"TAKE HEED LEST YOU FALL!"

(How to Prevent Falling Into Sin)

I Corinthians 10:1-13

8-6-2023

INTRODUCTION: 9:24-27

***Take HEED lest you fall!** (v. 12)
(People stumble and fall when they don't pay attention to where they are going)

Pay attention to four principles that will prevent you from making a drastic fall.

I. Experiencing great <u>PRIVILEGES</u> does not exempt you from falling (v. 1-5)
(Look how sin is no respecter of persons)

Israel experienced the privilege of . . .

A. Miraculous <u>deliverance</u> (v. 1)
B. Godly <u>leadership</u> (v. 2)
C. Supernatural <u>provision</u> (v. 3-4)

. . . Yet Israel fell!

II. Learning from <u>EXAMPLE</u> is better than falling through experience (v. 6, 11)
(Look at the <u>examples</u> of the <u>fallen</u>)

III. Fearing sin's <u>CONSEQUENCES</u> can motivate you to keep from falling into its clutches (v. 7-10) (Look at the <u>end results</u> of sin)

IV. Taking <u>GOD'S ESCAPE ROUTE</u> is the way to endure Satan's temptations
(v. 13) (Look for an <u>open door</u> from temptation)

6 truths about the temptations you face:

A. You are not alone; Others have had the same temptations
("There hat no temptation taken you but such as is <u>common to man</u>")

B. God is in sovereign control over the tests He allows you to face
("But God is faithful, who will not suffer you ...")

C. Your trial is not too great for you to handle
("to be tempted above that ye are able")

D. God will always provide a way out without you giving in
("...but will with the temptation also make a way to escape")

E. Your trials will not continue forever
("...a way to escape..")

F. You can count on it, God will enable you to stand up under the pressure without caving under
("...that ye may be able to bear it")

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Chapter 10 is actually a continuation of 9:24-27. Paul had stated in 9:24-27 that he (for the Gospel's sake) strictly controlled his body (with its lusts and passions) so that he would never become a castaway (disapproved and disqualified for service; rendered useless or worthless for Christ's ministry).

The apostle now uses many of the people among the nation of Israel as an illustration of people who had great privilege yet because of selfish and sinister lusts (v. 6) were judged by God and rendered disapproved.

V. 12

Look out! Your standing today does not guarantee you won't fall tomorrow.

Those who suppose themselves to be so high and mighty that nothing could knock them off their pedestal have a problem in several ways. They are:

1. Intellectually deceived (*"thinketh")*

2. Independently self-sufficient (*"he standeth")*
   (i.e. not by God's power but by his own)
   (Prov. 16:18 - *"Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall."*)

3. Indifferently oblivious (to the potential of a fall) (*"take heed"* - look out, wake up and take notice)
   (II Peter 3:17 - *"Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness")*

***Take HEED lest you fall!** (v. 12)

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Pay attention to four principles that will prevent you from making a drastic fall.

I. Experiencing great <u>PRIVILEGES</u> does not exempt you from falling (v. 1-5)
(Look how sin is no respecter of persons)

Paul's point of view in v. 1-4 is that Israel had <u>tremendous privilege</u>. The nation was privy to wonders and miracles never experienced by anyone before or after.

Note: With privilege comes responsibility; and with greater privilege comes greater accountability. *"To whom much is given, much is required."*

By using the five-fold repetition of the word *"All,"* Paul stresses "the fact that without exception the Israelites received the tokens of God's good hand upon them" (Morris, p. 140).

Note: In verses 1-4, the word "***<u>all</u>***" occurs in every verse, showing that no one could excuse his sin by claiming a lack of deliverance, leadership, or provision. All shared the same blessings and all had the same privilege. Note: In Christ we all share in the same spiritual blessings (no "black sheep" in His family).

Specifically, what great privileges did the Moses generation of Israelites have?

1. Miraculous <u>deliverance</u> (v. 1)
2. Godly <u>leadership</u> (v. 2)
3. Supernatural <u>provision</u> (v. 3-4)
   --manna (v. 3)
   --water from a rock (v. 4)

A. Miraculous <u>Deliverance</u> (v. 1)

"I would not that ye should be ignorant" - "Those who fail to remember the past are condemned to repeat it" (a sign hung at Jonestown - ie. the Jonestown cult, Jim Jones)

"Under the <u>cloud</u>" - This supernatural cloud both guided and protected the nation of Israel as they made their exodus from Egypt.

It <u>guided</u> them by day as it took the form of a giant pillar and by night as a pillar of fire (which illuminated their path). SEE: Exodus 13:21-22.

It <u>protected</u> them from their pursuers as it produced a thick, foggy darkness, making it impossible for the Egyptians to know where they were going; and it protected them by providing light for their night journey (SEE: Exod. 14:19-20).

B. Godly <u>leadership</u> (v. 2)

"Baptized unto Moses" - i.e. they were fully identified with Moses as their leader as they were immersed, as it were, in the midst of the cloud and in the midst of the Red Sea which parted for them [Note: Baptism is believers' way of showing whom he identifies with; we identify with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and specifically with the salvation provided for us in the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ.]

Israel had the privilege of being led by the greatest human leader to ever live!

C. Supernatural provision (v. 3-4)

V. 3
"Spiritual meat" - Food produced by a supernatural or spiritual agent. The manna was literal food but owes its origin not to natural causes but to spiritual. It was delicious, honey-flavored, light, white wafers manufactured in Heaven (Exod. 16:4, 31)

"Spiritual drink" - Again, literal water, which came not from natural rivers, reservoirs, or springs, but from the invisible yet real and powerful pre-incarnate Person of Jesus Christ.

V. 4
"The rock was Christ" **=** Proof of Christ's pre-existence (cp. Jn. 8:58).

Everywhere they went, Jesus Christ went and gave them water for their parched tongues in the midst of a waterless desert (Exod. 17:1-9; Num. 20:1-13).

V. 5
"But" - Shows a marked contrast between the privilege received (v. 1-4) and the evil, ungrateful, disobedient, lustful response of the Israelites.

"Many of them" - Most of them but not "all" of them (God always has a narrow remnant).

"Overthrown" - To be strewn all over, low in the dust, as if blown down by a hurricane.
Having these privileges will not guarantee you will not fall:

--Growing up in a Christian home
--Going to a Christian school (college, seminary, institute)
--Going through the mechanics of devotions or church attendance

[Note: Paul had the privilege of being an apostle! Yet he feared being a castaway.]

II. Learning from EXAMPLE is better than falling through experience (v. 6, 11)
(Look at the examples of the fallen)

V. 6

Why did God reveal the casualties, ship wrecks, and negative examples of the Old Testament? Answer: So that we would not do likewise and face the abhorrent consequences of disobedience. We can either learn by example or we will learn by experience. But we will learn. Why not learn from the blunders of others rather than having to go through the "school of hard knocks" yourself?

A ***"lust"*** is simply an appetite which seeks to be satisfied outside of the will of God.

"Lust" - to have a strong desire toward something you don't have; to crave something that is not yours.

"Evil things" - bad things, things which are forbidden; detrimental, harmful.

It is intriguing to see how forbidden things tend to incite cravings for them. *"Stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant"* (Prov. 9:17).

Things people lust after today:

--the pretty woman/the handsome man
--the fancy clothes
--the new house
--the latest model car
--fame & fortune

The Israelites lusted when they preferred the food of Egypt over God's food (Numb. 11:4 - *"And the mixed multitude that was among them fell a lusting: and the children of Israel also wept again, and said, Who shall give us flesh to eat?"*
How to Gain Victory Over Lusts:

1. Pray for God to help you and meet your needs
   (James 4:2 - *"Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not."*)

2. Discipline your thought life
   (II Cor. 10:5 - *"Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.")*

3. Don't feed illicit passions
   (Rom. 13:14 - *"But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof.")*

4. Be content with what you have in God and from God
   (Heb. 13:5 - *"Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hat said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.")*

V. 11

God wrote the Old Testament not merely for the Old Testament saint but for us who live in the Last Days of the Church age.

III. Fearing sin's CONSEQUENCES can motivate you to keep from falling into its clutches (v. 7-10)

(Look at the end results of sin)

Satan can paint such an alluring picture of sin. There is a beautiful side to evil. That side is the front; the back side is ugly!

Look at the end result of sexual impurity (SEE: Prov. 5:1-13, 22:23)

V. 7

An idol is any substitute for God to which you devote time, thought, and energy.

Idolatry can be more than mere objects of wood, stone, or metal. The bible speaks of *"idols in the heart"* (Ezek. 14:3, 4, 7)

Examples of modern idols:

--rock or rap musician
--Hollywood movie star
--famous celebrity
--sports hero
[Note: Our identify should be in Christ]
--humanism (the worship of man)
--materialism (the worship of things)
--New Age-ism (the worship of self)

The idolatry referred to here is the golden calf set up below Mt. Sinai (Exod. 32:1ff).

"The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play" (Exod. 32:6). The word *"play"* suggest sex play (it is the same Hebrew word as is used in Gen. 26:8). In light of the drinking and nakedness (32:25), the scene likely became a drunken sex orgy (Ryrie note).

Idolatry always results in immorality.

Sinful humans will readily accept a deity which will allow them to live any way they want to.

V. 8

"Fornication" - Sexual immorality -- a broad term including: masturbation, pornography (sex videos, books, magazines), pre-marital sex, homosexuality, extra-marital affairs, etc.

Israel's idolatry and mingling with the heathen Midianites at Baal Peorr led to sexual immorality resulting in the deaths of 23,000 in *"one day"* and an additional 1,000 later, totalling 24,000 (SEE: Num. 25:1-9).

V. 9

"Tempt Christ" - Christ was in the Old Testament (another evidence of His pre-existence and deity).

"Tempt" - Israel tested Christ's patience, by being continually ungrateful and

having a bad, bitter attitude. He who is long-suffering can have His patience run out!

God sent vipers among the gripers (SEE: Num. 21:4-9).

Have you been testing the Lord's patience? (*"His spirit shall not always strive with man"* (Gen. 6:3; I Pet. 3:20).

V. 10

***"Murmer"* -** to grumble and complain. To have a bad attitude involving a reluctance to submit to God's will.

After God wiped out the rebels of Korah, many who were sympathetic toward them grumbled against Moses for it, and 14,700 of them died in the plague (SEE: Num. 16:41-50).

Murmuring is a terrible sinful attitude because:

1) It reveals a <u>stubborn</u> heart
(a refusal to subject oneself and one's consequences to God's will)
(Why do people complain about the weather? it's their chance to get back at God)

2) It is usually a <u>shifting of blame</u> onto someone other than self
(many justify their wicked attitude over the sin of others)

3) It reveals a <u>discontented</u> heart
(Phil. 2:14 - *"Do all things without murmurings and disputings")*

IV. Taking <u>GOD'S ESCAPE ROUTE</u> is the way to endure Satan's temptations
(v. 13)
(Look for an <u>open door</u> from temptation)

V. 13 confirms 6 truths about the temptations you face:

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The world, flesh, or devil provide the temptation -- God provides the way out.

God can be trusted to provide a place of refuge and protection that you can flee to.

God's "way out" might not seem to be the most desirable way in the short run, but it is the best when you take the long look.

God will meet the need you feel you have in His way and in His time if you *"wait upon Him."*

But we must take God's way out when He provides it. If we linger near the temptation, wondering if we should take God's way or the temptation, we may find that later the escape is gone and we are trapped. ("He who hesitates is lost")