



LESSON.—SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 1907.

Gideon and His Three Hundred.

Judges vii., 9-23. Memory verses 17, 18.
Read Judges vi-viii.

Golden Text.

Ye shall not fear them; for the Lord
he shall fight for you.—Deut. iii., 22.

Home Readings.

Monday, Nov. 11.—Judges ii., 1-23.
Tuesday, Nov. 12.—Judges vi., 1-24.
Wednesday, Nov. 13.—Judges vi., 25-40
Thursday, Nov. 14.—Judges vii., 1-23.
Friday, Nov. 15.—Judges viii., 1-17.
Saturday, Nov. 16.—Judges viii., 18-35.
Sunday, Nov. 17.—Ps. lxxxiii., 1-19.

FOR THE JUNIOR CLASSES.

How many of you can tell what weapons a soldier carries? Yes, he carries swords and guns and such things. And what would you think of a soldier who went against the enemy without any kind of a sword or gun at all? Yes, he would seem a very queer soldier, but our lesson to-day is about three hundred soldiers, something like that. They carried three things each; each had a trumpet, a torch, and a kind of jug. It must have looked a very funny army, don't you think? But there was no one there to laugh at them, because it was the middle of the night, dark and still, and their enemies were lying fast asleep in their tents.

The lesson is one of the most interesting in the series, and certainly there should be no difficulty in teaching it. Let the children figure out how the torch would be carried in one hand with its light hidden in the jug, how the other hand would likely hold the trumpet and handle of the pitcher in such a way that the fall of the pitcher could be almost immediately followed by the blast of the trumpet. If they are ordinary children they will like the thought of the smash, the row, and the sudden light in the middle of the dark, still night, immensely, and it will make the three hundred very real live people to them. Their imaginations having grasped the scene it will be easier to speak of its meaning.

FOR THE SENIORS.

The character of Gideon is one of the most interesting in the Bible. It is noticeable that Gideon was in a state of doubt whether God was any more with his people, whether all the stories of his dealings with them in time past were not mere fables, when the angel came to him. A fine well-built man in the prime of life, he seems to have been (Judges viii., 18), and God saw behind the bitter chafing at his country's bonds a heart that would do and dare if there were any to second its efforts, therefore 'The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valor.' Gideon lost little time in taking his stand and the willingness with which the people flocked to his call proved, as in similar instances in the world's history, how many will follow if another has courage to lead. The incident of God's miraculous treatment of the fleece would not only encourage Gideon, but also the men who were with him. The three chapters speak eloquently of the man's modesty, his faith, his enthusiasm at times of awakened faith, his obedience to God, his determination in spite of obstacles, and also, sadly enough, how easy it was for even such a man as he to be led astray by going beyond the law of God. The story of

the manner of selecting the soldiers directed by God, in which their zeal, courage, and alertness were proved, with the account that follows of the midnight attack is of the greatest interest. There is material in this lesson to supply many a full half-hour instead of only the one.

(SELECTIONS FROM TARBELL'S 'GUIDE.')

Verse 15. He worshipped. We perceive here that he was a man of faith and prayer—a man who walked with God,—a man whose thoughts, even amidst the engrossing cares of that momentous hour, were towards his Maker,—a man who held communion with his God amidst the perils of a nocturnal sally and the stratagems of war. Having worshipped, with light and nimble steps he climbed the mountain side, and roused his little band with the words full of hearty cheer—'Arise: for the Lord hath delivered into your hand the host of Midian.'—Luke H. Wiseman.

England's Ally. Once a sturdy Scot, valiant in speech as in deed, English Ambassador to the Court of Prussia, sat at the table of Frederick the Great, then meditating a war whose sinews were to be mainly formed of English subsidies. Round the table sat French wits of the infidel sort, and they and the King made merry over decadent superstitions, the follies of the ancient faith. Suddenly the talk changed to war and war's alarms. Said the long-silent Scot, 'England would, by the help of God, stand by Prussia.' 'Ah!' said infidel Frederick. 'I do not know you had an Ally of that name; and the infidel wits smirked applause. 'So please your Majesty,' was the swift retort, 'He is the only Ally to whom we do not send subsidies.' There stood the truth confessed. England's best ally is God; the times of her truest heroism and magnanimity have been the times when she was most obedient to Him.—A. M. Fairbairn.

To character and success, two things, contradictory as they may seem, must go together—humble dependence and manly independence; humble dependence on God and manly reliance on self.—Wordsworth.

In my own hands my want and weakness are,
My strength, O God, is Thine.
—Bayard Taylor.

(FROM PELOUBET'S 'NOTES.')

The Book of Judges is a collection of records belonging to the period between the death of Joshua and the birth of Samuel, a period of 280 years according to our common chronology. But if we add together the numbers given in Judges they amount to 410 years. For this and other reasons it is entirely probable that the oppressions and deliverances were not successive, but, in part, synchronous. They were, in fact, without exception, local struggles; and it is not only conceivable, but highly probable, that while one part of the land was enjoying security under its judge other tribes were groaning under the foreign yoke.—Professor Moore. While several of the events were thus occurring at the same time in different parts of the land, in other cases the judges ruled practically over the whole. The judges formed temporary heads in particular centres, or over particular groups of tribes.—Barak, in the north of Israel, Gideon, in the centre, Jephthah, on the east of Jordan, Samson, in the extreme southwest.—Driver.

Gideon did the best he could with what he had. He could not thresh out his wheat on the threshing floor, which, for the sake of the wind, must be on a hilltop, in sight of the invaders. Gideon, therefore, took his grain to the winepress, probably into the little house of the winepress, and there in a space not big enough to fling a flail in, he beat out the grain slowly and painfully and with rods. It is a picture of a man manfully doing the only duty possible to him under extreme disadvantage, while his heart is being gnawed with doubt. . . This, then, is heroism—the making the most of what you have. God meets us never on some fancy ground of our own choice, but

where he has placed us in the dust and din of our common life. Remember to make the most of what you have, when you are tempted to complain that you have no opportunity for the great hopes with which your heart is bursting. Remember Gideon whom God met and called a hero because, while suffering from both doubt and adversity, he still did what he could do with a brave and a dogged heart.—Report of Sermon by Prof. Geo. Adam Smith.

Academic doubts and intellectual restlessness are of no practical profit. 'But doubt that rises from the practical pressure of life, from the awful mass of labor that still lies before society, from the apparent indifference of the highest powers of the universe, though it is the awfulest doubt into which man may enter, is yet of the kind that God can use. But the strong lesson for us is that there is no doubt too deep for God to lift a man out of and make him a man of faith and victorious energy.'—Geo. Adam Smith.

BIBLE REFERENCES.

Psa. cvii.; Deut. xxviii.; Isa. ix., 4; x., 26; Eph. vi., 10-12; I. Cor. iii., 9; I. Sam. xiv., 6; Psa. xx., 5; cxviii., 8; Zech. iv., 6.

Junior C. E. Topic.

Sunday, Nov. 17.—Topic—Wanted: men for Gideon's band. Judg. vii., 2-7.

C. E. Topic.

THE WICKED.

Monday, Nov. 11.—God sees the wicked. Gen. vi., 5, 6.

Tuesday, Nov. 12.—God condemns the wicked. Prov. xii., 2.

Wednesday, Nov. 13.—He is angry with the wicked. Ps. vii., 11.

Thursday, Nov. 14.—The wicked are punished. Prov. xi., 5-8.

Friday, Nov. 15.—The wicked must repent. Ezek. xxxiii., 10, 11.

Saturday, Nov. 16.—God will forgive. Isa. lv., 7.

Sunday, Nov. 17.—Topic—What God thinks of the wicked. Nah. i., 3.

A Singular Experience.

Mr. H. H. McL., San Antonio, Tex., sends this interesting incident:

In one of your recent issues was an account of a young lady who was hypnotized by a snake, and her experience was so different from that of my chum of more than sixty years ago that I am led to relate his as then given me.

In a stream called Leatherwood, near Bedford, Ind., there was a pool where we went swimming, and to reach it we usually followed a path down quite a bluff, and on one occasion my chum had the experience referred to. He was suddenly arrested by the flash of brilliant colors, and which expanded and grew in gorgeousness and variety, producing the most pleasing and fascinating sensations. And these sensations were so peculiar, and from the surroundings, the thought came to him that he must be, as then called, charmed, but now hypnotized, by a snake, and he exerted all his will power to change his position, and whether from such exertions, or other cause, the charm was broken, he did not know. But when freed from it, he saw gliding away a large black snake. He said he never could think of the occurrence without a feeling of dread coming over him, and yet with the desire to retain the remembrance of those indescribable sensations, and to view those gorgeous colors again.—C. E. World.

When the Holy Spirit comes into the heart, He finds that we know so much already of what it were well to leave unknown; we are self-conceited, we are puffed up. We have learned lessons of worldly wisdom and earnest policy, and these we need to unlearn and deny.—Spurgeon.