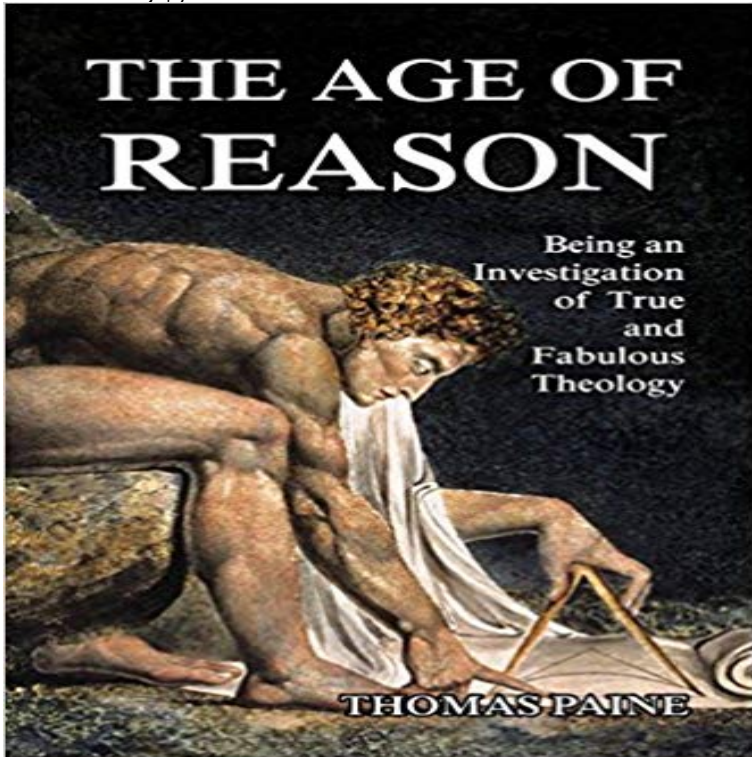


The Age of Reason: Being an Investigation of True and Fabulous Theology



Written by the ideological father of the American Revolution this work challenges institutionalized religion and the legitimacy of the Bible, using a chapter-by-chapter critical analysis of the Old and New Testaments which reveals the many contradictions, absurdities, and obvious lies contained therein. It also lays out the basis for Deism, the belief in a creative force, or nature, rather than a supernatural being. The work was a bestseller in the revolutionary-era United States, where it caused a deistic revival. Many of the leading American Revolutionary figures such as Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson were confirmed Deists, and Paine's writings are the single greatest reason why the American Constitution only referred to a God and a Creator while specifically eschewing any mention of Christianity, and why the First Amendment explicitly forbid the establishment of any official church or creed. Paine did not shirk from identifying Judaism as being the origin of Christianity, and was scorching in his criticism of Jews in particular: Could we permit ourselves to suppose that the Almighty would distinguish any nation of people by the name of his chosen people, we must suppose that people to have been an example to all the rest of the world of the purest piety and humanity, and not such a nation of ruffians and cut-throats as the ancient Jews were, a people who, corrupted by and copying after such monsters and imposters as Moses and Aaron, Joshua, Samuel, and David, had distinguished themselves above all others on the face of the known earth for barbarity and wickedness. If we will not stubbornly shut our eyes and steel our hearts it is impossible not to see, in spite of all that long-established superstition imposes upon the mind, that the flattering appellation of his chosen people is no other than a lie which the priests and leaders of the Jews had invented to cover the baseness of their

own characters; and which Christian priests sometimes as corrupt, and often as cruel, have professed to believe. We know nothing of what the ancient Gentile world (as it is called) was before the time of the Jews, whose practice has been to calumniate and blacken the character of all other nations; and it is from the Jewish accounts that we have learned to call them heathens. But, as far as we know to the contrary, they were a just and moral people, and not addicted, like the Jews, to cruelty and revenge, but of whose profession of faith we are unacquainted. It has been by wandering from the immutable laws of science, and the light of reason, and setting up an invented thing called revealed religion, that so many wild and blasphemous conceits have been formed of the Almighty. The Jews have made him the assassin of the human species, to make room for the religion of the Jews. The Christians have made him the murderer of himself, and the founder of a new religion to supersede and expel the Jewish religion. An intellectual tour de force, often suppressed and once officially banned by the British government, this edition has been completely reset and contains the complete original text.

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