

THE DECALOGUE IN RELATION TO THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT.

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I am asked to speak on the subject of the Decalogue, as the central feature of the Old Testament or Mosaic legislation, in relation to the Sermon on the Mount, the great New Testament code of morals, with more particular regard to the differences between them. Inasmuch as both these codes are usually regarded as having Divine authority, those differences are apt to occasion some perplexity. Unless rightly understood, the apparent antagonism between the two, sometimes awakens the suspicion either that God is not consistent with Himself, or that Moses had no true claim to speak in His name. My object will be to endeavor to set the matter in its true light, and if possible remove the perplexity.

Now, that there is a difference, and a very important difference of some kind between the Mosaic law on the one hand, and the standard given in the Sermon on the Mount on the other, must be fully conceded. The language of Christ plainly implies it. Again and again in His sermon He says: "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time," or rather, "to them of old time," as the Revised Version has it, "but I say unto you," so-and-so something very different. "Ye have heard that it was said to them of old time, thou shalt not kill, and whosoever shall kill, shall be in danger of the judgment; but I say unto you that everyone who is angry with his brother, shall be in danger of the judgment." "Ye have heard that it was said, Thou shalt not commit adultery; but I say unto you that everyone that looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adul-

tery with her already in his heart." "Again, ye have heard that it was said to them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shall perform unto the Lord thine oaths (or as it might better be rendered, thine oaths in the name of the Lord): but I say unto you, Swear not at all." "Ye have heard that it was said, An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth; but I say unto you, Resist not evil." "Ye have heard that it was said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thine enemy; but I say unto you, Love your enemies and pray for them that persecute you."

The same difference is involved in the very passage in which He repudiates any hostility to the Old Testament "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets. I am not come to destroy + to fulfil." This fulfilling is sometimes explained as referring to His accomplishment of the types and prophecies, or to His perfect obedience to the commands of the law. But while these things are all true in themselves, there seems to be no reference to them anywhere in the Sermon on the Mount. The reference is rather to the fact that He proposes to lift the standard up to a higher level all along the line, and present a higher ideal of character for the attainment of His followers than that which had previously prevailed. The fact that He thinks it necessary to repudiate any intention to destroy, shows that He must already have said much to create the impression of antagonism to Moses. That impression deepened to the very end of His ministry, so that it virtually formed the charge which the Sanhedrim sought to