

CHAPTER 3

In this chapter,

- I.** A general account of Israel's enemies is premised, and of the mischief they did them (v. 1-7).
- II.** A particular account of the brave exploits done by the first three of the judges.
 - 1.** Othniel, whom God raised up to fight Israel's battles, and plead their cause against the king of Mesopotamia (v. 8-11).
 - 2.** Ehud, who was employed in rescuing Israel out of the hands of the Moabites, and did it by stabbing the king of Moab (v. 12-30).
 - 3.** Shamgar, who signalized himself in an encounter with the Philistines (v. 31).

<ORIG> JUDGES 3:1-7

THE IDOLATRY OF THE ISRAELITES

We are here told what remained of the old inhabitants of Canaan.

1. There were some of them that kept together in united bodies, unbroken (v. 3): *The five lords of the Philistines*, namely, Ashdod, Gaza, Askelon, Gath, and Ekron, <ORIG>1 Samuel 6:17. Three of these cities had been in part reduced (<ORIG> Judges 1:18), but it seems the Philistines (probably with the help of the other two, which strengthened their confederacy with each other thenceforward) recovered the possession of them. These gave the greatest disturbance to Israel of any of the natives, especially in the latter times of the judges, and they were never quite reduced until David's time. There was a particular nation called *Canaanites*, that kept their ground with the Sidonians, upon the coast of the great sea. And in the north the Hivites held much of Mount Lebanon, it being a remote corner, in which perhaps they were supported by some of the neighbouring states. But, besides these,

2. There were every where in all parts of the country some scatterings of the nations (v. 5), Hittites, Amorites, etc., which, by Israel's foolish

connivance and indulgence, were so many, so easy, and so insolent, that the *children of Israel* are said to *dwell among them*, as if the right had still remained in the Canaanites, and the Israelites had been taken in by their permission and only as tenants at will.

Now concerning these remnants of the natives observe,

I. How wisely God permitted them to remain. It is mentioned in the close of the foregoing chapter as an act of God's justice, that he let them remain for Israel's correction. But here another construction is put upon it, and it appears to have been an act of God's *wisdom*, that he let them remain for Israel's real advantage, that those who *had not known the wars of Canaan* might *learn war*, v. 1, 2. It was the will of God that the people of Israel should be inured to war,

1. Because their country was *exceedingly rich and fruitful*, and abounded with dainties of all sorts, which, if they were not sometimes made to know hardship, would be in danger of sinking them into the utmost degree of luxury and effeminacy. They must sometimes wade in blood, and not always in milk and honey, lest even their men of war, by the long disuse of arms, should become as soft and as nice as the *tender and delicate woman*, that would not set so much as the sole of her foot to the ground for *tenderness and delicacy*, a temper as destructive to every thing that is good as it is to every thing that is great, and therefore to be carefully watched against by all God's Israel.

2. Because their country lay very much in the midst of enemies, by whom they must expect to be insulted; for God's heritage was a *speckled bird*; the *birds round about were against her*, ^{<2412>}Jeremiah 12:9. It was therefore necessary they should be well disciplined, that they might defend their coasts when invaded, and might hereafter enlarge their coast as God had promised them. The art of war is best learnt by experience, which not only acquaints men with martial discipline, but (which is no less necessary) inspires them with a martial disposition. It was for the interest of Israel to breed soldiers, as it is the interest of an island to breed sea-men, and therefore God left Canaanites among them, that, by the less difficulties and hardships they met with in encountering them, they might be prepared for greater, and, by *running with the footmen*, might learn to *contend with horses*, ^{<2412>}Jeremiah 12:5. Israel was a figure of the church militant, that must fight its way to a triumphant state. The soldiers of Christ must endure

hardness, ~~¶~~ 2 Timothy 2:3. Corruption is therefore left remaining in the hearts even of good Christians, that they may learn war, may keep on the *whole armour of God*, and stand continually upon their guard. The learned bishop Patrick offers another sense of v. 2: *That they might know to teach them war*, that is, they shall know what it is to be left to themselves. Their fathers fought by a divine power. God taught their hands to war and their fingers to fight; but now that they have forfeited his favour let them learn what it is to fight like other men.

II. How wickedly Israel mingled themselves with those that did remain. One thing God intended in leaving them among them was *to prove Israel* (v. 4), that those who were faithful to the God of Israel might have the honour of resisting the Canaanites' allurements to idolatry, and that those who were false and insincere might be discovered, and might fall under the shame of yielding to those allurements. Thus in the Christian churches there must needs be heresies, *that those who are perfect may be made manifest*, ~~¶~~ 1 Corinthians 11:19. Israel, upon trial, proved bad.

1. They joined in marriage with the Canaanites (v. 6), though they could not advance either their honour or their estate by marrying with them. They would mar their blood instead of mending it, and sink their estates instead of raising them, by such marriages.

2. Thus they were brought to join in worship with them; they served their *gods* (v. 6), *Baalim and the groves* (v. 7), that is, the images that were worshipped in groves of thick trees, which were a sort of natural temples. In such unequal matches there is more reason to fear that the bad will corrupt the good than to hope that the good will reform the bad, as there is in laying two pears together, the one rotten and the other sound. When they inclined to worship other gods they *forgot the Lord their God*. In complaisance to their new relations, they talked of nothing by Baalim and the groves, so that by degrees they lost the remembrance of the true God, and forgot there was such a Being, and what obligations they lay under to him. In nothing is the corrupt memory of man more treacherous than in this, that it is apt to forget God; because out of sight, he is out of mind; and here begins all the wickedness that is in the world: they *have perverted their way*, for they have *forgotten the Lord their God*.

~~<ORR>~~ JUDGES 3:8-11

THE GOVERNMENT OF OTHNIEL

We now come to the records of the government of the particular judges, the first of which was Othniel, in whom the story of this book is knit to that of Joshua, for even in Joshua's time Othniel began to be famous, by which it appears that it was not long after Israel's settlement in Canaan before their purity began to be corrupted and their peace (by consequence) disturbed. And those who have taken pains to enquire into the sacred chronology are generally agreed that the Danites' idolatry, and the war with the Benjamites for abusing the Levite's concubine, though related in the latter end of this book, happened about this time, under or before the government of Othniel, who, though a judge, was not such a king in Israel as would keep men from doing what was *right in their own eyes*. In this short narrative of Othniel's government we have,

I. The distress that Israel was brought into for their sin, v. 8. God being justly displeased with them for plucking up the hedge of their peculiarity, and laying themselves in common with the nations, plucked up the hedge of their protection and laid them open to the nations, set them to sale as goods he would part with, and the first that laid hands on them was Chushan-rishathaim, king of that Syria which lay between the two great rivers of Tigris and Euphrates, thence called *Mesopotamia*, which signifies *in the midst of rivers*. It is probable that this was a warlike prince, and, aiming to enlarge his dominions, he invaded the two tribes first on the other side Jordan that lay next him, and afterwards, perhaps by degrees, penetrated into the heart of the country, and as far as he went put them under contribution, exacting it with rigour, and perhaps quartering soldiers upon them. Laban, who oppressed Jacob with a hard service, was of this country; but it lay at such a distance that one could not have thought Israel's trouble would come from such a far country, which shows so much the more of the hand of God in it.


II. Their return to God in this distress: *When he slew them, then they sought him* whom before they had slighted. The *children of Israel*, even the generality of them, *cried unto the Lord*, v. 9. At first they made light of their trouble, and thought they could easily shake off the yoke of a prince at such a distance; but, when it continued eight years, they began to feel

the smart of it, and then those cried under it who before had laughed at it. Those who in the day of their mirth had cried to Baalim and Ashtaroth now that they are in trouble cry to the Lord from whom they had revolted, whose justice brought them into this trouble, and whose power and favour could alone help them out of it. Affliction makes those cry to God with importunity who before would scarcely speak to him.

III. God's return in mercy to them for their deliverance. Though need drove them to him, he did not therefore reject their prayers, but graciously raised up a deliverer, or *saviour*, as the word is. Observe,

1. Who the deliverer was. It was Othniel, who married Caleb's daughter, one of the old stock that had *seen the works of the Lord*, and had himself, no question, kept his integrity, and secretly lamented the apostasy of his people, but waited for a divine call to appear publicly for the redress of their grievances. He was now, we may suppose, far advanced in years, when God raised him up to this honour, but the decays of age were no hindrance to his usefulness when God had work for him to do.

2. Whence he had his commission, not of man, nor by man; but *the Spirit of the Lord came upon him* (v. 10), the spirit of wisdom and courage to qualify him for the service, and a spirit of power to excite him to it, so as to give him and others full satisfaction that it was the will of God he should engage in it. The Chaldee says, *The spirit of prophecy remained on him*.

3. What method he took. He first judged Israel, reproved them, called them to account for their sins, and reformed them, and then went out to war. This was the right method. Let sin at home be conquered, that worst of enemies, and then enemies abroad will be the more easily dealt with. Thus let Christ be our Judge and Law-giver, and then *he will save us*, and on no other terms,  Isaiah 33:22.

4. What good success he had. He prevailed to break the yoke of the oppression, and, as it should seem, to break the neck of the oppressor; for it is said, *The Lord delivered Chushan-rishathaim into his hand*. Now was Judah, of which tribe Othniel was, *as a lion's whelp gone up from the prey*.

5. The happy consequence of Othniel's good services. The land, though not getting ground, yet had rest, and some fruits of the reformation, forty years; and the benefit would have been perpetual if they had kept close to God and their duty.

~~6082~~ JUDGES 3:12-30

EGLON SLAIN BY EHUD

Ehud is the next of the judges whose achievements are related in this history, and here is an account of his actions.

I. When Israel sins again God raises up a new oppressor, v. 12-14. It was an aggravation of their wickedness that they did evil again after they had smarted so long for their former iniquities, promised so fair when Othniel judged them, and received so much mercy from God in their deliverance. What, and after all this, again to break his commandments! Was the disease obstinate to all the methods of cure, both corrosives and lenitives? It seems it was. Perhaps they thought they might make the more bold with their old sins because they saw themselves in no danger from their old oppressor; the powers of that kingdom were weakened and brought low. But God made them know that he had variety of rods wherewith to chastise them: *He strengthened Eglon king of Moab against them.* This oppressor lay nearer to them than the former, and therefore would be the more mischievous to them; God's judgments thus approached them gradually, to bring them to repentance. When Israel dwelt in tents, but kept their integrity, Balak king of Moab, who would have strengthened himself against them, was baffled; but now that they had forsaken God, and worshipped the gods of the nations round about them (and perhaps those of the Moabites among the rest), here was another king of Moab, whom God strengthened against them, put power into his hands, though a wicked man, that he might be a scourge to Israel. The staff in his hand with which he beat Israel was God's indignation; *howbeit he meant not so, neither did his heart think so,* ²³⁰⁶ Isaiah 10:6, 7. Israelites did ill, and, we may suppose, Moabites did worse; yet because God commonly punishes the sins of his own people in this world, that, the flesh being destroyed, the spirit may be saved, Israel is weakened and Moab strengthened against them. God would not suffer the Israelites, when they were the stronger, to distress the Moabites, nor give them any disturbance, though they were idolaters (~~6089~~ Deuteronomy 2:9); yet now he suffered the Moabites to distress Israel, and strengthened them on purpose that they might: *Thy judgments, O God! are a great deep.* The king of Moab took to his assistance the Ammonites and Amalekites (v. 13), and this strengthened him; and we are here told how they prevailed.

1. They beat them in the field: They *went and smote Israel* (v. 13), not only those tribes that lay next them on the other side Jordan, who, though first settled, being frontier-tribes, were most disturbed; but those also within Jordan, for they made themselves masters of *the city of palm-trees*, which, it is probable, was a strong-hold erected near the place where Jericho had stood, for that was so called (^{<634B>}Deuteronomy 34:3), into which the Moabites put a garrison, to be a bridle upon Israel, and to secure the passes of Jordan, for the preservation of the communication with their own country. It was well for the Kenites that they had left this city (^{<601B>}Judges 1:16) before it fell into the hands of the enemy. See how quickly the Israelites lost that by their own sin which they had gained by miracles of divine mercy.

2. They made them to serve (v. 14), that is, exacted tribute from them, either the fruits of the earth in kind or money in lieu of them. They neglected the service of God, and did not pay him his tribute; thus therefore did God recover from them that *wine and oil*, that silver and gold, which they prepared for Baal, (^{<208B>}Hosea 2:8. What should have been paid to the divine grace, and was not, was distrained for, and paid to the divine justice. The former servitude (v. 8) lasted but eight years, this eighteen; for, if less troubles do not do the work, God will send greater.

II. When Israel prays again God raises up a new deliverer (v. 15), named *Ehud*. We are here told,

1. That he was a Benjamite. The city of palm-trees lay within the lot of this tribe, by which it is probable that they suffered most, and therefore stirred first to shake off the yoke. It is supposed by the chronologers that the Israelites' war with Benjamin for the wickedness of Gibeah, by which that whole tribe was reduced to 600 men, happened before this, so that we may well think that tribe to be now the weakest of all the tribes, yet out of it God raised up this deliverer, in token of his being perfectly reconciled to them, to manifest his own power in ordaining strength out of weakness, and that he might bestow *more abundant honour upon that part which lacked*, (^{<612A>}1 Corinthians 12:24.

2. That he was left-handed, as it seems many of that tribe were, (^{<0721G>}Judges 20:16. Benjamin signifies *the son of the right hand*, and yet multitudes of them were left-handed; for men's natures do not always answer their names. The LXX. say he was an *ambi-dexter*, one that could use both

hands alike, supposing that this was an advantage to him in the action he was called to; but the Hebrew phrase, that he was *shut of his right hand*, intimates that, either through disease or disuse, he made little or no use of that, but of his left hand only, and so was the less fit for war, because he must needs handle his sword but awkwardly; yet God chose this left-handed man to be the man of his right hand, whom he would *make strong for himself*, ^{<18017>}Psalm 80:17. It was *God's right hand* that gained Israel the victory (^{<18443>}Psalm 44:3), not the right hand of the instruments he employed.

3. We are here told what Ehud did for the deliverance of Israel out of the hands of the Moabites. He saved the oppressed by destroying the oppressors, when the measure of their iniquity was full and the set time to favour Israel had come.

(1.) He put to death Eglon the king of Moab; I say, *put him to death*, not murdered or assassinated him, but as a judge, or minister of divine justice, executed the judgments of God upon him, as an implacable enemy to God and Israel. This story is particularly related.

[1.] He had a fair occasion of access to him. Being an ingenious active man, and fit to stand before kings, his people chose him to carry a present in the name of all Israel, over and above their tribute, to their great lord the king of Moab, that they might find favour in his eyes, v. 15. The present is called *mincha* in the original, which is the word used in the law for the offerings that were presented to God to obtain his favour; these the children of Israel had not offered in their season to the God that loved them; and now, to punish them for their neglect, they are laid under a necessity of bringing their offerings to a heathen prince that hated them. Ehud went on his errand to Eglon, offered his present with the usual ceremony and expressions of dutiful respect, the better to colour what he intended and to prevent suspicion.

[2.] It should seem, from the first, he designed to be the death of him, God putting it into his heart, and letting him know also that the motion was from himself, by the Spirit that came upon him, the impulses of which carried with them their own evidence, and so gave him full satisfaction both as to the lawfulness and the success of this daring attempt, of both which he would have had reason enough to doubt. If he be sure that God bids him do it, he is sure both that he may do it and that he shall do it; for a command from God is sufficient to bear us out, and bring us off, both

against our consciences and against all the world. That he compassed and imagined the death of this tyrant appears by the preparation he made of a weapon for the purpose, a short dagger, but half a yard long, like a bayonet, which might easily be concealed under his clothes (v. 16), perhaps because none were suffered to come near the king with their swords by their sides. This he wore on his right thigh, that it might be the more ready to his left hand, and might be the less suspected.

[3.] He contrived how to be alone with him, which he might the more easily be now that he had not only made himself known to him, but ingratiated himself by the present, and the compliments which perhaps, on this occasion, he had passed upon him. Observe, how he laid his plot. *First*, He concealed his design even from his own attendants, brought them part of the way, and then ordered them to go forward towards home, while he himself, as if he had forgotten something behind him, went back to the king of Moab's court, v. 18. There needed but one hand to do the execution; had more been engaged they could not so safely have kept counsel, nor so easily have made an escape. *Secondly*, He returned from the quarries by Gilgal (v. 19), from the *graven images* (so it is in the margin) which were with Gilgal, set up perhaps by the Moabites with the twelve stones which Joshua had set up there. Some suggest that the sight of these idols stirred up in him such an indignation against the king of Moab as put him upon the execution of that design which otherwise he had thought to let fall for the present. Or, perhaps, he came so far as to these images, that, telling from what place he returned, the king of Moab might be the more apt to believe he had a message from God. *Thirdly*, He begged a private audience, and obtained it in a withdrawing-room, here called a *summer parlour*. He told the king he had a secret errand to him, who thereupon ordered all his attendants to withdraw, v. 19. Whether he expected to receive some private instructions from an oracle, or some private informations concerning the present state of Israel, as if Ehud would betray his country, it was a very unwise thing for him to be all alone with a stronger and one whom he had reason to look upon as an enemy; but those that are marked for ruin are infatuated, and their *hearts hid from understanding*; God deprives them of discretion.

[4.] When he had him alone he soon dispatched him. His summer parlour, where he used to indulge himself in ease and luxury, was the place of his execution. *First*, Ehud demands his attention to *a message from God* (v. 20), and that message was a dagger. God sends to us by the judgments of

his hand, as well as by the judgments of his mouth. *Secondly*, Eglon pays respect to a message from God. Though a king, though a heathen king, though rich and powerful, though now tyrannizing over the people of God, though a fat unwieldy man that could not easily rise nor stand long, though in private and what he did was not under observation, yet, when he expected to receive orders from heaven, he rose out of his seat; whether it was low and easy, or whether it was high and stately, he quitted it, and stood up when God was about to speak to him, thereby owning God his superior. This shames the irreverence of many who are called Christians, and yet, when a message from God is delivered to them, study to show, by all the marks of carelessness, how little they regard it. Ehud, in calling what he had to do *a message from God*, plainly avouches a divine commission for it; and God's inclining Eglon to stand up to it did both confirm the commission and facilitate the execution. *Thirdly*, The message was delivered, not to his ear, but immediately, and literally, to his heart, into which the fatal knife was thrust, and was left there, v. 21, 22. His extreme fatness made him unable to resist or to help himself; probably it was the effect of his luxury and excess; and, when *the fat closed up the blade*, God would by this circumstance show how those that pamper the body do but prepare for their own misery. However, it was an emblem of his carnal security and senselessness. His heart was a fat as grease, and in that he thought himself enclosed. See ~~EB70~~ Psalm 119:70; 17:10. Eglon signifies a *calf*, and he fell like a fatted calf, by the knife, an acceptable sacrifice to divine justice. Notice is taken of the coming out of the dirt or dung, that the death of this proud tyrant may appear the more ignominious and shameful. He that had been so very nice and curious about his own body, to keep it easy and clean, shall now be found wallowing in his own blood and excrements. Thus does God pour contempt upon princes. Now this act of Ehud's may justify itself because he had special direction from God to do it, and it was agreeable to the usual method which, under that dispensation, God took to avenge his people of their enemies, and to manifest to the world his own justice. But it will by no means justify any now in doing the like. No such commissions are now given, and to pretend to them is to blaspheme God, and made him patronize the worst of villanies. Christ bade Peter sheathe the sword, and we find not that he bade him draw it again.

[5.] Providence wonderfully favoured his escape, when he had done the execution. *First*, The tyrant fell silently, without any shriek or out-cry, which might have been overheard by his servants at a distance. How

silently does he go down to the pit, choked up, it may be, with his own fat, which stifled his dying groans, though he had made so great a noise in the world, and had been *the terror of the mighty in the land of the living!* *Secondly*, The heroic executioner of this vengeance, with such a presence of mind as discovered not only no consciousness of guilt, but a strong confidence in the divine protection, shut the doors after him, took the key with him, and passed through the guards with such an air of innocence, and boldness, and unconcernedness, as made them not at all to suspect his having done any thing amiss. *Thirdly*, The servants that attended in the antechamber, coming to the door of the inner parlour, when Ehud had gone, to know their master's pleasure, and finding it locked and all quiet, concluded he had lain down to sleep, had covered his feet upon his couch, and gone to consult his pillow about the message he had received, and to dream upon it (v. 24), and therefore would not offer to open the door. Thus by their care not to disturb his sleep they lost the opportunity of revenging his death. See what comes of men's taking state too much, and obliging those about them to keep their distance; some time or other it may come against them more than they think of. *Fourthly*, The servants at length opened the door, and found their master had *slept indeed his long sleep*, v. 25. The horror of this tragical spectacle, and the confusion it must needs put them into, to reflect upon their own inconsideration in not opening the door sooner, quite put by the thoughts of sending pursuers after him that had done it, whom now they despaired of overtaking. *Lastly*, Ehud by this means made his escape to Sierath, *a thick wood*; so some, v. 26. It is not said any where in this story what was the place in which Eglon lived now; but, there being no mention of Ehud passing and repassing Jordan, I am inclined to think that Eglon had left his own country of Moab, on the other side Jordan, and made his principal residence at this time in the city of palm-trees, within the land of Canaan, a richer country than his own, and that there he was slain, and then the quarries by Gilgal were not far off him. There where he had settled himself, and thought he had sufficiently fortified himself to lord it over the people of God, there he was cut off, and proved to be fed for the slaughter *like a lamb in a large place*.

(2.) Ehud, having slain the king of Moab, gave a total rout to the forces of the Moabites that were among them, and so effectually shook off the yoke of their oppression.

[1.] He raised an army immediately in Mount Ephraim, at some distance from the headquarters of the Moabites, and headed them himself, v. 27.

The trumpet he blew was indeed a jubilee-trumpet, proclaiming liberty, and a joyful sound it was to the oppressed Israelites, who for a long time had heard no other trumpets than those of their enemies.

[2.] Like a pious man, and as one that did all this in faith, he took encouragement himself, and gave encouragement to his soldiers, from the power of God engaged for them (v. 28): "*Follow me, for the Lord hath delivered your enemies into your hands; we are sure to have God with us, and therefore may go on boldly, and shall go on triumphantly.*"

[3.] Like a politic general, he first secured the fords of Jordan, set strong guards upon all those passes, to cut off the communications between the Moabites that were in the land of Israel (for upon them only his design was) and their own country on the other side Jordan, that if, upon the alarm given them, they resolved to fly, they might not escape thither, and, if they resolved to fight, they might not have assistance thence. Thus he shut them up in that land as their prison in which they were pleasing themselves as their palace and paradise.

[4.] He then fell upon them, and put them all to the sword, 10,000 of them, which it seems was the number appointed to keep Israel in subjection (v. 29): *There escaped not a man* of them. And they were the best and choicest of all the king of Moab's forces, all lusty men, men of bulk and stature, and not only able-bodied, but high spirited too, and men of valour, v. 29. But neither their strength nor their courage stood them in any stead when the set time had come for God to deliver them into the hand of Israel.

[5.] The consequence of this victory was that the power of the Moabites was wholly broken in the land of Israel. The country was cleared of these oppressors, and *the land had rest eighty years*, v. 30. We may hope that there was likewise a reformation among them, and a check give to idolatry, by the influence of Ehud which continued a good part of this time. It was a great while for the land to rest, fourscore years; yet what is that to the saints' everlasting rest in the heavenly Canaan?

JUDGES 3:31

SHAMGAR SLAYS SIX HUNDRED PHILISTINES

When it is said *the land had rest eighty years*, some think it meant chiefly of that part of the land which lay eastward on the banks of Jordan, which had been oppressed by the Moabites; but it seems, by this passage here, that the other side of the country which lay south-west was in that time infested by the Philistines, against whom Shamgar made head.

1. It seems Israel needed deliverance, for *he delivered Israel*; how great the distress was Deborah afterwards related in her song (Judges 5:6), that *in the days of Shamgar the highways were unoccupied*, etc.; that part of the country which lay next to the Philistines was so infested with plunderers that people could not travel the roads in safety, but were in danger of being set upon and robbed, nor durst they dwell in the unguarded villages, but were forced to take shelter in the fortified cities.

2. God raised him up to deliver them, as it should seem, while Ehud was yet living, but superannuated. So inconsiderable were the enemies for number that it seems the killing of 600 of them amounted to a deliverance of Israel, and so many he slew with an ox-goad, or, as some read it, *a plough-share*. It is probable that he was himself following the plough when the Philistines made an inroad upon the country to ravage it, and God put it into his heart to oppose them; the impulse being sudden and strong, and having neither sword nor spear to do execution with, he took the instrument that was next at hand, some of the tools of his plough, and with that killed so many hundred men and came off unhurt. See here,

(1.) That God can make those eminently serviceable to his glory and his church's good whose extraction, education, and employment, are very mean and obscure. He that has the residue of the Spirit could, when he pleased, make ploughmen judges and generals, and fishermen apostles.

(2.) It is no matter how weak the weapon is if God direct and strengthen the arm. An ox-goad, when God pleases, shall do more than Goliath's sword. And sometimes he chooses to work by such unlikely means, that the excellency of the power may appear to be of God.