

1 Kings 12:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

Analysis

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.

This verse contributes to the broader narrative of kingdom divided: rehoboam and jeroboam, within the book's focus on kingdom division as judgment for Solomon's idolatry.

The Hebrew text reveals nuances important for understanding this passage's contribution to 1 Kings' theological message about kingship, covenant, and faithfulness to Yahweh. This verse demonstrates the consequences when God's people—especially their leaders—either follow or forsake the covenant established at Sinai.

Historical Context

First Kings was written during or after the Babylonian exile (6th century BCE), reflecting on the monarchy period (10th-9th centuries BCE) to explain why the kingdoms fell. The kingdom division (c. 930 BCE) created the northern kingdom (Israel, 10 tribes) and southern kingdom (Judah, 2 tribes).

Ancient Near Eastern kingship ideology viewed kings as divine representatives responsible for maintaining cosmic order through right worship. Archaeological discoveries from sites like Megiddo, Hazor, and Samaria confirm the historical reliability of 1 Kings' descriptions of building projects and administrative structures.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How can leaders today avoid Rehoboam's mistakes and lead with wisdom rather than pride?
2. What does the kingdom division teach about the long-term consequences of generational sin and compromise?
3. How does this verse point toward or prepare for the coming of Christ and His eternal kingdom?

Interlinear Text

וַיֹּדֶבֶר	אֵלֵיהֶם	כְּעֵצַת	הַיְלָדִים	לֵאמֹר			
And spake	H413	to them after the counsel	of the young men	saying			
H1696		H6098	H3206	H559			
אָבִי	הִכָּבִיד	אֶת	עַלְכֶם	וְאֲנִי	אֶסִּיף	עַל	עַלְכֶם
My father	heavy	H853	to your yoke	H589	and I will add	H5921	to your yoke
H1	H3513		H5923		H3254		H5923
אָבִי	אִיסַר	אֶתְכֶם	בְּשׁוּטֵי יָם	וְאֲנִי	אִיסַר		
My father	also chastised	H853	you with whips	H589	also chastised		
H1	H3256		H7752		H3256		
אֶתְּךָ	בְּעֵקְרֹבִים:						
H853	you with scorpions						
	H6137						