

# Romans 12:17-21

12:17 - “Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all.”

3367 [e]	2556 [e]	473 [e]	2556 [e]	591 [e]	4306 [e]	2570 [e]	1799 [e]	3956 [e]
mēdeni	kakon	anti	kakou	apodidontes	pronouomenoi	kala	enōpion	pantōn
17 μηδενὶ	κακὸν	ἀντὶ	κακοῦ	ἀποδιδόντες	, προνοούμενοι	καλὰ	ἐνώπιον	πάντων
to no one	evil	for	evil	repaying	providing	right [things]	before	all
Adj-DMS	Adj-ANS	Prep	Adj-GNS	V-PPA-NMP	V-PPM-NMP	Adj-ANP	Prep	Adj-GMP

444 [e]  
anthrōpōn  
ἀνθρώπων .  
men  
N-GMP

- “Repay no one evil for evil”
  - A Christian principle of non-retaliation found in:
    - Matthew 5:38-48
    - 1 Thessalonians 5:15
    - 1 Peter 3:9 -
- “Give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all”
  - From Proverbs 3:4
  - NEB translation: “Let your aims be such as all men count honourable.”

12:18 - “If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.”

1487 [e]	1415 [e]	3588 [e]	1537 [e]	4771 [e]	3326 [e]	3956 [e]	444 [e]	1514 [e]
ei	dynaton	to	ex	hymōn	meta	pantōn	anthrōpōn	eirēneuontes
18 εἰ	δυνατόν	τὸ	ἐξ	ὑμῶν	, μετὰ	πάντων	ἀνθρώπων	εἰρηνεύοντες ;
if	possible	-	of	you	with	all	men	living at peace
Conj	Adj-NNS	Art-ANS	Prep	Pro-G2P	Prep	Adj-GMP	N-GMP	V-PPA-NMP

- It is an honorable Christian character trait to be a peacemaker
- Jesus said, “Blessed are the peacemakers” in the world (Matthew 5:9)
- In Mark 9:50 Jesus told his followers, “be at peace with each other.”
  - Mark 9:49 speaks of “fire” of persecution as the “salt” that is sprinkled on offerings and sacrifices to God in the OT (Lev. 2:13; Ezk. 43:24; Ex. 30:35).
  - According to Romans 12:1-2 we believers are that sacrifice.
  - Persecution is the salt (fire) that prepares us for service. See:
    - 1 Peter 1:6-7 - “In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that your faith - of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire (**πυρος, pyros**, fire) - may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.”

- 1 Peter 4:12 - “Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful (**pyrosei**, fire or fiery) trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you.

## ◀ 1 Peter 4:12 ▶

### 1 Peter 4 Interlinear

27 [e]	3361 [e]	3579 [e]	3588 [e]	1722 [e]	4771 [e]	4451 [e]	4314 [e]	3986 [e]	4771 [e]
Agapētoi	mē	xenizesthe	tē	en	hymīn	pyrōsei	pros	peirasmon	hymīn
12 Ἀγαπητοί , μὴ		ξενίζεσθε	τῇ	ἐν	ὑμῖν	πυρώσει	πρὸς	πειρασμὸν	ὑμῖν
Beloved	not	be surprised at	the	among	you	fire	for	trial	to you
Adj-VMP	Adv	V-PMMP-2P	Art-DFS	Prep	PPro-D2P	N-DFS	Prep	N-AMS	PPro-D2P

1096 [e]	5613 [e]	3581 [e]	4771 [e]	4819 [e]
ginomenē	hōs	xenou	hymīn	symbainontos
γινομένη , ὡς		ξένου	ὑμῖν	συμβαίνοντος ;
taking place	as if	a strange thing	to you	[were] happening
V-PPMP-DFS	Adv	Adj-GNS	PPro-D2P	V-PPA-GNS

- - Mark 12:50 the salt refers to the flavor and preservation power of salt which HERE refers to the Christian character or Christian nature that is seen by the world.
    - Two sayings or observations that were known at Jesus’ time were:
      - “The world cannot survive without salt” (Tractate)
      - Salt from the Dead Sea can lose its savory quality and become useless (Pliny the Elder)
    - So, in context the fire of persecution can cause the salt of the Christian character to become useless.
    - The world will hate the Christian faith, but the world will always need the Christian faith and character. It is our responsibility not to lose it!
  - As individual believers and as a church body we need to live at peace with all men.
  - We are to make sure the conflict comes from the world and not from us.
    - John 16:33 - the world hated Jesus. Jesus promised us the world would hate us.
  - “If possible, to the extent that it depends on you.”

**12:19 - “Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.’ ”**

3361 [e]	1438 [e]	1556 [e]	27 [e]	235 [e]	1325 [e]	5117 [e]	3588 [e]	3709 [e]	1125 [e]
mē	heautous	ekdikountes	agapētoi	alla	dote	topon	tē	orgē	gegraptai
19 μὴ	ἑαυτοὺς	ἐκδικοῦντες	, ἀγαπητοί	, ἀλλὰ	δότε	τόπον	τῇ	ὀργῇ	; γέγραπται
Never	yourselves	avenging	beloved	but	give	place	-	to wrath	it has been written
Adv	RefPro-AM3P	V-PPA-NMP	Adj-VMP	Conj	V-AMA-2P	N-AMS	Art-DFS	N-DFS	V-RIMP-3S

1063 [e]	1473 [e]	1557 [e]	1473 [e]	467 [e]	3004 [e]	2962 [e]
gar	Emoi	ekdikēsis	egō	antapodōsō	legei	Kyrios
γάρ	, Ἐμοὶ	ἐκδίκησις	. ἐγὼ	ἀνταποδώσω	, λέγει	Κύριος .
indeed	Mine [is]	vengeance	I	will repay	says [the]	Lord
Conj	PPro-D1S	N-NFS	PPro-N1S	V-FIA-1S	V-PIA-3S	N-NMS

- “Do not avenge yourselves” is the next step beyond “do not repay evil for evil.”
- Our strength or motivation to “not avenge” ourselves is to know that our Lord will take care of the avenging business. Our business at this time is peacemaker and the faithful testimony of Jesus Christ and the power of that Life.
  - Do realize that the government is the Lord’s agent of wrath (Romans 13:4), so this verse can be eschatological or it can be applied practically in time.
  - It is NOT the church’s place to execute judgment on the earth. We are witnesses and example.
  - It IS the role of government, which are under the rule of the Lord. Thus, unjust governments will eventually be punished and eliminated from history. Note: Dispensation principles.
- This concept is supported by Paul with a quoted from Deuteronomy 32:35, but the addition of the words, “says the Lord” may indicate the principle is broader than Deuteronomy and reaches to the texts of the prophets such as Isaiah, Jeremiah, Amos, etc.

**12:20 - “To the contrary, ‘if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head.’ ”**

235 [e]	1437 [e]	3983 [e]	3588 [e]	2190 [e]	4771 [e]	5595 [e]	846 [e]	1437 [e]	1372 [e]	4222 [e]
alla	ean	peina	ho	echthros	sou	psōmize	auton	ean	dipsa	potize
20 ἀλλὰ	ἐὰν	πεινᾶ	ὁ	ἐχθρός	σου	, ψώμιζε	αὐτόν	; ἐὰν	διψᾶ	, πότιζε
On the contrary	if	should hunger	the	enemy	of you	feed	him	if	he should thirst	give drink
Conj	Conj	V-PSA-3S	Art-NMS	Adj-NMS	PPro-G2S	V-PMA-2S	PPro-AM3S	Conj	V-PSA-3S	V-PMA-2S

846 [e]	3778 [e]	1063 [e]	4160 [e]	440 [e]	4442 [e]	4987 [e]	1909 [e]	3588 [e]	2776 [e]	846 [e]
auton	touto	gar	poiōn	anthrakas	pyros	sōreusēs	epi	tēn	kephalēn	autou
αὐτόν	; τοῦτο	γὰρ	ποιῶν	, ἄνθρακας	πυρὸς	σῶρεύσεις	ἐπὶ	τὴν	κεφαλὴν	αὐτοῦ .
him	this	for	doing	coals	of fire	you will heap	upon	the	head	of him
PPro-AM3S	DPro-ANS	Conj	V-PPA-NMS	N-AMP	N-GNS	V-FIA-2S	Prep	Art-AFS	N-AFS	PPro-GM3S

- Continue OT quote of Proverbs 25:21-22
  - “Enemies” -
    - Jesus tells us to “love our enemies” (Matt. 5:43)
    - Jesus tells us to feed and water our enemies and turn the other cheek (Lk.6:29-30)

- Loving our enemies in the face of persecution would be considered “doing good in the sight of all people”
- “Heaping Coals”
  - This Greek phrase appears 2x in the LXX, but never as a metaphor: Isaiah 47:14 and Proverbs 6:28
  - Metaphors of fire and coal in the OT are usually references to God’s presence, and particularly, his judgment.
    - God’s presence and judgment could lead to repentance
    - Or, it could result in judgment if there is no repentance
    - Hoping for your enemies’ destruction is not the theme of our mission on earth, although it may be the inevitable result.
    - Hoping for judgment does not fit the context of the text necessarily
  - Some consider “coals of fire” to refer metaphorically to “the burning pangs of shame” that is found in Egyptian practice of carrying a tray of burning coals on your head as a sign of repentance
    - The case for this is strengthened when we realize the source of this quote is Proverbs which was itself written at a time of strong literary influence took place from Egypt in Israel during the days of Solomon

**12:21- “Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.”**

	3361 [e]	3528 [e]	5259 [e]	3588 [e]	2556 [e]	235 [e]	3528 [e]	1722 [e]	3588 [e]	18 [e]	3588 [e]	2556 [e]
	mē	nikō	hypo	tou	kakou	alla	nika	en	tō	agathō	to	kakon
21	μὴ	νικῶ	ὑπὸ	τοῦ	κακοῦ	, ἀλλὰ	νίκα	ἐν	τῷ	ἀγαθῷ	τὸ	κακόν .
	not	be overcome	by	-	evil	but	overcome	with	-	good	-	evil
	Adv	V-PMM/P-2S	Prep	Art-GNS	Adj-GNS	Conj	V-PMA-2S	Prep	Art-DNS	Adj-DNS	Art-ANS	Adj-ANS

- This then is the ultimate “test” for “God’s will” which is “good” according to the beginning of this chapter