

The address goes in stages :

First, vs. 1-5, Samuel's appeal as to his honesty and honor. Explain how much to the point the specifications of v. 3 were in that country and time. "Graft" and "pull" are what we would say.

Then follow in vs. 6-12 a series of instances in which God had delivered their fathers and themselves from peril and danger. Some classes may find interest in these. The point is—God had stood by them ; they should still have trusted Him, and not sought a king in His stead.

And now, the challenge, vs. 13-15 : " If you and your king are loyal to the Lord, well. If not, then the Lord will be against you, not for you."

The summer thunderstorm, vs. 16-19, will

be told about by any one of the class. It recalls John 12 : 28.

Then follow soothing words to the terrified people, vs. 20-24 : God will be merciful, and Samuel will not fail to intercede for them at the throne of the heavenly grace.

The story ends with a reminder like a sharp after-clap of thunder, v. 25.

For the lessons, perhaps these five may serve:

1. It is better to end life with a clean record than with strings of titles, or millions of dollars.
2. We can safely trust the God who has helped, to help still.
3. The God who can bring sudden thunder and rain in a rainless season, can visit swift punishment wherever and whenever it is needed.
4. The blessing of a good man's prayers.
5. God's mercy—the sinner's only hope.

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

[SEE SKETCH MAP, LESSON I.]

Of Jabesh-gilead, Hastings says, " While the history of this East Jordan city as furnished in the Bible is meagre, it gives us vivid pictures of both tragic and tender scenes in ancient Hebrew life". In Judg., ch. 21, the Israelites make a raid upon it with a powerful force, put all the men and married women to death, and carry off 400 maidens, who became wives to the Benjamites. 1 Sam., ch. 11 tells how, when it was attacked by the Ammonites under Nahash, Saul, to whom the inhabitants appealed for succor, came quickly with his army and utterly routed the enemy. Later, when Saul and his sons had been slain on Mount Gilboa

and their bodies had been hung up by the Philistines on the walls of Beth-shan, the men of Jabesh-gilead rushed in the very face of death, recovered the bodies, cared for them in the kindest manner, and buried them with proper honors, 1 Sam. 31 : 8-13. When David was made king at Hebron, he remembered this heroic deed, and sent special messengers to commend the men of Jabesh-gilead for their fidelity to Saul, 2 Sam. 2 : 5. Afterwards he brought thence the bones of Saul and his sons and buried them within the territory of their own tribe of Benjamin, in the sepulchre at Zelah belonging to Kish, Saul's father, 2 Sam. 21 : 12-14.

ADDED HINTS AND HELPS

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

Some Test Questions

1. What great victory had Saul won ? Where and for what purpose did Samuel summon a national assembly of Israel ?
2. Before whom did he place himself on trial ? On what points did he challenge inquiry ? What was the people's verdict ?
3. How did Samuel say the people had shown ingratitude to God in demanding a king ?
4. What five requirements were laid upon people and king ? What was promised if they should obey these ? What would

happen to them if they should disobey ?

5. By what miracle did the Lord confirm Samuel's words ? Why was the thunderstorm so great a wonder ?

6. What did the people beg of Samuel ? How did he comfort them ? What did he bid them do ?

7. How complete should our devotion to God be ? Quote a New Testament passage in which this is declared.

8. What are idols called in v. 21 ? How are the people to act towards these ?

9. Why was it certain that the Lord would not forsake His people ?