

application of the lex talionis -- as a principle of equity in court cases rather than a principle of vengeance in personal relationships.

MAT 5:43 "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor, and hate your enemy.'

MAT 5:44 "But I say to you, love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you

MAT 5:45 in order that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.

MAT 5:46 "For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax-gatherers do the same?

MAT 5:47 "And if you greet your brothers only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same?

MAT 5:48 "Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

Here is another case of rabbinic interpretation -- an interpretation which has added "what is said" (i.e., oral law) to "what is written" (i.e., the written Law of God). The first half of verse 43 is clearly from Leviticus 19:18 -- "You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the sons of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself; I am the Lord." But the second half of verse 43 is just as clearly not in or in accord with the O.T. at all! The O.T. not only commanded love for the Israelite neighbor, but commanded Israelites to love strangers in the same way. Thus Leviticus 19:34 states: "The stranger who resides with you shall be to you as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself; for you were aliens in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God." And what Christ objects to is not the O.T. teaching (with which He is in perfect accord), but the addition, "and hate your enemy."

R. Laird Harris says:

But it seems clear enough that this additional phrase is just what we may have expected the scribal interpreter of the ancient law of Israel to have added. To love one's neighbour would imply by logical inference - so the scribes would have reasoned - its opposite. But Jesus cuts through their sophistry by an appeal to the example of the God of the Old Testament who does good to all. So Jesus is here not contradicting the Old Testament, He is rather disagreeing with the foolish and wicked scribal commentary.

MAT 6:1 "Beware of practicing your righteousness before men to be noticed by them; otherwise you have no reward with your Father who is in heaven.

MAT 6:2 "When therefore you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be honored by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full.

MAT 6:3 "But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing