

Confessions - Book Xiii - Chapter XV

by St. Augustine

Transcript

16. Now who but thee, our God, didst make for us that firmament of the authority of thy divine Scripture to be over us? For "the heaven shall be folded up like a scroll"[564]; but now it is stretched over us like a skin. Thy divine Scripture is of more sublime authority now that those mortal men through whom thou didst dispense it to us have departed this life. And thou knowest, O Lord, thou knowest how thou didst clothe men with skins when they became mortal because of sin.[565] In something of the same way, thou hast stretched out the firmament of thy Book as a skin--that is to say, thou hast spread thy harmonious words over us through the ministry of mortal men. For by their very death that solid firmament of authority in thy sayings, spoken forth by them, stretches high over all that now drift under it; whereas while they lived on earth their authority was not so widely extended. Then thou hadst not yet spread out the heaven like a skin; thou hadst not yet spread abroad everywhere the fame of their death.

17. Let us see, O Lord, "the heavens, the work of thy fingers,"[566] and clear away from our eyes the fog with which thou hast covered them. In them[567] is that testimony of thine which gives wisdom even to the little ones. O my God, out of the mouth of babes and sucklings, perfect thy praise.[568] For we know no other books that so destroy man\\

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