
OFFENSES MUST COME

A study of the word “offense” in the Bible, exposing some of the misconceptions that we have about this important subject.

I. The mysteries surrounding the word “offend” in Scripture:

A. Questions that we ask ourselves:

1. Is it wrong to be offended?
2. Is it wrong to offend others?
3. You will be surprised by the answers.

B. Definition: to offend—means to irritate or annoy, to cause to feel resentment, disgust, or anger, to disturb so greatly that often a relationship is severed or damaged greatly.

II. This is a serious subject:

A. One man Adam, opened the door of offense that brought calamity on the entire human race:

*Ro. 5:18 Therefore, as through one man's **offense** judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man's righteous act the free gift came to all men, resulting in justification of life.*

B. God saw the darkness that had entrapped the human race and He initiated a powerful, divine intervention. The Scripture says of the LORD Jesus, that He:

*Ro. 4:25 Was delivered up because of our **offenses**, and was raised because of our justification.*

C. One of the most disturbing passages of Scripture:

Mt. 18:6 “But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.” (KJV)

D. God gives a stern warning.

Mt. 18:7 “Woe to the world because of offenses! For offenses must come, but woe to that man by whom the offense comes!”

1. The Greek word translated **offenses** in this passage is *skandalon*. It means a trap stick (a bent sapling), used to spring a snare.
2. It is the source of the English word **scandal**, so it means something much more serious than making someone feel bad. It means to entrap in moral corruption, to ensnare in a sinful lifestyle.
3. Other versions of Matthew 18:7:

a. Complete Jewish Bible:

Mt. 18:7 Woe to the world because of snares! For there must be snares, but woe to the person who sets the snare!

b. Douay-Rheims Bible:

Mt. 18:7 “Woe to the world because of scandals. For it must needs be that scandals come: but nevertheless woe to that man by whom the scandal cometh.”

E. Corrupting children (this means much more than hurting a child’s feelings):

Mt. 18:6 “But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.” (KJV)

Mt. 18:6 “But if you cause one of these little ones who trusts in Me to fall into sin, it would be better for you to have a large millstone tied around your neck and be drowned in the depths of the sea.” (NLT)

III. **Question #1—Is it wrong to be offended?:**

Ps. 119:165 Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them.

A. This scripture makes it sound like it is wrong to be offended, until you explore the original Hebrew.

- B. The Hebrew word translated **offend** is *mikshol* (pronounced mik-shole'). It literally means a stumbling block, something that cause you to fall.
- C. There are many things that offend us in life, but they should not make us stumble (as more modern translations indicate):

Ps. 119:165 Great peace have those who love Your law, and nothing causes them to stumble. (NKJV)

IV. **The word “offense” in its relation to the Son of God:**

- A. Isaiah prophesied that not only would the Messiah offend people, but that He would be for a “stone of stumbling and for a rock of offense” (Is. 8:14 KJV, see Ro. 9:33, 1 Pt. 2:8)
- B. When Peter tried to convince Jesus not to go to Jerusalem and be crucified, the Son of God said the following to His chief apostle:

*Mt. 16:23 He turned and said to Peter, “Get behind Me, Satan! You are an **offense** (Gr. skandalon) to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men.”*

- C. Jesus was offensive in the ministry to the religious Jews and to the masses:
 - 1. He preached against the Pharisees undue emphasis on dietary laws, instead of focusing more on character. This offended many:

Mt. 15:10-12 When He had called the multitude to Himself, He said to them, “Hear and understand: not what goes into the mouth defiles a man; but what comes out of the mouth, this defiles a man.” Then His disciples came and said to Him, “Do You know that the Pharisees were offended [Gr. skandalizo, pronounced skan-dal-id’-zo] when they heard this saying?”

- 2. He preached one of His deepest sermons that His followers would eat His flesh and drink His blood, a meal more important than the manna that came from heaven. Thousands turned away from Him at that point:

Jn. 6:54-55 “Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed.”

Offenses

Jn. 6:58 “This is the bread which came down from heaven—not as your fathers ate the manna, and are dead. He who eats this bread will live forever.”

*Jn. 6:60-61 Therefore many of His disciples, when they heard this, said, “This is a hard saying; who can understand it?” When Jesus knew in Himself that His disciples complained about this, He said to them, “**Does this offend you?**”*

- D. Even John the Baptist was offended at Jesus and he questioned whether or not He was the Messiah. Jesus sent a message back to him in prison:

*Mt. 11:4-6 “Go tell John. . .the blind see, the lame walk...the dead are raised and the poor have the Gospel preached to them. **And blessed is he who is not offended** (Gr. skandalizo) because of Me.”*

- E. All of His disciples were offended at the Son of God the night He was taken into custody:

*Mt. 26:31 Then Jesus said to them, “All of you will be **offended** [Gr. skandalizo] because of Me this night. For it is written, “I will smite the Shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad.”*

V. The last days dilemma:

- A. Jesus described the horror of the last days: earthquakes, wars, and more. Then He said:

*Mt. 24:8-10 “All these are the beginning of sorrows. Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake. And then many will be **offended** [Gr. skandalizo], will betray one another, and will hate one another.*

- B. The final outcome:

*Mt. 13:41 “The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that **offend** (Gr. skandalon), and those who practice lawlessness.”*

Offenses

- C. The commitment we should make, not intentionally offending people but doing our best not to be offensive, yet understanding that sometimes that will be inevitable:

Ac. 24:16 And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence (Gr. aproskopos) toward God, and toward men.