

all this history, the way in which the two characteristics, humility and energy of faith, were united in Gideon. Energy, to gather and purify the people for battle and for pursuit of the enemy; humility, which delivered from all self-confidence and led to implicit reliance on Jehovah. And yet it was on the side which seemed to have the least need of watchfulness, that the enemy was about to lay a snare for him, finally bringing about the moral ruin of this eminent leader in Israel.

The vanquished kings were not sparing in their praise of Gideon (ver. 18-21), which was all the more dangerous because there was apparently no interested motive. He asked them, "What manner of men were they whom ye slew at Tabor? And they answered, "As thou art, so were they; each one *resembled the children of a king.*"

Let us distrust the flattery of the world. A moment's reflection before the Lord would tell us, that the world flatters to enfeeble us, and to deprive us of the weapons with which we fight against it.

It does not appear as if Gideon was turned aside from God's path by this speech, but he seems to have lost a true sense of the power of the enemy, and to have despised rather than feared it. This was not the case with Joshua when he made prisoners of the five kings (Josh. x. 22-27). Far from underrating the strength of the enemy in the eyes of the men of Israel, he said to them: "Come near, put your feet upon the necks of these kings;"