

# thomas paine the age of reason

Thomas Paine The Age of Reason: A Revolutionary Work of Enlightenment and Critique

**thomas paine the age of reason** stands as one of the most influential and controversial works in the history of religious and political thought. Written during the late 18th century by Thomas Paine, a key figure in both the American and French Revolutions, this book challenged established religious doctrines and advocated for reason, deism, and free thought. The Age of Reason not only reflects the intellectual currents of the Enlightenment but also continues to spark debate about faith, skepticism, and the role of organized religion today.

## The Historical Context of Thomas Paine's The Age of Reason

To fully appreciate Thomas Paine the Age of Reason, it's essential to understand the historical backdrop against which it was written. Paine was an English-born American political activist and writer who played a pivotal role in shaping revolutionary ideas. After contributing to the American Revolution with his pamphlet *Common Sense*, Paine turned his attention to religion, a domain he believed was clouded by superstition and dogma.

## The Enlightenment Influence

The late 18th century was an era of intellectual awakening known as the Enlightenment, where reason, science, and individualism began to challenge traditional authority. Thinkers like Voltaire, Rousseau, and Locke questioned the power of the church and monarchy, advocating for human rights and rational inquiry. Paine's *The Age of Reason* fits squarely within this movement, promoting a worldview based on empirical evidence and logic rather than revelation or faith.

## Religious Climate of the Era

In Paine's time, Christianity, particularly in its orthodox forms, dominated European and American societies. The church wielded significant influence over politics and education. Paine's critique of the Bible and organized religion was thus seen as radical and even blasphemous by many. His open criticism sparked fierce backlash but also resonated with those disillusioned by religious hypocrisy and intolerance.

## Exploring the Core Themes of The Age of Reason

At its essence, Thomas Paine the Age of Reason is a passionate plea for rational thinking and skepticism toward religious dogma. Paine did not reject spirituality outright; rather, he embraced deism, the belief in a creator who does not intervene in human affairs, and dismissed miracles and

biblical stories as myths.

## **Critique of Organized Religion**

One of Paine's primary targets was the institutional church. He argued that religious organizations manipulated people's fears and ignorance to maintain power. The Age of Reason exposes what Paine saw as contradictions and moral failings within the Bible, urging readers to question scripture rather than accept it blindly.

## **The Bible Under Scrutiny**

Paine meticulously examined the Bible, highlighting inconsistencies and historical inaccuracies. He challenged the divine inspiration of biblical texts, suggesting that they were written by fallible humans with political motives. This analytical approach encouraged readers to differentiate between moral philosophy and superstition.

## **Advocacy for Deism and Reason**

Unlike atheism, which denies any deity, deism posits a creator who set the universe in motion but does not interfere with its laws or human destiny. Paine's rational God was accessible through reason and observation of the natural world, not through dogmatic scripture. This perspective invited a more personal and intellectual spirituality.

## **Why The Age of Reason Remains Relevant Today**

Despite being over two centuries old, Thomas Paine the Age of Reason continues to resonate in contemporary discussions about faith, science, and freedom of thought. Its advocacy for questioning authority and valuing reason aligns well with modern secular and humanist movements.

## **Inspiring Critical Thinking**

Paine's work encourages readers to think critically about their beliefs, highlighting the importance of evidence and logic. In an age where misinformation can spread rapidly, the call to examine ideas thoroughly before accepting them is more important than ever.

## **Freedom of Religion and Expression**

The Age of Reason also champions the right to challenge religious orthodoxy without fear of persecution. This legacy supports modern principles of freedom of speech and religious tolerance,

foundational to many democratic societies.

## **Bridging Science and Spirituality**

By promoting deism, Paine offered a middle ground between rigid religious literalism and outright atheism. His embrace of a creator discernible through natural laws paved the way for a dialogue between science and spirituality that continues today.

## **Understanding the Impact and Criticism of The Age of Reason**

Thomas Paine the Age of Reason was not without its detractors. Many religious leaders condemned it as heretical, and Paine himself faced social ostracism. However, the work's boldness also inspired many thinkers and activists.

### **Initial Public Reaction**

When first published in parts from 1794 to 1807, The Age of Reason provoked outrage among orthodox Christians. In America, where Paine had once been hailed as a hero, his religious skepticism alienated many supporters. Nevertheless, the book found an audience among freethinkers, intellectuals, and reformers.

### **Long-Term Influence on Secular Thought**

The principles laid out in The Age of Reason have influenced countless philosophers, writers, and political leaders advocating secularism and scientific inquiry. It helped lay the groundwork for modern secular humanism and the separation of church and state.

### **Criticism and Limitations**

Some critics argue that Paine's tone can be confrontational and dismissive, potentially alienating those with genuine faith. Additionally, his deist views, while progressive for the time, may seem overly simplistic compared to the complexity of contemporary religious philosophy.

## **Tips for Reading and Appreciating The Age of Reason**

If you're interested in exploring Thomas Paine the Age of Reason for yourself, here are some helpful tips to deepen your understanding and appreciation of this seminal work:

- **Contextualize the Text:** Familiarize yourself with the historical and philosophical background of the late 18th century to grasp why Paine's arguments were so groundbreaking.
- **Read Slowly and Reflectively:** Paine's prose can be dense and rhetorical. Take your time to absorb his points and consider how they relate to modern issues.
- **Compare with Other Enlightenment Writers:** Reading contemporaries like Voltaire or Diderot can provide additional perspectives on the themes Paine discusses.
- **Engage with Modern Commentary:** Look for scholarly articles or discussions that analyze Paine's work to enrich your interpretation.
- **Keep an Open Mind:** Whether or not you agree with Paine's conclusions, his work challenges readers to think critically, which is valuable in any intellectual journey.

Exploring Thomas Paine's *The Age of Reason* offers a compelling dive into the crossroads of faith, reason, and liberty, illuminating the enduring human quest to understand the world through the lens of both skepticism and hope.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### What is the central theme of Thomas Paine's 'The Age of Reason'?

The central theme of 'The Age of Reason' is the advocacy of deism and the critique of organized religion, emphasizing reason and scientific inquiry over revelation and dogma.

### How did Thomas Paine's 'The Age of Reason' influence religious thought in the 18th century?

'The Age of Reason' challenged traditional Christian doctrines and promoted a rational approach to religion, influencing the spread of deism and encouraging skepticism toward institutionalized religion during the Enlightenment.

### What are the main criticisms Thomas Paine makes about the Bible in 'The Age of Reason'?

Paine criticizes the Bible for containing contradictions, historical inaccuracies, and moral inconsistencies, arguing that it should not be accepted as literal truth and that reason should guide belief instead.

### Why was 'The Age of Reason' controversial when it was

## published?

The book was controversial because it openly criticized Christianity and organized religion, which offended religious authorities and many believers, leading to Paine being labeled an atheist and facing significant backlash.

## How does Thomas Paine's deism in 'The Age of Reason' differ from traditional Christianity?

Paine's deism rejects the idea of divine revelation and miracles, believing instead in a creator who does not intervene in human affairs, and emphasizes reason and observation of the natural world as the basis for belief.

## Additional Resources

**\*\*Thomas Paine and The Age of Reason: A Critical Examination of Enlightenment Thought\*\***

**thomas paine the age of reason** stands as a seminal work in the history of Enlightenment literature, marking a pivotal moment in the discourse surrounding religion, reason, and individual liberty. Published in the late 18th century, this treatise challenged traditional religious dogmas and advocated for a rational approach to faith and morality. As one of the most controversial and influential texts of its time, *\*The Age of Reason\** continues to provoke debate among historians, theologians, and philosophers alike. This article explores the background, content, and enduring impact of Thomas Paine's work, while situating it within the broader context of Enlightenment ideals and religious criticism.

## Contextualizing Thomas Paine and The Age of Reason

Thomas Paine, an English-born political activist and philosopher, gained prominence through his revolutionary writings such as *\*Common Sense\** and *\*The Rights of Man\**. His advocacy for independence and democratic principles resonated strongly during the American and French revolutions. However, Paine's intellectual pursuits extended beyond politics into the realm of religion, where he sought to apply the same principles of reason and liberty that underpinned his political ideas.

*\*The Age of Reason\**, published in three parts between 1794 and 1807, emerged from Paine's critical examination of organized religion, particularly Christianity. Written during a period of intense religious fervor and political upheaval, the work challenged the authority of the Bible and questioned the legitimacy of miracles, prophecy, and institutionalized worship. Paine's deistic viewpoint emphasized natural religion accessible through reason and observation of the natural world, rather than revelation or scripture.

## The Central Themes of The Age of Reason

At its core, *\*The Age of Reason\** advocates for a rational approach to spirituality, rejecting

superstition and dogmatic beliefs. Key themes include:

- **Critique of Biblical Authority:** Paine scrutinizes the inconsistencies and contradictions within the Bible, arguing that it should not be taken as infallible truth.
- **Promotion of Deism:** The work endorses a belief in a Creator discernible through reason and the laws of nature, distancing itself from orthodox Christianity.
- **Advocacy for Religious Freedom:** Paine condemns religious institutions that suppress free thought and persecute dissenters.
- **Emphasis on Reason Over Revelation:** The treatise insists that human reason is sufficient to understand moral and spiritual truths without reliance on supernatural claims.

These themes reflect broader Enlightenment values, which prioritized empirical evidence, skepticism towards traditional authority, and individual intellectual liberty.

## Analytical Insights into Paine's Critique of Religion

One of the most striking aspects of *\*The Age of Reason\** is its rigorous textual criticism. Paine meticulously dissects biblical narratives, highlighting historical inaccuracies and moral ambiguities. By doing so, he undermines the scriptural basis for many religious doctrines, which was a radical stance at a time when the Bible was often regarded as sacred and unquestionable.

Paine's deism, while rejecting orthodox religion, did not dismiss the concept of God altogether. Instead, it proposed a rational deity akin to a watchmaker who created the universe and its laws but does not intervene in human affairs. This perspective allowed Paine to reconcile belief in a higher power with Enlightenment skepticism of miracles and revelation.

However, the reception of *\*The Age of Reason\** was far from universally positive. Many contemporaries viewed Paine's work as blasphemous and dangerous, leading to widespread condemnation and censorship. Religious authorities criticized Paine for what they saw as an attack on social order and morality. Yet, for proponents of secularism and free thought, the text became a foundational document advocating intellectual emancipation.

## Comparisons with Contemporary Enlightenment Thinkers

While Paine was not alone in his critique of religion, his style and approach distinguish *\*The Age of Reason\** from other Enlightenment writings. Figures such as Voltaire and David Hume also questioned religious orthodoxy, but Paine's emphasis on accessibility and directness made his work more approachable to a broader audience.

- **Voltaire:** Known for his satirical attacks on the Church, Voltaire combined wit with philosophical

rigor but maintained a more nuanced stance on religion than Paine.

- **David Hume:** Hume's skepticism focused on epistemology and the limits of human understanding, influencing Paine's arguments about miracles and revelation.
- **Baron d'Holbach:** An atheist philosopher, d'Holbach rejected theism entirely, whereas Paine maintained a deistic belief in God.

Through these comparisons, it becomes clear that Thomas Paine's *\*The Age of Reason\** occupies a unique position, blending accessible prose with radical critique, and balancing faith in reason with a belief in a Creator.

## The Legacy and Modern Relevance of The Age of Reason

The impact of *\*The Age of Reason\** extends beyond its immediate historical context. Its challenge to religious orthodoxy contributed significantly to the development of secular thought, influencing movements for religious liberty and the separation of church and state.

In contemporary discourse, Paine's work is often revisited in debates about the role of religion in public life, freedom of expression, and the value of skepticism. The text's insistence on questioning inherited beliefs resonates with modern scientific inquiry and critical thinking.

However, the work's limitations are also notable. Critics argue that Paine's deism, while progressive for its time, still presupposes a theistic framework that some modern secularists find unnecessary. Additionally, his dismissal of scripture is sometimes seen as overly simplistic, neglecting the complex historical and cultural contexts of religious texts.

Despite these critiques, *\*The Age of Reason\** remains a touchstone for those examining the intersection of faith, reason, and liberty. It exemplifies the tensions and challenges inherent in questioning deeply entrenched beliefs and advocates for an intellectual courage that continues to inspire.

## Key Features of The Age of Reason's Writing Style

Thomas Paine's ability to communicate complex ideas in clear, persuasive language is one of the work's defining features. His use of straightforward prose, combined with logical argumentation and appeals to common sense, helped disseminate Enlightenment principles beyond academic circles.

- **Clarity and Accessibility:** Paine wrote to reach a broad audience, avoiding overly technical jargon.
- **Logical Structure:** Arguments are systematically presented, with evidence drawn from scripture and natural philosophy.

- **Passionate Tone:** Despite its rationalist approach, the work conveys a strong moral conviction and urgency.

These stylistic elements contributed to both the popularity and the controversy surrounding the text.

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Thomas Paine's *\*The Age of Reason\** remains a landmark in the history of religious criticism and Enlightenment literature. By boldly challenging traditional beliefs and championing reason as the path to truth, Paine set forth ideas that would ripple through centuries of philosophical and theological debate. His work invites readers to continuously engage with questions of faith, reason, and freedom—an invitation as relevant today as it was over two centuries ago.

## [Thomas Paine The Age Of Reason](#)

**thomas paine the age of reason:** [The Age of Reason](#) Thomas Paine, 1948

**thomas paine the 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.

**thomas paine the 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.

**thomas paine the 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.

**thomas paine the age of reason:** *The Age of Reason: Being an Investigation of True and Fabulous Theology* Thomas Paine, 1896

**thomas paine the 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.

**thomas paine the 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.

**thomas paine the 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.

**thomas paine the 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.

**thomas paine the 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.

**thomas paine the 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.

**thomas paine the 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.

**thomas paine the 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 quo

**thomas paine the 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.

**thomas paine the 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.

**thomas paine the age of reason: The Age of Reason** Thomas Paine, 2018-06-26 The Writings of Thomas Paine: The Age of Reason by Thomas Paine. 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. It was published in three parts in 1794, 1795, and 1807. IN the opening year, 1793, when revolutionary France had beheaded its king, the wrath turned next upon the King of kings, by whose grace every tyrant claimed to reign. But eventualities had brought among them a great English and American heart-Thomas Paine. He had pleaded for Louis Caper-Kill the king but spare the man. Now he pleaded, -Disbelieve in the King of kings, but do not confuse with that idol the Father of Mankind!. In Paine's Preface to the Second Part of The Age of Reason he describes himself as writing the First Part near the close of the year 1793. I had not finished it more than six hours, in the state it has since appeared, before a guard came about three in the morning, with an order signed by the two Committees of Public Safety and Surety General, for putting me in arrestation.

**thomas paine the 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.

**thomas paine the 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...

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