

November 20th, 1864.

SAUL ANOINTED KING.

1 Sam. x. 1-27.

Ver. 1-6. David, 1 Sam. xvi. 1, and Solomon, were anointed in the same way, 1 Kings i. 39. Kissing was the act of a subject to a king, Psal. ii. 12. Saul was to remember, 1. He was the *Lord's* servant. The people would call him *king*, but God would treat him as His *servant*, and keep him on the throne only while he did his duty. None are so high as to be above serving God, Psal. ii. 10, 11. 2. He was *anointed* king. This would remind how solemnly he was set apart to God's work. 3. It was over *God's* inheritance; they were therefore to be governed after God's will.

Ver. 2-13. Mention separately the six signs given to Saul. These signs would convince Saul that Samuel was commissioned by God to anoint him king, and they would help to keep him obedient to Samuel's instructions. The prophecies which the Bible contains are great proofs of its being from God. Notice Samuel's tenderness of feeling. He had told him the previous day that the asses were found, but only now of his father's anxiety (ver. 2) when he was on his way home.— Cherish a tender spirit. There must have been good people in Israel then; see how many are referred to, ver. 3-5. Christ has more followers than we are apt to think, 1 Kings xix. 10-18. These men did not go to God empty-handed; when we go to worship, it is a good time to lay past our money as we have ability, 1 Cor. xvi. 2. The prophets were often called the sons of the prophets, 2 Kings ii. 3-5, and dwelt in societies, (ver. 5) cultivating learning, teaching music, &c. This is the meaning of their prophesying; see 1 Chron. xxv. 1; Rom. xii. 6. It is doubtful (ver. 6) if Saul was a pious man until now. It is not a good sign that, though he lived within twenty miles of Ramah, he was a stranger to Samuel, 1 Sam. ix. 19; and that it should be thought so astonishing he became a prophet. He was now changed, (ver. 11) but, from his future history being so inconsistent, we cannot tell how far the change went. Beware of grieving or quenching the Spirit of God, who speaks to you in this Bible. One man (ver. 12) seems to have known how Saul could become a prophet; he asked, But who is their father?—meaning, How did any of these men become prophets? Could not God make *Saul* a prophet as well as another. Is any thing too hard for the Lord? What changes did he work on another Saul! 1 Tim. i. 12-16 and

on the Corinthians, 1 Cor. vi. 9-11. He can do the same for you.

Ver. 14-16. Saul shows his prudence here; it would have been dangerous to tell his uncle all. We are always bound to speak truth, but need not tell the whole truth. It would have been a lie to say that was all Samuel told him. Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord. Who shall dwell in Thy holy hill? He that speaketh truth in his heart. Psal. xv. 2.

Ver. 17-19. Mizpeh was a city of Benjamin, Josh. xviii. 3-26, where the tribes had assembled to exterminate Benjamin, Jud. xx. 1; it was a fit place in which to honour Benjamin by taking a king from that tribe. The sin of Israel (ver. 18, 19) lay here. They thought their misfortunes arose from the want of a king, instead of being the fruit of their sins, Jud. ii. 16-19; and they imagined a king would be a better governor than God, 1 Sam. viii. 7. God had designed they should have a king of His choosing, Deut. xvii. 14, 15; but through their sin he gave them one in anger, Hos. xiii. 9-11. The benefits we receive from God are soon forgotten, Isa. i. 2, 3.

Ver. 19-24. Though Saul was anointed previously, the lot was taken to satisfy the people, otherwise they might have thought he was only Samuel's choice. The lot was resorted to on great occasions, Josh. vii. 17. "The lot is cast into the lap, but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord," Prov. xvi. 33. This is a very different thing from gambling and wagering, which are sinful and dangerous. Observe Saul's modesty; (the stuff in which he was hid was the people's baggage.) This was a good beginning; some in his place would have put themselves in the most prominent place. See his faith: he knew on whom the lot would fall. All God's promises shall be fulfilled, Psal. cxi. 7, 8. All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth, Psal. xxv. 10. His appearance was in his favour, ver. 23, and 1 Sam. ix. 2 which, with God's choice, and Samuel's approbation, enlisted the feelings of the people on his behalf.

Ver. 25-27. The manner of the kingdom is the manner in which it was to be ruled, Deut. xvii. 14-20. In every company (ver. 27) there are some good and some bad. The good are so by God's grace, ver. 26; Eph. ii. 1, 3, 4, 5. Belial is a word meaning wickedness. Children of Belial are the same as wicked men. In despising him they despised God, for God had elected him. See Saur's self-command; he waited for a fit opportunity of approving himself to be worthy of the throne. "Go not forth hastily to strive, lest thou know not what to do in the end thereof," Prov. xxv. 8. Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, Col. iv. 5.—Edin. S. S. Lessons.