

Samuel's Farewell Address

is the loving dread which a true child has of offending his father. *See him in truth*; a third mark of acceptable service, to be added to those of vs. 20, 21. *For consider*. The first motive to obedience is gratitude. *How great things he hath done for you*. This appeals to Canadians as much as it could ever have done to the ancient Israelites.

V. 25. *Ye shall be consumed*; the stern law of sowing and reaping, Gal. 6:7, 8. The word here translated "consumed" is rendered by "perish" in ch. 26:10; 27:1, and is used in these latter passages of being slain in battle. Perhaps this verse looks forward to Saul's death on Mount Gilboa (ch. 31:1-4) after the defeat of his army.

APPLICATION

Behold, the Lord hath set a king over you, v.

13. No choice of men can depose God from His authority over them. There have been whole nations, like France, who have gone so far as to deny that there is a God, and to carry on their government as if He had no existence. But He has continued none the less to rule over them, and has brought upon them the terrible consequences of forsaking Him. It is told of Claverhouse, the fierce persecutor of the Scottish covenanters, that when he was asked one day how he would give an account to God for some deed of cruelty, he replied, in effect, that he would give his account to the king, and as for God he would take Him in his own hand. But we may be sure, that however we may attempt to do so, we cannot put God out of our lives, and that we shall at the last have to give an account to Him.

If ye will fear the Lord, v. 14. These words of Samuel, in which he lays down the conditions of true and enduring prosperity for the nation and for the individual, were never more needed than in Canada to-day. This is a time with us of great material development. Our population is growing. Riches are increasing. But the true greatness of a nation depends not on such things as these, but upon the uprightness and integrity of its rulers and its people. As individuals, we may win a brief success by dishonorable and unrighteous methods, but the only life that will be truly successful in the long run is one which is ruled by the fear of God and a regard for the rights of others.

See this great thing, v. 16. God does not commonly answer prayer by such miracles as the one recorded here. But we have only to look about us to see answers quite as wonderful. When men are enabled, by the help received in answer to prayer, to overcome

some evil habit and to live pure and righteous lives, though they are surrounded by many temptations. we have as real a manifestation of divine power as if we were to see a mountain lifted from its place, or a stream turned back from its course, or the waters of the sea divided.

And all the people greatly feared the Lord, v.

18. The man who is guilty of some crime is filled with fear in the presence of the judge. for he knows that the judge has authority to pronounce the sentence of the law upon him. But when the same judge goes to his home, his little girl will climb up on his knee and look up into his face with a confidence in which there is no trace of fear. It is because we are guilty of breaking God's law that we are afraid of Him. The only way to have this dread removed, is to confess our sin and to receive the forgiveness which is promised to us through the shedding of Christ's blood.

Fear not, v. 20. God's message to the troubled heart is ever, "Fear not." When the heavenly host chorused the Saviour's birth, an angel soothed the startled shepherds with the words, "Fear not." When the fearful Marys looked at the empty tomb and the displaced stone, their hearts grew faint with nameless dread; but the angel of consolation whispered gently, "Fear not." God even allows those who have been comforted to comfort others. When Paul's prison ship was wrecked and everybody else had given up in despair, an angel stood by him and said, "Fear not, Paul," and so filled Paul's own heart with comfort that he was able to inspire that whole ship-load of people with his own hope and confidence.

Yet turn not aside, v. 20. No one should despair of rendering some worthy service to