

or against us? Tell of the great storm God sent in answer to Samuel's prayer, that the people might see his power over all things, and in teaching Golden Text call attention

to "the great things" he has done for us, which should lead us to serve and obey him. Print Lesson Thought, and tell simple story to illustrate the thought.

B.C. 1079.



LESSON VI.—SAUL REJECTED.

1 Sam. 15. 12-26.

Nov. 11.

down to Gilgal.

a Josh. 15. 55.

13 And Samuel came to Saul: and Saul said unto him, *b* Blessed be thou of the LORD; *c* I have performed the commandment of the LORD. *b* Gen. 14. 19; Judg. 17. 2.—*c* Luke 18. 11.

14 And Samuel said, What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?

15 And Saul said, They have brought them from the Amalekites: *d* for the people spared the best of the sheep and of the oxen, to sacrifice unto the LORD thy God; and the rest we have utterly destroyed. *d* Gen. 3. 12; Prov. 23. 13.

16 Then Samuel said unto Saul, Stay, and I will tell thee what the LORD hath said to me this night. And he said unto him, Say on.

17 And Samuel said, When thou wast little in thine own sight, *e* wast thou not made the head of the tribes of Israel, and the LORD anointed thee king over Israel?

18 And the LORD sent thee on a journey, and said, Go and utterly destroy the sinners the Amalekites, and fight against them until they be consumed.

19 Wherefore then didst thou not obey the voice of the LORD, but didst fly upon the spoil, and didst evil in the sight of the LORD?

20 And Saul said unto Samuel, Yea, I have obeyed the voice of the LORD, and have gone the way which the LORD sent me, and have brought Agag the king of Amalek, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites.

21 But the people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the chief of the things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice unto the LORD thy God in Gilgal.

22 And Samuel said, *e* Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt-offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, *f* to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. *e* Psa. 50. 8, 9; Prov. 21. 3.—*f* Eccl. 5. 1.

23 For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king.

24 And Saul said unto Samuel, *h* I have sinned: for I have transgressed the commandment of the LORD, and thy words: because *i* I feared the people, and obeyed their voice. *g* 2 Sam. 12. 13.—*h* Exod. 9. 27.—*i* Exod. 23. 2.

25 Now therefore, I pray thee, pardon my

sin, and turn again with me, that I may worship the LORD.

26 And Samuel said unto Saul, I will not return with thee; *j* for thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, and the LORD hath rejected thee from being king over Israel. *j* Chap. 2. 30.

GENERAL STATEMENT.

Saul has now ruled over Israel for about ten years. The kingdom has been organized, a court is assembled around the house of Saul at Gibeah. Abner, Saul's uncle, and the Twelve Tribes are all united under his throne. Outwardly the state is prosperous, for the Philistines have been repelled, the Ammonites have been driven back to their deserts, and the frontiers on every side are protected. But Saul has not fulfilled the early promise of his reign, he has grown arrogant, independent in his spirit, and no longer heeds to the guidance of the prophet. The Amalekites upon Israel, and to execute the fierce wrath of the LORD. Two hundred thousand of the armed men rally at the summons and fall upon the accused people. But instead of obeying God's command, they spare the king as a token of triumph, and the best of the spoil under the pretext of an offering. Saul has revealed his disloyalty to the God of Israel, and his purpose to act henceforth according to his own will. Samuel is bidden to utter the sentence of the true King upon his recreant representative. All night long the aged prophet wrestles with his duty, but with the morning, he enters upon his sorrowful task. He meets the victorious army, driving before them vast herds of cattle, and flocks of sheep, the spoils of conquest. Soon the king appears effusive in his words of honour to the prophet, and of congratulation to himself. A few words of stern rebuke, and his mantle of self-righteousness falls. He is revealed as the hypocrite, the rebel against the God of Israel, the seeker after selfish rewards. In a burst of prophetic wrath, Samuel proclaims the high principle that obedience to God's command is more acceptable than sacrifices upon his altar. Saul, who has forfeited his privilege as the anointed of God, hears the solemn sentence which sets him aside as the representative of Jehovah, and shall soon uplift a worthier possessor to his throne.

EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

Verse 12. Samuel arose early. After a night spent in supplication with God in behalf of Saul. To meet Saul. Saul was now on