

LESSON I—October 6th, 1896.

The Time of the Judges. JUDGES 2: 1-12, 16.

(Commit to memory verses 11, 19 and 16).

GOLDEN TEXT: "The Lord raised up judges, which delivered them." Judges 2: 16.

PROVE THAT: God is merciful to the penitent. Mal. 3: 7.

SHORTER CATECHISM. Review Quests. 1-3.

LESSON HYMNS. *Children's Hymnal*—Nos. 8, 89, 14, 88.

DAILY PORTIONS. *Monday.* The Time of the Judges. Judges. 2: 1-10. *Tuesday.* The Time of the Judges. Judges. 2: 11-17. *Wednesday.* A sad history. Judges. 2: 18-23. *Thursday.* Command and warning. Num. 33: 50-56. *Friday.* Forsaking God. Jer. 2: 4-13. *Saturday.* Folly of disobedience. Ps. 81: 8-16. *Sabbath.* Unfaithfulness. Ps. 106: 34-45. (*The I. B. R. A. Selections*).

NOTES AND EXPLANATIONS.

INTRODUCTORY. The book of Judges contains the history of the Israelites from the death of Joshua to the birth of Samuel. It illustrates the sad consequences of not "wholly following the Lord." The Canaanites were not all driven out, and those who remained corrupted the people so that they frequently lapsed into idolatry of the grossest kind. When they repented, after suffering divine chastisement, God raised up "judges," leaders of ability and courage, who delivered them from their oppressors and restored his worship. The book of Judges gives an account of this transition time in the history of England. It stretches from the death of Joshua to that of Samson, and covers a period variously estimated at from 300 to 400 years.

LESSON PLAN. I. A Penitent People. vs. 1-5. II. Forgetful Descendants. vs. 6-10. III. A Merciful God. vs. 11, 12, 16.

I. A PENITENT PEOPLE. 1. **The Angel of the Lord** (R. V.)—This is not a prophet or some other earthly messenger of Jehovah but the Angel of the Lord who is of one essence with God. (Keil). This is inferred from the authoritative manner in which he speaks (Gen. 16: 7, 9, 11; 22: 11; Ex. 3: 1-6). Compare ch. 6: 8 with 6: 11. Those who understand the angel, or "messenger," to have been a prophet, suggest that it may have been Phinehas. **From Gilgal**—It was there that he had last appeared (Josh. 5: 13-15); there they had renewed the covenant and "rolled away" the reproach of Egypt; there they had celebrated their first Passover, and exchanged the manna for the new corn of the land; there the memorial stones were erected and there they had solemnly recorded their renewed consecration to Jehovah before the aged Joshua. How the Angel manifested his course we cannot tell. It may have been by a cloud as of old, or a trail of light like the star which guided the wise men to Bethlehem. He made himself visible at a distance in 1 Chr. 21: 15, 16 (2 Chr. 3: 1). **Bochim**—This name does not occur again. Since the people were assembled for a religious purpose (verse 5) it is probable that it is merely a special title for Shiloh where the tabernacle was. **I will never break my covenant with you**—Provided you are true and faithful to yours. The first breach of covenant shall never be laid to my charge. (Bush). (Gen. 17: 7, Ex. 6: 4; Mic. 7: 20; Luke 1: 55, 72-75).

2. **League**—R. V. "covenant" (Ex. 23: 32; Deut. 7: 2, 3; Josh. 9: 7, 12; 23:

12). Because they were in covenant with Jehovah. "The command to every follower of Christ is to make no league with our spiritual enemies. Our corrupt affections and lusts are not to be spared. It is not sufficient to make them pay tribute, we must crucify and slay them; we must shew them no mercy; our hatred of them must be irreconcilable and incessant." (Bush). **Break down their altars** (R. V.)—Ex. 34: 23; Deut. 7: 5; 12: 3. Nothing must remain to tempt them to idolatry. **Why have ye done this?**—Better, "what is this that ye have done." An exclamation of sorrowful surprise. They had ceased from their efforts to drive out the Canaanites and had made treaties with them.

3. **I also said**—Num. 33: 55; Josh. 23: 13. The expulsion of these nations was to be a gradual process (Ex. 23: 29, 30; Deut. 7: 22) but it was not to cease until all were driven out. "It is not an innocent thing to suffer the presence of sin and give it equal rights." (Cassell). **As thorns in your sides**—R. V. marg. "shall be adversaries unto you." The words "as thorns" are inserted by our translators from Num. 33: 55; Josh. 23: 13, and the word for "sides" should be, some think, "adversaries." **A snare unto you**—The attractions of idolatry would overcome their steadfastness. "Familiarity blunts aversion, smooths away contrarieties, removes differences, impairs obedience." (Cassell). The only safe course is to put temptation out of the way (Ex. 23: 33; 34: 12; Deut. 7: 16; Ps. 106: 36).

4. **Lifted up their voice and wept**—We have probably but a mere outline of the