



Growing into Church Discipline Pt 3: God was NOT Pleased!

Learning from the Old Testament Pt 1, July 23, 2023

Holy Text: 1 Corinthians 10:1-11

Over the last two weeks, we began to try to understand Church Discipline by refreshing our understanding of the Church itself. We read of both the *nature* of the church (called out, which includes separate, holy living apart from the world) and *mission* of the church (to advance on and push back the kingdom of darkness), which includes preaching the Gospel, making disciples, battling devils, and upholding and making great the Name of Jesus the Christ, the Son of the living God! (Matt 16:18-19)

We said the (local) Church is a group of born-again, Spirit-filled, baptized believers in Jesus Christ who gather on the LORD's Day for biblical worship and who are committed to obeying Scripture and personal holiness. It is led by the Holy Spirit through specific elders and deacons, governed by the Scriptures, and, collectively, is passionate about covenant love one to another, advancing the Gospel, making disciples, and being a light in the midst of the culture.

Such an institution, and all she does for the people of God, must be protected! We also looked at the Purposes and Nature of Biblical Discipline. Biblical discipline is a way that God maintains His reverence, His awe, and His Majesty among His people. It is designed so that God's name is not taken lightly. Also, Biblical Discipline is used by God to instruct, correct, and sanctify His people. The Nature of Biblical Discipline is ultimately redemptive for God's people, as He treats us like sons and daughters and not illegitimate children! (Heb 12:3-13)

Proposition: Biblical discipline (God's correction) began at the Fall (leaving the garden, curses, death), intensified at the Flood, and continued through the Tower of Babel. After God called Abraham, it took on a more "congregational" feel because God had called a unique people for Himself.

Today's Text:

1. Set towards the end of Paul's very instructional epistle, wherein much discipline was rendered, in this chapter, we read of a great usage of the Old Testament narratives: in many cases, to warn the church of what NOT to do.
2. Paul begins by helping the Corinthians Christians identify with their spiritual fathers. Yes, the Old Testament would be for gentiles too. We too are children of Abraham! (v.1)

Romans 4:16 (KJV) *Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all,*

Galatians 3:7-9 (KJV) *Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. 8 And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. 9 So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.*

Galatians 3:29 (KJV) *And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.*

3. These leaders (and their children) were “baptized” unto Moses. That is, they recognized Moses’ divine appointment for their good (deliverance and guiding), and his selection by God to be the one through whom God would establish His holy Law. (v.2) He’s making the case that they participated in what amounts to a “type” or “prefiguring” of New Testament ordinances: with Moses as Israel’s deliverer prefiguring Christ who is the ultimate deliverer! Who can forget how God confirmed Moses leadership in cloud and sea...

Exodus 13:21-22 (KJV) *And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night: 22 He took not away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people.*

Exodus 14:21-22 (KJV) *And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the LORD caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided. 22 And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground: and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left.*

4. He also referenced God’s kind provision in sending Manna from heaven to feed His people, despite their near constant complaining. (v.3)

Exodus 16:1-4 (KJV) *And they took their journey from Elim, and all the congregation of the children of Israel came unto the wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after their departing out of the land of Egypt. 2 And the whole congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness: 3 And the children of Israel said unto them, Would to God we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the flesh pots, and when we did eat bread to the full; for ye have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger. 4 Then said the LORD unto Moses, Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate every day, that I may prove them, whether they will walk in my law, or no.*

5. The apostle’s goal seems to be, in part, to show Christ’s church that it was the pre-Incarnate Christ who led His people in the Old Testament wilderness, as well as to warn them to not allow Israel’s attitude to become theirs! (v.4)

Exodus 17:1-7 (KJV) *And all the congregation of the children of Israel journeyed from the wilderness of Sin, after their journeys, according to the commandment of the LORD, and pitched in Rephidim: and there was no water for the people to drink. 2 Wherefore the people did chide with Moses, and said, Give us water that we may drink. And Moses said unto them, Why chide ye with me? wherefore do ye tempt the LORD? 3 And the people thirsted there for water; and the people murmured against Moses, and said, Wherefore is this that thou hast brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our cattle with thirst? 4 And Moses cried unto the LORD, saying, What shall I do unto this people? they be almost ready to stone me. 5 And the LORD said unto Moses, Go on before the people, and take with thee of the elders of Israel; and thy rod, wherewith thou smotest the river, take in thine hand, and go. 6 Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come*

water out of it, that the people may drink. And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel. 7 And he called the name of the place Massah, and Meribah, because of the chiding of the children of Israel, and because they tempted the LORD, saying, Is the LORD among us, or not?

6. When we taught through this Passage in 2014, we said, “By framing Israel’s escape from Egypt and subsequent provision in terms of activity of Christ, he’s preparing the Corinthian church to see again, from a different angle, the love of the LORD and how worthy Christ is of the sacrifice of holiness. He’s essentially saying to Corinth that, “the same Jesus who blesses you, blessed our fathers. Yet they still rebelled; do not do likewise!” Think about the goodness of Christ towards Israel! From the escape from Egypt, He taught them about his coming salvation (baptism in the Red Sea, the Lord’s Supper in the wilderness). Even then Christ was leading, providing, protecting, teaching, loving, forgiving, blessing, delivering, guiding, covering, and fighting for His children! Oh, the salvation of Christ! Oh, the mercy of the Lord! “Oh come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the LORD, our Maker.” (Ps 95:6)¹
7. **But God WAS NOT PLEASED with many of them. (v.5) Paul lists several examples of God’s displeasure in 1 Cor 10. Our goal today is read two of them (vv.5, 7) to see how our loving God chastised His people in the OT.**

Overthrown in the Wilderness (1 Cor 10:5b, Numbers 13-14)

Historical Context: Israel is encamped in the wilderness of Paran. (Num 13:3) It has been approximately 13-18 months since they left Egypt by the hand of God, most of that time spent at Mt. Sinai. They are close to the Promised land of Canaan (Gen 17:8), so Moses sent out 12 spies (one from each Tribe) to reconnoiter the land in preparation for conquest:

***Numbers 13:17-20 (KJV)** And Moses sent them to spy out the land of Canaan, and said unto them, Get you up this way southward, and go up into the mountain: **18** And see the land, what it is; and the people that dwelleth therein, whether they be strong or weak, few or many; **19** And what the land is that they dwell in, whether it be good or bad; and what cities they be that they dwell in, whether in tents, or in strong holds; **20** And what the land is, whether it be fat or lean, whether there be wood therein, or not. And be ye of good courage, and bring of the fruit of the land. Now the time was the time of the firstripe grapes.*

After forty days, the spies returned. The land was rich in resources. They even brought back some of it’s fruit! (vv.23-24)

***Numbers 13:26-27 (KJV)** And they went and came to Moses, and to Aaron, and to all the congregation of the children of Israel, unto the wilderness of Paran, to Kadesh; and brought back word unto them, and unto all the congregation, and shewed them the fruit of the land. **27** And they told him, and said, We came unto the land whither thou sentest us, and surely it floweth with milk and honey; and this is the fruit of it.*

Congregational Contempt: But they also reported the military situation:

¹ <https://calvaryreformationchurch.org/sermons/2014/5/6/and-the-rock-was-christ-020914>

Numbers 13:22 (KJV) And they ascended by the south, and came unto Hebron; where Ahiman, Sheshai, and Talmai, the children of Anak, were. (Now Hebron was built seven years before Zoan in Egypt.)

Numbers 13:28-29 (KJV) Nevertheless the people be strong that dwell in the land, and the cities are walled, and very great: and moreover we saw the children of Anak there. **29** The Amalekites dwell in the land of the south: and the Hittites, and the Jebusites, and the Amorites, dwell in the mountains: and the Canaanites dwell by the sea, and by the coast of Jordan.

So what happened after? Congregational fear! Giants...giants in the land! So much so that Caleb (one of the spies) had to "still the people before Moses!"

Numbers 13:30 (KJV) And Caleb stilled the people before Moses, and said, Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it.

Nevertheless, the other spies (except Joshua) gave an evil report:

Numbers 13:31-33 (KJV) But the men that went up with him said, We be not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we. **32** And they brought up an evil report of the land which they had searched unto the children of Israel, saying, The land, through which we have gone to search it, is a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof; and all the people that we saw in it are men of a great stature. **33** And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, which come of the giants: and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight.

This greatly discouraged the congregation and produced rebellion against God's plan and God's man:

Numbers 14:1-4 (KJV) And all the congregation lifted up their voice, and cried; and the people wept that night. **2** And all the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron: and the whole congregation said unto them, Would God that we had died in the land of Egypt! or would God we had died in this wilderness! **3** And wherefore hath the LORD brought us unto this land, to fall by the sword, that our wives and our children should be a prey? were it not better for us to return into Egypt? **4** And they said one to another, Let us make a captain, and let us return into Egypt.

They were ready to return to slavery, AFTER seeing experiencing miraculous deliverance, divine provision, and seeing Mt. Sinai quaking with God's power! Joshua and Caleb tried to intervene and instill the courage to be obedient:

Numbers 14:5-9 (KJV) Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembly of the congregation of the children of Israel. **6** And Joshua the son of Nun, and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, which were of them that searched the land, rent their clothes: **7** And they spake unto all the company of the children of Israel, saying, The land, which we passed through to search it, is an exceeding good land. **8** If the LORD delight in us, then he will bring us into this land, and give it us; a land which floweth with milk and honey. **9** Only rebel not ye against the LORD, neither fear ye the people of the

land; for they are bread for us: their defence is departed from them, and the LORD is with us: fear them not.

To no avail. The congregation wanted to stone them! (v.10) **God WAS NOT PLEASED:**

Numbers 14:10-12 (KJV) *But all the congregation bade stone them with stones. And the glory of the LORD appeared in the tabernacle of the congregation before all the children of Israel. 11 And the LORD said unto Moses, How long will this people provoke me? and how long will it be ere they believe me, for all the signs which I have shewed among them? 12 I will smite them with the pestilence, and disinherit them, and will make of thee a greater nation and mightier than they.*

After Moses interceded for the people (vv.13-19), God rendered His judgment. He would not instantly smite them, but...

God's Discipline: All the adult congregation (except for Caleb and Joshua) would die (or be overthrown) in the wilderness. None of the rebellious group would live to see the Promised Land. Instead, they would WANDER in the WILDERNESS until they died!

Numbers 14:22-23 (KJV) *Because all those men which have seen my glory, and my miracles, which I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and have tempted me now these ten times, and have not hearkened to my voice; 23 Surely they shall not see the land which I swear unto their fathers, neither shall any of them that provoked me see it:*

Numbers 14:32-34 (KJV) *But as for you, your carcasses, they shall fall in this wilderness. 33 And your children shall wander in the wilderness forty years, and bear your whoredoms, until your carcasses be wasted in the wilderness. 34 After the number of the days in which ye searched the land, even forty days, each day for a year, shall ye bear your iniquities, even forty years, and ye shall know my breach of promise.*

Numbers 14:37 (KJV) *Even those men that did bring up the evil report upon the land, died by the plague before the LORD.*

Astoundingly, after the LORD's judgment, the people (now sad and mourning over their sin) decided to try to go in anyway! It didn't go well:

Numbers 14:41-45 (KJV) *And Moses said, Wherefore now do ye transgress the commandment of the LORD? but it shall not prosper. 42 Go not up, for the LORD is not among you; that ye be not smitten before your enemies. 43 For the Amalekites and the Canaanites are there before you, and ye shall fall by the sword: because ye are turned away from the LORD, therefore the LORD will not be with you. 44 But they presumed to go up unto the hill top: nevertheless the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and Moses, departed not out of the camp. 45 Then the Amalekites came down, and the Canaanites which dwelt in that hill, and smote them, and discomfited them, even unto Hormah.*

[The Rebellion at Sinai \(1 Cor 10:7; Exodus 32\)](#)

Historical Context: Israel had recently left bondage in Egypt. The LORD delivered them with miracles and great power! About two months later, God led them to Mount Sinai to give them

His holy Law for their good (Ex 19-20). Moses spent 40 days on the mountain receiving instructions (Ex 24:18).

Congregational Contempt: The people knew God's commands and HAD ALREADY AGREED to be obedient...

Exodus 24:3-7 (KJV) *And Moses came and told the people all the words of the LORD, and all the judgments: and all the people answered with one voice, and said, All the words which the LORD hath said will we do. 4 And Moses wrote all the words of the LORD, and rose up early in the morning, and builded an altar under the hill, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel. 5 And he sent young men of the children of Israel, which offered burnt offerings, and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen unto the LORD. 6 And Moses took half of the blood, and put it in basons; and half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar. 7 And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people: and they said, **All that the LORD hath said will we do, and be obedient.***

But they nevertheless rebelled. While Moses was on the mountain, the people became frustrated with the "delay" and took matters into their own hands.

Exodus 32:1-9 (KJV) *And when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down out of the mount, the people gathered themselves together unto Aaron, and said unto him, Up, make us gods, which shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him. 2 And Aaron said unto them, Break off the golden earrings, which are in the ears of your wives, of your sons, and of your daughters, and bring them unto me. 3 And all the people brake off the golden earrings which were in their ears, and brought them unto Aaron. 4 And he received them at their hand, and fashioned it with a graving tool, after he had made it a molten calf: and they said, These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. 5 And when Aaron saw it, he built an altar before it; and Aaron made proclamation, and said, To morrow is a feast to the LORD. 6 And they rose up early on the morrow, and offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play. 7 And the LORD said unto Moses, Go, get thee down; for thy people, which thou broughtest out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves: 8 They have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them: they have made them a molten calf, and have worshipped it, and have sacrificed thereunto, and said, These be thy gods, O Israel, which have brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. 9 And the LORD said unto Moses, I have seen this people, and, behold, it is a stiffnecked people:*

So what happened after?

- God was so angry, He was ready to destroy most of His people. (v.10)
- Moses interceded for them! (vv.11-13)
- The LORD relented according to Moses prayer. (v.14)
- Moses then came down the mountain ANGRY. When he saw the dancing and the golden calf, he threw the tablets of the Law (v.19), pulled down the calf, burned it with fire, ground it to powder, mixed the powder with water, and made the people drink it! (v.20)
- He challenged Aaron: "What did this people unto thee, that thou hast brought so great a sin upon them?" (v.21)

- Aaron blamed the people! By implication, church leaders must not follow Aaron's example!

Exodus 32:22-25 (NLT) "Don't get so upset, my lord," Aaron replied. "You yourself know how evil these people are. **23** They said to me, 'Make us gods who will lead us. We don't know what happened to this fellow Moses, who brought us here from the land of Egypt.' **24** So I told them, 'Whoever has gold jewelry, take it off.' When they brought it to me, I simply threw it into the fire—and out came this calf!" **25** Moses saw that Aaron had let the people get completely out of control, much to the amusement of their enemies.

God's Discipline: When Moses asked, "Who is on the LORD's side?", Levi responded. Not only did the tribe of Levi strap on swords and go through the camp killing (about 3000 men, vv.27-28), but even after Moses interceded again (vv.29-32), God would not completely forgive those who sinned against Him that day and ended their lives. (v.33) Indeed:

Exodus 32:35 (KJV) *And the LORD plagued the people, because they made the calf, which Aaron made.*

Final thoughts:

1 Corinthians 10:6 (KJV) *Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted.*

In Paran, the people lusted after (or put before God) their own comfort and security. **Their fear overrode their faithfulness.**

At Sinai, they lusted after **familiarity** (false gods as in Egypt) and **fun**. Quickly forgetting the love and holiness of God, **they were impatient concerning God's way, and chose their own way, a proclivity still all too common.** Instead, we must:

Proverbs 3:5-6 (KJV) *Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. **6** In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.*

Galatians 5:16 (KJV) *This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.*

Paul's purpose in reminding Corinth of these things was not to condemn, but to exhort... to encourage right hearts, motives, and actions towards Christ...to learn from the past and apply those lessons to the present and future. That is our desire as well.

We must remember that:

1. God loves and guides His people.
2. God's people must follow His commands.
3. God has always disciplined His people.

May the LORD teach us and help us apply what we have learned...for His glory and our good.

Amen.