

**PAGES**

**MISSING**

# SUNDAY SCHOOL BANNER

for  
TEACHERS  
AND  
YOUNG PEOPLE.

VOLUME XVII.]

OCTOBER, 1883.

[No. 10.]

## The Tapestry Worker.

BY MARGARET SCOTT MACRITCHIE.

“ CARRY me out, my brethren ;  
For I can work no more.  
Carry me out to meet Him—  
My Master at the door !  
The sun is slowly setting,  
And the old man's eyes are dim,  
And the task He gave is finished ;  
Carry me out to Him !

“ The task He gave is finished ;  
I mind when it began,  
How joyously and swiftly  
The busy moments ran ;  
In arduour for His service,  
Methought I wrought so well,  
That e'en His own appointments  
I should at last excel.

“ But through my vain ambition  
There fell the hand divine,  
That quietly effaced it—  
My dearly-loved design.  
And while I sore lamented  
For beauty swept away,  
' *More beauty hath obedience,*  
I heard the Master say.

“ Then I was still, my brethren,  
And turned to toil anew,  
Leaving to Him the guidance,  
Whose plans are sure and true ;  
And though to trace His pattern  
At times I vainly tried,  
My heart found rest remembering  
*He sees the other side.*

“ I sat behind the canvas,  
I saw no beauty grow,  
I held His own directions—  
Enough for me to know ;  
Many had wider portions  
Of clearer, brighter hue,  
But the old man in the corner  
The Master needeth too.

“ And if no gain nor glory  
Shine out from this my weft,  
Still, He will not be angry—  
I did the task He left.  
And now that I am helpless,  
And weary is my frame,  
My brethren, in the distance  
I hear Him call my name.”

They bore the old man gently  
Forth from the working-room,  
Forth from the ended labour,  
Forth from the silent loom.  
And down a voice came floating,  
A voice serenely blest,

“ O good and faithful servant,  
Enter thou into rest !

“ Long, long in patient duty  
Thy yearning soul was tried,  
Open thine eyes to beauty  
Upon the other side !  
Behind the canvas toiling,  
Thou didst not dream of this,  
That every shadow-tangle  
Wrought out eternal bliss ;

“ And every thread mysterious  
Into the pattern given,  
Was weaving rich perfection  
Of love and life in heaven.  
Now rise thou to the glory  
By lowly hearts possessed,  
Who but fulfil My bidding,  
And leave to Me the rest !”

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## The Sunday School Banner.

W. H. WITHEROW, D.D., Editor.

TORONTO, OCTOBER, 1883.

### Progress of our Sunday School Work.

THE Sunday School work of our Church continues to exhibit very gratifying progress, as is indicated by the statistics submitted to the late Conferences.

The most encouraging feature of all is that the number of conversions reported during the year is 4,022, being an increase of 389 over those of the previous year.

No department of our general Sunday School work exhibits more rapid development than the circulation of our connexional Sunday School literature. The reports show a decrease in the circulation of other papers besides our own, to the extent of 7,896, but their place has been taken by an increased circulation of our own papers of 16,391. But since those statistics were collected, in April and May, the circulation

of our own Sunday School periodicals has further increased from 93,559, the number then reported from the three Western Conferences, so that now the issue to all the Conferences has reached 174,900. Still the fact that 21,702 copies of other papers were taken in these Western Conferences shows that there is yet much to be done—in which the aid of the ministers is invoked—to secure the patronage of our own schools for our own connexional literature.

It may safely be asserted that for amount of matter, style of illustration, general character and price, our own periodicals will challenge comparison with any that are published; indeed, I believe them to be the cheapest in the world. They will be found, moreover, loyal to the institutions of our own country, and to the doctrines of Methodism, while the foreign papers patronized by some of our Schools are often hostile to both. Even were our papers only equal to others, the special prominence given to the missionary and other interests of our own Church should secure their support in preference to others.

For the first time the number of scholars having taken the temperance and anti-tobacco pledge is given. The number reported is 6,680, which it is hoped will be largely increased, as the Sunday School papers are most pronounced in their inculcation of temperance principles.

There is one more topic to which very serious consideration is invited. There are a very large number of appointments—there must be some hundreds in the aggregate—in connection with which no Sunday Schools are yet organized. These are chiefly in the missions in the more recently settled parts of the country, and in its more sparsely settled regions. The assistance of the ministers is urgently solicited, that in every place where there is Methodist preaching there may also be a Methodist Sunday School. It is in helping this work that the Sunday School Aid and Extension Fund has been most useful in the past, and may be expected to be increasingly useful in the future. Scores of new Schools have been established by its help. If brethren will only organize, in every place where even a handful of children can be gathered, a school under Methodist management, the Society will grant liberal aid in the way of Sunday School helps.

Put a man into a factory as ignorant how to prepare fabrics as some teachers are to watch the growing of juvenile minds, and what havoc would be made of the raw material!—*Horace Mann.*

## The Next International S. S. Convention.

THE Executive Committee of the International Sunday School Convention held an important session at Chautauqua, August 8th and 9th. Fifteen members were in attendance, representing thirteen different States, and the District of Columbia, and the Province of New Brunswick, and Dominion of Canada. An important part of the committee's work was the general outlining or plan of programme for the next international gathering. It is too early yet to speak of the plan, as the details are left to a sub-committee or further arrangement. The next meeting of the International Convention will occur at Louisville, Kentucky, on the 11th, 12th, and 13th days of June, 1884.

We have just had the pleasure of visiting Louisville, and no more central or delightful place could be found for the Convention. We are sure that the large-hearted hospitality of our Southern friends will give as cordial a welcome to visitors from the North as we had the pleasure of giving them in Toronto at the last Convention.

### The Prepared Class.

A TEACHER should prepare *himself* for his work; he should prepare his materials for teaching; and he should prepare the lesson. But it is certainly of importance that he should have a prepared class; that his scholars should be under proper authority, willing to learn, and that they should themselves be prepared with their own contribution to the general stock of knowledge, exposition, and illustration of the lesson. It is no slight gain to a teacher when the spirit and temper of the scholars are right. Then the good ground is ready for the good seed. But it is doleful work when Sunday after Sunday time has to be spent in subduing disorder before a lesson can be given.

Such a prepared class would not only be a blessing in the Sunday School itself, but its members would be witnesses for Christ in their study of His Holy Word at home. It is no slight matter that there are so many of the houses of irreligious parents in which attention is gained for the Bible by the reading of it by children who are Sunday School scholars.

The prepared class in the school will be a permanent blessing to the Church. It will train youths to study truths, the doctrines of Christianity, and the various subjects relating to religion, so that in after years they will be thoughtful and intelligent hearers in the congregation.

Such thorough preparation as is most desirable is not gained by mere human effort. No matter how docile a scholar, or how able a teacher, the great want is the influence of the Holy Spirit. In these times we are in danger of over-estimating the importance of literary preparation, and personal decency of behaviour; and of thinking too little of the need and power of the Holy

Spirit. And yet we should let our history as a people teach and admonish us.

The vital power of Methodism must be sought—not in its form, but in its spirit. It is the result, not of the work of great men, but of the Holy Ghost. Our work is over if we begin to trust on human expedients, and turn aside in the least from Him who was the strength of our fathers. In school as in chapel, among scholars as among congregations, we have a definite aim and work. We have to save souls. We may try many plans, but we have only the same Gospel to preach that was the power of God unto salvation among us from the first, and we must seek to have our hearers and our pupils prepared of the Holy Spirit. We wish to bring our scholars to the faith of Christ. But religious faith is not a mere logical conviction. We make our appeal to youths as well as to men—to the spiritual nature, laying not much stress on mere technical theology or learned distinctions as a qualification for saving souls; and if, to use the striking words carved on Philip Embury's tomb, in America, we are "to beautify the earth with salvation," we must ourselves be prepared, and our classes must be prepared by the blessing of the Holy Spirit, who shall teach us the whole truth and guide us.

The "Prepared Class," then, will be one disciplined in good order; interested in the work of the day; diligent in preparatory study of the lesson; not negligent of mental improvement; not forgetful to read good and helpful books; and above all, under religious influence and the influence of the Lord. Of such a class there may be members who are not consciously under this Divine influence, who may not pray for it, but for whom the blessing may be gained in answer to the earnest prayers of pious teachers and fellow-scholars.—*Wesleyan S. S. Magazine.*

### The Prepared Teacher.

MUCH is said now-a-days about preparation classes, preparation of lessons, and so forth, with reference to Sunday School work; and the importance of the subject cannot be very well overstated, but it is just possible that if it be the one chief theme of conventions and speakers, other thoughts of great importance will be kept in the rear, and mischief will follow.

Surely before a teacher prepares the materials out of which a lesson is to be built, and before he prepares the lesson itself, he should prepare himself. A prepared teacher is as necessary as a prepared lesson. It is in the class as it is in the pulpit, the man should be adapted for his work. The best teacher is the one who not only can give a good lesson, but who is a lesson.

As a rule, a good Providence indicates our work and place, and if every one to whom direction is given to work in our schools would watch honestly for the sign, and obey the injunction, there would soon be a noble contingent of the Lord's army coming forth to do valiant things for Him in this department of toil. But God signals to many who will not see. They look to the signals as Nelson did at Trafalgar when he

put the telescope to his blind eye. The consequence is that many stand idle all the day long, to whom the Master says, or has said, "Go work" for Me.

As a rule, our Sunday Schools have not lacked helpers, although many who could have done much have done nothing. Nor can it be denied that there has been much self-sacrifice, much heart-searching, much mental discipline, much thorough devotion on the part of hundreds of thousands of Sunday School teachers.

One chief secret of the success of the institution has been the personal winsomeness and character of the individual teacher; and so long as there is personal fitness for the work, personal adaptation of spirit, personal love for the Saviour and for children, personal attractiveness on the part of teachers, the Sunday School will continue to be a mighty and a growing force. But great forces need to be under the guidance of wise and good persons, and, therefore, each one connected with this force should be duly qualified.

Our teachers need to be at one with God. They should be devoted, converted persons. In them the religious sentiment should be genuine and energetic. They should be wide in their sympathies, receptive of Divine influences, and responsive to the best human influences. They should cultivate the habit of prayer diligently, secret bible-reading, apart from, and in addition to, biblical study. They should be hopeful as to the results of their work, and be strong in faith. They should be all this—but more. They should seek to improve and adorn their minds continually, and to extend their intellectual range. To be merely good is not enough, is not nearly enough. Some such have often been the most impracticable and unreasonable men, both in Sunday Schools and in the general work of the Church. They are people to be avoided; but they should have been taught to apply themselves to thought, reading, and education, so that they might become better workers and less objectionable associates. The best teachers anywhere, in schools of any grade, are they who have a genial, opulent, overflowing soul; having that, they have one of the great secrets of success in teaching.—*Westleyan S. S. Magazine.*

### How to Teach the Youngest Scholars.

BY MRS. B. B. CAMPBELL.

"How shall we teach the little ones?" is a question often on the lips of infant-class teachers; "how gain their attention?" First of all, let me say, put yourself in sympathy with each pupil in your class, let your heart touch theirs, and they will respond by giving you as much attention as should be expected from their age. They are young, fresh, and confiding; moreover, they are usually good readers of the face. If you come to them with cold, forbidding or indifferent aspect, no matter what your words may be, they will turn from you to find something brighter, and to them of more interest, else-

where; anything within range of their vision will attract and interest, and you will find it difficult to recall their attention. If, on the contrary, you meet them with smiles and words of pleasant welcome, showing real interest in each little one, in his or her presence in the class, asking them simple questions, and encouraging them to give their own childish replies, always giving the replies due attention, leaving their minds in no doubt as to what you have aimed to teach them, telling all as if directly from your heart to theirs, you will usually find you have gained the child's attention,—more, the heart with it.

In the class there may be one who for months has been looking forward to the time when she should be old enough to accompany her brothers and sisters to the Sunday School. After her longing eyes have followed them as they left her on Sunday, now she too, with hand clasped in that of an older one, and heart full of pleasant expectancy, is on her way there. The superintendent receives her kindly, and the teacher readily admits her to the class, and not unkindly hears her repeat the lesson she has long been treasuring for this day. But the teacher's face is not lighted with loving looks or smiles, the tones, though not unpleasant, perhaps, are not soft and tender in the ear of the little one, to whom no word of welcome or praise for her little recitation has been given, and she does not recognize any touch on her young heart, neither does the teacher recognize the idea that this new pupil should receive more of her attention until she comes to feel at home among faces and scenes quite new to her. And so the disappointed child goes home with ardour chilled, and is far from sure that she wants ever to go to Sunday School again.

A little boy has been told that he is to go to Sunday School as soon as he is old enough. Timid, sensitive, and retiring, he looks forward to the time with dread; the day comes, and with much persuasion from others and reluctance on his part, he consents to go. How his little heart beats as the superintendent leads him to the class! But the gentle, loving face of the teacher half reassures him, and as she tells him in soft, pleasant tones that she is glad to have him come to her class, and that she is sure the little boys are glad too, and then kindly listens to his little lesson with interest, and talks with, not altogether to, him about it, he feels the soft touch upon his heart, the bond of sympathy is being established, and in his heart already are dawns of a true love for the Sunday School; and when the next Sunday comes around, no urging will be needed, he will be quite ready to meet his teacher. In the matter of infant-teaching the age or acquirements should not as much govern, in choice of teachers, as the tact or winning manner they may possess in imparting instruction; and, pervading all, there should be a tender desire to win these young hearts for Jesus.

THE Old Testament revision will probably be published next winter or spring.

## Children and Church Attendance.

BY REV. WILLIAM AIKMAN, D.D.

"If my children were able to attend but one service on Sunday, and the choice lay between the Church and the Sunday School, I would have no hesitation which to choose; I would take them to the Church and I would forego the Sunday School."

So said an able and efficient superintendent to me the other day as we walked a country road together. I replied heartily,

"I am glad to hear you say so, and all the more because you are a Sunday School superintendent and deeply interested in Sunday School work. I have known superintendents who considered the Church only as a sort of adjunct to the Sunday School, and would not hesitate for a moment to sacrifice the claims of the one to those of the other.

As we stood by his gate we talked over this matter, and found ourselves largely at one. The Sunday School has been a power of immeasurable importance, and he would be a very unobsequious and unappreciative man who would for a moment underrate it. Sunday School teachers and superintendents who have given much thought and care and labour to it, and have seen its fruitage and rejoiced in it as the years have gone on, are in no danger of not understanding its value. But its influence on Church attendance is a matter which calls for careful consideration.

One may stand at the door of any church on a Sunday morning and watch the children troop forth from the school, and he will see only here and there one go into the Church. The most pass on their way to their homes, and clearly the Church service has not entered into their minds as a thing which in the least concerned them. It may be questioned whether some of them have much of an idea how the inside of the edifice really appears.

Now Church attendance is a matter largely of habit. But how or when can the habit be formed when systematically the child is trained to turn away from the Church doors? If one looks over almost any ordinary congregation on the Sabbath he will frequently be surprised to notice how few children are present. Some of us preachers are in the habit of saying something in our sermons to the little folks, but not infrequently we find that there are no little ones there to whom we can speak.

It might be a matter of surprise that, considering how almost universal attendance on Sunday School is, so comparatively few young people, when they have left it, are found in the Church. In the ordinary walks of life one will now-a-days rarely meet with a young man or a young woman who has not at some time been a member of a Sunday School, while at the same time he will find everywhere young people who rarely ever visit a Church. We think this would not be so had a different system been pursued and a different theory been held.

The Sunday School, in a very mistaken way, has been called "The Children's Church." This

is a vicious designation, and has a deal of harmful meaning in it. The Sunday School is no Church, and cannot take the place of the Church, and the fact that so comparatively few pass from one to the other, unless they become members of the Church while in the Sunday School, declares it. By much of, at least, silent training the children are taught that they have little to do with the Church, and it is not at all strange that they feel no interest in its services when they have grown too old to remain in the Sunday School.

The children should be taught that what is said to them, what the preacher preaches, is not indeed all of the Church service which claims their regard. Merely to be present, to engage in the worship of God, to sing, to pray, to hear the Scripture read, to mingle in these acts of devotion, are sufficient of themselves were there nothing else. The sermon is an accessory, the worship is the main thing. To have this firmly fixed in a child's mind is to have done an unspeakably important thing for his moral and religious training. What could be so valuable as to have inwrought with a child's nature the value, the duty, the privilege of divine worship. To be with a company who, on the Sabbath day, worship and praise the great God, to bow with them in prayer, to join with them in song, though no word of preacher should be comprehended, this should be made to stand out before a child's mind as beyond measure a thing to be sought after. But it is, we fear, under the present state of things, rarely made to appear, even by a glimpse, in our Sunday Schools.—*Illustrated Christian Weekly*.

ADVERSITY is the trial of principle. Without it a man hardly knows whether he is honest or not.

SOMETIMES a fog will settle over a vessel's deck and yet leave the topmast clear. Then a sailor goes up aloft and gets a look-out which the helmsman on the deck cannot get. So prayer sends the soul aloft—lifts it above the cloud in which our selfishness and egotism befog us, and gives us a chance to see which way to steer.—*Spurgeon*.

A DISCOVERY of intense interest to the Christian world has lately, it is claimed, been made. A Mr. Shapira found among the Arabs fifteen pieces of black sheepskin leather containing portions of the Book of Deuteronomy which date back nine hundred years before Christ. Mr. Shapira succeeded in procuring them, and now offers them to the British Museum for \$5,000,000. These MSS., if real, are of immense value, because they carry us back some hundreds of years farther than any known MSS. The Decalogue is, also, written upon them, and tallies very closely with the record in our present version. Of course it will take some time to prove the genuineness of these slips, but modern scholarship will soon satisfactorily settle the question of their reliability. We wait to hear the verdict of competent authorities.—*Canada Christian Advocate*.

### Opening and Closing Services for Fourth Quarter of 1883.

#### OPENING SERVICE.

I. Silence.

II. Responsive Sentences.

*Supt.* Praise waiteth for thee, O God, in Zion : and unto thee shall the vow be performed.

*School.* I will pay my vows unto the LORD now in the presence of all his people.

*Supt.* The LORD is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth.

*School.* Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live.

*Supt.* Glory ye in his holy name : let the heart of them rejoice that seek the LORD.

*All.* Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer.

III. Singing.

IV. The Ten Commandments, or Apostles' Creed.

I. Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

II. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth ; thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them : for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me ; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.

III. Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain : for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

IV. Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work : but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD thy God : in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates ; for in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day ; wherefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.

V. Honour thy father and thy mother : that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

VI. Thou shalt not kill.

VII. Thou shalt not commit adultery.

VIII. Thou shalt not steal.

IX. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

X. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.

V. Prayer, followed by the Lord's Prayer in concert.

VI. Scripture Lesson. \*

VII. Singing.

#### LESSON SERVICE.

I. Class Study of the Lesson.

II. Singing Lesson Hymn.

III. Recitation of the Title, Golden Text, Outline, and Doctrinal Suggestion, by the school in concert.

IV. Review and Application of the Lesson, by Pastor or Superintendent.

V. The Supplemental Lessons. †

VI. Announcements (especially of the Church service and week-evening prayer-meeting).

#### CLOSING SERVICE.

I. Singing.

II. Responsive Sentences.

*Supt.* We ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip ; for how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation ?

III. Dismission.

## Book Notices.

*Judas Maccabeus, and the Jewish War of Independence.* By CLAUDE RUGNER CONDER, R. E. New Plutarch Series. New York : George P. Putnam's Sons. Toronto : William Briggs. Price \$1.

The Story of the Maccabees forms one of the most important episodes in Jewish history. It was a preparation for the advent of Christianity. It left its permanent impress on the character of the nation. It records one of the most heroic struggles for liberty which ever took place in the annals of mankind. Prof. Conder throws much light on this period by his exhaustive study, not only of Josephus, and the Book of Maccabees, but that of the Talmud and contemporary history. This is a good book for S. S. libraries.

\* Either the International Lesson for the day, or some suitable portion of Scripture.

† Special Lessons in the Catechism may here be introduced.

# INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS.

## FOURTH QUARTER—STUDIES IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

### OCTOBER, 1883.

NOTE.—The Scripture verses to be committed to memory are indicated by an index [587] at the side.

R.C. 1141.

Oct. 7.

#### LESSON I.—ELI'S DEATH.

1 Sam. 4. 10-18.

10 And the Philistines fought, and *a* Israel was smitten, and they fled every man into his tent; and there was a very great slaughter; for there fell of Israel thirty thousand footmen.

11 And *b* the ark of God was taken; and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were slain.

12 And there ran a man of Benjamin out of the army, and came to Shiloh the same day, with his clothes rent, and *d* with earth upon his head.

13 And when he came, lo, *e* sat upon *e* a seat by the way-side watching; for his heart trembled for the ark of God. And when the man came into the city, and told *it*, all the city cried out.

14 And when Eli heard the noise of the crying, he said, What meaneth the noise of this tumult? And the man came in hastily, and told Eli.

15 Now Eli was ninety and eight years old; and his eyes were dim, that he could not see.

16 And the man said unto Eli, *f* I am he that came out of the army, and I fled to-day out of the army. And he said, *g* What is there done, my son?

17 And the messenger answered and said, Israel is fled before the Philistines, and there hath been also a great slaughter among the people, and thy two sons also, Hophni and Phinehas, are dead, and the ark of God is taken.

18 And it came to pass, when he made mention of the ark of God, that he fell from off the seat backward by the side of the gate, and his neck brake, and he died; for he was an old man, and heavy. And he had judged Israel forty years.

#### GENERAL STATEMENT.

The predictions of the youthful seer soon began its dark fulfilment, with fate bitter to the house of Eli and the land of Israel. The wave of Philistine invasion once more rolled from the shore up the mountain sides, and in the first battle, in the borders of Benjamin, four thousand of the Israelites fell. The warriors remembered how in other days the ark of the Lord had led the way in triumph, and they sent for it from its curtained Holy of Holies. With it went forth to battle the two wicked sons of Eli, while their venerable father, blind with age, sat trembling

upon his throne beside the forsaken tabernacle. But the outward symbol of God's presence was of no avail when the people no longer held him in their hearts, and in the second battle on the same field thirty thousand warriors were slain, the hosts of Israel were driven to utter rout, the wicked priests fell, and the holy ark itself was carried away in triumph among the spoils of victory. The darkest day in Israel's history had come, the time of "the captivity of the land," when the emblem of God's presence was in hostile hands. The sun was setting when a fugitive, breathless with long running, entered the walls of Shiloh. His torn garments and dust-beset brow told the story of the disaster, and the loud wail of the people greeted his approach. The old priest by the gate of the tabernacle heard the cry, and with foreboding heart inquired its cause. The messenger was led into his presence, and, in response to the old man's question, briefly recounted the tale of woe, each successive sentence plunging the sword deeper into the heart of the ruler, the father, and the priest. When the words "the ark of God is taken," fell upon the ears of the aged man, he dropped fainting from his lofty seat, and fell to the ground dead! Thus in a day the hopes of Israel fell to the point of despair, and darkness spread its pall over the land.

#### EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

**Verse 10. The Philistines.** These were a powerful people of the maritime plain on the south-western border of Israel, inhabiting five large cities (of which Gaza was the most important) with the territory around them. They were the enemies and oppressors of Israel during most of the time of the Judges, were conquered by David, but not entirely subdued until three hundred years before Christ. They were descendants of Ham, and worshipped Dagon, the fish-god. The name Palestine is derived from the word Philistine. **Fought.** This was the second battle fought at Eben-ezer, an unknown place north or north-west of Jerusalem. A third battle on the same field was a victory for Israel. (See next lesson.) **Israel was smitten.** They had the ark of God with them, but it was of no avail when the love of God was no more in their hearts. 1. So the mere forms of Church order are of very little use without the Spirit in its members. **Every man into his tent.** That is, "every man to his home." In their land of permanent dwellings they still used the term to which their fathers had been accustomed



during their wilderness life. **A very great slaughter.** 2. God leaves his own professed people to perish when they forsake him and follow idols. **Thirty thousand.** Without the ark they had lost four thousand; with it, more than seven times as many. **Footmen.** Israel was a mountainous country, hence its army was composed mainly of infantry, as chariots were useless, and cavalry were not then employed in war.

11. **The ark of God.** The chest containing the two tables of the law, built in the wilderness, and kept in the tabernacle as the token of Jehovah's presence. Borne before the host it had once opened the way through Jordan; but now, when the people were no more faithful, they found its power gone. **Was taken.** Its capture was permitted, (1) To punish the people for their profanation of it; (2) To rebuke them for their false confidence in the ark, rather than God; (3) To bring them to repentance from sin; (4) To show the Philistines that there was still a God in Israel. (See next chapter.) In reality the loss of the ark proved a blessing to the people and brought no good to its captors. 3. God often brings good out of seeming evil, and is ever watching over his cause, even while he seems to neglect it. **Sons of Eli.** Two wicked priests, though sons of a good, but weak, man. Their crimes were greed, impiety, and sensuality. **Were slain.** Their place was at the altar, not in the camp, and their death was a fit ending to lives of guilt.

12. **There ran.** Swift-footed runners were often kept with ancient armies to bear messages. An Arab at the present time has been known to outrun a good horse on long distances. **A man of Benjamin.** The tribe in whose limits the battle was fought. It lay between Judah and Ephraim. **Came to Shiloh.** The place where the tabernacle had stood since the time of Joshua, about seventeen miles north of Jerusalem. After the loss of the ark it was deserted by the Israelites and perhaps laid waste by the Philistines, and never again occupied. It is now called Seilun. **The same day.** On the day of the battle, and after the defeat, he ran twelve or fifteen miles. **Clothes rent.** The usual sign of lamentation. **Earth upon his head.** Ashes and dust were thrown upon the head as a token that the mourner had been brought down to the very earth. 4. Those who have forsaken God are brought near to sorrow.

13. **Eli.** The aged priest, now nearly a hundred years old; a sincere worshipper of God, but unable to cope with the turbulent age upon which he had fallen. **Sat upon a seat.** Rather, "upon his throne," the chair of state, already referred to in chap. 1. 9, where he sat as priest and judge. **By the way-side.** Probably it stood at the gate leading into the court of the tabernacle, which fronted the street of the city. **Watching.** Though he could not work, he could watch. **His heart trembled.** With a foreboding of disaster, for he knew the danger to the ark, which was the nation's greatest

treasure. **For the ark.** He was a patriot and a father, but, more than for the land or for his sons, his anxiety was for the ark. 5. The follower of God holds his cause dearest and nearest to his heart. **Came into the city.** At the gate of the city he met the people, while Eli and the priesthood were near the tabernacle within. **All the city cried out.** With the loud Oriental wail, in a voice penetrating and heard afar.

14. 15. **Eli heard.** He could hear but not see. **What meaneth the noise?** The question was addressed to the Levites around, and then borne out to the messenger. **Came in hastily.** Breathless with long running, unable to collect his thoughts and break the news gently. **Ninety and eight years old.** His old age may account for his weakness in administration, and should temper the severity of our judgment upon his character. It is to be noticed that this record, written probably by his adopted son Samuel, always refers to him kindly. **Eyes were dim.** "Were set, or stiff." But for his blindness he could have seen the torn garments and dust-covered head of the messenger, and known his message.

16. **I am he that came.** And thus can report not rumours but certain facts. **What is there done?** In Hebrew the same words as in 2 Sam. 1. 4, "How went the matter?" **My son.** The kind language of an old man, who was in a sense the father of the entire people. See Josh. 7. 19.

17. **The messenger answered.** A simple, direct statement, yet each sentence mounts higher and strikes a deeper pang. 6. How much of sorrow a word may bring! **Israel is fled.** This was a deep disgrace, threatening ruin to the people, yet it was but the beginning of sorrows. **A great slaughter.** A defeat might yet leave hope for a victory, but not the loss of the warriors upon whom the nation depended. **Thy two sons.** Sad tidings for a father's ears, fulfilling the prophecy of chap. 2. 34, and the presage of heavier woes to his house. **The ark of God is taken.** The most bitter tidings are reserved for the last, for this seemed the token that the covenant of God was broken, the people abandoned by their divine Head, and left to destruction. There was a general belief among ancients that when the gods of a nation were carried captive to the conquering city, they transferred their patronage to it, and ceased to protect their former homes.

18. **When he made mention.** This is stated to show that it was religious grief, and not paternal, that caused the aged man's death. **Fell off... backward.** The seat was probably of stone, elevated, and without a back. **By the side of the gate.** The gate leading to the court of the tabernacle. The ancient curtain had been replaced by a more substantial wall with gates of entrance, and probably the tabernacle itself was at that time not a tent but a

house, with rooms built round it, somewhat as the temple in after times. **His neck brake.** Even a young man might be killed by such a fall, much more one in old age and with heavy body. 7. But death comes as no sorrow to one who has been a servant of God. Doubtless Eli in another world would realize at once his own errors and God's grace in forgiveness. **Judged Israel.** Not by election of the people, but by the divine appointment, and perhaps, in the prime of his years, a leader by his own vigor as well as the dignity of his office. **Forty years.** While Samson is ruling upon the Philistine frontiers, Eli was judge in the central section. Eli was succeeded by Samuel, under whom the people rose once more to power.

#### GOLDEN TEXT.

**His sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not.** 1 Sam. 3. 13.

#### OUTLINE.

1. **The Battle,** v. 10-11.
2. **The Watcher,** v. 12-15.
3. **The Report,** v. 16-18.

#### HOME READINGS.

- M.* Eli's death. 1 Sam. 4. 10-18.  
*Tu.* Sending for the ark. 1 Sam. 4. 1-9.  
*W.* The ark among the Philistines. 1 Sam. 5. 1-12.  
*Th.* The ark returned. 1 Sam. 6. 1-15.  
*F.* The warning of wisdom. Prov. 1. 20-33.  
*S.* Parents and children. Eph. 6. 1-10.  
*S.* Israel at peace. Isa. 32. 13-20.

**Time.**—B. C. 1141.

**Place.**—Shiloh, in central Palestine.

**Connecting Links.**—1. Israel defeated by the Philistines. 1 Sam. 4. 1, 2. 2. The ark of God brought to the camp. 1 Sam. 4. 3-9.

**Explanations.**—*The Philistines fought*—The battle was at Ebenezer, where afterward God gave the Israelites a great victory over the same enemies. *Israel was smitten*—Though they had the ark in the camp it did not save them from defeat. *Into his tent*—Into his home, is the meaning. *There fell*—Slain in the battle. *The ark . . . was taken*—The chest containing the law of God and the token of God's presence with his people. *Two sons of Eli*—They were very wicked, though priests of God, and deserved to die, as was shown in the last lesson. *Came to Shiloh*—Where the tabernacle was. *Clothes rent . . . earth upon his head*—Oriental tokens of mourning. *Eli sat . . . watching*—Very anxious for the ark of God. *All the city cried*—As they heard the sad news. *What meaneth*—He heard the noise, but no one had ventured to tell him its cause, and being blind, he could not see the faces of the people. *Told Eli*—Told him what is related in the following verses. *I am he*—I am one who came from the army and know all that has happened. *My son*—Eli was, as priest and judge, the father of all the people. *The messenger answered*—His words are of gathering trouble: a story of sorrow simply told. *When he made mention*—The ark of God was dearer than all else, because it was believed to have

God's presence with it. *From off the seat*—The seat had no support at the back. *An old man*—About ninety-eight years.

#### LESSON HYMNS.

No. 8, *New Dominion Hymnal.*

Saviour, like a Shepherd lead us.

No. 17, *Neo D. II.*

I need thee, precious Jesus!

No. 795, *Hymn Book.*

4-Ss & 2-6s.

I and my house will serve the Lord;  
 But first obedient to his word  
 I must myself appear;  
 By actions, words, and tempers show,  
 That I my heavenly Master know,  
 And serve with heart sincere.

I must the fair example set;  
 From those that on my pleasure wait  
 The stumbling-block remove;  
 Their duty by my life explain;  
 And still in all my works maintain  
 The dignity of love.

#### QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

1. **The Battle,** v. 10, 11. Where and between whom was the battle fought? ver. 1. What did we learn about the Philistines in Lesson X, Third Quarter? [The lesson about Samson]. What did the Israelites have with them at this battle? v. 4, 5. Why did not the presence of the ark help them? What was the result of the battle? How was the prophecy of God to Samuel fulfilled? How may we expect to win victory? 1 John 5, 4.

2. **The Watcher,** v. 12-15. Who was watching, and for what? Who was Eli, and what was his character? Who brought the news of the battle? How did the people receive the news? What did Eli inquire about, and why? For what was he anxious?

3. **The Report,** v. 16-18. How did Eli address the messenger? What four sad things did the messenger tell? Which of these appealed to Eli as a ruler? What brought sorrow to him as a father? How did he regard it as a just punishment? What was the saddest news of all, and why? What was the effect of the news upon him? How does this lesson show the result of the GOLDEN TEXT?

#### TEACHINGS OF THE LESSON.

Where does this lesson show—

1. That God forsakes the people that forsake him!
2. That sin and neglect bring sore punishment!
3. That God's warnings are sure of fulfilment!

**The Lesson Catechism.**—(For the entire school). 1. For what did the Israelites send when about to fight with the Philistines? For the ark of God. 2. Why did not the ark save them from defeat? Because they had forsaken God. 3. Who were slain in the battle? The two sons of Eli. 4. What became of the ark? It was taken by the Philistines. 5. How did

the news affect Eli? He fell down and was killed.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—God's fidelity to his warnings.

#### QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

1. **The Battle**, v. 10, 11. Who won the victory in this battle? How many of the Israelites were slain? What was the greatest loss to the Israelites? Why had the ark been put in jeopardy? See v. 3. Of what were the people guilty in this act?

2. **The Watcher**, v. 12-15. Who brought the news to Shiloh? What did his rent clothes signify? How did Eli show his anxiety for the result? How did he learn the tidings? What was his age, and what his infirmity?

3. **The Report**, v. 16-18. What announcement was made by the messenger? What was Eli's special inquiry? What gave the high-priest the greatest grief? What was dearer to him than his own children? What was the effect of this news upon him?

#### PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.

Where in this lesson are we shown—

1. That bold ventures, without the divine blessing, will bring defeat?
2. That disasters to the Church are personal disasters to believers?
3. That the true Christian should be anxious for the well-being of the Church?

#### QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

Who fought against the Israelites? The Philistines. What did the Israelites take with them into battle? The ark of God. Why did they do this? They hoped it would help them. To whom should they have looked for help? To the Lord. What followed? A great battle. Who were defeated? The Israelites. Whose sons were killed? The sons of Eli. What became of the ark of God? It was taken by the Philistines. What was in the ark? The ten commandments. How did the people in the city receive the bad news? With great sorrow. Who was waiting to hear of the battle? Eli. How old was he at the time? Ninety-eight years. How did he bear the sad tidings? He fell back and died. What caused Eli's death? The loss of the ark. What did this mean to him? The loss of God's favour. Why was Eli punished? [Repeat GOLDEN TEXT.]

#### WORDS WITH LITTLE PEOPLE.

Some people trust in—

- Their good resolutions;
- Their good works;
- Their church-going.

Others trust in—

- A living God, who fights for them, and saves them from their enemies.

In which do you trust?

#### ANALYTICAL AND BIBLICAL OUTLINE.

##### The Results of Forsaking God.

#### I. SUPERSTITION.

The ark of God was come. v. 6.

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

#### II. WEAKNESS.

Israel was smitten. v. 10.

"Turned their backs, because they were accursed." Josh. 7. 12.

#### III. DEFEAT.

There was a very great slaughter. v. 10.

"Gave his people over . . . unto the sword." Ps. 78. 62.

#### IV. LOSS OF PRIVILEGE.

The ark of God was taken. v. 11.

"He forsook the tabernacle of Shiloh." Ps. 78. 60.

#### V. ANXIETY.

His heart trembled for the ark. v. 18.

"If I forget thee . . . tongue cleave." Ps. 137. 6.

#### VI. SORROW.

All the city cried out. v. 13.

"Behold my affliction . . . enemy . . . magnified." Lam. 1. 9.

#### VII. DEATH.

Fell from off the seat. . . he died. v. 18.

"I will cut off thine arm." 1 Sam. 2. 31.

#### ADDITIONAL PRACTICAL LESSONS.

##### Thoughts upon the Loss of the Ark.

1. Those children who are not controlled in youth, in age will become the sorrow of their parents.
2. The destiny of the nation, as well as of the family, depends upon the right training in the home.
3. The warnings as well as the promises of God are sure fulfilment.
4. The outward forms of worship have no saving power without the heart of service.
5. Love for our children should not be greater than love for the cause of God.
6. He who has done God's will fully need never tremble with fear.
7. Good men suffer keenly for the sins of others and their own errors of judgment.

#### CATECHISM QUESTION.

9. *What do you learn from the death of Christ?*  
From the death of Christ I learn the infinite evil of sin in the sight of God, who could not suffer it to go unpunished.

Without shedding of blood is no remission.—Hebrews 9. 22.

10. *What further do you learn from the death of Christ?*

Beside the infinite sin in God's sight, I learn that God is love; for "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."—(John 3. 16).

### ENGLISH TEACHER'S NOTES.

BY SARAH GERALDINA STOCK.

A SHORT time ago I was admiring a live hyacinth, rich with exquisitely tinted blossoms, a wealth of beauty to look at. A few days later I saw it faded and spoiled and withered before its time. The slender string which bound it to the supporting prop had been in some way severed, so that the stalk, unable to bear the weight of the blossoms, had given way, and hung drooping and useless. What had brought this ruin upon its beauty? The failure of restraint.

Not long before, a sad accident had happened in one of our northern towns. A factory chimney had fallen, crushing and killing several of the workmen. The chimney appears to have been regarded by the latter for some time as unsafe, and the day before it fell it was noticed as rocking tremendously in the gale. The catastrophe might probably have been prevented had the mischief been stopped in time.

We have a sad history before us to-day. It shows us

#### 1. Two lives cut short.

There was no position among the Israelites more honourable and more to be desired than that of priest. It had been coveted by Korah and his companions. Num. 16. 10. This office was the heritage of Eli's two sons, Hophni and Phinehas; and one of them must have looked forward to be high-priest, in the room of his father. They had the care of the ark of God, and went out with it to battle against the Philistines, thinking, no doubt, to return home victorious and triumphant. They were young men "in the flower of their age," (chap. 2. 33), and might look forward to long years of prosperity and pleasure. But that day of battle was their last, and the mournful news was carried home to the aged father: "thy two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, are dead." They were cut short in their prime.

#### 2. A terrible catastrophe.

Hophni and Phinehas did not fall alone. Thirty thousand warriors of Israel were slain; the ark of God, the "glory of Israel," was taken by the enemy, and the aged high-priest fell back and died when he heard the news. Nor was this all. Read the description of what happened in Psalm 78. 60-64. It was such a calamity as rarely visits a nation, the destruction of their "holy place," so that the spot where it had stood became as a "curse,"

(Jer. 7. 12, 14; 26. 6, 9), and "desolate, without an inhabitant," and the utter ruin of their strength and prosperity. For twenty years they had to bear the yoke of the Philistines, unable to recover their lost liberty. Chap. 7. 2, 3.

What was the cause of all this? The Golden Text tells us. It was the lack of restraint, the failing to put a stop to what was mischievous while there was yet time. The source of it lay, strangely and sadly enough, in the conduct of one who was nevertheless a servant of God, in the neglect and weakness of Eli the high-priest.

Hophni and Phinehas must have been brought up, as Samuel was, under the shadow of the "house of God." But they never gave ear to the voice of the Lord, nor submitted their hearts to his cause. They began, no doubt, early to go astray from the right path. While Samuel, in his youthful days, opened his heart to the knowledge of God, Hophni and Phinehas, as grown men, exercising the high office of priest, and filling often the place of their father, "knew not the Lord." Chap. 2. 12. And so they used their place and power presumptuously, selfishly, and wickedly, not only gaining for themselves an ill report, but leading others into sin. The mischief had now grown to a great height, and Eli's remonstrance was as a feather to stop the course of the wind. But there was a time when he might have stopped it. When Hophni and Phinehas were boys, wayward and self-willed, no doubt, but not yet confirmed in evil habits, and still amenable to fatherly discipline, then was the time. But "he restrained them not." And because they, who ought, by example, influence, and precept to have led Israel in the right way; on the contrary, "made themselves vile," encouraging all kinds of wickedness, and driving the people into apostasy, (chap. 2. 17, 24; Psa. 78. 56-58,) therefore the wrath of God came, not only upon them, but upon Israel, bringing about the terrible ruin we have been considering. Chap. 2. 27-54.

Would our young people avoid bringing calamity upon themselves and upon others? Let them learn the value of restraint—

(a) *In submitting to it.* It is thought a fine thing in the present day to be subject to no control. The young plant thinks it can do without any supporting prop, and breaks away, to its own exceeding detriment. But where would be many of the gardener's choicest specimens if not inclosed in the narrow confines of a pot? Where would be the beauty of the green-house, or the fruit of the hot-house, if they were set freely open to all the winds of heaven? I knew a fine young man who had discerned this when quite a little boy. "How can you expect me

not to do it again," said the young sage to his mother, "if you never punish me!" The young have, indeed, cause to fear who have no restraining bands set about them.

(b) *By exercising it.* As they grow older they cannot have parents and guardians continually about them, closing the avenues of approach to all evil. The slender threads of loving admonition and warning may be broken through if they choose to break through them. They must be supplemented by self-restraint. "Bind them," says Solomon, "continually upon thine heart, and tie them about thy neck." Prov. 5. 21. And above all let the prayer go up on high: "That thine hand might be with me, and that thou wouldest keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me!"

### BEREAN METHODS.

#### Hints for the Teachers' Meeting and the Class.

Give an account of the ark, its form, construction, history, etc. . . . How it came to be in the camp. . . . Why it did not bring victory The Philistines—origin, home, history character, religion, etc. . . . The battles, first and second. . . . Results of the second battle. . . . Eli, his history and character. . . . A word-picture of the scene at Shiloh: 1. The messenger; 2. the priest; 3. The message. . . . Lessons: 1. Concerning parental government; 2. Concerning national destiny; 3. Concerning our duty. . . . Eli was anxious for God's cause: what reasons for anxiety do we have? . . . ILLUSTRATIONS. Illustrate from the history of ancient peoples—Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome—the principle that wickedness in a nation is the precursor of its weakness and ruin. . . . A tree growing in crooked and deformed shape because not trained and pruned to straightness while a young shoot. So with character. . . . Parable of Nathan the Wise. A king possessed a ring which would make its wearer the favourite of God and pure in character. Having three sons, and unwilling to favour one above another, he caused two other rings to be made just like it, then mingled the three so that no one could tell the talisman from the rest. To each son he gave one ring, and the possessor of the talisman would be revealed in the one who enjoyed most of God's favour by living a holy life. So the distinction between God's people and others is the possession of righteousness, and righteousness will give power over the world.

**References.** FOSTER'S CYCLOPEDIA OF ILLUSTRATIONS: Poetical, 2450. Prose, 4310, 4312, 7100, 7102. Ver. 10: Prose, 10895. Ver. 17: Poetical, 3122. . . . FREEMAN'S HANDBOOK: Ver. 12: Rendering the clothes, 70;

Earth on the head, 279. Ver. 18: Gates, 15; The seat of judgment, 248.

### Primary and Intermediate.

BY M. V. M.

**LESSON THOUGHTS.** God punishes sin. Make on the board three steps, printing "Sin" on the first, "Defeat" on the second, "Death" on the third. Or, make three frames, making word-picture for each frame. The first representation shows more easily how one leads up to the other.

#### SIN.

Eli was an old priest who knew God's law. God tells us his commands so that we may keep them. Eli tried to keep them himself, but he did not make his sons do so. He let them do wrong, and in so doing he broke this command, "Train up a child," etc. Tell that God puts children under the care of grown people so that they may be taught right and good ways. When the Israelites saw how the sons of the priest sinned, they thought it was not so bad to disobey God, and so they sinned, too. Show how one little seed multiplies. A head of wheat furnishes a good object-lesson here. Teach that just so evil repeats itself. Tell how war broke out, and let children tell what they think God would do for disobedient people?

#### DEFEAT.

Question about the ark of God, what it symbolized, etc. Recall the crossing of Jordan, and tell why the people had confidence when they saw the ark. Had they reason to rejoice when they saw it coming? No, for they were not fighting in obedience to God, and they had disobeyed God in getting possession of the ark. Tell how Hophni and Phinehas dared to touch what God said only holy hands should touch. Describe the battle, the defeat, the death of Eli's sons, and lead children to see how all this trouble grew out of disobedience.

#### DEATH.

Use blackboard, and describe the interview between Eli and the messenger. Eli knew that God was angry with the people, and that he would punish them, but when he heard that the ark had been carried away by the wicked Philistines, it was more than he could bear. Ask why this was worse than the loss of his sons? Can we do anything if God is not with us? Make above the steps a cross, print above, "Christ our Ark," and teach that without Christ we can do nothing good; that disobeying God will hide Him from our sight, and that we can only be safe and conquer our enemies as we obey God's voice, and so keep in sight of our Ark.

## Lesson Word-Pictures.

All the day long the battle raged; masses of men fiercely charging one way, masses of men as fiercely charging the other way; warriors in single combat, their swords crossing or spears clashing. It is war's bloody maelstrom, one mad whirl of its cruel, pitiless forces. In it all is one specially prominent object. Have we not seen it elsewhere, draped with blue, resting on gold-covered staves that white-robed priests were lifting? It is the ark of God, before which the walls of Jericho fell abashed, before which Jordan's stream shrank away. And to-day, will not its presence triumphantly bow to the earth these assaulting idolaters? No, the Philistines are not running. They even venture closer and closer. They may have been occasionally repulsed, and yet that impious wave finally surges up to the very ark, sweeps away the envelope of its priestly guard, and profanes it by its unhallowed grasp! Ah, it is only a wooden box that is taken, for God is not with the ark to-day. Israel flies, and among the white, cold faces left behind in death, are Hophni and Phinehas. A man is running. His garments are torn. Earth is on his head. He is a messenger from the battle-field, a fragment flung out of the wild maelstrom. He reaches Shiloh, and as he touches it, the shadow of death seems also to touch it. There are outcries of grief on every side. As the man goes on, the shadow goes on and deepens and blackens. The cries sharpen and multiply. There is an old man in Shiloh, seated by the way-side, an old man, white-haired, weary, dim of sight. He hears the growing outcry. He turns his wrinkled, pitiful, face, his sightless eyes, in the direction of the noise. What does it mean? Will some one

tell him? But the messenger comes and tells the story himself. Hophni and Phinehas dead! The ark of God taken, that sacred shrine, the cherubim's resting-place; the awful Shekinah's pedestal—that taken, and Dagon victorious over Jehovah! The burden of the tidings the old man is too weak to carry. He falls from his seat and dies!

## Blackboard.

BY J. B. PHIPPS, B.S.Q.



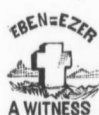
This illustration is designed to teach that the path of disobedience and sin always leads to destruction. Punishment is the natural result of sin, and if a person will walk in its path, whose fault is it if he suffers the consequences? The design represents a cliff with a path leading to the edge. Whoever walks in this path long enough will certainly fall. Even so it is with sin's way. Israel was defeated in consequence of sin; and the ark was taken in consequence of sin; and if any one of us is walking in sinful ways he will just as certainly suffer punishment. The time to leave a disobedient way is now.

B.C. 1130.

Oct. 14.

## LESSON II.—SAMUEL THE JUDGE.

1 Sam. 7. 3-17.



3 And Samuel spake unto all the house of Israel, saying, If ye do a return unto the LORD with all your hearts, then b put away the strange gods and c Ashtaroth from among you, and d prepare your hearts unto the LORD, and e serve him only; and he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines.

a Deut. 30. 2.—b Gen. 35. 2.—c Judg. 2. 13.—d 2 Chron. 30. 19.—e Deut. 6. 13.

4 Then the children of Israel did put away Baalim f and Ashtaroth, and served the LORD only.

f Judg. 2. 11.

5 And Samuel said, g Gather all Israel to Mizpeh, and I will pray for you unto the LORD.

g Judg. 10. 17; 11. 11; 20. 1; chap. 10. 17.

6 And they gathered together to Mizpeh, and h drew water, and poured it out before the LORD, and fasted i on that day, and said there, j We

have sinned against the LORD. And Samuel judged the children of Israel in Mizpeh.

A 2 Sam. 14. 14.—i Neh. 9. 1, 2.—j Judg. 10. 10.

7 And when the Philistines heard that the children of Israel were gathered together to Mizpeh, the lords of the Philistines went up against Israel. And when the children of Israel heard it, they were afraid of the Philistines.

8 And the children of Israel said to Samuel, Cease not to cry unto the LORD our God for us, that he will save us out of the hand of the Philistines.

9 And Samuel took a sucking lamb, and offered it for a burnt-offering wholly unto the LORD; and k Samuel cried unto the LORD for Israel; and the LORD heard him.

k Psa. 99. 6; Jer. 15. 1.

10 And as Samuel was offering up the burnt-offering, the Philistines drew near to battle against Israel: l but the LORD thundered with

a great thunder on that day upon the Philistines, and discomfited them; and they were smitten before Israel.

*1* Josh. 10, 10; Judg. 4, 15; chap. 2, 10.

11 And the men of Israel went out of Mizpeh, and pursued the Philistines, and smote them until *they came* under Bethel.

12 Then Samuel took a stone, and set it between Mizpeh and Shen, and called the name of it Ebenezer, saying, Hitherto hath the LORD helped us.

13 So *m* the Philistines were subdued, and they *n* came no more into the coast of Israel: and the hand of the LORD was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel.

*m* Judg. 13, 1.—*n* Chap. 13, 5.

14 And the cities which the Philistines had taken from Israel were restored to Israel, from Ekron even unto Gath; and the coasts thereof did Israel deliver out of the hands of the Philistines. And there was peace between Israel and the Amorites.

15 And Samuel *o* judged Israel all the days of his life.

16 And he went from year to year in circuit to Bethel, and Gilgal, and Mizpeh, and judged Israel in all those places.

17 And his return *was* to Ramah; for there *was* his house; and there he judged Israel; and there he built *p* an altar unto the LORD.

*o* Chap. 12, 11; Judg. 2, 16.—*p* Judg. 21, 4.

#### GENERAL STATEMENT.

The ark of God remained for less than a year in the hands of the Philistines, but for many years was in seclusion, and separated from the tabernacle. During almost a generation there was no regular service, and no organization of the nation; the people were without the emblem of God's presence, and crushed under the power of their enemies. Yet there was one strong heart that remained faithful and sustained the faltering hope of Israel. From his home in Ramah, Samuel went quietly throughout the land, calling upon the tribes to unite, urging them to cease from the service of the false gods, and promising them God's help if they would become his people as of old. His labours were successful. Everywhere the heart of the nation responded to his appeal, the idols were forsaken and destroyed, and the face of the people was turned toward their fathers' God. The next step in the reformation was to summon a great assembly of the people at Mizpeh, a central location in the land of Benjamin. They met to express their sorrow over the past and their vows of consecration to God's service. But the inevitable result followed this awakening of the national and religious life. Their Philistine oppressors marked the gathering, feared its result, and marched to disperse the throng and bind the shackles more securely upon the nation. The terror of the people only made them turn to their God and his prophet in despairing faith. Samuel was just offering a lamb, the token of Israel's consecration, and lifting up his interceding cry, when the Philistine hosts appeared in sight. The Almighty answered with a thunderstorm of hail and lightning upon the faces of the

foes. They were seized with a sudden panic, and fled, pursued by the rejoicing Israelites. A signal victory was wrought; long kept in mind by the monument raised upon the field, and called "Ebenezer—the stone of help." The vigour of Samuel made the victory a permanent freedom to Israel. Everywhere the Philistines retired, and the Israelites pushed forward their borders. The whole land was now united under the wise rule of the prophet, and Samuel passed from city to city executing justice and imparting instruction. At Ramah arose a new altar, making it the religious capital of the people, and gathering all the tribes for worship; while peace and order reigned throughout the land.

#### EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

**Verse 3. Samuel spake.** Going among the people, and meeting them in homes and gatherings. **All the house of Israel.** Probably this refers mainly to the people in the central portion of the land, northern Judah, Benjamin, and Ephraim. **If ye do return.** Already the desire after God and the reaction from the idol-worship of the past had begun to quicken the hearts of the people. 1. There is a longing of the nature which only God can satisfy. **Return unto the Lord.** The association with the Canaanite races had resulted in the worship of their idols, from which the best part of the people were now striving to be free. **The strange gods.** The gods which were foreign or strange to Israel as a race. **Ashtaroth.** Plural form of Ashtoreth or Astarte, the male divinity corresponding to Baal as the male, generally figured as a woman with horns projecting from the head. **Prepare your hearts.** By renouncing all rival affections, and inclinations toward other gods. **Serve him only.** 2. God will accept no half-service; he demands the whole heart. **He will deliver thee.** The utterance of faith inspired from on high. 3. Those who are with God have an almighty Friend. **Philistines.** See note on verse 10, last lesson. Their iron rule had now rested upon Israel for more than a generation.

**4, 5. Then.** As the result of Samuel's personal efforts among the people. **Put away Baalim.** Plural of Baal, the male divinity of the Canaanite races, worshipped under different forms, but generally as a male figure having horns. His worship was accompanied with the grossest debauchery. **Gather all Israel.** The next step in the revival and reformation was to hold an assembly. Not all the Israelites were present, but representatives from all parts of the land. The design was to inspire the people with a new enthusiasm in God's service. **To Mizpeh.** "The watch-tower," a place in the tribe of Benjamin, not far from Jerusalem. **I will pray for you.** There was a general confidence in the power of prayer dwelling in one who lived in such intimate communion with God. 4. We have an Intercessor nearer the throne than even Samuel.

**6. They gathered.** Elders and people from all Israel; the women and children being left at home. **At Mizpeh.** This was the religious centre of the people after the loss of the ark and the fall of Shiloh. Here the great assemblies were held and here Saul was inaugurated king. **Drew water and poured it out.** A token either of their sorrow and humiliation before God; or of a vow, which was thus shown as irrevocable as the water spilled upon the ground. **Fasted.** As a sign of their abasement on account of sin. **Said there.** 5. The open and audible confession of sin will be a help in renouncing it. **Samuel judged.** Though he had been looked upon as the national leader and prophet for many years, this was the commencement of his official career. He now assumed authority as God's representative, judged between man and man and between the people and their God, and prepared to undertake the duties of a military leader. 6. The revival of God's work demands purity and righteousness on the part of his workers. 7. God's cause requires organization and leadership for its success.

**7. Philistines heard.** Such a gathering could not escape notice, and would forebode danger of insurrection. **The lords of the Philistines.** The Philistines were not yet organized into a monarchy, but were ruled by an aristocracy of their five affiliated cities. **Went up.** From their cities on the lowlands to the seat of the Israelites in the mountain region. **Against Israel.** 8. The immediate result of a revival of God's work is to arouse the bitter opposition of all its enemies. **They were afraid.** They were unorganized, without arms, and thoroughly cowed under their masters by a generation of servitude.

**8. Said to Samuel.** They had no confidence in themselves, but great faith in their leader's influence with God. **Cease not to cry.** "Be not silent for us from crying." The language here and elsewhere would indicate that the prayer of Samuel was probably a loud, piercing cry, like a shriek, kept up for a long time. **Unto the Lord our God.** They claim now an interest in Jehovah as their God, for they had renounced the service of idols. **That he will save us.** They had no arms, and no power; if saved at all it must be by the hand of God. 9. Often the very exigency of trial promotes faith in God.

**9. A sucking lamb.** A lamb a few days old, representing a people young, helpless, and dependent upon their God. **Offered it.** Either by his own hand, as prophet; or by the hand of the high-priest, Ahitub, who may have been present as a young man. **Burnt-offering.** This sacrifice was wholly consumed upon the altar, and represented entire consecration to God. **Cried unto the Lord.** Praying for the people, while the sacrifice lay on the altar. **The Lord heard.** "Answered" is more accurate. The answer was given in the thunder-storm, as the voice of the Lord. . Psa. 99. 6.

**10. Philistines drew near.** About to rush in upon the almost defenceless throng. **The Lord thundered... discomfited.** The thunder, with lightning, in a land where such storms are rare, and accompanied with hail beating on the faces of the Philistines, wrought upon their superstitious fears, and threw them into confusion. **Smitten before Israel.** They fled, casting their arms away in their haste to escape. Such sudden panics are not rare, even in the thorough discipline of modern warfare.

**11. The men of Israel.** Encouraged by the voice of their leader and by the token of God's help. **Went out.** Left the shelter of the city in pursuit of the flying foes. **Smote them.** Using such arms as they possessed, and taking those of their enemies. **Beth-car.** An unknown place between Mizpeh and the plain, probably on the edge of the mountains of Benjamin.

**12. Took a stone.** According to the ancient custom, still prevalent in Oriental countries, of setting up monuments of great events. **Shen.** The word signifies "a tooth," and doubtless refers to some projecting crag, then well known, but now not identified. **Eben-ezer.** "The stone of help," a monument reminding Israel that the victory came not by their own prowess, but by the help of God. It stood on the very field where the ark had been captured twenty years before (chap. 4. 1), and was full of humbling, grateful suggestions. **Hitherto.** "Up to this point of time."

**13. Philistines were subdued.** Thoroughly beaten and repelled. **They came no more.** Not during the period of Samuel's rule did they successfully make inroads upon the land of Israel. **Hand of the Lord was against.** This would indicate that they made attempts to regain their lost supremacy, but failed. **All the days of Samuel.** Not during his life, but his government; for after the accession of Saul to the throne, their aggressions were successfully renewed.

**14. Cities... taken... restored.** The small cities and villages along the foot-hills of the maritime plain, on the borders between Israel and Philistia. **From Ekron.** The most northerly of the Philistine cities, now called Akir. **To Gath.** Probably "Tell-es-Safeh," fifteen miles south of Ekron. These places, Ekron and Gath, were not conquered, or certainly not held, for Gath appears afterward as the leading Philistine city. **The coasts.** The places bordering on Israel, between the two cities named above, but not including them. **Peace.... Amorites.** This is a general term for the Canaanite races in and around Israel, who were now overawed by the Israelite power, under Samuel's vigorous leadership.

**15. Judged Israel.** Probably he was the only judge whose authority was recognized by both Judah and Ephraim, and by all the tribes



on the west of the Jordan. **All the days of his life.** Even after the coronation of Saul, Samuel was recognized as possessing supreme authority, and held in the highest reverence.

**16. Went...in circuit.** By a systematic round of visitation, though apparently in quite a narrow sphere, as all these places are in the tribe of Benjamin. Perhaps this was arranged to bring the distant tribes together at the centre of the land. **Bethel.** Twelve miles north of Jerusalem, and an ancient sanctuary, where God had appeared to Jacob. Gen. 28. **Gilgal.** In the Jordan valley, near Jericho, the headquarters of Joshua's army during the conquest. **Mizpeh.** Five miles north of Jerusalem.

**17. Return was to Ramah.** About six miles north of Jerusalem. **His house.** He went to this place, his father's home, after the destruction of Shiloh. **Built an altar.** This was the recognized altar for all Israel, now that the ark was in seclusion and the tabernacle was no longer a place of meeting. Until the selection of a permanent place for both altar and ark, it seemed necessary to have some such temporary place of worship and offering.

#### GOLDEN TEXT.

Hitherto hath the Lord helped us. 1 Sam. 7. 12.

#### OUTLINE.

1. A Reformer, v. 3-6.
2. An Intercessor, v. 7-12.
3. A Ruler, v. 13-17.

#### HOME READINGS.

- M.* Samuel the judge. 1 Sam. 7. 3-17.  
*T.* Asa's reformation. 2 Chron. 15. 1-15.  
*W.* Jehoshaphat's rule. 2 Chron. 19. 4-11.  
*Th.* The just judge. Deut. 16. 16-22.  
*F.* The Lord's help. Isa. 44. 1-8.  
*S.* The Lord's deliverance. Psa. 85. 1-13.  
*S.* Prayer for rulers. Psa. 72. 1-20.

**Time.**—B. C. 1120.

**Place.**—Mizpeh in the tribe of Benjamin.

**Connecting Links.**—1. The ark among the Philistines. 1 Sam. 5. 1-12. 2. The return of the ark. 1 Sam. 6. 1-21. 3. The ark at Kirjath-jearim. 1 Sam. 7. 1, 2.

**Explanations.**—*Samuel spake*—To the people as he went among them. They were at this time under the power of the Philistines. *If ye do return*—He had before urged them to seek the Lord as their helper. *Put away the strange gods*—The idols of the heathen. *Prepare your hearts*—Turn toward God. *He will deliver*—God would deliver them as soon as they were worthy of deliverance. *Baalim and Ashtaroth*—The supreme male and female divinities of the Phenicians and Canaanites. *Gather all Israel*—For a service of worship and confession of sins. *Drew water and poured it*—As an emblem of sorrow over sins, pouring out their hearts before God. *Judged*—Set matters right between the people and toward God; showed them their sins,

and gave decisions of duty. *Philistines heard*—They were at that time ruling over Israel as its conquerors. *They were afraid*—Not having arms nor power to wage war, and feeling themselves helpless. *Cease not to cry*—They had confidence in Samuel's prayers with God, but none in their own power. *A sucking lamb*—As a burnt-offering, indicating the consecration of the people to God. *The Lord heard*—That is, heard with favour, and answered. *Thundered*—Thunder storms are rare in that region. *Discomfited them*—Drove them away. *They were smitten*—The Israelites took courage and went out against them. *Took a stone*—As a memorial and monument of the victory. *Ebenezer*—The word means "stone of help," and it was on the very place where the ark had been taken. Chap. 4. 1. *Subdued*—Driven away in answer to Samuel's prayer. *All the days of Samuel*—While he ruled as judge. *Days of his life*—Even after Saul became king Samuel still held authority. *In circuit*—He went around holding a court for judgment of cases. *Built an altar*—The tabernacle at Shiloh had been destroyed, and the service was in neglect until Samuel restored it.

#### LESSON HYMNS.

- No. 23, *New D. H.*  
 I will sing of my Redeemer.  
 No. 32, *New D. H.*  
 Jesus, Lover of my soul.  
 No. 118, *New D. H.*  
 Come, thou Fount of every blessing.

#### QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

**1. A Reformer, v. 3-6.** In what condition were the Israelites at that time? What four things did Samuel urge the people to do? What kind of a service does God require? Deut. 6. 5. What did Samuel say that God would do for them? For what purpose did Samuel call the people together, and where? What did he promise to do for them? How did the people show a true sorrow for sin?

**2. An Intercessor, v. 7-12.** What happened when the Philistines heard of the meeting at Mizpeh? Why were they offended? Why were the Israelites afraid? Upon whom did they depend for help? How did Samuel help them? How were his prayers answered? What did Samuel set up as a memorial, and where? What did its name instruct the people?

**3. A Ruler, v. 13-17.** What did God help Samuel to do? What successes did Samuel have against the Philistines? Show on the map the places where Samuel judged Israel? Where was Samuel home? How did Samuel show the spirit of worship? What are our sacrifices to God? Rom. 12. 1.

#### TEACHINGS OF THE LESSON.

Where do we find in this lesson—

1. How to come to God?
2. How to obtain victory?
3. How to remember God's mercy?

**The Lesson Catechism.**—(For the entire school). 1. How did Samuel urge the Israelites to obtain deliverance from the Philistines? By turning to the Lord. 2. What did he lead the people to do at Mizpeh? To confess sin and seek God. 3. What did the Philistines do when they heard of the meeting? They came against Israel. 4. How were the Israelites delivered from the Philistines? Through the prayer of Samuel. 5. What memorial of the victory did Samuel set up? The stone Ebenezer. 6. What did he say that the stone was to remind the people of? "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us."

**DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION** — The power of prayer.

#### QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

**1. A Reformer**, v. 3-6. What test of reform did the prophet urge? What was Ash-taroath? What duty did Samuel insist upon? What incentive did he present? How was his advice received?

**2. An Intercessor**, v. 7-12. What offer did Samuel make to the people? What act of humiliation accompanied their confession? What made the Israelites afraid? What intercession was made by Samuel? What intercession is now made for God's people? Rom. 8. 27. How were the Philistines routed? What memorial was set up, and what was its purport?

**3. A Ruler**, v. 13-17. What deliverance was wrought for the Israelites? What was secured by this deliverance? Under whose supervision were the people? What were the leading traits of Samuel's character?

#### PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.

Where in this lesson are we taught the duty of—

1. Sincere repentance?
2. Humble confession?
3. Earnest prayer?
4. Grateful remembrance?

#### QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

Who ruled the Israelites after Eli's death? The Philistines. What did the people worship? False gods. What did this cause them? Sorrow of heart. What did they now long to do? To return to the Lord. Who was their kind friend? Samuel. What did he tell them to do? Put away all other gods. To what place did he call them? To Mizpeh. For what purpose? To confess their sins. How did they show their sorrow? They poured out water before the Lord. Who came to drive the people away? The Philistines. What did the people ask Samuel to do? To pray to God for them. Why did God hear Samuel's prayer? Because of his faith and obedience. How did God help the Israelites? He sent a great storm to frighten the Philistines. How did Samuel celebrate the victory of the Israelites? He set up a "stone of help" on the battle-field. [Repeat Golden Text.] How long was there peace in Israel? As long as the people

served God. How long did Samuel rule Israel? All his life.

#### WORDS WITH LITTLE PEOPLE.

How we may show gratitude to God—By worshipping him only; by trusting him only; by serving him only; by telling how he has helped us.

#### ANALYTICAL AND BIBLICAL OUTLINE.

##### Samuel the Ruler.

I. A BELIEVING RULER.

Return unto the Lord. . . will deliver you.

v. 3.

"He hath torn and he will heal." Hosea 6. 1.

II. A PRAYING RULER.

I will pray for you unto the Lord. v. 5.

"Samuel among them that call." Psa. 99. 6.

III. A RIGHTEOUS RULER.

Judged the children of Israel. v. 6.

"To do justly and love mercy." Micah 6. 8.

VI. A TRUSTED RULER.

Cease not to cry. . . for us. v. 8.

"Pray for thy servants unto the Lord." 1 Sam. 12. 19.

V. A REVERENT RULER.

Hitherto hath the Lord helped us. v. 12.

"He is their help and their shield." Psa. 115. 9.

VI. A DILIGENT RULER.

Went from year to year in circuit. v. 16.

"Ye judge not for man, but for the Lord." 2 Chron. 19. 6.

#### ADDITIONAL PRACTICAL LESSONS.

##### One Man's Power for Good.

1. While there lives among a degenerate people one man thoroughly consecrated to God, there remains hope of revival for God's cause. v. 3.

2. One man devoted to God inspires confidence by himself setting an example of righteousness. v. 3.

3. One man can hold up before a back-slidden people their duty of serving God, and their privilege of enjoying God's protection. v. 3.

4. One man can by his personal character and earnest efforts exert an influence over a whole people to lead them to a reformation. v. 4.

5. One man can have power with God by his prayers in behalf of his people and the cause of God. v. 5, 9.

6. One man can lead the people in their repentance from sin, their turning toward God, and their consecration. v. 5, 6.

7. One man can give his people an example of trust in God which shall encourage them in an hour of adversity. v. 7-10.

8. One man can so encourage the confidence of others, and direct their efforts, as to give them victory over adversaries by God's power. v. 10, 11.

9. One man can show to others God's hand in their history and God's care over them. v. 12.

#### CATECHISM QUESTION.

11. What more do you learn from the death of Christ?

Beside learning the infinite evil of sin in God's sight,—and that God is love,—I also learn that God is a Being of awful justice; and that in the death of our Lord Jesus, both his love and justice are harmonized and glorified.

It pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief.—Isaiah 3. 10.

To declare—his righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.—Romans 3. 26.

Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have embraced each other.—Psalm 85. 10.

#### ENGLISH TEACHER'S NOTES.

BY SARAH GERALDINA STOCK.

THE business of the judge of Israel in old times included far more than we at present ascribe to the office. Under the Theocracy they were the actual human rulers, and their office answered rather to that of a Viceroy over one of the provinces of an empire, to whom is delegated the power of the sovereign. Such a viceroy or judge must be acquainted with all the affairs of the province committed to his charge. He must make himself personally acquainted with every part of it. He must be like a careful gardener in a spacious garden, leaving no part unwatched, no part untended, and so arranging for each several spot as to preserve and enhance the beauty of the whole.

But suppose such a garden be waste and desolate, the shrubs and plants withered, the grass growing rank, the ground full of weeds. Before the ordinary careful tending begins there must be something to tend. The ground must be weeded, new shrubs and flowers planted, and the whole place restored. Suppose that through the hardly completed hedge the cattle from the neighbouring fields make an entrance, threatening the newly recovered ground. They must be driven out and the place made secure against further intrusion. Then the work may be continued in tranquility, and the garden kept in fertility and beauty.

Just so, if the viceroy finds his province in a state of rebellion, he must first restore the authority of the sovereign, and bring back the inhabitants to their allegiance.

Nothing can be undertaken until this is accomplished. Then he may have to meet an inroad of the enemy. And when this is successfully repelled he may in peace go about the work of constant and careful supervision.

This is exactly the picture we find presented to us of Samuel, the judge of Israel. He had

1. *To bring the people back to their allegiance.*

They were in a state of moral and spiritual depression. They had forsaken the Lord, and his judgments had fallen upon them, but as yet they had not returned to him. There could be neither deliverance from their enemies nor prosperous administration as long as they were in this condition. And Samuel's first work was to call upon them to repent and put away their idols. The story of their return is told in a few verses, but how great a change does it represent! The thing was done openly and decidedly. Baalim and Ashtaroth were put away, a day of national fasting and confession was appointed, and at Mizpeh the Israelites declared themselves, by word and act, to be the people of God. The "garden of the Lord" which had so long lain waste and bare, unsightly and fruitless, began again to assume its former aspect. The hard soil was broken up, the dry ground was watered, and the almost withered plants began to revive and lift their heads anew. But now Samuel had another work to do—

2. *To meet an inroad of the enemy.*

The newly restored garden was speedily threatened. The Philistines who had trampled down Israel at their will during the apostasy of the people, were roused by the fear of losing their prey, and hastened to gather themselves together to battle. Quickly Samuel prepared his defenses. They were three in number: consecration, prayer, and action: There was the burnt-offering, offered "wholly unto the Lord," typical of the great sacrifice, by virtue of which alone the sinner can hope for deliverance, but expressive also of Israel's entire surrender to God. There was the cry of faith to him who was able to give the victory. And there was action; for "the Lord thundered with a great thunder upon the Philistines, and discomfited them, and they were smitten before Israel." The deliverance was complete, Israel was set free and her lost cities restored. And now Samuel entered upon his daily work.

3. *To watch over the land and the people.*  
He did this diligently, "year by year." He did it thoroughly, going throughout the country from north to south, to leave no part unvisited. And he did it with a single eye, as the people themselves testified. Chap.

12. 2-5. Of this work, which occupied the last part of his life, there is little recorded. It was a time of peace and prosperity, in which the blessing of the Lord rested upon Israel.

We have seen how this peace and prosperity were secured. And so must it be with the peace and prosperity of the soul.

"Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to thy word." "Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life."

Such is the command and counsel of Scripture. But before this walking and this keeping can be carried out, the heart must be turned to God. By nature it is in a state of anarchy and desolation. It is like a garden ruined and spoiled, or a province which has thrown off its allegiance to its rightful monarch. And the first thing necessary is that it should be restored and renewed. It is no use trying to secure God with an unrenewed heart. "Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?"

And when the heart has turned, has received new life, then often does the enemy swoop down to destroy, if possible, what God has reclaimed, suggesting doubts, heaping up temptations, pressing hard on the timid soul. But the defenses still hold good: consecration—be decided for God and you will find he is on your side; prayer, "Call upon me. . . I will deliver thee;" action, "If any man will do his will, he shall know," etc.; and God will give the victory.

Then comes the tending. Let it be careful and thorough. Every thought and word tried in the light of God, every part of the life given heed to, that all may be done to his glory. Yet not in our own strength, but in his, that Samuel's motto may be ours: "Ebenezer: hitherto hath the Lord helped us."

#### BEREAN METHODS.

##### Hints for the Teachers' Meeting and the Class.

Draw a map of Palestine, showing the Philistine plain, and the mountain region occupied by Israel, and locating Mizpeh, Aphek, Bethel, Gilgal, Ramah, etc. . . . Show the condition of Israel when Samuel arose to power, as an illustration of a people in need of revival, without ordinances, organization, or power, subject to the world, and in sin, etc. . . . Show the steps which Samuel took to bring about a revival. (See Additional Practical Lessons.) . . . Show the results of a revival: 1. Reformation; 2. Opposition of the world; 3. Power over the world; 4. The favour of God; 5. Strength in God's cause

. . . The character of Samuel as here shown. (See Analytical and Biblical Outline.) . . . Practical duties for us all: 1. Trust; 2. Repentance from sin; 3. —; 4. —. . . ILLUSTRATIONS. Samuel's power was from his union with God. Illustrate by electromagnet, which is very powerful while in connection with the galvanic battery, but utterly powerless when separated. . . . Samuel as an intercessor for his people is a good type of Christ, our mediator, one who supplicates in our stead before the throne of the Highest; one whose prayer is more acceptable than ours could be; one who brings us into fellowship with the Most High. . . . Mary, Queen of Scots, once said, "I fear the prayers of John Knox more than an army of ten thousand men!"

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#### Primary and Intermediate.

BY M. V. M.

LESSON THOUGHT. *God our helper.* To be taught: 1. Who helps into trouble. 2. Who helps out of trouble.

#### WHO HELPS INTO TROUBLE.

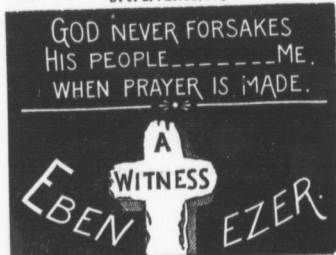
Question on the trouble into which the Israelites had fallen. Print "Baal" and "Ash-toreth" on the board, tell that these are the names of the gods worshipped by the heathen. But now many of the Israelites worshipped these same idols! Ask why this was a great sin, and call for first commandment. Tell how the Israelites fell into this sin little by little, first associating with those who committed it, then thinking it was not so very bad, and gradually learning to do it themselves. Illustrate by telling how children learn to tell lies, use improper language, smoke, etc. Teach that trouble comes as soon as we begin to disobey God, and that the companions who lead us into sin never make us happy. Now that the Israelites worshipped the gods of the Philistines, the Philistines did not treat them kindly. Tell how they stole their wheat, drove away their cattle, and troubled them in many ways. Trouble always follows leaving God and following Satan. Tell what some of the idols are which we are in danger of worshipping, and lead the children to see that it is always Satan who leads into trouble.

#### WHO HELPS OUT OF TROUBLE.

See if children can tell who the good judge was who did not listen to Satan, but stayed by God. What does a child do in trouble? Runs

to mother. So the Israelites went to Samuel, and begged him to help them. Pin up a black heart, and ask what makes a heart black? Let children tell what some of the sins are that Satan puts into the heart, and then tell what the altar of sacrifice meant. Tell what Samuel offered for the sin of the Israelites, and that this was a picture of the offering of Jesus, the Lamb of God, for our sins. Pin up a white heart over the black one, and teach that when we repent of sin, confess it, and turn to God for cleansing, he looks away from our dark heart of unbelief and sin to the white heart of Jesus, and is satisfied. Tell how the Lord owned the sacrifice, and how Samuel set up a stone as a witness of the Lord's help, teaching that when we have done wrong and been forgiven, we should be glad to tell of it, so that others may know how good the Lord is.

**Blackboard.**  
BY J. B. PHIPPS, ESQ.



**EXPLANATION.** The power of prayer is one of the teachings of to-day's lesson. The Israelites obtained deliverance by turning to the Lord, and, as a memorial of the victory Samuel set up a stone, and named it Ebenezer. We have on the board a stone in the shape of a cross, which is to remind us of the great victory over the powers of evil and over death that Christ gained in order that we might live. I must show my gratitude by being a living witness of the Lord Jesus, and may this symbol of the cross remind us that as hitherto hath the Lord helped us, even so will he help all those that come to him in prayer.

**B. C. 1095.**

**LESSON III.—ASKING FOR A KING.**

1 Sam. 8. 1-10.

**Oct. 21.**



1 And it came to pass, when Samuel was old, that he *a* made his *b* sons judges over Israel.  
*a* Deut. 16. 18.—*b* Judg. 10. 4.

2 Now the name of his first-born was Joel, and the name of his second, Abiah: they were judges in Beersheba.

3 And his sons *c* walked not in his ways, but turned aside after *d* lucre, and *e* took bribes, and perverted judgment.  
*c* Eccl. 2. 19.—*d* Exod. 18. 21.—*e* Deut. 16. 19.

4 Then all the elders of Israel gathered themselves together, and came to Samuel unto Ramah.

5 And said unto him, Behold, thou art old,

**Lesson Word-Pictures.**

It is revival time. Backsliders are coming home, and idols are going out of the home,—to the bats. There is a great consecration-meeting at Mizpeh. Beautiful must have been the outlook from Mizpeh across fields dotted with flocks, or far away to the hills terracing the cloud-palaces of the sky with their blue slopes. At this great consecration-gathering in Mizpeh there were the mystic outpouring of water, the fasting, the penitential outcries of the people. But what is the meaning of that black, cloud-like shadow away off on the landscape? "The Philistines are coming!" is the dread announcement going through the ranks of the Israelites. How many hearts beat quicker, how many cheeks whiten! As the the Philistines come nearer, the Israelites shrink closer up to Samuel who stands by the place of offering. They are God's swallows flying to his altar before some ravenous bird of prey. One man crying at an altar unto God; this on one side. On the other side, that great, angry, menacing cloud of war, the Philistines. Cries to God here; cries to Baalim and Ashtaroth—it may be—there. On they come, the Canaanitish host, dark, wrathful, threatening! But what is that cloud in the sky, dark, wrathful, threatening, and advancing toward the Philistines? And hark! How the awful thunder rattles and crashes and roars, while the bolts of the lightning smite down upon the host of the Philistines! "It is the Lord!" is the hushed, wondering cry from Israelite to Israelite. The Lord? Was he there, in the cloud, as on that wild, wild night when "the Lord looked unto the host of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and of the cloud, and troubled the host of the Egyptians?" Like chaff scattered by a driving tempest the Philistines are fleeing. Like the tempest that drives the Israelites are pursuing. What a marvellous answer to prayer! And now they crowd about Samuel again. It is not an enemy driving them to Samuel for protection, but we catch their shouts as they roll to its new position a stone from the fields, their Ebenezer, to be a silent, steadfast witness of God's ready help.

and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now I make us a king to judge us like all the nations.

¶ But the thing displeased Samuel, when they said, Give us a king to judge us. And Samuel prayed *g* unto the LORD.

*f* Hosea 13. 10.—*g* Prov. 3. 5.

7 And the LORD said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for *h* they have not rejected thee, but *i* they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them.

*h* Exod. 16. 8.—*i* Chap. 10. 19.

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, 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 Samuel told all the words of the LORD unto the people that asked of him a king.

#### GENERAL STATEMENT.

Twenty years and more of peace and prosperity have passed under the benignant but firm rule of Samuel. The enemies have ceased to oppress, the people are in order, the law of God is honored, and though as yet the tabernacle remains in neglect, the worship of God is observed. The southern frontier has been rescued from the Philistine oppressors, and the sons of Samuel are sent thither to represent the aged judge, now growing infirm with the weight of years. But though sons of Samuel, they are not of his character. Their oppression and injustice lead to complaints, until at last the elders of the tribes present to Samuel a respectful yet earnest plea for a change in the form of government. They would have no more an invisible, but a temporal throne, and a king like the peoples around them. Their words bring sorrow to Samuel, less because of the slight to himself than because of their rejection of the rule established by the Lord. He bears his burden to the altar, and receives an answer of consolation and direction. The people have shown themselves unworthy of the high purposes of God in their behalf. The divine plan had been to develop a sentiment of personal loyalty to God, and an individual character in his service; to make a whole nation of kings, a peculiar people, separate from and unlike others. But they have rejected this high vocation, which must now wait a thousand years for its realization in the new kingdom of the Lord. They have chosen the glitter and show of worldly power, with its repression of the individual, its lowering of personal character, its lifting up of the few at the expense of the many. And they shall have their choice. Though in his anger, God shall give them a king, and then overrule his folly to the advancement of his own plans for Israel and for the world.

#### EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

Verse 1. It came to pass. This refers to a period of not less than twenty years of

peace, prosperity, and growth under Samuel's rule. **When Samuel was old.** His exact age is not known, but is supposed to have been at this time about sixty years, as he lived for sixteen years after the coronation of Saul. **Made his sons judges.** Not with authority equal to his own, but as his deputies or assistants in remote places where he could not journey. **Over Israel.** Samuel's rule was by moral power rather than by organized system, and extended itself by his influence only. Probably the northern tribes, and those east of the Jordan, were only measurably under his control.

2. **His first-born was Joel.** None of these sons are referred to, except in a parallel passage, (1 Chron. 6. 28.) where the text is quite uncertain. **Judges in Beersheba.** This was the most southerly city in the tribe of Judah, on the border of the Arabian desert, and near the land of the Philistines. Its mention here would indicate that this portion of the country had been wrested from the Philistines, and that the powerful tribe of Judah recognized Samuel's authority.

3. **Walked not in his ways.** Samuel had Eli's cross to bear in his children, though in less degree, and less to his own blame. 1. Each soul stands alone before God, and makes its own choice of character. 2. Sons are not saved by the piety of their parents. **Turned aside.** The right way is the direct way, and wrong-doing is a turning aside from it. 3. Let us keep our paths straight towards duty. **After lucre.** The word means "ill-gotten gains." They sought for riches rather than for right. 4. Not money itself, but the love of it, is the root of all evil. **Took bribes.** The original here shows a manifest reference to Deut. 16. 19, notwithstanding some critics think that Deuteronomy was written long after this time. Bribery is the receiving of a gift by an office-holder from one who has an interest to serve by presenting it; as by a judge from one of the parties in a suit, or by a legislator from one who wishes to influence legislation. It is a crime exceedingly common in Oriental countries. **Perverted judgment.** Gave decisions unfairly, and thus wronged some in order to benefit others, the highest crime in a ruler. 5. Public office is a trust which no one should use for his own gain.

4. **The elders.** A class of rulers which arose in the patriarchal period, when each family was ruled by its head, somewhat like the clans of Scotland two hundred years ago. Through all the changes of Israelite government, this institution of the eldership was maintained, each family or collection of families having its head. **Gathered themselves.** We can see the evidences that the nation had become united and orderly under Samuel's wise and steady rule, and was growing up into a desire for a more settled and permanent system. **Came to Samuel.** They came to him as the nation's father and the Lord's representative, and addressed him in a reverent manner. **Unto Ramah.** This was probably the ancestral

home of Samuel's family. From his residence, and the altar which he had built, it became in a certain sense the capital of the tribes during his rule. Its precise location, in the tribe of Benjamin, remains unknown.

5. **Said unto him.** They were not dissatisfied with the manner of his rule, but feared it might not be perpetuated under a successor. Besides, there was a prospect of invasion by the Ammonites, (chap. 12, 12,) and they were desirous of a stronger government for war. **Thou art old.** And therefore unable to fulfil all the duties of a ruler, and liable to be taken away by death. 6. Those who have work to do must do it with their might, for man's time for labour on earth is short. **Thy sons walk not.** They bring no definite charges, but state the well-known fact that the sons are not like their father. **Make us.** They might have chosen a king for themselves, without asking his consent; they might have sought to obtain a change in the government by a conspiracy and a revolution, but the fact that they treated the aged judge with such reverence indicates a high degree of intelligence and character, and a great advance since the turbulent times of Abimelech (Judges 9) and Jephtha, etc., (Judg. 11.) **A king.** The Oriental mind has scarcely conception of government without a king, so that their desire was natural. **To judge us.** They desired a leader with army ready for war; a ruler with hereditary descent, and a court with its splendor, to give dignity to their nation, and provide honourable places for themselves. **Like all the nations.** The Philistines had recently come under the rule of a king; the Ammonites had a king, and the tribes around them were gradually settling down to monarchical government. They were ambitious of worldly power, as well as desirous of settled government, and in this worldliness of feeling lay their sin, for it was their special privilege not to be like, but unlike, other nations. 7. God's people are to be a peculiar people, and not adopt the standards of the world.

6. **Displeased Samuel.** Besides the natural dislike of an old man to change, and the feeling that he was being set aside after a lifetime of self-denying service, there was the danger which he foresaw in the new form of government, and the worldly desires which prompted it, as causes of his displeasure. Perhaps, too, he looked deeper into the results of such a course, that it would destroy the individuality of the people, repress the personal development of character under the throne, create a machine for conquest, and so thwart the divine plan of training a race to become the guardians and propagators of truth for the world. **Samuel prayed.** He carried the whole subject to the Lord, and took counsel with him, a sure way to obtain peace of soul and right guidance. 8. If you would be relieved of trouble, bear it to the mercy-seat.

7. **The Lord said.** By an inward voice of conviction. **Hearken unto the voice.**

The Lord saw all the dangers of the scheme, and all the mingled motives of good and evil which prompted it, but saw also how it might be overruled for his glory, the people's good, and the world's benefit. 9. Divine power alone can bring good out of evil. **Not rejected thee, but . . . me.** This was to comfort Samuel, by the assurance that they were not dissatisfied with his rule, but with the system which God had given them. **That I should not reign.** They were not content with an invisible and spiritual ruler, but wished to have an outward show of government. What God wished to develop in Israel was like the kingdom afterward established by Christ, in which each subject owns a personal sway of an invisible King. How noble a type of humanity, might have appeared if this ideal could have been realized in that earlier age!

8. **According to all the works.** They had shown the same traits in every age since the exodus from Egypt: distrust, selfishness, worldly lust, and seeking for visible objects of worship. **Served other Gods.** As Baal and Ash-toreth, and doubtless gods of other names. **So do unto thee.** Samuel was suffering the same wrongs which God had ever endured from his people: yet God loved them, and so should Samuel also.

9, 10. **Hearken unto their voice.** Do as they desire. **Protest solemnly.** Warn them fully of the dangers of their course and its inevitable results. They had imagined the gains of royalty, they must also understand some of its evils. **The manner of the king.** The powers and privileges which the king will undertake to exercise. **Told all the words.** He repeated the warning of God to the elders, and in the succeeding verses depicted the tyranny in which the king would indulge when once seated upon his throne. But the people were not educated up to a standard of self-government under a spiritual headship, and the visible monarchy seemed to be their only resource against dangers in and around the state, so Samuel prepared to appoint over them a king.

#### GOLDEN TEXT.

It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in princes. Psa. 118. 9.

#### OUTLINE.

1. The Desire of the Elders. v. 1-5.
2. The Displeasure of the Judge. v. 6.
3. The Decision of the Lord. v. 7-10.

#### HOME READINGS.

- M. Asking for a king. 1 Sam. 8. 1-10.  
 T. The manner of the king. 1 Sam. 8. 11-22.  
 W. The law for the king. Deut. 17. 14-20.  
 Th. The authority of rulers. Rom. 13. 1-10.  
 F. Prayer for rulers. 1 Tim. 2. 1-8.  
 S. The Divine king. Psa. 2. 1-12.  
 S. The King of kings. Rev. 4. 1-11.

Time.—B.C. 1095.

Place.—Ramah in central Palestine.

**Connecting Links.**—No events are named between the last lesson and the present.

**Explanations.**—*His sons judges*—Not with full power, but as his helpers in the care of the State. *The name*—Nothing is known of Samuel's sons more than is here related. *Judges in Beer-sheba*—In the southern part of the land. *Walked not in his ways*—Good fathers do not always have good sons. *Turned aside*—From the right way. *After lucre*—After gain. *Took bribes*—Gave their decisions, not for the side which was right, but which paid them money. *Perverted judgment*—Ruled unjustly over the people. *Elders of Israel*—The heads of the families in all the tribes. *Came to Samuel*—Who was the representative of God in rule over the people. *Thou art old*—Hence, unable to do the work of a judge. *Make us a king*—They were willing to receive as king the one whom Samuel should select, since they knew he would be God's choice. *Displeased Samuel*—Because it showed that the people were dissatisfied with his rule, and because he feared that having a king would make them like the nations around them. *Samuel prayed*—A good man takes all his troubles to the Lord. *The Lord said*—God gave the people a king, because they were desirous of one, but not because he was pleased with it. God's plan had been to raise up a self-governing nation, in which each family should be led by God's will. *They have not rejected thee*—This was to comfort Samuel. *Have rejected me*—Have been dissatisfied to have God for their king. *According to all*—"They have done just as they have always done in forsaking God," is the meaning. *Protest solemnly*—Show them the dangers of the kingdom. *Show them the manner*—How the king will rule over them. This Samuel did in the verses which follow.

#### LESSON HYMNS.

No. 138, *New D. H.*

O worship the King all glorious above!

No. 35, *New D. H.*

Take the name of Jesus with you.

No. 38, *New D. H.*

Crown him with many crowns.

#### QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

**1. The Desire of the Elders, v. 1-5.** What happened when Samuel became old? In what part of the land did these men rule? What character did they show in governing? Why was such conduct especially wicked? What did it lead the elders of Israel to do? What did they wish Samuel to do? How did this show their confidence in Samuel? How did it show their desire to be like the world? What is said about love of the world in 1 John 2. 15?

**2. The Displeasure of the Judge, v. 6.** How did Samuel receive the elders' request? Why was it displeasing to him? What did he do about the matter? What should we do with all things that trouble us? 1 Pet. 5. 7.

**3. The Decision of the Lord, v. 7-10.** How did the Lord answer Samuel's prayer? How

was the answer a comfort to Samuel? How did it show God's knowledge of men's sins? What did God command Samuel to do? Against what did God tell Samuel to warn the people? How did Samuel obey God's command? What was the determination of the people? ver. 19. Why was their desire not wise? [GOLDEN TEXT].

#### TEACHINGS OF THE LESSON.

How does this lesson show—

1. The temptations of those who rule?
2. The power of worldly example?
3. The tendency of men to forsake God?

**The Lesson Catechism.**—(For the entire school). 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.

**DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.**—The sovereignty of God.

#### QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

**1. The Desire of the Elders, v. 1-5.** Who succeeded Samuel in the judgeship? Wherein did they differ from their father? What was the divine standard for a good ruler? Exod. 18. 21. What deputation waited upon Samuel? In what did they desire to resemble other nations?

**2. The Displeasure of the Judge, v. 6.** How was the request received by Samuel? Why was he displeased? Whom did he consult?

**3. The Decision of the Lord, v. 7-10.** What divine direction was given to Samuel? Who was the supreme authority in the Jewish nation? Against whom was this movement of the elders really directed? Of what past conduct was this the ripened fruit? What example of God's patient dealing with his people is here given? What did Samuel explain to the people?

#### PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.

Where are we taught in this lesson—

1. The sin of discontent with divine plans?
2. The need of personal right-doing?
3. The folly of seeking our own paths?
4. The patience of the Lord with the wayward?

#### QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

Who ruled Israel when Samuel was old? His sons, Joel and Abiah. What did they prove to be? Unjust judges. What did they love better than justice? Money and power. What did the people ask Samuel to give them? A king. How did Samuel feel about this? He was displeased. What did he do? He prayed to God about it. What did the Lord advise Samuel? To let the people have their own way. What did God say of them? That they had rejected him. For what were they seeking?





Sovereign and Defender, to be under the immediate and personal rule and protection of Jehovah, to be led, guided, and preserved by him. As long as they submitted themselves to this beneficent rule they enjoyed peace and prosperity. We saw, last time, how, under Samuel, the "judge" appointed by God, they had been set free from their enemies, the Philistines, and preserved in freedom and tranquility. But they grew tired of this peaceful and righteous rule, and as soon as an excuse was found, their complaints broke forth.

*What was their desire?*

"Thou art old," was their complaint to Samuel, "and thy sons walk not in thy ways." Did they then ask for the reform of abuses that might have crept in under the management of these sons of Samuel? Did they pray that he would appoint other men in their place that would faithfully follow in his footsteps? Not at all. The complaint was brought out first, but it was not the real foundation for the request that followed: "Make us a king to judge us 'like all the nations.'" "Like all the nations." Herein lay the pith of their desire. They were tired of their peculiar form of government. They wanted the outward and visible dignity, the pomp and show, the martial splendor, accompanying the king's office. They wanted a brilliant warrior to go forth at their head in time of war, one on whom they might rest their confidence, and around whom they might rally. This was the way among other nations, and why should they be singular?

*What did this desire involve?*

I remember hearing a remark about a young lady; "She says she does not like A——" (naming the place of her residence.) "Then," was the reply, "that means that she does not like home." The desire to live elsewhere than in A—— involved, in her case, the rejection of life at home. And so it was with the Israelites. To be like all the nations meant the giving up of that in which they had stood alone, namely, the direct government of Jehovah. "They have rejected me," saith the Lord, "that I should not reign over them." They refused that which was their glory and their blessing, just to be like others.

*What did the gratification of this desire bring them?*

Samuel was bidden of the Lord to grant their request. A king was given to them—just the king they wanted; imposing in bodily stature, full of fire and courage, and possessed of those amiable qualities which often show themselves in a young monarch before he has been spoiled by prosperity and power. But the history of Saul and the kingdom under him is a sad history, ending

with defeat and mourning; it was some years before peace was restored to Israel. They had had their own choice, and it proved a bitter one.

Let this story be a warning. There are numbers of young people—and elder ones, too—Christians by profession, to whom separation from the world seems a mistake and a folly. They want to be.

*Like the world in their pleasures.* They look upon balls and gay parties as proper recreation, necessary, in fact, either to advance or to keep up their position in society. And why not? they say. Religion should not make us morose.

*Like the world in their habits.* Why should they "set a watch before their mouth?" The world talks lightly, sharply, and brilliantly, so they will do the same. The world has rules of etiquette which they can on no account neglect.

*Like the world in their plans.* To watch for the guiding hand of God is too slow for them. They must shape out their way by their own reason and judgment, as appears most to their advantage.

*Like the world in their business.* "Labour not to be rich" is a maxim they prefer to forget. The world is rushing on headlong after wealth and distinction, and they must do the same.

And if they attain all this, what will they get by it? Just what the world gets and no more. They will find weariness, like others; hollowness and emptiness, like others. They will find much that looks fair outside, bitter to the taste, like others. They must hold their wealth with an uncertain hand, like others.

And see what they must give up: the guidance of the unerring One, the protection of the almighty One, the "blessing of the Lord" that "maketh rich" without sorrow. For they cannot have the portion of God's people and the world's portion, too. It is a sad thing to reject the portion the Lord gives, "The world passeth away and the lust thereof, but he that doeth the will of the Lord abideth forever."

## BEREAN METHODS.

### Hints for the Teachers' Meeting and the Class.

Give a picture of the state of Israel under Samuel—the bright side: peace, order, prosperity, progress, advancing civilization, worship of God, etc. . . . The dark side: worldly ambitions arising. (See Analytical and Biblical Outline.) The divine plans for Israel's government: a people of God; a kingdom of individual loyalty; a people unlike the world. . . . The elements of good and of evil in the request of the elders. . . . The spirit

shown by Samuel. . . The grace of God in dealing with Israel, as shown in this lesson. . . Are our circumstances like those of Israel? . . . What lessons concerning popular government? . . . ILLUSTRATIONS. *Bribery.* A caliph detected a judge in receiving a bribe. He ordered him to be slain, and his skin to be made into a covering for the judge's bench, then appointed the man's own son to be his successor upon it. . . *Covetousness.* Some one compares a covetous man to a hog, which is of no use while living, but when killed becomes food. So with the gains of the miser, only made available after his death. . . Amasis was a common soldier, afterward a captain, then made king of Egypt by his comrades. His former companions undertook to treat him with the same freedom as of old. He showed them one day an image of a god made of metal. They bowed down before it, and he said, "This was once a basin into which you would place your feet for washing. Now, it has been turned into a god, and you bow before it. So I that was once your equal am now transformed into your king. Bow down, then, and do me reverence." Thus he showed his subjects the honour which they were expected to award him. . . God would have the Israelites a whole nation of kings, self-governing, and looking up to God only. A Western farmer, while travelling in Europe, was asked, "Are there no nobility, no princes, in your country?" "Yes," said the farmer, "I am one of them." There is a sense in which every heir of the kingdom of God belongs to the highest order of nobility.

#### Primary and Intermediate.

BY M. V. M.

LESSON THOUGHT. *Our King is Mighty.* To be taught: That the Israelites already had a King; that they asked for another, which showed that they were not satisfied with the one they had; that God let them have their own way to teach them how wrong it was.

1. Ask questions about the Israelites. Where had they been slaves? Who led them out of Egypt? Who took care of them in the wilderness, led them across the Red Sea, the Jordan, fed them, guided them? etc., etc. Lead children to see that only a powerful monarch, with all things at his command, could have led such a great people, and given plenty to eat and drink in the wilderness. Turn the thoughts for a moment to the King who takes care of us, provides for all our wants, keeps our hearts beating, tells us the right and wrong ways, etc. What if we should say, "We want another God to rule over us?"

2. Tell how the leaders of the Israelites came to Samuel to ask for a king in his place.

Was Samuel a king? No, he was a judge and a priest, and it was not Samuel, but God, whom the people rejected. Print the words on the blackboard first, leaving the cross until later, and tell that Samuel was displeased, not because he was rejected, but because the Lord was. Ask what was the right thing to do, and teach that in all trouble or perplexity we should pray.

3. Ask why parents do not always let children have their own way. When children get old enough to choose then parents often have to let them do foolish things to teach them that their own way is not best. So God told Samuel to let the Israelites have their own way. He knew they would soon learn that an earthly king cannot be trusted. Make cross below the words on the board, and ask who has come to be our King. Draw out briefly the story of Jesus, his death on the cross, rejected by the Jews, and still rejected by every one who will not own him as King. Lead children to see the difference between owning him with the lips and with the life, and teach that if he is really our King we shall listen to all his commands and obey him. Rub out words above the cross, and print, "Jesus is our King." In echo-prayer ask him to be our King, indeed, ruling us in all things.

#### Blackboard.

BY J. B. PHIPPS, ESQ.



BLACKBOARD QUESTIONS. Ask the questions in the Lesson Catechism for to-day. Who was the rejected King? Is he not often rejected now? Why did they want an earthly king? Against what did God tell Samuel to warn the people? What is there on the board besides the crown? (A yoke.) The yoke symbolizes servitude, and God had thus warned the people that with the crown would certainly come trouble. Are not each one of us oftentimes like the Israelites? When we want our own way; when we think we are wiser than God; and when we will not listen to advice.

E. C. 1095.

## LESSON IV.—SAUL CHOSEN KING.

Oct. 28.

1 Sam. 10. 17-27.



17 And Samuel called the people together *a* unto the LORD to *b* Mizpeh :

*a* Judg. 11, 11 ; 20. 1.—*b* Chap. 7. 5.

18 And said unto the children of Israel, Thus *c* saith the LORD God of Israel, I brought up Israel out of Egypt, and delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of all kingdoms, and of them that oppressed you :

19 And *d* 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.

*c* Judg. 6. 8.—*d* Chap. 8. 7 ; 12. 12.

20 And when Samuel *e* had caused all the tribes of Israel to come near, the tribe of Benjamin was taken.

21 When he had caused the tribe of Benjamin to come near by their families, the family of Matri was taken, and Saul the son of Kish was taken : and when they sought him, he could not be found.

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

*e* Josh. 7. 14 ; Acts 1. 24.—*f* Chap. 23. 2.

23 And they ran and fetched him thence : and when he stood among the people, he was higher than any of the people from his shoulders and upward.

24 And Samuel 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 Samuel told the people *g* the manner of the kingdom, and wrote *it* in a book, and laid *it* up before the LORD. And Samuel sent all the people away, every man to his house,

*g* Deut. 17. 14 ; chap. 8. 11.

26 And Saul also went home to Gibeah ; and there went with him a band of men, whose hearts God had touched.

27 But *h* the children of Belial said, How shall this man save us ? And they despised him, *i* and brought him no presents. But he held his peace.

*h* Chap. 11. 12 ; Deut. 13. 13.—*i* 2 Sam. 8. 2.

## GENERAL STATEMENT.

The king for Israel had been chosen by the LORD, and anointed by his prophet, in the person of a young man of Benjamin, Saul, the son of Kish, and now follows the public recognition of the new monarch. An assembly of the people is called at Mizpeh, a place of sacred memories, both of disaster and of deliverance, and there with the "stone of help," Ebenezer, before them, the people meet with their God and his faithful prophet. They are reminded of all God's mercies and his care, of Egyptian waves rolling asunder in their path, of Canaanite sceptres

broken over them, of God's constant watchfulness, and of their own ingratitude. Then they are bidden draw near, and witness God's grace in giving them what they now desire, a king. The princes of the twelve tribes approach, the lot is cast, and Benjamin, the least of all the tribes in influence is chosen. The elders of Benjamin come forward, the lot is again taken, and the tribe family of Matri is selected. Thus the choice is narrowed down, amid the increasing interest of the throng, until at last the name of Saul the son of Kish is called forth as the chosen king of Israel. While all are eager for his coming, he sits in seclusion, with sincere modesty and alarm that he, the young farmer of Gibeah, should be called upon to direct a nation in the crisis of its history. By divine direction his hiding place is discovered, and he is brought forth unwillingly. Standing before the host, he looms up like a giant with broad shoulders and mighty frame, with all the majesty of a king in his appearance. As the venerable prophet, representing the nation's past, takes the hand of the youthful sovereign, whose face is turned toward its future, the air rings with the cry, "Long live the king !" The principles of the new government are proclaimed, and the constitution of the realm is recorded, and then the memorable assembly closes. A company of followers, touched with the enthusiasm of the hour, accompany King Saul back to his home at Gibeah, but a larger number utter their murmurs of displeasure at the choice, and hold themselves aloof from offering the tokens of loyalty. But Saul passes over the murmurs, as if he heard them not, and calmly awaits his hour.

## EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

Verse 17. **Samuel.** In this lesson the prophet-judge appears in the noblest attitude ; as one who assists in the revolution which is to take from himself the supreme power, and bestow it upon another. **Called the people.** The king had already received a private appointment, but the divine choice was now to be publicly indicated, and the king to be accepted by his people. **Unto the Lord.** It is not necessary to suppose that the ark was present ; but the assembly was in a peculiar degree in God's presence, and its result under his direction. **Mizpeh.** As the place where God had already met his people and given them victory ; and also because it was in a central location. See notes in last lesson. 1. It is well for any people when the Lord is present at their political gatherings.

## 18. Said unto the children of Israel.

It was partly a representative body, with the elders and heads of the tribes, partly popular. Many of the people being present, encamped, and to some extent armed. **Thus saith the Lord.** Samuel spoke with direct inspiration, and with the authority of God's representative. 2. He speaks with power who can speak in God's

name. **I brought up Israel.** The exodus from Egypt is everywhere referred to as the birth of the nation, and as the first great exhibition of God's peculiar interest in Israel as his own people. **Delivered you.** The deliverance was wholly divine; no human statesmanship or courage could have brought it to pass. **Out of the hand of all kingdoms.** The Amalekites in the wilderness, the Moabites and Amorites east of Jordan, and the Canaanites in whose land they were then dwelling. **Them that oppressed you.** The Syrians, Midianites, Philistines, and other surrounding tribes, who had at various times oppressed Israel during the period of the judges. From all these foes God had given them deliverance, by raising up men like Ehud, Gideon, and Samuel. 3. Every nation can show God's hand in its history.

**19. Rejected your God.** By rejecting God's plan of self-government, which would have trained the nation up to individual character and personal godliness. **Ye have said.** Though the kingdom was the choice of the people, not of God, yet God would give them their desire, and still overruled their error to the interest of his cause. **Present yourselves.** Arrange in systematic order for the casting of the lot. **Before the Lord.** Not necessarily before the ark, but in the presence of the prophet Samuel as his representative. **By your tribes.** These were represented by their twelve princes, among whom the lot was first cast. **Your thousands.** The division of the tribes, according to the sons or families of the tribe-father.

**20, 21. To come near.** The representatives passed in order, and in some way, probably through the medium of the high-priest, the choice of God was manifested. **Benjamin.** This was the smallest of the tribes, having its home between the territory of Judah and that of Ephraim. **By their families.** The heads of the clans of Benjamin next appeared and that of **Matri**, a new family, which perhaps arose after the tribal war (Judges 20), was chosen. The successive steps are passed over, until, in the family of Kish, **Saul... was taken.** He had already been anointed king in private, and knew what the result of the public choice would be. **Could not be found.** He had hidden, out of diffidence and modesty, embarrassed at the sudden summons to so high a position. Perhaps, too, he was alarmed as he saw the tokens of God's displeasure at the people's desire for a king. 4. Modesty well becomes those who are called to important stations.

**22. Inquired of the Lord.** Perhaps through the high-priest, by the means provided in the law. **If the man,** etc. Literally, "has there yet a man come hither?" that is, Is there any other person (meaning Saul) present besides those "before the Lord?" It was an inquiry whether Saul were present, or was to be sought for at home. **Among the stuff.** In the baggage of the assembly, which was generally placed in the centre of the camp.

**23. Ran and fetched him.** The whole proceeding was in haste, and with enthusiasm. **He was higher.** A young man of noble presence, just such a one in appearance as they would choose for a king. It was an age when leaders stood in the fore-front of the battle, and a giant would be conspicuous before his foes, and strike terror to his foes. In the Mohammedan traditions, Saul is known only by the name Thalût, "the tall."

**24. Whom the Lord had chosen.** God had chosen, indeed, but chosen according to *their* idea of a king, not according to his own; for if God had selected a man according to his own will, he would have failed to meet the popular desire. **None like him.** In majesty of appearance, giving instant popularity. He had also at that time humility of character and nobleness of mind; and when the opportunity came, he showed energy in action. But he was a creature of impulse, and soon became dominated by evil passions. **God save the king.** Rather, "Let the king live!" 5. Popular applause is easily won, and as easily lost. 6. Better the abiding favour of God than the transient regard of man.

**25. Told the people.** In a public address. **The manner of the new kingdom.** The principles of the new kingdom, with the respective duties of king and people toward each other and toward God. Thus this was a limited monarchy; and, indeed, the Israelite throne was never despotic in its theory, like most of the oriental monarchies. **Wrote it in a book.** This might be called the constitution of the state. It has, of course, been lost, and no copy of it is known. But its principles can be traced in the after history. **Before the Lord.** Not in the ark, but among the archives of the nation, in the care of the priests. **Sent all the people away.** It would appear that before the dismissal the rulers and elders brought their presents to the new-made king.

**26. Saul also went home.** He did not assume the royal state and power, but wisely waited for circumstances to demand his action. In this he doubtless acted by advice of Samuel, and so conciliated the favour of the people. 7. Let us not be in haste to demand all our rights and privileges. Phil. 4. 5. **To Gibeah.** A hill four miles north of where Jerusalem afterward stood, the home of Saul's family. **Band of men.** Voluntary followers, giving their service as a guard of honour, and the nucleus of an army. **Whose hearts God had touched.** They were filled with the enthusiasm of the hour, and followed the new king under a noble impulse of loyalty. 8. The best workers in a cause are those whose hearts God has touched.

**26. Children of Belial.** This should not be taken as a proper name, but is a Hebrew expression for "worthless people," generally referring to the wicked and unbelieving. They are here named in contrast with the "band" of the previous verse. **How shall this man.** They

represented a large and powerful minority, probably from the haughty and turbulent tribe of Ephraim, who resented the appointment of a king from the insignificant Benjamites. **De-spised him.** Looked upon him with contempt. **Brought him no presents.** The customary gift, as the token of homage and acknowledgment of a higher authority over the possessions and service of the subject. **He held his peace.** Literally, "he was as being deaf." He took no notice of the malcontents, not from scorn, but from prudence, passing by the slight, that he might win the allegiance of the scorners. It is evident that there was a wide-spread disaffection, a reaction from the enthusiasm of the assembly, that seriously threatened the stability of the new government.

**GOLDEN TEXT.**

And all the people shouted, and said, God save the king. 1 Sam. 10. 24.

**OUTLINE.**

1. The King Rejected, v. 17-19.
2. A King Sought, v. 20-22.
3. A King Found, v. 23-27.

**HOME READINGS.**

- M. Saul chosen king. 1 Sam. 10. 17-27.  
 T. Saul meeting Samuel. 1 Sam. 9. 15-27.  
 W. Saul anointed king. 1 Sam. 10. 1-11.  
 Th. The throne of kings. Prov. 16. 1-15.  
 F. Gifts to the king. Matt. 2. 1-11.  
 S. The honour of the king. Psa. 21. 1-13.  
 S. The King of glory. Psa. 24. 1-10.

Time —1095 B.C.

Place.—Mizpeh, in the tribe of Benjamin.

**Connecting Links.**—1. God's command to Samuel to institute the kingdom. 1 Sam. 8. 22. 2. Samuel's meeting with Saul. 1 Sam. 9. 1-27. 3. The anointing of Saul. 1 Sam. 10. 1-16.

**Explanations.**—*Samuel called the people*—This was after Saul had been privately chosen and anointed. *Unto the Lord*—To meet the Lord, who was the nation's head. *Thus saith the Lord*—God declared through Samuel how he had called, saved, and kept the people, and how they, on the other hand, had constantly shown themselves rebellious. *Ye have this day*—The day when a king was to take God's place before the people. *Nay, but set a king*—Their conduct had been ungrateful and disobedient. *Present yourselves*—In the person of the heads of the tribes and their families. *All the tribes*—Twelve in all, represented by their princes. *Benjamin was taken*—The lot fell on Benjamin, the smallest of all the tribes. How it was taken we do not know. *The tribe* was divided into its families, and among these that of *Matri* was taken by lot. The families were divided into households, and that of *Kish* was taken, and in the household of *Kish* Saul was taken by name. *Could not be found*—He was at that time modest and without ambition to rule. *Inquired... further*—Through the high-priest. *If the man should yet come thither*—This may mean, "If another man should come;" if they should choose again, as the man could not be found. *Among the stuff*—The baggage. *Higher than any*—He had a tall, noble figure, such as the people

desired in their king. *The Lord hath chosen*—God had chosen such a man as the people would have selected. *God save the king*—Rather, "Let the king live!" *The manner of the kingdom*—Its rules and requirements. *Laid it up*—Perhaps in the tabernacle. *Saul... went home*—Not yet assuming the state of a king. *A band of men*—Voluntary followers. *God had touched*—Who were led by the influence of God's Spirit. *Children of Belial*—An expression meaning "wicked people." *No presents*—Such as were given to a king. *Held his peace*—Did nothing to punish the rebellious in spirit.

**LESSON HYMNS.**

No. 144, *New D. H.*

Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!

No. 2, *New D. H.*

All hail the power of Jesus' name!

No. 1, *Hymn Book.*

C. M.

O for a thousand tongues to sing  
 My great Redeemer's praise,  
 The glories of my God and King,  
 The triumphs of his grace.

Jesus! the Name that charms our fears,  
 That bids our sorrows cease;  
 'Tis music in the sinner's ears,  
 'Tis life, and health, and peace.

He breaks the power of cancelled sin,  
 He sets the prisoner free;  
 His blood can make the foulest clean,  
 His blood availed for me.

**QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.**

1. **The King Rejected**, v. 17-19. Who was the true King of Israel? How had God shown himself the people's King? Who are God's people now? 1 Pet. 2, 9, 10. What are the privileges in God's kingdom? Rom. 8. 17. How had the Israelites rejected God as their King? How may we reject God as they did?

2. **A King Sought**, v. 20-22. What did Samuel command the people to do? What was then done? How was the king chosen? Who was the one chosen as king? Can you tell what had happened to him before this? [See CONNECTING LINKS]. Why could he not be found? Did he know that he was to be the king? chap. 10. 1. What spirit did Saul show on this occasion?

3. **A King Found**, v. 23-27. Where was Saul found, and how? What was his appearance? What did Samuel say of him? How was he received by the people? [GOLDEN TEXT]. What did Samuel do for the government of the new kingdom? Where did Saul go, and who went with him? How did some show their contempt? How did the new king show his wisdom?

**TEACHINGS OF THE LESSON.**

Where does this lesson show—

1. That God is his people's King?
2. That men are often ungrateful to God?
3. That rulers are by God's appointment?

**The Lesson Catechism.**—(For the entire school). 1. Who was the first king of Israel?

Saul the son of Kish. 2. By whom was he appointed 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."

#### QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

1. **The King Rejected**, v. 17-19. What took place at a former gathering of the people at Mizpeh? Why were the people called together again? Of what did the Lord remind them? Of what ingratitude did he accuse them? To what did he summon them?

2. **A King Sought**, v. 20-22. How was the choice of a king made? On what other occasion was the same course taken? Josh. 7. 16-18. On whom did the lot now fall? Why was Saul absent when chosen?

3. **A King Found**, v. 23-27. Where was the new king discovered? What especially distinguished him from his brethren? How did Samuel introduce him to the people? What was their response? What instruction was given by Samuel in regard to the new government? How was Saul received by the people?

#### PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.

Where in this lesson are we taught—

1. The claims of God's goodness?
2. The sin of ingratitude?
3. The long-suffering patience of God?

#### QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

To what place did he call the people? To Mizpeh. What was done there? A king was chosen. Of what did Samuel remind the Israelites? Of God's goodness to them. What was God to them? Their King and Friend. What did Samuel tell them? That they had rejected the Lord. Who was chosen of all the people? Saul, the son of Kish. What did Saul do? He hid himself. How did they find him? The Lord showed them where he was. How was Saul unlike the rest of the people? He was higher by his head and shoulders than any man. How did the people greet Saul? Repeat **GOLDEN TEXT**. What did Samuel make for the Israelites? All the laws of the new kingdom. How did he give them to the people? Written in a book. What did Samuel then do? He sent every man to his house. Where did King Saul go? Home to Gibeah. Who went with him? Friends who loved him. Who did not like Saul to be their king? The children of Belial.

#### WORDS WITH LITTLE PEOPLE.

God shows his love for us—

- In bearing with our foolishness.
- In following us when we reject him.
- In telling us when we make mistakes.
- In letting us come back to him when we see our sin.

#### CATECHISM QUESTION.

13. *What offices doth Christ execute as our Redeemer?*  
Christ as our Redeemer executeth the offices of

a Prophet, of a Priest, and a King, both in his estate of humiliation and exaltation.

#### ANALYTICAL AND BIBLICAL OUTLINE.

##### The Two Kings of Israel.

#### I. THE REJECTED KING.

1. **Personal**. "The Lord God of Israel." v. 18.  
"I am the Lord thy God." Exod. 20. 2.
2. **Gracious**. "I brought up Israel." v. 19.  
"Merciful and gracious...plenteous in mercy." Psa. 103. 8.
3. **Almighty**. "Delivered you." v. 18.  
"The Lord God omnipotent reigneth." Rev. 19. 6.
4. **Omniscient**. "He hath hid himself." v. 22.  
"Eyes of the Lord...in every place." Prov. 15. 8.

#### II. THE CHOSEN KING.

1. **Origin**. "Tribe of Benjamin." v. 20.  
"Smallest of the tribes of Israel." 1 Sam. 9. 21.
2. **Appearance**. "None like him." v. 24.  
"Man looketh on the outward appearance." 1 Sam. 16. 7.
3. **Limitations**. "Manner of the kingdom." v. 25.  
"A copy of the law...read therein." Deut. 17. 18.
4. **Wisdom**. "He held his peace." v. 27.  
"I as a deaf man, heard not." Psa. 38. 13.

#### ADDITIONAL PRACTICAL LESSONS.

##### God's Relation to his People.

1. As God spoke to his people through the medium of his own appointed prophet, so God speaks to us through his written word. v. 17.
2. God is ever present at the gatherings of his people, so that every meeting of his Church is before the Lord. v. 17.
3. 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. v. 18.
4. God's interest in his people has not been because of their worthiness, but in spite of their faithlessness toward him. v. 19.
5. Even when his people have shown themselves unworthy, God still cares for them, and adapts his plans to their imperfections. v. 19, 20.
6. God sometimes permits his people to follow their own ways that by experience they may learn to submit the more willingly to his counsel. v. 24.

#### ENGLISH TEACHER'S NOTES.

BY SARAH GERALDINA STOCK.

I REMEMBER a friend of mine bringing home a plant in full flower, seemingly health-

ful and vigorous, and which might be expected to continue long an adornment to the room where it was placed. It did not, however, answer to our anticipations. The blossoms were soon withered, the leaves began to droop, and the plant gradually died. Then the cause was discovered. It had no root. In the shop of the florist it had made a brilliant appearance. When brought home it had thrown into the shade the beauties of other plants. But there was nothing durable in it. Its loveliness was soon gone, and its promise for the future proved utterly deceptive.

There have been human characters just like this plant, and one of them we have now to consider.

We saw last time what the Israelites had asked for—a king to judge them like all the nations. Samuel had been directed to grant their request, and we now see the King brought before them. He has

#### *A fair appearance.*

He stands among the thousands of Israel like a king,—‘a choice young man and a goodly,’ higher than any of the people from his shoulders and upward,—a very hero in form and stature. And he has fine qualities corresponding to his external figure. He has shown obedience and diligence in executing his father’s commission, going from place to place in search of the asses; thoughtfulness, in proposing to return home lest his father should be troubled about him, (chap. 9. 4, 5;) discretion, in keeping silence concerning the revelation made to him by Samuel, and modesty in keeping out of sight when the choice of a king was to be. Chap. 10. 16, 21. And further, he has come under the distinct influences of the Spirit of God, to prepare him for his high station. Chap. 10. 9-13. And so, as far as the eye of man can see, he gives

#### *A fair promise for the future.*

The Israelites want a leader to go forth with them to battle. Here is the very man, strong, spirited, and brave, a man whose very presence will inspire his followers and make the hearts of the foes to quail. They want the splendour and dignity of a court. Here is one exactly fitted to sustain it. They want a ruler—intelligent, fair, and upright. Surely Saul will be all this. Samuel has warned them of arbitrary and oppressive conduct on the part of a king. Surely such a course will be far from the amiable and generous young monarch before them. There is something highly attractive in the first view we get of Saul. He seems just such a character as must become popular, and the more so as its various excellencies unfold to view. Samuel himself seems to have been greatly taken with the king he was directed to give the people. He was loth in after years to give him up, and

did so only at the express command of the Lord. Chap. 15. 35; 16. 1.

No wonder their king was received with acclamations by the people. For we must not misunderstand the words of Samuel: “See ye him whom the Lord hath chosen?” It was true that Saul was chosen of God for the people, but he was not the king of God’s choice. He was given in answer to the desire of the people, as we read in chap. 12. 13, “Behold the king whom ye have chosen and whom ye have desired.” He was exactly the kind of monarch the people wished for. The time was not yet come for the king after God’s own heart. Saul was the king after man’s own heart.

#### *What became of this fair appearance and fairer promise?*

We noticed this briefly last time, and shall have the subject brought before us again, so that I need not here enlarge upon it. The beauty passed away; the promise for the future, after a brief expansion, faded and withered. Under the rule of Saul, Israel was neither peaceful, nor happy, nor victorious. The spiritual influence under which he had come proved transient. He went his own way, and followed the counsel of his own heart. His elevation to the sovereignty rendered him in time haughty, arbitrary, jealous, wilful, and cruel. The change in him was not unlike that in Nero, or in Henry the Eighth of England. And profoundly sad was his end.

#### *What caused this failure?*

The fact of his having “no root in himself.” Matt. 13. 21. He had human virtues, human excellencies, and like all things purely human, they passed away. He had never yielded his being to God, never let the Spirit of God take possession of his heart, and so he “endured but for a time.”

#### *Let each one take the warning.*

Human nature produces many amiable qualities. Young people may be obedient to their parents, diligent in their business, thoughtful for others, modest in their demeanour, discreet in their conduct; they may even come under actual spiritual influence, may be attracted to the things of God, may enter into Christian occupations with the servants of God; and yet go no farther. They may be as branches full of blossoms, sweet and fair, but which, severed from the parent stem, and having no root of their own, must in time wither away; or like young pines I have seen where a fire had swept by, their branches still fresh and green, yet doomed to decay and perish, because the stem was burned and charred. The great need is for each one to be rooted in Christ, drawing perpetual life from him who is its unchang-



ing and inexhaustible source. Without this a character may be highly pleasing for a time, may be, in fact, after man's own heart; but in the end there must be disappointment, nor can such a character find favour with God. "The carnal mind is enmity with God, for it is not (however outwardly fair and amiable) subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." And how solemn the warning: "They that are in the flesh cannot please God." Ever true is it that "all flesh is grass"—all the glory of a man as the "flower of the field: the grass withereth, and the flower fadeth."

### BEREAN METHODS.

#### Hints for the Teachers' Meeting and the Class.

Notice the connecting events with the last lesson; the choice of Saul; tell the story, or call it out from the scholars.... Mizpeh, its location, and the previous events occurring there.... The purpose of this gathering.... How God showed himself as Israel's king.... The relations between God and his people. (See Additional Practical Lessons).... The manner of Saul's appointment.... His reception by the people.... His friends and his foes.... His conduct and early character.... Note: (1) God's grace in this lesson; (2) Samuel's spirit; (3) Saul's character; (4) The people's feeling.... Samuel as the model of a public man, showing: (1) Fidelity to God; (2) Love for his people; (3) Submissiveness and unselfishness; (5) Loyalty to the king; (5) Spirit of order, showing mutual relations of king and people.... What duties in public affairs are here shown?... ILLUSTRATIONS. *Saul's modesty.* When George Washington, before the Revolution, (then Colonel Washington,) received the thanks of the Virginia House of Burgesses for his gallant services to the colony in the Indian wars, he attempted to reply, but, stammering and in confusion, was unable to express himself. The President said, "Sit down Col. Washington, your valour is only equalled by your modesty." *Popularity soon passing,* ver. 27. Instances of distinguished statesmen, generals, and singers, dying in want. Belisarius begging his bread, etc.... *Saul holding his peace,* ver. 27. Inscription on a sun-dial in England, "I mark only the hours that shine."

#### Primary and Intermediate.

BY M. V. M.

**LESSON THOUGHTS.** *God is King of kings.* Review the last lesson, and make plain to children that the Israelites were not satisfied with God as their King, and wanted to be ruled by a man. Ask why God let them have their own way, and teach that if we choose not to obey God he will let us seem to have our own way, so as to find out how wrong a way it is.

### THE KING CHOSEN.

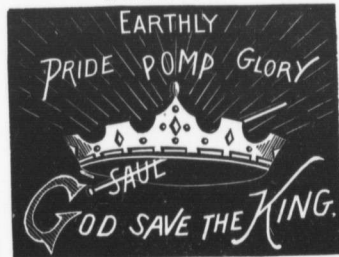
Describe the calling together of the people by Samuel. Before this Samuel had seen Saul, and had anointed him as king, but none of the people knew that he was chosen. [The children will be interested in the story of the meeting of Samuel with Saul, and the surprise of the young farmer-boy who was suddenly made a prince.] Make twelve little squares on the board to stand for the twelve tribes of Israel, and tell that from among these tribes one was chosen in which the king was to be found. Then, from the families of the tribe chosen, a family was named as the one to which the new king belonged. The teacher may give an idea of the choice by lot, which will please the children. Tell that Saul was very fine-looking, and that the people were pleased to have him for a king, though a few grumbled.

### OUR KING CHOSEN.

Talk about choosing, and show that a real choice means action. Illustrate by a boy at a place where two roads meet. He stops and thinks which one it is best to take, and chooses one. Then he walks in that one he has chosen. If he sat still, or walked off in the one he had not chosen, you would think he had made no real choice. By some such illustration teach that to say we choose God as our King, and then do what he forbids, is untrue and wrong, as well as foolish. Ask the children what the Israelites expected their king to do for them, and then ask what we expect our King to do for us, writing answers on the board. When shall we choose our King? Print God's answer. "Choose ye this day," and, without asking promises, help children to see that no one can choose too early or too earnestly to have God for a King.

### Blackboard.

BY J. B. PHIPPS, ESQ.



The Israelites are about to have their own way, and Saul is chosen to be their king. This illustration represents the state of their feelings. They only saw the pomp and glory of the crown, and took no heed of the warning of Samuel.