

LESSON III—October 18th, 1896.

Solomon's Wealth and Wisdom. I KINGS 4: 25-34.

(Commit to memory verses 29, 30).

GOLDEN TEXT: "Them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed." I Sam. 2: 30.

PROVE THAT—God prospers the upright. Prov. 14: 11.

SHORTER CATECHISM. Questions 46, 47, 48.

LESSON HYMNS. *Children's Hymnal*—Nos. 156, 74, 236, 253.

DAILY PORTIONS. *Monday.* Solomon's wealth and wisdom. I Kings 4: 25-34. *Tuesday.* Wisdom's invitation. Prov. 8: 13-21, 32-36. *Wednesday.* The source of wisdom. Ps. 119: 97-104. *Thursday.* Insufficiency of worldly wisdom. I Cor. 1: 20-31. *Friday.* True glory. Jer. 9: 12-24. *Saturday.* God-given wisdom. Dan. 1: 11-20. *Sabbath.* Spiritual wisdom. I Cor. 2: 1-13. (*The I. B. R. A. Selections.*)

HELPS IN STUDYING.

INTRODUCTORY. The preceding portion of our chapter is occupied with a list of Solomon's officers (vs. 1-20) and a description of the extent of his kingdom (vs. 21-24). In all this there is the fulfillment of the divine promise. To dwell merely upon the outward glory of such a kingdom would profit little if we did not point the moral which it teaches. The first half of our lesson affords an excellent text from which to speak of the use and abuse of temporal blessings. Solomon found all to be but vanity and vexation of spirit, but surely God did not mean that it should be so. The second half of our passage naturally suggests thoughts upon the right employment of education and mental ability. Talents which are not consecrated by piety are apt to prove a snare rather than a blessing.

LESSON PLAN. I. Solomon's Wealth. vs. 25-28. II. Solomon's Wisdom. vs. 29-34.

The reign of Solomon was a peaceful and prosperous one. The splendor of his court outshone that of the mightiest monarchs of his time; his wisdom was renowned throughout the world; commerce enriched the nation and the peaceful pursuits of the people were undisturbed by robber or raider. If the people who dwell under the sceptre of Solomon had reason to be thankful, how much deeper ought to be our gratitude, who enjoy the blessings of British freedom under the reign of Queen Victoria. Our temporal prosperity is quite as great as that of Israel; we enjoy a liberty such as in Oriental never dreamed of; we are as safe from foreign foes; our homes and property are as securely guarded by the laws; and our beloved sovereign is one whose wisdom and tact has proved her a worthy ruler over a vast empire than that of Solomon and whose virtues shines in vivid contrast with the moral weakness of the wise king. Solomon had an immense establishment¹ but every man knew his place and performed his appointed duty. No idlers were allowed to stand before the king.² Industry and order are the right and left hands of success. "Every man in his month" provided what was necessary. "Every man according to his charge" fulfilled his duty. We are not required by God to do great things but he wishes everything he gives us to do to be faithfully performed as unto him. We are serving a greater king than Solomon. If those who provided

provender for his horses and dromedaries thought themselves honored and suffered nothing to be lacking, how much more conscientious should we be who, in even the common daily duties of life, are serving king Jesus. Solomon³ was by far the wisest man that ever lived and there are some features of his wisdom that we would do well to imitate. He concerned himself *first* with the duties of his position. He tried to be a good ruler. Our first duty is to fill our present position well. It may seem a very humble one but it is the stepping stone to something higher if we shew ourselves worthy of promotion. Our future success depends upon our present faithfulness; *secondly*, he gave himself to the study of man's duty in various circumstances, and gave us the result in his wonderful proverbs. The question "What *ought* I to do?" is the first one that calls for an answer in every case. When you have settled that, all other questions will settle themselves. *Thirdly*, Solomon took delight in the works of nature. The more we know about the plants and trees and birds and beasts and insects and fishes around us the more will we admire the wisdom and goodness of that God who made us and them. And *fourthly*, Solomon was glad to tell others all he knew. You know something about Jesus that Solomon never learned. Tell others about him. Your Sabbath school lessons will be a double blessing to you if you share their precious truths with some one else.

¹ 2 Chr. 9: 25. ² Prov. 22: 29. ³ Matt. 2: 1.

LESSONS. 1. Those are safe who are under God's blessing and protection. 2. Those who are engaged in the King's service must be faithful. 3. If we improve the talents we have God will increase them. 4. If God thought it worth while to make anything, it is worth our while to learn about it. 5. The humblest christian knows more than the wisest heathen.