

sure he will answer unmistakably. We do not know in what manner the answer came to David, but it was very clear and definite. Sometimes God answers us very distinctly through circumstances. He shuts us up to taking one of two ways by closing the other against us. He stops us in the way by obstacles that we may be led to consider our ways. Sometimes by some passage in the Scriptures flashing its light upon us, even while we speak with him, he tells us of our duty. Sometimes he sends a messenger—a friend or acquaintance at a critical moment to counsel in his name, and help us to a right decision. Many of us have had these experiences, and each can recall his own, but the point to be remembered is that God will reveal his way to those who earnestly seek to know it.

5. *We are shown the beauty of a magnanimous spirit.* David's commendation of the men of Jabesh-Gilead, and his invocation of blessing upon them, because they had given Saul a decent burial teaches this. The lesson is all the more beautiful when we remember the fairness with which David had treated Saul during his life time. Saul had chosen to show himself as an enemy, but David had not retaliated in kind. He had repeated opportunities of taking Saul's life had he chosen. Now that he was dead he displays the magnanimity of true greatness in blessing those who had performed the burial rites of his enemy. His spirit is commendable. Let us not be enemies towards those who may choose to make themselves enemies towards us. Let us see their good points and credit them for these while they live and have nothing spiteful to say of them when dead.

6. *The persistence of an enmity that has been cultivated.* Abner the great general of

Saul refused to be convinced by defeats or any other evidence of the fact of David's right to reign. He confesses (ch. 3: 10) that he had all along known that God would translate the kingdom from Saul's house to David's house. But he had been so trained to contend against David, and had so cultivated a spirit of enmity towards him, that against his own better knowledge he had persisted and made Ishbosheth king over Israel. We should be careful not to feed feelings of enmity and prejudice. Such feelings will grow into veritable clouds that will prevent us seeing the real facts concerning those whom we oppose and blind us to their just rights.

ADDED POINTS.

1. We serve God at times as well by passively waiting as by actively working. "They also serve who only stand and wait."

2. At pivotal points God-reliance is better than self-reliance.

3. It would be a foolish pride that would lead a traveller to take a wrong road rather than confess ignorance by inquiring. Let us understand the limitations of our knowledge.

4. Fair words as to the dead come most appropriately from those who have been fair to them in life. A flower given into the living hand is better than tons of wreaths on the coffin.

5. Before we enter on a divisive course like Abner's, let us think into what civil war and internecine strife we may be plunging those around us.

6. Let us dare to be honest even though it requires us to recede from a position taken openly at a former time.

7. God is not bound by human laws of primo-geniture.

THE BLACKBOARD.

By Rev. R. H. ABRAHAM, D. Sc., Burlington, Ont.

DAVID'S GREATNESS.

F ellowship with God.	vs. 1.
A ffectionate obedience.	vs. 2.
I nquiring the will of God.	vs. 1.
T houghtfulness of others.	vs. 6.
H umble acceptance of trust from God.	vs. 7.
F irm trust in God.	
U niform dependence on God.	
L oyalty to God.	

LESSON II—July 12th, 1896.

David King over all Israel. 2 SAM. 5: 1-12.

(Commit to memory verses 10-12).

GOLDEN TEXT: "David went on, and grew great, and the Lord God of hosts was with him."
2 Sam. 5: 10.

PROVE THAT—The Lord rewards the faithful. Ps. 101: 6.

SHORTER CATECHISM. Quest. 66. *What is the reason annexed to the fifth commandment? A.* The reason annexed to the fifth commandment, is a promise of long life and prosperity (as far as it shall serve for God's glory and their own good) to all such as keep this commandment.