

## Saul chosen King.

OCTOBER 28.

1 SAMUEL X : 17-27.

*Golden Text, 1 Samuel 10 : 24.*

**A**LTHOUGH displeasing to God, the selection of a king was permitted for reasons already stated, and was gone about in a becoming manner. The people were willing that God should decide who their king should be. Samuel, though inwardly protesting against the business, aided them in carrying it out. As for Saul, so far from being ambitious, he remonstrated against his appointment, ch. 9 : 21. He was, however, anointed by Samuel to the regal office, v. 1. To convince him that this thing was from the Lord, he gave him three signs, vs. 2-6. Vs. 17-20. The people must also have convincing proof that Saul was the right man in the right place: so they are convened at Mizpeh, and while Samuel reiterates his protest and charges them with rejecting God, now that it must be done, he arranges for determining the matter in an orderly manner by lot, a custom often referred to in scripture and always with a reference to the interposition of God, Prov. 16 : 33. V. 21. *Son of Kish*—called "Cis" in Acts 13 : 21, concerning whom very little is known. *Could not be found*,—although he knew he was to be the coming man, his innate modesty made him shrink from publicity. V. 22. *Enquired further*, seeing Saul's hesitancy, they made enquiry through the high-priest by means of the Urim and Thummim though what they really were, or in what way they were consulted, we do not know. The Lord answered the enquiry. *The Stuff*—the camp baggage of the assembled people. V. 23. In personal appearance Saul was every inch a king. Of commanding presence, he was the very beau ideal of what the people desired. Thus does man ever look to the outward appearance, ch. 16 : 7. In the first blush of their enthusiasm they coined an expression which has come down to our own times "God save the King." V. 25. Samuel was careful, amid this outburst of enthusiasm, to explain the manner of the Kingdom, i. e. the royal rights and privileges together with the limitations to which they were to be subjected. *He wrote it in a book*—made a careful record of the whole transaction and placed it in custody of the priests along with the sacred archives of the nation. *Samuel went all the people away*—showing that he still retained authority over them. V. 26. *Saul also went home to Gibeah*—a small town five miles N. of Jerusalem. He did not at once enter upon his kingly office, but waited his opportunity. *Whose heart God had touched*—who feared God and stood by their King. Have our hearts been touched by the gracious influence of the Holy Spirit! Then we shall evidence our loyalty by acknowledging Jesus as our King and following him. V. 27. *Men of Belial*—malcontents, who showed their disaffection by withholding their gifts, 2 Sam. 8 : 2-6. The best gift we can offer to God is our hearts, Ps. 51 : 17.

## Samuel's Farewell Address.

NOVEMBER 4.

1 SAMUEL 12 : 13-25.

*Golden Text, 1 Samuel 12 : 24.*

**S**AMUEL was the last of the judges who united military with the ecclesiastical authority. After his time the religious instruction of the people was carried on by an unbroken line of prophets, and the political government by kings. His character is one of the purest and noblest in O. T. history. The influence he exerted on the people was second only to that of Moses: a sagacious and successful general: a faithful and fearless prophet: conspicuously a reformer: singularly unselfish and patriotic: an able statesman: a man of faith and prayer. His farewell address was made at the time of the great political change. He lived many years after that, ch. 25 : 1, and continued to wield great influence. He even deposed Saul, ch. 15 : 23. Vs. 13-15. Although asking for a king was virtually rejecting God, yet Jehovah had acceded to it and would not utterly reject them. What was true of these Israelites, has been true all through the ages, that righteousness exalteth a nation but sin is a reproach to any people, Prov. 14 : 34. It was so from the beginning, Gen. 4 : 7. Vs. 16-18. He would shew them that although they had a king set over them God had not surrendered His authority. *Is it not wheat harvest!*—Rain seldom or never fell in that season: should it come now at Samuel's bidding it would prove to them that he was still the Lord's prophet and entitled to their continued respect and obedience. *Graciously feared the Lord and Samuel*—not in the sense that Samuel desired, but were afraid that some terrible judgement was coming upon them in consequence of their wickedness in rejecting God as their sovereign. V. 19. In their extremity they implore Samuel to intercede for them, see Exo. 9 : 28; 10 : 17. While he does not palliate their sin, he holds out to them the hope of God's favour if they will truly repent and henceforth serve Him. The Lord is merciful and gracious, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance, 2 Pet. 3 : 9. V. 21. *Vain things*—so idols are called, and the sacrifices to heathen deities are styled "vanities," Acts. 14 : 15. V. 22. *His people*—as a nation God chose them to be his people, but individually, they could only be so in so far as they served him with all their hearts. Salvation is freely offered to us in the Gospel: it is at our peril if we reject it. V. 23. Samuel here sets a sublime example to all believers to pray for all who are out of the right way. V. 24. *True fear of the Lord* lifts him who cherishes it above the fear of man: it leads to loving service and obedience: it brings conviction of sin, repentance, and the assurance of forgiveness. The fear of the Lord is put for the whole worship of God. Ps. 34 : 11. The great things God has done for us should lead us to love and serve Him,