

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

THE GLORY OF SOLOMON'S EMPIRE (Temperance)

International Sunday School Lesson For September 28, 1952.

Memory Selection: "A man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions."—Luke 12: 15.

Lesson Text: I Kings 4: 20-26; 11: 4-8.

Solomon reigned for forty years, from 1015 B. C. to 975 B. C. This was a time of great prosperity for the Kingdom of Israel. A merchant fleet from Israel plied the seas and caravans from all over the known world made their way to and through its borders.

Solomon was the author of many treatises; he was a poet, a writer of songs and proverbs. He built the Temple dedicated to the worship of Jehovah, which even until this day defies description. He had an equally glorious palace, filled with hundreds of wives, most of whom were foreign-born and worshippers of idols.

However, even with the apparent prosperity and fine living, all was not well with Israel. Solomon's wisdom, great as it was, was not that of a true statesman. He was skillful as a builder, as a teacher, as a diplomat in arranging a whole series of marriage alliances with foreign royal houses, but he was not wise enough to see that buildings might be so numerous and so costly as to burden unduly the resources of his people.

As Solomon grew old, he grew old shamefully. Someone has said that a fitting epitaph on Solomon's tombstone would have been, "Born the wisest man on earth; died a fool." Solomon was not like his father, David, who was close enough to his people to sympathize with their needs and struggles. David knew poverty at first hand but Solomon, born in the king's palace, had his every want supplied without effort on his part. He looked upon his subjects as a means to an end—to gratify his every desire.

While Solomon strengthened Israel's national security, extended her borders, enlarged her commerce, gave her good foreign alliances and good government, in the end, he ruined it all with his failure to keep himself in touch with God. In his multitudinous marriages with foreign women, he allowed them to bring into his court their idols and idol-worship. Religion with Solomon became something to be subordinated to political aims. He refused to listen to the voice of the prophets.

With everything going so well in his kingdom, Solomon felt no need of Jehovah. Adversity is often more valuable for a people or a nation, because the times that try men's souls often result in a sincere examination of heart to try to discover the cause of the difficulty. How much better it would have been had Solomon given God some credit for his prosperity. Instead, it only served to puff up further an already inflated ego.

Perhaps, the worst condition of Solomon's kingdom was its surrender to unbridled appetite—people as well as king. His reign was marked by an "eating and drinking and making merry" sentiment. The writer of first Kings outlines in detail the tremendous amount of food that was required for one day in Solomon's court.

The decline of the Kingdom was slow, but sure. Solomon apparently weathered his prosperous times through his youth and middle age but, as he grew older, the timbers of his character gave way.

The climatic sin of Solomon was his weakness for foreign wives, who introduced their heathen gods and idols into the palace. Association with these heathen beliefs and practices eventually took its toll—Solomon gave them his own favor and deference. Soon he, too, was worshipping these strange gods, with a resultant loss of his faith in Jehovah.

What happened to Solomon—living life in its lowest aspects—will happen to every man. Solomon did not keep his faith in God because he neglected the worship of God. Regular worship of God in His church, and fellowship with other believers, will keep faith strong.

With Solomon began the long struggle between the kings and statesmen, who looked on religion as a means to national ends, and the prophets, who saw it as the supreme goal of a nation's life. And thus began the downfall of Israel as a nation.

John Foster Miller has said, "Your living is determined not so much by what life brings to you as by the way your mind looks at what happens. Circumstances and situations do color life, but you have been given the mind to choose what the color will be." (These commentaries are based on copyrighted outlines prepared by the Division of Christian Education, National Council of the Churches of Christ, U. S. A., and used by permission.)

WHICH WAY...AND HOW FAR?

BLUE BELL CHESTNUT MILE 5 MILES

These are fundamental questions which we ask in many, many forms:

The school-boy wonders how to prepare for his chosen profession... and how long it will take him.

The romantic swain wonders which girl to marry... and when he will be able to afford to marry.

The ailing business-man wonders how to regain his health... and how long before he can return to work.

And millions of folks, troubled with a sense of the futility of life, ask "how can we find happiness... and when will we ever attain it?"

The experience of the Christian Church answers clearly: We find happiness by believing the truth Jesus Christ revealed to men... and that happiness begins as soon as we have faith in Him.

THE CHURCH FOR ALL... ALL FOR THE CHURCH

The Church is the greatest factor on earth for the building of character and good citizenship. It is a storehouse of spiritual values. Without a strong Church, neither democracy nor civilization can survive. There are four sound reasons why every person should attend services regularly and support the Church. They are: (1) For his own sake. (2) For his children's sake. (3) For the sake of his community and nation. (4) For the sake of the Church itself, which needs his moral and material support. Plan to go to church regularly and read your Bible daily.

Day	Book	Chapter	Verses
Sunday	Psalm	24	1-8
Monday	Job	23	1-10
Tuesday	Isaiah	1	16-26
Wednesday	Isaiah	11	1-9
Thursday	Acts	4	1-12
Friday	Hebrews	1	1-14
Saturday	Psalm	120	1-10

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Perquimans Church Services

HERTFORD BAPTIST CHURCH
C. W. Duling, Pastor
Sunday School, 9:45 A. M.
Morning Worship, 11:00 o'clock.
Evening Worship, 8 o'clock.
Mid-week Services, Wednesday at 8 P. M.

BETHLEHEM CHURCH OF CHRIST
Joe Brickhouse, Pastor
First Sunday
11 A. M. and 8 P. M.

BURGESS BAPTIST CHURCH
Colon Jackson, Jr., Pastor
Church services second and fourth Sundays at 11 A. M.
Sunday School at 10:00 A. M.
Church service 7:45 P. M. second and fourth Sundays.

PERQUIMANS CHARGE CHURCHES
H. M. Jamieson, Pastor
First Sunday:
New Hope Church, 11:00 A. M.
Oak Grove Church, 7:00 P. M.
Second Sunday
Winfall Church, 11:00 A. M.
Cedar Grove Church, 10 A. M.
Woodland Church, 7:00 P. M.
Third Sunday
Oak Grove Church, 11:00 A. M.
New Hope Church, 7:00 P. M.
Fourth Sunday
Cedar Grove Church, 11:00 A. M.
Woodland Church, 10 A. M.
Winfall Church, 7:00 P. M.
Fifth Sunday
Woodland Church 11:00 A. M.
Prayer Meeting each Wednesday at Winfall Church, 7:00 P. M.

ANDELFSON'S METHODIST CHURCH
R. M. Gradeless, Pastor
Church School, 10:00 A. M.
Morning Worship, 11:00 A. M., second and fourth Sundays.

WOODVILLE BAPTIST CHURCH
James F. Burke, Pastor
Church Services on second and fourth Sundays at 11 A. M.
First and Third Sundays at 7:45 P. M.
Sunday School 9:45 A. M.

UP RIVER FRIENDS CHURCH
Elizabeth White, Pastor
Sunday School, 9:45 A. M.
Church Services, 11 A. M.
Christian Endeavor, 6:30 P. M.

BETHEL BAPTIST CHURCH
Rev. Bennie Crawford, Pastor
Sunday School, 10 A. M.
Preaching first and third Sundays at 11 A. M.
Preaching second and fourth Sunday evening at 7:30.

PINEY WOODS FRIENDS CHURCH
D. Virgin Pike, Pastor
Church School 10 A. M.
Morning Worship 11 A. M.
Young People's Meeting 7 P. M.

WHITEVILLE GROVE BAPTIST CHURCH
Caleb Goodwin, Jr., Pastor
Sunday School, 11 A. M., every Sunday except third Sunday.
Church services every third Sunday at 3 P. M.

HERTFORD METHODIST CHURCH
A. L. Chaplin, Pastor
Church School, 9:45 A. M.
Morning Worship, 11:00 o'clock.
Youth Fellowship, 6:45 P. M.
Evening Worship, 7:30 P. M.
Mid-week Fellowship, Wednesday at 7:30 P. M.

BAGLEY SWAMP PILGRIM
Coy S. Saunders, Pastor
Sunday School, 10:00 A. M.
Morning Worship, 11:00 o'clock.
Young People's Meeting, 6:30 P. M.
Evening Worship, 7:30 o'clock.
Mid-week Services, Thursday at 7:30 P. M.

HOLY TRINITY EPISCOPAL CHURCH
Rev. Charles F. Wolf, Rector.
9:45 A. M., Church School, every Sunday.
9:00 A. M., Holy Communion, 1st Sunday.
8:30 A. M., Holy Communion, 2nd, 4th, 5th Sundays.
11:00 A. M., Holy Communion, 3rd Sunday.
11:00 A. M., Morning Prayer, 2nd, 4th, 5th Sundays.
10:00 A. M., Holy Communion, Fridays and Saints' Days.

BEREA CHURCH OF CHRIST
Walker Perry, Pastor
2nd and 4th Sunday at 10:30 A. M.
Morning worship on first and third Sundays at 11 A. M.
Evening worship first and third Sundays at 7:30 P. M.

CHAPPELL HILL BAPTIST CHURCH
A. H. Ostlaw, Pastor
Sunday School, 2 P. M. every first Sunday.
Church Service 3 P. M. every first Sunday.
Sunday school at 11 A. M. every second, third and fourth Sunday.

Go To Church Your Church Any Church But Go