

The Land of Little People

Far away and yet so near us, lies a land where all have been, Played beside its sparkling waters, danced along its meadows green, Where the busy world do dwell in and its noises only seen, Like the echo of a tempest or the shadow of a dream; And it grows not old forever, sweet and young it is to-day-- 'Tis the Land of Little People, where the happy children play.

And the things they know and see there are so wonderful and grand, Things that wiser folks and older cannot know nor understand: In the woods they meet the fairies, find the giants in their caves, See the palaces of cloudland and the mermen in the waves, Know what all the birdies sing of, hear the secrets of the flowers— For the Land of Little People is another world than ours.

Once 'twas ours; 'tis ours no longer, for when nursery time is o'er Through the Land of Little People we may wander nevermore, But we hear the merry voices and we see them at their play, And our own dark world grows brighter and we seem as young as they, Roaming over shore and meadow, talking to the birds and flowers— For the Land of Little People is a fairer world than ours.

LESSON NOTES.

FOURTH QUARTER.

STUDIES IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

B.C. 1249] **LESSON X.** [Dec. 9

GIDEON'S ARMY.

Judg. 7. 1-8. Memory verses, 2, 3.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts. Zech. 4. 6.

OUTLINE.

1. The Host of Midian.
2. The Host of God.

TIME.—1249 B.C.

PLACE.—Near Mounts Gilboa and Little Hermon, west of the sea of Galilee.

CONNECTING LINKS.—After the general description of the life of the people under the judges, given in the last lesson, the history takes up the main events under the respective rulers, the narrative growing more and more graphic and detailed as we come toward the beginning of the new dispensation to be ushered in by Samuel. There have been already four judges, and Gideon, who is the fifth, is one of the ablest of the list. The lesson is a story from his life.

EXPLANATIONS.—*Beside the well*—That is, above, on the mountain side. *The people are too many*—The army is too large; it numbered thirty-two thousand, which number was greatly inferior to the Midianites. *I will try them*—Put them through some form of test; what the form was is at once described. *Down into the water*—That is, down the side of Mount Gilboa, to the well of Harod, or fountain, or spring. *The people took victuals*—The people who took supplies were the three hundred who took from the rest of the ten thousand soldiers, so that each had a pitcher and a lamp, as afterward described.

QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

1. *The Host of Midian.* Who was Jerubbaal, or Gideon? Why was he called Jerubbaal? chap. 6. 32. What caused the invasion of the Midianites? Whose descendants were these Midianites? Gen. 25. 2, 4. Where did they dwell? Exod. 2. 15; 3. 1; Num. 22. 1, 4. In what part of the land was this invasion made? How great was the army of invasion? ver. 12. What was the general feeling throughout the army? ver. 3.

2 The Host of God.

By what name is God often called. Isa. 1. 9; Rom. 9. 29

What was the number of the host of God that made Gideon's army?

How was the choice made?

How were they equipped for the battle?

How had Gideon gathered his army?

What lesson ought Israel to have learned from this method of the Lord? Zech. 4. 6.

To whom did they ascribe the whole glory? chap. 8. 22.

How complete was the victory which God gave them? chap. 8. 28.

PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.

God and one are a majority, some one has said. Will you be that one? Gideon was ready for any task. Are you?

There were fearful ones in this army. There are moral cowards everywhere. Are you one?

The hosts of Midian, like the hosts of sin, were a vast multitude. God was greater than they. God is greater than are the forces of sin.

Only one out of every one hundred and seven was accepted for this army.

When the Son of man comes with fan in hand to purge his floor, will he divide us closely? Will you be chosen or left?

HINTS FOR HOME STUDY.

1. Learn all you can of Gideon in chaps. 6, 7, 8.
2. Write the story of his life as fully as you can.
3. Locate these two armies so as to understand all that happened.
4. Mark the places that are difficult to understand, and ask some one about them.
5. Give the great characteristic of Gideon as a man.

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

1. What great danger was threatening Israel during the days of Gideon? Destruction by the Midianites.
2. To what tribe did Gideon belong? The tribe of Manasseh.
3. What made Gideon the leader of the army of Israel? "The Spirit of the Lord came upon him."
4. How large an army did he raise? Thirty-two thousand men.
5. How many did God choose to overthrow Midian? Three hundred picked men.
6. What lesson did he mean thus to teach them? "Not by might," etc.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—The Lord of hosts.

CATECHISM QUESTION.

12. By what means were our first parents led to commit so great a sin against God?

By the subtlety of the devil, who made use of the serpent to beguile Eve.

Genesis iii. 13. And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.

2 Corinthians xi. 3. As the serpent beguiled Eve in his craftiness.

B.C. 1120] **LESSON XI.** [Dec 16

DEATH OF SAMSON.

Judg. 16. 21-31. Memory verses, 29, 30

GOLDEN TEXT.

Great men are not always wise. Job 32.

9.

OUTLINE.

1. Blind.
2. Mocked.
3. Avenged.

TIME.—1120 B.C.

PLACE.—Gaza, in south-western Palestine.

CONNECTING LINKS.—We have come far along in the story of the Judges; we are almost at the end of the list. Samson is the thirteenth of the fifteen who were raised up to work deliverance for Israel. The years have been years of distress, with occasional gleams of prosperity. Some of the romantic incidents of Scripture have occurred, Samson himself has contributed to these incidents, and has been the terror and scourge of the Philistine nation. But now he is near his end. Samson sins, and sin always brings penalty; not always in this world, but always somewhere. Samson suffered here. Read the story.

EXPLANATIONS.—*Put out his eyes*—A common Oriental way of effectually destroying the power of an enemy. *Fetters of brass*—Double fetters of some composite metal; double, as they were perhaps on both his hands and feet. *He did grind*—That is, he was reduced to the condition of a common slave. *Hair began to grow*—His strength was not in his hair, but in his consecration to Jehovah, of which the Nazirite's hair was

a sign. When he came into right relation to God once more God blessed him with strength. *Heavenly merriment*—Fluted with wine. *Maak sport*—Entertained them by feats of strength; or perhaps he danced and sung, as the word may mean, or by his awkwardness in his blindness aroused their mirth. *Put the pillars*—He leaned wearily, and asked to be allowed to rest upon or against the pillars which supported the house.

QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

1. *Blind.* Who was made blind by the Philistines. Who was he; what had he done; why was he made blind? How had he come into the power of the Philistines? How was he regarded by the Philistines? Under what vow had he been born? Had his long hair anything to do with his strength? What was the secret of his gigantic might?

2. Mocked.

- Where had Samson been confined? What occasion gave them opportunity to mock and deride him? What was the character of the gathering? vers. 25, 27. What inference do you draw as to the size of the town of Gaza at this time? How could people be on the roof of a house and see what went on inside? How could Samson "make sport" when blind? What can you find explaining this scene?

3. Avenged.

- How severe was the punishment put upon Samson? What was Samson's prayer? Does this teach that God approves of human vengeance taking? What do the Scriptures teach about self-avenging? Duet. 32. 35; Psa. 94. 1; Isa. 35. 4, etc. How was he avenged upon his enemies? What was the character of Samson? Was his life a success or a failure?

PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.

The old story is told over; temptation, parley with evil, a moment of weakness, asleep in sin, bound hand and foot by the devil. Life is daily witnessin, the same scene. Are you acting in such a one?

Men come to a spiritual crisis as Samson came to a physical one. If they yield, spiritual blindness comes and who will restore sight to those blind eyes? Is there a hint that it will ever come? *Samson died blind.*

HINTS FOR HOME STUDY.

1. Study first the history from Gideon to Samson.
2. Study, second, the history of Samson's life.
3. Study the effect of his life on history.
4. See if you can find any references to him in other parts of the Bible.
5. What were the elements of success and failure in his life?

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

1. When the Philistines had overpowered Samson what did they do to him? Put out his eyes.
2. What did they then compel him to do? To grind in the prison-house.
3. To whom did the Philistines ascribe their victory over Samson? To their god Dagon.
4. What do we know was the cause of his misery and death? His wicked forgetfulness of God.
5. What serious warning from this great man's life comes to us all? "Great men are not always wise."
6. Wherein only lies true wisdom? In loving God.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—The fear of God.

CATECHISM QUESTION.

13. Who is the devil or Satan? The chief of the fallen angels, who before man's fall, sinned against God, and was cast out of heaven.

1 Peter v. 8. Be sober, be watchful: your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.

Jude 6. Angels which kept not their own principality, but left their proper habitation. He hath kept in everlasting bonds under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.

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REV. B. F. DIMMICK, Pastor of Christle Chapel, Cincinnati, O.

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