

sinned against the light of the Word and the goodness of God; I have grieved the Spirit and He is gone; I tempted the devil, and he is come to me; I have provoked God to anger and He has left me."

The lessons of the narrative are:

1. The danger of mistaking partial for complete obedience.

(a) God requires literal obedience.

(b) God's language never exceeds God's meaning.

(c) Conscience is seen most clearly in minute obedience.

2. The possibility of giving a religious reason for an act of disobedience.

(a) One duty must not be performed on the ruins of another.

(b) God's commandment must not be changed on man's afterthought.

3. The danger of being seduced into disobedience by social clamor.

(a) The people who tempt are not the people who can save.

(b) Where God has spoken distinctly, there should be no human consultation."

The kingdom which was given to Saul was like a rich farm; but he did not cultivate it, and finally the noxious weeds that he allowed to grow up poisoned him to death.—Peloubet.

Light from the East

SHEEP AND CATTLE—The Amalekites were a band of roving Arabs roaming over the south country of Judea, and their flocks and herds were their wealth, just as their animals are the sole possessions of many Arab tribes to-day, and upon them and the produce from them they live a good part of the year. The conquerors in every raid still carry off the best part of the cattle of the vanquished; indeed, that is the purpose which is usually behind every hostile expedition. The south country is used to this day for raising flocks and herds, which can be easily moved from place to place, but it has never been found suitable for settled inhabitants.

WITCHCRAFT—The practice of magic or divination was from the beginning closely connected with idolatry. It was a part of the ritual of the kingdom of darkness, and all appeals to it involved the worship of demons, a homage to Satan which was treason to Jehovah and was possibly, to Saul's mind, the worst thing of which a man could be guilty. The punishment of the crime in Israel was death (Ex. 22: 18; Deut. 18: 10) and the law was rigorously enforced in Saul's reign, 1 Sam. 28: 3, 9.

TEACHING HINTS AND HELPS

This section embraces teaching material for the various grades in the school.

For Bible Class Teachers

AN ANALYSIS

When God intimated to Samuel His determination to set aside Saul as king of Israel, the prophet's heart was rent with anguish. "He cried unto the Lord all night," v. 11. This is a notable example of compliance with the apostle's precept regarding prayer for kings, 1 Tim. 2: 1, 2. Observe:

1. *The sinful conduct of Saul.* (a) That for which he is condemned in the lesson is the persistent disregard of the word of the Lord. In ch. 13: 6-9 we read that, "when the men of Israel saw that they were in a strait," the king took it upon himself to officiate as priest and "offered the burnt offering." For this conduct he was rebuked by Samuel

who said to him, "Thou hast done foolishly: thou hast not kept the commandment of the Lord thy God. Now thy kingdom shall not continue," ch. 13: 13, 14. His house as a permanent dynasty in Israel was thus rejected. Notwithstanding this strong remonstrance and forcible check on his career, Saul went on from bad to worse, and became a conspicuous example of one being often reproved and hardening his neck, Prov. 29: 1. (b) He failed to carry out God's command regarding Amalek. The Amalekites were the hereditary enemies of Israel. During five centuries they manifested bitter hatred and committed many atrocities against the chosen people. (See Deut. 25: 17-19.) The national safety required that this public foe should be removed, and God commissioned Saul to carry out the sentence of Deut. 25: 19. There was to be no reser-