Loving Thy Neighbor as Thyself: The Place of Judaism in the Identity of the English Unitarians

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Abstract

In the last quarter of the eighteenth century, the Unitarian movement, led by Theophilus Lindsey and Joseph Priestley, emerged in England in an environment already wrought with religious, intellectual and political dissent. These theologians descended from a two and a half century tradition of antitrinitarian thought that had begun with Michael Servetus during the Protestant Reformation. Antitrinitarianism, as a theological position that denied the doctrine of the Trinity, was perhaps the most conceptually disruptive proposal to emerge from this already tumultuous period of the sixteenth century. The extremity of the theological problems posed by denying the Trinity was due to the fact that many believed Jesus' divinity to be the defining element of Christianity. Moreover, the only people who denied the Trinity were the Jews. As if to emphasize this concern, early antitrinitarians fixated upon post-biblical Jewish sources and the Hebrew language; they began to connect themselves intimately to the Jewish heritage and to identify intensely with the Jewish people as the proper worshippers of the one, true God.

Exhibiting similar aberrant patterns of behavior, the eighteenth century Unitarians identified more closely with the Jewish people and Judaism than any before them while still contending unwaveringly that they were Christians. By analyzing the story of the Unitarians – their heritage, their defenses of themselves and their beliefs, and the perceptions of their enemies – we can understand not only the unique ways that these people conceptualized their own religious identity as Christians and investigate how these Christians’ identities were related intimately to Judaism, but we can also begin to understand the complicated and interdependent relationship between these two ancient faiths.

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English sentences with "love thy neighbor as thyself" in context. 11 exact matches15 similar. 1. "Love thy neighbor as thyself," Jesus said. The New Yorker. 2. It also reaffirms the truth of the ancient injunction to "love thy neighbor as thyself" -- it turns out to be literally accurate, give or take a modest number of genes. The New York Times - Science. 5. When the Athena Group recently converted the former House of Living Judaism, 838 Fifth Avenue, at 65th Street, it preserved features like the inscription over the entrance: "Love Thy Neighbor as Thyself". The New York Times. 6. I managed to put in chronological order the sayings: "I have not yet begun to fight"); "My kingdom for a horse"); "A rose is a Contemporary English Version All the Law says can be summed up in the command to love others as much as you love yourself. Good News Translation For the whole Law is fulfilled in one statement: Love your neighbor as yourself. American Standard Version For the whole Law is fulfilled in one statement: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Contemporary English Version For the Law is fulfilled in one commandment: "Love your neighbor as you love yourself." Holman Christian Standard Bible For the whole Law is fulfilled in one statement: Love your neighbor as yourself. American Standard Version For the whole Law is fulfilled in one statement: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Douay-Rheims Bible For all the Law is fulfilled in one word: Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Darby Bible Translation For the whole Law is fulfilled in one word, in Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

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