

SERMON.

Judges viii. 4.—“ *And Gideon came to Jordan, and passed over, he, and the three hundred men that were with him, faint, yet pursuing.*”

In the various accounts which the sacred writers have left us of the deliverances of the Israelites from their oppressors, one idea is prominently put forward, and seems designed to be impressed on the mind of the reader, that their deliverance was wholly owing to the power of God. As their punishment came from God, though inflicted by human agents, so their deliverance came from God, though wrought by human agents. Many of the actors in these scenes were men of remarkable intellectual powers, and possessed of no common strength, skill, and sagacity; yet had they trusted to these powers alone, they would have been over-matched. Could Moses, though mighty in words and deeds, have contended successfully with the hosts of Pharaoh? Would Joshua have proved himself equal to the contest with the warlike tribes of Canaan? Would Gideon have overcome the Midianitish host with three hundred men? Could Samson, by brute force, or cunning, have discomfited the Philistines? The answer is the same in every instance. Not by their own power or might was this triumph gained, but thine arm, O Lord, hath gotten Thee the victory.

In this respect we desire you, my brethren, to observe a great difference between the Bible, and the turn of thought adopted by writers of our own day. The Bible, though it never multiplies miracles needlessly, nor deals in mere