

In the second part of our study we took up the first desire Paul alludes to – the desire to gratify our sinful appetites – and discovered that the Israelites despised the manna God provided for them, and wanted to return to slavery in Egypt, where they had enjoyed a more varied diet. We also noted a scriptural illustration of this kind of desire in the decline of Solomon from wisdom to foolishness, prompted by his desire to gratify his sinful appetites for many horses, many wives, and much gold and silver.

In the third part of our study we looked at the second desire alluded to in our text passage – the desire to make God tangible and substantial and physically real – and we noted that idolatry begins with turning away from the Lord, proceeds with replacing the Lord with false gods, and then expresses itself in worshipping and serving tangible, substantial images of those gods. Anything that God has created or that human beings have created may be used to obscure God and draw us away from Him; and thus it becomes an idol.

We recognized the tendency in all of us to want to bring God down to a level where we can grasp Him with our minds, and understand and picture Him in a more tangible and real way.

But we saw that in creating physical representations that people can see and touch, idolatry creates and worships and serves a god who is not the one true and living God, the God who has no physical form or substance and is invisible – in short, the God of the Bible.