

Gratitude: Another Example, 1 Corinthians 10:1-10; You Can't Go Back to Egypt

It is crystal clear that the Church Age believer is susceptible to the very same failures as were the Jews of the Exodus generation. But it becomes even more crystal clear if we also consult:

1 Corinthians 10:1 - For I do not want you to be unaware, fellow believers, that our fathers were all under the cloud and all passed through the sea.

1 Corinthians 10:2 - All were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea.

1 Corinthians 10:3 - All ate the same spiritual food.

1 Corinthians 10:4 - All drank the same spiritual drink, for they were drinking from a spiritual rock which followed them and the rock was Christ.

1 Corinthians 10:5 - Nevertheless, with most of them God was not well-pleased; for they were scattered [*katastronnumi*: Lit: “to spread around on the ground; bodies scattered all over the desert, or ...”] the Jornada.

1 Corinthians 10:6 - Now these things happened as examples [*tupos*: patterns for the purpose of ethical, moral, and spiritual discernment] for us. [Examples are now listed] That we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted [*epiqumia*].

1 Corinthians 10:7 - Do not be idolaters as some of them were. As it is written, “The people sat down to eat and drink and stood up to play.”

1 Corinthians 10:8 - Nor let us act immorally [*fornication*] as some of them did and twenty-three thousand fell in one day.

1 Corinthians 10:9 - Nor let us try the Lord [*criticize grace provisions*] as some of them did and were destroyed by the serpents.

1 Corinthians 10:10 - Nor grumble as some of them did and were destroyed by the Destroyer.

NOTE: Please take notice that Paul is offering several examples of sins which are common to man: lust, idolatry, illicit sex, disorientation to grace, and complaining.

1 Corinthians 10:11 - Now these things happened to them as an example [*ytpos*: pattern] and they were written for our instruction [*nouthesia*: to admonish through written instruction from Scripture] upon whom the end of the ages has come.

1 Corinthians 10:12 - Therefore, let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.

1 Corinthians 10:13 - No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man. God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape [*salvation, rebound, 10 problem-solving devices*] also, that you may be able to endure it.

You may claim to have habituated such wheel-tracks to the point that you are never tempted by them and thus do not need to be admonished by these Jewish examples. You are a prime candidate for the strike of the serpent.

Proverbs 3:34 - He mocks the arrogant but gives grace to the humble.

James 4:6 & 1 Peter 5:5 - God makes war against the arrogant but gives grace to the humble.

If we are to be admonished by the failures of the Jewish people then what is the message of the venom? Answer: Even if you avoid the few sins mentioned, you are susceptible to the subtle sins of self-righteous arrogance. You view yourself as better than others. You lie to yourself about it and then judge others who don't measure up. You move into unrealistic expectations and then react to feet of clay. This results in iconoclastic arrogance and the control of the soul by the venom of: jealousy, hatred, bitterness, maligning, judging, vindictiveness, revenge motivation, and implacability.

(And if you don't like this kind of message, bear up, brother. You're being admonished not to imitate your Jewish counterparts of old whose illustrations of failure, according to Scripture, are very instructive.)

It may be hard for you to imagine cobras and vipers by the thousands but it is not all that unusual as our pioneer forefathers knew all too well.

Gregg, Josiah. Commerce of the Prairies. Edited by Max L. Moorhead. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1954, p. 46:

Rattlesnakes are proverbially abundant upon all these prairies, and as there is seldom to be found either stick or stone with which to kill them, one hears almost a constant popping of rifles or pistols among the vanguard, to clear the route of these disagreeable occupants, lest they should bite our animals. As we were toiling up through the sandy hillocks which border the southern banks of the Arkansas, the day being exceedingly warm, we came upon a perfect den of these reptiles. I will not say 'thousands,' though this perhaps were nearer the truth—but hundreds at least were coiled or crawling in every direction. They were no sooner discovered than we were upon them with guns and pistols, determined to let none of them escape.

As the venom of mental attitude sins build up in the soul, self-absorption dominates the thinking. As venom divorces you from reality, you simultaneously believe yourself to be a clear thinker. Such delusions cause the arrogant believer to entertain thoughts of revolution are expressed by disinterest in the Word, boredom at Bible class, distractions from outside adversity, and ultimately the lust to return to Egypt.