

'Of the Religion of the Jews & Christians'

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Chap. Of the religion of the Jews & Christians.

All religion may be distinguished into three sorts, natural, civil, divine, natural which is dictated by the light of nature that is by right reason, civil which is dictated only by the will of man, divine which is dictated by the will of God. All natural religion is comprehended in these two præcepts: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart & with all thy soul & with all thy mind. This is the first & great commandment, & the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy self. On these two commandments hang all the law & the Prophets. They are dictated by the light of nature & by the truth of them is manifested the truth of the law & the Prophets which are in all things consonant to them & founded upon them & whose grand design is to inculcate them.

The wisdom & power which appears in the frame of the world & of its various parts is sufficient to convince men that they were framed by a wise & powerful being, & in gratitude we are to give thanks & honour & glory to our benefactor & to him alone for our being & for the blessings of meat & drink & raiment which we receive from him. And since he is the first cause & by consequence of necessity everlasting & every where immoveably we are to conceive him always invisibly present to us at all times & in all places & that he knows all things we say or do or think, without ever being seen by us & to distinguish him from all visible beings by invoking him without his appearing, & speaking to them only when they appear.

Religion is either natural & of eternal obligation or positive & mutable. The natural is comprehended in these two precepts Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart & with all thy soul & with all thy mind. This is the first & great commandment & the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy self. On these two commandments hang all the law & the prophets. The positive [is [either revealed & true or invented by man & false The revealed] consisted chiefly in ceremonies significant of things past present or to come & in believing the things, [The invented is for honouring dead men & carrying on the interest of the living] the chief of which was the coming of the Messiah. adumbrated in the Paschal lamb. prophet predicted by Moses & præfigured by the paschal Lamb & the Christ or Messiah predicted by Daniel.

Chap. **Of the Christian religion & it's corruption in morality.**

The Christian religion was the same with the Iewish till the Calling of Cornelius & the Gentiles with this only addition that Iesus who was crucified under Pontius Pilate was the Prophet predicted by Moses & the Christ or Messiah predicted by Daniel, & that he rose from the dead & ascended into heaven & is to return & judge & rule the quick & dead, & that we are to testify our becoming his disciples by baptism & to give him honour & glory on account of his death, & to commemorate it often & direct our prayers to God in his name, & upon repentance to hope for remission of sins by his merits. But when the Iewish nation received not this doctrine, God rejected them, & called the Gentiles without obliging them to observe the law of Moses, & soon after caused the Iewish worship to cease & the Iews to be dispersed into all nations

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The street & the wall of Ierusalem was finished in the 28th year – – – – – cause to return & to build Ierusalem.

Before this desolation the Iews continued a people – – – – became Gods people & increased under various persecutions the last of which was that vehement & lasting persecution under the Emperors Dioclesian Galerius & Maximinus which ended in the conversion of the Roman Empire to Christianity by the victories of Constantine the great first over Maxentius A.C. 312 then over Maximinus A.C. 314 & lastly over Licinius A.C 318.

The moral part of religion is comprehended in these two precepts, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart & with all thy soul & with all thy mind. This is the first & great commandment & the next is like unto it Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy self. Vpon these two hang all the law & the prophets. This is that part of religion which ever was & ever will be binding to all nations being of an eternal immutable nature. And it was practised by the first Christians while they continued in affliction under the Roman heathen Emperors that is for about 180 years, their affliction purging them from hypocrites & vitious livers: But after the Empire by the victories of Constantine became Christian, the Christians by the prosperity of their affairs, & by the flowing in &c – – –