

in Israel's side and Judah's until the age of the Maccabees.

VER. 1. *Kerithath-Yearim*. "City of woods" (comp. Psa. 132, 6), lay on the frontier of Judah. It was perhaps selected as the nearest town on the road to Shiloh. *Up*. For the city was in the hill country. Abinadab was almost certainly a Levite, as Josephus says. *Hill*. Some unnamed height in the neighborhood, possibly marking one of the "high places" so often used for worship. *Sanctified*. As a Levite, for specially Levitical functions. VER. 2. The ark had remained seven months (chap. 6, 1) in Philistine hands, and now it had lain for about twenty years in Abinadab's house before these reforms of Samuel's. It was not placed in a public sanctuary until David's time (2 Sam. 6). *Lamented*. A difficult word. The text is a vivid description of the at last repentant people turning to cry after the God whom they had repelled from them. The margin, which has excellent authority, shows us the spontaneous instinct that brought Israel together. VER. 3. *If*. Samuel puts their repentance to the test just as the Baptist does (Matt. 3, 8). *Strange*. That is, foreign, the "idols of the nations." *Ashlaroth*, plural of *Ashareth*. See our note on Judg. 2, 11 (Dec. 2, 1888), and comp. 1 Kings 11, 5. She was the "queen of heaven," goddess of the moon or of the planet Venus, and her worship, the foulest of all Oriental cults, passed into Greece with the name of Aphrodite, to bring the same poison there. *Direct* (margin), so read. *Only*. "He is a jealous God," and it is this attribute that rouses pagan hostility to his worship. VER. 4. The plural names of Baal and Ashoreth indicate that the Israelites adopted all the various cults of these deities, as differentiated by local names or special functions. VER. 5. *Mizpah*. "The watch-tower," always with the definite article, to show that it is not quite a proper name yet. It lay near Jerusalem on the north. *Pray*. The eager penetrating tones of Samuel's voice in these intercessions were remembered as peculiarly characteristic of the great Prophet (comp. chap. 8, 6; 12, 17 *sq.*; and Psa. 90, 6; Jer. 15, 1). VER. 6. *Drew water*. Some have connected this with the traditional rite at the feast of tabernacles, allegorized in Isa. 12, 3 and John 7, 37, *sq.* But the water was then poured on the altar and as a sign of joy; this was poured on the ground (LXX.) and accompanied the fast of penitence. Others more probably take the water as a symbol of purifying the land, and others of hearts poured forth in penitence. *Fasted*. As on the day of atonement (Lev. 16, 29). The ceremonies of this day had the same purpose as those which were systematized in the Levitical ritual for that yearly occasion. *We have sinned*. Comp. Judg. 10, 10; 2 Sam. 12, 13. *Judged*. This describes the reformation which he carried out at this prolonged assembly, involving his assumption for the future of the functions of "Judge" (again see notes December 2, 1888). Samuel's government was much more universal and thorough than any of his predecessors had exercised. VER. 7. The assembly lasted so long that the Philistines suspected an insurrection and massed their forces. *Lords*. The "princes" of the five towns (see last lesson). Thus the whole army of the confederacy marched on Mizpah. VER. 8. *Cause*. Literally, "be not silent from crying," like Psa. 28, 1. VER. 9. *Lamb*. See Lev. 22, 27. *Whole*. A more probable reading is suggested by the LXX. and Josephus. "offered it as a burnt-offering for all the people." *Answered*. Quoted in Psa. 90, 6. VER. 10. The "answer" is the "great voice" (Psa. 29, 3) with which Jehovah thundered. Comp. Isa. 65, 24. *Discomfited*. "Struck panic into," a word used, as panic was originally, for supernatural defeats. VER. 11.

Beth-ezer. Above the road to Philistia, but unknown otherwise. VER. 12. *Shen*. Literally, "the tooth," some sharp rock called so from its shape. The word recurs in chap. 14, 4. *Eben-ezer*. See margin. This signal victory on the very site of the disaster of twenty years before emphasized Jehovah's lesson to the people. They never thought of using the ark as a charm again. *Hither*. The thought is exactly that of Psa. 105, 12. VER. 13. The events of the next chapter show that this subjugation was only relative, probably extending over the time of Samuel's active judgeship. VER. 14. These verses describe the period of Samuel's prime, his military success, and his vigorous and equitable administration. The pure theocracy was to be exhibited at its best before yielding to the earthlier ideal of the monarchy. *From Ekron*, etc. Not including these cities, which had never been Israelite. Judah's occupation of Ekron (Judg. 1, 18) was brief. The frontier towns between Ekron and Gath were released from vassalage. *Amorites*. That is, "highlanders," who thus joined with a people of like habits. The name is often used generally of the aborigines of Palestine. VER. 15. *Judged*. Surrendering his military and administrative functions to his sons and then to Saul, but remaining to the last by far the most venerated authority in the land. VER. 16. *Circuit*. A very confined one, for all these places were in Benjamin. We may suppose that the routine work was done by the elders in each town, but that serious matters came to Samuel in Ramah. None of the Judges had moved much outside a rather small circle. *Beth-el*. For its eventual history see Gen. 12, 3; 28, 11, *sq.*; 35, 10; Judg. 20, 18, 26; 1 Kings 12, 32, *sq.*; Hos. 4, 15; 10, 5. *Gilgal*. An important place during the conquest. VER. 17. *Ramoth*. His birthplace (chap. 1, 1) and burial-place (chap. 21, 1) is claimed by no less than eight sites. It may be identical with Arimathea (from *Ramathaim*, the dual, "two heights"). *Altar*. Not improbably he may have erected the tabernacle there. It was at Gibeon, hard by (?) at Solomon's accession.

The Lesson Council.

Question 3. What were the characteristics of the reformation or revival under Samuel?

The revival was preceded (1) by a profound sense of personal wickedness; (2) by a distressing sense of abandonment by God; and (3) by a conviction of the folly of attempting the service of God and of the heathen deities at the same time. The reformation consisted (1) in an absolute abandonment of the evil, sensual, and selfish idolatrous rites; (2) in a gathering by common consent of all the moral force in the great assembly of Mizpah, in a church-like way; and (3) in sole trust in God, not, this time, in the ark or in Samuel. This trust in God was shown in the prayer offered.—*Rec. H. M. Simpson.*

The reformation began where their troubles began more than a score of years before; in the moral condition of the priesthood and the people. Instead of the vile sons of Eli, Eleazar, who has been sanctified or ceremoniously set apart, is put in charge of the ark of the Lord. Instead of vainly trusting in the ark for victory, while their hearts sinfully cling to their idolatries, the people now, under the private exhortations of Samuel, turn to God with their hearts.—*Rec. A. E. P. Albert, D.D.*

1. It evinced deep sorrow for sin. Strength of sorrow is always proportioned to one's knowledge of good. As Israel recalled holier days they bitterly lamented after their offended Lord. The fasting, the public confession of guilt, the intercession through Samuel, and the will-