

they are always just.

6. *A cringing penitent.* The details of vs. 24-28 will call out many a question: Was Saul sorry for his sin, or only sorry because his sin got him into trouble? Was he honest or dishonest in blaming the people for his disobedience of God's command? Did he want pardon because he felt sorry that he

had broken God's command, or only because he thought it might be a way to get the sentence of doom recalled? Samuel seems to have lost faith in Saul—judge by vs. 26-29. It is sad for us, indeed, when we have forfeited the confidence of both God and men.

The Golden Text points out the only way of keeping these intact.

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

[SEE SKETCH MAP, LESSON I.]

Dr. George Adam Smith writes, "Between Hebron and the wilderness, there are nine miles by three of plateau, where the soil is almost free from stones, and the fair, red and green fields, broken by a few heathy mounds, might be a scene of upland agriculture in our own country (Scotland). This is where the Judean Carmel lay with the farms of Nabal". In this region, about 10 miles southeast of Hebron, is a ruined town now called Kurnul. The same writer speaks of the ruins of a Crusader's castle, with a large bright blue pool below. These ruins consist of a large square tower, built in the 12th

century A.D. The name Carmel means "garden". Here Saul set up a "monument" on his return from the expedition against the Amalekites (see 1 Sam. 15: 12, Rev. Ver.). It is a familiar story, how the churlish Nabal refused to give David provisions for himself and his men, and how Abigail, the wife of the rich and niggardly sheep-owner, secretly furnished the future king with the needed supplies, 1 Sam., ch. 25. From the Carmel plateau, there is a wide view. Hebron to the north, with the white buildings and outstanding mosque, is visible through a glass.

ADDED HINTS AND HELPS

In this section will be found further assistance under various headings.

From the Library

The king who heeded the voice of his army in such a matter showed that he was not their leader, but their tool and their slave. The king who pretended to keep the booty for the purpose of offering sacrifice to the Lord his God, was evidently beginning to play the hypocrite;—to make the service of God an excuse for acts of selfishness, and so to introduce all that is vilest in kingcraft as well as in priestcraft.—Frederick Denison Maurice.

Saul was like the man in the iron cage in the Pilgrim's Progress, who gave his history: "I left off to watch and be sober; I laid the rein on the neck of my lusts; I sinned against the light of the Word and the goodness of God; I grieved the Spirit, and He is gone; I tempted the devil, and he is come to me; I have provoked God to anger, and He has left me; I have so hardened my heart that I cannot repent".—Blaikie.

Some Test Questions

1. In whose power had Israel been? What garrisons of these oppressors did Saul and Jonathan overthrow?
2. What commission was given him as to the Amalekites? How did he disobey God? Where did he meet Samuel?
3. How did he greet the prophet? What did he claim to have done? How was he convicted of falsehood?
4. Upon whom did he lay the blame for the sparing of the cattle? Show that he was guilty of hypocrisy.
5. What answer did Samuel make to Saul's excuses? Why were the Amalekites called sinners?
6. What proof that he had fulfilled his commission did Saul now offer?
7. What great principle as to worship did Samuel lay down? Where was it repeated by prophets? Where confirmed by Jesus?
8. What confession did Saul at last make? What did he ask Samuel to do? What was Samuel's reply at first?
9. How did Saul detain him? What then