

Lesson IV. GIDEON AND THE THREE HUNDRED January 24, 1915

Judges 7 : 1-8, 16-23. Study Judges, ch. 7—Memory Verse, 7.

Golden Text—Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.—Zechariah 4 : 6.

1 Then Jerubba'al, who is Gid'eon, and all the people that were with him, rose up early, and pitched beside the well of Har'od : so that the host of the Mid'ianites were on the north side of them, by the hill of Mo'reh, in the valley.

2 And the Lord said unto Gid'eon, The people that are with thee are too many for me to give the Mid'ianites into their hands, lest Is'rael vaunt themselves against me, saying, Mine own hand hath saved me.

3 Now therefore go to, proclaim in the ears of the people, saying, Whosoever is fearful and afraid, let him return and depart early from mount Gilead. And there returned of the people twenty and two thousand ; and there remained ten thousand.

4 And the Lord said unto Gid'eon, The people are yet too many ; bring them down unto the water, and I will try them for thee there : and it shall be, that of whom I say unto thee, This shall go with thee, the same shall go with thee ; and of whomsoever I say unto thee, This shall not go with thee, the same shall not go.

5 So he brought down the people unto the water : and the Lord said unto Gid'eon, Every one that lappedth of the water with his tongue, as a dog lappedth, him shalt thou set by himself ; likewise every one that boweth down upon his knees to drink.

6 And the number of them that lapped, putting their hand to their mouth, were three hundred men ; but all the rest of the people bowed down upon their knees to drink water.

7 And the Lord said unto Gid'eon, By the three hundred men that lapped will I save you, and deliver the Mid'ianites into thine hand : and let all the other people go every man unto his place.

8 So the people took victuals in their hand, and their

trumpets : and he sent all the rest of Is'rael every man unto his tent, and retained those three hundred men : and the host of Mid'ian was beneath him in the valley.

16 And he divided the three hundred men into three companies, and he put a trumpet in every man's hand, with empty pitchers, and lamps within the pitchers.

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

18 When I blow 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, The sword of the Lord, and of Gid'eon.

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

20 And the three companies blew the trumpets, and brake the pitchers, and held the 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, and cried, and fled.

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

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

THE LESSON RETOLD

Flashing swords and shields ! Big tents pitched close together ! That was the camp of the great army of the Midianites which had come to fight the Israelites.

On the other side of the stream thousands of Israelites under Gideon were getting ready for the battle. But the Lord told Gideon that he had too many soldiers, and that all except the bravest should be sent home. So twenty-two thousand soldiers of the Israelites were sent back to their homes, while ten thousand were left. This number was still too great, and God spoke to Gideon, "Bring thy people down to the water."

Gideon led the host of Israelites down to the spring. They were thirsty. Three hundred of them dipped up the water in their hands and drank ; all the rest bent down on their knees to drink.

The Lord said, "Take with thee the three hundred who dipped up the water in their hands. Let all the other people go." Gideon did as the Lord told him to do. The Lord wished to teach His people, that it was not by a great and powerful army that they were to gain the victory over their enemies, but that it was through His help that they were to conquer.