

know how completely he has succeeded in his design. The wolf catcheth and scattereth the sheep.

In the book of Joshua, characterized by the power of the Holy Spirit with Israel, this effort was baffled at the time of the controversy caused by the setting up of the altar, *Ed* (Jos. xxii). Thanks to the energy of the tribes and to the zeal of Phinehas, the introduction of sectarian principles was avoided. When divine principles are at stake we must not fail to stand in the breach, at the risk of war between brethren. The maintenance of Israel's unity, as God had established it, had more value for the saints at that time, than courteous relationships between brethren.

Later, in the book of Judges (viii. 1), when Ephraim began to chide with Gideon, the conflict was quieted through the humility of the latter who deemed the gleanings of the grapes of Ephraim better than the vintage of Abiezer. In chap. viii, and still more in the chapter we are considering, it is no longer a question of defending principles. The discontent of Ephraim proceeded from a sense of his own importance. He had been pacified on the former occasion by the humility of Gideon, but, conscience not having been reached and there having been no self-judgment, he renewed against Jephthah the same accusations. A fault in our career as Christians left unjudged will reappear sooner or later in similar circumstances. Here the state of Ephraim had grown worse, for while on the previous occasion he had gleaned, on