

- 1 ¶ Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea;
- 2 And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; 3 And did all eat the same spiritual meat;
- 4 And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.
- 5 But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness.
- 6 ¶ Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted.
- 7 Neither be ye idolaters, as *were* some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.
- 8 Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand.
- 9 Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents.
- 10 Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer.
- 11 Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. 12 Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.
- 13 There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God *is* faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear *it*.
- 14 Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry.

There are several things that we must observe if we are to be edified by this passage:

- I. The unity of the Old and New Testaments
  - a. Spiritually, they were given precious promises that would have saved them, if they had believed.
    - i. Baptized unto Moses: They came under the order that God had provided for them. They did not hold a constitutional convention in the wilderness. Their government was imposed by God. They were under discipline until Christ would come.
    - ii. They had effectual sacraments, that revealed Christ to them: He is the bread and the water of life.:
      1. They ate spiritual meat: the manna. God called them to love Him; He promised to take away their sins; He promised to provide for them and make them a people unto Himself.
      2. Same spiritual drink: the water from the rock. We do not separate the sacrament from the sign.
      3. They had the reality, not just the empty ceremony.
    - iii. They had real spiritual blessings, and true believers existed among them, who had the gift of faith and the work of the Holy Spirit within them.
    - iv. All of Israel were included; the children were also baptized into Moses and were under the cloud—that is, under the direction of God. They were under the authority of the prophet Moses and the structure that was given to them at Sinai. This structure included both blessings and cursings. Blessings if they believed and lived under this structure; cursings if they did not. The structure given them was for the purpose of delivering them from idolatry and making them disciples of the one true God. The greatest blessing conferred upon them was the oracles of God, as Paul tells us in Romans 3.
- II. The disunity of the Old and New Testaments

- a. Spiritually, we live under great privileges, for we know the promises as fulfilled, not just promises. Christ has come; the final sacrifice has been made—and all those things that pointed to Christ have passed away and are no longer needed.
  - b. We are not baptized into Moses, but into Christ, and are under His government. Instead of Sinai, we have Pentecost, where the Spirit was poured out. Gifts were given to men for the government of the church: see Eph. 4. The gifts for the government of the church are not carnal, not of the flesh, are not inherited, but are given by the Holy Spirit. Elders, deacons, ministers, etc., are the gifts of Christ to the church. But we are still under the cloud of God’s government and order.
  - c. Our sacraments more clearly reveal the core of Christ’s work. He is the bread that came down from heaven. We eat and drink of his broken body and shed blood. We also do not separate the reality from the sign, but neither do we confuse the reality with the sign. Rome does not sufficiently distinguish between the sign and the reality; the Plymouth Brethren, Christian Science, and other bodies do not sufficiently see the connection between the sign and the reality.
- III. The danger to our souls. The danger is idolatry.
- a. Proceed from lusts. They longed for the things that were provided for them by the idolatrous system of Egypt—just a Christians long for the things of the world. Our soul hates this manna. How could they say that. It was a great temptation to them: God knew what they needed. He didn’t have to provide them with the same food every day. He did it on purpose, so that they might know that man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God. This is the same food for every Christian: old, young, rich, poor, etc. But they wanted to jazz up the diet.
  - b. Men change their gods to feed their lusts. The old church that talked about the Ten Commandments must be changed to one that emphasizes relationships, warmth, caring and good intentions. “They sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.” But God’s people do not go to church to play. Idolaters go to idol temples to play.
  - c. Men change their gods to commit fornication. Sexual misconduct and idolatry go together. When we pass from precept to emotion and feeling, the door is opened to the sheep, and all kinds of wild animals enter into the fold. Israel had the word of God—the precepts of God—what a great privilege to have the Word of God. But they wanted more sexual freedom—the loosening of the reins of God’s government—they changed their Gods so they could change the commandments.
  - d. Then they tempted Christ and murmured: Are not we all the people of God? Has God spoken only by Aaron and Moses. God must jump to our tune. It is not right that He has ordained biblical offices and authority; we are going to make our own choices. We will choose our own leaders, who will take us back to Egypt. Thus the rebellion of Dathan and Abiram and Korah. There is nothing new under the sun. God’s leaders were vilified and demonized. That they might know that they must remain under the rod of God’s government, the rod of Moses and Aaron was put into the Ark of the Covenant and a reminder to the rebels.
  - e. This is why the apostle warns us to flee from idolatry. God has given us a way to escape, by showing us what the true worship of God is. The way of escape isn’t fun and games. It isn’t satisfying the lusts of the body. It isn’t feel-good stuff. It is the offering up of the body to Jesus Christ as a living sacrifice, because this is what the preaching of the cross is.
  - f. God has made a way of escape for us, just as He did for Israel—a way to escape idolatry. We submit to the order that He has provided for us.

- g. “Wherefore” God loves His people. Just as He placed them in the Old Testament under Moses, so we have been placed in the church under Jesus Christ. This is to humble us and discipline us for the glory of Jesus Christ.

May God bless you.