

1 CORINTHIANS: MOVING FROM THE CARNAL TO THE SPIRITUAL STATE

Part XXII: Avoiding Israel's Example Of God's Disqualification

(1 Corinthians 10:1-13)

I. Introduction

- A. In 1 Corinthians 9:27, Paul claimed that he strove to avoid being disqualified by God to receive His reward in ministry even though he had preached the Gospel to others. This implies that all of us believers must take care to avoid being disqualified by God through sin, and 1 Corinthians 10:1-13 gives an example of such failure:

II. Avoiding Israel's Example Of God's Disqualification, 1 Corinthians 10:1-13.

- A. Like the Corinthian believers to whom Paul wrote, the nation Israel had been given many advantages from God toward living effectively for Him and being rewarded with His rich blessing, 1 Cor. 10:1-4 with 1:5-7:
1. Paul had observed that his Corinthian readers had been enriched in Christ in every way so that they did not lack any spiritual gift, positioning them for great spiritual productivity with blessing, 1 Cor. 1:5-7 NIV.
 2. Similarly, Israel in the Exodus was greatly benefited by God, 1 Cor. 10:1-4 (B. K. C., O. T., p. 525-526):
 - a. All Israel enjoyed God's supernatural guidance with His cloud by day and pillar of fire by night throughout their journeys from Egypt to the Promised Land, 1 Cor. 10:1a with Exodus 13:20-22.
 - b. All Israel experienced God's miraculous deliverance from the Egyptians at the Red Sea, 1 Cor. 10:1b.
 - c. All Israel were united to the great prophet Moses as their leader through God's cloud guidance and deliverance at the Red Sea, 1 Corinthians 10:2; Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, fn. to 1 Corinthians 10:2.
 - d. All Israel enjoyed the supernatural bread from heaven, God's daily provisions of the manna, that extended throughout their journeys from Egypt to the Promised Land, 1 Cor. 10:3 with Exodus 16:35.
 - e. All Israel enjoyed God's supernatural provision of water in the wilderness both near the start and near the end of their wilderness journeys (Ex. 17:1-7 with Num 20:1-13), indicating that Christ was actually accompanying them as their True Provider, 1 Corinthians 10:4.
- B. However, in spite of these manifold divine benefits, only Joshua and Caleb from that entire generation participated in the blessing of entering the Promised Land, 1 Cor. 10:5 with Num. 14:30 and Num. 20:12.
- C. Paul took this example of Israel's failure in the wilderness and applied it to his Corinthian readers to warn them to avoid experiencing God's similar disqualification for reward and blessing as follows, 1 Cor. 10:6-11:
1. The failure of that generation in Israel to reach the Promised Land acts as an example to warn believers today not to lust after evil things as that generation did, 1 Corinthians 10:6.
 2. Specifically, believers today should not practice idolatry as did Israel, that is, looking to something besides God for their blessing, lusting for food and pagan revelry in the process, 1 Corinthians 10:7 NIV.
 3. Also, believers today should not commit immorality as did Israel in Numbers 25:1, 9 that resulted in the deaths of twenty-three thousand of them, 1 Corinthians 10:8.
 4. Believers today should not put God to the test as did Israel in Numbers 21:5 where they questioned God's plan and purpose on their trek and were killed by snakes, 1 Corinthians 10:9; Ibid., B. K. C., O. T., p. 526.
 5. Believers today should not grumble like Israel did against Moses and Aaron in Korah's rebellion (Num. 16:41-49) and subsequently were slain in being buried alive as the earth opened up on them and others were burned to death by fire from the Lord, 1 Corinthians 10:10.
 6. Following this list of warnings, Paul repeated his claim that all these events of God's disqualifying discipline on ancient Israel in the wilderness were meant to be our examples (1 Cor. 10:11) to warn us.
- D. Accordingly, Paul warned his readers that whoever of God's people today thought that his standing in Christ and its corresponding freedom meant he could sin with impunity as though he had no accountability to the Lord was wrong, and "possibly dead wrong," 1 Corinthians 10:12; Ibid.
- E. For those who need God's help in heeding this warning, victory is available by His provision, 1 Cor. 10:13:
1. We need to know that any temptation to sin we experience has been commonly faced by others, v. 13a.
 2. However, God is faithful not to allow us to be tempted above what we are able to overcome by His grace and our understanding and capacity to use His spiritual resources for victory, v. 13b.
 3. In the temptation, He will also make a way of escape that we might be able to overcome it, v. 13c.

Lesson: *Israel's failure in the wilderness in spite of her divine advantages acts as a negative example, warning us to overcome temptations to sin lest we be disqualified by God to miss His blessing and reward in life and service.*

Application: *May we learn from Israel's failure to overcome temptation that God not disqualify us in discipline.*