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The Sunday School Lesson
 SUNDAY, OCTOBER 21st

HISTORY IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

Golden Text—Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord. Ps. 33: 12.

Lesson Text—1 Kl. 4: 21-29; 11: 6, 9-11.

Exposition—'L. History of Solomon, 1 Kl. 4: 21-29.

These verses have significance apart from the full facts of Solomon's life. He had these great possessions, of which we read, because he had the favour of the Lord. The importance of Solomon is that he succeeded to the throne of David and was commissioned to build the temple. In his youth he prayed to God for wisdom and became divinely endowed (vs. 29, 30; Jas. 1: 12). During his reign the temple was built and the kingdom of Israel reached the zenith of its glory. But in his latter years Solomon departed from the faith, as we shall see. To get the full view of Solomon, let us review some facts and lessons from his life.

Twice in his life was it granted to Solomon to meet God (9: 2; 11: 9). Too many of us it is granted to meet God far more frequently than that. The appearance was in a dream, but it was a real appearance (Gen. 28: 12, 13; Num. 12: 6; Job 23: 14; Matt. 1: 20; 2: 13, 15; Ac. 18: 9, 10). It was a wonderful thing that God said to Solomon, "Ask what I shall give thee"; that is God setting the infinite resources of His power at the disposal of man. But God says the same thing to each humblest child of His today (Jno. 14: 13, 14; 15: 7; Matt. 7: 7, 8; Mk. 11: 24; Jno. 15: 16; 16: 23, 24; 1 Jno. 3: 22; 5: 14, 15). God's great "kindness unto David" his father in the past encouraged Solomon to ask great things for himself in the present. God's dealing in kindness with David was according to David's sincere, righteous and upright walk (1 Kl. 3: 6; 1 Kl. 9: 4; 15: 5; 2 Kl. 20: 3, 4; Ps. 15: 1, 2; 18: 20-24; 1 Jno. 3: 22).

Solomon recognized that he owed his present exalted position entirely to God (vs. 8; Dan. 2: 21; 4: 25, 32; 5: 18, 21). He also recognized his own utter insufficiency for the position, though he was at this time perhaps twenty-one years of age, in his own eyes he was "but a little child" (1 Kl. 3: 7). To him office was a sacred trust. The people was a great people in number and they were God's own people whom He had chosen (1 Kl. 3: 9). He felt that what he wanted was a fitness for his position. He asked therefore, for wisdom and knowledge, and he wished them not for display but to fit him for service, "that I may go out and come in before the people." He also asked for a "hearing heart" (1 Kl. 3: 9), i.e. a heart that should hear the voice of God. What he asked is of more value than all honors and riches (Prov. 3: 13-18; 16: 16).

His father's words to him and prayer for him had suggested to Solomon this request (1 Chron. 22: 12; 29: 19). This great thing that Solomon asked we may all have (Jas. 4: 2, 3). The discernment that he sought was the highest form of discernment, moral discernment. It is the work of the Holy Spirit to impart this (Isa. 11: 2-4; Jno. 16: 12, 13). He was utterly overwhelmed at the thought of undertaking in his own strength the task for which no man was sufficient.

God was well pleased with Solomon's prayer. (Prov. 15: 8). Solomon got what he asked, but he got it in a more abundant measure than he had asked, his wisdom became noted throughout the earth and throughout all ages (1 Kl. 2: 28; 4: 29-34; 5: 12; 10: 3-8, 23, 24). God also gave him exceedingly abundant; above all he asked (Eph. 3: 20). If we seek the best thing, God will give us with it the minor things (Matt. 6: 23; Ps. 84: 11, 12; Rom. 8: 32). His riches were enormous (1 Kl. 10: 23-29).

II. Solomon's Apostasy 11: 6, 9-11. Although it is stated that God gave "wisdom" to Solomon we find that he ended his life with a heart "turned from the Lord God of Israel" (v. 9). He was endowed with great administrative gifts, by means of which his international neighbours were constrained to be at peace with him (5: 10).

In the building of the temple God gave him plans and means. But he undoubtedly went beyond God's

purpose in levying so heavily upon the people and building up so large a ruling class (vs. 13-16). Such a use of arbitrary power as is implied in this customary levy must have raised great discontent among the people. This was tempered by Solomon's not overworking his people and in assigning the most laborious task to remaining Canaanites. He did, however, build more than the Temple and enhanced his glory by forced labor (1 Kl. 9: 17-19). Taking pride in this misuse of the endowment of God's wisdom led him to his moral breakdown (11: 1, 4). "His heart was not perfect with the Lord his God . . . God threatened him (v. 9).

BRITAIN'S EXPORTS NEAR END-YEAR TARGET

Five months ahead of schedule Britain is near to achieving her export target for the end of 1948. Overseas trade returns published August 24 show that in July the volume of Britain's exports was about 49% above the 1939 level—only 1% below the target set for next December. This is reckoned to be the largest quantity of goods sent abroad in any one month for nearly twenty years. In terms of value last month Britain exported goods totalling \$382,400,000. They topped by \$32,800,000 the previous best figure established July 1920.

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PURITY PASTRY (enough for 2 pie shells)
 Sift together 1 1/2 cups PURITY FLOUR and 1/4 teaspoon salt. Cut 1/2 cup softened butter into mixture with two knives, until it looks like very coarse meal. Add 3 tablespoons dry weather gradually, mixing until dough is ball mixture. Roll dough for 1 or 10 minutes and turn out on a lightly floured board. Roll with a light quick motion to 1/8 inch thickness. Press dough lightly into pie plates so that no air bubbles are trapped, and trim off the edge.

PELLING (1 pie)
 Beat 2 eggs only and whites and 1/2 cup sugar well blended. Grind 1/2 cup walnuts and 1/2 cup raisins in 1/4 cup water through and add to egg mixture. Add 1/2 cup of sugar, 1/2 cup of flour, and a few pieces of space fillers, and a few pieces of salt. Stir in 1/4 cup hot water. Pour into pie plate lined with pastry and bake in hot oven (450° F.) for ten to fifteen minutes. Then reduce temperature to medium (350° F.) and bake for 20-25 minutes, or until filling is firm. Cool and serve with whipped cream or decorate with raisin face. (Village recipe may be doubled if you wish 2 pastries.)

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