

1 Kings 3 : 4-15—Memory Verses, 9, 10.

Golden Text—The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.—Proverbs 9 : 10.

4 And the king went to Gib'eon to sacrifice there : for that was the great high place : a thousand burnt offerings did Sol'omon offer upon that altar.

5 In Gib'eon the Lord appeared to Sol'omon in a dream by night : and God said, Ask what I shall give thee.

6 And Sol'omon said, Thou hast shewed unto thy servant Da'vid my father great mercy, according as he walked before thee in truth, and in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart with thee : and thou hast kept for him this great kindness, that thou hast given him a son to sit on his throne, as it is this day.

7 And now, O Lord my God, thou hast made thy servant king instead of Da'vid my father : and I am but a little child : I know not how to go out or come in.

8 And thy servant is in the midst of thy people which thou hast chosen, a great people, that cannot be numbered nor counted for multitude.

9 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 ?

10 And the speech pleased the Lord, that Sol'omon had asked this thing.

11 And God said unto him, Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life : neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies : but hast asked for thyself understanding to discern judgment :

12 Behold, I have done according to thy words : lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart : so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee.

13 And I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches, and honour : so that there shall

not be any among the kings like unto thee all thy days.

14 And if thou wilt walk in my ways, to keep my statutes and my commandments, as thy father Da'vid did walk, then I will lengthen thy days.

15 And Sol'omon awoke : and, behold, it was a dream. And he came to Jeru'salem, and stood before the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and offered up burnt offerings, and offered peace offerings, and made a feast to all his servants.

THE LESSON RETOLD

It was night-time. Everything was still, and King Solomon had gone to sleep. Soon after David, his father, had died, and he himself had become king, he went from his palace in Jerusalem to Gibeon, a place five or six miles northwest of Jerusalem, where the tabernacle had been kept for a time and which was a famous place of worship. The place was a hill in the midst of broad valleys, and near by was a fountain and a fine lake. These were called "the waters of Gibeon." Solomon had come to this place that he might worship God, who had made him king to rule over all the people of Israel.

I think perhaps he had been lying awake for a long time that night. I think he had been wondering how he could learn to be a wise, good king like his father, King David. Solomon was a very young man to be so great a king and to have the care of God's people laid upon him.

Suddenly, as he lay asleep, a wonderful

thing happened to Solomon. God came to him in a dream. And God spoke to him, saying, "Ask what I shall give thee." This was God's wonderful offer to Solomon.

Solomon thought, and then he answered : "O Lord my God, Thou hast made me king over Thy people. Thou hast given me a great task, and I know not how to begin my work. I am like a little child that needs Thy help every hour of every day.

"So, Lord, I pray Thee, make me wise. Teach me how to be a good king over Thy people."

Solomon knew that God had promised to David, his father, that Solomon should be king over Israel, and he blessed and praised God for fulfilling this promise. Solomon remembered what a great king his father had been, and he wanted to rule his people as well as David had done. And for this he knew that he needed the help which God alone could give. The young king was very