

Sha'ul of Tarsus & His Letters ~ Part 77

1 Corinthians ~ Part 17

Note: To examine the graphics in this series, click on them for a pop-up version.

As I mentioned in my last post, we continue to explore **Sha'ul's Letters to the Corinthians**.

Regarding Mutual Submission ~ Part 4

Example of Overconfidence

¹ For, brothers, I don't want you to miss the significance of what happened to our fathers. All of them were guided by the pillar of the cloud, and they all passed through the sea,

I don't want you to miss the significance of what happened to our fathers as they left **Egypt** on their way to the **Land of Israel**. This introduces an illustration showing that the risk of rejection by **God** (1 Corinthians 9:27) is real; compare Psalms 78 and 106. For even though *all of them* had extraordinary advantages that might have led them to suppose their status with **God** was secure (compare Romans 9:4–5, Mattityahu 3:9), "the majority of them" met with **God's** disapproval and died as a result (v. 5 below); let this be a warning to you (vv. 6–14 below). They were *guided by the pillar of the cloud* (Exodus 13:21–22), and they *passed through the sea* (Exodus 14:19–31; Psalms 105:39, 136:13–15).

² and in connection with the cloud and with the sea, they all immersed themselves into Moshe, ³ also they all ate the same food from the Spirit,

Sha'ul speaks of the **Israelites** as being baptized into **Moshe**. Either **Sha'ul** is speaking figuratively of the **Israelites'** traveling through the sea as baptism, or **Sha'ul** thinks of their experience as an actual baptism or consecration to God. **Moshe** was a mediator of the **Mosaic** covenant who typified the true mediator, **Yeshua** (compare Galatians 3:19; Messianic Jews 3:2–6). Either way, **Sha'ul** is once again referring to the immense care **God** showed for them. **Sha'ul** refers to the **manna** and **quail** that came down from heaven (Exodus 16:13–15), spoken of as spiritual food because it typified **Yeshua**, the true bread from heaven (John 6:32–33).

⁴ and they all drank the same drink from the Spirit—for they drank from a Spirit-sent Rock which followed them, and that Rock was the Messiah. ⁵ Yet with the majority of them, God was not pleased, so their bodies were strewn across the desert.

The majority. An understatement: of all the Israelites over 20 years old, only Joshua and Caleb were permitted to enter the Promised Land (Numbers 14:27–38, 26:63–65).

Example of Self-Indulgence

⁶ Now, these things took place as prefigurative historical events, warning us not to set our hearts on evil things as they did. ⁷ Don't be idolaters, as some of them were - as the Tanakh puts it, "The people sat down to eat and drink, then got up to indulge in revelry." ⁸ And let us not engage in sexual immorality, as some of them did, with the consequence that 23,000 died in a single day. ⁹ And let us not put the Messiah to the test, as some of them did, and were destroyed by snakes. ¹⁰ And don't grumble, as some of them did and were destroyed by the Destroying Angel.

They were disapproved; they lost their lives because of sin. They lusted (Numbers 11:34); they worshiped idols (Exodus 32:1–14); they committed fornication (Numbers 25:1–9); they tempted God by deliberately trying His patience (Numbers 21:4–9); they complained (Numbers 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 a license to sin. Rather, they lay upon us the greater responsibility to obey God and glorify Him. (Note on v. 8: **Sha'ul** gives 23,000 slain, while Numbers 25:9 says 24,000. However, **Sha'ul** recounts how

many died in one day, while Moshe records the total number of deaths, for obviously, some died later.)

Examples Are Warning

*¹¹ These things happened to them as prefigurative historical events, and they were written down as a warning to us who are living in the acharit-hayamim (the ends of the ages). ¹² Therefore, let anyone who thinks he is standing up be careful not to fall! ¹³ No temptation has seized you beyond what people normally experience, and God can be trusted not to allow you to be tempted beyond what you can bear. On the contrary, along with the temptation, he will also provide the way out so that you will be able to endure.*¹

No one is so good that he is immune from temptation. We will never be entirely free from it.... There is no order so holy, no place so secret where there will be no temptation.

~ Thomas à Kempis

In our next post, we will eagerly continue our exploration of **Sha'ul's** Letters to the **Corinthians**, starting with 1 Corinthians 10:14 and delving deeper into the topic of **Mutual Submission**. Stay tuned for more insights and revelations.

¹ 1 Corinthians 10:1–13.