

much finer animals in the East than in this country: they were more prized, as horses were forbidden to be multiplied, Deut. xvii. 16; Isa. ii. 7: and large herds of asses were kept, Gen. xii. 16. Observe *Saul's diligence*: he did his very best, and searched far and near to find them. Whether working or learning let us do it with our might, Eccles. ix. 10; heartily a to the Lord, Col. iii. 23. Newton says, a cobbler, if a Christian, should be the best in the parish. Observe what a *good son* Saul was, ver. 5; this was *honouring* his father; a wise son maketh a glad father, Prov. xv. 20.

Ver. 6-10. The name of this city is not known. A man of God is a common name for a prophet, Josh. xiv. 6; honourable, means much honoured or famous. He was the greatest since Moses; revelations were made to him when but a child. 1 Sam. iii. 10; 19 to 21. Presents were usually brought on visiting a superior; a shekel is worth half-a-crown. The servant was wrong if he thought prophets could be bribed to tell the future, ver. 8; see 1 Kin. xiv. 3; 2 Kin. v. 16. God only, and His prophets whom he instructs, can foretell: therefore fortune-tellers are cheats. But the servant's advice was good. God's people had the privilege then of asking His direction, 1 Sam. xxiii. 24. We have now two means of obtaining the guidance of God: The Scriptures, Psal. xix. 11;—Prayer, Jas. i. 5. It shows how little we know the worth of the soul, if we pray to God in sickness for health, or in poverty for subsistence, and neglect to pray for pardon and a change of heart; this ought to be first. His young master was not too proud to take his servant's advice; the servant was respectful, the master kind.

Ver. 11-14. How politely these maidens speak; let your speech be with grace, Col. iv. 6. This was a great feast such as that of the new moon; Samuel prayed for a blessing on it. We can ask, but God only gives. Psal. xx. 1-4. How do you know this was not a Sabbath-day? ver. 11, and Fourth Commandment.

Ver. 15-17. God's omniscience; the very hour is mentioned, His eyes are in every place, Prov. xv. 3. How He makes different events work together for good; the loss of the asses brought Saul to Samuel. His compassion; He will regard the prayer of the destitute, Psal. cii. 17. Since God knows all, what a comfort to those who love Him; how awful for those who live in sin, Jer. xvii. 10. Do not be afraid to cry to God in distress.

Ver. 18-24. How Saul must have wondered at the seer's knowledge. There was no need for the present the servant had. The high place was where the sacrifice was offered. Observe Saul's humility; he is not elated at

being bidden to eat with the great king of Israel. Samuel says, the desire of Israel on thee; Saul must have had some guess the meaning of this, 1 Sam. viii. 4; but he scarcely believes one so unknown should be promoted to the throne. God exalts the humble. The Benjamites had been destroyed by the other tribes for their sin, xx. 48. Observe how free Samuel was of jealousy. He was then chief ruler, yet has no envy of this stranger who is to be placed above him as king. A sound life is the life of the flesh, but envy the tenness of the bones, Prov. xiv. 20. One envieth not. Observe how he gives honour to whom honour was due. The elders would have their expectations of Saul raised by the reception of him.

Ver. 25-27. The tops of the houses flat, Deut. xxii. 8, and adapted to secret conversation. Samuel's conversation was about the kingdom, and how he ought to govern the fear of God. How different Samuel's answer from what Saul expected; he came to inquire about his father's asses, and he heard of a kingdom. God's ways are not as our ways. The intimation was kept secret till the right moment arrived: Saul only knew it. We may suppose he slept little that night, and was ready to meet Samuel at spring of the day. But late or early, God's word is always in season. Hear it, Deut. 6-9; it will lead you to a crown of glory, 1 Tim. iv. 8; a throne, Rev. iii. 21; and a kingdom, 1 Pet. i. 4.—*Edin. S. S. Lessons.*

THE CHRISTIAN'S FRIEND.

There is a Friend that sticketh closer than thyself,
Who gave the new commandment, saying, "I love one another."

This Friend is beloved Jesus; come let us go to
And He will freely pardon us, and wash our feet
from sin.

Carry all your burdens to Him and He will give
rest
Let it be no outward burden, but that weight
of your breast.

Call on thy God for mercy and present Him all
sin,
He will give you another nature and change
your heart within.

He will clothe you with His righteous robes
and throw your rags away,
So then you will not be naked at the great appointed day;
Then you must fight the warfare, wear the armour
and be strong;
It's a thorny path to heaven but the journey is long.

Hold the Saviour precious as the Pearl of
price.
Be clothed with humility, the flower of Paradise
Your mind that was once on earth will be
wards your God,
You'll be looking to the King of kings, He'll
you with his rod.