

DOWNLOAD PDF THE AGE OF REASON: BEING AN INVESTIGATION OF TRUE AND FABULOUS THEOLOGY

Chapter 1 : Full text of "The Age of Reason: Being an Investigation of True and Fabulous Theology"

*The Age of Reason: Being an Investigation of True and Fabulous Theology (Cambridge Library Collection - Philosophy) [Thomas Paine] on calendrierdelascience.com *FREE* shipping on qualifying offers. A major actor in the American Revolution, the English intellectual Thomas Paine () is best remembered for his pamphlet Common Sense ().*

Historical context[edit] Intellectual context: These deists, while maintaining individual positions, still shared several sets of assumptions and arguments that Paine articulated in *The Age of Reason*. The most important position that united the early deists was their call for "free rational inquiry" into all subjects, especially religion. Saying that early Christianity was founded on freedom of conscience, they demanded religious toleration and an end to religious persecution. They also demanded that debate rest on reason and rationality. Deists embraced a Newtonian worldview, and they believed that all things in the universe, even God, must obey the laws of nature. Without a concept of natural law, the deists argued, explanations of the workings of nature would descend into irrationality. This belief in natural law drove their skepticism of miracles. Along these lines, deistic writings insisted that God, as the first cause or prime mover, had created and designed the universe with natural laws as part of his plan. They held that God does not repeatedly alter his plan by suspending natural laws to miraculously intervene in human affairs. Deists also rejected the claim that there was only one revealed religious truth or "one true faith"; religion could only be "simple, apparent, ordinary, and universal" if it was to be the logical product of a benevolent God. Moreover, many found the Christian revelations in particular to be contradictory and irreconcilable. Most deists argued that priests had deliberately corrupted Christianity for their own gain by promoting the acceptance of miracles, unnecessary rituals, and illogical and dangerous doctrines these accusations were typically referred to as "priestcraft". The worst of these doctrines was original sin. Deists therefore typically viewed themselves as intellectual liberators. Those few British radicals who still supported the French revolution and its ideals were viewed with deep suspicion by their countrymen. By the middle of the decade, the moderate voices had disappeared: These acts prohibited freedom of assembly for groups such as the radical London Corresponding Society LCS and encouraged indictments against radicals for "libelous and seditious" statements. Afraid of prosecution and disenchanted with the French revolution, many reformers drifted away from the cause. It has been my intention, for several years past, to publish my thoughts upon religion. The circumstance that has now taken place in France of the total abolition of the whole national order of priesthood, and of everything appertaining to compulsive systems of religion, and compulsive articles of faith, has not only precipitated my intention, but rendered a work of this kind exceedingly necessary, lest in the general wreck of superstition, of false systems of government and false theology, we lose sight of morality, of humanity and of the theology that is true. I contrived, in my way there, to call on Joel Barlow, and I put the Manuscript of the work into his hands According to Paine scholars Edward Davidson and William Scheick, he probably wrote the first draft of Part I in late 1792, [8] but Paine biographer David Hawke argues for a date of early 1793. He only escaped the guillotine by accident: Part II was first published in a pirated edition by H. Symonds in London in October 1793. Eaton was later forced to flee to America after being convicted of seditious libel for publishing other radical works. Later, Francis Place and Thomas Williams collaborated on an edition which sold about 2,000 copies. Williams also produced his own edition, but the British government indicted him and confiscated the pamphlets. Fearing unpleasant and even violent reprisals, Thomas Jefferson convinced him not to publish it in 1794; five years later Paine decided to publish despite the backlash he knew would ensue. Carlile charged one shilling and sixpence for the work, and the first run of 1,000 copies sold out in a month. He immediately published a second edition of 3,000 copies. Like Williams, he was prosecuted for seditious libel and blasphemous libel. The prosecutions surrounding the printing of *The Age of Reason* in Britain continued for thirty years after its initial release and encompassed numerous publishers as well as over a hundred booksellers. In Part I, Paine outlines his major arguments and personal creed. I believe in one God, and no more; and I hope for happiness beyond this life. I believe in the

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equality of man; and I believe that religious duties consist in doing justice, loving mercy, and endeavouring to make our fellow-creatures happy. But, lest it should be supposed that I believe many other things in addition to these, I shall, in the progress of this work, declare the things I do not believe, and my reasons for not believing them. My own mind is my own church. All national institutions of churches, whether Jewish, Christian or Turkish, appear to me no other than human inventions, set up to terrify and enslave mankind, and monopolize power and profit. I do not mean by this declaration to condemn those who believe otherwise; they have the same right to their belief as I have to mine. But it is necessary to the happiness of man that he be mentally faithful to himself. Infidelity does not consist in believing, or in disbelieving; it consists in professing to believe what he does not believe. Paine rejects prophecies and miracles, writing: How happened it that he did not discover America, or is it only with kingdoms that his sooty highness has any interest? For example, in his analysis of the Book of Proverbs he argues that its sayings are "inferior in keenness to the proverbs of the Spaniards, and not more wise and economical than those of the American Franklin ". My intention is to show that those books are spurious, and that Moses is not the author of them; and still further, that they were not written in the time of Moses, nor till several hundred years afterward; that they are no other than an attempted history of the life of Moses, and of the times in which he is said to have lived, and also of the times prior thereto, written by some very ignorant and stupid pretenders to authorship, several hundred years after the death of Moses. Paine also argues that the Old Testament must be false because it depicts a tyrannical God. The "history of wickedness" pervading the Old Testament convinced Paine that it was simply another set of human-authored myths. He presents the history of Christianity as one of corruption and oppression. Soon after I had published the pamphlet "Common Sense," in America, I saw the exceeding probability that a revolution in the system of government would be followed by a revolution in the system of religion. The adulterous connection of Church and State, wherever it has taken place Human inventions and priestcraft would be detected; and man would return to the pure, unmixed and unadulterated belief of one God, and no more. It is an age of revolutions , in which everything may be looked for. All of these arguments appear in *The Age of Reason*, albeit less coherently. In a letter to Elihu Palmer , one of his most loyal followers in America, Paine describes part of his rhetorical philosophy: The hinting and intimidating manner of writing that was formerly used on subjects of this kind [religion], produced skepticism, but not conviction. It is necessary to be bold. Some people can be reasoned into sense, and others must be shocked into it. Say a bold thing that will stagger them, and they will begin to think. His use of "we" conveys an "illusion that he and the readers share the activity of constructing an argument". In the eighteenth century "vulgarity" was associated with the middling and lower classes and not with obscenity; thus, when Paine celebrates his "vulgar" style and his critics attack it, the dispute is over class accessibility, not profanity. For example, Paine describes the Fall this way: The Christian Mythologists, after having confined Satan in a pit, were obliged to let him out again to bring on the sequel of the fable. After giving Satan this triumph over the whole creation, one would have supposed that the Church Mythologists would have been kind enough to send him back again to the pit: But instead of this they leave him at large, without even obliging him to give his parole—the secret of which is that they could not do without him; and after being at the trouble of making him, they bribed him to stay. After this, who can doubt the bountifulness of the Christian Mythology? Having thus made an insurrection and a battle in heaven, in which none of the combatants could be either killed or wounded—put Satan into the pit—let him out again—gave him a triumph over the whole creation—damned all mankind by the eating of an apple, these Christian Mythologists bring the two ends of their fable together. They represent this virtuous and amiable man, Jesus Christ, to be at once both God and Man, and also the Son of God, celestially begotten, on purpose to be sacrificed, because they say that Eve in her longing had eaten an apple. It took "deism out of the hands of the aristocracy and intellectuals and [brought] it to the people". Bishop Richard Watson , forced to address this new audience in his influential response to Paine, *An Apology for the Bible*, writes: For example, he says that once one dismisses the false idea of Moses being the author of Genesis, "The story of Eve and the serpent, and of Noah and his ark, drops to a level with the Arabian tales, without the merit of being entertaining. It was the

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early Deists of the middling ranks, and not the educated elite, who initiated the kind of ridicule Paine would make famous. As John Redwood, a scholar of deism, puts it: I am unwilling to attribute bad designs, deliberate wickedness, to you or to any man; I cannot avoid believing, that you think you have truth on your side, and that you are doing service to mankind in endeavouring to root out what you esteem superstition. What I blame you for is thisâ€”that you have attempted to lessen the authority of the Bible by ridicule, more than by reason. As the historian E. Thompson has put it, Paine "ridiculed the authority of the Bible with arguments which the collier or country girl could understand". Claiming that true religious language is universal, Paine uses elements of the Christian rhetorical tradition to undermine the hierarchies perpetuated by religion itself. He contends that Paine draws on the Puritan tradition in which "theology was wedded to politics and politics to the progress of the kingdom of God". There were four major factors for this animosity: Paine denied that the Bible was a sacred, inspired text; he argued that Christianity was a human invention; his ability to command a large readership frightened those in power; and his irreverent and satirical style of writing about Christianity and the Bible offended many believers. Around 50 unfavorable replies appeared between and alone and refutations were still being published in They also issued ad hominem attacks against Paine, describing him "as an enemy of proper thought and of the morality of decent, enlightened people". Between and , Carlile claimed to have "sent into circulation near 20, copies of the Age of Reason". Paine wrote that "the people of France were running headlong into atheism and I had the work translated into their own language, to stop them in that career, and fix them to the first article The church had no priest or minister, and the traditional Biblical sermon was replaced by scientific lectures or homilies on the teachings of philosophers. It celebrated four festivals honoring St. Paine became so reviled that he could still be maligned as a "filthy little atheist" by Theodore Roosevelt over one hundred years later. Ethan Allen published the first American defense of deism, Reason, The Only Oracle of Man , but deism remained primarily a philosophy of the educated elite. Men such as Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson espoused its tenets, while at the same time arguing that religion served the useful purpose of "social control". The public was receptive, in part, because they approved of the secular ideals of the French Revolution. Palmer published what became "the bible of American deism", The Principles of Nature, [89] established deistic societies from Maine to Georgia, built Temples of Reason throughout the nation, and founded two deistic newspapers for which Paine eventually wrote seventeen essays. Before Paine it had been possible to be both a Christian and a deist; now such a religious outlook became virtually untenable. Their fear helped to drive the backlash which soon followed. Hailed only a few years earlier as a hero of the American Revolution , Paine was now lambasted in the press and called "the scavenger of faction", a "lilly-livered sinical [sic] rogue", a "loathsome reptile", a "demi-human archbeast", "an object of disgust, of abhorrence, of absolute loathing to every decent man except the President of the United States [Thomas Jefferson]". I know not whether any man in the world has had more influence on its inhabitants or affairs for the last thirty years than Tom Paine. There can be no severer satyr [sic] on the age. For such a mongrel between pig and puppy, begotten by a wild boar on a bitch wolf, never before in any age of the world was suffered by the poltroonery of mankind, to run through such a career of mischief.

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Chapter 2 : The Age of Reason, Free PDF, ebook | Global Grey

The Age of Reason; Being an Investigation of True and Fabulous Theology is a work by English and American political activist Thomas Paine, arguing for the philosophical position of Deism. It follows in the tradition of eighteenth-century British deism, and challenges institutionalized religion and the legitimacy of the Bible.

Surprisingly and to my delight, so does much of the rest of it. All that is good and moral exists in that creation and in the good works and deeds of ourselves. The rest are lies and hypocrisies and an affront to the reasoning minds God gave us. Such is the basic line of argument. This is an entertaining, thought-provoking tract, screed, dissembling rant -- call it what you will. This is a book that Christians do not like because it puts to the lie their contention that America was founded as a "Christian nation. He trashes the absurdities of the Bible with aplomb, charting the origins of many of the myths and the perpetuation of those and subsequent strictures of the church to the good of its own authority, power and material enrichment. His most heretical assertion is that God did not write the Bible; that it is solely a cobbled creation of men; and even if done so by "divine inspiration" -- the latter is meaningless to Paine since it is completely unprovable, and most unlikely. Paine looks for horses, not zebras, and is more likely to believe that men lie than witness miracles. In the course of all this we get doses of science and natural law and philosophy and ruminations on ancient languages and so on. He barely finished part one of this work in France before the guards came for him. Luckily he came out of it, unlike so many of his friends. Some readers of an atheistic or agnostic bent may not be pleased that Paine does not outright reject God, or even place his existence on the table for possible rejection. But the God he does believe in is so remote as to be effectively nonexistent, for any practical purpose. In any case, it is man with whom Paine has issues, particularly those of the cloth and those who follow them. His refutations of Biblical and Church doctrines, his lambasting of ideas like miracles, and his criticisms of violence in the name of a greater good are just some of the highlights. Let them sleep, then, in the arms of their nurses, the priests, and both be forgotten together. Mark says it was sun-rising, and John says it was dark. Luke says it was Mary Magdalene and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, and other women, that came to the sepulchre; and John states that Mary Magdalene came alone. So well do they agree about their first evidence! They all, however, appear to have known most about Mary Magdalene; she was a woman of large acquaintance, and it was not an ill conjecture that she might be upon the stroll.

Chapter 3 : The Age of Reason - Wikipedia

'The Age of Reason', which essentially advocated deism, promoted humanism, reason and freethinking, and violently quelled with ALL institutionalized religion (esp It is amazing to me to think this book was written in /

Chapter 4 : Age of Reason: Being an Investigation of True and Fabulous Theology, in Two Parts by Thomas Paine

*The age of reason; being an investigation of true and fabulous theology. By Thomas Paine, [Thomas Paine] on calendrierdelascience.com *FREE* shipping on qualifying offers. The 18th century was a wealth of knowledge, exploration and rapidly growing technology and expanding record-keeping made possible by advances in the printing press.*

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The Age of Reason: Being an Investigation of True and Fabulous Theology, a deistic treatise written by eighteenth-century British radical and American revolutionary Thomas Paine, critiques institutionalized religion and challenges the inerrancy of the Bible.

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Chapter 6 : Staff View: The age of reason.

The Age of Reason: Being an Investigation of True and Fabulous Theology by Thomas Paine *The Age of Reason* represents the results of years of study and reflection by Thomas Paine on the place of religion in society.

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THE AGE OF REASON BEING AN INVESTIGATION OF TRUE AND FABULOUS THEOLOGY BY THOMAS PAINE
Secretary of Foreign Affairs to Congress in the American War and Author of the Works Entitled "Common Sense."

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