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## JESUS AND THE AUTHORITY OF THE MOSAIC LAW

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The question of the relevance of the Mosaic law for Christian ethics, a perennial theological issue, has assumed new importance with the popularity of relativistic ethics, the 'new morality'. Proponents of this approach generally reject any appeal to moral 'rules', including especially those found in the OT.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, sometimes in response to this approach, others stress the eternal and absolute validity of at least the OT 'moral' law.<sup>2</sup> The debate has focused attention on the teaching and example of Jesus, to which both sides appeal for support. And an initial glance at Jesus' teaching would seem to provide support for both alternatives.<sup>3</sup> This article surveys some relevant aspects of Jesus' life and teaching in the hope of discovering his fundamental approach to the issue of the authority of the Mosaic law for his followers.

The breadth and complexity of the topic may make this project appear to be overly ambitious. While acknowledging the problem, the study is, I think, manageable, granted the following limitations. First, the discussion will be confined to the synoptic gospels. This should not be taken to imply an *a priori* rejection of the historical value of material within the fourth gospel, but is simply to recognize that study of the synoptic and Johannine traditions demands different methodologies. Second, while some necessary reference to the history of the traditions studied will be made, the focus of the study will be on the final, canonical shape of the Jesus tradition. The validity and importance of such a focus is being increasingly recognized.<sup>4</sup> It is only by careful exegetical examination of the extant material in its context that the degree of coherence within the tradition, so important in making *traditionsgeschichtlich* decisions, can be assessed. The discovery of many inconsistencies and contradictions lends credence

to the search for distinct traditions responsible for the various perspectives; a high degree of coherence, on the other hand, suggests either that the final redactors have molded the material into a harmonious outlook, or that we are confronted with a reflection of Jesus' own stance which has stamped its influence on all the various traditions. Certainty on this matter is impossible; but should a unanimity of viewpoint among the final redactors (the evangelists) be found, preference should be accorded to the second alternative. This indicates the need to take into consideration the perspective each evangelist brings to bear on the material. Again, however, the study is not primarily devoted to a delineation of the evangelists' theologies. A final limitation relates to the focus of the discussion. 'Jesus and the law' is a many-faceted topic involving, potentially, Jesus' attitude toward the oral law and the various forms of Jewish piety. Our investigation will be confined to the single question: to what extent and in what manner did Jesus conceive the Mosaic law to be binding on people who had entered the Kingdom of God?

Before proceeding to an analysis of the relevant passages, it will be helpful to outline briefly some representative positions on the question of Jesus' relationship to the law. While a bewildering variety of views, with varying differences in detail, has been espoused, the following list adequately summarizes the main tendencies:<sup>5</sup>

1. Jesus summarily abrogated the law. While requiring mention, this view is almost universally rejected by serious scholars.<sup>6</sup>
2. Jesus' teaching is a new law, the Messianic law, which replaces the Mosaic law.<sup>7</sup>
3. Jesus is the last and greatest expositor of the law of God. He entirely upholds the moral law, showing complete obedience to its demands in his own life, and demonstrating in his teaching the original intent of the law's demands.<sup>8</sup>
4. Jesus 'radicalized' the law, intensifying the demands of the law beyond what they originally included. This 'Toraverscharfung', carried out on the basis of Jesus' immediate awareness of the will of God<sup>9</sup> and/or the paramount demand of love,<sup>10</sup> results in the abrogation of some commands.<sup>11</sup>
5. Jesus intensified the requirements of the law and brought new demands of his own, without however clearly abrogating any moral commands.<sup>12</sup>
6. Jesus' teaching *fulfills* the law, in the sense that the law pointed forward to his teaching. His demands move in a different sphere, above and apart from the law, whose continuing validity exists only in and through him.<sup>13</sup>

This general survey enables us to isolate several key questions which are crucial for our purposes. First, what does Jesus' own behavior imply about his view of the law? Second, did Jesus establish a critical principle(s) by which the validity and meaning of the Mosaic commands could be evaluated? Third, what was the place of the Old Testament in Jesus' ethical teaching? Fourth, did Jesus, in fact, implicitly or explicitly teach the abrogation of any commandment? Fifth, what did Jesus claim would be the effect on the law of his coming? These questions furnish the outline for the study.

#### *Jesus' Personal Observance of the Law*

Robert Banks, in the most important modern treatment of Jesus and the law, correctly stresses the need to distinguish among the written law, the oral law and customs in assessing Jesus' relationship to the Judaism of his day.<sup>14</sup> With respect to the written law, it cannot be demonstrated that Jesus personally violated any of its commands.<sup>15</sup> He is seen in attendance at the great festivals in Jerusalem, pays the half-shekel temple tax (Mt. 17.24-27), wears the prescribed tassel on his robe (Mt. 9.20; cf. Num. 15.38-41) and, whatever may be said about his teaching on the subject of commands relating to the Sabbath and ritual purity, he does not transgress them.<sup>16</sup>

While it has been argued that Jesus displays an equal fidelity to the oral law,<sup>17</sup> it seems on the contrary, that a clearer distinction can be made. His association with various 'impure' elements of society and his non-emergency Sabbath healings are rather clear infringements of the accepted *halaka*.<sup>18</sup> However, the verdict that there is no evidence Jesus kept *any* of the oral law cannot be sustained;<sup>19</sup> his regular attendance at synagogue services and his habits at meals and in prayer suggest behavior in conformity with, if not in obedience to, the oral law.<sup>20</sup> With respect to both the oral law and the customs of his day, Jesus' behavior seems to have been dictated more by the needs of the ministry than by a sense of subservience.<sup>21</sup>

That the synoptic tradition portrays a Jesus fundamentally subservient in his behavior to the written law is clear, but it is impossible to infer from this that Jesus wished his followers to observe it equally faithfully.<sup>22</sup> Apart from an obvious problem inherent in this argument (there is no evidence that Jesus was less faithful to the stipulations of the 'ceremonial' law than to the 'moral'), it suffers from a basic

failure to recognize the place of Jesus' ministry in the history of revelation. While Jesus' coming undoubtedly inaugurated a decisively new era in the *Heilsgeschichte*, the period of time before the culminative redemptive events of the Cross and Resurrection remains one of transition in which elements of the previous dispensation persist. Jesus' adherence to the written law *could* simply reflect an aspect of the old age which was destined to pass away in the new age.<sup>23</sup> Thus, the evidence from Jesus' personal observance of the law is, *taken by itself*, of almost no value for our purposes and, again, the need to determine Jesus' view of the role of the law in the new age is indicated.

#### *Critical Principles for the Evaluation of Commands*

It is frequently asserted that Jesus established love for others, or humanitarian considerations, as a principle on the basis of which the meaning and applicability of OT commands could be evaluated. The passage which most clearly suggests such an interpretation is the 'Great Commandment' pericope (Mt. 22.34-40; Mk 12.28-34; cf. Lk. 10.25-28<sup>24</sup>). In response to the question of an inquirer, 'Which is the greatest commandment in the law?',<sup>25</sup> Jesus cites two texts from the Pentateuch, which respectively command love for God (Dt. 6.5) and love for one's neighbor (Lev. 19.18).<sup>26</sup> The conjunction of the commands clearly suggests that, for Jesus, love for God and for others are inseparable and *together* constitute the 'greatest' commandment (note particularly Matthew's 'the second is like it').<sup>27</sup>

What is involved in establishing the double love commandment as the 'greatest' is explicated more fully in Jesus' concluding assertion (according to Mt.): 'on these two commandments depend [κρέματα] all the law and the prophets'. The phrase 'law and prophets' is found only rarely in Jewish literature as a denotation of the OT Scriptures but is used with this meaning in the NT.<sup>28</sup> However, Matthew's use of the term here and in 5.17 and 7.12, clearly gives a particular nuance to the phrase, so that the 'commanding' or ethical aspect of the Scriptures is highlighted.<sup>29</sup> Crucial for the understanding of the relationship between the 'law and the prophets' and the love commandment is the meaning of the word κρεμάννυμι. The term is often compared with the Heb. תלוּי, which is used by the rabbis in formulations similar to that in the gospels.<sup>30</sup> But the purpose of the rabbis is to isolate a command or principle from which the rest of the

law could be derived,<sup>31</sup> and this essentially scholastic exercise is foreign to the context in the gospels.<sup>32</sup> A second alternative is to view the love command as constituting *the* fundamental hermeneutical principle, which can serve to discriminate among the different Old Testament laws.<sup>33</sup> Thirdly, the role of the love commandment as denoted by κρεμόννυμι has been compared to the hinges of a door or the nail from which objects are suspended.<sup>34</sup> According to this analogy, the love commandment is set apart from all others as the most basic demand of the law, but does not displace any other commandments.<sup>35</sup> On the basis of evidence from within the pericope, it is almost impossible to determine which of these last two alternatives should be accepted. Hence, it is necessary to postpone a decision until other relevant passages have been considered.

It is appropriate to begin with the dialogue between Jesus and the scribe immediately following Jesus' enunciation of the love commandment. This interchange, recounted only by Mark, may provide an important indication as to how he, at least, viewed the great commandment. In keeping with a prevalent Marcan motif, the scribe, after expressing agreement with Jesus' formulation, goes on to assert the superiority of love over sacrifices. To this Jesus responds by declaring that the scribe is 'not far from the Kingdom of God'. Inasmuch as the sentiment here expressed has exact parallels in the prophets (e.g., Hos. 6.6) and in the rabbinic literature,<sup>36</sup> it is hardly legitimate to find a rejection of the sacrificial system in deference to love (and could the one 'replace' the other?).<sup>37</sup> In itself, this pericope indicates no more than that love for God and others is a demand of God more fundamental than the offering of sacrifices.

Mark's Gospel is alone in containing a pronouncement of Jesus which is related to the present issue: 'the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath' (Mk 2.27). Despite the complex traditions-history, and frequent assertions to the contrary, there is insufficient justification for denying the authenticity of this verse.<sup>38</sup> The statement is remarkably similar to the dictum attributed to R. Simeon b. Menasya (c. AD 180): 'The Sabbath is delivered over for your sake, but you are not delivered over to the Sabbath'.<sup>39</sup> But Simeon is seeking only to justify technical breaches of the Sabbath *halaka* which are necessary to prevent death;<sup>40</sup> clearly, Jesus' application of the saying covers more than this. But how much more? To answer this, it will be necessary to study the Scriptural example adduced by Jesus immediately before this saying.

All three synoptists record Jesus' appeal to 1 Samuel 21.1-6, where it is told how David and his followers ate the bread of the presence, 'which is not lawful for any but the priests to eat' (Mk 2.25-26; Mt. 12.3-4; Lk. 6.3-4). Jesus' intention in adducing this example is not clear. Often it is alleged that Jesus is seeking to excuse his disciples' behavior by asserting the priority of human needs over requirements of the ceremonial law.<sup>41</sup> But there is no indication whatever in Mark and Luke, and little in Matthew ('they were hungry'), that the disciples were in any need.<sup>42</sup> The contrast with the rabbinic approach to the passage is instructive: they sought to justify David's action by suggesting that he was in danger of starving to death.<sup>43</sup> Other scholars assert that Jesus is simply correcting the current interpretation of the Sabbath law by pointing out that the Scripture itself allows greater leniency than do the Pharisees.<sup>44</sup> This approach has the merit of noting that the action of the disciples is a breach of the oral law only, but is unable to do justice to the fact that Jesus explicitly characterizes David's action as illegal.<sup>45</sup> A more satisfactory view can be attained when the emphases in the text itself are noted: 1. all three narratives strongly highlight, with awkward insertions, the relation of David and his followers;<sup>46</sup> 2. all three narratives conclude with a claim of Christological authority over the Sabbath; and 3. Matthew adds immediately after the reference to 1 Samuel 21 an explicitly typological appeal to the OT. Taken together, these factors suggest that the point of the allusion is to set up a typological relationship between David and Jesus: if David, along with his followers, has the right to break the law, David's 'greater Son' and his followers have an even greater right.<sup>47</sup> The comparison is even more appropriate, if, as seems probable, David's action occurred on the Sabbath, although this is not brought out by Jesus.<sup>48</sup> To be sure, the typological relationship is not clearly enunciated here,<sup>49</sup> but this interpretation suffers from fewer difficulties than the others.

The interpretation of vv. 25-26 in a typical-Christological rather than in an ethical-hermeneutical sense renders the connection between these verses and Mark 2.27 difficult to explain, unless 'man' is to be understood as a mistranslation of an Aramaic *bar nasha*, 'Son of Man'.<sup>50</sup> This suggestion, however, is most improbable.<sup>51</sup> It seems best not to establish any close connection between vv. 25-26 and v. 27, a conclusion which Mark's introductory formula, *καὶ ἔλεγεν αὐτοῖς*, suggests in any case.<sup>52</sup> If, on the other hand, v. 27 should not be joined with v. 28 (as will be argued below), Jesus' saying must be

seen as an isolated logion. That the saying asserts the priority of human need over obedience to the Sabbath law is widely held,<sup>53</sup> but the scope of the intended application must be carefully delineated. If the rabbis could enunciate this principle without overturning the Sabbath law, there is no *a priori* reason to think Jesus must have overturned it. On the contrary, it would appear proper to confine the applicability of the dictum to the immediate point at issue, which is the validity of the scribal tradition. We conclude therefore that Jesus, in asserting that 'the Sabbath was made for man', is criticizing the tendency of the oral law to define appropriate Sabbath observance apart from the (partially) humanitarian thrust of the original legislation. He is not establishing the primacy of 'human needs' over the Sabbath law.

A statement very similar to Mark 2.27 is made by Jesus in response to the hostility with which his intention to heal a man on the Sabbath is met: 'Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save life or to destroy it?' (Mk 3.4; Lk. 6.9; Matthew gives a simple statement—12.12). Interpretations of this assertion have fallen into three types. According to the first, 'doing good' and 'doing evil', further defined in Mark and Luke by the alternative 'saving life' or 'destroying life', refer to the attitudes of the protagonists in the conflict: while Jesus is intent on healing, his antagonists are plotting Jesus' death.<sup>54</sup> However, this approach appears to be over-subtle, and it is impossible to explain Matthew's narrative on this basis.<sup>55</sup> Secondly, it is asserted that 'doing good' is set forth as one of God's fundamental demands, in the pursuit of which occasional breaches, or the outright overthrow of the Sabbath can be tolerated.<sup>56</sup> But it is probable that the third view, according to which Jesus is interpreted as seeking to define what the Sabbath law itself allows, is to be accepted.<sup>57</sup> Favoring this approach are the explicit assertions in the saying itself that Jesus is speaking in terms of 'what is lawful';<sup>58</sup> the conjunction in Matthew and in Luke 14.1-6 (where a similar statement occurs) of the principle with the reference to what the scribal law allows when an animal is in need on the Sabbath; and the fact that, again, the Sabbath law in question is from the *oral*, not the written law. While, then, it is undeniable that love for the neighbor (= 'doing good') is here set forth as a consideration which must be taken into account when determining what is 'lawful' on the Sabbath, there is no warrant for regarding the principle as one that can effect the abrogation of commandments.<sup>59</sup>

In turning now to evidence for the application of the love command and similar ideas found only in Matthew's Gospel, an important phase of the investigation is reached, for it is particularly Matthew who is said to have given fundamental importance to this principle. Twice in Matthew, Jesus quotes Hosea 6.6, 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice', in order to justify the behavior of himself or his disciples: in 9.13, in response to Jewish criticism at his association with 'sinners' and in 12.7; with reference to the transgression of the Sabbath *halaka*. Some commentators have understood in the contrast between 'mercy' and 'sacrifices' a reference to the moral and ceremonial laws respectively.<sup>60</sup> But this is not really the issue in either context. The generally accepted interpretation of the function of this quotation understands 'mercy' as the quality of human compassion which is more important than a rigid adherence to the law or to traditions.<sup>61</sup> Yet while this explanation suffices in 9.13, it can be applied to the situation in Matthew 12 only with great difficulty, for it is improbable that Jesus castigates the Jews for failing to have compassion on the hungry disciples.<sup>62</sup> Some have felt this difficulty and have interpreted the quotation as a statement about the mission of Jesus which is exhibiting the 'mercy' of God.<sup>63</sup> But this approach cannot adequately explain the contrasting element, 'sacrifice'. A more fruitful approach is to note that the prophet Hosea probably intended to present a contrast not between compassion on others and sacrifice, but between heart-felt loyalty to God (חסד) and the offering of sacrifices which was bereft of that inner faith.<sup>64</sup> There is no reason to think that Jesus did not interpret the verse in this way, since it makes excellent sense in both Matthean contexts: the Jews' failure to discern in Jesus the gracious will of God to 'call sinners' and to recognize him as 'one greater than the Temple' stems from a pettifogging preoccupation with the development and the application of God's law severed from a heart-felt loyalty to the living God.<sup>65</sup>

The saying which is most similar to the love commandment in Matthew's Gospel is the so-called 'Golden Rule' (Mt. 7.12). Often considered a decisive summary of Jesus' demands in the Sermon on the Mount,<sup>66</sup> the saying, like the Great Commandment, gives a decisive word about the OT: it 'is the law and the prophets'. But as with the love commandment, it is difficult to determine the nature of the relationship so established with the OT. Besides which, it is questionable whether the saying can be interpreted as a summary of



Jesus' teaching in the Sermon, for there is much in it which can in no way be subsumed under that principle.<sup>67</sup>

Our survey of passages which appear to bear some relationship with the kind of axiom enunciated in the great commandment concludes with a saying common to Matthew and Luke. As part of Jesus' denunciation of the scribes and Pharisees, both Matthew and Luke record the criticism that while scrupulously tithing the smallest vegetables, they are neglecting more basic principles (Mt. 23.23; Lk. 11.42). Typically, Matthew relates the denunciation more closely to the law by characterizing these principles as 'the weightier matters of the law' and describing them with language reminiscent of Micah 6.8.<sup>68</sup> Obviously, a hierarchy is established here, priority in the law's demands being accorded to the cardinal virtues of justice, covenant-loyalty and faithfulness (Mt.; Lk.: justice and love of God). But it is made explicit that Jesus does not demand adherence to the 'weightier matters' as a *replacement* of attention to the *minutiae*: 'these you ought to have done, *without neglecting the others*'.<sup>69</sup> Here, as elsewhere, Jesus' criticism of the scribes and Pharisees is not that their attention to the details of the law is in itself wrong, but that, as a result of such attention, more fundamental demands of God are often neglected. And far from representing a radical new principle for the evaluation of the law, such an emphasis is entirely in keeping with large segments of the prophetic tradition.<sup>70</sup>

It is now possible to return to the love commandment. The preceding survey was undertaken in order to garner evidence which might allow a decision as to whether the double commandment of love represented a principle by which the validity and applicability of other commandments could be assessed or whether it established a basic demand of God which, while given precedence over others, could not displace them. It should be clear that the evidence points decisively to the latter interpretation as being correct. In no instance was love or humanitarian concerns shown to effect the abrogation of a commandment; with respect to the Sabbath, concern for the fellow man was recognized as an important factor in the original promulgation of the commandment itself. For Jesus, it is not a question of the 'priority of love over law'<sup>71</sup> but of the priority of love *within* the law. Love is the greatest commandment, but it is not the *only* one; and the validity and applicability of other commandments can not be decided by appeal to its paramount demand.

*The Place of the Old Testament in Jesus' Ethical Demands*

Of perhaps the most direct relevance for the topic under consideration is the way in which Jesus employed the OT in his own ethical teaching. The nature of his application of the OT, while not necessarily normative, is nevertheless of great significance. However, the investigator who hopes to draw determinative conclusions from a study of this material is doomed to disappointment, for perhaps the most significant aspect of this topic is the paucity of references to the OT. Before discussing the significance of this fact it is necessary to examine the relevant texts.

A number of examples have already been introduced in the previous section. The fundamental demand of love is expressed by means of two OT commands, although the significance of this is mitigated by the fact that the question which led to these quotations was framed in terms of the OT.<sup>72</sup> We have also seen that Jesus appealed on three occasions to the prophetic tradition in order to highlight the need for inner obedience in addition to outward conformity to the law's demands (Hos. 6.6 in Mt. 9.13 and 12.7; Mic. 6.8 in Mt. 23.23). However, in view of the polemical contexts, it cannot be certainly concluded that Jesus is doing anything more than pointing out that his Jewish detractors' behavior is inconsistent with their own principles.

In the discussion about divorce common to Mark and Matthew (Mk 10.2-12; Mt. 19.3-12), Jesus appeals to Genesis 1.27 and 2.24 in order to correct the commonly accepted interpretation of Deuteronomy 24.1-4. This procedure is sometimes compared with the rabbinic practice of seeking to construe harmoniously two apparently conflicting statements in the law.<sup>73</sup> Yet this view does not take sufficient cognizance of the emphases in the text. While little should be made of the fact that the Deuteronomy quotation is attributed to *Moses* and the Genesis statement to *God*,<sup>74</sup> it is important to note that Jesus characterizes the legislation in Deuteronomy as having been given because of 'hardness of heart'.<sup>75</sup> Rather than harmonizing the passages, Jesus rather clearly suggests that the need for the Mosaic legislation arose from a new factor—human sinfulness. Further, it has been claimed that Jesus utilizes the Genesis account not as OT revelation *per se*, but as an indication of God's original purposes.<sup>76</sup> However, this is a distinction which is illegitimate and it is necessary to see in this incident an appeal to the will of God revealed in the OT as indicative of what is forever appropriate in the marriage relationship.

An undoubted example of an appeal to a Mosaic commandment in ethical debate is encountered in the narrative of the conflict over ritual defilement (Mk 7.1-23; Mt. 15.1-20). Jesus, in responding to the criticism that his disciples 'eat with unwashed hands', broadens the issue by launching an attack on the 'tradition of the elders'. The implications of this attack for Jesus' view of both the oral and written law will be considered in due course, but our interest here is in the fact that the tradition is criticized primarily because it has the effect of 'making void the word of God'.<sup>77</sup> The portion of God's word at issue, the fifth commandment, is clearly held up as a norm applicable to the Jews, who are criticized for their failure to take it into consideration in the development of their tradition. Once again, all that can be definitely proved from this is that Jesus expected the Jews of his day to observe the commandments under which they lived.

Another incident in which the commandments of the decalogue play a role is the encounter between Jesus and a rich enquirer, who asks about the means of attaining eternal life (Mt. 19.16-22; Mk 10.17-22; Lk. 18.18-23). Jesus responds by quoting five of the ten commandments (Mark adds 'do not defraud', Matthew, 'you shall love your neighbor as yourself'). When the young man asserts that he has observed these, Jesus goes on to demand that he also sell all that he has and follow him. Although it is argued that these further demands are simply attempts to bring out the real meaning of the commandments in the case of this particular individual,<sup>78</sup> this interpretation must be rejected: while the command to 'sell all' might conceivably be construed as implied in the commandments, it is impossible to interpret the demand of discipleship ('follow me') in the same way. Clearly this climactic demand is something that goes well beyond any requirement of the OT.<sup>79</sup> Moreover, it may be that Jesus' citation of the commandments was simply a 'set-up', intended to expose the man's shallowness in terms of his own religious framework and to pave the way for the enunciation of the really applicable demands.<sup>80</sup> This understanding of the citation is possible, but it is not certain that it should be accepted: it is perhaps better to view the decalogue commands as genuine, though incomplete, demands of discipleship.<sup>81</sup>

These references exhaust the evidence for Jesus' direct use of the OT in his ethical teaching (the 'antitheses' of Mt. 5 will be considered below).<sup>82</sup> It is clear that they provide little support for the view that Jesus simply took over and applied the moral demands of the OT for

the new age. Not only are Jesus' demands made, for the most part, independently of the OT, but those occasions on which the law is cited are exclusively polemical in character. However, it is illegitimate to conclude from this that Jesus saw no place for the OT in the ethics of the Kingdom, for it could be argued that Jesus simply *assumes* the relevance and acceptance of the OT demands in the Jewish context of his ministry. The independent authority on the basis of which Jesus formulated his ethical demands is obvious, however, and the next stage of our inquiry will illuminate that further.

*Abrogation of Old Testament Commands?*

In attempting to assess the applicability of OT commandments to Christian believers, it is important to determine whether Jesus abrogated any commandments. By 'abrogation' is meant the declaring invalid of the natural meaning of a commandment for the Christian dispensation. Put in this way, virtually all Christians at all times have accepted the abrogation of *some* OT commandments—those relating to the sacrificial system, for example. A more crucial question is whether the abrogation of commandments with a distinctly ethical thrust occurs.

Two matters in the dispute over ritual defilement require comment. We have seen that Jesus came to the defense of his disciples' transgression of the *halaka* concerning the washing of hands by criticizing the oral law as a whole for its effectual negation of Scriptural commands. As an example of this, Jesus cites the prevalent scribal interpretation according to which something declared *Corban*, dedicated to God, could not be used by anyone but its possessor. By insisting on the inviolability of the vow, the scribes were creating a situation in which parents could be legally denied the use of their children's possessions, a state of affairs which Jesus viewed as a transgression of the fifth commandment.<sup>83</sup> Some scholars have argued that the real issue in this passage is the conflict between two *written* laws, the fifth commandment and the demand to fulfill a vow.<sup>84</sup> But in both accounts the emphasis is repeatedly placed on the 'tradition of the elders'. It seems clear that Jesus perceives the real problem to lie with the *Corban* procedure, which opened the door for such a conflict.<sup>85</sup>

The *Corban* example is not directly relevant to the original point of dispute, but this issue is taken up at the end of the narrative, when

Jesus solemnly announces to the crowd: 'there is nothing outside a man which by going into him can defile him; but the things which come out of a man are what defile him' (Mk 7.15; Mt. 15.11 is briefer, but makes the same point). Immediately afterward, Jesus reiterates the point privately to his disciples, in the course of which Mark parenthetically notes 'thus he declared all foods clean' (7.19b). This remark interprets Jesus as having effectively annulled the Levitical food laws, and this interpretation appears to be a legitimate conclusion from the principle enunciated in v. 15: 'Was er aber hier sagt muss die alten Reinheitsgesetze sprengen'.<sup>86</sup> The authenticity of the saying is sometimes questioned because of the difficulty in explaining the controversies over food laws in the early church if Jesus had declared his mind on the matter.<sup>87</sup> But Jesus' almost parabolic pronouncement is not so clear as to settle all questions on this issue; Mark's interpretation is undoubtedly an insight gained only after long, and perhaps continuing, debate.<sup>88</sup>

The different elements in the pericope we have just been considering raise an important question: how can Jesus first appeal to the written law to castigate the scribal tradition (Mk 7.7-13), and then, if only implicitly, overturn part of that written law (v. 15)?<sup>89</sup> Many would respond by advocating the need to observe a distinction between the moral and the ceremonial law.<sup>90</sup> It is claimed that such a distinction was unknown in Judaism and that it is thereby illegitimate to introduce this principle into Jesus' teaching on the law.<sup>91</sup> While it is true that a theoretical distinction of this sort was not made, there emerges, for instance in Philo and at Qumran, a *practical* differentiation of this nature. Jesus' appropriation of the prophetic emphasis on the need for *inner* obedience, his comment about 'the weightier matters', the elevation of the love command and his transformation of the Passover meal all suggest that he may have operated with a similar distinction.<sup>92</sup> Thus, while the evidence does not allow us to assume that Jesus and his hearers presupposed a clear and conscious demarcation between the moral and ceremonial law, it is not illegitimate to find the seeds of this kind of a distinction in passages such as Mark 7.1-23. Ultimately, the basis for the acceptance or abrogation of laws lies elsewhere. As Cranfield, commenting on Mark 7, says, 'the key is rather that Jesus spoke as the one who is, and knew himself to be τέλος νόμου (Rom. x.4)'.<sup>93</sup>

The synoptic evangelists recount four conflicts between Jesus and various Jewish authorities over the observance of the Sabbath. Jesus'

attitude toward the Sabbath and his justification of his own and his disciples' conduct is frequently cited as constituting an abrogation of the Sabbath command.<sup>94</sup> Basic to the decalogue Sabbath commandment is the prohibition of work. What precisely is meant by 'work' is not clearly defined in the OT, although there are indications that all types of normal activity were included.<sup>95</sup> As the Sabbath became increasingly important in post-exilic Judaism, the need was felt to define more clearly the kinds of activity prohibited, and this led to the development of the oral Sabbath law.<sup>96</sup> It appears that it was only this scribal tradition, not the written law, which Jesus and the disciples violated.<sup>97</sup> The case for finding an abrogation of the written Sabbath law rests on the justifications given by Jesus for this activity. These justifications can be grouped into two types according to whether humanitarian or Christological concerns predominate.

The humanitarian arguments have already been dealt with in a previous section. The principles that 'the Sabbath was made for man' and that 'it is lawful to do good (or heal) on the Sabbath' were seen to function as indicators of the kind of activity which the OT law was intended to allow.<sup>98</sup> In neither case does Jesus suggest that the Sabbath law is to be wholly rejected or even that occasional breaches are allowed in the interests of human need. His intent is not to replace the Sabbath law but to define what that law in fact allows. Nevertheless, it must be asked whether Jesus' definition of what is allowed is somewhat broader than what the OT seems to indicate. Particularly significant is the fact that all the healings which Jesus performed on the Sabbath were non-emergency cases; indeed the duration of the illness is often stressed.<sup>99</sup> The synagogue ruler in Luke 13.14 objects to Jesus' performance of Sabbath healing. Jesus' reply is interesting in that he asserts that it was necessary (*δεῖ*) for the miracle to fall on the Sabbath (Lk. 13.16).<sup>100</sup> This indicates that Jesus regarded the Sabbath as a particularly appropriate time for his ministry of healing and may represent a slight shift from the trend of the Old Testament Sabbath tradition. Nevertheless, Jesus' working of miracles stands in a unique category and too much can not be made of this.<sup>101</sup>

In the second line of the argument Jesus highlights his own status as a means of justifying his disciples' Sabbath behavior. As we have argued, this is the point of the allusion to 1 Samuel 21.1-6 found in Mark 2.25-26 and parallels. A similar typological appeal to the OT is recorded by Matthew immediately after this (Mt. 12.5-6): if the

priests who serve in the Temple on the Sabbath are innocent of wrong-doing (according to the rabbinic dictum that the 'Temple service takes precedence over the Sabbath'<sup>102</sup>), how much more innocent are the disciples, who are 'serving' Jesus, 'one greater than the Temple?'<sup>103</sup> Both of these allusions to the OT focus attention on the person of Christ, in whose service disobedience to the letter of the law can sometimes be justified. The third Christological argument is the climax of this approach: 'the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath' (Mt. 12.8; Mk 2.28; Lk. 6.5). It is possible that the saying has been placed here by the early church as a conclusion stemming from the claims made in the narrative,<sup>104</sup> but it is more likely that the claim is Jesus' own.<sup>105</sup> It is impossible to understand this other than as an assertion of superiority over the Sabbath and, hence, of the authority to abrogate or transform the Sabbath law.<sup>106</sup> The significance of this claim must not be missed: as I.H. Marshall says, 'Jesus claims an authority tantamount to that of God with respect to the interpretation of the law'.<sup>107</sup> But while Jesus undoubtedly claimed this right, there is no evidence that he exercised it; the most that can be said is that his Sabbath healings 'stretch' the written Sabbath law. Whether the NT church acted on the authority inherent in Jesus' claim is a question that is not of legitimate concern here.<sup>108</sup>

The single most important passage in determining the relationship between Jesus and the law is undoubtedly Matthew 5.17-48. Inasmuch as Jesus' direct statements about the OT in vv. 17-19 are difficult to interpret and can be properly understood only in relation to vv. 21-48, it will be advantageous to consider the latter passage first.

Scholars are deeply divided over the nature of the relationship which is exhibited between the OT quotations and Jesus' demands.<sup>109</sup> It is proper that the antitheses be considered at this point in our discussion because most scholars hold that Jesus clearly abrogated commandments of the OT, but there is no agreement on which of the antitheses fall into this category.<sup>110</sup> It will be necessary to examine each of them in turn, but first some comments should be made about the introductory formula which all six have in common.<sup>111</sup>

Although the introductory formulas are not identical in every case, it is almost certain that they are all variations of a single basic formula, represented most fully in v. 21 and v. 33: ἠκούσατε ὅτι ἐρρέθη τοῖς ἀρχαίοις . . . ἐγὼ δὲ λέγω ὑμῖν.<sup>112</sup> There has been some question about the meaning of the dative with ἀρχαίοις, but it seems certain that it should be given a purely dative ('to the ancients')

rather than an ablative ('by the ancients') sense.<sup>113</sup> With this meaning, it is difficult to exclude some reference to the generation who received the law at Sinai,<sup>114</sup> although it should not be too quickly concluded that the *written* law only must thereby be involved; it was the Jewish belief that the *oral* law, too, was given at Sinai (cf. Abot 1.1-2).<sup>115</sup> Similarly, it is most natural to interpret 'you have heard' as a reference to the reading of the Scriptures in the synagogue,<sup>116</sup> but it should not be forgotten that the Scripture was usually read in interpreted ('targumized') form.<sup>117</sup> An important alternative to the view that the formula refers to the reading of the law in the synagogue is the possibility that Jesus is utilizing a standard rabbinic formula which was employed to contrast the teaching of one sage with another.<sup>118</sup> But this alternative must probably be discarded; the attestation for the formula is rather late, the Sermon presents anything but the academic milieu in which the rabbinic formula appears, and the Christological *ἐγώ* introduces a strongly distinctive element into the formula in Matthew 5.<sup>119</sup> Therefore it can be concluded that the formula used by Jesus suggests he is quoting the OT as it is usually heard by his audience. Whether that 'hearing' involved interpretative elements not properly a part of the text can be determined only by carefully studying the actual quotations and Jesus' response to them.<sup>120</sup> One final point should be made: while it has become standard to label the six citations with Jesus' responses as 'antitheses', this term itself might represent an illegitimate assumption. The grammar allows at least three different nuances of translation: 'you have heard, but I (*in contrast to that*) say to you'; 'you have heard, and I (*in addition to that*) say to you'; 'you have heard, and I (*in agreement with that*) say to you'.<sup>121</sup>

It is generally agreed that no abrogation of the law occurs in the first two antitheses, but it is more difficult to determine whether Jesus is simply drawing out the actual meaning of the commands or whether he is *extending* their application. The numerous parallels to Jesus' teaching on anger and adultery in the OT and Jewish literature are frequently cited to prove that Jesus' demands would not be unfamiliar to his hearers.<sup>122</sup> But it is not clear that these sentiments were widely taught or accepted in Jesus' day<sup>123</sup> nor do any of the parallels give evidence that such sentiments were derived from the sixth and seventh commandments. It is the *conjunction* of inner motive with the decalogue commandments that is distinctive to Jesus' demands.



But that Jesus understood this conjunction to be implied in the OT law, at least with respect to the sixth commandment, is shown, it is argued, by the clause quoted after the commandment. 'Whoever kills shall be liable to judgment' is often interpreted as a reference to a scribal tradition which prescribed punishment only for the outward deed and ignored the inner motive. Against this, Jesus associates anger with murder by prescribing the same punishment for each.<sup>124</sup> But this clause is more likely to be a representation of the OT laws pertaining to the punishment of the murderer.<sup>125</sup> The same point can be made if this is so, however: the error would then lie in the juxtaposing of the penalty for 'case law' with the general ethical principle, thereby suggesting an illegitimate restriction on the latter.<sup>126</sup>

Certainty on this question is almost impossible, but the apparent lack of evidence for the subsuming of anger and lust under the prohibitions of the decalogue might suggest that Jesus' interpretation does go beyond the legitimate intent of the law. Should we therefore speak, as do many, of the 'radicalization' or 'deepening' of the law in these first two antitheses? The difficulty with these descriptions is that they suppose Jesus is 'doing something to' the law, whereas this is not obvious. Rather it would appear that Jesus, with the emphatic 'but I say to you', enunciates principles neither derived from, nor intended to extend, the meaning of the laws which are quoted.<sup>127</sup>

In contrast to the first two antitheses, it is commonly asserted that in the third antithesis Jesus revokes the OT law concerning divorce.<sup>128</sup> In order to determine the validity of this assertion, it will be necessary to deal with several difficult questions and to take into consideration Jesus' teaching elsewhere on the question.

First, it is important to note that in none of the passages recording Jesus' teaching on divorce does he present the right of divorce as a *Mosaic command*. In Matthew 5.31, the quotation from Deuteronomy 24.1 presents the giving of the certificate of divorce as the command, and Mark 10.2-11 // Matthew 19.3-12 is in agreement with this.<sup>129</sup> Inasmuch as divorce is not *commanded* in Deuteronomy 24.1-4,<sup>130</sup> nor, indeed, anywhere in the OT, it is incorrect to speak of an abrogation of the divorce command.

Secondly, it is necessary to ask whether Jesus withdraws the *permission* of divorce granted by Moses. In Mark 10 and Luke 16.18, this would seem to be the case, for the prohibition of divorce appears to be absolute. According to Mark 10.5 (see also Mt. 19.8), Jesus

views the Mosaic toleration of divorce as a concession to the people's stubborn insensibility to the divine will (= 'hardness of heart').<sup>131</sup> In contrast to this (δέ, v. 6) stands the original creation intention of God which, it would appear, Jesus seeks to restore and uphold (οὖν, v. 9).<sup>132</sup> This view can be defended in Mark, but it fails to explain the Matthean parallel. For the effect of the 'exception clause' (Mt. 19.9; cf. also Mt. 5.32) is to bring Jesus' teaching on the legitimacy of divorce into rather close agreement with that of the Deuteronomic legislation.<sup>133</sup> Indeed, this is often denied, it being argued on grammatical grounds that no exception exists in Matthew or that *πορνεία*, the basis for the exception, is significantly narrower in meaning than the equivalent concept in Deuteronomy 24.1. Lending weight to these arguments is the fact that Jesus' line of argument in Matthew, as in Mark, appears to point toward a teaching which is stricter than Moses' and in harmony with the creation will of God. Despite the plausibility of this approach, it does not appear that either the grammatical or the lexical argument cited above can be sustained.<sup>134</sup> Of course, another alternative is to deny the authenticity of the exceptive clauses in Matthew, but real difficulties exist for this possibility also.<sup>135</sup> Thus it must be concluded that both the Matthean pericopae give teaching on divorce closely similar to the Mosaic provisions.<sup>136</sup> This being the case, the 'hardness of heart' to which Jesus attributes the Mosaic teaching is not done away with in the new age of the Kingdom; indeed, the case of 'serious sexual sin' (*πορνεία*) which justifies divorce is a prominent example of just that. As under the Mosaic law, the fact of human sin is recognized and provision made for it.

To return to Matthew 5.31-32, it is now important to determine what effect Jesus' teaching has on the actual commandment quoted—viz., to give a bill of divorce. The pronouncement of Jesus juxtaposed with this quotation suggests that the root problem which Jesus attacks is a liberal divorce procedure based on the Deuteronomy passage. As such, the bill of divorce command is never really addressed, though it might be inferred that Jesus envisages a context in which such a provision would be inappropriate.<sup>137</sup>

Thus, it is not clear that Jesus abrogates any Mosaic commandments respecting divorce and remarriage. On the other hand, Jesus *does go beyond* the OT in forthrightly labelling remarriage after an improper divorce 'adultery'.<sup>138</sup> Once again, then, more than straightforward 'exposition' of the OT is involved in the third antithesis. Nor does

Jesus 'deepen' or 'intensify' the commandment which is quoted or any part of the Mosaic divorce legislation.<sup>139</sup> Jesus' purpose is to emphasize in a new way the seriousness of initiating an illegitimate divorce ('causes her to commit adultery') and to place blame on the one who marries an improperly divorced person. His agreement with Deuteronomy 24.1-4 as far as the basis for a legitimate divorce is concerned is, as it were, incidental to his central intention.

The fourth 'thesis' cited by Jesus as a springboard for his own teaching is an accurate summary of a number of OT passages commanding the faithful performance of oaths and vows.<sup>140</sup> T.W. Manson argues that v. 33b, pertaining to vows (e.g., between man and God), is an intrusion and that the original teaching had to do only with speaking the truth with men.<sup>141</sup> But the distinction implied by this is too rigid: the OT does not always clearly distinguish between oaths and vows, both ἐπιορκέω and ὄρκος can refer to either, and 'both are solemn affirmations of a truth, both having some connection with God'.<sup>142</sup> The rabbis accepted with reluctance the need for oaths, but they never prohibited them, although the Essenes may have.<sup>143</sup> Jesus' prohibition appears, however, to be absolute: 'do not swear at all'—in which case a clear difference with respect to the OT is found.<sup>144</sup> On the other hand, the examples cited in vv. 34-36 strongly suggest that Jesus had in mind the casuistic development regarding oaths in the scribal tradition.<sup>145</sup> This feature, combined with undoubted examples of hyperbole in the Sermon and the conclusion in v. 37a, may serve to indicate that Jesus' main point is the need for absolute truthfulness and that he intends to prohibit only those oaths whose purpose is to avoid that truthfulness.<sup>146</sup> In this case, Jesus' teaching would be almost indistinguishable from the OT position. Nevertheless, it is difficult to uphold any restriction on Jesus' prohibition: the final words of v. 37, 'anything more than this comes from the evil one', repeat the categorical abolition of oaths. Furthermore, James, who *may* preserve an independent witness to Jesus' words, also gives an absolute prohibition (5.12).<sup>147</sup> However, the forbidding of all *voluntary* oaths cannot be legitimately styled an abrogation of an OT command because there is no OT text which *commands* oaths; the custom is presumed and regulations are given for its practice.<sup>148</sup> Again, Jesus does not exposit or deepen the commandment, but effectively cancels legislation which is no longer needed since the practice it regulated is prohibited in the coming Age.<sup>149</sup>

John P. Meier claims that Jesus' teaching with regard to the *lex talionis* is 'perhaps the clearest and least disputable case of annulment in the antitheses'.<sup>150</sup> While it is precarious to contest so strong a statement, it does not seem that this judgment can be sustained. The law requiring equivalent compensation, found at three places in the Pentateuch, had the purpose not to justify, but to restrain private retribution, by establishing a judicial procedure to which all could appeal.<sup>151</sup> Jesus does not question the legitimacy of this policy (nor does he uphold it), but prohibits his disciples from using the principle in personal relations. Inasmuch as application of the *lex* to private parties is not envisaged in the OT, it is likely that Jesus is opposing a misuse of the law among his contemporaries.<sup>152</sup> Thus, nothing is done to the OT law as such.<sup>153</sup>

The final statement quoted by Jesus in Matthew 5 is unique among the antitheses as including a clause which is not drawn from, nor representative of, the OT. This is sometimes contested, it being urged that the restriction of the love command in Leviticus 19.12 to the fellow-Israelite (עַרְבֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל<sup>154</sup>) and the frequent expressions of hostility to Israel's enemies in the OT render 'you shall hate your enemy', 'die logische und praktische Konsequenz'.<sup>155</sup> But even within Leviticus 19, the command of love is widened to embrace the 'resident alien' (v. 34) and, when the entire thrust of the OT is considered, a command to hate can hardly be considered a fair extrapolation.<sup>156</sup> The source from which the sentiment is taken cannot be certainly identified, although perhaps most likely is the demand that the members of the Qumran sect hate the 'sons of darkness'.<sup>157</sup> In contrast to this, Jesus demands that his followers love even their enemies, which in the context particularly includes their persecutors.<sup>158</sup> Once again, the demand of Jesus does not abrogate any OT commandment, but neither can it be regarded as a natural extrapolation from OT teaching.<sup>159</sup>

Having examined each of the antitheses, it can be concluded that none of the usual characterizations of Jesus' handling of the OT is sufficient to embrace all of the evidence. 'Exposition' can in no manner account for the situation in the final four antitheses, although it cannot be ruled out as a description of the first two. Besides the inadequacy of the term to do justice to the evidence, it is highly questionable whether the antithetical formula would have been chosen had simple exegesis been Jesus' goal. Likewise, the process observed in the first two antitheses *might* be best described

by the terms 'deepening' or 'radicalization', but the latter four cannot be understood in this way. What is the dominant note, hinted at in the emphatic 'I say to you', testified to by the crowds at the conclusion of the Sermon and observed in all the antitheses, is the independent, authoritative teaching of Jesus, which is neither derived from nor explicitly related to the OT.

As a summary of the evidence relating to Jesus' abrogation of the OT, it should be noted that only one commandment, that a bill of divorce be given, was seen to be implicitly revoked, and it is important to note that Jesus explicitly characterizes it as a less-than-adequate statement of God's perfect will. One practice (swearing) allowed in the Mosaic law was forbidden by Jesus to his disciples and in two other instances (Sabbath observance and food laws), Jesus enunciated principles which would allow for the abrogation of laws.

#### *Direct Statements about the Old Testament*

We have argued that, to determine the manner in which the Christian believer can use the OT as a guide for behavior, it is necessary to understand the impact of Jesus' coming on the older revelation. In this final section, it is our task to examine the text which most directly treats that question: Matthew 5.17-19 and the partial Lukan parallel, 16.16-17.

In Luke 16.16, Jesus clearly announces a fundamental shift in Salvation-history: 'The law and the prophets were until John; since then the good news of the Kingdom of God is preached, and every one enters it violently'. Especially in light of v. 17, it is impossible that Jesus intends to announce the *termination* of the relevance of the OT;<sup>160</sup> rather, the period during which men were related to God under its terms has ceased with John.<sup>161</sup> Matthew's parallel (11.13a) presents some interesting differences: 'all the prophets and the law prophesied until John'. Unique and particularly striking is the notion of the law 'prophesying', but it is difficult to know what to make of it. Banks sees in it an indication of a Matthean theological theme which regards the law as well as the prophets as pointing forward to Christ.<sup>162</sup> This understanding will have to be pursued further in discussing Matthew 5.17, but the present verse need only indicate that the entire OT is being viewed as the first member in a 'prophecy-fulfillment' understanding of history.<sup>163</sup>

Study of Matthew 5.17-19 is complicated by the complex and debated tradition history of the verses. According to some, each of the three verses has to be assigned to a different stratum of the early community as they present differing views of the law.<sup>164</sup> The validity of the various suggestions concerning the history of these verses can be assessed only after their meaning has been determined. But as a working procedure, we will seek to determine the meaning of each verse within its present context, since it is certainly legitimate to suppose that the final redactor, at least, intended them to be understood in relation to one another.

The meaning given to the phrase 'the law and the prophets' has an important bearing on the exegesis of v. 17. We have already noted that the phrase appears to connote the OT Scriptures in the NT generally, but that Matthew gives the phrase a particular nuance, stressing the normative or imperatival aspect of the OT. The fact that νόμος is used alone in v. 18 and that v. 19 speaks of 'commandments' strongly suggests that this connotation is present in 5.17 as well.<sup>165</sup> But it is not legitimate to press this distinction to the extent that the phrase is taken to imply simply 'the will of God';<sup>166</sup> reference to the written Scriptures cannot be eliminated.<sup>167</sup>

It is not to 'abolish' the demands of the OT Scriptures that Jesus has come, but to *fulfill* them. The determination of the meaning of 'fulfill' in this context is a notorious *crux*, for while the sense of the term as applied to prophecies appears easy to establish, its significance with respect to commands is much less obvious. Any acceptable interpretation will have to do justice to the following factors:

1. When Septuagintal usage is considered, it is almost certain that πληρώω is more closely related to מִלֵּא than to מִלֵּא.<sup>168</sup>
2. The term with which πληρώω is contrasted, καταλύω, means 'abolish', 'annul'.<sup>169</sup>
3. The focus in Matthew 5 is clearly on the relationship between the OT and Jesus' *teaching*, not his actions.

A number of suggested interpretations can be immediately eliminated when these factors are given sufficient consideration.<sup>170</sup> The remaining possibilities posit a relationship between Jesus' teaching and the OT according to which the former (1) 'fills up' the law by expressing its full intended meaning;<sup>171</sup> (2) 'fills up', or 'completes' the law by extending its demands;<sup>172</sup> or (3) 'fulfills' the law by bringing that to which it pointed forward.<sup>173</sup> Two further consider-

ations are crucial in deciding which of these positions is correct: the usage of πληρώω in Matthew and the implications of the use of the OT in the antitheses.

The most obvious and distinctive use of πληρώω in Matthew comes in the introductions to the so-called 'formula quotations', which declare the 'fulfillment' of an OT prophecy or historical event in the life of Jesus. It is this aspect of Matthew's employment of πληρώω which is stressed by Banks, who argues that 'precisely the same meaning should be given to the term πληρώω when it is used of the Law as that which it has when it is used of the prophets'.<sup>174</sup> The fact that the Law itself is said to 'prophesy' according to Matthew (11.13) demonstrates that the law as well as the prophets can be regarded as possessing a 'prophetic' function. Thus, it is suggested, as Jesus fulfilled the OT prophecies in his activity so he 'fulfilled' the OT law in his teaching.<sup>175</sup>

Against this view, however, it can be argued that the closest parallel to the use of πληρώω in Matthew 5.17 is found not in the formula quotations, which all have the passive form, but in Matthew 3.15, which, like 5.17, has the active infinitive. And 'to fulfill all righteousness' in 3.15, it is argued, must mean something like 'to obey (e.g., "complete") every righteous demand of God'.<sup>176</sup> Furthermore, Matthew uses πληρώω elsewhere, albeit in non-theological senses, to mean 'fill up' or 'complete' (13.48; 23.32).

It is difficult to determine which of these lines of evidence should be taken as most significant in determining the meaning of πληρώω in Matthew 5.17. On the one hand, the difference between the passive formulation in the formula citations and the active in Matthew 5.17 may preclude their association, but, on the other hand, the meaning of Matthew 3.15 is not clear and not much may be gained by comparing Matthew 5.17 with it.<sup>177</sup> On the whole, there would appear to be a slight balance of evidence in favor of Banks's interpretation. The reference to the law 'prophesying' (11.13), taken in conjunction with the dominant use of πληρώω in the formula quotations, is very suggestive. Moreover, the idea of the fulfillment of the law is in accord with the broad scope of fulfillment in Matthew, including, as it does, historical events with no clearly predictive element (cf. 2.15).

More decisive support is given this interpretation of πληρώω if the understanding of the antitheses developed above is correct. Most scholars recognize the need to interpret the basic 'theory' enunciated

in vv. 17-19 in light of the specific practical examples of vv. 21-48. Hence, those who regard 'fulfill' as connoting the bringing out of the true intention of the law find exposition of the OT in the antitheses; while 'deepening', 'radicalizing', or 'intensifying' the law is found by supporters of the view that 'fulfill' implies an extension of the law's demands. Yet if Jesus in the antitheses is doing neither, but is rather bringing new demands only indirectly related to the OT commands which are cited, then the law can perhaps be best viewed as an *anticipation* of Jesus' teaching. Jesus fulfills the law by proclaiming those demands to which it looked forward.<sup>178</sup>

Can this interpretation be reconciled with vv. 18-19? At first sight, no stronger endorsement of the eternal validity of even the most insignificant item in the law could be found than appears in these verses.<sup>179</sup> But such an interpretation poses insuperable problems for anyone who is concerned to discover a consistent position within Matthew. Many scholars simply deny that this is possible and find in vv. 18-19 a tradition stemming from the conservative Jewish community in the early church, a tradition which Matthew has for some reason inserted in its present context.<sup>180</sup> While it is possible that one could be forced to this view, it must be said that it seems a very difficult one; is it likely that the final redactor would have deliberately inserted sayings which appear, when compared with vv. 21ff., to present Jesus as 'the least in the Kingdom of Heaven'? Surely it is incumbent on us to seek out other alternatives before this position is accepted.

Attempts to avoid the conclusion that there is in these verses an absolute endorsement of every demand in the law focus on three things: the scope of the *ἕως* clauses in v. 18, the meaning of *νόμος* in v. 18 and the antecedent of *τούτων* in v. 19.

The first *ἕως* clause in v. 18, 'until heaven and earth pass away', must be compared with Luke 16.17: 'it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away, than for one dot of the law to become void'. It is probable that the Lukan verse must be understood as an assertion of the continuing validity of the law, in order to guard against the drawing of antinomian conclusions from v. 16.<sup>181</sup> Almost certainly, the Matthean *ἕως* clause must be given the same meaning: 'until heaven and earth pass away' is simply another way of saying, 'until the end of the present world order'.<sup>182</sup>

The second *ἕως* clause in v. 18 is less easy to interpret, since *πάντα*, 'all things', has no clear antecedent and the precise meaning



of γένηται is uncertain.<sup>183</sup> One approach understands πάντα to refer to the demands of the law which are to be 'done' or 'obeyed'.<sup>184</sup> But, when Matthean usage is considered, γένηται must almost certainly be translated 'happen', 'come to pass', so this approach must be excluded.<sup>185</sup> A second interpretation takes πάντα as a reference to *events* which are to come to pass, and inasmuch as this interpretation gives a natural sense to both γένηται and πάντα, it should probably be accepted. The events denoted by πάντα have been variously identified: the death or resurrection of Christ,<sup>186</sup> those things prophesied of his first coming or of his entire career,<sup>187</sup> or the end of the Age.<sup>188</sup>

A consideration of Matthew 24.34-35, which presents several striking linguistic parallels to v. 18, can aid in making a decision. In that context, 'until all these things come to pass' is probably to be interpreted as a reference to the signs enumerated by Jesus earlier in the chapter.<sup>189</sup> πάντα ταῦτα, then, indicates *predicted events*. πάντα in 5.18, without the ταῦτα, leaving it unspecified, is likely to mean much the same thing: all predicted events, the 'whole divine purpose'.<sup>190</sup> While it is claimed that this interpretation makes the second ἕως clause tautologous to the first and hence superfluous, this is not really the case: the second introduces the idea, absent from the first, of God's redemptive purposes. If these interpretations of the ἕως clauses are correct, then they provide no help in delimiting the statements of vv. 18-19.

Νόμος in v. 18 probably means, basically, the OT Scriptures,<sup>191</sup> although it is probable also that the imperatival aspect of the Scriptures is still particularly in view. Another kind of delimitation is suggested by those who suppose that νόμος here is a reference to the *moral* law only.<sup>192</sup> But such a meaning is unlikely in view of the lack of attestation for any clear distinction in Judaism among moral, ceremonial and civil law and the stress on detailed parts of the Scriptures in 5.18.<sup>193</sup> A better suggestion is that the continuing validity of the law is to be understood in the light of its 'fulfillment' (v. 17).<sup>194</sup> In all its details, the Scripture remains authoritative, but the manner in which men are to relate to and understand its provisions is now determined by the one who has fulfilled it. While this view cannot be demonstrated exegetically, the position of v. 18 between v. 17 and the antitheses surely suggests that it can be understood only in conjunction with the new approach to the law. It is precisely the same with Luke 16.17, placed between v. 16 and the saying about divorce in v. 18.

This statement about the permanent validity of the law leads to the practical conclusion (οὖν) of v. 19:<sup>195</sup> even 'the least of these commandments' must be practiced and taught; not to do so is to risk exclusion from the Kingdom.<sup>196</sup> But what are *these* commandments? Attempts to restrict the reference to the decalogue, Jesus' commands, or the antitheses cannot be justified.<sup>197</sup> Most likely, the antecedent of τούτων is to be located in νόμος, the whole (v. 18) being broken down into its parts (v. 19). In the same way, then, as νόμος in v. 18 must be understood in light of its fulfillment, so 'these commandments' should be understood as referring to the commandments as fulfilled (and thereby, perhaps re-interpreted) in Jesus.<sup>198</sup>

The function of vv. 18-19 is rather clearly to guard against a possible antinomian interpretation of v. 17 and, perhaps, of the following antitheses.<sup>199</sup> While it is generally held that it was Matthew's concern about antinomian tendencies in his church that led him to insert these Jewish-Christian sentiments here, it must be asked whether Jesus, too, would not have been concerned about the possibility of his listeners drawing such a conclusion. Could not he have appropriated a perhaps popular Jewish saying about the eternal validity and applicability of the law and applied it to the 'fulfilled law' in order to demonstrate his essential continuity with it? It would appear that such an evaluation is at least as probable as supposing that Matthew has done the same.<sup>200</sup>

### *Conclusion*

In his direct statements about the law Jesus upholds the continuing validity of the entire OT Scriptures, but also asserts that this validity must be understood in light of its fulfillment. It can be readily seen that the evidence gleaned from other lines of investigation in the course of the study is compatible with this position. No sensation-causing revolutionary, Jesus adhered to the law in his own life, but used it remarkably little in his teaching about the righteousness expected of members of the Kingdom. Jesus evidenced in the antitheses and claimed in his statement about the Sabbath an authority over the law, such as only God possesses. On the basis of this authority, Jesus denied to his disciples at least one practice tolerated in the old dispensation (vows), and set forth a principle destined to abrogate large segments of Pentateuchal laws (cf. Mk 7.15). But none of this occurs as a deliberate attack on the law; rather

the validity or abrogation of laws appears to be decided entirely by their relationship to Jesus' teaching and to the new situation which his coming inaugurates.<sup>201</sup>

This general perspective is found in all three synoptic gospels with differences in emphasis, but without significant contradictions. Each evangelist combines statements upholding the validity of the law with pronouncements of Jesus regarding his authority over the law. Little use of the law is made in any gospel in the formulation of kingdom ethics and dietary regulations receive criticism in all three also. These conclusions depend for their cogency on the exegetical decisions reached in the course of the study; and particularly Matthew 5.18-19, and the general approach to the law in the first gospel, are likely to be raised as fundamental objections to this unified outlook.<sup>202</sup> Yet for all Matthew's concern with Judaism and his apparent reluctance to sever relationships with the synagogue, he transmits some of Jesus' most far-reaching claims with respect to the law (5.17, 21-48; 12.8) and it seems preferable to understand more conservative statements within this 'fulfillment' motif rather than speak of contradictions in his material. The unanimity in outlook found in the synoptics on this matter, when contrasted with first-century Jewish beliefs and even some circles in the early church, suggests that we are in touch here with the *ipsissima vox Jesu*.

What may we then conclude from this about the authority of the Mosaic law in the new age of fulfillment? Any conclusions drawn from Jesus' teaching must, of course, be tentative and subject to the correction and expansion of the more explicit treatment of some of these questions in the epistles. The most that can be done here is to suggest some directions in which the evidence would seem to lead.

First, and most basically, every Mosaic law must be, as Ridderbos puts it, 'placed under the condition of its fulfillment'.<sup>203</sup> On the basis of Jesus' teaching, it does not seem that any Mosaic commandment can be assumed to be directly applicable to the believer. Jesus' authority as the law's fulfiller stands even over the decalogue, as his claim of lordship over the Sabbath shows; and most believers have utilized that authority in refusing to 'honor the *seventh* day'.<sup>204</sup> Nor do statements about the discontinuity/continuity of the law presume the tripartite division of the law, so popular in much of Christian history. The *whole* law came to culmination in Christ. As the sole ultimate authority of the Messianic community, he takes up the law into himself and enunciates what is enduring in its contents. In doing

so, it may be inaccurate to speak of a 'new law',<sup>205</sup> but it cannot be denied that Jesus' commandments include both general principles and some detailed demands—much more than the bare requirement of love is involved.<sup>206</sup> The change in redemptive 'eras' brings with it a change in the locus of authority for the people of God,<sup>207</sup> but it does not bring a liberation from authority as such.

Thus, secondly, the teaching of Jesus gives little support to those who would want to apply the criterion of love to discriminate among the applicability of Mosaic commandments. It was not on the basis of 'the demands of love', but on the basis of his unique intuitive knowledge of God's will that Jesus interpreted and applied the law.

Finally, Jesus by no means countenances the abandonment of the Mosaic law; indeed (if Mt. 5.18-19 be accepted as authentic), he explicitly commands that it be taught. However, this teaching must always be done with due attention to the fulfillment of the law (v. 17) and the way in which this fulfillment affects the meaning and applicability of its provisions.

#### NOTES

1. Cf., e.g., Joseph Fletcher, *Situation Ethics: The New Morality* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1966), 69-81; Norman Pittenger, *Loving Says it All* (New York / Philadelphia: Pilgrim, 1978), 43-44.

2. Cf., e.g., Carl F.H. Henry, *Christian Personal Ethics* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1957), 328-53; and the more extreme position espoused by Greg L. Bahnsen, *Theonomy in Christian Ethics* (Nutley, N.J.: Craig, 1977), 141-84.

3. Willy Rordorf, *Sunday: The History of the Day of Rest and Worship in the Earliest Centuries of the Christian Church* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1968), 78.

4. See the helpful survey of this issue in Bernhard W. Anderson, 'Tradition and Scripture in the Community of Faith', *JBL* 100 (1981), 5-21. He pleads for a recognition of the validity of 'tradition which still makes its theological witness in scripture, and scripture which theologically incorporates and crystallizes biblical tradition' (21).

5. For similar outlines, though differing in the demarcation of positions, see Klaus Berger, *Die Gesetzesauslegung Jesu: Ihr historischer Hintergrund im Judentum und im Alten Testament* (WMANT, 40, 1; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1972), 4-9; Robert Banks, *Jesus and the Law in the Synoptic Tradition* (SNTSMS, 28; Cambridge: University Press, 1975), 2-9.

6. The impossibility of understanding the position and debates of the early church if Jesus has simply abrogated it is usually cited as a determinative factor (cf. Adolf Harnack, 'Hat Jesus das alttestamentliche Gesetz abgeschafft?').

*Aus Wissenschaft und Leben* (Giessen: Töpelmann, 1911), II, 228; Rudolf Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament* (New York: Scribner's, 1951), I, 16; W.D. Davies, *The Setting of the Sermon on the Mount* (Cambridge: University Press, 1964), 428.

7. This position is usually identified in Matthew's Gospel. Cf. B.W. Bacon, 'Jesus and the Law: A Study of the First "Book" of Matthew (Mt. 3-7)', *JBL* 47 (1928), 203-31. Davies finds fewer Mosaic traits and is more cautious in speaking of a new law, but finds a 'Messianic torah' in Matthew (*Setting*, 94-107).

8. This was the position held by most of the reformers (cf. Harvey K. McArthur, *Understanding the Sermon on the Mount* [London: Epworth, 1960], 36). Among modern scholars: Henry, *Ethics*, 316; Bahnsen, *Theonomy*, 141-83; Herman Ridderbos, *The Coming of the Kingdom* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1962), 314; Ned B. Stonehouse, *The Witness of the Synoptic Gospels to Christ* (combining *The Witness of Matthew and Mark to Christ* and *The Witness of Luke to Christ* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979 [= 1944], 197-211). Hans Windisch (*The Meaning of the Sermon on the Mount* [Philadelphia: Westminster, 1951], 132-50) argues that Jesus stayed essentially within the framework of Judaism in his attitude to the law.

9. Cf. Werner Georg Kümmel, 'Jesus und der jüdische Traditionsgedanke', *ZNW* 33 (1934), 121-27.

10. Cf. W. Gutbrod, 'νόμος', *TDNT*, IV, 1063.

11. Late in the nineteenth and early in the twentieth centuries, scholars especially stressed the 'prophetic' character of Jesus' approach to the law (Harnack, 'Gesetz', 230-34; Bennett Harvie Branscomb, *Jesus and the Law of Moses* [New York: Richard A. Smith, 1930], 262-66; C.G. Montefiore, *Some Elements of the Religious Teaching of Jesus according to the Synoptic Gospels* [New York: Arno, 1973], 44). More recently, Jesus' approach to the law has been compared with that of the Qumran sectarians (Herbert Braun, *Spätjüdische-häretischer und frühchristlicher Radikalismus: Jesus von Nazareth und die essenische Qumransekte* [2 vols.; 2nd edn; BHT, 24,2; Tübingen: Mohr, 1959]). Probably the majority of modern scholars hold something like this general view.

12. This seems to have been the dominant view in the Patristic period (cf. McArthur, *Sermon*, 26-32). Ernst Percy (*Die Botschaft Jesu: Eine traditions-kritische und exegetische Untersuchung* [Lunds Universitets Årsskrift, n.s. 49; Lund: Gleerup, 1953], 122-23) concluded: '... dass Jesus im Gesetz die Offenbarung des Willens Gottes gesehen zu haben scheint, aber eine Offenbarung, die in gewissen Fällen die tatsächliche Beschaffenheit der Menschen berücksichtigt und deshalb in solchen Fällen überboten werden muss, wenn Gottes Willen in Bezug auf die Menschen völlig verwirklicht werden soll'. Cf. also Pieter Godfried Verweij, *Evangelium und neues Gesetz in der ältesten Christenheit bis auf Marcion* (Domplein / Utrecht: Kemink en Zoon, 1960), 350-51.

13. Banks argues for this position in his important monograph, *Jesus and the Law in the Synoptic Tradition*. His basic position is accepted by John P. Meier (*Law and History in Matthew's Gospel* [An Bib, 71; Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1976], 87-88).

14. *Jesus and the Law*, 90-91. Branscomb (*Jesus and the Law*, 126-28) contests the validity of separating the oral from the written law, but against this it must be maintained that as long as a significant Jewish group (the Sadducees) rejected the validity of the oral law, such a distinction is not only possible but necessary.

15. Gutbrod, 'νόμος', *TDNT*, IV, 1062. Robert MacKintosh (*Christ and the Jewish Law* [London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1886], 59-62) who argues this notes that Jesus was not accused of law-breaking at his trial.

16. Jesus' contact with ritually unclean people in the course of his healing ministry cannot be viewed as a transgression of the law, since this kind of activity is hardly covered in the law (Banks, *Jesus and the Law*, 105).

17. Branscomb, *Jesus and the Law*, 170-74. Gerhard Barth argues that, at least in Matthew, the oral law is not rejected as such ('Matthew's Understanding of the Law', *Tradition and Interpretation in Matthew*, by Günter Bornkamm, Gerhard Barth and Heinz Joachim Held [Philadelphia: Westminster, 1963], 86-89).

18. The deliberateness and frequency with which Jesus performs miracles on the Sabbath suggests that more than 'isolated incidents' are involved (as argued by M. Hubaut, 'Jesus et la loi de Moïse', *RTL* 7 [1976], 406).

19. Contra Banks, *Jesus and the Law*, 237-38.

20. Branscomb, *Jesus and the Law*, 126-28. Banks argues that Jesus attended the synagogue solely to minister (regarding *κατὰ τὸ εἰωθός* in Lk. 4.16 as a reference to habits of ministering [cf. Acts 17.2]) (*Jesus and the Law*, 91). But it is more likely that such ministry grew out of regular attendance for worship (Robin Nixon, 'Fulfilling the law: The Gospels and Acts', *Law, Morality and the Bible*, ed. Bruce Kaye and Gordon Wenham (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1978], 60).

21. Banks, *Jesus and the Law*, 99, 237-38.

22. Pace MacKintosh, *Christ and the Law*, 59-62.

23. Cf. the position adopted by W.D. Davies ('Matthew 5.17, 18', *Christian Origins and Judaism* [Philadelphia: Westminster, 1962], 50-58).

24. The narrative in Lk. 10.25-28, in which a lawyer in response to Jesus' question about his understanding of the law enunciates the two love commandments, is probably the description of a separate incident from that in Mt./Mk. (As T.W. Manson says [*The Sayings of Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979 [= 1957]), 259-60], '... the chief connecting link, the conjunction of the great commandments, is precisely the sort of thing that would appear over and over again'. Cf. also C.E.B. Cranfield, *The Gospel According to Saint Mark* [CGTC; Cambridge: University Press, 1966], 376; I. Howard Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke* [NIGTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans,

1978], 440-41; Banks, *Jesus and the Law*, 164. For an alternative view, cf. Victor Paul Furnish, *The Love Command in the New Testament* [Nashville / New York: Abingdon, 1972], 36-38).

25. μεγάλη is almost certainly an example of the Hellenistic tendency to use the positive with a superlative meaning (BDF, #245 [2]; Maximilian Zerwick, *Biblical Greek* [Scripta Pontificii Instituti Biblici, 114; Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1963], 48-49).

26. In Mark, the command to love God is prefaced with the *Shema* (Dt. 6.4), which some have taken as an indication of a Hellenistic missionary provenance for Mark's tradition (Günther Bornkamm, 'Das Doppelgebot der Liebe', *Neutestamentliche Studien für Rudolf Bultmann* [BZNW, 21; Berlin: Töpelmann, 1954], 87-88). That Mark has Gentile readers in mind is not improbable, but it is unnecessary to suppose that he has added the *Shema*; for it comes immediately before the command to love God in Dt. and was, of course, a prominent element in the Jewish liturgy. As such, it is more likely that Matthew has omitted it with Jewish readers in mind (James Moffatt, *Love in the New Testament* [London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1929], 120).

27. Furnish, *Love Command*, 26-27; David Hill, *The Gospel of Matthew* [NCB; London: Oliphants, 1972], 307. Some of the ethical implications of this combination are explored by Rudolf Schnackenburg in 'Mitmenschlichkeit im Horizont des Neuen Testaments' (*Die Zeit Jesu* [für H. Schlier], ed. Günther Bornkamm and Karl Rahner [Freiburg / Basel / Vienna: Herder, 1970], 70-92).

The combination of these two virtues as summarizing morality has parallels in Jewish literature; cf. especially Test. Iss. 5.2; 7.6; Test. Dan 5.3; Philo, *de Abr.* 208; *de Spec. Leg.* 2.63. Because these summaries stem from Hellenistic Judaism, it has been argued that the double love command of the Gospels must have a Hellenistic provenance (Berger, *Gesetzesauslegung*, 136-89; Christoph Burchard, 'Das doppelte Liebesgebot in der frühen christlichen Überlieferung', *Der Ruf Jesu und die Antwort der Gemeinde* [für J. Jeremias], ed. Eduard Lohse [Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1970], 53-57). But the explicit reference to Scriptural commands is unique to the gospel tradition and fundamentally distinct from the Stoic-tinged expressions in Philo and the Testaments (Reginald H. Fuller, 'The Double Commandment of Love: A Test Case for the Criteria of Authenticity', *Essays on the Love Command* [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1978], 48-51).

28. 2 Macc. 15.9; 4 Macc. 18.10; Midr. Ps. 90 #4; Mt. 5.17; 7.12; Lk. 16.16; 24.44; Jn 1.45; Acts 13.15; 24.14; 23.23; Rom. 3.21. SB (I, 240) note that the phrase is rare in Jewish literature; it may be that it reflects a Christian emphasis on prophecy (Ernst Lohmeyer, *Das Evangelium des Matthäus*, ed. Werner Schmauch [Meyer K.; 2nd edn; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1958], 105-106). Berger (*Gesetzesauslegung*, 224) argues that the phrase

denotes the canon of the OT only when an explicit reference to the Scriptures is present.

29. Wolfgang Trilling, *Das wahre Israel: Studien zur Theologie des Matthäus-Evangeliums* (SANT, 10; Munich: Kösel, 1964), 173-74; Georg Strecker, *Der Weg der Gerechtigkeit: Untersuchungen zur Theologie des Matthäus* (FRLANT, 82; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1962), 144; A. Feuillet, 'Morale ancienne et morale chrétienne d'après Mt. V. 17-20; Comparaison avec la doctrine de L'Épître aux Romains', *NTS* 17 (1970-71), 124.

30. E.g., TB Ber. 63a; SB I, 907-908. Cf. also Berger, *Gesetzesauslegung*, 230; Rudolph Schnackenburg, *The Moral Teaching of the New Testament* (New York: Seabury, 1965), 93.

31. SB I, 907-908. Despite discussions as to the relative value of commandments, the rabbis maintained their theoretical equality (cf. M. Abot 2.13; TB Shabb. 31a; and E.E. Urbach, *The Sages: Their Concepts and Beliefs* [2 vols.; Jerusalem: Magnes, 1975], 349).

32. Furnish, *Love Command*, 32-34.

33. Furnish, *Love Command*, 74; Branscomb, *Jesus and the Law*, 263. Barth ('Matthew's Understanding', 78-85) views love as the basis upon which Matthew re-interpreted and thereby retained the law. J.L. Houlden (*Ethics and the New Testament* [New York: Oxford University Press, 1973], 107) sees the love commandment as interpreting the law in Matthew, but in Mark and Luke, he claims, the law is 'rivaled and supplanted'.

34. For the former, cf. Arndt, 451; and Ceslaus Spicq, *Agape in the New Testament*, Vol. 1: *Agape in the Synoptic Gospels* (St Louis / London: B. Herder, 1963), 30; for the latter, Bertram, 'κρεμάννυμι', *TDNT*, III, 920.

35. Banks, *Jesus and the Law*, 169.

36. Cf. TB Sukk. 49b; Ber. 55a.

37. Vincent Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark* (2nd edn; London: Macmillan, 1966), 489; Hugh Anderson, *The Gospel of Mark* (NCB; London: Oliphants, 1976), 282; Banks, *Jesus and the Law*, 168.

38. Verses 27-28 are frequently understood as a separate complex which has been added to vv. 23-26 (Taylor, *Mark*, 218; Rudolf Pesch, *Das Markusevangelium* [HTKNT; 2 vols.; Freiburg / Basel / Vienna: Herder, 1977], I, 178-79); some regarding only v. 28 as an authentic *logion Jesu* (Felix Fils, "Le Sabbat a été fait pour homme et non l'homme pour le Sabbat" (Mc II,27)', *RB* 69 [1962], 516-23); others only v. 27 (Eduard Lohse, 'Jesu Worte über den Sabbat', *Judentum, Urchristentum und Kirche*, ed. W. Eltester [BZNW, 26; Berlin: Töpelmann, 1964], 84-85; Arland J. Hultgren, 'The Formation of the Sabbath Pericope in Mark 2.23-28', *JBL* 91 [1972], 40; Taylor, *Mark*, 220); others neither (F.W. Beare, "The Sabbath was made for man"', *JBL* 79 [1960], 131-35). A thorough discussion of the verse, with extensive bibliography, is provided by F. Neiryneck, 'Jesus and the Sabbath. Some Observations on Mark II,27', *Jésus aux Origines de la*



*Christologie*, ed. J. Dupont [BETL, 46; Leuven: Leuven Univ. Press / Gembloux: Duculot, 1975], 227-70.

The difficulties in accepting the authenticity of v. 27 are the presence of a parallel in Jewish literature, its omission in Matthew and Luke and the redactional καὶ ἔλεγεν αὐτοῖς which introduces it. But the last point may indicate nothing more than a break in Mark's narrative, because of the omission of material (William L. Lane, *The Gospel According to Mark* [NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974], 118-19) and Matthew and Luke may feel (as have many scholars!) that the verse interfered with the Christological conclusion (Banks, *Jesus and the Law*, 120). The Jewish saying has a very different thrust from Jesus' application of the verse and the uniqueness of the sentiment is a strong indication of authenticity (cf. Pesch, *Markusevangelium*, I, 186; Marshall, *Luke*, 229-30).

39. Mek. Ex. 31.13.

40. Lohse, 'Jesu Worte', 85.

41. Verweij, *Evangelium*, 23; Anderson, *Mark*, 110.

42. Cf. Heinz Schürmann, *Das Lukasevangelium* [HTKNT; Freiburg / Basel / Vienna: Herder, 1969], I, 303-304. Beare correctly notes that the reference to David's action does *not* justify what the disciples did ('The Sabbath', 133-34).

43. SB, I, 618-19.

44. Cranfield, *Mark*, 115; Lane, *Mark*, 116-17.

45. Marshall, *Luke*, 232.

46. 'And those who were with him' is found twice in all three narratives. Cf. on this especially Lane, *Mark*, 116-17.

47. Pesch, *Markusevangelium*, I, 181-82; Schürmann, *Lukasevangelium*, I, 303-304; R.T. France, *Jesus and the Old Testament* (London: Tyndale, 1971), 46-47; cf. Marshall, *Luke*, 232; L. Goppelt, 'πεινώω', *TDNT*, VI, 19.

48. The fact that the bread of the presence was set out suggests that it was a Sabbath; the rabbis explicitly bring this out (SB, I, 618-19; Hans Joachim Schoeps, 'Jesus und das jüdische Gesetz', *Aus frühchristlicher Zeit: Religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen* [Tübingen: Mohr, 1950], 217).

49. Banks contests the typological interpretation, claiming that '... nowhere else in the gospels does Jesus portray himself as David's successor' (*Jesus and the Law*, 115). But, against this, cf. especially Sherman E. Johnson, 'The Davidic-Royal Motif in the Gospels', *JBL* 87 (1968), 136-50.

50. Beare, 'The Sabbath', 131.

51. Cranfield, *Mark*, 117-18.

52. Lane, *Mark*, 117-18.

53. Branscomb, *Jesus and the Law*, 145-46; E. Lohse, 'Σάββατον', *TDNT*, VII, 22; Anderson, *Mark*, 110-11; O. Sydney Barr, *The Christian New Morality: A Biblical Study of Situation Ethics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969), 24-25; Rordorf, *Sunday*, 62.

54. Henry Barclay Swete, *Commentary on Mark* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1977 [= 1913]), 52; Taylor, *Mark*, 222; Pesch, *Markusevangelium*, I, 192-93.
55. D.E. Nineham, *The Gospel of St. Mark* (The Pelican New Testament Commentaries; Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1963), 109 (on the former point).
56. Branscomb, *Jesus and the Law*, 148; Nineham, *Mark*, 109-10; Charles Carlston, 'The Things that Defile (Mark VII.14) and the Law in Matthew and Mark', *NTS* 15 (1968-69), 87; Braun, *Radikalismus*, II, 69-70; Barth, 'Matthew's Understanding', 79; Rordorf, *Sunday*, 70; Anderson, *Mark*, 113.
57. MacKintosh, *Christ and the Law*, 65; Schürmann, *Lukasevangelium*, I, 308-309; Marshall, *Luke*, 235. Nineham (*Mark*, 109-10) argues that the Sabbath can be broken because Jesus' miracles are 'emergency' healings relating to the coming of the Kingdom. But the statement appears to be much broader than that.
58. ἐξεστίν, in light of the question put to Jesus, almost certainly relates to the law itself.
59. Marshall says: '... Jesus relates the institution of the Sabbath to the good purpose of God for men which lay behind it and hence to the principle of love for each other which ought to characterize their use of it' (*Luke*, 235).
60. W.C. Allen, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to St. Matthew* (ICC; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1907), 90.
61. Alfred Plummer, *An Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to St. Matthew* (London: Robert Scott, 1915), 173.
62. Pace H.-H. Esser, 'Mercy', *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, ed. Colin Brown (3 vols.; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975-78), II, 596.
63. Barth, 'Matthew's Understanding', 83; David Hill, 'On the Use and Meaning of Hosea VI.6 in Matthew's Gospel', *NTS* 24 (1977-78), 109-118.
64. Cf. James Luther Mays, *Hosea: A Commentary* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1969), 98; Hans Walter Wolff, *Hosea* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1974), 120; Hill, 'Hosea VI.6', 109-10.
65. That the quotation of Hos. 6.6 in Mt. 12.7 is intended to refer primarily to v. 6 is suggested by the repetition of ἀναίτιους after the quotation.
66. Barth, 'Matthew's Understanding', 80; Strecker, *Der Weg*, 137.
67. Especially difficult to fit under the rubric of Mt. 7.12 is the teaching in ch. 6, which concentrates on man's relationship with God (Meier, *Law and History*, 42).
68. Probably Matthew's κρισίς represents מְשַׁמֵּת, חֶסֶד אֱלֹהִים and πίστις 'walking humbly with God'.
69. The final clause, commending the tithing (which was apparently a scribal tradition developed on the basis of Dt. 14.22-23 and Lev. 27.30 [SB, I, 932-33]) has been attributed to a conservative Jewish-Christian community (Branscomb, *Jesus and the Law*, 207-13; Berger, *Gesetzesauslegung*, 50) but there is no reason to think that Jesus took an unrelentingly critical stance

toward the oral law (Davies, 'Matthew 5.17, 18', 47-48).

70. Walter C. Kaiser, Jr, 'The Weightier and Lighter Matters of the Law: Moses, Jesus and Paul', *Current Issues in Biblical and Patristic Interpretation*, ed. Gerald F. Hawthorne (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975), 185; Ridderbos, *Kingdom*, 302-303; M'Neile, *Matthew*, 335.

71. Carlston, 'Things that Defile', 87.

72. Banks downplays the role of love in Jesus' ethics, claiming that the love command is a decisive demand only within the law (*Jesus and the Law*, 243-44). But passages such as Mt. 5.43ff. suggest that love plays a prominent part in the demands of the Kingdom also (Strecker, *Der Weg*, 136-37).

73. J. Duncan M. Derrett, *Law in the New Testament* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1970), 377; Davies, *Setting*, 104-105; Stonehouse, *Witness*, 204-205; Anderson, *Mark*, 241-42.

74. Banks, *Jesus and the Law*, 149; contra Schoeps, 'Jesus und das jüdische Gesetz', 215-16; Trilling, *Israel*, 205-206; Victor Hasler, 'Die Herzstück der Bergpredigt: zum Verständnis der Antithesen in Matth. 5,21-48', *TZ* 15 (1959), 96.

75. Kenneth J. Thomas correctly notes the differences between the rabbinic technique and Jesus' approach. As he says, '... one citation is used to interpret the other by placing it in a new context' ('Torah Citations in the Synoptics', *NTS* 24 [1977-78], 88; cf. also Banks, *Jesus and the Law*, 147-50).

76. Trilling, *Israel*, 205-206.

77. It is wholly unjustified to find in Mk 7 a criticism of the tradition because it did not put 'human needs and interests' first (contra Anderson, *Mark*, 186). The emphasis throughout the narrative is on the word of God which is ignored because of the tradition.

78. Henry, *Ethics*, 375; Ridderbos, *Kingdom*, 293; Cranfield, *Mark*, 330; Lane, *Mark*, 367; Thomas, 'Torah Citations', 89.

79. C.F.D. Moule, 'Prolegomena: The New Testament and Moral Decision', *ExpT* 74 (1962-63), 370; Bacon, 'Jesus and the Law', 214; Taylor, *Mark*, 427-28; Banks, *Jesus and the Law*, 162-63; Meier, *Law and History*, 88.

80. Banks, *Jesus and the Law*, 164.

81. Gutbrod, 'νόμος', *TDNT*, IV, 1063; Taylor, *Mark*, 427-28.

82. Luke 11.28, in which the blessedness of 'those who hear and keep the word of God' is pronounced, has reference to Jesus' teaching, not the Old Testament (Marshall, *Luke*, 480).

83. Montefiore questions the historicity of this criticism, noting that the Mishnah tractate Nedarim in fact solves the issue of a conflict between the inviolability of vows and the provision for parents in much the same way as does Jesus (*The Synoptic Gospels* [New York: KTAV, 1968 (= 1927)], I, 164-65). This criticism is well answered by M'Neile: 'It is precarious to argue that, because of the majority of Michnic [sic] Rabbis had agreed to adopt a certain view, that must have been the prevailing one in the time of Jesus' (*The Gospel According to St. Matthew* [London: Macmillan, 1928], 225).

84. Branscomb, *Jesus and the Law*, 168-69; Kümmel, 'Jüdische Traditions-gedanke', 123-24; Anderson, *Mark*, 182.

85. Thomas, 'Torah Citations', 90; Banks, *Jesus and the Law*, 136.

Mt. 23.2-3, in which Jesus tells the people to do 'all things' that the scribes and Pharisees teach, is often brought up as evidence that Jesus upheld the scribal tradition. Many therefore relegate the verses to a conservative Jewish group in the early church (Branscomb, *Jesus and the Law*, 231-33; Kümmel, 'Jüdische Traditions-gedanke', 127). Against this, however, M'Neile rightly comments: '... it is so Jewish that it could hardly have originated in later tradition even in Jewish-Christian circles' (*Matthew*, 329-30). Others qualify 'all things' as 'all things that are in agreement with the written law' (Stonehouse, *Witness*, 196-97; Amos N. Wilder, *Eschatology and Ethics in the Teaching of Jesus* [rev. edn; Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1978 (= 1950)], 130; Plummer, *Matthew*, 314), but it is best to see in the statement hyperbole, and perhaps irony, the stress falling on the condemnation of the scribes for not *doing* what they teach (Joachim Jeremias, *New Testament Theology: The Proclamation of Jesus* [New York: Scribner's, 1971], 210; Banks, *Jesus and the Law*, 175-76).

86. Verweij, *Evangelium*, 22; Siegfried Schulz, *Die Stunde der Botschaft. Einführung in die Theologie der vier Evangelisten* [Hamburg: Furche, 1967], 174; Kümmel, 'Jüdische Traditions-gedanke', 124-25; Pesch, *Markusevangelium*, I, 384; Davies, 'Matthew 5.17, 18', 40-41. Contra Barth, 'Matthew's Understanding', 89-90.

87. Quentin Quesnell, *The Mind of Mark: Interpretation and Method through the Exegesis of Mark 6,52* (AnBib 38; Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1969), 98; Carlston, 'The Things that Defile', 95; Percy, *Botschaft*, 118.

88. Davies, 'Matthew 5.17, 18', 41; Taylor, *Mark*, 341-43; Lane, *Mark*, 254. Lambrecht, after a detailed *traditionsgeschichtlich* investigation, concludes for the authenticity of Mk 7.15 ('Jesus and the Law: An Investigation of Mk 7:1-23', *ETL* 53 [1977], 75).

89. Cf. Quesnell, *Mark*, 93-94.

90. Bahnsen, *Theonomy*, 214.

91. Cf. Banks, *Jesus and the Law*, 242-43.

92. Kaiser, 'Weightier and Lighter Matters', 181-85; David Wenham, 'Jesus and the Law: An Exegesis of Matthew 5.17-20', *Themelios* 4 (April, 1979), 95.

93. *Mark*, 244.

94. Ernst Käsemann, 'The Problem of the Historical Jesus', *Essays on New Testament Themes* (SBT, 41; London: SCM, 1964), 40; Rordorf, *Sunday*, 65-71; Kümmel, 'Jüdische Traditions-gedanke', 121-22.

95. Activities specifically prohibited are: regular plowing and harvesting (Ex. 34.21); kindling a fire (Ex. 35.3); carrying burdens (Jer. 17.21-27); trade

(Neh. 10.32); treading the winepress, loading beasts, and holding markets (Neh. 13.15-22); long journeys and the pursuing of business (Is. 56.2). Cf. Lohse, 'Σάββατον', *TDNT*, VII, 5.

96. The Mishnah tractates 'Erubim and Shabbat are devoted to this task. Cf. SB, I, 616-18.

97. D.A. Carson, 'Jesus and the Sabbath in the Four Gospels', *From Sabbath to Lord's Day: A Biblical, Historical and Theological Investigation*, ed. D.A. Carson (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1982), 61. Cf. also, for Matthew's narrative, Hill, *Matthew*, 211-12, and Davies, *Setting*, 103-104; and for Luke's, Jacob Jervell, 'The Law in Luke-Acts', *HTR* 64 (1971), 29.

98. As Jesus points out (Mt. 12.12; Lk. 14.5), even the rabbis allowed men to help animals on the Sabbath (cf. M. Shabb. 5.1-4; TB Shabb. 128b). Apparently the Qumran sectarians (CD 11.13-17) and some rabbis (cf. TB Shabb. 128b) forbade even this.

99. Rordorf, *Sunday*, 65-66. The rabbis allowed medical attention that was necessary to prevent death on the Sabbath (SB, I, 622-29).

100. Since the woman is described as having been 'bound by Satan', the work of healing is obviously not only physical.

101. Nineham (*Mark*, 109-10) stresses the *Messianic*, eschatological aspect of Jesus' Sabbath healings. But as suggested above, some of the sayings suggest a broader application.

102. TB Shabb. 132b.

103. The aptness of the parallel between the priests, innocent because they serve the Temple, and the disciples, innocent because they follow Jesus, is too clear to overlook (cf. Birger Gerhardsson, 'Sacrificial Service and Atonement in the Gospel of Matthew', *Reconciliation and Hope: New Testament Essays on Atonement and Eschatology presented to L.L. Morris on his 60th Birthday*, ed. Robert Banks [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974], 28).

104. Lane, *Mark*, 120. Mk 2.28 is variously understood as an attempt to 'tone down' the radical claim of Mk 2.27 (Käsemann, 'Historical Jesus', 38-39) or to make more radical the claim of v. 27 (Schürmann, *Lukasevangelium*, I, 305; C. Colpe, 'ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου', *TDNT*, VIII, 452). Others argue for the authenticity of v. 28, but understand the original statement to have had 'man' as the subject (M'Neile, *Matthew*, 170; Pesch, *Markusevangelium*, I, 185-86).

105. Besides the difficulties felt by some over a 'Son of Man' saying so early in the Gospel (against which, see Morna Hooker, *The Son of Man in Mark* [London: SPCK, 1967], 99-102), the difficulty of the transition between v. 27 and v. 28 is cited as a major problem. But the ὥστε introducing v. 28 can be regarded as a conclusion stemming from the Christological arguments throughout the incident rather than an inference drawn from v. 27.

106. F. Godet, *A Commentary on the Gospel of St. Luke* (5th edn; 2 vols.; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, n.d.), I, 290; Roland de Vaux, *Ancient Israel* (2

vols.; New York / Toronto: McGraw-Hill, 1961), II, 483.

107. *Luke*, 233.

108. On this, cf. further especially Rordorf, *Sunday*, and *From Sabbath to Lord's Day*, ed. D.A. Carson.

109. Exposition of the law (Henry, *Ethics*, 300-307; Ridderbos, *Kingdom*, 299; Bahnsen, *Theonomy*, 90; John Murray, *Principles of Conduct: Aspects of Biblical Ethics* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1957], 158); deepening, radicalizing or intensifying the law (Martin Dibelius, *The Sermon on the Mount* [New York: Scribner's, 1940], 69-71; Jacques Dupont, *Les Béatitudes*, Vol. I: *Le problème littéraire—Les deux versions du Sermon sur la Montagne et des Béatitudes* (3rd edn; Bruges: Abbaye de Saint-André, 1958), 146-58; Davies, *Setting*, 101-102); the promulgation of a new law (Spicq, *Agape*, I, 5-6); the setting forth of a new teaching which does not abrogate the law (Percy, *Botschaft*, 163-64).

110. Various divisions of the antitheses along these lines are popular: (1) that the third, fifth and sixth antitheses abrogate the law, while the first, second and fourth deepen it (Rudolf Bultmann, *The History of the Synoptic Tradition* [rev. edn; New York: Harper & Row, 1963], 135-36; Schulz, *Botschaft*, 186; Eduard Lohse, "Ich aber sage euch", *Der Ruf Jesu*, 189-90; Alexander Sand, *Das Gesetz und die Propheten: Untersuchungen zur Theologie des Evangeliums nach Matthäus* [Biblische Untersuchungen, 11; Regensburg: Pustet, 1974], 52-53; Eduard Schweizer, *The Good News According to Matthew* [London: SPCK, 1975], 110-11; Carleton, 'Things that Defile', 80-81; Davies, 'Matthew 5.17, 18', 44; Robert A. Guelich, *The Sermon on the Mount: A Foundation for Understanding* [Waco, TX: Word, 1982], 268; (2) That the third, fourth and fifth abrogate the law, while the first, second and sixth deepen it (Jeremias, *Theology*, 252; Meier, *Law and History*, 135); (3) That the third and fifth abrogate the law, while the others deepen it (Gerald Sloyan, *Is Christ the End of the Law?* [Philadelphia: Westminster, 1978], 50-51); (4) That the third, fourth, fifth and sixth abrogate the law, while the others deepen it (Albert Descamps, *Les Justes et la justice dans les évangiles et le christianisme primitif hormis la doctrine proprement paulinienne* [Louvain: Univ. of Louvain / Gembloux: Duculot, 1950], 122; Schnackenburg, *Moral Teaching*, 75; R.G. Hamerton-Kelly, 'Attitudes to the Law in Matthew's Gospel: A Discussion of Matthew 5.18', *BR* 17 [1972], 22); (5) That the fourth, fifth and sixth abrogate the law, while the others deepen it (Braun, *Radikalismus*, II, 13).

111. Some remarks on the tradition-history of the antitheses are in order here. Bultmann, noting that the *content* of the third, fifth, and sixth appears elsewhere (*Luke*) without the antithetical framework, regarded them as secondary (*Tradition*, 134-36); M. Jack Suggs has argued that all six antithetical forms are Matthew's work 'The Antitheses as Redactional Products', *Essays on the Love Commandment*, 95-101). But it is equally possible that *Luke*, in accordance with an *observable* tendency, has omitted

the Old Testament quotations (Percy, *Botschaft*, 148-50; cf. Meier, *Law and History*, 127). The uniquely authoritative stance suggested by the formula (ἐγὼ, is a strong pointer to the authenticity of the basic framework (cf. Stauffer, 'ἐγὼ', *TDNT*, I, 348; Ben F. Meyer, *The Aims of Jesus* [London: SCM, 1979], 291). Descamps presents a strong case for tracing the contents of the antitheses back to Jesus ('Essai d'interprétation de Mt. 5,17-48. "Formgeschichte" ou "Redaktionsgeschichte"?, *SE*, I, ed. Kurt Aland, *et al.* [TU 73; Berlin: Akademie, 1959], 171-72).

112. Meier, *Law and History*, 131. Every antithesis has Jesus' ἐγὼ δὲ λέγω ὑμῖν, but τοῖς ἀρχαίοις is omitted in the second, fifth and sixth, while the third has only ἐρρέθη δέ.

113. There is, apparently, only one instance of the dative of agency in the New Testament—Lk. 23.15 (BDF, #191; cf. also Patrick Fairbairn, *The Revelation of Law in Scripture* [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1957 (= 1869)], 228-29; Percy, *Botschaft*, 123-24; contra Ridderbos, *Kingdom*, 297-98; William Hendriksen, *New Testament Commentary: Exposition of the Gospel According to Matthew* [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1973], 295-96).

114. Cf. the rabbinic זוריות חר'אשונים (Barth, 'Matthew's Understanding', 93; Verweij, *Evangelium*, 18). Included also is probably the 'chain' of teachers who transmitted the law (SB, I, 253; Meier, *Law and History*, 132).

115. Percy, *Botschaft*, 124.

116. M.-J. Lagrange, *Evangile selon Saint Matthieu* (EBib; 5th edn; Paris: Gabalda, 1941), 97; Manson, *Sayings*, 155; Guelich, *Sermon*, 182. Since Matthew consistently uses the passive form of λέγω to introduce quotations of Scripture, it is likely that some reference to the OT is included when ἐρρέθη is found in the formula (G. Kittel, 'λέγω', *TDNT*, IV, 111-12; Schweizer, *Matthew*, 117; Meier, *Law and History*, 131; contra SB, I, 253; Barth, 'Matthew's Understanding', 93).

117. Cf. Gustaf Dalman, *Jesus-Jeshua: Studies in the Gospels* (New York: Macmillan, 1929), 58. ἠκούσατε may well suggest the fact of 'traditionally interpreted' quotation (SB, I, 253; Matthew Black, *An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts* (3rd edn; Oxford: Clarendon, 1967), 300; Trilling, *Israel*, 268-69; Percy, *Botschaft*, 124).

118. See especially David Daube (*The New Testament and Rabbinic Judaism* [New York: Arno, 1973 (= 1956)], 55-60) who suggests the paraphrase 'you have understood the meaning of the law to have been' for the first, second and fourth antitheses, 'you have understood literally' for the others. Cf. also I. Abrahams, *Studies in Pharisaism and the Gospels*, first series (New York: KTAV, 1967 [= 1924]), 16; Lohse, 'Ich aber', 193-96; Davies, *Setting*, 101; Hill, *Matthew*, 120. Morton Smith has suggested that τοῖς ἀρχαίοις is parallel to the rabbinic בראשונה, which would yield a meaning for the antithetical formula something like 'at first they used to say... they came around to saying' (*Tannaitic Parallels to the Gospels* [JBLMS, 6; Philadelphia: SBL, 1951], 28).

119. Meier, *Law and History*, 133; Guelich, *Sermon*, 182. Percy points out that the rabbinic formula is always used in the context of a refutation of one opinion *by means of appeal to Scripture*; a process completely unlike that in the antitheses (*Botschaft*, 124-25; cf. also Lohmeyer-Schmauch, *Matthäus*, 117).

120. Meier properly notes the diversity in the antitheses and cautions about '... making general statements that are meant to apply to all six equally' (*Law and History*, 128-29).

121. Pierre Bonnard, *L'Évangile selon Saint Matthieu* (CNT; Neuchâtel: Delachaux & Niestlé, 1963), 64.

122. Gerald Friedlander, *The Jewish Sources of the Sermon on the Mount* (New York: KTAV, 1969), 40-53; C.G. Montefiore, *Rabbinic Literature and Gospel Teachings* (New York: KTAV, 1970 [= 1930]), 38-56; SB, I, 276-82, 298-301.

123. Windisch, *Sermon*, 132.

124. Plummer, *Matthew*, 78; M'Neile, *Matthew*, 61.

125. Banks, *Jesus and the Law*, 188-89. Cf. especially Gen. 9.6; Ex. 21.12; Lev. 24.17. κρίσις probably connotes the punishment of God rather than a 'court of law' (Arndt, 454) and is probably chosen so as to provide a clear connection between the penalties for murder and for anger. The second and third descriptions of punishment in v. 22 are probably not intended to represent a *gradation* in punishment, but to expand and explain the first (G. Bertram, 'μωρός', *TDNT*, IV, 841-42; J. Jeremias, 'ῥακά', *TDNT*, VI, 975-76). For another explanation, see C.F.D. Moule, 'Uncomfortable Words: I. The Angry Word: Matthew 5.21f.', *ExpT* 81 (1969-70), 10-13.

126. On the distinction between the decalogue as 'principal' law and the developed system as 'case' law, see Gordon Wenham, 'Law and the legal system in the Old Testament', *Law, Morality and the Bible*, 28.

127. Banks, *Jesus and the Law*, 189, 191; Guelich, *Sermon*, 238, 258.

128. Although some would view vv. 31-32 as a continuation of the second antithesis (Günther Schmahl, 'Die Antitheses der Bergpredigt: Inhalt und Eigenart ihrer Forderungen', *TTZ* 83 [1974], 290), it is probably a separate unit (Meier, *Law and History*, 129; Guelich, *Sermon*, 197).

129. Cf. Mt. 19.7 and Mk 10.5, in which 'this commandment' probably refers not to *divorce*, but to the need to give the bill of divorce, *when* divorce occurs (contra Banks, *Jesus and the Law*, 149).

130. It is probable that the apodosis of Dt. 24.1-4 does not come until v. 4 (cf. RSV), in which case the only *command* is that a divorced woman, whose second husband has died, cannot remarry her first spouse (C.F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*, Vol. 1: *The Pentateuch* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, n.d.], 416-17).

131. The term in question is σκληροκαρδία, used only in this context in the NT. In the LXX this word, and its adjectival form (σκληροκάριος) are found four times, in each case with the sense 'spiritual obduracy'. Important also is the verbal form σκληρύνω which J. Behm defines as '... the



persistent unreceptivity of a man to the declaration of God's saving will . . . ' (TDNT, III, 614).

132. Thus, essentially, Lane, *Mark*, 355.

133. ערוה דבר, the phrase which appears to establish legitimate grounds for divorce, refers to a serious sexual sin (S.R. Driver, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Deuteronomy* [ICC: 3rd edn; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1895], 270-71). The school of Shammai advocated this translation, stressing the word ערוה. Jesus' position in Mt. 5.32 and 19.9 would seem to be rather close to Shammai's (and λόγος πορνείας may be a rough translation of the phrase from Dt., since the word order ערוה דבר does occur [M. Git. 9.10; cf. SB, I, 313]).

134. The grammatical case rests on understanding εἰ μὴ in Mt. 19.9 and παρεκτός in 5.32 in a 'preteritive' sense, in which case πορνεία is simply excluded from consideration (cf. Banks, *Jesus and the Law*, 153-59). But, as Fitzmyer says, this and other less likely grammatical re-interpretations are 'subterfuges to avoid the obvious' ('The Matthean Divorce Texts and Some New Palestinian Evidence', *TS* 37 [1976], 207).

More popular, and more defensible, have been attempts to give πορνεία a meaning other than the usual: anything forbidden by OT law (Bruce Malina, 'Does *Porneia* mean Fornication?', *NovT* 14 [1972], 10-17); premarital sex (Abel Isaakson, *Marriage and Ministry in the New Temple* [Lund: Gleerup, 1965], 127-41); marriage within prohibited degrees of kinship (Joseph Bonsirven, *Le divorce dans le Nouveau Testament* [Paris: Desclée, 1948], 50-60; Fitzmyer, 'Divorce Texts', 213-23; Meier, *Law and History*, 148-50; and especially Heinrich Baltensweiler, *Die Ehe im Neuen Testament* [Zurich: Zwingli, 1967], 87-102; Guelich, *Sermon*, 204-210). It is clear that πορνεία can have such a restricted meaning (particularly in the latter sense) when the context so indicates, but there are insufficient contextual factors to justify such a restriction in the Matthean texts.

135. As Hill points out, Jewish law required divorce in cases of adultery, and it is quite possible that Matthew simply makes this explicit (*Matthew*, 124-25, 280-81). Moreover, the tendency in Matthew is uniformly to make the demands of the law stricter, not to provide 'loopholes'.

136. Perhaps Mark and Luke are to be regarded as presupposing the exception (Hill, *Matthew*, 124-25, 280-81). But the omission is certainly a problem.

137. Ridderbos, *Kingdom*, 299.

138. Branscomb, *Jesus and the Law*, 152.

139. Contra, e.g., Hill, *Matthew*, 124.

140. Cf. especially Lev. 19.12; Num. 30.3; Dt. 23.21; Ps. 56.14. It is improbable that a reference to the third commandment is included (J. Schneider, 'ὁμύω', *TDNT*, V, 178; Banks, *Jesus and the Law*, 193-94).

141. *Sayings*, 158; cf. also Paul S. Minear, 'Yes or No: The Demand for Honesty in the Early Church', *NovT* 13 (1971), 2-3; Davies, *Setting*, 24.

142. Meier, *Law and History*, 151-52.

143. For the former, see SB, I, 321-28; Friedlander, *Jewish Sources*, 60-65; Montefiore, *Rabbinic Literature*, 48-50. Josephus claims that the Essenes forbade swearing (*Bf* 2.8.6) but also mentions a solemn entry oath (*Bf* 2.8.7). The evidence from the Scrolls is inconclusive, but it is probable that an entrance oath alone was allowed (Davies, *Setting*, 240-41).

144. Ernst Kutsch, "Eure Rede aber sei ja ja, nein nein", *EvT* (1960), 208-209; Schneider, 'ὄμνῶ', *TDNT*, V, 178; Montefiore, *Synoptic Gospels*, II, 68; Friedlander, *Jewish Sources*, 60; Banks, *Jesus and the Law*, 194-95; Meier, *Law and History*, 153-55. To view the phrases introduced by μήτε . . . μήτε as a list of oaths prohibited by Jesus is incorrect; μήτε is equivalent to μηδέ here and introduces examples of the kind of thing Jesus is combatting (SB, I, 328). Neither is it legitimate to view v. 37a as a new oath introduced by Jesus (Schneider, 'ὄμνῶ', *TDNT*, V, 180-81).

145. For examples, cf. SB, I, 328-36.

146. Hasler, 'Herzstück', 98-99; Stonehouse, *Witness*, 206-207; Murray, *Principles*, 171.

147. μη ὀμνύετε . . . μήτε ἄλλον τινὰ ὄρκον.

148. Meier (*Law and History*, 152) claims that oaths are commanded in the OT, but there is only one text of which this can be said (Ex. 22.10-13) and this is limited to a specific situation in the courts. Dt. 6.13 and 10.20, which Meier cites, should be regarded not as commands that vows be made, but that any vows made by God's people should be made to the Lord.

It would not appear that Jesus' words have relevance to the taking of an oath in a law court; he prohibits *all* oaths *voluntarily undertaken*.

149. Dupont, *Béatitudes*, I, 158.

150. *Law and History*, 157; cf. also Barth, 'Matthew's Understanding', 94.

151. Cf. Martin Noth, *Exodus: A Commentary* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1962), 132.

152. Hasler, 'Herzstück', 101-102; Stonehouse, *Witness*, 209; Murray, *Principles*, 174-75.

153. A number of scholars find in this antithesis the introduction of a new demand: whereas the law had *restrained* vengeance, Jesus *prohibits* it (Gutbrod, 'νόμος', *TDNT*, IV, 1064; M'Neile, *Matthew*, 69; Dupont, *Béatitudes*, I, 158; Marshall, *Luke*, 116).

154. Cf. J. Fichtner, 'πλησίον', *TDNT*, VI, 314.

155. Schultz, *Botschaft*, 186 (quoting Klostermann). Cf. also Banks, *Jesus and the Law*, 199. Spicq (*Agape*, I, 9-10) and O.J.F. Seitz ('Love your enemies', *NTS* [1969-70], 42-43) allow that 'hate your enemy' is a not unnatural extrapolation from the OT teaching.

156. Olaf Linton, 'St. Matthew 5,43', *ST* 18 (1964), 66.

157. 1QS 1.3, 9-10; 2.4-9. Cf. H. Bietenhard, 'Enemy', *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, I, 554; Furnish, *Love Command*, 42-47; Davies, *Setting*, 245 (possibly). Otherwise, it is possible

that a popular maxim is involved (SB, I, 353; Seitz, 'Love', 51; O. Michel, 'μισέω', *TDNT*, IV, 690). Morton Smith suggests that the phrase may have been a gloss in a targum ('Mt. 5.43: "Hate thine Enemy"', *HTR* 45 [1952], 71-72).

Montefiore, in a thorough survey of the rabbinic evidence, concludes that the sages did teach, in theory, a universal love; many teachings, in practice, failed to express it (*Rabbinic Literature*, 59-104).

158. W. Foerster, 'ἐχθρός', *TDNT*, II, 814; Furnish, *Love Command*, 46-47.

159. Contra Henry, *Ethics*, 226.

160. Robert Banks, 'Matthew's Understanding of the Law: Authenticity and Interpretation in Matthew 5.17-20', *JBL* 93 [1974], 235. Pace Schulz (*Botschaft*, 189) and Barth ('Matthew's Understanding', 63-64), it is not legitimate to find in Matthew's version a greater emphasis on the permanency of the law.

161. It is probable that Luke intends to include John *within* the period of the Kingdom (cf. Lk. 3.18 and Acts 1.22—Werner Georg Kümmel, "Das Gesetz und die Propheten gehen bis Johannes"—Lukas 16,16 im Zusammenhang der heilsgeschichtlichen Theologie der Lukasschriften', *Verborum Veritas* [für Gustav Stählin], ed. Otto Böcher and Klaus Haacker [Wuppertal: Brockhaus, 1970], 94-98; Marshall, *Luke*, 628; contra Hans Conzelmann, *The Theology of Saint Luke* [New York: Harper, 1961], 25-26 *et passim*).

162. *Jesus and the Law*, 210; Meier, *Law and History*, 71-73; Descamps, *Justes*, 161-62.

163. Walter Grundmann, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus* (THKNT; Berlin: Evangelische Verlag, 1968), 310.

164. Hamerton-Kelly, 'Attitudes', 19-32, provides a convenient discussion.

165. Theodor Zahn, *Das Evangelium des Matthäus* (4th edn; Leipzig: Deichert, 1922), 209-10, 215; Trilling, *Israel*, 173-74; Strecker, *Der Weg*, 144. (The use of ἦ rather than καὶ in 5.17 is probably due to the negative form of the sentence [Bonnard, *Matthieu*, 61].)

166. As do Sand, *Gesetz*, 186; Berger, *Gesetzesauslegung*, 224.

167. Bahnsen, *Theonomy*, 50-51.

168. Brevard S. Childs, 'Prophecy and Fulfillment: A Study of Contemporary Hermeneutics', *Int* 12 (1958), 204; Banks, *Jesus and the Law*, 208-209. The LXX never uses πληρόω to translate כִּי (on the LXX usage of πληρόω, cf. Descamps, *Justes*, 124-25) and the interchange of מִלֵּו and כִּי in the targums (Meier, *Law and History*, 74) is insufficient basis to overturn this factor.

169. The closest parallel to Mt. 5.17 in the use of καταλύω is 2 Macc. 2.22, where it is used with reference to the law and must mean 'abolish' or 'annul' (Grundmann, *Matthäus*, 145; Banks, *Jesus and the Law*, 207; contra Henrik Ljungman, *Das Gesetz Erfüllen: Matth. 5,17ff. und 3,15 untersucht* [Lunds Universitets Årsskrift, n.s. 50; Lund: Gleerup, 1954], 60-61).

170. (1) Supposing כִּי to lie behind πληρόω, the word has been translated

'confirm' or 'sustain' (Dalman, *Jesus-Jeshua*, 56-58; Branscomb, *Jesus and the Law*, 226-28; Daube, *New Testament*, 60-61); (2) πληρώω has been identified with כּוּן and καταλύω with לַעַב to give the contrast between 'doing' and 'neglecting' the law (cf. M. Abot 4.9; SB, I, 341; A. Schlatter, *Der Evangelist Matthäus* [Stuttgart: Calwer, 1957], 153-54; Jacob Jocz, *The Jewish People and Jesus Christ: the Relationship between Church and Synagogue* [3rd edn; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979], 26); (3) On the analogy of prophetic fulfillment, πληρώω has been interpreted to mean 'obey' (Zahn, *Matthäus*, 212-13; T.W. Manson, *Ethics and the Gospel* [London: SCM, 1960], 53-54); (4) With reference to a supposed parallel to Mt. 5.17 in TB Shabb. 116b, it has been suggested that πληρώω means 'add to' (Jeremias, *Theology*, 83-84); (5) 'to observe completely' is the sense suggested by Descamps (*Justes*, 127-31); (6) Ljungman, with reference to Mt. 3.15, argues for the meaning 'accomplish as a unity in Jesus' work' (*Gesetz*, 58-61); (7) Jesus' coming has been viewed as the basis for enabling himself and others to carry out God's demands (Julius Schniewind, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus* [NTD: 7th edn; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1954], 54).

171. R.C.H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Matthew's Gospel* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1943), 206-207; Henry, *Ethics*, 318; Ridderbos, *Kingdom*, 294; Bahnsen, *Theonomy*, 61-72; Nixon, 'Fulfilling', 56-57.

172. Although the following authors disagree on the exact nuance, they are united in giving πληρώω the sense 'give the complete or perfect meaning': Kümmel, 'Jüdische Traditionsgedanke', 128-29; Lagrange, *Matthieu*, 93-94; Dupont, *Béatitudes*, I, 138-44; Lohmeyer-Schmauch, *Matthäus*, 107-108; Wilder, *Eschatology*, 130; Schnackenburg, *Moral Teaching*, 57-58; Davies, 'Matthew 5.17, 18', 33-45; Floyd V. Filson, *A Commentary on the Gospel According to St. Matthew* (BNTC; London: Black, 1960), 83; Feuillet, 'Morale', 124; Grundmann, *Matthäus*, 145-46; Schweizer, *Matthew*, 107; Schulz, *Botschaft*, 182; Trilling, *Israel*, 174-79; Christoph Burchard, 'The Theme of the Sermon on the Mount', *Essays on the Love Command*, 73.

173. Banks, *Jesus and the Law*, 207-10; Meier, *Law and History*, 75-85. Meyer (*Aims of Jesus*, 153) says: 'His [Jesus] crowning revelation "fulfilled" the Torah by bringing it to its appointed eschatological completion'.

174. *Jesus and the Law*, 210.

175. Banks, *Jesus and the Law*, 210. Guelich similarly stresses the redemptive-historical focus of v. 17 and views the verse as a pronouncement of Jesus' bringing in the eschatological 'Zion-torah' (*Sermon*, 137-38, 163). And see also Meyer, *Aims of Jesus*, 143-51.

176. Cf. G. Schrenk, 'δικαιοσύνη', *TDNT*, II, 198.

177. Meier (*Law and History*, 76-81) deals with both these points. He argues that there is no significant difference between the passive use of πληρώω in the quotations and the active in 5.17. But it may be that he minimizes the difference: never in the NT is πληρώω in the passive followed by Jesus as the agent, which would be the parallel to 5.17. As to 3.15, he

suggests that πληρόω there may tie in with the use of the term in the fulfillment quotations.

178. Exponents of the view that Jesus 'intensified' the law in the antitheses are forced to argue that this intensification does not act directly on the commands which are cited. The view advocated above is able to retain the direct contact.

179. Cf. the parallels in Jewish literature (SB, I, 244-45).

180. E.g., Kümmel, 'Jüdische Traditionsgedanke', 127; Hans-Theo Wrege, *Die Überlieferungsgeschichte der Bergpredigt* (WUNT, 9; Tübingen: Mohr, 1968), 40.

181. Marshall, *Luke*, 630.

182. Inasmuch as Jesus, in both Mt. (24.35) and Lk. (21.33) clearly predicts the 'passing away of heaven and earth', it is incorrect to view this saying as equivalent to saying 'never' (H. Traub, 'οὐρανός', *TDNT*, V, 515; Meier, *Law and History*, 61).

183. It seems clear, however, that the ἕως clause is temporal (contra Eduard Schweizer ('Noch einmal Mt. 5,17-20', *Das Wort und die Wörter* [für Gerhard Friedrich], ed. Horst Balz and Siegfried Schulz [Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1973], 71), who wants to give the clause a *final* meaning and A.M. Honeyman ('Matthew V. 18 and the Validity of the Law', *NTS* 1 [1954-55], 141-42), who finds a Semitic construction which yields an inclusive and modal sense).

184. Wrege, *Bergpredigt*, 39; Sand, *Gesetz*, 38; Grundmann, *Matthäus*, 148; Schulz, *Botschaft*, 183; Hill, *Matthew*, 118. Schweizer has argued that the love command in particular is the subject ('Matth. 5.17-20: Anmerkungen zum Gesetzesverständnis des Matthäus', *Neotestamentica: Deutsche und Englische Aufsätze 1951-1963* [Zürich / Stuttgart: Zwingli, 1963], 400-405).

185. Cf. especially Meier, *Law and History*, 53-54, 61-62.

186. Jesus' death: Davies, 'Matthew 5.17, 18', 44-63; the Resurrection: Hamerton-Kelly, 'Attitudes', 30.

187. Meier (*Law and History*, 62-64; cf. Guelich, *Sermon*, 145-48) argues for the former; for the latter, cf. Lenski, *Matthew*, 204.

188. M'Neile, *Matthew*, 59.

189. Banks, *Jesus and the Law*, 216. And for more evidence for this view of this difficult logion, see especially Cranfield, *Mark*, 407-408.

190. Plummer, *Matthew*, 76.

191. Arndt, 545; contra Gutbrod ('νόμος', *TDNT*, IV, 1059), Banks (*Jesus and the Law*, 214-15) and Meier (*Law and History*, 52) who restrict the reference to the Pentateuch.

192. Fairbairn, *Law*, 226-27; MacKintosh, *Christ and the Law*, 23.

193. Bahnsen, *Theonomy*, 48.

194. Lagrange, *Matthieu*, 94; Bonnard, *Matthieu*, 62; Trilling, *Israel*, 179; G. Schrenk, 'ἐντολή', *TDNT*, II, 548-49; Sloyan, *End of the Law*, 49-51; Wenham, 'Jesus and the Law', 95.

195. Most scholars hold that v. 19 comes from Matthew's special tradition (Hamerton-Kelly, 'Attitudes', 21-27), although some suppose that it was joined to v. 18 in 'Q' (H. Schürmann, "Wer daher eines dieser geringsten Gebote auflöst . . .", *BZ* 4 [1960], 240-49; Meier, *Law and History*, 101-103).

196. Although Meier (*Law and History*, 92-95) argues that gradations in rank, not exclusion from the Kingdom, is meant.

197. For the first, see Schrenk, 'ἐντολή', *TDNT*, II, 548; for the second, Banks, *Jesus and the Law*, 221-23; for the third, Carlston, 'Things that Defile', 79. Against the last-named view, it does not appear that Matthew ever uses οὗτος prospectively.

198. A.T. Lincoln, 'From Sabbath to Lord's Day: A Biblical and Theological Perspective', *From Sabbath to Lord's Day*, 374. James D.G. Dunn (*Unity and Diversity in the New Testament: An Inquiry into the Character of Earliest Christianity* [Philadelphia: Westminster, 1977], 246) sees Matthew to be advocating 'continuing loyalty to the law, that is, for him, the law as interpreted by Jesus'. Guelich (*Sermon*, 153-55) finds v. 19 to be restricted by v. 20, which introduces the idea of the eschatological 'Zion-torah' (the term is Hartmut Gese's).

199. Barth ('Matthew's Understanding', 94-95) is a good representative of those who believe the seemingly divergent views of the law in Matthew are due to the fact that he was fighting on 'two fronts'—against a rabbinic-like stress on the law on the one hand and against antinomians on the other.

200. Banks ('Matthew 5.17-20', 236-40) defends the substantial authenticity of vv. 17-20. Although his interpretation differs slightly from mine, his arguments are nonetheless relevant here.

201. Cf. especially Banks, *Jesus and the Law*, 242-45; and also Verweij, *Evangelium*, 351.

202. Matthew's viewpoint is often characterized as 'Jewish-Christian' and seen to take a far more positive stance toward the written and oral law than, e.g., Mark or Luke (see, for instance, the presentation of Dunn, *Unity and Diversity*, 246-51).

203. *Kingdom*, 308.

204. The letter of the fourth commandment clearly specifies the *seventh* day, not simply a 'one-in-seven' principle.

205. Davies has suggested that the early Christians, taking up some inchoate indications in this direction in contemporary Judaism, may have come to view Jesus' teaching as a new *torah* (*Torah in the Messianic Age and/or the Age to Come* [JBLMS, 7; Philadelphia: SBL, 1952]; *Setting*, 122-88). But this is contested by Peter Schäfer, 'Die Torah der messianischen Zeit', *ZNW* 65 (1974) 27-42; and Robert Banks, 'The Eschatological Role of Law in Pre- and Post-Christian Jewish Thought', *Reconciliation and Hope*, 175-85.

206. Meyer, *Aims of Jesus*, 143.

207. Bahnsen's treatment (*Theonomy*) is flawed by a consistent failure to give adequate attention to such salvation-historical considerations. Similarly, approaches which emphasize the difference in *interpretation* of the law evidenced by Jesus and the Pharisees (cf. Stephen Westerholm, *Jesus and Scribal Authority* [CB, NT, 10; Lund: Gleerup, 1978]) often fail to come to grips with the radical shift in perspective brought by the coming of the Kingdom.