

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

What grieved Samuel?
 Why was the Lord displeased with Saul?
 What did he do?
 What did he tell Samuel to do?
 Who lived in Bethlehem?
 How far was it from Ramah? **About nine or ten miles.**
 What preparations did Samuel make to go to Bethlehem?
 Whom did he invite to the sacrifice?

Which son of Jesse did Samuel see first?
 Why was he not chosen? (Verse 7.)
 How many sons of Jesse passed before Samuel?
 What did Samuel then ask Jesse?
 Where was the lad David at this time?
 How did Samuel know that David was the Lord's choice? **The Lord told him.**
 How was he anointed?
 With what did the Lord anoint him?

Remember—

That God knows your heart. Verse 7.
 That he chooses the meek and lowly of heart.

EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

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General Statement.

A few years have passed by, and Saul is wandering further and still farther from the ways of God, while Samuel, in his own home, mourns over the wreck of his hopes. At length God's command comes to the aged prophet to seek one who shall in due time take the place of the rejected Saul. After a moment's hesitation, at the thought of Saul's reckless anger and its possibilities, Samuel obeys. As the venerable prophet, with long Nazarite locks hanging upon his shoulders, appears driving the heifer for sacrifice at the gate of Bethlehem, there is trembling among its rulers, lest he may have come to rebuke and punish some hidden crime. But he dispels their fears and bids them prepare by the rites of purification for a sacrifice to the Lord. The family of Jesse, ancient and honorable, are summoned to the place of honor; and as his sons—tall, stalwart young men—enter the prophet's presence, Samuel can scarcely believe that not one of these has been chosen by the God of Israel. But the inner voice reminds the prophet that the king now to be anointed is not to be marked by physical aspects, but rather by the attitude of his heart and the traits of his character. Out on the hills among his sheep sits the future king, a bright-eyed boy, slinging stones at a mark in the valley, singing God's praise upon his harp, and, though unseen by men, growing up to a fitness to hold the scepter. The youth is summoned at last, and, standing among his brothers, receives wonderingly the anointing from the horn of oil which once had been held over Aaron's brow by the hands of Moses. From that hour a new power dwells within the shepherd boy; voices speak in his ear unheard by those around, divine aspirations stir within his soul, and among the mountains of Bethlehem a true king of men begins to rise.

Verse 1. The Lord said. Probably by an inward voice to Samuel's consciousness. **How long wilt thou mourn?** He mourned because of his love for Saul and of his anxiety for the people, who were becoming estranged from God by Saul's influence. **I have rejected.** See notes on last lesson, verse 23. **Fill thine horn.** The word is not the same with that translated "vial" in 1 Sam. 10. 1, when Saul was anointed. The oil was the sacred oil used only at the anointing of Aaron, and afterward of the kings. A Jewish tradition states that it was exhausted at the coronation of Josiah, and never replenished. **Jesse.** Who, as a prominent citizen, living ten miles away, and the representative of a princely house, was well known to Samuel. He was the son of Obed, a descendant of Nohshon, Prince of Judah during the Exodus. Canaanite and Moabite blood were mingled with Israelite in his veins, through Rahab (Josh. 2; Matt. 1. 5) and Ruth. He was the inheritor of riches, and probably a good, plain man, though nothing is known of his character. **I have provided.** God still claimed his right

to rule over Israel by taking down one king and setting up another. (1) *Happy is that nation which is in the hands of the Lord!* **Me a king.** Rather, "a king for me;" not to satisfy the people, but the Lord.

2. How can I go? Samuel was afraid, and the sacred writer shows his honesty by stating it. There was just reason for his fear, as may be seen by Saul's conduct afterward at an imagined act of disloyalty. (See chapter 21 and 22. 7-23.) **Take a heifer.** The usual animal for sacrifice. **I am come to sacrifice.** There was no deception here, for this would be the fact; and while Samuel was bound to tell no lies, he was not bound to reveal all his intentions. The ark was in one place, the altar in another, and the tabernacle in seclusion; so that the regular worship was disorganized, and the prophet offered sacrifice by divine warrant.

3, 4. Call Jesse. Three directions—the invitation, the following of divine impulse, and the anointing. **Will show thee.** (2) *He who communes with God will enjoy divine guidance.* **Sam-**

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