

April 10th

Memory verse for the week:

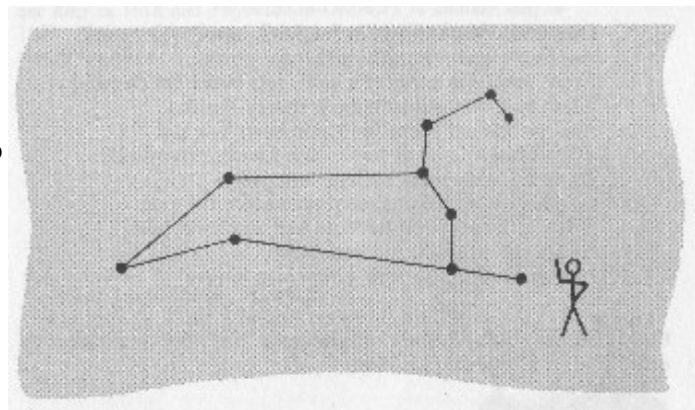
The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork. Psalm 19:1
Today is the day for your Memory verse challenge! Don't forget to telephone a friend from church or a family member such as grandparents and demonstrate what you have learned.

Something to do tonight if...

If you are allowed to stay up until it is really dark and *if* the weather is fine and clear it would be a good night to do some star gazing. Your garden would do or even, if you turn off the room lights, looking out of a south facing window. If you have to stay in and have no south facing window you can still enjoy looking at the stars and marvel at all the beauty God has created, but you may not be able to see the particular constellation we are looking for. The moon does not rise until after 11 o' clock tonight which will help.¹ Too much moonlight drowns out the starlight.

Something to do now

A constellation is a group of stars that *look as if* they are near each other. Because the sky looks like a two dimensional surface to us but is really three dimensional space this is rather an illusion. You can understand this if you put some objects on the table. Stand back from the table and move around it. The relationship of the objects on the table appears to change although you know that they have not moved. A cup that is in front of a teapot may appear to touch it even though it is further away than a spoon that does not touch it at all. It is the same with the stars in the sky.



The constellations in the sky all have names. The ancient people gave them names that have come down to us. They had no street lights nor indeed strong lights of any sort. It is hard for us to imagine how amazing the night sky looked to them. This is because our powerful lights drown out the starlight which was very bright to them. A constellation which is easy to see at this time of the year is Leo, which means *Lion*. The dots on the picture are the stars that form the constellation. Of course you have to imagine the lines. I think you can see why the ancient people called this constellation *Lion*. The six stars that mark the front or mane of the lion in a backwards question mark mark are sometimes called the *Sickle*. You can see the Lion if you stand facing south. It will be high in the sky, slightly to the east of centre, with the lion's head looking west. You can see from the picture that you should look for a backwards question mark pattern. This is the Sickle. The brightest star in this constellation is *Regulus*. You will find it at the bottom of the backwards question mark to the left of the star that marks the lions front paw(s).

Even if in the end you cannot go and look for Leo tonight don't worry. This constellation is easy to spot all through April and May so as soon as there is a good clear night without too much moonlight you should be able to see it.

Something to do whatever the weather!

Make your own picture or diagram of the constellation Leo. You could use sticky silver stars, if you have some, or silver pens if available. If you have some black paper that would be good to use. You could cut out tiny star shapes in white paper or kitchen foil to stick on the black paper. Write your memory verse over the chart!

¹ The time for the moonrise was correct in 2021. It may not be so good in subsequent years.

On the 10th April 1919 scientists released a picture made by eight telescopes in different parts of the world at the same time. It was the first ever picture of a black hole.



“A black hole,” says NASA, “is a place in space where gravity pulls so much that even light cannot get out. The gravity is so strong because matter has been squeezed into a tiny space... Because no light can get out, people can't see black holes. They are invisible. Space telescopes with special tools can help find black holes. The special tools can see how stars that are very close to black holes act differently than other stars.”²

Christian astronomer John Hartnett writes:

“From the biblical creationist perspective this is... good operational science. There is nothing new here that refutes the biblical timeline of about 6,000 years [since the creation] because that is subject to historical science considerations. It is not an operational science question... The data was taken from the different telescopes and was assembled and processed over a period of about a year, but those initial observations were taken over a period of 7 *days* in April of 2017. Over those days the supermassive black hole was ‘observed’. In the same way over the 24-hour period Day 4 of Creation Week about 6,000 years ago all the stars and galaxies (with supermassive black holes) were ‘observed’ at the earth as God created them (Genesis 1:16–19). God spoke and “it was so.” Creationist cosmologists have suggested various ways in which God could have done this with starlight from distant stars visible at the earth in the biblical time-frame. But, ultimately, Creation Week was a miraculous series of events, and God might well have done things in a way that is not accessible to us.”³

Something to read aloud

April weather

April showers
Bring summer flowers

This month is usually showery, although if we go back in history we find from records that were kept that in the time of Queen Victoria, April was less showery than it is today.

A cold April
The barn will fill

This old rhyme means that cold weather in April is good for crops because it holds back over rapid early growth.

Don't forget to keep filling in your weather chart if started one in January or last month. (If you did not start one then you could do so now.) Then, at the end of the month, you will be able to decide whether this April was showery or not and whether it was cold.

Something to do outside

If you have a garden or can go outside to an open space you will see butterflies and moths, wild

² <https://www.nasa.gov/audience/forstudents/k-4/stories/nasa-knows/what-is-a-black-hole-k4.html>

³ <https://creation.com/first-black-hole-image> You can see the picture here:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=3&v=S_GVbuddri8&feature=emb_logo

bees, ladybirds and hover-flies before the end of the month. If you are in the country and a very good observer (especially in the early mornings) you will see young rabbits out feeding on the new grass.

Here are some of the flowers you might see:

Red Campion, Cuckoo Flower or Lady's Smock (sometimes also called "Milkmaids"), Buttercups, Cranesbill and Wild Hellebores. In the garden you might find dandelions and daisies and no one will mind if you pick a few and put them in an eggcup of water indoors. If you put a few leaves or even blades of grass with them they will look very pretty.

Try to look all these flowers up in a nature book with good illustrations.⁴

Swallows, Sand Martins and House Martins, Nightingales and cuckoos will arrive this month and at night in the country you might hear the barn owl. This is a busy month in the garden and if you have one and perhaps you can help.

If you do not have a garden try some indoor gardening. You do not need any special seeds for this – although you can't do without a little soil of some sort. Many of the fruits you eat have seeds in them which will grow into interesting plants with a little care.

Stones such as those in peaches, plums, apricots and even dates will all grow. Soak them for 48 hours in water. If there is a hard shell such as that on a peach you should crack it a little gently first but be careful not to break the seed inside. Plant the seeds in moist garden soil or compost in a plastic food bag which should then be sealed or knotted. Put the bag in a warm place such as an airing cupboard or a sunny windowsill.

You can also do this with pips from grapefruit oranges or lemons. Fruit which is going off and cannot be eaten will contain pips that are perfect for planting! In some ways these citrus fruits are the best to experiment with as they will shoot within three weeks (stone fruit may take much longer) and when planted in suitable containers indoors they produce a pretty evergreen tree that has glossy citrus smelling leaves. Once the pips have begun to shoot take them out of the airing cupboard and put them in the light. Keep them in the plastic bag until they have three leaves. Then you can gently plant them into pots. For this a disposable plastic drink cup will do at least at first. Just make a hole in the bottom for drainage and stand it on a saucer. As your tree grows eventually you will need to put it into a bigger pot. Any sort of pot will do provided it has a drainage hole in the bottom. You can keep these little trees for years by trimming the branches and roots every so often. One way of doing this is to grow a grapefruit using it's own skin as a pot. If the grapefruit has been cut in half and the fruit eaten, make holes in the half skin all over with a knitting needle. Plant your little seedling in some soil in the skin. Keep the soil moist but not soaking wet. As the roots start to grow through the skin (this will take about a year) they can be snipped off with scissors.

You can grow apple, cherry, pear, and grape pips if you soak them first. Even unroasted peanuts in shells will grow in a pot if you gently crack the shells a little to help them on their way.

⁴ <http://www.british-wild-flowers.co.uk> has detailed photos to help you identify them.