

Lesson I.

THE KINGDOM DIVIDED

January 1, 1911

1 Kings 12 : 6-16. Study 1 Kings 12 : 1-24—*Memory Verses, 13, 14.

Golden Text—He that walketh with wise men shall be wise ; but a companion of fools shall be destroyed.—Proverbs 13 : 20.



15 Wherefore the king hearkened not unto the people ; for the cause was from the Lord, that he might perform his saying, which the Lord spake by Ahijah the Shilonite unto Jeroboam the son of Ne'bat.
16 So when all Israel saw that the king hearkened not unto them, the people answered the king, saying, What portion have we in Da'vid ? neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse : to your tents, O Israel : now see to thine own house, Da'vid. So Israel departed unto their tents.

THE LESSON RETOLD

The Lessons for the whole of last year were from Matthew's story of the life of Jesus. In the Lessons for this year we shall hear of the kings and prophets who lived in Israel before Jesus came. To-day we go back to the time when King Solomon died, and all the twelve tribes of the Israelites gathered together at Shechem to make his son Rehoboam their king. But first they spoke to Rehoboam, and complained that Solomon had made them work very hard and pay him a great deal of money to build his splendid palace in Jerusalem and to make other cities in his kingdom larger and grander. The people asked the new king Rehoboam to give them less work to do for him, and not to ask them for so much money. Rehoboam told them to come back again in three days, and he would tell them then what he would do.

After they had gone, Rehoboam asked advice of the old men who had been friends

6 And king Rehoboam consulted with the old men, that stood before Solomon his father while he yet lived, and said, How do ye advise that I may answer this people ?

7 And they spake unto him, saying, If thou wilt be a servant unto this people this day, and wilt serve them, and answer them, and speak good words to them, then they will be thy servants for ever.

8 But he forsook the counsel of the old men, which they had given him, and consulted with the young men that were grown up with him, and which stood before him :

9 And he said unto them, What counsel give ye that we may answer this people, who have spoken to me, saying, Make the yoke which thy father did put upon us lighter ?

10 And the young men that were grown up with him spake unto him, saying, Thus shalt thou speak unto this people that spake unto thee, saying, Thy father made our yoke heavy, but make thou it lighter unto us ; thus shalt thou say unto them, My little finger shall be thicker than my father's loins.

11 And now whereas my father did lade you with a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke : my father hath chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions.

12 So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam the third day, as the king had appointed, saying, Come to me again the third day.

13 And the king answered the people roughly, and forsook the old men's counsel that they gave him ;

14 And spake to them after the counsel of the young men, saying, My father made your yoke heavy, and I will add to your yoke : my father also chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions.

15 And the king answered the king, saying, My father made your yoke heavy, and I will add to your yoke : my father also chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions.

16 So when all Israel saw that the king hearkened not unto them, the people answered the king, saying, What portion have we in Da'vid ? neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse : to your tents, O Israel : now see to thine own house, Da'vid. So Israel departed unto their tents.

of his father ; and they advised him to speak gently to the people and make fair promises. If he did this, they said he could afterwards treat the people as he pleased. But Rehoboam was not satisfied with this advice. He gathered his young companions together, and asked them what they thought he should do. The young men told him to say to the people that if Solomon his father had required a great deal from them, he would require still more, and if his father had punished them a little when they were disobedient, he would punish them a great deal.

So the people came back again in three days, and with them, as their leader, was a young man, Jeroboam, whom God had said would be one day king over ten of the tribes of Israel. Rehoboam spoke roughly to the people, and told them he would treat them even worse than his father had treated them. Then the people went away in great anger,

*The Scripture Memory Passages of the Supplemental Leaflets are recommended as a substitute for those here given Sabbath by Sabbath. Their recitation leads to the obtaining of a beautiful Certificate or Diploma.