

Lessons from the Previous Dispensation | 1 Corinthians 10:1-11

- Verse 1 –
 - Paul calls for knowledge instead of ignorance on seven occasions, using this same word, ἀγνοέω [agneo]: Romans 6:3, 7:1, 10:3, 11:25, 1 Corinthians 10:1, 12:1, 2 Corinthians 1:8, 2:11, and 1 Thessalonians 4:13. He uses the exact or very similar phrase in Romans 1:13, 1 Corinthians 10:1, 12:2, and 1 Thessalonians 4:13.
 - The knowledge Paul wants the Corinthians to have in this passage is that **our fathers** (a reference to the Jewish nature of the Corinthian church) were both **under the cloud**
 - A reference to the pillar of cloud
 - Note that the Greek word translated **under** can be *with, under, or by*, thus does not require the concept of being *beneath* the cloud, in which case the cloud over the Tabernacle would be in view, but that does not fit the chronology of this verse, which is at the crossing of the Red Sea.
- Verse 2-
 - This is a clear example that the term Baptism is not always a term about water (in most cases is not).
 - Here the *baptism* was both **in the cloud** and **in the sea**, neither of which involved water (they walked through the sea-bed on dry ground).
 - To be baptized **unto Moses** is similar to being baptized **unto Christ** (in Gal. 3:27), and is a self-identification with that person.
 - After the Red Sea experience, every Israelite was totally "clothed in Moses" and identified with him, enough to be found guilty in an Egyptian court of law if they returned.
- Verses 3-4
 - Many believe the Bible is difficult to understand because it talks in allegory, but whenever the Bible uses allegory, it plainly announces it, as here. Paul speaks of spiritual **meat** and **spiritual drink**, not literally food and water.
 - When the people drank *physical* water from the Rock, they were drinking the physical provision of God. But ultimately God was providing them **spiritual drink** which was **Christ**.
 - It is important to know that the Israelites, in the Exodus experience, had a share in Christ long before He was born Jesus of Nazareth. This doesn't imply their salvation (for Christ had not died, and the next verse is explicit that this is not the salvation of the nation). It only implies that they were nourished spiritually by the Second Person of the Trinity, the eternal Son of God.
- Verse 5 - The **many of them** that were **overthrown in the wilderness** was *all but those under 20 years of age*, along with Joshua and Caleb.
- Verse 6 –
 - The value of knowing the Hebrew Scriptures is to overcome the **lust after evil things** as well as other sins (which will be enumerated in following verses). A similar statement is given in Romans 15:4.
 - The word **examples** is τύπος [typos], from which we get *type*, used in the sense of a *pattern* or *impression left by striking*. The word contains the idea of striking/beating (as in a typewriter). For a powerful example, see John 20:25.
 - So, the *type* on the pages of the Old Testament is a reflection of the *type* that was the message from the impressions left from the *strikes/sufferings* of the people of the Exodus.
- Verse 7 - As an example of the dangers of idolatry, Paul quotes Exodus 32:6. In the face of wickedness, the people **sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play**.

- Verse 8 –
 - Continuing with *the message typed by Israel*, Paul warns against **fornication**, which brought a plague that killed 23,000 of the nation.
 - The sole purpose of 38 years of wandering was to bring about the death of everyone over 20 years of age. Thus it was 38 years of plagues, for the most part.
 - The death of the **three and twenty thousand** is problematic because Numbers 24:9 says that 24,000 died.
 - Option 1: Paul speaks of the deaths in a **single day**, where Numbers speaks of the total.
 - Option 2 (my preference): Paul is not making mention of the Numbers 24 incident, but continuing with the Exodus 32 incident. Exodus 32:35 says that **the Lord plagued the people** but does not say how many died. Exodus 32:25 says that the people **were naked**, even **naked unto their shame**, thus making a connection to fornication.
- Verse 9 –
 - The word **tempt** means to *test* the Lord.
 - Numbers 21:4-7 speaks of how the **discouraged** Hebrews **spoke against God, and against Moses** and so **the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people**. This speaking against God fits the meaning of **tempt**, or testing the Lord.
- Verse 10 –
 - Who is **the destroyer**?
 - In Exodus 12:23, KJV says **the destroyer** but would more accurately be *the destruction* (as in YLT), but the destruction clearly comes from the Lord Himself.
 - Not in the immediate context, but in 2 Samuel 24:16 the **angel who destroyed** was **the angel of the Lord**. In 2 Chronicles 32:21, **the Lord sent an angel who destroyed**, though this time the destruction was upon the enemy. In Acts 12:23, **an angel of the Lord** destroyed King Herod, who did not give God glory. In the Tribulation the destruction comes from the Lord.
 - This is a good example of how we must not make *assumption* that **the destroyer** is Satan, when there is far more Biblical evidence that the Lord was the One bringing destruction.
- Verse 11 –
 - The word **admonition** is *νουθεσία* [nouthesia], which is a compound of *nous* (mind/thinking) and *tithemi* (to put in order), thus, to admonish someone is to *help them get their thinking in order*. The term *nouthetic counseling* is built on this concept. Therefore, the Old Testament **ensamples** are to *get our thinking in order!*
 - The **admonition** needs to be given to people **upon whom the ends of the world are come**. Note carefully that it does not say *the end of the world is come*, for this would not be true. Rather, it is plural, **the ends...are come**.
 - The **ends** cannot come upon **the world**, for the world can only have one end. Further, the term translated **the world** is also *in the plural* thus would have to be *the ends of the worlds*.
 - The problem would have been resolved with a more literal translation, *the ends of the ages*, with *ages* being a reference to the dispensations. That first generation saw *the end of all prophesied ages* except for the Tribulation and the future Kingdom age.
 - The age they were living under was a *mystery*, never foretold before its revelation. Having seen *the ends of the ages*, the people may have thought they could *sin so that grace may abound* (Rom. 6:1). Paul says they should receive the **admonition** of the events of the previous ages as a reminder of the character of God.