

**TITLE: EXAMPLES, WARNINGS, & ENCOURAGEMENT**

**TEXT: 1 CORINTHIANS 10:1-13**

**INTRO:** This chapter has 3 main points, each one getting more specific on the topic than the previous one. Paul starts with general exhortations to remain pure in everything (using the example of the Israelites). Then he speaks of idolatry in particular, and how it applies to eating meat offered to idols. Last, he instructs on making the right decision regarding eating those foods. This is the “big picture” of chapter 10. In this sermon, we focus on his warning & exhortation to the Corinthians (and to us) not to take sin lightly, remembering that the distress he spoke of in 7:26 is no less present in ch. 10!

**I. THE EXAMPLE OF THE ISRAELITES (v. 1-5):**

**A. Their blessings (v. 1-4)**

1. (v. 1-2) *Our fathers* (spiritual fathers – Israelites) *were under the cloud and passed through the sea* (Red Sea). So they were surrounded by water. This is why he says they “*were all baptized* (immersed) *unto Moses in the sea*. Moses here represents the law, which God brought to the Israelites through him. They were immersed into God’s new covenant & law under Moses’ sole leadership (no Pharaoh), who is a type of Christ. Christians likewise are baptized into the *new law & covenant* (in the church—**1 Cor 12:13**). The point is that these Israelites were completely under & amenable to this new law (of Moses).
2. (v. 3-4) The blessings under this new covenant – *they all ate the same spiritual meat* (manna – miraculously given), *and drank the same spiritual drink* (miraculous water from the rock); *for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them* (Christ). God took care of them and provided for every need (manna; literal water from the rock). Spiritually speaking, the provider of all this was **The Rock** – Christ (who is God).

**B. Their punishment (v. 5)**

1. In spite of God’s choosing & blessing them, He overthrew most in the wilderness because of their disobedience (v. 6f).
2. The point is that even in a desert where there was no food or water, and where none of their needs could be provided, God still fulfilled every need. This was a testing of their faith – and they failed! If God tested *their* faith, why not ours (v.12-13)?

**II. THE EXAMPLE APPLIED TO CHRISTIANS (v. 6-13):**

**A. Learn from these examples, and remain pure! (v. 6-11)**

(v. 6) *Now these things* (positive & negative events) *were our examples*. We should learn from the OT (**Rom 15:4**).

1. Don’t lust like they did. **Num 11:4-6**– they lusted for flesh to eat (instead of manna). God provided quail (& a plague)!
2. (v. 7) *Neither be idolaters...* Reference to the golden calf (**Ex 32:6**). Idolatry is the specific sin Paul addresses in v. 14-22.
3. (v. 8) *Neither commit fornication* (ch. 5-6) like the Israelites did *and 23,000 fell in one day*. **Num 25:1-18** – the people “committed whoredom with the daughters of Moab” and “bowed down to their gods” (by Balaam’s counsel – **31:16**). \*Num 25:9 says that **24,000** died. Paul says that **23,000** died, but this was “**in one day**.”
4. (v. 9) *Neither tempt Christ as some of them tempted, and were destroyed of serpents* (**Num 21:5f; 2 Kings 18:4**). They tempted Him by complaining about the manna God had miraculously provided (“our soul loatheth this light bread”). Are we ever discontent with what God has given us (individually or as a church)? Paul was content (**Phil 4:11-13**).
5. (v. 10) *Neither murmur* (gripe, complain)...*and were destroyed of the destroyer*. Many times they murmured against God, but none more offensive than in **Num 14** when the spies brought back the bad report of the land. **All** but Joshua & Caleb died in the wilderness! This ought to teach all of us not to think of God (and speak to Him) with such disrespect!

(v. 11) Repeat of v. 6 – All these things were our examples, written for **our** admonition! *End of the ages* = last dispensation. All these things the Israelites did & were punished for should be a strong warning and encouragement to us to remain pure and live in accordance with God’s will, because the Christian age is the final age – the last opportunity to obey God.

**B. How to remain pure! (v. 12-13)**

(v. 12) *Wherefore* (learning from the Israelites) *let him that thinks he stands take heed lest he fall*.

1. Calvinists try to redefine the meaning of “standing” and “falling” in order to keep this verse from disproving Once Saved, Always Saved,” but don’t miss the context here. “Wherefore” builds on the previous message – that the Israelites, God’s people, fell (i.e., died and missed the promised land)! We too (Christians) can fall and miss the promised land (Heaven).
2. And, this is such a strong warning because he’s not just saying that any Christian can fall. He’s saying that we can fall even when we’re feeling strong (whether truly strong or not)! Even when you think you’re at a spiritual peak, keep on your toes – this is when Satan can catch you with your guard down!

(v. 13) But this warning comes with important and valuable promises!

1. *No temptation has taken you but such as is common to man* (“human”; that to which all are subject; not something you shouldn’t be able to handle). God is never going to allow Satan to tempt anyone in some spiritual way beyond the human realm. Nor is anyone going to be tempted in some way that is not common to all mankind – you’re not tempted in some special way. There is no respect of persons (**Ac 10:34; Col 3:25**, etc.). And if others can resist (i.e., Paul—**9:27**), so can you!
2. *God is faithful; He will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able*. God loves us! He’s not going to let you be tempted beyond what you’re able to bear. I.e., no sin you’ve ever committed was beyond your control to say NO to!
3. *He will with the temptation also make a way to escape* (go out; exit). Watch yourself, beware of what tempts you, and pray that you can avoid these things (**Mt 26:41**—watch & pray that ye enter not into temptation). But this isn’t a guarantee that temptation won’t come. So when it comes, be prepared, and look for the way to escape (e.g., Joseph w/Potiphar’s wife).

**CONCLUSION:** In the context, Paul is trying to keep this congregation strong by preparing them for the coming distress (**7:26**). They need to watch out for each other by not wounding a brother’s conscience (ch. 8). And they need to learn from the example of the Israelites who fell in many areas (**10:6-10**). We too need to learn, and always take heed (be on your toes), trust God’s promises, & look for that way to escape!