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1 Corinthians 10
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By Dan Maines

1 Corinthians 10

1 Corinthians 10:1-2

For I do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and they all passed through the sea, and they all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea.

† Paul uses Israel's history as a warning, showing the continuity of God's covenant dealings.

† Israel's baptism into Moses foreshadowed the church's

baptism into Christ.

† Philo (On the Life of Moses 1.174) described Israel's deliverance as a great sign of God's power, reinforcing Paul's point.

1 Corinthians 10:3-4

And they all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink, for they were drinking from a spiritual rock which followed them, and the rock was Christ.

† The manna and water prefigured Christ, the true bread and living water.

† Christ was present with Israel, showing His eternal covenantal role.

† Justin Martyr (Dialogue with Trypho 113) identified the Rock as Christ, affirming Paul's teaching.

1 Corinthians 10:5

Nevertheless, with most of them God was not pleased, for their dead bodies were spread out in the wilderness.

† Despite their blessings, many perished through unbelief.

† Privilege does not guarantee salvation, faithfulness does.

1 Corinthians 10:6-7

Now these things happened as examples for us, so that we would not crave evil things as they indeed craved. Do not be idolaters, as some of them were, as it is written: "The people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play."

† Israel's failures were warnings for the church.

† Idolatry, with its feasting and immorality, is condemned.

† Josephus (Antiquities 3.308) recounts Israel's idolatry at Sinai, consistent with Paul's warning.

1 Corinthians 10:8-10

Nor are we to commit sexual immorality, as some of them did,

and twenty-three thousand fell in one day. Nor are we to put the Lord to the test, as some of them did, and were killed by the snakes. Nor grumble, as some of them did, and were killed by the destroyer.

† Paul reminds them of Israel's sins: immorality, testing God, and grumbling.

† Each resulted in divine judgment.

† Numbers 25 and 21 give the background, confirming Paul's examples.

1 Corinthians 10:11-12

Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come. Therefore, the one who thinks he stands, watch out that he does not fall.

† The fulfillment of the ages had come upon the first-century church.

† Paul warns against presumption, urging humility and vigilance.

1 Corinthians 10:13

No temptation has overtaken you except something common to mankind, and God is faithful, so He will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it.

† God's faithfulness provides hope in trial.

† Temptation is limited and escapable by His grace.

1 Corinthians 10:14

Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry.

† Paul repeats the urgent command to avoid idolatry.

† Faithfulness to God requires decisive separation.

1 Corinthians 10:15-17

I speak as to wise people, you then, judge what I say. Is the cup of blessing which we bless not a sharing in the blood of Christ? Is the bread which we break not a sharing in the body of Christ? Since there is one loaf, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one loaf.

† The Lord's Supper unites believers with Christ and one another.

† Participation is communion with Christ Himself.

1 Corinthians 10:18-21

Look at the people of Israel, are those who eat the sacrifices not partners in the altar? What do I mean then? That food sacrificed to idols is anything, or that an idol is anything? No, but I say that things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons and not to God, and I do not want you to become partners with demons. You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons, you cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons.

† Idolatrous sacrifices are demonic, not neutral.

† The Lord's Table and idolatry are incompatible.

† Tertullian (On Idolatry 14) condemned Christians who compromised with idol feasts, echoing Paul's warning.

1 Corinthians 10:22

Or do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? We are not stronger than He, are we?

† God's jealousy demands exclusive devotion.

† To provoke Him is spiritual folly.

1 Corinthians 10:23-24

All things are permitted, but not all things are of benefit. All things are permitted, but not all things build people up. No one

is to seek his own advantage, but that of his neighbor.

† Christian liberty is restrained by love.

† The aim is always the edification of others.

1 Corinthians 10:25-27

Eat anything that is sold in the meat market without asking questions, for the sake of conscience, for the earth is the Lord's, and all it contains. If one of the unbelievers invites you and you want to go, eat anything that is set before you without asking questions, for the sake of conscience.

† Freedom allows eating meat sold in markets without fear.

† Believers need not be enslaved to endless questions about food.

1 Corinthians 10:28-30

But if anyone says to you, "This is meat sacrificed to idols," do not eat it, for the sake of the one who informed you, and for the sake of conscience, now by "conscience" I do not mean your own, but the other person's, for why is my freedom judged by another's conscience? If I partake with thankfulness, why am I slandered about that for which I give thanks?

† The believer's liberty must be limited by the conscience of others.

† Love seeks to protect others over asserting rights.

1 Corinthians 10:31-33

Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all things for the glory of God. Do not offend Jews or Greeks, or the church of God, just as I also please everyone in all things, not seeking my own benefit but the benefit of the many, so that they may be saved.

† The guiding principle is God's glory.

† Paul seeks to edify and win as many as possible.

† The believer's aim is the salvation and building up of others.

How it applies to us today

† 1 Corinthians 10 warns us against arrogance, idolatry, and compromise.

† We must flee from sin and live for God's glory.

† Christian liberty is governed by love and the edification of others.

† Our aim in all things is the glory of God and the salvation of souls.

† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †

Source Index

† Philo, On the Life of Moses 1.174 - Israel's deliverance as God's power

† Justin Martyr, Dialogue with Trypho 113 - the Rock as Christ

† Josephus, Antiquities 3.308 - Israel's idolatry

† Tertullian, On Idolatry 14 - compromise with idol feasts condemned

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