

“The Human Chess Board”

The board of chess on human scale
Align and standing checkered square
An add some word and phrases be
Command each piece as game proceeds

The first to go is usually pawns
Though power less, the pieces sum
To eight the more their power be
The least of all, the more of these

The power most by queen of court
And board is more than tale of lore
For truly she is more the match
Of any piece or pieces be

The knights in gallop can L-pace
The bishops travel in oblique fashion
The rooks or castles though brick they be
Have all the power to move foundation

But they by virtue of might and make
Are much the better than other eight
The pawns by name are common and simple
They fall by number but may escape

And if survive the game near end
Where other pieces fall in yore
Though small the power, at last supreme
The pawn of one or two or even four

One king will fall, one king restored.

About the verse, “The Human Chess Board”

When my kids were younger, we went to several medieval festivals – once of which was near Gadsden, Alabama in a place called **Horse Pens Forty**. The picture below is of the human chess match; one of many venues of entertainment that day, the human chess board was quite fascinating staged with the natural backdrop of rocks, costume and language of the cast.

For what I know of the game of chess – which is far less than my brother or nephew – the pawns are the most common and often the first that are usually committed to the *cause*. The subject of the verse is largely on this piece – not because it is the most important – but because the pawn is sometimes underestimated perhaps with the perceived use of the name to signify the expendable and lesser valued or appreciated. Like “the Irish” in the movie, *Braveheart*, the pawns are the first to deploy in battle – and with seemingly little fighting power (save the sheer number), they sacrificially march or proceed into battle.



The term “used as pawns” is sometimes applied on the premise that it represents the abuse of another; to be used with bad intent or for selfish reasons. For example, a recent article I came across on the Web, describes bloggers as *used a pawns* because, like the game piece, they:

1. There a lots of them (chess has eight pawns)
2. They are the first to go (chess games usually begin with a pawn move)
3. Most are killed-off by attrition (pawns are expendable...)
4. A few make it to the end and become powerful; again, by attrition
5. Before attaining such power, you are under constant threat and attack

Being “used” has many connotations. If we love someone and commit ourselves unselfishly to them (hence, love), than to a certain extent we are “being used”; in other words, we are committing ourselves to a cause with all the risk of being attacked – and even killed-off!

Life does not offer any absolute shelter for being used. Generally, the more we avail ourselves to another, the more probable or risky the chance of being used. Ideally, others do not take advantage of our good intention and nature by abusing it; but instead, value, appreciate and respect the other. When the other (or others) is not considered in this light, the chance of being used is probable if not certain. Love is about giving to another – and not about taking as-used...