



[1 Corinthians 10:6-11](#)

(6) Now these things became examples for us, so that we might not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. (7) Neither be idolaters, as *were* some of them; as it is written, "The people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play." (8) Neither should we commit sexual immorality, as some of them committed, and twenty-three thousand were destroyed in one day. (9) Neither should we tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted *Him*, and were killed by serpents. (10) Neither *should we* complain against *God*, as some of them also complained, and were killed by the destroyer. (11) Now all these things happened to them *as* examples, and were written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the ages are coming.

A Faithful Version

Israel's experience in Egypt and in the wilderness is an object lesson that [God](#) desires us to reflect on frequently. These lessons are most forcefully brought to the fore during the spring as we begin rehearsing God's plan of salvation in the annual holy days. Once freed from their slavery to Egypt, it took the Israelites but seven days to cross the Red Sea, breaking completely clear of Egyptian control. In dramatic contrast, it took them forty *years* to walk the remaining few hundred miles! During this trek, every man of war numbered in the first census after leaving Egypt—with the exception of Joshua and Caleb—died without reaching the Promised Land. Will we allow ourselves to match this miserable record by failing to maintain our liberty?

What a costly expedition! [Hebrews 3:16-19](#) clarifies the cause of their failure more specifically:

For who, having heard, rebelled? Indeed, was it not *all* who came out of Egypt, led by [Moses](#)? Now with whom was He angry forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose corpses fell in the wilderness? And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who did not obey? So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief. [emphasis ours]

Clearly, they did not make the right efforts to defend their God-given liberties. Instead, they exacerbated their circumstances by failing to discipline themselves to submit to God's rule over their lives, even though He freely rescued them from their slavery. They were unwilling to pay the costs of directing their lives as He commanded, despite knowing, through the many manifestations of His power, that He acted exactly as Moses had said He would.

— John W. Ritenbaugh

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