

*Voices From the Past:*  
*The Peril of The Spiritually Privileged*

**1 Corinthians 10:1-12**

1 For I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud and all passed through the sea;

2 and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea;

3 and all ate the same spiritual food;

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

5 Nevertheless, with most of them God was not well-pleased; for they were laid low in the wilderness.

6 Now these things happened as examples for us, so that we would not crave evil things as they also craved.

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."

8 Nor let us act immorally, as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in one day.

9 Nor let us try the Lord, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the serpents.

10 Nor grumble, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer.

11 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.

12 Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed that he does not fall.

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**Passage Summary:**



## **Wiersbe's Expository Outlines on the New Testament:**

### *I. The Danger of Falling into Sin (10:1–13)*

Paul uses Israel to illustrate the temptations and sins of God's people. While Israel in the OT is different from the church in the NT (note v. 32), there are several parallels between the two.

#### *A. Israel had spiritual advantages (vv. 1–4).*

Paul compares its passing through the sea and under the cloud to the believer's experience of baptism. Just as Christian baptism identifies the believer with Christ, so Israel's "baptism" identified the people with Moses. Israel was delivered from Egypt by the blood of the lamb just as Christians are delivered from the world and sin by the cross. God opened the sea to let the Israelites through, thus separating them from their slavery in Egypt; in like manner, the resurrection of Christ has separated the Christian from the world and the bondage of the flesh. The Jews ate manna, and Christians feed on Christ, the Bread of Life, as they partake of the Word. Israel drank water supernaturally provided, and Christians drink the living water (John 4:10–14) of salvation and the refreshing water of the Spirit (John 7:37–39). Some are puzzled by "that spiritual rock that followed them" (v. 4), as though a literal rock rolled along in the wilderness with the Jews. Two explanations are possible: (1) Paul states that a spiritual rock followed them, and certainly Christ did travel with His people and met their needs; (2) the word "them" is not in the original text, so that Paul may be saying, "They drank of



that spiritual rock that followed [after the manna was given].” First the bread, then the water followed.

*B. Israel fell because of sin (vv. 5–10).*

God was “not well pleased” with them (v. 5), which is the same Gk. word as “castaway” in 9:27. They were disapproved; they lost their lives because of sin. They lusted (Num. 11:34); they worshiped idols (Ex. 32:1–14); they committed fornication (Num. 25:1–9); they tempted God by deliberately trying His patience (Num. 21:4–9); they complained (Num. 16:41–50). What a list of sins! Yet, God had to judge their sins even though they had been wonderfully delivered from Egypt. **Spiritual privileges never give us license to sin.** Rather, they lay upon us the greater responsibility to obey God and glorify Him.

*C. Israel is a warning to us today (vv. 11–13).*

The people of God, whether in the OT or the NT, must never presume to sin. In v. 12, Paul warns the overconfident, and then encourages the fearful in v. 13.

**Outline:**

*I. Israel’s Privileges*

*II. Israel’s Perishing*

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- Paul says, “I don’t want you to be unaware” of Israel’s history. He also says, “these things were written for our instruction.” Discuss the importance of learning from history, especially learning from *Biblical* history. How can reflecting on the past help us in the present and future?
  
- The children of Israel had experienced many “spiritual privileges” and experiences. What were some of them that Paul mentions in verses 1-4?
  - In what ways do we experience similar - yet *greater* - spiritual privileges today?
  
- How can spiritual privileges, such as access to Scripture, Christian teaching and Christian community lead to complacency or a false sense of security in our faith?
  - How can we make sure this doesn’t happen?
  - What do our privileges, experiences, and blessings *actually* require from us? (**cf. Luke 12:41-48**)
  
- The Israelites were delivered from Egypt, but they still “craved evil things” (v. 6). What kind of things *should* we crave?
  - How can we starve out the cravings of the flesh and feed the cravings of our “new man”?



- The Israelites “tried the Lord.” What does it mean to “test God”? How did the Israelites test God? What are ways *we* tempt/try the Lord?
- Paul says, “do not be grumblers.” We live in a world characterized by grumbling and complaining. Why is this sin so much worse for a believer to commit?

***Prayer Topics:***

- Pray that ABC would not be like the generation that perished in the wilderness - but that we would humbly strive to honor God through faithful obedience.

