

Lesson I.

THE KINGDOM DIVIDED

January 1, 1911

LESSON SETTING—Our last series of Lessons from the Old Testament (July to December, 1908) brought us to the close of Solomon's reign. The Lessons for 1911 begin with the coming of Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, to the throne, and will carry us on to the close of the Old Testament history.

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

* Memorize vs. 13, 14. **THE LESSON PASSAGE**—1 Kings 12: 6-16. Study 1 Kings 12: 1-24. Read 1 Kings 11: 26-40.

6 And king Rehoboam ¹ consulted with the old men, that ² stood before Solomon his father while he yet lived, ³ 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 ¹ consulted with the young men that were grown up with him, ⁴ and which stood before him:

9 And he said unto them, What counsel give ye that we may ⁵ answer this people, who have spoken to me, saying, Make the yoke ⁶ which thy father did put upon us lighter?

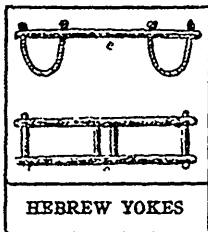
10 And the young men that were grown up with him spake unto him, saying, Thus shalt thou ⁷ speak unto this people that spake unto thee, saying, Thy father made our yoke heavy, but make thou ⁸ it lighter unto us; thus shalt thou ⁹ say unto them, My little finger ¹⁰ shall be thicker than my father's loins.

11 And now whereas my father did lade you with a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke: my father

Revised Version—¹ took counsel; ² had stood; ³ that stood; ⁴ return answer to; ⁵ that thy; ⁶ say; ⁷ speak; ⁸ is thicker; ⁹ Omit hath; ¹⁰ bade, saying; ¹¹ counsel of the old men which they had given him; ¹² but I; ¹³ Omit also; ¹⁴ So the king; ¹⁵ it was a thing brought about of the Lord; ¹⁶ establish his word; ¹⁷ by the hand of; ¹⁸ to; ¹⁹ And when.

Daily Readings—(Courtesy, I.B.R.A.)—M.—Ahijah's prophecy, 1 Kgs. 11: 26-40. T.—The kingdom divided, 1 Kgs. 12: 1-11. W.—The kingdom divided, 1 Kgs. 12: 12-24. Th.—Counsel refused, Zech. 7: 8-14. F.—A soft answer, Prov. 15: 1-9. S.—Folly of pride, Prov. 16: 18-23. 8.—Walking with the wise, Prov. 13: 8-20.

THE LESSON EXPLAINED



The Lesson begins with an assembly of all Israel at Shechem (see Geography Lesson) to confirm the succession of Rehoboam to the throne of his father Solomon. First, however, the people demanded of the new king that he should lighten the burden of taxation and forced labor which Solomon had

laid upon them. Rehoboam delayed his answer for three days. Vs. 1-5.

I. THE KING'S COUNSELORS.—6, 7. **Rehoboam.** The name means "enlarger of the people." But the new king, by his folly, proved himself the "diminisher" of his people. **Consulted.** One of the few wise things that Rehoboam did, was to seek the counsel of those who had greater wisdom and experience than himself. **Old men;** old in comparison with Rehoboam, who was forty-one when he became king, ch. 14: 21. **Stood before Solomon;** as counselors of that king. **Be a servant . . . this day.** Give the people a civil answer now; tell them you will do whatever they ask. **Thy servants for ever.**

Content with fair words, the people would scatter to their homes, leaving the king to do what he pleased. These old counselors proposed a policy of "long promises, short performance".

8-11. Forsook the counsel. He was too proud to bend to the people's will even for a moment. **Consulted with the young men;** literally, "boys", rash and inexperienced advisers ready to flatter Rehoboam's pride by urging him to show himself master and force the people to submit to his will. **My little finger,** etc.; a foolish brag of Rehoboam's that he is stronger and wiser than his father. **Add to your yoke.** The burdens of taxation and forced labor laid upon the people by Solomon are likened to the yoke placed upon the necks of oxen. **Chastised you with whips;** a lighter form of punishment in comparison with what the people might expect. **With scorpions:** a kind of lash with metal points, so that each blow might wound like a scorpion's sting.

II. THE KING'S CONDUCT.—12-14. **Jeroboam;** a brave soldier under king Solomon. Ahijah, a prophet, speaking for God, had told him that he would become king over ten of the tribes. When Solomon heard of this prophecy, Jeroboam was compelled to flee to Egypt. (See ch. 11: 26-40.) He had

* 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.