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TWENTY EIGHTH STUDY

OFFENCES - Luke 17:1-4; Matthew 18:6,7 - Offences, Greek, *skandalon*, one of the most difficult words in the N.T. to translate. But it is a very strong term, much stronger than the English word “scandal,” which comes from it. The noun and the verb form, go beyond the idea of stumbling (from which one may rise [or come up]) and always indicates or points toward spiritual destruction.

Jesus indicated that snares, to entrap the unsuspecting [or innocent], will always exist. But *woe to that man* who is responsible for setting the trap. It would be better for him -- literally, “it is profitable” -- that a “millstone of a donkey” -- that is a large one pulled round and round by a donkey -- would be hanged around his neck, and he would be drowned in the depth of the sea. This punishment was reserved for the greatest criminals; and the size of the stone would prevent any chance of the body rising again to the surface and being buried by family and friends. This consideration in the minds of heathens, greatly increased the horror of this kind of death. It is hard to conceive how Jesus could have given a more solemn warning concerning the heinousness of causing a new or weak Christian to stumble and be ensnared by sin because of one’s influence. The need for a consistent, godly life here startles us. We do well to heed the warning. <sup>1</sup>