

OFFENCE (SKANDALON)  
Biblical Words  
Banska Bystrica, 28th March 2021

Οὐαὶ τῷ κόσμῳ ἀπὸ τῶν σκανδάλων· ἀνάγκη γὰρ ἔλθειν τὰ σκάνδαλα, πλὴν οὐαὶ τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ δι' οὗ τὸ σκάνδαλον ἔρχεται

**Matthew 18:7** "Woe to the world for temptations to sin! For it is necessary that temptations come, but woe to the one by whom the temptation comes! <sup>7</sup>  
Beda svetu pre pohoršenie. Pohoršenia sice musia prísť, ale beda človeku, skrze ktoreho pohoršenie prichádza.

Καὶ τοῦτο προσεύχομαι, ἵνα ἡ ἀγάπη ὑμῶν ἔτι μᾶλλον καὶ μᾶλλον περισσεύῃ ἐν ἐπιγνώσει καὶ πάσῃ αἰσθήσει <sup>10</sup> εἰς τὸ δοκιμάζειν ὑμᾶς τὰ διαφέροντα, ἵνα ᾗτε εἰλικρινεῖς καὶ ἀπρόσκοποι εἰς ἡμέραν Χριστοῦ

**Phil 1:9** And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, <sup>10</sup> so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ

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## 0. INTRODUCTION

- Past topics: (1) Scripture; (2) Law; (3) Gospel; (4) Sin; (5) Repentance; (6) Faith; (7) Hope; (8) Love; (9) Kingdom of God; (10) Church; (11) Covenant; (12) "The LORD" [Yahweh]; (13) Hell; (14) Redemption; (15) the World; (16) Judgment; (17) Offence [→ wisdom; → lust/desire]

### 0.1. USAGE

- "škanďál! → verejný neprístojný, nemiestny výstup: *vyvolať škandál, pohoršenie: spôsobiť pohoršenie, pobúrenie, výtržnosť* (porušenie verejného poriadku): *pouličná výtržnosť, hanba: To je hanba!...*
- [Oxford Dictionary] "Offence; Offense" 5.a The act or fact of offending, wounding the feelings

of, or displeasing another; usually viewed as it affects the person offended; hence, b.5.b Offended or wounded feeling; displeasure, annoyance, or resentment caused (voluntarily or involuntarily) to a person. c.5.c Phrases: to give offence to, to offend, displease; to take offence, to be offended, to feel resentment, to take umbrage; without offence, without giving, or taking offence. Colloq. phr. no offence: do not take offence; no offence is meant or taken. ...A breach of law, duty, propriety, or etiquette; a transgression, sin, wrong, misdemeanor, or misdeed; a fault. Phr. to commit an offence.

- A stumbling-block; a cause of spiritual or moral stumbling; an occasion of unbelief, doubt, or apostasy

## 0.2. THE GREEK WORD

- [PASSOW]

**Σκανδάληθρον, ου, τό, the stick in a trap on which the bait is placed, and which, when touched by the animal, springs up and makes the trap shut, the trap-spring, also called πάσσαλος**

**Πρόσκομμα, ατος, τό, (προσκόπτω) a stumbling, false step :—the result of stumbling, a bruise, hurt, Ath. 97 F :—**

- [ABBOTT-SMITH]

† σκάνδαλον, -ου, τό (late form of the rare word σκανδάληθρον, v. LS, s.v.), [in LXX chiefly for שִׁבְיָה, לִשְׁבִיָּה;] prop., the *bait-stick* of a trap, a *snare, stumbling-block* (Le 19<sup>14</sup>, Jth 5<sup>1</sup>): fig., Ro 9<sup>33</sup>, 1 Pe 2<sup>8</sup> (Is 8<sup>14</sup>; aliter in LXX; στερεόν σκάνδαλον in Aq.). Metaph., of that which causes error or sin; (a) of persons: Mt 13<sup>41</sup> 16<sup>23</sup>; Χριστός ἐσταυρωμένος, 1 Co 1<sup>23</sup>; (b) of things: Mt 18<sup>7</sup>, Ro 11<sup>9</sup> (LXX) 14<sup>13</sup>, 1 Jo 2<sup>19</sup>, Re 2<sup>14</sup>; τὸ σ. τοῦ σταυροῦ, Ga 5<sup>11</sup>; pl., Mt 18<sup>7</sup>, Lk 17<sup>1</sup>, Ro 16<sup>17</sup>.†

SYN.: πρόσκομμα.

- **Revelation 2:14** But I have a few things against you: you have some there who hold the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel (βαλεῖν σκάνδαλον ἐνώπιον τῶν υἱῶν Ἰσραήλ), so that they might eat food sacrificed to idols and practice sexual immorality
- **Mt 16:23** But he turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me (σκάνδαλον εἰ ἐμοῦ). For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man.
- **Judith 5:1** Vrchnému veliteľovi asýrskeho vojska Holofernesovi oznámili, že Izraeliti sa pripravujú na boj, že uzavreli horské prechody, múrmi obohlnali všetky temená vysokých vrchov a že na rovinách porobili zátarasý (ἔθηκαν ἐν τοῖς πεδίοις σκάνδαλα)  
 \*\*\*† ἀπρόσκοπος, -ον (< προσκόπτω), [in LXX: Si 35 (32)<sup>21</sup>, III Mac 38\*:] 1. act., *not causing to stumble*: metaph., of not leading others into sin, 1 Co 10<sup>32</sup>. 2. Pass., *not stumbling, without offence, blameless*: Ac 24<sup>16</sup>, Phl 1<sup>10</sup> (for exx., v. MM, s.v.).†

## 0.3. HEBREW

- **Leviticus 19:14** You shall not curse the deaf or put a stumbling block (לִשְׁבִיָּה) before the blind, but you shall fear your God: I am the LORD

## 1. OFFENCE IS SIN

### 1.1. CAUSING OFFENCE

- **Mt 13:41** The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will gather out of his kingdom all causes of sin (πάντα τὰ σκάνδαλα) and all law-breakers.

### 1.2. TAKING OFFENCE

- **Lk 17:1** And he said to his disciples, "Temptations to sin are sure to come, but woe to the one through whom they come! <sup>2</sup> It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck and he were cast into the sea than that he should cause one of these little ones to sin

(Εἶπεν δὲ πρὸς τοὺς μαθητὰς αὐτοῦ· ἀνένδεκτόν ἐστιν τοῦ τὰ σκάνδαλα μὴ ἔλθειν, πλὴν οὐαὶ δι' οὗ ἔρχεται· ἂν λυσιτελεῖ αὐτῷ εἰ λίθος μυλικὸς περικείται περὶ τὸν τράχηλον αὐτοῦ καὶ ἔρριπται εἰς τὴν θάλασσαν ἢ ἓνα σκανδαλίση τῶν μικρῶν τούτων ἓνα)

## 2. CAUSES OF OFFENCES

### 2.1. OFFENCE BY SIN

- **Mt 5:29** If your right eye causes you to sin (σκανδαλίζει σε), tear it out and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell. <sup>30</sup> And if your right hand causes you to sin (σκανδαλίζει σε), cut it off and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body go into hell.
- **Mt 13:20** As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy, <sup>21</sup> yet he has no root in himself, but endures for a while, and when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately he falls away (εὐθὺς σκανδαλίζεται).
- **1John 2:10** Whoever loves his brother abides in the light, and in him there is no cause for stumbling (ὁ ἀγαπῶν τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ ἐν τῷ φωτὶ μένει καὶ σκάνδαλον ἐν αὐτῷ οὐκ ἔστιν)

### 2.2. OFFENCE BY CHRIST

- **Luke 7:22** And he answered them, "Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the poor have good news preached to them. <sup>23</sup> And blessed is the one who is not offended by me. (μακάριός ἐστιν ὃς ἐὰν μὴ σκανδαλισθῇ ἐν ἐμοί)
- **Mr 14:27** And Jesus said to them, "You will all fall away, for it is written, 'I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered' (καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς ὅτι πάντες σκανδαλισθήσονται, ὅτι γέγραπται· πατάξω τὸν ποιμένα, καὶ τὰ πρόβατα διασκορπισθήσονται).

### 2.3. OFFENCE BY THE GOSPEL

- Hebrews 9:22 And apart from shedding of blood there is no remission.
- **1Cor 1:23** but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles (ἡμεῖς δὲ κηρύσσομεν Χριστὸν ἐσταυρωμένον, Ἰουδαίοις μὲν σκάνδαλον, ἔθνεσιν δὲ μωρίαν)
- **Galatians 5:11** But if I, brothers, still preach circumcision, why am I still being persecuted? In that case the offense of the cross has been removed (ἄρα κατήρηται τὸ σκάνδαλον τοῦ σταυροῦ)

[CHAMBERS *God's Workmanship*] "Blood" was, and is, the offence. "You Christians wallow in blood," it is objected, "could no other word be used?" There is something so offensive in the word "blood." "And why talk so much about sin? Sin is but a defect, slowly being outgrown in the evolution of man."

### 2.4. OFFENCE BY RIGHTEOUSNESS

- **Romans 9:33** as it is written, "Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense; and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame (ἰδοὺ τίθημι ἐν Σιών λίθον προσκόμματος καὶ πέτραν σκανδάλου, καὶ ὁ πιστεύων ἐπ' αὐτῷ οὐ καταισχυθήσεται).
- **1Pt 2:7-8** "The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone," <sup>8</sup> and "A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense." They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do. (**1Pt 2:7-8** ἀπιστοῦσιν δὲ λίθος ὃν ἀπεδοκίμασαν οἱ οἰκοδομοῦντες, οὗτος ἐγενήθη εἰς κεφαλὴν γωνίας <sup>8</sup> καὶ λίθος προσκόμματος καὶ πέτρα σκανδάλου· οἱ προσκόπτουσιν τῷ λόγῳ ἀπειθοῦντες εἰς ὃ καὶ ἐτέθησαν)
- **Romans 9:31-32** Israel who pursued a law that would lead to righteousness did not succeed in reaching that law. Why? Because they did not pursue it by faith, but as if it were based on works. They have stumbled over the stumbling stone (προσέκοψαν τῷ λίθῳ τοῦ προσκόμματος)
- **Mt 13:55** Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary? And are not his brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? <sup>56</sup> And are not all his sisters with us? Where then did this man get all these things?" <sup>57</sup> And they took offense at him (ἐσκανδαλίζοντο ἐν αὐτῷ). But Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his hometown and in his

own household.

## 2.5. OFFENCE BY CHRISTIAN FREEDOM

- **Mt 15:10-12** "Hear and understand: <sup>11</sup> it is not what goes into the mouth that defiles a person, but what comes out of the mouth; this defiles a person." <sup>12</sup> Then the disciples came and said to him, "Do you know that the Pharisees were offended (οἱ Φαρισαῖοι ἀκούσαντες τὸν λόγον ἐσκανδαλίσθησαν;) when they heard this saying?"

## 3. DEALING WITH OFFENCES

[CHAMBERS] There is a difference between "offence" and "stumbling." "And they were offended in Him (ἐσκανδαλίζοντο ἐν αὐτῷ). But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country . . ." (Matthew 13:57). "But Jesus knowing in Himself that His disciples murmured at this, said unto them, Doth this cause you to stumble?" (**John 6:61** τοῦτο ὑμᾶς σκανδαλίζει; see also Matthew 5:29; 11:6; 13:41; 16:23; 17:27; 18:6-7). Offence means going contrary to someone's private opinion, and it is sometimes our moral duty to give offence. Did Jesus Christ know that He was offending the private opinion of the Pharisees when He allowed His disciples to pluck the ears of corn and eat them on the Sabbath day? Did He know that He was offending them when He healed the sick on the Sabbath day? Certainly He did; and yet our Lord never put an occasion of stumbling in anyone's way. The passage which alludes to Him as "a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence has another reference. (*Biblical Psychology*)

### 3.1. CONSIDERATENESS

- **Romans 14:13** Therefore let us not pass judgment on one another any longer, but rather decide never to put a stumbling block or hindrance in the way of a brother (τὸ μὴ τιθέναι πρόσκομμα τῷ ἀδελφῷ ἢ σκάνδαλον)
- **Romans 14:21** It is good not to eat meat or drink wine or do anything that causes your brother to stumble (καλὸν τὸ μὴ φαγεῖν κρέα μηδὲ πίνειν οἶνον μηδὲ ἐν ᾧ ὁ ἀδελφός σου προσκόπτει)
- **2Cor 6:3** We put no obstacle in anyone's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry (Μηδεμίαν ἐν μηδενὶ διδόντες προσκοπήν, ἵνα μὴ μωμηθῇ ἡ διακονία)
- **1 Cor 8:8** Food will not commend us to God. We are no worse off if we do not eat, and no better off if we do. <sup>9</sup> But take care that this right of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak (βρῶμα δὲ ἡμᾶς οὐ παραστήσει τῷ θεῷ· οὔτε ἐὰν μὴ φάγωμεν ὑστερούμεθα, οὔτε ἐὰν φάγωμεν περισσεύομεν. <sup>9</sup> βλέπετε δὲ μή πως ἡ ἐξουσία ὑμῶν αὕτη πρόσκομμα γένηται τοῖς ἀσθενέσιν)

### 3.2. DEFENDING CHRISTIAN LIBERTY

- → taking offence as a means of BLACKMAILING...
- **Gal 2:4-5** Yet because of false brothers secretly brought in- who slipped in to spy out our freedom that we have in Christ Jesus, so that they might bring us into slavery- <sup>5</sup> to them we did not yield in submission even for a moment, so that the truth of the gospel might be preserved for you.
- **Galatians 5:13** For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another (ὑμεῖς γὰρ ἐπ' ἐλευθερίᾳ ἐκλήθητε, ἀδελφοί· μόνον μὴ τὴν ἐλευθερίαν εἰς ἀφορμὴν τῆ σαρκί, ἀλλὰ διὰ τῆς ἀγάπης δουλεύετε ἀλλήλοις)

## 4. TO REMEMBER

- To take offence *always* means TO SIN ⇒ NEVER TAKE OFFENCE at other people's sins.
- We should avoid *causing* offence by sin and by Christian adiaphora (freedom in non essentials)
- We are *not responsible* for offences caused by righteousness or by essential Christian liberty. Never let yourself be blackmailed by the so called "weak Christian brother" who tries to control your faith.