

1 Corinthians 10:3-12

Paul has been writing to the Corinthians, giving them an example of how he runs the race of the Christian life in order to *save some* (9:22). His goal in the race was to *gain the more* for the Lord Jesus Christ (9:19), *gain them that are under the law* (9:20), and *gain them that are without the law* (9:21). To do so, he became *all things to all men*, but only for the *gospel's sake*, not his own. The result of running the race well and sharing the gospel, he said, is an *incorruptible crown*. It is possible Paul means by that, those whom he shares the gospel with and believe are his *incorruptible crown*? The bottom line is Paul did not want to be a phony. He wanted to be real in the manner in which he shared the good news.

In our previous session Paul began to show how the Israelites from the days of Moses (that would have been about 1,500 years earlier) did not run the race well, they did not *bring their lives into subjection* (1 Cor. 9:27).

These were people who saw the miraculous power of God, and yet they failed. Paul did not want the Corinthians to be ignorant of the fact that no matter how strong they may think they were, they could fall—Just as those, 1,500 years earlier, were *baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea* (1 Cor. 10:1,2) fell.

He reminds the Corinthians of their *fathers* who went before them. By using the term *our fathers* in verse one, we get a pretty indication that Paul is speaking largely to a Jewish congregation. They would have all known the illustrations he gives in today's passage.

In our last session we read the account of the children of Israel escaping Egypt and Pharaoh and his armies, and crossing the Red Sea on dry ground. They had been led miraculously by a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night (these were the glory of God leading His people).

Unless you have grown up in a Bible teaching church and attended Sunday School, you may not have much a clue about the examples Paul uses. The only way for us to grasp what Paul is writing to those in Corinth, is for us to go back to the Old Testament and read the accounts.

Verse 3— And did all eat the same spiritual meat.

Exodus 16:1-36

The food the children of Israel ate in the wilderness was literal meat (Quail and Manna), but Paul calls it in our 1st Corinthians passage, *spiritual meat*. While it was actual food, we see it also was a picture of the Bread of Life who would come to save the nation of Israel. John 6:31-35.

Verse 4— Same spiritual drink...drank of that spiritual Rock...and that Rock was Christ.

Exodus 17:1-7

The Rock in the wilderness was a type of Christ who would offer streams of Living water. John 4:13-14.

**Verse 5—
With many...God was not well pleased. Overthrown.**

Numbers 14:1-45

Paul's purpose in reminding the Corinthians of what happen 1,500 years before is revealed to us in verse 6.

**Verse 6—
These things were our examples.** Greek word is tupos meaning, type. A value of knowing the Hebrew Scriptures is to overcome the lusting after evil things. And that is what Scripture does for us—we too can use it as an example in our own lives.

**Verse 7—
The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.**

Exodus 32:1-6.

Paul's point is that idolatry, that is, worshipping false gods, takes the Christian's mind off the Lord and puts it on evil and various lusts.

**Verse 8—
Fell in one day three and twenty thousand.**

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 25:9 says that 24,000 died.

Option 1: Paul speaks of the deaths in a single day, where Numbers speaks of the total. That is, by the time the plague was over, 24,000 had died.

Option 2: Paul is not making mention of the [Numbers 24](#) incident, but continuing with the [Exodus 32](#) incident, when they made the golden calf. [Exodus 32:35](#) says that **the Lord plagued the people because of the calf** 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 in 1 Corinthians 10:8 regarding **fornication as some of them committed**.

**Verse 9—
Were destroyed by serpents.**

Numbers 21:4-6

**Verse 10—
Were destroyed by the destroyer.** We have already seen this in Numbers 14.

Verse 11—

For ensembles (examples) These things written...for our admonition.

Ends of the world. Not “end” of the world. Paul says **ends**. The word **would** is better translated *ages*. The Greek word translated **world** is **αἰών** *aion*, it means *ages*. Paul is probably meaning the ends of the prophesied ages, or dispensations. That first century generation saw the end of all prophesied dispensations. The dispensation they were now living in was that of Grace. It was a mystery. Now having seen the ends of all previous dispensations the people may have thought they could sin so that grace may abound (Romans 6:1).

What is the admonition (warning)? To know the character of God in the events of the prior dispensations.

Verse 12—

It is when you think you **standeth...take heed, lest you fall** People are people. We are not unlike the children of Israel, the Hebrew people. They had the presence of God in their midst and saw miracle after miracle, and yet they fell.

Knowing the entire Bible will help us to walk with the Lord. Studying God’s word will help us stay on the alert. We can be *all things to all men* and not fall into the temptations that are in the world.

Verse 13—

No temptation taken you but such that is common to man. A temptation can be a trial, or a proving. It can be something that tries you. Every man and woman experiences temptation according to their nature.

Will not suffer you to be tempted above what you are able. That is, more than your nature will be able to bear. **A way of escape.** There will always be a way out. How do we find that way? By not being ignorant of the Word of the Lord (vs. 1), and fleeing (vs. 14).

Verse 14—

Dearly beloved, flee idolatry. The word flee means to avoid something by *flight*, in other words run!

I guess I could have summed up this entire passage with this sentence:

“Don’t be ignorant of what brings you down, run away from them.”