

NOTES
ON
THE BOOK OF NUMBERS

by

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"Things new and old."

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Numbers 15

The words with which our chapter opens are peculiarly striking, when taken in connection with the contents of chapter 14. There all seemed dark and hopeless. Moses had to say to the people, **"Go not up, for the Lord is not among you; that ye be not smitten before your enemies."** And, again, the Lord had said to them, **"as truly as I live, as ye have spoken in mine ears, so will I do to you. Your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness . . . Doubtless ye shall not come into the land concerning which I swear to make you dwell therein . . . As for you, your carcasses, they shall fall in this wilderness."**

Thus much as to chapter 14. But no sooner do we open the section now before us, than, just as though nothing had happened, and though all were as calm, as bright, and as certain as GOD could make it, we read such words as these, **"The Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, when ye be come into the land of your habitations, which I give unto you,"** &c.

This is one of the most remarkable passages in the entire of this most wonderful book. Indeed there is not, in the whole compass of the book, a passage more thoroughly characteristic, not only of Numbers, but of the entire volume of GOD. When we read the solemn sentence, **"Ye shall not come into the land,"** what is the plain lesson which it reads out to us? The lesson, which we are so slow to learn, of man's utter worthlessness. **"All flesh is grass."**

And, on the other hand, when we read such words as these, **"When ye be come into the land of**

your habitations, which I give unto you," what is the precious lesson which they read out to us? This, assuredly, that salvation is of the Lord. In the one, we learn man's failure; in the other, GOD's faithfulness. If we look at man's side of the question, the sentence is, "**Doubtless ye shall not come into the land.**" But if we look at GOD's side of the question, we can reverse the matter, and say, "**Doubtless ye shall.**"

Thus it stands in the scene now before us; and thus it stands in the whole volume of inspiration, from beginning to end. Man fails; but GOD is faithful. Man forfeits everything; but GOD makes good all. The things which are impossible with man are possible with GOD. Need we travel through the inspired canon in order to illustrate and prove this? Need we refer the reader to the history of Adam, in paradise? or the history of Noah, after the flood? or the history of Israel, in the wilderness? Israel, in the land? Israel, under the law? Israel, under the Levitical ceremonial? Shall we dwell upon the record of man's failure in the prophetic, priestly, and kingly office? Shall we point out the failure of the professing church as a responsible vessel on the earth? Has not man failed always and in everything? alas! it is so.

This is one side of the picture - the dark and humbling side. But, blessed be GOD, there is the bright and encouraging side also. If there is the "**Doubtless ye shall not;**" there is also the "**Doubtless ye shall.**" and why? Because CHRIST has entered the scene, and in Him all is infallibly secured for the glory of GOD and the eternal blessing of man. It is GOD's eternal purpose to head up all things in CHRIST. There is not a single thing in which the first man has failed, that the second Man will not make good. All is set up on a new footing in CHRIST. He is the Head of the new creation; Heir of all the promises made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, touching the land; Heir of all the promises made to David concerning the throne. The government shall be upon His shoulder. He shall bear the glory. He is the Prophet, Priest, and King. In a word, CHRIST makes good all that Adam lost, and brings in much more beside than Adam ever had. Hence, when we look at the first Adam and his doings, whenever and However viewed, the sentence is "**Doubtless ye shall not.**" Ye shall not remain in Paradise - ye shall not retain the government - ye shall not inherit the promises - ye shall not enter the land - ye shall not occupy the throne - ye shall not enter the kingdom.

But, on the other hand, when we look at the last Adam and His doings, wherever and however viewed, The entire category must be gloriously reversed; the "**not**" must be for ever taken from the sentence, for in CHRIST JESUS "**all the promises of God are yea and Amen, to the glory of God by us.**" There is no "**nay**" in the matter when CHRIST is concerned. All is "**yea**" - all is divinely settled and established; and because it is so, GOD has set His seal to it, even the seal of His Spirit, which all Believers now possess.

"For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us, even by me and Silvanus and Timotheus, was not yea and nay, but in him was yea. For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us. Now He which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts" (II Corinthians 1:19-22).

Thus, then, the opening lines of Numbers 15 must be read in the light of the whole volume of GOD. It falls in with the entire history of the ways of GOD with man, in this world. Israel had forfeited all title to the land. They deserved nothing better than that their carcasses should fall in

the wilderness. And yet such is the large and precious grace of GOD, that He could speak to them of their coming into the land, and instruct them as to their ways and works therein.

Nothing can be more blessed or more establishing than all this. GOD rises above all human failure and sin. It is utterly impossible that a single promise of GOD can fail of its accomplishment. Could it be that the conduct of Abraham's seed in the wilderness should frustrate GOD's eternal purpose, or hinder the fulfillment of the absolute and unconditional promise made to the fathers? Impossible; and, therefore, if the generation which came up out of Egypt refused to go into Canaan, the Lord would, of the very stones, raise up a seed to Whom His promise should be made good. This will help to explain the opening sentence of our chapter, which comes in with such remarkable force and beauty after the humiliating scenes of chapter 14. In this latter, Israel's sun seems to go down amid dark and angry clouds; But in the former, it rises with serene brightness, revealing and establishing that great truth that "**The gifts and calling of God are without repentance.**" GOD never repents of His call or His gift; and hence, though an unbelieving generation should murmur and rebel ten thousand times over, He will make good all that He has promised.

Here is the divine resting place of faith at all times - the sure and safe haven for the soul amid the wreck of all human schemes and undertakings. Everything goes to pieces in man's hands; but GOD in CHRIST remains. Let man be set up in business again and again, under the most favourable circumstances, and he is sure to become a bankrupt; but GOD has set up CHRIST in resurrection, and all who believe in Him are placed on a new footing altogether, they are taken into partnership with the risen and glorified Head, and there they stand for ever. That wondrous partnership can never be dissolved. All is secured on a basis that no power of earth or hell can ever touch.

Reader, say, Dost thou understand the application of all this to thyself? Hast thou discovered, in the light of GOD's presence, that thou art, in very deed, a bankrupt; that thou hast made shipwreck of everything; that thou hast not a single plea to urge? Hast thou been led to make a personal application of those two sentences upon which we have been dwelling, namely "**Doubtless thou shalt not,**" and "**Doubtless thou shalt**"? Hast thou learnt the force of these words, "**Thou hast destroyed thyself; but in me is thy help**"? In one word, hast thou come to JESUS as a lost, guilty self-destroyed sinner, and found redemption, pardon, and peace in Him?

Do pause, dear friend, and seriously consider these things. We can never lose sight of the weighty fact that we have something more to do than to write "*Notes on the Book of Numbers.*" We have to consider the soul of the reader. We have a most solemn responsibility to discharge to him or to her; and therefore it is that, from time to time, we feel constrained to turn, for a moment, from the page on which we are meditating, in order to make an appeal to the heart and conscience of the reader, and entreat him, most earnestly, that if he be as yet unconverted, undecided, he would lay aside this volume, and apply his heart seriously to the great question of his present condition and eternal destiny.

In comparison with this, all other questions dwindle into utter insignificance. what are all the schemes and undertakings which begin, continue, and end in time, when compared with eternity and the salvation of your never-dying soul? They are as the small dust of the balance.

"What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul"

If you had the wealth of a Rothschild, the money king - if you stood on the loftiest pinnacle of literary fame or political ambition - if your name were adorned with all the honours which the universities of this world could bestow - if your brow were wreathed with the laurels and your breast covered with the medals of a hundred victories - what would it profit you? You must leave all - you must pass through the narrow arch of time into the boundless ocean of eternity. Men of princely wealth, men of literary fame, men who have ruled by their intellectual power the House of Lords and Commons - men who have held thousands hanging entranced upon their lips - men who have reached the very highest point of naval, military, and forensic distinction - have passed away into eternity; and the awful question as to such is, "Where is the soul?"

Beloved reader, we beseech thee, by the most weighty arguments that can possibly be urged upon the soul of men, not to turn away from this subject until thou hast come to a right conclusion. By GOD's great love - by the Cross and passion of CHRIST - by the powerful testimony of GOD the Holy Ghost - by the awful solemnity of a never-ending eternity - by the unspeakable value of thy immortal soul - by all the joys of Heaven - by all the horrors of hell - by these seven weighty arguments, we urge thee, this moment, to come to JESUS. Delay not!

Argue not! Reason not! But come now, just as you are, with all your sins, with all your misery, with your misspent life, with your dreadful record of mercies slighted, advantages abused, opportunities neglected - come to JESUS who stands, with open arms and loving heart, ready to receive you, and points to those wounds which attest the reality of His atoning death upon the Cross, and tells you to put your trust in Him, and assures you you will never be confounded. May GOD's Spirit carry home this appeal to thy heart, this moment, and give thee no rest until thou art savingly converted to CHRIST, reconciled to GOD, and sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise!

We shall now return, for a moment, to our chapter.

Nothing can be more lovely than the picture here presented. We have vows and freewill offerings, sacrifices of righteousness, and the wine of the Kingdom, all based upon the sovereign grace which shines in the very first verse. It is a fair sample, a beautiful foreshadowing of the future condition of Israel. It reminds us of the marvellous visions which close the book of the prophet Ezekiel. The unbelief, the murmuring, the rebellion, are all over and all forgotten. GOD retires into His own eternal counsels, and from thence looks forward to the time when His people shall offer an offering in righteousness and pay their vows to Him, and the joy of His kingdom shall fill their hearts for ever (Verses 3-13).

But there is one very striking feature in this chapter, and that is the place which **"the stranger"** gets. It is most thoroughly characteristic.

"And if a stranger sojourn with you, or whosoever be among you in your generations, and will offer an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the Lord; as ye do, so he shall do. One ordinance shall be both for you of the congregation, and also for the stranger that sojourneth with you an ordinance for ever in your generations: as ye are, so shall the stranger be before the Lord. One law and one manner shall be for you, and for the stranger

that sojourneth with you."

What a place for the stranger! What a lesson for Israel! What a standing testimony on the page of their favourite and boasted Moses! The stranger is placed on the very same platform with Israel - **"As ye are, so shall the stranger be,"** and this, too, **"before the Lord."**

In Exodus 12:48 we read, **"And when a stranger shall sojourn with thee, and will keep the Passover to the Lord, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it."**

But in Numbers 15 there is no allusion to circumcision at all. And why? Is it that such a point could ever be waived? No; but we believe the omission here is full of meaning. Israel had forfeited everything. The rebellious generation was to be set aside and cut off; but GOD's eternal purpose of grace must stand, and All His promises be fulfilled. All Israel shall be saved; they shall possess the land; they shall offer pure offerings, pay their vows, and taste the joy of the Kingdom. On what ground? On the ground of sovereign mercy. Well, it is on the selfsame ground that **"the stranger"** shall be brought in; and not only brought in, but **"As ye are, so shall the stranger be before the Lord."**

Will the Jew quarrel with this? Let him go and study Numbers 13 and 14. And when he has drunk into his inmost soul the wholesome lesson, then let him meditate on Numbers 15; and we feel assured he will not seek to push **"the stranger"** off the platform, for he will be ready to confess himself a debtor to mercy alone, and to acknowledge that the same mercy which has reached him can reach the stranger, and he will rejoice to go in company with that stranger to drink of the wells of salvation thrown open by the sovereign grace of the GOD of Jacob.

Are we not forcibly reminded, by the teaching of this part of our book, of that profound section of dispensational truth presented in Romans 9-11, particularly of its magnificent close?

"The gifts and calling of God are without repentance. For as ye [strangers] in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief: even so have these also now not believed (i.e., Mercy shown to the Gentiles, see Greek), that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy [i.e., come in on the ground of mercy like the stranger]. For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all [Jews and Gentiles - Israel and the stranger]. O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counselor Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen" (Romans 11:29-36).

In Numbers 15:22-32, we have instructions as to sins of ignorance and presumptuous sins - a very grave and important distinction. For the former, simple provision is made, in the goodness and mercy of GOD.

The death of CHRIST is presented, in this portion of the chapter, in its two grand aspects, namely, the burnt offering, and the sin offering; that is, its aspect to Godward, and its aspect to usward; and we have also all the preciousness, fragrance, and joy of His perfect life and service,

as a man in this world, as typified by the meat offering and drink offering.

In the burnt offering, we see atonement wrought according to the measure of CHRIST's devotedness to GOD, and of GOD's delight in Him.

In the sin offering, we see atonement wrought according to the measure of the sinner's necessities and the hatefulfulness of sin in GOD's sight.

The two offerings, taken together, present the atoning death of CHRIST in all its fullness. Then, in the meat offering, we have CHRIST's perfect life and the reality of His human nature, as manifested in all the details of His path and service in this world. While the drink offering typifies His complete surrender of Himself to GOD.

Into the rich and marvellous instruction conveyed in the different classes of sacrifices, presented in this passage, we do not attempt to enter now. The reader who desires to study the subject more fully, is referred to a little volume entitled "*Notes on the Book of Leviticus.*"

We merely state here, in the very briefest manner, what we judge to be the main import of each offering; to go into details would only be to repeat what we have already written.

We would merely add that the claims of GOD demand that sins of ignorance should be taken cognizance of. We might feel disposed to say, or at least to think, that such sins ought to be passed over. But GOD does not think so. His holiness must not be reduced to the standard of our intelligence. Grace has made provision for sins of ignorance; but holiness demands that such sins should be judged and confessed. Every true heart will bless GOD for this. For what would become of us if the provisions of divine grace were not adequate to meet the claims of divine holiness? And adequate they most surely could not be, if they travelled not beyond the range of our intelligence.

And yet, while all this will, generally speaking, be fully admitted, it is often very sorrowful to hear professing Christians making excuses for ignorance, and justifying unfaithfulness and error on the ground of ignorance. But very often, in such cases, the question may, very cogently, be urged, why are we ignorant, in reference to any point of conduct, or the claims of CHRIST upon us?

Suppose a question comes before us, demanding a positive judgment, and calling for a certain line of action; we plead ignorance. Is this right? Will it avail? Will it dispose of our responsibility! Will GOD allow us to shirk the question after such a fashion? Nay, reader, we may rest assured it will not do. Why are we ignorant? Have we put forth all our energies, have we adopted every available means, have we made every possible effort, to get at the root of the matter and reach a just conclusion? Let us bear in mind that the claims of truth and holiness demand all this of us; nor should we be satisfied with anything less. We cannot but admit that, were it a question involving, in any measure, our own interests, our name, our reputation, our property, we should leave no stone unturned in order to make ourselves fully acquainted with all the facts of the case. We should not long plead ignorance in such matters. If information were to be had, we should have it. We should do our very utmost to know all the ins and outs, the pros and cons of the question, so that we might form a sound judgment in the matter.

Is this not so, reader? Well, then, why should we plead ignorance when the claims of CHRIST are in question? Does it not prove that while we are quick, earnest, energetic, all alive, when self is concerned, we are indifferent, sluggish, slow-paced, when CHRIST is concerned? Alas! alas! this is the plain humbling truth. May we be humbled under a sense of it! May the Spirit of GOD make us more thoroughly in earnest in things which concern our Lord JESUS CHRIST. May self and its interests sink, and may CHRIST and His interests rise in our estimation, every day! And may we at least cordially own our holy responsibility to go diligently into every question in the which the glory of our Lord and Saviour JESUS CHRIST may, even in the most remote degree, be involved, however we may fail practically in our research. Let us not dare to say, or think, or act, as though we thought that anything that concerns Him is a matter of indifference to us. GOD, in His mercy, forbid! Let us esteem All that merely concerns ourselves to be, comparatively, non-essential; but the claims of CHRIST to be of paramount authority.

We have said thus much on the subject of ignorance, in the sense of our responsibility, to the truth of GOD, and to the soul of the reader. We feel its immense practical importance. We believe we very often plead ignorance, when indifference would be the truer term to use. This is very sad. Surely if our GOD, in His infinite goodness, has made ample provision even for sins of ignorance, that is no reason why we should coolly shelter ourselves behind the plea of ignorance when there is the most abundant information within our reach, had we only the energy to make use of it.

We might not, perhaps, have dwelt at such length upon this point, were it not for the conviction which becomes, each day, more strengthened in the soul, that we have reached a serious moment in our history as Christians. We are not given to croaking. We have no sympathy whatever with it. We believe it is our privilege to be filled with the most joyful confidence, and to have our hearts and minds ever kept [garrisoned] by the peace of GOD that passeth all understanding. **"God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind"** (II Timothy 1:7).

But it is impossible to close our eyes to the startling fact that the claims of CHRIST - the value of truth - the authority of Holy Scripture, are being, more and more, set aside, each day, each week, each year. We believe we are approaching a moment in the which there will be toleration for anything and everything save the truth of GOD. It behooves us therefore to look well to it, that GOD's Word has its own proper place in the heart; and that the conscience is governed, in all things, by its holy authority.

A tender conscience is a most precious treasure to carry about with us, from day to day - a conscience that ever yields a true response to the action of the Word of GOD - that bows down, without a question, to its plain statements. When the conscience is in this fine condition, there is always a regulating power wherewith to act upon one's practical course and character.

Conscience may be compared to the regulator of a watch. It may happen that the hands of the watch get astray; but so long as the regulator has power over the spring, there is always the means of correcting the hands. If that power be gone, the entire watch must be taken to pieces. So with the conscience. So long as it continues true to the touch of Scripture, as applied by the Holy Ghost, there is always a safe and sure regulating power; but if it becomes sluggish, hardened, or perverted, if it refuses to yield a true response to **"Thus saith the Lord,"** there is

little if any hope. It then becomes a case similar to that referred to in our chapter, "**But the soul that doeth anything presumptuously, whether he be born in the land, or a stranger, the same reproacheth the Lord; and that soul shall be cut off from among his people. Because he hath despised the Word of the Lord, and hath broken his commandment, that soul shall utterly be cut off; his iniquity shall be upon him**" (Verses 30, 31).

This is no sin of ignorance, but a presumptuous, willful sin, for which nothing remained but the unmitigated judgment of GOD.

"Rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry" (I Samuel 15:13).

These are weighty words for a moment like the present, when man's will is developing itself with such extraordinary force. It is deemed manly to assert our will; but Scripture teaches the direct opposite. The two grand elements of human perfection - of perfect manhood - are these, namely, dependence and obedience.

In proportion as any one departs from these, he departs from the true spirit and attitude of a man. Hence, when we turn our eyes to Him who was the perfect man - the man CHRIST JESUS, we see these two grand features perfectly adjusted and perfectly developed, from first to last. That blessed One was never, for a single moment, out of the attitude of perfect dependence and absolute obedience. To prove and illustrate this fact would take us through the entire Gospel narrative. But take the scene of the temptation, and there you will find a sample of the whole of that blessed life. His one unvarying reply to the tempter was, "**It is written.**" No reasonings, no arguments, no questions. He lived by the Word of GOD. He conquered Satan by holding fast the only true position of a man - dependence and obedience. He could depend upon GOD; and He would obey Him. What could Satan do in such a case? Absolutely nothing.

Well, then, this is our example. We, as having the life of CHRIST, are called to live in habitual dependence and obedience. This is walking in the Spirit. This is the safe and happy path of the Christian. Independence and disobedience go together. They are utterly unchristian and unmanly. We find these two things in the first man, as we find the two opposites in the Second.

Adam in the garden sought to be independent, He was not content with being a man, and abiding in the only true place and spirit of a man, and he became disobedient. Here lies the secret of fallen humanity - these are the two elements which make up fallen manhood. Trace it where you will - before the flood, after the flood; without law, under the law; Heathen, Pagan, Jew, Turk, or nominal Christian; analyze it as closely as you please - and you will see that it resolves itself into these two component parts - independence and disobedience. And when you reach the close of man's history in this world, when you view him in that last sad sphere in which he is to figure, how do you see him? in what character does he appear? as "**the willful king,**" and the "**lawless man.**"

May we have grace to ponder these things aright. Let us cultivate a lowly and an obedient spirit. GOD has said, "**To this man will I look, even to him who is of a contrite spirit and trembleth at my word.**"

May these words sink down into our ears and into our hearts; and let the constant breathing of our souls be, "**Keep back thy servant, O Lord, from presumptuous sins, and let them not have dominion over him.**" *

* We would remind the young Christian reader, especially, that the true safeguard against sins of ignorance is the study of the Word; and the true safeguard against presumptuous sins, is subjection to the Word. We all need to bear these things in mind; but our younger brethren particularly. There is a strong tendency amongst young Christians to get into the current of this present age, and to drink in its spirit. Hence the independence, the strong will, the impatience of control, the disobedience to parents, the headiness, high-mindedness, and self-confidence, the pretentious style, the assumption, the setting up to be wiser than their elders - all these things so hateful in the sight of GOD, and so entirely opposed to the spirit of Christianity. We would most earnestly and lovingly entreat all our young friends to guard against these things, and to cultivate a lowly mind. Let them remember that "**God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the lowly.**"

It only remains for us, ere closing this section, to notice the case of the sabbath-breaker and the institution of "**the riband of blue.**"

"And while the children of Israel were in the wilderness, they found a man that gathered sticks upon the sabbath day. And they that found him gathering sticks brought him to Moses and Aaron, and to all the congregation. And they put him in ward, because it was not declared what should be done to him. And the Lord said unto Moses, The man shall be surely put to death: all the congregation shall stone him with stones without the camp. And all the congregation brought him without the camp, and stoned him with stones, and he died; as the Lord commanded Moses" (Verses 32-36).

This surely was a presumptuous sin - it was flying in the face of a most plain and positive commandment of GOD. It is this that specially marks a presumptuous sin, and leaves it utterly inexcusable. Ignorance cannot be pleaded in the face of a divine command.

But why, it may be asked, had they to put the man in ward? Because, although the commandment was explicit, yet the breach of it had not been anticipated, nor had any penalty been enacted. To speak after the manner of men, the Lord had not contemplated such folly on man's part, as the interruption of His rest, and therefore He had not formally provided for such an occurrence.

We need not say that GOD knows the end from the beginning; but in the matter now before us, He purposely left the case unnoticed until occasion required. But alas! occasion did require, for man is capable of anything. He has no heart for GOD's rest. To kindle a fire on the sabbath day was not only a positive breach of the law, but it evidenced the most complete alienation from the mind of the Lawgiver, inasmuch as it introduced into the day of rest that which is the apt symbol of judgment. Fire is emblematic of judgment, and as such it was wholly out of keeping with the

repose of the sabbath. Nothing therefore remained but to visit the sabbath-breaker with judgment, for "**whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.**"

"And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and bid them that they make them fringes in the borders of their garments, throughout their generations, and that they put upon the fringe of the borders a riband of blue. And it shall be unto you for a fringe, that ye may look upon it, and remember all the commandments of the Lord, and do them; and that ye seek not after your own heart, and your own eyes . . . that ye may remember, and do all my commandments, and be holy unto your God. I am the Lord your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: I am the Lord your God" (Verses 37-41).

The GOD of Israel would keep His people in continual remembrance of His holy commandments. Hence the beautiful institution of "**the riband of blue**" which was designed to be a heavenly memorial attached to the very borders of their garments, so that the Word of GOD might ever be held fast in the remembrance of the thoughts of their hearts. Whenever an Israelite cast his eyes upon the blue riband, he was to think of the Lord, and yield a hearty obedience to all His statutes.

Such was the great practical intention of "**the riband of blue.**"

But when we turn to Matthew 23:5, we learn the sad use which man had made of the divine institution:

"But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments."

Thus the very thing which had been instituted for the purpose of leading them to remember the Lord, and to yield a lowly obedience to His precious Word, was turned into an occasion of self-exaltation and religious pride.

Instead of thinking of GOD, and His Word, they thought of themselves, and of the place which they held in the estimation of their fellows. "**All their works they do to be seen of men.**" Not a thought of GOD.

The spirit of the original institution was completely lost, while the outward form was kept up for selfish ends. Can we not see something like this around us and among us? Let us think of it - think deeply and seriously. Let us see to it that we do not turn the heavenly memorial into an earthly badge, and that which ought to lead to lowly obedience into an occasion of self-exaltation.

~ end of chapter 15 ~

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