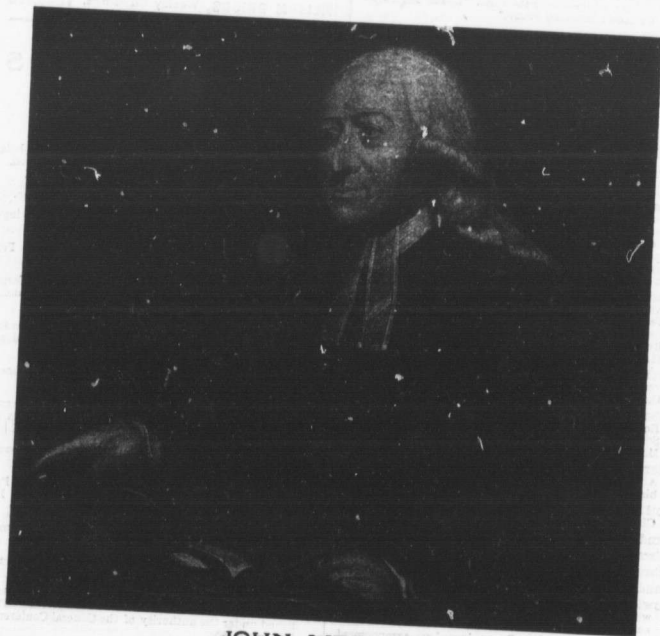


# Sunday School

## *✻ ✻* Banner *✻ ✻*

FOR TEACHERS AND YOUNG PEOPLE



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Vol. 37

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# SUNDAY SCHOOL BANNER

for  
**TEACHERS**  
AND  
**YOUNG PEOPLE.**

Vol. 37

JULY, 1903

No. 7

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### The Teacher's Work.

BY W. BOWMAN TUCKER, PH.D.

"A workman that needeth not to be ashamed."—2 Tim. 2. 15.

Teach me, O Lord, that I may work  
With face uplifted, clear to thee;  
A workman comprehending truth,  
And teaching in simplicity.

Guide thou my mind, that as I learn  
I may in mind retain the truth,  
And may in heart true meekness find,  
And vigor of perpetual youth.

For unto learning I would give,  
The will and days of my best powers,  
And live for those entrusted me—  
The students of life's early hours.

A faithful workman! Thine own work—  
Creation nobler than man's art!  
Grant thou the nobleness, in work,  
To be of thee the counterpart.

How rich was Galilean home!  
Ennobled, slighted Nazareth!  
Where Christ the humble workman dwelt,  
And toiling drew his honest breath.

And nobler hue to life was given,  
And loftier purpose to man's aim,  
When business, of thy Father's sort  
Laid strong on thee its holy claim.

O workman true, the Word unfold,  
To fashion crowds, by wayside well;  
On through the years to common men  
As once, still speak; our doubts dispel.

Give me thy spirit, loving, pure  
And able thee to imitate;  
Wed to the Word, the work to do,  
The young by truth to thee relate.

With best endeavor, I'll pursue  
The truths by Revelation told,  
With consecrated heart attend  
To thee, the Light in days of old.

And in myself, thy sentence bear  
Approval of my earnest aim;  
Assure me of my part with thee,  
And write on me thy blessed name.  
Shawville, Que.

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## Sunday School Banner

W. H. WITHROW, D.D., Editor

TORONTO, JULY, 1903.

### How Ministers Help to Plant New Schools.

IN almost every one of scores of schools recently planted, the chief agency in so planting them has been the minister in charge. We are persuaded that in few ways can they better promote the growth of Methodism in this land than by planting these germs of future churches.

We take the liberty of urging the brethren, wherever a handful of children may be gathered together and a loving hand found to lead them to the Saviour, that there a new school should be founded. It is in helping such schools that the Sunday School Aid and Extension Fund has been helpful in the past and promises to do much in the future. A grant of books and papers will be given free wherever needed to schools, and the fund will aid and foster already established schools which may need such help.

We have pleasure in submitting extracts from a few of the many letters received, showing what the brethren have accomplished in this and how the assistance from this fund has been appropriated.

A minister at a young town in the North-West writes: "This place is worth helping. I would not be surprised if there is a population of 1,500 there before a year, and as this is the only school in town, we wish to make it as attractive as possible."

A minister in Newfoundland writes: "Our new school started in September last. I am happy to say the venture is quite a success. On the opening day two married women came, saying they wanted to learn to read well enough to be able to use the Bible for themselves."

A minister in North-West Ontario writes: "I can only get this school going by taking hold of it myself in connection with the public service. The place is very isolated, and is twenty-five miles from here. I teach the lesson for twenty-five minutes; then we sing and I preach a short sermon. The adults present also take part in the lesson study. This is preferable to no school at all, which would be the case if I did not adopt this plan. I have just started another school on the same plan."

Another minister writes: "I have to appoint a woman as superintendent of the school. It will be only with difficulty that a school can be kept up at all, and, therefore, anything to encourage will be helpful."

A minister in the North-West Territories writes: "This is a new country. At some appointments there are so few children that we have not been able yet to organize schools, the settlers being bachelors or young married people without children, or with very small ones. In other places again the settlers have larger children, but only a quarter or one-third are Methodists or Methodist adherents, and then union schools must be organized. Many of these union schools are getting libraries from the Methodist Book Room, and are taking the Methodist Sunday School papers, but we cannot report them as Methodist schools."

A minister in New Brunswick, to whom a quantity of second-hand books were sent, writes: "They were in good time for the winter's reading, and you could have no idea what good they have done, for there are many in our school who are not able to buy books for their own use, much less to help purchase a library, and your books are just as good as new, to

distribute among the families. It is a grand good work for the Lord, this, of putting good reading in the hands of the young. It is as seed sown on good ground, that we trust, with the blessing of God, will bring a plentiful harvest for glory."

A missionary in Newfoundland some time ago wrote: "Every fish is needed to provide for the long winter. They are eager to get the papers, and every time I visit the outposts, the inquiry is, 'Have I any papers?' They are an incalculable boon to the people, many of whom see no other paper. They are doing much to uplift our people. There are nine places outside of this, which only get a visit monthly from the missionary."

### School of Methods.

At a joint committee meeting held at Sackville, N.B., March 10th, and composed of prominent Sunday School workers from the Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and P. E. Island Conferences, with representatives from Mt. Allison University, it was unanimously decided to organize a School of Methods for Sunday School workers to be held at Mt. Allison University, July 14th to 24th, 1903.

Correspondence has been opened with some of the best known Sunday School experts on the Continent, and successful workers of the Maritime Provinces will be engaged to assist.

An attractive and helpful course of study has been arranged. The practical needs of Sunday School workers will receive careful attention; lessons for the year will be studied; methods of teaching will be explained; and live discussions will take place at different times. It will be a real school for real students.

Part of each day will be given up to recreation, including games on the campus, receptions, and excursions, thus combining pleasure and earnest study.

Mt. Allison is an ideal place for a grand Methodist gathering of Sunday School workers. Ten days of college life, with residence and board in college halls; and the advantages of the library, the museum, and the art gallery of the university, will all combine to make this one of the most successful summer schools for Sunday School workers ever held in Canada.—Wesleyan.

### John Wesley—An Appreciation.

BY PRESIDENT ROGERS.

THE world loves a great and good man. It does not always accord him immediate recognition, but when once accorded, it follows after, holds him in honor and reverence. Orators sound his praises, poets immortalize his name, sculptors and painters are ready with the marble and the canvas to perpetuate for succeeding generations his form and features. Carlyle was right when he said: "Hero-worship never dies, nor can die. Loyalty and sovereignty are everlasting in the world." Longfellow has said:

"When a great man dies,  
For years beyond our ken,  
The light he leaves behind him lies  
Upon the paths of men."

And so Wesley has not been forgotten. The light he left behind him has not faded out, but has been growing more resplendent as the years have passed, and it still lies, and long will continue to lie, "upon the paths of men," brightening their way to the kingdom of heaven. Nay, the echo of Wesley's footsteps comes resounding down the century, and it can be heard above the tramp of the millions. That echo is heard in every part of the habitable globe, even in the wilds of darkest Africa, where Bishop Taylor's heroic little band are camping, the advance-guard of the army of the Lord.

They tell us that in Europe, in some of the old galleries of art, the sight-seer without lifting his eyes to the picture can tell when he stands before one of the great masterpieces, as the marble floors are most worn in front of the greatest pictures, where for hundreds of years, the most feet have moved to and fro in studying in different lights and shadows the artist's work. So in the gallery of Methodism, the marble floor is most worn before the picture of John Wesley. There all Methodists pause reverently to meditate.

Most religious reformers have come not from homes of luxury filled with sunshine and the fragrance of costly flowers, but from homes where poverty has made them familiar with the stern realities of

life. From such a home came forth John Knox and Calvin. From such a home came George Fox, whose father was a weaver, and Luther, whose father was a miner. And in a home of poverty John Wesley was reared. But even the Lord was born in a stable, and those poor Galilean fishermen for his apostles. It has been wisely ordered by the providence that shaped their destiny that great spiritual captains should be nursed in wintry whirlwinds, in desolate darkness, and amid hardship and difficulty, that they might at last step forth strong and true men, capable of giving battle to the forces of evil.

And if John Wesley had had the power to anticipate Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes' advice to select excellent ancestors, he could hardly have succeeded more admirably, notwithstanding the poverty that was their lot. Wesley's father, grandfather, and great-grandfather were educated at Oxford. But to his mother more especially was he indebted for the rare qualities which he possessed. It is said that men understood Goethe's greatness when they looked on the face of his mother. Most great men have had great mothers, and Wesley's was no exception to the rule. She was a lady by birth and breeding, a beautiful and accomplished woman, the daughter of a minister who had been styled "the St. Paul of the dissenters." She was a woman of rare gifts, of strong character, and of intense piety. Adam Clark has said of her: "Such a woman, take her for all in all, I have not beard of, I have not read of, nor with her equal have I been acquainted."

In personal appearance John Wesley was small of stature and slender of frame. He measured less than five feet six inches in height, and weighed not more than 125 pounds. He had an eye which is said to have been "the brightest and most piercing that can be conceived," and a countenance that was "singularly beautiful and expressive." He was always scrupulously neat in his person and habits, and his manners were those of a scholar and a gentleman. He had a quiet dignity of manner that never forsook him. In his old age his appearance has been likened to that of an apostle. He was a man of magnetic personality, and those who were brought within his influence were strangely drawn toward him. His disposition was cheerful, and in his old age he could write: "I do not remember to have felt lowness of spirits for a quarter of an hour since I was born."

Although he lived eighty-seven years, he seems to have enjoyed health and vigor to the last.

First of all, Wesley was under all circumstances a gentleman. One who knew him well has said that he never helped poor people in the street without removing his hat to them when they thanked him.

John Wesley was a scholar. He won distinction in the University of Oxford, and the room he then occupied is still known as "Wesley's room," and the creeping vine on the wall is called "Wesley's vine." It is not every one who graduates from a university that becomes a scholar. Whitefield was educated at Oxford too, but he cannot be compared with Wesley for depth or range of knowledge. Wesley seems to have had a genius for language, and early formed the practice of conversing in Latin, and continued it to the end of his life. He compiled grammars in Greek, Latin, Hebrew, and French. As an author he possessed an admirable style, and it has been said that no writer, with the exception of Addison, wrote better English. He was not without merit as a poet, but in this respect he was inferior to his brother Charles. And for that matter, who was not? He certainly might have attained fame in the republic of letters had he so desired.

"This rounded scholar might have hid apart

In sheltering cloister, from the moil  
and din

Of seething life, but it o'erleaped all  
bars,

Bidding him forth to deal with common  
sin."

Wesley had great oratorical power. He had not the eloquence of St. Chrysostom of "the golden-mouth," neither did he have Whitefield's wonderful gift of elocution, so that he could by the very tones of his voice move an audience to tears, irrespective of the thoughts which his words conveyed. But no preacher of that century produced such an effect upon the conscience as Wesley did. Whitefield was an impassioned and dramatic orator. Charles Wesley was deeply emotional. John Wesley addressed himself to the reason of his hearers, and his appeal was irresistible. Often as he preached "God bowed the heavens and came down; the rocks were broken in pieces, and the mountains flowed down at his presence." Thousands flocked to

listen to his words, and on a single occasion he preached to more than 30,000 people.

"How thronged the multitude to hear that speech!

To feel the hand that probed such secret springs;

That scorched the quivering sinner with 'Repent,'

Or lifted faith on strange, ecstatic wings."

As an evangelist, Wesley was pre-eminent.

The condition of England at the time Wesley entered upon his career, was one of spiritual desolation. Never had there been a time so void of faith. It was at a time when Paley addressing the young clergymen of his diocese, found it desirable to advise them "not to get drunk, or to frequent ale-houses, but to avoid profligate habits, and not to be seen at drunken feasts or barbarous diversions." In satiric reference to the prevailing immorality of those times, Lady Montague wrote that she understood a bill was being prepared for presentation to Parliament to have "not" taken out of the commandments and inserted in the creed.

Wesley was tolerant of the opinions of those who disagreed with him, and never outraged liberty of conscience. In this respect he was like Luther, and unlike both Knox and Calvin. He recognized the fact that one might differ with him in religion, and yet be as pious as he was himself. "I will not," he writes, "quarrel with you about any opinion, only see that your heart be right toward God, that you know and love Jesus Christ, that you love your neighbor, and walk as your Master walked. I desire no more. I am sick of opinions."

If ever a man had a genius for hard work, it was John Wesley. No man ever had greater capacity in this direction than he did. In the fifty years of his ministerial life, he preached 40,000 sermons, travelled 250,000 miles, and put forth no less than 200 publications.

John Wesley had in a conspicuous degree the three qualities which Emerson has said attract the reverence of mankind—disinterestedness, practical power, and courage. His disinterestedness is shown in his habitual sacrifice of those things which most men count dear unto themselves. He left the halls of a venerable university to tread the mire of the lanes and by-ways that he might win to the

Master the common people of his country. He was as indifferent to money as was ever Socrates, or Gregory, or Calvin. He accumulated no property, but distributed among the poor whatever he received above his necessities. He acted on this principle from the beginning to the end of his career, giving away \$150,000, and died, as Cardinal Manning said, a priest of God ought to die, "without money and without debts."

His practical power is shown in the manner in which he organized and controlled his society. Surely no greater compliment need be paid to his talent in this direction than to quote Macaulay's opinion that he had as great a genius for government as Richelieu. His courage was great. He never could have faltered as Cranmer faltered. His moral courage is shown in the manner in which he bore the contumely and the reproach of the learned and the aristocratic. His physical courage is shown in the manner in which he faced ignorant and brutal mobs, while stones flew about him on every side, with a physical courage not less sublime. He has recorded in his journal how his "heart was filled with love, his eyes with tears, and his mouth with arguments," as he stood on one of these occasions looking into the faces of the rabble. Like Socrates and Paul, he bore the persecutions of the multitude. He spent much of his life in clouds and storm. So true is it that—

"He who ascends the mountain-tops shall find

The loftiest peak most wrapped in clouds and storms;

Though high above the sun the glory shines,

And far beneath the earth and ocean spread,

Round him are icy rocks, and loudly blow

Contending tempests on his naked head."

In the gentleness of his nature, Wesley may be likened to Melanethon. He was more refined than Luther, who had a rough nature, and was oftentimes offensively rude and brusque. He was not cold, unsocial, and ungenial, as Calvin was. His kindness of heart, his amiability of temper, and affability of demeanor made him everywhere a welcome guest. Great men are often dull and insipid in conversation, as Addison, Descartes, and Dryden are said to have been. But





and service of John Wesley, shall we not exclaim: "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace and bring glad tidings of good things!" And shall we not praise God that he gave to the world such a man as John Wesley. "Blessing and honor, glory and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, forever and ever." Among England's great dead in Westminster Abbey, a monument has been reared to Wesley's memory; but the Methodist Church of the world is his monument, and his name will live until—

"Seas shall waste, the skies to smoke decay,  
Rocks fall to dust, and mountains melt away."

— North-Western Christian Advocate.

### John Wesley's Passion for Souls.

**W**ELL would it be for the whole world if, as we approach the birthday of John Wesley and as we enter upon our great Methodist year, the spirit of love for sinners that was in John Wesley, and the energy with which he labored for their conversion, might fall upon all who bear the name of Methodist. What love and energy were his! How his Journal breathes with his restless love of souls! When he was past sixty, he travelled long distances in all kinds of weather and preached thirty times in ten days; when he was past eighty, he preached eleven times in four days, and each time with the demonstration of the Spirit. He records that at this age he had so severe a cold that he could not sing or even speak, except in a single key, and yet he proceeded, though the multitude was so great that, notwithstanding "the wind was high and piercing cold," he had to preach in the open air. On another occasion, in his old age, he slipped on the ice on London Bridge and severely hurt himself, but he was helped along, met his congregations and preached just the same.

In his Journal, Friday, January 1, 1742, he wrote:

"After a night of quiet sleep, I waked in a strong fever, but without any sick-

ness, or thirst, or pain. I consented, however, to keep my bed, but on condition that every one who desired it should have liberty to speak with me. I believe fifty or sixty persons did so this day; nor did I find any inconvenience from it. In the evening I sent for all the bands who were in the house, that we might magnify our Lord together. A near relation being with me when they came, I asked her afterwards if she was not offended. 'Offended!' said she; 'I wish I could be always among you. I thought I was in heaven.' This night also, by the blessing of God, I slept well, to the utter astonishment of those about me, the apothecary in particular, who said he had never seen such a fever in his life."

It was this undeterred and undeterrable hunger to preach the Word to sinners that created Methodism. No slipped ease, no hammock sighing for a mission, no resolutions to be carried into effect to-morrow, could have created Methodism. Methodism was fire in the bones, and fire running in the dry stubble.

The preachers of our day, multitudes of them, work as hard as any in the most heroic, so-called, days of the Church. If they do not preach as often, it is not because they are not at work. To-day the Church is a vast organism, a body of service having "many members," each of which demands the earnest pastor's attentions and counsels; no earnest pastor can keep abreast of their needs. But, might it not be to the glory of God if on all sides there might be more of a preaching passion for souls for whom Jesus died? In 1870 there was a lay membership of 1,367,144; after the lapse of exactly one generation, we have a membership of 2,996,159. This is a good showing, since it expresses a growth of 100 per cent.

But if we might be imbued with the evangelism of Wesley and the fathers, might not that increase of a hundred-fold be possible in each quadrennium? What impresses one as he reads the life and success of Wesley and the fathers as soul-winners is that they lived for it, worked for it, prayed for it, put all else aside for it. Nevertheless, Wesley so improved his time that he was the most prolific literary worker in the history of the Christian Church. But he still subordinated everything to saving souls. Oh, for participation in his passion for souls!—Central Christian Advocate.

### My Advocate.

BY LLEWELLYN A. MORRISON.

A sinner, vile and base,  
Burden'd with sin, I fall  
Before Jehovah's face,  
And for His mercy call;  
Lost and undone myself I see:  
How can he cleanse or pardon me?

My sins! My dreadful sins!  
Was ever guilt like mine?  
My breaking heart begins  
To feel the wrath, divine:  
In the white light of purity  
Can there be found a place for me?

An Intercessor stands  
Before the Throne, above—  
My rescue he demands  
By reason of his love:  
My Royal Advocate is he,  
Entreating Sovereign grace for me.

He shows the wounds he bears,  
The griefs and sorrows borne,  
The scars his visage wears,  
Dark Venom's crown of thorn,  
Gethsemane and Calvary—  
He strongly pleads them all for me.

His argument is heard  
By merit of the blood;  
According to the Word  
I am at one with God;  
The lifted sceptre sets me free—  
My Counsellor avails for me.

Pardon and peace are given,  
Faith, holiness, and joy;  
Glad songs of hope and heaven  
My ransom'd lips employ;  
I am a son by love's decree;  
The Comforter abides with me.

Toronto, 1903.

### Methodist Magazine and Review for June.

The Wesley Souvenir number, enlarged by sixteen pages, is offered at reduced price as a memorial of the great man the bicentenary of whose birth the world this year celebrates. It contains over a score of articles, with over sixty illustrations, of John Wesley and his work.

Among the contributors are Drs. Carman, Burwash, Reynar, and Allison; H. H. Fudger, J. W. L. Forster, Miss S. E. Springer, and the Editor. Dr. Bryce and John Charlton, M.P., representing the Presbyterian Church; Dr. Thomas, of the Baptist Church; John Cameron, of London, a representative Congregationalist, and Augustine Birrell, of the Anglican Church, discuss varied aspects of Wesley's character. Some of the engravings are from quaint contemporary documents. There are many admirable portraits, and almost every phase of the life of one of the greatest leaders of the last century is present. Every Methodist, and many who are not, should have a copy.

Toronto: William Briggs. Montreal: C. W. Coates. Halifax: S. F. Huestis. \$2.00 a year; \$1.00 for six months.

### The Jewish Encyclopedia.

Volume IV. of The Jewish Encyclopedia has just left the press, and from the first article, "Chazars," to the article, "Dreyfus Case," which ends this volume, it is especially rich in topics of interest to the general or casual reader, while those articles which appeal more particularly to the scholar have received the same careful treatment accorded to such subjects in the preceding volumes. The publication of the fourth volume marks the completion of one-third of this important undertaking, and there seems no good reason to doubt that Volume XII. will leave the press on the scheduled time—December 31, 1905.

For the non-Jewish theologian and clergyman it will prove an indispensable source of inspiration. The many Hebrew commentaries on the Bible, which have been written by scholarly rabbis of the Middle Ages down to our own time, have hitherto been as sealed books to the non-Jewish scholar. The Jewish Encyclopedia gives for the first time in the English language a resume of the contents of this rich literary mine.

The Christian theologian, furthermore, will find in this encyclopedia a detailed survey of the political, religious, and social life of the Jewish people at the time and during the two centuries prior to and succeeding Jesus. Thus it throws a new and powerful sidelight upon the Gospels, and the origin and the first development of Christianity.

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pages which make up the volume will be found many articles of absorbing interest to the general reader.

The volume closes with a notable article on the "Dreyfus Case," written by a prominent French litterateur, whose connections are such that they brought him into intimate relations with various personages concerned in this world-stirring drama. The article covers twenty-nine pages, and brings the subject to the last act of this famous drama, which, according to the latest European press reports, remains yet to be written.

#### BIBLE PHILOSOPHY, AND THEOLOGY.

Volume IV. of the Encyclopedia will be found exceptionally rich in these fields, the merit and utility of which, in conjunction with the range covered, will appeal to all interested in these phases of Jewish science. The following is a selection of the more notable articles on these subjects: The history of the Jews in the different countries of the world which has contributed so largely to the advancement and development of mankind along all lines of intellectual and industrial activity is widely presented in this volume, being treated either under the names of the countries or of the different cities where the Jews dwelt. Because biographical matter is sought after with greater frequency than any other kind of cyclopaedia information by the average reader and student, the Department of Biography has been made exceptionally full. Throughout, these biographies, many of which appear here for the first time in any work, contain the records of the achievements of Jews whose activities have been among their co-religionists or outside the pales of their religion and their race.

#### FACTS OF INTEREST.

Number of editors and contributors engaged on the entire work, over 600; number of volumes in the entire work, 12; number of volumes already issued, 4; number of pages in the entire work, about 8,000; number of illustrations in the entire work, about 2,000; time for completion of the entire work, December 31, 1905; estimated cost, about \$600,000; sold by subscription only—special price per volume (cloth) in advance of publication, \$6. In respect to Volume IV.—Total number of entries, 1,132; number of editors and contributors, 173; total number of illustrations, 203; total number of pages (including prefatory matter), 700.

#### Wesley as a Worker.

John Wesley's was a mind thoroughly disciplined, and amply stored with varied knowledge. In scholastic attainments he is said to have been before most men of his age. He had ready wit, a refined taste, a cheerful temper. He was a pattern of neatness and of order in his dress, in the management of his papers, and in his personal habits. Yet underneath all this polish and grace was such strength of will, steadfastness of aim, uncompromising conscientiousness, undaunted courage, and invincible perseverance, and withal, such prodigious power of work, as, plainly, eminently fitted him to act as the leader of that greatest religious movement since Pentecost, and which, under God, was destined to quicken the whole English-speaking world. No one man, probably, ever before or since, performed such herculean labors as this one. He rode five thousand miles, and preached on an average five hundred sermons every year for fifty years. His correspondence must have been immense. He wrote, or carefully abridged, nearly two hundred volumes. His generosity was limited only by his means. He admonished his people thus: "Earn all you can; save all you can; give all you can." Many times his life was in danger from the fury of mobs. Still more keenly than ever this sense of physical peril did his refined mind feel and resent the cool and studied insolence or contempt of the educated classes. Yet, all the same, he could even, from first to last, exultantly cry, "None of these things move me." He lived in perpetual activity, cheerfulness and trust in God. A lady once asked him: "Mr. Wesley, supposing you knew that you were to die at twelve o'clock to-morrow morning, how would you spend the intervening time?" "Why," he replied, "just as I intend to spend it now. I should preach this evening at Gloucester, and again to-morrow morning at five. After that I should ride to Tewkesbury, preach in the afternoon and meet the societies in the evening. I should then repair to friend Martin's house, who expects to entertain me, converse and pray with the family, as usual, retire to my room at ten o'clock, commend myself to my heavenly Father, lie down to rest, and wake up in glory."

## The Bicentenary of John Wesley.

OUR present aim is to trace some of the personal characteristics and some of the providential dealings which made Wesley such a factor in elevating the whole community of the English people.

One of his first characteristics was his valuation of time and his care to make the best use of it. In the preface to his Diary he says: "Fifteen years ago I began to take more exact account than I had done before, of the manner wherein I spent my time, writing down how I had employed every hour."—Few indeed there are who are thus careful; few there are, who at the close of a day can give an exact account of more than twelve out of its sixteen waking hours. Two or three or four hours may often slip away in minor occupations, of which the mind keeps no record. His care, therefore, in attempting to account for every hour is remarkable.

From his mother he inherited persistency. With all her goodness she was a most determined woman. One incident shall suffice for illustration:

"The revolution of 1688 threatened to disturb the early married life of Samuel Wesley (the father of John Wesley) and his spouse. The husband wrote a pamphlet in which he defended revolution principles, but the wife secretly adhered to the old cause. Nor was it until a year before Dutch William's death, that the rector made the discovery that the wife of his bosom, who had sworn to obey him, and regard him as her over lord, was not in the habit of saying amen to his fervent prayers on behalf of his suffering sovereign. An explanation was demanded, and the truth extracted, namely, that in the opinion of the rector's wife her true king lived over the water. The rector at once refused to live with Mrs. Wesley any longer until she recanted. This she refused to do, and for a twelve-month the couple dwelt apart, when, William III. having the good sense to die, a reconciliation became possible."

And John Wesley was her own son. We need not feel surprised to see him persistent amid jeers in the maintenance of the "Holy Club," nor in his work of preaching the whole truth, even though it cost his exclusion from pulpit after pulpit of the English Church; or in his field preaching, even though he were pelted in place after place. It is good

to be zealously affected always in a good thing.

## HIS CONVERSION.

Although a member of the "Holy Club," Wesley, in his later life, did not claim that at that time he was converted. The special renewing grace of the Lord was necessary to his conversion; and it did not come till later. In this early life he was striving for salvation through ascetic formalities. For instance, on his voyage to Georgia, he resolved to eat no meat, and, at one time, while in the colonies, he resolved to live on bread alone. He was depending on the influence of these austerities to cleanse his heart.

And he was a ritualist. Any variation from the forms of the Church of England was to him in those days repulsive.

In this temper of mind, he went as a missionary to Georgia. He labored hard, and denied himself greatly, and yet at the end of a year and a half he returned to England with a sense of failure. He had not accomplished anything among the Indians, nor had he pleased the church people of Savannah, and he had evoked such opposition that his enemies (unjustly indeed) induced the magistrates to forbid his departure from Savannah until tried in court, and yet to postpone trial, week after week, till in desperation he left the city under cover of darkness.

In his journal of Tuesday, January 22, 1738, in his reflections upon a storm of January 13, he gives his own account of his state of mind in these words:

"I went to America to convert the Indians; but, oh! who shall convert me? Who, what is he, that will deliver me from this evil heart of mischief? I have a fair summer religion. I can talk well; nay, and believe myself, while no danger is near; but let death look me in the face, and my spirit is troubled. Nor can I say, 'to die is gain'!"

"I have a sin of fear, that when I've spun My last thread, I shall perish on the shore."

"I think, verily, if the Gospel be true, I am safe; for I not only have given, and do give all my goods to feed the poor; I not only give my body to be burned, drownd, or whatever God shall appoint for me; but I follow after charity (though not as I ought, yet as I can), if haply I may attain it. I now believe the Gospel is true. 'I show my faith by my works, by staking my all upon it. I would do so again and again a thousand times, if the choice were still to make. . . .

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"Sunday, February 29, 1738. It is now two years and almost four months since I left my native country, and in order to teach the Georgian Indians the nature of Christianity; but what have I learned myself in the meantime? Why (what I the least of all suspected) that I, who went to America to convert others, was never myself converted to God."

How, then, did that change come about which Wesley considers as his conversion? It was first through the influence of Peter Bohler, a minister from the ranks of the Moravians. He was in England, and Wesley fell into his company. From his conversations, Wesley came to a knowledge of the transforming work of the Holy Spirit. Let us read again from his Journal:

"Wednesday, May 24, 1738. In the evening I went very unwillingly to a society in Aldersgate Street, where one was reading Luther's Preface to the Epistle to the Romans. About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart, through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for salvation, and an assurance was given me that he had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death.

"I began to pray with all my might for those who had in a more especial manner despitefully used me and persecuted me. I then testified openly to all there, what I now first felt in my heart."

From this time the real fruitfulness of Wesley's life and work seems to date. There must have been a peculiar power in his preaching, and a peculiar adaptability to the hearts and to the spiritual needs of the people, for they came to his out-door appointments in all sorts of weather. At one point a thousand would face the frost; at another three thousand listened in the rain. The fact that the hearers did not mind the weather testifies to the hunger of many thousands for the true Bread of Life.—Ex.

### Summer Schools.

The summer school idea is growing. The original school at Victoria University, Toronto, will, it is expected, be bigger and better than ever. A similar assembly will be held at or near Ottawa, under the auspices of the Montreal Conference League, and probably several others in the various districts.

During the past month we had the pleasure of a call from Mr. E. R. Machum, of St. John, N.B., who is a live wire with reference to Sunday School work. He informs us that the New Brunswick and Nova Scotia Conferences intend to unite in holding a school of pedagogy at Sackville, N.B., during the latter part of July, for the special purpose of training Sunday School teachers for their work. If possible, it is the intention to secure Dr. Hamill or some other expert teacher to take up Normal work for ten days, and the professors of the colleges will also take a prominent part. It is expected that there will be an attendance of several hundreds of teachers, superintendents, and workers from these provinces by the sea. The programme will be under the direct auspices of the University, in co-operation with the Standing Sunday School Committees of the two Conferences. It is a capital idea to bring the Sunday School workers and college instructors together in this way, as they can be of mutual help to one another.—Epworth Era.

### The Enlarged Senior.

With this quarter begins the issue of our enlarged Senior Lesson Quarterly. Some time ago we nearly doubled the number of pages devoted to each lesson. Now we add practically eighteen pages, by adding sixteen pages to the body of the quarterly, and taking in the two inside pages of the cover. Then, counting the full-page picture and map, we have a lesson quarterly of sixty-eight pages, with five pages per lesson, thus making the largest Sunday School lesson quarterly published by anybody anywhere in this or any other land. Considering the character of the contents in connection with the bulk of the publication, it may truthfully be called "The Biggest and Best." Of course, this means greatly increased expense, though there is no increase in price. To meet this there should be at least an equivalent increase in circulation, and it is to be hoped that many new subscriptions will be sent in at once. The Senior Quarterly is intended for scholars from about fifteen or sixteen years of age up toward manhood and womanhood.



"According to the views of orthodoxy the last must include the vast majority of mankind." "Many," said our Saviour, "shall come from the east and the west and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of God." Who are the many, the author asks, of the divine arithmetic? "When we think of the myriads of the race who die in infancy, the countless millions who live and die in heathen lands in a state of spiritual infancy, and that it is said, 'Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved,' we feel that in proportion to the saved in the eternal world the number of the lost who have consciously and wilfully rejected the offers of salvation will be as the inmates of our penitentiaries to the rest of the population."

The words "lost" and "saved" are used as if they referred not to the character and state of the soul, but to condition and environment. But character is the one essential thing which each personality carries into the coming life. God's holy displeasure at sin denotes his attitude towards wilful and persistent transgression. The book is one of wise exegesis, of solemn admonition, of tender comfort and consolation. It is written in Dr. Johnston's lucid and luminous style, is enriched by apt quotation from the best literature of our language. It is striking to note how the poets—those true sages and seers of our race—from Thomas of Celano to Robert Browning, are full of inspiration and confidence in the doctrine of immortality, and the just and righteous judgments of God.

## LESSONS AND GOLDEN TEXTS—THIRD QUARTER.

Studies in the Old Testament from Samuel to Solomon.

**Lesson 1.** July 5.—ISRAEL ASKING FOR A KING. 1 Sam. 8: 1-10. Study vs. 1-22. *Commit vs.* 4-7. (Read Deut. 17: 14-20; 1 Sam. chs. 4-8.) **GOLDEN TEXT:** 1 Sam. 7: 3. Prepare your hearts unto the Lord, and serve him only.  
2. July 12.—SAUL CHOOSES KING. 1 Sam. 10: 17-27. *Commit vs.* 24, 25. (Read 1 Sam. chs. 9, 10.) **GOLDEN TEXT:** Is. 33: 22. The Lord is our King; he will save us.  
3. July 19.—SAMUEL'S FAREWELL ADDRESS. 1 Sam. 12: 13-25. Study vs. 1-25. *Commit vs.* 23-25. (Read 1 Sam. chs. 11, 12.) **GOLDEN TEXT:** 1 Sam. 12: 24. Only fear the Lord, and serve him in truth with all your heart.  
4. July 26.—SAUL REJECTED AS KING. 1 Sam. 15: 13-23. Study vs. 10-31. *Commit vs.* 20-22. (Read 1 Sam. chs. 13-15.) **GOLDEN TEXT:** 1 Sam. 15: 22. To obey is better than sacrifice.  
5. Aug. 2.—SAMUEL ANOINTS DAVID. 1 Sam. 16: 4-13. Study vs. 1-13. *Commit vs.* 11, 13. (Read the chapter.) **GOLDEN TEXT:** 1 Sam. 16: 7. Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart.  
6. Aug. 9.—DAVID AND GOLIATH. 1 Sam. 17: 33-49. Study vs. 32-54. *Commit vs.* 45-47. (Read the chapter; also 1 Chron. 11: 10-14.) **GOLDEN TEXT:** Rom. 8: 31. If God be for us who can be against us?

**Lesson 7.** Aug. 16.—SAUL TRIES TO KILL DAVID. 1 Sam. 18: 5-16. *Commit vs.* 12-14. **GOLDEN TEXT:** Ps. 46: 1. God is our refuge and strength; a very present help in trouble.  
8. Aug. 23.—DAVID AND JONATHAN. 1 Sam. 20: 12-23. Study vs. 1-42. *Commit vs.* 14-17. (Read 1 Sam. 18; also 2 Sam. 9.) **GOLDEN TEXT:** Prov. 18: 24. There is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.  
9. Aug. 30.—DAVID SPARES SAUL. 1 Sam. 26: 5-12, 21-25. Study vs. 1-25. *Commit vs.* 21. (Read 1 Sam. chs. 21-25.) **GOLDEN TEXT:** Luke 6: 27. Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you.  
10. Sept. 6.—DEATH OF SAUL AND JONATHAN. 1 Sam. 31: 1-13. *Commit vs.* 6, 7. **GOLDEN TEXT:** Prov. 14: 12. There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.  
11. Sept. 13.—DAVID BECOMES KING. 2 Sam. 2: 1-10. Study vs. 1-11 and 5: 1-10. *Commit vs.* 1-3. **GOLDEN TEXT:** Ps. 133: 1. Behold how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.  
12. Sept. 20.—ABSTINENCE FROM EVIL. (A Temperance Lesson.) 1 Pet. 4: 1-11. *Commit vs.* 1, 2. **GOLDEN TEXT:** Eph. 5: 18. Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess.  
13. Sept. 27.—REVIEW. (Read Ps. 8, 19, 27.) **GOLDEN TEXT:** Ps. 27: 1. The Lord is my light and my salvation.

## ORDER OF SERVICES—THIRD QUARTER.

### OPENING SERVICE.

- I. SILENCE.  
II. RESPONSIVE SENTENCES. [Ps. 31, 14-19.]  
SPT. But I trusted in thee, O LORD;  
SCHOOL. I said, Thou art my God.  
SPT. My times are in thy hand;  
SCHOOL. Deliver me from the hand of mine enemies, and from them that persecute me.  
SPT. Make thy face to shine upon thy servant:  
SCHOOL. Save me for thy mercies' sake.  
SPT. Let me not be ashamed, O LORD; for I have called upon thee:  
SCHOOL. Let the wicked be ashamed, and let them be silent in the grave.  
SPT. Let the lying lips be put to silence;  
SCHOOL. Which speak grievous things proudly and contemptuously against the righteous.  
SPT. Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee:  
SCHOOL. Which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men!  
III. SINGING.  
IV. THE TEN COMMANDMENTS, OR THE APOSTLES' CREED.

- V. PRAYER, followed by the Lord's Prayer in concert.  
VI. SINGING.

### LESSON SERVICE.

- I. CLASS STUDY OF THE LESSON.  
II. SINGING LESSON HYMN.  
III. RECITATION OF THE TITLE AND GOLDEN TEXT by the school in concert.  
IV. REVIEW AND APPLICATION OF THE LESSON by Pastor or Superintendent.  
V. ADDITIONAL LESSON. [Special lesson in the Church Catechism may here be introduced.]  
VI. ANNOUNCEMENTS (especially of the Church service and the Epworth League and week-evening prayer meetings.)

### CLOSING SERVICE.

- I. SINGING.  
II. RESPONSIVE SENTENCES. [Ps. 27, 11, 14.]  
SPT. Teach me thy way, O LORD,  
SCHOOL. And lead me in a plain path, because of mine enemies.  
SPT. Wait on the LORD: be of good courage,  
SCHOOL. And he shall strengthen thine heart:  
SPT. Wait, I say, on the LORD.

# International Bible Lessons.

## THIRD QUARTER: STUDIES IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

### LESSON I. Israel Asking for a King.

[July 5.]

**GOLDEN TEXT.** Prepare your hearts unto the Lord, and serve him only. 1 Sam. 7. 3.

#### AUTHORIZED VERSION.

[Study also verses 11-22. Read Deut. 17. 14-20; 1 Sam. chapters 4-8.]

1 Sam. 8. 1-10. [Commit to memory verses 4-7.]

1 And it came to pass, when Samuel was old, that he made his sons judges over Is'ra-el.

2 Now the name of his firstborn was Jo'e'l; and the name of his second, A-bi'ah: they were judges in Be'er-she'ba.

3 And his sons walked not in his ways, but turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted judgment.

4 Then all the elders of Is'ra-el gathered themselves together, and came to Sam'u-el unto Ra'mah.

5 And said unto him, Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now make us a king to judge us like all the nations.

6 But the thing displeased Sam'u-el, when they said, Give us a king to judge us. And Sam'u-el prayed unto the LORD.

7 And the LORD said unto Sam'u-el. Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them.

8 According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of E'gypt even unto this day, wherewith they have forsaken me, and served other gods, so do they also unto thee.

9 Now therefore hearken unto their voice: howbeit yet protest solemnly unto them, and show them the manner of the king that shall reign over them.

10 And Sam'u-el told all the words of the LORD unto the people that asked of him a king.

#### REVISED VERSION.\*

1 And it came to pass, when Samuel was old, that he made his sons judges over Israel. 2 Now the name of his firstborn was Joel; and the name of his second, Abijah: they were judges in Beer-sheba. 3 And his sons walked not in his ways, but turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted justice.

4 Then all the elders of Israel gathered themselves together, and came to Samuel unto Ramah; 5 and they said unto him, Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now make us a king to judge us like all the nations. 6 But the thing displeased Samuel, when they said, Give us a king to judge us. And Samuel prayed unto Jehovah. 7 And Jehovah said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee; for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not be king over them. 8 According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt even unto this day, in that they have forsaken me, and served other gods, so do they also unto thee. 9 Now therefore hearken unto their voice: howbeit thou shalt protest solemnly unto them, and shalt show them the manner of the king that shall reign over them.

10 And Samuel told all the words of Jehovah unto the people that asked of him a king.

#### Lesson Hymns.

*New Canadian Hymnal*, No. 3.

All people that on earth do dwell,  
Singing to the Lord with cheerful voice;  
Him serve with mirth, his praise forth tell,  
Come ye before him, and rejoice.

*New Canadian Hymnal*, No. 6.

Oh, worship the King all glorious above!  
Oh, gratefully sing his power and his love!  
Our Shield and Defender, the Ancient of Days,  
Pavilioned in splendor, and girded with praise.

\*The Revised Version, copyright 1901, by Thomas Nelson & Sons.

**Time.**—According to Usher about 1095 B. C.

**Place.**—Ramah.

#### Home Readings.

M. Israel Asking for a King. 1 Sam. 8. 1-10.

Tu. Advice refused. 1 Sam. 8. 11-22.

W. Saul's visit to Samuel. 1 Sam. 9. 1-13.

Th. Samuel's message to Saul. 1 Sam. 9. 14-24.

F. The King's duties. Deut. 17. 14-20.

S. The best rule. Prov. 8. 1-17.

8. Reference by Paul. Acts 13. 16-24.

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New Canadian Hymnal, No. 321.

A better day is coming,  
A morning promised long,  
When girded Right, with holy Might,  
Will overthrow the wrong.

### Questions for Senior Scholars.

1. *The Failure of Samuel's Sons as Judges* (v. 1-3).—How long had Samuel been judge over Israel? Why had Samuel appointed additional judges? Was it wise for him to appoint his own sons? Wherein did "judges over Israel" differ from modern judges? In what part of the land did Joel and Abiah hold sway? What may we infer from the meaning of the names of these young men? In what three regards did they turn from their father's ways? Explain these three sins.

2. *The Elder's Demand for a King* (v. 4-6).—Who were the elders of Israel? Why did they come to Samuel in their trouble? Could they have made the change themselves? What two good reasons did they give for a change in their rulers? Why did they want at the same time to have the form of their government changed? In what ways was Israel unlike "all the nations"? What reasons for displeasure had Samuel?

3. *Jehovah's Decision* (v. 7-10).—What was the essential evil of the elders' request? What is the meaning of the word "theocracy"? Who was Israel's real ruler? Why did Jehovah grant what they should not have? What reasons had Israel for gratitude and loyalty? Can people who are not true to God be trusted to be true to each other? Was this the first token of their dissatisfaction? In what sense had they served other gods?

4. *The Prophet Samuel's Protest* (Supplementary) (v. 11-22).—Why did Samuel protest? How did Samuel know what the manner of the king would be?

### Questions for Intermediate Scholars.

1. *Uncorthy Sons of an Honored Father* (v. 1-3).—How long had Samuel been a judge in Israel? Whom did he appoint to help him? How did they act in office? What were their names? How did they differ from their father?

2. *A King Desired* (v. 4-6).—Who came to Samuel? Of what did they complain? What did they ask? What reason did they give? What did Samuel do about it?

3. *A Request Granted, but Not Approved* (v. 7-10).—What did God say the people had done? What was Samuel instructed to do? What sins in the history of Israel are mentioned? What was to be made known to them?

### Questions for Younger Scholars.

Who was Samuel? When was he called by the Lord? What was his mother's name? *Hannah*. Whom did he live with in the temple? *Eli, the high priest*. What had Samuel come to be? Who took his place as judges? What were their names? *Joel and Abiah*. Were they like their father? Were the people satisfied with them? What did they ask of Samuel? What did Samuel do? What did the Lord say to him? Whom had the people rejected? What did he tell Samuel to show them? Did he do so? What did they reply?

### A Review in Seven Questions.

1. Who came to Samuel? *The elders of Israel*. 2. What did they desire Samuel to do? *To choose a king for Israel*. 3. Why did they desire a king? *To be like other nations*. 4. How did Samuel feel at receiving their request? *He was displeased*. 5. What did God say about it? *"They have rejected me"*. 6. What did God command Samuel to do? *To give the people a king*. 7. What is our GOLDEN TEXT? *"Prepare your hearts,"* etc.

### The Church Catechism.

31. What is justification? Justification is an act of God's free grace wherein he pardoneth all our sins and accepteth us as righteous in his sight, only for the sake of Jesus Christ.

Romans 4. 5. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.

1 John 2. 12. I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake.

## THE LESSON OUTLINE.

### The Kingdom of God.

I. GOD IS OUR KING—POWERFUL, WISE, JUST, AND FAITHFUL.  
He doeth according to his will, and none can stay his hand. Dan. 4. 35.

Out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding. Prov. 2. 6.  
He will judge the world in righteousness Acts 17. 31.

He abideth faithful; he cannot deny himself.  
2 Tim. 2, 13.

## II. GOD DESIRES OUR LOYALTY.

Be still, and know that I am God. Psa.  
46, 10.

In all thy ways acknowledge him. Prov. 3, 6.

## III. GOD RULES IN THE PERSON OF THE MESSIAH.

There was given him a kingdom, that all peo-

ple, nations, and languages should serve  
him. Dan. 7, 14.

All kings shall fall down before him; all na-  
tions shall serve him. Psa. 72, 11.

## IV. THE LAW OF GOD'S KINGDOM IS LOVE.

Love is the fulfilling of the law. Rom. 13, 10.

All the law is fulfilled in one word, Thou  
shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Gal.  
5, 14.

## EXPLANATORY NOTES.

Two scenes from Samuel's life were presented in our lessons last December—his call to the prophetic ministry (while still a boy), and his administration of public affairs as judge. During many unrecorded years he was recognized by the nation as its chief executive and its court of last resort; he traveled an annual circuit, and Ramah, Bethel, Gilgal, and Mizpeh were among his stopping places. The greatest reformer of Hebrew history, he impressed his life deeply upon the national character. But in advanced years he deputed his sons to act as judges in the remote tribes, and their venality brought Samuel's administration into disfavor. Confidence in the integrity of the government decreased; the borders of the nation were seriously threatened by barbarians; and amid general dissatisfaction the feeling grew that the establishment of a monarchy would be to the interest of all concerned. We are not to regard the election of a king as contrary to the traditions and sentiment of Israel. Compare Deut. 17, 14-20 with Balaam's prophecy of a "scepter" (Num. 24, 17) and with the promise made to Abraham of kings to arise among his descendants. But though in "the days of the judges" there had been aspirants to a throne, no Hebrew had yet been recognized as king except over a small section; and it is probable that no choice now could have been agreed upon without the assistance and guidance of the greatest living Hebrew, Samuel the prophet and judge.

**Verse 1.** *When Samuel was old.* Dates are not given, but evidently eighteen or twenty years and passed between the victory of Ebenezer and the appointment of Samuel's sons to be judges.

**2.** The names of these sons have been interpreted as a protest against the idolatry still prevalent in Israel. *Joel* means Jehovah-is-God, and *Abiah* ["Abijah"], Jah-is-to-be-worshipped-under-the-title-of-Father. "Yashni," given in 1 Chron. 6, 28, is "an obvious corruption" of the text. *Judges in Beer-sheba.* Josephus's statement that Samuel resigned his office and divided the nation between his sons, placing one in Beth-el and the other in Beer-sheba, contradicts the statement, in 1 Sam. 7, 15, that Samuel "all the days of his life" retained civil and religious authority. It is more probable that his sons had a delegated jurisdiction over the southern half of the country only. Beer-sheba is often alluded to as a southern boundary of Israel, and the formula "From Dan to Beer-sheba" denoted the full extent of the land. But in the earlier days, before the desert had encroached upon Simeon's territory, it was the center of a busy agricultural region.

**3.** We are not to assume that Samuel's sons were corrupt when appointed to be judges. Our

English idiom "straightforward," to denote a course of rectitude, illustrates the Hebrew idiom, *walked not in his ways, but turned aside.* *Lucre* means gain or profit. In the Bible it is used in a bad sense only. The statement *took bribes and perverted judgment* ["justice"] takes on fresh interest when compared with Deut. 16, 19, where such conduct is directly forbidden. The comparison becomes more forceful when we observe that though the English translation varies the Hebrew words are in the two passages exactly the same.

**4.** *The elders of Israel* were hereditary chieftains. Before Moses organized the nation "elders" ruled the tribes (Exod. 3, 16), and later a council of seventy elders was instituted as representative of all (Num. 11, 16, 24, 25). A distinction is traceable between elders of cities (civil magistrates) and elders of tribes or districts (princes). Through the later stages of the monarchy and after the return from captivity elders were prominent, and in New Testament times one third of the Sanhedrin was chosen from their number. In this passage we have a body of elders from all the tribes, forming a sort of executive committee to shape and to carry into effect the conclusions of the "great congregation" or national assembly. *Gathered*

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*themselves.* Such a gathering implies "much previous consultation" of the leaders of the nation. Evidently dissatisfaction with Samuel's sons had been profound and pervasive. One of the difficult questions of Palestinian geography relates to the situation of *Ramah* (Ramathaim-Zophim, 1 Sam. 1, 1, 3, 19), the home of Samuel. Many locations have been suggested, but of late years, by a series of exclusions, *er Ram*, a hill five miles north of Jerusalem, is generally fixed upon (tentatively) as a site.

5. *Thou art old.* Not a very tactful introduction according to modern usage; but we may infer that Samuel himself had made age and infirmity the justification for the appointment of his sons. These words, therefore, are not an attack, but a concession; as if they said, You are right in claiming exemption from the heavy responsibilities of your holy office, but your plan has not worked well, for, alas! your lieutenants are not as good as yourself. Seventy has been guessed at as Samuel's age at this time. *Thy sons walk not in thy ways.* A delicate way of implying that they were bribe-takers and unjust judges. (See note on verse 3.) Official venality often is a result, as it always is a cause, of private degradation and crime. *Make* (literally, "Set," or, "Appoint") *us a king.* We may assume that some at least of these elders were familiar with the doctrine of Deut. 17. 14; they recognized that down from ancient times there had come a divine authorization for change (when needed) in governmental forms, and believed that the time to make the change had come. In turning to the prophet of God for sanction their conduct merits praise. But closer study shows that their religiousness was, after all, only superficial. Their petition was not for direction, but for a king; not for wisdom to guide, but for success in carrying out their plans. Furthermore, their ideal of a king was thoroughly pagan. The lofty conception of the theocracy (God-rule) had slipped out of their minds; they would now be satisfied with the low moral order of such states as Moab, Sidon, and Damascus if only they might secure equal military and commercial importance. Their conduct throughout is that of worldly-wise men who are using their best human skill to lift the nation out of its difficulties, not at all that of representatives of Jehovah in the midst of a pagan world.

6, 7. *The thing displeased Samuel.* "The matter was evil in the eyes of Samuel." What he first recognized in the request was a scheme to supersede him, and, naturally, his feeling (verse 7) was that of indignation because of

the national ingratitude. Characteristically he made no public utterance until he had *prayed unto the Lord* ["Jehovah"]. God's answer showed Samuel what he had not at first perceived, that the present demand for a king was really "defection from God." Was the nation already so far below the ideal of the theocracy that a visible kingdom had become "a necessary factor in its training"? This is possible; what is certain is that most of the prevalent dissatisfaction was due to restlessness under God's rule. Israel's ideals were the ideals of heathendom. The nation had *rejected* God not merely in this request, but primarily in the *works* of evil mentioned in verse 8. For this reason the Lord says, *Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee.* One of the falsest statements that ever have passed current as true is "The voice of the people is the voice of God." Nevertheless the God of love always is attentive to the popular voice. To "hearken" here means to yield to their demand. "There is now no way of teaching this willful people but by granting their petition and giving them a king after their own heart, whose failure should make way for a true Theocrat." Sometimes the best way to lead men up from low conceptions is to realize those conceptions.

8. *The works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt.* They had been affected by all the idolatries about them. *They have forsaken me.* From the murmurings and rebellions of the exodus down to the present time large numbers of the people had *serv'd other gods*, often openly, always privately. Compare Stephen's speech (Acts 7) and Psa. 106. There is personal tenderness in the reminder given to Samuel. *According as they have done to me, says Jehovah, so do they also unto thee.*

9. *Houebit yet* ["thou shalt"] *protest* [literally, "witness"] *solemnly unto them.* Show them how much deeper than they surmise is the national dissatisfaction with the theocracy; show how grave and far-reaching will be the results of the change they seek to effect; *show them the manner of the king*—"the gilded slavery of an oriental despotism." They have watched from a distance the splendor of courts and conquests; give them an inside view of the tyranny which makes such glory possible. The "manner of the king" is described in verses 11-18, and Solomon's reign, with all its glory, fulfilled Samuel's prediction.

10. *Samuel told all the words of the Lord* ["Jehovah"] *unto the people.* Through the elders.

## HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

*His sons walked not in his ways.* His sons were not the judges, but rather unofficial assistants of their father, whose duties were arduous and many. Neither God nor the people had asked for their services. Good men in high position have often come to grief through unworthy children. There is no hint that Samuel had not done his duty by his sons, and yet it is very possible that the multiplicity of duties inseparably connected with his office may have taken some of the time he should have reserved for the moral and religious training of his boys. Be that as it may, we who are parents may pause and ponder. Many of our leading men, and often women, active workers in the Lord's vineyard, are so intent in working for the state, public, or even the Church in general—to say nothing of the vast army overwhelmed with worldly interests—as to make it impossible for them to render the service due their children. Thus it happens—alas! too often—that children of pious parents, though bearing honorable names, do become not only indifferent to religious influences, but also line themselves on the side of the corrupt and degrading. Parents, however onerous your duties may be, never lose sight of your own children, whom God has given especially for you to train.

The sins of Samuel's children were such as are peculiarly common in our own day and country—fondness of *lucre*. The Hebrew verb from which the noun "lucre" is derived means to tear off violently. The noun itself signifies plunder or unjust gain. In a land like our own there are innumerable chances to make money dishonestly. Many sons of noble sires have been caught in the coils of lucre. They also took bribes—a common failing of oriental judges and men in authority to this day in Bible lands. The word "bribe" originally meant a scrap or piece of bread, given to a beggar, but now the term is confined to dishonest gifts to influence those in positions of trust, who often, like beggars, hold out their hands for that which belongs not to them. *Perverted judgment.* Would that all dishonest judges had died before Saul was made king! How many of our judges are reproductions on a larger scale of Samuel's sons!

*Behold, thou art old.* How old we know not. Jewish tradition says fifty-two. Modern commentators, having no data by which to judge, disagree, and the Holy Scriptures furnish no clew. It is folly for us to guess. Old age seldom comes alone, but generally with a train

of deficiencies arising from mental and physical ailments. But such defects are quite as often magnified by the young as they are minified by the old themselves. It is hard for an old man to see his plans thwarted, much more excellent. Yet the world is full of aged men who rejoice in the success of their juniors. It is a great art to grow old gracefully, but the grace of God in the heart is sufficient for this also.

*Like all the other nations.* This does not mean that they desired just the same kind of kings as the nations around them had, but rather that they wanted a monarchical form of government. What a tyrant fashion is! How many good people have stumbled right here! How many happy homes have been wrecked because they imitated those less worthy than themselves. What an unsafe guide that vague, undefined something called "Everybody" is! We should never want to be like some one else, unless we know that this some one else is better than we are, is more like God, or as God would like to have him be. Never imitate anyone unless God is thereby glorified. Are there some people to-day whose hearts were once full of communion with God but who, having formed some unholy alliance or partnership, just to be like other people, have lost that sweet peace, and even an ardent desire for it? Before you make a change consider well the possible consequences. Conscious communion with God, assurance of our heavenly Father's interest in us, and that he leads us in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake, are treasures beyond compare. Hold fast to this at all hazard. Court not wealth, position, honor, power, social influence, nor the society of anyone who is not a child of God, unless it be with the avowed purpose of doing good to that one, or of gaining in spiritual power. How many individuals have lost their first love by unwise changes! How many churches once full of holy power and revival spirit have become lukewarm and indifferent to the salvation of those entrusted to their care, because they abandoned well-tried methods and succumbed to doubtful practices. There is danger for the Methodist Church in being "like all the other nations." Fine architecture, classic music, well-written or well-delivered sermons—all these may be made very helpful to the Lord in carrying on his work. But, after all, the chief business of a Methodist church as well as every member of it is to bring souls to Jesus Christ and build up the kingdom of God. The

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very slight increase in our Church membership for the past few years should bring us all to a reconsecration of our powers. What the Church needs to-day is not more elegance, nor wealth, but rather a host of young men and women, like Joseph, Daniel, and the three Hebrew children, who refuse to be like other men when it is their solemn duty to be unlike them. Bless the Lord, their number is increasing. "But sin is ever also folly. In asking for a monarchy like those around them the people were courting a despotism whose intolerable yoke it would not be possible for them to shake off in the future (1 Sam. 8. 18)."—*Edersheim*. Christians, like the ancient Israelites, are to be a "peculiar people," and not like their godless neighbors.

*Make us a king.* Kings may be as good as judges or presidents. Indeed, "all governments are ordained of God." Nay, more, a king had been promised them by Moses himself (Deut. 17. 14, ff.; comp. Gen. 17. 6; 35. 11). The time seemed ripe for change. Philistia, on the west, was a constant menace to the theocracy; Ammon, on the east, was hostile as ever; and that ancient enemy, Amalek, was ever on the alert to injure Israel. There were dangers, but why? If we are to believe their writers, Israel always suffered when it forsook God, when the people turned away from Jehovah. What they should have done was to seek the Lord and reform. Obedience first, then a desire for something higher or better. They had no business to ask for a king. This was taking things out of God's hands. What they should have done, first of all, was to inquire what the will of the Lord was in the matter. How strange they should ask for a king when they knew that Jehovah was their King, had always been their King, had never failed them, had always delivered them in the hour of trouble and danger, had been their constant guide from the hour they left Egypt to this very day. What folly, then, to demand an earthly king when the King of kings wanted to rule over them! It was not wrong, in itself, to ask for a king. It was the spirit in which they asked that made it wrong—the lack of faith displayed in asking. It was desiring the earthly for the heavenly. It is the same old story still. It is a manifestation of selfishness, a putting of our will above the will of our Father in heaven. It is forgetting to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. First of all let us conquer self, and we need not greatly fear the enemy from without. "How utterly do some leave God out of their calculations! How absolutely unconcerned they are as to whether they can reckon on his approval of their

mode of life! How little it seems to count!"—*Blaikie*.

*Samuel prayed unto the Lord.* Prayer, the privilege of all God's people, is the greatest solace for the grief-stricken soul. The most successful workers in God's vineyard have always been great in prayer. How foolish to attempt great things for God without constant communication with the throne of grace! No matter how men may treat us, how little our work for him may be appreciated or understood, God is ever willing to hear our petitions and to lighten our burdens. The Church of our time needs more prayer. Our midweek prayer meetings are generally a good index of the spirituality not only of the church, but of the individual members as well. Those of us who love the Lord let us not neglect the hour of prayer, whether in the church, at the family altar, or in our closets. If any of us neglect these helps to godly life let us ask ourselves Why? From the example of Samuel let us learn to take all difficulties to God in prayer. What a blessed habit, what a mighty force, what source of joy and peace, prayer may become in the daily life of every one of us!

*They have not rejected thee.* How much more serious our wrongdoings may be than we and those around us may regard them! How few think that when they sin against their neighbors they also sin against God! The psalmist had a better conception of the nature of sin than some of us have when he exclaimed, "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned." Faithful minister of God, or discouraged Sunday school teacher, be not so much grieved that your counsel is rejected, that your efforts are not appreciated, as that men reject the counsels of Jehovah, whose servant and spokesman you are. The sin against God is infinitely greater than any slight to you. No grief can come to the faithful worker in the Church of God which does not touch with infinite sorrow the heart of the great Father in heaven. Are we not sometimes apt to lose sight of the exceeding greatness of sin, and regard it not so much the index of a rebellious heart against God as a well-meant insult to ourselves?

*Protest solemnly unto them.* The Hebrew is very emphatic, more so than our English versions, though the full meaning cannot be conveyed in a translation. God is good. Notwithstanding their wrong decision, he says to Samuel, "Give them another chance; tell them faithfully what they may expect from a king." While God suffers man to have his own way he does his utmost to lead him in the path of righteous-

ness, a path which always leads to joy and peace in the Holy Ghost.

*Hearken to their voice.* Do as they ask. "When God is asked for something amiss he shows displeasure in granting, mercy in denying, the petition."—*Deane.* God at times grants our wishes in order that we may see the folly of our prayers, just as a wise parent indulges a child in what he knows will cause him pain, simply for the sake of teaching him better. But, while granting such requests, God never ceases to warn and to show a better way. Experience alone can teach most of us. "When men show themselves incapable of appreciating a high privilege it is meet they should suffer the loss of it, or at least a diminution of it." But notwithstanding all our blunders, both individual and national, how comforting it is that God is at the helm, and that he can make even the wrath of man praise him, and that he can bless all those who put their trust in him, under any form of government.

#### Prismatic Lights on the Lesson.

BY BISHOP WARREN.

##### UNDER WHICH KING?

There must be a king. National affairs, seasons, worlds, are too great and complicated for our individual management. Incontestably there is a King of seasons and worlds. It is better that minor kinglings of national affairs be in harmony with the great King. Under him the Israelites had been lifted from the lowly position of slaves to the foremost nation in some respects on the earth. Why change?

The theocratic method of government from the time of Moses had been by judges, who were the inspired mouths of God. Ask pupils what was done by divine direction under Moses, Joshua, Deborah, Gideon, Samson, and Samuel. Why change?

Three reasons are given (verse 5). Samuel was old. Another would the sooner take his place. His sons were bad. By making a king he deposed them. The real reason was they wanted to be like other nations.

Samuel protested and prophesied fifteen evils that the kings would bring upon them (verses 11-18). But when the people would not hearken he granted their request. Had the people waited, David would have been God's first appointee.

Contrast the kingship of Jesus. He gives rest, power to get wealth, strength in the inner man, love passing knowledge, dominion here and glory hereafter.

Under which king are we?

We can choose. God "solemnly protests" the results, but gives us our predetermined way in the end. The insanity that says, "Give us our kind of a king," in the face of predicted results, is in the world yet.

These dealings of God with nations and individuals happened for sample cases, and were written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the ages are come (1 Cor. 10. 11).

Why need folly be enacted for the thousandth time?

#### Thoughts for Young People.

##### LESSONS FROM SAMUEL'S CAREER.

1. Samuel was a witness that an hereditary priesthood derives all its worth from a divine presence which is not shut up in it or limited by it, and that without that presence it means nothing and is nothing, nay, becomes worse than nothing, a plague and cancer in the society, poisoning its very heart, spreading disease and death through it.

2. The signal downfall of the nation which took place during Samuel's life, when the ark, the symbol of the people's unity, was captured by the Philistines, prepared the way for great national changes. Samuel's reformation awakened in the people a sense of order to which they had been strangers before. But Samuel's sons did not walk in his ways. They were self-seekers; they were suspected of taking bribes. The effect of this distrust was just that which proceeds in all ages from the same cause—dissatisfaction, a cry for change, a feeling that the fault of the person who administers implies some evil or defect in that which he has to administer. The degeneracy of Samuel's sons made the people long for a different sort of rule, for one which should be less irregular and fluctuating.

3. The request for a king displeased Samuel because he had a sense that there was something wrong in the wish of his countrymen. He may have felt their ingratitude to himself; he may have thought that his government was better than any they were likely to substitute for it.

4. God's answer to Samuel's prayer was a very strange one. "Hearken unto them, for they have rejected me." Let them have their way, seeing that they are not changing a mere form of government, but breaking loose from the principle upon which their nation has stood from its foundation. The Hebrews were asking for heavy punishments, which they needed, without which the evil that was in them could not have been brought to light or cured. But beneath their dark counterfeit image of a king was

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hidden the image of a true King reigning in righteousness, who would not judge after the sight of his eye nor reprove after the hearing of his ear, but would smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips would slay the wicked. [Maurice.]

### Teaching Hints for Intermediate Classes.

BY REV. A. H. MC KINNEY.

#### NOTE.

As so much of the interest in the lessons of the quarter focuses about the name of Saul, the first king of Israel, we will adopt his name as our memory word for the quarter, planning and teaching our lessons according to the following outline:

#### SURROUNDINGS.

#### APPROACH.

#### UNFOLDED TEXT.

#### LESSON.

#### STUDY IN ADVANCE.

#### SURROUNDINGS.

*Time.* Uncertain, somewhere between 1098 and 1037 B. C.

*Places.* Beer-sheba and Ramah. The teacher should provide a map to be used in the class.

*History.* See Unfolded Text.

*The Record.* In classes for Intermediates no time need be spent on critical questions concerning the books of Samuel.

#### APPROACH.

Ask: How many have ever seen or have read *Plutarch's Lives*? What do you know about the book? Here is a copy of it. (Let the teacher show the book, or if it is not obtainable have selected some biography about which the suggested questions may be asked and which may be brought to the class for the purpose of attracting the attention and of stimulating the interest of the pupils.) Now say: During this quarter we are going to write the lives of Saul and David. In this notebook you will reserve two pages for each lesson. On the first page we will each write at home before coming to the class the following:

1. The title of the lesson.
2. The Golden Text thereof.
3. Such facts concerning Saul or David relating to the lesson as we are able to learn during the week.

On the second page we will record:

1. Such additional facts as we learn during the lesson hour.
2. The truth that we wish to remember in connection with the lesson.

Have prepared for each pupil a notebook on the front cover and on the first page of which is printed:

### LIVES OF SAUL AND DAVID.

COMPILED BY

In each case, on this last line, print the name of the person for whom the book is intended. Urge the pupils to do the work as indicated week by week in Study in Advance, and to bring their books to class on each Sunday.

#### UNFOLDED TEXT.

As there has been a break in our studies, and as our pupils have forgotten many things, that they may understand to-day's text it will be necessary for the teacher to spend a little time in recalling the lessons for December, 1902, and in connecting to-day's lesson therewith, so as to get an intelligent acquaintance with the lesson surroundings.

We will study our lesson in connection with the persons mentioned therein, as follows:

*Samuel.* Ask: Who was he? What do you remember about him? We have here an excellent opportunity, which should be eagerly and intelligently embraced in order to review what the pupils learned concerning Samuel during last year. If the teacher is well prepared, but little time need be given to this exercise.

*Samuel's Sons.* Ask: What were their names? What office did they hold? Where? (Have some pupil point our Beer-sheba on the map.) What did Samuel's sons *not* do? Name three evil things that they did do? From a study of the NOTES the teacher should be prepared to explain concisely who the judges and the elders were, and to be ready to answer any questions concerning them.

*The Elders.* Ask: Who were they? Where did they gather? (Have Ramah pointed out.) Why? What three things did they say to Samuel? How did he feel? What did he do?

*The Lord.* How did the Lord answer Samuel? (The teacher should be prepared to answer this question, as it is one that troubles every thoughtful child. See NOTES.) What did he say? (Have some one read aloud verses 7, 8, and 9, and explain their meaning.) What did Samuel then do?

#### LESSON.

Ask for the Golden Text. Have several repeat it. Ask: Do we have any kings in this country? Do we serve anyone? From talking about the nation, turn the conversation to our-

selves and develop the thought: In spite of the fact that we claim to be our own master everyone has a master other than himself or herself. The only really free person is the one who has the Lord for his Master and is willing to obey his commands.

Have the following printed on a slip of paper, and hand a blank slip to each member of the class:

I TAKE THE LORD FOR  
**MY MASTER**  
AND WILL SERVE HIM.

Have each one copy this on his or her slip, and ask all who will honestly make and with God's help try to keep this resolution to print it in their Lives at home directly after school.

STUDY IN ADVANCE.

Ask the pupils to read the Scripture narrative between to-day's lesson and that for next Sunday, and to write in their Lives three of the most important events recorded therein.

Review words, "My Master." (See note at beginning of HINTS for the next lesson.)

By Way of Illustration.

BY JENNIE M. BINGHAM.

"*Make us a king.*" Little folks and larger ones are very likely to want the things which are not good for them, and to prefer such things to those which are the best possible for them. A baby wants an open razor to play with, because it is so bright. A child wants to eat poison berries, because they are so pretty. Young people want to have a part in occupations or to find a place in surroundings which are evil, because they are so attractive. Older people want wealth or position or power, because it seems to promise so much. All of us are inclined to reach out after that which is not for our good, because to the eye of sense it is so pleasing. Very few of us are ready to have God decide for us always as to what is for our good. Still fewer of us would make a wise choice if God should permit us to choose for ourselves. The safest prayer, even when the bitterest cup is proffered to us, is, "Nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done."

"*Like all the nations.*" The foolish imitation of others is responsible for many evils. The life of a Chinese girl is one long torture because of the horrible custom of foot-binding. The women of Lake Nyassa insert a piece of stone in their upper lip, enlarging it from time to

time till speaking and eating become most awkward and painful operations, and the very lip sometimes is torn away. Few things are more necessary for the young Christian than to learn independence of worldly persons and ideas.—*Expositor's Bible.*

"*And Samuel prayed unto the Lord.*" Lincoln's intimate friend, Noah Brooks, tells how Mr. Lincoln, like Hezekiah and Samuel, was accustomed to spread his cause before the Lord, and when told that many were praying for him he said, "I have been a good deal helped by just that thought. I should be the most presumptuous blockhead upon this footstool if I for one day thought I could discharge the duties which have come upon me since I came into this place without the aid and enlightenment of One who is stronger and wiser than all others."

*Verses 7-9. A Visible Helper.* These verses show us that this national rejection of God as king was parallel to the lust after idols. Both sins sprang from the same root—the difficulty of believing in an invisible helper, and the consequent craving for some material embodiment of power as an idol or as a king. Sense cried aloud for something more substantial than this God whom no man could see. It was all very well to be told stories about a captain of the Lord's host, with a drawn sword in his hand, whom a Joshua might get a glimpse of now and then; but flesh and blood would fight better if one's eyes could see a stalwart Israelite striking with his sword. Shall we condemn them? In our daily life why do we cling so fondly to visible helpers and feel that a human breast on which we can lay our heads, and to which we can confide our troubles, is more to us than the heart and ear of God. There are many people to-day who had much rather have a good balance at their credit in the bank than God's promise to take care of their needs. We are all of us tempted to think, like the old cosmogonists, that the blue vault about us must fall unless somewhere on the edge of the horizon there are pillars to hold it up.—*Alexander McLaren.*

Heart Talks on the Lesson.

BY MRS. J. H. KNOWLES.

The Epistle to the Hebrews says, "We ought to give more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip." The mind is like a sieve; thoughts run through it unless we make an effort to hold them. Our days are so full of things to read and hear and see, impressions are like clouds drifting over a lake. We must give heed to the

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good lessons that we learn each Sunday, "lest we forget."

How soon these ancient Hebrews forgot Mizpah, where the Lord discomfited the Philistines, and Eben-ezer, the "stone of help." They had peace all the days of Samuel, but they forgot whose hand had given it. They forgot that God had chosen them out of other nations to make them better, stronger, richer than all. And, forgetting, they were deceived by appearances; they thought it would be better to be like these others, while God had set them apart for peculiar favor and honor.

Let us look into this mirror. We may see ourselves there. It is the Christian's honor to be chosen out of the world; to be different from it; to possess something better than its folly, worry, disappointing ambitions and pursuits. But it is close around us; we form friendships in it; it is lonesome to be singular; we forget Mizpah and Eben-ezer; we want to be like other people, and we adopt their ways and fall into their spirit. We do not say we have rejected Jesus as our King, but we really have done so when we are not different in thought and spirit and conduct from those who do not profess to belong to him. He never forces us to accept him as King; he waits for our willing allegiance. He lets us have our way and learn our loss by sad experience. And what a loss it is not to have him rule our heart and life! The day is sure to come when we cry out because of another king we have chosen. It is a bitter cry. One in youth chooses self as king; ease, pleasure, good times; and at middle life he sees opportunity, honor, friends, ability, gone—stolen by the oppressor he chose as his ruler. And you, when you come to manhood or womanhood, robbed of the strength and beauty of character you would have gained in the service of Jesus, how great will be your loss!

Let us be reasonable. Let us have a mind of our own. Do not think you must go here or there, do this or that, because "all the others do." Consider what is best; choose for yourself; bring others to your way of thinking rather than yield to their way. The desire to be "like other nations" led Israel away from God. It is a subtle and fatal snare. The only escape from it is to be loyal to Jesus and to desire above all else to be like him.

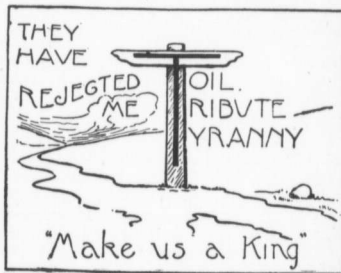
### The Teachers' Meeting.

To understand this lesson we must first understand precisely what the people wanted. They asked for a king, but they had one already—God. 1. They wanted a *visible* king because

they were not living by faith in the Unseen. 2. They wanted a king without regard to God's wish in the matter, and thus in a measure rejected God. 3. They wanted a king first of all because by him they hoped to win prosperity; but they desired prosperity without reference to moral character. When they had obeyed God they always had had success; now they wanted success without regard to the question of obedience. 4. They wanted a king because they wanted to be like other nations. There was a sinful desire for conformity to the world.... We should learn from this lesson God's sovereignty. 1. God is Sovereign of this earth. This is the condition of things—not a theory. 2. Government exists to make it difficult to do evil and easy to do right, and the best government is that which brings people nearest to God's ideals. 3. Without the vision of faith people cannot tell what is best for them, and sometimes God guides perverse natures into the right path by giving them temporarily the things that they most crave, knowing that these gifts will punish them, humble them, and draw them nearer to him and to ultimate obedience. 4. To reject God brings upon the rejecter untold sorrow.

### Blackboard.

BY THOMAS G. ROGERS.



Israel had flourished and dwelt securely beneath the leadership of the judges appointed by and representing God. With the passing of Samuel, however, beholding the ungodliness of his sons, the people forejudged the matter, declaring in effect that this method of leadership was no longer an adequate provision for the nation. They desired to place themselves in voluntary submission to an earthly sovereign, ignoring the explicit command of God, that they should "serve him only." Even with the prospect of an exacting and tyrannous rule they

choose their own way rather than that of God. Let us consider carefully, lest in waywardness we too should reject the divine decree and in seeking our own ends make choice of some evil without remedy or hope.

Coloring.—Post and path, cream; T, red; words, white; phrases, light blue and red.

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BY REV. S. G. AYRES.

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## LESSON II. Saul Chosen King.

[July 12.]

GOLDEN TEXT. The Lord is our king; he will save us. Isa. 33. 22.

### AUTHORIZED VERSION.

[Read 1 Sam. chapters 9, 10.]

1 Sam. 10. 17-27. [Commit to memory verses 24, 25.]

17 And Sam'u-el called the people together unto the LORD to Miz'peh;

18 And said unto the children of Is'ra-el, Thus saith the LORD God of Is'ra-el, I brought up Is'ra-el out of E'gypt, and delivered you out of the hand of the E-gyptians, and out of the hand of all kingdoms, and of them that oppressed you:

19 And ye have this day rejected your God, who himself saved you out of all your adversities and your tribulations; and ye have said unto him, Nay, but set a king over us. Now therefore present yourselves before the LORD by your tribes, and by your thousands.

20 And when Sam'u-el had caused all the tribes of Is'ra-el to come near, the tribe of Ben'-ja-min was taken.

21 When he had caused the tribe of Ben'-ja-min to come near by their families, the family of Ma'tri was taken, and Saul the son of Kish was taken: and when they sought him, he could not be found.

22 Therefore they inquired of the LORD further, if the man should yet come thither. And the LORD answered, Behold, he hath hid himself among the stuff.

23 And they ran and fetched him thence: and when he stood among the people, he was

### REVISED VERSION.\*

17 And Samuel called the people together unto Jehovah to Mizpah; 18 and he said unto the children of Israel, Thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel, I brought up Israel out of Egypt, and I delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of all the kingdoms that oppressed you: 19 but ye have this day rejected your God, who himself saveth you out of all your calamities and your distresses; and ye have said unto him, Nay, but set a king over us. Now therefore present yourselves before Jehovah by your tribes, and by your thousands. 20 So Samuel brought all the tribes of Israel near, and the tribe of Benjamin was taken. 21 And he brought the tribe of Benjamin near by their families; and the family of the Matrites were taken; and Saul the son of Kish was taken: but when they sought him, he could not be found. 22 Therefore they asked of Jehovah further, Is there yet a man to come hither? And Jehovah answered, Behold, he hath hid himself among the baggage. 23 And they ran and fetched him thence; and when he stood among the people, he was higher than any

\*The Revised Version, copyright 1901, by Thomas Nelson & Sons.

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higher than any of the people from his shoulders and upward.

24 And Sam'u-el said to all the people, See ye him whom the LORD hath chosen, that *there* is none like him among all the people? And all the people shouted, and said, God save the king.

25 Then Sam'u-el told the people the manner of the kingdom, and wrote it in a book, and laid it up before the LORD. And Sam'u-el sent all the people away, every man to his house.

26 And Saul also went home to Gib'e-ah; and there went with him a band of men, whose hearts God had touched.

27 But the children of Be'l-i'al said, How shall this man save us? And they despised him, and brought him no presents. But he held his peace.

of the people from his shoulders and upward. 24 And Samuel said to all the people, See ye him whom Jehovah hath chosen, that there is none like him among all the people? And all the people shouted, and said, Long live the king.

25 Then Samuel told the people the manner of the kingdom, and wrote it in a book, and laid it up before Jehovah. And Samuel sent all the people away, every man to his house. 26 And Saul also went to his house to Gibeah; and there went with him the host, whose hearts God had touched. 27 But certain worthless fellows said, How shall this man save us? And they despised him, and brought him no present. But he held his peace.

**Time.**—Uncertain; according to Usher's chronology, about 1095 B. C. **Place.**—Mizpeh, in the tribe of Benjamin.

#### Home Readings.

- M. Saul anointed. 1 Sam. 9. 25 to 10. 2.  
 Tu. Saul Chosen King. 1 Sam. 10. 17-27.  
 W. Duty to rulers. Rom. 13. 1-8.  
 Th. God's counsel. Jer. 22. 1-9.  
 F. A king's trust. Psa. 21.  
 S. "The Lord reigneth." Psa. 93.  
 S. The King of glory. Psa. 24.

#### Lesson Hymns.

- New Canadian Hymnal*, No. 1.  
 Before Jehovah's awful throne,  
 Ye nations bow with sacred joy;  
 Know that the Lord is God alone,  
 He can create, and he destroy.

- New Canadian Hymnal*, No. 459.  
 All hail the power of Jesus' name!  
 Let angels prostrate fall,  
 Bring forth the royal diadem,  
 And crown him Lord of all!

- New Canadian Hymnal*, No. 359.  
 God be with you till we meet again;  
 By his counsels guide, uphold you,  
 With his sheep securely fold you;  
 God be with you till we meet again.

#### Questions for Senior Scholars.

1. *Samuel Reprimands the People* (v. 17-19).—Where was Mizpeh? What is meant by calling the people together "unto the Lord"? For what purpose were the children of Israel "the chosen people" of God? In what sense had they rejected Jehovah? Why did they ask Jehovah to choose the king for them when they knew he did not want them to have a king? In what sense could they present themselves before the Lord? What were the tribes? What were the thousands?

2. *The Selection of a King* (v. 20-24).—What peril was averted by the choice of the tribe of Benjamin? Was the family of Matri distinguished in Benjamin? Where had Saul hidden himself? Why were large men preeminent as soldiers in ancient days? In what respect were there none among all the people like Saul? Did the people acquiesce in the choice?

3. *The National Constitution* (v. 25).—What is meant by "the manner of the kingdom"? On whom was this manner or charter a check? How was it laid up before the Lord? Why was it laid up before the Lord? Who dismissed the assembly?

4. *The Establishment of the Kingdom* (v. 26, 27).—Who went with Saul? What is the meaning of "the children of Belial"? What was the motive of their contempt? How did Saul behave? Was this wise?

#### Questions for Intermediate Scholars.

1. *A National Assembly* (v. 17-19).—To what place were the people called? Of what did Samuel remind them? What sins had they committed? What claims had Jehovah upon their trust and gratitude?

2. *The King Selected* (v. 20-24).—By whom was the new king chosen? What had been previously done in the matter? By what method was the selection made? Where was Saul when the lot was ended? How did they find him? How did he appear when presented by Samuel? How was he received by the assembly?

3. *The Beginning of the Kingdom* (v. 25-27).—What provision was made for the kingdom? What was the purpose of it? In what way was the constitution preserved for future use? What did Saul first do? Who went with him? What opposition to him appeared? How did he treat it?

### Questions for Younger Scholars.

Who was Saul? Can you tell how he looked? What was he doing? What was his father's name? *Kish*. What place did he come to? *Zuph*. What did Saul wish to see there? Why? What did Samuel know when he saw Saul? To what did he invite him? Did he tell him what he wanted to know? Where did he go with him? What did he do to Saul there? What came upon Saul on his way home? Where did Samuel call the people together? What does "Mizpeh" mean? *The Lord be between thee and me when we are absent one from another*. What did Samuel do there? Who was chosen? Where was he? What did the people do?

### A Review in Seven Questions.

1. Who was the first king of Israel? *Saul, the son of Kish*. 2. By whom was he ap-

pointed king? *By the Lord*. 3. By whom was he anointed? *By the prophet Samuel*. 4. Where was his appointment made known? *At an assembly of the people*. 5. What was his appearance? *He was the tallest among the people*. 6. What did the people say when they saw him? *"God save the king."* 7. What is our GOLDEN TEXT? *"The Lord,"* etc.

### The Church Catechism.

32. What is adoption? Adoption is an act of God's free grace whereby he bestows on believers the name and privileges of the sons of God.

Galatians 4. 4, 5. But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

## THE LESSON OUTLINE.

### The King of Kings.

I. "THE POWERS THAT BE ARE ORDAINED OF GOD."

*See ye him whom the Lord hath chosen.* v. 24.

There is no power but of God. Rom. 13. 1. The Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will. Dan. 4. 17.

II. GOVERNMENT EXISTS ON BEHALF OF VIRTUE.

*Present yourselves before the Lord.* v. 13.

He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God. 2 Sam. 23. 3. The throne is established by righteousness. Prov. 16. 12.

III. GOD HOLDS RULERS TO A STRICT ACCOUNT.

*Samuel told the people the manner of the kingdom.* v. 25.

Forasmuch as thou hast not kept my covenant and my statutes, I will surely rend the kingdom from thee. 1 Kings 11. 11.

Every one of us shall give account of himself to God. Rom. 14. 12.

IV. GOD HOLDS THE HEARTS OF ALL MEN IN HIS HANDS.

*Men whose hearts God had touched.* v. 26.

The Lord trieth the hearts. Prov. 17. 3. I will put my laws into their hearts. Heb. 10. 16.

## EXPLANATORY NOTES.

Our lesson tells how Saul the son of Kish was chosen by lot in the presence of a representative national gathering to be king of Israel. Really his duties were to be those of the viceroy of Jehovah, who was still the supreme ruler of the nation. We cannot doubt that Saul was chosen because of his kingly qualities. He was the one man in all Israel best fitted by nature and grace to execute this high trust, and his earlier career as sovereign shows this. First of all, the selection was revealed to Samuel, and then through Samuel to Saul. The quaint story is told in chapter 9 and the earlier part of chapter 10. The gathering that we now study marks the close of the period of the judges. Down to this date the social order of the nation had been preserved by the priesthood and by hereditary "elders," chiefs of clans. The weak moral character of the people and the strong temptations to idolatry which beset them made them an easy prey to surrounding nations, which took turns in tyrannizing over them. Now and then a man of God appeared to call them back to the true worship; now and then a strong-willed hero freed some portion of the holy land from the invaders whom God used as instruments of punishment, but there was yet no "king in Israel," and "every man did that which was right in his own eyes"—subject, of course, to the generally recognized law of God. In this lesson Samuel, prophet and judge, appears in the noblest attitude, as one who assists in a revolution which is to take from himself the supreme power and bestow it upon another.

### Verse

*together to Mizpeh* ["Mizpeh" were the courts. All holy places Samuel, royal authority national religion the element with times, heard against it, brews utter Eben-ezer! future generation helped us, that in some indicated of the high and thum certaining was here theocratic tribe and and possess authority (J tions were than to det

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**Verse 17.** *And Samuel called the people together unto the Lord* ["Jehovah"] *to Mizpeh* ["Mizpah"]. Mizpeh, Beth-el, and Gilgal were the three chief seats of Samuel's circuit court. All three were held by tradition to be holy places. Mizpeh had a fame of its own. Samuel, who was now to invest another with royal authority, had here inaugurated the great national reformation. Here in deep humiliation the elders of Israel had renewed the covenant with the God of their fathers. The Philistines, hearing of the assembly, had come up against it, and it was at Mizpeh that the Hebrews utterly routed them, and "raised their Eben-ezer"—the memorial stone which told to future generations, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us." The phrase "unto Jehovah" shows that in some way the divine presence was now indicated at Mizpeh, possibly by the presence of the high priest, whose "ephod" and "urim and thummim" were the ordained means of ascertaining God's will. Such an assembly as was here called together was a feature of the theocratic government; it represented every tribe and "family" and "thousand" of Israel, and possessed a certain national judicial authority (Judg. 21); but in general its functions were to accept the will of Jehovah rather than to determine by vote the will of the people.

**18, 19.** *Thus saith the Lord God* ["Jehovah, the God"] *of Israel.* Samuel, as the prime minister of the Theocracy, opens this parliament by delivering God's royal address. *I brought up Israel.* The pronoun is emphatic, and contrasts with *ye* at the beginning of verse 19: It was *I* who wrought these beneficent marvels; it is *you* who have this day *rejected your God.* The rejection lay in their determination to have their own way, and not his. *The hand* has in all ages and languages been a notable symbol. We have it in singularly forceful form in modern English in the word "mortgage," "the grip of a dead hand." In our text it reminds Israel of the tight grasp of bondage from which God had delivered the nation. *Them that oppressed you.* Egypt, Amalek, Midian, Edom, Moab, Philistia—nations whose monarchical institutions they now sought to imitate. But the kings of these very nations Israel, without an earthly king, had defeated. *Set a king over us.* "Some one was needed more warlike and vigorous than Samuel, more just and capable than his sons," but surely God was needed most of all; and it was independence from God that these men were really striving for. *Present yourselves.* God would give them their desire, intent on overruling

their error for their good. The first step in reaching God's decision was for the people to arrange themselves before Jehovah, that is, before his representative, in regular order of tribe and clan. The nation had naturally divided into tribes, the tribes into clans (called "families"), and the "families" into "houses," which perhaps we would call families. Besides this natural division there was an artificial organization (which dated back to Moses) of "thousands," "hundreds," "fifties," and "tens," the "thousand" being almost equivalent to the "family."

**20.** *The tribe of Benjamin was taken.* Selected by God: the method, almost certainly, was by lot. The word "lot," which has been degraded to describe the meanest form of gambling contrivable—a base endeavor to get something for nothing—in ancient times stood for a solemn appeal to the Deity. God himself arranged it as part of the ritual service of the Hebrews (Lev. 16. 8), and formally approved it on other occasions (Prov. 16. 33; Acts 1. 26); and apparently the urim and thummim and ephod of the high priest were used, like lots, to ascertain the will of Jehovah.

**21.** *The family of Matri* ["the Matrites"]. One of the divisions of the tribe of Benjamin; not mentioned elsewhere. We need not understand from the phrase *come near* that out of so great a concourse the representatives of any one tribe or clan gathered together and marched toward the high priest. More probably the selection was made by the use of stones on which were inscribed the names of those concerned, and the process may have lasted for several days. *Saul the son of Kish was taken.* Probably from all the "heads of houses" the name of Kish was chosen, and from his household the name of Saul. Although already anointed king in private, when publicly selected Saul could not be found. Modest, and dignity were united in this retirement.

**22.** *Therefore they inquired of the Lord* ["asked of Jehovah"] *further, if the man should yet come thither.* ["Is there yet a man to come hither?"] The idiom is foreign to us, but the inquiry is whether Saul is present or is to be sought for at his home. How *the Lord answered* their inquiry we are not told, but the phraseology intimates that in this case at least the urim and thummim were used. *Among the stuff* ["baggage"]. The trappings and baggage which had been heaped up in the middle of the assembly.

**23.** *They ran and fetched him thence.* Doubtless with much enthusiasm. *He was*

higher than any of the people from his shoulders and upward. Even to this day majestic physique is of advantage to a public leader. In an age when there was little strategy in war the man of tallest stature and longest arm was best equipped for leadership. Most popular heroes (like Wallace and Charlemagne) have been giants. The Mohammedan name for Saul is Thalât, "The-tall."

24. The words of *Samuel* are adroit. See ye him whom the Lord ["Jehovah"] hath chosen, that there is none like him among all the people. Saul had now been chosen by both God and the people—by God because he had a noble character; by the people because he had a noble face and form. All the people shouted. The applause seemed to be, but as we shall see presently was not, universal. God save the king. "Long live the king."

25. *Samuel*, who still held the responsibility for the establishment of the kingdom, now told the people the manner of the kingdom, its principles, the respective duties of king and people toward each other and toward God. This was a sort of Magna Charta, or national constitution, of which no trace is left excepting in the subsequent history of Israel and Judah. It may have been an expansion of Deut. 17. 1-20. The God-ordained "manner of the kingdom" contrasted sharply with the "manner of the king" described in 1 Sam. 8. Wrote it in a book, and laid it up before the Lord ["Jehovah"]. We may suppose that this manuscript was kept, together with the book of the law, "by the side of the ark of the covenant" (Deut. 31. 26).

### HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

*The Meeting at Mizpah.* The word Mizpah, or more correctly, Mizpah, as in the Revised Version, denotes watchtower. As there were many watchtowers in Palestine the name Mizpah must have been very common. It is pretty generally agreed that the place intended in this lesson is the modern Neby Sâmwil (prophet Samuel), four or five miles north-northwest of Jerusalem. It was evidently a favorite gathering place of the people, for the tribes, by their representatives, had met here for deliberation on several occasions (Judg. 20. 1; 21. 1-8; 1 Sam. 7. 5, ff.).

This representative assembly at Mizpah, quite incidentally, testifies to a very high state of civilization under Samuel's judgeship, as well as to the excellent, noble spirit of the prophet. An important change is about to take place in the national life of Israel. This change of gov-

26. *Saul also went home* ["to his house"] to Gibeah. Back to his farm, which is supposed to have been about four miles north of Jerusalem. In thus returning to privacy he showed singular wisdom. It is only just to recognize the singular nobility of character, astuteness, and celerity of action with which Saul began his reign. He failed only when he refused to follow God's leadership. With Saul went a band of men ["the host"], a sort of bodyguard, volunteers apparently, although they may have already had some organization. Whose hearts God had touched. The providence that had selected Saul for the throne had fitted these men to be his supporters.

27. *The children of Belial* ["certain worthless fellows"]. This is not a proper name, as it was supposed to be by the earlier translators. It is the Hebrew phrase for "good-for-nothings," and generally refers to the wicked. How shall this man save us? Huge as he was in body Saul had not yet taken great part in public affairs, and these grumblers, like enough, were the active politicians of the day. They despised him. By contemptuous words as well as by bringing him no presents ["present"], which was virtual rebellion. He held his peace. "He was as being deaf." He took no notice of the malcontents; not from scorn, but from prudence. He passed by the slight that he might win their allegiance. This disaffection may have spread widely. It was a not unnatural reaction from the enthusiasm of the assembly. But Saul knew God was with him, and waited his opportunity (which soon came) to unify all Israel.

ernment is effected in a peaceful manner, and not, as too usual in the East to this day, by a bloody revolution. It is not positively known who constituted this assembly, but probably only the representatives selected by the tribes, the so-called "elders of Israel" (1 Sam. 8. 4). Others think that all Israelites of twenty years of age and over, as well as adult foreigners, who had cast their lot with the people of God, had a voice on this and similar occasions (Num. 1. 3). Be that as it may, the assembly, or "congregation of the people," had great power, and is frequently mentioned in connection with important events in the story of Israel, especially in the selection of the leaders, as in the case of Joshua (Num. 27. 18, ff.), of David (2 Sam. 5. 1), of Solomon (1 Chron. 29. 22), and several other kings (see 1 Kings 12. 20; 2 Kings 11. 19, and often).

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Some critics see in this account of the meeting at Mizpeh an evident contradiction to the statement made in chapter 8, where Samuel protests against the selection of a king, and still more especially with the report given in 9. 1-16, and with the previous anointing mentioned in verses 9, 25 to 10. 8. "It is thoroughly inconceivable," says Thenius, "that Samuel should have first of all anointed Saul king by the instigation of God, and then have caused the lot to be cast, as it were, for the sake of further confirmation; for in that case either the prophet would have tempted God or he would have made him chargeable before the nation with an unworthy act of jugglery." Kell replies to this charge as follows: "Such an argument as this could only be used by critics who deny not only the inspiration of the prophets, but all influence on the part of the living God upon the free action of men, and cannot therefore render the truth of the biblical history at all doubtful. Even Ewald sees no discrepancy here, and observes in his history (vol. ii, page 32, German edition), 'If we bear in mind the ordinary use made of the sacred lot at that time, we shall find that there is nothing but the simple truth in the whole course of the narrative. The secret meeting of the seer with Saul was not sufficient to secure a complete and satisfactory recognition of him as king; it was also necessary that the Spirit of Jehovah should single him out publicly in a solemn assembly of the nation, and point him out as the man of Jehovah.'" The trouble with much of our modern criticism is that things did not happen exactly as our critics would have them happen had they been in control. I wonder if critics of our national history two or three thousand years hence will not try to prove that our Parliamentary Records of the first three months of the year 1903 are myths and bundles of contradiction! Some strange things, yet none the less true, were done in the last Legislature.

*Ye have this day rejected your God.* Samuel, the true servant of God, once more makes prominent their ingratitude and disloyalty. Though personally grieved and sick at heart, he loses sight of himself and his own rejection, and openly charges them with their disloyalty to King Jehovah, who all along their history had done the very things for which they now demand a human king. Had not Jehovah delivered them from greater perils than were now confronting them? Had he not broken the yoke of Pharaoh, the greatest monarch of his age? Had he not led them through untold distress and constant perils through forty years of

wilderness life? And had he not made their little army victorious over the united forces of Canaan? O, how apt we are to forget God's past mercies! Just like Israel. Instead of remembering the glorious story of the exodus, the conquest of Canaan, as well as the numberless deliverances under the judges, they seem to forget them all. How often have we also forgotten God's goodness to us, and have wickedly turned away from him, that we might carry on some schemes and plans for which we dared not even ask his help! How often do we do so simply that we might be like the wicked around us! There are many ways in which we may reject God. We always reject God when we do that which we *know* to be wrong, or what may be just as bad, when we engage in things which we *do not know* to be right. After all, the source of most sin is selfishness. All selfishness manifests itself by lack of faith in God. It is an awful thing to reject God, and yet this can be done without a public declaration of our apostasy from Jehovah, for "he that is not with me is against me." The saddest thing about the whole matter is that we are more apt to forget God in the hour of prosperity than in adversity. How many there are who once had time to attend to their religious duties, but who, owing to their success in business or in social life, have turned their backs on God!

*The tribe of Benjamin was taken.* The selection was probably by lot. This method of procedure was common among all the nations of antiquity, no less than in Israel. Achan was detected by lot (Josh. 7. 14); the land was divided between the tribes by lot (Josh. 14. 2); the order of the priestly services was determined in the same manner (1 Chron. 24. 5); and even in New Testament times we read of casting lots (Luke 1. 9; John 19. 24; Acts 1. 26). Whatever method was followed the sacred writer would have us believe, as he himself did, that it was done under the immediate guidance of Jehovah. And why not? If miracles were possible then, there is nothing improbable about the whole subject. We may not expect to have divine guidance in that way at present, any more than we may expect miraculous intervention in our behalf. Nevertheless, God does still guide and direct all those who put their trust in him. The taking of Benjamin must have been very unexpected and unwelcome, for at this time, owing to the fearful war on account of the Gibeah affair, Benjamin had been well-nigh exterminated (see Judg. 20). The selection of Saul was no accident. There are no accidents in God's plans. How often God

works in ways apparently unimportant, but which, nevertheless, are fraught with significance! So here. A farmer in Benjamin loses his asses; his son is sent in search of them. Samuel and Saul meet. The seer somehow knows that the future king of Israel is before him. So in our own day. What seems a trifling event often changes the course of many a life, and even the destiny of a nation. The accidental dropping into a little country church on a cold winter night, a chance word, or an item in a newspaper—these and similar things have produced great results, and have given the world a Spurgeon, a Simpson, a Foster, a Livingstone, a Lincoln, and a host of other royal men kingly than Saul and mightier than Napoleon. Many of God's noblest men have come from very obscure places.

*Behold, he hath hid himself.* Truly great men are always modest, and as a rule dislike the public gaze. They love to keep themselves in the background. Wise men never seek additional responsibilities; yea, good men may shrink with terror from increased duties. Moses did so, so did Jeremiah, and so has many a holy man since their time. Jonah fled to Tarsish and Gregory of Nazianzum into the wilderness. But let a man be filled with the Spirit of God, and convinced that the great King needs and requires his services, and he, like Moses, Jeremiah, Jonah, and Gregory, will go on in the strength of the Lord, and dare and do. Let us not mistake modesty for indolence, cowardice, and love of ease. There are to-day many men of great natural power who are hiding among the stuff of popularity instead of helping God make the world better. But, after all, Saul had some excuse, for he doubtless knew that he was selected to carry on a work for God which could have been done better in another way. He was, at best, but the second choice of heaven, for had the people in selecting him not rejected God? "Even though his mind was not a spiritual mind, there was something frightful in the very idea of a man stepping, so to speak, into God's place."—*Blaiik.*

*Whose hearts God had touched.* God had a work for Saul, work which the new king, without assistance from other men, could not well perform, so God touched the hearts of many. So to-day, weary toiler in the vineyard of the Master, discouraged worker in some reform, be sure that when the Lord has great work for you to do he will surely touch the hearts of many to sympathize with you and to help you. Our Saviour had his disciples to help, and who later carried on the work. Martin Luther had

a faithful band of followers, both nobles and peasants. John Wesley had his "Holy Club" of learned men, no less than his valiant local preachers. So in more modern reforms Wendell Phillips, Garrison, Gladstone and others did not have to stand alone. But better stand alone than fail to do one's duty. No Christian need stand alone, for he can always hear the beautiful promise, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." Whenever anyone refuses to help in any good work, however unpleasant the task may be, he may well ask, "Has God touched my heart?"

*Sons of Belial said, How shall this man save us?* Belial is not a proper name; the phrase "sons of Belial" simply means "trifling, worthless men," the vulgar crowd without principles. Every community has them. They are not only moral zeros, but positive hindrances in the way of all moral progress. Have we not some in our churches and Sunday schools? And how many there are who openly say, "How can joining the church save us? We need no salvation; we are living up to the best light we have. We need no atoning blood or washing of regeneration to save us. We are willing to accept Jesus as our teacher." But when it comes to salvation they also ask, "How can this man save us?" The great question for each one of us to-day is, Have we faith in the atoning blood of Jesus Christ? If not, how do we differ from the sons of Belial? The sin of sin is unbelief, the rejection of the King of kings.

*He held his peace.* A great and a good man in the execution of his duties can be silent under many insults, can possess his soul in patience, can, like Saul, bide his time. The foreign enemy will soon come; then Saul will unite all Israel, and by his prowess will justify the divine selection.

### Prismatic Lights on the Lesson.

#### SAUL ANOINTED KING.

The character of God appears in that when he was rejected from being king he wisely chose the best possible man for his place. So the character of Samuel appears in that when he was rejected he was willing to aid in anointing another.

Besides being tall, strong, and trained in a strenuous life, Saul was susceptible of divine inspiration (verse 10), a capital quality for a king. Will he keep it?

The warning is repeated (verse 19). Yet they are called together to see that the Lord gives the king by the lot that he directs.

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Five hundred years of theocracy were passed. Now begin five hundred years of monarchy. It begins in willfulness, distrust of God, and a desire to be like other nations.

In spite of their rejecting God as king, in spite of the reiterated warnings, they still wished to be semireligious. They allowed God to choose the king, and asked him to tell where he was when hid (verse 22).

To guard as far as possible from the perils of an absolute monarchy Samuel wrote a constitution and laws to bring the king to right doing, and laid it up before the Lord (verse 25).

The king was chosen from the least and almost extinct tribe of Benjamin, that the strong tribes might not be jealous of each other, and to start the king as a humble man (verse 21).

To inaugurate the reign under best auspices God touched the hearts of a host to accept him as king and go with him (verse 26).

"Saul was as one deaf" (verse 27), to the sons of worthlessness who scoffed at him. Certainly he began prudently.

He began with a brilliant military victory (chap. 11. 1-11), and with sublime executive clemency (11. 13).

There could have been no better beginning. All good beginnings do not insure good endings.

### Thoughts for Young People.

#### GOD'S RELATION TO HIS PEOPLE.

1. *God talks with his people.* "There stands on the table beside me a primrose which three months ago was adorned with fair white blossoms, with plenty of buds half open and others ready to follow. But the promise which these gave was never fulfilled. As the already open blossoms faded away, those which should have succeeded all died in the bud, and the leaves began to wither and shrivel up. I wondered, what was the cause, till one day, emptying a little water which had run through into the saucer beneath, I found a worm in it which had evidently been preying on the plant. This having been removed, the question arose as to whether the spoiled plant, with the leaves gone from one side and no signs of any possible blossoms to come, should be kept or not. I kept it, marred as it was, and tended it day by day, giving just so much water as was needed, placing it in the light though not in the hot sun. And now a sweet odor is rising up from some shoots, which are lifting their heads, and the delicate, creamy buds are just beginning to appear again." Just so God did not leave Is-

rael uncared for. There was a prophet among the people. And his holy example as well as his faithful words were as light in the darkness, as springs in the drought; and, long and helpless as the time must have seemed, at the end of it tiny buds of repentance began to appear, promising the fair blossoms of restoration and peace and gladness. As in Samuel's day God spoke to his people through the medium of his own appointed prophet, so God speaks to us today through his written word.

2. *God cares for his people.* God has, in every age, shown a peculiar interest in, and care over, his people, delivering them from enemies and guiding them in their way. He is ever present at the gatherings of his people, so that every meeting of his Church is before the Lord. God's interest in his people has not been because of their worthiness, but in spite of their faithlessness toward him. Even when his people have shown themselves unworthy, God still cares for them and adapts his plans to their imperfections.

3. *God cares for us one by one.* Men of science say that atoms of matter do not actually touch each other; that in a globule of water or a bit of granite the particles are distinct and separate, only *seeming* to be in one mass. So in the world, each individual stands alone before the eyes of God, as though the only person in the world. God sometimes permits his people to follow their own ways, that by experience they may learn to submit the more willingly to his counsel.

### Teaching Hints for Intermediate Classes.

#### NOTE.

The proper time to begin to prepare for Review Sunday is on the first Sunday of the quarter. In connection with the study of the very first lesson of the series the teacher should give the pupils a word or words, which will be used in the review for the purpose of recalling the principal facts and truths of the lesson study. (See below.) In addition to the review words the pupils should preserve in their Lives the title, the Golden Text, and the application made and printed in connection with each lesson. A very few minutes should be spent on each Sunday in recalling these things that have been written. For teachers and pupils who follow some such plan as this review day has lost its terrors.

#### SURROUNDINGS.

*Time.* Shortly after last lesson.

*Places.* Mizpeh: Read up on the history of

this place and explain the meaning of the word as it is now used in our religious life. Gibeah: Saul's home.

#### APPROACH.

Ask: What have you written in your Lives as the result of reading the text between to-day's lesson and that for last Sunday? Have several read what they have written. Let the others comment upon what is read, and if necessary correct it, but in every case commend what has been well done.

Ask: Who is the chief ruler in our country? How was he chosen for his office? Talk about the appointment of the Governor-General but spend only enough time to get the pupils thoroughly interested, and then quickly transfer that interest to the

#### UNFOLDED TEXT,

which may be viewed profitably in a series of pictures, which the teacher will make real to the pupils in the ratio that they are real to himself.

1. *A Servant of God.* Picture Samuel, now about seventy years old, standing before the people who honored him, faithfully delivering Jehovah's message to those who were really rejecting the God who had done such wonderful things for them and through them.

2. *A King Chosen.* Here is an excellent place for picture painting, but the teacher should resist the temptation to spend over-much time on it as he pictures the representative of each tribe coming forward "before the oracle and receiving the answer *yes* or *no*," until the least of all the tribes, Benjamin, is chosen. Then follow the representatives of the families, until that of the Matrites, the least known of all, is chosen. Then follow the households until that of Kish, a small farmer, is chosen, and of his sons Saul, now about forty years old, is the choice. (To understand that this was not a matter of chance, see 1 Sam. 9. 15-17.)

3. *A Modest Man.* Picture the search for Saul, the use of the Urim and Thummim (Exod. 28. 30; Num. 27. 21), and the finding of the newly chosen king, who in his modesty or in his awe had hidden himself among the baggage. Look at him, see his size as Samuel points him out, and hear the people as they say, "God save the king." Then follows the writing of the law of the kingdom, the dispersing of the people, and Saul's return to Gibeah.

4. *Sons of Belial.* Describe who they were, what they said, and what they refused to do. This picture is comparatively unimportant.

#### LESSON.

Ask: Why are men chosen for political positions to-day? Discuss this question as freely as time will permit, and then ask: Why was Saul chosen king? Many answers will be given. Use them all to lead up to something like this: God wished him to be king because, considering all the circumstances, he was the one best fitted for the throne. Finally, ask: Whom does God choose to-day for important places in his kingdom? Again many and varied answers will be given. Sift them all in order to formulate something like this: *God chooses for his important work those who are the most willing and the best prepared to do it.* Have each pupil write this sentence on a slip of paper, and then ask them to print on the same paper the following:

## LORD, HELP ME TO BE READY FOR THY CHOICE

WHEN IT IS REVEALED.

Ask all to carefully copy into their Lives what is written on their slip.

#### STUDY IN ADVANCE.

Ask all to read the Scripture text between to-day's lesson and that for next Sunday in order to be able to write in their Lives a short account of "The Campaign against the Ammonites."

Review words, "God's Choice."

#### PREVIEW.

- Lesson I. My Master.
- Lesson II. God's Choice.
- Lesson III. Heart Service.
- Lesson IV. Obedience.
- Lesson V. Heart.
- Lesson VI. Giants.
- Lesson VII. Jealousy.
- Lesson VIII. Friend.
- Lesson IX. Overcome Self.
- Lesson X. God's Way.
- Lesson XI. King.
- Lesson XII. Total Abstinence.

#### By Way of Illustration.

*Verses 17-19. God's Faithfulness.* The lesson that most forcibly recurs to us in the study of the history of the Jewish people is God's faithfulness even to the unfaithful, his changelessness even to those who were constantly changing. Many are the strata of human his-

tory, and in all cases of slow and faded reasonableness is a new era of righteousness and stability its porous rock, but for the future and fidelity God stands

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tory, and they lie like the strata of the earth in all conceivable positions, showing the results of slow deposits of opinion, age-long accretion of custom, with fossils of fashion and prejudice and fad that once had life. While it is now reasonably firm beneath our feet, and civilization is but slightly shaken by smoking volcanoes of anarchy and earthquakes of war, we have learned that even civilized society has its Lisbon earthquakes, and that many an ager-silent Vesuvius at unexpected intervals suffers a new eruption. Our confidence in the stability of human institutions is our confidence in righteousness, even as our confidence in the stability of the earth beneath our feet is not in its porous and brittle and perishable stratified rock, but in its underlying granite. Our hope for the future is in the granite of God's veracity and fidelity. Whatever fails, the foundation of God standeth sure.—*William E. Barton.*

*The Request Granted.* That God hearkened to their petition does not show that he approved of it, but is only an instance of where he "gave them their request but sent leanness into their souls." It not infrequently happens that God treats his wilful children in this way. Wise earthly parents sometimes do this. Ruskin says he well remembers how he was taught obedience. He was a little child, and one night when the steaming tea-urn was brought in he cried for it. His mother told him it would burn him. Still he cried for it, and his mother said to the maid, "Bring it to him and let him hold it." The result was that he was badly burned, but he learned that his mother's word was safe to follow.

*Verses 21, 22.* Humility marked the young Saul, and humility is not a characteristic of young life. It usually takes a good many hard knocks to beat youthful self-conceit out of a man, and he will be sure to get his share of these; for things in this world are ordered so that modesty and humility, like lowly shrubs, escape the lightning which strikes the high cedars. It is time enough to boast when we are putting off the armor, and few of us have much inclination to do so then. But when we are putting it on, and have made no proof of our prowess, the less we think of ourselves the better. We may well recall the saying of that Cambridge scholar, "Gentlemen, none of us, not even the youngest, is infallible."

*Verse 23.* Because a man looks to be head and shoulders above other men it doesn't follow that he is really better than the average of men. Goliath was twice the man that David was in outward show, but he wasn't half the man

that David was in reality. It may be muscle that gives a man the seeming advantage; it may be an attractive face or figure; it may be money; it may be family connections; it may be official station; whatever it is, it is, after all, nothing more than a pedestal—the real man must be measured and tested apart from it. But the worst of it is that we commonly take in the man's pedestal as a part of his own stature; and then when finally he is off from that pedestal, we find how woefully deceived we were! "Man looketh on the outward appearance," and misjudges accordingly. We must learn to see the difference between a man and his pedestal.

### Heart Talks on the Lesson.

Never did a young man have richer possibilities or brighter prospects. If only he had not missed his way! Had he chosen God as God chose him, we would not say,

"Saul the mistake, Saul the failure,  
Saul the ruin that he seemed to be."

"There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof is death."

In our introduction to him we see, what we are slow to learn, that God uses the most ordinary affairs in life in working out his plans for us. Nothing is unnoticed by the All-seeing eye. Unconscious of its significance, we plan a journey; we meet a friend; we move to a new residence; we begin a new business; or we pass days without note or change of any kind. But all events, whether we call them great or small, have relation to our personal character and the fulfillment of that which our heavenly Father designs for us. We are not orphans. We have a Father who cares for us. This lifts our life out of the commonplace. Everything we do is worth our asking his direction and blessing. Jesus taught no new truth when he said, "Not a sparrow falleth to the ground without your Father, and ye are of more value than many sparrows." We can but wish to please One who is interested in the smallest matter that concerns us.

Saul's father's asses strayed away and he was sent to find them. For three days he searched without success, but the search brought him to Samuel. His servant proposed to consult the seer as to where the asses might be found. Should God care about such a matter? Was it right to ask him? Neither Saul nor his servant had any question about it. They believed it the surest and quickest way to get what they were looking for. "In all thy

ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy steps." "In everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God." "Casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you." In bringing to God this that immediately concerned him Saul discovered God's wider plans for him. The loss of the asses, a most ordinary occurrence, was the first step in the gain of a kingdom. The day before, "the Lord had told Samuel in his ear" that Saul was to be king, and as soon as he saw him the Lord said, "Behold the man whom I spoke to thee of." It is blessed to have an ear trained to know the voice of God. Samuel's ear had been so trained ever since he was a child. It was happy for Saul to find one like Samuel to advise him and show him the will of God. At first he was docile, willing to be guided; his soul was stirred that day that he spent alone with him. Never before had he been so near to God. Never had he seen as then the responsibility and the possibilities of his life. If only he had lived afterward in the light of that hour!

Has there come such a vision to you, when the Spirit has shown you the responsibility and the possibilities of your own life? Be true to the vision. The history of Israel's first king, that "choice and goodly young man," is full of instruction. Study it carefully. It sets forth the eternal principles upon which rests the kingdom of God. Those principles must be the foundation and the pillars of character if we would possess that kingdom.

### The Teachers' Meeting.

In studying this lesson note that Saul had already been designated as king, but not in public. Why was he told privately first?... The advantages resultant upon the public choice of the king.... The advantage of the choice by lot. The radical difference between the ancient choice by lot and the modern lottery—one is an appeal to God for guidance, the other a desire to get one's neighbor's property without paying for it. Study God's reminder that he had brought Israel out of Egypt and out of the hands of all kingdoms. What is the intimation here?... Who had been the only lawgiver and king of Israel?... We must note that though God did not choose to have a king he insisted for the good of the people in choosing the king.... In what sense did the Israelites really reject God by their insistence on a king?... A study of Saul's character in these early days: His hiding himself among the baggage; his reticence and

quiet determination to assume all responsibilities when the time came.... How this lesson shows the insufficiency of worldly wisdom.

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### SERMONS ON THE LESSON.

Verse 22.—Banks, L. A., *Great Sinners of the Bible*, page 257. Verse 24.—*The Homiletic Review*, vol. xii, page 506. Verse 26.—Holmes, J. M., *Sermons*, page 131. Banks, L. A., *Christ Dream*, page 102.

### Blackboard.



God is merciful to us even in our stubbornness and folly. When we have set our hearts, even in disobedience, upon a certain course he

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directs our choice in his own infinite wisdom, that we may not bring ruin and contempt upon ourselves. The Israelites wanted a king. They were warned by Samuel of the inevitable consequences, and reminded also of the will of God, their heavenly king, but, desiring to imitate the custom of heathen neighbors, they still persisted in their demand. Then the Lord himself chose from among their number a man with

every prospect of future success, limited only by his loyalty to God and compliance with his statutes. Although accepting the divine appointment, they had betrayed a spirit of rebellion and ingratitude that proved the precursor of national calamities, which loving obedience to their God would have averted.

*Coloring.*—Illustration, cream, etc.; phrases, white with blue and yellow with violet.

### LESSON III. Samuel's Farewell Address.

[July 19.]

**GOLDEN TEXT.** Only fear the Lord, and serve him in truth with all your heart.  
1 Sam. 12, 24.

**AUTHORIZED VERSION.**

[Study also verses 1-12. Read 1 Sam. chapters 11, 12.]

1 Sam. 12. 13-25. [*Commit to memory verses 23-25.*]

13 Now therefore behold the king whom ye have chosen, and whom ye have desired! and, behold, the LORD hath set a king over you.

14 If ye will fear the LORD, and serve him, and obey his voice, and not rebel against the commandment of the LORD, then shall both ye and also the king that reigneth over you continue following the LORD your God:

15 But if ye will not obey the voice of the LORD, but rebel against the commandment of the LORD, then shall the hand of the LORD be against you, as it was against your fathers.

16 Now therefore stand and see this great thing, which the LORD will do before your eyes.

17 *Is it not wheat harvest to-day? I will call unto the LORD, and he shall send thunder and rain; that ye may perceive and see that your wickedness is great, which ye have done in the sight of the LORD, in asking you a king.*

18 So Sam'u-el called unto the LORD; and the LORD sent thunder and rain that day: and all the people greatly feared the LORD and Sam'u-el.

19 And all the people said unto Sam'u-el, Pray for thy servants unto the LORD thy God, that we die not: for we have added unto all our sins *this* evil, to ask us a king.

20 And Sam'u-el said unto the people, Fear not: ye have done all this wickedness: yet turn not aside from following the LORD, but serve the LORD with all your heart;

21 And turn ye not aside: *for then should ye go after vain things, which cannot profit nor deliver; for they are vain.*

22 For the LORD will not forsake his people for his great name's sake: because it hath pleased the LORD to make you his people.

23 Moreover as for me, God forbid that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to pray for you: but I will teach you the good and the right way:

**REVISED VERSION.\***

13 Now therefore behold the king whom ye have chosen, and whom ye have asked for: and, behold, Jehovah hath set a king over you. 14 If ye will fear Jehovah, and serve him, and hearken unto his voice, and not rebel against the commandment of Jehovah, and both ye and also the king that reigneth over you be followers of Jehovah your God, *well*: 15 but if ye will not hearken unto the voice of Jehovah, but rebel against the commandment of Jehovah, then shall the hand of Jehovah be against you, as it was against your fathers. 16 Now therefore stand still and see this great thing, which Jehovah will do before your eyes. 17 Is it not wheat harvest to-day? I will call unto Jehovah, that he may send thunder and rain; and ye shall know and see that your wickedness is great, which ye have done in the sight of Jehovah, in asking you a king. 18 So Samuel called unto Jehovah; and Jehovah sent thunder and rain that day: and all the people greatly feared Jehovah and Samuel.

19 And all the people said unto Samuel, Pray for thy servants unto Jehovah thy God, that we die not: for we have added unto all our sins *this* evil, to ask us a king. 20 And Samuel said unto the people, Fear not: ye have indeed done all this evil; yet turn not aside from following Jehovah, but serve Jehovah with all your heart: 21 and turn ye not aside: *for then would ye go after vain things which cannot profit nor deliver, for they are vain.* 22 For Jehovah will not forsake his people for his great name's sake, because it hath pleased Jehovah to make you a people unto himself. 23 Moreover as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against Jehovah in ceasing to pray for you: but I will instruct you in the good and the right way. 24 Only fear Jehovah, and serve him in truth

\*The Revised Version, copyright 1901, by Thomas Nelson & Sons.

24 Only fear the LORD, and serve him in truth with all your heart: for consider how great things he hath done for you.

25 But if ye shall still do wickedly, ye shall be consumed, both ye and your king.

**Time.**—Uncertain; according to Usher's chronology about 1095 B. C. **Place.**—Gilgal in the Jordan valley.

#### Home Readings.

- M. The upright judge. 1 Sam. 12. 1-12.  
 Tu. Samuel's farewell address. 1 Sam. 12. 13-25.  
 W. "Good and evil." Deut. 30. 10-20.  
 Th. Joshua's exhortation. Josh. 24. 14-25.  
 F. Folly of disobedience. Psa. 81. 8-16.  
 S. Promises. Lev. 26. 1-13.  
 S. Fidelity in service. Acts 20. 17-27.

#### Lesson Hymns.

*New Canadian Hymnal*, No. 210.

Guide me, O thou great Jehovah,  
 Pilgrim through this barren land;  
 I am weak, but thou art mighty;  
 Hold me with thy powerful hand.

*New Canadian Hymnal*, No. 224.

My faith looks up to thee,  
 Thou Lamb of Calvary,  
 Saviour divine;  
 Now hear me while I pray.

*New Canadian Hymnal*, No. 219.

More love to thee, O Christ,  
 More love to thee;  
 Hear thou the prayer I make  
 On bended knee.

#### Questions for Senior Scholars.

1. *The Faithfulness of the Lord* (v. 1-12).—Over whom had Saul won a victory? At what place did Samuel "renew the kingdom"? What contrast does he draw between himself and the king in verse 2? What challenge does he make in verse 3? What response did the people of Israel make? In what books of the Bible may we find "the righteous acts of Jehovah" which Samuel reviews? What divinely accredited deliverers of the nation does Samuel first mention? What was the besetting sin of Israel? What four great deliverers among the judges does Samuel mention? [In place of Bedan the Septuagint and Syriac give Barak.] What is implied in all this concerning God's faithfulness?

2. *The Terms of the Lord* (v. 13-19).—In what sense had Israel chosen their king? In what sense had Jehovah been judge over the nation? What was to be the result of their reverent and obedient service? What was to be

with all your heart; for consider how great things he hath done for you. 25 But if ye shall still do wickedly, ye shall be consumed, both ye and your king.

the result of their rebellion against God's commands? Do similar results follow similar causes to-day? If so, why are they not generally recognized? What sign of God's authority did Samuel offer to give? What was the effect on the people when the sign came? What did they ask Samuel?

3. *The Requirements of the Lord* (v. 20-25).—What three requirements of the Lord does Samuel here specify? Why was it evil for Israel to ask for a king? What "vain things which cannot profit nor deliver" had Israel gone after? What "vain things which cannot profit nor deliver" are modern people tempted to go after? What peculiar reason is given in verse 22 for Jehovah's tender mercy? Why is it a sin not to pray for others? What is the duty of those who know the good and the right way? What reason have we as well as Israel for serving Jehovah with all our hearts? What is the inevitable result of continued wickedness?

#### Questions for Intermediate Scholars.

1. *The Way of Life and the Way of Death* (v. 13-15).—What occasion brought the Israelites together? Who had chosen the king? What requirements did Samuel make of the people? What would come upon them if they failed in duty to Jehovah? What events in their history are referred to?

2. *An Impressive Miracle* (v. 16-19).—What season of the year was it? What unusual event happened? Why did the storm come? What effect did it have upon the people?

3. *The Mercies of the Lord Proclaimed* (v. 20-25).—What assurance did Samuel give? Against what sin did he warn the people? What did he promise to do for them? Upon what conditions was prosperity assured? What would result if they should do wickedly?

#### Questions for Younger Scholars.

Who tried to make slaves of Israel? What did Saul do? How did the people feel about it? Where did Samuel call all Israel to meet? Why? Was Saul among them? What offerings did they make? *Peace offerings*. What was done to Saul? How was a man made king? *The high priest anointed his head with oil*. What did Samuel then do? What did he say of Saul? "*The king walketh before you.*" What of himself? "*I am old and grayheaded.*" What did he

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bid them do? What sign did he have from the Lord? Was it in the time of rain? *No.* What did the people do? Were they afraid? *Yes.* What did Samuel say to them?

#### A Review in Six Questions.

1. What did Samuel in his farewell address urge the people to do? *To fear and serve the Lord.*
2. What did the Lord do in answer to Samuel's prayer? *He sent thunder and rain.*
3. What was the effect of this upon the people?

*They feared the Lord and Samuel.* 4. What did Samuel promise to do for the people? *To pray for them.* 5. What did he promise to teach them? *The good and the right way.* 6. What is our GOLDEN TEXT? *"Only fear," etc.*

#### The Church Catechism.

33. What is regeneration? Regeneration is that work of the Holy Spirit, wherein we are made new creatures in Christ Jesus, being renewed in the image and likeness of God.

### THE LESSON OUTLINE.

#### The Wisdom of Otherworldliness.

#### I. THE UNTRUSTWORTHINESS OF WORLDLY RICHES.

*Stand still, that I may reason with you before the Lord.* v. 7.

They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare. 1 Tim. 6. 9.

Riches certainly make themselves wings; they fly away as an eagle. Prov. 23. 5.

#### II. THE DECEITFULNESS OF WORLDLY PLEASURES.

*Ye dwelled safe; but if ye will not obey the voice of the Lord, then shall the hand of the Lord be against you.* v. 11, 15.

I will prove thee with mirth; therefore enjoy pleasure: and, behold, this also is vanity. Eccles. 2. 1.

I gathered me silver and gold, I withheld not my heart from any joy, and all was

vanity and vexation of spirit. Eccles. 2. 8, 10, 11.

#### III. THE INSUFFICIENCY OF WORLDLY WISDOM.

*Ye said unto me, Nay; but a king shall reign over us: when the Lord your God was your king.* v. 12.

I gave my heart to know wisdom: I perceived that this also is vexation of spirit. Eccles. 1. 17.

Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? 1 Cor. 1. 20.

#### IV. THE WISDOM OF OTHERWORLDLINESS.

*The Lord will not forsake his people.* v. 22.

He endured, as seeing Him who is invisible. Heb. 11. 27.

God giveth to a man that is good in his sight wisdom, and knowledge, and joy. Eccles. 2. 26.

### EXPLANATORY NOTES.

King Saul seized his earliest opportunity, and splendidly justified God's choice. His relief of Jabesh was a great military exploit, and his magnanimity toward those who opposed him won all hearts. In the hour of enthusiasm Samuel gathered the people together in Gilgal near Jericho, a place whose ancient associations (Josh. 5, 2, 10) had made it sacred. There he formally installed Saul as king, probably by a second anointing and by coronation. And now Samuel made his farewell address. By God's permission he had bowed to the popular will, and, against his own judgment, had "made a king." In pathetic contrast with the triumphant vigor of the young king he says, "I am old and gray-headed." "My sons are with you," he adds, to be treated, if found guilty, as the king and the people deem proper. From childhood Samuel had lived "a life of pitiless publicity; he now challenges the people, "before the Lord and before his anointed," to witness whether he had ever done any public or private wrong. The popular answer was a conspicuous vindication of Samuel's moral character. He calls upon Jehovah and upon "Jehovah's anointed" to be witnesses of the people's attestation of the "white flower of his blameless life;" and, having vindicated himself, he solemnly arraigns them for their unfaithfulness to Jehovah in spite of his wonderful loving-kindness to them. It was Jehovah who had advanced Moses and Aaron, and brought the "fathers" out of Egypt; it was Jehovah who, when Israel rejected him, had left them in the power of Habor, of the Philistines, and of Moab; it was Jehovah who had raised Gideon and Bedan (Barak?) and Jephthah and Samuel to deliver them out of the hand of enemies on every side. Surely Jehovah's justice and mercy merited their continued confidence in their invisible king. But when they had apprehended invasion of their territory by Nahash of Ammon they had forgotten Jehovah and demanded a king like those of the surrounding nations. At this point in Samuel's address our lesson begins. He strives to impress upon the people that, although a dangerous step has been taken, Jehovah must still be absolute monarch.

**Verse 13.** Now therefore behold the king whom ye have chosen, and whom ye have desired ["asked for"]. The Hebrew language lends itself to puns. Here is an interesting play on Saul's name, which means "Asked," and in verses 17 and 19 it is repeated. With a goodly countenance and great stature, and in the great glory of his triumph over Nahash, the king stood before them as their own chosen one, their hearts' desire. With a second *behold* Samuel calls attention to the other and higher source from which the king derived his authority. He was Jehovah's selection; Jehovah had set him over them.

**14, 15.** *If ye will fear the Lord* ["Jehovah"], and serve him, and obey ["hearken unto"] his voice, and not rebel. The second clause of this verse has been slightly altered by the translators so as to complete the verse grammatically, but without very clear sense. The Revision, following the Hebrew more closely, makes the second clause an expansion of the first, dependent, like it, upon the *If* with which the verse begins, and then, to complete the sense, the Revision adds the word "well." According to Hebrew idioms the result of loyalty to Jehovah was left to the imagination of the hearers. *But if ye will not obey* ["hearken unto"] the voice of the Lord ["Jehovah"], but rebel. . . then shall the hand of the Lord ["Jehovah"] be against you, as it was against your fathers. Not in enmity, nor in petulance, but because Purity must always stand "against" moral wrongdoing. These two verses contain in substance "the burden of all law and prophecy."

**16-19.** The Revision inserts "still" after *stand*. The question *Is it not wheat harvest today?* means, "Is it not a day characteristic of this time of the year?" As we might ask "Is it not a wintry day?" The harvest in Palestine was almost as preclusive of thunderstorms as the Fourth of July with us would be of snow. This holy man, "subject to like passions as we are," "prayed earnestly," and the Lord ["Jehovah"] sent thunder and rain that day. All this, to impress deeply upon the hearts of the people the sense of their great wickedness in asking for a king. Our pupils should be made to understand that, of course, there was no wickedness involved in any Hebrew patriot coming to the conclusion that a monarchy was a form of government preferable to that under which he lived, nor in such a man framing his prayers in harmony with that conclusion. Neither Samuel nor the elders held it to be morally wrong to desire a king, provided only the supreme sovereignty of Jehovah was acknowledged and the

king was regarded as Jehovah's vicergerent. But the people of Israel had swept aside the ideas of the theocracy; they were tired of God's rule. What they wanted was not a king under God, but another king than God, a king like the nations round about. The immediate result of the unseasonable thunder and rain was great awe and terror on the part of the people. They greatly feared the Lord ["Jehovah"] and Samuel. As is often the case with sinners, terror led to penitence, and the people asked Samuel to pray for them.

**20.** *Fear not.* God's constant reassurance to the penitent. Sin confessed and repented of need cause no fear. There is yet hope if they turn not aside from following the Lord ["Jehovah"], but serve the Lord ["Jehovah"] with all their heart.

**21.** *The vain things, which cannot profit nor deliver,* were idols.

**22.** *The great name's sake* which was the adequate reason for Jehovah's refusal to forsake his people, in spite of their sins, is really the consistency of God's character. It would have been inconsistent with his holy attributes to forsake them.

**23.** Modest as Samuel is, he now recognizes the great personal hold he has on these people. They need human as well as divine help, and no man can now help them so well as he. He is retiring from the public duties of judge, and as prophet he may not be so conspicuous in the future as in the past. But he exclaims, *God forbid that* ["Far be it from me that"] *I should sin against the Lord* ["Jehovah"] *in ceasing to pray for you.* Not only so, but, *I will teach you* ["I will instruct you in"] *the good and the right way.* From the retirement in Ramah there shall still be issued from time to time words of warning and encouragement as needed. This assurance brought hope to all hearts.

**24, 25.** Here is a repetition, in language slightly varied, of the solemn statements of verses 14, 15. By a consideration of God's wonderful providence in the past the people are exhorted to serve Jehovah heartily and sincerely, and the lesson closes with the solemn warning repeated, a warning that applies to both *ye and your king.*

The lessons of this passage are very practical and personally concern both teacher and scholar. They are morally fundamental—what Paul would call the milk of the word. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die;" but "There is mercy with the Lord that he may be feared." Let us press these truths home to our own hearts and to the hearts of our scholars.

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## HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

Our lesson to-day is taken from Samuel's farewell address, which should be read in its entirety and carefully studied by every teacher and scholar. Samuel was now an old man, ready to transfer the reins of government into other hands, apparently without a murmur or complaint. This speech of Samuel has many points of resemblance with Joshua's farewell words to the tribes at Shechem. The period of the judges closes and that of the monarchy is about to open.

In spite of Israel's backsliding the nation is not forsaken by Jehovah, but is led on to greater achievements and victories. The address is easily analyzed. Notwithstanding the ingratitude of the people and their rejection of Samuel, he challenges them to adduce a sufficient reason for the change about to be made. Indeed, his conduct throughout the years has been above reproach.

God had also been true to all his promises, and nothing but shortsightedness and ingratitude could account for the new order of government. The nation's prosperity in the future under a king, as in the past under the judges, is conditioned upon their loyalty to Jehovah. The fact that they have a visible king does in no way release them from their obligations to Jehovah. In case, however, they are faithful and loyal to him and serve him with all their hearts they will be prospered, but failure to obey him will be followed by disaster and misery. Samuel concludes by promising, though having given up the office of judge, to continue to teach and warn them.

*The Lord hath set a king over you.* There is no real contradiction between this and the statement in the first lesson of this month, where we read that the children of Israel had rejected Jehovah. (See Notes on that lesson.) The editor of the books of Samuel, no doubt, used several documents in compiling this history. In condensing the reports some passages have been left dark and difficult to understand, yet the difficulties and apparent contradictions are far fewer than many of the critics make out. The three reports regarding the selection of Saul as king are perfectly credible. He is first anointed privately by Samuel (1 Sam. 10. 1), then elected by lot publicly at Mizpeh (10. 17, ff.), and finally, some time later, proclaimed king at Gilgal (11. 14, 15).

*If ye will not . . . then shall the hand of the Lord be against you.* Jehovah had consented to the election of Saul. Even though a people may be ungrateful, God does not for-

sake them utterly, but by his Spirit, word, and faithful servants continues to warn and persuade, and manifests his fatherly interest. A change of government excuses no one in Israel or anywhere else from right living. Men's duties to God are the same under all systems of government, be it monarchy or republic, be it Provincial or Imperial. The laws of God are unchangeable; we cannot violate them without paying the penalty. Rebellion against God will necessarily bring ruin in its train, now as in the days of Samuel. Transgression of God's law brings the hand of the Lord inevitably against the transgressor. No nation had this truth impressed upon it more than ancient Israel. Their entire history is replete with proofs of this proposition. Defeat after defeat, from Moses down to the Babylonian captivity, was attributed by the sacred writers to defection from Jehovah and his holy law. Israel suffered much from the nations around them, but more from their own wickedness. What they needed was not so much a change of government as a change of heart. This is a lesson that nations no less than individuals still need to learn. "It is often necessary to remind even Christian people of the great truth that no change of outward circumstances can ever bring with it a relaxation of moral duty, or make that lawful for us which, in its own nature, is wrong. Nothing of moral quality can be right for us on shipboard which is wrong for us on dry land."—*Blaikie*. How many there are who think because they do not belong to the church, or have not made an open profession of religion, that they are exempted from the law of God? Or how many professing Christians, who seem to think that our religious obligations are not the same during summer vacation as at other times. Right is right at all times and in all places: so wrong is wrong everywhere and every day.

*So Samuel called unto the Lord.* What a grand old man Samuel was? Though rejected by the people, he turns to the source of all comfort, and in the strength thereby gained he warns the people and pours out his heart for them before the Lord. No vengeance, no jealousy, no acrimony nor pique in his great soul. It should encourage weak humanity everywhere to see that such a man as Samuel could live so close to God, though beset with so many difficulties. Bless the Lord that such lofty souls have been found and are still numerous in the various callings of life. Some one has well said that the following inscription on General Gordon's tomb in St. Paul's Cathedral, London,

might have been with equal justice the epitaph of the judge and prophet Samuel: "Major General Gordon, who at all times, everywhere, gave his strength to the weak, his substance to the poor, his sympathy to the suffering, his heart to God." Samuel had a reputation as being mighty in prayer. So much that his supplications on behalf of others are often mentioned in holy writ (see 1 Sam. 7. 5; 8. 6; 15. 11; Psa. 99. 6; Jer. 15. 1). "The prayers of a righteous man availeth much." How blessed to be able, like Samuel, to challenge those who know us best, to testify against us, if guilty of having betrayed any trust reposed in us, or of having failed to perform our duties in a righteous manner.

*Fear not, serve the Lord with all your heart.* Samuel having most faithfully portrayed the disastrous consequences of disobedience, and having warned the people, now as a true prophet of God turns around to comfort them. The people have been made to realize fully their precarious condition, not however before the thunder and lightning had, as it were, most terribly testified against them and had stamped the truth of the prophet's message. So in our day, God has to frighten us quite often into right living. The average human heart needs the thunders of Sinai no less than the sunshine of God's love. Only the few are permitted to be carried to the skies on flowery beds of ease. When the people fear, Samuel comforts and tells them, "Fear not." Yea, more, they are requested to fear God and serve him with all their heart. Whoever fears God and keeps his commandments has no occasion to fear. Love casteth out fear. Samuel, like all wise men, never rebukes without pointing out a better way, a way of escape from sin and its consequences. After the cloud the sunshine, after flood the rainbow, after the dreary darkness a glorious vision of God's face, radiant with love and grace. But let us not forget that repentance and right doing must precede joy and peace in the Holy Ghost. God cannot forsake the penitent righteous any more than he can accept the rebellious wicked.

*The Lord will not forsake his people.* This is as true to-day as ever. But, alas! are there not some in our midst to-day who used to have communion with God, but whose love has grown cold, and who have forsaken God. There is no danger of God forsaking his people, but our care should ever be, "Take heed lest ye fall."

*For his great name's sake.* God has a name, a reputation. He is good to his people, powerful to vanquish every enemy, mighty to deliver

all his saints. He is true, is faithful, is just, and gracious. Even the heathen nations around have heard of his almighty power and everlasting love to the Israelites. To forsake them now would be in a sense to dishonor himself. Moses makes use of this same argument (Exod. 32. 12); so does Joshua (Josh. 7. 9). We meet the same thought often in the Psalms and other portions of the Scriptures (1'sa. 23. 3; 25. 11; 79. 9, and often).

### Prismatic Lights on the Lesson.

#### SAMUEL'S FAREWELL ADDRESS.

Washington followed Samuel's example, and, able as the address was, with far less point. Notwithstanding the people's rejection of God, it shall be well if they henceforth obey (verse 14). He calls God to witness by giving thunder and rain in the dry season (verse 18). The people see their sin (verse 19). Then the exhortation to turn not aside from following the Lord goes on (verses 20-22). The service is to be with all the heart, and not to go after vain things, or "nothings," that is, idols.

No better farewell can be imagined. It reminds one of the promises and threatenings of Christ's farewell address.

Note well Samuel's sense of his duty to pray for others. It is a sin against God to neglect this (verse 23). It is a part of the Lord's Prayer. Christ spent his last hours praying for his disciples, and not for these alone, but for us, all them who shall believe on him through their word. He continues it now. He ever lives above for me to intercede. Paul follows his example and prays for the Ephesians and us (Eph. 3. 14-19).

We are commanded to pray for all men, especially for rulers and even enemies. This is what Samuel was left in the world for after he was deposed from the judgeship, and what we are left for after our salvation is secured.

Closing word: Fear the Lord; serve him in truth; do it with love, or all the heart, and consider how great things he hath done for you (verse 24).

No one can doubt that God inspired Samuel with such sentiments of love after he had been so dishonored by the people. The word Christ, and his spirit, were in the world long before the Christ was born.

### Thoughts for Young People.

#### ON VERSE 20.

It is the special and most perilous curse of sin that it obscures, or blots out altogether, or terribly distorts, the vision of God in our

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hearts; it gradually reduces us to that most desolate of all conditions, "having no hope and without God in the world."

1. Those who need friends most are those who have fallen most and are in the most sore condition; but even if man despises and finds no forgiveness for our faults, is there any hope that He in whose sight the very heavens are not clean—that he will pity us, and take us to his breast, and suffer us to live in the glory of his presence? Will he who is the Friend of the innocent be a Friend of the guilty too? God loathes our sins, but knowing that we are but dust, he loves our souls. He sent his Son to seek and save the lost. When that blessed Son had taken our nature upon him he lived with the aged and the withered, the homeless and the diseased, with the palsied and the demonic, with the ignorant and the blind.

2. Each new day is to you a new opportunity. Return to God and use it rightly, letting the time past of your life suffice you to have walked in the bad ways of sin and shame. The mistakes, the follies, the sins, the calamities, of the past may, if you use them rightly, be the pitying angels to guide you through the future. If you put off the present time for repentance, the convenient season may never come. As yet the door stands open before you; very soon it will be too late, and the door be shut. [Farrar.]

3. Though the temporal punishment may remain, it yet may be no sign that the sin is unforgiven. It is a difficulty in our way raised by ourselves. God takes us back though we are fallen. Let us serve him still, though the vigor of the old days is gone.

4. What an argument with us ought God's long-suffering to be! What peace is in the thought of forgiveness so large, so full, so free, as God has promised! Not friends, nor repose, nor confession, nor resolution avails anything without the very presence of God; but each of these things in him may work us weal, and he in them can bring us absolution and perfect peace. [Benson.]

#### Teaching Hints for Intermediate Classes.

##### SURROUNDINGS.

*Time.* Shortly after the last lesson. (See Time in Lesson I.)

*Place.* Gilgal, about five miles west of the Jordan.

*Ammonites.* Let several read from their Lives what they have written concerning the

Ammonites. Impress the fact that Saul's victory increased his popularity.

##### APPROACH.

Bring to the class a copy of Napoleon's Farewell Address to the army, and let a member of the class read it aloud. After commenting upon it and allowing the pupils to express their opinions concerning it tell them that we are to study to-day about a similar address.

##### UNFOLDED TEXT.

Unless the teacher has the lesson story well crystallized it will be very difficult to get and to keep the attention of the pupils. To help in this direction the following is suggested:

## SAMUEL'S STATEMENT. PRAYER. EXHORTATION. PROMISE.

1. *Samuel's Statement.* Have some one read aloud and very slowly verses 13 and 15 inclusive and verse 25 while the other pupils listen. Then ask each one to print in a very few words just what the verses mean. After several have read what they have printed, and comments have been made, have all print this:

OBEDY | DISOBEY

G O D

AND

PROSPER | SUFFER.

2. *Samuel's Prayer.* Have verses 16-19 inclusive read aloud, then ask and discuss these questions:

- (1) For what did Samuel pray?
- (2) Why did he ask for the miracle?
- (3) How was his prayer answered?
- (4) What was the effect upon the people?
- (5) What did they ask Samuel to do for them?

3. *Samuel's Exhortation.* Have another pupil read aloud verses 20, 21, 22, and 24, and ask the pupils to print the three things that Samuel exhorts the people to do. After they have read their answers and they have been commented upon have all correct what they have printed so that it will appear thus:

- (1) Fear not.
- (2) Turn not aside.
- (3) Serve the Lord.

4. *Samuel's Promise.* Ask the pupils to print the name of the two things that Samuel promised to do for the children, as follows:

(1) Pray for them.

(2) Teach them.

Note.—In most classes it will be most profitable to consider only the former part of the above division. It is better to fasten well one truth than to try to teach many things.

#### LESSON.

Have the Golden Text repeated by several. Explain what is meant by the word "fear," and get the pupils to tell you what they understand by "in truth" and "all your heart." Talk about real heart service; illustrate, and then have all print:

LORD, HELP ME TO RENDER

## HEART SERVICE

FOR THREE.

STUDY IN ADVANCE.

Ask the pupils to read the narrative between to-day's text and that for next Sunday, and to write in their Lives a short account of Saul's first disobedience, when he failed to wait for Samuel to offer sacrifice.

Review words, "Heart service."

### By Way of Illustration.

*Verse 18.* When God speaks through natural forces, in earthquake or famine or flood, men realize how helpless they are. In the recent famine in India there were men who said for the first time in their lives, "God is all-powerful. All things are from him; if he withholds the rain, we die." When there was a great earthquake in London in the time of Wesley men and women who before had felt all-sufficient called out to a God whose power they were glad to acknowledge. In times of trial God's people are brought to feel dependence. The psalmist says, "In my prosperity I said, I shall never be moved." We need to learn that all our springs are in Him.

*Verse 23.* *Intercessory Prayer.* Samuel speaks of a failure to pray for others as a sin against the Lord.

When Henry VIII was king of England William Tyndale wished to translate the Bible into English so that the English people could have God's word in their own tongue. The king and Church refused to allow it. There was not a spot in England where Tyndale was safe to carry out his project, so

he went to the Continent. Amid great difficulties he made his translation. He sent it over to England and the authorities burned it. He was betrayed, imprisoned, and at last burned to death. His dying words were a prayer of intercession: "O Lord, open the eyes of the king of England." That prayer was answered. In a little time Henry VIII saw the Bible in a new light. He even gave his royal sanction to the translation. The English translation which is in our hands to-day proclaims that the prayer of intercession prevails.

It is startling to turn to John's gospel and see there the place occupied by Christ's intercessory prayer.

Stephen prayed for the group of people who stood about him as he was being stoned to death, and lo! out of that group comes a young man, Paul, who gives his whole life to Christ.—*James K. McClure.*

*Verse 24.* *Dependableness.* "Surely the Captain may depend on me" may not be the best thing to say before others, but rightly meant it is a noble self-commitment. Dependable people!—their price is above rubies. There are Christians who need neither prodding nor watching: who can be told and then trusted.—*Maltbie D. Babcock.*

### Heart Talks on the Lesson.

There may be more people on earth now who are spiritually wise than there were in the days of Samuel, but I doubt if any one of them understands the mind of God more clearly than did he. The blessed Spirit was his teacher, and from a child he had been attentive to his teaching. He was therefore wise in spiritual things, as everyone may be whose habit of mind is to say, "Speak, Lord, thy servant heareth."

Samuel's sons were not good men. There is no sorrow equal to that in a father's heart. He probably learned something of the heart of God toward his self-willed, disobedient children through his experience with his own boys. How often he had reasoned with them as he reasoned now with the people! How often he had reminded them of the goodness of God, all he had given them and done for them! How grieved he had been when they were set upon their own way, and yet how anxious he always was to do the best he could for them when they were so blind to their own interests! How plainly he had seen that they must choose for themselves, and that he could only warn and advise them and never cease to pray for them! And how well he knew that any moment they would give up their wrongdoing he would forgive and for-

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get all! And so this Spirit-taught man read from his own human love the divine love. "Be quiet," he said to the people, "that I may reason with you before the Lord. Ever since Jacob came into Egypt God showed his care and love for your fathers. When they were in trouble he sent Moses and Aaron to deliver them. When they forgot God and fell into trouble again, as soon as they said, 'We have sinned and we are sorry,' he saved them from all their enemies. It is a story of love and forgiveness and guidance all the way. But you who know all this, and know what he has done for you, grieve him by choosing another king. But because he will do the best possible for you he says, 'You may try having your own way, and if only you will not utterly forsake my commandments I will still be your friend.'" When, under the conviction of Samuel's earnest words the people cried out, "Pray for us, for we have sinned," he said, "Fear not, for the Lord will not forsake his people for his great name's sake. You have been wicked and ungrateful, but do not doubt God's love. Do not turn from him in the vain hope of help anywhere else. Fear the Lord; serve him with a sincere heart; consider what he has done for you. But know that even while he loves you he cannot save you from the consequences of your sin if you persist in it." Did not Samuel give the Gospel message? His words recall the words of Jesus: "How oft would I have gathered you but ye would not!"

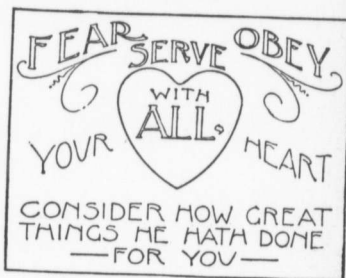
Let us be still while the Holy Spirit reasons with us before the Lord. Think what he has done for us; he gave his Son to die that we might live. He loves us, cares for us, protects us, saves us from evils that we see and many that we do not see. Faithful and true, never will he leave us or forsake us. How can we refuse to have this good and loving God to be the King of our heart, the Ruler of our life? How can we turn aside from following and serving him, going after vain things which cannot profit nor deliver?

#### The Teachers' Meeting.

An outline: 1. The Merciful Lord, verses 20, 24; 2. The Faithful Lord, verse 22; 3. The Destroying Lord, verse 25; 4. Following the Lord, verses 20, 21, 24; 5. Forsaking the Lord, verses 21, 25; 6. The Faithful Prophet of the Lord, verse 23.... Why the people feared: 1. Because of the unseasonable thunder and rain which the Lord sent in answer to Samuel's prayer. 2. Because of Sam-

uel's plain statement of their guilt, of which the thunder and rain were a divine indorsement. 3. Because of the summary of God's dealings with them which Samuel had just given (verses 6-15). 4. Because of the blameless character which they acknowledged Samuel had presented (verses 1-5). A godly life always excites fear in the heart of the ungodly.... Why the people should not fear: 1. Because God tells them not to, and God has given this injunction perhaps oftener than any other. 2. Because there is bright hope for them if they will not turn aside from the Lord. 3. Because if they serve him with all their heart they will serve him with love, and perfect love casteth out all fear.

#### Blackboard.



The parting words of the aged prophet manifest his unalterable loyalty to God, and his lasting love for those whom, he said, it had pleased the Lord to make his people. He saw Israel embarked upon their new self-chosen regime, and desired only that they should not forget or displease the One whose hand had led and prospered them in the past. His threefold injunction constitutes a sublime formula for Christian living, requiring neither addition nor definition. To fear, serve, and obey with all the heart was to love perfectly, and in so loving to keep the first great and comprehensive commandment of the law. O that we too, considering how great things he hath done for us, might be impelled to such devotion of heart and life.

Coloring.—Heart, pink; "All," white; words, cream and blue; lower text, orange.

#### Library References.

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SERMONS ON THE LESSON.

Verse 13.—*The Hamiletic Review*, vol. xxix, page 426. Verse 17.—Spurgeon, C. H., *Sermons*, vol. ii, page 232. Verse 20.—Farrar, F. W., *The Fall of Man*, page 284. Benson, E. W., *Boy Life*, page 227. Verse 23.—*The Treasury*, vol. vii, page 302. Verse 24.—Watkinson, *Noonday Addresses*, page 153.

LESSON IV. Saul Rejected as King.

[July 26.]

GOLDEN TEXT. To obey is better than sacrifice. 1 SAM. 15. 22.

AUTHORIZED VERSION.

[Study also verses 10-12, 24-31. Read 1 Sam. chapters 13-15.]

1 Sam. 15. 13-23. [Commit to memory verses 20-22.]

13 And Sam'u-el came to Saul: and Saul said unto him, Blessed be thou of the LORD: I have performed the commandment of the LORD.

14 And Sam'u-el 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 Am'a-lek-ites: 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.

16 Then Sam'u-el 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 Sam'u-el said, When thou wast little in thine own sight, wast thou not made the head of the tribes of Is'ra-el, and the LORD anointed thee king over Is'ra-el?

18 And the LORD sent thee on a journey, and said, Go and utterly destroy the sinners the Am'a-lek-ites, 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 Sam'u-el, Yea, I have obeyed the voice of the LORD, and have gone the way which the LORD sent me, and have brought A'gag the king of Am'a-lek, and have utterly destroyed the Am'a-lek-ites.

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 Gil'gal.

22 And Sam'u-el said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.

REVISED VERSION.\*

13 And Samuel came to Saul: and Saul said unto him, Blessed be thou of Jehovah: I have performed the commandment of Jehovah. 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: for the people spared the best of the sheep and of the oxen, to sacrifice unto Jehovah thy God; and the rest we have utterly destroyed. 16 Then Samuel said unto Saul, Stay, and I will tell thee what Jehovah hath said to me this night. And he said unto him, Say on.

17 And Samuel said, Though thou wast little in thine own sight, wast thou not made the head of the tribes of Israel? And Jehovah anointed thee king over Israel; 18 and Jehovah 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 Jehovah, but didst fly upon the spoil, and didst that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah? 20 And Saul said unto Samuel, Yea, I have obeyed the voice of Jehovah, and have gone the way which Jehovah 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 devoted things, to sacrifice unto Jehovah thy God in Gilgal. 22 And Samuel said, Hath Jehovah as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of Jehovah? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. 23 For rebellion

\* The Revised Version, copyright 1901, by Thomas Nelson & Sons.

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.

is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as idolatry and teraphim. Because thou hast rejected the word of Jehovah, he hath also rejected thee from being king.

**Time.**—Uncertain; according to Usher's chronology about 1079 B. C. **Place.**—Gilgal in the Jordan valley.

**3. Rejection** (v. 22, 23).—What is the true test of love and loyalty? How does our Lord define worship of God? What is better than sacrifice?

#### Home Readings.

- M.* Samuel's command. 1 Sam. 15. 1-12.  
*Tu.* Saul Rejected as King. 1 Sam. 15. 13-23.  
*W.* Saul's bitterness. 1 Sam. 15. 24-31.  
*Th.* Previous disobedience. 1 Sam. 13. 5-14.  
*F.* Amalek condemned. Exod. 17. 8-16.  
*S.* Acceptable service. Prov. 21. 1-8.  
*S.* Better than sacrifice. Mic. 6. 1-8.

#### Questions for Intermediate Scholars.

**1. Saul's Disobedience** (v. 13-19).—Why did Samuel go to Saul? What claim did Saul make? What question did Samuel ask? What message had Samuel for Saul? What had Saul been charged to do? In what respect had he failed?

**2. Saul's Excuse** (v. 20, 21).—What did Saul say he had done? Who had been brought as a captive? How did he explain the saving of cattle?

**3. What God Requires** (v. 22, 23).—What is always pleasing to God? Why is sacrifice pleasing to him at any time? What two sins are mentioned as especially offensive? How did the sin of Saul seem in comparison with those sins? Why was Saul rejected from the kingdom?

#### Lesson Hymns.

*New Canadian Hymnal*, No. 214.

Oh, hear my cry, be gracious now to me!  
 Come, Great Deliverer, come!  
 My soul, bowed down, is longing now for thee,  
 Come, Great Deliverer, come!

*New Canadian Hymnal*, No. 217.

What a Friend we have in Jesus,  
 All our sins and griefs to bear!  
 What a privilege to carry  
 Everything to God in prayer!

*New Canadian Hymnal*, No. 222.

Gently, Lord, oh, gently lead us  
 Through this lonely vale of tears;  
 Through the changes thou'st decreed us,  
 Till our last great change appears.

#### Questions for Younger Scholars.

What was Saul at first? What did he grow to be? What is our own wisdom often? *Foolishness.* What was Saul in battle? Were his people proud of this? *Yes.* Why was it wrong for him to offer sacrifices? *Only the priests had a right to do it.* Was it also wrong to take the flocks of the enemy? *Yes.* How did Samuel talk to Saul? What noble thing did he say? **GOLDEN TEXT.** What terrible sentence was passed on Saul? What did Saul say? What did he want Samuel to do? Was Samuel ready to do it? *Not at first.* What did he see in the heart of Saul? *A will that was not fixed to serve God wholly.* Do you know any hearts like Saul's?

#### Questions for Senior Scholars.

**1. Rebellion** (v. 13-19).—Was Saul's reign warlike or peaceful? What was the secular effect of his reign? For what had he been anointed of the Lord? What was his first recorded act of disobedience? What rash vow did he make? What was the essence of his present sin? Had Jehovah before this threatened to destroy the Amalekite? Can God change his mind? What is meant by his "repentance"? Where was this Carmel? On what ground had Samuel still a voice in public affairs? What was the essence of Saul's sin? What effect had his disobedience on the character of the entire war? How did this physically brave man show moral cowardice?

**2. Stubbornness** (v. 20, 21).—Why did not Saul confess his wrongdoing? Who was responsible for the people's disobedience? Who had made Saul king? For what purpose? Would such sacrifice as the people were about to make be acceptable to Jehovah?

#### A Review in Five Questions.

**1.** Whither did Jehovah send Saul? *To destroy the Amalekites.* **2.** How did Saul disobey? *He saved the best of the spoil.* **3.** What excuse did Saul make for this act? *That they were for a sacrifice.* **4.** What lesson did Samuel then teach him? **GOLDEN TEXT:** "To obey," etc. **5.** What judgment was then pronounced against him? *"Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being king."*

## The Church Catechism.

34. How are believers assured of their sonship? Believers are assured of their sonship by the witness of the Spirit, direct and indirect.

1 John 3. 24. And he that keepeth his com-

mandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.

Romans 8. 16. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.

## THE LESSON OUTLINE.

## Sin and Obedience.

## I. THE SINFULNESS OF SIN.

*Evil in the sight of the Lord.* v. 19.

He that committeth sin is of the devil.

1 John 3. 8.

Sin becomes exceeding sinful. Rom. 7. 13.

## II. THE DECEITFULNESS OF SIN.

*Yea, I have obeyed the voice of the Lord.*

v. 20.

Be sure your sin will find you out. Num.

32. 23.

Sin, taking occasion by the commandment,

deceived me, and by it slew me. Rom.

7. 8.

O foolish people and unwise, is not He thy

father that hath bought thee? Deut.

32. 6.

## III. THE CONSEQUENCES OF SIN.

*Because thou hast rejected the word of the*

*Lord, he hath rejected thee.* v. 23.

The wages of sin is death. Rom. 6. 23.

He that sinneth against me wrongeth his

own soul. Prov. 8. 36.

## IV. THE GIST OF VIRTUE.

*To obey is better than sacrifice.* GOLDEN

TEXT.

To love him with all the heart is more

than all whole burnt offerings and sacrific-

ices. Mark 12. 33.

What doth the Lord require of thee, but

to do justly, and to love mercy, and to

walk humbly with thy God. Mic. 6. 8.

## EXPLANATORY NOTES.

With the end of Samuel's farewell address began the reign of Saul. Most of twenty years must be counted as the interval of history between the last lesson and this—years full of the trials which came to Saul as king in a time when enemies were upon every hand, and full of temptations which finally caused his ruin. To attempt to detail the story would take more than our space. At last Saul committed one overt act of disobedience to God, and Samuel in his extreme old age was sent forth to meet him as he came from Carmel to Gilgal. There occurred the scene which our lesson records. In verse 11 God says, "It repenteth [grieves] me that I have set up Saul to be king." This does not teach that God is subject, like men, to changes of mood or opinion, though, of course, God's conduct toward men, being conditional, must change. Verse 29 should be read carefully. All divine emotions are grounded in immutable righteousness. "The emotion of indignation or grief or pity is as godlike as the emotion of love." Much as Samuel had disapproved of Saul's course, he could not bear to have him and his dynasty rejected, "and he cried unto the Lord all night." In this lesson we have a portraiture of fidelity of the highest type, which weeps for its friend, yet obeys God. Here is infidelity equally pronounced—disobeying God and striving to deceive its friend.

**Verse 13.** *Blessed be thou of the Lord* ["Jehovah"]. A friendly salutation frequently used (Gen. 14. 19; 24. 31; Ruth 3. 10; 2 Sam. 2. 5). Saul "betrays his uneasiness at seeing the prophet thus seeking him out," and would conciliate him with kindly speeches. *I have performed the commandment of the Lord* ["Jehovah"]. In truth he had utterly neglected the commandment of the Lord, except in attacking Amalek.

**14.** *What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?* They could mean nothing but Saul's disobedience.

**15.** *They have brought them from the Amalekites.* Like Adam in Eden and Aaron at Sinai,

he tries to shift the blame to others, forgetful that "a king who heeded the voice of his army in such a matter showed that he was not their leader, but their tool and their slave." But Saul had an argument ready to justify the people also. They had *spared the best of the sheep and of the oxen*, for no selfish purpose, but to *sacrifice unto the Lord* ["Jehovah"] *thy God, and the rest*, Saul adds, *we have utterly destroyed* [Margin, "devoted"]. In so far as the people had obeyed God Saul unites himself with them. His excuse was thoroughly hypocritical (though perhaps not consciously so); for the "devoted" thing could not be offered in sacrifice to the Lord, because it was his already. But all the possessions of the Amalekites had been



devoted. Read verse 3 of this chapter. The worst vice possible to a religious man lies in "making the service of God an excuse for acts of selfishness." But it may have been Saul's intention to follow up his splendid victory by a splendid sacrificial service to Jehovah (all planned in a thoroughly pagan spirit), for throughout his public career he showed punctiliousness in the externals of religion. (See 1 Sam. 13. 12; 14. 18, 34, 35, 44; 15. 31.)

**16.** *Stay, and I will tell thee what the Lord ["Jehovah"] hath said to me this night.* Saul's excuses cannot hide the facts from God.

**17.** When ["though"] *thou wast little in thine own sight, wast thou not made the head of the tribes of Israel?* The Margin, which gives the present tense, is better. The allusion is to Saul's own modest words. 1 Sam. 9. 21. *The Lord ["Jehovah"] anointed thee king over Israel.* Saul's exaltation, then, was due to Jehovah, who was himself the invisible king of Israel, and whose vicegerent Saul was chosen to be.

**18.** *The Lord ["Jehovah"] sent thee on a journey.* See verses 1, 2. *Utterly destroy the sinners the Amalekites.* Sin, then, was the reason for the fate of this tribe. "Verse 2 shows that a prominent element in this sin was their savage opposition to Israel, and it seems probable that there is more in that than we have the means of knowing." We have only glimpses of the bestiality of the life of the early inhabitants of Palestine, but enough has come down to us to justify the conviction that they were beyond redemption physically as well as morally, and that the world's welfare demanded their extirpation.

**19.** *Wherefore then didst thou not obey the voice of the Lord ["Jehovah"].* Partial obedience is disobedience. *Fly upon the spoil.* Samuel's vision is clear and his words are well chosen. He declares, what Saul well knows, that the war had been turned to selfish ends. Instead of holy zeal for the Lord's cause had come greed for other people's possessions.

**20, 21.** *Yea, I have obeyed the voice of the Lord ["Jehovah"].* Saul's powers of resistance were majestic, but used for evil ends. He specified: 1. He had listened to divine direction; 2. had followed it; 3. had brought home in triumph the captured king of Amalek; and

4. had destroyed the nation. For the only divergence from the Lord's command *the people only were to blame*, in taking of the chief of the ["devoted"] *things which should have been utterly destroyed* for purposes of sacrifice.

**22, 23.** To such an inane argument Samuel can listen no longer. He bursts into a strain of lofty rhythmical eloquence, one of the most noble of all the prophetic strains, at once poetic, oratoric, and axiomatically true. "His words were taken up by his successors, and the closely allied passage (Hos. 6. 6) was prominent in the teaching of Jesus, Matt. 9. 13; 12. 7. The enlightened scribe (Mark 12. 33) applied these words and won our Lord's approbation." They are the gist of all prophetic teaching—that inward and spiritual grace is needed to make the outward and visible sign effective. (Compare Isa. 1. 11-15; Jer. 6. 20; Amos 5. 21-24; Mic. 6. 6-8; Psa. 40. 6-8; 51. 16, 17.) For the Lord the American Revision substitutes "Jehovah." The Mosaic law condemned to death the dealer in witchcraft (Exod. 22. 18; Lev. 19. 26, 31; Deut. 18. 10), but the practice of divination and necromancy was widespread, and to suppress them Saul had addressed himself with characteristic energy (1 Sam. 28. 3). Now, after having preached to others, he had himself become a castaway. "Deliberate opposition to God's will is as truly apostasy from him as is dependence on evil spirits." Instead of *iniquity and idolatry* the American Revision reads "idolatry and teraphim." Teraphim were the household images of the Israelites, relics of ancient Chaldean idolatry used from a distant and dim ancestry even by those who worshiped Jehovah. Perhaps they were fetiches or charms rather than gods; they were made in human form. *Stubbornness*, obstinate resistance, Samuel declares to be essentially idolatry, "the elevation of self-will into a god." Because Saul had *rejected* Jehovah's word he is now *rejected from being king*. (See 1 Sam. 13. 13, 14.)

All of this prophetic utterance must soon have come to the knowledge of the people, who would thereupon expect a change of dynasty after Saul's death; but not one word is recorded from Samuel that would justify Saul's deposition. David scrupulously avoided any attack on "the anointed of the Lord."

### HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

*The people spared.* Here we have the same old refrain, the same old story: "The woman thou gavest me." How natural, how cowardly to shift the blame? The people, not I. What

hypocrisy? What did an autocrat like Saul care for the wishes of the people? The subjects of an oriental monarch do very little that is contrary to his will. A man like Saul, who was

cruel enough to threaten the life of his own faithful Jonathan, would pay but little attention to the clamors of his soldiers. As a matter of fact, Saul usually ruled with a rod of iron. (See 1 Sam. 14, 24, 34, 40.) How much does this language of Saul sound like that of many modern politicians?

*They have spared . . . to sacrifice unto the Lord thy God.* This is plausible language, yet insincere. It is dangerously easy to fall into such habits of thinking and speaking. The most dangerous man in any institution or community is he who, while seeking his own selfish purposes, yet is trying to persuade himself and others that he is doing it all for the glory of God. No sacrifice can be pleasing to God which involves the breaking of the moral law or which is contrary to the letter or spirit of the Sermon on the Mount. To disobey is bad, but to pretend that we do so in order to please God is devilish. The command was to destroy the cattle, not to save even the best of them for sacrifice. The hypocrisy of Saul becomes still more apparent when we remember that though the animals were sacrificed to Jehovah most of the meat would be eaten by the people, for the sacrifices offered would be, in the very nature of things, peace or thank offerings. For the law regarding these, see Exod. 29, 20-28 and Lev. 7, 11-21. The fact that you or I should give a tenth of all we make to the Lord will not justify us in oppressing our neighbor or in taking undue advantage of our competitors in business. The endowing of a library, a chair in some college or university, or the building of a church will not condone the sin of oppressing the laboring man or of crushing our less fortunate competitors.

Then again, Saul knew very well that whatever had been put under the ban of extermination belonged, according to the law, unconditionally to Jehovah (Lev. 27, 29; Deut. 13, 16). What was already Jehovah's could not be taken by Saul or anyone else. What has been given once to the Lord is his and cannot be given the second time. It is an awful thing to try to cover up our greed and meanness under the cloak of religion. Growth in grace has no greater enemy than hypocrisy.

*Go and utterly destroy the sinners, the Amalekites.* The Amalekites were probably a roving, wandering tribe, very fierce in their nature, an old and bitter enemy of Israel whom they attacked at Rephidim (Exod. 17, 8, ff.), in the Negeb (Num. 14, 45), and elsewhere (Judg. 7, 12). They never lost an opportunity to injure Israel. Even Moses had commanded their

extermination. Samuel simply repeats the command of Moses. For us, under the Christian dispensation, it is difficult to understand a command apparently so cruel. This is a subject we would fain pass over in silence were it not that it meets us time and again in the Old Testament. We are often asked by unbelievers if God can issue such commands, or if we can conceive of Jehovah as being a party to such a relentless course? Our first answer to all such is that we must consider the case not from the glorious heights of Christian civilization in the twentieth century of our era, but rather from the wider standpoint of the age of Moses and Samuel when the religious world was nearer its infancy. All those who believe in God at all, believe that he is the Lord of nature and of nature's laws. But are the laws of nature any less harsh or relentless than the laws of God as revealed in the Bible? Nature speaks in thundering tones: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." If I violate a natural law, who will blame nature for the consequent suffering? Nay, more, who does not know that in the complex nature of things, though we cannot explain it or see its justice, the innocent constantly suffers. Nature, no less than revelation, teaches most clearly that the sins of the fathers are visited upon the children to the third and fourth generation. What means the vast army of innocent little sufferers in the slums of our cities and elsewhere who have entailed so loathsome a heritage? Untold millions of sufferers to-day pay the penalty, imposed by nature, for the sins of others. Why should an innocent babe have all the germs of a transmitted disease? Would it not be preferable to die the death of an Amalekite child at the hand of an angry Hebrew soldier in the days of Samuel than to exist as many children do now? Answer these questions if you can; till then do not criticize too severely the reputed doings of God in gray antiquity. Sin is sin. Now, as in Samuel's days, its wages is death. This applies no less to nations than to individuals. The Amalekites, we may well conclude, were steeped in sin, in the last stages of degeneracy, "a festering mass of putridity," a source of corruption to all around them, no longer fit to live. What could God do with them? Indeed, what can he do with a person who utterly disregards his voice and warnings? God is just no less than merciful. He is too wise to err, and too full of love to punish unnecessarily. Let us therefore not cry, Peace, peace, where there is no peace, or impugn God's goodness at the expense of his righteousness. W. S. Bruce, speak-

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ing of God's treatment of the Canaanites, says: "Jehovah was loathe to remove these offenders from the earth, and gave them ample time for repentance. . . . Such a value does he set on righteousness and holiness, that he will maintain them at any cost. And when evil has reached its climax he will prove himself severe and relentless in his swift destruction of it, sweeping away effete and corrupt tribes to make way for purer and stronger races. The God of the Old Testament is the God of to-day, who by the milder methods of civilization is exterminating races that have fallen below hope of national redemption."

*To obey is better than sacrifice.* This doctrine is the burden of prophetic utterances to a formal Church. Outward form and ceremony are necessary: without them solid progress is impossible. Ceremonies alone, without purity of heart, powerless. Whoever will obey God will not be deficient in sacrifice. Perfect submission to God will always be accompanied with sacrifice, abundant and continuous. Sacrifice in matters of religion is always important and necessary. Whoever does not sacrifice anything at all for the sake of God and his fellow-men has not reached a high degree of perfection.

*He hath also rejected thee.* This is an awful sentence. God cannot accept the selfish service of an insincere heart. God, however, rejects us only after we have rejected him. We love him because he first loved us. So, also, he rejects us because we first rejected him. Saul cannot rule over Israel, because he will not allow Jehovah to rule over him. So, to-day, we cannot help God redeem mankind if we do not allow him to redeem us. Disobedience on our part necessarily results in our rejection by God. The question is a simple one: Is Saul or Jehovah to rule? If Jehovah, Saul must obey. So in our life. The question resolves itself to this: Am I willing to submit my will to the will of God? "There are just two alternatives for thee, O sinner, who are not making God's will the rule of thy life. Repent, believe, and be forgiven; continue to sin, disobey, and be lost forever."—*Blaikie*.

Saul's downward course was gradual. It was not one disobedient act, but a series of transgressions. It was insubordination to the King of kings. It was his pride, his selfishness. He so indulged himself as to become impervious to all good influences. It is an awful thing to form the habit of trifling with any sin. Woe be to the man that knows not how to obey God. The poet has well said:

"We are not worse at once. The course of evil

Begins so slowly, and from such slight source,  
An infant's hand might stem its breach with  
clay.

But let the stream get deeper, and philosophy—

Ay, and religion too—shall strive in vain  
To turn the headlong current."

### Prismatic Lights on the Lesson.

#### SAUL UN-KINGED.

Fifteen years have passed since the good beginning of Saul's reign. Samuel yet lives. Saul is commanded of God to utterly destroy certain people and their possessions. He disobeyed; played the hypocrite and deliberately lied (verse 13). Therefore he was rejected from being king (verse 23).

It is evident that to a large extent Saul was endowed with the same power Samuel had enjoyed, namely, immediate inspiration from God to fit him for his office. This he had obeyed on several occasions, to the great advantage of the kingdom. Saul was among the prophets, not only before his public recognition but after.

It would seem that a man who had been so honored and exalted would be true to the God who lifted him up. Doubtless he meant to be. But he began with little sins and making excuses for them. Nothing so blunts the conscience as to make it approve what it should condemn. He made the mistake of putting his own judgment of what was necessary against positive commands. Man's judgment is made up from observation within a narrow horizon; God's from infinity. Obedience, ever so little, is better than sacrifices, ever so much.

Under the stern rebuke of Samuel and the threatened punishment Saul made a sham repentance (verse 25). He wanted honor before the elders rather than before God (verse 30).

How much better for Israel to have had Samuel for judge than Saul for king!

Though Saul was rejected, his removal from kingship did not come at once—perhaps for fifteen years. But the dark shadow of fatal Gilboa was in the last word of the previous lesson: "Ye shall be consumed in battle, both you and your king."

### Thoughts for Young People.

#### OBEEDIENCE.

1. *All obedience belongs primarily to God.* The one Fountain of all good must be the single center of all service. Thus far obedience is an instinct. The creature owes it to its Creator, the preserved to the Preserver, the family to the one great Parent of us all.

2. *The question is not whether we will obey God.* God is far too strong and absolute a God for that. Every creature which he has ever made shall and will obey him. The question is only how we obey, and when. Shall it be a violent compulsion, or a voluntary act of filial devotion? The true motive, the essence, of obedience God tells us when he says, "Love is the fulfilling of the law." "If ye love Me, keep My commandments." To love is to obey, and the measure of the obedience is the degree of the affection. That affection is generated only by close contact with the Lord Jesus Christ.

3. *Obedience does not consist in isolated acts;* it is an atmosphere, it is a necessity, it is the breathing of a new existence, and it is the beginning of immortality.

4. *There is no happiness like the happiness of obedience.* Adam was made to rule. The fall has altered it, and now every man's dignity and every man's joy is in service. Man never fulfills his destiny but when he obeys. Therefore, in his great mercy, God has so placed every one of us, from the greatest to the least, that we have some one over us whom we have to obey. "To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." [Vaughan.]

### Teaching Hints for Intermediate Classes.

#### SURROUNDINGS.

Time. 1079 B. C. (?)

Place. Gilgal. See last lesson.

#### APPROACH.

Ask the pupils to read aloud what they have written concerning Saul's disobedience. Be prepared to explain clearly but very concisely how Saul had changed in character and the causes for the change.

A Christian worker who had wonderful influence in the development of a part of the kingdom of Christ not only lost that influence but became an outcast from society. How? By falling suddenly from his high position into the gutter? No, but by going down step by step, very slowly at first, but very rapidly toward the end. Why did he fall? *He was selfish.* His selfishness led him to disobey God, and his disobedience resulted in the loss of the power which he had once possessed. When God let go, the man's own selfish nature drove him to his ruin. With some such illustration as this let the teacher attract the pupils, and then let her say: We are going to study the record of a man who once had great power and lost it.

#### UNFOLDED TEXT.

In order to get and to give a clear understanding of our lesson text, the teacher will be obliged to consider not it alone, but also much that precedes it. This may be crystallized around three pictures, as follows:

## SAUL SINNING. REBUKED. EXCUSING HIMSELF.

1. *Saul Sinning.* In order that the pupils may correct or verify what they have written in their Lives, have one of them read aloud 1 Sam. 10. 8. Explain that this command was given in order to emphasize the fact that Saul was dependent on the Lord. Have another pupil read aloud 1 Sam. 13. 8, 9, and show that Saul in making this offering disobeyed the command of God given by Samuel. Have a third pupil read aloud 1 Sam. 13. 13, 14. Explain that Saul had *distrusted* and *disobeyed* the Lord, and that we are going to learn how he became *deceitful* in his attempt to cover up his sin.

2. *Saul Rebuked.* Picture Samuel spending the whole night in tears (verse 11), his going forth to deliver God's unwelcome message, his meeting Saul, and the latter's hypocrisy in his manner and in the words with which he greets the aged servant of the Lord.

Have a pupil read aloud Samuel's question (verse 14) and another Saul's answer (verse 15), and explain the meaning of these two verses.

Then picture Samuel reminding Saul of what the latter had been, of what God had made him, and of what God had commanded him to do. When the pupils have these things clearly in mind have some one read aloud verse 19.

3. *Saul Excusing Himself.* It will be best for the teacher to study very carefully the Scripture narrative and the NOTES in order to be able to show the pupils just what verses 20 and 21 mean and to explain in what Saul's deceit and hypocrisy consisted.

Samuel's reply as recorded in verses 22 and 23 shows just what Saul's sin was and the result thereof:

1. He had rejected the word of the Lord.
2. This rejection led him to disobey the voice of the Lord.
3. This led him into rebellion and stubbornness against the Lord.
4. The result was that God had rejected him.

#### LESSON.

The essence of the lesson story is in the Golden Text. Have several repeat it. Ques-

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tion upon it and illustrate it until all understand its meaning. Finally ask all to honestly pray and then to print in their Lives this prayer:

LORD, HELP ME TO YIELD  
**OBEEDIENCE**  
 TO THEE IN ALL THINGS.

STUDY IN ADVANCE.

Ask the pupils to write in their Lives a short account of the family of David.

Review word, "Obedience."

By Way of Illustration.

*Verses 13, 15, 20.* *Partial obedience* is entire disobedience. There is no more common delusion than to soothe ourselves by the notion that we have done our duties when we have done a percentage of them. We manage to ignore the unobeyed balance of the commandments and to think ourselves very good kind of people. But the unobeyed precepts are like the missing stones in an arch, for the want of which the whole tumbles into ruin.

*Verses 15.* "*The people.*" It is hard to admit that we are wrong. How easy to say, "The woman, the serpent, my temperament, my circumstances!" Few things more surely reveal our self-love and pride than this instinctive, automatic excuse-making. We thoroughly understand the lawyer who asked the question, "And who is my neighbor?" wishing "to justify himself." There is little hope for our growth in virtue unless we make up our minds frankly to admit the truth about ourselves. No man can afford to play ostrich. To acknowledge our sins is to have spiritual victory. When we pull up a weed we leave a clean place for a flower.

*Verses 22.* "*To obey is better than sacrifice.*" Love is at the basis of true obedience, and love has more than a cash value. A mother would rather have her son lovingly obedient to her than to have him devote a large share of his spending-money to attractive presents for her while continuing in disobedience to her loving requests of him. Any true wife would rather have her husband's love than a fair share of his income. The loving spirit which prompts to obedience will prompt also to gifts; but if one must choose between gifts without love, and love without gifts, the true heart will say that love is better than gifts, obedience is better than sacrifice.—*Joseph Parker.*

*Verses 23.* *Alienating power of sin.* Sin brings separation from God. The word "de-

part" uttered to the workers of iniquity is not an arbitrary one. It voices a law of God that runs through all his social realm. Sin pushes the prodigal away from his home, his friends, his property, his pleasures, his character, even his clothes and food. The law of the word "depart" has driven him away from everything that was beautiful and of good report. Behold him in his rags and loneliness feeding swine. The man who yields himself to sin is pushed away from God by a changeless law of moral repulsion. Is it hopeless? Yes, so long as his back is turned toward God. But let him "come to himself," feel his sin, and long for his Father's face, and the law of changeless love takes hold of him. The law of divine attraction draws him to God and goodness.—*Maltbie D. Babcock.*

Heart Talks on the Lesson.

Chosen, yet rejected! Is God thus fickle? Does he change his mind or his purpose toward men? Never. "He is not a man that he should repent." "I am the Lord; I change not." He abides forever true to principles of righteousness, justice, mercy, and love; and while the human will moves in that orbit with God, his purposes and promises are fulfilled surely as the courses of the stars in the heavens. But when the human will breaks away from the divine will it is like a wandering star, in outer darkness.

There are many Sauls. Chosen of God they are, to sit upon thrones, in the intellectual, moral, social, and religious world. Every one of them is chosen to be a joint heir with Christ in the glory of his coming kingdom. Saul was not more distinctly called to honor in Israel than you are called to a high place as a child of God, to possess his best gifts on earth and in heaven. Nothing will change his purpose or thwart his plan for you except you make the mistakes that Saul made. There was a day when he had a vision of what God would have him be and do. Had he been obedient to that vision, as was Saul of Tarsus, the promise of his choice and godly youth would have been fulfilled. But his "change of heart" was superficial. It did not reach his inmost self. Pride, self-sufficiency, self-will, remained. Saul, not God, was still Saul's king, and in his eyes Israel's king. He could not bear prosperity because his character had not a rock foundation, and the pressure of the world was too heavy for it. In his first success and popularity he acknowledged God. He said, "The glory does not belong to me; the Lord hath wrought salva-

tion in Israel." But when he had been two years king he blew the trumpet throughout the land that Saul had routed the Philistines, without a word about the help of God. His impatient, self-sufficient spirit could not wait for God's way, so he took in his own hands the burnt offering, contrary to the express command. He was always outwardly religious, but his heart was never true, and Samuel faithfully warned him that for that reason he could not keep the kingdom. But what are warnings to a young man sure of his own power and "bound to succeed" by the force of his own will? On he went, with his magnificent endowments and possibilities, on, not to success but to saddest failure; farther away from God, depending upon his own strength, impairing his moral sense until he persuaded himself he was obeying the voice of the Lord when he was going directly in opposition to his commands. Faithfully Samuel continued to warn him. How he loved him, and tried to shew him the evil of his ways! But he had to give him up at last. Saul must choose for himself. "He came no more to see Saul until the day of his death; nevertheless, he mourned for Saul." O, the pathos of those words! Heart-breaking it is to find how unavailing are our efforts to help one whom we have loved and prayed for when pride and self-will are unyielding.

There are two sides in the destiny of every life—God's will and man's will; the divine choice, the human choice. We may have the royal gifts God chooses for us if we choose his way; we must lose all, if we choose our own way in opposition to his. "Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord he hath also rejected thee from being king, and hath given the kingdom to a neighbor of thine that is better than thou." "Hold fast that thou hast, that no man take thy crown."

### The Teachers' Meeting.

The general topic illustrated by this lesson is blessings forfeited by man's sin. We here study divine sorrow over sin; concealment of sin; reproof for sin; and re'ection for sin. . . . The exceeding sinfulness of sin (Rom. 7. 13; 1 John 3. 8) is here shown. Note how the lesson teaches: 1. That God demands perfect obedience. 2. That sin cannot be concealed. 3. That sin will certainly be punished. . . . The deceitfulness of sin. It blinds the eyes; dulls the conscience; perverts the reason; and often makes evil appear as good and good as evil." "The forfeitures of sin: it robs of peace, of God's love, and of heaven; it makes us unable

to do tasks God has set for us, and threatens an eternal rejection from Christ in the judgment day."

### Blackboard.



The dire pronouncement of Samuel, that Saul should be no longer king, was directly consequent upon the disobedience of the latter. Sacrifices formed a large and important feature of the religious service, for God had required that his people should so approach and honor him; yet the essential thing was not the offering, but the spirit of sacrifice, reverence, and devotion which inspired it. Unaccompanied by such feelings, no sacrifice, however costly, could prove acceptable. When Saul and his followers returned from their commission against the Amalekites the spirit of disobedience possessed their hearts, and discovered itself in deeds of selfishness and vainglory. A crippled excuse could not shield Saul from the righteous judgment of the prophet, and his name, once honored, is degraded forever.

Coloring.—Altar, light brown; fire, red and yellow; lamb, white; heart, pink; words, red; phrase, yellow and blue.

### Library References.

THE PHILISTINES.—Kent, *History of the Hebrew People*, vol. i, pages 27, 84. Sayce, *Patriarchal Palestine*. Deane, *Samuel and Saul*. Geikie, *Hours with the Bible*, vol. i, page 308.

THE AMALEKITES.—Ewald, *History of Israel*, Index. Geikie, *Hours with the Bible*, vol. i, page 302; vol. ii, page 290; vol. iii, page 128. Sayce, *Patriarchal Palestine*, Index.

OBEEDIENCE.—Dymond, *Essays*, page 253. *American Church Review*, vol. iv, page 384.

### SERMONS ON THE LESSON.

Verse 13.—*The Homiletic Monthly*, vol. xii, page 88. Verse 22.—*Union Pulpit*, page 199.

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## Primary Teachers' Department.

### Notes.

SUMMER schools for primary Sunday School workers will be held as usual in many parts of the country. The excellent one held each season at Asbury Park, N.J., will be in session this year July 6-11. Many others are held elsewhere.

You are planning to attend one of these schools, are you not, primary teachers? It may require effort to compass it, but you will be richly repaid for the effort. Not only is actual knowledge gained of God's work and ways with his little ones, but your love will be deepened, your enthusiasm stimulated, and your faith quickened in the beauty and blessedness of the work to which you are called.

THE "Cradle Roll" has for its distinct purpose the identifying of the child with the Sunday school as soon as it has a name to present. The primary class that makes the most of this beautiful opportunity secures the membership certificates and presents them with a little ceremony, the father carrying the baby forward to receive the certificate. It is a great advantage in many cases to thus bring the father in touch with the Sunday school.

MISS JOSEPHINE BALDWIN follows the pretty custom of hanging a rosebud on the cradle in her own class when a little one has gone home. She says that one day when she was taking the name out of the Cradle Roll of a dear baby who had gone into the other life, a little girl said, "Don't take the name out! Don't they belong to us any more?" Thereafter she left the name in, at least for a time, for the sake of both parents and children.

"OUR penny collection is always ahead of our number of scholars present," said one teacher. Why cannot this state of things be the rule everywhere?

Before the offering is taken speak of the different kinds of gifts and sing an offering song or offer a prayer as soon as it has been taken.

Sometimes let one member of the class take the offering, calling him the treasurer.

MIDSUMMER days try what manner of spirit the teacher is of. It may not be possible for her to "stand by" her class through all the heated term. Possibly it would be doing injustice both to the class and to herself should

she attempt to do so. But the loving and thoughtful teacher will not leave her little flock uncared for. She will see that pasture is provided, and while absent for a season she will let the little ones know that she remembers and loves them.

Now that the days are warm and the children are out among the squirrels and birds as at another season, it will be a great advantage to the dumb animals, and incidentally to the boys and girls, for a school to organize a Band of Mercy at this season. It might perhaps be best for a class to have such an organization. A class needs to be banded together in some way for the sake of sociability, and they might better have some other object than a good time alone. Literature giving full directions for forming a Band will be sent free by Mr. George T. Angell, Boston, Mass., and if thirty signatures be secured to the Band of Mercy pledge and sent him, his paper *Dumb Animals* will be sent free to the Band.

THE primary department should be kept open all summer, whether the main school is or not. If the teacher goes away from home during the summer months, she should secure as able a substitute as possible for her class. She should also send them one letter at least to be read aloud. As to the children's vacations, the ideal teacher will learn where each has gone and will write them a letter. Doubtless no letter received during their visit will give them more pleasure. She should also ask each child to write a letter to her, also one to the class, the latter to be read aloud to the class.

SOME primary classes choose a name. We have heard of one calling itself "Little Sunshine Weavers." This was painted upon the wall of their room.

### Who Shall Make the Blackboard Pictures?

BY AN ARTIST TEACHER.

MUCH has been said and done of late about illustrating the lesson in such a manner that it shall fall within the comprehension of a child, and many excellent and earnest people are setting themselves to the solving of the problem.

In the Sunday schools it has been the custom to put the blackboard work in the hands of that good teacher who is both willing and "handy" with the crayon. The true artist, if the school should include one, is not, as a rule, likely to devote himself or herself, to this work, as the artistic temperament has not usually the plodding, patient quality necessary for every Sunday work of a very limited range. Yet a person with some artistic impulses, which have never found expression elsewhere accepts the situation, and often brings much enthusiasm and imagination to it. Often, too, he brings too much.

The chief difficulty is, that without a training in free hand drawing, and with an active imagination, he fails to produce that simple, restrained, and beautiful symbol or suggestion that would appeal to the unspoiled artist in the child. He overdoes the matter, and loads the blackboard with labored and pathetic attempts at real pictures, produced in crude colors, leaving nothing to the imagination of the children, but forcing them to accept his.

I knew a child of six, a child of rare poetic and artistic instincts, who cared nothing for the color books in which the pictures tried to tell the whole story in bright colors, but who never ceased to pore over black-and-white line drawings that were suggestive and artistic. "This is the book I love," she would say, and then read her own stories into the pictures.

Who, then, shall draw the pictures on the blackboard? I doubt if it has occurred to many that the children themselves are, in these times, better able to give expression to an idea in free-hand drawing than their untrained elders. In the first place their impulses are fresh from God, their perception quick, and, added to these, their training in the new methods of drawing in the public and private schools gives them the ability to express themselves. It is a time when parents are constantly being astonished at the bits of beauty in form or color that their children leave about on scraps of paper. Twenty and forty years ago it was not thought to be worth while to take the time from arithmetic or grammar to use in the training of the hand, but we have learned that the time to train the hand is when the young soul is leaping up like the life in a plant, or bird, seeking expression in form, or color, or sound, and if expression is ever to come, it must come then.

To take advantage of the plastic age is the aim—and sometimes the bane—of modern educators. Not only is the hand of the child

trained to the work of producing beauty of line and color, but the eye, running before the hand is quick to discern a fault or a failure in the drawing of another. "I could do that!" he thinks eagerly, and usually he is right. The question is, Shall we let him try?

Wise teachers in the primary departments are letting the children use the blackboards. After finding which child expresses his thought of the lesson story better through the hand than through speech, the way is clear. *Expression* is the thing to be sought, and while each form should be cultivated, the child should be left free to use his best gift.

The thing that has proven itself to be good for the primary department must be equally good for the higher classes. A little inquiry would develop the facts about the day school work of children and young people, and from one to half a dozen could be found who would accept a position on the "Board of Illustrators" with delight. They would need to be under an advisory board, who would, with their deeper insight into the truths of the lesson, give suggestions; but these should be wise enough to help without hampering the child. It is always a gain if the work can be divided, but in small schools there may be but one who has the sketching gift, and to this one the work can be given. It is usually the boy or girl from fourteen to eighteen years of age who has the awakening to a sense of art forms, with the desire to use them, and the use of them may be the beginning of the life work to which he was born.

Some simple parable from Nature is often the best illustration. A nest on a wind-swept branch and the mother bird on her nest, with some slant touches across the board indicating a rain storm, would illustrate our Father's care over his children. A flower holding up its cup to the down-falling rain would suit a variety of lesson topics, and two crossed swords a number of lessons in which warfare has chief place. Any simple nature sketch is better than the often-used hearts, crowns, and crosses.

The young artist will seek to express himself in lines of natural beauty, though he may use few of them. His efforts will stir the creative impulse in every member of the class or school, and awaken an interest of a new order in the work of illustrating the lesson.

If there appears to be the danger of putting the child or young person in too prominent a position before the school, the work on the blackboard can be done behind a screen, or quite alone on Saturday.

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## Additional Lessons.

BY MARY A. LATHBURY.

LITTLE HYMN STUDIES.—VII.

## "SUN OF MY SOUL."

"Sun of my soul, thou Saviour dear,  
 It is not night if thou be near:  
 O may no earthly cloud arise  
 To hide thee from thy servant's eyes."

This beautiful evening hymn is from a little book called *The Christian Year*, written by an Englishman, Rev. John Keble. It was written to be a companion to the Book of Common Prayer, and there are poems for every feast and holy day of the Church, as well as for other church services.

John Keble was born in 1792 at Fairford, Gloucestershire, England. He was a brilliant student at Oxford, was ordained a priest in 1816, and in 1831 was elected professor of poetry at Oxford. After four years he became vicar of Hursley, Hampshire, where he died in 1866. He was still a young man when he began to work upon *The Christian Year*, and it was published in 1827 without the author's name, for he was a very modest man. His wish was to have the book published after his death, but his friends urged him to put it forth at once. He did so, and thousands have blessed him for the little book ever since.

"When the soft dews of kindly sleep  
 My wearied eyelids gently steep,  
 Be my last thought how sweet to rest  
 Forever on my Saviour's breast."

The portrait of John Keble shows a bright and gentle face full of purity and love. The hymn that we are studying shows us the same qualities. We may be sure, then, that he had these things in his heart, if they could shine from his face and flow from his pen; and that is why every other heart opens to the evening hymn. It comes, too, winged with the lovely music that William Henry Monk, the great composer, arranged for a German-Swiss melody by Peter Ritter, chapel master to the grand duke of Baden. Have you ever heard a great congregation singing at twilight? While it goes up to God in a great wave of song, each soul is singing it for himself, for it is a most intimate and personal prayer. It begins by calling the Lord Jesus the spiritual Sun, as he truly is, for he said, "I am the Light of the world," and it prays that no cloud may hide him from the soul. Then, as sleep falls like the blessing of the dew, the soul prays that it may think last of Jesus, and rest upon his breast as John the beloved disciple did.

"Abide with me from morn till eve,  
 For without thee I cannot live;  
 Abide with me when night is high,  
 For without thee I dare not die."

Here is a true story about the little book that first held this hymn. Four travelers once met near Mount Sinai in the great stony desert of Arabia. People who travel over that hard road, once trodden by the Israelites on their way from Egypt to Canaan, do not carry much baggage. Yet three of these four people carried with them *The Christian Year* with their Bible. We are not told that they sang "Sun of my soul" as the red sunset light faded from the rocky crest of Sinai, but no doubt they did so. The writer of this lesson once sat in a sheltered corner of the deck of a Sound steamer with a party of friends. It was a still summer night, and we sang hymns softly to ourselves. When we sang "Sun of my soul" a few near us joined in the hymn, and before it was done the hundreds of people seated on the forward deck were singing it too. They were of many faiths, and some of no faith, but all knew the dear old evening hymn.

Do you see how simple, and yet how strong, is the reason why we should want the Lord Jesus to "abide with us." How can we live wisely and well through the day without him? And how can we trust ourselves to the helplessness of sleep, which is so like death, without him? Do we always feel him with us?

"Come near and bless us when we wake,  
 Ere through the world our way we take;  
 Till, in the ocean of thy love,  
 We lose ourselves in heaven above."

We cannot here give you all the stanzas that are in the hymn book, but if you will turn to hymn 804 in the Methodist Hymnal you will find those lovely prayers for the sinful, the sick, the poor, and the sorrowful in verses 4 and 5, for the soul that longs for Jesus as its best friend longs also that he may become the best friend of those who need him most. Then comes the last verse, which takes one through his waking, his way in the world, and into heaven itself. When we have sung this hymn we have uttered a beautiful prayer for God, and we should think of it in this way, and expect him to answer it.

When the Christians among the Cree Indians, away up toward the north pole, sent some of their number to a great meeting of white Christians, there was not one among them that could speak English well enough to tell his faith; but some stood up together and sang "Sun of my soul" in their own language, and thus told their faith in the Lord Jesus.

## International Bible Lessons.

## THIRD QUARTER.

## LESSON I. (July 5.)

ISRAEL ASKING FOR A KING. 1 Sam. 8.  
1-10.GOLDEN TEXT: "Prepare your hearts unto the  
Lord, and serve him only." 1 Sam. 7. 3.

## Primary Notes.

BY JULIA H. JOHNSTON.



*Approach.* A little talk about coming to God's house. How big, how old, does one need to be? How often do we come to church? Does anyone live in the church all week? Can you remember any little boy who was brought

by his mother when very small to stay in God's house all the time?

By such questions, lead on to the story of Samuel, drawing the history from the children as far as possible, seizing principal points, avoiding time-consuming details.

The boy who listened to God's voice and answered, grew to be a man who was just as obedient and true. God made him the teacher of his people. He was their judge, telling them what to do. What God told him, he told the people, as, when a boy, he gave the message to Eli. Impress the importance of beginning early, and keeping on always in the right way.

For a long time the Israelites listened to Samuel, but by and by they grew tired and longed for something different. So we have *The People's Wish*. Drill on lesson-title a moment, as expressing this wish. Two reasons for this "asking:" they were tired of Samuel, now an old man, and did not like his sons, who were not as good judges as their father (O, the pity of it, when children are not as good as their good parents!), and they wished to be like other people. Other places and people had kings to rule over and lead them to battle, and they wished to be like the rest.

Did you ever see a flock of sheep? Do you know how silly they are? What one does the rest do, without waiting to see whether it is best or not. Some sheep, crossing a covered bridge, came to a broad ray of light shining

through a crack. The leader carefully lifted his feet and stepped over it as if it were a log. The next, when they came there, did exactly the same thing because the leader did, and all that came after did what was done by those who were in front. Some people are like this. They want to do as the rest do, no matter what it is.

*The Lord's Answer.* Picture Samuel's hurt and troubled heart over the people's request, and his prayer for them. God answered the prayer. The people might have their wish, if they refused to give it up, but it would not be well for them. They would have troubles now unthought of. They were not only refusing to have Samuel for their leader, but the Lord, who alone was their true King. Teach Golden Text, and impress the royal thought of our Lord's kingship, even over young hearts, who should prepare—make ready—for him, and please him only, no matter what others do.

If we follow our Lord he will always show the way. There will be light somewhere. In the dark we see the shining stars. They keep shining till the sun comes up. Sometimes we get into dark places. We don't know what to do. We are troubled and afraid. Be sure there is always a light, a star somewhere. This quarter we will call our lesson-thought STARS. They will help us, as stars in the dark. The text for Review is "The Lord is my light and my salvation," and we will take these star-thoughts as part of the light he gives us. For to-day we have

*Star-Thought: God Only.* No one else can help as our Father can. No other king is like him. We owe everything to him. Should we even wish or ask another king? Let us make ready our hearts, as people prepare a palace and a beautiful throne for the king they love.

Learn this little hymn-verse for the quarter, and sing to tune "Little drops of water:"

Father, teach and lead us

Ever in the light.

May these precious lessons

Shine like stars at night.

*Thought for Teachers.* We must appeal to the child by something tangible if possible. We must secure some cooperation, however small, or lessons will be forgotten. What he puts down himself he is apt to recall.

For this quarter, if possible, have silver stars, one for each lesson, with lesson-truth written on it. Pin these week by week to the board, or hang upon small hooks by loops of ribbon. Give each child a silver star for a pattern; ask that paper ones be made at home, one a week.

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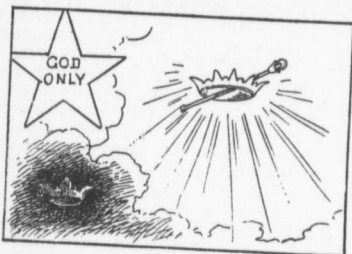


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LESSON II. (July 12.)

SAUL CHOSEN KING. 1 Sam. 10. 17-27.

GOLDEN TEXT: "The Lord is our king; he will save us." Isa. 33. 22.

Primary Notes.



*Approach.* There was once a boy who ran away from home. He had no good reason at all, but he thought it would be a fine thing to do because he had been reading about a boy who did it, and he made up his mind to do what

others had done, just for fun. He never thought how it would hurt the hearts of his kind father and mother. It would have been only fair to let the foolish boy find his way back and learn to do better all by himself, but the father found out in what direction he had gone and sent after him at once. By and by the boy was found, hungry and tired and sick, and brought home to be lovingly cared for. The father saved his boy in this way. No one but the father would have done so much for him when he was so disobedient and ungrateful.

Now, in spite of the sin of the thankless Israelites, their King still loved and cared for them and was ready to save them and give them another chance to do right and please him.

*King Saul.* The story to-day is about the king which was given to the Israelites, who begged for one. Although it was not right for them to wish for some one in Samuel's place, and not right for them to wish any leader but God, any king but the Lord, yet, in letting them have what they wished, God gave them a

king who was strong and bright, and who might, if he chose, be a good king, while the people, if they would only obey God, might be happy.

Picture the great company at Mizpeh, where Samuel called the people together "unto the Lord." When we come together in church and Sunday school it is "unto the Lord." Tell how the story of God's leading and saving was brought back to their minds. Picture the choice of Saul, the Lord showing which company of people, which family, finally which man, was the one; then Saul's hiding, the finding and showing of the new king, who was head and shoulders above them all. Let the children feel the enthusiasm of the great occasion kindle in their hearts as the scene of the shouting multitude is described, and we seem to listen to "God save the king."

Impress the solemnity of the moment, when Samuel told the people all the rules of the kingdom, and wrote them in a book to be laid up before the Lord, and afterward Saul went home with a heart full of longing to do right, while with him went some men whose hearts God had also touched with a wish to please him. This tall, strong young king had now a chance to live a true life and help his people. God was willing to save him and to save the people from harm and wrong, and show them the right way. God is King of kings, high over all, and stronger than all. Teach Golden Text.

*Star-Thought: God Will Save Us.* The Israelites thought it a great thing to have an earthly king over them to be their captain and lead them against their enemies, but our King is greater, and able to save us from those enemies in the heart (name some of them) which are worse and harder to drive away than even the giants of old days.

*Thought for Teachers:* In order to create in-



terest in a story like this it is useful to seize upon childish conceptions of royalty, its pomp

and power, and transfer these ideals to God as King, the children's King, always ready to save. Children glory in strength. "My papa is stronger than yours" you may hear a boy say. Utilize every such feeling, correcting and turning it Godward.

### LESSON III. (July 19.)

#### SAMUEL'S FAREWELL ADDRESS. 1 Sam. 12. 13-25.

GOLDEN TEXT: "Only fear the Lord, and serve him in truth with all your heart." 1 Sam. 12. 24.

#### Primary Notes.



*Approach.* The phrase in the Golden Text, "With all your heart," may be taken as the keynote of this lesson. Samuel's great anxiety was to impress this need of loyalty as he made his farewell address to the people.

Attract attention by the story of a man who owned a beautiful house. He allowed some people to live in it on condition that he should always be free to come in when he was in the city, and a place should always be kept for him. He did not give the house to these people, but they seemed to forget this. They acted as if it belonged to them. They took possession of it altogether and left no room at all for the owner, not even a small corner. He was crowded out of his very own. This did not happen all at once. It began by the feeling that the best room, which was kept for the owner, and some other parts of the house as well, might be used by the people who had come in. They began to put their things in these places till by and by they left no room at all for the owner. Was that fair? He had a right to it all. He should have been made welcome to any or every part of it.

The good judge and teacher Samuel wished his people to remember that their hearts belonged to God. He wished them to allow the great Owner to come in. He wished them to please him with all their hearts. We learn all this from

*Samuel's Good-bye Talk.* In this talk Samuel tried in two ways to help the people to understand and remember that they must serve the good God with all their hearts, not with divided hearts, or even half a heart. First, he showed them how well it would be with them

if they did the will of the Lord, they and their king together.

The next thing was to show how they would suffer if they disobeyed the Lord. To make them understand his great power, Samuel called on the Lord, and he sent a great rain and terrible thunder right in the wheat harvest, when the ripe grain was ready to gather. It frightened them all very much, and they said they were sorry for their sin in not putting God first before this, and then they begged Samuel to pray for them that they might be forgiven and not die.

*God's Love and Mercy.* Although God saw that these people needed a hard lesson to make them remember, yet he loved them and pitied them and was ready to forgive and save them. Samuel saw that it was time now to comfort those who were sorry. He said, "Fear not." He told them how their God loved them and was ready to forgive and save. You see how needful it is for some one who knows the good God very well to give this message, for, no matter how loving he is, if people do not know and understand it, they will not be comforted. So the good-bye talk was in part about this loving kindness of the Lord, who would never leave his own dear people. If he had to punish them it would be because he loved them too well to let them go on sinning against him and hurting themselves. If your parents did not care whether you were good or bad they would not punish you for doing wrong. They do it to make you better.

Samuel promised to keep on praying for these people. He loved them too, though they grew tired of him when he was old.

*Star-Thought: Serve God.* This thought shines like a star in the dark. It tells us what to do. Who should serve God? You, and every-



one. Why? He is your God, and you are his own. He is good and loving and has the best

right to your heart. Serving him is the best and happiest thing in the world. How serve him? With all your heart. Teach Golden Text and make clear the ways of whole-hearted service in child-life.

*Thought for Teachers:* Shall we ask of our little scholars a greater loyalty than we are willing to give to our King? Heaven is "The Land of the Leal," but should not earth be too? The leal and true, the faithful and constant, have their opportunity for whole-hearted service below.

To be loyal, in its finest sense, is to be truly loving.

### LESSON IV. (July 26.)

#### SAUL REJECTED AS KING. 1 Sam. 15. 13-23.

GOLDEN TEXT: "To obey is better than sacrifice." 1 Sam. 15. 22.

#### Primary Notes.



*Approach.* The lesson of obedience in this portion is obvious. The true sort must be impressed, for there is a make-believe kind, like Saul's, which is not pleasing to God. Introduce by the story of a boy who was told to do

some weeding while his father was away a few days. "I wish you to work so many hours in the garden," was the command, "and to spend the time in those beds," pointing them out. The boy worked so many hours and pulled a great many weeds, but instead of doing exactly what he was told, and working where he was told, and at the time he was told, he took another part of the garden where the weeds were easier to pull. He worked late instead of early in the day, so that he could not tell much about the weeds; and when his father came home, although he said, "I've done what you said," the weeds in the right bed showed that the boy had not really obeyed, though he had worked out of doors and pulled weeds.

In this lesson to-day we have, first.

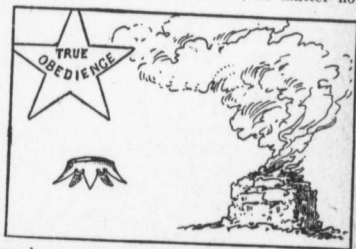
*God's Command.* Explain that God sent Saul and his soldiers to destroy some wicked people who had to be punished. This was not to be done because the king and his men disliked these Amalekites, or because it would make them rich to get their cattle and sheep, but because God

told them to do it for a good reason. The Israelites were forbidden to take any of the sheep or oxen for their own. They were not to keep them for any reason at all.

*The Command Disobeyed.* Tell how Saul and the people failed to do as they were told. They only did it in part. The best of the cattle were kept by them. Describe Samuel's visit to King Saul, the hurry Saul was in to say that he had obeyed, and the way in which his disobedience was betrayed by lowing oxen and bleating sheep. Impress, in passing, the truth that when one only makes believe to obey and tries to cover up what is wrong, something is almost always sure to show it at once. Wrong-doing cannot be hid. It is not only never safe to make believe, but it makes the disobedience far worse to pretend that it is obedience. The very worst of all is to be like Saul when he pretended that the cattle were saved to offer to God, and that the people took them anyhow, as if they would have dared if Saul had not allowed it.

*Disobedience Punished.* This is so sad a part of the lesson that it is hard to tell about it. It was very hard for Samuel to give the sad message to Saul, but he had to do it. God said that it was not a large offering of the best of cattle that he wished, but an obedient heart, and that because Saul had turned away from God and broken God's commands God must now put him away from being king. If only Saul had served God from the beginning with his whole heart he would never have heard this terrible message. This story is kept in God's book for us that we may know how far away from God those may go who do not give him the whole heart.

*Star-Thought: True Obedience.* The make-believe obedience will never do, no matter how



much we say about having done as we were told.

True obedience is doing just *what* we are told, *as* we are told, and *when* we are told.

This is more pleasing to God than a present worth millions.

*Thought for Teachers.* Great wisdom is needed to teach such lessons so tenderly that the child-heart will recognize God's love through all, and his justice too. A child's sense of right will respond to the explanation of true obedience if tenderly and truly given.

#### About the Bible.

I FIND that it is well to teach the children verses setting forth the love of the Bible, for I remember how fond I was myself as a child of "Holy Bible, book divine."

There are many similar verses, and it is well for a teacher to be ever upon the lookout for them. These can be taught the children or given them to write upon cards.

Here is a pretty verse the teacher might write upon a blank leaf of a Bible of each child. The autograph album fad, once so popular among children, has disappeared. Yet it will surely be pleasing to the little ones upon reaching maturity to see in their Bibles the handwriting of their teacher.

"This little book, I'd rather own,  
Than all the golden gems  
That e'er in monarch's coffers shone,  
Than all their diadems."

#### Whisper Songs for July.

##### FIRST LESSON.

Who is this whose coming  
Life and blessing brings?  
Is my heart all ready  
For the King of kings?

##### SECOND LESSON.

Who will come and save us  
From the power of sin?  
Jesus—only Jesus;  
Let him enter in.

##### THIRD LESSON.

If our Saviour finds us  
Trying to be true,  
He will let us serve him  
As the angels do.

##### FOURTH LESSON.

If we gladly follow,  
Willingly obey,  
Christ will walk beside us  
In the heavenly way.

#### Order of Service

FOR THE PRIMARY DEPARTMENT.

#### Third Quarter.

*Teacher.* God be merciful unto us and bless us;

*Class.* And cause his face to shine upon us.

*T.* Let us come boldly unto the throne of grace,

*C.* That we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help.

CONCERT PRAYER.

"We are little children,  
Weak and apt to stray;  
Saviour, guide and keep us  
In the heavenly way.  
Save us, Lord, from sinning;  
Watch us day by day;  
Help us now to love thee;  
Take our sins away."

PRAYER. Brief prayer, all uniting in the Lord's Prayer.

SINGING.

GOLDEN TEXT DRILL.

OFFERING, preceded by Concert Recitation:

"Here we come with gladness  
Gifts of love to bring,  
Pleasing Him who loves us,  
Christ, our Saviour King.  
"Small may be our offering,  
But the Lord will use  
Every gift we bring him;  
None will he refuse."

ADDITIONAL LESSONS.

MARCHING SONG:

"We've listed in a holy war,  
Battling for the Lord!  
Eternal life our guiding star,  
Battling for the Lord!

*Refrain.*—"We'll work till Jesus comes,  
We'll work till Jesus comes,  
We'll work till Jesus comes,  
And then we'll rest at home.

"We've girded on our armor bright,  
Battling for the Lord!  
Our Captain's word our strength and might,  
Battling for the Lord."

LESSON TAUGHT.

ECHO PRAYER.

LAST WORDS.—Repeat after teacher:

"If we sing and work for Jesus,  
As we walk our earthly way,  
Then we'll praise his name forever  
In the land of endless day."

MIZPEH.

## A Revelation.

BY REV. W. BOWMAN TUCKER, PH.D.

(Ex. 24. 10; 25. 40.)

His friends and Aaron saw the blaze  
Of light divine, illumine the sky,  
And crown the mountain top for days,  
Proclaiming thus Jehovah nigh.

They saw, but still were unimpressed,  
For as they saw they ate and drank;  
In them the sight begat no quest,  
Above the love of common rank.

Down from the mount as common men  
With only common powers they came,  
And in the mood most fit for them,  
They labored in the way of shame.

No pattern in the mount they saw,  
For did they not but eat and drink?  
The vision rare does God withdraw  
From those who neither love nor think.

God's holy men his methods know,  
And plans discern, and purposes;  
And laden with their vision show  
Heaven's thoughts in earthly likenesses.

O might I have a heavenward trend,  
And feel the kindling fire of God,  
And take my lessons at first-hand,  
To work by truths divinely showed.

The common things uncommon are;  
And every humble circumstance,  
The pattern from the Mount doth bear,  
And shines with heavenly radiance.  
Shawville, Que.

## John Wesley's Breadth of Religious Views.

No Methodist, if he has truly imbibed the spirit of the founder of his Church, can ever be a narrow sectarian, an arid creedist, a small and malignant bigot. Tolerance of others' opinions is enough of a common-place thing to-day. The confederation and co-operation of all the Churches is being constantly urged. The exaltation of conduct, righteousness, right living generally, above "confes-

sions of faith" purely intellectual—what Church and what preacher do not proclaim these at present? But such liberal conceptions were not as prevalent and universally accepted in the eighteenth century as they are in the twentieth. John Wesley, in proclaiming them, was a good deal of a prophet in the wilderness. Hence we do well to read again and again his great emancipating enunciations, to realize their significance for his time and ours, and to walk now and ever in the broad path of light which they have made for our feet.

What grander, more fundamental, and eternal truths were ever proclaimed by human lips than these: "I resolved to use every possible method of preventing a narrowness of spirit, a party zeal, that miserable bigotry which makes many so unready to believe that there is any work of God but among themselves." "I desire to have a league offensive and defensive with every soldier of Christ. We have only one faith, one hope, one Lord, but are directly engaged in one warfare." "My brother and I set out upon two principles: (1) None go to heaven without holiness of heart and life; (2) whosoever follows after this—whatever his opinions be—is my 'brother, and sister, and mother.'" "Come, and let us look one another into the face, and perhaps some of you who hate what I am called, may love what I am by the grace of God." "Let the points wherein we differ stand aside; here are enough wherein we agree, enough to be the ground of every Christian temper, and of every Christian action." (This was in a letter to a Roman Catholic.) "The distinguishing marks of a Methodist are not his opinions of any sort." "Orthodoxy, or right opinions, is, at best, but a very slender part of religion, if it can be allowed to be any part at all." "A string of opinions is no more Christian faith than a string of beads is Christian holiness." "I impose my notions upon none; I will be bold to say, there is no man living farther from it. I make no opinion the term of my union with any man; I think and let think. What I want is, holiness of heart and life."

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