

Christians Must Avoid the Israelites' Mistakes

Introduction:

1. In 1 Corinthians 10:1-13 Christians are given some very important instructions that are based on God's dealings with the Israelites.
2. Some general matters are presented in vs.1-6.
 - a. According to vs.1-4, God blessed the Israelites by delivering them from Egypt, by providing food and water for them, and by providing direction and protection for them.
 - b. However, we learn from vs.5 that God was not pleased with many of the Israelites, and they were not allowed to enter the Promised Land.
 - c. In vs.6 Christians are admonished to avoid the mistakes of the Israelites.
3. In vs.7 we are shown that Christians must not be "*idolaters*."
4. Since these instructions are based on events recorded in the Old Testament, let us briefly examine . . .

Discussion:

I. THE ISRAELITES AND IDOLATRY

- A. God clearly taught the Israelites to avoid idolatry.
 1. God condemned idolatry in the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:3-6).
 2. He also told His people to avoid idolaters because of their influence (Deuteronomy 7:1-5).
- B. The folly of worshipping idols is pointed out in Psalm 115:1-9.
- C. Unfortunately, the Israelites practiced idolatry on many occasions, and God punished them.
 1. Aaron made the golden calf, and the Israelites worshipped it (Exodus 32:1-6, 35).
 2. The Israelites worshipped idols after Joshua died (Judges 2:11-14).
 3. Solomon worshipped and built high places for the gods of his wives (1 Kings 11:4-10).
 4. Many of the kings who ruled Israel and Judah were idolaters, and both kingdoms were eventually taken into captivity.
- D. On the basis of this information, let us turn our attention to . . .

II. CHRISTIANS AND IDOLATRY

- A. God clearly teaches Christians to avoid idolatry.
 1. God repeatedly condemns idolatry in the New Testament.
 - a. 1 Corinthians 10:14
 - b. 1 John 5:21
 - c. Revelation 21:8
 2. God also teaches Christians to avoid idolaters because of their influence.
 - a. 1 Corinthians 5:11
 - b. 2 Corinthians 6:16-18
- B. The folly of worshipping idols is discussed in Acts 17:24-29.
- C. The New Testament teaches that God will punish idolaters.
 1. Idolaters will not inherit God's kingdom.
 - a. 1 Corinthians 6:9-10
 - b. Galatians 5:19-21
 2. Most Christians would not practice idolatry by bowing down before an image; however, we must realize that the New Testament identifies "*covetousness*" as idolatry.
 - a. Ephesians 5:5
 - b. Colossians 3:5
 3. This should help us understand why Jesus issued such a strong warning against covetousness in Luke 12:15.