

FOR THE SABBATH SCHOOL

International S. S. Lesson.

LESSON I.—THE KINGDOM DIVIDED.—JULY 3.

1 Kings xii. 16-25.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"A soft answer turneth away wrath; but grievous words stir up anger." Prov. xv. 1.

TIME AND PLACE.—975 B. C. Shechem.

INTRODUCTION.—Returning to O. T. history glance backward over the course of development from a single emigrant to a great nation. 1. The birth of Abraham, in Chaldea. About 2000 B. C. 2. The Exodus,—the birth of the Hebrew nation. Moses. About 1500 B. C. 3. The conquest of Canaan,—the home of the nation. Joshua. 1451-43 B. C. 4. The period of the judges, the development of the nation. 350 years. 1415-1095 B. C. 5. The monarchy founded. Saul. 1095 B. C. 6. The kingdom in its meridian splendor. David and Solomon. 1055-975 B. C. 7. The temple. 1005 B. C. 8. The kingdom divided. 975 B. C.

VERSE BY VERSE.—16 "All Israel."—Delegates representing the ten tribes.—Bahr. "To your tents, O Israel."—Disperse to your homes. This cry—the Marseillaise of Israel—had its origin when the people dwelt in tents, in the march through the desert, Job. xxii. 4; Num. i. 52; ix. 18; xvi. 26. "See to thine own house."—Henceforth, the house of David, look after thine own tribe, Judah, only. Not a threat of war, but a warning against interference.

V. 17. "The children of Israel which dwell in the cities of Judah."—Some of the families of the ten tribes were settled in the limits of the tribe of Judah, and these remained under the authority of Rehoboam.

V. 18. "Sent Adoram, who was over the tribute."—He was at the head of the tax collectors. "Stoned him with stones."—He was sent to collect the revenue, and was resisted by force. "Made speed."—The slaying of Adoram showed that the rebellion was a settled fact. "To flee to Jerusalem."—He was at Shechem, where he had assembled the people, but his capital was at Jerusalem.

V. 19. "Unto this day."—When this history was written. The two parts of Solomon's kingdom were never reunited.

V. 20. "That Jeroboam."—He was an Ephraimite, who had been employed by King Solomon in overseeing public works. "Was come again."—He had been to Egypt to escape from the anger of Solomon, but had returned on hearing of his death, and had been the leader of the ten tribes in their revolt, they now make him king. "None . . . but the tribe of Judah only."—But including some individuals from the other tribes (v. 17), and the small tribe of Benjamin (v. 21.) They were called from this time by the name of Judah.

V. 21. "To bring the kingdom again."—He proposed, that is, to subdue the rebellion of the ten tribes, and bring them under his authority.

V. 22. "The name of God."—I. e., the prophet Shemarab.

V. 23. "Return every man to his house."—The army which the king had assembled was to be disbanded.

V. 25. "Built Shechem."—Fortified it, and made it for a time his capital. "Built Penuel."—This was on the eastern side of Jordan, and was fortified to defend and control the eastern portion of his domain.

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR.

CONDUCTED BY REV. W. M. McTAVISH, B.D., DESERONTO.

DAILY READINGS.

First Day—Command with promise. Ex. xx. 12-17.

Second Day—Honoring by obedience. Prov. i. 7-19.

Third Day—By upright living. Prov. xxiii. 19-25.

Fourth Day—Joseph's faithfulness. Gen. xiv. 1-17.

Fifth Day—Absalom's disloyalty. 2 Sam. xv. 1-17.

Sixth Day—Christ's example. Luke ii. 51, 52; John xix. 25-27.

PRAYER MEETING TONIGHT, JULY 3.—HONORING FATHER AND MOTHER.

Eph. vi. 1, 4. Prov. xvii. 6, 21, 25. Q. 27.

HONORING FATHER AND MOTHER

Honoring father and mother! An old subject, but one which must never be neglected. It had a place in the Decalogue; it was not forgotten in the teaching of the prophets. It was not overlooked in the teaching of Christ; the great Apostle Paul called attention to it. It is a live, practical subject still, and indeed, in the opinion of many, it needs to be emphasized more strongly to-day than ever before. There is a conviction among the older people that young people do not defer as cheerfully to the opinions of their parents as young people once did, and that they are more impatient of restraint than they once were. Whether this be true or not we cannot say, but if it be true, more's the pity.

I. How are we to honor parents?

(1) We should treat them with all due respect. When we speak of them we should speak respectfully and never in those contemptuous and contemptible terms which are used by ungrateful children. If we speak to them we should address them with due deference and never in such a way as to wound their feelings. In our behaviour toward them we should treat them with reverence. It is said that the children of Jonathan Edwards always rose up when their parents entered the room, and remained standing until the parents were seated; and when either Mr. Edwards or his wife was speaking, the children, no matter with whom they were conversing, would be silent and attentive immediately. What an example to all children!

(2) We should be obedient to their counsels and their lawful commands. Isaac was a full grown man when his father led him out and placed him upon the sacrificial altar, and yet he submitted as willingly and obediently as if he had been a little child. It is to be feared that boys and girls to-day, at altogether too early an age, suppose they are free from the great law of obedience to parents. It is difficult to determine at what age one may cease to obey his parents, but as a rule it is safe to say that as long as parents claim the right to command, children should feel called upon to obey—to obey lawful commands, or to obey in everything which is not contrary to the will of God. Dr. Parkhurst says, "To learn to obey is the hardest, even as it is the most valuable lesson a child can ever acquire. It is not only valuable for what it is in itself, it is also valuable for what it serves as the basis of."

(3) We should honor our parents by consulting them in our plans, and by seeking their advice in our undertakings. When John Wesley and his brother Charles were young men in college, they frequently consulted their mother as to their duties and other engagements. It was a most commendable habit, and we cannot but feel that were it formed by other young people there would not be so many wrecks upon the shores of time.

II. Why we should honor parents.

(1) Because they have special claims upon us. No one has done so much for us as they. With how much solicitude did they watch over us! How intently they guarded us against that which would have been injurious! How patiently they waited beside us when sickness laid us low! With what wistful eyes did they look for our recovery! How many anxious hours did they spend planning for our welfare! How much they denied themselves for our sake! We speak of the Chinese as heathen, but in the matter of honoring parents, the "heathen Chinese," as we call him, could show us an example which we would do well to follow. Every New Year morning each man and boy, emperor and peasant alike, pays a visit to his mother. He brings with him presents for her, thanks her for her kindness to him and asks her to continue her favors another year.

(2) God Himself enjoins us to honor parents. He holds out the brightest promises to those who do so, and utters the most solemn warnings to those who refuse. Jesus never uttered anything more severe than when He said to those who took advantage of certain Rabbinical ordinances to escape the responsibility of caring for their aged and helpless parents. (Matt. xv. 4-6).

The following clipping is from the *Christian Endeavor World*, and is deserving of careful consideration. The Conveners of the Assembly's Committees will, I am sure, be glad to see that it is given a place in this column:—

BUSINESS, OR BEGGARY?

The Lord's business should never be conducted by His people as if He were a mendicant. It is the purpose of the missionary boards and benevolent societies of the various denominations to secure a dignified and scriptural presentation of the benevolent causes, and a wise and wide distribution of the funds thus secured. That local needs will arise which cannot be immediately supplied in this way is inevitable, yet it is dividing a house against itself and lowering the standard of systematic and intelligent giving to have a large number of importunate personal appeals flooding the churches, subtracting from the funds that go through the regularly established channels, for the prosecution of the work for which the denominations hold their boards responsible.

But the unfortunate phase of this matter to which we feel compelled to call attention is the frequency with which these appeals are directed to the Christian Endeavor societies, and the misfortune of it is that, however deserving the cases may be, they tend to wean the support of the societies from their official denominational enterprises. That they are more frequently thus addressed shows the assumption to be that these societies are more sympathetic and less discriminating in their responses. This is the strongest reason for leaving their benevolence to the guiding hand of their denominational officials.