

work she was found to be incompetent, unable to perform what was required. It was useless, therefore, to think of engaging her. Obedience and competence: every one who desires a servant will seek these.

In the Golden Text for to-day we hear how the Lord himself sought a servant to do his will. For the words "I have found David my servant," imply a previous search. It is not the language of one who has stumbled unexpectedly upon something, but of one who has been earnestly and carefully seeking for it. Why is this human image used by Him to whom all things are known, and from whom nothing is hid? Because it is one we can understand. It appeals to the experience and to the sympathies of even the youngest. Who has not, at some time or other, earnestly sought for a desired object? And who has not rejoiced when such an object is found? But why the search, and why the rejoicing? Because the thing is desired, cared for—cared for so much as to be worth an unlimited amount of time and pains spent in the seeking. When we are told, therefore, that the Lord sought and found a thing or a person we get some faint glimmering of how much he cared for them.

And why did the Lord thus desire to find a man who should be his servant? Most of us seek servants to minister to our daily needs. God requires nothing of this kind. Moreover, he has tens of thousands of angels to do his bidding. His thus earnestly seeking a servant among men must have been for man's sake. And so we find it. God sought a servant to be captain and shepherd over his people Israel. Chap. 13. 14; 2 Sam. 5. 2.

For such a post two things were required, the same that we have noticed above. The servant must be (1) obedient, and (2) competent.

Saul had been tried, but he failed in the first respect. He might be called, as we have said before, the king after man's own heart. And man's heart is by nature rebellious; "it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Rom. 8. 7. We saw last time that Saul had rejected the word of the Lord. Now the Lord had found a man after his own heart (chap. 13 14; Acts 13. 22), who would do his will, whether in feeding sheep or in ruling a nation.

I suppose it would have amazed the elders of Bethlehem if Samuel had told them how he sought in that place. The young son of Jesse, the least of the family, was not counted of any importance in their eyes. Even his own father had not thought it necessary to call David to the sacrifice. Nor even when Samuel's search was baffled

did it occur to him that the youngest could be the chosen one. Gentle, meek, and obedient, as David assuredly was (for we find him exhibiting all these qualities), Jesse had not remarked in the boy any remarkable talent or spirit—the episode of the lion and the bear being very likely unknown to him. But just such a one, who would seek neither his own will nor interest, but that of his divine Master, and who would depend, not on his own strength, but wholly on the Lord, was the one desired. "This is he."

But what of his competence? The work to which he was called was a great and mighty one. Could he perform it? The Lord saw to that. An earthly master may find an obedient servant who is yet very incompetent. But where God finds an obedient heart he can endue the man with all the necessary ability.

"Arise and anoint him." "And the Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward." The anointing was a symbol of spiritual endowment. And in this case it was not a mere symbol. Not being clothed with his own strength and his own will, David was ready to be clothed with power from above. The dew of heaven descended upon the ground that was waiting to receive it. Unlike Saul, the youth on whose head the anointing oil was poured yielded himself up to the influence of the Spirit of God. This was his competence for the work before him.

David was a type of a greater Servant whom Jehovah sought and chose—the one referred to in the words "I have found a ransom." Job 33. 24. The tender love of God toward mankind made him desire this Servant, who should, as man, fulfil all his pleasure. In him was found perfect obedience. Psa. 40. 8; John 4. 34; 6. 38; 8. 29. And what was his competence for the work given him to do? Not his eternal power and majesty, for these he had laid aside, but the anointing of the Holy Spirit. Isa. 42. 1; Luke 4. 18; Acts 10. 38.

And now that the divine Servant has made the way, God is seeking other servants, men, women, and children, to do his will, not that he needs their service, but that, in his love, he desires it; that he would have them enjoy the honour and the blessing of being his servants. And for this no rank, no wealth, no special talent, no dignity of age is required. The poorest, the weakest, can obey. A man who had become rich by his own exertions wanted his daughter taught music. The teacher tried the girl, but in vain; she could not learn. Then he went and said to the father: "It is useless to try to teach your daughter to play; she has no capacity." "Then," said the