

From the long-suffering of the Lord, His servant should learn a lesson of patience. (Compare Matt. 10 : 24 ; Jno. 15 : 18, 20.)

### III. The People Warned, 9, 10.

Vs. 9, 10. *Protest solemnly unto them.* God will not allow His people to bring evil upon themselves without warning them against it. *The manner of the king* ; the way in which

the king whom they desire will treat them.

Vs. 11-18 give Samuel's description in detail. The king pictured here is one towards whom all the substance and the services of the nation must flow. In vs. 19-22, we have the people's rejection of the warning given and the Lord's renewed direction to Samuel to grant their demand.

### APPLICATION

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*It came to pass, when Samuel was old,* v. 1. Boswell tells us, that Dr. Samuel Johnson had engraved on the dial of his watch, "The night cometh," so that he might be stimulated to earnest effort every time he looked at the face of his time-piece. The example of Jesus teaches us to see in the rapid flight of time a reason for redoubled zeal, John 9 : 4. Soon old age will overtake the youngest and the strongest of us and compel us to lay down our work, for lack of strength to do it longer. We have not a moment to waste in idleness, or to spend on unworthy objects. The task of each day should be taken up and carried through with such diligence and fidelity, that when we grow old we can look back on life and not be ashamed.

*Joel.... Abiah,* v. 2. The names embody, each of them, the name of Jehovah. The letters E. R. placed on certain buildings, show that they belong to the government of which King Edward is the head. The name of God should be stamped on ourselves and everything we have. We belong to Him. He has created us. He supplies our daily needs. Above all, He has redeemed us by the costly sacrifice of His Son. We rob Him of the honor which is His due, if we employ our powers or possessions in a way contrary to His will.

*Turned aside,* v. 3. Sometimes two trains on different tracks run side by side for some distance, and then when a certain point is reached, the two tracks begin to diverge. The distance between them constantly increases, until the train on the one track fades from the sight of the passengers on the other, and at last they reach widely separated destinations. Before choosing our path in life, we should be sure about whither it will lead. However little, at first, the wrong path

diverges from the right, we should beware of entering upon it, because it unerringly leads, in the long run, to destruction and misery.

*Took bribes.* An ancient practice, but none the less vile on that account. To accept a bribe is to acknowledge that one considers money worth more than his manhood ; and to be bribed to a certain course, makes every further step taken a lie. A country, where the leaders accept bribes and the people suffer them to do it unrebuked, is already far gone toward ruin.

*Thy sons walk not in thy ways,* v. 5. We may not be responsible for what others do ; but we are responsible for the example we set before them. Even the very young have companions who imitate them. How sad it is, if by copying our conduct, others are led to do wrong, and so evil in the world is multiplied ! And what a joy to know that those about us are helped to do right because they see in us what right is !

*Samuel prayed unto the Lord,* v. 6. God is just as near to us as our perplexities. To get into His presence, we do not need to build a ladder up to Him and then creep up round after round. All we have to do is to turn our faces towards Him.

"Speak to Him thou, for He hears, and Spirit with Spirit can meet ;  
Closer is He than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet."

*They have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me,* v. 7. Beware of rejecting an ambassador of God, in however humble guise he may come. Those whom God sends to speak in His name, He clothes with His authority, and to despise them is to offer an insult to God himself.