man came to them saying he had come from the battle. David asked for news and was told that Israel had lost the battle and Saul and Jonathan were both dead. The Amalakite bringing the news thought that David would be happy about this and so he told a foolish lie thinking to get himself a reward.

He told David that he had killed Saul.

This did not please David at all. He tore his clothes and mourned for Saul and David. Then he had the man executed for his claim to have killed king Saul.

David mourned sadly for king Saul and especially for his dear friend prince Jonathan. He even wrote a sad song telling of his sorrow. You can read it in 2 Samuel 1:19-27. Here are a few lines of it:

"The beauty of Israel is slain upon thy high places: how are the mighty fallen! Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon; lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice."

After mourning for Saul and Jonathan, David was not sure what to do. He sent for the priest and had him ask the Lord if he should return to Israel. He said to return. He asked where to go and the Lord told him to go to Hebron.

Thought - Lies always come back on us sooner or later.

Monday

Text: 2 Samuel 2:3,4 “And his men that were with him did David bring up, every man with his household: and they dwelt in the cities of Hebron. And the men of Judah came, and there they anointed David king over the house of Judah. And they told David, saying, That the men of Jabeshgilead were they that buried Saul.”

At Hebron the men of Judah anointed David to be king over Judah. The other tribes of Israel however did not agree.

The men of the city of Jabeshgilead did a brave deed. The Philistines had cut off the heads of Saul and Jonathan and taken them to their king, but the bodies had been nailed up on a wall to be mocked. A group of these men sneaked into the Philistine city at night and rescued the bodies and brought them back and gave them a decent burial with honor.

When David learned of this he told them how glad he was for their brave deed.

David did not try to force himself as king over all of Israel. But trouble still came. Abner, Saul’s captain of the army got one of the other sons of Saul, called Ishbosheth, and declared him king.

Abner had been so close with Saul in their hunting of David that he had come to think a lot like Saul. Also he never got over the time when David told him off for not guarding the king better. He wanted revenge.

For a while there was a lot of fighting between Israel and Judah, Ishbosheth was not any good for a king and finally Abner became angry and came over to give his services to David. But sadly, Joab the captain of David’s army, killed him by trickery.

David mourned for him and gave him an honorable burial. This way the people saw that David was not wanting to do any of these false and wicked deeds.

When two men killed Ishbosheth as he was resting on his bed, and brought his head to David, thinking to be rewarded. He Told

them how wicked it was to kill a man in such a sneaky way and had them executed and held a funeral for Ishbosheth.

A lot of sad things happened, but after a while, all of Israel accepted David as king. If David would have always trusted in the Lord to protect him from Saul, and had not lied and gone his own way from time to time, he probably would have become king sooner and with much less trouble.

Thought – God tells us never to seek revenge. Abner’s wish for revenge caused much trouble and finally destroyed him.

Tuesday

Text: 2 Samuel 5:3,4 “So all the elders of Israel came to the king to Hebron; and king David made a league with them in Hebron before the LORD: and they anointed David king over Israel. David was thirty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years.”

Finally David was king over all Israel.

David wanted a better city to be the capital of Israel and so he chose what became Jerusalem. The enemies of Israel held it, but by clever strategy David and his men captured it and made it his capital.

Some of the kings of other nations honored David and made agreements with him. Hiram the king of the rich city of Tyre, sent cedar logs and made a lovely palace for David to live in.

David began to deal with the Philistines that were still troubling the people. Each time he would think to go out and fight them, he would ask the Lord if he should go and the Lord would tell him what to do.

Finally, when the Philistines were come out to fight again, the Lord told David to wait where there was a lot of mulberry trees and when he heard the sound of wind in them, he was to attack as the Lord would fight for them.

He did this and the Philistines were really beaten and driven away. They did not

trouble Israel for a long time after that.

Thought – Jerusalem had been where the Priest Melchizedek had lived in the time of Abraham.

Wednesday

Text: 2 Samuel 6:2,3 “And David arose, and went with all the people that were with him from Baale of Judah, to bring up from thence the ark of God, whose name is called by the name of the LORD of hosts that dwelleth between the cherubims. And they set the ark of God upon a new cart, and brought it out of the house of Abinadab that was in Gibeah: and Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, drave the new cart.”

Now David wanted very much to bring the Ark of the Lord up to Jerusalem. He made special arrangements and invited 30,000 of Israel's leaders to come. He made a great celebration and the high priest placed the ark on a new cart drawn by oxen. Two sons of the high priest, Uzzah and Ahio, drove the cart.

They started on their way to Jerusalem with great excitement. There was a lot of music and rejoicing. It was a big celebration to honor the Lord.

Then when they came to a certain place, one of the oxen stumbled a bit and it rocked the Ark on the cart. The son of the High Priest, Uzzah, put out his hand to touch to Ark to steady it. Instantly he was struck dead.

The music stopped, in silent horror the people looked at what had happened. King David was afraid and upset with God. He would not go any further but the ark was carried into the house of Obededom the Gittite.

In sadness the party broke up and the King and the people returned to their homes. What had happened? Why had Uzzah been killed? These thoughts troubled David greatly.

The priests looked into the books of the

laws of the sanctuary and found that only the sons of Kohath, were to move the ark and they were to carry it, by its rods, on their shoulders, always reverently covered. Even they were never to touch it.

When David learned this, he asked how the man was who had offered his home as a place to keep the ark. When he found out that he was being blessed, he decided to bring the ark to Jerusalem, but this time it would be done properly with respect for God's laws and instructions.

God can accept no partial obedience, no lax way of treating His commandments. By the judgment upon Uzzah, He wanted to impress upon all Israel, the importance of giving strict obedience to His laws. Thus the death of that one man, by leading the people to repentance, might prevent the necessity of inflicting judgments upon thousands.

You see, even though we might have a big celebration and really think we are honoring God, if we are not worshipping Him as He has said to do it, if we are not obeying all of His instructions and laws, He is not pleased with us. He cannot bless us unless we do things his way.

The idea of doing 'your own thing' in serving and worshipping God is a foolish idea, and is not accepted by God. If we are not willing to learn how He wants things done and cheerfully obey Him in doing it that way, He is not pleased with us and will not even hear our prayers! The only prayer he will hear from those who disobey Him is the prayer of repentance and confession.

Thought – You will remember that when the Philistines took the Ark of God, they returned it on a cart pulled by two cows. They were not harmed because they didn't know any better. The sons of the High Priest had no excuse not to know better.

Thursday

Text: 2 Samuel 6:18,19 “And as soon as David had made an end of offering burnt offerings and peace offerings, he blessed the

people in the name of the LORD of hosts. And he dealt among all the people, even among the whole multitude of Israel, as well to the women as men, to every one a cake of bread, and a good piece of flesh, and a flagon of wine. So all the people departed every one to his house."

When David went out again to have the Ark moved to Jerusalem, it was a very different scene. Instead of wild celebration similar to how the heathen worship their Gods, it was with great respect, reverence and dignity.

Everything was done according to the laws of God. Music was played, but with dignity and solemn joy. Even the king removed his royal robes and marched wearing only the plain white robe of a priest. This was to show to all that he was on the same level as his people on that day, and only the Ark of God was the object to be honored.

There was great joy, but this time it was mixed with respect and reverence. Sacrifices were offered all along the way. And when the ark entered Jerusalem, David danced with joy. This was a sacred type of dancing expressing reverence and joy and not like what we think of as dancing.

After all was finished the King gave a gift of food and grape-juice to each of the people there and they went home with great joy.

Thought – The music and dancing in joyful praise to God at the removal of the ark had not the faintest resemblance to the dissipation of modern dancing. The one tended to the remembrance of God and exalted His holy name. The other is a device of Satan to cause men to forget God and to dishonor Him. {PP 707}

Friday

Text: 2 Samuel 7:1-3 "And it came to pass, when the king sat in his house, and the LORD had given him rest round about from all his enemies; That the king said unto

Nathan the prophet, See now, I dwell in an house of cedar, but the ark of God dwelleth within curtains. And Nathan said to the king, Go, do all that is in thine heart; for the LORD is with thee.

Now David began to think about something very dear to his heart. He wanted to build a wonderful temple to honor the Lord. He called Nathan the prophet and told him about this idea. Nathan, without asking God about it first, said for David to go ahead as he was sure it would be pleasing to the Lord.

When Nathan was at home that night, the Lord told him in a vision to go back to David and tell him that it was not God's will that David be the one to build this house. David had been a man of war all his life and it was not proper for him to build the temple. Instead, his son who would follow him to the throne, he would build the temple.

Now David listened to the word of the Lord and although he was disappointed, he obeyed. He made plans and gathered material to be ready for his son to build the temple when the time came.

Here we see one of the differences between David and king Saul. He was willing to listen to the words of the Lord, even when they meant he had to change his plans and give up his dearest wishes.

Have you ever wondered why God called David 'a man after my own heart', when we see more sins and mistakes recorded that David did, than that King Saul ever did? The difference is a big one; David humbly repented, Saul proudly refused to repent.

Thought - Those who go to heaven may have committed great sins, look at Peter, and Paul, but they will always have been humble enough to repent and change, turning away from their sins. Those who are proud and stubborn and will blame everybody and everything rather than confess they have done wrong and ask for forgiveness- they will not be saved. = ^ .. ^ =

Weekly Bible Lesson #7: "A KINDNESS AND A GREAT SIN"

MEMORY VERSE: "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me." Psalms 51:10

Sunday

Text: 2 Samuel 9:6,7 "Now when Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, was come unto David, he fell on his face, and did reverence. And David said, Mephibosheth. And he answered, Behold thy servant! And David said unto him, Fear not: for I will surely shew thee kindness for Jonathan thy father's sake, and will restore thee all the land of Saul thy father; and thou shalt eat bread at my table continually."

When David was king he remembered the promise that Jonathan and he had made to be kind to each other's families. He called for a man named Ziba, who had been a servant in Saul's palace. He asked him if there were any of Saul's family left alive so he could be kind to them for the memory of his dear friend Jonathan.

So he learned a sad story; when the word came that Saul and Jonathan had been killed in the battle, the servants at Jonathan's house were very afraid. They thought that David would come and kill all the descendants of king Saul for that was the way of things then.

There was a nurse caring for the baby son of Jonathan, Mephibosheth, (a big name for a little boy!) and she grabbed up the baby in great terror to run away with him and hide thinking he would be killed if she didn't hurry. She did not know that Jonathan and David were best friends.

As she was running away with the little child, she had an accident and dropped him. The poor little baby cried and cried as his both legs were broken from the fall. Never would he be able to walk properly.

When David heard about Mephibosheth, he sent for the boy, who was now a young man. When he was brought to the palace, David told him about the love he had for his

father, Jonathan and gave him all the property that had belonged to King Saul. He told the boy that for his whole life he would live in the palace and eat at the king's table. His servants would take care of his lands and his family.

Thought - God blesses us when we keep our promises and also when we are kind to the handicapped and poor.

Monday

Text: 2 Samuel 2:3,4 "And his men that were with him did David bring up, every man with his household: and they dwelt in the cities of Hebron. And the men of Judah came, and there they anointed David king over the house of Judah. And they told David, saying, That the men of Jabeshgilead were they that buried Saul."

At first, King David always fought side by side with his men whenever they were in a battle. He did not think of himself too highly. But the time came when the idea of being a King started to affect even him. It is a terrible temptation for any man to have a lot of power and have people obeying his every whim. That is why God had never wanted Israel to have a human king.

The day came when David did a strange thing; instead of going out to battle with his forces, he got proud and lazy. He remained at home in his comfortable palace and SENT his general and his men to go fight his battles for him.

Soft living and the kingly life were getting to him. If he would have done his duty and not sent his army out alone to work for him, while he stayed in comfort, he would have avoided doing the most terrible sin of his whole life! A sin that even today causes unbelievers to smirk and make dirty jokes

about the man God said “was after His own heart.”

The idea was that Kings could get away with doing things that the ordinary man would be despised for doing, and this idea began very slowly to affect David. Satan does not just suddenly come in and attack, he gradually gets us thinking too much of self, and less about God and His holy laws. The man who had sung the psalm, “Oh how I love Thy law!” was ready for a fall.

Joab was off fighting but David had come home to the good life and was lounging around his palace, so he ran into another danger, idleness. Strolling about from one part of his lovely palace to another, he was thinking proud and selfish thoughts. He was almost getting to the place of Nebuchadnezzar when he said, “Is not this great Babylon which I have built?” Suddenly from his high palace roof, he saw a sight that caught his attention.

Thought – We can see that shirking duty, pride, luxury and idleness paved the way for David’s terrible sin. We can lose the Holy Spirit easily and not notice we have lost him!

Tuesday

Text: 2 Samuel 11:2,3 “And it came to pass in an eveningtide, that David arose from off his bed, and walked upon the roof of the king’s house: and from the roof he saw a woman washing herself; and the woman was very beautiful to look upon. And David sent and enquired after the woman. And one said, Is not this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?”

What did he see? He saw a beautiful lady having a bath perhaps on her rooftop, perhaps in her garden. Now it is interesting to think that maybe, Bathsheba, for that was her name, should have been much more careful about where she decided to have a bath. Sometimes, sad to say, people who

know they are really good looking, tend to want to show off more than they should.

Many men have been tempted to sin either in thought or deed by a woman who was not careful to dress and act modestly. If we tempt others to sin, God holds us partly responsible for that sin. Maybe we didn’t mean to be a temptation, but each of us should be very careful that our words, deeds, or appearance are not making it easy for others to be tempted to do wrong.

David suddenly had a very wrong thought; he called a servant and asked who was that beautiful lady down there. He was told that it was Bathsheba, the WIFE of one of his best soldiers, Uriah the Hittite.

Now that should have stopped David in his tracks, here was the wife of one of his faithful men and he knew he should respect that and there should be the end of it all.

But Satan was quick to whisper, “Hey, you are the KING! You can have whatever you want, after all, her husband won’t be back for a while- you could at least invite her over for supper.”

The message was sent and the lady came. Now of course, people were used to obeying the King, but in this case Bathsheba should have refused and obeyed God instead. Maybe she was flattered that the King wanted her company. Sad to say relations happened between David and Bathsheba that should only happen between a man and his wife.

Thought – If David thought he had gotten away with something, he soon learned differently!

Wednesday

Text: 2 Samuel 11:6,7 “And David sent to Joab, saying, Send me Uriah the Hittite. And Joab sent Uriah to David. And when Uriah was come unto him, David demanded of him how Joab did, and how the people did, and how the war prospered.”

A few weeks later, David received the message that the lady was going to have a baby.

Now there was a problem as her husband had been away for months. David, still thinking that he could lie and cheat his way out of a bad spot, sent a message to ask for Uriah to come home and tell him how the battle was doing.

When he came and reported, then David told him to go home and see his wife. He even sent a lovely meal over for them to enjoy. But Uriah was the kind of man that David used to be, he was faithful, and he said, "I can't go home and visit my wife when all the rest of the men are out there fighting!" So he didn't go.

For two nights David kept him in Jerusalem, hoping he would go home and stay with his wife, but he would not go. So David did a cruel mean trick, and sent back a letter with Uriah to General Joab. This letter told the General to see to it that Uriah would get killed in the battle!

Now another man needed to choose between right and wrong. Joab knew that to do this was wrong, he should have refused to sin like this, but he too, decided to obey the king rather than do what God would have him to do.

Soon after that a terrible battle happened and because of setting Uriah up to be killed, he and others as well, died needlessly. The message came back to David, and he was relieved to think that now at least, he was off the hook.

He waited the proper time and then sent for Bathsheba and married her. Now remember that David already had lots of wives, he had no need to have more, in fact he should have only had one!

Foolish, foolish man, did he think that he could even fool God in heaven?

Thought – How quickly one sin leads to another when we have turned our eyes away from God and started indulging our selfish desires!

Thursday

Text: 2 Samuel 12:4-6 "And there came a traveller unto the rich man, and he spared to take of his own flock and of his own herd, to dress for the wayfaring man that was come unto him; but took the poor man's lamb, and dressed it for the man that was come to him. 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 fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity."

David, in his blindness thought all was settled now, but the thing he had done displeased God very much. God spoke to Nathan the Prophet and he rose early to hasten to the Kings court. He had a message to bring to David and was going to use a story to tell it.

When he appeared before David he told a story of a rich man who had many flocks of sheep, and a poor man that had one little pet lamb that he loved and cherished. He told how the rich man, when he needed a lamb to cook for some visitors, took the poor man's pet lamb and killed it for dinner.

David was irate, "How could he have been so mean!" he cried out, "He deserves to die for this and had no pity! He shall repay the lamb four times over!"

Solemnly Nathan looked at David and pronounced in a clear ringing voice, "Thou art the man!" Then he told in detail of the wicked crime David had done and how the Lord said that because he had done this, the sword would never depart from his house, he would have trouble for the rest of his life and so it certainly was! He told the words of the Lord where He reminded David of all He had done for him and all the wives and riches he already had. "If this were not enough for you", God said, "You could have

asked Me and I would have given you more!"

He also said that someone would take his wives and also that he would pay four times, just as he had said the man in the story should pay. But there was mercy too, if David would truly repent, he would not die.

The mercy of God is so great, David was forgiven, but still the results of his sin followed him the rest of his earthly life. The first repayment came when the baby boy that had been born to Bathsheba died. Later three more of David's sons died, the last one just before David died himself.

David's psalm of sorrow for his sin is Psalm 51, be sure to read it and see how truly sorry David was for his sin. Finally he was listening to God again and never again did he let pleasure-seeking come between him and God!

Thought – Sin can be forgiven, but there is no sin that does not bring sad bad effects into our lives! God does not perform a miracle to stop the results that come from our wrongdoing, but if we truly repent and turn from sin, He holds us up through our trials. We should never think that it is OK to sin as all we have to do is ask to be forgiven and it is all blotted out. Sins are NOT blotted out until the close of probation and the effects go on and on in our lives and the lives of others. Let us take hold of the Power of the Holy Spirit through the Name of Jesus and put away sin from our lives!

Friday

Text: Psalm 139:23,24 "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

When we begin to look to self and to our own pleasure and entertainment, we start to move away from the keeping power of the Holy Spirit. As soon as there is the least distance between our hearts and Jesus, Satan

pushes himself into the gap. As soon as he is there, he works to blind our eyes so that we do not see Jesus clearly any more.

When this happens we lose the ability to clearly tell right from wrong. We don't see our sins as being as evil and harmful as they really are. We begin to lie and blame others or excuse our sins. Satan is there to whisper that it is really perfectly all right to do this.

We hear things from people this is happening to such as; "Oh, I don't think that God would keep me out of heaven for such a little thing," or; "well I don't think it really matters", or "well, it isn't my fault, if they had not done such and such I would not have done this," "If I had a better time when I was growing up, I would not do this," "After all, it is the heart that matters, not the actions."

It goes on and on, it is really amazing the excuses a person can come up with when he has let Satan come between him and Jesus for the sake of some sinful habit or practice.

David was blinded by Satan into thinking that it was OK to do whatever he felt like doing, and he did not even see how terrible the thing was until he heard the story of Nathan. Nathan knew he was risking his life to carry this message to the King, but the truth needed to be spoken or David was a lost man.

Thought - If God had not sent His prophet to show David the truth about the sin he thought nobody knew about, David would not have been led to see and repent of his sin and would have been lost! We have a messenger in our day whose writings show us many hidden sins in our lives. Many people hate these writings as Ahab hated the true prophet: "There is yet one man, Micaiah the son of Imlah, by whom we may enquire of the LORD: but I hate him; for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil." 1Kings 22:8. The Lord loves us too much to lie to us and make us feel good about ourselves when we have sin in our lives! = ^ .. ^ =

Weekly Bible Lesson #8: "THE HANDSOME PRINCE"

MEMORY VERSE: "So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom." Psalm 90:12

Sunday

Text: Psalm 3:1,2 "LORD, how are they increased that trouble me! many are they that rise up against me. Many there be which say of my soul, There is no help for him in God."

David never forgot the terrible lesson of his fall into sin. But even though he had repented, and the Lord had forgiven him, the effects of that sin stayed with him. In himself he did not have the confidence in ruling that he had before. Also the people, including his own sons, did not have the same respect for him, that they had before. It seemed his sons thought that if their father could do as he pleased in regard to his desires, so could they.

Many used David's sin as an excuse for their own, overlooking the fact of his deep repentance and the trouble that came upon him because of the sin. Amazing, as it may seem, many people down through the ages including today, have used the sin of David as an excuse for their own. There is never any excuse for sinning. God's power is great enough to keep us and give us victory over all temptations. If we sin, it is our choice to do so.

David had a son named Amnon, and he decided that he would have what he wanted just like his father did. He planned a trick and a trap for one of his half sisters and took advantage of her.

Now as you know, David had several wives and so he had children who all had him for a father but they had different mothers. This was not a good idea and led to many problems.

So when this girl's full brother, Absalom, learned about what his half brother had done, he set a trap and made a party and invited his brothers and at the party he had

Amnon killed. The message came to David that all his sons were killed, but then he found out it was just Amnon. You see if David would have punished Amnon for his wicked deed, probably this sad event would not have happened but because of his great sin, he did not have the confidence to correct his son.

Absalom ran away to another country and stayed there for 3 years. David missed him but did not feel free to send for him to come back.

Thought - Sin never makes us happy. Remember this when temptations seem bright and desirable. It is like a Sodom Apple; it looks bright and tasty but when you bite it, it is full of a dry powder like ashes.

Monday

Text: 2 Samuel 14:24,25 "And the king said, Let him turn to his own house, and let him not see my face. So Absalom returned to his own house, and saw not the king's face. But in all Israel there was none to be so much praised as Absalom for his beauty: from the sole of his foot even to the crown of his head there was no blemish in him."

Joab managed to get David to agree to send for Absalom, but again he made another mistake, he said his son could return to Jerusalem but he was not going to see him or talk to him. This was not wise at all. For two whole years David refused to see Absalom or talk to him.

Finally Absalom decided to do something to get his father's attention; he had the field of barley that belonged to Joab, the king's general, burned. Finally David realized how unfair he was being and sent for Absalom and kissed him.

But there were some bad seeds of rebellion in Absalom's heart. He was a very handsome man and had a beautiful head of hair that all admired. The people learned to love this handsome prince. He got himself chariots and horses and had fifty men to go before him.

He would seat himself at the city gate and when people would come through who were planning to go to the King for help or judgment, he would get them to tell their story to him. Then he would tell them that it was very sad, but the king would not bother to help them. Now, if only he were king, then they would get the help they needed.

So more and more the people learned to love the handsome prince, and to wish that he were king instead of David. All the while, David thought his son was helping him with the work of ruling the kingdom.

Thought – Many people who are very good to look at can be tempted to have a problem with pride.

Tuesday

Text: 2 Samuel 11:2,3 “2Sa 15:10 But Absalom sent spies throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, As soon as ye hear the sound of the trumpet, then ye shall say, Absalom reigneth in Hebron.”

After years of this, the people were won over to thinking that they wanted Absalom to be king. When he thought all was ready, he asked his father if he could go to Hebron, which is where David was first crowned king. His father thought it was fine for him to go there as he thought Absalom just wanted to make a special act of worship.

David had no idea that Absalom was going to rebel and declare himself king. But the young man had sent secret messages all over Israel saying that when he had the trumpets blown at Hebron, they would know he was now king and they should all come out to help him fight against David.

When David got word of the rebellion, he

was surprised and shocked. But this was just another link in a long chain of things brought about because of his sin. Quickly David and his faithful servants made ready and fled from the palace.

No way did he want to see war in the city of Jerusalem and her streets full of blood, so he headed over the brook and out into the wilderness. As he fled, friends joined him and all at once they looked up and there was the high priest and his group coming to join them, carrying the ark of God.

David thanked them, but asked for them to return and not expose the ark of God for him. “If God will bless me,” David said, “he will bring me back, but if not, let God do what is right in His eyes.”

Thought – How it must have hurt David to have his own son who he trusted and loved, now hunting to kill him.

Wednesday

Text: 2 Samuel 15:30,31 “And David went up by the ascent of mount Olivet, and wept as he went up, and had his head covered, and he went barefoot: and all the people that was with him covered every man his head, and they went up, weeping as they went up. And one told David, saying, Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom. And David said, O LORD, I pray thee, turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness.”

“As the priests turned back toward Jerusalem a deeper shadow fell upon the departing throng. Their king a fugitive, themselves outcasts, forsaken even by the ark of God—the future was dark with terror and foreboding. “And David went up by the ascent of Mount Olivet, and wept as he went up, and had his head covered, and he went barefoot: and all the people that was with him covered every man his head, and they went up, weeping as they went up. And one told David, saying, Ahithophel is among the conspirators with Absalom.” Again David was forced to recognize in his calamities the results of

his own sin. The defection of Ahithophel, the ablest and most wily of political leaders, was prompted by revenge for the family disgrace involved in the wrong to Bathsheba, who was his granddaughter.” {PP 735.3}

David knew how clever that man was and realized that if he was advising Absalom, he would surely be defeated by his rebel son. He prayed that somehow the Lord would cause that this wise man’s advise to be made into foolishness.

Right after he had prayed that prayer, who should he see coming to join him but his old friend Hushai, with dirt on his head and his cloths torn in sorrow. He was coming to stay with his friend the king, no matter what happened.

Quickly David saw that God had provided an answer to his desperate prayer and he asked Hushai to go back, and pretend to join with Absalom, but to give advice that would help David to escape. He would also be able to send word back to David by the priests as to what Absalom was doing.

So he turned back to Jerusalem, while the king and his party of mourners pressed on towards the wilderness.

David was truly humbled in heart now as never before in his life, and we are told that as he fled, a man came out and began to curse him. What the man was saying was false, and one of David’s soldiers wanted to go and remove his head. But David humbly refused. “My son is trying to kill me, what more can that man do to me?” he asked.

Thought – David truly knew that he was suffering from the results of his sin. He did not complain of God’s dealings with him, but felt that He was very merciful to him.

Thursday

Text: 2 Samuel 16:1,2 “And when David was a little past the top of the hill, behold, Ziba the servant of Mephibosheth met him, with a couple of asses saddled, and upon them two hundred loaves of bread, and

an hundred bunches of raisins, and an hundred of summer fruits, and a bottle of wine. And the king said unto Ziba, What meanest thou by these? And Ziba said, The asses be for the king’s household to ride on; and the bread and summer fruit for the young men to eat; and the wine, that such as be faint in the wilderness may drink.”

Just when things were going very badly, David and his group saw a man coming with a pair of donkeys loaded with fruit, wine and bread. It was Ziba, the servant that took care of the lands that belonged to Mephibosheth.

“Why have you brought these things?” David asked him. Ziba told David that they were to help him, to give him donkeys for his family to ride on, and food to eat. David asked about Ziba’s master, and found out that another person had returned evil for the good David had done, because Mephibosheth had decided to stay in Jerusalem, hoping to get the kingdom of his grandfather Saul for himself. So even after all the kindness David had shown him, he repaid evil for good.

Ziba was concerned as he felt David had dealt most fairly with his master, and he wanted David to know he was on his side. David then declared that from then on, all the lands that Ziba had been caring for would be his own.

Now when Hushai got back to Jerusalem he went to Absalom and told him that he would help him. The proud young prince was flattered that a good friend of his father should come and work for him, and welcomed him.

The other counselor that David was so worried about had advised Absalom to gather his forces and go right away after David, and so catch him before he could get ready to fight back. Certainly if he had done this, David would have been defeated.

But Hushai advised Absalom to wait, reminding him what a great warrior his father was, and saying he ought to be fully ready before he would dare attack him. Absalom

was inclined to take his ease, and decided to follow that advise. After this, Ahithophel knew that sooner or later Absalom was going to loose, and so he went home and hanged himself.

Thought – So through the help of a good friend, David was able to safely make his escape.

Friday

Text: 2 Samuel 18:3-5 “But the people answered, Thou shalt not go forth: for if we flee away, they will not care for us; neither if half of us die, will they care for us: but now thou art worth ten thousand of us: therefore now it is better that thou succour us out of the city. And the king said unto them, What seemeth you best I will do. And the king stood by the gate side, and all the people came out by hundreds and by thousands. And the king commanded Joab and Abishai and Ittai, saying, Deal gently for my sake with the young man, even with Absalom. And all the people heard when the king gave all the captains charge concerning Absalom.”

David gathered his forces together after they had reached a safe place, and they made ready to fight against the rebels. David wanted to go with them, but they insisted that he not go, as the main aim of Absalom, was to kill his father. David asked all the men to please not be too hard on his son, whom he still loved.

The battle raged between David’s men and the forces of Absalom, and the more experienced warriors quickly scattered the troops of the rebels. God was helping David as well that day, because he had remained humble in his trial, and God was able to fight for him.

When things were going against him,

Absalom thought he had better get out of there, and began to ride his mule quickly through the woods. All at once as the animal raced forward under a large oak tree, the branches of the tree caught in the hair of Absalom, and he was pulled off his mule, and there he hung by his hair, unable to get down.

One of the soldiers found him there, but he would not dare to harm him, as he knew how much the king wanted him brought back alive. He told Joab, and he was not so particular to follow the request of David. Twice Joab had helped Absalom to make peace with his father, and he had only repaid him evil for good. He went to see the prince hanging in the tree. Then he and his guards killed the proud young prince.

Absalom had made a fancy pillar in the Kings Tombs, which he wanted to be for his monument, but now he was thrown into a pit in the woods and a huge pile of stones were piled over him, and there he was left in disgrace. Once the prince was dead, Joab called the army off, so that no more of the Israelites would be needlessly killed. They returned to the city where David was anxiously waiting.

When they came back, the first thing he wanted to know was if Absalom was safe and when he learned he was dead, he was so upset he didn’t care about anything else. Then the people of the army began to sneak into the city, as if they had done a great wrong. Seeing this, Joab went and talked to David and told him that if he did not show better consideration for those who had fought for him, they would not care to help him ever again.

“I am sure that if all of us were dead and only Absalom alive, you would be happy!” he said. Then David saw his mistake and came and praised his men and thanked them for standing by him.

Thought - So the hair that had been the young prince’s pride and glory became what destroyed him. = ^ .. ^ =

Weekly Bible Lesson #9: "SOLOMON, THE WISEST KING"

MEMORY VERSE: "Better is a poor and a wise child than an old and foolish king, who will no more be admonished." Ecclesiastes 4:13

Sunday

Text: 2 Samuel 20:1,2 "And there happened to be there a man of Belial, whose name was Sheba, the son of Bichri, a Benjamite: and he blew a trumpet, and said, We have no part in David, neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse: every man to his tents, O Israel. So every man of Israel went up from after David, and followed Sheba the son of Bichri: but the men of Judah clave unto their king, from Jordan even to Jerusalem."

Soon David was invited back to his palace in Jerusalem. First the tribe of Judah called for him to return. Many of those who had done him wrong begged forgiveness and David forgave them. Those who had helped David were rewarded. Mephibosheth came and told how he had wanted to go with David, but his servant had refused to saddle a donkey for him and had lied to David about him. So David said for Ziba and him to share the land.

Now when David returned, the ten tribes came up and they were offended that they had not been asked about David returning to Jerusalem, then a man named Sheba blew the trumpet in Israel and told everyone of the ten tribes to go home and not follow David any more.

The forces of David went to attack the city where this man was, but a wise woman in the city called out to Joab and ask why he should attack them for the sake of this man who had done wrong. Joab said if the man was turned over, then they would not attack the city. So it was that Sheba was executed and the war ended.

Remember the words of David when Nathan the prophet told him of his sin? David said that the man in the story should repay

four times. So far David had repaid three times. First the baby born to him and Bathsheba had died, then Amnon was killed by his brother, then Absalom died in the rebellion. There was one to go. This one did not happen until after David died.

Bathsheba had another baby boy who they called Solomon. God told them that he would be the next king and he would be the one to build the temple for God. Solomon was now a grown man. David did much to gather all the things that would be needed to build the temple and draw plans for it. These were shown to Solomon and he was to build the temple. God had promised that he would have peace during his reign and so would be able to concentrate on doing this great task.

Thought - Though God does not forsake those who choose to follow Him; sin continues to bring trials and suffering. However if we trust God and obey Him, He does work to bring good for us out of the trials.

Monday

Text: 1 Kings 1:11, 12 "Wherefore Nathan spake unto Bathsheba the mother of Solomon, saying, Hast thou not heard that Adonijah the son of Haggith doth reign, and David our lord knoweth it not? Now therefore come, let me, I pray thee, give thee counsel, that thou mayest save thine own life, and the life of thy son Solomon."

Although David had made all these plans for Solomon and the Temple, he had not done anything to make sure that Solomon would be the next king and so be able to do them. Now he was old and sick and didn't know much about what was going on.

One of his older sons, a brother of Absalom named Adonijah, decided that he

would make himself king. He invited everyone except the priest, the prophet, Solomon and, of course, his father. He blew the trumpets and announced himself king. Most of the people thought this was perfectly OK, and so they followed him.

Nathan the prophet knew it was not OK, so he went to see Bathsheba, the mother of Solomon and asked her to go and see David about this. He went also to see David and when David found out what had happened, he rose up and ordered for his royal mule to be taken and Solomon put on it.

The Priest and the Prophet anointed Solomon, and the trumpets were blown. "God save King Solomon!" the people shouted. The son of the priest went and told Joab and Adonijah that King David had declared Solomon to be the next king and that it was the will of God.

The people with Adonijah quickly went away to their home and Adonijah himself hurried to the sanctuary where he took hold of the horns of the altar. This meant he was looking for mercy.

Solomon asked him to be brought before him and he said if he would be faithful to Solomon and not make trouble, he would not be harmed. Sadly, just after David died, Adonijah did show he was plotting to become king, and he was executed. This was number four of the repayment.

Thought – Notice that these four deaths, except maybe the first one, were not the direct doing of God, but the result of foolishness and wickedness in the sons of David, but they were triggered by the sin of David.

Tuesday

Text: 1 Kings 2:45 "And king Solomon shall be blessed, and the throne of David shall be established before the LORD for ever."

Solomon was inclined to let the ones his father had warned him about live in peace if

they did not do any wicked plotting against him, however they did - and so one by one they were executed until those who had done wickedness were removed from the kingdom. Then Solomon had peace round about.

You see, when wickedness is not punished, the curse of God rests on a nation or group. Even in a family, if the parents do not correct their children and teach them to obey God-trouble comes on that family.

Why? Is it because God is just sitting up there looking for a reason to get angry? No, nothing could be further from the truth. The truth is that God WANTS to protect and bless all of His children, but when they disobey Him and do wrong, it leaves a door open for Satan and his nasty bunch to come in and attack. He is only too glad to get the chance to make trouble. God can only fully protect us when we are fully choosing to obey Him. He provides the strength for us to obey- but we have to make the choice.

One of the things that Solomon did early in his reign was to go to Gibeon and make a really big offering to God. He truly wanted to do right and obey God and honor Him so he gave an offering fit for a king.

That night the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream, and asked him what he wanted the Lord to give to him. The answer Solomon gave showed he was humble and truly wanted to do right. Instead of asking for riches and honor, or a long life, Solomon asked God to give him wisdom to judge the people wisely.

"Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people?"
1 Kings 3:9

Thought – God was pleased with Solomon's humble request and promised to give him not only wisdom, but also riches and honor as well, so that there would never be another king as great as he was.

Wednesday

Text: 1 Kings 3:17,18 “And the one woman said, O my lord, I and this woman dwell in one house; and I was delivered of a child with her in the house. And it came to pass the third day after that I was delivered, that this woman was delivered also: and we were together; there was no stranger with us in the house, save we two in the house.”

It was not long before the special wisdom that God had given to Solomon began to become known throughout the land and even in other lands.

One day there came a special case before the king. Two women lived together in one house and both of them had a baby around the same time. One of the women accidentally lay on her baby in the night and it died.

When she woke up and saw her baby was dead, she did a mean trick and took the other lady's baby, and put her dead baby beside the sleeping woman. When the other lady woke up she was very sad as at first she thought her baby was dead. But as she looked she saw that the other lady, really had her baby, and it was the live one.

They fought and quarreled but the other lady would not return the living baby to its own mother and kept claiming it was hers. In they went before King Solomon to get him to figure out which lady was telling the truth.

He listened to the story and then he said a most horrible thing. He told his guard to bring a sword, and then take the live baby and cut it in half and give half to each mother!

Right away the real mother cried out, “Oh, No! Let her have the live child, do not kill it!” but the dishonest woman said, “Very good, let it be neither her's nor mine but divide it!”

Then Solomon gave the baby to its real mother as he then knew the real mother was the one who did not want to see the baby hurt.

Thought – This story of the wise judgment of the two women soon went all over and people were amazed at the wisdom of Solomon.

Thursday

Text: 1 Kings 4:32-34 “And he spake three thousand proverbs: and his songs were a thousand and five. And he spake of trees, from the cedar tree that is in Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall: he spake also of beasts, and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fishes. And there came of all people to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all kings of the earth, which had heard of his wisdom.”

Solomon was the wisest man that ever lived. No living person today can come close to knowing as much as Solomon did. He studied nature and scriptures and every kind of science. Under his rule the land was rich in everything, wonderful buildings were made and people came from far and wide just to see for themselves this amazing king and learn about his God.

Solomon wrote three books of the Bible and we find his wisdom in them; Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and the Song of Solomon, sometimes called ‘Canticles’.

If you read in the Bible in 1 Kings 4-10, you will be amazed at the tremendous wealth of King Solomon. No kingdom since has ever come close to Israel under the rule of Solomon.

Now here we have the wisest man that ever lived, and he was also the richest man and highly honored too. At first he was humble and really wanted to obey the Lord. If he had always done this, things would have been wonderful for him and for Israel.

But Solomon began to do something very unwise. First he married a daughter of King Pharaoh of Egypt. This woman was not a worshipper of the true God. Solomon should not have married her, but he loved and admired her beauty so much, that he did it

anyway.

No doubt he thought that he was much too smart to ever be turned away from God by a woman. But Satan knew better, and he rejoiced when Solomon turned from obeying God and married a heathen wife.

Thought – Sin makes foolish even the smartest man. Only in the commandments of God is there real wisdom.

Friday

Text: “1 Kings 11:1-3 “But king Solomon loved many strange women, ...Of the nations concerning which the LORD said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall not go in to them, neither shall they come in unto you: for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods: Solomon clave unto these in love. And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines: and his wives turned away his heart.”

Solomon is famous for having built the Temple of God and we will learn about that next week. He built a wonderful palace for himself, in addition to the temple that David had planned. He also made a beautiful house for his wife, the daughter of Pharaoh.

Now it was all bad enough that Solomon married one heathen woman, but he did not stop there. Oh No! He made all kinds of leagues and treaties with other nations and they sent their beautiful daughters to him as part of the deals and Solomon married them.

Soon he had wives of all different heathen religions. Wives that worshipped Baal, wives that worshipped Chemosh, wives that worshipped Molech, and even Ashtoreth.

Solomon had seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines (A concubine is sort of a second-class wife). And most of

them were heathen princesses.

I am sure that Satan blinded Solomon into thinking that because he was the wisest man; he would not be led astray by having these heathen wives. Other people might be, but he would not. It was just like a collection, he seemed to want samples of every kind of religion.

Solomon did not insist that his wives stop worshipping their idols and worship the True God, and so the idols and priests of all these heathen religions were all brought into Israel, right into the capital city!

First one wife wanted a temple to worship her god, and then another wanted one and so on. Then they all wanted him to join them and take part in the feasts and ceremonies. Soon he began to take part in the heathen rituals of these wives and worshiped idols.

Horrible as it is to say, Solomon actually got so caught up in all this heathen worship that eventually he would even offer his own children to some of these horrid idols!!

And all the time Israel was seeing these heathen feasts and rituals being practiced right alongside the Temple of God. Soon it did not seem to matter what god you worshipped, after all, Solomon’s wives worshipped them and all the heathen idols were now in the capital city. The seeds were sown by Solomon, which finally led to the destruction of Israel.

Thought - How could such a wise man become such a fool? Sin makes anyone foolish- don’t ever think you are too smart to be caught in Satan’s snares. Even the wisest man that ever lived was seduced away from the God that had blessed him so much and into terrible sin by heathen women. = ^ .. ^ =

Weekly Bible Lesson #10: "THE GREAT TEMPLE"

MEMORY VERSE: "Exalt ye the LORD our God, and worship at his footstool; for he is holy." Psalm 99:5

Sunday

Text: 1 Kings 5:5 "And, behold, I purpose to build an house unto the name of the LORD my God, as the LORD spake unto David my father, saying, Thy son, whom I will set upon thy throne in thy room, he shall build an house unto my name."

As we learned last week, Solomon at first when he became King, was determined to do what was right. As soon as his kingdom was settled, after four years, he got busy to carry out the words of his father David to build the wonderful Temple for the worship of God. The building of the temple took seven years.

David had drawn plans and laid up a lot of material that was to be used to build and now Solomon asked Hiram, king of Tyre, and he sent many great cedar logs from the forests at Lebanon to go into the building. Solomon gave him food in exchange for the logs.

They fastened the logs together in great rafts and floated them down from Lebanon to Israel. Solomon ordered 30,000 men to serve in the work of cutting and shipping these logs for the temple. The men went 10,000 at a time for one month and then they came home for two months while the other ten thousands went.

Many men were also busy making ready the place where the temple was to be built and building retaining walls and great foundations. The temple was to be built on Mount Moriah. This was the very mountain where Abraham had offered his son Isaac.

Solomon had thousands and thousands of men all at work on the different jobs of making the foundation and preparing the stones and wood for the building. It was a very busy time. The people were happy as

they worked to build the Temple.

Thought - The Temple became known as Solomon's Temple, not God's Temple. Why was this? It was because of what Solomon did later on in exalting himself and disobeying God.

Monday

Text: 1 Kings 8:54-56 "And it was so, that when Solomon had made an end of praying all this prayer and supplication unto the LORD, he arose from before the altar of the LORD, from kneeling on his knees with his hands spread up to heaven. And he stood, and blessed all the congregation of Israel with a loud voice, saying, Blessed be the LORD, that hath given rest unto his people Israel, according to all that he promised: there hath not failed one word of all his good promise, which he promised by the hand of Moses his servant."

When the temple was finished, Solomon held a great gathering and the Ark was carefully brought up from the sanctuary to the Most Holy Place in the Temple. When it was placed in there, the Cloud of the Lord's presence did come into the Most Holy Place and the priests had to go out because they could not stay there because of the cloud.

Then Solomon went up onto a special platform there he kneeled down and prayed to God the dedication prayer. How solemn and earnest were his words that day and He called upon God to bless the people and to be merciful and forgive them when they would pray to Him in the temple. He also asked God to bless the strangers from other lands who would learn to worship the true God of Heaven.

When we pray to God, we should always

kneel before Him to show our respect, standing to pray, or standing in a circle holding hands, is not the way to honor God properly. Solomon knelt during his prayer and afterwards stood to pronounce a blessing on the people. You can read his wonderful prayer in 1 Kings 8.

“Now when Solomon had made an end of praying, the fire came down from heaven, and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of the LORD filled the house.” 2 Chronicles 7:1

After that there was a wonderful time of gladness. What a huge celebration it was; “And Solomon offered a sacrifice of peace offerings, which he offered unto the LORD, two and twenty thousand oxen, and an hundred and twenty thousand sheep. So the king and all the children of Israel dedicated the house of the LORD.” These were dedicated to the Lord but were also used to provide a large feast for the people that lasted for two whole weeks.

Thought – It would have indeed been a wonderful witness to God’s glory had Solomon always remained true to the Lord. As people would come to see the wonderful temple, they would learn about the services which told about a Saviour to come and how by faith in this coming Saviour, sins could be forgiven. As people came to Solomon to learn about His great wisdom, he could have told them the truth about the God of Heaven Who had blessed Solomon with this wisdom and greatness. Others would have wanted to follow God too and the temple would have been God’s temple. It would have stood for all times and we would have been able to see it today.

Tuesday

Text: 1 Kings 9:4-7 “And if thou wilt walk before me, as David thy father walked, in integrity of heart, and in uprightness, to do according to all that I have commanded thee, and wilt keep my statutes and my

judgments: Then I will establish the throne of thy kingdom upon Israel for ever, as I promised to David thy father, saying, There shall not fail thee a man upon the throne of Israel. But if ye shall at all turn from following me, ye or your children, and will not keep my commandments and my statutes which I have set before you, but go and serve other gods, and worship them: Then will I cut off Israel out of the land which I have given them; and this house, which I have hallowed for my name, will I cast out of my sight; and Israel shall be a proverb and a byword among all people.”

It is good to read all of what God said to Solomon when He spoke again to him when the temple was finished. God knew that already Solomon was gradually turning away his heart from serving God to pride and selfishness. God knew what would happen as a result of the wrongs that Solomon had already started to do and the wrongs he would do.

God told Solomon that if the people of Israel turned away from serving God, they would eventually be destroyed and so would the temple be burned and destroyed. People would hiss and be astonished and want to know why it had happened and they would say, “This has happened because the people of God turned away from following and obeying God!”

God knew that the people would follow their king and turn their hearts away from God also. The warning God gave Solomon needs to be read and thought of by each one of us. God deals the same with His people now as He did then. If we are willing and obey God, He can and will bless us, but if we turn away and serve ourselves and our own ideas, we will eventually be destroyed just like the great Temple that was one of the wonders of the world!

Our God is the same yesterday, today and always. If we have a humble and teachable

spirit and obey His Word, then He does bless us and is with us. If only Solomon would have listened and stopped doing the things that he was starting to do in pride and disobedience to God!

Thought – Always remember that God’s blessings are not found in great riches and wealth and luxury, as He knows that such things are not good for us. But He blesses with power to live a good and useful life, and joy and peace in the heart. These blessings even all the riches of the world cannot buy.

Wednesday

Text: 1 Kings 3: 7:13,14 “And king Solomon sent and fetched Hiram out of Tyre. He was a widow’s son of the tribe of Naphtali, and his father was a man of Tyre, a worker in brass: and he was filled with wisdom, and understanding, and cunning to work all works in brass. And he came to king Solomon, and wrought all his work.”

Even in the very building of the Temple, Solomon made a mistake that would cause trouble even down through the ages. Remember the story of how the first sanctuary was built in the wilderness by Israel under the Lord’s instructions? Well at that time, God gave special knowledge and wisdom to two men of Israel, so they could make the special furniture and so on for the sanctuary.

After the job was done, God did not take away the special gift, and these men and their children after them were famous in the world for being able to do wonderful work in metals and other crafts.

At first these men remained humble and used their gift to bless others. But after a while they began to charge very high wages for their work and soon a spirit of moneymaking drowned out the good of the gift God had given them.

Now already Solomon was starting to fail to ask guidance from God as much as he did at first. When he wanted a man to make the special work for the temple, he did not

remember to ask God, whom he should choose. Instead he sent to a heathen nation and hired a man who, though he was a descendant of one of these two men, was a heathen.

This man was Hiram, (sometimes written Hiram) and he was not a worshipper of the True God. He should not have been allowed to work on the Temple. God only likes people to do His work who love to do it, because they love to serve him. But this man demanded huge amounts of money to do the work. He did not care that it would be a privilege to even work for free on the House of God!

Soon the selfishness and pride of this man began to spread to the other workers. Soon this group demanded high wages or they would go on strike. Then another group demanded. Instead of the wonderful temple being built by people who loved to serve God, it was being built by selfish people who only wanted to get what they could out of the king. This spirit has remained even down to our day in the hearts of men who do not love to serve the Lord.

Thought – So it ended up to be Solomon’s Temple and not God’s, even though at first, God did accept it.

Thursday

Text: Matthew 21:42 “Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord’s doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?”

An interesting object lesson happened in the building of the Temple. It was a story that Jesus later used to teach the people. As we have said, the stones and logs for the building, were all to be prepared ahead of time, so when the temple was actually built, it was to go together like a giant Lego set. There was to be no noise of hammers or saws as it was built.

Imagine how carefully they had to number the pieces and prepare them according to the plans or they just would not fit. The stones were huge that were to be used in the foundation. In fact, a few of them are still standing today in what is called 'the Wailing Wall' in Jerusalem, where the Jews like to come and pray.

As they were putting the foundation together, there with the stones brought from the quarry was a strangely shaped stone of great size. The workers could not figure out where it was supposed to go. It did not seem to fit anywhere, so they pushed it to one side and kept on building. For a long time it was an annoyance as it was just in the way.

Then there came a time when they found they needed a very special stone to make the corner. It had to be very strong and large as it had to bear all the great weight of the building and hold it together.

If they chose a stone not strong enough the whole building could fall down! They searched and tested stones but none were right for the job. Some just crumbled when great weight was put on them, others would crack when the sun and the frost came.

Then somebody remembered the rejected stone. They brought it to the place and tested it. Sure enough, it was found to fit perfectly and could bear all the weight needed.

In this real happening, God had left an object lesson pointing to Jesus. When He would come to earth, He would be rejected as someone who just did not fit anywhere in worldly ideas.

But for those who will accept Him, they find He is the one on which they can safely build their whole lives and their hope for Salvation. The stone rejected became the most important stone of all!

Thought – Jesus is the Sure Foundation Stone. If we surrender to Him we will find Him a safe refuge from all trouble. Those who reject Him will one day perish in their sins.

Friday

Text: 1 Kings 6:12-14 **“Concerning this house which thou art in building, if thou wilt walk in my statutes, and execute my judgments, and keep all my commandments to walk in them; then will I perform my word with thee, which I spake unto David thy father: And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will not forsake my people Israel. So Solomon built the house, and finished it.”**

God richly blessed Solomon as long as he was willing and obedient. If only Solomon would have always stayed obedient to the Lord, then Israel would have been the greatest nation on earth and people from the entire world would have learned about the True God of Heaven from Israel, and His fame would have been everywhere.

Israel was very large in the time of Solomon and great caravans were constantly passing through from the east and west. God had placed Israel where all the world's traffic tended to come through it. He had also given to Solomon a Missionary Spirit, to desire to give the knowledge of the Lord's Truth to all the world's people.

Gradually though, Satan was able to change the missionary spirit into a desire to make money and do business. Solomon built great, strong cities where the caravans had to pass so he could make money off them.

Many years before, through the Prophet Moses, God had left warnings for anyone who should become a ruler or king in Israel. You can find these rules in Deuteronomy 17:17-20. Any king was supposed to have them handy and read and follow them always.

Solomon knew these rules, and when he obeyed them, all went well. But bit-by-bit he began to break these rules. One rule was that the king should not have a lot of wives, and everyone knew that no Israelite was to marry

a person from a heathen religion. Nor was he to have lots of horses and chariots. Neither was he to get involved in gathering up riches and money. He was not to think that just because he was a king, that he was better than the people he ruled. All were to be equal in Israel. The King's job was to serve the people.

First Satan led Solomon to make a deal with Egypt and marry the Princess. It seemed to him that he had gotten away with breaking God's rules, as the Princess did become a worshipper of God. But soon Solomon was marrying more heathen wives and breaking all the rules God had laid down for kings!

Ever so slowly Solomon was led from worshipping the True God, to the place where he was bowing down to heathen idols. How Satan was laughing at that! How terribly did this affect the entire nation as well. If the

King, who was known to be so wise, would take part in heathen feasts and worship, the people thought it must be OK for them to do it too. Can you see why we must NEVER look to another human being to guide us as to what is right?

Finally God declared that the kingdom would be taken from Solomon and his family and given to a servant. But because of His promise to David, he would let 2 tribes remain under David's descendants.

Thought - It is so sad that Israel was only great for a very few years, then by insisting on disobeying God, they lost His blessing. We can only be truly blessed if we fully trust and obey God. It is not huge and costly buildings that really honor God. People who love and serve Him with a humble heart honor Him much more than all the riches of Solomon. Character is Heaven's wealth.
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Weekly Bible Lesson #11: "THE SORROW OF SIN"

MEMORY VERSE: "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." Ecclesiastes 12:13

Sunday

Text: 1 Kings 11:6-8 "And Solomon did evil in the sight of the LORD, and went not fully after the LORD, as did David his father. Then did Solomon build an high place for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab, in the hill that is before Jerusalem, and for Molech, the abomination of the children of Ammon. And likewise did he for all his strange wives, which burnt incense and sacrificed unto their gods."

As we learned, Solomon at first when he became King, was determined to do what was right. Twice God appeared to him. Each time God promised him blessings IF he would obey Him, but He warned of what would happen if he did not.

Slowly Solomon's heart turned away from God. So many people came to admire him

and his work and to bring gifts and flatter him with their words. Each time Solomon chose to do something that God had warned not to do, the gap between him and God became larger.

As the distance between him and God grew larger, Satan pressed in more and more with his temptations and soon Solomon did not bother to seek God in prayer any more or to serve Him. It is interesting that as soon as we turn away from doing what we know is right, even a little, the devil pushes in so it becomes harder to see God and we lose all desire to serve Him.

Little by little Solomon left the Lord and soon he was worshipping with his heathen wives the evil gods of Ashtoreth, Molech and Chemosh. He burned incense to them and offered sacrifices, even some of his own children to these senseless idols.

How could the wisest man be so stupid

as to do this? It is important to remember that Solomon's wisdom came from God, and when he left God he may have still been smart but he was certainly not wise.

The more light we have, if we turn away from it, the more darkness we will have in our lives. When an angel sins; he becomes a devil. When a man who knew God turns away-he becomes lost in terrible darkness.

Thought - If you ever feel that you don't want to pray or worship God, that is the very time you must turn to God in prayer right away, as this is the sign you are losing your hold on the Lord and Satan is coming between.

Monday

Text: 1 Kings 11:9-11 "And the LORD was angry with Solomon, because his heart was turned from the LORD God of Israel, which had appeared unto him twice, And had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods: but he kept not that which the LORD commanded. Wherefore the LORD said unto Solomon, Forasmuch as this is done of thee, and thou hast not kept my covenant and my statutes, which I have commanded thee, I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and will give it to thy servant."

Solomon learned the emptiness of a life that seeks in earthly things its highest good. He made altars to heathen gods, only to learn their promise of rest to the spirit is only a lie. Gloomy and fearful thoughts troubled him night and day. For him there was no longer any joy in life or peace of mind, and the future was dark with despair.

Yet the Lord did not leave him entirely to the path he had chosen. God sent messages of reproof and allowed stern judgments to come on him. So He tried to wake the king up to see the sinfulness of his course. He removed His protecting care and allowed

enemies to harass and weaken the kingdom. "The Lord stirred up an adversary unto Solomon, Hadad the Edomite. . . . And God stirred him up another adversary, Rezon, . . . captain over a band," who "abhorred Israel, and reigned over Syria. And Jeroboam, . . . Solomon's servant," "a mighty man of valor," "even he lifted up his hand against the king." 1 Kings 11:14-28

Finally, the day came when God sent a messenger to Solomon. The prophet delivered to Solomon the startling message: "Forasmuch as this is done of thee, and thou hast not kept My covenant and My statutes, which I have commanded thee, I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and will give it to thy servant. Notwithstanding in thy days I will not do it for David thy father's sake: but I will rend it out of the hand of thy son." Verses 11, 12.

Solomon woke up, as from a dream by this sentence of the judgment against him and his house. He began to see his folly in its true light. Very sorry and with mind and body enfeebled, he turned away from the empty and foolish pleasures of sin and worldliness, to drink once more at the fountain of life. For him at last the discipline of suffering had done its work. For a long time he had the fear of utter ruin because he had no power in himself to turn from his sin and folly.

In the message of the prophet, he saw the mercy of God and realized that the door was still open for him to return to God and repent. He took hold of the ray of hope. God had not utterly cut him off, but stood ready to deliver him from bondage more cruel than the grave, and from which he had had no power to free himself.

Thought - Remember this, sin may look bright and attractive, but once we get into it, we are held by it like being in a cruel trap. It does no good to try and use our own strength and ideas to break free; only God can set us free from the chains of sin.

Tuesday

Text: Ecclesiastes 2:9-11 “So I was great, and increased more than all that were before me in Jerusalem: also my wisdom remained with me. And whatsoever mine eyes desired I kept not from them, I withheld not my heart from any joy; for my heart rejoiced in all my labour: and this was my portion of all my labour. Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do: and, behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun.”

When a man who had known the Lord like Solomon had, turns away to darkness, very rarely does he ever turn back. It is more common for people who are in darkness and then they learn about God and turn to the light, there is more hope for them. But when a man sins against what he knows to be right -this is almost hopeless.

But Solomon DID repent and he repented with all his heart. He came back to the Lord and did all that he could to undo the evil that his example before the people had caused. In his old age he wrote books to try to instruct the people away from the folly and sin he had been involved in.

He wrote some psalms and the wonderful books of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and the mysterious poem, the Song of Solomon, which is sort of a prophetic story about Jesus.

If a person is truly sorry and repents of his sins, he will not have the attitude—“Oh well, God forgave me, I can forget all about what I did.” Oh no! He will repent more and more as the Holy Spirit shows him more of the terribleness of sin and its ongoing results and he will try with all his might to undo the damage his sin has caused to others and the Name of the Lord.

We can never fully undo what our sin has done, but if we don't even care enough to try,

it is a sure sign that we have NOT really returned to God and we are NOT really forgiven or born again!

Thought – It is a good lesson to read the entire story in Ecclesiastes. There is so much to be learned from Solomon's return from folly.

Wednesday

Text: Proverbs 21:9 and 25:24 “It is better to dwell in a corner of the housetop, than with a brawling woman in a wide house.

It is better to dwell in the corner of the housetop, than with a brawling woman and in a wide house.”

It is most interesting to read the Proverbs and Ecclesiastes and at the same time remember the lessons Solomon learned the hard way. There is no real happiness in disobeying God.

Notice these two texts, there is several places where Solomon tells us that it is better to be poor than to have wealth and trouble and fighting going on around you. And without God ruling in our hearts, we will always have fighting and trouble, because we have no power in ourselves to stop it.

No money can buy peace of mind and heart, but anyone who truly gives their heart to the Lord and chooses in His power to always obey Him, will have that priceless treasure. Notice these words from a song:

Had I wealth and love in fullest measure,
And a name revered both far and near,
Yet no hope beyond, no harbor waiting,
Where my storm-tossed vessel I could steer;
If I gained the world, but not the Saviour,
Who endured the cross and died for me,
Could then all the world afford a refuge,
Whither in my anguish, I might flee?

O What emptiness!— without the Saviour
'Mid the sins and sorrows here below!
And eternity, how dark without Him!
Only night and tears and endless woe!
What, tho' I might live without the Savior,

When I come to die, how would it be?
 O to face the valley's gloom without Him!
 And without Him all eternity!

Thought – In Jesus we have everything; without Him we have nothing worth having!

Thursday

Text: Galatians 6:7 21:42 “Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.”

Solomon's repentance was real; but the harm that his example of evil-doing had done could not be undone. During his apostasy there were in the kingdom men who remained true to their trust, maintaining their purity and loyalty. But many were led astray; and the forces of evil started by bringing in idolatry and worldly practices could not easily be stopped by the penitent king.

His influence for good was greatly weakened. Many felt they could not trust his leadership. Though the king confessed his sin and wrote out for the benefit of after generations a record of his folly and repentance, he could never hope entirely to destroy the bad influence of his wrong deeds.

Using the king's sins as an excuse, many continued to do evil, and evil only. And in the downward course of many of the rulers who followed him we see the results of turning to sin.

In great sorrow as he thought on the evil of his course, Solomon had to declare, “Wisdom is better than weapons of war: but one sinner destroyeth much good.” “There is an evil which I have seen under the sun, as an error which proceedeth from the ruler: folly is set in great dignity.” “Dead flies cause the ointment of the apothecary to send forth a stinking savor: so doth a little folly him that is in reputation for wisdom and honor.” Ecclesiastes 9:18; 10: 5, 6, 1.

Among the many lessons taught by Solomon's life, none is stronger than the power of influence for good or for ill. However small our circle of family and friends,

we still have an influence for good or bad. Even if we don't see it, it affects others in blessing or cursing. It may be heavy with the gloom of discontent and selfishness, or poisonous with the deadly taint of some cherished sin; or it may have the life-giving power of faith, courage, and hope, and be sweet with the fragrance of love. But one way or another the influence will be there!

People can be lost because of the effects of our example. As the seed sown produces a harvest, and this in turn is sown, the harvest is multiplied. In our relation to others, this law holds true. Every act, every word, is a seed that will bear fruit. Every deed of thoughtful kindness, of obedience, of self-denial, will reproduce itself in others, and through them in still others. So every act wrong deed and selfish word is a seed that will spring up to be a weed to harm yourself and others. Then their example will affect more and so on. Thus the sowing of good and evil goes on for time and for eternity. {adapted from PK 86.2}

Thought – Be sure to pray to Jesus to show you what your influence on others is and to give you power to make it tell for the good.

Friday

Text: Ecclesiastes 12:1 “Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them.”

Solomon's later writings show that as he realized more and still more the wickedness of his course, he gave special attention to warning the youth against falling into the errors that had led him to waste Heaven's choicest gifts.

With sorrow and shame he confessed that in the prime of manhood, when he should have found God his comfort, his support, his life, he turned from the light of Heaven and the wisdom of God, and put idolatry in

the place of the worship of Jehovah. And now, having learned through sad experience the folly of such a life, his yearning desire was to save others from entering into the bitter experience through which he had passed.

With touching sadness he wrote concerning the privileges and responsibilities before the youth in God's service: "Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun: but if a man live many years, and rejoice in them all; yet let him remember the days of darkness; for they shall be many. All that cometh is vanity. Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment. Therefore remove sorrow from thy heart, and put away evil from thy flesh: for childhood and youth are vanity." Ecclesiastes 11:7-10.

Those who listen to the warning of Solomon's apostasy will shun the first approach of those sins that overcame him. Only obedience to the requirements of Heaven will keep man from turning away from God. God has given to us great light and many blessings; but unless this light and these blessings are accepted, they can't protect against

disobedience and apostasy. When those whom God has given places of high trust turn from Him to human wisdom, their light becomes darkness. Their abilities become a snare.

Till the conflict is ended, there will be those who will depart from God. Satan will so shape circumstances that unless we are kept by divine power, they will ever so slowly weaken the protection of the soul. We need to ask at every step, "Is this the way of the Lord?" So long as life shall last, we need to be guarding the affections and the passions with a firm purpose. Not one moment can we be safe except as we rely upon God, the life hidden with Christ. Watchfulness and prayer are the safeguards of purity. {adapted from PK 83.-84}

Thought - Young people, there are many wrong and wicked attitudes around us these days. One of them is that the young should do whatever they please and 'have a good time', and then later on when you get old, then you can ask to be forgiven and still be saved. Solomon did repent, and he will be saved, but Oh how terrible were the results of his sin, both in his life and the others around him! And oh how many youth never live to get older; and even when they do, they are broken in mind and health, and often even then they still have no wish to repent.

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Weekly Bible Lesson #12: "THE KINGDOM DIVIDED"

MEMORY VERSE: "Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honour the face of the old man, and fear thy God: I am the LORD." Leviticus 19:32

Sunday

Text: 1 Kings 11:28-31 "And the man Jeroboam was a mighty man of valour: and Solomon seeing the young man that he was industrious, he made him ruler over all the charge of the house of Joseph. And it came to pass at that time when Jeroboam went out of Jerusalem, that the prophet Ahijah the Shilonite found him in the way; and he had clad himself with a new garment; and they two were alone in the field: And Ahijah caught the new garment that was on him, and rent it in twelve pieces: And he said to Jeroboam, Take thee ten pieces: for thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, Behold, I will rend the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon, and will give ten tribes to thee."

Last week we learned how as Solomon turned from obeying God and went all the way into heathen idolatry, that The Lord sent a message to him that the kingdom would be taken from his family and given to his servant. However the Lord was so merciful to Solomon and said it would be taken from his son, and part of it would still be left with the house of David, for the sake of His promise to David.

There was a man in the house of Solomon who was a servant there and the son of a servant. His name was Jeroboam. He was a hard worker and wise and Solomon had already made him a governor over the tribes of Joseph's sons.

One day as he was walking in the field, the prophet of God came up and took a new garment and tore it into twelve pieces. Then he told Jeroboam to take ten of those pieces. He was to be king over ten of the tribes of Israel, but this was not to happen until Solomon was dead.

God told Jeroboam the same as he told all the kings, "If you will obey me and walk in my commandments, I will bless you and be with you and your family will be kings after you."

However Jeroboam was not the type to just wait around, he began to stir up trouble for Solomon. Solomon learned that Jeroboam was the one God was going to give Israel to and he tried to kill him just like Saul had tried to kill David. Jeroboam fled into Egypt and did not return until Solomon died.

Thought - The results of our deeds come back on us sooner or later.

Monday

Text: 1 Kings 11:43 "Solomon slept with his fathers, and was buried in the City of David his father: and Rehoboam his son reigned in his stead."

Rehoboam was the one of the sons of Solomon, which he had chosen to reign after him. He was the son of an Ammonite Princess and had been surrounded by idolatry as he was growing up.

Later after Solomon repented and turned back to God, he tried to teach his son the right ways and to undo the effects of the idol worship from him and teach him the ways of the God of heaven.

But because of Solomon's own sins, Rehoboam was not much interested in listening to his father preach to him. He did not have any strength to his character. He would worship God for a while, but then would sink back into the heathen worship he learned from his mother.

He also had grown up in the richest palace in the world! He liked luxury and selfish pleasure. He had the idea that to be King

was to have his own way in everything. But God intended Kings to be the servants of the people and look out for their best interest, not their own.

Thought – The way children are first taught when they are young has a very strong power over them. If you were taught right, be happy! If not, don't give up, just ask God to help you overcome and if you make a firm choice to serve Him, He will teach you His ways!

Tuesday

Text: 1 Kings 12:1-4 “And Rehoboam went to Shechem: for all Israel were come to Shechem to make him king. And it came to pass, when Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who was yet in Egypt, heard of it, (for he was fled from the presence of king Solomon, and Jeroboam dwelt in Egypt;) That they sent and called him. And Jeroboam and all the congregation of Israel came, and spake unto Rehoboam, saying, Thy father made our yoke grievous: now therefore make thou the grievous service of thy father, and his heavy yoke which he put upon us, lighter, and we will serve thee.”

It is important to notice that even though God had said ten of the tribes of Israel would be taken away from Solomon's house, still Rehoboam was given a chance and a choice. If he had been a wise man serving the Lord, he would have kept the kingdom.

Solomon had been such a rich king, and he had money and goods coming into him from all over the world. He had more than anyone could ever want. And yet when he went into devil worship, the blessing of God was partly removed and he did not prosper.

Also, he went into great expense as he built all these temples and shrines and idols for his wicked wives and himself to worship. Pagan idolatry is always an expensive business as the huge feasts and entertainments and all the heathen priests and so on cost a

king's fortune.

It was not long before Solomon began to take money most unfairly from the people of his kingdom. He set up taxes and more taxes until the people became poor to support his luxury and he did not care.

He passed laws and made the people of the land do so much work for him that they hardly had time to care for their own lands and families! The king that had been wise and gracious became cruel and hard hearted. The people mourned for the selfishness of the king.

Thought – Remember what God had told Samuel to tell the people when they wanted a king? Well it all came true to the letter! (see 1 Samuel 8:9-18)

Wednesday

Text: 1 Kings 12:6-8 “And king Rehoboam consulted with the old men, that stood before Solomon his father while he yet lived, and said, How do ye advise that I may answer this people? And they spake unto him, saying, If thou wilt be a servant unto this people this day, and wilt serve them, and answer them, and speak good words to them, then they will be thy servants for ever. But he forsook the counsel of the old men, which they had given him, and consulted with the young men that were grown up with him, and which stood before him.”

The people of Israel now came to King Rehoboam and they asked him honestly if he would make the burden that Solomon had put on them a little lighter, and if so, they would gladly serve him and have him for their king.

This was Rehoboam's chance to save his kingdom. Would he take it?

He sent for the old and wise men that had stood as counselors to Solomon in his better days. “What should I do with these people?” he asked.

The wise old men advised him to listen to the people, show kindness to them. If he did the people would happily serve him all his life.

Rehoboam thought about it, but it did not appeal to his selfish, ease loving character. He decided to call the young men he had grown up with, many of them idol worshippers. They were like him, they liked to party and have a good time at the expense of others.

In they came to his throne room. "What should I do?" he asked them.

"Well, your majesty", they said, "You are the KING! What you want is what counts, not what they want! You better show them who is boss and put them in their place."

Now no doubt this young man was pretty much used to being spoiled and having his own way since he was little. He liked how his buddies flattered him and he liked the idea of being boss, so he called the people together and made a cruel and terrible announcement.

Thought – Many young people today are turning away from the counsel of the old and wise, which God would have them to follow, and listening to the counsel of the young and foolish. Be sure you don't make that mistake!

Thursday

Text: 1 Kings 12:13,14 "And the king answered the people roughly, and forsook the old men's counsel that they gave him; And spake to them after the counsel of the young men, saying, My father made your yoke heavy, and I will add to your yoke: my father also chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions."

Jeroboam had quickly come from where he was hiding out in Egypt as soon as he heard of Solomon's death. He had talked to the people of Israel but they all decided, no doubt under the influence of the Holy Spirit, to give the son of Solomon one last chance.

But he threw it away.

Proudly the young King sauntered out to appear before the people of the tribes of Israel. And what did he tell them? Basically he said that if they thought Solomon made their lives hard, just wait and see what he would do. He said he would make their load heavier and if his father had beaten them with whips, he would beat them with scorpions!

That did it. Any hope to save the kingdom was now gone. The ten tribes said, "What have we to do with the house of David, let's go home Israel". So Rehoboam found himself king only over the cities of Judah and Benjamin, while most of the country rebelled against him and chose Jeroboam as their king.

He did not give up right away, he decided to send the tax collector to try and make peace with them. What happened? The people of Israel caught the man and stoned him to death! Rehoboam then was afraid for his own life and fled back to Jerusalem.

He started to gather an army to fight against the ten tribes and force them back in line. He realized he had been foolish and for a while he smartened up and followed the Lord.

Thought – Often when once we make a foolish choice, we find we cannot undo it.

Friday

Text: 1 Kings 12:21-24 "And when Rehoboam was come to Jerusalem, he assembled all the house of Judah, with the tribe of Benjamin, an hundred and fourscore thousand chosen men, which were warriors, to fight against the house of Israel, to bring the kingdom again to Rehoboam the son of Solomon. But the word of God came unto Shemaiah the man of God, saying, Speak unto Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, king of Judah, and unto all the house of Judah and Benjamin, and to the remnant of the people,

saying, Thus saith the LORD, Ye shall not go up, nor fight against your brethren the children of Israel: return every man to his house; for this thing is from me. They hearkened therefore to the word of the LORD, and returned to depart, according to the word of the LORD."

Rehoboam was going to fight against the tribes who had rebelled. But God sent a prophet to tell him not to do it. He told the king it was the will of the Lord that Israel would be divided.

The king and the people listened to the message and did not go to war against their brother tribes. For the first few years, Rehoboam's kingdom did very well. One reason was that at first he decided to obey the Lord.

Another reason was that many wise and good men came from the ten tribes and joined themselves to the king, as they did not want to leave the house of David. These men were a blessing to Judah and Benjamin.

Rehoboam planed wisely and built cities of defense and made them strong, placing wise captains of the army in each one. He seemed for a while to turn from his silly ways and be wise as his father had first been. But sadly, he soon turned back to the exciting and debasing ways of paganism and left off to serve the Lord.

How sad the words: "It came to pass, when Rehoboam had established the kingdom,

and had strengthened himself, he forsook the law of the Lord, and all Israel with him." 2 Chronicles 12:1.

It wasn't long before God allowed an enemy, Shishack king of Egypt, to attack and take many of the cities of Judah. He also went right into Jerusalem and stole away the beautiful shields of gold Solomon had made.

The prophet of God warned Rehoboam, "Because you have forsaken God, I will let Shishack the king of Egypt rule over you!" But when the people heard this, they repented and the Lord showed them some mercy. He would not allow Shishack to destroy them, but they would have to serve him and pay money to him.

So in a few years the kingdom of Israel went from being the greatest nation the world has seen, to a weak and divided country, serving the king of Egypt. Why? Because they left off to obey the Lord and served their selfish hearts and worshipped idols.

Thought - "No man liveth unto himself. None perish alone in their iniquity. Every life is a light that brightens and cheers the pathway of others, or a dark and desolating influence that tends toward despair and ruin. We lead others either upward to happiness and immortal life, or downward to sorrow and eternal death. And if by our deeds we strengthen or force into activity the evil powers of those around us, we share their sin." {PK 94.1}. = ^ .. ^ =

Weekly Bible Lesson #13: "GOLDEN CALVES AGAIN!"

MEMORY VERSE: "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments." Exodus 20:4-6

Sunday

Text: 1 Kings 12:26-27 "And Jeroboam said in his heart, Now shall the kingdom return to the house of David: If this people go up to do sacrifice in the house of the LORD at Jerusalem, then shall the heart of this people turn again unto their lord, even unto Rehoboam king of Judah, and they shall kill me, and go again to Rehoboam king of Judah."

Now as we learned, the kingdom was divided as a result of the foolishness of Rehoboam, the son of Solomon. Jeroboam ruled in the ten tribes and Rehoboam ruled in Judah and Benjamin.

Now Jeroboam had been a true worshipper of God, however he too had grown up influenced by idolatry. Now when he was in a position to have made great reforms and led the Israelites back to the true God, he failed to trust in God and through selfishness, he did a great evil. This evil eventually resulted in the total destruction of the ten northern tribes.

Jeroboam began to worry that the people of the ten tribes would go back and join up with the descendant of David later on. He was especially worried because of the yearly feasts of the Passover and others.

You see, all Israel was supposed to go to the temple at Jerusalem for these sacred feasts. At least once a year each man was to appear before the Lord at the temple where the Ark of the Covenant was kept.

So Jeroboam thought this was a danger to his kingdom and decided he had better

do something about it. Now if he had not been so selfish, and had obeyed and trusted in the Lord, he and Israel would have been blessed. But the more he worried, the darker grew his thoughts until he made a terrible choice.

Thought - We never need to fear evil will come from obeying the Lord. Even if it looks that way to us, God will bring good out of it.

Monday

Text: 1 Kings 12:28,29 "Whereupon the king took counsel, and made two calves of gold, and said unto them, It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem: behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. And he set the one in Bethel, and the other put he in Dan."

Certainly Jeroboam must have been greatly influenced by the example of Solomon when he set up false temples and idol worship in Jerusalem for the sake of his heathen wives. He had the idea that religion was all the same- as long as one worshipped it didn't much matter where or how.

He made two golden calves, and set them up, one in Bethel, and the other in Dan. How very sad, he put an idol in the very place that was called the 'House of God'! This was where Jacob had set up a stone as a monument after he had the dream of the ladder to heaven. Now Bethel was to be made a doorway to hell.

It was bad enough to make these idols of the symbol of the sun god, but he also told the people, just as the wicked children of

Israel had done after they left Egypt, that those images were the gods that had brought them out of Egypt. Then he told the people, "It is too much effort for you to go all the way to Jerusalem to worship God, you can worship here."

He then tried to get some of the Levites to come and work for him and serve these idols, which he claimed only represented the God of heaven, but they would not do it.

Then he went even further, he made his own time for a yearly feast, and hired even some of the 'lowest' of the people as priests and so he offered sacrifices to these calves and had a big celebration for the people to attend.

Thought – Sometimes we can really convince ourselves that because of the situation we are in, it is OK to do wrong. There is never a time when it is OK to do even the smallest wrong.

Tuesday

Text: 1 Kings 13:1,2 "And, behold, there came a man of God out of Judah by the word of the LORD unto Bethel: and Jeroboam stood by the altar to burn incense. And he cried against the altar in the word of the LORD, and said, O altar, altar, thus saith the LORD; Behold, a child shall be born unto the house of David, Josiah by name; and upon thee shall he offer the priests of the high places that burn incense upon thee, and men's bones shall be burnt upon thee."

Did God just allow Jeroboam to go on without a warning? Oh No! God sent a prophet and he arrived just as Jeroboam himself was offering incense to his idols on his altar he had made. The prophet spoke to the altar and said the words of our text, then he went on to say that he would give a sign that this was true and would happen. He said the altar would be rent (Broken or split).

Right away the altar was broken and the

ashes spilled out on the ground. Now Jeroboam should have repented at such a clear sign for the Lord that he was doing wrong. But what did he do? Anger and rebellion rose up in his heart against the true God of heaven, that dared to show before all the people that he was doing wrong.

He stretched out his hand to order that the man of God be arrested and killed. As soon as he stretched out his hand to order this, his whole arm withered up like an old stick and he could not bring it to his side again. There he stood with his arm sticking out and withered all up.

Now he was really terrified. He cried to the man of God to please pray for him that his arm be restored. The prophet did pray, and God in mercy did heal Jeroboam's arm. He sure did not deserve to be healed, but God was giving him another chance to change and do right.

Thought – God deals with us so kindly, none of us deserve even the least blessing He gives us, but He pours them out anyway.

Wednesday

Text: 1 Kings 13:7-9 "And the king said unto the man of God, Come home with me, and refresh thyself, and I will give thee a reward. And the man of God said unto the king, If thou wilt give me half thine house, I will not go in with thee, neither will I eat bread nor drink water in this place: For so was it charged me by the word of the LORD, saying, Eat no bread, nor drink water, nor turn again by the same way that thou camest."

Now the God of Heaven had given this prophet some very careful directions. He was not to stop to eat or drink anything and was to go straight home by another route than he had come.

Jeroboam, after his arm was healed, asked the prophet to come and have a meal and receive a reward from the king. You can

see why God did not want this to happen. It would have made Jeroboam feel that everything was all right between him and God, when it certainly was not. He still needed to repent and turn away from his terrible sin of idolatry.

The prophet was careful to refuse the king's offer and started on his way home, riding his little donkey on a route different than the one he had come on. So far all was well. He was obeying God.

How quickly the word of what had happened at the altar spread through the land! Soon it reached the ears of an old man who also had at times been used by God as a prophet. He boasted that he would get the prophet to come to his house and have a meal, even if God had told him not to.

What a terrible thing to try and trick someone into doing wrong! Off he went and caught up with the man of God who was going straight home, as he had been commanded.

Now the old prophet told the man a lie, he told him that he too, was a prophet of God. That part was true, but then he told him that God had sent a message to him telling him to bring the man of God home for a meal. Now this was a lie.

The man refused, but the older man kept lying and asking him until the man of God foolishly gave in and went home to the old prophet's house.

Now God could not allow this disobedience to go unpunished, after all, He was trying to show the king and all Israel the importance of obeying God completely.

Thought – The man of God should have remembered that if God wanted him to change his course, He would have told HIM, not sent someone else to tell him!

Thursday

Text: 1 Kings 13:20-22 “And it came to pass, as they sat at the table, that the word of the LORD came unto the prophet that brought him back: And he cried unto

the man of God that came from Judah, saying, Thus saith the LORD, Forasmuch as thou hast disobeyed the mouth of the LORD, and hast not kept the commandment which the LORD thy God commanded thee, But camest back, and hast eaten bread and drunk water in the place, of the which the LORD did say to thee, Eat no bread, and drink no water; thy carcass shall not come unto the sepulchre of thy fathers.”

The two prophets were sitting at the table having a hearty meal, and likely an interesting talk together. All at once the old prophet who had lied looked horrified, the Spirit of the Lord came upon him and he cried to him the words of our text. A terrible judgment was to happen to him because he did not obey God but listened to the lying prophet.

Now quickly the old prophet had the donkey saddled for the man of God and he was on his way home. But he was never going to get there.

As he traveled along thinking of the terrible rebuke that had come to him, all at once a lion leaped from the side of the road and pulled him from his donkey and killed him. There he lay, dead on the road for all to see the results of disobedience to the Lord's word.

Now, just in case some folks would say it was just an accident that he got killed by a lion and it had nothing to do with the Lord, that lion, who obeyed the command of the Lord, stood beside the body of the man for hours like a solemn guard. He did not eat the man or harm the donkey, which would have been perfectly normal to be killed and eaten by a lion.

There lay the disobedient prophet, and there stood on one side the stately lion, and on the other side the unharmed donkey. We don't know how long they stood there, but it was a long while. Long enough for the word to spread around and finally back to the prophet who had lied to the man of God.

Then he got his donkey and went to where this awesome sight was to be seen. How his heart must have trembled as he saw the clear evidence of the hand of the Lord! Maybe then the lion went away, I do not know, but the old prophet was able to get the body and put it onto one of the donkeys. He took it home and buried it, mourning over him, "Alas my brother!" He told his sons that when he died, to bury him with the man of God.

Thought – The prophet had listened to the temptations of Satan when he decided to go and lie to the man of God. Satan wanted to undo all the effect of the warning of God on the people and the king.

Friday

Text: 1 Kings 13:33,34 "After this thing Jeroboam returned not from his evil way, but made again of the lowest of the people priests of the high places: whosoever would, he consecrated him, and he became one of the priests of the high places. And this thing became sin unto the house of Jeroboam, even to cut it off, and to destroy it from off the face of the earth."

Romans 14:23 "...for whatsoever is not of faith is sin."

Now there are many lessons in this sad story for us to learn. Notice the text from Romans, what does it mean? It means that we should never listen to anyone who wants to get us to do what we truly feel in our hearts is not right with God.

There is a thing called 'integrity', and it means that we are honestly doing what we believe to be right according to our conscience. We should never go against our 'integrity'.

Now our integrity can sometimes be

wrong, and if so, the Lord will guide us to learn the truth from his holy Word, then we should obey that word and change our integrity. For example, maybe for years I keep Sunday. I think I am doing right. But one day I learn that the seventh day is the day to keep.

I check it out in the Bible, and sure enough, I was wrong. So now if I change and keep Sabbath, I am still in my integrity. But if I decide to keep on with Sunday now I know better, I am not in my integrity any more.

The man of God went against his integrity when he listened to the other prophet because the Lord had told him clearly what he was to do. It does not matter who tells us, we must not go against God's commands to us. Just because the Lord has spoken through a person at one time does not mean that he might not sin later. We always must double check with the Word of God and not go against it.

Why did the Lord heal the rebellious king and yet have the lion kill the disobedient prophet? Well, you remember that the man of God had told the king the Lord had commanded him not to stop and eat or drink?

The Lord was trying to show Jeroboam and the people of Israel that it was important to OBEY the Lord totally. If the prophet then had disobeyed and nothing had happened, then it would have undone that entire lesson the Lord was showing Israel. That was Satan's plan when he got the old prophet to boast of how he could persuade the man of God to turn aside. But now all could see that it was a foolish and dangerous thing to ever disobey the Word of God!

Thought - I would urge you by the power and help of Jesus, to never go against what you know is right, not even if a minister or a king tells you to! = ^ .. ^ =