

The Greek and Roman Experiments

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The Greeks and later the Romans also tried to build society upon their gods. But these gods were not big enough because they were finite, limited. Even all their gods put together were not infinite.

Actually, the gods in Greek and Roman thinking were like men and women larger than life, but not basically different from human men and women. As one example among thousands, we can think of the statue of Hercules, standing inebriated...

Hercules was the patron god of Herculaneum which was destroyed at the same time as Pompeii. The gods were amplified humanity, not divinity. Like the Greeks, the Romans had no infinite God.

This being so, they had no sufficient reference point intellectually; that is, they did not have anything big enough or permanent enough to which to relate either their thinking or their living. Consequently, their value system was not strong enough to bear the strains of life, either individual or political.

All their gods put together could not give them a sufficient base for life, morals, values, and final decisions. These gods depended on the society which had made them, and when this society collapsed the gods tumbled with it. Thus, the Greek and Roman experiments in social harmony (which rested on an elitist republic) ultimately failed.

(How Should We Then Live?: The Rise and Decline of Western Thought and Culture by Francis A. Schaeffer, Westchester, Illinois: Crossway Books, 1976, 21, Paragraph Structure Modified)