

Temperance is a fruit of the Holy Spirit. Temperance is the ability to hold things in balance, not to allow something to get out of balance, not to stray from the right hand or to the left. It is intemperate to eat and drink too much. On the other hand, it is intemperate not to enjoy the blessings of good meat and drink. Both are condemned in the Bible. It is not pleasing to the Lord for us to despair because of our sins, for that is an affront to the mercy of God; neither is it pleasing to the Lord for us to presume, for this is an affront to the Lord's righteousness.

This is true not only with respect to God's mercy and God's righteousness; it is also true with respect to the Law which was given by Moses, and the Grace and Truth which came by Jesus Christ. Another way of considering this is to examine the relationship between Israel and the Church. Did Israel have Christ? Or did Israel have another way of finding approval with God? Is the church a completely different order than Israel? What is the relationship between Israel and the Church? What about Moses and Christ? Does Christ have nothing to do with Moses? The danger is on the right hand or on the left. Some would turn grace into law, turn the church into Israel, and Christ into Moses. Others would deny Christ to Israel and make Moses a savior, and law into grace. The error on the one hand is to make no difference between law and grace; the other error is to see nothing of Christ in Moses.

Who is the master, and who is the servant? Of course, if the law has nothing to do with Christ, then the question is irrelevant. Hebrews tells us that Moses was master of his own temple and Christ is the master of His. Do the temples have nothing to do with each other? Moses' temple has passed away and some would think that it must be rebuilt again before Israel can be saved. Does Christ's temple have nothing to do with Moses? If there is a relationship between Moses and Christ what is the nature of that relationship? Is Moses the servant of Christ, or is Christ the servant of Moses. To ask the question is to answer it.

If the coming of Christ necessitated the fading away of John the Baptist, it could come as no surprise that Moses should also fade away. Jesus said that John was the greatest of those born of women, yet he must yield to Christ, and so must Moses.

The passage before us will help turn some light on these things, so let us look at the text.

- I. There are some things the same
  - a. The Apostle says that we can learn from the history of Israel because the history was written with us in view. So the issue of whether or not there is a relationship between the church and Israel is settled. God's dealing with Israel had the church in view. Illustration: When I was in high school some of my best Christian friends were from the Church of Christ. In any discussion of the Bible, the first question they would ask if a reference was made was, "Is that in the New Testament?" Verse 11.
  - b. God is the same. This means that true worship is Israel, just as it is for us, was spiritual worship, according to truth and sincerely from the heart, from the inner man. Ceremonies were never for the benefit of God, but for our benefit. This does not mean that the ceremonies were optional, for humility requires us to receive anything God has ordained for our benefit, for why should we be wiser than God. But if in His providence, He has caused Jewish ceremonies to pass away, humility requires us to assent to that also, and not try to resurrect that which God has put to rest.
  - c. Jesus Christ is the same, and was among them. If Christ had not been among them, then how could they tempt Christ, as they did in the wilderness. Tempting God is to put him to the test, to withhold our faith until He jumps through our hoops. This is what Israel did, for they were constantly murmuring and complaining and looking for signs and wonders. This spirit con-

tinued even until the time of Christ. He said, “a wicked and adulterous generation seeks after a sign....”

- d. God’s moral requirements were the same. It would be a denial of His nature if He does not require man to love God with all his heart, soul, mind, and strength, and his neighbor as himself. The two illustrations were these
  - i. They must worship the true God, and not idols, figments of their imaginations.
  - ii. They must not lust after evil things. This is the root of idolatry. Men change their Gods, when their gods get in the way of their desires. Many a person has abandoned true Christianity because of the bible’s strict requirements for sexual morality. It is easier to change your religion than to change your behavior.
  - iii. The reference to fornication was particularly appropriate for the Corinthians. There was a temple to Venus at Corinth with one thousand temple prostitutes.
  - iv. The reference to murmurings is also appropriate. Unwillingness to submit to God’s order and to be thankful is at the heart of our idolatry and selfish wickedness. Murmuring and complaining is the way wicked people respond to those in authority. Children gripe and complain about their parents; children about their school and teachers; labor against management; etc. etc. Murmuring is the sin of insubordination.
- e. The requirements of faith: Hebrews 11.

## II. How is it different in the Church? What does it matter that Christ has come?

- a. We see Christ clearly. Israel saw Christ through a veil. We see with an open face, according to II Cor. 3, and that changes us into the image of Christ. This is the reason that we must not turn to the beggarly elements, as they are called by the apostle. We are sons of God and have a right into the very presence of God through Jesus Christ. Do not every allow anything to obscure your view of Jesus Christ---I am not talking about some mystic vision, but the clarity that the New Testament Scriptures give to Jesus Christ. Do not try to interpret the New Testament by the Old Testament; read the Old Testament in terms of the New.
- b. There is much greater offense if we turn away from the way God had provided for us. To whom much is given, from them much is required.
 

He that despised Moses’ law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace. – Hebrews 10:28,29
- c. Ends of the world. All the ages of the world come to end in the church. The whole purpose for the creation of the world is completed in Jesus Christ, and in the church that He purchased with His own blood. Israel was created to bear witness of the church. The church is not formed for the purpose of teaching Israel; Israel was formed to teach the church. Jesus was not sent into the world to lead us to Moses; Moses was sent into the world to lead us to Christ.

Amen and Amen.