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A1230 – July 22, 2012 – 1 Corinthians 10:1-6
The Disqualified Generation

As we return today to our verse-by-verse study of 1 Corinthians turn to 1 Cor 9:24. Paul has been setting forth a principle that requires discipline to apply; namely, the setting aside of Christian freedoms for the sake of others. If the others are unbelievers then they are to be set aside for the sake of the gospel. If the others are believers then they to be set aside for the sake of the brother's weaker conscience. But voluntarily setting aside freedoms requires discipline on par with the discipline of an athlete training to win the Olympic Games, who though he has rights to eat certain foods and drink certain drinks and relax his training regimen, sets such rights aside to become the very best that he can be and win the prize. Such is the mentality of the Christian athlete who runs so as to win the prize at the judgment seat of Christ. He disciplines himself to win the imperishable prize.

Verse 24, "Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize?" Of course they knew. Corinth hosted the Isthmian Games just six miles away. And on the last day of the games, when the prizes were awarded, only one from each event received the crown of celery. Paul says, "Run in such a way that you may win." - an imperative command to the Christian to live so that he will win rewards at the judgment seat of Christ. Rewards are put out in front of us in order to motivate us to live godly lives in the present. Contrary to the Kantian notion that we should simply do duty for duties sake, the Christian should do duty for the reward just as an athlete does his duty for the prize. And to run in such a way is obedience to Christ's command.

Verse 25, "Everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things." It requires discipline to become the very best that you can be so you can win the prize. "They," meaning athletes, "then do it to receive a

perishable wreath,” they would be awarded with a wreath of celery that would wilt by the end of the day, “but we” do it for “an imperishable” wreath or crown. There are five crowns put forth in the NT for the Christian who wins the race. These crowns are imperishable and represent the capacity for the Christian who wins them to cast them at the feet of the Savior and glorify Him. So then the crowns are not for selfish use but for selfless use, namely, to glorify Jesus Christ whose grace was sufficient to enable us to run so as to win.

Verse 26, “Therefore I run in such a way, as not without aim; I box in such a way, as not beating the air.” : the two most pre-eminent events at the games and Paul says I don’t practice like I’m not competing. I practice as if I am competing because the way you practice is the way you compete in the game. And every day of the Christian life you are practicing, in all the little details of life you are practicing how to handle those details properly, so that when the big things happen in life, you handle them in the same way you’ve been practicing daily, with self-discipline, by faith.

Verse 27, “but I discipline my body and make it my slave, so that, after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified.” Every day Paul disciplined himself so that when he reached the finish line he was not disqualified from the prize. Clearly there are Christians who will not win the prize but will find that they did not live up to the capacity that Christ gave them and therefore they will be ashamed of how they ran the race and will enter the kingdom empty-handed, with no crowns to cast at the Saviors feet.

Today we come to 1 Cor 10:1-13 where the Exodus generation of Israel is set forth as a model of the disqualified believer. They are an example not to follow. This entire generation was disqualified from the prize, which in OT Israel was the Promised Land and which corresponds in the NT Church to the Crowns. So Paul is picking up on the next to last word of verse 27, “disqualified,” and giving us a negative example, so that we will avoid the mistakes of that generation and be disqualified ourselves.

Verse 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; 2and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea; 3and all ate the same spiritual food; 4and all drank the same spiritual drink, for**

they were drinking from a spiritual rock which followed them; and the rock was Christ. **5Nevertheless, with most of them God was not well-pleased; for they were laid low in the wilderness. 6Now these things happened as examples for us, so that we would not crave evil things as they also craved.** Now you see a familiarity with the Exodus is presupposed by Paul. And without it we won't understand the lesson because verse 6 says **these things happened as examples for us**, and down in verse 11, virtually the same thing is stated, **these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction.** So we have to know what happened if we are to learn the lesson.

Now notice that the lesson is contingent on these things being real history, the entire lesson for us depends on the historicity of that generation and the things that happened to that generation. And if the things didn't happen then there are no lessons because you don't build lessons off of imagination; you build lessons off of real history. So the whole passage depends upon the historicity of that generation and the things that happened to that generation, events which every liberal theologian denies happened. They always want to keep the lesson but ditch the historicity underneath the lesson. But if you ditch the historicity, you ditch the lesson, there is no example that remains. So the historicity of these events is critical to the application. And Christianity is the only religion that absolutely insists on the historicity of the events. It's not just a set of religious beliefs. The beliefs rest upon real history that occurred in space and time and if those events did not occur in space and time then Christianity is simply untrue.

So everything that is said here about this generation actually occurred in history and the purpose of them occurring in history was to serve as an example for us. Now the problem is that while many Christians are familiar with what happened to that generation they don't realize the significance of what happened. Those things that happened were divinely designed lesson plans for us.

Now take a look at that word **example** used in verses 6 and 11. That's the word *typos* in the Greek from which we get the word "type." There are types in the OT and antitypes that answer to the type in the NT. These things were "types" Paul says. But the question is whether they really are types or if they're just illustrations because the Greek word can mean a "model" or

“pattern” or “example” and therefore not a formal “type.” It’s important to distinguish between a formal type and an illustration because people have gone hog wild with types; anytime they find a similarity between two things they say it’s a type and then they go way beyond the text and start allegorizing, getting involved in all kinds of minutia - so and so scratched their side and that looked to the Roman soldier as piercing Jesus’ side or something. The problem with that is it distracts attention away from the true intent of the text. So yeah, we all know you can find similarities between things in the Bible, Joseph has many similarities with Christ but there are also similarities between Isaac and Christ, Samuel and Christ, Elijah and Christ. Are we going to make all these men types of Christ? What’s the line here? The bottom line is that for something to be a type there have to be six criteria met. First it has to have a correspondence, there has to be similarities and clearly in this case there are similarities between the NT believer and that generation of OT Israel. Second, the type requires historicity, the OT type has to be historical if it’s a real type and again, this is affirmed in the present case. Third, the type must be there by divine design, it can’t be something that you made up by some insignificant similarity and in this case, again that is affirmed because Paul says these things happened for an example for us. Fourth, a type must be predictive, it must in some way be prophetic and that’s one place where I think this falls short. I can’t see that that generation was a predictive of our lives as Christians. Fifth, a type must be heightened, have a heightened sense and that’s probably true although it’s questionable. And sixth, a type must be assigned a type by God and this too is unclear, just because the word type is used, the word also means “a model” or “example.” Since it fails on one or two of the criteria it’s not a formal type but an illustration or example that is designed to teach us a lesson; namely, don’t do what they did, they blew it and you can blow it too as a Christian. So learn from them what not to do!

So there are correspondences here. And we’re just going to go back and forth to see the correspondences today. There are continuities and discontinuities between Israel and the Church and we’re going to look at some of the continuities, some of the things that parallel one another. You can never toss the OT because you think we’re not Israel, we’re the Church, you can’t do that because OT Israel has lesson plans embedded that were designed to teach the NT Church. So you have to teach the whole counsel of God. Otherwise you’ll miss the lessons.

So let's look at what Israel had and try to find the corresponding things we have. Verse 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; ²and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea; ³and all ate the same spiritual food; ⁴and all drank the same spiritual drink.**

Period, end of sentence after the word **drink**. Now we don't have all these things but Israel did, however, we have corresponding things. Notice the word that is repeated over and over in there, a little three letter word. Can anyone find it? All, A-L-L. And when you see a word repeated over and over in the text that's where the emphasis is. And if you count the number of times it's used you'll see it's used five times. Observe, and you might mark these as you go through if you mark in your Bible. One, they **were all under the cloud...**two, they **all passed through the sea...**three, they **all were baptized into Moses...**four, they **all ate the same spiritual food...**and five, they **all drank the same spiritual drink**. The emphasis is **all** the Israelites of the Exodus generation did these five things. They **all** shared these same five privileges. No Israelite could argue, well, I only got two of the five things and so I was at a disadvantage and therefore I have an excuse. No, they all had the same five privileges and so nobody had an advantage over anyone else. They were all working from the exact same privileges. And the point he's trying to illustrate is that as Christians we all share five corresponding privileges. And those are what we have to find, what we all share that corresponds to what they shared. But the bottom line is you have no excuse if you are a Christian, there are no Christians running around that have more privileges than you do and therefore you're at a disadvantage. No, we all share the exact same five corresponding privileges so you have no excuse for not running the race and winning.

Now Paul starts off real nicely in verse 1, **I do not want you to be ignorant brethren**, the actual word is ignorant and this would grab your attention, huh, Paul's calling me an ignoramus, not exactly, but clearly they are acting ignorant. The carnal Corinthians as they're often called, were not running the race well. So he's going to inform them how they are running and if they keep running this way they're going to be just like that disqualified generation that did not enter the land. So let's look at that word "disqualified" briefly so we understand what exactly he's talking about. The Greek word is *adokimos* and the sense of the term is that you would test

something in order to prove its quality, the point is you're not trying to show that it lacks quality, that's not the point of the test, God doesn't test you to try and break you, He tests you in order to draw out the good qualities, to approve of you. And that's what a test will do to an athlete, it's not designed to destroy them, it's designed to approve of them, build their confidence, but if they fail, then of course it reveals they lacked the proper fitness. And when God tested that generation He was not doing it to break them down, He was doing it to approve of them and build their confidence, but they kept failing, they didn't pass the tests, they were disqualified.

So let's look at that generation, the Exodus generation. This is a summary of the Book of Exodus. And we'll trace it in three stages so you can see clearly the lessons. First of all they were in Egypt, in Exod 1:1-12:51 the nation Israel was all down in Egypt because God sent them down to Egypt 400 years earlier. And while they were in Egypt they became slaves and they were forced by the taskmasters to build the kingdom of Pharaoh. Now what is that a picture of? It's a picture of an unbeliever enslaved to sin, in bondage to sin, forced to build the kingdom of Satan.

Secondly, the Exodus, Exod 12:51. God sent them Moses as their savior, he had a miraculous rescue after his birth and he was to be their object of trust, the nation was to put their faith in Moses to save them from Egypt. And when they trusted Moses as their savior they were rescued from Egypt. And what is that a picture of? Salvation, being set free from the bondage to sin, being set free from building the kingdom of Satan. So now we have salvation.

Third, we have the Wilderness Wanderings, this is Exod 13 to Josh 6 when God sent the cloud by day and the fire by night and they passed through the Red Sea and they all ate the manna and they all drank the water out of the rock and God would test them and they would fail but He was trying to lead them to the land, the Promised Land. That was the prize, that was the reward, if they would trust Him then they would enter and enjoy the Land. So what is this all a picture of? It's a picture of the believer, how God guides him, how God provides for him, how God protects him, how God is giving and giving and giving so the believer will respond to Him and walk with Him and ultimately win rewards!

And how did the nation do? Notice verse 5, **with most of them God was not well-pleased**; we'll see how many He was well-pleased with in a while, maybe you already know if you know your Bible. I'll tell you this much, you can count them on one hand. The rest of them, Paul says, **were laid low in the wilderness**, and the Greek for **laid low** means "killed," they were killed by God in the wilderness, God killed them because they failed to walk by faith, God would not let them inherit the land, God kept them from that enjoyment. And we as Christians, if we fail to learn the lesson from that generation will not be allowed to inherit rewards, God will keep us away from that enjoyment. So they blew it and we can blow it too. So learn the lesson, it's a very serious lesson. Some Christians are going to be ashamed at the judgment seat of Christ, utterly ashamed because they blew it.

Verse 1 again, **For I do not want you to be ignoramuses, brethren, that our fathers**, speaking of that generation of Jews that pictured saved believers, **were all under the cloud and all passed through the sea**. Let's go back to see the **cloud**, Exod 13:21. Now this isn't the picture of them in Egypt, in bondage, and it isn't a picture of the Exodus, their salvation, this is a picture of them as already saved and so this is inside the believer's life, this is about their walk, how they lived before God as saved people. And inside their lives as saved people there are five things they all had and there are five corresponding things all Christians have. So you can't whine and throw a fit and say, well, so and so Christian has more than me. No they don't. You just have an attitude problem.

In Exodus 13 a strange thing appears. A cloud that moves around in front of you, leading you around, they had never seen this before. All they had seen was Egyptian taskmasters, whips, straw and bricks for years and years! Notice verse 17, "Now when Pharaoh had let the people go, God did not lead them by the way of the land of the Philistines, even though it was near; for God said, "The people might change their minds when they see war, and return to Egypt." Notice how thoughtful God is. I'm not taking them that way because that will discourage them. So for those of you who are always complaining about your life and why it worked out the way it did, get over yourself, God is always looking out for your best interest and if you'd had it your way it would have been a disaster. Verse 18, "Hence God led the people around by the way of the wilderness to the Red Sea; and the sons of Israel went up in martial array from the land of Egypt. ¹⁹Moses took the bones of

Joseph with him, for he had made the sons of Israel solemnly swear, saying, “God will surely take care of you, and you shall carry my bones from here with you.” ²⁰Then they set out from Succoth and camped in Etham on the edge of the wilderness.” Now clearly they are being led but we haven’t been told yet how they are being led. So in verse 21 we find out. “The LORD was going before them in a pillar of cloud by day to lead them on the way, and in a pillar of fire by night to give them light, that they might travel by day and by night. ²²He did not take away the pillar of cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people.” Ahh, a cloud going “before the people” or in front of them. It’s leading their way, it’s guiding them. So the first thing we want to observe is that the cloud was God’s leading. God led how many of the Israelites? All of them. He didn’t just lead some of them by the cloud and fire. He led all of them. He took them down the path He wanted them to go.

So hold your place here and turn to Rom 8 where we see the corresponding truth for Christians, that God leads us by His Spirit. Now I guess some Israelites could have peeled off and went out on their own in the wilderness of Sinai but that would be stupid. And Christians can peel off and not be led by the Spirit but again, that would be stupid. So he’s trying to teach us a lesson here. Be led by the Spirit. Verse 12, “So then, brethren, we are under obligation, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh—¹³for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live. ¹⁴For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God.” And there we see the leading of the Spirit. Now the Spirit always leads by the word of God, so he’s saying, follow the word of God. The Spirit works in terms of the word of God. So if you follow the word of God you are following the revelatory agent of the word of God, the Holy Spirit and you are on the right path in life. So the first correspondence between that OT generation and the NT believer is they were being led by the cloud and we are to be led by the Spirit. And this is something we all have, not just some of us, all of us, a gracious gift of God!

Now turn back to Exodus 14:19. The cloud was going before them, leading them out of Egypt and ultimately to the Promised Land. But after they went out of Egypt Pharaoh realized what he had done and so he got his army together and started to go after them, to put them back in slavery, just like Satan does to a new believer, wants to destroy him early on so the rest of his life he’s impotent. But watch, in verse 19 the Egyptian army has arrived, the

Israelites are cornered, they have mountains on the North and South, they have the Egyptian army to the West and the Red Sea to the East. Verse 19, “The angel of God, who had been going before the camp of Israel, moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud moved from before them and stood behind them.” So now the cloud is not leading them. It’s not in front of them anymore, where is the cloud? It’s behind them. Well what’s it doing there? Verse 20, “So it came between the camp of Egypt and the camp of Israel; and there was the cloud along with the darkness, yet it gave light at night. Thus the one did not come near the other all night.” It’s protecting them from the Egyptian army. So another truth here we want to pick upon is that by the cloud God protected them.

What’s the corresponding truth for Christians? Hold your place here and turn to 1 John 5.

Does God protect us? If Pharaoh and his armies are a picture of Satan and the demons and we’re supposed to learn a lesson from this then what is the lesson? The corresponding lesson would be that God protects the believer from Satan and the demons. And notice this truth in 1 John 5:18, “We know that no one who is born of God sins;” he’s referring to the born of God self, that aspect of you cannot sin, “but He who was born of God keeps him, and the evil one does not touch him.” The evil one cannot touch the born of God self. That part of us is completely shielded from Satan. He cannot touch that. He has no rights of access. And on that note, as a side note, don’t let anybody tell you a Christian can be demon indwelt. No Christian can be demon indwelt, that space is already taken up by the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit does not share that space with demons. Greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world. So a Christian cannot be possessed by a demon, he can be tempted, he can be influenced, but not possessed. God protects us against that by indwelling us with the Holy Spirit. And so just as God protected all the Israelites from Pharaoh and his armies at the Red Sea so God protects our born again self from Satan and the demons. They can’t touch that part of you. And that too is a grace operation! So now we’ve seen the cloud, it guided and protected them and we are led by the Spirit and protected.

Let’s go to the second illustration. Not only were all the Israelites of that generation **under the cloud**, but Paul says they **all went through the Red Sea**. You know the story, turn to Exod 14:21, this generation saw amazing miracles of God, fantastic things that have correspondence in our lives.

Notice verse 21, “Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the LORD swept the sea *back* by a strong east wind all night and turned the sea into dry land, so the waters were divided. ²²The sons of Israel went through the midst of the sea on the dry land, and the waters *were like* a wall to them on their right hand and on their left. ²³Then the Egyptians took up the pursuit, and all Pharaoh’s horses, his chariots and his horsemen went in after them into the midst of the sea. ²⁴At the morning watch, the LORD looked down on the army of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and cloud and brought the army of the Egyptians into confusion. ²⁵He caused their chariot wheels to swerve, and He made them drive with difficulty; so the Egyptians said, “Let us flee from Israel, for the LORD is fighting for them against the Egyptians.” ²⁶Then the LORD said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand over the sea so that the waters may come back over the Egyptians, over their chariots and their horsemen.” ²⁷So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to its normal state at daybreak, while the Egyptians were fleeing right into it; then the LORD overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea. ²⁸The waters returned and covered the chariots and the horsemen, even Pharaoh’s entire army that had gone into the sea after them; not even one of them remained. ²⁹But the sons of Israel walked on dry land through the midst of the sea, and the waters *were like* a wall to them on their right hand and on their left.” The point here is God miraculously delivered them from their enemies.

By correspondence, does God miraculously deliver us? Absolutely, salvation itself is a miraculous deliverance. So hold your place here once more and turn to Col 1:13. God delivered that generation from Pharaoh and his armies who were pictures of Satan and the demons. And notice what God does for us through His Son in verse 13, “For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.” Our salvation is a miraculous deliverance from the domain of darkness; the world, the flesh and the devil, just as God miraculously delivered that generation from their enemies; Pharaoh and his army. So we share a correspondence with that generation here by miraculous deliverance. Our salvation is a mighty deliverance.

Not only that but another correspondence, Paul says of that generation, **they were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea**, that is, they were thoroughly identified with Moses. Baptism just means “identification”

and they were identified with Moses by putting their trust in him as God's chosen deliverer. When they went through the Red Sea with Moses they were identified with Him because they all went through the same baptism, what we call the baptism of Moses. There are eight baptisms in the Bible; five dry and three wet. The interesting thing, of course, is that none of the Israelites got wet, they all walked through the Red Sea on dry land, and the ones that got wet were the Egyptians who died. So the real significance of baptism is not found in the water but in identification. They were identified with Moses. It was a real baptism. All real baptisms are dry baptisms. The wet ones are nothing more than rituals, nothing happens other than you get wet, but when a dry baptism occurs something does happen, a change in identification occurs. So at the Red Sea the Israelites were identified with Moses, that's a real baptism, **they were all baptized into Moses.**

Now are we baptized into anyone? Is there some corresponding baptism? Absolutely. Turn to Rom 6. We are not baptized into Moses, nor are we identified with him, but we are baptized into Christ, we are identified with Him. Rom 6:3, "Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? ⁴Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life." That is depicting our identification with Christ in His death and resurrection. It's also a dry baptism and so something really happened at the moment of faith in Christ. We were no longer identified with Adam but now we are identified with Christ, our old man was crucified with Christ and our new man was raised with Christ so that we might live a new life. So then again, just as all of them were baptized into Moses so the corresponding truth is that all of us are baptized into Christ. It's something we all share.

The fourth parallel Paul finds is that the wilderness generation **all ate the same spiritual food**; by spiritual food he means supernatural food, and maybe you remember the manna in the morning and the quail in the evening that came down from heaven. So turn to Exodus 16:4. There are many passages showing this, I'm just showing you one. As they wandered around there wasn't much food, it was a barren wilderness. So what did God do for them? He provided for them. Notice verse 4, "Then the LORD said to Moses, "Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a day's portion every day, that I may test them," Here comes one

of those tests, He's not testing them to make them look bad, He's testing them so as to approve of them, that they've learned about Him and are able to trust Him and obey. So the bread out of heaven is a test, "whether or not they will walk in My instruction. 5 On the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather daily." These are very specific instructions. Six days gather and on the sixth day gather twice as much because on the seventh day, Sabbath, God wanted them to rest. Now it sounds very simple, just do what the Lord says, trust and obey. But of course believers like to do it their own way and so they always twist the commands and partially obey and then say, see, I did it, no you didn't. Partial obedience is not obedience. And that's what the Israelites did, they partially obeyed, they gathered for six days but each day they'd gather too much because they were afraid God wouldn't provide any the next day when he said He would, then on the sixth day they gathered enough for the seventh but they went out on the seventh day anyway when God said stay home. And the whole point is partial obedience which is no obedience at all. They failed the test and the Lord got angry at them.

Now they were given this bread out of heaven as spiritual food. Do we have any spiritual food? Turn to John 6. Here we find the corresponding provision for us. Verse 30, "So they said to Him, "What then do You do for a sign, so that we may see, and believe You? What work do You perform?" 31 "Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, 'HE GAVE THEM BREAD OUT OF HEAVEN TO EAT.'" 32 Jesus then said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, it is not Moses who has given you the bread out of heaven, but it is My Father who gives you the true bread out of heaven. 33 "For the bread of God is that which comes down out of heaven, and gives life to the world." 34 Then they said to Him, "Lord, always give us this bread." 35 Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst." So then we see that the manna out of heaven in the OT looked forward and pointed to Christ who is the true bread that comes out of heaven, He is the bread of life and if you believe in Him you will have this life. And that is what we have as Christians. God gave them physical life by supernatural means and God gives us spiritual life by supernatural means. And as a side note, the water, you also see there in verse 35, He is also the living water.

Now finally, the fifth correspondence, they **all drank the same spiritual drink** and for this turn to Numbers 20:8. Now this happened at the beginning of their journey and at the end of their journey. I'm just showing you the one at the end of the journey because it shows that even Moses was disqualified. Even Moses was unable to trust and he made a big boo-boo here because he was in leadership, he was the servant of God. Verse 8, "Take the rod; and you and your brother Aaron assemble the congregation and speak to the rock before their eyes, that it may yield its water. You shall thus bring forth water for them out of the rock and let the congregation and their beasts drink." ⁹So Moses took the rod from before the LORD, just as He had commanded him; ¹⁰and Moses and Aaron gathered the assembly before the rock. And he said to them, "Listen now, you rebels; shall we bring forth water for you out of this rock?" ¹¹Then Moses lifted up his hand and struck the rock twice with his rod; and water came forth abundantly, and the congregation and their beasts drank." Now did Moses obey the LORD? Was Moses supposed to strike the rock? No, he was supposed to speak to the rock. But he decided he was going to do things his own way, like a lot of believers, just sort of follow the word of God, partial obedience and partial obedience is no obedience at all. Verse 12, "But the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, "Because you have not believed Me, to treat Me as holy in the sight of the sons of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land which I have given them." You are disqualified! This is the disqualified generation. And as Paul said, with most of them God was not well-pleased; for they were laid low in the wilderness.

The text does not say God was not well-pleased with all of them, but with most of them. So there are some with whom He was well-pleased and we want to identify them if we can. To see those with whom God was well-pleased turn to Numbers 32:8. These are positive models. The rest of the generation is negative models. But we do have some positive models, some who were not disqualified and won the prize and inherited the Land. Verse 8, "This is what your fathers did when I sent them from Kadesh-barnea to see the land." He's recounting what happened when he sent the twelve spies in to spy out the Promised Land. "For when they went up to the valley of Eshcol and saw the land, they discouraged the sons of Israel so that they did not go into the land which the LORD had given them. ¹⁰"So the LORD'S anger burned in that day, and He swore, saying, ¹¹"None of the men who came up from Egypt, from twenty years old and upward, shall see the land which I swore to

Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob; for they did not follow Me fully, ¹²except Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite and Joshua the son of Nun, for they have followed the LORD fully.” See, they were the only two who trusted the Lord, the rest of them turned aside. Verse 13, “So the LORD’S anger burned against Israel, and He made them wander in the wilderness forty years, until the entire generation of those who had done evil in the sight of the LORD was destroyed.” They did not win the prize. We do not want to be like them, we want to be like Joshua and Caleb, the only two from that entire generation that ran like the apostle Paul and won the prize. The rest failed miserably.

So then we see that we all have five things that correspond to the five things that OT generation had. They had the cloud which led them through the wilderness and protected them from Pharaoh and his armies; we have the Holy Spirit which leads us if we follow and protects us from Satan and the demons; they were all baptized into Moses at the Red Sea and miraculously delivered from Pharaoh and his armies; we are all baptized into Christ at the moment of faith in Him and miraculously delivered out of the kingdom of darkness and into the kingdom of light. They all ate the same spiritual food, the manna out of heaven; we all ate the same spiritual food which is Jesus Christ, the bread out of heaven that gives life; and they all drank from the same spiritual drink, the water out of the rock, and we all partake of Jesus Christ who is the water of life. If we have all these things and yet we do not recognize the grace that has bestowed such great things upon each one of us and we fail to trust and obey, then surely we will be disqualified from rewards at the judgment seat of Christ, surely we will enter the kingdom but not with imperishable crowns to cast at the Savior’s feet. May we learn from the negative example of that generation that not all believers qualify for the prize, but many are laid low, only two received the prize, and may we follow the shining example of those two; Joshua and Caleb.

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