

Sexual Immorality

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BIG SANDY, Texas—In 1 Corinthians 10:6-10, the apostle Paul listed five negative characteristics that were displayed by the children of Israel in the wilderness after they were delivered from Egypt.

- Lusting after evil things—Numbers 11:1-33
- Idolatry—Exodus 32:1-6
- Sexual immorality—Numbers 25:1-9
- Tempting Christ—Numbers 21:5-6
- Murmuring—Numbers 14:2-37

In last week's article, we talked about the subject of idolatry—with emphasis on Exodus 32:1-6.

In this week's article, I will talk about the subject of sexual immorality.

Committed harlotry

When the apostle Paul wrote 1 Corinthians 10:8, he referred to an incident that previously occurred in Numbers 25:1-9.

Numbers 25:1-3—"Now Israel remained in Acacia Grove, and the people began to commit harlotry with the women of Moab. They invited the people to the sacrifices of their gods, and the people ate and bowed down to their gods. So Israel was joined to Baal of Peor, and the anger of the LORD was aroused against Israel."

In the Old Covenant history, God expressed His anger in a dramatic fashion.

Numbers 25:5—"So Moses said to the judges of Israel, 'Every one of you kill his men who were joined to Baal of Peor.' "

Numbers 25:6-9—"And indeed, one of the children of Israel came and presented to his brethren a Midianite woman in the sight of Moses and in the sight of all the congregation of the children of Israel, who were weeping at the door of the tabernacle of meeting. Now when Phinehas the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, saw it, he rose from among the congregation and took a javelin in his hand; and he went after the man of Israel into the tent and thrust both of them through, the man of Israel, and the woman through her body. So the plague was stopped among the children of Israel. And those who died in the plague were twenty-four thousand."

Sexual immorality

Now, let's notice some scriptures in the New Testament about sexual immorality.

In 1 Corinthians 10:8, the Greek word describing sexual immorality is *porneuo* (found in *Strong's Concordance* as No. 4203). The concordance identifies the verb as follows: "to commit sexual immorality of any kind, adultery."

Strong's Concordance identifies the noun *porneia* (No. 4202) as follows: "sexual immorality, fornication, marital unfaithfulness, prostitution, adultery, a generic term for sexual sin of any kind."

In the King James Version of the Bible, the noun *porneia* is translated as "fornication" 26 times.

In the King James Version of the Bible, the verb *porneuo* is translated "fornication" in eight places.

Although the King James Version of the Bible consistently uses the English word *fornication*, let's look at a few verses (involving either the verb *porneuo* or the noun *porneia*) in the New King James Version.

Matthew 5:32—"But I say to you that whoever divorces his wife for any reason except sexual immorality causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a woman who is divorced commits adultery."

Matthew 19:9—"And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery."

1 Corinthians 5:1—"It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and such sexual immorality as is not even named among the Gentiles—that a man has his father's wife!"

1 Corinthians 5:9-10—"I wrote to you in my epistle not to keep company with sexually immoral people. Yet I certainly did not mean with the sexually immoral people of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world."

1 Corinthians 6:18-20—"Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's."

1 Thessalonians 4:3-8—"For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality; that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, not in passion of lust, like the Gentiles who do not know God; that no one should take advantage of and defraud his brother in this matter, because the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also forewarned you and testified. For God did not call us to uncleanness, but in holiness. Therefore he who rejects this does not reject man, but God, who has also given us His Holy Spirit."