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The Ten Commandments - the Sermon on the Mount, 1930.

"THE TEN COMMANDMENTS"

"THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT."

THE TEMPLE, SUNDAY MORNING,

APRIL 20, 1930, CLEVELAND, O.





It is not infrequent, my friends, that
the Jewish festival of Passover and the Christian festival
of Easter are concurrent, or, as is the case this year,
in close proximity one to another. But there is more than
a calendar concordance between these two holy days. In
the first place, both Passover and Easter are spring
festivals,—the spring festivals which antedate the
historic facts of exodus and resurrection, which later
on became identified with them. And then both holidays
have outstanding personalities associated with them.
Passover has the personality of Moses; Easter that of
Jesus.

Moses, and no Christianity without Jesus. There is so much of agreement and of contrast in the personalities of Moses and Jesus that one is intrigued and invited to dwell upon them, especially at this time, at the confluence of these two holidays. Both Moses and Jesus stand at the head waters of two great historic religions. Both men left the indelible imprint of their own lives and characters upon the two religions. Moses was not the founder of Judaism, but he was its law giver, and the Torah was known as the "true Torah of Moses." The religious genius of the Jew refused to make any man central in its religious thinking, and so belief in Moses

is not a dogma of Judaism. And yet the development of Judaism throughout the ages felt the continuing impact of the teachings of the life of Moses.

Jesus was the founder of Christianity, though indirectly, for he himself did not wish to found any new religion; and Jesus is the central dogma of Christianity, though he himself had no desire to become a religious dogma. And yet it is true that without Jesus Christianity is unthinkable. Both Moses and Jesus were great leaders of men, and here the first great contrast becomes evident. Moses, besides being a great religious leader, was also a great political leader. He was a revolutionist; he was an emancipator; he was a nation builder. He molded and fashioned that political entity which we call the Jewish people. Jesus was never a political leader. Jesus never guided the destinies of a people; Jesus was never concerned with the political fortunes of his people, which fortunes in his day were very low. He was exclusively a spiritual leader, a man who tried to guide his generation spiritually away from an overwhelming catastrophe which he believed was imminent, the destruction of the whole social order of his day at the hands of God, and the establishment of a new order of society also at the hands of God.

Both Moses and Jesus were great teachers of men, and here the second great contrast becomes evident.

Moses was a prophet. Jesus was a mystic. Moses proffered man a practical code of moral conduct for a continuing and an enduring society. Jesus proffered men an extreme code of intense moral idealism for a society which was coming to a sudden and cataclysmic end, a society that was awaiting the winnowing and sifting process of purgation and purification at the hands of God, a society that would soon come to an end before the new kingdom of perfection which God would establish upon earth.

reformer. He did not believe in the slow evolutionary improvement of the human race through its own race. He was overwhelmed by the convictions that the end of the world was approaching, a belief, by the way, which was commonly held in his day; that God would destroy the sinners and the evildoers, and only the good and the righteous would be saved. Consequently Jesus' great proclamation to the men of his day was - like the proclamation of John - "Repent ye, for the Kingdom of Heaven is near at hand." His preaching was for repentance, an intensive kind of inner spiritual cleansing at all costs, in order that men might be spared the fateful birththroes of the Messianic day which was fast approaching.

His ethics, then, was an ethics for society in extremis. But not so Moses. Moses was not an apocalyptic dreamer. Moses was a social prophet and a

legislator. Moses wished to give men directions by which they could build a finer and nobler society, which would make possible greater freedom and greater happiness for all men and all future times, directions which were expressed in terms of law and precept. Moses was not a savior of men who found themselves on the brink of an abyss. Moses was the architect of a nobler social order which would give to men greater spiritual satisfaction and freedom. That is why the teachings of Moses are expressed in most instances in terms of social legislation, while those of Jesus are expressed in most instances, if not in all, in terms of morals and homily. One was Halachah, the other was Haggadah; one was law, the other was homily and moral exaltation,—homiletics.

Do not misunderstand me. I do not mean to imply that one had a nobler conception of human life and human possibilities and human destiny than the other. All that I seek to indicate is that one was deliberately and calmly charting a course for society for all future times, an uninterrupted course for future mankind, while the other was desperately trying to save men from a universal showreck which he believed was impending. That is why Moses' name is, properly enough, identified with the Ten Commandments, while Jesus' name is, properly enough, identified with the Ten Commandments, while Jesus' name is, properly enough, identified with

Of course Moses taught much more than is

contained in the Ten Commandments, as Jesus taught more than is contained in the Sermon. But these two dogmas are characteristic of the method, the teaching and the attitudes and the points of view of these two teachers. The Ten Commandments, with one or two exceptions, represent law which society can't enforce, and for the violation of which society may punish. There are other laws in the Bible besides the Ten Commandments. There are those laws which our Rabbis called "The Duties Left to the Heart,"-- laws which society cannot enforce by promise or by punishment.

cannot enforce that law. The law of charity, the law of purity, the law of holiness, -- these are duties left to the heart and the conscience of man. The Bible, the prophets, the teachings of the later Rabbis are full of this type of moral teaching which cannot take on the character of moral law. But the Sermon on the Mount is almost exclusively composed of these "Duties left to the Heart." And even, as we shall see in a moment, these "Duties left to the Heart" of the Sermon are not at all foreign and not at all new to Jewish ethical thought.

A word, then, about the Ten Commandments.

I have spoken of them frequently in the past. I wish to

point out just one or two facts about them this morning.

They are only the foundations of Judaism, but because they

are the foundations they are the indispensable minimum

of Judaism; they are the sine qua non of all civilized life; and because of that the Ten Commandments have become the bedrock upon which almost every civilized society today is established.

declaration of faith from which all moral idealism is derived. "I am the Lord thy God." Jewish ethics always found its source and its sanction in God. God was the center not alone of the physical life of man but of his moral life as well.

The Second Commandment destroyed idolatry for all time and established the spiritual nature of God and of man's wormip of God. It is a declaration of monotheism. "Thou shalt have no other God beside me."

It is Israel's war upon idolatry. "Thou shalt not make unto thyself any graven images." And it is an expression of the unique conception of God held by Israel, namely, that God is spirit and therefore cannot be represented in objects.

The Third Commandment is a commandment for reverence. When one speaks of the supreme sanctities of life one should speak of them and think of them reverentially. "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain."

The Fourth Commandment is one of the greatest acts of social legislation known to mankind, -- the

enactment of a day of rest, a compulsory day of rest for all men who labor. That was the beginning of civilization, really. For the man who is compelled to labor at his total every day in the year will remain a beast of burden, and never rise to the estate of manhood. It is only as a man has leisure that he can enter the intellectual and the spiritual realms of human life. And note how advanced that act of legislation of the Fourth Commandment is. Not only was the Jew included in that enactment, not only was the stranger included in that enactment, but even the dumb beast of burden must have a day of rest. "Nor thou shalt do no manner of work, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor manservant, nor maidservant, nor the cattle, nor the stranger that is within thy gate."

The Fifth Commandment laid a foundation for the Jewish conception of family life, family life built upon mutual respect, honor and love, not upon mutual exploitation. "Honor thy father and thy mother."

The Sixth Commandment needs no explanation.

"Thou shalt not murder." No civilized community can endure that violates that commandment.

of the Jewish conceptions of "purity in the home." "Thou shalt not commit adultry." And no amount of modern psychoanalysis, and no amount of modern hankering after self-expression and freedom can get around this commandment.

It is root-essential to clean, decent, harmonious living to men and women. It stands like the rock of Gibraltar in the midstof all the shifting currents of moral theories which go on from age to age.

The Eighth Commandment, "Thou shalt not steal" needs no elaboration.

The Ninth Commandment lays the foundation for the whole Jewish system of civilized society, for no jurisprudence, no courts, no application of justice is possible without men trained into giving true witness and honest testimony. "Thou shalt bear no false witness against thy neighbor."

And the last is perhaps the only one that is not a commandment in the sense of being enforceable by society. "Thou shalt not covet." That enters the realm of "The duties left to the conscience of men" -- envy, jealousy, which are responsible for so much of misery and unhappiness in the world.

These are the Ten Commandments, -- the nucleus, not the whole, the kernel. Later biblical books, later prophets, later sages, later rabbis elaborated upon them, amplified them, applied them in greater detail. Later generations built the structure upon these foundations of a full social life. Through the ensuing centuries many a great teacher in Israel voiced moral principles, exalted principles not contained in these

commandments of Sinai. And the Judaism of the first century, the Jduaism of the time of Jesus, had a complete system of ethical aspirations, and Jesus knew that system. Jesus knew these moral doctrines and principles of Judaism, and he gathered them together and gave them a fresh and vigorous expression, and approached them with a new ardor and a new intensity, and gave them a new emphasis.

This is not detracting from the great quality of the teaching of Jesus when I say that. Nearly all of his teachings are already found elsewhere in Jewish ethical writings. The greatness of a moral teaching does not lie primarily in its teaching new or original ideas. In the realm of moral ideals, whether they are sound or unsound, there is really very little newness or originality. It is a courageous preaching of old ethical ideals, a new emphasis, an original re-application which makes the great religious teacher. Jesus' ideals moved in the stream of Jewish ethical aspiration. His soul and mind were nurtured on them. Unlike many in his generation, unlike many in our generation, Jesus took the ethical ideals of his race too hard; he believed in them profoundly and sincerely; he lived by them and he wanted the men of his generation to live by them.

But the men of his generation, even as the men of the generation of Moses, or of Isaiah, or of our

generation, were back-sliders. Even those who observed
the form of the ritual and the law failed to live by the
inner intent of that ritual and law; and Jesus sought
and stressed and emphasized to bring vividly to the mind
of men "the inner intent," the soul of the laws by which
they were living and the rituals which they were performing.

Let me indicate to you for a moment as I read the Sermon on the Mount, the sources in earlier Jewish writings from which Jesus' sentiments are drawn, or the parallels which we find in other Jewish writings, so that you may see how intrinsically Jewish his teachings were.

"Seeing the multitudes he went up into a mountain, and when he was set his disciples came unto him, and he opened his mouth and taught them." Mountains and market places, even as synagogues and academies were used in those days for the teaching of God's word. Now follow the beatitudes. "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdon of heaven." "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted." This is an echo of the opening verses of Isaiah, chapter 61. "The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord hath annointed me to bring good tidings unto the humble. He hath sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to comfort all the mourners."

Humility of spirit was frequently taught

by our teachers and rabbis. The disciples of Aaron, said one of the rabbis, are characterized by "a humble spirit," while the disciples of Baalam are characterized by a haughty spirit."

"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." This is a literal quotation from Psalms, 37. "The meek shall inherit the earth."

"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled."

This too is an echo of many a passage found in the Bible, particularly the one in Proverbs. "He who pursues after righteousness and kindness will find life."

"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy." "If thou hast mercy upon others, God will have mercy upon you."

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." "God is good unto Israel." "God is good unto all those who are pure in heart."

"Blessed are the peace makers, for they shall be called the children of God." No literature in the world so abounds with appeals for peace between men and between nations as the Bible. One of the Rabbis enumerates twenty virtues which are connected with the ideal of peace, and ends by saying that God himself is peace.

"Blessed are they which are persecuted, for righteousness sake, for theirs is the kingdom of

heaven." "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you, and shall do all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake." These sentiments are addressed particularly to his disciples. "God shall champion the cause of him who is persecuted." "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets. I amnot come to destroy but to fulfill, for verily, I say unto you till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled.

Least
Whosoever, therefore, shall break one of these/commandments and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven."

Here, of course, Jesus is exactly on the same platform with the rabbis of his day. This is a complete refutation of the claim which is frequently made that Jesus came to destroy the old law of Israel or to offer a new law. Nothing was further from his mind. All that Jesus wanted is to teach men the inner intent and purpose of the old law, so that they may live not by its externalities but by its inner spiritual intent.

Therefore he follows this statement by saying: "For I say unto you that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and the Pharisees (whom he regarded as being merely formalists

and legalists) ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." Then he proceeds to indicate just what he means by living according to the intent of the law rather than by the mere surfaced literalism of the law. "Ye have heard that it was said by 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 whosever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment. And whosoever shall sayto his brother Raca, shall be in danger of the council. And whoseever shall say Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire. Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar and there rememberst that thy brother hath ought against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar and go thy way. First be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift."

unknown to his people. Already in the Book of Leviticus we are told, "Thou shalt not hate thybrother in thy heart." And that reconciliation must precede atomement, that was well known to all the teachers and all the people who followed the teachings of the teacher in the time of Jesus. Even the Day of Atomement, said the Rabbis, does not atome for sin. A sin between man and man men must atome for by restitution, by contrition, by repentance, by asking for forgiveness. "The day of atomement

does not atone for such sins."

"Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time Thou shalt not commit adultery. But I say unto you that whoseever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee; for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off and cast it from thee; for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell." We find that sentiment oft repeated in our literature. One of the Rabbis said, "Thou shalt not say that only he who commits adultery with his body is an adulterer, but even he who commits adultery with his eyes through lust is called an adulterer."

away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement.

But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery, and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery." Nor is that new. At the time of Jesus all great schools of Jewish thought,—the school of Shami and the school of Hillel,—debated this question of divorce. The Bible declares in the Book of Deuteronomy, that if a man finds in a woman "an unseemly thing" he is warranted in divorcing her. The school of Shami

maintained that unseemly thing could only mean immorality, and there was only one warrant for divorce. The school of Hillel, and later of Akiba, maintained that covers many other reasons. Jesus placed himself on the side of the school of Shami. But there was no departure there from Jewish law or Jewish literature. It may be said in passing that Jewish law did not follow the teachings of Shami, nor does modern Christian society, by and large, live according to this teaching of Jesus on the subject of divorce.

"Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shall perform unto the Lord upon thy oaths. But I say to you thou shalt not swear at all, neither by Heaven, for it is God's throne; nor by earth, for it is his footstool; neither by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King; neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black, but lat your communication be yea, yea, or nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil."

In other words, Jesus took the position taken by many of the ascetics, by many of the spiritual men of his day: never to take an oath. In the Book of the Secrets of Enoch, one of the books of our Apocrypha, we find a similar expression: "I swear to you, my children, but I swear to you not by any oath; neither by heaven or

earth, or by any other creature which God created. The Lord saith There is no oath in me but truth and justice.

If there is any truth in men, let them swear by the words yea, yea, or else nay, nay.*

eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. But I say unto you that ye resist not evil, but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also; and if any man will sue thee at the law and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also; and whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away."

Now the law "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth"—lex talionis—was no longer practiced in the days of Jesus. It had long ago, centuries ago, been interpreted to mean monetary fine for physical injury, and Jesus knew as well as did the rabbis of his day, that the Jew was not supposed to live merely by the law; that there was something which was called " "—that a man ought to go beyond the law; not insist on the "pound of flesh" and the exaction of the law. But never and this is one of the great contrasts between the teachings of Jesus and of other rabbis; and perhaps here he is original, but this originality was not agreed in by the people of his day, nor by the people of our day,—

Judaism never taught "Resist not evil." Quite the contrary, Judaism taught strenuously to resist evil.

Judaism was never pacific; Judaism never believed in turning the other cheek to the smiter, because Judaism, perhaps a bit more informed of the psychology of human beings than this mystic was, knew that weakness is often an incitement to opp ression, and confirms the oppresser in his evil doing; and while you find here and there writings among the Rabbis, proverbs which are remniscent of this sentiment of Jesus, such as, "If thy neighbor calls thee a donkey, why just take a saddle and put it on your back." In other words, go him one better." Or this very sentence of the Sermon is found in the Talmud, "If a man says Go with me a mile, go with him twomiles."

But these are scattered and unrelated proverbs. Essentially Judaism repudiated this type of pacifism, which is understandable in the thinking of Jesus, and understandable in the thinking of any man, who believes that the world is soon coming to an end, that all evil and all wickedness would be destroyed not by the work of man but by the intervention of God. Why, therefore, take the trouble to correct evil or resist evil when all evil will soon be destroyed by God himself?

Thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you love your enemy; bless them that curse

you; do good to them that hate you, and pray for them whichdespitefully use you and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your father which is in Heaven. For he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? Do not even the Publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethern only, what do ye more than others?do not? even the Publicans the same? Be ye therefore perfect even as thy Father which is in Heaven is perfect. "Ye have heard it said "Love thy neighbor". That is found in the Bible. "And hate thine enemy." That is found nowheres in the Bible. That is found nowheres in Jewish literature. On the contrary, the Bible warns us over and over again, "When thy enemy falls thou shalt not rejoice." In the Book of Exodus we read, "If thou findeth the ox of thy enemy lost, thou must return it unto him. " "If you see the ass of thy enemy crushed under a burden, unable to bear that burden, thou must help even the animal of an enemy."

Nowhere are we told to hate the enemy;
but nowhere are we told to love our enemy, because that
is impossible. We can forgive our enemies; we should
forgive them. We ought to try to disillusion our enemies
from that hate which causes them to be our enemy, but
psychologically it is impossible, absolutely impossible

to love one's enemy. We ought to pray for them. And here the rabbis tell us a very interesting anecdote.

Rabbi Mayer lived in the midst of a group of people which made life miserable for him, and one day he praydfor their destruction, and the wise his wife, turned to Rabbi Mayer and said, "Husband, is it not written in the Bible 'Let the sins be destroyed'?" "It is not written, 'Let the sinners be destroyed.' Let us pray for these people that they may repent, rather than pray for their destruction."

I will take one or two more passages from
the Sermon. I wish I had the time to cover it all, because
it is magnificent teaching. "Take heed that ye do not
your alms before men to be seen; otherwise you have no
reward of your father which is in heaven." Jesus is
here trying to teach the men of his generation righteousness without ostentation, prayer without ostentation,
fasting without ostentation. The purpose of alms is to
help other people, not to advertise oneself by mention
of it. And here too he was in complete consonance with
the ethical idealism of his day held by the leaders of
his generation.

In the Temple of Jerusalem there was a chamber of silence. To this chamber the rich man, silently and stealthily, brought his offerings of alms; and to this self-same chamber, silently and unobserved, the poor

man would come and take whatever he needed. One of the Rabbis, commenting on the last sentence in the Book of Koheleth--"On every secret doing, whether good or evil, God will bring you to judgment"--says, "The secret good thing for which God will bring man to judgment is alms; for the man who gives alms publicly is a sinner in the sight of God. "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal."

In other words, build for yourself spiritual treasures upon earth. Try to acquire the wealth of the mind and the soul rather than the wealth of things in ccin. There is a beautiful paragraph in our Talmud which illustrates this thought. In the years of drouth King Modibas distributed to the poor all the food which had been stored and accumulated by his father in the granaries of his empire, and his brothers and friends remonstrated. They said, "Your father gathered and stored all his wealth, and you squandered it." And King Modibas replied, "My father laid up treasures upon earth. I have laid up treasures in heaven. My father laid up treasures which no thief can steal. My father laid up treasures which bear no interest; I have laid up treasures

which bear interest through all eternity." The same thought: the relative value of spiritual goods and material goods.

"Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your Heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?"

That too is an extreme ethical preachment, and it is well that men do not follow it. If we lived by this preachment there would be no thrift, there would be no savings, there would be no insurance, there would be no provision for tomorrow. For a world that is coming to an end thrift and saving are preposterous; for a society which is continuing uninterruptedly, thrift and savings and prevision and provision are of the essence of stable society. Our Rabbis did say, "Don't worry about tomorrow's sorrows; there are enough sorrows today." In that sense they said take no thought of tomorrow.

"Judge not that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge ye shall be judged." We find in the Pirke Aboth, "Judge other men on the side of merit." Every man. And this other phrase, "By that measure by which man measures other people, he himself shall be

measured."

And finally that magnificent sentence, "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets." This is the famous Golden Rule. Hillel gave voice to it, you will recall, in a negative form. A man came to Shami and asked to be converted, but before he became a proselyte he asked to be instructed the whole law of Judaism while standing on one foot. He was in a hurry. And Shami, who was an irascible sort of fellow, drove him out with a builder's rod which he held in his hand, -- chased him off. And he went to the gentle Hillel. and told him the same story. Hillel said, "Sure, I can teach you the whole law while you stand one one foot. The whole law is, "Love thy neighbor as thyself.' This is the whole law; the rest is commentary. Go and study while standing on both feet."

Some have tried to make a great ado about the fact that Jesus puts the Golden Rule in the affirmative, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so unto them"--and Hillel puts it in the negative. There is nothing to it. In the literature of in the Apocrypha, we find the Golden Rule both in the affirmative and in the negative.

I have taken the trouble thus in detail to point out the parallelisms in the teachings of Jesus and

in the teachings of Judaism, so that you might see how much akin his teachings were to our faith. He taught as a Jew, he lived as a Jew, and he died as a Jew. He was misunderstood. The people in the valley always misunderstand the man who is on the mountain heights. He had a dream of the millennium, of the Kingdom of God swiftly and suddenly coming to pass, an ecstatic vision of a reborn society. He was deluded. The millennium does not come about through sudden cateclyism, but through the slow travail of the ages.

He died upon the cross as a rebel and a conspirator against Rome. Later ages made a God of him, though his aim through life was only to worship God in humility and in love. Later ages made a religion of him, though his only religion was, as he himself stated was his law and his prophets, -- "Whatsoever ye wish that other men shall do unto you, do ye even so unto others."

He died a betrayed and lonely man upon Calvary. So must die all who seek the Kingdom. For did not Moses too die a lonely man on Mount Nebo, far from the Promised Land?

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The spirit of the find god is upon une. Isaiah 61. Because the Lord hath amounted we To bring good tidings unto the humble. He hath sent we to bind up the brother hacked ... To comfort all the mouners.

An Abstract of the Address
"THE TEN COMMANDMENTS" THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT" By

RABBI ABBA HILLEL SILVER THE TEMPLE, APRIL 20th, 1930

It is not infrequent that the Jewish holiday of Passover and the Christian holiday of Easter are concurrent, or as is the case this year, in close proximity. There is, however, more than a mere calendar concordance between these holidays. They are both spring festivals antidating the historical events of exodus and resurrection which at a much later time came to be identified with them.

Both Passover and Easter speak of great personalities - Moses and Jesus - who are inextricably associated with them. There would have been no Exodus without Moses and no Christianity without Jesus.

Both Moses and Jesus stand at the head-waters of two mighty streams of religious thought - Judaism and Christianity. Moses was not the founder of Judaism. But he was its law-giver. Moses is not a dogma of Judaism. But the whole development of Judaism felt the continuing impact of his personality and his teachings.

Jesus was the founder of Christianity, though indirectly, for he himself had no thought of founding a new religion and contrary to his wishes he himself became the central dogma of that religion. Christianity without the personality of Jesus is unthinkable.

Both Moses and Jesus were leaders of men - and here the first contrast appears.

Moses was a political leader as well as a religious leader. He was an emancipator and a nation builder. Jesus was never a political leader. He never guided the destinies of a nation. He was exclusively a spiritual guide pointing the way of salvation to a generation which he believed to be on the threshold of a universal upheaval and of a new order of existence. Both Moses and Jesus were teachers of men.— And here another contrast appears. Moses was a prophet. Jesus was a mystic.

Moses proffered men a practical code of moral conduct for a continuing society.

Jesus proffered an extreme code Aintense moral idealism for a society which faced swift and sudden catastrophe and transformation. Jesus was neither a prophet nor a

reformer. He did not believe in the slow evolutionary improvement of the human race by its own efforts. He was over-whelmed by the conviction that the end of the world was approaching. His proclamation, like that of John, was: "Prepare ye for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." His code of ethics was for a world in extremis."

Moteo Moses. Moses was no apocalyptic dreamer. He was a social prophet and a legislator. He was not a savior of men who find themselves on the brink of an abyss. He was the deliberate architect of a nobler social order which would make possible greater freedom and happiness for men in all future times. That is why Moses' teaching was largely social legislation and Jesus'-moral homily. That is why Moses' name, properly enough is associated with Commandments and Jesus' with a Sermon.

The Ten Commandments in the main represent laws which society can enforce and whose violation society can punish. There are many other moral duties found elsewhere in the Bible which are of the kind that are left to the heart. Laws concerning love of our neighbor, charity and purity. These could not be expressed in legislation. "The Sermon on the Mount" is composed almost entirely of these duties which are left to the heart. They were, with the exception of one or two extreme doctrines which Judaism could not accept, neither foreign to nor new in Judaism at the time of Jesus. Jesus gathered them together, gave them fresh and vigorous form and preached them with a new ardor and fervor. The great moral teacher is not necessarily one who discovers new truth. New ideals in morals whether Men sound or unsound are extremely rare. A courageous and powerful restatement of moral ideals at a time when such a new emphasis is needed marks the great teacher. Many people in Jesus' day as in Moses' or Isaiah's or our own day were back-sliders. Even those who observed the forms of law and ritual did not live of to their true intent and spirit.

Like all the great teachers of Israel Jesus tried to teach men the inner intent and purposes, the soul discipline of ritual and law. This is the dominant theme of "The Sermon on the Mount."

Jesus sought to save men. He was misunderstood. He suffered as all mankind's spiritual leaders suffered. He had an ecstatic vision of the millenium which did not come to pass. Perfection is born only out of the slow travail of the ages. He died a betrayed and lonely man on Calvary.

So die all who seek the Kingdom. Did not Moses die a lonely men on Mt. Nebo. far from the Promised Land?

