

# paine age of reason

**Paine Age of Reason** is a seminal work in the history of political philosophy and religious critique. Written by Thomas Paine in the late 18th century, this book profoundly challenged traditional religious doctrines, urging a move toward rationalism and deism. It remains a pivotal text for understanding the Enlightenment's influence on modern ideas about faith, reason, and government. This article explores the background, main themes, historical significance, and enduring legacy of Paine Age of Reason, providing a comprehensive overview for readers interested in history, philosophy, and religious studies.

## Background and Context of Paine Age of Reason

### Who Was Thomas Paine?

Thomas Paine (1737–1809) was an English-born American political activist, philosopher, and revolutionary figure. Known for his persuasive writings advocating independence and democracy, Paine's most famous works include *Common Sense* and *The American Crisis*. His writings played a crucial role in inspiring the American Revolution and shaping the early principles of the United States.

### Historical Setting of the Book

*Paine Age of Reason* was written during a period of significant social and political upheaval, primarily in the late 18th century. The Enlightenment, characterized by an emphasis on reason, science, and skepticism of traditional authority, heavily influenced Paine. The work was published in three parts between 1794 and 1807, amidst the backdrop of the French Revolution, debates over religious authority, and growing tensions between traditional Christianity and emerging secular philosophies.

## Main Themes of Paine Age of Reason

### Critique of Organized Religion

One of the central themes of *Paine Age of Reason* is its critique of organized religion, particularly the Christian church. Paine argued that many religious institutions had corrupted the original messages of the Bible and had become tools of political and social control.

Key points include:

- Rejection of religious dogma and miracles as unsupported by reason or evidence.
- Criticism of the Bible's inconsistencies and contradictions.
- Condemnation of clergy and church authorities for their role in

perpetuating superstition and ignorance.

## **Promotion of Rationalism and Deism**

Paine advocated for a religion based on reason and natural law rather than revelation or divine intervention. His deist beliefs emphasized:

- The existence of a Creator who established natural laws.
- Rejection of miracles and supernatural events.
- Emphasis on morality derived from human reason rather than religious authority.

## **Rejection of the Bible as Divine Revelation**

Paine's approach was to scrutinize the Bible critically, asserting that:

- The scriptures were written by humans and contain errors.
- Many stories in the Bible are morally questionable or historically inaccurate.
- The Bible should be read as a historical document rather than divine truth.

## **Advocacy for Free Thought and Scientific Inquiry**

Paine Age of Reason champions:

- The importance of scientific evidence and empirical inquiry.
- The value of skepticism in evaluating religious claims.
- The need for individuals to develop their own understanding rather than accept dogma blindly.

## **Structure and Content of Paine Age of Reason**

### **Part I: The Age of Reason**

This section discusses the importance of reason as the guiding principle in human life and criticizes religious dogma, emphasizing that true religion should be compatible with reason.

### **Part II: The Bible and Its Contradictions**

Paine analyzes biblical texts, pointing out inconsistencies, historical inaccuracies, and moral issues, arguing that the Bible is not a reliable guide for morality or truth.

## **Part III: The True Religion**

In the final section, Paine articulates his vision of a rational religion based on natural law, emphasizing moral virtue and ethical conduct as the true essence of faith.

## **Reception and Controversy**

### **Initial Public Reception**

Paine's *Age of Reason* was highly controversial upon publication. It faced fierce criticism from religious institutions, clergy, and conservative factions who viewed it as atheistic and irreverent.

### **Impact on Religious Thought**

Despite the controversy, the book significantly influenced:

- The growth of secularism and rationalist movements.
- Debates about the role of religion in government and society.
- The development of deist ideas and criticisms of institutionalized religion.

### **Legal and Social Repercussions**

In some regions, the work was banned or censored. Paine himself faced social ostracism, and the book's publication contributed to ongoing conflicts between Enlightenment thinkers and traditional religious authorities.

## **Legacy of Paine's Age of Reason**

### **Influence on Modern Secularism**

Paine's *Age of Reason* is regarded as a foundational text for secular humanism and rationalist philosophy. Its emphasis on reason over revelation continues to resonate in contemporary debates about religion and science.

### **Impact on American and Western Thought**

The ideas presented influenced:

- The development of American Enlightenment principles.
- Secular governance and the separation of church and state.
- The broader movement toward scientific skepticism and human rights.

## Contemporary Relevance

Today, Paine's *Age of Reason* is studied for its historical significance and its role in promoting critical thinking and scientific inquiry. It remains a vital text for those advocating for religious liberty, freedom of thought, and rational discourse.

## Conclusion

Paine's *Age of Reason* stands as a powerful critique of religious dogma and a passionate call for rationalism and scientific inquiry. Thomas Paine's work challenged societal norms of his time, advocating for a morality founded on reason rather than divine authority. Its enduring legacy continues to influence debates on religion, science, and individual liberty, making it a cornerstone of Enlightenment thought and secular philosophy.

## Additional Resources

For readers interested in exploring Paine's *Age of Reason* further, consider the following:

- Read the full text of Paine's *Age of Reason*, available in public domain archives.
- Explore biographies of Thomas Paine to understand his life and influences.
- Study the history of the Enlightenment to contextualize the ideas presented in the book.
- Engage with contemporary critiques of religion and secular philosophy.

This comprehensive examination of Paine's *Age of Reason* underscores its importance as a revolutionary work advocating for reason, morality, and individual liberty, principles that continue to shape modern society.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### What is the main argument of Thomas Paine's 'Age of Reason'?

Thomas Paine's *'Age of Reason'* advocates for deism, emphasizing reason and scientific inquiry over organized religion, and criticizes religious dogma and institutionalized churches.

### How did 'Age of Reason' influence the Enlightenment movement?

*'Age of Reason'* promoted rationalism and skepticism towards traditional religious authority, encouraging Enlightenment thinkers to prioritize scientific evidence and individual reasoning.

## **What were the controversial aspects of 'Age of Reason' when it was published?**

The book was controversial because it challenged Christian doctrines, criticized organized religion, and promoted atheism or deism, leading to accusations of atheism and censorship.

## **How did Thomas Paine's 'Age of Reason' impact his reputation?**

While it solidified Paine's reputation as a radical thinker and advocate of reason, it also damaged his standing among religious communities, leading to widespread criticism and alienation from some of his earlier supporters.

## **In what ways does 'Age of Reason' reflect the principles of secularism?**

'Age of Reason' emphasizes the importance of separating religion from government and public life, advocating for rational thought and scientific understanding as the basis for moral and societal values.

## **Is 'Age of Reason' still relevant today, and why?**

Yes, 'Age of Reason' remains relevant as it encourages critical thinking, skepticism of dogma, and the promotion of science and reason, principles that continue to influence secular and humanist movements worldwide.

## **Additional Resources**

Paine Age of Reason: An In-Depth Review of Thomas Paine's Critical Work

Thomas Paine's Age of Reason is a seminal text that has left an indelible mark on the landscape of religious and philosophical thought. Published in three parts between 1794 and 1807, this work encapsulates Paine's fervent critique of organized religion, his advocacy for deism, and his call for rational inquiry into spiritual matters. As one of the most influential writings of the Enlightenment era, it continues to evoke both admiration and controversy. In this review, we will explore the themes, historical significance, strengths, weaknesses, and enduring impact of Age of Reason.

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## **Introduction to Age of Reason**

Thomas Paine, renowned as a revolutionary thinker, political activist, and author of Common Sense, turned his intellectual focus toward religion in later years. Age of Reason represents his attempt to challenge traditional religious dogmas and promote a philosophy rooted in reason, science, and skepticism. The work is divided into three parts, each building upon the previous, to dissect the nature of religion, critique institutionalized faith, and propose a rational approach to understanding the divine.

The work emerged during a tumultuous period in history, marked by political upheaval from the American and French Revolutions. Paine's Age of Reason was both a product of and a catalyst for the broader Enlightenment movement that emphasized empirical evidence and rational thought over superstition and blind faith.

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## Historical Context and Significance

Understanding Age of Reason requires contextualizing it within the late 18th and early 19th centuries. During this era, traditional religious authorities held significant sway over societal norms and political institutions. The Enlightenment challenged these structures by advocating for scientific inquiry, individual rights, and secular governance.

Paine's work was revolutionary, not just in its content but also in its tone. It openly questioned the legitimacy of the Bible, the church, and religious dogmas, which was a bold stance that drew both admiration and fierce opposition. The publication of Age of Reason sparked debates about the role of religion in public life, freedom of conscience, and the relationship between faith and reason.

Key points of significance include:

- Promoting deism: a belief in a rational, non-interventionist creator.
- Challenging the authority of organized religion.
- Influencing later secular and humanist movements.
- Stirring controversy that persisted into modern debates about religious liberty and skepticism.

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## The Core Themes of Age of Reason

### Critique of Organized Religion

One of Paine's primary targets in Age of Reason is organized religion, especially the doctrines propagated by the Catholic Church, the Protestant churches, and other religious institutions. Paine argues that many religious practices and teachings are inconsistent, superstitious, and historically fabricated.

He contends that:

- Many religious texts, including the Bible, are human creations filled with contradictions.
- Religious institutions have historically used faith to manipulate and control populations.
- The concept of divine revelation is dubious since it cannot be verified by reason or evidence.

Paine advocates for a religion based solely on reason and moral virtue, rather than dogmas handed down by authorities.

## **The Deism and Rational Religion**

Age of Reason champions deism—a belief in a rational creator who does not interfere in human affairs. Paine posits that:

- The universe operates according to natural laws that can be understood through science and reason.
- There is no need for supernatural intervention or miracles to explain the origins and workings of the universe.
- Morality can be derived from human nature and reason, without reliance on divine commandments.

He emphasizes that true religion should be compatible with science and evidence, arguing that rational inquiry is the path to spiritual truth.

## **Criticism of the Bible and Religious Texts**

Paine critically examines the Bible, asserting that:

- It is a collection of human writings, not divinely inspired scripture.
- Many stories are mythological or allegorical rather than literal truths.
- The moral teachings often conflict with justice and compassion.

He challenges the literal interpretation of biblical stories, advocating for a view of scripture as historical documents that require contextual understanding rather than unquestioning faith.

## **Morality Without Religion**

A significant theme is the possibility of moral behavior without reliance on religious authority. Paine argues that:

- Morality is inherent in human nature and can be cultivated through reason.
- Ethical principles should be based on human well-being and social harmony.
- Religion often promotes guilt and fear, which can hinder moral development.

He envisions a society where morality is grounded in rational understanding and mutual respect, rather than divine commandments.

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## **Features and Strengths of Age of Reason**

- Clarity and Logical Argumentation: Paine's prose is straightforward and compelling, making complex ideas accessible to a broad audience.
- Advocacy for Scientific Inquiry: The work champions evidence-based reasoning, aligning with Enlightenment values.
- Promotion of Religious Tolerance: By criticizing dogma and superstition, Paine advocates for freedom of conscience and religious diversity.
- Historical Analysis: Paine offers a critical examination of religious texts, emphasizing their human origins and cultural contexts.
- Moral Philosophy: The emphasis on morality based on reason rather than divine authority remains influential.

Features:

- Clear critique of religious institutions
- Promotes deism and rational spirituality
- Emphasizes empirical evidence
- Calls for moral independence from religion

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## Weaknesses and Criticisms

Despite its strengths, Age of Reason has faced significant criticisms:

- Agnostic and Atheist Overtones: Paine's rejection of organized religion and skepticism about divine revelation have led to accusations of atheism, which alienated many believers.
- Simplification of Religious Beliefs: Critics argue that Paine oversimplifies complex theological doctrines and dismisses genuine faith experiences.
- Historical Inaccuracy: Some scholars contend that Paine's interpretations of biblical texts are selective or misrepresentative.
- Controversial Tone: The work's confrontational style has been criticized as intolerant and dismissive of religious believers.
- Limited Engagement with Theology: The focus on critique often neglects constructive alternatives or deeper theological exploration.

Cons:

- Potential for alienation of religious audiences
- May promote skepticism to the point of nihilism
- Lacks nuanced discussion of religious diversity

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## Enduring Impact and Legacy

Age of Reason remains a pivotal work in the history of secular thought and religious critique. Its influence extends beyond its immediate historical context, inspiring later movements advocating for secularism, human rights, and scientific rationalism.

Legacy Highlights:

- Contributed to the intellectual foundation of secular humanism.
- Inspired debates about the role of religion in government and education.
- Provided a template for critical engagement with religious texts.
- Continues to be referenced in discussions about faith, reason, and morality.

While controversial, Paine's work has helped shape a worldview that values inquiry, skepticism, and moral independence. It also exemplifies the Enlightenment's challenge to authority and its commitment to human reason.

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# Conclusion

Paine's *Age of Reason* is a bold, thought-provoking critique of religion and a passionate plea for rational spirituality. Its advocacy for reason, scientific inquiry, and moral autonomy continue to resonate in contemporary debates about faith, secularism, and human rights. Although its confrontational tone and skeptical stance have limited its acceptance among religious communities, the work's intellectual rigor and commitment to truth make it a cornerstone of Enlightenment literature.

For readers interested in philosophy, history, or religious studies, *Age of Reason* offers valuable insights into the power of reason to question tradition and the importance of critical thinking. Whether one agrees or disagrees with Paine's conclusions, engaging with *Age of Reason* challenges us to reflect on the nature of belief, morality, and the pursuit of knowledge in a rational universe.

## Paine Age Of Reason

**paine age of reason:** The Age of Reason Thomas Paine, 2018-11-04 Complete and unabridged paperback edition.

**paine age of reason:** The Age of Reason Thomas Paine, 1877 Paine's years of study and reflection on the role of religion in society culminated with this, his final work. An attack on revealed religion from the deist point of view -- embodied by Paine's credo, I believe in one God, and no more -- its critical and objective examination of Old and New Testaments cites numerous contradictions.

**paine age of reason: The Age of Reason** Thomas Paine, 2023-12-05 A major actor in the American Revolution, the English intellectual Thomas Paine (1737-1809) is best remembered for his pamphlet *Common Sense* (1776), which advocated American independence from Britain. Although accorded honorary French citizenship in 1792 for his republican *Rights of Man*, Paine was later imprisoned and narrowly escaped the guillotine. It was around this time that he started to write *The Age of Reason*, originally published in two parts between 1794 and 1795. In Part 1, Paine outlines his personal religious views and attacks institutional faith as a human invention, while Part 2 analyses the Bible and highlights its contradictions. The work was met with great hostility in Britain and denounced as espousing atheism, while in America it led to a short-lived revival of deism but was also much reviled. This reissue includes both parts and affords valuable insight into radical freethinking during the age of revolutions. MISSIONS AND REVELATION Every national church or religion has established itself by pretending some special mission from God, communicated to certain individuals. The Jews have their Moses; the Christians their Jesus Christ, their apostles and saints; and the Turks their Mahomet; as if the way to God was not open to every man alike. Each of those churches shows certain books, which they call revelation, or the Word of God. The Jews say that their Word of God was given by God to Moses face to face; the Christians say, that their Word of God came by divine inspiration; and the Turks say, that their Word of God (the Koran) was brought by an angel from heaven. Each of those churches accuses the other of unbelief; and, for my own part, I disbelieve them all. As it is necessary to affix right ideas to words, I will, before I proceed further into the subject, offer some observations on the word revelation. Revelation when applied to religion, means something communicated immediately from God to man.

**paine age of reason: Age of Reason** Thomas Paine, 2014-03-01 *Age of Reason*, The Definitive Edition, includes Paine's original two volumes of *Age of Reason*, plus his third volume which remained unreleased until 1807. President Thomas Jefferson convinced Paine not to publish his third volume in 1802, as Paine originally intended, out of fear of the backlash it may cause. Now, thanks

to this edition of Paine's Age of Reason, the modern reader can enjoy Paine's three-volume original work in one distinguished manuscript.

**paine age of reason:** *The Age of Reason; being an investigation of true and fabulous theology* Thomas Paine, 1796

**paine age of reason: The Age of Reason - Being an Investigation of True and Fabulous Theology** Thomas Paine, 2008-05 Many of the earliest books, particularly those dating back to the 1900s and before, are now extremely scarce and increasingly expensive. We are republishing these classic works in affordable, high quality, modern editions, using the original text and artwork.

**paine age of reason: The Age of Reason** Thomas Paine, 2023-10-01 The Age of Reason by Thomas Paine; Eric Sutton: Embark on a profound intellectual journey as Thomas Paine challenges conventional beliefs, advocating for reason, logic, and individual freedom in this influential work that played a pivotal role in shaping the Age of Enlightenment. Key points: Rational Inquiry: Join Paine in his exploration of religious and philosophical ideas, as he critically examines traditional religious doctrines, questions the authority of established institutions, and champions the power of reason and critical thinking as essential tools for navigating the complexities of life. Enlightenment Principles: Discover Paine's passionate defense of human rights, religious tolerance, and political liberty, as he articulates his vision for a more enlightened and egalitarian society, advocating for the dismantling of oppressive systems and the empowerment of individuals. Enduring Influence: Recognize the lasting impact of Paine's ideas on political and intellectual discourse, as The Age of Reason continues to inspire generations of thinkers, serving as a catalyst for social change, and offering a timeless call to embrace reason, knowledge, and the pursuit of truth. The Age of Reason by Thomas Paine; Eric Sutton: The Age of Reason, skillfully translated by Eric Sutton, is a seminal work by Thomas Paine that challenges religious dogma and advocates for rational thinking and individual freedom. Paine, a leading figure of the Enlightenment, presents a compelling case for skepticism and critical inquiry, questioning traditional religious beliefs and advocating for a more rational approach to understanding the world. Through persuasive arguments and sharp analysis, he examines the inconsistencies and contradictions within religious doctrines, promoting the idea that reason should be the guiding principle in matters of faith. The Age of Reason remains a thought-provoking and influential treatise that continues to ignite intellectual debates and inspire individuals to question long-held beliefs.

**paine age of reason: The Age of Reason** Thomas Paine, 2014-10-02 This book contains the complete AGE OF REASON by Thomas Paine including an introduction to Origins of Freemasonry and the much censored criticism of Christianity. About his own religious beliefs, Paine wrote in The Age of Reason: I believe in one God, and no more; and I hope for happiness beyond this life. I do not believe in the creed professed by the Jewish church, by the Roman church, by the Greek church, by the Turkish church, by the Protestant church, nor by any church that I know of. 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. Thomas Paine (February 9, 1737 [O.S. January 29, 1736] – June 8, 1809) was an American and English political activist, philosopher, political theorist and revolutionary. As the author of the two most influential pamphlets at the start of the American Revolution, he inspired the Patriots in 1776 to declare independence from Britain. His ideas reflected Enlightenment-era rhetoric of transnational human rights. He has been called a corsetmaker by trade, a journalist by profession, and a propagandist by inclination. In December 1793, he was arrested and imprisoned in Paris, then released in 1794. He became notorious because of his pamphlet The Age of Reason (1793–94), in which he advocated deism, promoted reason and free thought, and argued against institutionalized religion in general and Christian doctrine in particular. He also wrote the pamphlet Agrarian Justice (1795), discussing the origins of property, and introduced the concept of a guaranteed minimum income. In 1802, he returned to the U.S. where he died on June 8, 1809. Only six people attended his funeral as he had been ostracized for his ridicule of Christianity.

**paine age of reason: The Age of Reason** Thomas Paine, 2016-06-14 The Age of Reason; Being

an Investigation of True and Fabulous Theology is an influential work written by English and American political activist Thomas Paine. It follows in the tradition of eighteenth-century British deism, and challenges institutionalized religion and the legitimacy of the Bible. Originally distributed as unbound pamphlets, it was published in three parts in 1794, 1795, and 1807. It was a best-seller in the United States, where it caused a short-lived deistic revival. British audiences, however, fearing increased political radicalism as a result of the French Revolution, received it with more hostility. The Age of Reason presents common deistic arguments; for example, it highlights what Paine saw as corruption of the Christian Church and criticizes its efforts to acquire political power. Paine advocates reason in the place of revelation, leading him to reject miracles and to view the Bible as an ordinary piece of literature rather than as a divinely inspired text. It promotes natural religion and argues for the existence of a creator-God.

**paine age of reason:** *The Age of Reason* Thomas Paine, 2010-09 Before his arrest and imprisonment in France, knowing that he would probably be arrested and executed, Paine, following in the tradition of early eighteenth-century British deism, wrote the first part of *The Age of Reason*, an assault on organized revealed religion combining a compilation of inconsistencies he found in the Bible with his own advocacy of deism, calling for free rational inquiry into all subjects, especially religion. The Age of Reason critique on institutionalized religion resulted in only a brief upsurge in deistic thought in America, but would later result in Paine being derided by the public and abandoned by his friends.

**paine age of reason:** *The Age of Reason - Thomas Paine (Writings of Thomas Paine)* Thomas Paine, 2022-05-16 *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 18th-century British deism, and challenges institutionalized religion and the legitimacy of the Bible. It was published in three parts in 1794, 1795, and 1807. In Part I, Paine outlines his major arguments and personal creed. In Parts II and III he analyzes specific portions of the Bible in order to demonstrate that it is not the revealed word of God. Most of Paine's arguments had long been available to the educated elite, but by presenting them in an engaging and irreverent style, he made deism appealing and accessible to a mass audience.

**paine age of reason:** *Age of Reason* Thomas Paine, 2000-04-06 *The Age of Reason* COMPLETE VERSION Parts 1 and 2 By the British and American revolutionary Thomas Paine *The Age of Reason; Being an Investigation of True and Fabulous Theology* is a pamphlet, written by a British and American revolutionary Thomas Paine, that challenges institutionalized religion and the legitimacy of the Bible, the central text of Christianity. Published in three parts in 1794, 1795, and 1807, it was a bestseller in the United States, where it caused a short-lived deistic revival. British audiences, however, fearing increased political radicalism as a result of the French Revolution, received it with more hostility. The Age of Reason presents common deistic arguments; for example, it highlights what Paine saw as corruption of the Christian Church and criticizes its efforts to acquire political power. Paine advocates reason in the place of revelation, leading him to reject miracles and to view the Bible as an ordinary piece of literature rather than as a divinely inspired text. It promotes natural religion and argues for the existence of a creator-God. Most of Paine's arguments had long been available to the educated elite, but by presenting them in an engaging and irreverent style, he made deism appealing and accessible to a mass audience. The book was also inexpensive, putting it within the reach of a large number of buyers. Fearing the spread of what they viewed as potentially revolutionary ideas, the British government prosecuted printers and booksellers who tried to publish and distribute it. Nevertheless, Paine's work inspired and guided many freethinkers.

**paine age of reason:** *The Age of Reason* Thomas Paine, 2017-04-20 *The Age of Reason; Being an Investigation of True and Fabulous Theology* is a work written by English and American political activist Thomas Paine. It follows in the tradition of eighteenth-century British deism, and challenges institutionalized religion and the legitimacy of the Bible. Originally distributed as unbound pamphlets, it was published in three parts in 1794, 1795, and 1807. It was a best-seller in the United States, where it caused a short-lived deistic revival. British audiences, however, fearing increased

political radicalism as a result of the French Revolution, received it with more hostility. The Age of Reason presents common deistic arguments; for example, it highlights what Paine saw as corruption of the Christian Church and criticizes its efforts to acquire political power. Paine advocates reason in the place of revelation, leading him to reject miracles and to view the Bible as an ordinary piece of literature rather than as a divinely inspired text. It promotes natural religion and argues for the existence of a creator-God.

**paine age of reason: The age of reason** Thomas Paine, 1925 Signed in ms. in vol. 1: Van der Weyde. v. 1. Life of Thomas Paine, by W.M. Van der Weyde.--v. 2. Early essays. Common sense. The American crisis, I-IV.--v. 3. The American crisis, V-XIII. Patriotic papers.--v. 4. Political pamphlets.--v. 5. Open letters. Dissertations.--v. 6. Rights of man.--v. 7. Rights of man, concluded. Miscellaneous essays.--v. 8. The age of reason.--v. 9. Theological discussions.--v. 10. Miscellany. Songs and rhymes. Index.

**paine age of reason: The Age of Reason Original Edition(Annotated)** Thomas Paine, 2021-03-30 The Age of Reason by Thomas Paine is subtitled: Being an Investigation of the True and Fabulous Theology, which though often excluded when discussing the work, provides a snapshot of Paine's focus. Thomas Paine was a political activist in both England and America, active in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. He is known for following and promoting Deism. Deists believed that the Christian Church was corrupt, bent on seizing political power. Originally published in three parts, The Age of Reason became a bestseller in the United States. It wasn't as popular in England, however, because of fears following the French Revolution. The main title of the work stems from Paine's desire that his readers should replace revelation with reason. He didn't believe in miracles and thought of the Bible as nothing more than a literary work. Previously, Paine had written many works in praise of Deism, but they were only available to an elite group who had a certain level of education and wealth. Paine's style in The Age of Reason was more accessible to the public. Not only was the style more accessible but also the book itself was less expensive than many of his previous works on the topic. Historically, when part I of The Age of Reason was published, the French Revolution had caused a wave of disillusionment among the masses. The Reign of Terror was well under way, and Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette had already been executed. Britain and France were at war, and anyone in Britain still supporting the French Revolution was untrustworthy. Thomas Paine, because of works such as The Age of Reason, fell into that category. Paine's works led to his fleeing England to set sail for France; specifically, part II of Rights of Man led to this move after it was declared seditious. There, he wrote the first part of The Age of Reason in response to the secularism and atheism that had gripped the French Revolution. Despite the fact that the French inspired this work, Paine dedicated it to his Fellow Citizens of the United States of America. France didn't prove a safe haven for him either; he was imprisoned there for ten months because the Jacobins thought him too moderate. He was nearly executed by guillotine but managed to escape that fate. After his release, and despite poor health, Paine began work on part II of The Age of Reason. Following the success of part II, Paine left France for the United States, where he wrote part III, titled The Age of Reason: An Examination of the Passages in the New Testament, Quotes from the Old and Called Prophecies Concerning Jesus Christ. Thomas Jefferson convinced him not to publish this third part in 1802, but Paine did so anyway five years later. Part I of The Age of Reason outlines Paine's own beliefs. He writes that he believes in one God and the equality of man. He believes that one's religious duties require justice, mercy, and making others happy. He goes on to say that he doesn't believe in the creeds professed by any church and that his mind is his church; all other churches that he knows of are devices created by man to enslave others while monopolizing power to turn a profit. He then attacks revelation. According to Paine, the fact that a revelation can only be confirmed by the one who experienced it is insufficient evidence for its truth and God's existence. Because he believes in a creator-God, Paine urges his readers to rely instead on reason and look to the natural world for evidence of God's existence. The Age of Reason continues to use the Bible's words against itself. Paine examines the book as a work of literature and nothing more, testing its consistency and finding it wanting. He also tests its historical accuracy and determines

the book was not inspired by the divine. Paine turns his discussion toward religion and the state, highlighting the lust for power that grips institutions and its priests, pointing out the Church's oppression of scientific...

**paine age of reason:** The Age of Reason - Thomas Paine Thomas Paine, 2007-11 I put the following work under your protection. It contains my opinion upon Religion. You will do me the justice to remember, that I have always strenuously supported the Right of every man to his opinion, however different that opinion might be to mine. He who denies to another this right, makes a slave of himself to his present opinion, because he precludes himself the right of changing it. The most formidable weapon against errors of every kind is Reason. I have never used any other, and I trust I never shall. Your affectionate friend and fellow citizen, Thomas Paine.

**paine age of reason:** The Age of Reason- Part I and II Thomas Paine, 2014-03-13 The Age of Reason is one of Thomas Paine's most well-known and influential works, considered a must-read for anyone interested in philosophy.

**paine age of reason:** Thomas Paine's the Age of Reason - Part Three Robert Shear, 2014-07-03 What would Tom Paine think now, if he knew the events of the past two hundred years? Would he still be a Deist if he knew about Evolution, the Big Bang and discoveries in geology and the neurosciences? What would he think of the Book of Mormon, New Age spirituality and the rise of religious fundamentalism? How would he view our current conflicts over birth control, abortion, gay marriage and events in the Middle East? Thomas Paine's The Age of Reason - Part Three has won praise from Paine experts both for its authentic voice and for answers to these questions that are logical extensions of Paine's past works. This imagined update to the classic work is presented from Paine's perspective and in his familiar style. He reviews two centuries of progress in science and human rights and the evolving role of religion in American society, reflecting on the implications of these changes for his own views about God and Nature. His critical commentary on current affairs will be stimulating and thought-provoking to those who know his prior works as well as to those having their first encounter with America's original critic of organized religion. Concluding with his current advice to the American people, Paine issues a call to action urging us to enter a new Age of Enlightenment with sweeping changes to the role of religion in our public and private affairs. Thomas Paine and The Age of Reason 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. These words are still shocking to even the most committed of religious critics in the 21st century. The more so they were written by one of America's most visionary Founders - the man whose Common Sense inspired his countrymen to accept that separation from England was inevitable, that the time for Revolution was upon them. Paine's pamphlets on The Crisis so bolstered spirits that General Washington ordered them read to the troops. Their opening words: These are the times that try men's souls became a battle cry of the American Revolution, inspiring the outnumbered patriots to victory over superior British forces. It was later said that Independence had been achieved equally by the sword of Washington and the pen of Paine. When the French Revolution came under attack, it was Thomas Paine whose spirited defense, Rights of Man, was most widely embraced - and condemned. His new manifesto labeled seditious in England, Paine received a hero's welcome in France and was given a seat in the National Convention called to write a democratic constitution for that country. But not for long. Under pressure from royalists across Europe, the French Revolution faltered, its leaders turning against one another. Fearing his own end was near, Paine prepared what he had planned to be his final work: The Age of Reason. In this pamphlet he attacked the foundation of the churches with a detailed assault on the credibility and morality of the Bible, offering instead a simple moral code based on belief in a benevolent God who reveals himself not in dreams, visions or holy books but in the intricate designs of Nature. The book was attacked from all sides, its author labeled Infidel. One of America's most famous writers, he could never again find a publisher for his work. Thomas Paine died in 1809 with none of the honors appropriate to his contributions to our modern world. Denied a place in a Quaker cemetery, only six persons attended the burial on his farm in New Rochelle, NY. There stands no monument to him in

Washington, DC. His unpublished autobiography and collected works, including the original manuscript for Part Three of *The Age of Reason* were lost in a fire, along with the rest of his papers. Of his surviving works, *The Age of Reason* remains the most controversial, and the most widely quoted.

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