



Scripture in Action



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Vol. 3 No. 3 – The Traffic Roundabout – Introduction

Each instalment of *Scripture in Action* will introduce a contemporary scenario, sometimes real, sometimes based on real events, sometimes hypothetical. You then will be asked questions such as “What would you do next?” In answering these questions, reflect on how Scripture can inform and influence your response. Later in the magazine, there will be a short discussion in which I shall present possible answers and the Scriptural basis for my answers. Will we agree?

Vol. 3 No. 3 – The Traffic Roundabout – Part 1

The Traffic Roundabout. Just the thought of the humble traffic roundabout sends shivers down many motorists’ spines. And, as for double-lane roundabouts, have you ever modified your journey, even at times by some distance, to avoid one?

Here is a scenario that I and most of the motorists reading this scenario have experienced.

You are driving along a single-lane suburban road and you are approaching a cross-road. To manage traffic at this crossroad, a single-lane roundabout has been installed. You wish to turn right at the crossroad, and so you will need to enter the roundabout and then take the third exit.

You put on your right-turn indicator as you approach the roundabout, and, since there are no vehicles already on the roundabout or about to enter it from your right, you enter the roundabout. To your alarm, a car approaching from the road to your left enters the roundabout at speed, thinking or trying to bluff you that it had time to do so without inconveniencing you. In fact, you must brake sharply to avoid a collision. The other vehicle is travelling straight on, and so takes what for them is the second exit. You both end up on the same road, the offending vehicle immediately in front of you.

A short distance later, you both must stop at a set of traffic lights, with you still immediately behind the other vehicle.

What do you do at the various stages of this drama?

Vol. 3 No. 3 – The Traffic Roundabout – Part 2

Let me remind you of the key elements of this drama. When you turned right at a crossroad governed by a single-lane roundabout, a vehicle from your left cut you off. You are now both on the same road stopped at some traffic lights, with you being immediately behind the offending vehicle.

What do you do at the various stages of this drama?

Given that I had to brake sharply to avoid a collision, a short, sharp blast on my car horn would be warranted if a warning of danger were still relevant. Blasting your car horn in irritation or anger is not justified (or legal).

Otherwise, I would do nothing out of the ordinary. Under no circumstances should you endeavour to confront the other driver. If the other driver leaves their car and approaches you, ensure all your doors and windows are locked and do not engage with the person.

In my experience, there are one of two reasons for such traffic incidents. Firstly, the other driver may have honestly made a mistake; surely all of you who are motorists have made an error of judgement at some time or other. Secondly, the other driver simply doesn't and never did care that they cut you off; what then is the point of blasting your car horn.

My scriptural basis is simple. Colossians 3:13, "Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you."

The mistaken driver would appreciate your forgiveness. The aggressive driver might pause to think why you have not taken umbrage. We can all spread God's Will in these little ways, and cumulatively they have the most enduring effect.

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