

LESSON II—October 11th, 1896.

Solomon's Wise Choice. I KINGS 3: 5-15.

(Commit to memory verses 11, 12.)

GOLDEN TEXT: "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." Ps. III: 10.

PROVE THAT—We need the Lord's guidance. Ps. 37: 5.

SHORTER CATECHISM. Questions 42, 43, 44.

LESSON HYMNS. *Children's Hymnal*—Nos. 1, 78, 220, 72.

DAILY PORTIONS. *Monday.* Solomon's wise choice. I Kings 3: 5-15. *Tuesday.* The choice of Moses. Heb. 11: 17-26. *Wednesday.* Joshua's choice. Josh. 24: 14-24. *Thursday.* The excellency of wisdom. Job 28: 12-28. *Friday.* Which to choose. Deut. 30: 11-20. *Saturday.* Righteousness the first choice. I Tim. 6: 6-16. *Sabbath.* The best knowledge. Phil. 3: 1-14. (*The I. B. R. A. Selections.*)

HELPS IN STUDYING.

INTRODUCTORY. Solomon treated those implicated in the plot of Adoni'jah with wise leniency and his authority was unquestioned henceforth. The closing scenes of David's life are described in I Chr. 22, 28 and 29 chapters. For sublimity and pathos the narrative is unexampled. His private charge regarding certain obnoxious and dangerous persons (I Kings 2: 1-9) is painful reading and forcibly reminds us of the lower ideas regarding some points of morality which possessed even good men in old Testament times. Read in connection with our lesson 2 Chr. 1: 1-13; I Kings 4: 29.

LESSON PLAN. I. Solomon's Prayer. vs. 5-9. II. God's Answer. vs. 10-15.

When Solomon was firmly established on the throne he gathered all Israel together at Gib'con, where the old tabernacle stood, in order that his accession to the throne might be solemnized by fitting religious services. There on the brazen altar,¹ which had been first erected under the shadow of Sinai, he offered a thousand burnt offerings. He was deeply impressed with the importance of his position and felt very much the need of wisdom and experience in discharging the responsible duties of royalty. No doubt he had prayed for the blessings he needed and might trust God to give them to him, but he was favored with a special message in a dream² which confirmed his faith, and is recorded for our instruction. In this dream God invited him to ask for whatever he wished.³ Suppose you had been in Solomon's place what would you have asked for? What would you ask for now if the same offer were made? Your answer would shew what lies nearest to your heart. In replying Solomon reminded God of his goodness to his father David, and a part of it was placing his son on the throne.⁴ He spoke of his own inability to discharge aright the office to which God had raised him,⁵ especially when he considered the great nation⁶ which he was called to govern. Then he asked God for what he felt he needed most, wisdom—the ability to judge righteously in all matters coming before him.⁷ Many would have been tempted to ask for other things, good perhaps in themselves, but less worthy of a king, but Solomon chose the noblest amongst many kingly virtues. Almost every day God is asking us to choose between several things and happy are we if our choice is always wise. Take the noblest and least selfish course and you will seldom go wrong. God was pleased that Solomon had shewn himself so conscientious regarding his duties and promised to give him not only what he had asked, but riches and honor and long life besides. God is answering our prayers in the same way still. If we make the choice most worthy of a Christian we shall get what we ask and everything else besides that is good for us. Jesus has said "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things,"⁸ food, raiment, earthly blessings generally shall be added unto you.⁹ Riches has its dangers,¹⁰ but with money we may do much good;¹¹ honor is a vain thing if we are not worthy of it; and long life is a blessing only to those who have spent it well; but if we are Christ's then all things are ours and heaven is our inheritance at last.¹²

¹2 Chr. 1: 5. ²Gen. 31: 11; Matt. 1: 20; 2: 13, 19. ³Ezek. 36: 37; Matt. 21: 22; Jas. 4: 2. ⁴1 Kings 1: 48. ⁵1 Tim. 1: 15; Ps. 121: 8; 2 Cor. 3: 5; 12: 10. ⁶Gen. 13: 16; 15: 5. ⁷Prov. 2: 3-9; Isa. 1: 5. ⁸Matt. 6: 33; 13: 12. ⁹Eph. 3: 20. ¹⁰Matt. 13: 22; Mark 10: 24; 1 Tim. 6: 10. ¹¹1 Tim. 6: 17-19. ¹²Rom. 8: 32; 1 Cor. 3: 21-33.

LESSONS. 1. Jesus bids us ask and we shall receive. 2. The children of pious parents should remember their father's God. 3. We should seek first the kingdom of God. 4. God always gives us far more than we ask. 5. Riches, honors, and a long life are blessings only to those who employ them rightly.