

Matthew 5:33

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths:

Analysis

Jesus addresses oath-taking, which Jewish law regulated carefully. Oaths invoked God's name or substitutes to guarantee truthfulness. But the practice had become corrupted—people used lesser oaths they felt free to break while claiming only God-oaths were truly binding.

Historical Context

The Third Commandment prohibited taking God's name in vain. Jewish tradition developed elaborate rules about which oaths were binding. Some teachers said oaths 'by heaven' or 'by Jerusalem' were non-binding, creating loopholes for dishonesty.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How do we create 'loopholes' in our speech to justify dishonesty or exaggeration?

2. What does the need for oaths reveal about human untrustworthiness?

Interlinear Text

Πάλιν	ἤκούσατε	ὅτι	ἐρρέθη	τοῖς	ἀρχαίοις	Οὐκ
Again	ye have heard	that	it hath been said	G3588	by them of old time	not
G3825	G191	G3754	G4483		G744	G3756
ἐπιорκήσεις	ἀποδώσεις	δὲ	τῷ	κυρίῳ	τοὺς	ὅρκους
Thou shalt	shalt perform	but	G3588	unto the Lord	G3588	oaths
G1964	G591	G1161		G2962		G3727
σου						
thine						
G4675						

Additional Cross-References

Deuteronomy 23:21 (References Lord): When thou shalt vow a vow unto the LORD thy God, thou shalt not slack to pay it: for the LORD thy God will surely require it of thee; and it would be sin in thee.

Leviticus 19:12 (References Lord): And ye shall not swear by my name falsely, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God: I am the LORD.

Deuteronomy 23:23 (References Lord): That which is gone out of thy lips thou shalt keep and perform; even a freewill offering, according as thou hast vowed unto the LORD thy God, which thou hast promised with thy mouth.

Psalms 76:11 (References Lord): Vow, and pay unto the LORD your God: let all that be round about him bring presents unto him that ought to be feared.

Exodus 20:7 (References Lord): Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

Deuteronomy 5:11 (References Lord): Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain: for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

Psalms 50:14 (Parallel theme): Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the most High:

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