

Any person found guilty of Denying God or any of the persons of the Blessed Trinity, or, if he obstinately continues therein, liable to the pain of death Act 21 Stat. 1 Ch. 2. Who in writing or Discourse, or any Impression, Quarrel, or Argument or Reason against the Being of God, or any of the persons of the Trinity, or the Authority of the Scriptures, or the providence of God, shall for the first fault be imprisoned till he is satisfied by publickly inquiring of the Congregation where the scandal was given for the second fault shall be fined in a Year or the third part of his Real Estate and the twentieth part of his free personal Estate, half to the poor of the parish where the Crime is committed and half to the prisoner and further shall suffer Imprisonment till he gives satisfaction to the Congregation as aforesaid. The offender for the third time is punishable by death as an obstinate Blasphemer. The first fault may be tried and punished by any Magistrate, Justice or Minister of Law in Scotland; the second by the Sheriff, Steward, Bailiffs of Burghs and Regalities and their Deputies; and the third by the Courts of Justiciary Act 11 Stat. 5 Ch. 1. R. W. Saying at the Doctrine of the Holy Scriptures as all Nonsons and Impostors, and Denying the Holy Trinity, the Incarnation of our Blessed Saviour, and the Existence of Spirits, and Maintaining that God the Word and Nature are but one thing, and that the world was from Eternity; was found liable to suffer an Arbitrary punishment 23 Decemb. 1696 4th. Nixon Road

Because the Avowing and publishing Blasphemous and Impious Opinions Contrary to the Doctrine and Principles of the Christian Religion, tend greatly to the Dishonour of the Almighty God, and may prove destructive to the publick peace and Welfare: It is provided by the Law of England, that if any person bred in or professing the Christian Religion, shall by writing, printing, teaching or Avowed speaking deny of the persons in the Holy Trinity to be God, or assert that there are more Gods than One, or deny the Christian Religion to be true, or deny

the Scriptures to be of Divine Authority; and he Convicted thereof by the Oath of two Witnesses; he shall for the first offence be incapable to have or Enjoy any office or Employment Ecclesiastical civil or Military or any profit thereby, and forfeit any office or Employment the Enjoyer or possessor at the time of his Conviction. And if Convicted a second time, he shall for ever be Disabled to sue in any Court, or to be Guardian or Executor or Administrator, and be incapable of any gift or office, and be committed for three Years without Bail. But none shall be prosecuted for speaking such Blasphemy, unless Information of the words be given upon oath before a Justice of peace within four days after they were spoken, and the prosecutor be within three Months after Information. And if the offender within four Months after his first Conviction shall acknowledge and Renounce such Offence, or Erroneous Opinion in the Court where he was Convicted, he shall be Disabled from the Penal ties hereof, 9 Stat. 10 W. 2. c. 32.

No person furious or Distracted in his Wits can be punished as an Atheist Act 21 Stat. 1 Ch. 2. But Ignorance, Ruziness, Drunkenness, Passion or Rillitory cannot be pleaded in Excuse for Atheism

### Chap. 2. Of Blasphemy.

Blasphemy (from *βλασφημειν* *blasphemaimen* to revile) is any Injury offered to God, by Attributing what doth not belong to him, viz. what is Proprietary to an Inconferent with his Divinity; or by Denying what doth belong to him, and Attributing to the Creature, that which is proper only to the Creator. Prosop. Fama. de Politicis 2. c. 11.