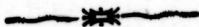


their Ophrah became a gathering centre, and the ephod became a centre of Ophrah, to the displacement of the divine sanctuary at Shiloh, the true centre of gathering for Israel. Gideon was not a proud man, but, his heart being deceived, he was no longer upright before God. He dwelt in his own house (v. 29), and rested from his glorious labours. He was surrounded by a numerous family, but he had set up a "serpent" which was eventually to accomplish the destruction of his race. No sooner had he closed his eyes in death, than Israel returned to unmixed idolatry, and made Baal-berith their god (v. 33), thus making a demon their chief and "Lord of the covenant."

But there is one consolation in the midst of all the ruin which will be seen in chap. ix.: God never leaves Himself without a testimony in this scene. Let us then be His witnesses, holding fast this word of Gideon to the people: "Jehovah shall rule over you."

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



“ BUT THE END  
OF ALL THINGS IS AT-HAND : BE YE  
THEREFORE SOBER, AND WATCH UNTO PRAYER.”  
“ BLESSED ARE THOSE SERVANTS, WHOM THE  
LORD WHEN HE COMETH SHALL FIND  
WATCHING.”