

In his better days, Gideon would not have accepted this flattery, nor have allowed the adversary to plant a germ of self-confidence in his heart.

But we see him exposed to a fresh snare (ver. 22-23). It is no longer the flattery of the world, but that of the people of God. The men of Israel said unto Gideon : "Rule thou over us, both thou and thy son and thy son's son also, for *thou* hast delivered us from the hand of Midian." They put their leader in the place of Jehovah and offer him the sceptre. "Rule thou over us." None are more prone to clericalism than the people of God. It is not only the bane of Christendom, it is also the innate tendency of the natural heart of believers. The fact of ministry being blessed is apt to lead us to make of the servant a "minister" in the human sense, thus losing sight of God. By the grace of God, the faith of Gideon escaped this danger. He said resolutely, "I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you; *Jehovah shall rule over you.*" The object of his ministry was that God should have the pre-eminence and lose nothing of His authority over His people.

(*To be continued, D. V.*)



"God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time."—1 Pet. v. 5, 6.