

LESSON X—December 6th, 1896.

Solomon's Sin. 1 KINGS II: 4-13.

(Commit to memory verses 9, 10).

GOLDEN TEXT: "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." 1 Cor. 10: 12.

PROVE THAT—Idolatry is forbidden. Lev. 26: 1.

SHORTER CATECHISM. Questions 70, 71, 72.

LESSON HYMNS. *Children's Hymnal*—Nos. 11, 131, 120, 122.

DAILY PORTIONS. *Monday.* Solomon's sin. 1 Kings 11: 4-13. *Tuesday.* Ahijah's prophecy. 1 Kings 11: 29-38. *Wednesday.* Wise counsel forsaken. 1 Kings 12: 1-11. *Thursday.* The kingdom divided. 1 Kings 12: 12-20. *Friday.* Danger of evil companionship. Deut. 7: 1-11. *Saturday.* Resisting warning. Jer. 44: 1-11. *Sabbath.* Idols of the heart. Ezek. 14: 1-8. (*The I. B. R. A. Selections.*)

HELPS IN STUDYING.

INTRODUCTORY. The Bible does not pass over the faults of the good men whose lives it records. It tells of Noah's drunkenness, Moses' loss of temper, David's sin, and Solomon's lapse into idolatry. When one so greatly favored did not stand we need to take heed to ourselves lest we too "depart from the living God."

LESSON PLAN. I. Solomon's Sin. vs. 4-8. II. Solomon's Sentence. vs. 9-13.

Solomon reigned forty years,¹ so that if he was twenty when he came to the throne, this falling away must have occurred when he was about fifty or fifty-five years of age. At that age he ought to have been more steadfast in character. Satan lays snares for the young, but he does not give up trying when we get older. All your life long you will need the grace of God to keep you safe. God requires perfect consecration. Ash'tor-eth was a goddess of Hiram's people. She is supposed to represent the moon, or the planet Venus. Mil'com is the same as Mo'lech, and was worshipped with horrible human sacrifices, especially of children. The Ammonites were descended from Lot and lived on the east side of the Jordan. Solomon had no right to countenance in any way such abominable worship.² God is a spirit and is to be worshipped in spirit and in truth. "Did evil in the sight of the Lord" is the usual expression for disloyalty to God by approving of, or taking part in, idolatrous worship. Che'mosh was the god of war. Its worship was similar to that of Molech and consisted of cruel sacrifices of children, accompanied by disgusting orgies. The Moabites were descendants of Lot and lived on the east of the Dead Sea. The "hill before Jerusalem" was the Mount of Olives, on whose southern summit this idol shrine was erected. It stood on the east side of the city and so "in front of it," when one looks toward the sun rising. This spot was

afterwards called the "mount of offense," because it had been so desecrated. Solomon's "strange wives" were the foreign women whom he had married for the sake of political alliance and friendship. Had he trusted God to keep his kingdom safe he would not have been drawn into this danger by motives of worldly policy. God had shown great favor and kindness to Solomon, therefore his conduct was the more inexcusable.³ Our privileges are much greater than even Solomon's—how much greater than our guilt if we do not loyally and gratefully use them. Not only had God warned his people of the danger of marrying heathen wives, but he had specially instructed Solomon. He could not plead ignorance. It was a wilful contempt of God. It is not likely that God appeared again to Solomon, but sent a prophet to say this. Since Solomon had not kept his part of the "covenant," or agreement, God withdrew his promise. David's joy would not be that of Solomon. His son would sit on a much less glorious throne, for he should rule over but two tribes, instead of twelve. One of Solomon's officers of state would be his successor over the chief part of his dominions. God is always far more merciful than we deserve.⁴ He remembers mercy to generation after generation of his people. Although the greater part of Solomon's possessions would be taken from his son, yet the house of David would still reign at Jerusalem and worship in the temple.

¹Ch. 11: 42. ²2 Cor. 6: 17; 7: 1; Isa. 52: 11; Rev. 18: 4. ³Luke 10: 12-15. ⁴Ex. 34: 6, 7; Ps. 32: 5; Ps. 103: 10, 11, 12.

LESSONS. 1. The society of the irreligious is dangerous to piety. 2. Religious considerations should determine our choice of companions. 3. God is displeased with us when we do wrong. 4. Because he loves us he punishes us. 5. Mercy is mingled with judgment.