

testimony. Midian and Amalek (ver. 33), however, were not thus restrained. If, in their folly, the people of the city sought to hinder their own deliverance, the world made a determined effort to suppress the revival which was to release Israel from bondage.

Up to this time Gideon had only performed an act of obedience; now the Spirit of Jehovah came upon him. His first act of power was to sound the trumpet, assembling the tribes together after him. The strength of Israel was in their gathering together, it was that which Satan and the world most feared.

Gideon, notwithstanding his strength, did not manifest much confidence in God. He asked for signs to know if Jehovah would save the people by his hand. All God's orders to Gideon were clear and simple, but when Gideon asked for signs of God, all became obscure and complicated. We can hardly understand what his thought was. It may be that the fleece represented Israel, blessed of God, when dryness rested upon the nations, and *vice versa*, for having proved God, Gideon put Him to a counterproof. What poor faith! What feeble confidence in Him! But the God of grace patiently did what His servant required. He wished to deliver His people. He wished, by all means, to sustain the feeble heart of His witness, in order to enlist him in His service and to make him an instrument for His glory.

(To be continued, D, V.)