

Tuesday 12th July 2022

Exodus 21: 24 *“eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot.”*

Matthew 5: 38 *“You have heard that it was said, ‘Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.’ But I tell you, do not resist an evil person. If someone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also.”*

‘He can’t get away with it.’ ‘I’ll get even.’ Tit for tat. The feeling for revenge is common to us all. We abhor unfairness particularly if we are the losers. We get indignant about the exercise of power on the vulnerable.

In Old Testament days the ‘eye for eye’ maxim was proposed as a guideline for court procedures. Justice should be meted out but proportionate to the crime. Any sentence should not be too harsh nor too lenient but have an educational quality. Similar to the Community Orders of today where offenders must give their time free working for their community.

The impulse to avenge a verbal slight or physical assault is strong in us but more to the liking of God is compassion and a willingness to try and understand why someone has acted unjustly.