

Vs. 18, 19. *I brought up Israel... and delivered you*, etc. When Samuel had the people together, he reproached them with ingratitude to Jehovah: He had led them out of Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, and had delivered them from all the peoples around about who harried their borders and plundered their lands. *Ye have... rejected your God*. They would have an earthly king instead of Jehovah to rule them and fight their battles.

II. The King Chosen, 20-24.

V. 20. *Samuel brought all the tribes of Israel near*; and proceeded to find out who should be king over Jehovah's people. The common way of ascertaining God's will in such a case as the present was by casting lots: it was God who determined how the lot would fall out, Prov. 16:33. He showed in this way, who was guilty of wrong-doing (Josh. 7:14, etc.; 1 Sam. 14:42, etc.); how the land should be divided among the tribes (Josh. 18:10); who should serve as priest (Luke 1:9) or apostle (Acts 1:26); and in this way disputes were settled, Prov. 18:18. The method was to put a question, and the lot indicated "Yes" or "No" as the answer. So here, the tribes were proposed one by one, until the lot answered "Yes" to the question, "Is the king to be taken from Benjamin?" In the same way, *the family of the Matrites* (Rev. Ver.) was taken, and the choice fell at last upon *Saul the son of Kish*. Evidently such a method of learning God's will would in a case like this consume a great deal of time. *They sought him, he could not be found*; when the casting of lots was completed.

Vs. 22-24. *They enquired of the Lord*; and it was discovered that he was among the stuff,—hidden, out of modesty, among the animals and baggage of the people. *Ran and fetched him*; in admiration and pride: was he not a goodly man, a whole head taller than others? Before the invention of fire-arms, personal strength was the chief quality in a leader, as it still is among the Arabs. (See also *Light from the East*.) *See ye him... none like him*. Samuel set him forward. "This is Jehovah's choice", he said; and the enthusiasm of the people broke out, after the long suspense of casting lots, in the glad shout, *God save the king*.

III. The King Followed, 25-27.

V. 25. Saul had been chosen by Jehovah and acclaimed by the people, but an ominous shadow fell over the fair scene. Samuel recited before the people the manner (that is, the method) of the kingdom, and wrote it in a roll, and laid it up before Jehovah, that is, in the sanctuary at Mizpeh, or, possibly the important document was added to the Book of the Law kept beside the ark, Deut. 31:26. This was a solemn protest on the part of Samuel. The method of the kingdom is doubtless that described in ch. 8:11-18, last Lesson. "You have persisted", says Samuel, in effect, "and you have your king; but when he turns tyrant, remember that you have brought it upon yourselves." According to another view, "the manner of the kingdom" here denotes the rights of the king and his duties to God and the people (see Deut. 17:14-20).

Vs. 26, 27. *Saul went home to Gibeah*; a village between two and three miles north of Jerusalem in the territory of Benjamin. There he awaited the events which should call him out to active leadership, and *with him the valiant men, the host, whose hearts God had touched* (Rev. Ver.), and who accepted Saul, with hope and joy as their king. *Children of Belial*. There were others, worthless fellows, as the phrase means (see *Light from the East*), who spoke contemptuously, "How is this man to be our champion?" The one class brought presents to Saul after the Eastern manner of showing homage to a king; the other, by refusing to bring presents, signified their rejection of his authority. Saul had from the very first a foretaste of the opposition which hampered his activity in later years.

Light from the East

BELIAL—Is always printed with a capital letter, as it if were a proper name, but we are assured by scholars that it is an abstract term denoting "worthlessness" or "wickedness". Paul's use of it, however, in 2 Cor. 6:15 as a name for Satan, as the Lord of unclean heathenism, suggests that it was a proper name in some language outside the Hebrew, the name of an ancient and notorious embodiment of wickedness, or a term for the