

Lesson VII.

GIDEON AND HIS THREE HUNDRED November 17, 1907



EGYPTIAN SWORDS

GOLDEN TEXT—Ye shall not fear them : for the Lord your God he shall fight for you.—Deuteronomy 3 : 22. Memorize vs. 17, 18. **THE LESSON PASSAGE**—Judges 7 : 9-23. Read Judges chs. 6 to 8.

9 And it came to pass the same night, that the Lord said unto him, Arise, get thee down ¹ unto the host ; for I have delivered it into thine hand.

10 But if thou fear to go down, go thou with ² Phu'rah thy servant down to the ³ host :

11 And thou shalt hear what they say ; and afterward shall thine hands be strengthened to go down ¹ unto the host. Then went he down with ² Phu'rah his servant unto the ⁴ outside of the armed men that were in the ³ host.

12 And the Mid'ianites and the Amal'ekites and all the children of the east lay along in the valley like ⁵ grasshoppers for multitude ; and their camels were without number, as the sand ⁶ by the sea side for multitude.

13 And when Gid'eon was come, behold, there was a man that told a dream unto his fellow, and said, Behold, I dreamed a dream, and, lo, a cake of barley bread tumbled into the ⁷ host of Mid'ian, and came unto ⁸ a tent, and smote it that it fell, and ⁹ overturned it, that the tent lay along.

14 And his fellow answered and said, This is nothing else save the sword of Gid'eon the son of Jo'ash, a man of Is'rael : ¹⁰ for into his hand ¹¹ hath God delivered Mid'ian, and all the host.

15 And it was so, when Gid'eon heard the telling of the dream, and the interpretation thereof, that he worshipped, and ¹² returned into the ³ host of Is'rael, and said, Arise ; for the Lord hath delivered into your hand the host of Mid'ian.

16 And he divided the three hundred men into

Revised Version—¹ into the camp ; ² Purah ; ³ camp ; ⁴ outermost part ; ⁵ locusts ; ⁶ which is upon the sea shore ; ⁷ the ; ⁸ turned it upside down ; ⁹ Omī for ; ¹⁰ God hath ; ¹¹ he ; ¹² into the hands of all of them trumpets, and ; ¹³ with torches ; ¹⁴ For the Lord, and for Gideon ; ¹⁵ when ; ¹⁶ in pieces ; ¹⁷ torches ; ¹⁸ and they shouted, and put them to flight ; ¹⁹ they blew the three hundred trumpets ; ²⁰ and against all ; ²¹ as far as ; ²² toward Zererath, as far as ; ²³ by ; ²⁴ were gathered together ; ²⁵ Mid'ian.

Daily Readings—(Courtesy, I. B. R. A.)—M.—Sin and its consequences, Judges 6 : 1-10. T.—Gideon's call, Judges 6 : 11-24. W.—Gideon encouraged, Judges 6 : 25-40. Th.—Gideon and his three hundred, Judges 7 : 1-14. F.—Gideon and his three hundred, Judges 7 : 15-23. S.—"Not by might," Zech. 4 : 1-10; S.—Power in weakness, 1 Cor. 1 : 20-31.

THE LESSON EXPLAINED

I. MIDIAN'S CAMP.—9-11. The same night. Gideon (Do not miss reading the whole story of his call of God to deliver Israel from the invading Mid'ianites and other tribesmen of the desert, ch. 6) had collected an army of 32,000 men, but 22,000 of these were sent home (v. 3), and the remaining 10,000 were reduced to 300 in the manner described in vs. 4-8. **Arise, get thee down ;** into the valley of Jezreel (see Geography Lesson) to give battle unto the host of the Mid'ianites, etc., v. 12. Thus God bids Gideon go forward to drive out the invaders. **If thou fear, etc.,** to make the attack. **Go . . . with thy servant ;** as spies by night. **Went he . . . outside of the armed men ;** the edge of the camp, where the soldiers were stationed to guard the unarmed women, children, shepherds, camel drivers (see v. 12), etc., of Mid'ian's host.

12-14 Children of the east ; a general name for the wandering tribes of Arabia. The Mid'ianites and Amalekites are mentioned, because they made up the

BETWEEN THE LESSONS—The Book of Judges continues the history of Israel in Canaan after the death of Joshua. The people soon began to sin grievously against God, and, as a punishment, He permitted powerful enemies to oppress them sorely, and often to bring them into bondage. But, when His people repented, He raised up heroic leaders, to deliver them and rule over them. These leaders were called "judges" One of them was Gideon, of whom the Lesson tells.

three companies, and he put ¹² a trumpet in every man's hand, with empty pitchers, ¹³ and lamps within the pitchers.

17 And he said unto them, Look on me, and do likewise : and, behold, when I come to the ⁴ outside of the camp, it shall be *that*, as I do, so shall ye do.

18 When I blow ⁷ with a trumpet, I and all that are with me, then blow ye the trumpets also on every side of all the camp, and say, ¹⁴ The sword of the Lord, and of Gideon.

19 So Gid'eon, and the hundred men that were with him, came unto the ⁴ outside of the camp in the beginning of the middle watch ; ¹⁵ and they had but newly set the watch : and they blew the trumpets, and brake ¹⁶ the pitchers that were in their hands.

20 And the three companies blew the trumpets, and brake the pitchers, and held the ¹⁷ lamps in their left hands, and the trumpets in their right hands to blow *withal* ; and they cried, The sword of the Lord, and of Gid'eon.

21 And they stood every man in his place round about the camp : and all the host ran, ¹⁸ and cried, and fled.

22 And ¹⁹ the three hundred blew the trumpets, and the Lord set every man's sword against his fellow, ²⁰ even throughout all the host : and the host fled ²¹ to Bethshit'tah ²² in Zer'erath, and to the border of A'bel-meho'lah, ²³ unto Tab'ath.

23 And the men of Is'rael ²⁴ gathered themselves together out of Naph'tali, and out of Ash'er, and out of all Manas'seh, and pursued after ²⁵ the Mid'ianites.

main portion of the invading army. **Like grasshoppers ;** that is, locusts, which sometimes swarm over Palestine, covering the ground for miles. **Camels ;** for carrying the women and children and baggage of the immense host. **A man (a Mid'ianite soldier) . . . told a dream.** God has often used dreams to make His purposes known. (See Joseph's, Gen. 37 : 5-10, and Pharaoh's, dreams, Gen. 41 : 1-8.) **A cake of barley bread ;** a flat, round bannock, the commonest sort of food. Tumbling into the camp, it overthrew the tent (Rev. Ver.), that is, doubtless, the tent of the commander. This cake was the dreamer's picture of Gideon's army, and shows his contempt for it. **His fellow . . . the sword of Gideon, etc.** The second soldier, wiser than the first, dreaded the foe his companion despised.

II. MIDIAN'S CONQUEROR.—15-21a. Gideon heard . . . worshipped ; so sure was he that the message of the soldier's dream was from God. **Arise.** No hesitation, now, but prompt, soldier-like obed-