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INTERNATIONAL S. S. LESSON THIRD QUARTER, 1883. Lesson X.—August 26.

THE HOME STUDIES. GIDEON'S ARMY. (Judges 7: 1-8.)

HOME STUDIES. M. God glorified in the deliverance of his people... Pa. 30. T. God glorified in the chastisement of his people... Isa. 10: 12-20.

GOLDEN TEXT. "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon..." Judges 7: 20.

Time, about 1222 B.C. Place, near the hill Meath, 15 or 20 miles southwest of the sea of Galilee.

Introduction. The history of Israel has been eventful since the death of Joshua, which occurred two hundred years before the time of the present lesson.

THE LESSON.

I. Gideon. 1. Then Jerubbabai, who is Gideon, and all the people that were with him, pitched beside the well of Harod; so that the host of the Midianites were on the north side of them, by the hill of Moreh, in the valley of Jezrael.

1. Jerubbabai.—Means "a contriver against Baal." This name was given him because he threw down the altar of Baal in his own family, and cut down the grove about it.

2. And the Lord said unto Gideon, The people with thee are too many for thee; and I will bring thee down upon them, and thou shalt smite them.

3. Now therefore go, to proclaim in the ears of the people, saying, Whosoever is fearful and trembling, let him return and depart early from Mount Gideon, and there shall be nothing to him; and whosoever is courageous, let him stand with me, on the mountain side.

4. And the Lord said unto Gideon, The people are yet too many; bring them down upon the water, and I will bring thee down upon them, and thou shalt smite them.

5. So he brought down the people upon the water, and the Lord said unto Gideon, Every one that lappeth of the water, I will bring down, and will smite him; but he that drinketh not of the water, but hath put his hand to his ear, and hath drunk with his hand to his mouth, as I did, he shall stand with me, and he shall be courageous.

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

7. The people that were with thee are too many; they are 32,000; the force of the enemy numbers 135,000. From this standpoint it would seem there were too few. But this was the Lord's battle, and he only needed energy to carry out his strategy.

8. Whosoever is fearful, let him return. This was a special command (see Deuteronomy 20: 1). In purpose was to free the army of Gideon before he was met, as they were leaving them would rout the others. Men of strong faith are usually men of true courage.

9. And there returned twenty and two thousand men; and the Lord said unto Gideon, The Lord is with thee, thou shalt smite the Midianites.

10. And Gideon said unto his servant Othniel, Behold, I have brought thee down upon the water, and the Lord has smitten the host of the Midianites, as thou saidst.

11. And the Lord said unto Gideon, The sword of the Lord and of Gideon. Then came Gideon, and delivered the Midianites.

mouth with great rapidity, thus suggesting the use of the fork makes of his tongue in drinking. Some commentators say that the moral quality suggested by this means of drinking is, that those who prostrated themselves before him showed more self-indulgence; besides, the prostration brought out their long practiced habit of bowing themselves before Baal. However, God knew his men, and chose them. The manner in which they drank water was a sign to Gideon who they were. There were but three hundred men. (1) The lesson to be learned from this is, that God fits his own battalions; but employs human agencies. At all times God must have the glory. The three hundred selected for Gideon's forces could not conquer the 135,000 heathen. On the other hand, God could have slain the mighty host without the aid of this 300. Yet he wanted their aid. So he wanted the aid of men, and children to-day, to help put down evil.

III. The Victory. 7. And the Lord said unto Gideon, By the three hundred men that lapped will I save you, and deliver the Midianites into thine hand; and let all the water flow away, and let every man drink, save the three hundred that have put their hands to their mouths, as I did. So the people took water of the water, and the host of Midian was slain.

8. By the three hundred men that lapped will I save you.—How this was done is not told. Gideon and his servant went up near to the camp, and heard a dream from the lips of one of the enemy. It reassured him, as his interpretation was that Israel would overcome the host encamped below them. When midnight had come Gideon's men were divided into three companies. Each man had a torch in a large empty pitcher and a trumpet. A trumpet and a torch generally, in an attack at night, represented a company of soldiers. Hence the three hundred trumpets sounded, the pitchers were broken, three hundred lamps flashed through the darkness, and from the tents of the enemy came the fearful war cry, "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon!" The result was that each invader turned upon his neighbor in the darkness, and seized the sword of the Lord, and the Midianites were cut to pieces—annihilated.

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Added to this, we see a little further on the blessing of heavenly adoption. Notice the eleventh verse:—"I will lay thy stones with fair colors, and lay thy foundations with sapphires. And I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones. This is rare building, if it is not there should be quick market for such an array of choice things: sapphires and agates—what would you have more? Here are all manner of precious stones, and all of these given freely! The only terms are "everything for nothing! Heaven for asking!" All the treasures of God are freely bestowed upon the sons of men who are willing to accept them as gifts of grace.

As if this were not enough, the Lord Jesus offers out a fourth blessing, namely, *salvation*—salvation by faith. "In righteousness shall thou be established; thou shalt be far from oppression; for thou shalt not fear; and from terror; for it shall not come near thee. No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn." Security is worth infinitely more than gold. To be protected by divine

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are to be nothing, and Jesus is to be your all in all. When you will come down to that, then take the goods, the bargain is made; eternal life is yours. But the text says a little more than that—it says, "Buy, and eat"—as much as to say, make it yours in the most complete sense. If a man buys a loaf of bread it is his; but if he eats it, then all the lawyers in the world cannot dispute him out of it—he has it by a possession which is not only new points of the law, but all the law. When a poor soul hath confidence enough to take Christ and to live upon him as his own, saying, "This Christ is able to save me, I take him unto me and I am saved," why, the devil himself cannot unsave you. What is to divide him from Christ? There is the bath, and I wash therein and am clean: what then? Who can obliterate the fact that I have washed? The righteousness of Christ is bestowed upon me, and put on by me, who can tear off that glorious dress? Christ fed upon is ours beyond all question. No method of possession is more sure and safe than that of eating what you have bought. Feed, then, on Christ, the bread of heaven, and though you be in yourself the poorest of the poor, yet he is yours forever and ever.

See, then, the blessed invitation, the whole of God's mercy in Christ, infinite love and boundless compassion are to be had for no price at all; they are freely given to every man who has no money with which to procure them. The height of love meets the depths of poverty and fills them up. He that has nothing is invited to have all things, for he is the person for whom they were provided in the eternal purposes of God.

FRAGMENTS OF A JOURNEY. BY N. R. PITTMAN. No. IV.

Our first night in Monterey, State of New Nevada, to our "weary pilgrim band" was not a solid wall of sleep between the sun-setting and the sun-rising.

"Vague wishes Unexpressed, Strangely unmet, Sweet unrest," discloses the experience not only of the youthful theologian to whose "maiden fair to see" "distance lends enchantment," but also of the fathers and grandfathers who "love them when they are old."

When the mountains of the Orient were fringed with the silver lace of the morning sun, the citizens of Monterey saw bunches of gesticulating Americans talking on plazas and street corners. A native Mexican escorted a company of us to the post office before breakfast. Men and women of toil were moving hastily along the streets. Buyers and sellers were busy in market places. Everything about me reminded me of the smell of the dusty books of the ancients. The Orient and the Occident have met in Monterey. The streets are parallel and rectangular. They are narrow and excellently though roughly paved with stone. With magnificent masonry, the squares are solidly walled, except here and there a closed door adjacent to an open window, which is defended by a net-work of iron bars reaching almost to the level of the street. The stores are on the corners and the residences between. A truant eye would discover a bit of indoor life. Very few homes have more than one floor. Here a home of poverty and wretchedness. There a home of wealth and music. So it is everywhere in the world. John the Baptist goes from a dungeon to a throne eternal. King Herod goes from a throne to a dungeon eternal. Solomon and David had thrones earthly and thrones celestial. Material wealth is not incompatible with spiritual wealth. But the temporal palace is sometimes a gang-way to the eternal penitentiary.

In the rear the tallings are courts or plazas in which are shelters for cooking, and clusters of shade trees about the walls, and seats for circles of talkers. In the court of the Heffey Hotel our pilgrims joined with the Mexican brethren in holding prayer-meeting. In the soft light of the evening moon, while the bells of Paval Cathedral were ringing their rhythmic chimes, we sang and prayed. Many of our hearts were full. Our Mexican brethren were overjoyed. Judge Stewart, of Georgia, and Dr. Boyce, of the Seminary, and others, spoke through an interpreter to the Mexicans. The members of the Monterey church wept and rejoiced. Many who were not Christians were deeply moved. I think I shall carry that scene in my memory up to heaven; and I hope to meet the Heffey Hotel congregation around God's throne.

We visited the Baptist church house. Some brethren slept in it during the nights we tarried in the city. It was a well-kept place. The pastor is Rev. S. T. Trevino, who was converted under the ministry of Westrup, the martyr missionary, who planted the church in Monterey. Bro. Trevino is sustained by the Home Mission Board of New York. The baptistry is in the church-yard. This little church-house is under the shadow of a magnificent Catholic cathedral. But we were told that the popular feeling is becoming bitter against the Catholics. The prospect for the Baptist in Mexico is exhilarating. Bro. Westrup, brother of the slain missionary, is encouraged in teaching a school. Rev. W. D. Powell, a prominent man of God, is meeting glorious success in Saltillo, &

the new sarcophagus of John Howard Payne, I would wreath it with the rare flowers of the tropics in memory of HOME, SWEET HOME.

COOLNESS—CROWDS—A SHERIFF IN TROUBLE, &c., &c.

Dear Recorder:—I guess you never had a news-letter from this place before—I know you've never had one from this scribble.

Doubtless many of your readers would like to know where Saltillo is, and what it is. Well, it is on the top of Saltillo Mountain, 2500 feet above the sea; 13 miles from Hendersonville, on the Spartanburg & Asheville R. R., about 40 miles from Spartanburg. So much for the where. It is a pleasant resort for the people of the low-country during the fiery heat of dog-days and August suns. Here are two hotels, both packed to their utmost capacity with the denizens of North and S. Carolina, and were there two other houses opened to-day, they would be filled within a week or two.

While I was sojourning here with my family, the worthy bishop of Spartanburg came up, bringing his choir with him. He hugged the floor in the dining-room all night for the want of a bed, while the young ladies "hunted soft planks" on the parlor floor for the same reason. It is scarcely necessary to add, that that pastor and choir spent next night in Hendersonville. Do you ask why the place is so crowded? The capacity is limited, not being able to accommodate more than 125 persons. The air is so cool and pure and crisp—so like alpine water is ice-cold without the introduction of ice; the company is so polite, sociable, refined; the place is so retired—all these are disad-

antages in selecting a place for a season's rest. Dr. W. W. Duncan and faculty of Wofford College are summering here and enjoy it very much.

I said there were two hotels, but do not advise as to which one is the best to go to. I heard a yodeler that illustrates my predicament as a traveler in a mountain country. A lad and asked him for directions to a certain place. Said the yodeler, "It is two ways, either of them will take you there, and no matter which you take, you'll wish your father."

Another anecdote from saying anything faro. In ante-bellum "Thompson" kept the leading hotel. Dr. had earned "keeping a good all men in his p (the same) and f bled at his far the hours at w a long, lean, man present dinner. Th unseasonable being "off "on" but could." "scared r be sum ham an milk, "sit d di self, "be t be t "

"And the sky-line is broken By the Mountains Divine! And the planet stands up Body-guard before God, And no cloud-land and glory Transfigures the sod."

Yonder is La Salla, the queen of mountains, with dindem of ame' sine cloudlets upon her head and pers of daisies on her feet. Wh sun has said good-bye to all the mountains round about Mont makes La Salla's cheeks radiate his kisses. Gen. Taylor's flattery was placed on La Sal' and the Mexicans surrender.

The evening before Estados Unidos Mexico cloud sailed up from the and thunders pealed pounced and the air w Mexican soldiers with our divisions of have only two per son (estacion de lasts from about t October. The c omprizes the r evening's rain within about e' River was dry a Gardens are the mornin heat. The moar rest. The seats in could n without pure week and c e

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