

# The Signs of the Times.

"Behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." Rev. 22: 12.

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## The Signs of the Times

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### The Talents.

HAVE you read of the servant who hid in the earth  
The talent his master had given?  
When by diligent use to redouble its worth  
He ought to have faithfully striven?

My friend, you have talents—God gave them to you  
And will surely require them again.  
Take care not to waste them, if ever so few,  
Let them not have been given in vain.

You have Speech; then remember to watch your words  
well.  
And let them be gentle and kind.

It may seem a small matter, but no one can tell  
The comfort a word leaves behind.

You have Time: Every minute and hour of the day,  
Is spent by your Father in Heaven,  
Make haste to improve ere it passes away,  
The talent so graciously given.

You have Influence, too, though it seems very small;  
Yet in greater or less degree.

You assist the improvement and comfort of all  
With whom you may happen to be.

You have talents of Gold which by Heaven were lent  
Every want of the poor to relieve.

Oh, use them as blessings so graciously sent,  
Tis more blessed to give, than receive.

And the man who in earnest endeavors to live  
As an heir of eternity ought,  
By his silent Example a lesson may give,  
Which by words he would never have taught.

Then consider the talents intrusted to you,  
And may they be duly improved,  
Let your service be heart and soul, as is due  
From children so greatly beloved.

### General Articles.

#### SERMON ON THE MOUNT.

BY MRS. E. G. WHITE.

THE Redeemer of the world sought to make his lessons so simple that all could understand who heard them. It was not his choice to teach within walls or temples. True, he often did so in order to reach a class whom he would not be likely to meet while speaking in the open air, but Jesus preferred the fields, the groves, and the lake-sides for his temples. There were also his favorite resorts for meditation and prayer.

He had special reasons for choosing these natural sanctuaries in which to give instruction to the people. The landscape lay before him, rich in scenes and objects familiar alike to the lofty and the humble. From these he drew illustrations that simplified his teachings, and impressed them firmly upon the minds of his hearers. The birds caroling in the leafy branches, the glowing flowers of the valley, the spotless flocks resting on the bosom of the lake, the lofty trees, the fruitful lands, the waving grain, the barren soil, the tree that bore no fruit, the mighty hills, the babbling brooks, the setting sun that tinted and gilded the heavens all served as means of instruction, or as emblems by which he taught the beauties of divine truth. He connected the visible works of the Creator with the words of life which he spoke, and thus led the mind from the contemplation of Nature unto Nature's God.

The malice of the Jews was so great in consequence of the miracle of Jesus in healing the man with the withered hand on the Sabbath day, that he with his disciples withdrew to a more favorable field of labor. They went to the sea-side of Galilee, and great multitudes followed him, for this new miracle wrought upon the Sabbath day was noised abroad through all that region. As Jesus taught, many of the sick, and those possessed with demons, were brought to him,

and he made them whole. His great heart of love was filled with divine pity for the poor sufferers, many of whom sought only to draw near enough to touch him, believing that in so doing they would be healed, and in this they were not disappointed, for the touch of faith brought healing power from the great Physician, and their distress and gloom were changed to joy and thanksgiving. He also cast out many demons, who, in leaving their victims, acknowledged Christ, saying, "Thou art the Son of God."

The people of Galilee were greatly aroused, and flocked to the presence of the Saviour. At length the crowd so increased that he scarcely had room to stand, and therefore entered a small ship, which was near the shore, and there preached to the crowd that thronged upon the beach. So he labored uninterruptedly in teaching the people and in healing the sick. But when the day was far spent he stole away and hid himself in the solitude of the mountain, to commune with his Father in secret. Jesus spent the entire night in prayer, while his disciples slept at the foot of the mountain. About dawn he came and wakened them. The disciples were now about to receive an office of sacred responsibility, second only to that of Christ himself. They were to be set apart for the gospel work. They were to be linked with Jesus, to be with him, to share his joys and trials, to receive his teachings, and be faithful witnesses of his mighty works, that they might be able to impart the instruction thus gained to the world. They were to be qualified so that Jesus could at times send them forth alone to teach and work even as he taught and worked. Jesus wished his disciples to gain an experience in the gospel labor while he was on earth to comfort and direct them, so that they would be able to successfully continue the work after his death, and lay the foundation of the Christian church.

While Jesus was preparing his disciples for their ordination, and instructing them as to the duties of the great work that lay before them, Judas urged his presence among them. This man made great professions of devotion to Jesus, and proposed to become one of his disciples. Said he, "Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest." Jesus did not warmly receive him, neither did he repulse him, but addressed him with these words of mournful pathos, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." Judas was selfish, and his main object in seeking a connection with Christ was to obtain temporal advantages through him; but Christ's reference to his own poverty, contrasting his condition with that of the foxes and the birds, was designed to cut off any hope Judas might cherish of securing earthly gain by becoming a follower of Christ. Judas was a man of acknowledged executive ability, and possessed of no small influence. For these reasons the disciples were anxious that he should form one of their number. They commended him in the highest terms to Jesus, as one who would greatly assist him in his work. They were therefore surprised that he received him so coolly; but the Saviour read the heart of Judas, and knew, even then, the part he was to act in his future betrayal and execution. Still, Jesus wished to connect this man with himself, that he might learn his divine mission, and gain moral strength to overcome the defects in his character, and experience an entire change of heart that would ensure his salvation. This it was possible for him to do, through the help of Christ.

Had Jesus repulsed Judas, the disciples, who regarded him with such favor, would have questioned, in their own minds, the wisdom of their Master. In receiving him, Jesus avoided this, and also placed the selfish and avaricious Judas in the most favorable position to develop qualities of mind and heart that would eventually gain for him a place in the kingdom of Heaven. But notwithstanding these precious opportunities Judas chose a course that covered him with everlasting infamy.

Gathering his disciples about him, Jesus bowed his head, and, laying his hands

upon their heads, offered a prayer, dedicating them to his sacred work. Thus were the Lord's disciples ordained to the gospel ministry. This being accomplished, Jesus with his companions returned to the sea-side, where the multitudes were already gathering to hear him. Many of them were there for the purpose of being relieved of various maladies. Here he healed the sick and comforted the sorrowing, until the crowd increased so that there was not room for them upon the narrow beach. Jesus therefore moved up the mountain to a level space where the people could be accommodated. Here Jesus called his disciples near him, that the great truths he uttered might not fail to be indelibly impressed upon their minds, and that nothing might divert their attention from his words.

Though the disciples were close about him, and his words seemed specially addressed to them, yet they were also designed to reach the hearts and consciences of the mixed crowd there assembled. At every large gathering of this kind, the people still expected that Jesus would make some great display of power in regard to the new kingdom of which he had spoken. The believing Jews looked for him to free them from the yoke of bondage and reinstate them in their ancient glory. But in his sermon on the mount Christ disappointed their hopes of earthly glory. He opened his discourse by stating the principles that should govern his kingdom of divine grace, as contained in the several beatitudes.

"Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven." The poor in spirit are those who claim no personal merit, and boast of no virtue in themselves. Realizing their utter helplessness, and deeply convicted of sin, they put no faith in mere outward ceremonies, but cast themselves upon Jesus who is all-righteous and all-compassionate. The Christian can only rise through humility. The proud heart strives in vain to earn salvation by good works; for though one cannot be saved without good works, yet these alone will not suffice to win eternal life. After he has done all he can, Christ must impute to him his own righteousness.

In Christ, God has bestowed Heaven's best gift to redeem man, and, as the gift is full and infinite, so is saving grace boundless and all-sufficient. This saying of Christ struck at the very root of the self-righteousness of the Pharisees, who felt themselves already rich in spiritual knowledge, and did not realize their need to learn more. Such characters could have no part in the kingdom of Christ.

"Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted." In pronouncing a blessing upon those who mourn, Jesus did not design to teach that there is any virtue in living under a perpetual cloud, nor that selfish sorrow and repining has any merit of itself to remove a single stain of sin. The mourning spoken of by Christ is a godly sorrow for sin, that works repentance unto eternal life. Many grieve when their guilt is discovered, because the result of their evil course has brought them into disagreeable circumstances. It was thus that Esau mourned the sin of despising and selling his birth-right; but it was the unexpected consequence of that sin which caused his grief. So Pharaoh regretted his stubborn defiance of God, when he cried for the plagues to be removed from him; but his heart was unchanged, and he was ready to repeat his crime when tempted. Such mourning is not unto repentance.

He who is truly convicted of sin feels his whole life to have been one continued scene of ingratitude. He feels that he has robbed his best friend of the time and strength which was bought for him at an infinite price. His whole soul is filled with unutterable sorrow that he has slighted and grieved his compassionate Saviour. Such mourning is precious, for it will yield the peaceful fruits of righteousness. The worldling, from his standpoint, may pronounce this sorrow a weakness; but it is the strength which binds the penitent to the Infinite One with links that cannot be broken. It reveals that the angels of God are bringing back to his soul the graces which were lost through hardness of

heart and transgression. To confess and deplore one's errors evinces an excellency of character capable of discerning and correcting them. The tears of the penitent are only the clouds and the raindrops that precede the sunshine of holiness, the sorrow that heralds a joy that will be a living fountain in the soul. Men are sowing in God's great field with toil and tears, yet with patient expectation; and they will be blessed, for the heavens will open and the rain will fall, insuring a bountiful harvest. Then when the Reaper comes, he will return with joy bringing home his sheaves.

"Blessed are the meek; for they shall inherit the earth." The difficulties that the Christian encounters may be very much lessened by that meekness of character which hides itself in Christ. Jesus invites all the weary and heavy laden to come unto him who is meek and lowly in heart, that they may find rest. If the Christian possesses the humility of his Master, he will rise above the slights, the rebuffs, and annoyances to which he is daily exposed, and they will cease to cast a gloom over his spirit. That meekness which Jesus blessed, operates amid the scenes of domestic life; it makes the home happy, it provokes no quarrels, gives back no angry answers, but soothes the irritated temper, and diffuses a gentleness which is felt by all within its charmed circle. It calms the inflammable spirit of retaliation, and mirrors forth the character of Christ.

Far better would it be for Christians to suffer under false accusations than to inflict upon themselves the torture of retaliation against their enemies. Hatred and revenge are instigated by Satan, and bring only remorse to him who cherishes them. Lowliness of heart is the strength that gives victory to the Christian. His reward is an inheritance of glory.

"Blessed are they who do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled." As the body feels the necessity for temporal food to supply the waste of the system, and preserve the physical strength, so the soul should long for that spiritual nourishment that increases the moral strength, and satisfies the cravings of the mind and heart. As the body is continually receiving the nutriment that sustains life and vigor, so should the soul constantly receive the heavenly food which gives nerve and muscle to spirituality. As the weary traveler eagerly seeks the spring in the desert, and, finding it, quenches his burning thirst with its cool and sparkling water, so should the Christian thirst for and seek the pure water of life, of which Christ is the fountain. There the soul may be satisfied, there the fever born of worldly strife is allayed, and the spirit is forever refreshed. But a majority of those who listened to Jesus hungered only for worldly advantages and honor. Especially did the self-exaltation of the Pharisees prevent them from longing for any higher attainments than they had already reached, for in their own estimation they were at the very pinnacle of perfect righteousness. However, there were many who heard thankfully the lessons of Jesus, and from that time, shaped their lives according to his teachings.

"Blessed are the merciful; for they shall obtain mercy." Here Jesus struck a blow at the arrogance and cruel intolerance of the Jews. Both priests and people were, as a rule, overbearing, quarreling with all who opposed them, severely critical and resentful of any reflection cast upon their own acts. Jesus said of the Pharisees, "Ye tithe mint, and rue, and all manner of herbs, and pass over judgment and the love of God." The Saviour desired to teach his followers a lesson of mercy that they should not be wanting in that tender compassion which pities and aids the suffering and erring, and avoids magnifying the faults of others.

(To be Continued.)

ONE always receiving, never giving, is like the common world, in which we never flow but never remain.

## THE SABBATH IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.

WE have shown in previous articles that the first day of the week is mentioned only eight times in the New Testament, and is not in a single instance spoken of as a sacred day, or a day of rest. In contrast, we have shown that the Sabbath is mentioned fifty-nine times in the New Testament, and in every instance reference is made to the day of the week on which the Creator rested from his work, the day he set apart as his, the day on which he put his blessing.

We have also shown that the observance of the first day of the week cannot gather strength from the example of Christ and the first apostles, but that the example of the apostles is decidedly on the side of the divine precept in support of the observance of the seventh day of the week as the sanctified Rest-day of the Lord.

But here we are met by a certain class of opponents of the primeval Sabbath with the assertion that only nine of the ten commandments are given in the New Testament, and that the Sabbath is purposely left out. Writers and speakers use different terms. It is sometimes stated that "every other precept of the decalogue is re-affirmed in the New Testament excepting the Sabbath." And it is not unfrequently the case that ministers will so far presume upon the ignorance and credulity of the people as to affirm that nine of the ten commandments are given *verbatim* in the New Testament, and that the Sabbath of the Old Testament is carefully kept out of the New.

With these statements which, as we shall show, are utterly void of truth they give the impression that the Sabbath is not as important in the Christian, as in the Jewish dispensation. And those who can accept such statements without investigation, will not only rest satisfied with a false position, but they will regard the agitation of the Sabbath question as unnecessary and even wrong. The fact that our opponents make a stronger impression on the public mind with their broad assertions on this point than by any other attack, is our apology for testing their statements in a plain and thorough manner by the Word of God.

We appeal to men of candor, who will respect truth and love it for the truth's sake. Of men who will through prejudice reject the plain truth of God's Word, and trample it under their feet, we have no hope. We freely admit that the fourth commandment is not given *verbatim*, that is, word for word, in the New Testament. And it is just as true that only the three short commandments are thus repeated. The sixth, seventh and eighth only are repeated in the New Testament. Does this fact release men from keeping the first, second, third, fourth, fifth, ninth and tenth? No, indeed. "Thou shalt not kill; thou shalt not commit adultery; thou shalt not steal," are the only precepts of the decalogue which are repeated word for word in all the New Testament. Let the most critical eye search this matter fully. We state the facts in the case.

What, then, can be said of those ministers who will state to audiences hastening to the bar of God to be judged by the moral law, and in the very face of Heaven, that nine of the ten commandments are given *verbatim* in the New Testament? Their egregious assertions must be attributed either to inexcusable ignorance of the subject, or to the custom of handling the Word of God deceitfully. If they are so grossly ignorant of the subject as to shield them from the charge of clerical trickery, and uttering deliberate falsehood in the house of God, they have no business meddling with the subject.

The ten precepts of the moral code did exist from the days of fallen Adam, and were binding on the people before they were spoken from Sinai, and written upon tables of stone. This is evident from the fact that the Bible contains a record of the very sins which are the violation of each one of the ten commandments, as existing before the law was declared in the hearing of the people at Sinai. Where there is transgression there must be law. Remove law, and sin ceases to exist. "For where no law is, there is no transgression." Rom. 4:15. The sin of Sabbath-breaking was rebuked as early as thirty days before the ten commandments were spoken from Sinai. This fact is fully established by comparing Ex. 16:1, 23-30; 19:1.

And there is no intimation in all the Old Testament that God would at any time change any of the precepts of his moral code. That law being in its nature changeless as the very throne of Heaven, once written in the Old Testament, accompanied with the record of the circumstances of awful grandeur that attended its rehearsal at Sinai, the Lord has not seen fit to have it written a second time in the New Testament. The Holy Ghost never undertook to give the divine law a new account in the New Testament. The tables in their years after resurrection appeal to the

moral code as given in the Old Testament as the highest living authority in Heaven, or on the earth. They state moral duties and obligation, and refer to the precepts of the moral code to sustain their propositions. If it had been left to Paul, Peter, James, John and Jude, to give the moral code, or nine-tenths of it over again in the New Testament, those faithful men would have done it, and we should be able to read those precepts word for word in their writings.

Our opponents see as clearly as we do, that it is necessary to their position that nine of the ten commandments should appear in the New Testament, word for word. Hence the temptation before the minds of those ministers who feel that they must preserve the unity of their flocks to give a false impression to quiet the minds of the people upon the Sabbath question.

This fact crops out in the statement of those opponents who manifest more regard for party than a clear conscience in the statement that nine of the ten commandments are given *verbatim* in the New Testament. They see the need that it should be so; and, feeling it important that the people should view the matter thus, in order that they be shielded from the claims of the fourth commandment, they seem to adopt the policy of the Roman church, that "the end justifies the means," and give themselves up, even in the house of God, to the utterance of a deliberate untruth.

We stand upon the grand old moral code, the only document in the universe that has the honor to have been spoken by the voice of God in the hearing of the assembled people, and to have been engraven with his finger on the tables of stone. Do our opponents declare that moral code revised, so that only nine of its precepts should be observed by Christians? Then we inquire: What prophet has foretold that this should be done? What apostle has recorded the fact that this has been done? The Bible is silent upon the subject. No such revision of the moral code has taken place.

Do any still urge that the apostles have revised the moral code so as to release men from the claims of the fourth commandment? Then we again inquire: Where is the revised code? What scribe ever copied it? What printer ever printed it? What book-seller ever sold it? What colporteur ever carried it about the country to throw into laps of the dear children to impress them with the fact that there are nine commandments, and only nine, for Christians to observe?

Our pen is at this time dealing with plain facts in a pointed manner. And, may be, we shall be pardoned by the candid reading public for inquiring: Do these men who have the moral code revised, or changed in some way, so as to release Christians from the observance of the Sabbath of the fourth commandment, really believe that any such revision has taken place? If they do, why not produce a copy of the revised code? Please pass it in, gentlemen. When you will produce the new code, brought into existence by as good authority as that which originated the old, we will be happy to accept it as the moral law for Christians, and cease to agitate the public mind with the Sabbath question. But until you do this, we shall cling to the original document, and plead for the observance of all its precepts by Christian men.

Again we inquire: Do these men believe what they say, when they tell the people that the fourth precept of the moral code has been revised, or so changed that Christians are released from the observance of the last day of the week? We make this pointed appeal with the fact in full view, known everywhere, that in the several branches of the mammoth Sunday-school institution the old moral code of ten commandments has been thrown into the laps of a million of the dear youth of our land, printed word for word as God spoke it from Sinai, and as he wrote it on the tables of stone. If the divine law has been revised, why do not the managers of the American Tract Society, which has the support of nearly a score of the leading denominations of our land, publish the new code for all the Sunday-schools. Why send out from their publishing house in New York cart-loads of primers and cards in which are printed the ten commandments to make a false impression on the tender minds of the lambs of Christ's fold, if that moral code is not to be understood, and observed word for word, just as it reads? Why not print the revised code, make a correct impression on the minds of the youth, and free the subject from present embarrassment, if they believe what they teach?

It will appear evident to every candid mind that these religious bodies who are printing and circulating the original moral code do not really believe that it has been revised. To say the least, want of faith in the revision doctrine has kept them from getting the several precepts of the revised code together in due form, and publishing it to the Christian world.

We are delighted to see that one of the fair pages of the Baptist hymn book is devoted to the ten commandments, word for word, just as we teac-

and observe them. Most certainly they did not put the ten commandments in their beautiful hymn and tune book, that they might sing them. No, they have put this grand old moral code with the sacred songs of the house of God, from reverence and love for its Divine Author, and that while under the inspiration of worship their hearts may be impressed with the sacred duty to observe all his commandments. God bless the Baptists. In making the commandments thus prominent they remind us of the Word of the Lord to the Hebrews by Moses: "And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates." Deut. 6:7-9.

In 1873, before a crowded audience at Woodland, Cal., we called for the revised copy of the moral code from the New Testament, containing nine of the ten precepts of the decalogue. Prof. Martin of the Christian College of that place in a review undertook the task of presenting them. As there is a general agreement with those who hold this view, we give Mr. Martin's nine as a sample of the rest. If, however, any should be dissatisfied with any of his, they are urgently invited to improve Mr. Martin's revised New Testament code. And in order to bring the matter directly before the eye of the reader we will give nine of the precepts of the moral code as repeated from Sinai, and engraven on the tables of stone, side by side with what is said to be the revised code in the New Testament, as made out by Prof. Martin.

## ORIGINAL CODE.

1. Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

2. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them; for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me, and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keeping my commandments.

3. 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.

5. Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

6. Thou shalt not kill.

7. Thou shalt not commit adultery.

8. Thou shalt not steal.

9. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

10. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house; thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbor's.

## REVISED CODE.

1. Get thee behind me, Satan; for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. Luke 4:8.

2. Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars' hill, and said, Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you. God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of Heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands. Acts 17:22-23.

3. But above all things, my brethren swear not, neither by Heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath; but let your yea be yea, and your nay, lest ye fall into condemnation. James 5:12.

5. Children obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honor thy father and mother, which is the first commandment with promise, that it may be well with them, and thou mayest live long on the earth. Eph. 6:1-3.

6. Thou shalt not kill. Rom. 13:9.

7. Thou shalt not commit adultery. Rom. 13:9.

8. Thou shalt not steal. Rom. 13:9.

9. Thou shalt not bear false witness. Rom. 13:9.

10. Thou shalt not covet. Rom. 13:9.

Before calling special attention to the quotations which are said to constitute the new moral code for Christians, we wish to make some general remarks touching the heresy we are reviewing.

1. All talk about the "re-affirming of the nine commandments," and the "revised moral code," is on the supposition that the ten commandments were abrogated at the death of Christ. Mark this: The position is that all ten of the commandments were in full force up to the time of the death of Christ, and that, with the death of the world's Redeemer, the moral code also died.

2. As the decalogue was the living moral code throughout the entire ministry of the Son of God until the hour of his death upon the cross, it would be more than childish to quote any of Christ's words spoken during his public ministry, as re-affirming any of its precepts. Whatever, therefore, may be claimed from the New Testament as re-affirming nine of the precepts of the decalogue, must be found in the Acts and Epistles of the apostles.

3. But bad for their theory this gives a period between the death of the moral code at the cross, and the re-affirming of the nine precepts by the apostles in which there is no law. And "where no law is, there is no transgression." Rom. 4:15. This view gives a sinless period to the world of more than twenty long years. Not sinless however because of any change in men; but because of the supposed decease of God's Moral Detecter, "For by the law is the knowledge of sin." Rom. 3:20.

Beginning with the first, we now briefly notice the passages which these gentlemen who have the divine law abolished, and a part of it re-enacted, would have the Christian world believe are the new code for the Christian age. For their first com-