

One of these judges sprang from Judah, another from Zebulun, and the third from Ephraim. They were not called on to fight, but to maintain the people in the condition in which victory had placed them. Possibly they had not the energy of a Jair (chap. x. 1-5), who "arose," as the word tells us, but, like him, two of these judges were men of great wealth. Periods of outward prosperity are not the most profitable for the people of God. The personal importance of the judges comes out, but not the condition of Israel. Who they were, and what they did, is known, but not anything of what was going on in the heart and conscience of the people. And so no sooner was the last of these judges dead, than Israel relapsed into their previous condition (chap. xiii. 1). There are certain occasions when we have to "overcome," others when we have to "stand" (Ephes. vi. 13). How do we employ the corresponding days of peace which the Lord permits us to have? To strengthen ourselves in the truths God has given us, or to go to sleep amid comfortable surroundings, only to be unexpectedly awoke when Satan returns to the charge, and to find ourselves powerless in the presence of the enemy? Those who are not fed are not able to fight. Let us use the times of prosperity in growing in our personal knowledge of the Lord and in walking in communion with Him. We shall thus be strengthened to resist fresh attacks, and avoid falling into bondage more cruel than that from which we have escaped.

*(To be continued, D. V.)*