

"he" is expressed in Hebrew, therefore emphatic. (See chap. 17. 12, *h*, where the same promise is given.) **Shall be my son.** Israel was called Jehovah's son (Exod. 4. 22; Deut. 14. 1); the same name is given here to the king, the head of the nation. (Compare Psalm 2. 7, and Heb. 1. 5.) **Establish the throne . . . forever.** This was conditioned upon the obedience of those on the throne (verse 13). In a spiritual sense Christ, the Son of David and Solomon, continues to reign to this day; and of his dominion there shall be no end.

**12. The Lord give thee discretion and understanding.** (See 1 King, 3. 5-15.) Every one engaged in the work of God needs these two gifts. Solomon was about to undertake the greatest work of his life, the building of Jehovah's temple; therefore it is eminently fit that David should pray that his son should be divinely guided. "Nothing requires greater wisdom than the building and care of God's house."—*Harbut and Boherty*. Given an efficient minister with an efficient official board, the success of a church is certain. **Give thee charge.** This clause is very obscure. The literal is (may be) "command thee over Israel," which probably means, "may Jehovah appoint thee ruler over Israel." **Keep the law.** When one receives discretion and understanding from God, it is not difficult to keep the law. Without God's help it cannot be done.

**13. Then shalt thou prosper.** Success is a necessary result of obedience to God. True success impossible to him who rebels against his Maker and disregards his laws. The first part of this verse reminds us of Moses's words to Israel (Deut. 7. 11, and 11. 32), and the second, of his words to Joshua (31. 17). (See also Josh. 1. 6, 7.)

**Be strong.** As Solomon was to work for God it required great strength and courage. So in our day. The temple of God, if built at all, must be done by men filled with faith, courage, and unselfishness. David repeats a part of this charge in chap. 28. 20.

**14. Behold, in my affliction.** The Hebrew word rendered "affliction" may also mean, "low estate, or poverty." Bertheau and others translate it "by very strenuous efforts, or great labors." The word occurs about forty times, and is uniformly rendered "affliction;" so the Revised Version did well to change it from "trouble" of the Authorized Version. **A hundred thousand talents of gold.** According to the best modern authorities a talent of gold or silver contains three thousand shekels. Now, a shekel of gold is supposed to have been equivalent to about \$10.71, and a talent of silver something less than sixty cents. Thus the gold amounted to \$3,213,000,000, and the silver to \$1,800,000,000. This amount is so large that the accuracy of the Chroniclers has been called in question. As already referred to in a former lesson, the Hebrews employed letters for numbers; these letters were writ-

ten with or without dots and other marks over them; again, several of the Hebrew letters are so similar that it would have been an easy thing to confound them, for example, **א** (A) is 1, but **ב** with two dots over it is 1000; **ב** (b) is 2, but **ג** (k) is 20; **ו** (w) is 6, **י** (y) is 10, and a final **י** (n) is 50; **ד** (d) is 4, while **ר** (r) is 200. Again, there are several letters in Hebrew that assume a particular shape at the close of a word. Thus medial **כ** is 20, but final **כ** 500; medial **מ** 40, but when final 600; medial **פ** or **פ** 80, but final 800. Where the system of enumeration was so unscientific we are not to be surprised if we find some numbers very difficult to explain. Again, we must remember that we do not know the exact value of the talent; therefore, to dogmatize is out of the question, and speculation is useless. **Brass and iron without weight.** So abundant were these that the actual weight was not known—an extravagant way of saying large quantities. "Bronze" or "copper" would be a better translation than "brass." **And thou mayest add thereto.** That Solomon carried out this wish of his father is clear from 2 Chron. 2.

**15. Workmen.** This verse clearly shows that the era of building had already commenced, and that carpenters and masons and those engaged in the more common work, whether from Tyre or other foreign countries, or native Hebrews, were there in abundance. (See verse 2.) **Cunningmen.** "Cunning," though of the same root as the verb "to know," is now generally used in a bad sense. The word in the original denotes one especially skilled in the finer works, as in silver, gold, embroidery, etc. (See 2 Chron. 2. 6.)

## Thoughts for Young People.

### How God Prepares for His Work.

**1. God prepares for his work on earth by giving power to his people.** He paves the way to peace through war (verses 6-8). Miracles were never God's favorite means, but plain men and women rather, who by the consecration of their plain talents—health, common sense, wealth—do better work on earth than the tallest angels could do.

**2. God prepares for his work by giving to his people rest and peace** (verses 9, 10). One class of graces thrives in times of persecution; another in times of peace. When God finds need for quiet years in which to prepare his Church for special work he stills the noisy waves of war and politics and makes the storm a calm.

**3. God prepares for his work by raising up special leaders, endowed with wisdom, ability, and spirit** (verses 10-13). Together come the hour and the man. When a Hildebrand or Luther or Wesley is needed, he appears. And though in the strain and confusion of the conflict the greatness of the human leader is not always seen, nor the reality of the divine leadership, and "thoughts will come if God