

not hate thy brother in thine heart", (Lev. 19:17), "The stranger that dwelleth with you... thou shalt love him as thyself", (Lev. 19:34). The Old Testament commands proper heart attitudes and Jesus is directly in line with it against Pharisaic externalism.

The next two phrases of Matthew 5:22 may be variously interpreted. It is usually said that the argument proceeds by way of climax, the lesser sin of saying "Raca" and the least sin of saying "thou fool" is punishable by the Sanhedrin or even the Gehenna of fire. But it is not clear why saying "Thou fool" is a lesser sin than saying "Raca" or why Jesus should threaten anyone with punishment by the Sanhedrin.

Rather it seems to the writer that we have here a new alternation between the quotation of a common error and Jesus' answer. "You say that to say "Raca" will make one liable to the Sanhedrin; I say that to say "Mō-ro", "thou fool", makes one liable to hell." What is the difference between "Raca" and "Mō-ro"? It seems that "Raca" is Aramaic for "empty head", and that "Mō-ro" "thou fool" is a rather close Greek equivalent. The point of Jesus' words may well be that the Jews for some time had regarded "Raca," the Aramaic expression, with disfavor and had prescribed, as usual, penalties for the external curse word rather than recognizing the sinfulness of the attitude. The Greek equivalent, though just as bad in revealing an angry heart had perhaps not yet attained a place on the Pharisaic index! They only forbade vile language when it was in Aramaic! Jesus, of course, has no use for such sophistry and says the slightest sin is sin in any language, and makes one liable not to a human court, but to the judgment of God! A parallel instance of such alternation of quotation without the repetition of "you say...but I say" is found in Matthew 23:16-19.

Divorce

We come finally to Christ's teaching on divorce, Matthew 5:31-32. Does He here contradict the Old Testament and give a higher New Testament revelation? It seems not. Rather He is here contradicting a mis-translation of Dt. 24:1-4. The King James translation of this passage implies that divorce for unspecified offenses received divine sanction. "Let him write her a bill of divorce." This seems also to have been the interpretation of the Pharisees of Jesus' day, for as is well known they divided on the question as to what were legitimate grounds for divorce. One group - the followers of Shammai - said adultery was the only proper grounds; the other group - Hillel's disciples - said almost anything was sufficient.

Now examining the passage in the Hebrew we see that actually the verse probably should not be taken as giving a divine approval of divorce. The clauses of the first part, the protasis, are so closely joined together by conjunctions, that there seems to be no good place for the conclusion, the apodosis, until verse 4 where the negative "lo" gives the conclusion to the "Ki" of verse 1 meaning "when" or "if". Also note that the protasis includes different possible situations to all of which the apodosis of verse 4 applies. It says if a man marries, and something happens between them, and he divorces his wife, and she marries another and the second husband divorces her or dies; then she